

Unsettling Le Fanu:
Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu and Irish Settler Writing

by

Aoife Mary Dempsey

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School of English
Trinity College Dublin

Supervisor: Dr Jarlath Killeen

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis has not been submitted as an exercise for a degree at this or any other university and that it is entirely my own work.

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SUMMARY

This thesis examines the short fiction of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu (1814-73) as an example of Irish settler writing. The thesis applies settler theory as a reading strategy in the analysis of Le Fanu's stories that feature an Irish setting, arguing that his use of colonial history evidences a preoccupation with retelling the settler story. Moreover, this thesis considers Le Fanu's stories within their original material contexts, particularly those published in the *Dublin University Magazine*, a long-running periodical with an Irish Protestant conservative ethos.

The introduction sets out the theoretical parameters of the thesis, situating the central argument within current debates in postcolonial studies. It discusses the emergence of settler colonial studies and the parameters of settler writing more broadly, before moving to a discussion surrounding Ireland's postcoloniality. Le Fanu is introduced as the subject in which the abstract concepts of settler theory and settler writing can be concretized. This chapter also delineates existing scholarship on Le Fanu and places this thesis within the field.

Chapter One introduces the historical and cultural contexts of Ireland following the Act of Union in 1801, in the years before and after Le Fanu's birth. The chapter then moves to discuss the founding of the *Dublin University Magazine* in 1833, an important influence in shaping Le Fanu's writing and his life. The chapter considers the magazine and its founding editors as an "imagined community", around which Irish Protestants gathered with a view to consolidating Irish Protestant national identity.

Chapter Two examines Le Fanu's earliest work, twelve short stories that appeared in the *Dublin University Magazine* between January 1838 and October 1840. The chapter identifies aspects of settler writing in Le Fanu's fiction as he repeatedly returns to issues surrounding New English settlement and Old English decline. These twelve stories comprise some of Le Fanu's most critically neglected texts, which are given a new perspective through the application of settler theory, and in reading these stories within their context of the *Dublin University Magazine* in the late 1830s.

Chapter Three considers Le Fanu's short fiction published between 1847 and 1862, all of which are set in Dublin. The chapter examines the Dublin stories within the context of the pre- and post-Famine period, and discusses the shift from Le Fanu's rural stories to those set

in the capital city. The chapter also considers the fusion of colonial history and haunting in terms of its advancement from the settler narratives that featured in Le Fanu's earliest stories.

Chapter Four concerns Le Fanu's final stories to feature an Irish setting, published between 1861 and 1872. Le Fanu returned to writing fiction set in rural Ireland after a long gap. These stories are considered in light of Le Fanu's editorship of the *Dublin University Magazine*, as well as the period following his sale of the magazine, after which he never contributed again. His final stories are considered within the context of their publication in Charles Dickens's *All the Year Round*, a popular London-based periodical. Further, these stories are compared to Le Fanu's earliest writing, pointing to the changing socio-political conditions and how such changes are reflected in the stories.

Finally, the Conclusion provides an overview of the main arguments of the thesis, demonstrating how the re-reading of Le Fanu's fiction within its material and historical contexts can offer new and valuable interpretations of his work. Further, the Conclusion offers an assessment of how the application of settler theory may be used in examinations of Irish Protestant writing more broadly.

Dedicated to my grandmother, Mary O'Connell Dempsey

05/10/1916 – 12/08/1998

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INTRODUCTION

Unsettling Le Fanu: Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu and Irish Settler Writing

The Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland in 1801 is a watershed moment in Irish history. The Act triggered a reconfiguration of the relationship between the two nations that threatened to dissolve more than just the Irish Parliament, exposing the fractured nature of Irish national identity. The colonial and sectarian divisions of Irish society already in existence before the Act became increasingly entrenched over the course of the next century. One outcome of the loss of the Irish Parliament and its incumbent statutory roles was that the minority Protestant population – who until then held a privileged position in Irish state-making – encountered a crisis with regards to their role in Irish society. Faced with the threat of being subsumed into a monolithic “British” culture, and unable to make claim to the same Irish national identity available to Catholics, Irish Protestants began to revisit their cultural and historical origins, in an attempt to forge their own national identity somewhere between their British antecedents and their Catholic countrymen. This thesis will argue that a “settler perspective” was reactivated through the unavailability of a “stable self” in the years after the Act of Union, which contributed to a surge in supernatural, historical, and antiquarian writing by Irish Protestants from the 1820s onwards. As part of this wider movement, the short fiction of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu (1814-73), can be read as an example of what has been termed “second world”, or settler writing that is, writing that negotiates the parameters of coloniser and colonised perspectives. The thesis will adopt a pluralist approach in the consideration of both the material and the imaginative conditions that influenced Le Fanu’s work, primarily by conducting close readings of Le Fanu’s fiction set in Ireland. This introduction will outline the theoretical and historical parameters of this study, situate Le Fanu within existing scholarship on the subject, and conclude by outlining the rationale for the chapters to follow.

Situating the Settler

In postcolonial studies, the settler is a complex and often controversial figure. The dichotomy of coloniser-colonised that has sustained conventional postcolonial inquiry is disrupted by the introduction of the settler perspective.¹ In the most literal terms, the settler is an emissary of empire who travels to a potential or existing colony to stake a claim on the land by establishing a physical settlement in the name of their country of origin. Settlers seek to establish societies modelled on that of their colonial homeland – or upon an improved version of it – which often necessitates the displacement (usually through violent means), of the existing indigenous or autochthonous population along with any forms of society or political organisation already in situ.² In their collection on settler colonialism (2010), Tracey Banivanua Mar and Penelope Edmunds point out that settlers ‘tended not to emigrate to assimilate into indigenous societies, but rather emigrated to replace them’, an important distinction that differentiates the motivations of the settler from that of the migrant.³ Banivanua Mar and Edmunds go on to explain how settlement involves a systematic process of familiarisation, as settlers ‘fashioned new places of belonging out of the land they appropriated’ while simultaneously removing any ‘unsettling reminders of alternative and indigenous claims to land’.⁴ While the initial impulse

¹ The study of postcolonial cultures was developed as an academic field in the 1970s and inaugurated by Edward Said’s pioneering work, *Orientalism* (1978). Said posits that the Orient is constructed as “Other” to the West (Occident), which infers that the Orient is racially, ethnically, and culturally opposite and inferior. Said’s post-structuralist approach and radical historical revisionism initiated a review of academic intellectual inquiry in the study of cultures with a history of colonialism. Said’s work caused scholars to question and review the structures of power in the world and to investigate the legacy of colonialism. The academic field of postcolonial studies that developed in the wake of Said’s initial intervention remained steadfast in the binary conceptions of west/east, first world/third world, coloniser/colonised. In the 1990s, a new area of postcolonial inquiry began to emerge, one that initially defined itself as the “second world” perspective. By introducing another perspective, settler colonial studies interrupted the postcolonial dyad of coloniser-colonised that had initially defined the field. Since then, postcolonialism has been continuously refined and nuanced, with the “post” in postcolonial no longer referring solely to cultures after colonial withdrawal and independence, but rather encompassing all colonial interaction from the point of first contact between two cultures right up to present day. For a good overview of postcolonial theory and its impact on literary studies, see numerous volumes by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, but in particular their canonical work, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (1989), which remains a foundational text in the field. See also Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest* (London: Routledge, 1994).

² Autochthone refers to the indigenous inhabitant of a place as opposed to an inhabitant descended from settlers or emigrants. However, ‘The term indigenous tends to be used for people who are already marginalised, while autochthonous is generally reserved for people who are dominant in a given area but fear future marginalisation’. As such, this thesis will use the term indigenous to refer to the peoples established in Ireland prior to the settlements of the Tudor plantations and the Cromwellian-Williamite settlements of the seventeenth century given that Catholics were numerically dominant yet were marginalised. Quentin Gausset, Justin Kenrick, and Robert Gibb, ‘Indigeneity and Autochthony: A Couple of False Twins’, *Social Anthropology/Anthropologie Sociale*, 19.2 (2011) 135–42 (p. 135).

³ Tracey Banivanua Mar and Penelope Edmunds (eds), ‘Introduction: Making Space in Settler Colonies’, *Making Settler Colonial Space: Perspectives on Race, Place and Identity* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 1-24 (p. 2).

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

is to render new territory in the style of home, adaptation is necessary for survival, and it is through the process of formation and adaptation that the settler becomes ideologically detached from the original homeland and instead begins to establish new connections with the place of settlement, usually over a period of several generations. This process is exhibited most clearly by settler colonies such as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States of America, where white majority populations forged new identities in places of settlement and came to embody these nationalities in place of the indigenous populations.

The theorisation of the settler was inaugurated in the 1990s by the postcolonialists Alan Lawson and Stephen Slemon, whose interventions challenged the coloniser-colonised binary that had shaped postcolonial inquiry for the first three decades of its existence.⁵ Consideration of the settler perspective was introduced through the identification of what Lawson and Slemon initially termed the “second world”, situated between first world (coloniser), and third world (colonised), an approach that sought to reveal the specific conditions of settler colonial subjectivity. As the figure who occupies this “second world” position, the settler was later described by Lawson and Anna Johnston as being ‘both colonized and colonizing’, in that the settler could identify with both. On one hand, settlers established a connection to their adopted country, which ‘in the most extreme cases led to revolution by the settler-colonists’ against their former compatriots, ‘as in the United States in 1776 and in Southern Rhodesia in 1965’. Concomitantly, Johnston and Lawson clarify that ‘the settler was an agent of colonial rule over the proportionally, and usually numerically, shrinking indigenous population’.⁶ This paradox is central to interrogating the settler and has remained a consistent line of inquiry in the development of the field of settler-colonial studies. Extending from Slemon, Lawson and Johnston, the contemporary settler-colonial scholar Lorenzo Veracini has formulated a tripartite system to explain the settler situation: coloniser-settler-colonised. Veracini considers this to be a ‘relational system’ that ‘complicates the bilateral opposition between coloniser and colonised that is paradigmatic in the interpretive categories developed by [post]colonial studies’.⁷ Investigating the settler perspective reveals interior processes of colonisation through

⁵ Alan Lawson’s ‘A Cultural Paradigm for the Second World’, *Australian-Canadian Studies*, 9.1-2 (1991), 67-78 and ‘Postcolonial Theory and the “Settler” Subject’, *Essays on Canadian Writing*, 56 (1995), 20-36, along with Stephen Slemon’s ‘Unsettling Empire: Resistance Theory for the Second World’, in *World Literature Written in English*, 30.2 (1990), 30-41, are the foundational pieces of scholarship in the field of settler studies. Lawson and Slemon also co-authored a chapter in *De-Scribing Empire: Post-Colonialism and Textuality*, ed. by Alan Lawson and Chris Tiffin (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 13-32, on ‘The Scramble for Post-Colonialism’, in which they delineate second world writing.

⁶ Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, ‘Settler Colonies’, in *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, ed. by Henry Schwartz and Sangeeta Ray (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), pp. 360-75 (p. 363).

⁷ Lorenzo Veracini, ‘The Settler-Colonial Situation’, *Native Studies Review*, 19.1 (2010), 101-18 (p. 103).

the physical acts of settlement and assimilation, mediated between a foreign colonial power and a suppressed indigenous population.

However, as the field of settler-colonial studies has developed over the last two decades what has become abundantly clear is that no two experiences of colonisation are the same. Although comparable, discrete experiences of colonialism cannot be simplified and collapsed into holistic definitions or ‘classificatory approaches’.⁸ Veracini explains that settler colonialism ‘is not necessarily restricted to a specific group, location or period’, rather ‘it is a global and genuinely transnational phenomenon, a phenomenon that national and imperial historiographies fail to address as such’.⁹ Though the central tenet of an unstable identity has remained steadfast in settler studies, the parameters of what constitutes the settler or settler societies has been expanded significantly. Johnston and Lawson explain that ‘In general, historical definitions of “settler colonies” have relied on the presence of long-term, majority white racial communities, where indigenous peoples have been outnumbered and removed by colonial policies and practices’, which would seem to delimit the qualifiers to Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the Americas.¹⁰ However, Johnston and Lawson argue that more ‘problematic’ settler colonies such as ‘Algeria, Ireland, Kenya, New Caledonia, Zimbabwe (formerly Southern Rhodesia), Palestine, Mozambique and South Africa’ have ‘significant things in common’ with the more unambiguous settler colonies mentioned above, while they identify the “‘case” for the inclusion of Ireland’ as ‘a pressing one’.¹¹ Settler societies, then, are not necessarily contingent upon the presence of an exogenous majority population, but rather can be extended to include any form of colonial settlement that involved the movement and settlement of a body of people with the attendant subjugation of an indigenous population.

Regarding the practicalities of settlement, the process of planting and building allowed settlers to establish a physical claim on the land during the first stages of colonial settlement, to make their presence felt through visible occupation. Banivanua Mar and Edmonds identify ‘a range of cultural strategies’ such as ‘rapid zoning, fencing, planting’ which ‘cooperated to give observable effect to settler purchases or acquisitions of paper title to land’.¹² Beyond the initial act of physical settlement, these ‘cultural strategies’ were transferred to imaginative forms such as literature and art in the construction of the new nation and the promotion of a

⁸ Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 5. Due to multiple works by Veracini citations will include an abbreviated title.

⁹ Ibid., p. 6 and p. 2.

¹⁰ Johnston and Lawson, p. 361.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 362.

¹² Banivanua Mar and Edmonds, p. 4.

shared group identity. In his formulation of nationhood as an “imagined community”, Benedict Anderson identifies literature as a crucial component in establishing collective national identity. Literature is one means by which imagined communities can express and disseminate a view of the collective self, bounded by the ‘deep, horizontal comradeship’ that underpins the idea of a shared nationhood.¹³ Writing the settler experience is a transformative stage in the transition from initial colonial occupation to settler nationalism.

Articulating the Settler Experience

Settler writing encompasses a vast array of texts: from the first-hand recordings of colonial explorers such as Marco Polo or Captain James Cook, right up to the fictional works of Katherine Mansfield or Jean Rhys.¹⁴ Settler writing, as the textual expression of the settler experience (whether factual or fictional), is characterised by certain distinguishing features. Tim McLoughlin argues that ‘First, settler self-inscription reflects a shifting and ambiguous relationship between the settler and the mother country, which is itself affected by the constantly changing history of the settler within the country of settlement’.¹⁵ Second, the settler responds to the relationship with the indigenous population. Alison Rudd emphasizes the focus on versions of split or divided identity, what she calls ‘subjective doubleness’, by which she

¹³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. edtn. (London: Verso, 1983; 2006). Anderson defines the nation as ‘an imagined political community [...] It is *imagined* because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion [...] it is imagined as a *community*, because, regardless of the actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship’, pp. 5-7. Original emphasis. However, this is not to suggest that the national model is the only method by which group identity is formulated. Indeed, as Anthony W. Marx notes, nationalism can ‘exist among the populace before or without corresponding states being established, and then it may inspire the attempted creation of reconfiguration of such a state’. Marx, p. 6.

¹⁴ Marco Polo (1254-1324) is a Venetian explorer who journeyed around China and the far east in the late thirteenth century. His recorded experiences were later collected in *The Travels of Marco Polo* (c.1300). Captain James Cook (1728-79) compiled a journal while on his first journey around the world aboard the HMS *Endeavour* between 1768-71. The journal includes written accounts of first encounters and impressions of indigenous peoples from various South Pacific islands, including the Maori of New Zealand and the now extinct Moriori of the Chatham Islands. Katherine Mansfield (1888-1923) is a celebrated Modernist who was born in New Zealand. Though best-known for her European short stories, Mansfield wrote many stories set in New Zealand that feature distinctly Gothic and postcolonial themes. See for example ‘The Woman at the Store’ (1912), ‘Ole Underwood’ (1913), and ‘Old Tar’ (1913). Jean Rhys (1890-1979) is a novelist best known for her Modernist and feminist writing. She was born to white parents on the British-controlled Caribbean island of Dominica before moving to England as a teenager. One of her best-known works, *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), is a retelling of and response to Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* (1847), told from the perspective of Rochester’s first wife, Bertha Mason. Rhys’s novel is prime example of settler writing.

¹⁵ Tim McLoughlin, ‘Settler Instability: Edgeworth’s Irish Novels and Settler Writing from Zimbabwe’, in *Irish and Postcolonial Writing: History, Theory, Practice*, ed. by Glenn Hooper and Colin Graham (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 89-108 (p. 97).

means that ‘The settler is caught between the positions of coloniser and colonised’.¹⁶ As such, settler writing is preoccupied with establishing an identity that is neither “foreign” nor “native”, but somewhere in-between, and this “doubleness” is reflected in settler narratives. Third, in order to overcome the settler dilemma of never quite belonging either to their nation of origin or to the country in which they have settled, settler writing is ‘concerned to perform the concomitant indigenization of the settler’, that is, writing oneself into existence by narrating the history, culture, and experiences of the settler in the place of settlement.¹⁷ This stage often returns to explore the initial acts of settlement in the colony as the form of what Anthony Marx terms ‘historical commonality’ that unites the settler group.¹⁸ Through the act of self-inscription, the settler community authorises its sense of “belonging”, the collective presence in the site of settlement is legitimized and rooted by establishing an originary narrative.

Unsurprisingly, the Gothic is a mode frequently adopted in settler writing given that the Gothic lends itself to themes of instability, estrangement, fear of the unknown Other, and a preoccupation with the violent past. The intersections of Gothic and colonialism are well-established at this stage. As far back as 1994, Judie Newman discussed the ‘Janus-faced’ nature of the postcolonial Gothic text, arguing that ‘At its heart lies the unresolved conflict between the imperial power and the former colony’.¹⁹ Seasoned Gothicists Andrew Smith and William Hughes have contended strongly that ‘The Gothic has historically maintained an intimacy with colonial issues, and in consequence with the potential for disruption and redefinition vested in the relationships between Self and Other, controlling and repressed, subaltern milieu and dominant outsider culture’. The Gothic, they insist, ‘is, and has always been, post-colonial’.²⁰ Correspondingly, Ken Gelder describes the connection between the colonial and the Gothic as inevitable: ‘Colonial explorers went on to reproduce Gothic tropes almost as a matter of course, as they accounted for what they saw’ when encountering foreign lands previously unknown to exist.²¹ What they saw, of course, was so utterly different to their understanding of ‘home’ as to render the experience profoundly unsettling. In her work on the rural Gothic tradition in

¹⁶ Alison Rudd, *Postcolonial Gothic Fictions from the Caribbean, Canada, Australia and New Zealand* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010), pp. 136-37, quoting Alan Lawson (1995), p. 28.

¹⁷ Johnston and Lawson, p. 369.

¹⁸ Anthony W. Marx, *Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 6.

¹⁹ Judie Newman, ‘Postcolonial Gothic: Ruth Praver Jhabvala and the Sobhraj Case’, *Modern Fiction Studies*, 40 (1994), 85-100 (p. 86).

²⁰ Andrew Smith and William Hughes, ‘Introduction: Defining the Relationships between Gothic and the Postcolonial’, *Gothic Studies*, 5.2 (2003), 1-6 (p. 1).

²¹ Ken Gelder, ‘Australian Gothic’, in *A New Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by David Punter (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), pp. 379-92 (p. 379).

North American fiction and film, Bernice Murphy argues that the emergence of the rural Gothic is traceable back to the experiences of the first colonial settlers: ‘It is that uncertainty [of the boundless wilderness], combined with the powerful historical and cultural legacy that sprang from the first encounters between European settlers, the North American landscape, and its original inhabitants, that has helped to give rise to the Rural Gothic tradition’.²² Murphy argues that the American psyche, inherited from the original European settlers, is still shaped by those first encounters with the landscape and the people of the North American continent, and the inconceivable strangeness of both. If such colonial roots are traceable in twenty-first century texts (as Murphy argues), then it stands to reason that settler Gothic fiction of eighteenth and nineteenth-centuries is equally connected to and affected by colonialism, given that most settler communities were established during this period.

It seems necessary here to distinguish between postcolonial Gothic and settler Gothic. Though intrinsically related through the intersection of colonial and Gothic subjects, postcolonial Gothic is generally understood to refer to the re-reading of Gothic texts through a postcolonial lens with a view to highlighting previously overlooked instances of racial, imperial, and orientalist discourse.²³ Postcolonial Gothic texts can be written either from the perspective of the coloniser or the colonised. For example, consider Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* (1899), which adopts the perspective of white colonial explorers as they travel up the Congo river in central Africa. The text is postcolonial in terms of its subject matter, and Gothic in terms of the imagery used in the description of the alien African landscape and its strange inhabitants. An example of a narrative constructed from a contrary, colonised perspective is *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy (1996). This novel incorporates themes of India’s history, class relations, and cultural tensions and employs Gothic conventions such as doubling, ghosts, and the haunted house to underscore India’s fractured colonial history. According to Gina Wisker, the postcolonial Gothic ‘doubly destabilizes’; texts that are ‘both Gothic and postcolonial’ can ‘trouble versions of reality in a manner that is culturally inflected and redolent with traces of history and expression ignored and denied by received versions of colonial,

²² Bernice M. Murphy, *The Rural Gothic in American Popular Culture: Backwoods Horror and Terror in the Wilderness* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 2-3.

²³ See, for example, William Hughes, ‘Revisiting the Postcoloniality of Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*’, in *Empire and the Gothic: The Politics of Genre*, ed. by William Hughes and Andrew Smith (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 88-102. Hughes conducts a postcolonial reading of quintessential Victorian Gothic texts: ‘Postcolonialism forces the critical reader to read *Dracula* in a certain way, much, indeed, as recent developments in the same theoretical field have transformed the approach to *Wuthering Heights*. In the case of Brontë’s novel, merely geographical Romanticism and the provincial exotic have been superseded by a powerful indictment of the British slave trade in Africa and the Americas, and indeed of repressive slaveries closer to home’, p. 90.

imperial histories'.²⁴ Postcolonial Gothic texts serve to uncover previously ignored histories of colonial horror, to represent what Michael F. O'Reilly has described as 'the return of the colonial repressed'.²⁵ Settler Gothic, on the other hand, is a specific mode of writing by colonial settlers that makes use of Gothic themes and tropes in order to explore ideas of identity, nationality, and the relationship between self, Other, and place, negotiated through colonial settings and specifically from the perspective of the colonial settler. Settler Gothic literature emulates the situation of the settler who is positioned – literally and figuratively – between the absent and estranged coloniser, and present and strange colonised.

Another important process of settler self-inscription involves the curation of history and culture. Oona Frawley contends that 'As a practice, colonialism involves the movement and subsequent settlement of people in lands not their own; as an ideology [...] it involves the movement and subsequent settlement of ideas'.²⁶ These "ideas" were dispersed across the globe, and while European ideas were planted in faraway places, ideas also travelled back from exotic places to Europe as a form of what Ricardo Roque and Kim A. Wagner call 'Colonial knowledge', namely 'Colonial representations of foreign people, their cultures and practices' which were presented and understood to be factual, 'valid representation[s] and evidence of the past'.²⁷ Frawley cites the emergence of the museum in the eighteenth century as a significant moment in the colonial history of the world as the museum 'becomes a signifier of European attitudes towards both the natural and cultural world'. As Europeans attempted to 'classify and systematize all things natural', the result was a parallel interest in 'displaying the findings for scientific study'.²⁸ Of particular interest were strange and exotic items from distant places, 'highly prized' as 'signifiers of the wealth required to travel or of one's connection with colonial administration', but also prized for their Otherness and their apparent anachronism.²⁹ In Ireland, societies such as the Royal Irish Academy (1785) were established as, Elizabeth Tilley outlines, 'like-minded bodies anxious to debate and publicize advances in learning'. The

²⁴ Gina Wisker, 'Crossing Liminal Spaces: Teaching the Postcolonial Gothic', *Pedagogy*, 7.3 (2007), 401-25 (p. 411).

²⁵ Michael F. O'Reilly, 'Postcolonial Haunting: Anxiety, Affect, and the Situated Encounter', *Postcolonial Text*, 3 (2007), 1-15, (pp. 3-4).

²⁶ Oona Frawley, *Irish Pastoral: Nostalgia and Twentieth-Century Irish Literature* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005), p. 35.

²⁷ Ricardo Roque and Kim A. Wagner (eds), 'Introduction: Engaging Colonial Knowledge', *Engaging Colonial Knowledge: Reading European Archives in World History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 1-32 (p. 6). Roque and Wagner devise their understanding of colonial knowledge from Said's *Orientalism*, which proposes that Western accounts of other cultures are constructed to infer cultural and racial inferiority.

²⁸ Frawley, p. 35.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 36.

Academy's 'antiquarian role' was in collecting 'precious objects – everything from gold ornaments to ogham stones – formed the nucleus of the National Museum [of Ireland]'.³⁰

As display cases in museums were filled up with colonial curiosities, writing about folk culture, popular superstitions and "primitive" societies also increased; the subjects were both domestic and foreign. S. J. Connolly refers to this movement as 'the "discovery of the people" that took place everywhere in Western Europe in the later eighteenth century, reflecting general revolt against what was coming to be seen as an excess in artifice and rationality', and was characterised by class-based interaction between high and low, or elite and popular cultures.³¹ The preoccupation with popular culture was linked to the emergence of national culture occurring at the time; people were seeking new modes of identification, one of which was the conception of the secular "nation" with a distinguishing national culture. Part of this process, Diarmuid Ó Giolláin explains, necessitated 'Going back to the origins for regeneration' which is 'part of every mythical worldview', articulating a shared past in an effort to promote cultural continuity and kinship which in turn encouraged an interest in collecting and archiving folk or popular culture.³² Storytelling is an essential component in the formation of group identity; it 'unites a community, clarifying or exorcizing its shared feelings and beliefs, its fears and aspirations'.³³ The collection and display of the past, then, promotes this shared culture and links it to a common history that helps consolidate shared identity in the present. In settler societies, creating this link to the site of settlement is crucial to establishing a sense of belonging. While folk stories and popular antiquities facilitated fictional articulations of culture, and museums contained material remnants of the past, history writing provided another important function of imaginative settlement, of establishing a "factual" link with the place of settlement, a chronological conception of cultural origins. In settler societies, conceptualising the nation must account for both indigenous and settler claims to authenticity, which, of course, are conflicting. Where there was an absence of an extended history or organic folk culture for

³⁰ Elizabeth Tilley, 'The Royal Irish Academy and Antiquarianism', *The Oxford History of the Irish Book, Volume IV: The Irish Book in English, 1800-1891*, ed. and intro. by James H. Murphy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 463-76 (p. 463). Royal Irish Academy hereafter abbreviated to RIA.

³¹ Seán Connolly, "'Ag Déanamh Commanding" Elite Responses to Popular Culture, 1660-1850', in *Irish Popular Culture, 1650-1850*, ed. by James S. Donnelly Jr. and Kerby A. Miller (Dublin and Portland, OR: Irish Academic Press, 1998), pp. 1-29 (p. 7). See also Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, third edn. (London: Ashgate, 2009). Due to multiple works by Connolly, subsequent citations will include an abbreviated title. Connolly publishes interchangeably as "Seán Connolly" and "S. J. Connolly". Citations will reflect the name used by the author in each case, but for consistency, in-text references to Connolly will use "S. J."

³² Diarmuid Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore: Tradition, Modernity, Identity* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2000), p. 9.

³³ George Denis Zimmermann, *The Irish Storyteller* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), p. 12.

settlers, indigenous stories and histories had to be co-opted in order to embed the settler in their own conceptions of the nation. Given that a nation is imagined through ‘a set of representations, embodying certain types of political and cultural communities and their operations’, Himani Bannerji points out that in countries with a history of colonialism, what is more pertinent is not *what* is imagined, but rather ‘whose imagination is advanced as the national imaginary’.³⁴ In colonized countries, therefore, reading, writing, transcribing, collecting, curating, and representing the national culture are deeply political acts.

Settling the Irish Question

If this thesis is to consider a section of Irish writing in the nineteenth century as a form of settler writing, it is first necessary to set Ireland within the appropriate historical and theoretical parameters. Framing Ireland as postcolonial has proven a complex project, not least given the complexity of current relations between the Republic, Northern Ireland, and the United Kingdom. David Lloyd, along with Joe Cleary, Glenn Hooper, Colin Graham, Declan Kiberd, Kevin Whelan, Tim McLoughlin, Oona Frawley, and Claire Connolly, and more recently, Eóin Flannery and Derek Gladwin, have all worked towards ‘regarding Ireland in a post-colonial frame’ to varying degrees and using a variety of approaches.³⁵ Individual methods and viewpoints notwithstanding, these scholars have favoured the postcolonial turn in examining Irish culture and history given the discipline’s propensity for comparative, outward-looking frameworks of analysis that eschew the nationalist model that has hitherto encompassed much of Irish cultural theory. However, Ireland’s status as postcolonial has been hotly contested due to the country’s complicated colonial history. The lack of any clear (or convenient) trajectory from conquest to settlement, from colonisation to post-colonisation, precluded Ireland from consideration in many early models of postcolonial theory. For example, Robert J. C. Young’s theory of “Tricontinentalism” (2001) positions the continent of Europe as the collective coloniser, which of course necessarily includes Ireland and other countries within Europe that were actually subject to colonial suppression.³⁶ Similarly, canonical theoretical texts such as

³⁴ Himani Bannerji, ‘Geography Lessons: On Being an Insider/Outsider to the Canadian Nation’, *Dangerous Territories: Difference and Equality in Education*, ed. by Leslie G. Roan and Linda Eyre (New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 23-41 (p. 24). Original emphasis.

³⁵ David Lloyd, ‘Regarding Ireland in a Post-Colonial Frame’, *Cultural Studies*, 15.1 (2001), 12-32. The major theorists mentioned here addressed the question of Ireland’s postcoloniality around the beginning of the 2000s, which was likely a trend sparked by the continued development of postcolonial studies internationally from the late 1980s through the 1990s. Scholars such as Eóin Flannery and Derek Gladwin have built upon this work and developed Irish postcolonial theory further, from the mid-2000s to present day.

³⁶ Robert J. C. Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Chichester, Sussex: Wiley Blackwell, 2001).

Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), acknowledge Ireland's complicated colonial status but avoid any kind of engagement with, or discussion of these complications, merely gesturing towards Ireland as part of some 'new areas of concern'.³⁷ Even Lawson and Johnston's consideration of the Irish "case" falls short in that they proceed to ignore the so-called complicated colonies in their ensuing analysis, focussing instead on the more straightforward examples of Australia and New Zealand.³⁸ Ireland's own complicity in the project of empire overseas also complicates matters.³⁹ Moreover, Ireland's proximity to mainland Europe, both geographically and culturally, coupled with the lack of any visible marker of race between coloniser and colonised – unlike that encountered by European colonisers in India, Africa, or the Americas – means that Ireland's postcoloniality is more difficult to see and therefore more difficult to define. Another major sticking point for some is the change in Ireland's colonial status with the 1801 Act of Union, after which Ireland went from being an overseas colony with its own representative parliament (an unusual situation in itself), to forming part of the United Kingdom of England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, ruled remotely from Westminster.⁴⁰

Joe Cleary speculates that due to Ireland becoming 'constitutionally part of the United Kingdom' in 1801 and thereafter 'not formally treated as a colony though it retained many of the features of such [...] compounded this sense of Ireland as "a case apart" or an anomaly of

³⁷ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 201.

³⁸ Johnston and Lawson, p. 362.

³⁹ See Barry Crosbie, *Irish Imperial Networks: Migration, Social Communication and Exchange in Nineteenth-Century India* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), and also Jane Ohlmeyer's ongoing work on Irish complicity in the colonial project of India (*Colonial Ireland, Colonial India*), 'Ireland, India and the British Empire', *Studies in People's History*, 2.2 (2015), 169-88. There has also been some investigation into Irish involvement in the Caribbean given that many Irish people initially sent as indentured servants later acquired land. See Eve Walsh Stoddard, *Positioning Gender and Race in (Post)Colonial Plantation Space: Connecting Ireland and the Caribbean* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

⁴⁰ A significant number of complex factors – social, political, and economic – led to the Act of Union between Great Britain and Ireland in 1800, which came into effect on 1 January 1801. The Rebellion of 1798, led by Theobald Wolfe Tone and the United Irishman and aided by the French, was a deciding factor in implementing the union. Historians agree that the idea of a union had been tabled in both the Irish and British parliaments as far back as 1700 and renewed at intervals. James Kelly points out that 'The growing disposition in Britain from the middle of the eighteenth century to favour a policy of closer control of Ireland [...] can be explained by disenchantment with the conduct of the Irish parliament, and concern about its commitment and ability to safeguard the connexion between the two island kingdoms'. James Kelly, 'The Origins of the Act of Union: An Examination of Unionist Opinion in Britain and Ireland, 1650-1800', *Irish Historical Studies*, 25.99 (1987), 236-63 (p. 237). Additionally, the outbreak of revolution that swept across Europe and America in the late eighteenth century was a growing concern for Great Britain, especially given the increasing pressure from the Irish Catholic majority for Catholic Emancipation. Moreover, Thomas Bartlett states resolutely that 'Union would have been inconceivable without the 1798 rebellion'. Bartlett, *Ireland: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 228. See also James Kelly, 'The Failure of Opposition', *The Irish Act of Union, 1800: Bicentennial Essays*, ed. by Michael Brown, Patrick M. Geoghegan, and James Kelly (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2003), pp. 108-28.

some sort'. Cleary also points out that even aside from Ireland's protracted withdrawal from colonisation, 'the country has never really fitted comfortably into an official body of imperial writing'.⁴¹ Despite semantic arguments about Ireland's colonial status at various points in time – kingdom, colony, region, state, republic – a colonial relationship exists between Ireland and England, formed over many centuries. Cleary's uncomplicated summation that 'The question about Ireland's colonial status can be posed and inflected in a variety of ways' is helpful in that it echoes assertions by postcolonialists such as Slemon and Veracini who have maintained that there is no single or correct way to be "colonised", and indeed no correct way to talk about it.⁴² Cleary (among others), also strongly contests the categorization of Ireland's colonial experiences as 'anomalous' or 'atypical', and 'hence by inference too "exceptional" to be usefully considered alongside other overseas colonies'.⁴³ Philip Holden remarks that 'Postcolonial studies, indeed, gains much of its power through an ability to place one experience of decolonisation next to each other, and to excavate parallels without reducing them to equivalence'.⁴⁴ In fact, understanding the Irish colonial situation in dialogue with that of other colonies, whether the comparison be by virtue of similarities or differences, is precisely what theorists such as Veracini, Lawson, Johnston, and Slemon have proposed as a model for the investigation of settler societies. Lindsay J. Proudfoot and Michael M. Roche, in their edited collection on geographies of empire (2005) gesture to this figuration of local experiences in global contexts: 'Central to these formulations [of sites of colonisation] is the idea that the individual experience of Empire was mediated through the interaction between local specificities of "place" and the externalities inscribed in these wider imperial networks or circuits'.⁴⁵ In other words, neither the individual nor the collective experience can be viewed in isolation as they are inextricably related. Regarding Irish specificity, McLoughlin observes that 'the Irish colonial context at the end of the eighteenth century, so different in many respects from anywhere else, produces its own discrete discourse', and yet Ireland's distinctive experiences remain part of a wider programme of global imperialism coordinated by the British Empire.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Joe Cleary, 'Amongst Empires: A Short History of Ireland and Empire Studies in International Context', *Éire/Ireland*, 42 (2007), 11-57 (p. 21).

⁴² Joseph Cleary, *Outrageous Fortune: Capital and Culture in Modern Ireland* (Derry: Field Day, 2006), p. 19

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 24

⁴⁴ Philip Holden, 'The "Postcolonial Gothic": Absent Histories, Present Contexts', *Textual Practice*, 23 (2009), 353-72 (p. 357).

⁴⁵ Lindsay J. Proudfoot and Michael M. Roche (eds.), 'Introduction: Place, Network, and the Geographies of Empire', in *(Dis)Placing Empire: Renegotiating British Colonial Geographies* (Hampshire & Burlington: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 1-14 (p. 3).

⁴⁶ McLoughlin, p. 97.

Understanding Ireland as a settler colony has also proved challenging. Stephen Howe, a longstanding opponent of what he considers to be the ‘gross oversimplification’ of questions concerning Ireland’s ‘place in the history of the British Empire, and within comparative studies of colonialism and post-coloniality’, has contested any attempt to figure Ireland as a colony.⁴⁷ He argues that ‘Writing about settler societies is overwhelmingly critical and unsympathetic [...] Where the designation of a society as “settler” has itself been contentious, the literature has been massively one-sided’. Howe continues:

To define a society as settler colonial is, almost invariably, to associate it with a range of features that are generally regarded as deplorable, for very good reasons. It is to view it as both illegitimate, and as probably doomed to a rapid and well-deserved demise.⁴⁸

Howe considers the designation of a society as a settler society to be entirely negative. Indeed, to indiscriminately label Ireland – or anywhere – a settler colony without due attentiveness and consideration of the complexities of centuries of history and culture would be specious. However, to assume that any questioning of colonial processes has, as its primary aim, the indiscriminate vilification of the coloniser, demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding of the objective of postcolonial studies in the first instance. Howe fails to see colonialism as a spectrum of experiences, and instead falls into the oversimplified binary of coloniser = bad, colonised = good. It is important to acknowledge here that colonial settlement in Ireland was by no means a consistent process, but notwithstanding Howe’s objections, Ireland has undergone numerous waves of colonial settlement over the course of six centuries, from the Norman conquests of the twelfth century to the Tudor plantations in the sixteenth century and the Cromwellian settlement of the seventeenth century.⁴⁹

Between the initial English conquest of Ireland in 1169 and the installation of the lordship of Ireland in 1171, little in terms of proactive military or administrative control was exerted over Ireland. By the mid-sixteenth century, the lordship of Ireland created in 1171 was ended and Henry VIII was declared king of Ireland in The Kingship Act of 1541. Jane

⁴⁷ Stephen Howe, ‘Minding the Gaps: New Directions in the Study of Ireland and Empire’, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 37.1 (2009), 135-49 (p. 136). See also Howe, *Ireland and Empire: Colonial Legacies in Irish History and Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁴⁸ Stephen Howe, ‘Questioning the (bad) Question: “Was Ireland a Colony?”’, *Irish Historical Studies*, 36 (2008), 138-52 (p. 147).

⁴⁹ See, for example, Jane Ohlmeyer (ed.), *Ireland from Independence to Occupation, 1641-1660* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). Thomas Bartlett refers to the period between 1541 and 1691 as ‘The Making of Protestant Ireland’ and remarks: ‘The one hundred and fifty years between the establishment by Parliamentary statute of the kingdom of Ireland (1541) and the confirmation by military victory at the Boyne (1690) and Aughrim (1691) that that kingdom would be a Protestant one are the most momentous in the history of Ireland between the English invasion of the twelfth century and the setting up of the two Irish states in the twentieth’. *Ireland: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010; 2015), p. 79.

Ohlmeyer points out that by 1603 ‘After the union of the crowns [...] the British kings viewed Ireland as an integral part of their personal dynastic heritage’.⁵⁰ The initial Tudor plantation settlements were followed by another wave of major settlement during the Cromwellian invasions of the 1640s, which introduced the Act of Settlement (1652), and the Act of Satisfaction (1653), along with a group of settlers commonly designated as the “New English”, as distinguished from the pre-reformation “Old English” settlers who had by then largely assimilated into Gaelic culture, encouraged in part by their shared Catholicism.⁵¹ Ohlmeyer explains that ‘The completion of the Cromwellian conquest of Ireland reduced the titled nobility, especially those lords with royalist and confederate track records, to particularly low ebbs’, after which many ‘preferred exile on the continent’ where they ‘eked out existences as political refugees’.⁵²

Following these land confiscations, the Jacobite-Williamite war (1688-91) saw Catholics (and Protestant dissenters, mainly Presbyterians) further dispossessed of their estates as forfeit for sedition, after which, ‘Catholic landowning east of the Shannon was almost entirely brought to an end’.⁵³ Religion became the crucial signifier of difference between the New English settlers and the indigenous Gaelic population, while land ownership became the fulcrum of power. McLoughlin argues that ‘It was the “new English” who brought into focus the issue which underpins and exacerbates all colonial endeavours: land’. McLoughlin argues that land ‘gave the settlers the status and security they wanted to consolidate their power’.⁵⁴ The process of settlement that began in the sixteenth century was strengthened throughout the seventeenth by the advancement of the New English landlords and the Penal Laws; Cromwell’s ‘land settlement of the 1650s represented the most ambitious attempt to plant Ireland at any point in the island’s history’, and succeeded in establishing a ruling minority class that would retain power in Ireland for over two centuries, the Protestant Ascendancy.⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Jane Ohlmeyer, ‘Seventeenth-Century Ireland and the New British and Atlantic Histories’, *American Historical Review*, 104.2 (1999), 446-62 (p. 450).

⁵¹ Old English settlers ‘had developed by the mid-fifteenth century a hybrid lifestyle in which they were borrowing freely from their Gaelic counterparts’, while likewise, their Gaelic rivals ‘were not above “anglicising” themselves for their own advantage’ Bartlett, p. 62

⁵² Jane Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English: The Irish Aristocracy in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 280.

⁵³ Bartlett, p. 129.

⁵⁴ T. O. McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland: Irish Voices Against England in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1999), p. 22. Due to multiple works by McLoughlin citations will include an abbreviated title.

⁵⁵ Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, p. 287. The term “Irish Protestant” encompasses the Protestant religions under the Established Church of Ireland (established 1801, disestablished 1869). Where the term Irish Anglican is used it refers specifically to the Anglican religion (as Le Fanu was an Anglican), and should not be confused with the term “Anglo-Irish”. Previously, all peoples of non-Catholic religions were referred to as Anglo-Irish, signifying their English descent and difference from the indigenous Irish people who were mostly Catholics. This term is vague and, as Killeen has argued, ‘we need to acknowledge that these terms [Anglo-Irish and

Given that the subject of this study is the formation of settler identity by Irish Protestants in the nineteenth century, two centuries after the New English arrived in Ireland, it is apposite to question why we should continue to call nineteenth-century Irish Protestants “settlers” given their historical distance from their Cromwellian and Williamite antecedents. In other words, how long does a settler remain a settler? Of course, there is no neat answer to this question, but it is possible at least to make a distinction between the first wave of settlers – the people who arrive in a territory and physically establish a settlement but who are born elsewhere – and their descendants, the people born in the site of settlement thereafter. To a certain extent, all non-indigenous cultures can be considered settlers indefinitely. For example, much of the literature by white Canadians, Australians, and New Zealanders of European descent is still considered ‘settler literature’ today, as there exist indigenous cultures and First Nations peoples who challenge European claims to legitimacy. Sheila Collingwood-Whittick explains that in Australia and New Zealand, settler communities ‘have a more difficult time achieving closure on the eternally debatable question of their identity. It seems, namely, that as long as an indigenous population exists, the legitimacy of the non-indigenous community’s status in these former colonies will remain challenged’.⁵⁶ Conversely, it is more difficult to figure American literature as settler literature as the indigenous populations of the North, Central and South American continents were effectively wiped out, and thus pose little or no challenge to monolithic conceptions of white cultural legitimacy. Johnston and Lawson observe that ‘Increasingly, the white settlers referred to themselves and their culture as indigenous; they cultivated native attributes and skills [...] and in this way cemented their legitimacy, their own increasingly secure sense of moral, spiritual, and cultural belonging’.⁵⁷ Veracini refers to this process of settler indigeneity as “‘deep colonising’”, in which the settler forms a new nationalism that usually results in a bid for sovereignty from the former colonial homeland.⁵⁸ Of indigenization in the Irish situation, Bartlett remarks, ‘the Protestants of

Ascendancy] elide much in the way of class, theological and political difference, and it is best to be more specific’. Killeen, *The Emergence of Irish Gothic*, p. 34. Where Anglo-Irish is used in this thesis, it refers only to English-Irish relations in terms of politics and economics: “Anglo-Irish trade”, “Anglo-Irish Treaty”, etc. “Ascendancy” is understood to refer to a landed class of Protestants as distinct from Protestants of middle-class backgrounds (such as the Le Fanu family), and once again is not interchangeable with terms such as Anglo-Irish or Irish Anglicans. For further arguments surrounding appropriate terminology, see also Margot Gayle Backus’s *The Gothic Family Romance: Heterosexuality, Child Sacrifice, and the Anglo-Irish Colonial Order* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999).

⁵⁶ Sheila Collingwood-Whittick (ed.), ‘Introduction’, *The Pain of Unbelonging: Alienation and Identity in Australasian Literature* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2007), pp. xiii-xliii (p. xxxix).

⁵⁷ Johnston and Lawson, p. 363.

⁵⁸ Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, p. 109, quoting Deborah Bird Rose, ‘Land Rights and Deep Colonising: The Erasure of Women’, *Aboriginal Law Bulletin*, 3.85 (1996), 6-13.

Ireland, like settler populations everywhere in the Atlantic world, had begun to develop a strong local patriotism, an acute sense of place that would lead them to regard Ireland as their home'.⁵⁹ Indigenization is a process enacted over generations and with each conflict or reconciliation there are challenges to this process, accompanied by re-articulations of the imagined community and the political nation state.

After the rebellion of 1798 and the Act of Union in 1801, the post-Union Irish were obliged to reconfigure their political, cultural, and national boundaries which, as the century wore on, were crystalized along sectarian lines. Historians such as Bartlett, Connolly, Ohlmeyer, and Kevin Whelan have all pointed to the 1798 Rebellion as a watershed moment in Irish history in which 'sharpening political divides' put an end to the 'old allegiances' of high and low culture, and cross-sectarian patronage.⁶⁰ Connolly remarks that 'the crisis of the 1790s marked the end of an era in relations between élite and popular cultures', given that 'the delicate framework of reciprocity and tacit understanding [...] was undermined by new forms of sectarian and political conflict'.⁶¹ Bartlett refers to 'The concept of a "moral economy" between ruler and ruled' that existed in Ireland during the eighteenth century, contrary to 'conventional wisdom that eighteenth-century Ireland was notoriously a violent country'. Bartlett argues revisions of Irish history have 'emphasize[d] that harmony rather than conflict characterized social relationships in eighteenth century Ireland, at least until the 1790s', although 'there was, of course, conflict' too.⁶² In the spring of 1800, the Irish Parliament voted to dissolve itself when the bill proposing for an Act of Union of Great Britain and Ireland was passed in Westminster and Dublin. On 1st January 1801, the act became law and the Irish Parliament ceased to be. Joseph Valente offers the following summation:

For centuries, the Anglo-Protestant settler population of Ireland, unlike their peers in India, Jamaica, or Hong Kong, identified themselves as national subjects of their adopted homeland, as Irishmen in short. By the late eighteenth century, however, the bulk of this population, unlike their Anglo peers in America and Australia, elected to sue not for separation from but for reintegration with the metropolitan state of Great Britain. And with the Act of Union in 1800, they succeeded.⁶³

⁵⁹ Bartlett, p. 154.

⁶⁰ Kevin Whelan, 'Underground Gentry: Catholic Middlemen in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', in *Irish Popular Culture 1650-1850*, ed. by James S. Donnelly Jr and Kerby A. Miller (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998), pp. 118-72 (p. 160).

⁶¹ Connolly, "'Ag Déanamh Commanding" Elite Responses to Popular Culture, 1660-1850', p. 21.

⁶² Thomas Bartlett, 'An End to the Moral Economy? The Irish Militia Disturbances of 1793', *Past & Present*, 99 (1993), 41-64 (p. 42).

⁶³ Joseph Valente, "'Double Born": Bram Stoker and the Metrocolonial Gothic', *MFS Modern Fiction Studies*, 46.3 (2000), 632-45 (p. 632).

The case for seeing nineteenth-century Irish Protestants as ‘settlers’ is persuasive because such a reflection became part of the community’s own self-identity in the post-Union period.

McLoughlin pinpoints the “adversarial space” occupied by the settler in Ireland, the ‘areas of confrontation’ that existed ‘between the settler and Westminster, and between the settler and the Catholic Irish. If the coloniser or settler is to survive he must control this adversarial space, and the cleanest way to do this is by legislation’, by which he means the establishment of a self-governing parliament in Dublin.⁶⁴ The closure of parliament inevitably reawakened the challenges of controlling this adversarial space, as Irish Protestants found themselves in ‘The place of difference and otherness’ between coloniser and colonised.⁶⁵ The “settler” was still positioned somewhere between England and Ireland, but now they no longer had legislative control. Consequently, post-Union Irish Protestants turned to imaginative means to satisfy the need for self-inscription. Thus, Irish Protestants in the nineteenth century were required to negotiate a complicated politics of identity. Their self-identification as a minority population was defined by their shared religion and a history of settlement in Ireland, coupled with a budding settler nationalism. Howe rightly (though irreverently), remarks that ‘if one looks sufficiently far back, *everyone* in Ireland is a settler, including the Celts – which is on one level evidently true, but hardly a politically effective or cogent riposte’.⁶⁶ It is for this reason that lateral approaches to the study of settler colonialism, studies that compare systems of settlement enacted in a global context, are required in conjunction with studies of national models, rather than just viewing such experiences in isolation. However, within the national model, it is also necessary to recognise the unique parameters and contexts of each wave of settlement, and thereby avoid collapsing centuries of complex socio-political history into a set of blanket terms. Though Ireland is regularly acknowledged as postcolonial, its continued designation as “atypical” or “anomalous” suggests that the Irish situation requires further investigation. What this thesis proposes is to apply settler theory as a reading strategy in examining Le Fanu’s short fiction with an Irish setting, thereby contributing to a wider discussion in understanding Ireland’s postcoloniality.

⁶⁴ McLoughlin, *Contesting Ireland*, p. 24. McLoughlin is drawing from Homi K. Bhabha’s articulation of adversarial space as ‘The place of difference and otherness’ in ‘Signs Taken for Wonders: Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree outside Delhi, May 1817’, *Critical Inquiry*. 12.1 (1985), 144-165 (p. 152).

⁶⁵ Bhabha, ‘Signs Taken for Wonders’, p. 152.

⁶⁶ Howe, ‘Questioning the (bad) Question...’, p. 147. Original emphasis.

Unsettling Le Fanu

Having thus delineated the theoretical and historical parameters of this thesis, I wish to introduce Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu as the subject through which these abstract conceptions of the Irish Protestant settler can be concretized through an examination of his Irish-set short fiction. Born in Dublin on 28th August 1814, Le Fanu was the second child of Thomas Philip Le Fanu (1784-1845) and his wife Emma Lucretia (née Dobbin), preceded by sister Catherine Frances (1813-41) and followed two years later by his brother, William Richard (1816-94). Of French Huguenot descent, the Le Fanus arrived in Ireland during the Williamite conquests after the Huguenot exodus from France, while on his mother's side, the Sheridans were of mixed Irish and English heritage. Notable literary relatives include Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816) the eighteenth-century playwright and satirist, whose sister Alicia was Le Fanu's grandmother.⁶⁷ Additionally, R. B. Sheridan's granddaughter, Caroline Norton (1808-1877), the English-born author and activist, was in regular correspondence with Le Fanu and assisted him with his work in terms of writing and help with the English press.⁶⁸ W. J. McCormack, Le Fanu's foremost biographer, describes the family as 'comfortably bourgeoisie' in that they belonged to the Protestant middle class of lawyers, bankers, merchants, and clerics, who gained ground in the wake of the 'descending Ascendancy', the landed Protestant aristocracy who were in post-Union decline.⁶⁹ Le Fanu spent the early years of his life in the Royal Hibernian Military School in Chapelizod, which was at that time merely a village outpost of Dublin, where his father was Church of Ireland clergyman. In 1826, when Le Fanu was just twelve years old, Thomas was appointed the Dean of Emly, a diocese located in the south-west of Ireland, and accordingly the family moved to Abington in east Co. Limerick where they would reside in the glebe house for almost two decades.⁷⁰ The geographic legacy of his early life is

⁶⁷ W. J. McCormack, *Sheridan Le Fanu and Victorian Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 1. Due to frequent references made to this text, as well as a number of different works by McCormack cited throughout this thesis, I will cite references to this volume as *Sheridan Le Fanu*, while other works by McCormack will include his name and an abbreviated title.

⁶⁸ Caroline Norton was Le Fanu's second cousin and her eldest sister, Helen, married Price Blackwood, the 4th Baron Dufferin and Clandeboy. Le Fanu regularly requested his London publisher to send copies of new novels to both Mrs. Norton and Lord and Lady Dufferin. The Le Fanu-Bentley correspondence contains details of Le Fanu's directives to send copies to both Mrs. Norton and the Dufferins in the following letters: Le Fanu to R. Bentley 3 January 1864 (p. 167), Le Fanu to R. Bentley 5 November 1864 (p. 177), and Le Fanu to G. Bentley 12 December 1864 (p. 178). In a letter dating 15 December 1863, Le Fanu asks Bentley: 'I suppose there would be no objection to my inscribing the book [*Wylder's Hand*] to Mrs Norton?', p. 167. All references to the Le Fanu-Bentley correspondence are cited from Walter Eugene Edens, 'Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu: A Minor Victorian and His Publisher' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Illinois, 1963), in which Edens transcribes letters from the Le Fanu-Bentley correspondence between 1864 and 1897 (after Le Fanu had died but still concerning his work). See for reference the Appendix to this thesis, pp. 267-69.

⁶⁹ Killeen, *The Emergence of Irish Gothic*, p. 48.

⁷⁰ The Church of Ireland diocese of Cashel and Emly is situated in east Munster and came under the jurisdiction

evident in Le Fanu's fiction, with both Limerick and Chapelizod repeatedly evoked as settings for his stories. Similarly, the weight of Irish history bears heavily on his work and Le Fanu's considerable knowledge of seventeenth and eighteenth-century Irish history is evident and impressive. Le Fanu is particularly in tune with his own family's role in the history of Ireland, his ancestor Charles de Cresserons having fought during the Williamite War in Ireland (1688-91) and alongside William of Orange himself in the penultimate conflict, the Battle of the Boyne (1690). A fictional de Cresseron (minus the "s"), is employed as the narrator of Le Fanu's 1863 novel, *The House by the Church-yard*, a story set squarely in Chapelizod and rooted in eighteenth-century history. The legacies of biography, geography, and history coalesce in Le Fanu's fiction and play a crucial role in their interpretation. Moreover, understanding Le Fanu as a post-Union Protestant writer, who lived through a period of progress and improvement as well as violence and horror, is fundamental to this study.

In the autumn of 1832 Le Fanu commenced his university education at Trinity College Dublin, the bastion of Irish Protestant intellectualism. Le Fanu's university associates included such notable figures as Charles Lever (1806-72) and Samuel Ferguson (1810-86), who were fellow students and later friends, the well-known antiquarian and writer William Carleton (1794-1869), as well as the writer, barrister, M.P. and later leader of the Home Rule League, Isaac Butt (1813-79), who was also a witness at Le Fanu's wedding.⁷¹ These eminent peers had a significant influence on both Le Fanu's socio-political outlook and his writing. It was through his association with Butt that Le Fanu became involved in the *Dublin University Magazine: A Literary and Political Journal*, a monthly periodical that ran uninterrupted from 1833 until 1882.⁷² Le Fanu's first published stories appeared in the pages of the *D.U.M.* between 1838

of the Bishopric of Cashel. In 1833, the Bishopric of Cashel was united to the Bishopric of Waterford and Lismore under the Church Temporalities Act, a restructuring measure implemented by the liberal Whig government as part of ongoing reforms within the Church of Ireland prompted by the Act of Union, under which the Church of Ireland was aligned with the Church of England. Thomas Le Fanu's appointment as Dean of Emly came in the wake of a revival of 'the office of rural dean' during the first decades of the nineteenth century. Donald Akenson explains that these deans were often 'cathedral dignitaries, but in many other cases they were outstanding members of the parish clergy', such as Thomas Le Fanu. Donald Akenson, *The Church of Ireland: Ecclesiastical Reform and Revolution, 1800-1885* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971), pp. 131-32. In particular, see chapter two, 'The Era of Graceful Reform, 1800-1830' (pp. 71-145), and chapter three, 'Reform by Critical Strangers, 1830-1867' (pp. 146-225). For the implementation and outcomes of the Church Temporalities Act, see pp. 159-64.

⁷¹ The Home Rule League was established in 1873, and Butt was its first leader up until his death in 1879. William Carleton was not a student of Trinity College Dublin.

⁷² The *Dublin University Magazine: A Literary and Political Journal* ran from January 1833 until December 1877. It was then renamed *The University Magazine: A Literary and Philosophic Review* and ran from 1878 to 1880, and then again under the title *The University Magazine* with a quarterly series from 1880 to 1882. For specific studies of the *Dublin University Magazine* see Michael Sadleir's *Dublin University Magazine: Its History, Contents, and Bibliography* (Dublin: Bibliographical Society of Ireland, 1938), and the most recent study by Wayne E. Hall, *Dialogues in the Margin: A Study of the Dublin University Magazine* (Cincinnati: The

and 1840, and thereafter the magazine was to play an important role in his life. In July 1861, Le Fanu purchased the *D.U.M.* and became its editor until 1869. In his book-length study of the periodical, Wayne E. Hall remarks that, ‘As had been the case under Charles Lever, the *DUM* prospered under Le Fanu in large part on the strength of its editor’s own prolific output’.⁷³ Prior to owning the *D.U.M.*, in 1841 Le Fanu purchased the *Warder*, ‘a paper of note in Ireland’, according to his brother William, and throughout his career he owned and edited several Dublin newspapers including the *Statesman* and the *Dublin Evening Mail*.⁷⁴ Additionally, Charles Gavan Duffy (1816-1903) and Thomas Davis (1814-45) were contemporaries and acquaintances of Le Fanu’s and were also founders of the *Nation*, a weekly political newspaper established in 1842 that was initially associated with O’Connell’s Repeal movement. Duffy and Davis were central figures in the group of largely Protestant repealers who became known collectively as Young Ireland. Although strongly influenced by the journalistic aspirations of his prominent peers – so much so that despite being called to the bar in 1839 Le Fanu eschewed the legal profession in favour of a career in journalism – he did not share their political outlook, erring very much on the side of conservative, Tory politics. In many ways, attendance at Trinity marked the beginning of a new phase in Le Fanu’s life. Although he returned to Limerick periodically after his graduation, the death of his sister Catherine in 1841, followed by his father’s death four years later in 1845, signalled the end of Le Fanu’s early life and heralded the family’s permanent return to Dublin, a move that coincided with the Great Famine (1845-52), a period of devastating hunger, disease, and emigration, particularly in rural Ireland. In December 1843, Le Fanu’s marriage to Susanna Bennet, daughter of Dublin barrister George Bennet, would see him moving to his father-in-law’s house at 18 Merion Square, where he would reside for the rest of life and where he died in February 1873 at the age of 58.⁷⁵

Le Fanu’s body of work is considerable. He commenced his writing career in 1838 and continued to produce work – albeit inconsistently – right up until his death in 1873. His corpus

Catholic University of America Press, 1999). Both Hall and Sadleir discuss the importance of Le Fanu’s role in shaping the content of the magazine both as contributor and editor. *Dublin University Magazine* is hereafter abbreviated to *D.U.M.*

⁷³ Hall, p. 194.

⁷⁴ William Le Fanu, *Seventy Years of Irish Life* (London: Edward Arnold, 1893), p. 138. To avoid confusion with the Le Fanu surname, references are hereafter cited as *Seventy Years*.

⁷⁵ Biographical details are obtained from *Sheridan Le Fanu*, which remains the most substantial biographical volume on Le Fanu to date (for dates of family deaths see p. 62 and p. 89, for marriage dates see pp. 114-15). Further biographical details are obtained from *Seventy Years*, see p. 138 for details and dates of Catherine Le Fanu’s death, p. 139 for Susanna Bennet’s death, and p. 164 for details of Thomas Le Fanu’s death. See also the Appendix to this thesis, pp. 267-69.

can be divided into three phases: early, middle, and late.⁷⁶ The early period (1838-63), although long, incorporates the years in which Le Fanu established himself as a professional writer through regular submissions to the *D.U.M.*, up until he began his productive publishing arrangement with Bentley & Son (c. 1863), after which there is a definite shift in both the genre and style of his work. During the early period, Le Fanu's fiction comprises of short stories with Irish settings, chiefly set in Dublin or rural Limerick and its environs. Likewise, his early forays into novel writing are rooted in Irish soil: *The Cock and Anchor: Being a chronicle of Old Dublin* (1845), *The Fortunes of Colonel Torlogh O'Brien: A Tale of the Wars of King James* (1847), and *The House by the Church-yard* (1863) are set in Dublin, Limerick, and Chapelizod respectively. Le Fanu's early writing period also spans many significant personal episodes, including the death of his sister (1841), father (1845), wife (1858), and mother (1861), as well as the exodus of the remaining Le Fanu family from Limerick back to Dublin after 1845.

The middle period in Le Fanu's writing career (1863-69) is much shorter and reflects Le Fanu's dedication to both journalism and editing, and to producing a remarkable number of three-volume novels.⁷⁷ In the early 1860s, Le Fanu struck a productive deal with London-based publisher Richard Bentley, who in a letter dated 26 February 1863 stipulated that Le Fanu's next novel be written 'of an English subject and in modern times'. One week later, the ensuing letter dated 6 March 1863 includes a post-script reiterating the condition: 'P.S. I presume the story will be of modern English life'.⁷⁸ Bentley's intervention marked a turning point in Le Fanu's writing, after which he abandoned the usual Irish setting of his fiction in favour of pleasing his publisher.⁷⁹ For the next decade Le Fanu would stick closely to what McCormack

⁷⁶ Kevin Sullivan remarks that 'the life and work of all great writers [...] fall conveniently into three periods - early, middle, and late. Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu is nicely accommodated to the gaullish [sic] division'. Sullivan demarcates the early years as 1838-48, middle 1848-63, and late 1863-73. While Sullivan's parameters are more proportionally balanced, attributing roughly a decade to each period, my observations of Le Fanu's phases of writing are determined thematically and biographically rather than chronologically. 'Sheridan le Fanu: The Purcell Papers, 1838-40', *Irish University Review*, 2 (1972), 5-19 (pp. 5-6).

⁷⁷ Le Fanu wrote twelve three-volume novels between 1863 and his death in early 1873. Eight of the twelve were produced during what I define as the middle period of his writing. Five of these were published by Bentley, while the remaining three were published by Tinsley Brothers.

⁷⁸ Richard Bentley to Le Fanu, 26 February 1863, Edens, p. 164. Richard Bentley to Le Fanu, 6 March 1863, Edens, pp. 164-65.

⁷⁹ For an analysis of transformations in the literary marketplace over the course of the nineteenth century see Richard Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1957). Altick charts the influence of social, political and economic factors in shaping both the book trade and the trends of the reading public. Improvements in literacy led to a broadening of mass readership, which hitherto had been a privileged pursuit of the learned few. Likewise, technological improvements, most notably the advent of steam-powered printing (1843), revolutionised reading culture (p. 277). More books could be produced at a cheaper cost, which flooded the marketplace and gave rise to a variety of different literary forms: weekly penny magazines, serialisation of novels (the railway market and yellowbacks), and other mass-circulation periodicals catering to different classes (p. 318 and pp. 358-59). Bentley was keen to tap into the mid-nineteenth century trend for sensation fiction, a form particularly popular

has dubbed ‘the Bentley formula’, producing triple-decker novels at an accelerated rate.⁸⁰ The slew of novels published in the 1860s include one of Le Fanu’s best-known and most commercially successful works, *Uncle Silas* (1864). The novels of the 1860s were, for the most part, published in London either by Bentley or Tinsley Brothers, and although some were occasionally serialised in the *D.U.M.* (by this time Le Fanu was editor), they were crafted primarily for a middle-class, English readership. Often, the plots for the novels of the middle period are derived from early short stories, greatly expanded and re-written to fit the Bentley formula. This propensity to re-write and revise his work, as well as regularly publishing anonymously, has caused consternation among Le Fanu scholars for many decades. Indeed, close to century and a half after his death a complete list of Le Fanu’s works remains elusive.⁸¹ The novels of the middle period were born out of financial necessity; this economic impetus is evidenced by the Le Fanu-Bentley letters which detail the prolonged correspondence between author and publisher on issues of deadlines, length, serialisation, second editions, payment, copyright, advertisement, reviews, sales, and some unsuccessful attempts by Le Fanu to leverage a better deal by hinting at interest from competing publishers, as well as supplying Bentley with favourable reviews of existing works.⁸²

The late period of Le Fanu’s writing (1869-73) is shorter still, and where a clear break exists between early and middle periods there is an argument to be made for some considerable overlap between the middle and late periods. Specifically, the trend of triple-decker, English-set novels that dominated the middle period of his writing extended into the late period and include (in terms of form and theme), the four novels produced between 1869 and 1873.⁸³ However, after 1869 and with his sale of the *D.U.M.* in the same year, though still producing novels, Le Fanu suddenly returned to writing short stories, many with Irish settings. He also

with female readers who in recent years had grown into a dominant sector of the Victorian readership: ‘Instead of withering away, the sensational-fiction industry flourished as never before, profiting by the publicity given the reading habit among the masses and by the widening popularity of the cheap serial’ (p. 289). See also Altick, *Victorian People and Ideas: A Companion for the Modern Reader of Victorian Literature* (London: Norton, 1973), and *The Presence of the Present: Topics of the Day in the Victorian Novel* (Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1990).

⁸⁰ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 140.

⁸¹ As of yet, a definitive bibliography of Le Fanu’s work has yet to be established, although some have made concerted efforts. M. R. James is credited with identifying a number of unsigned stories in 1923, while most recently, Gary William Crawford and Brian J. Showers have produced the most comprehensive catalogue to date: *Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu: A Concise Bibliography* (Dublin: Swan River Press, 2011).

⁸² The Le Fanu-Bentley correspondence reveals the details of Le Fanu’s contract with Bentley. In some cases, Le Fanu pointedly cites “favourable reviews” of his work by various people, usually acquaintances of his (Edens, p. 168 and p. 201-02), and in a letter to Richard Bentley in 1865, Le Fanu not-so-subtly hints that advertising in magazines can boost book sales (Edens, p. 179).

⁸³ *Checkmate* (1871), *The Rose and Key* (1871), *Willing to Die* (1873), *Morley Court* (1873). Although these novels are linked by genre to the novels of the 1860s, none of them were published by Bentley. Instead, two were published by Hurst and Blackett and two by Chapman and Hall, both London-based publishing firms.

began experimenting with different styles hitherto unseen in his fiction. He produced almost twenty published works in total during this short period, including some of his best: the much-celebrated ‘Green Tea’, serialised in Dickens’s *All the Year Round* between October and November 1869, and *Carmilla*, serialised in *Dark Blue* between 1871-72, both of which subsequently became part of the 1872 collection, *In a Glass Darkly*.

The focus of this thesis is Le Fanu’s short fiction that retains an Irish setting as it is in these stories that elements of the settler perspective and issues of Irish Protestant identity can be most clearly identified. These stories appear at various stages across Le Fanu’s writing career, although they feature most heavily in the early phase. These short stories have also remained largely overlooked in scholarship on Le Fanu to date, a critical gap this thesis seeks to address. The use of the overarching framework of settler theory will facilitate the interpretation of Le Fanu’s work as both a product of specific personal and national trends, as well as a reaction to larger systems of colonial expansion and retraction. Le Fanu’s fiction evidences an engagement with his cultural inheritance as a descendent of New English settlers and Huguenot refugees, his status as part of a ruling minority population, and his experiences of a post-Union Ireland in political and cultural flux. Furthermore, while some studies have highlighted Le Fanu’s “Anglo-Irish” connections, a sustained postcolonial inquiry of his work has yet to be mounted.

Current Scholarship

Over the course of the twentieth century, scholarly interest in Le Fanu has been fitful, and many of the early biblio-biographies were based largely on William Le Fanu’s memoir, *Seventy Years of Irish Life* (1893), which along with T. P. Le Fanu’s *Memoir of the Le Fanu Family* (1924), constitute the earliest biographical studies on Le Fanu.⁸⁴ In 1980, McCormack’s thorough and insightful biography, *Sheridan Le Fanu and Victorian Ireland*, initiated a revival in the field of what could be tentatively termed “Le Fanu Studies”. Since then – and particularly in the last

⁸⁴ The two earliest biographical studies of Le Fanu are Nelson Browne’s *Sheridan Le Fanu* (1952), and Michael H. Begnal’s *Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu* (1971), both of which draw heavily on *Seventy Years* and contain biographical inaccuracies. Browne speculates on the function of Gothic in Le Fanu’s fiction, adopting a psychoanalytic perspective in the interpretation of his literature and using evidence from Le Fanu’s personal history to support this approach. Until Browne’s single-author approach, only cursory references to Le Fanu were made in the inter-war period, predominantly in surveys of Victorian and Gothic fiction. Credit for a renewed interest in Le Fanu’s fiction is also due in part to the author M. R. James, who was a professed fan of Le Fanu’s, and who in 1923 edited *Madam Crowl’s Ghost and Other Tales of Mystery*, which brought together several of Le Fanu’s unsigned short stories. James also wrote a prologue and an epilogue to the collection. Other posthumous collections of Le Fanu’s tales include *Best Ghost Stories of J. S. Le Fanu* (1964), and *Ghost Stories and Mysteries* (1975), both edited by E. F. Bleiler.

decade – there has been a notable increase in the amount of critical material in circulation. This may be due in part to the 2014 bicentenary of Le Fanu’s birth, which prompted many contemporary critics to review existing scholarly material and contribute new analyses of Le Fanu’s fiction. Most recently, the collection *‘Inspiring a Mysterious Terror’: 200 Years of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu* (2016), is the result of the ‘Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu Bicentenary Conference’, held in Trinity College Dublin in October 2014, and brings together the latest scholarship in the field, including new contributions by McCormack and Victor Sage, whose 2004 work, *Le Fanu’s Gothic: The Rhetoric of Darkness* was one of the most significant book-length studies to follow McCormack’s.⁸⁵ Prior to this, the editors of *Reflections in a Glass Darkly: Essays on J. Sheridan Le Fanu* (2011), compiled a collection of essays and other biographical material on Le Fanu, which helped further consolidate Le Fanu Studies in the run-up to the bicentenary, combining essays from nineteenth-century sources with scholarship from living academics.⁸⁶ Although Le Fanu serves as the focal point of an impressive spectrum of scholarship, interpretive approaches to the fiction are profoundly diverse. This diversity in scholarship rightly reflects the diversity of Le Fanu’s writing, in whose oeuvre one can find poetry and ballads, folk tales and short stories, newspaper articles and novels. Despite varied approaches, some recurring themes are identifiable: an examination of Le Fanu’s Irish-Anglican heritage, his religious affiliations (Anglican, Calvinist, Swedenborgian), and his place in an Irish Gothic lineage that begins with Charles Robert Maturin and stretches to Bram Stoker, Samuel Beckett and beyond.⁸⁷ However, there has yet to be a thorough examination of

⁸⁵ McCormack’s ‘The Bad Wall; or, Problems of History in Fiction’ pp. 197-230, discusses the various literary, social and historic sources in some of Le Fanu’s critically neglected novels. McCormack has a sustained interest in what we might call Le Fanu’s “lesser works”. He remains convinced of the unwarranted under-appreciation of Le Fanu’s 1863 novel, *The House by the Church-yard*, to which James Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake* has an acknowledged debt. In McCormack’s contribution to Morin and Gillespie’s *Irish Gothics*, “‘Whom We Name Not’: *The House by the Churchyard* and its Annotation’ (pp. 147-67), he asserts the need for an annotation to the notoriously dense novel, which is rich in subtle historical references. In an earlier work, *The Shadow of James Joyce: Chapelizod & Environs* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2011), McCormack contributes another article concerning Le Fanu, *The House by the Church-yard*, and Joyce: ‘Sheridan Le Fanu and Greater Chapelizod’ (pp. 77-82). McCormack highlights the significance of the environs of Chapelizod and the Phoenix Park for Le Fanu and his work. McCormack’s second significant book-length study of Le Fanu, *Dissolute Characters: Irish Literary History through Balzac, Sheridan Le Fanu, Yeats and Bowen* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), traces – as the title suggests – the line of Irish Gothic writing from Balzac to Bowen, with a strong emphasis on Le Fanu throughout. As in *Sheridan Le Fanu and Victorian Ireland*, McCormack traces the development of the Gothic through literature, Victorian Irish culture, and the influence of European modernity.

⁸⁶ Gary William Crawford, Jim Rockhill, and Brian J. Showers (eds), *Reflections in a Glass Darkly: Essays on J. Sheridan Le Fanu* (New York: Hippocampus Press, 2011).

⁸⁷ Another robust area of inquiry in Le Fanu scholarship over the years is his vampire novella, *Carmilla*, which has attracted much of the critical attention. *Carmilla* was first serialised in *The Dark Blue* from December 1871 until March 1872, and was subsequently added to the 1872 collection, *In a Glass Darkly*. The advent of Queer Theory and Third-Wave Feminism in the early-mid 1990s is, perhaps, partially responsible for the focus on this story of a lesbian vampire. Vampire narratives in particular were subject to literary revisionism, exposing moments of liminality as suggestive of repressed sexuality and alterity. See, for example, Tamar Heller, ‘The

the postcolonial aspects of Le Fanu's work, with only a few brief inquiries conducted in the general area.

In 2010, two short studies on Le Fanu and empire emerged that began to address this critical gap: Nicholas Allen's 'Sheridan Le Fanu and the Spectral Empire', and a section on colonial ghosts in Andrew Smith's *The Ghost Story, 1840-1920: A Cultural History*. Allen argues that there is a 'history of objects in the writings of Sheridan Le Fanu [...] particularly those objects sourced or connected to imperial trade', by which he means the presence of exotic objects in these stories namely, tobacco, tea, coffee, and the monkey in 'Green Tea'.⁸⁸ Allen also points out that some of the stories are set in the late eighteenth century or early nineteenth century, which places them in the imperial contexts of the American War of Independence (1775-83), the French Revolution (1789-99), and the Napoleonic Wars (1803-15). Allen restricts his study of imperial objects to the five stories of *In a Glass Darkly* (1872), and argues that the 'transcontinental imaginings' of the stories 'offer a way to think of Ireland not as a site of originary identity but as a mobile, complex and changing space within an evolving world system', indicating that 'Ireland's changing role within the economy of empire informs Le

Vampire in the House: Hysteria, Female Sexuality, and Female Knowledge in Le Fanu's *Carmilla*', in *The New Nineteenth Century: Feminist Readings of Underread Victorian Fiction*, ed. by Barbara Herman and Susan Mayer (New York: Garland, 1996), 77-95; Joseph Andriano, "'Our Dual Existence": Archetypes of Love and Death in Le Fanu's *Carmilla*', in *Contours of the Fantastic*, ed. by Michele K. Langford (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994), pp. 49-55; Elizabeth Signorotti, 'Repossessing the Body: Transgressive Desire in *Carmilla* and *Dracula*', *Criticism*, 58 (1996), 607-32; Maria Jose Feu Guijarro, 'The Semantics of the Supernatural in Le Fanu's *Carmilla*: A Functional Lexematic Analysis of the Story of a Female Vampire', in *Proceedings of the 20th International AEDEAN Conference*, ed. by P. Guardio and J. Stone (Barcelona, Spain: Universitat de Barcelona, 1997), pp. 445-51; Tammi Elise Thomas, 'Masquerade Liberties and Female Power in Le Fanu's *Carmilla*', in *The Haunted Mind: The Supernatural in Victorian Literature*, ed. by Elton E. Smith and Robert Haas (New York: Scarecrow Press, 1999), pp. 39-65; Jarlath Killeen, 'In the Name of the Mother: Perverse Maternity in *Carmilla*', in *Reflections in a Glass Darkly: Essays on J. Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed. by Gary William Crawford, Jim Rockhill, and Brian J. Showers (New York: Hippocampus Press, 2011), pp. 363-84; Robert Mighall, "'A Pestilence which Walketh in Darkness": Diagnosing the Victorian Vampire', in *Spectral Readings: Towards a Gothic Geography*, ed. by Glennis Byron and David Punter (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1999), pp. 108-24; Joss Lutz Marsh, 'In a Glass Darkly: Photography, the Premodern and Victorian Horror', in *Prehistories of the Future: The Primitivist Project and the Culture of Modernism*, ed. by Elazar Barkan and Ronald Bush (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), pp. 159-71; Nina Auerbach, 'My Vampire, My Friend: The Intimacy *Dracula* Destroyed', in *Blood Read: The Vampire as Metaphor in Contemporary Culture*, ed. by Joan Gordon, Veronica Hollinger, and Brian Aldiss (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), pp. 11-16; Robert F. Geary, 'Carmilla and the Gothic Legacy: Victorian Transformations of Supernatural Horror', *The Blood is the Life: Vampires in Literature*, ed. by Leonard Heldreth and Mary Pharr (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1999), pp. 19-29. The theory of the vampire as radical deviant – sexual, political, racial, or otherwise – has remained dominant. See, for example, Clemens Ruthner, 'Vampirism as Political Theory: Voltaire to Alfred Rosenberg and Elfriede Jelinek', in *Visions of the Fantastic: Selected Essays from the Fifteenth International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts*, ed. by Allienne R. Becker (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), pp. 3-12; Backus's, *The Gothic Family Romance: Heterosexuality, Child Sacrifice, and the Anglo-Irish Colonial Order* (1999).

⁸⁸ Nicholas Allen, 'Sheridan Le Fanu and the Spectral Empire', in *The Ghost Story from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century: A Ghostly Genre*, ed. by Helen Conrad O'Briain and Julie Anne Stevens (Dublin: Four Courts, 2010), pp. 112-23 (p. 112).

Fanu's imagination'.⁸⁹ However, rather than proposing to re-examine Le Fanu's work with a view to uncovering additional colonial or postcolonial features, Allen instead proposes a revision of Irish Gothic writing and its intersection with imperial trade more broadly. Although Allen sees Le Fanu's fiction (or at least some of it), as informed by global systems of imperialism, he does not go so far as to see Le Fanu's work as colonial (or postcolonial) fiction.

Andrew Smith's book-length study of the ghost story from 1840 to 1920 includes a section on colonial ghosts in which Smith reads ghost stories in their relative colonial contexts. Smith includes analysis of texts by Charles Dickens and Rudyard Kipling along with an examination of a selection of Le Fanu's fiction, in which he traces the legacies of Irish colonial history and incidents in which hysteria translates to horror.⁹⁰ Smith sees Le Fanu's fiction as informed in part by the changing balance of power between Protestants and Catholics in the mid-century period. What is significant, however, is that Smith sees in Le Fanu's work evocations of both Catholic and Protestant histories, rather than firmly allying Le Fanu to a strictly "Protestant" tradition, as is usually the case. Though he does not explicitly acknowledge it, Smith is noticing an ambivalent settler perspective in Le Fanu's work, one that encompasses a coloniser-colonised perspective.

Finally, Robert A. Smart's 2013 chapter, 'Postcolonial Dread and the Gothic: Refashioning Identity in Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', examines these respective stories as versions of 'a powerful colonial anti-text that revealed most fully the Anglo-Irish fears about the Catholic majority that had been disenfranchised by 300 years of colonial "reconquests"'. Smart conducts a postcolonial re-reading of the two major Irish vampire texts, although his argument is limited to the configuration of the vampire and the orphan as disruptive and unrooted figures in Gothic fiction. Smart sees the postcolonial elements of the vampire story in Ireland as emblematic of 'the fraught relationship between the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy and the Catholic majority of the colony', or in other words, between the settler and indigenous populations. Smart highlights the 'tentative identity of Anglo-Irishmen who stood between England and native Ireland', whereas by contrast, Irish Catholics possessed 'a clear and undifferentiated political and cultural identity'.⁹¹ Socio-historical studies of the period – such as Anne Kane's comprehensive work *Constructing Irish National Identity*

⁸⁹ Allen, p. 112 and p. 117. The five stories of *In a Glass Darkly* are: 'Green Tea', 'The Familiar', 'Mr Justice Harbottle', 'The Room at the Dragon Volant', and 'Carmilla'.

⁹⁰ Andrew Smith, *The Ghost Story, 1840-1920: A Cultural History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), p. 152. See pp. 150-57 for section on Le Fanu.

⁹¹ Robert A. Smart, 'Postcolonial Dread and the Gothic: Refashioning Identity in Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Transnational and Postcolonial Vampires: Dark Blood*, ed. by Tabish Khair, Johan Höglund, and Elleke Boehmer (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 10-45 (pp. 11-12).

(2011) – have shown that in fact, Irish Catholics did not have an uncomplicated collective national identity until at least the post-Famine period, and even then claims about Irish Catholic solidarity are often oversimplified.⁹² But the contention that Irish Protestants, by virtue of comparison, had more complicated affiliations when it came to national identity is certainly persuasive. Smart’s argument about the ‘tentative identity’ of Irish Protestants traces the postcolonial themes of the split self and complicated national identities habitually articulated in settler fiction. Moreover, what Smart calls the ‘double helix of fear/repulsion and desire/obsession’ where Irish Catholics are concerned, is drawn from earlier arguments about the defining features of Irish Protestant Gothic writing. However, Smart, like others, stops short of making an explicit connection between the ‘tentative identity of Anglo-Irishmen’ and the settler-colonial perspective.⁹³

So far, Smith, Allen, and Smart have come closest to considering Le Fanu’s work as ‘postcolonial’, bordering on the ambivalent settler perspective. Another robust area of research into Irish Protestant (or “Anglo-Irish”), writing in the nineteenth century and its connection to the country’s colonial history is the symbolism of the Big House. The Big House came to signify Protestant authority in Ireland in concrete shape as the abode of the all-powerful landlord. Jacqueline Genet explains that ‘The high walls of the Big House were to separate for seven centuries the Gaelic population from the English invaders and this partition gave birth to two separate worlds’.⁹⁴ Although Genet’s is a somewhat hyperbolic articulation, it nevertheless underscores the equation of landholding and power in Ireland, particularly following what Ohlmeyer refers to as ‘the revolution in landholding that occurred in mid-[seventeenth]-century Ireland’ which resulted in ‘the wholesale transfer of land from Catholic to Protestant hands’.⁹⁵ The Big House in literature came to be read as a metaphor for power relations, and consequently, the depiction of the Big House as under violent attack, as haunted, or as

⁹² See Anne Kane, *Constructing Irish National Identity: Discourse and Ritual During the Land War, 1879-1882* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011). See also Sean Connolly’s *Religion and Society in Nineteenth Century Ireland* (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1985), which charts the advancement of the Catholic Church in solidifying a specifically Catholic national identity through the course of the nineteenth century. In particular, see pp. 28-30 in which Connolly highlights ‘the emergence of a new style of popular politics’ led by O’Connell and the Catholic clergy that included ‘techniques of mass agitation’ and ‘challeng[ed] the basic assumptions of a political system based on the deferential acceptance of rule by an elite’, which was ‘in itself deeply alarming to [Protestant] contemporaries’, p. 28.

⁹³ Smart, p. 11. The work of Julian Moynahan in *Anglo-Irish: The Literary Imagination in a Hyphenated Culture* (1995), and Terry Eagleton in *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger* (1995), connects the idea of a split identity and Gothic literature by Irish Protestants. This argument will be discussed in more detail below.

⁹⁴ Jacqueline Genet (ed.), *The Big House in Ireland: Reality and Representation* (Savage: Barnes and Noble, 1991), p. 15.

⁹⁵ Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English*, p. 301. Genet cites the history of the Big House as dating back to the twelfth century, but Ohlmeyer’s argument locating the sectarian transfer of landholding in the seventeenth century is more historically pertinent to this study.

crumbling and decaying, has been interpreted as an oblique commentary on Protestant-Catholic relations. Vera Kreilkamp, in her book-length study of the Big House (1998), is forthright in her assertion of a correlation between the trope of the decaying Big House and the political instability of post-Union Ireland. She identifies a ‘preoccupation with a loss of position and prestige, with spiritual and physical decay, and with the guilt of an imperial class fast losing ground to Catholic political challenges’.⁹⁶ Kreilkamp includes Le Fanu’s *Uncle Silas* (1864), as an example of Big House literature, alongside Charles Robert Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), despite the fact that the novels were published forty years apart, and that Le Fanu’s novel is set in Northumberland and not the Irish countryside. In the introduction to the 1947 edition of *Uncle Silas*, Elizabeth Bowen revolutionised readings of the novel by presenting an Irish political angle that encouraged new perspectives of Irish fiction with international settings. Bowen’s hypothesis that *Uncle Silas* was ‘an Irish story transposed to an English setting’ led to a number of re-readings of the novel, but few have gone back to examine the story in its original form as the short story ‘Passage in the Secret History of an Irish Countess’, published in the *D.U.M.* in 1838.⁹⁷

Kreilkamp proposes that ‘The predominance of the ruined or abandoned house’ in Le Fanu’s and Maturin’s novels ‘suggests a growing confrontation with the insecure reality of postunion [*sic*] Protestant Ireland’,⁹⁸ and attributes the authors’ empathy with the ‘Irish gentry class, dispossessed and exiled by the Cromwellian intruders’ to their familial heritage as exiled

⁹⁶ Vera Kreilkamp, *The Anglo-Irish Novel and the Big House* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1998), p. 96. In a later chapter on ‘The Novel of the Big House’, Kreilkamp explains that the presence of the Big House in the Irish landscape has ‘long asserted the political and economic ascendancy of a remote colonial power structure’, operating as a visible reminder of Irish subordination and a ‘division’ not only in terms of wealth but of ‘political allegiance, ethnicity, religion and language’. Kreilkamp revisits much of the argument made in her earlier work and includes a small section on Le Fanu and Maturin under the title ‘Big house Gothic’. On the connections between the Gothic and the Big House novel, Kreilkamp cites the common themes of ‘doomed satanic landlords residing in their encumbered, decaying or strikingly archaic mansions’, which along with ‘motifs of a threatened inheritance’ and complicated legal entailment ‘suggest the anxiety of a gentry society confronting the illegitimate sources of its patrimony and its growing fears of dispossession’. Kreilkamp, ‘The Novel of the Big House’, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Irish Novel*, ed. by John Wilson Foster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 60-77 (p. 60 and pp. 68-69).

⁹⁷ Elizabeth Bowen, ‘Introduction’, *Uncle Silas: A Tale of Bartram-Haugh* (1864; London, Cresset, 1947), pp. 7-28 (p. 8). ‘Passage in the Secret History of an Irish Countess’ was later revised again as ‘The Murdered Cousin’ for inclusion in the 1851 collection, *Ghost Stories and Tales of Mystery*. Even including these earlier versions of *Uncle Silas*, there is still almost twenty years between Le Fanu’s story and Maturin’s novel, so to read them comparatively is somewhat problematic given the differing socio-political contexts. Much of the analysis concerned with Le Fanu and the Big House has depended upon *Uncle Silas* as the exclusive example, often ignoring evidence of similar tropes in his other work, although this is probably because so few have bothered to read Le Fanu’s earlier works. Aside from Kreilkamp, both Julian Moynahan and Victor Sage rely on the novel to form the basis for much of their respective arguments. R. F. Foster’s *Words Alone: Yeats and his Inheritances* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), also makes use of the Big House trope in *Uncle Silas* in his chapter on ‘Anglo-Irishry and the Uses of the Supernatural’ (pp. 91-127).

⁹⁸ Kreilkamp, p. 96.

French Huguenots.⁹⁹ In the seventeenth century Huguenots were settlers, analogous to the Cromwellian settlers of the same period, although they came to Ireland with different motives: one to escape religious persecution, the other to enact it. Although Kreilkamp clearly elicits Le Fanu's settler heritage the reason why he wrote about a crumbling Big House, she does not reflect upon how a legacy of colonial settlement contributed to articulations of Irish Protestant identity in the nineteenth century. Aside from Kreilkamp, both Gregory A. Schirmer (1984), and Jean Lozes (1991), have written of the Big House in Le Fanu's fiction as 'expressing the sense of guilt and insecurity that haunted his own class' but have stopped short of defining his work as explicitly colonial or postcolonial.¹⁰⁰ Schirmer's argument has a decidedly postcolonial approach, exploring Irish fiction of the nineteenth century – including Le Fanu's – as reflective of 'the rise in political consciousness' and the 'threat to the established order'.¹⁰¹ Schirmer identifies 'two distinct strands' of fiction in the nineteenth century: 'that of the Anglo-Irish Protestant and that of the native Irish Catholics'. He aligns Le Fanu with the former perspective, claiming that 'they offer two distinct ways of looking at Ireland', with the implicit assumption that these "ways of looking" do not intersect. Schirmer falls into the trap of binary cataloguing, as is often the case in surveys of Irish fiction. Approaching Le Fanu's work from a settler perspective allows for a more nuanced interpretation, exploring the ways in which 'the Anglo-Irish Protestant' and the 'native Irish Catholics' overlap and inform one another.¹⁰²

Jean Lozes tackles the same issue again using Le Fanu's fiction as an index of the fears of a declining colonial class. 'Le Fanu's Houses' discusses the Big House as a symbol of colonial authority that was in decline in the nineteenth century and, according to Lozes, played a major role both in Le Fanu's fiction and in his life. Lozes' analysis pivots on the "unhomely" houses of Le Fanu's fiction as extremely paradoxical places in which the occupants are

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 98. The main exodus of Huguenots from France occurred in 1685 after Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes (1598), which was a decree that gave Huguenots the right to practice their religion without persecution. Most Huguenots left France for England, although many subsequently settled in Ireland given the likelihood at the time that Cromwellian settlement would ensure Protestant supremacy.

¹⁰⁰ Gregory A. Schirmer, 'Tales from the Big House and Cabin: The Nineteenth Century', in *The Irish Short Story: A Critical History*, ed. by James F. Kilroy (New York: Twayne, 1984), pp. 21-44 (p. 39). See also Alison Milbank's *Daughters of the House: Modes of the Gothic in Victorian Fiction* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1992), which explores the idea of the Female Gothic and the domestic sphere in the sensation literature of Le Fanu, Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins, Charlotte Brontë, and more. Milbank, like Lozes and Kreilkamp, notes the importance of the house in Le Fanu's fiction, linking Le Fanu's literal displacement in terms of home ownership to a metaphorical sense of displacement due to his cultural inheritance of the waning Anglo-Irish Ascendancy. Milbank's analysis pivots on the assertion that Le Fanu uses threats to the house as a staple component of his fiction: threats in the form of invasion, destitution, and collapse, both actual and metaphysical. It is clear that Le Fanu consciously used the house as a Gothic trope and was very much aware of its eighteenth-century antecedents.

¹⁰¹ Schirmer, p. 21.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 22.

‘constantly threatened’ from within and without ‘by the unknown, madness, and death’, although in reality the study focuses entirely on only one house: Bartram-Haugh.¹⁰³ Lozes interprets the Big House as a ‘symbol of an authority which was more and more questionable’ while ‘The double and divided loyalty to England and Ireland was an unavoidable penalty for this class which experienced an inexorable decline in the nineteenth century’.¹⁰⁴ Here Lozes promotes a conception of the nineteenth-century Irish Protestant as “split” between English and Irish identities that was concretized in works by Julian Moynahan and Terry Eagleton. In his work on Anglo-Irish literature, Moynahan declared ‘the Anglo-Irish literary imagination is ineluctably haunted, cloven into duality by the cleavage in Irish society between settlers and natives’.¹⁰⁵ Moynahan identifies the psychological, cultural, and most importantly, sectarian split between Irish Protestants and Catholics in the nineteenth century, and this split, he asserts, is evidenced in the Gothic literature of the ruling minority. Similarly, Terry Eagleton’s influential work *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger* also recognised Irish Protestant Gothic literature as a distinctive sub-genre, asserting that the ‘Protestant Gothic might be dubbed the political unconscious of Anglo-Irish society, the place where its fears and fantasies most definitely emerge’.¹⁰⁶ Both scholars consider Gothic literature to be ‘a specifically protestant [sic] phenomenon’ in the context of eighteenth and nineteenth-century Ireland, as ‘Gothic is the nightmare of the besieged and reviled [...] of a minority marooned within a largely hostile people to whom they are socially, religiously and ethnically alien’.¹⁰⁷ Though Eagleton and Moynahan’s early assertions have since been tempered and refined by succeeding scholars, the connections between Irish Gothic writing and colonialism in the nineteenth century has remained intact, particularly the view that Irish Protestants were isolated and insulated from their Catholic countrymen.

¹⁰³ Jean Lozes, ‘Le Fanu’s Houses’, in *The Big House in Ireland: Reality and Representation*, ed. by Jacqueline Genet (Savage, Maryland: Barnes and Noble, 1991), pp. 103-09 (p. 103). Bartram-Haugh is the name of Silas Ruthyn’s house in *Uncle Silas*.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

¹⁰⁵ Julian Moynahan, *Anglo-Irish: The Literary Imagination in a Hyphenated Culture* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 116.

¹⁰⁶ Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger* (London: Verso, 1995), p. 187.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 188-89.

Le Fanu's connection to Gothic writing has remained a common area of inquiry,¹⁰⁸ although some have questioned his classification as a Gothic writer.¹⁰⁹ In an examination of British horror fiction (1988) Victor Sage argues that horror is inescapably Protestant as it is informed and inflected by the rhetoric of anti-Catholicism, as 'a form of "theological uncertainty", an anxiety which is recognisable at many different levels of consciousness'.¹¹⁰ Sage's book-length study, *Le Fanu's Gothic: Rhetoric of Darkness* (2004), adopts a similar position to his earlier work in that he posits a "rhetoric" of Gothic at work in Le Fanu's fiction, one that foregrounds epistemological uncertainties and is informed primarily by Le Fanu's religion. While McCormack's biography placed Le Fanu's writing in the context of his personal life, and within the historical context of life in Victorian Ireland, Sage was the first to approach Le Fanu with such a theoretical focus, providing an in-depth analysis of the narrative techniques, framing devices, and Gothic rhetoric at work in Le Fanu's fiction. Sage argues that 'Le Fanu's texts are acutely, but deceptively, aware of the act of narration itself, poised in a space between written and spoken language, which from the outset of his career employ their own poetics of interruption and alienation'.¹¹¹ Sage identifies what he terms 'the habit of epistemological doubt' in Le Fanu's work, and 'the corresponding narrative of fragmentation which is the symptom of a testing struggle between doubt and faith in the Anglican Protestant tradition'.¹¹² Sage connects what he considers to be Le Fanu's personal crisis of faith with a

¹⁰⁸ In the early twentieth century, Le Fanu was included in two scholarly works on Gothic fiction: *Wilkie Collins, Le Fanu, and Others* by S. M. Ellis (London: Constable & Co., 1931), and *The Supernatural in Fiction* by Peter Penzoldt (New York: Humanities Press, 1965). Other critical works of the mid-to-late twentieth century include V. S. Pritchett's 'An Irish Ghost' in *The Living Novel and Other Appreciations* (New York: Random House, 1964), pp. 121-27, Julia Briggs's *Night Visitors: The Rise and Fall of the English Ghost Story* (London: Faber, 1977), and Jack Sullivan's *Elegant Nightmares: The English Ghost Story from Le Fanu to Blackwood* (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1978), all important interventions supporting the critical appraisal of Le Fanu's work.

¹⁰⁹ Both W. J. McCormack in *Dissolute Characters: Irish Literary History through Balzac, Sheridan Le Fanu, Yeats and Bowen* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), and James H. Murphy in *Irish Novelists and the Victorian Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), have challenged the conception of Le Fanu's fiction as part of an Irish Gothic "tradition", McCormack arguing against the existence of such a tradition at all, and Murphy arguing that Le Fanu's fiction is better understood as sensation fiction. I would argue that Le Fanu's fiction encompasses both Gothic and sensationalist elements.

¹¹⁰ Victor Sage, *Horror Fiction in the Protestant Tradition* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1988), p. xvii.

¹¹¹ Victor Sage, *Le Fanu's Gothic: The Rhetoric of Darkness* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), p. 2.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 112. James Walton in his book *Vision and Vacancy: The Fictions of J.S. Le Fanu* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2007), refers to Le Fanu's epistemological uncertainty as a "vacancy", which propelled Le Fanu to seek solace in other theological systems, namely, spiritualism and Swedenborgianism. Walton argues that Le Fanu's Gothic is inspired by an existential fear as a result of a lack of spiritual authority. Walton traces this fear of the void through literary and philosophical influences rather than biographical ones, insisting that Le Fanu is ultimately sceptical about the comforts afforded by any spiritual systems. Similarly, Alison Milbank argues that Le Fanu inherited a nihilistic outlook that was wrought by his Huguenot identity. The Gothic, Milbank argues, allowed Le Fanu to express a bleak outlook, which is particularly evidenced by his interest in, and implementation of, Swedenborgianism in his fiction, but that he overcomes this nihilism with his Anglican faith. Milbank, 'Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu: Gothic Grotesque and the Huguenot Inheritance', in *A Companion to Irish Literature*, ed. by Julia M. Wright (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp. 362-76.

cultural crisis of faith experienced by post-Union Irish Protestants, in line with arguments made by Eagleton and Moynahan in the 1990s. Sage proposes that ‘we need to see the Gothic in this period [mid 1800s] as a cultural response, rather than a bounded genre’, with Le Fanu’s writing self-consciously formulating part of this cultural response.¹¹³ In an earlier chapter on Irish Gothic (2000), Sage summarises the features of Le Fanu’s Gothic:

Exhausted families, lineages, estates, their bankrupt members driven to suicide – which is frequently the “rational” (written, evidentiary) explanation of the Faustian bargain offered as an alternative to the “superstitious” (oral, demotic) account – the past (often the seventeenth century) mercilessly and violently encroaching on the present, the cultural and psychological “other” located deep within the self – these are the patterns of revenancy in Le Fanu’s shorter fictions.¹¹⁴

These recurring ‘patterns of revenancy’ evident in Le Fanu’s work are issues peculiar to Protestant Gothic writing: lineage, legal entail, bankruptcy, and encumbered estates.¹¹⁵ In essence, across all of his work on this subject, Sage – like Moynahan and Eagleton – suggests that Irish Protestants are drawn to the Gothic as it is a mode particularly suited to their cultural instability. In a later introduction to *Uncle Silas* (2006), Sage refers to the ‘the Janus-like aspect of their cultural provenance’, and contends that Le Fanu as ‘Protestant Anglo-Irish’ had ‘two audiences in mind: the Irish and the British’ and furthermore, ‘In this, he was part of a tradition’.¹¹⁶ Sage evokes the settler mindset in all but name, and like many others who trace a

¹¹³ Sage, *Le Fanu’s Gothic*, p. 5. Sage’s study incorporates a considerable amount of Le Fanu’s fiction, from early short stories to later novels, offering a thematic analysis and often contextualising the work within a historical and biographical framework. While Sage’s methodology is useful in highlighting Le Fanu’s stylistic continuity and recurrent, overarching themes, therein lies its weakness also. Sage tends to choose certain texts to fit his themes, overlooking and omitting those that do not neatly fit the criteria. While thematic patterns no doubt exist, and Le Fanu was a very formulaic writer in many respects, there nevertheless exists a marked difference between Le Fanu’s early and later fiction, his Irish-set and English-set fiction, and even between his overt supernatural tales and those more subtly supernatural (but no less Gothic), that Sage fails to identify, or at least make due reference to.

¹¹⁴ Sage, ‘Irish Gothic: C. R. Maturin and J. S. Le Fanu’, in *A Companion to the Gothic*, ed. by David Punter (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 2000), pp. 135-47 (p. 144).

¹¹⁵ Colin Graham, in a chapter on Irish colonial texts, remarks upon the over-textualization of Irish writing in the nineteenth century which he defines as a Freudian fetishization of text. Graham signals the ‘over-enforcement of the written and the printed in Irish writing in the nineteenth century’, by which he means the tendency of nineteenth century fictional narratives to depend upon written documents as plot catalysts, such as letters, wills and other legal documents. Graham cites *Uncle Silas* and ‘The Watcher’ (1847) as examples. In summary, Graham proposes that the diffuse editorial/textualized mode enacted by Irish writers (particularly Le Fanu) during the nineteenth century is a way for writers to acknowledge the absence of the Other, without confronting it overtly. Graham upholds the idea that Irish use of the Gothic is fundamentally different to Gothic writing elsewhere and as such, the Gothic should be understood within specific cultural and historic contexts, with, in this instance, the Irish colonial context having a profound influence on Le Fanu’s writing. Graham, ‘A Diseased Propensity: Fetish and Liminality in the Irish “Colonial” Text’, in *Irish and Postcolonial Writing: History, Theory, Practice*, ed. by Glenn Hooper and Colin Graham (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 32-48 (p. 33).

¹¹⁶ ed. Victor Sage, p. ix.

parallel argument, points to Le Fanu's Protestantism rather than his colonialism as the source of doubt, uncertainty, and a sense of split identity.

In his two studies of Irish literary history of the nineteenth century, R. F. Foster cautions against the assumption made by the likes of Kreilkamp, Eagleton, and Moynahan that Irish Protestant Gothic articulates Ascendancy (colonial), guilt, warning that 'it is worth asking how self-consciously guilty and insecure the mid-nineteenth century Protestant Ascendancy actually were [...] We may be more conscious of the Ascendancy's need to feel guilty than they were'.¹¹⁷ However, Foster concedes that 'Christian self-scrutiny, theological uncertainties, doctrinal disputes, declining congregations, educational challenges all beset the nineteenth century Church of Ireland', not to mention the steady erosion of political authority in the face of nascent Catholic influence.¹¹⁸ So while any claim that there is a direct correlation between fictional crumbling Big Houses and class consciousness and colonial 'guilt' over-simplifies interpretation, there is a connection to be made between the rise in Gothic literature written by Irish Protestants and the socio-political instability that affected Irish Protestants post-Union. Foster also places the threat to the Big House about a century later than Kreilkamp, following the Land Wars of the 1880s rather than the absenteeism of the 1790s. Importantly, Foster addresses the question of national identity of the Protestant Ascendancy – the "Anglo-Irish" – those who are characteristically understood as "the expatriate English". He points out that 'the Anglo-Irish were very far from seeing themselves as belonging to England', and highlights that in fact, their 'impulse to belong' to Ireland manifested in many forms, including a sustained interest in 'antiquarianism, archaeology, topography, and history', as well as 'a proprietorial interest in fairies'.¹¹⁹ Extending from Foster's argument, this thesis proposes that by the nineteenth century Irish Protestants considered themselves 'the whole people of Ireland', but where an uncertainty emerged was in competing claims of Irishness by the Catholic Irish which excluded Irish Protestant claims to the same identity.¹²⁰ The increasingly isolated political situation of Irish Protestants initiated by the Act of Union continued to deteriorate over the course of Le Fanu's lifetime, culminating in the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869.

¹¹⁷ R. F. Foster, *Words Alone: Yeats and his Inheritances* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 112. See also Foster's *Paddy and Mr Punch: Connections in Irish History and English History* (London: Allen Lane/Penguin, 1993).

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

¹²⁰ Jonathan Swift addressed the fourth pamphlet of *The Drapier's Letters* (1724-25) "To the whole people of Ireland". Swift, *Fraud Detected: or, The Hibernian Patriot. Containing, All The Drapier's Letters to the People of Ireland, To which are Added, Prometheus. A Poem. Also A New Poem to the Drapier* (Dublin: George Faulkner, 1725). See also, *Drapier's Letters*, ed. by Herbert Davis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935).

The following chapters will examine Le Fanu's short fiction as an example of settler writing, arguing that his work can be understood as part of a larger reawakening of the "settler perspective" in the first decades of the nineteenth century, which then began to dissipate towards the end of the 1860s. Le Fanu's fiction set in Ireland was part of a surge of supernatural, historical, and antiquarian writing by Irish Protestants in the post-Union period, influenced in part by European (especially German) interest in folklore, antiquarian, and Gothic themes and objects, but also motivated by the need to crystalize Irish Protestant identity. Each chapter discusses Le Fanu's short stories set in Ireland, moving chronologically from Le Fanu's earliest work set in rural Limerick, to the Dublin-based stories of the 1840s and 1850s, finally moving on to the stories he wrote towards the end of his life which sees a return to the same Limerick setting. The rationale for consideration of only those short stories with an Irish setting is based on the fact that in writing these stories, Le Fanu produced his most uncorrupted work. His early writing patterns evidence his sustained interest in writing Irish historical fiction with an Irish setting, a subject he was later forced to drop. Le Fanu also excelled in writing short stories as opposed to novels, although again he was required to abandon this pursuit about midway through his career. Le Fanu later returned to writing short stories towards the end of his life, further indicating that the short story was his preferred form. Frank O'Connor's discussion of the short story (1962) remains a persuasive treatise on the association of the short story with fractured societies, particularly those exposed to colonialism.¹²¹ Le Fanu's short stories – many of which formed the basis for his later novels – reveal his interest in telling the settler story. He returns repeatedly to the moment of New English settlement in Ireland, and to the years before the Act of Union, two pivotal moments in Irish colonial history. Julie Anne Stevens remarks that 'Because of its brevity, the short story relies as much on what is omitted as it does on what is included', and although Le Fanu never directly addresses Ireland's colonial situation, a close examination of his stories reveal components of settler writing.¹²²

Chapter One will begin by situating Le Fanu within the socio-political contexts of Ireland following the Act of Union in 1801. The chapter will discuss in depth the emergence of the *Dublin University Magazine* as an agent of collective imagining, and as a seminal influence on Le Fanu's writing. The magazine began as a platform for emergent Irish Protestant writers to showcase their work to a domestic audience in an attempt to stem the flow of talent

¹²¹ Frank O'Connor, 'The Lonely Voice', *Short Story Theories*, ed. by Charles E. May (Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1962; 1976), pp. 83-93.

¹²² Julie Anne Stevens, 'Introduction', *The Ghost Story from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century: A Ghostly Genre*, ed. by Helen Conrad O'Briain and Julie Anne Stevens (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010), pp. 11-15 (p. 12).

to the London literary circuit, while the regular appearance of self-reflexive essays expose the ideological drive to define an Irish Protestant canon. An incisive examination of the magazine is crucial to understanding the emergence of a settler identity during this period, and is also necessary in consideration of Le Fanu's fiction overall.

Chapter Two examines Le Fanu's earliest writing, twelve short works published between 1838 and 1840 in the *D.U.M.* These stories are set, for the most part, in rural Limerick, and exhibit a preoccupation with Irish colonial history. The Purcell stories, which were later posthumously collected as *The Purcell Papers* (1880), comprise some of Le Fanu's least-studied fiction, despite the fact that many are blueprints for his later novels. The stories are narrated by a Catholic priest, Father Purcell, whose ecclesiastic wanderings in the Irish countryside during the eighteenth century form the "basis" for these tales. Sombre stories of ruined Old English landlords are matched by frivolous tableaux of peasant life in rural Ireland, and all are embedded in Ireland's colonial history. Le Fanu's tendency to return to themes of history and the exploration of split identities is indicative of the settler compulsion to do likewise, while his Jacobite stories evidence an insecurity surrounding the New English takeover. Le Fanu's fascination with returning to key moments in Ireland's colonial history, such as the Cromwellian conquest and the Williamite-Jacobite Wars, serves as a starting point for his version of 'the changing history of the settler' in Ireland. By tracing the history of nineteenth-century Irish Protestants back to their seventeenth-century origins, Le Fanu contributed to the formation of an Irish Protestant identity in the post-Union period.¹²³ Much of his fiction (though especially evident in the Purcell stories), can be seen as an attempt to inscribe Irish Protestant culture into the fabric of Irish history, part of the settler process of transforming a historical tie into a natural one, as described by Veracini.¹²⁴

Chapter Three examines the next group of stories to feature an Irish setting, focussing on the fiction Le Fanu produced between 1847 and 1862. All the stories of this period feature Dublin or Chapelizod as the setting, as Le Fanu moves away from the Limerick stories that dominated his early writing. These stories are considered within the context of Le Fanu's early career and family life since moving to Dublin, as well as the wider socio-political upheaval of the 1840s. This includes the impact of the Great Famine (1845-52) and its aftermath, the Young Ireland rebellion of 1848, and the continued advancement of Catholic nationalism towards mid-century. The chapter covers six short stories set in the Dublin area and published while Le Fanu

¹²³ McLoughlin, p. 97.

¹²⁴ Veracini, 'The Settler Colonial Situation', pp. 105-06.

was resident in the city. Additionally, the chapter considers Le Fanu's figuration of Dublin in the 1790s, a city of Empire that was subsequently transformed after the closure of the Irish Parliament rendered the city a veritable ghost-town. Advancing from instances of supernatural encounter in the Purcell stories, the Dublin stories see a change in the use of historical ghosts and haunted houses.

Chapter Four examines five stories written towards the end of Le Fanu's life when, following a prolonged break, he returned to writing about rural Limerick. One story written in 1861 is a standalone tale concerning the complicated colonial legacy of a dispossessed Jacobite family, reminiscent of Le Fanu's earliest fiction. The remaining four stories were published between 1870 and 1872 but not, as was usual, in the *Dublin University Magazine*. Instead they appeared in Charles Dickens's popular weekly magazine, *All the Year Round*, which saw Le Fanu writing stories with an Irish subject matter for an English audience, a very significant change from his earlier work. The chapter considers the changing trends in popular readership that saw a resurgence in the demand for fairy tales, and will consider Le Fanu's situation towards the end of his career and his life, following his sale of the *D.U.M.* and in the wake of the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland. The chapter assesses the changing attitude in Le Fanu's work following the end of his relationship with *D.U.M.* Finally, the conclusion will reflect on the central arguments of the thesis and suggest possible new directions for further study.

CHAPTER ONE

Reading the Irish Protestant Settler: The Emergence of the *Dublin University Magazine*

Examination of Le Fanu's connection to the *Dublin University Magazine* has been largely confined to his period as editor between 1861 and 1869. However, Le Fanu's relationship with one of the most successful periodicals of the nineteenth century spanned three decades and played a formative role in defining his writing and his life. In the three extended studies of the *D.U.M.*, John P. McBride, Michael Sadleir, and Wayne E. Hall invariably agree that along with Isaac Butt and Charles Lever, Le Fanu was one of the magazine's most successful editors in terms of commercial popularity and the integrity of the literary content (although Sadleir is quite critical of Lever's reign).¹ The magazine's role in shaping Le Fanu's fiction, as well as its role in shaping Irish Protestant culture, is central to understanding the emergence of settler identity in the post-Union period. The political and cultural climate surrounding the commencement of the *D.U.M.* in 1833 conditioned the magazine's founding ideology. The *D.U.M.* functioned as an agent of collective imagining for Irish Protestants in the post-Union period and Le Fanu's involvement with the magazine over the course of his working life – and not just the nine years he was editor – is a significant factor in any consideration of his work. Gaining insight to the rationale behind the *D.U.M.* and its founding editors and contributors is imperative to understanding the formation of settler identity in the nineteenth century. In order to figure Le Fanu's fiction as a form of settler writing, it is necessary to examine the cultural and material conditions of Ireland leading up to the publication of his first stories in 1838. This chapter situates Le Fanu biographically within the context of Ireland in the post-Union period, at a time when widespread agrarian unrest began to manifest as new sectarian forms of nationalism. Moreover, this chapter moves to consider the *D.U.M.* as an “imagined community”, one that defined itself in terms of an Irish Protestant settler nationalism.

¹ See Michael Sadleir, *Dublin University Magazine* (Dublin: Bibliographical Society of Ireland, 1938), p. 78 and Wayne E. Hall, *Dialogues in the Margin: A Study of the Dublin University Magazine* (Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe Ltd, 2000), p. 215. See also John P. McBride, ‘The Dublin University Magazine: Cultural Nationality and Tory Ideology in an Irish Literary and Political Journal 1833-1852’, (unpublished doctoral thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1987) and Wayne E. Hall, *Dialogues in the Margin: A Study of the Dublin University Magazine* (Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe Ltd, 2000).

Post-Union Ireland: A State of Unrest

The socio-political conditions of the early decades of the nineteenth century are central to understanding the motivation behind the establishment of the *Dublin University Magazine*. Several internal and external factors came together to contribute to a period of civil unrest in Ireland in the half-century between the Act of Union in 1801 and the beginning of the Great Famine in 1845. While the American Revolution in 1775 and the French Revolution in 1789 heralded a seismic shift in the traditional autocratic systems of government, closer to home the rebellion of 1798 proved to be the final provocation needed to enact a political union between Great Britain and Ireland with a view to ensuring future stability. The gradual retraction of the Penal Laws over the course of the eighteenth century culminated in the promise of Catholic relief as part of the Union deal.² However, by 1823, when the Catholic Association was founded by Daniel O’Connell, emancipation was still a mere political chimera. Historian Anne Kane illustrates the unprecedented socio-political impact made by O’Connell and the Emancipation movement: ‘the Emancipation movement is recognized as the first mass mobilization in the modern era’, its major successes being that ‘it united Irish Catholics across class and political lines [...] and developed a repertoire of collective action’.³ Despite O’Connell’s advocacy for parliamentary rather than physical agitation and his refusal ‘to participate in the antithesis [sic] struggle due to its growing violence’, the foundations of the Emancipation movement in the decade before the Tithe War (c. 1831-38) contributed to ‘an emerging Irish political culture’ and prefigured ‘the coexistence of violent and constitutional methods of agitation’ that would persist to the end of the twentieth century.⁴ Violent methods of agitation were already a common occurrence in rural Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth

² Catholic Relief Acts were granted as part of the constitution of 1782, as well as further relief acts in 1792 and 1793. According to Eamon O’Flaherty, ‘The provision of an oath of loyalty designed for Catholics in 1774 and the removal of the most restrictive parts of the laws preventing Catholics from acquiring landed property in 1778 were complemented by the removal, in 1782, of most of the laws restricting Catholic worship, education and the clergy’. O’Flaherty further observes that ‘Irish perspectives on the place of Catholics in the state and on the extent of relief were very different from the British government’s viewpoint’, p. 33. Eamon O’Flaherty, ‘Ecclesiastical Politics and the Dismantling of the Penal Laws in Ireland, 1774-82’, *Irish Historical Studies*, 26.101 (1988), 33-50 (p. 33). Thomas Bartlett notes that ‘by 1760 something called the Catholic question – i.e. the matter of the re-admission of full civil, religious and political equality of Irish Catholics – had arrived on the agenda of both Irish and Anglo-Irish politics; and from then on there was to be nothing but the Catholic question’, p. 163. In the wake of rebellion and pushing the Union agenda, British Prime Minister William Pitt maintained that ‘only in a united Parliament’ could the Catholic question ‘be solved with benefit to Irish Catholics and without danger to Irish Protestants’. Thomas Bartlett, *Ireland: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 228. See also Padhraig Higgins, ‘Matthew Carey, Catholic Identity, and the Penal Laws’, *Éire-Ireland*, 49.3-4 (2014), 176-200. For chronology of significant dates in Irish history see the Appendix to this thesis, pp. 267-69.

³ Anne Kane, *Constructing Irish National Identity: Discourse and Ritual During the Land War, 1879-1882* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 33.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 35.

centuries, although they were more sporadic and less centrally organised than the political movements of the post-Union period. Tom Garvin points out that despite the historical focus on O'Connell there existed in Ireland 'an older, more violent and conspiratorial tradition, derived from eighteenth-century precedents'.⁵ Jacobitism, Defenderism, Ribbonism, and Whiteboyism were just some of the regional antecedents to the later widespread revolutionary secret societies such as the United Irishmen, the Fenians, and the Irish Republican Brotherhood. Garvin notes that 'During the century before the Famine, Irish society was shaken repeatedly by outbreaks of agrarian and sectarian violence in the countryside', of which 1798 was 'in a sense, only the largest and most politicized of these explosions'.⁶

However, this is not to suggest that agrarian movements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were cohesive, nationwide, politically motivated organisations, but merely that eighteenth-century movements laid the foundations for the later, larger organisations to follow. Patrick J. O'Connor chronicles the numerous social and political disturbances of County Limerick during the 1830s, citing 'the Whiteboy movement of the 1760s' as one of the earliest documented disturbances, followed by the Rockite movement in the 1820s, 'which was spawned out of the harsh adjustments to the post 1815 depression', leading to further agitation against tithes in the 1830s.⁷ Although many of these groups were regional and specific to local grievances – typically taxation or land management – and were not necessarily sectarian, their local origins are indicative of a wider symbolic feeling of unrest. S. J. Connolly argues that initially, Whiteboyism was a response to 'the enclosure of common lands and the extension of pasture at the expense of small scale tillage. Its targets included not just the Protestant landlord class but also Catholics of property [...] and even, in the 1780s, the Catholic clergy'.⁸ However mass agitation continued to mature, and as James S. Donnelly Jr points out, a 'localist interpretation' of agrarian grievance as purely economically motivated is misleading, as the Rockite movement of the 1820s 'involved a sustained outburst of agrarian violence greater than any that had previously occurred'.⁹ Donnelly cites the widespread circulation of public

⁵ Tom Garvin, 'Defenders, Ribbonmen and Others: Underground Political Networks in Pre-Famine Ireland', *Past & Present*, 96 (1982), 133-55 (p. 133).

⁶ Garvin, p. 133. See also *Secret Societies in Ireland*, ed. by T. Desmond Williams (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1973).

⁷ Patrick J. O'Connor, 'The Maturation of Town and Village Life in County Limerick 1700-1900', in *Common Ground: Essays on the Historical Geography of Ireland*, ed. by William J. Smyth and Kevin Whelan (Cork: Cork University Press, 1988), pp. 149-72 (p. 153).

⁸ S. J. Connolly, 'Jacobites, Whiteboys and Republicans: Varieties of Disaffection in Eighteenth-Century Ireland', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 18 (2003), 63-79 (p. 73). Due to numerous works by Connolly, subsequent references will include an abbreviated title.

⁹ James S. Donnelly Jr, 'Captain Rock: Ideology and Organization in the Irish Agrarian Rebellion of 1821-24', *Éire-Ireland*, 42.3 (2007), 60-103 (p. 62 and p.60).

‘proclamations, notices, and threatening letters’ written primarily in English, ‘the language of public discourse’, as evidence of the Rockites’ national agenda.¹⁰ Further, he notes the ‘frequent expressions of nationalistic and anti-English sentiment’ in the Rockite notices, often ‘Providing the Rockites with justification or rationalization for their readiness to use extreme violence were deeply held convictions about oppression [...] commonly rooted in a keen sense of the historic political wrongs inflicted on Ireland’.¹¹ What may have begun as a local articulation of economic grievances, had developed a nationwide following by the 1820s and adopted a strong sectarian hue. O’Connor cites the ‘potent mix of millenarian, sectarian and agrarian meanings’ as well as ‘a great deal of anti-Protestant feeling engendered at this time of crisis’. Such “anti-Protestant”, “anti-English” feeling, he points out, was directed at ‘sustainers of oppression such as parson, proctor yeoman, soldier and policeman’.¹²

In conjunction with the push for Catholic emancipation in Ireland, Connolly (in an earlier work), notes that in the early-to-mid-nineteenth century there was ‘throughout most of Western Europe, a period of religious revival’. Connolly sees this revival primarily as ‘a response to conflict and insecurity’, because ‘in an age of political upheaval and unprecedented economic change, men and women of all social classes found in religion a symbol of identity, a guarantee of stability, or a consolation in the face of harsh reality’.¹³ Connolly further remarks that in many ways, the rebellion of 1798 ‘assumed the character of a religious civil war’.¹⁴ The consolidation within the Church of Ireland (which became the established church as part of the Act of Union), during what Donald Akenson has termed ‘The Era of Graceful Reform’ between 1800 and 1830 was counterbalanced by a similar movement within the Catholic Church.¹⁵ Akenson explains that in the post-Union years, Catholics ‘achieved cohesion as a religious and political group. As their identity crystalized, the Roman Catholics mobilized their resources not only to achieve their own political rights but to undercut the privileged position of the Established Church’.¹⁶ What began as regional class grievances amid a social revolution

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 63.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 65.

¹² O’Connor, pp. 153-54.

¹³ S. J. Connolly, *Religion and Society in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1985), p. 7.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁵ Donald Harmon Akenson, *The Church of Ireland: Ecclesiastical Reform and Revolution, 1800-1885* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971), p. 71.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 142. This is not to suggest that Protestant political identity did not develop in the same manner during the same period. The ultra-Protestant society, the Orange Order, was founded in 1795, while R. F. Foster signals the development of “a distinctly Protestant political culture”, informed by both the political and religious climate (including Evangelicalism), that ‘contained its own conflicts between Whiggish Ascendancy values and the openly sectarian attitudes of the urban bourgeoisie’. Moreover, as Catholic agitation and mass mobilisation took place mostly in the rural domain, ‘Popular Protestantism became a coherent force in urban politics’. R. F. Foster, *Modern Ireland: 1600-1972* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), p. 302, quoting Henry Cooke (1841).

sweeping Europe in the late eighteenth century, eventually emerged as a sectarian conflict in Ireland in the nineteenth century. This was primarily because the majority of the rural poor and landless classes, as well as the emerging middle class of “strong farmers”, also happened to be Catholic. The Catholic Church seized the opportunity of class-based disaffection to consolidate its power, ‘for in having to fight for emancipation, the Roman Catholics achieved a political identity and momentum that was inevitably turned upon the Church of Ireland once the more pressing issue of emancipation was settled’.¹⁷ This momentum continued to gain traction in the post-Famine period.

The Le Fanu family moved to Limerick at a time when the Church of Ireland was attempting to re-establish itself in rural Ireland. This move was instigated by the reinstatement of rural Deans (e.g. Thomas Le Fanu), whose ‘duty it was to help coordinate religious policy and who could aid the bishop in making certain the level of parochial performance was satisfactory’.¹⁸ In other words, by way of cementing their status as the established church in the post-Union period, the Church of Ireland required more feet on the ground, so to speak. During this time, the Church of Ireland’s main revenue stream was derived from land, chiefly claimed in the form of tithes: a taxation on agricultural produce. Akenson explains that although the tithe tax was not particularly economically onerous, ‘tithes were certain to be an unpopular tax because the social benefits of the tithe taxation were far from obvious to the bulk of the population’.¹⁹ This was particularly so for those who actually paid it, the Catholic labourers, cottiers, and farmers who comprised the pre-Famine rural classes, many of whom were landless though entirely dependent upon working the land.²⁰ The Catholic peasantry paid a tax to support what they considered an interloping church ‘which most Irishmen believed to be heretical’.²¹ Although formally the historical parameters of the Tithe War are specified as

¹⁷ Akenson, p. 144.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 132.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 88.

²⁰ See Caoimhín Ó Danachair, ‘Cottier and Landlord in Pre-Famine Ireland’, *Béalóideas*, 48/49 (1980/1981), 154-65. Ó Danachair explains that ‘The most prevalent meaning of the term “cottier” is that of a labourer holding a cabin, either with or without land, as it may happen (but commonly from a quarter to three acres are attached), from a farmer or other occupier, for whom he is bound to work’, p. 154, quoting from ‘Reports of the Commissioners for inquiring into the Condition of the Poorer Classes in Ireland’, *Reports from Commissioners 1836*, pp. xxx-xxxiv. Ó Danachair continues, ‘In the 1820s and 1830s, in contrast, say, to the 1770s and 1780s there was a surplus of agricultural labourers, and many of them, no longer having the opportunity to work out their rent in labour for their farmer-landlords, speculated in potato growing in the manner known as “conacre” – taking a portion of land from the farmer for a year, growing a crop [...] in the hope of selling this crop so favourably as to be able to pay the rent and live off the profit [...] The essential feature of this system was that the labourer was, in fact, paid the wages of his labour not in money but in land’, p. 156.

²¹ Akenson, p. 88. I use the term “peasantry” – as the term employed by writers at the time – to denote the collective lower classes of Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as those rural classes and pre-industrial labourers who depended upon the land for a living. The term “peasantry” is not specific to a religious denomination, as both Catholics and Protestants could be found at all levels of Irish society, but overall, much

1831-38, tithes had been a bone of contention intermittently since the mid-eighteenth century, with the issue being revived with a vengeance in Limerick in the 1820s and throughout the 1830s. R. F. Foster considers the acceleration of agrarian violence in the 1830s as tantamount ‘to episodic warfare over the payment of Church tithes’,²² while O’Connor describes the ‘tithe affray at Askeaton and its chilling aftermath at Rathkeale’, two towns west of Limerick city, as some of ‘The most dramatic events’ of the period, occurring at a time when ‘the power of mass mobilisation was well exemplified’.²³ In particular, ‘Violence, in the cases of agrarian collective action and sectarianism, maintained a high profile in Limerick towns and villages’, with Abington, among others, cited by O’Connor as an ‘arena for conflict’.²⁴ While at Abington, Le Fanu was witness to violent faction fighting and tithe agitation first-hand. W. J. McCormack elucidates the local tensions provoked by the Tithe War and draws comparisons between the family’s personal experiences in Limerick and the literature Le Fanu produced both during and after that period. McCormack espies ‘a concurrence of social decline and religious questionings’ between family and fiction, remarking that like the family, ‘the doubting heroes of the fiction are the masters of disgraced houses, physically isolated and morally suspect’, citing *The Purcell Papers* (1880) and *Uncle Silas* (1864) as examples.²⁵ Furthermore, McCormack notes the recurrence of the isolated Big House ‘inexplicably disturbed by incidents of meaningless violence’, as inspired by Le Fanu’s experiences in the isolated glebe house at Abington.

of the peasant class was Catholic. From the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries onward, Ireland’s social demography was viewed as a two-tier system of landlord and peasant, though over time this simplified conception of class strata was re-evaluated and, as Connolly points out, by the eighteenth century the peasant class was a ‘multi-tiered hierarchy’ in itself that constituted “the poor”, labourers, cottiers, tenant farmers, strong farmers, and graziers, as differentiated from the professional middle class and the landed class. Connolly, “‘Ag Déanamh Commanding’: Elite Responses to Popular Culture, 1660-1850”, p. 1. In his study of landholding and settlement in Ireland, T. Hughes Jones classifies class distinctions based on property valuations, for example, “the poor” consisted of those families ‘who, in 1850, occupied dwellinghouses [sic] which were valued at less than £1’, and so forth up the scale. Hughes Jones, *Landholding, Society and Settlement in Nineteenth Century Ireland: A Historical Geographer’s Perspective* (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2010), p. 67. Pádraig Lenihan explains that the class situation at the beginning versus the end of the eighteenth century was quite different: ‘The late eighteenth-century economic boom brought a much different two-class system in the countryside. Middlemen declined, while some peasants grew more prosperous and emerged as the strong farmer class who would ultimately inherit the earth. Other peasants remained at, or sank to, the level of landless labourer or cottier’. Lenihan, *Consolidating Conquest: Ireland, 1603-1727* (Essex, England: Pearson Education Limited, 2008), p. 235.

²² R. F. Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600-1972* (London: Penguin Books, 1989), p. 292.

²³ Askeaton and Rathkeale are two towns 6 miles apart from one another and approximately 12 miles west of Limerick city. They are roughly 25 miles from Abington. O’Connor details a major conflict that occurred in both towns during the Tithe War. O’Connor, pp. 154-55.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ W. J. McCormack, *Sheridan Le Fanu and Victorian Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 47. Hereafter cited as *Sheridan Le Fanu*.

Perhaps the most important primary biographical resource for Le Fanu is his brother William's memoir, *Seventy Years of Irish Life* (1893). The first five chapters of William's memoir provide significant detail about the family's life in Limerick. William recounts that 'From the year 1826-1831 we lived on most friendly terms with the peasantry. They appeared to be devoted to us [...] But in 1831 all this was suddenly and sadly changed when the tithe war [...] came upon us'.²⁶ Thereafter, he claims, 'our friendly relations with the priests and people ceased'. William's account of the tithe war has a palpable tone of disillusionment throughout; he evidently viewed the Anglican church – and his family's role within it – as comparable to that of charitable missionaries whose efforts are spurned by an ungrateful public: 'It is hard now to realize the suddenness with which kindness and good-will were changed to insult and hate'.²⁷ It is clear that William considered the turning of public opinion in Limerick to be, in part, a personal affront. The various incidents of violence and deception he cites are either first-hand experiences or have immediate personal connections. On one occasion, William and Joseph's older sister Catherine 'who till a few months before had been idolized by the people for her goodness to them and untiring work amongst them, thought that if she and two girls, cousins [...] drove out by themselves, they would not be molested, especially as she had been in very delicate health'. However, Catherine and her cousins are 'received with the usual hooting', and are then physically attacked, 'pelted with mud and stone. One of the girls had a front tooth broken and they were glad to get home without further injury, and never again ventured to go out without protection'.²⁸

In another incident, William himself is victim to a similar attack while out distributing 'A number of circulars' on behalf of the Dean: 'My father had been persuaded by some friends to try whether offering a large abatement [of tithes], and giving time, might induce some of the farmers to pay at least some part of the tithes due'.²⁹ While dispatched on this mission, the boys met with distinct hostility in the form of 'the usual hooting', while 'Some houses were shut against us' and they 'were distinctly told that under no circumstances would one farthing of tithes ever be paid again'.³⁰ On the second day of the attempted dissemination, 'When we reached the village [of Kishiquirk, about 6 miles west of Abington], a considerable and very

²⁶ William Le Fanu, *Seventy Years of Irish Life* (London: Edward Arnold, 1893), pp. 42-43.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 55.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61.

threatening crowd was collected there, who saluted us with “Down with the Orangemen! Down with the tithes!”³¹ The scene quickly turned violent:

[...] we rode slowly through the throng. As we got near the end of the village a woman called to us, “What are ye riding so slow for? Push on, I tell you; they are going to kill ye!” We did push on, and with some difficulty, by riding one after the other, got past a cart which was hastily drawn across the road to stop us. On we galloped, showers of stones after us as we went. About a quarter of a mile further on another but smaller crowd awaited us; they were not on the road, but just inside the mound fence which bordered it. On this mound they had made ready a good supply of stones for our reception but seeing us hold our pistols towards them, they did not venture to throw the stones till just as we had passed them, when they came after us volley after volley [*sic*].³²

Recalling the memory of this event while writing his memoirs in 1893 – sixty years after the incident – William’s lucid description is testament to the profound effect it had on him. Surges of violence and anonymous ambushes were a common occurrence in the region at the time of the Tithe War and the Le Fanus, whose very livelihood was dependent upon tithe payment, were particularly vulnerable.

Further to incidents of literal antipathy, the *impression* of rural Irish disaffection was shared by the government in Dublin and in London. David Dickson in his study of Jacobitism in eighteenth-century Munster remarks that ‘At a distance the official mind in Dublin Castle tended to maintain its blanket assumptions about Munster [...] until at least the 1770s – that the Catholic population there was “full of disaffected inhabitants,” pathologically incapable of loyal incorporation’.³³ Dickson continues: ‘This was pure speculation, but the assumption was to be endlessly recycled: that there was a suppressed, menacing, and all-pervasive disloyalty in the countryside’.³⁴ Powerful assumptions such as these were not uncommon or unfounded, although they may have been exaggerated to encourage the bid for Union in the 1790s, and seemed to be confirmed by the events of 1798. Nevertheless, the impression of the Irish countryside as a space of hostility and violence continued to dominate well into the nineteenth century. In conjunction with political assumptions about agrarian unrest, Kane notes that widespread reporting of the Catholic Association’s ‘discursive activities’ such as ‘meetings, demonstrations, and council proceedings’ was ubiquitous, and ‘received full coverage

³¹ Ibid., p. 61.

³² Ibid., pp. 61-62.

³³ David Dickson, ‘Jacobitism in Eighteenth Century Ireland: A Munster Perspective’, in *Éire-Ireland*, 39 (2004), 38-99 (p.51), quoting Charles Vallancy, ‘Report on Military Survey’, c.1776 (B. L., Add. Ms 33, 118, f.138), Malcolmson, *Eighteenth-Century Irish Official Papers*, 2:226.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 52.

throughout the country in national and provincial newspapers'.³⁵ The wider public – both in Ireland and Great Britain – was fully awakened to the Irish situation and in particular, to the reality of Irish violence. Furthermore, Patrick O'Flanagan points to the power of the new science of statistics in the nineteenth century, which – though rarely accurate and often deliberately partisan – served to reaffirm the large discrepancy between populations of Catholics and Protestants. O'Flanagan remarks that 'The nineteenth century was to be a period of intensive Protestant reappraisal', while the religious census carried out in 1834 (re)confirmed empirically 'that Protestants were indeed a minority' and 'the widespread realisation of these facts helped to erode Protestant confidence in relation to their exalted social position'.³⁶ Changes in politics, religion, and culture combined to exacerbate a deeply divided society in the post-Union years. By the time Le Fanu enrolled in Trinity College in the autumn of 1832, a new Ireland was being formed. Fresh from his experiences in Limerick as part of an isolated family remote from their neighbours in religion, culture, class, and political outlook, Le Fanu suddenly entered a world of belonging. The confluence of alienation and cohesion engendered by Le Fanu's early experiences in Limerick and Trinity College is traceable throughout the Purcell stories. Comic stories of the Catholic lower classes conceal acrimony and class politics, while stories of noble Jacobite families whose influence was waning can be read as an example of the settler impetus to return to writing about the history of settlement, an articulation of the founding mythology that connected Irish Protestants of the nineteenth century to their originary past.

The Imagined Community of the *Dublin University Magazine*

In January 1833, against the backdrop of intense societal reformation, the *Dublin University Magazine: A Literary and Political Journal* emerged as a new monthly periodical with an explicitly Irish Protestant and Unionist ethos.

³⁵ Kane, p. 33.

³⁶ O'Flanagan, p. 137. O'Flanagan cites as his sources Thomas Newenham, *A statistical and historical enquiry into the progress and magnitude of the population of Ireland* (1805), and E. Wakefield, *An account of Ireland, statistical and political* (London: 1812). O'Flanagan points out that the reported statistics were not strictly accurate, and probably deliberately skewed, but that they served to undermine Protestant confidence regardless.

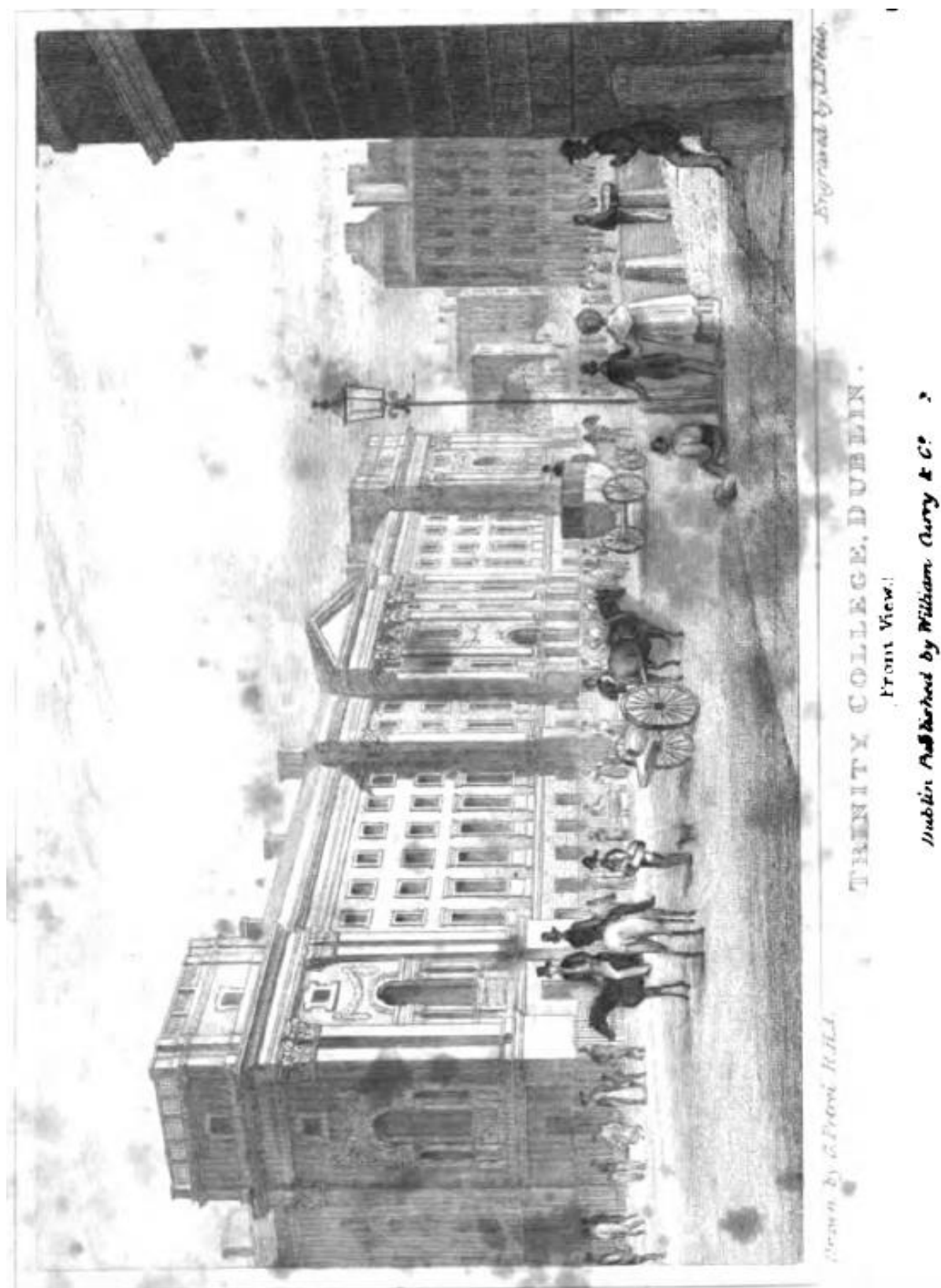


Figure 1: Etching of the front elevation of Trinity College by Irish artist George Petrie (1790-1866). The image featured as the frontispiece of the first volume of the *D.U.M.*³⁷

³⁷ George Petrie, 'Trinity College Dublin', *Dublin University Magazine*, 1 (1833), Frontispiece, n. p.

The first volume includes as a frontispiece an etching of the front elevation of Trinity College Dublin, as viewed from the former Irish Parliament building at the north-eastern corner of College Green, positioned – literally and figuratively – between two institutional beacons of Irish Protestantism. Although the magazine was not officially affiliated with the college, the editors and writers were largely comprised of students and alumni. McBride considers the magazine’s connections to the university ‘significant’ and remarks that ‘as a physical emblem of Protestant elitism in Ireland’, Trinity College ‘provided a focal point, important both socially and intellectually, which signified a shared experience for those past and present students who were to establish and maintain the *DUM*’.³⁸ This included one of the magazine’s founding editors, Isaac Butt (1813-79), ‘the organ of intellectual Irish Toryism’ (according to R. F. Foster) and later leader of the Home Rule League (1873-79).³⁹ Foster describes Butt as representative of ‘the young lawyers, academics and journalists grouped round the *Dublin University Magazine*’, who were ‘determined from the 1830s to assert an identity that was Protestant, Unionist and Irish. The magazine sought to promote Irish Protestant exceptionalism within a wider conception of “Britishness”, one that allowed for the articulations of regional or national identities such as English, Scottish, or Welsh.

McBride has pointed to the far-reaching effects of the post-Union “brain drain” among the educated Irish. ‘Literary absenteeism’ was rife as many intellectuals and artists abandoned Dublin for London; ‘Ireland’s provinciality’ and ‘the country’s inability to compete with English centres of thriving literary activity’ were the main challenges faced by those in the book industry.⁴⁰ The result was that in the early decades of the Union, in the face of significant political and cultural losses, there was a renewed drive towards the formation of an Irish Protestant intelligentsia. Elizabeth Tilley has also pointed to the ‘widely held belief that the publishing industry in Ireland virtually collapsed after the Act of Union in 1802’ and never fully recovered. However, Tilley points out that thirty years later, ‘one would expect that publishing would have recovered somewhat from the devastation of the reprint industry at the beginning of the century’. In fact there was a recovery of sorts, and Tilley notes that ‘the years following 1829 are relatively rich in titles published’. This period of revival coincides with the emergence of the *D.U.M.* in 1833, the same years that are ‘also distinguished by a discernible rise in Irish nationalist politics, with the Repeal Movement and Young Ireland sponsoring great

³⁸ McBride, pp. 47-48.

³⁹ Foster, *Modern Ireland*, footnote p. 305.

⁴⁰ McBride, p. 37.

amounts of reading material'.⁴¹ Indeed, Tom Clyde remarks on the *D.U.M.*'s 'lucky' timing in that the magazine 'coincide[ed] with the emergence of Daniel O'Connell and a new, more confident assertion of Irish national pride' with the result that 'the Ascendency conservatives [now had] a bogeyman around whom they could unite,' and this 'also encouraged them to assert their rights to the pride in being Irish'.⁴²

The magazine's first editorial outlines their commitment to promoting Irish talent: 'by opening at home a channel for those communications which have hitherto occupied the pages of foreign reviews and periodicals [and] to prevent the literary resources of our country being drained away'.⁴³ The editorial also justifies the magazine's close association with the 'venerable' institution of Trinity College, arguing that while some may consider the university above discussions concerning 'the politics of the day', the editors aver that 'it cannot be expected that we should stand aloof. Nor do we believe that the University ever was intended as a tomb, in which should be buried energies that might be usefully employed in the service of society'. The editorial asserts the need to address 'the battle outside' the university's walls:

We have lived to see experiment substituted for experience, and to behold the strange, and yet the solemn spectacle of a great and happy nation voluntarily renouncing that Constitution under which she had prospered, and entering on hazardous speculations, in an untried and theoretical system of representation. We feel as if we were yet but upon the threshold of the change. A spirit seems to have gone abroad of restless and ceaseless innovation, and it is with deep solicitude, that we put to ourselves the momentous question – "What will be the end thereof".⁴⁴

Here the magazine positions Ireland, and specifically Irish Protestants, as 'upon the threshold of change' following the 'voluntary renouncing' of self-government under the Act of Union. The magazine expresses its intention to provide a platform for home-grown talent with the equivalent function of articulating the views of those inside the college walls. *The Wellesley Index* also notes the significance of the iconography present on the original cover of the magazine, 'a woodcut of Irish [*sic*] round tower, harp, and tomb, suggesting the emphasis on

⁴¹ Elizabeth Tilley, 'National Enterprise and Domestic Periodicals in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', *Periodicals and Publishers: The Newspaper and Journal Trade, 1750-1914*, ed. by John Hinks, Catherine Armstrong, and Matthew Day (New Castle, DE and London: Oak Knoll and British Library, 2009), pp. 185-202 (p. 185).

⁴² Tom Clyde, *Irish Literary Magazines: An Outline History and Descriptive Bibliography* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2003), p. 97. Clyde lists the editors of the *D.U.M.* as follows: Charles Stuart Stanford 1833-34; Isaac Butt 1834-38; James McGlashan 1838-42; Charles Lever 1842-45; McGlashan June-July 1845; John F. Waller 1845-56; Durham-Dunlop Jan-Nov 1856; Cheyne Brady 1856-1861; Le Fanu 1861-69; Charles F. Adams 1869-73 (p. 94). Clyde's list is corroborated by McBride, Hall, and Sadleir's studies of the magazine.

⁴³ Charles Stuart Stanford, 'New Year's Day, or our First Number', *Dublin University Magazine*, 1 (1833), 87-90 (p. 88).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 89-90.

Irish history, poetry, and biography’, although, as the Index points out, this cover was ‘shortly replaced by one of Queen Bess [Elizabeth I]’, reaffirming the magazine’s ties to both Trinity College and its Royalist tradition.⁴⁵ Six years after the magazine’s first editorial edict, the same issues were raised again and expanded upon in another unsigned article entitled ‘Past and Present State of Literature in Ireland’, which appeared in the *D.U.M.* in March 1837. The author revisits issues concerning the non-existence of a commercial Irish press based in Dublin, and immodestly announces that ‘by shewing [*sic*] the way’, the *D.U.M.* will ‘awaken that life in the Irish publishing trade, which alone is wanting to raise us to the level of our neighbours [England]’ in terms of literary and intellectual achievement.⁴⁶ McCormack – who attributes the piece to Butt – asserts that ‘The essay constitutes, in effect, the first attempt at a theory of Anglo-Irish literature’.⁴⁷ The article bemoans the loss of its brightest talents to the foreign publication trades, ‘those lights which were so long losing themselves in the full-orbed day of England and Scotland’,⁴⁸ while simultaneously criticising the past state of literature in the country. It claims that ‘No literature had yet taken root in Ireland, except a trifling and occasional appearance of pamphlets’, and ‘a style of rhetoric, adapted to please the most uncultivated ear and understanding’.⁴⁹ The declaration is clear: to establish a canon of Irish national literature as imagined by the educated Protestants of Ireland. Further, the magazine’s implicit impetus was to challenge the Catholic monopoly on Irish identity – as enhanced by O’Connellite dogma – and to stake a claim for a specifically *Protestant* Irish identity.

Clyde argues that while periodicals are by no means a homogenous or “stable” genre, they nevertheless ‘produce a sense of cohesion amongst “vital groups” of individuals [...] This offers the reader a sense of identity which they can buy into, and which gives them a way of interpreting the world’.⁵⁰ Further, ‘if a nation is an “imagined community”, then these publications are not just an accidental by-product of that imagining, but a key mechanism by which it takes place, at the same time a forum *for* and an embodiment *of* that imagined

⁴⁵ Walter E. Houghton, Esther Rhoads Houghton, and Jean Harris Slingerland (eds.), ‘*The Dublin University Magazine, 1833-1877 and The University Magazine, 1878-1880*’, *The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900*, 5 vols (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), IV, pp. 193-370 (p. 195). See also John S. North, *The Waterloo Directory of Irish Newspapers and Periodicals, 1800-1900*, Phase II (Waterloo, ON: North Waterloo Academic Press, 1986), pp. 186-87.

⁴⁶ ‘Past and Present State of Literature in Ireland’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 9 (March 1837), 365-76 (p. 375).

⁴⁷ W. J. McCormack, ‘The Intellectual Revival (1830-1850)’, in *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*, general ed. Seamus Deane, Angela Bourke, et. al., 5 vols. (Derry: Field Day, 1991-2002), I (1991), pp. 1173-1300 (p. 1200). McCormack argues that, although it ‘cannot be proven absolutely’ the ‘editorial tone adopted throughout argues strongly in favour of attribution to [Butt]’, p. 1200.

⁴⁸ ‘Past and Present State of Literature in Ireland’, p. 374.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 369.

⁵⁰ Clyde, p. 7.

community.⁵¹ Similarly, in his study of the development of the nation state, Jim Mac Laughlin makes clear that ‘Central to the imaginative construction of any nation, not least in nineteenth-century Ireland, was the assumed existence of national collectives and the very real existence of agents and agencies capable of transforming the country into a nation’.⁵² The *D.U.M.* can be understood as one of these agencies working towards the consolidation of a national collective: that of the Irish Protestant community, or as Diane Long Hoeveler has elsewhere termed it, the ‘Irish Protestant Imaginary’.⁵³ Hoeveler recognises the emergence of this imaginary in a plethora of ‘textual displays of anti-Catholicism’ in the eighteenth and nineteenth century.⁵⁴ Consolidation against a common enemy – Daniel O’Connell, according to Clyde, or Catholicism in general, according to Hoeveler – helped to solidify the Irish Protestant community, while unification around a common cause, the promotion of an Irish Protestant literature, culture, and nationality, helped to enclose Irish Protestants as a minority national collective. The *D.U.M.* appealed to readers of the conservative Irish Protestant community by espousing a specific view of the present state of Ireland and the community’s position within it. Incumbent upon an evolving view of the present, ‘a collective memory’ and ‘a collective vision of the future’ also emerged.⁵⁵

The “collective vision” of the *D.U.M.* is realised through a blend of fiction, poetry, history, and politics.⁵⁶ Content cultivated to appeal to this specific audience include stories of murder, revenge, and supernatural intrigue that appear adjacent to impassioned articles on the tenets of Irish national education, Tory responses to Whig legislation, ethnographic accounts of the rural Catholic peasantry, ‘University Intelligence’, and historical biographies of eminent Protestant families.⁵⁷ In periodicals, the line between fact and fiction is blurred; journalistic

⁵¹ Ibid., p. xii.

⁵² Jim Mac Laughlin, *Reimagining the Nation-State: Contested Terrains of Nation Building* (London: Pluto Press, 2001), p. 130.

⁵³ Diane Long Hoeveler, ‘The Irish Protestant Imaginary: The Cultural Contexts for the Gothic Chapbooks Published by Bennett Dugdale, 1800-5’, in *Irish Gothics: Genres, Forms, Modes, and Traditions, 1760-1890*, ed. by Christina Morin and Niall Gillespie (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 34-57 (p. 36).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Mac Laughlin, p. 130.

⁵⁶ McBride also confirms the blend of politics and culture in his summation of the magazine: ‘the *DUM* from the outset sought to combine the political philosophy of the conservative Irish Protestant, and a determined Irish cultural nationalism’, p. 60.

⁵⁷ ‘University Intelligence’ was a regular feature of the *D.U.M.* that listed the latest news, forthcoming events, recent conferrals, and academic appointments of Trinity College Dublin, and also included notices from Oxford and Cambridge. See, for example, Isaac Butt, ‘University Intelligence’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 1 (1833), 97-101. In general, though particularly under the editorship of Butt (1834-38), the *D.U.M.* maintained this combination of factual and fictional content. The following are some examples from volume 3 which covers January to June 1834 and includes the recurring monthly features ‘Critical Notice’ and ‘State and Prospects of the Country’ in which the politics of the day are discussed, usually concerning whatever bill was then being debated in Westminster (e.g. the Poor Law, pp. 14-24). The volume closes with an unsigned article on ‘The

reports appear indiscriminately between poems and ghost stories, while fictional contributions commonly purport to be factual, further blurring the distinction through an implicit verisimilitude engendered by the cultivated respectability of certain Victorian periodicals. In an article on Le Fanu and the *D.U.M.*, McCormack argues that the ‘effects of anonymity and serialization upon readers’ mental constituting of the material they perused from month to month contribute to the complex “serialism” of magazine reading’, noting that the reader of a periodical would ‘read in an interspersing manner fiction and non-fiction, the work of authors who may have been (in certain cases), one and the same person’.⁵⁸ Alongside manifestos on the state of nation and Irish Protestant literature and history, reports of rural violence were a regular feature, particularly in the 1830s. For example, volume 11 of the magazine – the same volume that featured Le Fanu’s first stories – includes several articles that affirm the popular assumption of rural antagonism and Catholic revolt. In the January issue of 1838, a regular editorial piece entitled ‘Memoranda of the Month’, assigned to ‘recording in these memoranda, the incidents of each month, that mark the state of Ireland’,⁵⁹ includes details of the following incidents: ‘horrible attack upon a protestant’, ‘persecutions of protestants’,⁶⁰ ‘The Tithe War’, and a ‘catalogue of murders’.⁶¹ The memoranda cites an incident that occurred in county Clare, insisting that ‘coercion, or some other act must be put in force to quell the insurrectionary and lawless practices of our sanguinary and ferocious peasantry; otherwise, blood in torrents must flow throughout the land’.⁶² The memoranda also contains articles cut from regional

Repeal of the Union’ (pp. 713-24, attributed to Stanford by the *Wellesley Index*), which ends with a note of uncertainty: ‘No one can tell what a day may bring forth. But one of two things appears to us inevitable. The ministry must make up their minds to side either with the agitator [O’Connell] or with the conservatives. There is no middle course. If they make common cause with the one, the evils which were predicted as likely to result from the reform bill, will have a speedy accomplishment. The English church will follow the fate of the Irish church. The House of Lords will be swamped and the monarchy endangered. If they side with the other, the progress of revolution may be stayed, and something yet done to avert the calamities which impend over the country’, p. 724. There are also notices from various societies including the Dublin Geological Society, est. 1831 (pp. 97-104), and the Royal Dublin Society, est. 1731 (pp. 353-54). Articles on ethnographic and antiquarian pursuits were also common, including ‘A Letter from Cornelius O’Brien, On the Study of Irish Antiquities’ (pp. 316-30), and James Stuart, ‘On the Learning of Ancient Irish’ (pp. 535-45). Concurrently, poetry and fiction remain a staple, with a combination of Irish mythology, articles on the supernatural, European literature, and reports from the outreaches of empire. For example, William Carleton’s ‘The Resurrections of Barney Bradley’ (pp. 177-93), and ‘Stories of Second Sight and Apparition’ (pp. 546-59), Samuel Ferguson’s ‘Fragments from the History of Grana Weal’ (meaning Gráinne Mhaol, the legendary Pirate Queen of Mayo), (pp. 194-202), and ‘The Fairy Thorn’ (pp. 331-32), as well as ‘Chinese Historical Dreams and Romances’ (pp. 395-401).

⁵⁸ W. J. McCormack, “‘Never put your name to an anonymous letter’: Serial Reading in the *Dublin University Magazine*, 1861 to 1869’, *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 26 (1996), 100-15 (p. 105).

⁵⁹ ‘Memoranda of the Month’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 11 (1838), 125-40, (p. 125). For an example of similar reporting, see ‘Insurrectionary State of the County of Longford’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 11 (1838), 121-23.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 132-33.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 137.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 125.

newspapers such as the *Limerick Chronicle*, the *Tipperary Constitution*, and the *Waterford Mail*, as well as some of the Dublin-based papers including the *Dublin Record* and the *Warder* (of which Le Fanu was later owner and editor). A section entitled ‘Repeal of the Union’ cautions the reader that, ‘The watchword of sedition is not yet forgotten’, subsequently introducing decontextualized extracts of two speeches by Daniel O’Connell from December 1837 in which he is quoted as stating that he ‘would sink to my grave if I did not think that we would see a Parliament in College-green once more’.⁶³ Each section of the memoranda serves to reaffirm the perception of mass mobilisation among rural Catholics, commenting on ‘the general organization and progress of discipline of the popish peasantry, the great mass of whom are armed and enrolled in ribbon lodges’.⁶⁴ The factual and fictional contributions to the magazine at this time mutually reinforce an Irish Protestant paranoia, which in effect is another method of storytelling, of further crystalizing the distinction between “us” and “them”.

In societies with a history of colonial settlement, the construction of national identity is troubled by competing claims to “authenticity”. Settlers who have undergone a process of indigenization – described by Lorenzo Veracini as ‘a crucial need to transform an historical tie (“we came here”) into a natural one (“the land made us”)’⁶⁵ – is enacted over generations but is contested by indigenous communities. As such, settler and indigenous claims to nationality are mutually exclusive of one another, which often leads to forms of conflict. Anthony W. Marx defines nationalism as ‘a collective sentiment or identity, bounding and binding together those individuals who share a sense of large-scale political solidarity aimed at creating, legitimating, or challenging states’. Further, Marx notes the importance of ‘a sense of historical commonality’ in the formation of national identity, as one that ‘coheres a population within a territory and which demarcates those who belong and others who do not’.⁶⁶ The historical commonality that links the settler community to the site of settlement is often the most important component in the formulation of settler national identity. Related to this, the settler’s connection to the former colonial homeland is also important as a marker of difference between settler and indigenous. As a result, articulating the settler experience necessarily encompasses the ambivalence at the core of the settler’s existence, forced to negotiate between a remote identification with the coloniser, and a fraught, but nevertheless common history with the indigene. Stephen Slemon argues that because the ‘*illusion* of a stable self/other, here/there

⁶³ Ibid., p. 128.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 129.

⁶⁵ Lorenzo Veracini, ‘The Settler Colonial Situation’, *Native Studies Review*, 19 (2010), 101-18 (pp. 105-06).

⁶⁶ Anthony W. Marx, *Faith in Nation: Exclusionary Origins of Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 6.

binary division has *never* been available to Second-World writers' the result is that this 'figural contestation' becomes '*internalized* in Second-World post-colonial textual practice'.⁶⁷ Between the states of colonial Self and colonised Other, the settler seeks to establish (an)other Self distinct from both. Lorenzo Veracini argues that 'settler colonialism [...] is primarily characterised by indigenous deterritorialisation accompanied by a sustained denial of any state-making capability for indigenous peoples', a situation well-exemplified in Ireland between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁶⁸ In their critical collection on settler colonialism (2011), Fiona Bateman and Lionel Pilkington remind us that 'it is misleading to refer to settler colonialism in the past tense', as the world today reflects settlement practices established many centuries ago and relatively recently. Bateman and Pilkington consider settler colonialism to be 'a widespread historical and contemporary political phenomenon' that 'continues to exercise a profound effect on an extensive range of societies'. By the time settlers have been established for two or more generations, they 'consider themselves to belong to the country in which they were born, and attempts by the indigenous peoples to reclaim land or assert prior ownership of resources and territory leads to conflict and resentment'.⁶⁹ The longer the process, the more complex the outcome, which is why the contested nature of national identity is an important issue for settler societies that have evolved over multiple generations, particularly those identified as "problematic".

Articulating a collective history is central to any formation of group identity. The history narrative provides a sequential, cohesive link between past and present that serves to reinforce and justify a "factual" link with the place of settlement, a chronological conception of cultural origins. In settler societies, conceptualising the nation had to account for both indigenous and settler claims to authenticity, which of course were conflicting. Marx explains that 'Selective amnesia' was necessary when constructing a history to support 'national cohesion', as 'Myths of common past glory and unifying sacrifice pushed aside the reality of prior internal conflict, forging the image of a coherent unit that history and historians could take for granted'.⁷⁰ This "selective amnesia" also applies to historical misdeeds committed by one group upon another, as in the case of colonial settlement. The foundational myths of North

⁶⁷ Stephen Slemon, 'Unsettling Empire: Resistance Theory for the Second World', in *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. by Padmini Mongia (London: Arnold, 1996), pp. 72-83 (p. 80). Original emphasis.

⁶⁸ Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 105.

⁶⁹ Fiona Bateman and Lionel Pilkington (eds), 'Introduction', in *Studies in Settler Colonialism: Politics, Identity, Culture* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), pp. 1-9 (pp. 2-3).

⁷⁰ Marx, p. 31.

American settlement often elide the incidents of indigenous genocide, focussing instead on the efforts of the settler to establish a new nation defined by “liberty”. In Ireland, for example, although Protestant factions often had internal conflicts such as political or ecumenical disagreements, a cohesive Protestant identity was formulated on a common history of opposition to Irish Catholics. Examples include Sir Richard Cox’s *Hibernia Anglicana* (1689-90), the first history of English colonial involvement in Ireland and an apologia for conquest, written from the perspective of the New English settlers. Also, William King’s *The State of the Protestants of Ireland* (1691), and Sir John Temple’s *History of the Irish Rebellion* (1746), both of which are diatribes against Irish Catholics and detail the injustices committed against Protestants during the rebellion of 1641. Jarlath Killeen has argued that such foundational “historical” texts contributed to the emergence of a sense of Irishness that was exclusively Anglican, as distinct from and opposed to the Irishness of Catholics.⁷¹ Killeen posits that because the ‘stability of the Anglican colonizer was forever being challenged and undermined by forces both external (Catholic France and Protestant England), and internal (through discontent of Irish Catholics and Presbyterians)’, Irish Anglican identity ‘was constructed on an unusually unstable foundation’.⁷² Texts such as those by Cox, King, and Temple helped to support the myth of national cohesion required for any formulation of nationalism. In his study of the construction of Irish identity after 1798, Kevin Whelan outlines the polemic rhetoric that emerged and informed political and popular interpretation of the rebellion through various mediums, just as it had done after the Williamite-Jacobite war in the 1690s: ‘For conservatives, the immediate task in the aftermath of the rebellion was to create an exclusively sectarian narrative of the origin and progress of radicalism in the 1790s’, thereby revealing the rebellion’s ‘real (and ghastly) popish face’.⁷³ Whelan further explains that ‘The 1640s, the 1690s and the 1790s were interpreted as the three great traumas of Protestant Ireland’ and likewise ‘the same style, the same tropes, the same polemics, the same warnings’ of Catholic hostility and violence were recycled, ‘the master narratives of Protestant Ireland [...] regularly resorted to at times of stress, redefinition or Catholic resurgence’.⁷⁴ As the victors in the colonial war, the settler has the privilege of writing their own histories of conquest. The heroics

⁷¹ Jarlath Killeen, *The Emergence of Irish Gothic Fiction: History, Origins, Theories* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), p. 45.

⁷² Jarlath Killeen, *Gothic Ireland: Horror and the Irish Anglican Imagination in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), p. 55.

⁷³ Kevin Whelan, *The Tree of Liberty: Radicalism, Catholicism and the Construction of Irish Identity, 1760-1830* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996), p.133. See also p. 134, in which Whelan describes how ‘Lurid massacre stories were deliberately planted in the newspapers’, along with similar ephemera such as pamphlets, books, surveys, and works of fiction.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 136.

of the settler and the atrocities they had to experience become the foundation of collective settler identity thereafter.

The Union prompted a cultural reappraisal for Irish Protestants as there was suddenly a need to distinguish themselves from both the indigenous Catholic Irish and the “foreign” English Protestant. Though they shared commonalities with both, Irish Protestants did not consider themselves English and yet they were not Irish in the same way as Irish Catholics were. It is during this period, evidenced in particular by the ideology of the *D.U.M.*, that the emergence of a “settler” mentality can be identified, caught between a remote identification with the coloniser, and an indigenous claim to national belonging. Post-Union Irish Protestants turned to imaginative means to satisfy the need for self-inscription; their claim to authenticity and cultural “belonging” in Ireland was exhibited in part through the advancement of a national literature, as promoted by the *D.U.M.* Gaïd Girard notes that ‘One of the aims of this fiercely anti-papist and conservative magazine was to root the Protestant minority into a shared Irish culture, going back to an indeterminate and legendary past’.⁷⁵ In fostering the emergence of a “native” literature, the *D.U.M.* ‘would replace the cultural role held by the Parliament in Dublin’.⁷⁶ In his study of Irish storytelling, Georges Denis Zimmermann explains that although nationhood concerns ‘a community of people’ who share ‘a sentiment of unity’ in one way or another, once formed, ‘identities may have to be repeatedly redefined’.⁷⁷ As descendants of settlers who arrived in Ireland several generations previous, nineteenth-century Irish Protestants were somewhat removed from their colonial antecedents.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, they sought to establish a historical tie to the country that would verify a claim to an Irish identity, one that was not prescribed by Catholicism or preordained by indigeneity. In the case of post-Union Irish Protestants, their identity had to be redefined in relation to their religiously alien countrymen, and their foreign religious affiliates. In settler theory, Lorenzo Veracini refers to this kind of dilemma as ‘an indigenous/exogenous dialectic’, through which he imagines the relational system of coloniser, settler, and colonised operates.⁷⁹ Veracini sees the settler as ‘simultaneously indigenous and exogenous’; in other words, while there is typically ‘a crucial investment in place and landscape’ of the settled country, at the same time ‘settlers also

⁷⁵ Gaïd Girard, ‘Growing a Voice: Le Fanu and the Laboratory of the *Dublin University Magazine*’, in *Inspiring a Mysterious Terror’: 200 Years of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed. by Jarlath Killeen and Valeria Cavalli (Bern: Peter Lang, 2016), pp. 155-75 (pp. 158-59).

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 159-60.

⁷⁷ George Denis Zimmermann, *The Irish Storyteller* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), p. 11.

⁷⁸ Old English and New English waves of settlement were not restricted to the settlement of English people, but included the settlement of Normans and Huguenots, as well as Scottish Presbyterians.

⁷⁹ Lorenzo Veracini, ‘The Settler-Colonial Situation’, *Native Studies Review*, 19 (2010), 101-18 (p. 103).

routinely articulate diasporic identities via a focus on ancestral “roots” located elsewhere’, in an original “homeland”.⁸⁰

Storytelling – and particularly telling stories of origin – is an important process in the shaping of collective identity. In fact, ‘The telling may be more important than the tale. The storytelling event unites a community, clarifying or exorcizing its shared feelings and beliefs and aspirations’.⁸¹ For settler communities which are long-established in another country, this process of self-identification through storytelling is even more important, given that the original connections to the country of origin have long since diminished while a genuine connection to the place of settlement has prospered. The *D.U.M.* provided an outlet for precisely this type of storytelling, regardless of whether the story was fictional or factual, and it is clear that from the outset the magazine was self-consciously formed to occupy the role of patron of Irish Protestantism. Understanding the character of Irish Protestant “storytelling” that arose in the 1820s and ’30s, and was cultivated by the *D.U.M.* in particular from 1833 onwards, is important both for the identification of this literature as a form of settler writing and in understanding how Le Fanu’s work fits into this mould. As Tilley rightly cautions, it is a mistake to assume that ‘the politics and tone of the magazine remain constant throughout its forty-year history’, especially given that ‘it was produced by no fewer than eleven editors’.⁸² As such, this section is concerned with the magazine as it was from its inaugural issue in 1833 up until Le Fanu’s final Purcell instalment in October 1840. Drawing from studies by McBride, Sadleir, and Hall, as well as my own observations of the volumes during this period, one can identify a sustained presence of writing about folklore, history, romance, travel, poetry, and the supernatural, aside from the journalistic pieces on politics, current affairs, and book reviews. This type of anthropological writing was a popular form that emerged during this period, chiefly as a result of the scientific zeal that abounded during the industrial revolution in England, which also made its presence felt in Ireland with the most well-known of these scientific projects, the Ordnance Survey, which commenced in Ireland in 1824. ‘In addition to mapping’, Ó Giolláin explains, ‘information was gathered on antiquities, toponymy, geology and industry’, the results of which were published widely and consumed by the lay-reader.⁸³ The accumulation of such information was accompanied by an interest in folklore (although

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 105.

⁸¹ Zimmermann, p. 12.

⁸² Elizabeth Tilley, ‘Charting Culture in the *Dublin University Magazine*’, in *Ireland in the Nineteenth Century: Regional Identity*, ed. by Glenn Hooper and Leon Litvack (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), pp. 58-65 (pp. 58-59).

⁸³ Diarmuid Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore: Tradition, Modernity, Identity* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2000), p. 42.

not called this until 1846), of gathering stories and local traditions from the rural backwoods of empire, juxtaposed in time and space against the modernizing city.⁸⁴ Ó Giolláin identifies a trend of ‘Enlightened enquiry’ in early nineteenth-century writing, ‘an interest in the compiling of regional surveys of the physical and human environments of Britain and Ireland’ that developed in conjunction with other human sciences of the period.⁸⁵

The popularity of travel writing and the collection of ethnographic and antiquarian accounts in the eighteenth century – briefly quelled by a period of European rebellion and the Napoleonic wars – was renewed in the early nineteenth century and were staples of the *D.U.M.* Jennifer Schacker points out that ‘roots’ of folklore have ‘generally been traced to the quest for national identity and cultural purity that began in the late eighteenth century, as nationalist movements [...] were fuelled by the “discovery of popular culture” by “intellectuals...from the upper classes”’.⁸⁶ Though it was a pan-European movement, Ó Giolláin points out that the emergence of folklore as a form of the national tale developed unevenly. In countries such as England and France, interest in folklore was ‘regional’ and ancillary as there was no need to rely upon these narratives to buttress national consciousness. Such modern, ‘metropolitan’ countries, Ó Giolláin explains, already had ‘old, long-established and legitimated high cultures’, a more cohesive common heritage and history from which they could draw. By contrast, in ‘peripheral’ countries such as ‘Germany, Finland or Ireland’ folklore ‘was a key element of modern history and national identity’, which explains the prevalence of folklore and fairy tales emerging from these places.⁸⁷ In Ireland, as Joseph Spence argues, Irish Protestants ‘sought from all their explorations of the Irish past, fictional and historical, some justification for the continuation of Protestant Ascendancy and for a broad definition of Irish nationality’, one that would ‘counter that powerful O’Connellite propaganda which encouraged the Irishman to regard no one as “purely Irish” unless he was Catholic’.⁸⁸ In other words, the

⁸⁴ Ó Giolláin explains that “Folklore” was conceptualized towards the end of the eighteenth century, coined as a word in 1846 and institutionalized from the end of the nineteenth century on [...] “Folklore” was more an ideological than a scientific concept. To seek antecedents is an ambiguous task: primarily it is to look for early evidence of interest in the cultural elements which were later called folklore. These cultural elements have been variously known as “popular errors”, “popular superstitions”, “popular tradition”, “popular antiques”, “folklore”, “survivals”, “popular culture”, or “subaltern culture”, p. 32.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

⁸⁶ Jennifer Schacker, *National Dreams: The Remaking of Fairy Tales in Nineteenth-Century England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), p. 2, quoting Peter Burke ‘The “Discovery” of Popular Culture’, *People’s History and Socialist Theory*, ed. by Raphael Samuel (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1981), p. 216.

⁸⁷ Ó Giolláin, p. 4. Ó Giolláin specifies that he ‘use[s] the term “metropolitan” and “peripheral” in terms of a power relationship’, p. 4.

⁸⁸ Joseph Spence, ‘Allegories for a Protestant Nation: Irish Tory Historical Fiction, 1820-1850’, *Religion & Literature*, 28 (1996), 59-78 (p. 60).

development of folklore and history writing in Ireland in the first decades of the nineteenth century is driven by a renewed ‘quest for national identity’ in the same years.⁸⁹

Further to a European upsurge in folklore, Andrew Cusack identifies the *D.U.M.* as ‘an organ of cultural transfer between Germany and the British Isles’ particularly how the magazine ‘propagat[ed] German gothic in Ireland and Britain between 1833 and 1850’.⁹⁰ Cusack also notes the different effects and uses of German literature in Britain and Ireland, pointing out that while magazines like *Fraser’s* and *Blackwood’s* ‘led the revival of British interest in German literature from 1820 onward [...] The bookish founders of the *DUM* were attracted by the special prominence that literature appeared to enjoy in the national life of Germany’, a prominence that appeared to be in line with the Irish Protestant interest.⁹¹ Girard also points to the *D.U.M.*’s ‘partiality for dark romantic German literature’ and explains that ‘This movement sought to return to the primitive sources of national literature and culture previously neglected’ and as such was suited to the *D.U.M.*’s project of cultural redefinition.⁹² McCormack, too, discerns that ‘Between 1833 and 1850 more than one hundred and forty articles of German literary interest appeared in the magazine’, with more than half of these appearing within the first seven years. To account for this trend, McCormack cites John Anster’s influence as the first editor of the *D.U.M.* and the first translator of Goethe’s *Faust*, but more importantly, McCormack locates ‘a general affinity between certain central concepts of the German romantics and the needs of the emerging Anglo-Irish writers’, namely that of the short story and the folktale, two forms that define Le Fanu’s early writing.⁹³

As indicated by ‘Past and Present State of Literature in Ireland’, the *D.U.M.* in its foundational years was preoccupied with establishing a national literature which included a recovery of the literature of the “folk”. As Cusack observes, ‘the emphasis on the cultural distinctiveness of Ireland as a partner in the British empire necessitated the rediscovery and propagation of a distinctly Irish literature and culture, which in turn required antiquarian studies’.⁹⁴ In his introduction to the second series of his *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* (1833), William Carleton recognises his own role as part of a larger movement working towards the establishment of a national literature, explaining that the success of his first

⁸⁹ Schacker, p. 216.

⁹⁰ Andrew Cusack, ‘Cultural Transfer in the *Dublin University Magazine*: James Clarence Mangan and the German Gothic’, *Popular Revenants: The German Gothic and Its International Reception, 1800-2000*, ed. by Andrew Cusack and Barry Murnane (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012), pp. 87-104 (p. 87).

⁹¹ Cusack, p. 88.

⁹² Girard, p. 164.

⁹³ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 254.

⁹⁴ Cusack, p. 88.

volumes of stories was due to the ‘gratifying fact – that our native country, if without a literature at the time, was at least capable of appreciating, and willing to foster the humble exertions of such as endeavoured to create one’. Carleton also names the *D.U.M.* as ‘a work unsurpassed by any magazine of the day; and [...] a bond of union for literary men of every class’. Further expounding the magazine’s utopian principles, Carleton sees the *D.U.M.* and its mission as an edifying project for the betterment of the nation:

[The *D.U.M.*] has been, and is, a neutral spot in a country where party feeling runs so high, on which the Roman Catholic Priest and the Protestant parson, the Whig, the Tory, and the Radical, divested of their respective prejudices, can meet in an amicable spirit. I mention these things with great satisfaction, for it is surely a gratification to know that literature, in a country which has been so much distracted as Ireland, is progressing in a spirit of noble candour and generosity, which is ere long likely to produce a most salutary effect among the educated classes of all parties, and consequently among those whom they influence.⁹⁵

Carleton is here espousing a type of patronage adopted by the *D.U.M.* in leading the way for the post-Union nation, with Irish Protestants at the forefront of this enlightenment (although Carleton clearly possesses a more cross-sectarian vision than that evidenced by the content of magazine, especially given his own conversion from Catholicism to Protestantism). The ‘educated classes’ were to lead the way for a cultural and literary revival, thereby setting an example for ‘those whom they influence’, namely, the uneducated masses. In this way, Irish Protestants could assert their dual claim of a unique cultural and historical connection to Ireland, as well as their privileged position within it, with a like claim to equivalence in status to the educated classes in Britain and Europe. The ‘rapid progress of the national mind’, which is evidenced for Carleton by the ‘importance of the works which have issued from the Dublin press within the last eight or ten years’ – works he does not enumerate – will therefore ‘be able to sustain a native literature as lofty and generous, and beneficial to herself, as any other country in the world can boast of’.⁹⁶

The link between the oral tradition of storytelling and the written short story is long established.⁹⁷ Maggie Awadalla and Paul March-Russell argue that the short story ‘form is

⁹⁵ William Carleton, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, second series (London: George Routledge & Co., 1833; 1852), p. vi.

⁹⁶ Carleton, pp. vi-vii.

⁹⁷ See foundational works on the theory of the short story, all of which consider the modern short story as an evolution of the oral tale. See Frank O’Connor, ‘The Lonely Voice’, *Short Story Theories*, ed. by Charles E. May (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 1976), pp. 83-93, Seán Ó Faoláin, *The Short Story* (London: Collins, 1974), and Walter Benjamin, *The Storyteller: Tales Out of Loneliness*, trans. and ed. by Sam Dolbear, Esther Leslie and Sebastian Truskolaski (London: Verso, 2016).

shadowed by its oral past, partially because of its fusion with the folktale and the sketch'.⁹⁸ Heather Ingman offers a similar analysis, pointing to the direct correlation between the decline of oral culture and the emergence of the short story in Ireland:

Short fiction dealing with Irish themes started to proliferate at the moment when the Irish language and the oral tradition were being jettisoned in favour of English and the printed word. Research has highlighted the enormous implications of this shift from oral culture to print, not only for social structures, but also for patterns of thought [...] The emergence of Irish short fiction in the nineteenth century was entangled in the rise of national consciousness.⁹⁹

In order to secure their place in the Union, Irish Protestants sought to establish a national literature that would encompass their historic presence in Ireland, and yet demonstrate their modern advancements in education and learning equivalent to British and indeed to European standards. Penny Fielding, in her work on written and oral cultures in nineteenth-century Scotland, explains that in a similar way, 'Scotland's modern condition needed to be authenticated by its pre-modern past, yet it was this very past, devalued by unenlightened feudalism, which threatened Scotland's modernity in British eyes'. Fielding explains that the work of James Macpherson (1736-96), specifically through his Ossian poems (1761-65), overcame this impasse through the celebration of ancient Scottish-Gaelic culture and the construction of a "noble past" that would simultaneously speak to Scottish idiosyncrasy and yet elide accusations of barbarism. Instead of renouncing Scottish antiquity, 'Scots like James Macpherson mythologized it into a romance that could be a more appropriate precursor for British Scotland [...] Ossianic romance made Scotland famous by offering a mythic oral source of sensibility, heroism, and poetry which fed into European Romanticism'.¹⁰⁰

A similar process was at work in Ireland in the first decades of the nineteenth century as Irish Protestants had to tread the line between Irish exceptionalism and Irish savagery. Written collections of oral folk culture functioned to lay claim to a form of pre-modern identity while the act of collecting and curating these anachronistic accounts served to raise the collectors to a higher intellectual and social standing compared to the people from whom they amassed these sources. Whether these sources were genuine or not – as with the Ossian poems controversy – seemed to matter little, as fictional renderings of antiquarian collections were modelled on experiential accounts, as in Le Fanu's case. The folklore projects of the 1820s and

⁹⁸ Maggie Awadalla and Paul March-Russell (eds), 'Introduction: The Short Story and the Postcolonial', *The Postcolonial Short Story: Contemporary Essays* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), pp. 1-14 (p. 2).

⁹⁹ Heather Ingman, *A History of the Irish Short Story* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 15.

¹⁰⁰ Penny Fielding, *Writing and Orality: Nationality, Culture, and Nineteenth-Century Scottish Fiction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 9.

1830s had their roots in perhaps the most important of these experiential accounts: the Ordnance Survey of Ireland, which was carried out between 1824 and 1846 at a scale of six inches to the mile, the first and most comprehensive mapping project ever attempted. Alongside the detailed geographical data being recorded, Eugene O'Curry (1794-1862) and John O'Donovan (1806-61) were charged with the collection of local information regarding place names and colloquial history to supplement the scientific information gathered. Stiofán Ó Cadhla reveals the level of ethnographic study that was conducted by O'Donovan and O'Curry as part of the survey, framed in like manner to the antiquarian accounts of oral folk culture in the eighteenth century: their 'role was to go into the countryside to consult people with a view to investigating the etymology and orthography of place names prior to Anglicizing them'.¹⁰¹ Moreover, Cólín Parsons considers 'the Survey's letters, memoirs, and also the maps' to be 'active participants in the shaping and reshaping of Irish cultural history'.¹⁰² Parsons also remarks that 'These documents sometimes prioritize the past over the political realities of the present', pointing to the fact that while the Survey was a colonial strategy to assert control over Ireland, 'The survey's indifferent imperial gaze sits side by side with a sensibility that seeks out and respects indigenous forms of knowledge, Irish history, the Irish language, and the built heritage'.¹⁰³

As a social research project, the Ordnance Survey was the pinnacle of the European-wide development of the early scientific process of observation, description, collection, and preservation that sustained the antiquarian movement in the eighteenth century and underpinned European imperialism throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Such field-based surveys functioned to scientifically verify the 'authority of Englishness [or any European colonial enterprise] by the assumption of backwardness of others'.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, in its empiricism the Survey and other ethnographic studies confirmed the construction of the people it surveyed as outmoded, which in turn relegated their knowledge as 'tradition or traditional [...] The language of tradition was often used as a strategy to smooth over the more overt and explicit power relations'.¹⁰⁵ If something is "traditional" it is already past, outdated, "dying", as Zimmerman notes, 'a way of symbolically designating something as ancient and

¹⁰¹ Stiofán Ó Cadhla, *Civilizing Ireland: Ordnance Survey 1824-1842 Ethnography, Cartography, Translation* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2007), p. 26.

¹⁰² Cólín Parsons, *The Ordnance Survey and Modern Irish Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 81.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 69.

¹⁰⁴ Ó Cadhla, p. 43.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 95.

venerable – or burdensome’.¹⁰⁶ “Tradition” is also juxtaposed against “modern”, it is figured as static while modernity is dynamic. During the industrial revolution, tradition came to signify the opposite to the modern advancements in science, rationality, and technological progression. The advent of the museum, then, functioned as a place to contain tradition in the form of artefacts. Ó Cadhla points out that ‘The museum or archive is physical testimony to the appropriative nature of this knowledge accumulation’,¹⁰⁷ with projects such as the Survey forming ‘part of an apparatus of colonialism’ in the categorisation of people based on race, ethnicity, culture, and history.¹⁰⁸ Akin to Fielding’s observations concerning the function of Scottish mythology during the same period, Ó Cadhla notes that ‘Celticism served to define Ireland and the Irish in partly exotic and partly romantic terms’ which in turn allowed the Irish to be “othered” in terms of race, religion, and socio-economic development.¹⁰⁹ Such othering rationalises and justifies the colonial project as a form of patronage over “less advanced” societies.

Though the Survey was an English imperial project in terms of conception and management by the Royal Engineers Thomas Larcom and Thomas Colby, the Topographical Department was Irish-based and led by the Irishmen George Petrie (1790-1866), O’Curry and O’Donovan. Despite this, Ó Cadhla notes that the language used to describe the people surveyed contributed to colonialist discourse that was sustained by the Topographical Department: ‘The Irish were referred to as the Roman Catholic inhabitants, the aborigines or the Irish aborigines, the natives, the cottiers, the labourers, the vulgar, the peasantry, the mountain people, mountaineers or the old Irish’.¹¹⁰ In other words, the language used to describe the Catholic Irish was similar to that employed in other settler colonies, part of a process of “othering”, of differentiating between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples. The surveyors evidently upheld this distinction, positioning themselves as separate and above those whom they surveyed. Ó Cadhla also notes that the Survey ‘casts itself in the role of the heroic rescuer’ of a dying culture, just as antiquarian and folklore studies of the same period do.¹¹¹ In their role as patrons of this “dying” culture – be it as part of the Survey or in subsequent folklore

¹⁰⁶ Zimmerman, p. 11. Zimmerman discusses the range of meanings inherent in the use of the word “tradition”, ‘a term with various meanings and subject to different valuations. When it is used broadly, both as the process of handing down cultural elements through generations and as the body of beliefs, values, patterns of behaviour and skills passed on, it is not contentious. Trouble begins when one has to decide if the process involves change, and whether what is said to be thus inherited is sacred’, p. 10.

¹⁰⁷ Ó Cadhla, p. 33.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 56.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 103.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 95.

studies – Irish Protestants established for themselves a functionary role between coloniser and colonised. Connolly notes the ‘succession of Protestant intellectuals, from Davis to Ferguson in the 1830s and 1840s to Yeats in the early twentieth century’, who ‘sought to find in an engagement with Irish history and tradition a strategy whereby their class could reaffirm its threatened position as the natural leaders of Irish society’.¹¹² By curating an Irish past, Irish Protestants were positioning themselves as the natural successors to the outmoded indigenous population, just as settlers seek to overwrite the indigenous population as successors to national identity.

In any ‘settler situation’, Alan Lawson posits that a process of ‘effacement (of Indigenous authority) and appropriation (of Indigenous authenticity)’ takes place.¹¹³ This process of indigenization comes in three stages: ‘First, the effacement of the Indigene, the evacuation of the land’; second, the ‘replacement of the Indigene with forms of white indigeneity’;¹¹⁴ and third, ‘the desire to inherit the Natives’ spiritual “rites” to the land’.¹¹⁵ If this framework is applied to Ireland, the first stage, “effacement”, relates to the colonial conquest of Ireland during the seventeenth century, after which many Catholic landowners suffered attainder and were effectively removed from the land (though not eradicated as with other indigenous peoples elsewhere). The second stage, “replacement”, is enacted through the process of establishing physical permanence, which took place in Ireland during the eighteenth century. This stage is evidenced in part by a significant investment in building that took place, specifically the neo-Palladian Big Houses and estates in the countryside and the development of Georgian cities like Dublin, Limerick, and Cork. Andrew Kincaid argues that ‘during the

¹¹² S. J. Connolly, “‘Ag Déanamh Commanding’ Elite Responses to Popular Culture, 1660-1850’, in *Irish Popular Culture, 1650-1850*, ed. by James S. Donnelly Jr. and Kerby A. Miller (Dublin and Portland, OR: Irish Academic Press, 1998), pp. 1-29 (p. 8).

¹¹³ Alan Lawson, ‘Postcolonial Theory and the “Settler” Subject’, *Essays on Canadian Writing*, 56 (1995), 20-36 (p. 24).

¹¹⁴ While racial categories such as “white” are obviously not applicable in the case of Ireland, divisions were made instead on terms of ethnicity, religion, and class. Developments such as Phrenology allowed for divisions between white races; though ostensibly white, the “native” Irish ranked relatively low on such scales. Steve Garner avers that ‘Nominally white Europeans can also be racialized in the process of constructing national identities, as has been the case in Britain with nomadic, Jewish and Irish people, as well as Eastern Europeans’. Moreover, ‘Whiteness thus emerges [...] as a fluid, contingent and contested identity, simultaneously constitutive of non-white Others, yet fragmented into degrees of belonging (to communities based on place, class, nation and ‘race’)’. Garner, ‘The Uses of Whiteness: What Sociologists Working on Europe Can Draw from US Research on Whiteness’, *Sociology*, 40.2 (2006), 257-75 (p. 258 and p. 268.). See also Garner’s *Whiteness: An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2007).

¹¹⁵ Lawson, ‘Postcolonial Theory and the “Settler” Subject’, pp. 24-25. In explaining the process of indigenization, Lawson draws on the work of Terry Goldie, *Fear and Temptation: The Image of the Indigene in Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand Literatures* (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s, 1989), p. 13, as well as that of Daniel Francis, *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992), and Leslie Monkman, *A Native Heritage: Images of the Indian in English-Canadian Literature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981).

eighteenth century, the consolidation of Anglo-Irish power is most clearly visible in architecture across the whole of the country, not just in Dublin'.¹¹⁶ The third stage of indigenization emerged towards the end of the eighteenth century and continued throughout the nineteenth when there arose an interest in establishing cultural ties to the land. This desire manifested in the development in the fields of antiquarianism, archaeology, and history and was accelerated after the Act of Union due to increasingly sectarian formulations of national identity that required Irish Protestants to reassert their unique claims to authenticity.¹¹⁷ Clare O'Halloran points out that in Ireland, institutions such as the Royal Irish Academy that were dedicated to 'the study of Gaelic culture and antiquities' were primarily – if not exclusively – dependent on Protestant patronage.¹¹⁸ The *D.U.M.* functioned in a similar way, crystalizing Irish Protestant cultural identity. Having worked towards the establishment of an identity that accommodated Irish Protestant understanding of themselves as somewhere between Irish and English, the refiguration of Ireland under the Act of Union resurrected these issues once more.

The Act forced a reassessment of Irish national identity as the country's new status under the Union sought to subsume the island into a region of the United Kingdom. Regionalism, Seán Ryder explains, 'is never politically innocent'. The demarcation of somewhere as a "region" signifies the area's difference from other regions, and also as distinct from larger conceptions such as the nation:

Regionalism admits to cultural differences within the state, but leaves the territorial and legal claims of the state intact. In an imperial context, there is inevitably a hierarchical structure [...] between an imperial centre and a peripheral region [...] the regional culture is somehow deviant from the metropolitan form.¹¹⁹

The figuration of Ireland as a region of Great Britain necessarily reawakened for Irish Protestants longstanding issues surrounding their identity. The perceived loss of Irish Protestant cultural autonomy in the wake of the Act led to the need for re-examination of an

¹¹⁶ Andrew Kincaid, *Postcolonial Dublin: Imperial Legacies and the Built Environment* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), p. xxii.

¹¹⁷ Some important Irish antiquarian volumes include, for example, J. S. Folds, Caesar Otway, and George Petrie's *Dublin Penny Journal* (1832-36), Thomas Crofton Croker's, *Researches in the South of Ireland* (1824), James Hardiman's *Irish Minstrelsy, or Bardic Remains of Ireland, with English Poetical Translations* (London: J. Robins, 1831), and later, works by Sir William Wilde and Lady Jane Wilde, including *Ancient Legends, Mystic Charms, and Superstitions of Ireland* (London: Ward & Downey, 1888), as well as the field work of John O'Donovan, Eugene O'Curry, and George Petrie on the Ordnance Survey between 1824 and 1842.

¹¹⁸ Clare O'Halloran, *Golden Ages & Barbarous Nations: Antiquarian Debate & Cultural Politics in Ireland, c. 1750-1800* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2004), p. 160.

¹¹⁹ Seán Ryder, 'The Politics of Landscape and Region in Nineteenth-Century Poetry', in *Ireland in the Nineteenth Century: Regional Identity*, ed. by Glenn Hooper and Leon Litvack (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), pp. 169-84 (p. 169).

Irish tradition, which manifested in the stewardship of Irish folk traditions by Protestant writers. What began as a platform for emergent Irish Protestant writers to showcase their work to a domestic audience, in an attempt to stem the flow of talent to the London literary circuit, developed into a powerful agent of collective imagining. It is in the context of a burgeoning Irish Protestant literary self-awareness, a deeply sectarian and classist demarcation of Irish culture, and a renewed interest in rural storytelling of the heroic past that Le Fanu makes his first foray into professional writing. Le Fanu's fiction can be understood to form part of the indigenization process outlined by Lawson above. First, Le Fanu's fiction exhibits an interest in 'the constantly changing history of the settler within the country of settlement'.¹²⁰ Second, his work is responsive to the relationship with the indigenous population, and third, the stories are ultimately 'concerned to perform the concomitant indigenization of the settler' through the naturalizing process.¹²¹ Furthermore, the examination of Le Fanu's stories within the context of their publication in the *D.U.M.* and later in Dickens's *All the Year Round* is an important factor in understanding their wider significance. Le Fanu's forays into Irish historical, supernatural, and folkloric fiction are located on the spectrum between Crofton Croker at the beginning of the nineteenth century and William Wilde at the end, although his work has never been considered from this perspective. The following chapter argues that Le Fanu's Purcell stories form part of a cultural drive to establish an Irish Protestant "tradition" by returning to the origins of New English settlers in Ireland, seeking to legitimize the settler takeover from the Old English landed classes.¹²²

¹²⁰ McLoughlin, 'Settler Instability', p. 97.

¹²¹ Johnston and Lawson, p. 369.

¹²² Ó Giolláin explains that 'Going back to the origins for regeneration is a part of all mythical worldviews'. Moreover, "Folklore" was tradition, or at least traditional, and tradition helped legitimize identity. Hence the loss of tradition had negative implications for the maintenance of identity', pp. 8-9.

CHAPTER TWO

Provincial Perspectives: Le Fanu's Purcell Stories

This chapter examines Le Fanu's earliest fiction, and his least studied body of work, the twelve short stories that comprise the Purcell collection, published in the *Dublin University Magazine* between January 1838 and October 1840. Greatly influenced by antiquarian and folklore writing of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Le Fanu began contributing to the Irish Protestant periodical in the wake of its project to establish a canon of Irish national literature. Though many of the Purcell stories were later transformed into Le Fanu's more popular novels, this chapter considers them in their original context of the *Dublin University Magazine*, and also in relation to one another, which provides a new perspective for interpretation. These stories can be read as an index of Irish Protestant cultural politics at the time in that they grapple with issues of Irish Protestant identity and their roots in Ireland's colonial history. This chapter argues that Le Fanu's attempt to mythologise Ireland is an act of what Tim McLoughlin has called 'settler self-inscription', a blend of history and narrative assimilation through which the settler culture carves out a place of meaningful belonging in the country of settlement.¹ Moreover, Le Fanu's Purcell stories can be understood to form part of a larger movement towards Irish Protestant self-inscription in the post-Union period that required the repeated justification of the New English takeover from Old English settlers. This chapter details the material conditions of the original Purcell stories as opposed to the posthumously collected *The Purcell Papers* (1880), as well as introducing the character of Purcell, the fictional Catholic priest who "curates" and narrates the tales. The chapter then moves to look at the individual stories, grouped thematically as tales of the peasantry and tales of the Jacobite nobility, followed by the analysis of two stories on the subject of the Ireland's Jacobite-Williamite history.

¹ Tim McLoughlin, 'Settler Instability: Edgeworth's Irish Novels and Settler Writing from Zimbabwe', in *Irish and Postcolonial Writing: History, Theory, Practice*, ed. by Glenn Hooper and Colin Graham (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 89-108 (p. 97).

A Curate in Context: The Purcell Stories (1838-40), and *The Purcell Papers* (1880)

With the previous chapter having unpacked the broader cultural trends at play in the years before Le Fanu began writing for the *D.U.M.*, this section will introduce the Purcell stories as they first appeared in the magazine in their original form as short serials. It is also necessary to introduce the character of Purcell, whose role in the twelve stories varies from detached narrator to protagonist. The significance of using a Catholic priest as narrator will be outlined, as well as consideration of why Le Fanu wrote stories about the Catholic peasantry, the Jacobite nobility, and the Protestant Ascendancy, an unusual combination and uncharacteristic compared to other collections of the time. In January 1838, readers of the *D.U.M.* first became acquainted with ‘the late Rev. Francis Purcell, of Drumcoolagh’, styled as a ‘curious and industrious collector of old local traditions’, whose reflections would appear in the pages of the magazine bi-quarterly for the next two years. Both Purcell and the nameless ‘*residuary legatee*’ (beneficiary of the estate) who presents the late priest’s papers are the fictional curators of Le Fanu’s first published work, the twelve short stories that later came to be known collectively as *The Purcell Papers*.² When he created the character of Purcell, Le Fanu made Munster – and specifically Limerick – the chief domain of his industrious proto-folklorist, setting all the stories in the same geographical region: east County Limerick, on the borders of Tipperary and Clare and in the vicinity of Abington and the glebe-house. Le Fanu could have chosen anywhere in Ireland or beyond, or he could even have created an imaginary place, as he was to do later with *Chronicles of Golden Friars* (1870-71), a series of stories set in a fictional town in Northumberland, England.³ Instead he rooted the stories in the landscape of east Limerick and across the borders into Tipperary and Clare, the precise location in which he spent his youth and adolescence.

² Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 11 (1838), 50-54 (p. 50). Hereafter cited as ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’. The distribution of the Purcell stories, between the first story in January 1838 and final story in October 1840, is sporadic. Sometimes the stories appear in successive monthly instalments, other times a gap of up to five months could elapse. Bi-quarterly is the most accurate description of the general publishing pattern.

³ *Chronicles of Golden Friars* (London: Bentley, 1871), comprises three stories: ‘A Strange Adventure in the Life of Miss Laura Mildmay’, ‘The Bird of Passage’, and ‘The Haunted Baronet’.

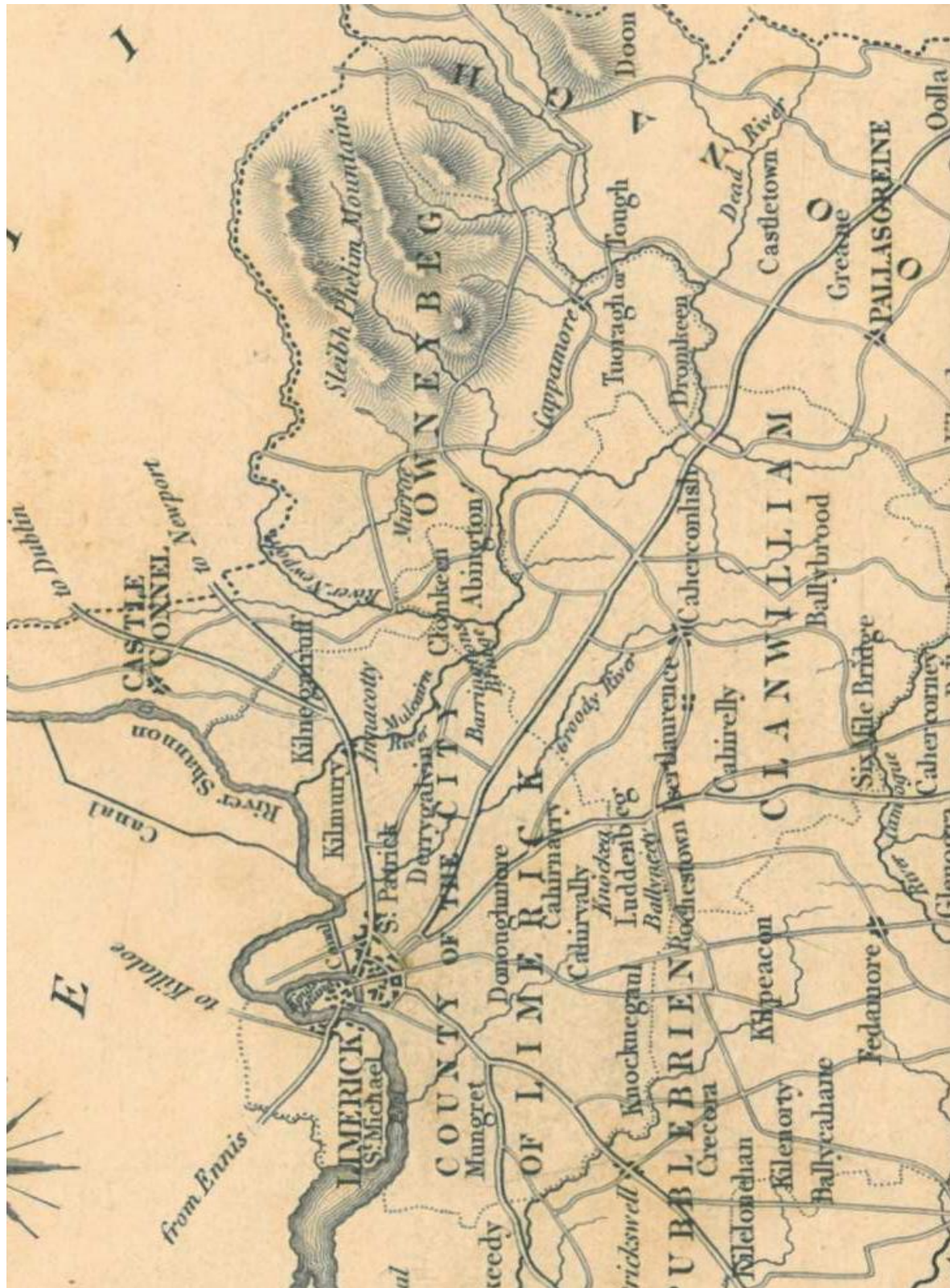


Figure 1: Section from ‘Map of County Limerick, 1837’.⁴

⁴ Samuel Lewis, *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, 3 vols. (London: S. Lewis & Co., 1837-1850), II (1837). <http://www.limerickcity.ie/Library/LocalStudies/BooksJournals/LewisAtlas1837/> [accessed 9 October 2017].

Le Fanu later repeated this pattern with a number of stories and novels set in the familiar streets of Dublin city, before abandoning the Irish provenance of his fiction at the behest of Bentley.⁵

The landscape portrayed in the Purcell stories is littered with emblems of historical memory in the shape of ruined castles, big houses, and ancient forests. The intimate descriptions of local topographical features also speak to Le Fanu's personal familiarity with the area, coupled with the evocation of personal experiences and local lore imbibed in his youth.⁶ In addition to the twelve original Purcell stories, Le Fanu later reused the same setting for five others: 'Ultor de Lacy: A Legend of Capperclun' (1861), 'The Child That Went With the Fairies', 'The White Cat of Drumgunniol', 'Stories of Lough Guir' (1870), and 'Sir Dominick's Bargain' (1872). Although the stories are set in the same locality as the Purcell stories, they do not feature the framing device of Purcell and his manuscripts. The Limerick stories bookend Le Fanu's writing career but they have remained peripheral in terms of critical analysis, despite their obvious biographical significance. A re-examination of Le Fanu's rural short fiction, as defined by their common setting and in the context of the *D.U.M.*, is more revealing of Le Fanu's authorial inclinations than an analysis of the triple-decker novels he manufactured in order to make a living. It is clear that the reason for Le Fanu's switch to English-set fiction is due primarily to Bentley's specifications, as prior to 1864 Le Fanu's writing output consisted of historical fiction with an Irish setting, and as other critics have argued, even in his English-set fiction the Irish provenance is perceptible.⁷

Until now, Le Fanu's novels have attracted much of the critical focus.⁸ His most prolific period of writing came during the final decade of his life from 1863 to 1873, in which he published an astounding fifteen three-volume novels, all of which were set in England. On average, Le Fanu produced a novel and a half per year, as well as continuing to write short stories and poems, and all while editing the *D.U.M.* full-time from 1861-69. There is little doubt, according to most evaluations, that Le Fanu excelled in the writing of short stories as

⁵ See discussion in Introduction for details of Le Fanu-Bentley correspondence and Bentley's editorial stipulations. Note 88.

⁶ William Le Fanu relays a number of personal anecdotes and aspects of Le Fanu's stories are perceptible in some. For example, the story of two funerals racing to the churchyard that Le Fanu used as a preface to 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' is relayed by William in *Seventy Years of Irish Life* (London: Edward Arnold, 1893), pp. 35-36. Hereafter cited as *Seventy Years*.

⁷ See discussion in Introduction concerning Elizabeth Bowen's reading of *Uncle Silas*. See also Raphaël Ingelbien, 'Re-Cycling Irish Short Fiction as English Narratives of Community: J. S. Le Fanu's *Chronicles of Golden Friars* (1871)', *Short Fiction in Theory and Practice*, 3 (2013), 161-73. Ingelbien has discussed the *Golden Friars* stories in terms of their transnational transformation from earlier, Irish-set versions. He suggests that the re-written and re-located *Golden Friars* stories retain elements that 'betray its [Irish] origin' (p. 161).

⁸ See discussion of 'Current Scholarship' in the Introduction for details of critical works on Le Fanu's novels. See also the Appendix to this thesis for a chronology of Le Fanu's life and publishing history, pp. 267-69.

opposed to novels, to which the discrepancy in quality between genres is testament in itself. Moreover, the plots of his early short stories were regularly expanded and repurposed for novel publication, although often the atmosphere and effect of the original story is lost over the course of three volumes (*Uncle Silas* being, perhaps, the only exception to this rule). Julia Briggs remarks that ‘Le Fanu is at his weakest where sustained invention is required’ but is ‘at his best in a traditional and well-tried tale to which he can bring his own imaginative powers’, which explains why ‘he is most successful in his ghost stories’.⁹ David Punter later qualified Briggs’s original assessment by adding that while ‘many of Le Fanu’s short stories are good’ there are also ‘some very doubtful ones’, suggesting instead that in terms of the quality of his writing ‘much seems to depend on the intensity of his involvement with the particular hallucination he is describing’ rather than being contingent upon the parameters of genre.¹⁰ As is typical in many broad surveys of Le Fanu’s work, Punter states that ‘Most of the best tales were written late in life’, citing Le Fanu’s ‘odd and irregular habits, living a largely nocturnal and reclusive life’ as the reason for this.¹¹ This biographical detail of Le Fanu’s reclusive behaviour has since proven to be hyperbole and Punter’s assessment overlooks the more likely reason for the improvement in quality: that of authorial maturity.¹² After years of experience Le Fanu had simply become a better writer. In terms of quality and technique, some of his best work is undoubtedly found in the short stories of the 1870s, particularly those that comprise *In a Glass Darkly* (1872). However, as this chapter will show, the early work was heavily informed by Le Fanu’s involvement with the *D.U.M.* and with the project of establishing a national literature

⁹ Julia Briggs, *Night Visitors: The Rise and Fall of the English Ghost Story* (London: Faber, 1977), p. 47.

¹⁰ David Punter, *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day*, 2 vols (London: Longman, 1996), I (1996), p. 203.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 203

¹² Le Fanu’s wife Susanna died suddenly in 1858, an event which affected him deeply but also coincided with a period of prolific writing. In his memoir, William recalls, ‘[Joseph’s] wife, to whom he was devotedly attached, died in 1858, and from this time he entirely forsook general society, and was seldom seen except by his near relations and a few familiar friends’, *Seventy Years*, p. 139. This statement has cultivated the opinion that Le Fanu became a complete recluse after Susanna’s death, earning himself the moniker “The Invisible Prince”. In an 1877 article in *Temple Bar*, and later as an introduction-cum-memoir to *The Purcell Papers* (1880), Albert Perceval Graves gives a more dramatic account of Le Fanu’s reclusive behaviour which has come to be regurgitated by succeeding scholars as fact: ‘Dublin, always ready with a nickname, dubbed him “The Invisible Prince;” and indeed he was for long almost invisible, except to his family and most familiar friends, unless at odd hours of the evening, when he might occasionally be seen stealing, like the ghost of his former self, between his newspaper office and his home in Merrion Square; sometimes, too, he was to be encountered in an old out-of-the-way bookshop poring over some rare black letter Astrology or Demonology’, A. P. Graves, ‘An Irish Poet and Novelist: Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu’, *Temple Bar*, 50 (1877), 504-17 (pp. 516-17), see also ‘Memoir of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu’, *The Purcell Papers*, 3 vols. (London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1880) I (1880), pp. v-xxxi (p. xxix). Perhaps seeking to capitalise on the late nineteenth-century popular resurgence of Gothic fiction, Graves probably embellished the extent of Le Fanu’s personal lugubriousness with a view to enhancing the Gothic aspects of his writing and boosting its saleability.

in response to the socio-political situation in Ireland in the 1830s and 1840s, material contexts that are fundamental to interpreting Le Fanu's work.

It is important to recognise that what scant analysis does exist of the Purcell stories has hitherto been based upon the posthumous collection *The Purcell Papers*, which was compiled by Alfred Percival Graves (1846-1931) and published by Bentley as a three-volume collection in 1880, forty years after Purcell's final appearance in the *D.U.M.* The original twelve stories were accompanied by 'Billy Malowney's Taste of Love and Glory', a standalone short story first published in the *D.U.M.* in June 1850. The story does not possess the same Purcell framework, nor is it set in the usual localities. The thirteenth tale was most likely added to extend the collection to three volumes. The collection's introduction-cum-memoir was also written by Graves and belies the fact that he was not personally acquainted with Le Fanu – Le Fanu being thirty years his senior – but was apparently familiar with the family. Although the collection did not appear until almost a decade after Le Fanu's death in February 1873, correspondence between Graves and Richard Bentley dates from as early as 30 December 1873 and reveals an already established agreement that Graves would write the memoirs: 'Mr William Le Fanu will furnish me with any particulars about Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu that you require. In what form would you like the memoirs to be written – & at what length?'¹³ A significant error in Graves's introduction, coupled with evidence in correspondence between Graves and William Le Fanu on the subject of which stories he might possibly include in a collection, suggests that Graves was not overly familiar with Le Fanu's work. In the introduction to *The Purcell Papers*, Graves mistakenly cites 'The Adventures of Sir Robert Ardagh' as his first published story. 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh' was, though, the second of Le Fanu's stories to be published, with 'The Ghost and the Bone-Setter' appearing in January 1838, two months earlier.¹⁴ Whatever Graves' motivation for compiling the 1880

¹³ Alfred Perceval Graves to R. Bentley, 30 December 1873. Walter Eugene Edens, 'Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu: A Minor Victorian and his Publisher' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Illinois, 1963), p. 250.

¹⁴ When asked by Graves, William Le Fanu offers his opinion on what shape the collection might take: 'I think the "Quare Gander" was the last of the Purcell Papers. "The Cock and Anchor" wd. be quite too long for one volume. It is a three volume novel & quite as long, if not longer, than any of the other novels my brother wrote'. William advises that the various Irish novels are too long to be included (as even a casual reader of Le Fanu would know), but suggests that 'there are a good many poems besides the three which are in The Purcell Papers'. William Le Fanu to Graves, 31 October 1879, Edens transcriptions, p. 254. From this letter we can infer that Graves inquired about which stories might be added to the existing twelve Purcell stories, presumably to expand the collection into a third volume, thereby earning Graves a higher fee. A letter between Graves and George Bentley confirms this: 'that I am to receive £50 for collecting & editing Le Fanu's Irish Stories & poems in three volumes, if they run to that length -- £30 if they fill only two volumes'. Graves to G Bentley, 20 October 1879. Edens transcriptions, p. 253. Concern over the copyright of Le Fanu's work, then believed to be held by Le Fanu's son, Phillip, is apparently assuaged when in a letter from Graves to George Bentley dated 8 November 1879, Graves states: 'I have received a letter from Phillip Le Fanu, son of Joseph's, expressing satisfaction at the idea of my editing his father's Irish stories.' As a footnote here by Edens points out, 'Philip

edition, consideration of the Purcell stories outside the context of the periodical in which they first appeared necessarily engenders an alternative interpretation of these works, a fact hitherto unacknowledged by other scholars. My reading of the Purcell stories will therefore consider them in the context of what Elizabeth Tilley has referred to as the ‘periodicity’ of the *D.U.M.*, that is, ‘to understand the journal’s response to popular literature’ and consider the magazine ‘as a whole, at least in terms of its yearly volumes’ in which a coherence of ‘Thematic development, repetition of stylistic features, editorial rigor, should all be in evidence’.¹⁵ The material and ideological conditions of the *D.U.M.* have a considerable effect on the interpretation of the Purcell stories.

The coherence of the magazine’s editorial and ideological mission, particularly under Butt’s editorship in the 1830s when the Purcell stories were published, is crucial to the stories’ explication. Gaïd Girard emphasises the importance of the *D.U.M.* as a “laboratory” for Irish Protestant writing in that the magazine ‘offered Le Fanu a unique opportunity to build his distinctive voice, encouraging his forays into legendary Irish tradition, European romantic literature and weird scientific discoveries in shorter tales’.¹⁶ Girard considers Le Fanu’s writing style to have been conveniently in line with what was then popular in the *D.U.M.*, while conversely, McCormack takes the view that Le Fanu was ‘ambitious to write for the magazine’.¹⁷ Similarly, Wayne E. Hall believes that Le Fanu was strongly influenced by Butt’s fictional contributions to the magazine, *Chapters of College Romance*, and fashioned his Purcell stories accordingly: ‘Because of its narrative technique, Faustian conflict, atmosphere of guilt and evil, a tale of promise ending in ruin, and a sense of the world as treacherous, “The

had died somewhere in Dublin in December of the preceding year [1878]. Either Graves had received the letter long before or was leading Bentley on’, Graves to G. Bentley, 8 November 1879, Edens transcriptions, p. 255. To put this deal in financial context, £50 in today’s currency is approximately equivalent to £2,500. According to earlier letters between Bentley and Le Fanu, Le Fanu earned on average £250 for each 2-3 volume novel (approx. £10,000 today). Graves negotiated a fee of a quarter of Le Fanu’s usual commission for merely compiling Le Fanu’s work and writing a short introduction. Considering that a three-volume novel often ran to around 180,000 words (or 60-80,000 words per volume), Graves secured an extremely lucrative deal for himself. For conversion and inflation calculator see *The National Archives*, <<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/>> [accessed 21 April 2017]. For information on composition of three-volume novels in the nineteenth century see Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900*, second ed. (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1975; 1998).

¹⁵ Elizabeth Tilley, ‘J. S. Le Fanu, Gothic, and the Irish Periodical’, in *Irish Gothics: Genres, Modes, and Traditions, 1750-1890*, ed. by Christina Morin and Niall Gillespie (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 130-46 (p. 130).

¹⁶ Gaïd Girard, ‘Growing a Voice: Le Fanu and the Laboratory of the *Dublin University Magazine*’, in *Inspiring a Mysterious Terror’: 200 Years of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed. by Jarlath Killeen and Valeria Cavalli (Bern: Peter Lang, 2016), pp. 155-75 (p. 158).

¹⁷ W. J. McCormack, *Sheridan Le Fanu and Victorian Ireland*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 55.

Murdered Fellow” reads much like a model for a Le Fanu story’.¹⁸ While it is safe to assume that Le Fanu was attentive to earlier issues of the *D.U.M.* before submitting his own work, I would argue that his style is not as contrived as McCormack and Hall suggest, and yet not as coincidental as Girard suggests. Considered in context with his contemporaries and forebears such as Thomas Crofton Croker, William Carleton, Samuel Lover, Charles Lever and indeed, Isaac Butt, the Purcell stories are indicative of the popularity of Irish folk tales and travelogues at the time, and in this way, Le Fanu wrote in a style similar to what he was accustomed to reading. More importantly, Le Fanu wrote with the purpose of contributing to an Irish Protestant form of ‘settler colonial storytelling’, in line with the *D.U.M.*’s move towards self-inscription bound-up in their national literature project.¹⁹

Where Le Fanu differs most from his forebears and contemporaries is in his use of a Catholic priest as narrator, rather than the typical device of the educated outsider collecting popular legends of romance and banditry while sojourning through the wild districts of the country. For example, such a device is employed by Thomas Crofton Croker in *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland* (1825), by William Carleton in *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* (1830), and by Samuel Lover in *Legends and Stories of Ireland* (1827), and *Popular Tales and Legends of the Irish Peasantry* (1834). Le Fanu would later adopt this device in the short story ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’ (1872). Jennifer Schacker refers to the importance of ‘the implied narrator’ and ‘the implied reader’ in early nineteenth-century folklore studies, arguing that the “object of the Compiler” rests on an implied distinction between the Irish peasantry (credulous and superstitious) and the reader (a critical observer of such phenomena)’.²⁰ In her study of Croker’s *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland* (1825), Schacker identifies ‘key passages [in which] Croker invokes an established colonialist rhetoric that places the reader [...] squarely in a position of critical authority and cultural superiority’.²¹ Although Schacker discusses non-fiction collections such as Croker’s, Purcell is presented to the readers of the *D.U.M.* as a *bona fide* collector, ‘a curious and industrious

¹⁸ Wayne E. Hall, *Dialogues in the Margin: A Study of the Dublin University Magazine* (Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe Ltd, 2000), pp. 81-82. ‘The Murdered Fellow’ is one of a collection of stories by Isaac Butt that appeared in the *D.U.M.* in instalments under pseudonym of Edward Stevens O’Brien. They commenced in vol. 4 (1834), 486-501, and the six stories or “chapters” appeared irregularly until vol. 10 (1837), 499-520. The stories were later printed as *Chapters of College Romance* (London: C. J. Skeet, 1863).

¹⁹ Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 96.

²⁰ Jennifer Schacker, *National Dreams: The Remaking of Fairy Tales in Nineteenth-Century England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), p. 50, quoting from Croker, *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland* (London: John Murray, 1825), frontispiece.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

collector of old local traditions' expressly modelled in the style of non-fiction volumes by Croker and others. In a further act of deliberate artifice, the *residuary legatee* fulfils the role of "compiler" of Purcell's 'manuscript papers', enacting a further level of distance between the Irish peasantry, Purcell, and the reader of the *D.U.M.*²² Thus the 'colonialist rhetoric' espied by Schacker is also applicable to Le Fanu's fictional folklore.²³ Folklore collections traded on an implied and colonially-inflected stereotype of the Irish national character, particularly the lower classes: poor, uneducated, superstitious, drunk. Roberto Romani explains that 'in accordance with nineteenth-century usage, what is meant by the term "Irish character" is the traits and attitudes exclusively of the Irish peasantry'. Typically, these traits consisted of 'warm-heartedness, inquisitiveness, and social disposition; whereas, on the dark side, its indolence, proneness to fight and riot, inclination to lawlessness, and lack of forward thinking were commonly mentioned'. According to Romani, 'The psychological traits and the detectable behaviour that made up the "Irish character"' were universally accepted and 'not in question at the time'.²⁴ Schacker explains that the reader of stories about Ireland 'is encouraged to think of himself or herself as the dominant culture', regardless of the reader's own socio-economic circumstances.²⁵ Croker was writing predominantly for an English audience, constructing a 'portrait of Ireland [that] takes shape through an English lens'.²⁶ Le Fanu, however, was writing explicitly for the Irish Protestant readers of the *D.U.M.*, so his representation of Ireland had a different objective and a different frame of reference. Although Purcell is an "outsider" to a certain extent, in that he is nomadic wanderer collecting stories on the course of his journeys across Munster, he is also an "insider" in terms of his religious affiliation, a status that grants him access to information to which an outsider would not be privy.

²² 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', p. 50.

²³ Schacker, p. 48.

²⁴ Roberto Romani, 'British Views on Irish National Character, 1800–1846, An Intellectual History', *History of European Ideas*, 23.5-6 (1997), 193-219 (p. 193). Romani continues: 'Even the Irish writers, Protestant and Catholic, added little substantial to the stereotype, which, however, marked a significant step beyond the "wild Irishman" whose echoes still resound through David Hume's *History of England*. For the perceived image of the Irish had in fact undergone a slight but decisive shift over the course of the eighteenth century. In the decades of concern here, some long-noticed qualities succeeded in making an impact on the stereotype. Now, even the most thunderous Tory reviewer had to acknowledge that the Irish had certain virtues, like hospitality, courage, or fondness for family affections. Despite this, my survey will show that political discourse overwhelmingly dealt with Irish faults, constant reference being made to their notoriety. [...] The features of Irish character were focussed through comparison not only with the English character but also with the Scottish, there definitely being three actors on the stage rather than simply two', pp. 193-94.

²⁵ Schacker, p. 57.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

The use of Purcell in a magazine filled with dire warnings about the nefarious activities of Irish Catholics and their priests would almost certainly have engendered both trepidation and intrigue in readers of the *D.U.M.*, which was perhaps the point. The use of a Catholic priest is especially provocative given that “Persecutions of Protestants” was a common feature in the *D.U.M.* at the time. In the same volume as the first Purcell story, the *D.U.M.* includes a report from the *Warder*, which in turn quotes the *Limerick Standard* from 9 December 1837: ‘It becomes our duty to-day to record a very glaring case of persecution effected by a Roman Catholic priest and his unfeeling parishioners upon a whole family of unoffending Protestants, which occurred at a place called Ballyclough, within about three miles of this city [Limerick], during the course of the past week’. The persecution in question was related to a Protestant family who, after interfering in an argument over land, are the victims of a Ribbonist plot to run them out of the parish by way of punishment. The Catholic priest, we are told, is unsympathetic to the family’s plight, telling them “I’ll not allow you to live in the parish any longer”.²⁷ This brief extract is just one of numerous stories about unoffending Protestants suffering unprovoked attacks by proselytizing priests and their Catholic rabble. The inflammatory content of these articles undoubtedly colours the reception of the fictional content contained in the same volume. Purcell’s narrative offers another level of intrigue and serves to unsettle the reader who feels that they are gaining access to prohibited information. Furthermore, Purcell has access to both “high” and “low” cultures, narrating stories from both the peasantry and the landed aristocracy. S. J. Connolly points out that in the eighteenth century, the Catholic clergy operated ‘as intermediaries between élite and popular culture’ as ‘The gradual but increasing progress of ecclesiastical reform had ensured that even the least well qualified of the parochial clergy were literate and possessed of some degree of both theological and classical training’.²⁸ In his position as both Catholic and educated the fictional priest can transcend class boundaries, and because of this, the Purcell stories can be split neatly enough between stories of high and low cultures: there are seven stories of the nobility and five stories of the peasantry.

Purcell is first introduced to readers as ‘the Late Rev. Francis Purcell’, ‘parish priest in the south of Ireland’, and aligned to ‘a race of priests – those of the old school, a race now nearly extinct – whose habits were from many causes more refined, and whose tastes more

²⁷ n. a., ‘Memoranda of the Month’, *D.U.M.*, 11, (1838), 125-40 (p. 133).

²⁸ Seán Connolly, “‘Ag Déanamh Commanding’ Elite Responses to Popular Culture, 1660-1850’, in *Irish Popular Culture, 1650-1850*, ed. by James S. Donnelly Jr. and Kerby A. Miller (Dublin and Portland, OR: Irish Academic Press, 1998), pp. 1-29 (p. 16).

literary than are those of the alumni of Maynooth'.²⁹ Before the Catholic seminary at Maynooth was established in 1795, because of the Penal Laws Catholic priests had to be educated on the continent – primarily in France – which became problematic after 1789 due to the French Revolution. Long before this, David Dickson notes that at the beginning of the eighteenth century French 'invasion rumours [...] gave sinister significance to the influx of continentally educated priests'.³⁰ A cohort of radicalised Catholic priests returning to Ireland to preach revolutionary thinking to their Irish congregations was an alarming prospect for the British government, and as Dáire Keogh explains, 'By shrewdly exploiting this crisis, the Irish bishops secured the endowment of a Catholic seminary from the Protestant state'.³¹ The reference to 'those of the old school' of priests unambiguously connects Purcell with a continental education and endows him with a certain amount of cosmopolitanism.³² While he may be a Catholic priest, Purcell has been refined by education and travel, thus acquiring the ability to observe and report objectively. Moreover, it is important that Purcell predates the establishment of Maynooth as it means that he comes prior to the more intense form of Catholic nationalism that Le Fanu associated with the priests educated there. The type of nationalism inculcated at Maynooth in the nineteenth century would exclude Irish Protestant claims to the same. Based upon the dates provided in the stories, the period during which Purcell was supposedly a seminarian in France suggests a possible association with the seminary of Saint-Sulpice (*Séminaire de Saint-Sulpice*), founded in Paris in 1641, and one of the oldest seminaries in France. As will become clear in the interpretation of the Purcell stories, the French connection typically denotes exposure to a type of religious and political radicalism, with which Purcell himself is also connected.

Through Purcell, Le Fanu was attempting to create his own version of the educated observer and folk tale collector, constructed to replicate the ethnographic accounts furnished by travel writers and antiquarians of the eighteenth century. The illusion that the Purcell stories are manuscripts collected and transcribed from eighteenth century oral tales lends further credence to their legitimacy as genuine sources. The first 'Extract from the MS. Papers of the Late Rev. Francis Purcell, of Drumcoolagh' opens with a framing device by way of

²⁹ 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', p. 50.

³⁰ David Dickson, *New Foundations: Ireland 1660-1800* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2000), pp. 79-80.

³¹ Dáire Keogh, 'Maynooth: A Catholic Seminary in a Protestant State', *History Ireland*, 3.3 (1995), 43-47 (p. 43). Keogh explains further that 'The penal era was drawing to a close, but the French Revolution and the loss of the continental colleges threatened the supply of priests to Ireland [...] As immediate hopes of a restoration in France faded, the need for an Irish-based seminary became increasingly obvious to the Irish hierarchy. The bishops feared the potential danger posed by the return to Ireland of young clerics imbued with democratic principles', p. 43.

³² 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', p. 50.

introduction to the deceased Purcell and his anonymous friend who presents Purcell's manuscript papers to the readers of the magazine.³³ This frame narrative is not explicit in the eleven subsequent stories, and instead each instalment thereafter is figured numerically in sequence: 'the second extract', 'the third extract', and so forth. The structure is predicated on the assumption that regular readers of the magazine would recognise Purcell as a recurring character-writer in the context of the magazine. McCormack notes that 'it might be possible to argue that the presentation of unsigned serial fiction in the *DUM* was designed to exclude any kind of identification which went beyond the internal relations of the magazines' contents and history'.³⁴ As such, through his unsigned fiction, Le Fanu makes use of the mechanics of seriality to exploit an author-reader continuum that would be sustained for the best part of two years. It is possible, then, to read the stories as a kind of "serial" within the context of the magazine. It is safe to assume that Le Fanu had, to a certain extent, a back catalogue of these stories already written prior to publication, considering that the first two appeared within two months of one another, while the third and fourth appeared the following June and August respectively. The idea of Purcell as a fully formed persona and regular contributor to the *D.U.M.* must have been envisaged prior to publication and from the outset, Le Fanu's first story was probably never intended to be a stand-alone text. The extended introductory segment that features in the first story was therefore important for establishing Purcell and his credentials going forward.

The historical, rural setting of the stories also creates a sense of the disappearing past that is typical of folklore writing. Folklore, Diarmuid Ó Giolláin contends, 'is predicated on the death of tradition [...] "Folklore" appeared as it was disappearing, it was discovered as it was being lost, it was recovered as it ceased to be'.³⁵ Recouping such traditions was part of a move towards Irish Protestant self-inscription, complimented by the national literature project transpiring in the *D.U.M.* at the time; the move to determine an Irish Protestant identity in the nineteenth century required an exploration of seventeenth and eighteenth-century cultural history and "traditions" that is reflected in the 'periodicity' of the magazine during the Butt years.³⁶ A similar exploration of the past occurs in settler narratives. Veracini explains that settler narratives routinely involve 'nostalgic and idealised reconstructions of settler pasts'.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ W. J. McCormack, "'Never put your name to an anonymous letter': Serial Reading in the *Dublin University Magazine*, 1861 to 1869', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 26 (1996), 100-15 (p. 104).

³⁵ Diarmuid Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore: Tradition, Modernity, Identity* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2000), p. 8.

³⁶ Tilley, 'J. S. Le Fanu, Gothic, and the Irish Periodical', p. 130.

Furthermore, ‘disregarding histories that precede the arrival of the “first” settlers is one essential feature of the politics of memory in settler colonial contexts’, an act of what has been termed “mnemonic myopia”.³⁷ Le Fanu’s fiction never ventures further back than the late seventeenth century, the precise moment of New English settlement, which would seem to confirm his disinterest in Ireland’s colonial pre-history. The staging of the Purcell stories in the early decades of the eighteenth century, in the years following the Williamite settlements, would seem to reveal an interest in reconstructing settler pasts as per Veracini’s specifications. McCormack claims that by evoking the subject of a waning Catholic gentry in the eighteenth century, ‘Le Fanu has moved back beyond the peasant-rebel to the heroic, defeated Jacobites whose lives were at risk in their own country’, and in this way creates a link with the nineteenth century Protestant readers who can relate to a sense of loss where power and prestige are concerned.³⁸ But more than this, Le Fanu returned obsessively to write stories set in the period following New English settlement as a means of rooting Irish Protestants in the moment of settler conception. As an expression of legitimacy and belonging, the return to the originary moment formed part of an ongoing process of settler indigenization in the nineteenth century. The Purcell stories reveal a mnemonic myopia in their ‘narratives of successful multicultural [or cross-sectarian] integration’ that in fact ‘conceal[...] trauma, poverty, and ongoing exclusion’, a doubling narrative of conciliation underwritten by trauma that is the hallmark of settler writing.³⁹

High Spirits of the Lower Classes: Five Tales of the Catholic Peasantry

The following section will consider five of the Purcell stories in which the protagonists are members of the Catholic lower classes or the “peasantry”. Beginning with Le Fanu’s first published story, ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’ (1838), this section will proceed chronologically and conclude with the final Purcell story, ‘The Quare Gander’ (1840). These five stories are fashioned in the style of a *seanchaí* (storyteller), with use of vernacular language throughout. Purcell’s role in these stories is inconsistent: sometimes he is involved in the main action of the story and recounts it first hand, as in ‘The Drunkard’s Dream’; in others, he is barely mentioned at all. While McCormack views the Purcell stories as evidence of Le Fanu’s religious and social alienation engendered by the Abington years, arguably the stories of the

³⁷ Veracini, p. 90, quoting Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca, NY & London: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 2.

³⁸ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 56.

³⁹ Veracini, p. 92.

Catholic lower classes indicate a genuine interest in and knowledge of the traditions of the peasantry.⁴⁰ In her recent study of spirituality in Victorian fiction Jen Cadwallader posits that the ‘transmission of people and incidents from his childhood into his fiction suggests that Le Fanu felt a sense of connection and sympathy with the Irish peasantry with whom he lived in such close quarters’, which in turn ‘helps explain the mixed politics of his fiction’.⁴¹ Indeed, the ‘mixed politics of his fiction’ is precisely why analysis of the Purcell stories is here split between tales of the nobility and tales of the peasantry, as both sets have different objectives. While the tales of the peasantry do certainly evince ‘a sense of connection and sympathy with the Irish peasantry’, equally they reveal class discordance and a dependence on negative stereotypes of rural Irish Catholics.⁴² Le Fanu’s articulation of the settler relationship with the indigenous is perceptible in these stories, the second of three preoccupations of settler writing outlined in the Introduction. In repackaging Catholic folklore for a Protestant readership, there is a process of “othering” at work in distinguishing between the traditions of the Jacobite nobility, with whom Le Fanu evidently related, and the Catholic rabble, projected as quaint but queer with the potential for perfidy. Beyond the veneer of humour and drunken mishaps in the stories of the peasantry, class conflict and the threat of a Catholic takeover is perceptible.

The Ghost and the Bone-setter’

‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’ has received very little critical attention, and most of the extant analysis is dismissive of the story. McCormack describes the story as ‘not itself a remarkable production’,⁴³ and ‘an exercise in pseudo-Gothic comedy, [that] need not detain us’.⁴⁴ Hall introduces it as ‘A piece remarkable only for its four separate narrative layers’, the story being relayed through the separate narratives of four characters layered backwards in time: the anonymous *residuary legatee*, Purcell, Terry Neil, and Terry Neil senior.⁴⁵ Recently, however, Girard has called for a renewed appraisal of Le Fanu’s early stories, arguing that ‘the most effective of his tales are his shorter pieces, most of them published in the *DUM*’.⁴⁶ Before commencing with the narrative proper, the reader is first introduced to Purcell and the

⁴⁰ McCormack remarks: ‘Can it be an accident that these stories should conclude the decade of the Le Fanus’ disillusion with their country, of their humiliation in a religious guerrilla war, of their domestic distress?’, *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 61.

⁴¹ Jen Cadwallader, *Spirits and Spirituality in Victorian Fiction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 25.

⁴² Cadwallader, p. 25.

⁴³ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 55.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁴⁵ Hall, p. 80.

⁴⁶ Girard, p. 157.

residuary legatee, who proceeds to recount the origin of ‘the superstition illustrated by the following story’, one that is ‘prevalent throughout the south of Ireland’. The narrator explains the superstition that ‘the corpse last buried is obliged, during his juniority of interment, to supply his brother tenants of the church-yard in which he lies, with fresh water to allay the burning thirst of purgatory’.⁴⁷ This supplementary explanation of a Catholic superstition was necessary for the Protestant readership of the *D.U.M.*, who may not have been familiar with the belief. Schacker notes that such annotations were common practice in folklore writing in which scenes are constructed as if ‘provided by a local and to be intended for an audience unacquainted with the locale. It offers readers a privileged, “insider’s” perspective but is very much oriented toward an “outsider’s” sensibility and frame of reference’.⁴⁸ Schacker is here referring to Croker’s *Fairy Legends* and his descriptions of Ireland for an overseas audience. Le Fanu was writing for an Irish periodical based approximately one hundred miles from where the story is set, and with a predominantly Irish readership, yet the introduction is framed as if describing a completely foreign culture from an outsider’s perspective. The same superstition is reported by William Le Fanu in *Seventy Years*, which suggests that the story was known to the Le Fanus as children in Abington. William explains that ‘the so-called battles of the Derrins (buryings), had no connection with the regular faction fights, and continued long after the former had ceased [...] I have a vivid recollection of one such fight in our neighbourhood, when much blood flowed’.⁴⁹ The fight in question is the same as described by Le Fanu in the Purcell introduction that precedes ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’, in which two funerals approaching the same churchyard (which William identifies as Abington), race to bury their dead first, with one party taking a short-cut through a field and throwing the coffin over the wall of the churchyard. A bloody fight ensued. The correlation between William’s memoir and Le Fanu’s Irish-set stories indicate that both brothers were exposed to storytelling and folktales of the peasantry from an early age. Le Fanu drew from these oral traditions for much of his Irish-set fiction, particularly in the Purcell stories.

‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’ is very short, being only four pages long in its original form. As such, there is little to consider in terms of plot and character development, but the story’s strengths are, as Hall indicates, certainly in its form and editorial structure. The protagonist of ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’ is Terry Neil, a local tenant on the Phelim estate who also functions as the bone-setter of the title, and whose supernatural experience is related

⁴⁷ ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’, p. 50.

⁴⁸ Schacker, p. 52.

⁴⁹ *Seventy Years*, pp. 35-36.

to Purcell by Neil's son of the same name. In the absence of local landlord Sir Phelim, Terry Neil senior spends an evening sitting in the castle with the servant, Larry O'Connor, as 'was customary when Sir Phelim id go anywhere out iv the country, for some iv the tinants to sit up to watch in the ould castle, just for a kind of compliment to the ould family'.⁵⁰ Neil encounters the ghost of the current Sir Phelim's grandfather who 'stept out clane an' complete'⁵¹ of his portrait hung above the fireplace. The ghost complains of a broken leg that he demands bone-setter Neil fix: "'Here's my leg,'" says he [Phelim], cockin' it up to him [Neil] – "pull it for bare life," says he; an' "if you don't, by the immortal powers I'll not lave a bone in your carcish I'll not powdher" says he'.⁵² During this scene, the ghost accidentally swigs from a bottle of holy water, mistaking it for alcohol; the ghost and the bone-setter are flung apart, sending 'the leg clane aff his body in my father's hands'. Neil awakens the next morning 'with the leg iv one of the great ould chairs pulled clane out iv the socket an' tight in his hand'.⁵³

'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' is more a commentary on class relations than it is a ghost story, since the supernatural elements are for comedic rather than horrific effect. The story recalls a time of custom and cooperation between master and servant, where according to the narrator the tenants sit in the castle 'for a kind of compliment to the ould family'. He then qualifies this statement by remarking that 'a mighty unplisant compliment it was for the tinants, for there wasn't a man of them but knew there was something quare about the ould castle'. What is initially depicted as an act of cordiality is quickly tempered by the division between landlord and tenant, between "us" and "them". The story illustrates the uncomfortable encroachment of the nascent Catholic middle class on a waning landed aristocracy. The reader is told at the outset that Neil's livelihood as a bone-setter was becoming increasingly prosperous, and that Neil 'began to feel his heart growin' light and his purse heavy; an' took a bit iv a farm in Squire Phelim's ground, just undher the ould castle'.⁵⁴ Neil senior is a precursor to a middle-class professional doctor, into which professions Catholics moved in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁵⁵ Although the story is set sometime in the early-to-mid-eighteenth century, the nineteenth-century unease surrounding a burgeoning Catholic middle class of professionals is discernible. Neil senior is a self-made man, one who has seemingly succeeded without privilege or formal education. We are told that Neil was 'mighty

⁵⁰ 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', p. 51.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 52.

⁵² Ibid., pp. 53-54.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 54.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 51.

⁵⁵ See Ronnie Moore and Stuart McClean (eds.), *Folk Healing and Health Care Practices in Britain and Ireland: Stethoscopes, Wands, and Crystals* (Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2010).

handy entirely for carpenter's work, and mendin' ould spdeethrees, an' the likes i' that. An' so he tuck up with bone-setting, as was most nathural'.⁵⁶ Moreover, we are told at the outset of the story that his son, Neil junior (the narrator of the story), is 'a *well-spoken* man, having for a considerable time instructed the ingenious youth of his native parish in such of the liberal arts and sciences as he found it convenient to profess'.⁵⁷ It is clear from this description that Neil junior is educated and, we are explicitly told, has been instructing the youth of his parish. In other words, he is likely a hedge school teacher.

Catholic Emancipation in 1829 challenged and significantly destabilised Protestant control of the professions of law, medicine, clergy, and policing, but the debate on denominational education dominated in the 1830s. The subject of Catholic education at all levels, including the establishment of a Catholic university, was regularly contested in the early issues of the *D.U.M.*⁵⁸ The National Schools system was established in 1831, two years before the journal began, and after many years of lobbying by Catholic church authorities. Connolly explains that while in theory the National Schools 'had been intended to provide a mixed education: in practice, most were from that start attended mainly by pupils from one particular denomination, and a high proportion were in fact managed by local clergymen'.⁵⁹ In other professions, McCormack explains, although 'the Protestant ascendancy and its middle-class followers still held the "commanding heights" in administration and the professions' in the mid-nineteenth century, 'Catholics had advanced significantly to press against the remaining restrictions which barred them from holding important legal offices'.⁶⁰ Similarly, Elizabeth Malcolm confirms the widespread impact of the introduction of 'a policy of positive discrimination in favour of Catholics' in the Royal Irish Constabulary in the 1830s, a move that led to deep sectarian conflict in the previously Protestant-dominated police force.⁶¹ Concurrently, the ban on Irish Catholics in parliament was lifted and the growth of movements such as O'Connell's Catholic Association (1823), meant that 'The Irish now possessed an

⁵⁶ 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', p. 51.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 50. Original emphasis.

⁵⁸ Tracts on national education were common in the *D.U.M.* in the 1830s. See, for example, Samuel O'Sullivan, 'National Education', *Dublin University Magazine*, 11 (1838), 195-222. This report from the Select Committee of the House of Lords, on the new plan of Education in Ireland (London, 1837), states the magazine's position clearly: 'as we are satisfied that nothing more is necessary to convince every honest man that the educational system which is patronised by the government is one of the greatest of the curses which Whig misrule has ever inflicted upon unfortunate Ireland', pp. 195-96.

⁵⁹ S. J. Connolly, *Religion and Society in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1985), p. 35.

⁶⁰ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 195.

⁶¹ Elizabeth Malcolm, "'The Reign of Terror': The Politics of Policing Ireland in the Late 1830s", *Irish Historical Studies*, 32 (2000), 59-74 (p. 59).

experiential basis of modern, organized, political collective action'.⁶² In short, the Catholics were advancing on all fronts.

The comic façade of 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' belies the disconcerting space and power relations at the core of the narrative, further underscored by the parable of reversed servitude. The industrious Neil family are contrasted with the languid, landowning Phelims – one of whom is absent, while the ghost of another is reported to have died from 'burst[ing] a blood vessel [while] pullin' out a cork out iv a bottle', an indication of a decadent lifestyle, further underscored by the ghost being known to 'come down out of the frame [...] to brake the bottles and glasses [...] an' dhrink all he could come at'.⁶³ It is also clear that the ghost of Sir Phelim is in purgatory, which amounts to a strong moral judgement on the ghost's character while living. Aside from the foreshadowing of the purgatory superstition in the introduction, Neil detects 'a great scent of brimstone' coming from the ghost as he passes by,⁶⁴ as well as the ghost's slip of the tongue in suggesting he 'came up – down, I mane', says he, – (an' as little the mistake was, my father tuck notice iv it)'.⁶⁵ The ghost of Sir Phelim is indentured as a drawer of water: "'and I'm appointed," says he, "to assist in carryin' the wather, an' gets a mighty poor share iv it myself," says he, "an' a mighty troublesome, warin' job it is, I can tell you"'. Although a wealthy landowner in life, in the afterlife he is not, he admits, 'as asy [easy] as I had a right to expect', reduced to a menial role as a "hewer of water".⁶⁶ While the denominations of any of the characters – including Purcell – are not stated explicitly, references to purgatory, confession, mass, and a 'Father Murphy' clearly indicate Catholicism.⁶⁷ If the ghost of Sir Phelim is Catholic, it is possible that his grandson is a Protestant, given that the family still own their estate at the time the story is set at the height of the Penal Laws.⁶⁸ By the time Neil is narrating the story to Purcell – after the death of his father which makes it roughly a generation or so after the main action of the story – Neil junior's subtle allusions to the 'ould

⁶² Anne Kane, *Constructing Irish National Identity: Discourse and Ritual During the Land War, 1879-1882* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p.34.

⁶³ 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', p. 51.

⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 52.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 53. Original emphasis.

⁶⁶ Ibid. This biblical reference is lifted from Joshua 9. 23 – 'Now therefore, you are cursed, and you shall never cease being slaves, both hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God'.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 53-54.

⁶⁸ Under An Act to prevent the further Growth of Popery (commonly known as the Popery Act), of 1703 (amended 1709 and repealed 1829), Catholic inheritances of land had to be equally subdivided between all the owner's sons (Gavelkind), with the exception that if the eldest son and heir converted to Protestantism, he would become the one and only tenant of estate (Primogeniture). The law significantly reduced the size and influence of Catholic land ownership in Ireland. Thomas Bartlett remarks that 'Not surprisingly, such laws led to a large number of conversions among Catholic landowners (over seven hundred by the 1730s) and a concurrent further diminution in the amount of land owned by Catholics'. Thomas Bartlett, *Ireland: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 164.

castle' and the 'ould family',⁶⁹ as well as the closing line 'he was never known to walk again', suggest that the Phelim family may be no longer around.⁷⁰

The Phelims can be read as a version of the Rackrents, the profligate Ascendancy family from Maria Edgeworth's influential satirical novel *Castle Rackrent* (1800). The novel tells the story of four generations of Rackrent heirs narrated by their former servant, Thady Quirk. Through successive mismanagement of the estate over many years, it eventually falls into the hands of the narrator's son Jason, a young lawyer who assiduously acquires the legal rights and economic means to usurp the Rackrents. The Rackrents are also a family who have converted to Catholicism, being formerly the O'Shaughlins. McCormack compares Purcell with Thady Quirk, postulating that 'The priest, like the family retainer, was a privileged person with access to the secrets of the caste superior to his own'.⁷¹ In 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', the Neils can be compared to the Quirks, particularly Neil junior and Jason, both educated and upwardly mobile. Raphaël Ingelbien notes the use of unreliable and duplicitous servants elsewhere in Le Fanu's fiction, most notably in 'Squire Toby's Will', a short story published in *Temple Bar* in 1868.⁷² Ingelbien draws parallels between the story's servant-narrator, Old Cooper, and Thady Quirk, suggesting that 'issues of cultural conflict as well as social difference between Ascendancy aristocrats and Catholic servants helped enhance the servant's potential treacherousness'.⁷³ Ingelbien also notes the suspicion that existed between servants and masters more generally, both in literature and in life, citing as an example an incident from Le Fanu's own life when he was shocked to discover that his footman had absconded to take part in the Fenian Rising of 1867.⁷⁴ William Le Fanu observes that 'In giving answers the Irish peasantry, as a rule, have no great regard for truth, but like to give the answer which they think will be most agreeable to the questioner'.⁷⁵ This kind of duplicity is most evident in Le Fanu's story when, upon inadvertently inciting the ire of the ghost, Neil (who though not a servant is nevertheless a tenant), declares himself to be "only a foolish, ignorant poor man", meaning that the ghost should disregard his comments. When attesting to the

⁶⁹ 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', p. 51.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 54.

⁷¹ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 55.

⁷² Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, 'Squire Toby's Will', *Temple Bar*, 22 (1868), 212-35. Le Fanu also employs the servant-narrator device in the second Purcell story, 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh' (1838), and later in 'Sir Dominick's Bargain – A Legend of Dunoran' (1872).

⁷³ Raphaël Ingelbien, 'The Teller of the Tale? Narration, Genre and Irishness in "Squire Toby's Will"', in *Inspiring a Mysterious Terror: 200 Years of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed. by Jarlath Killeen and Valeria Cavalli (Bern: Peter Lang, 2016), pp. 139-54 (pp. 144-45). Hereafter cited as 'The Teller of the Tale?'.
⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 145. See also *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 210.

⁷⁵ *Seventy Years*, p. 180.

ghost's declaration of himself as "a sober, riglar gintelman", Neil replies "That's your name, sure enough," says my father (though it was a big lie for him, but he could not help it)', seeming to agree with the ghost but in reality believing the opposite to be true.⁷⁶

In her study of nineteenth century domestic servants, Julie Nash tackles the falsehood of "separate spheres" of existence for servants and their masters, what she terms 'the false dichotomy of public and private realms', when in truth servants had unrestricted access and influence in the private home. Nash points out that though the idea of separate spheres was an 'important cultural myth', it was one that 'sometimes ignored household realities' of servants living in very intimate proximity with their employers. Moreover, Nash remarks, 'Domestic relations and domestic conflicts nearly always have broad cultural implications'.⁷⁷ The separate spheres of servant and master overlap in 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', with Terry Neil and Lawrence the servant seated in the parlour of Phelim castle while the family are absent. Within the parlour, the natural and supernatural spheres also overlap through use of the haunted portrait, which is emblematic of the class transgression. Kamilla Elliott explains that in Gothic literature, the haunted portrait is a method of 'projecting bourgeois identities into positions where they are not yet, but will be'.⁷⁸ The haunted portrait originally appeared in the first Gothic novel, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), by Horace Walpole, (from where Le Fanu likely lifted it), and is a common feature in Gothic fiction.⁷⁹ In 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' the portrait depicts old Sir Phelim, who upon encountering Terry Neil in his parlour, proclaims himself to have been "a good masther to Pathrick Neil, your grandfather".⁸⁰ The ghost is addressing the grandson of his former servant who is now seated in the parlour of the castle while the current Sir Phelim is absent. Neil is a representative of a nascent Catholic class, seated in the big house and projected into a position of future power. In this sense, the servant has usurped the master.

While at first glance 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' appears to be an inoffensive piece, just below the surface of the narrative uneasy class and colonial relations are perceptible. Johnston and Lawson point to the impasse of settler culture in that 'the "settler" subject exercises authority over the indigene and the land at the same time as translating desire for the

⁷⁶ 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', p. 53.

⁷⁷ Julie Nash, *Servants and Paternalism in the Works of Maria Edgeworth and Elizabeth Gaskell* (Aldershot, Hampshire: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), p. 2.

⁷⁸ Kamilla Elliott, *Portraiture and British Gothic Fiction: The Rise of Picture Identification, 1764-1835* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), p. 5.

⁷⁹ The haunted portrait also reappears in later works by Le Fanu. See, for example, *Carmilla* (1872), *Uncle Silas* (1864), *The House by the Churchyard* (1863), 'An Account of Some Strange Disturbances in an Old House in Aungier Street' (1853), and 'Strange Event in the Life of Schalken the Painter' (1839).

⁸⁰ 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', p. 53.

indigene and the land into a desire for native authenticity'.⁸¹ The desire for indigenous authenticity manifests in the cultivation of oral folk stories for a Protestant readership during this period, stories that explore the relationship between indigenous and settler cultures. Drawing upon this history serves in part to establish a mythology of belonging for Irish Protestants in the nineteenth century, which by definition is important for settler societies which, as time progresses, increasingly seek validation for settlement beyond a purely imperial imperative. At the same time, 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' is a story about Catholics told by a Protestant to other Protestants. As such, the authority over, and difference from the indigene is maintained through the "othering" of the Catholic peasantry as nescient and superstitious, as well as potentially dangerous, which serves as a caution to existing Protestant authority. Irish Protestant patronage was an important standard of difference in the post-Union years as the lack of any official governance was replaced by the governance of Irish culture which manifested in the foundation of Protestant-led societies such as the RIA (1785), the Royal Dublin Society (1731; 1820), the Royal Hibernian Academy (1823), and the *Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* (1849). Stories such as 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' evince the 'doubled goal' of the settler narrative, which is 'concerned to act out the suppression or effacement of the indigene [and] concerned to perform the concomitant indigenization of the settler'.⁸²

'The Drunkard's Dream'

'The Drunkard's Dream' is the fourth Purcell story, published in the *D.U.M.* in August 1838. In the intervening months between 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' and 'The Drunkard's Dream', two stories documenting the Jacobite nobility had appeared: 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh' in March and 'The Last Heir of Castle Connor' in June. 'The Drunkard's Dream' sees a return to the Catholic peasantry and features Purcell as the first-person narrator, a narrative style introduced in the previous story, 'The Last Heir of Castle Connor', as opposed to the omniscient approach of the first two. The reader is told that, at the time of the story, Purcell has been 'appointed the living of C—h' and has 'rented a small house in the town, which bears the same name', which is possibly Croagh, a small village in southwest County Limerick, although is more likely Caherconlish, a parish and town in east Limerick under the Diocese of Emly (of which Le Fanu's father was Dean), and roughly four miles from

⁸¹ Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, 'Settler Colonies', in *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*, ed. by Henry Schwartz and Sangeeta Ray (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), pp. 360-76 (p. 369).

⁸² Johnston and Lawson, p. 369.

Abington.⁸³ The quasi-supernatural story relayed by Purcell is fused with elements of psychological terror and explores the notion of dreams and premonitions. Purcell plays a direct role in the action of this story in his official capacity while exercising his parochial duties around Limerick. Purcell is summoned to administer the last rites at the deathbed of a reprobate parishioner, Pat Connell, after he has fallen down the stairs while drunk, only to find upon arrival that he is too late and Connell is already dead. Purcell begins to lead the now bereaved family in prayer when he suddenly notices Connell sitting upright: ‘the man whom all believed to have been actually dead, was living!’⁸⁴ Connell proceeds to tell Purcell about the dream or ‘vision’ he had while unconscious. The dream ostensibly involves a detailed description of his descent into hell and his encounter with the devil.⁸⁵ Purcell encourages Connell to consider the dream a warning and to repent and abandon his sinful lifestyle, to adopt ‘a conversion from profligacy, and the restoration of decent habits, and to religious feeling’, which Connell dutifully undertakes.⁸⁶ However, Connell inevitably succumbs to his alcohol addiction once more and is found dead on the stairs (again).

Of course, there is a possible connection between this incorrigible Connell and *the* O’Connell, for whom Le Fanu had nothing but unmitigated disdain, although it is also possible that the name Connell is used by Le Fanu merely as typical of both Irish and Catholic nomenclature.⁸⁷ McCormack quotes Le Fanu’s various invectives against O’Connell in personal letters and in newspapers he owned and edited, such as *The Warder* and the *Dublin Evening Mail*: ‘Mr O’Connell has been, throughout his whole political career, the sworn exterminator of Protestantism’.⁸⁸ A survey of Le Fanu’s personal correspondence and journalistic pieces gives the impression that Le Fanu – in line with other Irish Tory contemporaries – considered Irish Protestantism to be under attack from the British Whig government on one side, and from Catholic and O’Connellite fervour on the other. McCormack has signalled that a ‘dislocation’ in Irish society took place between 1838-40, the same period of the publication of the Purcell stories. He notes that while Irish Protestantism was ‘At

⁸³ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘The Drunkard’s Dream’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 12 (1838), 151-57 (p. 151). Hereafter cited as ‘The Drunkard’s Dream’.

⁸⁴ ‘The Drunkard’s Dream’, p. 154.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 156.

⁸⁷ The *D.U.M.* regularly published heavily prejudiced articles about O’Connell and his speeches, often quoting him out of context and characterising his beliefs as inherently violent and hostile towards Irish Protestants. See also Kevin Sullivan, ‘Sheridan Le Fanu: The Purcell Papers, 1838-40’, *Irish University Review*, 2.1 (1972), 5-19 (p. 6), and *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 36. In *Seventy Years*, William also mentions a humorous anecdote involving one Pat Connell of Limerick and the pre-emptive purchase of a coffin, see p. 115.

⁸⁸ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 84, quoting from the *Dublin Evening Mail*, 21 October 1840.

loggerheads with its sectarian foes at home, it was also deeply suspicious of its traditional ally, the imperial government at Westminster'. As Irish Protestants were 'Caught between new and aggressive power of the Irish Catholics and the distant authority of English politicians who openly repudiated their identity of interest' they were 'forced to examine its alternatives'.⁸⁹ Further to the general concern over the Catholic-Whig alliance, Irish Protestants also felt that Ireland was being generally mismanaged by Westminster, while the British government's view of 'Britannia's "sick sister" Erin' was that the country was in need of social, economic and moral reformation.⁹⁰ 'The Drunkard's Dream' can be read as a commentary on the degraded conditions of Irish rural life, set in the years of landlord absenteeism and governmental neglect that mirrored the present state of Ireland in 1838. In it we move from the lofty heights of Castle Phelim, Castle Ardagh, and Castle Connor of the previous three stories, situated in their 'refreshing glades'⁹¹ of sylvan solitude, to the uneven pavements and narrow lanes 'chill without ventilation, reeking in all manner of offensive effluviæ, dingy, smoky, sickly', of the 'small old fashioned towns' that surround such castles, comprised of buildings 'not only in a wretched but in a dangerous condition'.⁹² Whereas 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' introduced an industrious and nascent rural Catholic population, this second appearance of the Irish peasantry, in the shape of Pat Connell, is the stereotypical profligate Paddy, 'a drunkard' and 'a presumptuous sinner' who (Purcell infers), has thus far spurned his attempts at religious and moral counsel. One of the most striking elements of the story is the poverty of the Connell family, which Purcell notes on his arrival at their home: 'Your father has changed his abode since I last visited him, and, I am afraid, much for the worse'.⁹³ The ensuing description of the Connell homestead is gratuitous in detail, noting the 'steep and broken stairs' and the 'door of patched and half rotten plank' that led to the 'squalid chamber' where only 'one candle, held in the fingers of a scared and haggard-looking child, was burning in the room'.⁹⁴ Though Connell is a carpenter by trade, his family live in abysmal conditions, with the implication that Connell's alcoholism is to blame. However, by revealing the abject poverty of the Connell family, coupled with like descriptions of the degraded town in which they live, Le Fanu also

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 80.

⁹⁰ Michael de Nie, *The Eternal Paddy: Irish Identity and the British Press, 1798-1882* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2004), p. 3.

⁹¹ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh', *Dublin University Magazine*, 11 (1838) 313-24 (p. 313). Hereafter cited as 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh'.

⁹² 'The Drunkard's Dream', p. 152.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 153.

reveals the challenging socio-economic conditions of the poorest sections of Irish society, even for those who, like Connell, possessed the skills of a trade.

The Irish Poor Law was enacted in 1838, a move that had been subject to much debate in the years before, following its implementation in England in 1834. From as early as 1833, the Royal Commission for Inquiring into the Condition of the Poorer Classes in Ireland was in effect, just one of a number of commissions set up at the time to investigate the social, economic, and religious situation in Ireland in the early nineteenth century.⁹⁵ Commissions such as George Cornwall Lewis's inquiry into the Condition of the Poorer Classes in Ireland (1833), confirmed such religious and class disparity as scientific reality.⁹⁶ The suitability of introducing an Irish Poor Law modelled on the English system was hotly contested, not least in the pages of the *D.U.M.*⁹⁷ In December 1833, an article entitled 'Ireland – No. 11' considers the conditions of the Irish poor and ill-conceived notion of implementing a Poor Law:

Few, if any, will be found, we suppose, to adopt now the broad principle of the poor laws of England, as advisable for us. The plan of ekeing out the wages of a labourer in full work by an additional allowance from the parish work-house, cannot be too earnestly deprecated; it has led the French commission of inquiry on the means of improving the social condition of their nation, to denounce the English poor laws as the internal cancer which is eating into the bowels of England's social prosperity; but bad as the system stigmatized in these exaggerated terms may be, and little as we feel disposed for its unmodified

⁹⁵ Commissions and reports include: 'Reports of Commissioners for enquiring into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland (1835)', 'Report of Select Committee on the draining of bogs in Ireland (1810)', Report from the Select Committee on the state of Ireland (1831-32)', Reports of Commissioners on the state of the municipal corporations in Ireland (1835)', 'Reports of Commissioners appointed to consider and recommend a general system of railways for Ireland (1837)', 'Reports from the Commissioners of the Board of Education in Ireland (1813-14)', 'Commissioners of Irish Education Inquiry, Second Report (1826-27)', Commissioners of Public Instruction in Ireland, Second Report (1835)', 'Report on the State of Agriculture (1836)', 'Reports of Select Committee on foundation schools and education in Ireland (1837- 38)'.

⁹⁶ George Cornwall Lewis (1806-63), was charged to investigate the viability of implementing an Irish Poor Law (1838), modelled on the English Poor Law introduced in 1834, supposed to improve conditions for the poorer classes of Great Britain through the administration of "poor relief" in the form of poor houses and/or paid labour. Lewis found that the Irish peasant's over-reliance on land was the main cause of underdevelopment in the Irish countryside, but significantly Cornwall reported that the Irish "character" was capable of improvement, their backwardness being a result if political economy rather than racial inferiority. See *Poor Law Inquiry (Ireland), Appendix G. Report on the State of the Irish Poor in Great Britain* (1836). See also George Cornwall Lewis, *On Local Disturbances in Ireland, and the Irish Church Question* (London: B. Fellowes, 1836). For analysis of Cornwall's inquiry see John-Paul McGauran, 'George Cornwall Lewis, Irish Character and the Irish Poor Law Debate, 1833-1836', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 57 (2017), 28-39, and John Offer, "'Virtue", "Citizen Character" and "Social Environment": Social Theory and Agency in Social Policy since 1830', *Journal of Social Policy*, 35.2 (2006), 283-302.

⁹⁷ Almost every volume of the *D.U.M.* between 1833 and 1838 contains some mention of the desperate conditions of the Irish poor or discussion of the Poor Laws. See, for example, Isaac Butt and William West, 'Critical Notice', *Dublin University Magazine*, 1 (1833), 105-11; 'Ireland – No. 11', *Dublin University Magazine*, 2 (1833), 665-75; Samuel O'Sullivan, 'Ireland in 1834', *Dublin University Magazine*, 5 (1835), 1-16; 'Poor Laws for Ireland', *Dublin University Magazine*, 6 (1835), 24-31; 'The State of the Irish Poor', *Dublin University Magazine*, 7 (1836), 349-64; Samuel Ferguson, 'Capabilities of Ireland', *Dublin University Magazine*, 9 (1837), 46-57; Samuel O'Sullivan, 'Irish Tranquillity', *Dublin University Magazine*, 9 (1837), 577-86; 'Professor Butt's Introductory Lecture', *Dublin University Magazine* 9 (1837), 597-600.

introduction amongst us, we think it less unfair and less injurious than the manner in which the whole back-breaking burden of pauperism is thrown upon the cottiers and working classes throughout the country parts of Ireland.⁹⁸

Such articles outlining the utter destitution of the Irish poor juxtaposed against Ireland's potential for agricultural and industrial revolution illustrate the frustration levelled against the British government at this time. The inability of Ireland to legislate for itself on this and other issues is a constant cause of consternation in the *D.U.M.*, revealed by numerous articles on the subject. In July 1837, an article entitled 'Poor Law for Ireland' examines the proposed bill alongside the report from the Poor Inquiry Commissioners, which makes clear the *D.U.M.*'s position on "what's wrong" with Ireland:

Misery, confessedly, exists to a great extent. It is impossible to look, without compassion, upon a patient, a squalid, and a suffering population, multiplying under privations that would almost extinguish life, and enduring hardships with a resignation that would almost seem a second nature. This, too, in a country fertile beyond many other countries, and from which provisions are annually exported to an amount more than sufficient to supply all its own wants, if only they could be detained at home for the sustenance of its hardy and industrious people. Absenteeship, also, is felt as a great evil. A drain, of between two and three millions annually, for the support of men, who have delegated their domestic and social duties to hired retainers, whose duty it is to screw the tenantry, while they spend the produce of their industry in London, or in Italy, or in Paris, must needs be felt as a cause of exhaustion and a source of discontent, by which, while misery is generated, those dispositions and those habitudes are produced and fostered, which lead to crime and to insubordination.⁹⁹

⁹⁸ 'Ireland – No. 11', *Dublin University Magazine*, 2 (1833), 665-75 (p. 668).

⁹⁹ Samuel O'Sullivan, 'Poor Law for Ireland', *Dublin University Magazine* 10 (1837), 69-78 (p. 70). The article also includes excerpts from letters and lectures by 'Professor Butt': "'Mr. Nicholls's [Sir George Nicholls, British Poor Law Commissioner] grand and fatal mistake is this – he started on the assumption that he must deal with destitution in Ireland as if it were the accident of individuals, instead of considering it as the essential and general condition of a class. It is this which has led him to propose, as a remedial measure, workhouses where one out of every 100 of the population might occasionally be relieved; instead of suggesting some measure by which we might endeavour to find sufficient food for one third of the population who have not enough to eat"'. The article continues: 'To use the words of our excellent professor: "A knowledge of the manner of the preparation of the hill may be useful, as a key to understanding, or at least explaining the character of its provisions. Any one acquainted with Ireland must feel, upon perusing this bill, that it has not grown naturally out of a knowledge of the wants and circumstances of the country, but has been framed to meet a particular exigency in legislation. The truth is, that it has been brought in to meet the desire on the part of the public, that some remedial measure should be applied to the destitution which is known to exist in Ireland. The necessity of meeting this desire determined the cabinet to prepare some poor law. On this determination, Mr. Nicholls was sent over to report whether it would be possible to establish the workhouse system in Ireland; and he has reported, as he might have done without going to Ireland at all, that it is possible; and he has accordingly prepared a plan for dotting the country with workhouses, and for regulating and managing them. But he has not touched – indeed he could not touch – upon the vital question, whether the establishment of workhouses would be a remedy for the state of things which leaves a large proportion of our fellow-beings without sufficient food; and makes the condition of the poor of Ireland a disgrace, not only to the British empire, but to humanity', p. 70.

This section identifies the source of Ireland's problems: legislative mismanagement from Westminster. Ireland's population suffers while the country's potential for self-sufficiency goes untapped. 'The Drunkard's Dream' draws attention to these issues through the untapped resources of Connell, who though skilled in carpentry, lives in a squalid one-roomed dwelling with his large family. Even after his return to 'industry and sobriety', Connell remains in the same run-down house, telling Purcell: "'I'd leave this house if I could, but I can't find another lodging in the town so cheap, and I'll not take a better till I've paid off all my debts'".¹⁰⁰ Despite personal reform, then, Connell is financially restricted, essentially trapped in a poverty cycle.

Cadwallader links 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' with the moralising message of abstinence in 'The Drunkard's Dream', noting that the Capuchin Father Theobald Mathew (1790-1856), founded the Abstinence Society in 1838, the same year both stories were published. Cadwallader claims that 'The Drunkard's Dream' was written after Le Fanu and his brother 'attended a few of Mathew's "monster meetings"' and that Le Fanu had 'witnessed Father Mathew administering the pledge', although her source for this information is unspecified.¹⁰¹ Cadwallader cites a paragraph in *Seventy Years* in which William mentions that he and Joseph witnessed a procession passing along Sackville Street (O'Connell Street), in Dublin in 1838, although William does not stipulate in what month this occurred ('The Drunkard's Dream' was published in August), nor does he make clear whether the brothers went deliberately to attend this spectacle:

It was the year 1838 that Father Mathew, one of the simplest minded men I have ever known, began his noble temperance work [...] I have seen several of his monster meetings where thousands took the pledge; many of the great processions too, marching to meetings. As one of these [processions] with bands and banners passed through Sackville Street, a tipsy man, leaning with his back to the railings, was gazing at it with a contemptuous stare, and as my brother and I passed by him we heard him say, "What are they after all? What are they but a pack of drunkards?"¹⁰²

The point of this anecdote is the ironic humour of the drunk man watching the temperance procession, rather than extolling the virtues of Father Mathew or indeed the value of temperance in general, in which practice neither William nor Joseph partook. It is also possible that the brothers just happened to be walking along Sackville Street when a temperance procession passed them by coincidence, given that by 1838 both would have been enrolled at the nearby Trinity College. While William mentions that he had attended some of Father

¹⁰⁰ 'The Drunkard's Dream', p. 156.

¹⁰¹ Cadwallader, p. 31.

¹⁰² *Seventy Years*, p. 53.

Mathew's other monster meetings, there is no indication that his brother accompanied him to those. Cadwallader argues that in the story, Pat Connell's 'newly found sobriety, too, could serve as a textbook example in support of the abstinence cause', and links the temperance theme to two later stories from *The Purcell Papers*: 'Billy Maloney's Taste of Love and Glory' and 'The Quare Gander', although the former, of course, is not an original Purcell story.¹⁰³ While there is certainly an argument to be made for Cadwallader's connection between spirit drinking and spirit seeing, particularly in 'The Drunkard's Dream', the extent of Father Mathew's influence on Le Fanu and his writing is debateable.

Purcell, despite admitting 'his scepticism respecting the reality' of Connell's vision, uses the opportunity to encourage Connell's 'restoration to decent habits, and to religious feeling', pronouncing to Connell 'that our salvation depended not on a single word or deed of a moment, but upon the habits of a life'.¹⁰⁴ This statement is incorrect, however, as Catholic doctrine provides that a last-minute deathbed repentance does, in fact, override the habits of a lifetime. Cadwallader also admits that 'Purcell's counsel is perhaps more Protestant than Catholic' here, but maintains that 'its association of sobriety and industry echo[es] Father Mathew's message'.¹⁰⁵ However, it could be argued that Purcell's comment speaks more to a wider social criticism of Ireland, that implementing a "one size fits all" model of poor reform will not undo decades of governmental negligence, just as one act of temperance will not undo Connell's lifetime of indulgence. Subsequently, rather than pass judgment on the lapse in temperance that leads to Connell's death, Purcell seems sympathetic with Connell's plight:

But oh! who can describe the inveterate tenacity with which a drunkard's habits cling to him through life. He may repent – he may reform – he may look with actual abhorrence upon his profligacy; but amid all this reformation and compunction, who can tell the moment in which the base and ruinous propensity may not recur, triumphing over resolution, remorse, shame, everything, and prostrating its victim once more in all that is destructive and revolting in that fatal vice.¹⁰⁶

If anything, this passage would seem to show Le Fanu's *lack* of faith in the temperance movement, and suggests that despite its adherent's best intentions, even those inspired by the fear of eternal damnation, alcoholism and vice will win out, 'triumphing over resolution, remorse, shame, everything'.¹⁰⁷ Arguably, Le Fanu is here pointing to the specious use of the

¹⁰³ Cadwallader, p. 32. See also Colm Kerrigan, *Father Mathew and the Irish Temperance Movement, 1838-1849* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1992).

¹⁰⁴ 'The Drunkard's Dream', pp. 156.

¹⁰⁵ Cadwallader, p. 32.

¹⁰⁶ 'The Drunkard's Dream', pp. 156-57.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 157.

temperance movement in accounting for the condition of the Irish poor. Rather than blaming Irish Catholics for their inveterate drunkenness and idleness, legislative mismanagement also had a role to play in their misfortune. Moreover, when Connell reveals his vision of descending to hell after a night of drinking, he explains that he awoke during the night and ‘wanted the fresh air’, but rather than wake the children who were sleeping in the same room, ‘I groped my way out, and went down [the stairs] as asy as I could. I felt quite sober, and I counted the steps one after another, as I was going down, that I might not stumble at the bottom’.¹⁰⁸ Rather than stumbling out in a drunken stupor, Connell cautiously descends the stairs, which we already know to be ‘steep and broken’.¹⁰⁹ Connell then describes how ‘When I came to the first landing-place, God be about us always! the floor of it sunk under me, and I went down, down, down, till the senses almost left me’.¹¹⁰ This imagined sinking into hell corresponds to a literal sinking of the landing as an unsound structure. Later, Purcell returns to find Connell ‘busily employed in nailing down planks upon the landing place, through which, at the commencement of his mysterious vision, it seemed he had sunk’. As mentioned above, Connell explains that “‘I can never pass over that floor without trembling, I’d leave this house if I could, but I can’t find another lodging in the town so cheap, and I’ll not take a better till I’ve paid off all my debts’”.¹¹¹ Despite his return to temperance and industry, Connell still cannot afford to leave his lodgings. It is the material conditions of his life that contribute to his downfall – literally and figuratively – rather than individual moral depravity.

As with ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’, ‘The ‘Drunkard’s Dream’ concerns the conditions of Ireland’s rural poor, although in this instance there is no cross-class engagement. Purcell comes to the fore as a moralising standard with which the readers may align themselves even though he is a Catholic priest, while Father Mathew’s temperance movement is revealed to be hollow dogma. Unlike the industrious Neil family, the Connells are apparently trapped in escapable poverty, although it is suggested that this situation is not entirely of their own making. However, the emphasis appears to be on the unavailability – or inability – of the mechanisms of self-improvement for some strata of society to effect change. This non-threatening depiction of the Catholic peasantry as unaspiring could be read as an affirmation of Protestant authority in their privileged roles at the “‘commanding heights’” of Irish society, as the Catholic poor do not possess the qualities of leadership, as illustrated by Connell (the

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 155.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 153.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 155.

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 156.

slippage between Connell and O'Connell seems sharper here).¹¹² Romani discusses the conception of Ireland under the Union: 'The Union notwithstanding, Ireland continued to be perceived as an obstinately rebellious province which had to be healed of its many wounds before any true contribution to the national polity could be contemplated'. As an example of settler writing, 'The Drunkard's Dream' draws upon cultural stereotypes in portraying the Irish character as drunken and profligate, and by extension unfit to rule at a time when Catholic Emancipation continued to threaten Protestant power. The narrative can be understood as a critical appraisal of Irish society and the need for improvement – governmentally and personally – before, as Romani summates, 'any true contribution to the national polity could be contemplated'.¹¹³ If the Neils demonstrate a Catholic polity primed for takeover, the Connells reveal how precipitous such a move would be.

'Scraps of Hibernian Ballads'

The Purcell stories are not one long and uninterrupted, monolithic narrative. They are ruptured, interrupted, fragmented, and contradictory. The short story pattern established in the first seven Purcell extracts is interrupted by 'Scraps of Hibernian Ballads', an amalgamation of poetry and prose published in the *D.U.M.* in June 1839 as the eighth Purcell extract.¹¹⁴ Following 'The Drunkard's Dream', 'Scraps' was the first story of the Catholic peasantry to appear in almost a year. Jacqueline Simpson has described Le Fanu's 'attitude' to the oral culture of 'the less sophisticated people of his own neighbourhood' as 'both patronising and affectionate', an attitude that is evident throughout the Purcell stories.¹¹⁵ As has thus far been demonstrated in readings of 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' and 'The Drunkard's Dream', Le Fanu's representation of the Catholic peasantry vacillates between cultural stereotypes of drunkenness and superstition, to recognition of the plight of the poorest section of Irish society, to acknowledgement of the threat of a Catholic takeover. Heather Ingman in her study of the Irish short story argues that in the post-Union crisis of identity suffered by the 'Anglo-Irish', 'the dawning realization [that] they were in fact as much Irish as English' gave way to a desire to 'explain, defend and justify their country to the English', which then 'came to the fore in the Anglo-Irish short narrative'.¹¹⁶ Many of these "justifications" are found in the *D.U.M.*,

¹¹² Sheridan Le Fanu, p. 195.

¹¹³ Romani, p. 194.

¹¹⁴ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, 'Scraps of Hibernian Ballads', *Dublin University Magazine*, 13 (1839), 752-56. Hereafter cited as 'Scraps'.

¹¹⁵ Jacqueline Simpson, 'The charm of Old Women's Tales: Le Fanu's Use of Oral Tradition', *The Green Book*, 1 (2013), 43-55 (p. 43).

¹¹⁶ Heather Ingman, *A History of the Irish Short Story* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 17.

particularly in articles such as ‘Attractions of Ireland’ (1836), and ‘Capabilities of Ireland’ (1837), part of a series promoting the ‘attractions, local, social, and economical’ of Ireland, which served to dispel British perceptions about the extent of Ireland’s natural resources, raw materials, and potential for industry.¹¹⁷ Such misconceptions are challenged with empirical data and other examples to the contrary: ‘according to the estimate of Mr. Griffith, under whom the valuation of Ireland is now taking place, 14,603,000 acres of cultivated land, yielding, on the estimate of the same high authority, an agricultural produce of the annual value of £36,000,000’.¹¹⁸ Similarly, Ingman notes the *D.U.M.*’s self-professed mission to justify and promote a national literature in the same way, citing an article from 1841 that demonstrates the magazine’s aim to ‘project a sense of the cultural unity of the Irish nation’.¹¹⁹ In the editorial cited by Ingman – ‘Postscript: To Our Hundredth Number’ – the author proclaims: ‘we have had from the beginning one aim especially fixed before us; and that was the creation of a literature, which should be NATIONAL without degenerating into mere PROVINCIALISM’.¹²⁰ The Purcell stories contribute to this mission, and though “provincial” in terms of their rural settings, the cross-sectarian scope eschews any charge of “provincialism”. As such, the introduction of some ‘Hibernian Ballads’ to supplement the short stories serves to bolster Purcell’s repertoire of oral culture. However, given that Le Fanu invents peasant characters who recite stories and poems, rather than collecting them from living sources in the style of Croker and others, his intentions are complex.

Purcell opens this selection of ballads by stating that he wishes to counter the ‘grievous misconceptions’ that ‘tend to degrade the pretensions of my native land, an impression that there exists no such thing as an indigenous modern Irish composition, deserving the name of poetry’. In presenting the work of the fictional bard Michael Finley and other anonymous poets, Purcell wishes to prove that the Irish peasant is capable of mastering the art of poetry, though in reality, Le Fanu is submitting his own work. Purcell observes that while ‘There are to be sure in Ireland, as in all countries, poems which deserved to be laughed at’, there is nevertheless a sincerity in Purcell’s assertion that ‘No country, no time, is devoid of real poetry, or

¹¹⁷ Samuel O’Sullivan, ‘Attractions of Ireland’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 8 (1836), 112-31 (p. 112).

¹¹⁸ Samuel Ferguson, ‘Capabilities of Ireland’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 9 (1837), 46-57 (p. 47).

¹¹⁹ Ingman, p. 25. Ingman cites James McGlashan, ‘Postscript: To Our Hundredth Number’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 17 (1841), 528-32. In the same piece, McGlashan distinguishes between the magazine’s literary content and its politics: ‘Those opposed to our views of public affairs have, of course, always condemned our politics; but we do not know a single instance in which this has led them to treat the literary portion of our work with any injustice. A gentle admonition, that we should omit all papers on political subjects, is generally the severest censure we undergo from the Whig or Radical newspapers – a censure more likely to confirm than discourage us in our wonted course’, p. 529.

¹²⁰ McGlashan, ‘Postscript: To Our Hundredth Number’, p. 531. Original capitalisation.

something approaching it'.¹²¹ In their miscellaneous range, the Purcell stories were contrived as sketches "collected" by Purcell from disparate sources, nobility and peasantry alike, showcasing the variety of style, subject, and genre of Irish writing. This was in line with the project of literary reclamation undertaken by the *D.U.M.* In reality, all the stories were conceived by the imagination of one man. As Girard has pointed out, the varied interests of the *D.U.M.* 'offered Le Fanu a unique opportunity to build his distinctive voice', but further to developing his personal style, Le Fanu was experimenting with genre in order to showcase the "variety" of Irish writing capabilities.¹²² Although he wrote these stories and poems himself, Le Fanu's objective was to demonstrate the (apparently) broad capabilities of Irish literary talent. 'Scraps' is perhaps the clearest example of Le Fanu's conscious contribution to the *D.U.M.*'s national literature project, through which 'Irish life, Irish manners, and Irish modes of thinking, have been brought in their genuine reality [...] rescued from the deforming misrepresentations of caricaturing novels and dramas' and because of whose efforts, 'Our neighbours have learned to speak no longer with contempt of Irish authorship'.¹²³

'Scraps' consists of two short poems, a short stanza from the traditional Irish song, 'Shanavan Voich', and one long ballad, all housed within an introductory narrative by Purcell.¹²⁴ The first nameless and authorless piece is composed, we are told, by 'a self-educated man' of 'very humble birth' who after the death of 'her whom he loved', rose 'to high distinctions in the church to which he devoted himself'. The poem is composed of four stanzas of nine lines and conforms to a repeated rhyme scheme of a-a-b-a-b-c-c-c-b: 'When moonlight falls on wave and wimple, | And silvers every circling dimple, | that onward, onward sails. | When fragrant hawthorns wild and simple | lend perfume to gales | And the pale moon in heaven abiding'.¹²⁵ The poem is a Romantic piece modelled on the nature poems of Wordsworth and Keats; it also contains elements of an elegy. Immediately following the poem, Purcell writes: 'These lines I have transcribed in order to prove a point which I have heard you deny, namely, that an Irish peasant [...] may write at least correctly in the matter of measure, language, and rhyme', a statement that reveals the true purpose of the poem as deliberate pastiche. Le Fanu demonstrated an affiliation for poetry from a young age, as documented by William: 'When

¹²¹ 'Scraps', pp. 752-53.

¹²² Girard, p. 158.

¹²³ McGlashan, 'Postscript: To Our Hundredth Number', p. 532.

¹²⁴ 'Shanavan Voich' is an oral corruption of the Irish 'Sean-Bhean bhocht', which translates as poor old woman. The traditional Irish rebel song dates from the United Irishman Rebellion of 1798, although Purcell's exploits are supposedly situated long before this event. The Sean-Bhean bhocht is a figurative personification of Ireland used since ancient Gaelic times, later adopted by W. B. Yeats (amongst others), for his nationalist play *Cathleen Ní Houlihan*.

¹²⁵ 'Scraps', p. 753.

scarcely fifteen years of age my brother Joseph had written many pieces of poetry, which showed a depth of imagination and feeling unusual in a boy of that age'.¹²⁶ The second poem is attributed to Michael Finley and comprises of 'a portion of a ballad' on the subject of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, one of the United Irishmen leaders in 1798. In *Seventy Years*, William reveals that their mother, Emma, 'who, as a girl, had been in her heart more or less a rebel' had told Joseph of 'the hard fate which, in '98, befell many of those whom she knew and admired [and] of Lord Edward Fitzgerald and the fight he made for his life, and showed him the dagger with which he fought for it', Emma having stolen the dagger from a 'Major Swan' while at a dinner party.¹²⁷ The section comprises four stanzas of four lines and is a romantic rendition composed from the perspective of one of Fitzgerald's faithful followers.

Overall, the poems are not particularly noteworthy as they are purposely crafted to showcase Irish mastery of an English style. Accordingly, Le Fanu's poems have been largely neglected by Le Fanu scholars. What renders the poems significant is the narrative commentary in which the poems are framed. While on the one hand Purcell proceeds to defend the scope of 'indigenous modern Irish composition, deserving the name of poetry',¹²⁸ stating: 'I am desirous of showing you that although barbarism may and do exist in our native ballads, there are still to be found exceptions which furnish examples of strict correctness in rhyme and metre', Le Fanu subsequently highlights some concerns in the transmission of oral to written culture.¹²⁹ Purcell introduces Michael Finley as illiterate with 'a rooted aversion to pen, ink and paper', and moreover, 'his ever wakeful fears lest some literary pirate should transfer his *oral* poetry to paper – fears which are not altogether without warrant'. That pirate, it transpires, is Purcell himself, who attempts to convince Finley of the merits of transmitting oral to written: 'I urged the advisability of some care for the permanence of his reputation, as a motive to induce him to consent to have his poems written down, and thus reduced to a palpable and enduring form'.¹³⁰ In this fictional scene of transference from oral to written forms, Le Fanu reveals the project at the core of Irish antiquarian and folklore projects such as Croker's or Carleton's, that of translating oral culture to the written form, which, as Schacker points out, is not a neutral act of transference: 'Verbatim transcription [...] seeks to "capture" the voice of the speaker. But, of course, transcription also "speaks" the concerns of the transcriber'. As such, Schacker

¹²⁶ *Seventy Years*, p. 9.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 16-17.

¹²⁸ 'Scraps', p. 752.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 754.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 754. Original emphasis.

explains, ‘All written representations of oral discourse may be seen as double-voiced, and only one of those voices fits well with the modern, proprietorial concept of the Author’.¹³¹

In presenting this incident of a reluctant oral contributor and a possibly over-zealous collector, Le Fanu is perhaps questioning the process of folklore curation. However, this incident can also be seen as one supporting the cause of the collector, given that Purcell’s objective is merely to promote and preserve the work of Finley, not to poach it. Purcell reports that Finley ‘has now been dead nearly eleven years, and his fame has not prospered by the tactics which he pursued’. In other words, Finley’s reputation has suffered because he refused to commit his poems to print. Purcell then explains that he has ‘With no small difficulty, and no inconsiderable manoeuvring [...] at an expense of trouble and conscience’ managed to secure an ‘accurate “report” of one of his most popular recitations’ which he then presents in full as the ballad ‘Phaudhrig Crohoore’.¹³² Le Fanu thus addresses any censure levelled against the cultivation of oral culture by arguing that the process of translation and written record serves to benefit the illiterate population who do not understand the merits of philological documentation. This accords with what Veracini discusses as the various forms of transference that are enacted in settler societies: from the mass transference of people in the act of settlement, to the cultural transference enacted in processes of assimilation. In particular, Veracini describes the various ‘narrative transfer[s]’ that occur in the representation of indigenous peoples, one of which includes ‘when indigenous peoples are represented as hopelessly backward, as unchanging specimens of a primitive form of humanity inhabiting pockets of past surrounded by contemporaneity’, as is the case with the Irish countryside and its inhabitants.¹³³ Such methods of representation and ‘absorption’ of indigenous culture into ‘the settler body politic [...] allows settler institutions to claim that they are *ultimately* representing all residents of the population economy’, but in reality the absorption and transference of indigenous culture means that ‘Indigenous autonomy can thus be undermined for being too indigenous [backwards] and not indigenous enough [impure or corrupted by modernity, i.e. colonial influence]’.¹³⁴ In curating indigenous Irish culture, Irish Protestants could simultaneously make claim to a form of indigeneity in the role of stewardship and transference, while also figuring the indigenous population as anachronistic, ‘express[ing] regret for the *inevitable* “vanishing” of indigenous people’.¹³⁵ In its drive to establish a national

¹³¹ Schacker, p. 51.

¹³² ‘Scraps’, p. 754.

¹³³ Veracini, p. 41.

¹³⁴ Ibid., pp. 38-39. Original emphasis.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 41. Original emphasis.

literature, the *D.U.M.* and its contributors are complicit in the act of narrative transference, with the transaction between Purcell and Finley representing a fictional enactment of this process.

‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventure in the Great Snow’

‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventures in the Great Snow’ appeared one month after ‘Scraps of Hibernian Ballads’, in July 1839.¹³⁶ Writing of the Purcell stories, William Le Fanu remarked: ‘Some of my brother’s earliest stories in the *University Magazine* abound in fun about courtship and matrimony’, and indeed ‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventure’ is faithful to this description.¹³⁷ The story is related in the vernacular and completely omits Purcell in both character and narration, being told instead from the first-person perspective of an unknown character. The subtitle ‘Being a ninth extract from the legacy of the late Francis Purcell, P. P. of Drumcoolagh’ is the only connection to Purcell. The story is a comic farce and relates the story of Jim Sullivan, who while out visiting his dying uncle, is stranded by a heavy snow storm. His wife Nell, presuming him dead, sends out a search party whereupon a body is discovered and assumed to be Jim. The body is ‘waked’ and buried, and three days later Nell receives a marriage proposal from Andy Curtis, ‘an’ before three days more was past the weddin’ kem a’ Nell Gorman and Andy Curtis was married’. A week later, the snow thaws and Jim Sullivan returns home. The newlyweds are awoken to the sound of Jim ‘flakin’ the door wid a big blackthorn stick’, trying to gain entry.¹³⁸ Believing him dead, Nell and Andy assume that it is Jim’s ghost come back to haunt them, and they call for the local priest, although significantly not Purcell in this case. Eventually Jim is understood to be alive and Nell and Jim are re-married.

The most noteworthy aspect of the story is the representation of the Catholic priest. Previously where there has been cause to summon a priest, it has been a cue for Purcell to enter the narrative, but here the anonymous priest – and by proxy the Catholic Church – is shown to be avaricious and exploitative. When Nell believes Jim to be a restless spirit she asks him, “‘An’ tell me, how many masses ’ll make you asy, an’ by this crass, I’ll buy you as many as you want’”, the implication being that if Nell gives money to a priest, she can “buy” eternal rest for Jim’s soul.¹³⁹ When the priest is called to the house to exorcise Jim’s spirit, he remarks: “‘it’ll cost a power iv money” [...] “so we’ll say twelve pounds; an’ God knows it’s chape

¹³⁶ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventures in the Great Snow’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 14 (July 1839), 103-07. Hereafter cited as ‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventure’. It is not clear why Le Fanu chose to spell “Sullivan” with one ‘l’ rather than the typical spelling of “Sullivan”. It may have been an original typo made by the *D.U.M.* that was never corrected in later versions, or it may be a regional variation of spelling.

¹³⁷ *Seventy Years*, p. 97.

¹³⁸ ‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventure’, pp. 104-05.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

enough”’.¹⁴⁰ Twelve pounds in 1750 is equivalent to a thousand pounds today.¹⁴¹ In 1840, around the time the story was written, it is closer to five hundred pounds, a considerable sum for a farmer to pay, although this sum of money reveals the class of farmers to which these characters belong. At the close of the story, Jim is content to leave Nell married to Andy, ‘but the priest would not hear iv it; an’ he jist med him marry his wife over again, an’ a merry widdin’ it was, an’ a fine collection for his raverance’.¹⁴² Through the cracks of the comic façade a censure of the rapacious Catholic Church is perceptible. The story was published at the end of a decade that saw widespread dissent and non-payment of tithes to the Church of Ireland, the main source of income for Anglican clerics, including Le Fanu’s father. Meanwhile, as Akenson points out, ‘the rise in Roman Catholic clerical salaries served as an index of the changing position of the entire Roman Catholic population’. As the established church, the Church of Ireland received funds from government, the majority portion of which was collected through tithes. The Catholic Church, however, was ‘organised on an entirely voluntary basis, receiving no government funds for the support of its clergy or bishops. Hence, clerical incomes were a function of local giving, and an index of local devotion and local economic conditions’, as well as an index of local popularity.¹⁴³ Although presumably the story is set some time in the early-to-mid eighteenth century (as with the other Purcell stories), through the depiction of an avaricious Catholic priest, Le Fanu instead reveals the outlook of the established church in the late 1830s, at a time when the Catholic peasantry violently refused to pay tithes yet were content to “buy masses” and otherwise support what Le Fanu clearly saw as the absurd pageantry of Catholicism. In ‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventure’, the ‘patronising and affectionate’ outlook devolves into acrimony, perceptible in the idiocy and rapaciousness of the characters.¹⁴⁴

Though set in the same region as ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’, the ignorant peasantry depicted here are once again far removed from the educated Terry Neil. While ‘Scraps of Hibernian Ballads’ may have been constructed to challenge negative stereotypes of Irish writing and to illustrate a process of narrative transference that supported settler stewardship of indigenous culture, ‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventure’ sees a return to the type of stereotypical Irish character portrayed in ‘The Drunkard’s Dream’. The representation of

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 106.

¹⁴¹ For conversion and inflation calculator see *The National Archives*, <<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/>> [accessed 15 November 2017].

¹⁴² ‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventure’, p. 107.

¹⁴³ Akenson, p. 143.

¹⁴⁴ Simpson, p. 43.

Catholics as ‘hopelessly backward’ reveals the type of narrative transfer that ‘establishes a situation in which really existing people are transferred “elsewhen”’. Their anachronistic existence in ‘pockets of past’ means that the indigenous population is removed as a threat; a possible takeover is rendered inconceivable given their inherently backward existence and lack of ontological awareness.¹⁴⁵ In ‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventure’, Catholics are laughable, which implicitly upholds their continued denial of any state-making capabilities.

‘The Quare Gander’

The final Purcell story, ‘The Quare Gander’, comes full circle and completes Purcell’s tales with an exercise in humour and high spirits, but without the supernatural elements of ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’, save for the superstitions of the Catholic peasantry. ‘The Quare Gander’ is alike in style and theme to ‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventure’, recounting a farcical incident of the peasantry. In this case it concerns the farmer Terence Mooney and his pet gander, who is pronounced by a fairy doctor to be possessed by the soul of Terence’s dead father. In an attempt to make the gander speak and so reveal his intentions, Terence contrives to make the gander believe that he is to be sold at the market in Tipperary the following morning, but having indulged in ‘some illigant poteen’, Terence accidentally falls asleep in the poultry hamper. The following morning the hamper is conveyed to Tipperary with Terence locked inside. When Terence awakes, he begins shouting and struggling inside the hamper but the two farmhands, believing him to be the gander, drive to the nearest priest for help. On the priest’s instruction, the boys drive to a nearby bridge and proceed to lower the hamper over the side, leaving it suspended over the water while the priest stands on the riverbank reading from the bible. The bottom of the hamper suddenly gives way dropping Terence and his gander into the river and revealing the mix-up.

Cadwallader considers the story to be another example ‘connect[ing] a supernatural visitation to excessive drinking’, although of course there is no supernatural element here, and instead the superstitions of the peasantry are painted as comic and ridiculous.¹⁴⁶ The Catholic priest is revealed to be just as absurd as the self-professed fairy doctor in believing the gander to be possessed by the spirit of Terence Mooney’s father. The type of Catholicism depicted in ‘The Quare Gander’ is representative of the “Folk Catholicism” or popular Catholicism practised by many in the pre-Famine period and during the eighteenth century. Many pagan

¹⁴⁵ Veracini, p. 41.

¹⁴⁶ Cadwallader, p. 34.

customs were transferred or blended with Catholic rites of passage; wakes and “patterns” were part of the ‘perpetuation of non-Christian spirituality’ that became increasingly ‘unacceptable’ as the Catholic Church moved to restrict clerical laxity. The Catholic festivals and Saints days overtook the original pagan festivals such as Bealtaine, Lúnasa, and Samhain, all of which were considered an excess of ‘dangerously uninhibited festivity’ and linked to public disorder, especially when compared to the type of Evangelical Protestantism that emerged in the early nineteenth century.¹⁴⁷ The depiction of Catholicism revealed in Le Fanu’s fiction about rural Catholics is part of ‘a much broader divergence in social attitudes and standards of behaviour’ in the pre-Famine period, which can be understood as yet another form of Othering.¹⁴⁸ Ireland’s overly agrarian economy was already considered retrograde especially compared to the rapid industrialisation of Britain and Europe, as signalled by the *D.U.M.* in outlining the potential for industry in harnessing the country’s natural resources (among other sources).¹⁴⁹ Correspondingly, the Catholic religion was rendered farcical and antiquated by its continued investment in such folk and ritualistic practices. The excess of Catholic pageantry is revealed to be incompatible with the culture of modernity.

What is most notable about ‘The Quare Gander’ is the plaintive introduction, which seems to be consciously, though subtly, drawing Purcell’s chronicles to a close. The story begins with Purcell’s introduction, ‘As I rode at a slow walk, one soft autumn evening, from the once noted and noticeable town of Emly, now a squalid village, towards the no less remarkable town of Tipperary, I fell into a meditative mood’.¹⁵⁰ Emly, of course, was the parish on the Tipperary-Limerick border of which Le Fanu’s father was Dean. This lamentable description of ‘the once noted and noticeable town’ now a ‘squalid village’ perhaps reflects Le Fanu’s own feelings about the area. Once the romantic countryside of his youth this region had, over the course of just a few years, changed utterly with the advent of the tithe war and the increasing agitation of O’Connellite politics. By this time, Le Fanu was spending less and less time in Limerick and by September 1840 was kept busy in Dublin having acquired ‘an interest in two Dublin newspapers, the *Statesman* and *The Warder*’.¹⁵¹ Purcell’s lamentation conflicts with the humorous tone and high spirits of the story that follows: “‘Alas my country! What mournful beauty is thine; dressed in loveliness and laughter, there is mortal decay at thy heart

¹⁴⁷ S. J. Connolly, *Priests and People in Pre-Famine Ireland, 1780-1845* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), p. 245.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

¹⁴⁹ For sources see note 118 and 119 above.

¹⁵⁰ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘The Quare Gander’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 16 (1840), 390-94 (p. 390). Hereafter cited as ‘The Quare Gander’.

¹⁵¹ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 86.

[...] strange rulers have bruised thee [...] thy miseries have been poured out upon thee by foreign hands””.¹⁵² ‘The Quare Gander’ was published almost three years after ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’ and in that time Le Fanu’s representation of the Catholic peasantry changed considerably. The commentary on class relations traceable in ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’ and ‘The Drunkard’s Dream’ is completely absent in ‘Jim Sullivan’s Adventure’ and ‘The Quare Gander’, the latter two stories seeming only to mock Catholic absurdity. However, Purcell continues to be framed as a collector of these oral traditions. As in ‘Scraps of Hibernian Ballads’, this oral transference is revisited in ‘The Quare Gander’. At the outset the reader is told that Purcell meets with ‘a dealer in all kinds of local lore’ and that ‘After two or three short stories, in which the scandalous and supernatural were happily blended’, this lore dealer relates the story of Terence Mooney.¹⁵³ Even though the Purcell stories are entirely fictional, Purcell’s function as an ‘industrious collector of old local traditions’ mimics that of the ethnographic folklorist.¹⁵⁴ Furthermore, their appearance in the *D.U.M.* as unsigned articles deliberately creates the illusion that Purcell’s manuscripts are just that: factual historical ephemera.

Although he is a Catholic, Purcell seems to operate at a higher social and intellectual level than those whose stories he transcribes, a division that is most discernible in the stories of the peasantry. As a member of the clergy educated on the continent, Purcell already occupies a social position above the average Catholic, while his accounts of the peasantry are conditional upon this elevation, as in order to observe, describe, and record another class or culture, one must be in a position of relative power. What Purcell sees or, more importantly, hears, is repeatedly signposted in the stories as transmissions from oral to written in the manner of earlier folklorists and in scientific studies such as the Ordnance Survey. For example, in ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’, Purcell explains: “‘I *tell* the following particulars, as nearly as I can recollect them, in the *words* of the narrator””.¹⁵⁵ In ‘The Bridal of Carrigvarah’, the narrator twice uses the refrain ‘at the time of which I *speak*’.¹⁵⁶ In ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, the oral ‘tradition’ and ‘gossip’ of the first narrative is overruled by the written testimony of the second: ‘It was said’¹⁵⁷ is surpassed by ‘This *paper*, from a *memorandum*, I find to have been *written* in 1803’.¹⁵⁸ The most explicit discussion of this transmission occurs in ‘Scraps’ in which Purcell makes clear his ethnographic objectives for recording oral culture ‘in palpable

¹⁵² ‘The Quare Gander’, p. 390.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 300.

¹⁵⁴ ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’, p. 50.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 50. My emphasis.

¹⁵⁶ ‘The Bridal of Carrigvarah’, p. 405. My emphasis.

¹⁵⁷ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, p. 314.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 324. My emphasis.

and enduring form'. He describes how the fictional Finley, 'detecting me in the very act of following his recitation with my pencil [...] stopping abruptly in the midst of a line, he sharply exclaimed, "is my *pome* a pigsty, or what, that you want a surveyor's ground-plan of it?"'.¹⁵⁹ Here is an explicit connection between the written word and mapping, with Finley objecting to his oral recitation being reduced to a form of materiality over which he has no control. Purcell explains that Finley gets his way, although ultimately it is the written that triumphs as after Finley's death, his poems are captured in words.

It would appear that the written supersedes the spoken in terms of reliability. Penny Fielding reports that although a revived interest in oral culture is used as a means of defending against the onset of modernity and an excess of rationality by way of advancements in science and industry in the nineteenth century, at the same time 'Western culture has tended until very recently to devalue the oral in its own societies (and particularly in the societies of post-colonial cultures)', eschewing the oral 'for the reassurance that books and writing are the real art and the oral composition of songs, stories, and histories is not', a position that is confirmed by the outcome of 'Scraps'.¹⁶⁰ Furthermore, the fact that Purcell's collections are then "collected" again by the anonymous *residuary legatee*, and then of course by the *D.U.M.*, means there are three levels of curation in operation. The *residuary legatee* presents the 'manuscript papers' of Purcell, but significantly he records his surprise that Purcell's 'hobby' of collecting 'old local traditions' had 'carried him so far as to prompt him to commit the results of his enquiries to writing'.¹⁶¹ In recording his observations in writing, Purcell is thus transferred from hobbyist to professional collector, while in gathering these documents and presenting them as coherent and readable, the *residuary legatee* oversees Purcell's work and occupies a more senior position, as Purcell is now contained within his own narrative. Given that Purcell also plays an active role in some of the stories he can further be understood as an artefact rather than a curator. Thus, the Catholic priest becomes the subject rather than the object, while Le Fanu as the author and the *D.U.M.* as the medium perform their role as patrons of a "dying" culture, an act of narrative transference that 'denies legitimacy to ongoing indigenous presences and grievances [...] indigenous survival is thus transferred away, foreclosed'.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ 'Scraps', p. 754.

¹⁶⁰ Fielding, p. 5.

¹⁶¹ 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', p. 50. Original emphasis.

¹⁶² Veracini, pp. 41-42.

‘The decay of ancient grandeur’: Last Heirs of the Jacobite Nobility ¹⁶³

The Purcell stories are a collection of two halves: one half concerns the actions of the Catholic peasantry, while the second is concerned with what McCormack describes as ‘the heroic, defeated Jacobites whose lives were at risk in their own country’.¹⁶⁴ Purcell’s role in collecting the tales of the peasantry is different to that adopted in stories of the nobility. In the latter, Purcell either plays a direct part in the main action of the story, or else he receives the story from a written account with the implication that such accounts, because they are written, are factual and incontestable.¹⁶⁵ Of the seven remaining Purcell stories, three exhibit a common theme concerning the last male heirs of once prominent Catholic families set in the years after the Jacobite-Williamite wars and during the consolidation of the Penal Laws. These are ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’ (1838), ‘The Last Heir of Castle Connor’ (1838), and ‘The Bridal of Carrigvarah’ (1839). The protagonists of each are unmarried young men and the last heirs of their respective families, whose untimely and unnecessary deaths, usually predetermined by a bad deal of some sort, spell the end for their noble lineage. The tales of Catholic nobility were published intermittently with the stories of the Catholic peasantry discussed in the previous section. However, depictions of the landed class of Catholics differ greatly from their landless counterparts. Arguably, this distinction is due to their designation as Old English settlers rather than indigenous Irish, although this distinction is never made truly explicit. In their noble demise Le Fanu elicits a connection with nineteenth century Irish Protestants, who like these last heirs of a dissipated aristocracy are inheritors of debt and sedition.

‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’

‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’ was the second Purcell extract to appear in the *D.U.M.*, just two months after ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’. The second story dispenses

¹⁶³ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘The Last Heir of Castle Connor’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 11 (1838), 713-30 (p. 713). Hereafter cited as ‘Castle Connor’.

¹⁶⁴ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 56.

¹⁶⁵ It is worth noting that the treatment of written artefacts in the Purcell stories differs to the treatment of written accounts found in the Hesselius stories in the *In a Glass Darkly* collection (1872), where written accounts and editorial layering are proven to be untrustworthy. See Richard Haslam’s work on complex methods of inscription in Le Fanu’s “Green Tea” and Irish Victorian Calvinism’, *Inspiring a Mysterious Terror’: 200 Years of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed. by Jarlath Killeen and Valeria Cavalli (Bern: Peter Lang, 2016), pp. 93-115, ‘Theory, Empiricism, and “Providential Hermeneutics”: Reading and Misreading Sheridan Le Fanu’s *Carmilla* and “Schalken the Painter”’, *Papers on Language and Literature*, 47 (2011), 339-62, and ‘The Editor’s Amputated Fingers: Le Fanu’s “Green Tea” and the Chasm Between Inference and Evidence’, *Le Fanu Studies*, 9.2 (2014), n. p.

with the anonymous *residuary legatee* and begins instead with a more direct narration by Purcell himself. While the location of ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’ is described vaguely as ‘in the south of Ireland’,¹⁶⁶ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’ presents the reader with a more specific setting: ‘on the borders of the county of Limerick’.¹⁶⁷ McCormack notes that Limerick, although ‘a seaport at the mouth of Ireland’s longest river’, was nevertheless an ‘ambiguous bridgehead’ bordering the wilderness of Connaught.¹⁶⁸ Viewed from Dublin, Limerick was a rural frontier on the borders of the unknown, and given that the story was crafted for the primarily urban reader of the *D.U.M.*, the fact that the story is situated in the south of Ireland was probably enough to signify its folkloric credentials. Though Purcell’s Catholicism is readily apparent to readers, the religious provenance of the protagonist, Sir Robert Ardagh, is less immediately discernible. The story is set in the mid-eighteenth century during the time of Penal Laws when Sir Robert is ‘a young man, and the last heir of that family’ who inherits the Ardagh estate. As with the Phelims of ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’, Le Fanu here introduces another landed family who have apparently mismanaged their estate. ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’ recounts two versions of the same story in which Sir Robert makes a Faustian pact and is granted immense riches but with his soul as forfeit.¹⁶⁹ The first narrative is brief and told through an anonymous, collective third party that presents the ‘many wild and extraordinary traditions’ associated with castle Ardagh, thereby incorporating the castle and Sir Robert into an oral tradition.¹⁷⁰ The second, more detailed story purports to be ‘FACTS’ which sets about destabilising the oral tradition of the first narrative.¹⁷¹ By contrast, the second narrative is more appropriate to consideration as “history” gathered by Purcell and

¹⁶⁶ ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’, p. 50.

¹⁶⁷ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, p. 313.

¹⁶⁸ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 20.

¹⁶⁹ The Faustian bargain is recurrent in Le Fanu’s fiction, right through from his earliest work to his last. On Faust and Le Fanu McCormack notes ‘The author of *Faust* [Goethe] might seem distant from Limerick and Dublin, yet the first complete English translation of the poem (both parts) was made by John Anster (1793-1867), who was closely associated with the founding of the *Dublin University Magazine*, and contributed often to it. For a bonus, we can note that Anster visited the Le Fanus at home in County Limerick, during the 1830s, and had (like Sheridan Le Fanu) married a Miss Bennett. In other words, the circumstantial evidence in favour of Le Fanu’s familiarity with Goethe is strong, even if proof awaits its discoverer’. McCormack, ‘The Bad Wall; or, Problems of History in Fiction’, in *Inspiring a Mysterious Terror: 200 Years of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed. by Jarlath Killeen and Valeria Cavalli (Bern: Peter Lang, 2016), pp. 197-230 (p. 211). McCormack also refers to Walter E. Houghton, ed., *The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals 1824-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987) for translations of Goethe that feature in the *D.U.M.*

¹⁷⁰ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, p. 314. The story is also prefaced by a quote from *Macbeth* (1606), when Banquo and Macbeth first encounter the witches: ‘The earth hath bubbles, as the water hath | And these are of them’. As the quote has no discernible bearing on the plot of ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, it is likely Le Fanu used it to signify the supernatural content of the story to follow. See *Macbeth*, Act I, Scene III.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 324. Original capitalisation.

‘enabled, by a personal acquaintance with an eye-witness of the events’.¹⁷² This plot was later redeveloped and extended as ‘The Haunted Baronet’, serialised in five parts in *Belgravia* between July and November 1870, and subsequently collected as part of the *Chronicles of Golden Friars* in 1871.¹⁷³

In the first narrative, Sir Robert leaves Ireland as the last heir of a ruined landed family and returns many years later an unaccountably rich man. The reader is told that Sir Robert ‘went abroad and served in foreign armies, and that having acquired considerable honour and emolument, he settled at Castle Ardagh’.¹⁷⁴ He thereafter leads an entirely secluded life in Castle Ardagh, apart from ‘during the continuance of the racing season’ when he is seen ‘betting deeply and unhesitatingly, and invariably with success’. Significantly, Sir Robert never appears alone at the racetrack but is always in the company of ‘a certain strange looking person’, and ‘it was observed’ that while he avoided the company of others, ‘with this person he would converse earnestly and frequently’. Sir Robert’s unaccountable successes on the track are ‘sufficient to warrant report in pronouncing that there was something *queer* in the wind [...] and that, in short, his strange companion was little better than the devil himself.’¹⁷⁵ This arrangement continues for some years until eventually the stranger arrives at Castle Ardagh in the dead of night ‘by appointment, to settle some business’.¹⁷⁶ Sir Robert, in a state of agitation, reluctantly descends to meet the visitor, whereupon ‘The figure advanced as if to meet [Sir Robert], and in passing struck down the light. The servant could see no more; but there was a sound of struggling, renewed at intervals with silent but fearful energy’. In the darkness, the two approach the old door of the castle that opens upon a narrow cliff edge, overtopping a steep ravine. The struggle is ‘followed by a crashing sound as if some heavy body had fallen over, and was rushing down the precipice’.¹⁷⁷ The body of Sir Robert is found ‘At the foot of the precipice, not immediately under the castle, but dragged some way up the glen’, a scene reminiscent of the conclusion of Charles Maturin’s *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), another Irish Protestant text and a more famous story of Faustian bargains.¹⁷⁸ So ends this portion of the narrative, with the body of a landlord lying mutilated at the bottom of a wooded valley

¹⁷² Ibid., p. 313.

¹⁷³ ‘The Haunted Baronet’, *Belgravia*, vols. 12-13, (1870). First collected in *Chronicles of Golden Friars*, 3 vols. (London: Richard Bentley, 1871), although the story was not included in the posthumous collection *A Chronicle of Golden Friars and Other Stories* (London: Downey, 1896).

¹⁷⁴ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, p. 314.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 314. Original emphasis.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 315.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 316.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 317.

below his castle, a particularly caustic image for the mid-nineteenth century Irish Protestant reader.

Violence against landlords was common in rural Ireland, both in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. William Le Fanu reports his various experiences with agrarian violence throughout his youth in Abington, noting that ‘Boycotting, supposed to be a recent invention (in reality only new in name), was put in force against the [Church of Ireland] clergy, to whom the people were forbidden to speak’.¹⁷⁹ The same principles of boycotting were in operation against landowners. T. Jones Hughes asserts that ‘By the mid-eighteenth century, and before central government had taken upon itself the task of providing for the mass of the population, the landowner was often the supreme arbiter in local life’.¹⁸⁰ For the disaffected peasantry, the landowner was the symbol of power and the reason for inequality. J. C. Beckett explains:

In almost every part of the country there existed, under various names – Whiteboys, Carders, Threshers, Rockites, Ribbonmen – peasant secret societies, whose main purpose was to protect the tenant against the landlord, and in particular to combat the landlord’s power of eviction. The main weapon of these societies was terror, enforced by assassination.¹⁸¹

As a result, violent agrarian movements (by whichever name), typically targeted the landowner. Sir Robert’s mangled remains, though he is ostensibly at fault for his own Faustian bargain, is a portentous image for the landed class as victims of violence and bad financial decisions. Terry Eagleton remarks that ‘The encumbered nature of their estates was the true nightmare of many an Anglo-Irish landowner’.¹⁸² As the reader is expressly told in ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, ‘the estates descended on [Sir Robert] in a very impaired condition’ due to ‘the prodigality of his father’.¹⁸³ Writing of another Irish Protestant estate with colonial overtones, Tim McLoughlin notes that ‘As *Castle Rackrent* in particular shows, the estate becomes a site of contention, a place of conflict, transgression and division, all of which typify at local level the complex issues surrounding land in nineteenth-century Ireland’.¹⁸⁴ Owing to the disrepair of the Castle Ardagh estate, it seems that Sir Robert is compelled to strike a deal with the devil, and given that many Old English landlords had to convert to Protestantism and swear allegiance to the English monarchy in order to retain even small portions of their estates, the Faustian deal is an applicable metaphor.

¹⁷⁹ *Seventy Years*, p. 63.

¹⁸⁰ T. Jones Hughes, *Landholding, Society and Settlement in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: A Historical Geographer’s Perspective*, intro. by William J. Smyth (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2010), p. 256.

¹⁸¹ J. C. Beckett, *The Making of Modern Ireland, 1603-1923* (London: Faber & Faber, 1966), pp. 291-92.

¹⁸² Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger*, (London: Verso, 1995), p. 194.

¹⁸³ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, p. 317.

¹⁸⁴ McLoughlin, p. 92.

The second narrative positions itself in conflict with the first, proposing to ‘lay before the reader a distinct recital of the events from which the foregoing tradition arose’, without the ‘exaggerating influence of tradition’ that has tainted the first.¹⁸⁵ Le Fanu’s objective in drawing on two versions of the same event, from two contrary perspectives, could be interpreted as a caution against submitting to the ‘many wild and extraordinary traditions’ associated with the castle, as they are shown to be largely reductive and misinformed.¹⁸⁶ These oral traditions are superseded by the second, written narrative, recorded by an eye-witness to the events. However, in the narrative interlude between the two stories of Sir Robert the reader is told that ‘the two narratives are totally irreconcilable’, and that rather than being two versions of the same story, it is possible that they have instead ‘combined and blended together the fabulous histories of several distinct heroes of the family Ardagh’, which effectively denies the reliability of either version of events.¹⁸⁷ The “first” Sir Robert is ‘considered morose, reserved, and ill-tempered’, a landlord who ‘neither purchased land, nor extended his establishment’.¹⁸⁸ By contrast, the “second” Sir Robert proceeds to ‘disembarrass his property, and to purchase extensive estates in addition’ with his newly acquired money.¹⁸⁹ Moreover, the reader is expressly told that the first Sir Robert is ‘a soldier’ who has ‘served in foreign armies’,¹⁹⁰ while the second Sir Robert ‘left Ireland in the year 1742, being then just of age, and was not heard of until the year 1760 – about eighteen years afterwards – at which point he returned’, and there is no mention of military service in this instance. Rather, Sir Robert has returned to Ireland having ‘acquired all the advantages of polish of manner, and refinement of taste, which foreign travel is supposed to bestow’, which strongly indicates a sojourn of pleasure rather than a stint of military service.¹⁹¹ It is possible to read the two Sir Roberts as the same person distorted by unreliable narrative, or, as two separate members of the same family, both of whom succumb to, or are inheritors of, a similar fate. In either case, the landlord is a victim of his own estate.

In the second narrative, the basic plot of the first is furnished with additional characters and greater detail, although the core of the plot is largely the same. The anonymous Faust

¹⁸⁵ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, p. 317.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 313.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 317.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 314.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 317.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 314.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p. 317. On this point, Ann Cahill has argued that the second Sir Robert is a Protestant and has returned from a ‘Grand Tour’ in Europe, ‘whereas the Ardagh of the first telling is an exiled soldier and, my [sic] implication, a Catholic gentleman’. Beyond this statement, Cahill does not offer any further evidence to support this argument. Ann Cahill, ‘Irish Folktales and Supernatural Literature: Patrick Kennedy and Sheridan Le Fanu’, in *That Other World: The Supernatural and the Fantastic in Irish Literature and its Contexts*, ed. by Bruce Stewart, 2 vols (Gerards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1998), I (1998), pp. 307-19 (p. 316).

character of the first narrative appears in the second as Sir Robert's valet, Jacque, whose provenance is unclear but whose name suggests he is of French extraction. Furthermore, there is the addition of Sir Robert's wife, Lady Emily Ardagh, although the reader is informed that the couple's 'hopes of issue were several times disappointed',¹⁹² leaving Sir Robert as the only 'heir and representative of the family whose name he bore'. Whereas in the first narrative Sir Robert is a solitary figure without a family, the second narrative describes Sir Robert as 'a remarkably agreeable man, and possessing the combined advantages of birth and property [...] he was gladly received into the highest society which the metropolis commanded'. That Sir Robert is mixing with Dublin society in the mid-eighteenth century, marrying Miss F—d, who was 'then among the brightest ornaments of the highest circles of Dublin fashion', and whose 'family was in more than one direction allied to nobility', suggests that he is likely a Jacobite landowner of Old English stock, who though Catholic, would have had access to the Dublin social scene.¹⁹³ Although Catholic landownership was drastically reduced in the late seventeenth century, some Old English families managed to maintain (or recoup) their positions in high society. David Dickson remarks on the fluctuating religious freedoms between the end of the seventeenth century and into the eighteenth, observing that in general, 'Catholics were to find that prospects of religious security lay in royal favour rather than Irish parliamentary concession, at Whitehall rather than Dublin'.¹⁹⁴

Upon returning to Castle Ardagh after his marriage, we are informed of Sir Robert's 'wealth' and 'hospitality', and that his 'style of living was very handsome, and its internal resources of amusement considerable, [that] few invitations from Sir Robert or his lady were neglected',¹⁹⁵ a description that contrasts with the '*dark man*' of the first narrative.¹⁹⁶ Jacque the valet is 'an object of suspicion and inquiry to his fellow-servants', while Lady Ardagh 'had, at first sight, conceived an antipathy amounting to horror [towards him], a mixture of loathing

¹⁹² 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh', p. 318.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 317.

¹⁹⁴ Dickson, *New Foundations*, p. 6. Raymond Gillespie outlines the intricacies of Catholic landowning following the Act of Settlement in 1662: 'There are a number of reasons for the rise of those Catholics who became known as the "New Interest" men. Some had achieved their success through sheer persistence and force [...] local arrangements made between Protestants and Catholics to prevent disputes in the 1660s, together with the bribery of sheriffs, allowed Catholics to continue to hold some of their land in the face of legislation'. Further, important 'political contacts at the court at Whitehall' meant that 'an individual could override the Dublin administration's decisions through the mechanisms established by the Acts of Settlement and Explanation'. Gillespie also notes that Richard Talbot, 1st Earl Tyrconnell was an 'important figure in representing Old English gentry' in the late seventeenth century, 'navigating through the complexities of the first court of claims and brokering local deals between contesting landlords – and in the process amassing himself a personal fortune'. Raymond Gillespie, *Seventeenth-Century Ireland: Making Ireland Modern* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2006), pp.235-36. On Tyrconnell, see also Dickson, pp. 26-27.

¹⁹⁵ 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh', p. 318.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 314. Original emphasis.

and dread', yet Sir Robert refuses to part with his valet.¹⁹⁷ The servants suspect that Jacque 'in secret governed the actions of Sir Robert with a despotic dictation', which, coupled with his grotesque appearance and insolent character, make him a dark presence in the castle. After Jacque's sudden departure one night, Sir Robert's mood alters: he becomes sullen and reclusive for several years, until unexpectedly he directs his wife to invite a party of friends to celebrate Christmas. Before the holiday party can arrive, however, Sir Robert calmly declares that he "shall not live to see tomorrow's sun shine", and proceeds to lock himself in his bedroom.¹⁹⁸ Shortly after that, he is found dead. The body is conveyed to Saint Audoen's Church in Dublin, a Catholic church founded in the twelfth century that was transferred to the Church of Ireland after the reformation in the sixteenth century. However, as the majority of the parishioners remained loyal to the old faith, a new Catholic parish of Saint Audoen's was established adjacent to the old.¹⁹⁹ Two footnotes to the story offer further clarification: one serves to assure the reader that although Sir Robert's grave did exist, it is now in ruin among 'one indistinguishable mass of rubbish'. The second footnote confirms the identity of the "witness" to the events of the second narrative being that of Lady Ardagh's sister, who 'living to a very advanced age' wrote her 'memorandum' in 1803, in line with the setting of the story in the early-to-mid-eighteenth century.²⁰⁰

Location and landscape come into sharper focus in 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh' as compared with the stories of the peasantry. The story opens with a protracted description of the Limerick countryside while also introducing a connection with the American colonies:

In the south of Ireland, and on the borders of the county of Limerick, there lies a district of two or three miles in length, which is rendered interesting by the fact that it is one of the very few spots throughout this country, in which some fragments of aboriginal wood have found refuge. It has little or none of the lordly character of the American forests; for the axe has felled its oldest and grandest trees; but in the close wood which survives, live all the wild and pleasing peculiarities of nature.²⁰¹

The comparison of the forests of America with those of south-west Ireland is particularly striking as it suggests an imaginative connection between the settlement of North America and the settlement of Ireland. It is possible that the early reference to Sir Robert serving in 'foreign

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 319.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 323.

¹⁹⁹ See F. H. A. Aalen and Kevin Whelan (eds.), *Dublin City and County, from Prehistory to Present* (Geography Publications, Dublin, 1992), pp. 242-43.

²⁰⁰ 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh', p. 324.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 313.

armies',²⁰² means that he was involved in the Seven Years War (1756-63), a conflict between France and England with the North American colonies at the core of the dispute. This is also the most significant conflict to occur between 1740 and 1760, when Sir Robert is recorded as absent from Ireland.²⁰³ The war resulted in a redistribution of the balance of power in Europe; with French defeat and the relative strengthening of Great Britain, a new political order emerged. The war also provoked tensions between Britain and its colonies in North America, and was a catalyst for the American Revolution (1775-83).²⁰⁴ However, in precisely which army Sir Robert served remains unspecified, though his acquiring a French servant is suggestive. The reference to a major European conflict would have been readily recognisable to early nineteenth-century readers, just forty years on from the rebellion of 1798. It connects Sir Robert to potentially radical opinions and forces, and perhaps even to the 1798 rebellion itself. Furthermore, Sir Robert's eighteen-year sojourn on the continent means that he was an absentee landlord during that period. As Jane Ohlmeyer points out, many Jacobite landlords fled to the continent in the eighteenth century, particularly to France, where they 'eked out existences as political refugees' in the French court.²⁰⁵ The clues supplied in the case of Sir Robert are sufficient to confirm his Jacobitism. However, Le Fanu offers no clear verdict on whether Sir Robert was the architect of his own fate, or was a victim of circumstance.

Further to evoking a connection between the Ireland and the American colonies in the opening paragraph, the conflation of the imposing American forests with the wild woods of south-west Ireland introduces a staple of settler fiction: the untamed colonial periphery. While the American forests retain a 'lordly' character, Ireland, by contrast, has lost its ancient grandeur, with only remote vestiges of wilderness remaining. What remains of the aboriginal woods of county Limerick is evoked as a pre-colonial space unaffected by the progress of civilisation. While the axe of progress 'has felled its oldest and grandest trees', a section of 'the close wood [...] survives'.²⁰⁶ To the urban, middle-class, Protestant readers of the *D.U.M.*, the aboriginal forests in the wilds of Ireland were very obviously a reference to pre-colonial

²⁰² Ibid., p. 314.

²⁰³ See Matt Schumann and Karl W. Schweizer, *The Seven Years War: A Transatlantic History* (London: Routledge, 2008). The next major conflict of global significance was the American Revolution, or the American War of Independence (1775-83), followed by the French Revolution (1789-99).

²⁰⁴ Britain became the major colonial shareholder in North America after the conflict, taking over many of the French and Spanish colonies. Taxation without representation was the leading cause of the American Revolution. See Robert J. Allison, *The American Revolution: A Concise History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

²⁰⁵ Jane Ohlmeyer, *Making Ireland English: The Irish Aristocracy in the Seventeenth Century* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 280.

²⁰⁶ 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh', p. 313.

Ireland. Luke Gibbons points out that ‘before discovering America, Ireland became the outer edge of the known world, a liminal zone between the natural and supernatural’.²⁰⁷ The idea that Ireland contained its own wilderness within, its own frontier, was a source of fear and fascination for both Irish and English urban readers. Coupled with this abstract conception, J. H. Andrews notes the difficulties encountered by engineers in the early stages of the Ordnance Survey (circa the early 1820s), when the practicality of ‘the laying out of government roads in the wild and disturbed districts of south-west Ireland’ was a significant challenge for colonial cartographers due to inhospitable terrain and disruptive locals.²⁰⁸ The region beyond the pale was ungovernable wild space, both literally and figuratively.

In fiction, the division between tame and wild was used to great effect by the likes of Maturin in *Melmoth the Wanderer*, wherein a trip from the heart of Irish enlightened civilisation (Trinity College Dublin), to the wild coast of county Wicklow (a major site of violence in 1798), extends into a journey through space and time. In theory, Edmund Burke’s *Treatise on the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1757), meditated on the uncontainable power of nature and its ability to captivate and destroy the individual.²⁰⁹ Le Fanu himself repeatedly returns to this binary of ‘the wild and pleasing peculiarities of nature’, ‘the grotesque but graceful’, as something to be both admired and feared.²¹⁰ Malcolm Kelsall describes such contrasts as a ‘fundamental historical dichotomy [...] the divide between the idea of civilisation and its (necessary) concomitant, the savage’.²¹¹ At the outset, Le Fanu’s narrator introduces the landscape in detail, describing ‘a deep gully or glen’ in the ‘midst of this woodland’, where ‘the stillness of the scene is broken in upon only by the brawling of a mountain-stream, which, however, in the winter season, swells into a rapid and formidable torrent’. The watercourse is evoked using the imagery of fire, emblematic of a fiery hell at the bottom of the ravine at the top of which sits Castle Ardagh. The furious creek ‘wheels, flashes, and foams’ at the bottom of the cavernous glen that is ‘extremely deep and narrow, the sides descend to the depth of some hundred feet, and are so steep as to be nearly perpendicular’. The original medieval ‘square tower or keep’ of Castle Ardagh overhangs the steep gully, ‘one side of which rises as if in continuation of the precipitous cliff on which it is based’. The reader is informed that ‘The

²⁰⁷ Luke Gibbons, *Gaelic Gothic: Race, Colonization, and Irish Gothic* (Galway: Arlen House, 2004), p. 26.

²⁰⁸ J. H. Andrews, *A Paper Landscape: The Ordnance Survey in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 6.

²⁰⁹ See Burke’s *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*, ed. and intro. by James T. Boulton (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958).

²¹⁰ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, p. 313.

²¹¹ Malcolm Kelsall, ‘Civilisation, Savagery and Ireland: Maria Edgeworth’s Tour in Connemara’, *European Journal of English Studies*, 6 (2002), 173-87 (p. 173).

progress of improvement, and the increasing security of the times' had 'tempted its successive proprietors, if not to adorn, at least to enlarge their premises'.²¹² Since it is clearly of long standing, the castle is another indication that the Ardagh family were originally Old English Catholics who converted to Anglicanism in the aftermath of the Williamite settlement. Ardagh is a toponymic surname and could be a reference to the parish of Ardagh in county Limerick, approximately twenty-five miles south-west of Limerick city (thirty miles west of Abington). Le Fanu chose the site of east county Limerick and neighbouring counties as the province of Purcell, most likely because he knew the area extremely well, but also because the region retained a reputation for lawlessness. Contemporary journalistic accounts – such as those featured regularly in the *D.U.M.* – affirm the general perception of unruliness that abounded in rural Ireland, particularly in the 1830s when Catholic Emancipation, the Tithe Wars, and RIC sectarian reforms combined to destabilise the region further. Patrick J. O'Connor cites Abington as one of the main 'venues' where 'combative urges' were 'transmuted [...] into the white heat of battle' and 'yielded up the great bulk of the most notorious of the faction fights' in county Limerick.²¹³

Moreover, the landscape of rural Limerick yielded to the historic setting of Le Fanu's stories as even by the nineteenth century, rural Ireland was still considered a "backwards" place of poverty and violence, as well as a place that contained tangible traces of ancient history in the form of ruins. In many ways, a journey westwards and away from Dublin was also a journey back in time to a pre-modern era where evidence of conquest, settlement, and ancient society still existed, in contrast to the modernised and mechanised centre of Dublin. But unlike the pastoral Romanticism of the English countryside, a peaceful retreat from the industrial city, the Irish countryside is savage and strange. The opening paragraph laments how 'the tide of civilization' has 'passed over a land unprepared for it' and 'left nakedness behind it – we have lost our forests but our marauders remain – we have destroyed all that is picturesque, while we have retained everything that is revolting in barbarism'.²¹⁴ A purely aesthetic and picturesque setting seems unachievable here. Eagleton remarks that 'Nature in Ireland' is 'on the whole less an object of aesthetic perception than in England', one reason being that Nature is 'too stubbornly social and material a category, too much a matter of rent, conacre, pigs and potatoes

²¹² 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh', p. 313.

²¹³ Patrick J. O'Connor, 'The Maturation of Town and Village Life in County Limerick 1700-1900', *Common Ground: Essays on the Historical Geography of Ireland*, ed. by William J. Smyth and Kevin Whelan (Cork: Cork University Press, 1988), pp. 149-72 (p. 155).

²¹⁴ 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh', p. 313.

for it to be distanced, stylized and subjectivated'.²¹⁵ In other words, Irish people in the early nineteenth century did not have the luxury of objectifying nature from afar as they were still too immediately dependent on the land to survive. Further to this, the Irish landscape preserved the ruins of violent conquest and, as Oona Frawley points out, because it was burdened with the freight of history, land 'became a signifier of enormous weight and power' rather than merely a passive backdrop.²¹⁶ The fact that Le Fanu made explicit use of Limerick, rather than staging his stories vaguely in a generic rural region, means that Limerick is important to the telling of the stories. Limerick's colonial history was a topic Le Fanu would continue to explore in his subsequent fiction. Le Fanu's interest in the dying days of Old English nobility becomes clearer when compared to the following Purcell story, 'The Last Heir of Castle Connor'. Whereas the 'narrative transfer' enacted in the stories of the Catholic lower classes rested on the representation of indigenous peoples as 'hopelessly backward' and "'vanishing'" as a way of justifying a settler takeover, the representation of the Catholic nobility enacts another type of narrative transfer, one that seeks to promote continuity between a former ruling class and the existing settler collective. In this version, the objective is to reinforce the notion that "'settlers are also indigenous peoples'" and "'indigenous peoples are also settlers'".²¹⁷

'The Last Heir of Castle Connor'

As in 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh', 'The Last Heir of Castle Connor' concerns the last 'representative and heir' of an 'ancient Catholic' family, the O'Connors of Castle Connor. As the third Purcell extract, the story is an exercise in historical fiction, a subject in which Le Fanu demonstrated increasing interest and carried forward to his early novels: *The Cock and Anchor – Being a Chronicle of Old Dublin* (1845), and *The Fortunes of Colonel Torlogh O'Brien – A Tale of the Wars of King James* (1847). Joseph Spence remarks that, in fact, 'The most popular themes of Irish historical fiction in the nineteenth century were the Williamite wars, the Jacobite conspiracies and the '98 rebellion', and it is certainly possible that Le Fanu was deliberately appealing to this trend.²¹⁸ Indeed, both James H. Murphy and McCormack consider Le Fanu as, first and foremost, an Irish historical novelist: 'His work was seen to fall into three categories, the historical novel, the novel of sensation, and the supernatural story',

²¹⁵ Eagleton, p. 8.

²¹⁶ Oona Frawley, *Irish Pastoral: Nostalgia and Twentieth-Century Irish Literature* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005), p. 44.

²¹⁷ Veracini, pp.42- 43.

²¹⁸ Joseph Spence, 'Allegories for a Protestant Nation: Irish Tory Historical Fiction, 1820-1850', *Religion & Literature*, 28 (1996), 59-78 (p. 60). For this assertion Spence cites as his source the work of S. J. Brown, 'Irish Historical Fiction', *Studies*, 4 (1915), 445-51.

while both reject Le Fanu's classification as a Gothic writer, although admitting that 'there are clearly links between genres'.²¹⁹ The first three Purcell stories are representative of Le Fanu's varying style: comic, supernatural, and historical, a pattern that is repeated over the course of the twelve Purcell tales. 'The Last Heir of Castle Connor' concerns the old Irish family, the O'Connors, whose name 'recurs frequently in our history'. Following 'the accession of William the Third' and the 'storm of confiscation which swept over the land' in its wake, the O'Connors suffer significant losses to their domains but are left with 'Some fragments of property', at which point the narrative proper begins.²²⁰ Both 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh' and 'Castle Connor' are concerned with the decline of an old aristocracy brought about by a radical split with the past, this time in the form of the Williamite War and its consequences. Although Munster and the usual region of east county Limerick is not explicitly mentioned on this occasion, the description of the setting of 'Castle Connor' is evocative of the terminology and topography used in the previous Purcell stories.²²¹ The lengthy introduction ruminates on 'the decay of ancient grandeur' and the sublime appeal incited by such a spectacle:

as we gaze on the scion of some ruined family, the first impulse of nature bids us regard his fate with interest and respect, is justified by the recollection of great exertions and self-devotion and sacrifices in the cause of a lost country and of a despised religion.²²²

It appears that Catholics in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries can be romanticised as historical heroes and patriots, whereas Catholics of the nineteenth century were politicised, radicalised, and dangerous. What "fragments" remained of ancient Catholic landed families in the eighteenth century are now safely confined there. McCormack points out that Le Fanu's 'unconcealed admiration for earlier generations of resisting Catholics' is most obvious in the Purcell stories, arguing that the nobility differed greatly from the Catholic polity of the nineteenth century.²²³ It is also probable that Le Fanu saw in these ruined, ancient aristocratic

²¹⁹ James H. Murphy, *Irish Novelists and the Victorian Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 94. See also W. J. McCormack, 'Irish Gothic and After (1820-1945)', *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*, general ed. by Seamus Deane, 5 vols. (Derry: Field Day, 1991-2002), II (1991), pp.831-949 (p. 832).

²²⁰ 'Castle Connor', p. 713

²²¹ It seems reasonable to infer that as the first two stories introduce the setting of east Limerick and describe Purcell as gathering stories from his sojourns in the south of Ireland, it is likely that this third story is set, at the very least, in the same district. However, given the strong connection between the O'Connor name and Connaught, and the existence of a town in county Sligo named Castleconnor, it is possible that 'Castle Connor' is set in Connaught, if not in Castleconnor itself. Moreover, many Old English and Gaelic families were transplanted to Connaught following the Cromwellian confiscations.

²²² 'Castle Connor', p. 713.

²²³ McCormack states 'Sarsfields or Ardagh's had a nobility of which O'Connells are incapable', *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 83.

families a link to the precarious Protestant situation in the early nineteenth century: a class of people financially wronged and religiously persecuted.

Purcell emerges here as a character, rather than functioning as an abstract collector, occupying a lead role in the action of the story in this instance. The story is narrated in the first person throughout leaving no room for contested interpretations, as with the competing narratives of 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh' or the idiosyncratic accounts of the Neil family in 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter'. The story recounts an event in Purcell's adolescence, 'About the year 17–', which, based on the timelines of the previous stories must be sometime in the early eighteenth century, further indicated by mention of the Williamite confiscations. Purcell's friend, named only as 'young O'Connor', is drawn into a duel and suffers the fatal consequences. The reader is informed that when Purcell was 'a lad of about 15', he was introduced by his uncle (also a Catholic priest), to the Catholic 'inmates' of Castle Connor who 'at that time consisted of but two members, a widow lady and her only son, a young man aged about eighteen'. Purcell and young O'Connor rapidly become 'close and confidential companions – an intercourse which ripened gradually into in [sic] attachment ardent, deep and devoted', until the two are briefly separated when O'Connor is sent abroad to finish his education, presumably at a French institution given that there was no Catholic education in Ireland at the time.²²⁴ Upon his return three years later, Purcell quickly becomes reacquainted with O'Connor and accompanies him to a local dance hall where he is distressed when he notices O'Connor 'exchange a familiar, almost cordial greeting' with a man later revealed to be the notorious duellist, Fitzgerald, with whom he became acquainted while in France.²²⁵ McCormack points out that in the Purcell stories, 'religious despair and social collapse result from continental sojourn'.²²⁶ O'Connor is fatally wounded in the duel and following a protracted death-bed scene, Purcell descends into 'a raving phrenzy of brain fever', after which he devotes himself to the priesthood.²²⁷ While the plot itself is thin and exceedingly drawn out, what is more significant is that the story serves to develop Purcell himself, inventing a back story for the hitherto mysterious priest, fleshing him out as a sympathetic and fully-formed character. Even though the story is purportedly about O'Connor, Purcell is the protagonist here, and the incident with O'Connor merely functions as a plot catalyst.

²²⁴ 'Castle Connor', p. 713.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 715.

²²⁶ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, pp. 85-86.

²²⁷ 'Castle Connor', p. 728.

As with the first two Purcell stories, there are two main elements of settler writing at work in ‘Castle Connor’, although here they are more marked than in previous stories. The first is the role of history, and the second is the use of landscape. Names in Le Fanu’s fiction were endlessly recycled and are often considered insignificant due to overuse. However, in Le Fanu’s fiction set in Ireland, the use of surnames is particularly noteworthy. McCormack has written of the nebulous historical references in Le Fanu’s 1863 novel *The House by the Churchyard*, arguing that a detailed annotation of the novel is required in order to fully excavate their significance.²²⁸ Littered throughout his Irish-set fiction are names either aurally reminiscent of, or identical to, important figures in Irish history. In ‘The Last Heir of Castle Connor’, the name Fitzgerald gestures to the famous Fitzgerald family of county Limerick, also known as the Knights of Glin, allies of Strongbow during the Norman invasion of Ireland in the twelfth century, who converted to the Church of Ireland under the Penal Laws in the eighteenth century. Furthermore, for a reader of the 1830s, the surname readily evokes Lord Edward Fitzgerald, fifth son of James Fitzgerald, 1st Duke of Leinster, former member of the Irish Parliament, member of the United Irishmen, and one of the leaders of the 1798 rebellion. O’Connor – another significant Irish surname – invokes the O’Connors of Connaught, and the former High Kings of Ireland who were largely deposed following the same Norman conquest that saw the Limerick Fitzgeralds attain power.²²⁹ It is possible that the combination of a traditionally Anglo-Protestant name and a traditionally Gaelic-Catholic name engaged in combat is a deliberate tactic employed to illustrate in microcosm the struggle between Catholics and Protestants. The former high status of the ancient O’Connor family is likened to the ‘remnants of aboriginal forests, reft indeed of their strength and greatness, but proud even in decay’.²³⁰ The same analogy is made at the opening of ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, in which the ‘fragments of aboriginal wood have found refuge’ around Castle Ardagh.²³¹ The aboriginal woods that have been cut down to make way for progressive settlement and modernisation are equated with the ancient Catholic families of Ireland stricken, it is implied, for similar reasons and yet retaining a foothold in the remotest regions of the country.

Johnston and Lawson explain that in settler literature the ‘vastness’ of the colony landscape is often emphasised, ‘accompanied by a more strategic emphasis on its “emptiness”’.

²²⁸ W. J. McCormack, ““Whom We Name Not”: *The House by the Churchyard* and its Annotation’, in *Irish Gothics: Genres, Forms, Modes, and Traditions, 1760-1890*, ed. by Christina Morin and Niall Gillespie (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 147-67. See pp. 151-57.

²²⁹ See Michael Dolley, *Anglo-Norman Ireland, c1100-1318* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972).

²³⁰ ‘Castle Connor’, p. 713.

²³¹ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, p. 313.

Such vastness and emptiness could therefore be filled by the ‘European imagination’, as well as being literally filled with ‘people, crops, and herds’.²³² In Ireland, however, the landscape was neither “vast” nor “empty”, especially in the period before post-Famine emigration. Instead this vastness was conceived temporally as a perceived chasm between the primitive and the modern, further enhanced by the visual disparity in the topographies of urban Dublin and rural Ireland. On the surface, the former was a splendid Georgian city with European-style boulevards, grand architecture and intellectual institutions such as the Royal Irish Academy and Trinity College Dublin. The latter consisted of remote clusters of thatched cottages, an overwhelmingly agrarian economy and an uneducated population, which from the urban intellectual centre of Dublin was perceived to be archaic. Rather than evoking the empty and alien frontier that existed at the furthest reaches of empire, settler writing in nineteenth-century Ireland drew inspiration from the wilderness of the south and west, where it was supposed that a primitive ecology and anachronistic people still existed. Malcolm Chapman observes that ‘Since the eighteenth century, the Celtic fringes have posed for the urban intellectual as a location of the wild, the natural, the creative and the insecure’.²³³ In the representation of the Catholic nobility, ‘the acknowledgement of indigenous prior occupancy enabled a type of [narrative] transfer that ultimately established a moral equivalence between conflicting claims [of belonging]’. While indigenous claims by the Catholic lower classes can be elided through casting them as “backwards” and anachronistic, the Catholic nobility were harder to deny given their rank and authority. Thus Veracini explains that different narrative constructions of the indigenous ‘can complement each other and be deployed concomitantly as required’.²³⁴ Le Fanu figured the Jacobite nobility as another form of settler whose demise gave way for the New English settler polity of which he was part. The fact that these families appear to peacefully submit to their faith allows for a smooth transition to the New English takeover that overlooks the reality of forceful dispossession that took place, which conveniently elides any charge of wrongdoing on the part of the New English settler. In a similar way, the Williamite and Hanoverian successions were portrayed as a Glorious Revolution in succeeding the Stuart dynasty during the same period. Thus, the New English takeover can be cast as a natural succession to a class who were already on their way out.

²³² Johnston and Lawson, p. 364.

²³³ Malcolm Chapman, *The Gaelic Vision in Scottish Culture* (London: Croom Helm, 1978), p. 18.

²³⁴ Veracini, p. 43.

‘The Bridal of Carrigvarah’

As the sixth Purcell extract, ‘The Bridal of Carrigvarah’ returns once again to the subject of last heirs and extinct families. The decline of the previously powerful landed class is marked by the visible decay of the buildings in which they live, as detailed in the opening paragraphs. The story opens ‘In a sequestered district of the county of Limerick’ and there is a historical specificity surrounding the buildings that populate the landscape, although Carrigvarah does not appear to be a real place.²³⁵ The Heathcote farm is described as:

one of those strong stone buildings half castle, half farm-house, which are not unfrequent [*sic*] in the South of Ireland, and whose solid masonry and massive construction seem to prove at once the insecurity and the caution of the Cromwellite settlers who erected them.²³⁶

The farm belongs to Martin Heathcote, ‘Protestant by descent as by name’ but ‘not so in religion [...] an exemplary Catholic’ whose father ‘had returned in early youth to the true faith’. Compared to the less explicit indications of religious affiliation in previous stories, the reader is suddenly confronted with the unusual situation of Protestant-to-Catholic conversion, with no further explanation as to why this has taken place. In terms of class, we are told that ‘the rank’ of Heathcote and his only daughter, Ellen, ‘was of that unequivocal kind which precludes all familiar association with those of a decidedly inferior rank, while it is not sufficient to entitle its possessors to the society of established gentility’. It appears that their unorthodox religious situation has affected the Heathcotes’ class status, while their nearest neighbours of the ‘established gentility’ are ‘the O’Maras of Carrigvarah’, whose nomenclature suggests old Gaelic origins.²³⁷ Historically, the O’Mara family is connected to the town of Toomevara in north Tipperary, located on the far side of the Sliabh Phelim mountains to Abington on the old Dublin road. The Gaelic translation as *Tuaim Uí Mheára* means tumulus or burial mound of the O’Maras.²³⁸ As with the Phelims, the Ardaghs, and the O’Connors, Le Fanu uses a surname with toponymic significance, all of which – excepting O’Connor – are connected to the Limerick-Tipperary region. It is possible, once again, that the O’Maras are an Old English, Catholic family, their Gaelic surname and ancient dwelling being an indication of their longevity in Ireland. As with the Heathcote farm, the O’Mara ‘mansion-house’ is ‘constructed out of the ruins of an old abbey, whose towers and cloisters had been levelled by the shot of

²³⁵ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘The Bridal of Carrigvarah’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 13 (1839), 405-18 (p. 405). Hereafter cited as ‘The Bridal of Carrigvarah’.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*

²³⁷ *Ibid.*

²³⁸ For translation see Ó Dónaill, *Foclóir Gaelige-Béarla*, ‘tuaim, *f.* (*gs.* -ama, *pl.* -amanna) *Lit:* Tumulus’, <<http://www.teanglann.ie/en/fgb/tuaim>> [accessed 26 February 2018].

Cromwell's artillery'.²³⁹ This direct reference to the type of dwellings built by the Cromwellite settlers, as well as those buildings destroyed by them, underscore the presence of Ireland's violent sectarian history that is still observable in the landscape through the presence of these ruins. Further, as the O'Maras were subjects of a Cromwellian attack, their Catholicism would seem to be confirmed.

The complex historical backdrop frames what is essentially a straightforward story of star-crossed lovers. The story charts the relationship across class lines between young O'Mara – who is betrothed to a wealthy English heiress, Lady Emily – and Ellen Heathcote. O'Mara and Ellen wed secretly and have a son, but while O'Mara is in Dublin visiting his father (Colonel O'Mara), in an attempt to extract himself from the arranged marriage, he is killed in a duel by Lady Emily's brother. It transpires that 'a kind of humble companion' to Colonel O'Mara, Edward Dwyer, has manipulated this situation for his own personal gain, and manages to extract 'considerable and advantageous leases from Colonel O'Mara' after the death of his son.²⁴⁰ The provenance of Edward Dwyer is not clear, although his role as a scheming usurper and pseudo-servant to the O'Maras suggests that his social climbing impulse is more important – and threatening – than his religious affiliation. The death of young O'Mara's son, along with O'Mara himself, leaves the Colonel "without issue", leaving the path clear for Dwyer to supplant his former masters:

I am but a pauper now – a beggar's accusation is always libel – they must reward me soon – and were I independent once, I'd make them feel my power, and feel it so, that I should die the richest or the best avenged servant of a great man.²⁴¹

There is a return here to the crafty and conniving servant as with Jacque in 'Sir Robert Ardagh', more archetypally cast as the villain than the Neils of 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', but reminiscent of the Quirke caste nonetheless. McCormack comments that Le Fanu 'feared the consequence of Protestant isolation' in all aspects of Irish life.²⁴² In a letter from Le Fanu to his mother in dated August 1840, a year after the publication of 'The Bridal of Carrigvarah', Le Fanu comments – with obvious apprehension – on a nascent Catholic collective:

The Roman Catholics are an important political power, & as full as ever of treason. The lower classes of religions have acquired a smattering of information & have consequently acquired a kind of expansive ambition which will soon make itself felt against the higher orders. The Roman Catholic gentry

²³⁹ 'The Bridal of Carrigvarah', p. 405.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 418.

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 408. Original emphasis.

²⁴² *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 85.

of the professions are generally infidel and revolutionary & the protestants from first to last *unsteady*.²⁴³

What initially appears to be a story of ill-fated love, in fact transpires to be a paranoid fancy about the secret machinations of an aspiring peasant class. At the outset, Dwyer requests that ‘the critical and important services’ rendered to Colonel O’Mara be repaid by his being granted possession of the Heathcote farm, Heathcote being in arrears to the O’Maras. Upon young O’Mara’s refutation of this request, Dwyer sets out to ruin the family and so to that end secure his “reward”. Though the bargain at the centre of the Ardagh story is Faustian and hints at the supernatural, here Dwyer’s revenge is instigated by O’Mara’s refusal to repay what is owed. In other words, it is the O’Maras who have not fulfilled their end of the deal in this instance: ‘For these services, and they were not, as I have said, few or valueless, I have received little more reward than liberal promises’.²⁴⁴ The description of Dwyer is that of a man ‘low in stature’, with a ‘broad and square-built figure – his face sallow, and his features had that prominence and sharpness which frequently accompany personal deformity’, in addition he has ‘a remarkably wide mouth, with white teeth as the fangs of a wolf’.²⁴⁵ This description matches Sir Robert’s valet Jacque, also described as ‘low in stature’ with features that ‘had all that sharpness and sickliness of hue which generally accompany deformity’.²⁴⁶ A deformity of the body indicates a deformity of character, although in fact it is the O’Connors, the O’Maras, and the Ardaghs who are at fault for making promises that they cannot fulfil. Ardagh’s Faustian bargain made him wealthy but with his life forfeit, O’Connor’s commitment to a duel must also be honoured, while Dwyer’s debt of service to the O’Maras must be paid. The result is that each family line is extinguished.

Honourable intentions that result in less favourable outcomes is a recurring theme in the Purcell stories; the stories of the nobility can be read as a form of justification for the New English settlement. The Ardaghs, the O’Connors, and the O’Maras are descendants of encumbered family lines replete with dubious military connections and histories of sedition. The ruined castles and buildings they occupy are from a different era, hopelessly out of sync with the modernising world, with the implication that the families within are equally out of time. S. J. Connolly points to the ‘obliteration of a long-standing ethnic identity’ in the transition from Old English to New English power, ‘the term “Old English” disappeared.

²⁴³ J. T. S. Le Fanu to Mrs. E. Le Fanu, undated, postmarked 21 August 1840. Cited by McCormack in *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 85. Original emphasis.

²⁴⁴ ‘The Bridal of Carrigvarah’, p. 406.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 405.

²⁴⁶ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, p. 729.

Instead the dominant protestant elite used “Irish” to refer to the whole Catholic population, regardless of ancestry’.²⁴⁷ Connolly points to the ‘Tension’ that emerged between ‘recent arrivals and longer established colonists’ in Ireland; it seems that once a group have become “too native” their authority can no longer be supported, as was the case with the Old English who became progressively “Gaelicized”.²⁴⁸ Le Fanu’s stories emphasise both a continuity and a difference with the former landed elite: continuity in terms of the inherent right to rule, and difference to the extent that these families failed to keep pace with changing times, were innately corrupted through their decaying lineage and popish practices, and therefore needed to be replaced. As such, Le Fanu’s stories of ruined Jacobites function to propagate the idea that though worthy in their day, such families were the last vestiges of a decaying breed that required supplanting.

Moving on from the ill-omened Jacobite heirs, two narratives in the ‘female hand’ share commonalities with Ardagh, O’Connor, and O’Mara in relating the story of female heirs of landed families who are also the victims of bad deals made by their male guardians.²⁴⁹ ‘Passage in the Secret History of an Irish Countess’ and ‘Chapter in the History of a Tyrone Family’ are the fifth and tenth Purcell stories, published roughly a year apart in October 1838 and November 1839 respectively. Just as the basis of Le Fanu’s historical novels is readily detectable in certain Purcell stories, so too are the components of his relatively successful sensation novels, which find form in ‘History of an Irish Countess’ and ‘Tyrone Family’. Something of the style of Le Fanu’s writing in his overtly Gothic and sensationalist novels of the 1860s is traceable in both stories, although sensation as a subgenre is generally understood to be a strictly mid-nineteenth century development. Patrick Brantlinger defines sensation as fiction that ‘deals with crime, often murder as an outcome of adultery and sometimes of bigamy, in apparently proper, bourgeois, domestic settings’.²⁵⁰ Sensation fiction is also often stimulated by testatory misappropriation and the incumbent nature of inheritance in general,

²⁴⁷ S. J. Connolly, ‘Settler colonialism in Ireland from the English Conquest to the Nineteenth Century’, in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, ed. by Edward Cavanagh, and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 49-64 (p. 52).

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

²⁴⁹ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘Passage in the Secret History of an Irish Countess’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 12 (1838), 502-19 (p. 502). Hereafter cited as ‘History of an Irish Countess’. Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘Chapter in the History of a Tyrone Family’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 14 (1839), 398-415. Hereafter cited as ‘Tyrone Family’.

²⁵⁰ Patrick Brantlinger, ‘What is “Sensational” about the “Sensation Novel”?’ , *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 37.1 (1982), 1-28 (p. 1).

particularly where female inheritance is concerned.²⁵¹ Thus, ‘History of an Irish Countess’ and ‘Tyrone Family’ anticipate sensation fiction in their focus on the experiences of young female heiresses, while both are also “blueprints” for Le Fanu’s later novels *Uncle Silas* (1864), and *The Wyvern Mystery* (1869).²⁵² In her work on the Irish Gothic novel, Siobhán Kilfeather notes the ‘two archetypal Gothic plots’, male Gothic and female Gothic. In the former, Kilfeather identifies the Faustian pact as dominant, while in the latter, ‘beleaguered heroines’ are ‘incarcerated in rambling big houses, on isolated estates. Their oppressors are fathers, guardians, husbands, clerics and/or teachers’. Such conventions, Kilfeather explains, ‘represent all too obviously women’s sense of entrapment in domestic ideology, under patriarchy’.²⁵³ Though ‘Secret History of an Irish Countess’, and ‘Tyrone Family’ concern female heroines as victims of their male patrons, they are linked to the stories of ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, ‘Castle Connor’, and ‘Bridal of Carrigvarah’ in their portrayal of bad deals, both of which concern marriage and money.

‘Passage in the Secret History of an Irish Countess’

‘History of an Irish Countess’ was Le Fanu’s first use of a female protagonist, a gendered perspective that would become a staple of his later fiction. The story is told in first person from the perspective of the Irish countess of the title, named as Lady Margaret. A brief preface to Margaret’s narrative heralds the return of the *residuary legatee* (absent from the three intervening stories since ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’), who explains that ‘The following paper is written in a female hand, and was no doubt communicated to my much regretted friend [i.e. Purcell], by the lady whose early history it serves to illustrate, the Countess D—’.

This style of introduction was later used in Le Fanu’s 1872 novella *Carmilla*, which also concerns a female protagonist. Here the reader is cautioned, however, that the *residuary legatee* has ‘altered such of the names as might, if stated, lead at once to detection’, as a result of which, the surnames that have hitherto suggested the political and religious affiliations of the Jacobite heirs are here omitted and essentially open to debate.²⁵⁴ The plot of ‘History of an Irish Countess’ manifested subsequently in three different forms. First, ‘The Murdered Cousin’

²⁵¹ For an examination of female inheritance in the nineteenth century see Catherine O. Frank, *Law, Literature, and the Transmission of Culture in England, 1837-1925* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing, 2010). In particular, see Chapter Three, ‘Victorian Daughters and the Burden of Inheritance’.

²⁵² McCormack remarks that “‘Passage in the Secret History of an Irish Countess’ reads more like a blue-print for a tale than the thing itself”. *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 78.

²⁵³ Siobhán Kilfeather, ‘The Gothic Novel’, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Irish Novel*, ed. by John Wilson Foster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 78-96 (p. 89).

²⁵⁴ ‘History of an Irish Countess’, p. 502.

appeared in the 1851 collection, *Ghost Stories and Tales of Mystery*, this time without the Purcell narrative frame and incorporating some minor changes. Over ten years later in July 1864, ‘Maud Ruthyn and Uncle Silas’ began serialisation in the *D.U.M.* and ran until December of the same year. It was the first work of fiction in the *D.U.M.* that credited Le Fanu as the author, since *The House in the Church-yard*, which appeared the previous year, was attributed to the fictional narrator, Charles de Cresseron. Following its serial run, the novel was published by Bentley as *Uncle Silas: A Tale of Bartram Haugh*, and became one of Le Fanu’s best-known novels and financial successes.²⁵⁵ In the original ‘History of an Irish Countess’, the action takes place not in the usual Purcell domain of Limerick-Tipperary-Clare, but instead in counties Cork and Galway. The evocation of setting is not as detailed as in former tales and the mention of these two counties is brief. It seems likely that for purposes of plot, Le Fanu needed to select two locations with a significant intervening distance, while still located in the rural south-west. Situating the story in Limerick, Tipperary, or Clare would not have served his purpose on this occasion. As a result, ‘History of an Irish Countess’ does not have the level of topographical detail present in other Purcell stories, the scene instead being almost wholly interior and domestic. By the time ‘Maud Ruthyn’ was serialised and published as a novel, the Irish location had been omitted altogether, although Elizabeth Bowen did argue for the story’s Irish provenance in her introduction to the 1947 edition, citing as evidence the novel’s ‘hermetic solitude and the autocracy of the great country house, the demonic power of the family myth, fatalism, feudalism, and the “ascendancy” outlook’ as ‘accepted facts of life for the race of hybrids from which Le Fanu sprang’.²⁵⁶

Lady Margaret is the only child of a reclusive aristocrat, who upon her father’s death is sent to live with her equally odd and reclusive uncle, Sir Arthur T——n. Many years previous, Sir Arthur was involved in a scandal and suspected of the murder of a man then staying at his home. Hugh Tisdall was found dead in his bedroom, the door being locked from the inside, the cause of death being two brutal head wounds. No mode of ingress was found into the second story bedroom, and the murder remained unsolved. The “locked room mystery” at the centre of the short story is its notable strength, although the gradual reveal of the murder plot is more deftly drawn out in *Uncle Silas*. Honoré de Balzac, whom McCormack has shown to be an

²⁵⁵ Letters between Le Fanu and Richard Bentley in June and July 1864 discuss terms for the serialisation and publication of ‘Maud Ruthyn’. In a letter dated 3 July 1864, Le Fanu remarks ‘I am sorry you do not approve of the “title”. But we are not free to modify this in the collective publication. It strikes me that I can perhaps manage something in the way of “betterment”’. Edens, Le Fanu to R Bentley, pp. 173-74. The title of the story changes several times throughout the course of its serialisation in the *D.U.M.*.

²⁵⁶ Elizabeth Bowen, ‘Introduction’ to *Uncle Silas: A Tale of Bartram-Haugh* (London: The Cresset Press, 1947), pp. 7-23, (p. 8).

influence on Le Fanu's writing, used the locked room scenario in his *La Comédie Humaine* (1833), while Edgar Allan Poe was to adopt it for his 1841 short story, 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue'.²⁵⁷ The bad deal at the centre of the plot is a gesture of misguided solidarity by Margaret's father. He instructs that upon his death, Margaret should be entrusted to her uncle's care: 'all his vast property was left to me, and to the heirs of my body, for ever; and, in default of such heirs, it was to go after my death to my uncle, Sir Arthur, without any entail'.²⁵⁸ His rationale for placing his daughter in the care of a man who would benefit from her death is contrived to display his conviction of Sir Arthur's innocence. Margaret departs her home for her uncle's residence, named as Carricleigh, county Galway. Shortly after her arrival at Carricleigh, Margaret's cousin, Edward, makes a proposal of marriage, one engineered by Sir Arthur in order to acquire Margaret's fortune. Upon her refusal of Edward, the men contrive to murder Margaret in the same manner as befell Hugh Tisdall. Being lowered from the roof, Edward gains access to Margaret's second-floor bedroom through a trick window-frame, although Margaret, suspecting some foul play, is already awake and hiding in the room. Believing Margaret to be asleep in her bed, Edward administers 'two dull blows, given in rapid succession', but in fact it is Edward's sister Emily who receives the fatal blows, leaving Margaret to escape.²⁵⁹

This story is a departure in plot, style, and substance from the preceding Purcell stories, and McCormack, too, has noted the inconsistencies of 'History of an Irish Countess' and 'Tyrone Family', referring to them as the "'Protestant" tales' which, he postulates, may have been influenced by Le Fanu's sister Catherine (although he does not expand on how or why), and 'which are also marked by their lack of interest in the supernatural'. Instead they 'opt decisively for domestic interiors and explicitly criminal offences'.²⁶⁰ There is no evidence in the story to confirm categorically that Margaret is either Protestant or Catholic, beyond the assertion that Margaret's father was religious and paid 'stern attention to [her] religious instruction'.²⁶¹ Margaret's self-professed 'station and wealth' could suggest that the family are Anglican, although it is also possible that this reclusive family are Old English Catholics, as with the Ardaghs, the O'Maras, and the O'Connors.²⁶² Purcell's opening introduction notes

²⁵⁷ See McCormack, *Dissolute Characters: Irish Literary History through Balzac, Sheridan Le Fanu, Yeats and Bowen* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993). Hereafter cited as *Dissolute Characters*.

²⁵⁸ 'History of an Irish Countess', p. 506.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 517.

²⁶⁰ McCormack states that 'There is evidence' that these stories were influenced by Catherine, but he does not elaborate or provide the source for this evidence. *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 79.

²⁶¹ 'History of an Irish Countess', p. 502.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 503.

that Margaret has ‘long since died, a childless and a widowed wife’ and that the ‘two powerful and wealthy families, *that* in which she was born, and that into which she had married, have ceased to be – they are utterly extinct’.²⁶³ As with the ruined Jacobite heirs, Margaret’s family line has become extinct, as has the family she married in to, although there is no further mention of this family in the story. Given that the *residuary legatee* is supposedly compiling this story for the *D.U.M.* in the 1830s, and indicates that both families are already long extinct, the events of the narrative were evidently set in the early eighteenth century. Whatever her religion, Margaret’s marriage would likely not have crossed sectarian lines at this time. Dickson, for instance, refers to ‘the act of 1745 that made all “mixed marriages” null and void’, and even before this period it was not an acceptable practice.²⁶⁴ Thus we can assume that the family she married in to, now also extinct, were of like status and religion. It is also worth noting that the characters in the story are completely isolated, ‘with few acquaintances and almost no friends’, which suggests that they were already in decline.²⁶⁵ Therefore, Margaret’s chances of an advantageous match were likely very limited. Elsewhere in the Purcell stories, a connection to France has signified Catholicism, and as such, it seems reasonable to view the French influence in ‘History of an Irish Countess’ in like manner, which along with the aforementioned particulars, makes it possible that Margaret’s family were Old English Catholics.

In *Uncle Silas*, Madame de la Rougierre is the ghastly and terrifying French maid and governess employed by Maud’s father but later revealed to be Silas’s accomplice, who colludes to plot Maud’s demise. In ‘Secret History of an Irish Countess’ she is named merely as ‘the Frenchwoman’ and plays a much smaller role in the story, operating as a spy for Sir Arthur, though she is still a disturbing presence: ‘a tall, raw-boned, ill-looking, elderly Frenchwoman’ with ‘sullen and presuming manners’, ‘a creature of my uncle’s and therefore to be dreaded’. She is introduced as Margaret’s new maid when Sir Arthur informs her that he plans ‘shortly to visit the continent, with all my family’.²⁶⁶ Edward, too, embarks on a fake journey to France, though in reality he remains hidden in the house. We are also told that Sir Arthur had ‘in early youth, travelled upon the continent’, where it is implied he adopted loose morals and kept undesirable company.²⁶⁷ Continental associations are, of course, significant where Le Fanu is concerned, particularly the French connection. France is the hub of revolutionary Catholicism, and as in ‘Castle Connor’, a French visit typically signals a negative outcome. Likewise, Sir

²⁶³ Ibid., p. 502. Original emphasis.

²⁶⁴ Dickson, *New Foundations*, p. 79.

²⁶⁵ ‘History of an Irish Countess’, p. 506.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 511.

²⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 503.

Robert Ardagh's French visit precedes his downfall, orchestrated by his French valet. On this point, McCormack remarks, "‘Infidel and revolutionary’ [...] are the twin evils which France stands for, and in *The Purcell Papers* religious despair and social collapse result from a continental sojourn".²⁶⁸ In *Dissolute Characters*, McCormack reiterates his earlier assertion, arguing that 'the source of contamination' in the Purcell stories 'is continental Europe, especially France'.²⁶⁹ Ireland as a frontier between France and England was a habitual concern for the British government and the Irish Protestant elite as far back as the Tudor period, and more immediately so since the rebellion of 1798.²⁷⁰ So much, in fact, that Dickson refers to Ireland as an international 'theatre of war' during the last decade of the seventeenth century.²⁷¹ Unquestionably, the French connection in Le Fanu's stories signifies the presence of a hostile force.

Upon Margaret's escape at the close of the story, she explains that while Sir Arthur and Edward manage to evade capture, 'The Frenchwoman was, however, arrested in the neighbourhood upon the next day', where it also curiously revealed that 'She was, in reality, able to speak English like a native, but had exclusively used the French language, I suppose to facilitate her disguise'. The fact that the Frenchwoman can conceal her accent and 'speak English like a native', though a seemingly insignificant remark, is indicative of a greater threat of foreign infiltration, specifically French.²⁷² Though she could 'speak English like a native' all along, she instead continues to speak in French, which was likely a rhetorical device used by Le Fanu to reinforce her treacherousness. As such, being French and/or speaking French signifies villainy for readers of the *D.U.M.* Hoeveler explains that her definition of the "‘Irish Protestant Imaginary’" manifests itself as what we would recognize as textual displays of anti-Catholicism, and is composed of equal parts of guilt, anxiety, fear, and disdain for the native religion of the majority population'.²⁷³ In the Purcell stories, Jacobitism is the friendly face of Catholicism, while Jacobin France embodies its radical potential. The 'textual displays of anti-

²⁶⁸ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, pp. 85-86.

²⁶⁹ McCormack, *Dissolute Characters*, p. 135.

²⁷⁰ Bartlett explains the extent of the Irish connection with the French and Spanish courts, observing that 'Irish soldiers had fought in various campaigns in France in the middle ages'. Furthermore, 'it is significant that beginning in the 1520s, the French and later the Spanish courts were targeted by successive Irish malcontents who sought military assistance, and that equally France and Spain could see sound strategic reasons for involvement in Ireland's affairs. Ireland [...] from the early sixteenth to the early nineteenth centuries would become a major diplomatic and strategic object'. Bartlett, p. 81.

²⁷¹ Dickson, *New Formations*, p. 29.

²⁷² 'History of an Irish Countess', p. 518.

²⁷³ Diane Long Hoeveler, 'The Irish Protestant Imaginary: The Cultural Contexts for the Gothic Chapbooks Published by Bennett Dugdale, 1800-5', in *Irish Gothics: Genres, Forms, Modes, and Traditions, 1760-1890*, ed. by Christina Morin and Niall Gillespie (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 34-57 (p. 36).

Catholicism' in Le Fanu's fiction emerge as a form of Francophobia and suggests that nineteenth-century Irish Protestants equated the new forms of O'Connellite Catholicism with those at work in post-Revolutionary France, which saw the ruling aristocracy toppled by the lower-class majority. When we consider the stories of Ardagh, O'Connor, O'Mara, and Margaret side-by-side, what becomes increasingly clear is that the cause of ruination for this former nobility is not solely their religion, but rather their unfortunate situations after the defeat of James which led them to make ill-advised alliances with France. In one way or another, these families are tainted by their connection to France, something that would continue to surface in Le Fanu's later fiction.²⁷⁴ That Le Fanu continually returned to this point indicates that he saw a connection between the demise of the Jacobite nobility and the increasing isolation of the Protestant elite in Ireland in the 1830s and '40s.

'A Chapter in the History of a Tyrone Family'

The final story in this section, 'A Chapter in the History of a Tyrone Family', appeared in the *D.U.M.* in October 1839 and features a female protagonist and marriage plot. The story opens in county Tyrone, later moving to an estate in the south of Ireland, the exact location unspecified. The story recounts the experiences of the young heiress Fanny Richardson, who is married off to the mysterious Lord Glenfallen to live on his estate of Cahergillagh. Glenfallen forbids Fanny from entering the rear part of the castle (*à la* Bluebeard), commanding her to keep to her own chambers at the front. Fanny keeps her promise but she is nevertheless visited on three occasions by an old, blind Dutchwoman, Flora VanKemp, who professes to be the original Lady Glenfallen. After the first incident, Lord Glenfallen intervenes and assures Fanny that this woman is insane, but Flora repeatedly appears in Fanny's bedroom in the dead of night, warning her in no uncertain terms to 'leave this house upon to-morrow; let the world know that your husband has another wife living'.²⁷⁵ She eventually attempts to cut Fanny's

²⁷⁴ For example, 'Ullor de Lacy, a Legend of Cappercullen', 'The Watcher', and 'Sir Dominick's Bargain'. Le Fanu's 1872 novella 'The Room in the Dragon Volant' could also be considered as engaging with (or promoting) anti-French feeling. 'The Room in the Dragon Volant', *London Society*, 21 (1872) Part 1, 98-114; Part 2, 193-210; Part 3, 290-307; Part 4, 413-24; Part 5, 481-96.

²⁷⁵ 'Tyrone Family', p. 408. The story ought to be better known in its own right as the likely inspiration for Charlotte Brontë's madwoman, Bertha Mason, from her novel *Jane Eyre* (1847). The similarities to Jane's experiences with Bertha – Rochester's first wife who also roams around the house at night and is accused of lunacy – are striking. Though more masterfully executed by Brontë, Le Fanu's story precedes Brontë's novel by eight years. As far back as 1917, A. A. Jack asserted the connection between the two. Jack remarks 'that Le Fanu's tale suggested the plot of *Jane Eyre* is decidedly possible', (par. 23), and that 'Charlotte Brontë herself, in requesting Messrs. Aylett & Jones to send out review copies of the *Poems*, mentions alone among Irish papers the *Dublin University Magazine*. A favourable notice appeared in writing the editor to thank him for it, 6th October, 1846, she signs herself, "Your grateful and constant reader."' A. A. Jack, 'The Brontës', *The Cambridge History of English and American Literature*, vol. XIII, ed. by Sir Adolphus William Ward and

throat with a razor but misses her mark slightly and is intercepted by Lord Glenfallen. The story also includes the trial of Flora, who while on the stand accuses Glenfallen of having appointed her to kill his new wife. In the end, Glenfallen goes insane and is found with his throat cut, apparently self-inflicted.

Victor Sage, in an introduction to *Uncle Silas*, comments on Le Fanu's use of the Bluebeard plot, which is also applicable to 'Tyrone Family':

In his Gothic folk-tale Bluebeard plot, Le Fanu portrays the contradiction of an aristocratic, patriarchal, landowning class – the class whose interests he himself had always represented – at the end of its resources, willing to prey on its own young, its own future, to retain power and wealth just a little while longer. [The young characters] are all victims of isolated old men who bar their way to the future.²⁷⁶

While it is doubtful that Le Fanu was attempting to "represent the interests" of a landowning class, given that he was not of that class, what he does depict is certainly a vampiric ascendancy class 'willing to prey on its own young', and more importantly, he portrays a corrupt patriarchy in need of improvement (or displacement).²⁷⁷ Sage echoes Margot Gayle Backus's earlier treatise of Irish Protestant Gothic, in which she notes that the 'family system' – such as Edgeworth's *Rackrents* – 'consumes its offspring via a process of intergenerational corrosion'.²⁷⁸ Furthermore, Backus argues that

In situating the Anglo-Irish family in the narrative position conventionally held by the native Irish, Edgeworth supplies a primal Anglo-Irish family as the atavistic forerunners of the contemporary protestant Ascendancy, a group that was in the process of reimagining itself during this period. By appropriating the native's historically rooted status for the Anglo-Irish, this displacement furthers the ends of settler colonialism by, in effect, narratively re-enacting the dispossession of the native Irish.²⁷⁹

In other words, the story of the *Rackrents* is textual representation of a new colonial order displacing an older system, just as Le Fanu's Jacobite stories serve to 'narratively re-enact[...] the dispossession' of the Old English and Gaelic order.²⁸⁰ The purpose of such narratives was to 'establish[...] an absolute, purifying breach with the past' through the 'family's moral discreditation and economic decline',²⁸¹ which allowed for what Backus calls 'the emergence

Alfred Rayney Waller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1917), par. 8. <
<http://www.bartleby.com/223/1207.html>> [accessed 22 March 2017].

²⁷⁶ Sage, 'Introduction', *Uncle Silas* (London: Penguin, 2006), pp. ix-xxxvii (p. xviii).

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. xviii.

²⁷⁸ Margot Gayle Backus, *The Gothic Family Romance: Heterosexuality, Child Sacrifice, and the Anglo-Irish Colonial Order* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), p. 100.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

of a hegemonic, naturalized Anglo-Irish identity' in its place.²⁸² Backus recognises in Edgeworth's work at the turn of the nineteenth century what would become the *D.U.M.*'s guiding principles of the 1830s and '40s: reaffirming settler legitimacy through processes of narrative transference that included effacement of the Catholic lower classes and succession from the landed nobility.

At the outset, Fanny explains that 'My father had never seemed to love, or take an interest in me. He had desired a son, and I think he never thoroughly forgave me my unfortunate sex'. As for her mother, she is 'as fond of me as she was of anyone', but it is through her mother's machinations that Fanny is forced to accept marriage with Glenfallen, an advantageous match for her family. Once again, clues as to the families' religious provenance are unclear, in fact even more unclear than in previous stories. As already stated, McCormack considered this story as one of the "Protestant" tales along with 'History of an Irish Countess', but a clear indication remains ambiguous. The family name of Richardson, the reader is told in a footnote, has been altered, although while Margaret's entire family are "extinct", this time we are told that many of those connected to the story 'are still living'. This action of editing is taken by the *residuary legatee* rather than Purcell, which suggests that this family, or 'those who stand in close relation to the principal actors in this drama', are still around in the early nineteenth century.²⁸³ Fanny remarks that 'My father's wealth and connection had established him in the best society, and consequently, upon our arrival in the metropolis, we commanded whatever enjoyment or advantages its gaities afforded'.²⁸⁴ Unlike previous stories, there is no connection to France, although the Dutch origin of the first wife of Glenfallen could offer a clue to her religion at least. Holland is the home of William III and the country underwent a reformation in the sixteenth century, and as such Flora is almost certainly Protestant. However, this is still not inconclusive proof of the faiths of the main characters.

As with 'History of an Irish Countess' the introduction assures the reader of the authenticity of the succeeding story, comprising the narrator's own words, 'seen with her own eyes, and personally acted in the scenes which she described', whose testimony is apparently above reproach: 'she who told the tale was one far too deeply and sadly impressed with religious principle, to misrepresent or fabricate what she related as fact'.²⁸⁵ Once again in the tales of the nobility, the written supersedes the oral testimony offered by the peasantry,

²⁸² Ibid., p. 98.

²⁸³ 'Tyrone Family', p. 398.

²⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 401.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 398.

although at the same time Le Fanu makes clear the story's reliance on conventions of both European Romance and the folk tale. Glenfallen compares himself with Bluebeard when restricting Fanny's freedom in the castle: 'I shall be your *Bluebeard* [...] I shall impose on you a very trifling restraint during your sojourn here'.²⁸⁶ Likewise, when the newlywed couple arrive in the neighbourhood of Cahergillagh, Glenfallen points out his estate in the distance: "'There lies the enchanted castle'".²⁸⁷ Glenfallen explains that though the castle is old, 'he has no taste for antiquity', preferring 'a snug, modern, unmysterious bedroom, with well-aired sheets, to the waving tapestry, mildewed cushions, and all the other interesting appliances of romance'. Nevertheless, Glenfallen assures Fanny that she 'will find legends and ghostly lore enough to claim your respect', with 'a supernatural and appropriate anecdote for every closet and corner of the mansion'.²⁸⁸ The story's self-referential mocking of its own conventions clashes with the earnest introduction by Purcell as to the story's veracity, and also with the lengthy footnote supposedly added by the *residuary legatee*. The footnote follows the relating of a possible supernatural episode in Fanny's youth, long before her engagement to Glenfallen. Fanny's older sister was married and in ill-health, due to return to her family home to recover. The family expected her arrival one evening, and after hours of waiting they finally heard the arrival of a carriage:

The noise approached, it became louder and clearer [...] I now heard the shrill screaming of the rusty iron, as the avenue gate revolved on its hinges [...] On thundered the vehicle with the speed of a whirlwind [...] furious barking from all the dogs about the house, hailed its arrival.²⁸⁹

When the family rush out to greet the carriage, the courtyard is empty. The following morning Fanny learns that her sister died the previous night.

The reader is directed to a footnote from the *residuary legatee* in which they defend Purcell in the act of preserving 'those harmless fragments of picturesque superstition' that has apparently been 'subject to the charge of dealing too largely in the marvellous'. In this tract, the *residuary legatee* explains his motives for the collection of Purcell's manuscripts: 'in order that the lore which they contain may reach the world before scepticism and utility have robbed our species of the precious gift of credulity [...] those harmless fragments of picturesque superstition, *which it is our object to preserve*'.²⁹⁰ Here Le Fanu clearly evidences his objective

²⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 406. Original emphasis.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 403.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 404.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 399.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 400. My emphasis.

in composing the Purcell stories, along with his motive for presenting them as genuine historical artefacts. The *residuary legatee* professes his objective to ‘preserve’ the ‘lore which [the manuscripts] contain’, an aim clearly allied with the antiquarian and folklorist movements of the *D.U.M.* and Irish Protestant writing of this period. Richard M. Dorson coined the term “fakelore” to describe a ‘synthetic product claiming to be authentic oral tradition but actually tailored for mass edification’, which is precisely what Le Fanu produces with the Purcell stories.²⁹¹ Le Fanu’s fakelore project followed a popular trend for folklore in the 1830s, including works by Croker, Carleton, and Lover. As Andrew Cusack explains, in the opinion of the founders and contributors of the *D.U.M.*, ‘the best way of securing the Union was by putting Ireland on an equal footing with Britain’ that ‘could only be achieved by a combination of cultural and economic rehabilitation that would restore a country demoralized by its relegation to subaltern status by the Act of Union’. Cusack asserts that ‘if they could lead such change, their position as an elite could be preserved, even in the face of growing Catholic populism’. The project of cultural recovery and preservation undertaken by the *D.U.M.* in its early years was crafted to contribute to a canon of Irish national literature that in the 1830s and ’40s was in the process of being defined and curated, but which also ‘necessitated the rediscovery and propagation of a distinctly Irish literature and culture, which in turn required antiquarian studies’.²⁹² In this address to his readers, Le Fanu makes clear his role as a “fakelore”. He is actively contributing to the construction of an Irish literary canon, which in turn served to solidify Irish Protestant identity in the post-Union period by writing the stories of seventeenth-century Irish nobility and preserving the whimsy of the peasantry. In a similar way, Macpherson’s Ossian poems grounded Scottish identity in a usable, Romantic past. The distance – temporally and technologically – between these stories of antiquity, and the craft of nineteenth-century novelists such as Sir Walter Scott, served as a yardstick for the advances of the Scottish nation and its literature, just as in post-Union Ireland.

Stories of William and James: ‘Strange Event in the Life of Schalken the Painter’ (1839) and ‘Hardress Fitzgerald: A Royalist Captain’ (1840)

‘Strange Event in the Life of Schalken the Painter’ and ‘Hardress Fitzgerald: A Royalist Captain’ are two stories that share common themes with those of the Jacobite heirs, in that they

²⁹¹ Richard M. Dorson, *Folklore and Fakelore: Essays Toward a Discipline of Folk Studies* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 5.

²⁹² Andrew Cusack, ‘Cultural Transfer in the Dublin University Magazine: James Clarence Mangan and the German Gothic’, in *Popular Revenants: The German Gothic and Its International Reception, 1800-2000*, ed. by Andrew Cusack and Barry Murnane (Rochester, NY: Camden House, 2012), pp. 87-104 (p. 88).

relate to incidents in the life of two male protagonists and are historically couched in the Jacobite-Williamite history of Ireland. However, they are concerned not with the waning Old English families but rather are related to the opposing perspectives of William and James. ‘Strange Event in the life of Schalken the Painter’ appeared in the *D.U.M.* a month after ‘The Bridal of Carrigvarah’ in May 1839, at which time Le Fanu, having graduated, was still entertaining a career as a barrister, and was not writing full-time. However, McCormack notes that by ‘April 1839, with “Schalken” in the press [published in the *D.U.M.* the following month] book publication had already occurred to him’, and through his mother’s family, the Dobbins, Le Fanu ‘was confident of an introduction to Richard Bentley, one of London’s most energetic publishers with whom Dickens was associated’.²⁹³ By the following autumn, Le Fanu had bought an interest in two Dublin newspapers, the *Statesman* and *The Warder*. His desire to secure a publishing deal was perhaps what he had in mind when he composed the next Purcell extract, ‘Strange Event in the Life of Schalken the Painter’, a story that moves away – geographically and thematically – from the confines of Purcell and his domain, although is nevertheless framed by Purcell’s narration and a Williamite connection. ‘What had I to do with Schalken, or Schalken with me?’, so begins the seventh Purcell extract and indeed, the story appears to be an unaccountable anomaly.²⁹⁴ Why, in the midst of writing a series of straightforwardly Irish stories, did Le Fanu suddenly insert an invented story about the life of a seventeenth-century Dutch painter? One answer to the opening question is furnished almost immediately by the narrator, who by now is implicitly understood to be Purcell. The lengthy introductions having steadily receded in recent stories, Le Fanu evidently assumed that regular readers of the *D.U.M.* were by now familiar with Purcell and his exploits. Purcell explains that he has learned the following story from an acquaintance ‘with a Captain Vandael, whose father had served King William in the Low Countries and also in my own unhappy land during the Irish campaigns’. Intrigued by ‘a remarkable picture’ in Vandael’s home – apparently somewhere in Ireland – Purcell learns the story behind the painting’s composition.²⁹⁵ The artist is Godfried Schalcken (1643-1706), though named here as “Godfrey Schalken”.²⁹⁶ While a student of the acclaimed Dutch artist Gerrit Dou (1613-75), – here Gerard Douw – Schalken falls in love with Douw’s niece, Rose Velderkaust. While painting alone one evening, Schalken

²⁹³ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 89.

²⁹⁴ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘Strange Event in the Life of Schalken the Painter’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 13 (1839), 579-92 (p. 579). Hereafter cited as ‘Schalken’.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 579.

²⁹⁶ Note that in reference to the character in Le Fanu’s story I will adopt Le Fanu’s spelling of “Schalken”, whereas when referring to the real artist I will use the correct spelling of “Schalcken”. Likewise for the fictional Douw and the real Dou.

encounters an unknown person, cloaked and hooded, who introduces himself as ‘Minheer Vanderhausen, of Rotterdam’.²⁹⁷ The stranger requests a meeting with Schalken’s master, Douw, to take place on the following evening. Upon meeting at the appointed hour, Vanderhausen proposes a match with Douw’s niece Rose, offering as payment ‘a mass of gold ingots’, which Douw accepts.²⁹⁸ ‘Less than a week after the first interview [...] the contract of marriage is fulfilled’, after which Rose disappears and no trace of Vanderhausen of Rotterdam can be found.²⁹⁹ Months later Rose reappears suddenly at Douw’s house, dishevelled and distressed and calling for the assistance of ‘a minister of God’.³⁰⁰ Having finally induced her to lie down, Douw and Schalken momentarily leave her alone in the bed chamber, at which point the door is slammed shut. While trying to gain entry, Douw and Schalken hear ‘Shriek after shriek burst from the inner chamber’, but when they eventually regain entry, the room is empty.³⁰¹ Many years later, Schalken has a dream-vision of Rose leading him into ‘what appeared to be an old-fashioned Dutch apartment’. In the bedroom, Rose reveals ‘the livid and demonic form of Vanderhausen’ seated upright on the bed.³⁰² The subject of this vision, it is claimed, is the inspiration for the chiaroscuro painting owned by Vandael and described by Purcell at the beginning of the story.

Although the specific painting described by Purcell appears to be fictional – the style and composition based on a typical Schalcken painting – it is worth noting that the artist’s paintings were exhibited in Ireland twice before Le Fanu composed the story: first ‘Venus and Adonis, Diana and Actaeon’ was displayed in the Royal Irish Institution in Dublin in 1818, and second, ‘Head of St Jerome’ was exhibited in the Cork Society for Promoting Fine Arts in 1819.³⁰³ The latter was a loan from William Carleton, to whom the painting belonged and with whom Le Fanu was well acquainted. It is possible that the opening scene of ‘Schalken’, in which Purcell is ‘struck, while visiting Vandael, by a remarkable picture’, is inspired by a real-life event in which Le Fanu viewed Carleton’s painting while visiting his home (Le Fanu of course being too young to have viewed the paintings in 1818 or 1819).³⁰⁴ Furthermore, Schalcken is well-known for his portraits of William III, which he painted while living in

²⁹⁷ ‘Schalken’, p. 582.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 583.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 587.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 588.

³⁰¹ Ibid., p. 589.

³⁰² Ibid., p. 590.

³⁰³ Exhibits of Schalcken’s painting are listed in Ann M. Stewart, *Irish Art Loan Exhibitions, 1765-1927*, 3 vols. (Jersey, Channel Islands: John Appleby Publishing, 1995), II (1995), p. 643.

³⁰⁴ ‘Schalken’, p. 579.

London between 1692 and 1697.³⁰⁵ It is therefore very likely that nineteenth-century readers of the *D.U.M.* were familiar with the Dutch artist's work, and possibly his direct Williamite connections. 'Schalken' was included in the 1851 collection, *Ghost Stories and Tales of Mystery*, along with two other revised stories: 'The Murdered Cousin', formerly 'Passage in the Secret History of an Irish Countess', and 'The Evil Guest', formerly 'Some Account of the Latter Days of Richard Marston, of Dunoran' (1848). The title was shortened to 'Schalken the Painter' and the original story was edited, omitting the opening section about Purcell and Captain Vandael, as well as the final three sentences.³⁰⁶ While 'Schalken' is one of the few Purcell stories to have attracted considerable critical attention, previous interpretations of 'Schalken' have taken it out of the context of the original Purcell stories, instead basing their analysis on the 1851 version. Critical essays such as Kel Roop's 'Making Light in the Shadow Box: The Artistry of Le Fanu' (1985),³⁰⁷ and James Walton's book-length *Vision and Vacancy: The Fictions of J. S. Le Fanu* (2007), have examined the use and significance of art in 'Schalken' and in Le Fanu's writing more broadly.³⁰⁸ McCormack, too, devotes a chapter of *Dissolute Characters* to discussing the artistry of the story.³⁰⁹ Richard Haslam's 2011 article on 'Reading and Misreading' Le Fanu points to 'the tangled textual trail' left in the author's wake as a result of his tendency to edit, rewrite, and reuse plots. Haslam argues that Le Fanu's own revisions coupled with the intended or unintended corruption of erstwhile publishers has 'led even astute explicators astray' in their interpretations of Le Fanu's work.³¹⁰ Haslam also points out that some interpretations have been further undermined by their reliance on the version of the story published in E. F. Bleiler's *Best Ghost Stories* (1964), which he shows to be inaccurate.³¹¹ However, despite highlighting this important interpretive fault, neither

³⁰⁵ For details of Schalcken's biography see Homan Potterton, *Dutch Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Paintings in the National Gallery of Ireland* (Dublin: National Gallery of Ireland, 1986), p. 140.

³⁰⁶ The story was also adapted effectively for television by the BBC, first aired on 23 December 1979.

³⁰⁷ Kel Roop, 'Making Light in the Shadow Box: The Artistry of Le Fanu', *Papers on Language and Literature*, 21 (1985), 359-69.

³⁰⁸ James Walton, *Vision and Vacancy: The Fictions of J. S. Le Fanu* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2007). See also Walton's earlier essay, 'Vision and Vacancy: "Schalken the Painter" and Le Fanu's Art of Darkness', *Papers on Language & Literature*, 40.4 (2004), 353-83.

³⁰⁹ See 'Godfried Schalcken in History and Fiction', McCormack, *Dissolute Characters*, pp. 121-38.

³¹⁰ Richard Haslam, 'Theory, Empiricism, and "Providential Hermeneutics": Reading and Misreading Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* and "Schalken the Painter"', *Papers on Language and Literature*, 47 (2011), 339-62 (p. 339). Hereafter cited as 'Reading and Misreading'. See also Haslam's 'Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu and the Fantastic Semantics of Ghost-Colonial Ireland', in *That Other World: The Supernatural and the Fantastic in Irish Literature and its Contexts*, ed. by Bruce Stewart, 2 vols (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1998), I (1998), pp. 268-86. Haslam notes that much of Le Fanu's early Irish fiction formed the basis for his English-set stories, but the paper is largely an analysis of the 'Irish dimension' of 'Green Tea', (p. 269).

³¹¹ See Haslam, 'Reading and Misreading', pp. 348-49. Haslam focusses on the addition by Bleiler 'accidentally (or deliberately)' of the word "submission", instead of the original "submersion", which forms the basis for a lengthy analysis by McCormack in *Dissolute Characters*. In the 1839 version of the story, the word in question

Haslam nor previous critics have considered how the story functions as part of the Purcell universe, and instead the text has been considered in isolation, which seems remiss considering that both the original twelve Purcell stories and the posthumous *The Purcell Papers* are “collections”. The Purcell stories are components of an overarching narrative that links Purcell and the various characters to episodes in Ireland’s history, thus, they ought to be considered in context rather than analysed in isolation.

Specific elements of ‘Schalken’ prove a connection to its companion pieces, one of the strongest being the Faust-Bluebeard contract at the core of the narrative. The description of Vanderhausen resembles the stranger in the first part of ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’. In ‘Schalken’, the young artist is surprised by the sudden appearance of a figure in Douw’s studio:

there stood what was, or appeared to be, the figure of an elderly man: he wore a short cloak, and a broad-brimmed hat, with a conical crown [...] the face was altogether overshadowed by the heavy flap of the beaver which overhung it [...] a quantity of dark hair escaped from beneath this sombre hat.³¹²

While in ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, the stranger at the door is described as:

a low, square-built figure, apparently that of a man wrapped in a large black cloak, entered the hall [...] his dress appeared foreign, the skirt of his ample cloak was thrown over one shoulder; he wore a large felt hat, with a very heavy leaf, from under which escaped what appeared to be a mass of long sooty-black hair.³¹³

Dark hair or features, along with foreign, anachronistic clothing signals, in Le Fanu’s fiction, a malign influence, an indication of some past indiscretion come back to haunt the present. Similarly, laughter has a sinister quality in Le Fanu’s work, the ‘short, sudden laugh’ close to Schalken’s ear signals the presence of Vanderhausen,³¹⁴ while the ‘bursts of unnatural laughter’ that ‘roll through the deserted passages’ of Castle Ardagh indicate a mirth grounded in the demise of the central character.³¹⁵ Both Sage and Andrew Smith have noted the use of subversive laughter in Le Fanu’s work. Smith outlines the connection between laughter, mimicry and spectrality, arguing that ‘Laughter is non-cathartic and is used to represent the

is in fact “immersion”. When or how this trifold transference occurred is unclear, but Haslam’s discovery serves as an important caution against accepting sources at face value, particularly where Le Fanu is concerned.

³¹² ‘Schalken’, p. 581.

³¹³ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, p. 315.

³¹⁴ ‘Schalken’, p. 581.

³¹⁵ ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, p. 316. Andrew Smith has discussed the subversive use of laughter in Le Fanu’s fiction, citing as examples *Uncle Silas* and ‘The Child that Went with the Fairies’. Andrew Smith, *The Ghost Story, 1840-1920: A Cultural History*, p. 152. Victor Sage also comments on the ‘Comedy and the Grotesque’ in his ‘Introduction’ to *Uncle Silas* (London: Penguin, 2006), pp. ix-xxxvii (pp. xix-xx).

“horror” of the encounter’.³¹⁶ In both stories, laughter signals disdain, and as with ‘The Ghost and the Bone-setter’, political and class tensions exist behind the comic façade. While the reader is not witness to the particulars of the bargain struck in ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, in ‘Schalken’ the contract is made explicit and on behalf of a third party who apparently has no say in the matter. Here the subject of female jeopardy is revived, and Rose is evocative of Margaret in ‘Passage in the Secret History of an Irish Countess’ and Fanny in ‘Chapter in the History of a Tyrone Family’, three women whose fates are dictated by the will of their male guardians.³¹⁷

The most significant change to the original story, and perhaps the most important link to the other Purcell stories, is the omission of the Vandael introduction in the 1851 re-write. At first glance the opening section, along with the usual ‘extract from the legacy of the late Francis Purcell’ epigraph, is the only perceivable link between ‘Schalken’ and the other Purcell stories. Purcell is not mentioned by name at any stage in the body of the narrative, and it could be argued that ‘Schalken’ is truly a stand-alone story shoehorned to fit into the Purcell framework, which would in part explain the established tendency to analyse it in this way. However, given that previous Purcell stories have examined the Jacobite-Williamite history of Ireland from various perspectives, ‘Schalken’ is an extension of this theme set instead in the homeland of the Williamite king from the House of Orange-Nassau who would cement Protestant rule in Great Britain and Ireland. Captain Vandael is descended of a Dutch settler ‘whose father had served King William in the Low Countries’, and who is now apparently living in Ireland.³¹⁸ There is, of course, a similarity between the fictional Vandael and Le Fanu’s own ancestor, Charles de Cresserons, who served William III during the Williamite campaign and thereafter settled in Ireland. In the Williamite-Jacobite context of the Purcell stories it seems clear that Le Fanu was attempting to explore these Orange roots. Although the references are fleeting, the explicit historical link to William’s Irish campaigns and the setting of seventeenth-century Holland necessarily colours any reading of the story. In October of the same year, ‘A Chapter

³¹⁶ Smith, p. 154.

³¹⁷ The basic Bluebeard plot centres on a wealthy older man and his (usually unwilling), young bride. Bluebeard has been previously married but these wives have mysteriously disappeared. The young bride is taken to live in a castle or mansion in the countryside, far away from her family. She is given the freedom to roam the grounds but is expressly forbidden from entering a certain room or area of the domain. During his absence, the young bride takes the opportunity to look into the forbidden room and is horrified to find the corpses of her husband’s previous wives. Before Bluebeard can bestow the same fate on his latest wife, her family turn up in time to save her. The seventeenth-century French folktale has had many literary reincarnations, including Angela Carter’s feminist revision, ‘The Bloody Chamber’, from the collection of the same name (1979). The story has been interpreted as a caution against female curiosity and independence, linked to an awakened female sexuality.

³¹⁸ ‘Schalken’, p. 579.

in the History of a Tyrone Family' featured another Dutch character, Flora VanKemp, the murderous first wife of Lord Glenfallen. If, as McCormack notes, allusions to France and other 'continental associations' reveal the Catholicism of the characters such as Ardagh and O'Connor, signifying 'a continental source of evil', then it seems probable that Le Fanu's evocations of Holland suggest the Protestant equivalent: the source of originary Orangeism.³¹⁹ Le Fanu is thus connecting Ireland to European politics, perhaps pointing to Ireland's liminal position between these ideological enemies. After all, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Ireland was a stage on which continental conflicts were fought, with two English kings doing battle followed by the persistent threat of Spanish or French invasion. If we consider Le Fanu's fiction as an example of settler writing, then motivation for the recurring connection between continental imperialism, religious friction, and the effects of these conflicts on the individual lives of Irish people becomes clearer. In the conflict between disruptive religious forces, the New English Protestant Ascendancy emerge as a rationalising solution and portent of future stability divested of the religious extremism of seventeenth-century continental politics.

Religion resurfaces again in the story through the connection of Vanderhausen and St. Laurence's church in Rotterdam (*Grote of Sint-Laurenskerk*), the highly decorated late Gothic-era church converted to the Protestant denomination after the reformation in 1572 and damaged during the *Beeldenstorm* ("statue-storm"), at the height of Dutch and European iconoclasm in the mid-sixteenth century and led (in no small part), by Huguenot Calvinists.³²⁰ Rose remarks that grotesque and rigid Vanderhausen calls to mind "'the old, painted, wooden figure that used to frighten me so much in the church of St. Laurence of Rotterdam'". Gerard laughed, though he could not help inwardly acknowledging the justness of the comparison'.³²¹ Vanderhausen is the demonic embodiment of Catholic religious iconography, a fact confirmed by descriptions of his appearance. His old-fashioned clothes confirm his pre-reformation antiquity while 'the face was coloured with the bluish leaden hue, which is sometimes produced by the operation of metallic medicines', or perhaps, by lead white paint, a traditional material of classical European painters and sculptors, including Schalcken, which could account for the 'leaden hue'. Upon first meeting Vanderhausen, the previously sceptical Douw is convinced by 'the air and mien of the figure which at once satisfied the painter [...] and that he really stood in the

³¹⁹ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, pp. 76-77.

³²⁰ For information on the history of St Laurence's Church, see Laurenskerk Rotterdam website <<http://laurenskerkrotterdam.nl/bezoek-ons/#historie>> [accessed 21 December 2017].

³²¹ 'Schalcken', p. 586.

presence of a man of worship'.³²² The phrase 'a man of worship' is significant as an icon is a figure of religious worship, specifically, Catholic religious worship; Low Church orthodoxies such as those adopted in Holland after the reformation eschew such ritual and idolatry.³²³ Later again Vanderhousen is referred to as Rose's 'worshipful spouse'.³²⁴ His motions are 'indescribably odd, even horrible' as during his visit he 'did not once suffer his eyelids to close' and 'there was a deathlike stillness in his whole person, owing to the total absence of the heaving motion of the chest'.³²⁵ He resembles a possessed corpse or a statue, almost completely motionless, 'a perfect, stone-like movelessness of the figure'.³²⁶ Vanderhousen's connection to the church is indisputable. Upon soliciting Douw, Vanderhousen mentions that 'You visited the town of Rotterdam some four months ago, and then I saw in the church of St. Lawrence [sic] your niece'.³²⁷ Many years later when Schalken visits Rotterdam to attend his father's funeral, it is while in the church that he dreams of Rose who leads him into the vault. Here past Catholic idolatry is literally haunting the Protestant present, with Rose revealing that she was afraid of the statue in the church, afraid of Catholic idolatry. Finally, the painting that inspired the story depicts Rose standing in 'a chamber in some antique religious building', dressed in white robes and a veil, which although is 'not strictly that of any religious order' clearly indicates a religious context through its very mention.³²⁸

If Schalcken was born in 1643, then we can assume that the story takes place approximately fifteen to twenty years later while Schalcken was a student of Dou's, c. 1663 (although Le Fanu may not have been this attentive to biographical dates). This would make it less than a century since the Protestant reformation in the Low Countries, which means by that time churches such as St Laurence's would likely have been already purged of their Gothic-era religious icons. However, there is no biographical evidence to suggest that Le Fanu ever visited Holland, and as such, he never visited St Laurence's. What is more likely is that Le Fanu took inspiration from the Gothic cathedrals in Dublin: Christ Church, St Audoen's, and St. Patrick's cathedrals are all highly decorative, eleventh and twelfth-century Gothic cathedrals situated within a mile of one another in Dublin city centre. Moreover, the Anglican church in Chapelizod, the village where Le Fanu spent his early life, is also called St Laurence's Church.

³²² Ibid., p. 583.

³²³ For Dutch iconoclasm and the *Beeldenstorm*, see David de Boer, 'Picking up the Pieces: Catholic Material Culture and Iconoclasm in the Low Countries', *BMGN: Low Countries Historical Review*, 131.1 (2016), 59-80

³²⁴ Ibid., p. 587.

³²⁵ Ibid., p. 586.

³²⁶ Ibid., p. 581.

³²⁷ Ibid., p. 583. The text slips from St. Laurence to St. Lawrence here.

³²⁸ Ibid., p. 579.

Ireland's Catholic past was everywhere in evidence, as even after such cathedrals had transferred to the Anglican church their high altars and wood carvings and other Catholic remnants remained in situ. The Dutch setting ought to be understood as a figuration of Irish themes contextualised by a Protestant setting, rather than a literal evocation of the life of a Dutch painter, just as the stories of Old English families are contextualised by their French connections. Thus 'Schalken' is brought home to its Irish roots in multiple ways, connecting continental politics with Irish colonial history, while stylistically the story's themes of female entrapment, male patriarchy, and corrupt bargains link the story of 'Schalken' both to its Purcell predecessors and its successors.

'An Adventure of Hardress Fitzgerald, a Royalist Captain'

In the eleventh Purcell story we move from the (literal), portrait of a Dutch interior back to the exterior scenes on the borders of Limerick, Tipperary, and Clare, although the Dutch connection remains present. Captain Vandael's Williamite perspective is replaced by Hardress Fitzgerald's Jacobite one, as following the Battle of the Boyne (1690), we are introduced to Fitzgerald laying low in Dublin while attempting to 'keep myself unimpeded by any pledge or promise given to the usurping Dutchman', William III.³²⁹ 'An Adventure of Hardress Fitzgerald, A Royalist Captain' is the most historically complex Purcell plot, set in 'the most stirring, and, though the most disastrous, by no means the least glorious period of our eventful history'.³³⁰ Much of this story formed the basis for Le Fanu's second novel, *The Fortunes of Colonel Torlogh O'Brien* (1847), a historical romance about the Jacobite-Williamite war. The story is told 'in the *first person*, and in the words of the original narrator', and opens with the eponymous Hardress Fitzgerald, a captain in King James's army, in the immediate aftermath of James's defeat at the Boyne. Fitzgerald is 'in disguise in Dublin [...] the capital as furnishing at once a good central position of observation, and as secure a lurking place as I cared to find.'³³¹ The story quickly returns to Limerick as the scene of the main action when Fitzgerald hears rumours that 'Limerick was held for the king' (James II), in a last stand against the 'army of the Prince of Orange'.³³² While making his way across Keeper Hill in the Silvermines mountain range in Tipperary – a familiar site in the Purcell stories – Fitzgerald stumbles upon a band of Irish peasants and French soldiers in the service of General Patrick

³²⁹ Le Fanu, 'An Adventure of Hardress Fitzgerald, a Royalist Captain', *Dublin University Magazine*, 15 (1840), 145-59 (p. 145). Hereafter abbreviated to 'Hardress Fitzgerald'.

³³⁰ Ibid., p. 145.

³³¹ Ibid., p. 145. Original emphasis.

³³² Ibid., p. 146.

Sarsfield. Fitzgerald is charged by Sarsfield to deliver a message to the French General Boileau, who is encamped inside the walls of Limerick, but while journeying across the Clare/Limerick/Tipperary borders on this errand, Fitzgerald is captured by Williamite soldiers. Ultimately, Fitzgerald escapes with the help of a turncoat soldier and successfully manages to deliver Sarsfield's note to Limerick, which results in 'the destruction of William's great train of artillery, then upon its way to the besiegers'.³³³ Although the character of Hardress Fitzgerald is entirely fictional (despite the recycling of the Fitzgerald name that is historically freighted anyway), Le Fanu's evocation of the Siege of Limerick and of the character of Sarsfield himself is factually sound. This is a new development in terms of the Purcell stories, which have hitherto been rather historically vague. Piers Wauchope in his extended historical study of Sarsfield describes William's approach to Limerick in detail:

King William's approach to Limerick was necessarily cautious, for although the Irish army had been defeated, it had not been destroyed [...] He knew a large force had been collected inside the city's walls [...] He also knew that the Irish cavalry were encamped in Co. Clare between the two cities, and that the Irish had garrisoned all the small forts and castles at the crossing points on the Shannon and throughout the counties of Limerick, Kerry and Cork.³³⁴

In the story, Fitzgerald describes his plan to reach Limerick city by crossing the Shannon 'by boat from Kerry' and thereafter into 'the Earl of Clare's land, and thus into the beleaguered city', or 'to take the what seemed the easier way [...] to cross the Shannon at O'Brien's Bridge, or at Killaloe into the county of Clare'.³³⁵ Being already familiar with these parts of Limerick and Clare, Le Fanu was also evidently keenly aware of, and intrigued by, the region's Jacobite-Williamite history. It is the historicism of 'Hardress Fitzgerald' – presented as a true oral history – that is critical to understanding how the story functions alongside its companion pieces.

The story is sympathetic to the Jacobite cause, something that has been previously gestured towards but is now fully revealed. Fitzgerald, we are told, 'shared the fortunes of his master', James, 'enduring privations, encountering dangers, and submitting to vicissitudes the most galling and ruinous'.³³⁶ Fitzgerald's daring and successful escape from his English rival and captor, Captain Hugh Oliver, is further testament to a favourable opinion of the Jacobite cause. The soldier who helps Fitzgerald escape turns out to be 'the foster brother of Oliver,

³³³ Ibid., p. 159.

³³⁴ Piers Wauchope, *Patrick Sarsfield and the Williamite War* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1992), p. 126. By 'between the two cities' Wauchope presumably means Limerick and Ennis, Co. Clare, although Ennis is not technically considered to be a city but rather a large town.

³³⁵ 'Hardress Fitzgerald', p. 147.

³³⁶ Ibid., p. 145.

whom he thus devoted to death, but in revenge for the most grievous wrong which one man can inflict upon another!’ On the specifics of this ‘grievous wrong’ we are left to speculate.³³⁷ However, this closing sentence reveals that brother has turned on brother, and that perhaps Le Fanu viewed the Jacobite-Williamite conflict as more alike to a civil war, with two factions united by their royalist allegiance but opposed over the particulars of leadership. While the story is one of Jacobite heroics, the Williamite cause is not vilified, and the animosity between Fitzgerald and Oliver is personal rather than party-political: “‘Hardress Fitzgerald is before you. I know you well, Captain Oliver. I know how you hate me. I know how you thirst for my blood’ [...] ‘You are a desperate villain, sir,’ said Captain Oliver; ‘a rebel and a murderer’”.³³⁸ Fitzgerald explains that in some previous episode, he was ‘the judge and condemner of [Oliver’s] brother’, a course of action enforced by ‘military law, which I was compelled to pursue, yet even to this hour the recollection of that deed is heavy at my breast’.³³⁹ The central quarrel of this story, then, revolves around personal retribution rather than the clash of proxies for William and James. Despite composing a story from the perspective of a Jacobite supporter, Le Fanu evidently saw the Jacobite cause as related to Old English settlers, given that Jacobites, though Catholic, were still royalists. Conversely, nineteenth-century Irish Catholics were increasingly inclined towards an anti-royalist, repeal of the Union mentality. As McCormack points out, ‘Sarsfields or Ardaghs had a nobility of which O’Connells are incapable’.³⁴⁰ Here McCormack points to the difference between O’Connellite Catholics of the nineteenth century, those whose reformist nationalism increasingly occluded Irish Protestant claims to Irishness, and the “defeated heirs” of the Jacobite-Williamite wars who had an honourable (and royalist), objective in the defence of their king. Nevertheless, as the previous Jacobite stories have shown, in narrating the demise of the Jacobite class as one that had effectively run its course, descendants of the New English Protestant Ascendancy could ensure a ‘naturalized’ progression to their form of rule in the nineteenth century.³⁴¹

By exploring the New English, Williamite roots (‘Schalken’), and the Old English, Jacobite roots (‘Hardress Fitzgerald’), Le Fanu was tracing a connection between nineteenth-century Irish Protestants and their historical antecedents in the seventeenth-century conflict, strategically overlooking the Catholic populism of the post-Union period that increasingly refuted Irish Protestant claims to “Irishness”. As already noted, this period of Irish history was

³³⁷ Ibid., p. 159.

³³⁸ Ibid., p. 153.

³³⁹ Ibid., p. 152.

³⁴⁰ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 83.

³⁴¹ Backus, p. 98.

a popular topic for writers, particularly those connected to the *D.U.M.*³⁴² James H. Murphy cites the ‘very large numbers of historical novels and religious novels written in Ireland during the nineteenth century’ that ‘tend to make comparisons between the last generation or the recent past and the present’. This trend, Murphy argues, was stimulated by both a ‘fractured past’ and the ‘continuing deep divisions between Catholic nationalist Ireland and Protestant unionist Ireland’ in which ‘religious historical fiction, was one of the battlegrounds’.³⁴³ It is crucial that Murphy points to only ‘five distinct periods’ of Irish history that preoccupied nineteenth-century writers, all of which are figured around incidents of colonial settlement and conflict: ‘the Elizabethan conquest of Ireland, the Cromwellian period, the Williamite wars, the penal laws period [...] and the 1798 rebellion’.³⁴⁴ It is important here to return to McLoughlin, Johnston and Lawson’s elucidation of the three phases of settler writing. The first ‘reflects a shifting and ambiguous relationship between the settler and the mother country’,³⁴⁵ while the second concerns the relationship with the indigenous population, and third considers settler writing as ‘concerned to perform the concomitant indigenization of the settler’ by tracing the history of the settler in the place of settlement.³⁴⁶ Thus, the settler creates a sense of “belonging” through the establishment of foundational narratives. The turn to historical fiction by Irish Protestant writers in this period encompasses all three phases of settler writing, allowing the settler to position themselves relationally, yet independent from, both the overseas coloniser and the indigenous colonised. Pivotal moments in the history of Irish settlement are recycled as originary myths, which functioned to solidify Irish Protestant identity in the nineteenth century as natural successors to the decaying Jacobite aristocracy. Overall, the Purcell stories deal with the relation of the individual to society, the society in question being troubled by a fragmented colonial history, and the individuals in question being isolated and remote from that society, a situation analogous to that of Irish Protestants in the nineteenth century. As Fielding points out, ‘Speech and writing are powerful tools in the construction of the nation because each can assist in the homogenization of a populace which might otherwise remain disparate in terms of class and language’.³⁴⁷ All of the Purcell stories, and particularly

³⁴² In ‘Allegories for a Protestant Nation: Irish Tory Historical Fiction, 1820-1850’, Spence argues that Irish Protestants ‘sought from all their explorations of the Irish past, fictional and historical, some justification for the continuation of Protestant Ascendancy and for a broad definition of Irish nationality’, p. 60. This quote was used earlier in this chapter and is reiterated here to illustrate the connection to the earlier argument regarding the Irish Protestant “Imagined Community” of the *D.U.M.*

³⁴³ James H. Murphy, *Irish Novelists and the Victorian Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 149.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 149-50.

³⁴⁵ McLoughlin, p. 97.

³⁴⁶ Johnston and Lawson, p. 369.

³⁴⁷ Fielding, p. 8.

‘Hardress Fitzgerald’, ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, ‘Castle Connor’, and ‘The Bridal of Carrigvarah’, articulate in various ways the connections between the Old and New English settlers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, while their publication in the *D.U.M.* establishes these “histories” as part of a larger project negotiating the origins, boundaries, and aspirations of Irish Protestant identity in the nineteenth century.

Considered in light of their timing and their position in the *D.U.M.* it is clear that the Purcell stories can be understood as part of the national literature cultivated by Irish Protestants in the post-Union period. Significantly, by drawing a distinction between a “traditional” past and an enlightened present, Irish Protestants in the 1820s and ‘30s succeeded in laying claim to an historically-inflected identity while maintaining their position above the colonised which, as Johnston and Lawson argue, is part of the settler imperative of indigenization: ‘the settler mimics, appropriates, and desires, the authority of the indigene’.³⁴⁸ Fielding asserts that in the face of rapid modernity and concerns about an uncertain future, cultures often look to the past for stability: ‘In the face of these worries, we construct a rural, pastoral oral, handed down from one member of a close-knit family or community to another, which transmits empirical human truths rather than the abstractions of science’.³⁴⁹ Through the Purcell stories, Le Fanu constructs a folklore for the nineteenth-century Irish Protestant that can be understood as a form of settler writing in that it seeks to inscribe the settler in a traditional culture that situates an unstable future in a legitimized past.

The early 1840s were a period of significant personal upheaval for Le Fanu. In 1841, his sister Catherine Le Fanu died, followed by his father four years later in 1845, which left few connections to the former family parish. By 1844, Le Fanu was married and living full-time in Dublin, and soon after finishing ‘The Quare Gander’, he turned his attention to experimenting with the novel form, developing further his interest in the Irish historical romance. McCormack cites Mortimer O’Sullivan advising Le Fanu at this time ‘to attempt a longer tale than those allowed by the Purcell formula’.³⁵⁰ McCormack also observes that ‘there was a limit to the *Papers*’ potential; even the priestly persona could not sustain an endless series of anecdotes’.³⁵¹ But it is also likely that Le Fanu – now a writer and journalist by profession – was encouraged by the pervasive trend for three-volume novels that dominated

³⁴⁸ Johnston and Lawson, p. 369.

³⁴⁹ Fielding, p. 5.

³⁵⁰ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 90.

³⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 79.

the book trade for most of the nineteenth century.³⁵² Aside from his two commercially unsuccessful forays into the Irish historical novel, Le Fanu continued to write short stories throughout the 1840s, '50s, and '60s, although with less alacrity than during the prolific Purcell period of 1838-40. Moreover, Le Fanu shifted his attention from the familiar setting of rural Ireland and Limerick, to locations in Dublin and (occasionally), other European cities. In harmony with what would transpire to be his permanent move to Dublin, Le Fanu closed the book on Purcell and the landscape of his youth; he would not revisit this territory for over twenty years. This chapter has shown that when read in the context of the *D.U.M.*, Le Fanu's earliest fiction reveals a complex and sustained engagement with Ireland's colonial history, particularly that surrounding the moment of New English settlement. This form of 'settler self-inscription' formed part of a larger movement undertaken by Irish Protestants in the 1820s and '30s, which sought to establish settler claims to legitimacy and belonging in the country of settlement.³⁵³ Moreover, the settler identity allowed Irish Protestants to distinguish themselves from their Catholic counterparts by establishing their own specific history and origin story. A sustained examination of Le Fanu's Purcell stories in their original material context has never been undertaken, but as this chapter shows, Le Fanu was working within a broader cultural trend at negotiating the parameters of Irish Protestant identity. Le Fanu's fiction set in Ireland was part of a surge of supernatural, historical, and antiquarian writing by Irish Protestants in the post-Union period, influenced in part by European interest in folklore and antiquarian and Gothic themes and objects, but also motivated by the need to crystalize Irish Protestant identity against an increasingly marginalizing Irish Catholic nationalism. Where previously there existed only occasional examination of *The Purcell Papers* (1880), this chapter exposes the wealth of relevant source material available in the original Purcell stories, material that both supports and augments previous interpretations of Le Fanu's fiction. Most importantly, the chapter demonstrated that the stories' original publication in the *D.U.M.* is crucial to their interpretation, emerging at a critical period in the magazine's project of literary patronage.

³⁵² For detailed analysis of trends in the nineteenth-century book trade see Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public, 1800-1900*, second ed. (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1975; 1998).

³⁵³ McLoughlin, 'Settler Instability', p. 97.

CHAPTER THREE

‘What was a metropolis, is a capital no longer’: Le Fanu’s Haunted Dublin¹

After two years of writing about rural Limerick, Le Fanu shifted his literary focus to another biographically significant location, the capital city and his birthplace, Dublin. Born there in 1814, Le Fanu spent his early childhood in the village outpost of Chapelizod where, prior to his appointment as Dean of Emly, Le Fanu’s father was chaplain of the Royal Hibernian Military School. Upon securing his degree from Trinity College in 1839, Le Fanu remained living and working in Dublin where he would reside for the rest of his life.² His first foray into novel writing reflected this change of scenery, leaving behind the lonely forests of east Limerick. *The Cock and Anchor: Being a Chronicle of Old Dublin City* (1845), is set ‘in the fair city of Dublin’, among the ‘sinuous and narrow streets which lay in the immediate vicinity of the Castle’.³ From 1845 until his third novel, *The House by the Church-yard* (1863), Le Fanu demonstrated a sustained interest in writing Dublin-set fiction.⁴ This chapter explores six short stories published in the *Dublin University Magazine* between 1847 and 1862, and all of which are set in or near Dublin city. The stories are examined in pairs and grouped thematically, moving chronologically from the late 1840s to the early 1860s. This chapter also considers the impact of the major demographic and socio-political changes that occurred in Dublin the 1840s and ’50s, which affected the outlook of the *D.U.M.* and Le Fanu’s fiction. As with the Purcell stories, the cultural and historical context is important for any consideration of Le Fanu’s fiction as settler writing.

¹ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘The Fatal Bride: Being the Second Contribution from the Reminiscences of a Bachelor’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 31 (1848), 15-44 (p. 16). Hereafter cited as ‘The Fatal Bride’.

² William Richard Le Fanu, *Seventy Years of Irish Life* (London: Edward Arnold, 1893), specifies 1841 as the year Le Fanu graduated from Trinity College: ‘It was in this same year, 1841, that my brother took his B.A. degree in the University, and soon afterwards was called to the Irish Bar’, p. 138. Hereafter cited as *Seventy Years*. However, Trinity College records indicate that Le Fanu enrolled in Trinity on 22 October 1832 and was called to the Irish bar in 1839. Georges Dames Burtchaell and Thomas Ulick Sadleir (eds), *Alumni Dublinenses: A Register of the Students, Graduates, Provosts and Professors in of Trinity College in the University of Dublin, 1539-1860* (Dublin: Alex Thom & Co. Ltd., 1935), p. 492.

³ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, *The Cock and Anchor: Being a Chronicle of Old Dublin City*, 3 vols. (London: William Curry Jr. & Company, 1845), p. 1. Hereafter cited as *The Cock and Anchor*.

⁴ The exception to this trend of Dublin fiction written in the 1840s and 1850s is Le Fanu’s second novel, *The Fortunes of Colonel Torlogh O’Brien: A Tale of the Wars of King James* (1847), which once more evokes the Slieve Phelim mountains familiar to readers of Purcell, and is mostly an expanded version of the eleventh Purcell story, ‘An Adventure of Hardress Fitzgerald, A Royalist Captain’ (1840). See for reference the Appendix to this thesis, pp. 267-69.

A Capital in Context: The Legacy of Empire in Le Fanu's Dublin

Le Fanu's Dublin fiction is embedded in the capital's cityscape. Just as the Purcell stories were invested in the ruins and scenes of Jacobite-Williamite conflict, his Dublin fiction exhibits close ties with the city's layered history. The stories here discussed repeatedly engage with the materiality of the city; building and re-building are recurring themes, while the ghosts of the city's former occupants continue to emerge through the cracks. Over the course of the eighteenth century, the city had been substantially reshaped to reflect the dominant imperial ideology, and the 'sinuous and narrow streets' of the medieval centre were systematically overlaid to make way for grand concourses befitting a colonial capital.⁵ Andrew Kincaid points to the major redevelopments that occurred in the latter half of the eighteenth century, when 'Dublin was redeveloped as a colonial capital, the new landed aristocracy sought to carve out state power from the medieval core of the indigenous city', just as the sixteenth and seventeenth-century settlers had established market towns and stately homes throughout rural Ireland. After the Act of Union, the closure of the Irish Parliament on College Green meant that the building stood empty, yet it remained standing like a mausoleum, looming over the urban landscape, and just as these grand Georgian buildings had formerly 'illustrate[d] how imperial ideologies were built in stone', so too did they signify the hollowness of such power post-Union.⁶ Le Fanu's fiction during this period repeatedly reflects on the city in the pre- and post-Union years, which suggests that he considered the Act to be a pivotal moment in Dublin's history. The Dublin of the eighteenth century described in Le Fanu's fiction is a city undergoing physical alterations, taking the shape of a colonial capital; the Dublin of the 1840s and 1850s in which he lived when he wrote about it was also in the midst of significant upheaval. Moreover, the changing ideology of the *D.U.M.* in the 1840s and '50s is also an important consideration. As the interest in Ireland's folk culture receded, nationalist politics moved to the fore in the 1840s, primarily due to a mid-century shift in Ireland's socio-political climate. By the early 1860s, however, the *D.U.M.* retreated from the overt political commentary that had distinguished its earlier volumes. As such, this section will proceed to outline some of the relevant changes of Dublin city as an important contextual factor in the examination of Le Fanu's fiction from the same period. As the Dublin stories draw connections with the city's material history, this section will also consider the physical restructuring of Dublin in the century before Le Fanu's Dublin stories were published, both before and after the Act of Union,

⁵ *The Cock and Anchor*, p. 1.

⁶ Andrew Kincaid, *Postcolonial Dublin: Imperial Legacies and the Built Environment* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006), pp. x-xi.

as part of the broader schematics of British colonialism. Further, the monumental political and demographic changes wrought by the Great Famine (c. 1845-50) will be addressed. This section will conclude by examining the changing culture of the *D.U.M.* in the 1840s and '50s.

On 1st January 1801, Dublin went from being the second city of the British Empire to a veritable ghost town. Hitherto the literal and metaphorical seat of Protestant authority in Ireland, the Act of Union brought about a change in the political and social composition of Dublin. Speaking in the early years of post-Union Ireland, the Anglican clergyman George Newenham Wright writes of the state of the city in the wake of the Act:

This measure has seriously changed the appearance of Dublin; with the removal of its parliament the nobility of Ireland withdrew to England, and left their palaces in Dublin either to fall to decay, or be converted into public offices, hotels, or charitable institutions [...] While the public mind was still inflamed at the Act of Union having passed, it was not likely to be calmed by the embarkation of the nobles for a foreign country; some of them having disposed of their estates in Ireland, set sail with the intention of never re-visiting their native land.⁷

In Wright's summation, a sense of abandonment is perceptible by virtue of the hollowing out of the capital. In the eighteenth century, Louise M. Cullen points out that 'Dublin was the largest centre of theatre, music, publishing and service industries in these islands' outside London, and was altogether an 'essentially protestant [*sic*] city'. However, over the course of the century 'inevitably, Dublin's popular protestant character was weakened over time', and by the end of the eighteenth century 'the anglican [*sic*] dominance of the early decades was reduced'.⁸ An important change for Dublin's Protestant elite was, of course, the Act of Union itself, a move that would forever alter the status quo in Ireland. The Act set in motion a chain of events that would see the continued erosion of Protestant authority – municipal and metaphorical – over the course of the nineteenth century. It is significant, then, that in staging his Dublin fiction, Le Fanu elects to imagine Dublin before the Union, when 'Dublin was, in point of society, a very different city from what it now is'.⁹ The echoes of a past city and a city yet to come haunt Le Fanu's Dublin fiction. Written in the mid-nineteenth century during the crisis and aftermath of the Famine, and set in the late eighteenth century with the knowledge that the Rebellion of 1798 and the Act of Union were to come, Le Fanu instilled in this work a

⁷ George Newenham Wright, *An Historical Guide to Ancient and Modern Dublin*, Ills. by George Petrie (London: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1821), p. 9.

⁸ Louise M. Cullen, 'The Growth of Dublin 1600-1900: Character and Heritage', in *Dublin City and County: From Prehistory to Present: Studies in Honour of J. H. Andrews*, ed. by F. H. A. Aalen and Kevin Whelan (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1992), pp. 251-78 (pp. 252-53).

⁹ 'The Fatal Bride', p. 16.

sense of impending calamity. Beginning with ‘The Watcher’ in 1847 and ‘The Fatal Bride’ in early 1848, Le Fanu’s protagonists stalk an eerily empty city in the years before the rebellion. A westward shift up-river to the village outpost of Chapelizod maintains this theme of isolation, with a series of short stories set in the past which are in turn haunted by ghosts from an even more distant past, and once again contrast pre- and post-Union village life. Finally, in his two haunted house stories, Le Fanu retreats indoors and away from the open streets of Dublin, yet the ghosts of history remain in residence.

In the decade following the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829, Catholic Ireland continued to gain ground. By 1840, the Irish Municipal Reform Bill was passed, which meant that all but ten of the original sixty-eight corporations governing Dublin city were abolished. More importantly, the corporations were replaced by elected councils: ‘The result was that Roman Catholics took charge of a number of large town governments, and became influential in all of them’.¹⁰ This was followed swiftly by the election of Daniel O’Connell as Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1841, the first Catholic to hold that office since the seventeenth century. Donald Akenson asserts that by the end of the decade, due to further municipal reforms, ‘the Anglican Church was completely disestablished at the local government level’, presaging the official disestablishment that would follow just twenty years later.¹¹ By the late 1840s, rural famine stimulated mass migration into the city, which led to a sudden increase in the urban population, with a mainly Catholic influx. David Dickson explains that although Dublin’s population saw a ‘tepid’ but steady rise in the years after the Union, ‘The city’s population then surged forward between 1841 and 1851, as did the population of every Irish town, the direct result of the Great Famine’ with the movement of ‘crisis migrants’ from rural areas into urban areas in a bid to escape poverty and starvation.¹² Though it was a devastating humanitarian crisis, historians have shown that the Famine was advantageous for both the strength of the Catholic Church and the solidification of Catholic Irish identity. Akenson asserts that ‘while nationally a disaster, [the Famine] was a great blessing to the Roman Catholic Church. The famine reversed the course of Irish social history and thereby transformed the Catholic Church’s financial position’.¹³ At the same time, Dickson identifies an emergent middle-class Catholic population in Dublin, a ‘slow ascent of a predominantly Catholic “shopocracy” of publicans, small traders

¹⁰ Donald Harmon Akenson, *The Church of Ireland: Ecclesiastical Reform and Revolution, 1800-1885* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971), p. 211.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 212.

¹² David Dickson, *Dublin: The Making of a Capital City* (London: Profile Books, 2015), p. 308.

¹³ Akenson, p. 212.

and retail merchants to the commanding heights of city government'.¹⁴ Likewise, Connolly remarks that the Famine 'transformed the social structure of rural Ireland, sweeping away large numbers of the rural poor while leaving the farming population relatively untouched'.¹⁵

Along with major transitions in the country's social demography and the emergence of the Catholic middle class, the landed Protestant class was in a steady decline. The Encumbered Estates Act 1849 was 'a revolution in landowning comparable to some degree with that of the seventeenth century', a turning point that 'marked an important stage in the emergence of the land question as the key issue in Irish politics, a position it would occupy for the remainder of the nineteenth century, and beyond'.¹⁶ The Encumbered Estates Act 'brought the Catholic small landowner into his own. Emigration removed hundreds of thousands of abject poverty cases. The Catholic middle classes began to prosper'.¹⁷ Corresponding to changes in Ireland's class system, Catholic national identity continued to strengthen, which further challenged Protestant Irish identity and authority. Foster notes that 'Catholicism in the post-Famine age provided a highly organized, coherent identity that helped Irish society cope with the psychological impact of disruption'.¹⁸ Conversely, the Established Church suffered greatly from the withdrawal of Protestant landlords as a result of the act, the 'local bulwarks of the Anglican Church' whose 'estates passed to the new Catholic owners' meant that the Established Church's income – still heavily dependent on land revenues (tithes) – was significantly contracted.¹⁹

The 1840s also saw the continued appeal of the Repeal movement, which was not a Catholic-only effort. A group of 'largely Protestant repealers who clustered around the Trinity-educated journalist, Thomas Davis' (1814-45),²⁰ formed Young Ireland, a group initially allied with O'Connell in support of repeal of the union but who 'argued that confessional religion was a private matter and that the public religion they espoused – nationalism – was the only true faith'.²¹ Young Ireland and O'Connell eventually parted ways (for a number of complex reasons), but the root cause of contention was O'Connell's exclusionary perception of Irishness

¹⁴ Dickson, p. 336.

¹⁵ S. J. Connolly, *Religion and Society in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1985), p. 41.

¹⁶ Thomas Bartlett, *Ireland: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 295-96.

¹⁷ Akenson, pp. 212-13.

¹⁸ R. F. Foster, *Modern Ireland, 1600-1972* (London: Penguin, 1989), p. 340.

¹⁹ Akenson, p. 213. Akenson explains that despite the general rearrangement of episcopal finances since the beginning of the century, 'the Church of Ireland in 1867 still depended for its revenues chiefly upon the land rents and revenues [...] Despite the changes in this period, the Church of Ireland remained dependent on the same generic forms of income in 1867 that it had depended upon in 1767', p. 224.

²⁰ Bartlett, p. 277.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 278.

and Catholicism as interchangeable, which provided no room for the form of Protestant nationalism Young Ireland wished to represent.²² The Young Ireland-allied publication, *The Nation*, was founded in 1842 and was edited by Charles Gavan Duffy (1816-1903), who became the leader of Young Ireland after Davis' death in 1845, and who was, along with Davis, a contemporary and friend of Le Fanu's. McCormack reports that Le Fanu was tempted out of his staunch Tory conservatism in support of Gavan Duffy and the Young Irishmen, even speculating that Le Fanu contributed to their newspaper (although he concedes that 'nothing definite is known of any contribution of Le Fanu's in *The Nation*').²³ McBride also points to the connections between the *D.U.M.* and the *Nation*,²⁴ an indication of the softening of the magazine's previously staunch conservative ethos, while McCormack notes that 'a sense of political fluidity affected both conservative unionists and liberal nationalists' at the outbreak of famine in 1845, spurred on primarily by the wholly ineffectual response from Westminster, which prompted Tories such as Le Fanu to consider the benefits of repeal.²⁵ Both the Famine and the death of O'Connell would alter the social structure and the political landscape of Ireland once more. "Black '47", considered the worst year of the famine, saw support for the British government at an all-time low, while the United Kingdom general election in the same year saw a significant yield for the Irish Repeal group.²⁶ Furthermore, the death of O'Connell in the same year incited an intense revival of Catholic-led repeal, while the establishment of The Irish Confederation – a Young Ireland initiative – emerged from opposition to both O'Connellite tactics and any alliance with the British government, regardless of party. However, the Young Ireland rebellion in the summer of 1848 shocked curious Tories such as Le Fanu, who subsequently retreated back to the safety of unionist conservatism.²⁷

By mid-century, Irish Protestant articulations of identity and belonging continued to be challenged by Catholic claims to the same. While in the wake of the Act of Union the re-emergence of the settler identity had helped to support Irish Protestant articulations of themselves as an exceptional group with claims to a specific type of Irishness and national identity. By the 1850s, Connolly notes that 'the rising [Catholic] nationalism of the period

²² For the causes of the Young Ireland-O'Connell split, see Bartlett, p. 279.

²³ W. J. McCormack, *Sheridan Le Fanu and Victorian Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 103. Hereafter cited as *Sheridan Le Fanu*.

²⁴ John P. McBride, 'The Dublin University Magazine: Cultural Nationality and Tory Ideology in an Irish Literary and Political Journal 1833-1852', (unpublished doctoral thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1987), pp. 265-72.

²⁵ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 100.

²⁶ Cf. F.W.S. Craig, (ed.), *British Electoral Facts, 1832-1987*, 5th ed. (London: Parliamentary Research Services, 1989).

²⁷ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, pp. 102-03.

developed in ways that increasingly excluded' Irish Protestants.²⁸ Jarlath Killeen has explored in detail the Irish Protestant crisis of identity from as far back as the seventeenth century. He explains that an innate instability formed part of their identity as a group who considered themselves 'superior yet subordinate, English yet Irish'. To consider themselves wholly Irish had always been an issue since the Irish were considered the inferior, colonised Other. Yet increasingly settlers were considered "not English" either, 'but eventually Irishness became integral to their understanding of themselves'.²⁹ The events of the 1840s saw a change in Irish Protestant articulations of national identity as compared to the kind exhibited in the 1820s and '30s. Cynthia Sugars points to the importance of "storying" when conceptualising a nation: 'the question is not whether the nation is or is not an imagined community, but "whose imagination is advanced as the national imaginary"'.³⁰ In the late 1830s, the "storying" encouraged by the likes of the *D.U.M.* involved the propagation of existing traditions, legends, and myths of Irish antiquity, as well as the fashioning of new originary stories. The *D.U.M.* adopted a role of stewardship in the writing, collecting, and maintaining of these "traditions" for the benefit of the nation. This allowed early nineteenth-century Protestants to "story" a particular national identity in order to advance their idea of an Irish Protestant national imaginary at a time when their connection to the country required redefinition. Similarly, Barry Crosbie notes that 'late eighteenth-century antiquarian explorations and the age of Ossian succeeded in providing important stimuli for the developments of new attitudes in establishing an Irish past by Catholic as well as Protestant intellectuals based at TCD'.³¹ Publications such as the *D.U.M.* can be understood to form part of the storying process in the early decades after Union, particularly through their conscious effort to establish a national literature in the wake of a literal and literary absenteeism.³² However, while this mission is certainly reflected by the *D.U.M.* in its first decade or so, by the mid-1840s, Ireland was a changed place and as such the methods of storying changed to reflect this, moving away from the antiquarian focus of the post-Union years.

²⁸ S. J. Connolly, 'Settler colonialism in Ireland from the English Conquest to the Nineteenth Century', in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, ed. by Edward Cavanagh, and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 49-64 (p. 59).

²⁹ Jarlath Killeen, *Gothic Ireland: Horror and the Irish Anglican Imagination in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), p. 70.

³⁰ Cynthia Sugars, 'Haunted by (a lack of) Postcolonial Ghosts' Settler Nationalism in Jane Urquhart's *Away*', *Essays on Canadian Writing*, 79 (2003), 1-32 (p. 3), quoting Himani Bannerji, 'Geography Lessons: On Being an insider/Outsider to the Canadian Nation', *Dangerous Territories: Difference and Equality in Education*, ed. by Leslie G. Roman and Linda Eyre (New York: Routledge, 1977), 23-41 (p. 24).

³¹ Barry Crosbie, *Irish Imperial Networks: Migration, Social Communication and Exchange in Nineteenth-Century India* (Cambridge & New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 218.

³² Cf. the discussion in Chapter One under 'The Imagined Community of the *Dublin University Magazine*'.

John P. McBride has charted these shifts in his study of the *D.U.M.* McBride confirms that whereas under Isaac Butt's stewardship there was a definite focus on the literary identity of the magazine as shaped by a specifically Tory and Unionist ideology, by the early 1840s 'the balance within the magazine's contents between the stern and the serious [...] and the fashionable and the dandyish [...] had tipped in favour of the latter'. The magazine began carrying significantly less political content than hitherto: 'Tory Ireland, for the present, appeared more desirous of entertainment and diversion than of political and cultural admonishments concerning the plight of Irish Protestantism'.³³ W. J. McCormack has also commented on the changes in the magazine by mid-century, remarking that in the early years, though the 'political stance was Tory', its 'cultural interests were wide ranging, especially in its first decade and a half', whereas by contrast, 'The 1850s were years of despond', both for the nation and the magazine.³⁴ Butt was editor of the *D.U.M.* from the magazine's inception in the early 1830s, but throughout the 1840s both James McGlashan (1800-58), and Charles Lever (1806-72), were interchangeably responsible for its editorship. Elizabeth Tilley has cautioned against a homogenized perception of the periodical over time, arguing that 'each issue is rooted in a historical moment [...] and its claims to truth and importance are always contingent on that moment'.³⁵ This editorial changing of the guard certainly inaugurated a shift in the magazine's ideology, while the 'historical moment' of the 1840s further influenced its content.³⁶ Under McGlashan and Lever, the *D.U.M.* became 'less of a contentious political and cultural manifesto and more of a literary miscellany seeking general popular appeal', in the style of British magazines such as *The London Journal* or *Fraser's Magazine*.³⁷ However, as noted in *The Wellesley Index*, the popularity of the magazine under Lever meant that 'the *DUM* for a time achieved its goal of being recognized as the Irish *Blackwood's* or *Fraser's*', which

³³ McBride, p. 221.

³⁴ W. J. McCormack, "'Never put your name to an anonymous letter': Serial Reading in the *Dublin University Magazine*, 1861 to 1869', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 26 (1996), 100-15 (p. 101).

³⁵ Elizabeth Tilley, 'Charting Culture in the *Dublin University Magazine*', *Ireland in the Nineteenth Century: Regional Identity*, ed. by Glenn Hooper and Leon Litvack (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), pp. 58-65 (p. 61).

³⁶ Charles Stuart Stanford was the first editor of the *D.U.M.* (1833), however Butt was heavily involved in setting up the magazine and took over from Stanford in 1834. McGlashan was also involved with the magazine long before he became editor. He worked for Curry and Company, the Dublin publisher who was responsible for printing the magazine until McGlashan set up his own publishing company in the 1840s. See McBride, pp. 49-52.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 208. After Butt's departure from the magazine in 1838, McBride reports that 'Editorial responsibility for the *DUM* during this period [1838-42] appears to have rested squarely with James McGlashan', p. 179. In 1842, Lever was announced as the new editor and held the post until 1845 when McGlashan took over officially until 1852 when editorship passed to John Francis Waller and later Cheyne Brady.

suggests that this shift in favour of the literary paid off in terms of circulation and reputation.³⁸ Furthermore, there was also a 'change in focus from Ireland past to Ireland present', which necessarily impacted the literary contributions featured in the magazine.³⁹

As with the *D.U.M.*, Le Fanu's methods of storying also evolved during this period, as lamentable scenes of Jacobite ruin and tales of the idiosyncratic peasantry in the old south-west were replaced by the setting of late eighteenth-century Dublin, replete with a haunted population and its own set of colonial ghosts. The stories of this chapter reflect the events of the 1840s and '50s, and are further connected to an older revolutionary history. Aside from the momentous socio-political changes that occurred in the two decades between the end of the Purcell stories (1840), and the beginning of Le Fanu's prolific novel-writing period of the 1860s, the author's life was also marked by several personal tragedies. The first family bereavement occurred in 1841 when Le Fanu's elder sister, Catherine, died young: she 'fell into ill-health and died when she was twenty-seven. She was her father's darling. After her death he never was the same, and did not very long survive her'.⁴⁰ His father, Thomas Le Fanu, died in 1845, after which Le Fanu's mother moved to Dublin to live with William. The death of the Dean brought to a permanent end the family's life in Abington and county Limerick.⁴¹ In 1843, Le Fanu married Susanna (or Sue) Bennett, daughter of prominent Dublin solicitor, George Bennett, Q. C. They were married for fifteen years and had four children before Susanna died: 'His wife, to whom he was devotedly attached, died in 1858, and from this time he entirely forsook general society, and was seldom seen except by his near relations and a few familiar friends'.⁴² Shortly afterwards in 1861, Le Fanu's mother died, leaving himself and William as the only remaining members of their family. By this time William was a successful railway engineer and Le Fanu – now widowed and sole parent to four children – had established himself fully in the role of professional journalist and writer. He purchased the *D.U.M.* in 1861

³⁸ Walter E. Houghton, Esther Rhoads Houghton, and Jean Harris Slingerland, (eds.), 'The Dublin University Magazine, 1833-1877 and The University Magazine, 1878-1880', *The Wellesley Index to Victorian Periodicals, 1824-1900*, 5 vols (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), IV, pp. 193-370 (p. 199).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 207.

⁴⁰ *Seventy Years*, p. 138.

⁴¹ In 1857, William Le Fanu married Banky Barrington, daughter of Sir Joseph Barrington, 1st Baronet, who purchased an estate at Cappercullen in the parish of Oweybeg, County Limerick and built Glenstal Abbey as the family seat, approximately two miles from Abington. As such, after the Dean's death there was still a connection to Limerick through this marriage, although the Le Fanu family never lived in the area again.

⁴² *Seventy Years*, p. 139. McCormack in *Sheridan Le Fanu* cites 18 December 1843 as the date of marriage between Le Fanu and Susanna, p. 114. William's statement concerning Le Fanu's reclusive habits as a widower is perhaps what has led to the general (mis)conception that Le Fanu was 'a crepuscular figure creeping through the dark of night', instead of the more likely reason that he was 'just too busy to get out much'. Jarlath Killeen, 'Introduction: Forgetting Le Fanu?', *Inspiring a Mysterious Terror: 200 Years of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed. by Jarlath Killeen and Valeria Cavalli (Bern: Peter Lang, 2016), pp. 1-28 (p. 23).

and established a long-running writing contract with London publisher Richard Bentley in 1863,⁴³ though he endured financial difficulty throughout his life.⁴⁴ Within the same period of approximately twenty years, Le Fanu composed the entirety of his Dublin-set fiction, while the *D.U.M.* remained his primary literary outlet; his novels and short stories continued to debut in the magazine.

The following section will begin by examining Le Fanu's first short stories set in Dublin, which together form the 'Reminiscences of a Bachelor', although until now the stories have never been read as a pair. Following his first two novels, the stories 'The Watcher' and 'The Fatal Bride' were published in November 1847 and January 1848, respectively. The chapter will then proceed to examine two collections of stories set in Le Fanu's childhood village of Chapelizod: 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod' and 'Some Gossip about Chapelizod' appeared in the *D.U.M.* in January and April 1851. Finally, the chapter will move to consider Le Fanu's final two Dublin stories, which were published almost a decade apart but are linked by their domestic settings: 'An Account of Some Strange Disturbances in an Old House in Aungier-street' appeared in December 1853, while 'An Authentic Narrative of a Haunted House' was published in October 1862. There are three significant commonalities in all the Dublin stories around which the succeeding analysis will be based. The first is the marked advance in the idea of haunting compared to that of the Purcell stories. Gone are the Faustian bargains and Catholic superstitions, replaced instead by vengeful stalkers and existential doubt, probably (or at least, in part) the result of a personal crisis of faith that some critics have argued was triggered by Susanna's death.⁴⁵ Additionally, consideration of a broader crisis of faith in cultural terms was likely a factor in Le Fanu's thinking at this time, and is further evidenced by the culture of the *D.U.M.* As Le Fanu's political and spiritual outlook is challenged, his ghosts take on new meanings. The link between radical political thinking and supernatural encounter is manifest in his Dublin stories, and as with the countryside of east Limerick, the biographically relevant and colonially inflected topography of Dublin city and its surrounds link them to the city of the present and the city of the past. Finally, each of the stories educe recurring motifs: persecution, isolation, the haunted city, and the haunted house. As with other settler literature, urban spaces and homes are sites of innate vulnerability, constantly under

⁴³ For a study of Le Fanu's relationship with Bentley, see the Le Fanu-Bentley correspondence transcribed in Walter Eugene Edens, *Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu: A Minor Victorian and his Publisher* (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Illinois, 1963), pp. 250-60.

⁴⁴ McCormack details the nature of Le Fanu's personal finances and the extent of his fiscal debt to both William and his brother-in-law, John Bennett. *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 135.

⁴⁵ Cf. *Sheridan Le Fanu*, pp. 127-29. See also Zoë Lehmann Imfeld, *The Victorian Ghost Story and Theology: From Le Fanu to James* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016), p. 110.

threat from hostile, external forces. In Le Fanu's Dublin, the seemingly "safe spaces" of well-lit streets and private homes are threatened by spectral ingress.

Reminiscences of a Bachelor: 'The Watcher' and 'The Fatal Bride'

'The Watcher' marks Le Fanu's return to writing short stories with an Irish setting since closing the book on Father Purcell's manuscripts in October 1840. Following Purcell, Le Fanu shifted his interests and undertook novel writing, producing two lengthy historical novels, *The Cock and Anchor* (1845), and *The Fortunes of Colonel Torlogh O'Brien* (1847). 'The Watcher' is one of a two-part series, which along with 'The Fatal Bride' constitutes the 'Reminiscences of a Bachelor'. Once more, Le Fanu adopts the guise of a persona-narrator to frame these texts, this time known only as the Bachelor, who plays a role in both stories, and whose "reminiscences" constitute the content he submits to the *D.U.M.* by way of 'that mysterious agency, the penny-post'.⁴⁶ Although 'The Watcher' is one of Le Fanu's more critically recognised works, conversely 'The Fatal Bride' is one of his *least* known, entirely out of print until a 2014 edition by Swan River Press which saw the two stories republished as a pair for the first time.⁴⁷ In the intervening years between Purcell and the Bachelor, Le Fanu married Susanna Bennett, so his guise as a bachelor who has 'more than once narrowly escaped – I should say *missed* – the fate-matrimonial' is perhaps a private joke in this regard.⁴⁸ It is noteworthy, however, that Le Fanu chose once more an unmarried, single man as a literary persona. Purcell and the Bachelor are essentially *flâneurs*, unattached men with the freedom to travel about observing society and collecting other people's stories. The figure of the *flâneur* was first identified as an archetype by Walter Benjamin in the poetry of Charles Baudelaire (1821-67), and comes from the French *flâner*, which translates as "saunter" or "lounge", defined as 'a man who saunters around observing society'.⁴⁹ The *flâneur* is typically understood to be confined to the urban landscape of the modern European city, but Purcell – if

⁴⁶ 'The Fatal Bride', p. 16. 'Spalatro' is a story in two parts published in the *D.U.M.* in March and April 1843, and is Le Fanu's first non-Purcell work. The story has an Italian setting and thus is not relevant to this study. 'Spalatro', *Dublin University Magazine*, 21 (1843), 338-51 (Part I), 446-58 (Part II).

⁴⁷ In 2014 Swan River Press published 'The Watcher' and 'The Fatal Bride' under the collective title *Reminiscences of a Bachelor*, the first time the two stories have been published together since their original serialisation in the *D.U.M.* Although 'The Watcher' was republished in 1851, 1872 (and many times since), 'The Fatal Bride' was not republished until the 2014 edition. *Reminiscences of a Bachelor*, intro. by Matthew Holness, ed. and notes by Jim Rockhill and Brian J. Showers (Dublin: Swan River Press, 2014).

⁴⁸ 'The Fatal Bride', p. 15. Original emphasis.

⁴⁹ Definition and trans. by *OED*. See Walter Benjamin, *The Writer of Modern Life: Essays on Charles Baudelaire*, ed. and introduction by Michael W. Jennings, trans. by Howard Eiland et al. (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2006). See also, Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life*, trans. by P. E. Charvet (London: Penguin, 2010), originally published in 1863.

not a strict *flâneur* in that sense – certainly anticipates the city-dwelling Bachelor. Later, Le Fanu would introduce yet another solitary narrator in the form of Doctor Hesselius and his anonymous apprentice, much in the same manner as Purcell and his *residuary legatee*. The *flâneur* is symptomatic of the emergence of the modern European city and where Irish fiction is concerned, James Joyce's Leopold Bloom – the consummate *flâneur* of early twentieth century Dublin – has educed much of the scholarly attention.⁵⁰ However, in the late eighteenth century Dublin was consciously (re)constructed to resemble the boulevards of Paris, coordinating an eastward shift away from the medieval core of the city at Christ Church and Wood Quay towards a new centre featuring at its heart the bulwarks of Protestant authority: the Irish Parliament and Trinity College.

Given the immense changes made to the built fabric of the city during this period, the emergence of the *flâneur* in nineteenth-century Irish fiction – as a response to such changes – is compelling. Merlin Coverley explains:

even as the *flâneur* first emerges, he is recognised as a nostalgic figure symbolizing not only the birth of the modern city but also the destruction of his former home. The fate of the *flâneur* is bound up with the fate of the city he inhabits and his very existence acts as an indication of the struggles later generations of urban walkers will have to face as the city is redeveloped in a manner increasingly hostile to their activities.⁵¹

The Bachelor's stories are set during a time of major construction of the city (the 1790s), and written during a time of further reconstruction (the 1840s); as such there is undoubtedly a correlation between the years of authorship and the years of setting. The grand Georgian squares of Dublin were built between the 1750s and the 1820s, while Carlisle Bridge (now O'Connell Bridge), opened in 1794 and provided a new major thoroughfare across the river, shifting permanently the city's central axis. Additionally, James Killen describes the further development of the city between the 1830s and the 1860s, when various railway lines were constructed in and across Dublin, grand feats of Victorian engineering that reoriented the existing city once again: 'The first railway in Ireland, the Dublin Kingstown railway, opened between Westland Row and Dun Laoghaire (Kingstown) in 1834 [...] By 1854 the major railway routes to enter Dublin were *in situ*'.

⁵⁰ Leopold Bloom is the wandering protagonist of James Joyce's magnum opus, *Ulysses* (1922).

⁵¹ Merlin Coverley, *Psychogeography* (Harpenden, Herts: Pocket Essentials, 2006), p. 20.

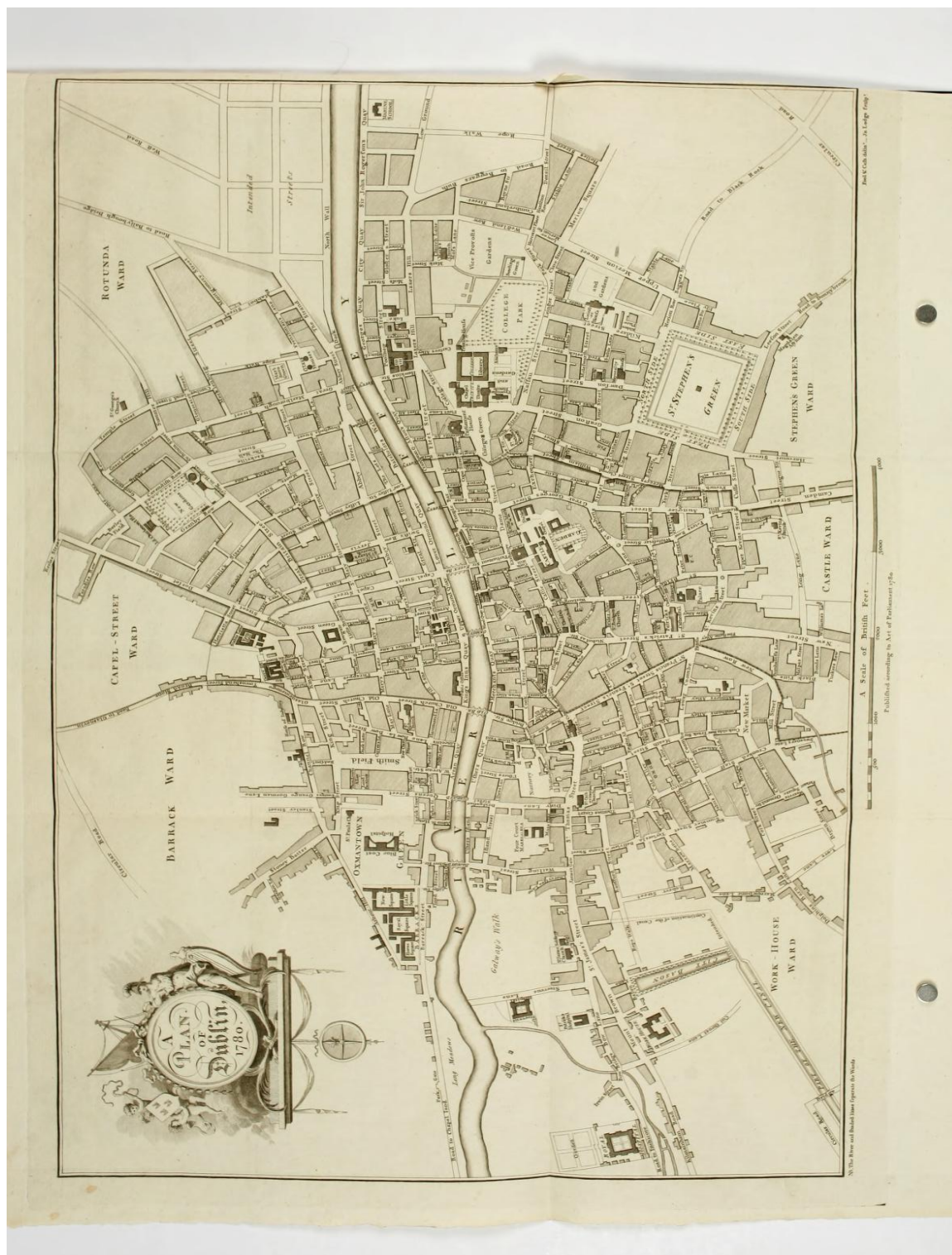


Figure 1: 'A Plan of Dublin' (1780).⁵²

⁵² Robert Pool and John Cash, *Views of the Most Remarkable Public Buildings, Monuments and Other Edifices in the City of Dublin* (Dublin: J. Williams, 1780), p. 6. Online access available at <<https://archive.org/stream/viewsofmostremar00pool#page/n5/mode/2up>> [accessed 5 December 2017].

The Amiens Street terminus opened in 1844, Kingsbridge (Heuston) in 1846, Broadstone in 1847, and Harcourt Street in 1853.⁵³ Robert Tracy refers to ‘Le Fanu’s phantom city’ in his writing about Dublin, along with the idea of Dublin ‘existing simultaneously at every period of its history, past, present, and future’, an idea that Le Fanu returns to repeatedly.⁵⁴

The Bachelor stories are set explicitly in the 1790s, within living memory of the ‘old bachelor’ who relates them to the present-day readers of the *D.U.M.* in 1847-48.⁵⁵ This past Dublin is not so far removed in history as Purcell’s remote rural tales, and its temporal proximity shows at once the contrast and the connection between the pre-Union city of the eighteenth century, and the Famine-era city of the nineteenth century. As Dublin was once again subject to major construction works, social and personal memories of the previous century’s transformation may have been stirred. Beyond the grand façades of colonial architecture, both cities are lurching towards a crisis, and behind the ballrooms and banquets there are illicit liaisons and guilty secrets. ‘The Watcher’ and ‘The Fatal Bride’ reveal a corruption at the heart of polite society in the crucial years before the Union, played out after dark in the back alleys of the city. In both stories, the Bachelor takes some part in the action of the story while wandering the city’s streets. In ‘The Watcher’, the Bachelor meets the protagonist while out walking:

One evening he walked down to the House of Commons with a member, an acquaintance of his and mine. This was one of the few occasions upon which I have been in company with Captain Barton. As we walked down together, I observed that he became absent and silent [...] I afterwards learned that, during the whole of our walk, he had heard the well-known footsteps dogging him as we proceeded.⁵⁶

Likewise in ‘The Fatal Bride’, while out walking once again the Bachelor becomes embroiled in the main action of the story through a chance encounter with one of the protagonists, brought about by his decision to traverse the back streets of the city late one night: ‘I rather courted than avoided such adventures as chance might possibly present. And in this spirit, instead of pursuing the open streets, I threaded the narrow alleys and back lanes with a careless sort of

⁵³ James Killen, ‘Transport in Dublin: Past, Present and Future’, *Dublin City and County: From Prehistory to Present*, ed. by F. H. A. Aalen and Kevin Whelan (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1992), pp. 305-25 (pp. 305-06).

⁵⁴ Robert Tracy (ed.), ‘Introduction’, *In a Glass Darkly* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. vii-xxix (pp. xv-xvi). Tracy here discusses ‘The Familiar’ and notes that it is ‘a slightly revised version of ‘The Watcher’, a story he had published in 1851’, p. xv. He does not reference the original 1847 version.

⁵⁵ ‘The Fatal Bride’, p. 15.

⁵⁶ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘The Watcher’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 30 (1847), 526-45 (p. 530). Hereafter cited as ‘The Watcher’.

swagger'.⁵⁷ The two Bachelor stories, though linked in one sense as two tales of doomed courtship, are deeply connected by their setting in an ephemeral Dublin city during the pre-rebellion, pre-Union years. Derek Gladwin in his study of the Bog Gothic describes the how 'Landscapes of fear' emerge in fiction as 'subjective reactions to specific material and imagined spaces', which links the psychological state of an individual or group to 'tangible environments'. Gladwin demonstrates that a history of colonialism can further complicate the interaction between real and imagined space; he argues that literary representations of places such as bogs are used to 'highlight[...] the relationships among landforms, national identity, and culture', which connects 'political histories' to 'specific geographies'.⁵⁸ In Le Fanu's stories, colonial history is linked to the 'specific geographies' of the city, which informs his literary representations of Dublin. The psychogeography of the city comes to the fore in both stories and is more immediately relatable to the urban-based readers of the *D.U.M.* as familiar buildings, streets, and squares set the scene, as opposed to the remote rural landscapes traversed by Purcell.⁵⁹

'The Watcher' is one of Le Fanu's more critically celebrated short stories although it is perhaps better known as 'The Familiar', a reworked and retitled version included in *In a Glass Darkly* (1872). Along with the other stories of the collection, 'The Familiar' is re-framed by the narrative of Doctor Hesselius, a fictional German metaphysician, and presented by an unnamed assistant as one of the doctor's unusual case notes.⁶⁰ Hitherto, much analysis of the story has been of this later incarnation, considered either as an isolated text or in relation to the *In a Glass Darkly* collection. Most Le Fanu scholars are at least *aware* of the different versions of the story, and while the majority of studies focus on the 1872 version, occasionally lip service is paid to the earlier incarnations. However, few have considered that 'The Watcher' and 'The Familiar' are really not identical or interchangeable texts.⁶¹ In his analysis of the

⁵⁷ 'The Fatal Bride', p. 25.

⁵⁸ Derek Gladwin, *Contentious Terrains: Boglands, Ireland, Postcolonial Gothic* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2016), pp. 10-11.

⁵⁹ In 1955, Guy Debord of the Situationist International – a French Marxist organisation made up of socio-political theorists and artists – defined psychogeography as 'the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, whether consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behaviour of individuals'. 'Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography', in *Situationist International Anthology*, ed. and trans. by Ken Knabb (Berkley, California: Bureau of Public Secrets, 1981), pp. 8-11 (p. 8).

⁶⁰ Other stories of the collection are 'Green Tea', 'Mr. Justice Harbottle', 'Carmilla', and 'The Room at the Dragon Volant'. All the stories were first published in various periodicals prior to being collected. The name Hesselius is possibly derived from the Swedish painter Gustavus Hesselius (1682-1755), cousin of Emanuel Swedenborg, a known influence on Le Fanu's theological outlook and later fiction. 'The Watcher' was also incorporated into the short story collection *Ghost Stories and Tales of Mystery* (1851), with some slight alterations to the original 1847 version, including the addition of a biblical prologue.

⁶¹ See, for example, Ivan Melada, *Sheridan Le Fanu* (Boston: Twayne, 1987); Robert Tracy, 'Introduction', *In a Glass Darkly* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. vii-xxix; Chester H. Schnepf, *The Protagonist's*

text(s), Nicholas Daly voices the typical assumption that ‘The Familiar’ ‘is almost taken word for word from an earlier story’, while in an endnote he further explains: ‘As the two texts are almost identical, the page references given here are from “The Familiar” in the readily available Oxford World’s Classics edition of *In a Glass Darkly*’.⁶² His ensuing analysis focuses on ‘The Familiar’ but occasionally meanders between the two versions: sometimes considering them the same text, sometimes remarking on their disparate historical publishing contexts of 1847 and 1872. Patricia MacCormack compares the relationship between Barton and the Watcher of ‘The Familiar’ with that of the Reverend Jennings and the monkey in ‘Green Tea’, but does not take into account the fact that Le Fanu conceived the character of the Watcher twenty years before that of the monkey: ‘Like Jennings [...] Barton has a familiar. His familiar is not a hybrid animal man, however, it is an uncanniness – as the stranger is both shadowing him as a doppelganger and facing him as an antagonist’.⁶³ Similarly, Nicholas Allen’s study of *In a Glass Darkly* examines the exchange of imperial objects throughout the stories of the collection, but in overlooking (or assuming the irrelevance of), the original version of ‘The Watcher’, his analysis of the stories in the context of their publication in 1872 is undermined.⁶⁴ A palimpsestic approach to the texts is therefore ill-advised; the three versions of the story are not textually identical and should not be read as such.

When compared carefully to the original 1847 version of ‘The Watcher’ that appeared in the *D.U.M.*, ‘The Familiar’ includes considerable structural revisions and is also replete with semantic alterations. Revisions to ‘The Familiar’ include the addition of a ‘Prologue’ containing a short introduction by Hesselius’ unnamed assistant, which frames the introductory “notes” from Hesselius who states that he received the story of this case from ‘a venerable Irish clergyman’ named Rev. Thomas Herbert, who in turn narrates ‘the chapters that follow’ but who does not feature in ‘The Watcher’.⁶⁵ The chapterization and sub-titles employed in ‘The Familiar’ are not used in ‘The Watcher’, while the addition of character names and place names

Dilemma in Poe and Le Fanu: The Emergence of the Modern Gothic Tradition (Maine: Goose River Press, 2003); Jeļena Brakovska, “Immundus Haborator” or Evil Inhabitants in Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu’s Ghost Stories’, *Comparative Studies*, 4.1 (2012), 87-95; Jen Cadwallader, *Spirits and Spirituality in Victorian Fiction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); and Imfeld’s *The Victorian Ghost Story and Theology* (2016).

⁶² Nicholas Daly, *The Demographic Imagination and the Nineteenth-Century City: Paris, London, New York* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 86. And ‘Notes’, pp. 215-16.

⁶³ Patricia MacCormack, ‘Baroque Intensity: Lovecraft, Le Fanu and the Fold’, *Irish Journal of Gothic and Horror Studies*, 2 (2007), 27-37 (p. 32).

⁶⁴ Nicholas Allen, ‘Sheridan Le Fanu and the Spectral Empire’, in *The Ghost Story from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century: A Ghostly Genre*, ed. by Helen Conrad O’Brian & Julie Stevens (Dublin: Four Courts, 2010), pp. 112-23.

⁶⁵ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘The Familiar’, *In a Glass Darkly*, intro. by Montague R. James (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press; The World’s Classics, 1926), pp. 41-82 (pp. 41-42).

are also a significant change from the original. ‘The Watcher’ omits some character surnames and street names: Lady L— becomes Lady Rochdale; Doctor R— becomes Doctor Richards, the Trinity College theologian, Dr —, becomes Dr Macklin, while the residence of Lady Rochdale is now specified as Henrietta Street, on the north side of the city. Unaccountably, the site of Yelland’s supposed death is also changed from Lisbon in the original story to Naples in the later version. Coupled with these major changes, there are numerous semantic inconsistencies, including the omission of sentences and substitution of words. The following examples are just three of many and are provided here in order to demonstrate that adaptations – though minor in some instances – can change the sense of the story and the interpretation thereof: ‘filled him with vague and *horrible* sensations’ (‘The Watcher’, p. 528), becomes the more moderate ‘unwonted and uncomfortable sensations’ (‘The Familiar’, p. 46). ‘By the side of the *dead* wall which bounded the college park’ (‘The Watcher’, p. 529), becomes ‘By the side of the *blank* wall which bounded College Park’ (‘The Familiar’, p. 40).⁶⁶ By way of a final example, the narrator’s encounter with the Watcher is shifted from Parliament to Trinity College: ‘One evening he walked down to the House of Commons with a member, an acquaintance of his and mine’ (‘The Watcher’, p. 530), is changed to ‘One evening he and I walked down to Trinity College with a Mr Norcott, an acquaintance of his and mine’ (‘The Familiar’, p. 41). This last alteration may have been due to the fact that by 1872, the Irish parliament had been closed for over half a century, and even though the story retains its setting as 1794, readers – particularly non-Irish readers – of the 1870s would more readily recognise the setting of Trinity College. Richard Haslam has elsewhere cautioned about the hermeneutic pitfalls associated with the interpretation of Le Fanu’s ‘tangled textual trail’,⁶⁷ and as with ‘Schalken the Painter’ and ‘Carmilla’, a century of editorial (or authorial), errors, omissions, and additions makes it virtually impossible to rely on reprints and later editions, *especially* without due consideration of the interpretive implications involved. Furthermore, the paratextual contexts of each version necessarily colour interpretation. The first version ought to be considered as a co-text with ‘The Fatal Bride’, while the later versions are part of other collections. The interpretive ramifications of these changes are significant, and while a detailed comparison of different versions of the story is beyond the scope of this study, analysis of ‘The

⁶⁶ My emphasis. In-text page citations are from the texts already cited in full in footnotes above. Later reprinted versions of ‘The Familiar’ contain numerous errors, amendments, and omissions. See, for example, ‘The Familiar’ (1926), pp. 41-82.

⁶⁷ Richard Haslam, ‘Theory, Empiricism, and “Providential Hermeneutics”: Reading and Misreading Sheridan Le Fanu’s *Carmilla* and “Schalken the Painter”’, *Papers on Language and Literature*, 47 (2011), 339-362 (p. 339). See also the discussion of ‘Schalken’ in Chapter One.

Watcher' here will be based on the 1847 version as printed in the *D.U.M.*, and considered in light of its companion story.

'The Watcher' tells the story of Sir James Barton, 'the younger brother of a certain baronet' and a retired navy captain recently returned to Dublin 'Somewhere about the year 1794', who begins courting the penniless Miss Montague, currently in the care of her aunt, the Dowager Lady L—. ⁶⁸ The women reside 'in a handsome mansion at the north side of Dublin', while Barton occupies lodgings 'situated at the south. The distance intervening was considerable and it was Captain Barton's habit generally to walk home without an attendant, as often as he passed the evening with the old lady and her fair charge'. ⁶⁹ While walking home late one evening, Barton is disturbed by the sound of footsteps following him down a deserted street, although to his distress he cannot determine the source. The following morning he receives a letter from somebody styled as 'The Watcher', warning him 'to avoid — street — (here the locality of his last night's adventure was named) — if he walks there as usual he will meet with something bad — let him take warning'. ⁷⁰ Barton initially dismisses the letter as a 'hoax' and the strange footsteps as a 'delusion':

But although he affected to treat the whole affair as unworthy of a thought, it yet haunted him pertinaciously, tormenting him with perplexing doubts, and depressing him with undefined apprehensions. Certain it is, that for a considerable time afterwards he carefully avoided the street indicated in the letter as the scene of danger. ⁷¹

About a week later the same incident is repeated: pursuing footsteps followed by a threatening letter. On the third occasion, the Bachelor himself is present in the company of Barton and an acquaintance when Barton is confronted by an 'odd-looking person'. The man 'Walked straight toward Barton [...] and halted, regarding him for a moment or two with a look of menace and fury almost maniacal; and then turning about as abruptly, he walked before us [...] and disappeared at a side passage'. ⁷² The reader is left to assume that this is the eponymous

⁶⁸ 'The Watcher', p. 526. In 1794, Price Blackwood, 4th Baron Dufferin and Clandeboyne was born, to whom Le Fanu was related through Blackwood's marriage to Helen Selina Sheridan (1807-67), granddaughter of playwright Richard Brinsley Sheridan, who in turn was the brother of Le Fanu's grandmother, Alicia Sheridan Le Fanu. Blackwood was a captain in the Royal Navy (like the protagonist of 'The Watcher'), and died in 1841, six years before the publication of 'The Watcher'. Le Fanu was close to the Dufferins. He often solicited Lady Dufferin for advice on writing, and dedicated *Uncle Silas* 'To the Right Hon. The Countess of Gifford, As a Token of Respect, Sympathy, and Admiration'. It is possible, then, that 1794 had a personal significance for Le Fanu, the dates in the story a reference *in memoriam* to the recently bereaved. However, 1794 is also a historically suggestive year in Irish and European history; the story is set in the midst of the French Revolution (1789-99) and in the politically overwrought years prior to the United Irishmen rebellion of 1798.

⁶⁹ 'The Watcher', p. 527.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 528.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 529.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 530.

Watcher, and as his appearances intensify, Barton's horror of encountering him escalates correspondingly. Barton becomes increasingly withdrawn from society and seeks both physical and metaphysical guidance but fails to find comfort in either: the doctor of the body diagnoses a sickness of the mind, while the doctor of the mind diagnoses a sickness of the body. The futility of this exercise is no doubt deliberate on Le Fanu's part, though when read as 'The Familiar', Barton's inability to find solace in religion or science is often incorrectly attributed to Le Fanu's personal frustrations after Susanna's long illnesses and death, who did not die until 1858, a decade after 'The Watcher' was first published.⁷³ In his efforts to escape the Watcher (and the city), Barton attempts a sojourn abroad, but is greeted by the same figure waiting at the port of Calais. Upon returning from this failed exercise, 'it was determined to remove him to a house of Lady L—'s, in the neighbourhood of Clontarf', with the understanding that 'A month or six weeks' absolute seclusion under these conditions, it was hoped might, by interrupting the series of these terrible impressions, gradually dispel the predisposing apprehensions'.⁷⁴ However, despite this change of scenery, the Watcher reappears.

Once resident in Clontarf with Lady L—, Miss Montague and her father General Montague (recently returned from India), Miss Montague adopts a pet owl found in one of the stables, a creature Barton comes to loathe and fear unaccountably. Late one night Barton becomes convinced that the bird is "lurking in some corner of the room", and commands his valet to check: "Get up, Smith, and look about; search for him. Such hateful dreams!". Upon being left alone in the room momentarily by his valet, the bedroom door swings shut and appears to be locked on the inside, barring re-entry, a scenario reminiscent of both 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh' and 'Schalken the Painter'. Barton, not realising his servant's absence, asks for a candle to be brought to his bedside. Upon hearing this summons, Smith attempts to return to the bedroom, but before he can react 'he heard a voice in the interior of the chamber answering calmly, and actually saw, through the window which overtopped the door, that the light was slowly shifting, as if carried across the chamber in answer to his master's call'. Smith then hears 'a rustling of the curtains, and a sound like that of one who in a low voice hushes a child to rest', followed by 'a yell of agony so appalling and hideous'.⁷⁵ At this point, both Smith and General Montague – alerted by the screams – rush to his aide but are too late. Upon opening the bedroom door, the owl 'started suddenly from the far side of the

⁷³ Cf. *Sheridan Le Fanu*, pp. 126-29.

⁷⁴ 'The Watcher', p. 539.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 543.

bed, and flying through the door-way close over their heads [...] crashed through the skylight that overlooked the lobby, and sailed away into the darkness of the outer space'. They find Barton dead in his bed, still clutching his bedclothes in fright with an expression of terror on his face.

At the close of the main action of the story, the Bachelor appends an explanatory conclusion that attempts to ground Barton's supernatural demise somewhat in empirical reality: 'it is enough for us to remark, that no clue to the solution of these mysterious occurrences was ever after discovered'.⁷⁶ However, the Bachelor also refers to an incident in 'Captain Barton's former life [...] which he himself seemed to regard as working out a retribution for some grievous sin of his past life, was a circumstance which not for several years after his death was brought to light'. Previous to his return to Dublin, we are told that Barton 'had formed, in the town of Plymouth, a guilty attachment, the object of which was the daughter of one of the ship's crew under his command'. Her father – one Sylvester Yelland – opposed the liaison, treating his daughter with 'extreme harshness, and even brutality', and Barton with 'marked insolence':

Barton retaliated [...] by a systematic exercise of those terrible and arbitrary severities which the regulations of the navy placed at the command of those who are responsible for its discipline. The man had at length made his escape, while the vessel was in port at Lisbon, but died, as it was said, in an hospital in that town, of the wounds inflicted in one of his recent and sanguinary punishments.⁷⁷

The Bachelor tempers the veracity of this explanation by adding that it is 'impossible to say' whether or not this incident had any bearing 'upon the occurrences of Barton's after-life', although it appears that Barton considered the incidents related. However, the Bachelor closes with the avowal that 'with respect to the agencies by which [this mysterious persecution] was accomplished, absolute and impenetrable mystery is like to prevail until the day of doom'.⁷⁸

On the surface 'The Watcher' appears to be a straightforward tale of guilt and retribution: Barton is being punished for his actions towards Yelland. Certainly Yelland's connection to the events of the story is heavily suggested and safe to suppose, though never categorically confirmed, and Le Fanu offers three possible scenarios to account for Barton's persecution. The first is grounded in empirical reality and presumes that Yelland did not die of his injuries, as was initially thought, but returns to stalk Barton in the flesh. Barton questions

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 544.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 545.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

his physician on the laxity and the likelihood of ‘bungling’ in ‘foreign hospitals’, either in the pronouncement of death or “‘in their entries of names, and so forth?’”. He then questions the doctor as to the possibility of some disease “‘which would have the effect of perceptibly contracting the stature, and the whole frame – causing a man to shrink in all his proportions, and yet to preserve his exact resemblance’”,⁷⁹ which would account for the short, ‘odd-looking person’ encountered by Barton while in the company of the Bachelor.⁸⁰ To these inquiries ‘The physician replied with a smile, and a very decided negative’.⁸¹ Though the medical man does not support Barton’s theory, this explanation of events is not improbable. Both Allen and Daly have focused on the material aspects of the story in their analysis, Allen noting the presence of imperial commodities, and Daly identifying a demographic anxiety, arguing that the story demonstrates an emergent late-nineteenth-century fear of mass transport and crowds, activated by the advent of public omnibuses and railways. As mentioned, much previous analysis of the story has concerned ‘The Familiar’ (rather than ‘The Watcher’), and often comparisons are drawn between it and the other stories of *In a Glass Darkly*, particularly ‘Green Tea’. As such, Allen’s argument is strengthened by a connection between Barton’s imperial profession as a navy captain and the Reverend Jennings’ foreign taste for green tea, while his tormentor takes the shape of an exotic monkey, though his point is somewhat obscured by the existence of the earlier version of the story.⁸² Likewise, Daly’s conjecture about the fear of crowded cities and invasions of private and public space is reinforced by the fact that Jennings’ monkey first appears while he is traveling in a public omnibus. However, there is no mention of public transport or throngs in ‘The Familiar’ (or ‘The Watcher’) and Barton is invariably totally alone when he encounters his stalker. If anything, the empty Dublin of the 1790s depicted in the story anticipates Dublin of the early nineteenth century, the hollow and abandoned streets point to the post-Union evacuation that was shortly to follow, the very opposite of crowded. Although Daly attempts to link ‘The Watcher’ with his reading of ‘The Familiar’, arguing that ‘Readers of the story in 1847 would have been well used to walking past excavated streets, lime-kilns,

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 531.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 530.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 531.

⁸² However, had Allen considered ‘The Watcher’ as a companion to ‘The Fatal Bride’, he could have made the stronger connection between Barton’s naval career and Captain Chadleigh’s presence in colonial India. There is also a mention of exotic pets in ‘The Fatal Bride’: ‘she left behind her, for the consolation of her spouse, along with an extensive assortment of macaws, avadavats*, lap-dogs, and other sundries’, p. 17. *An avadavat is south-Asian weaver bird or waxbill with green, red, and brown plumage. They were/are commonly kept as cagebirds like macaws or parrots. See *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, <<https://www.britannica.com/animal/avadavat>> [accessed 03 January 2018].

and the detritus of building', nevertheless his argument is weakened by the story's earlier and inconvenient incarnation as 'The Watcher'.⁸³

Rather, the physical space of the Dublin plays a major role in the story's explication. Though set in the heart of Dublin city, the centre of power for the Irish Protestant elite in eighteenth century, the city is depicted as a borderland and invokes a sense of peripheral uncertainty: 'Mr. Barton took his leave, and set out upon his solitary walk homeward. He had now reached the lonely road, with its unfinished dwarf walls tracing the foundations of the projected rows of houses on either side'.⁸⁴ As the haunting increases in frequency, the utter remoteness of certain parts of Dublin city is emphasised. Like the landscapes of Le Fanu's rural Ireland, these scenes are empty of people, and though set at a time when Dublin was the second city of empire, this is not a bustling metropolis: the protagonist is alone in this landscape. The situation calls to mind the site of the colonial frontier, a borderland at the outskirts of empire signifying the division between the civilised world and the wilderness beyond. Settler literature is particularly preoccupied with the dynamics of colonial space given that crossing the frontier necessitates a movement from the known to the unknown. Barton traverses the line between familiar and unfamiliar territory while crossing the city from north to south:

the road on either side was, as we have said, embarrassed by the foundations of a street, beyond which extended waste fields, full of rubbish and neglected lime and brick kilns, and all now as utterly silent as though no sound had ever disturbed their dark and unsightly solitude.⁸⁵

Barton's tormentor emanates from this void; his persecution commences while on his first journey along the road and is repeated when he attempts the same journey again at a later date. The darkness and debris of this area provides the necessary cover for anybody wishing to conceal themselves from view. The Dowager's residence on the north side of the city is not explicitly stated in 'The Watcher', although in 'The Familiar' her home is located in Henrietta Street, first laid out in the 1720s, making it the earliest Georgian street in Dublin.

⁸³ Daly, p. 87.

⁸⁴ 'The Watcher', p. 527.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 533.



Figure 2: (Top Image) Dublin City (1797). Carlisle Bridge is visible spanning the river between Sackville Avenue and D'Olier Street, north of Trinity College.

Figure 3: (Bottom Image) Close-up section of north inner-city, including Henrietta Street, Rutland Square, Sackville Street, and Mountjoy Square.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ William Faden, *A Plan of the City of Dublin*, (London: W. Faden; Dublin: Sold by W. Allen & J. Archer, 1797), n. p.

Another possible site for the original iteration is Rutland Square (now called Parnell Square), a short distance from Henrietta Street and the oldest Georgian square in Dublin, constructed between 1753 and 1785. It predates Mountjoy Square by about thirty years (completed 1818), and is the only other Georgian square north of the river. Whether the house is located at Rutland or Henrietta Street, it is possible that Barton makes his way southward across the river via the newly opened Carlisle Bridge (now O'Connell Bridge), which was completed in 1794, the same year 'The Watcher' is set. The bridge facilitated a direct route from Rutland Square down the newly developed Sackville Street (now O'Connell Street), across to the south side of the river towards Trinity College and the Irish Parliament.

Prior to this, the primary crossing was at Essex Bridge (now Grattan Bridge), linking Capel Street on the north bank to Parliament Street on the south bank.⁸⁷ Upon first hearing the echo of footsteps pursue him down this lonely road, Barton 'turn[s] about to confront his pursuers, but though there was quite sufficient moonlight to disclose any object upon the road he had traversed, no form of any kind was visible there'.⁸⁸ The reference to moonlight suggests that there is no street lighting on this stretch of road, and it is possible that if Barton's pursuer is a living person, there is ample opportunity for concealment here. At the time the story is set, the medieval city was in the process of being overwritten by Georgian modernity, and as Kincaid observes, 'Any change in ideology sees its reflection in alterations to the built environment'.⁸⁹ Settler colonialism imposes geographical alterations on the site of settlement, whether it be by virtue of planting or building, the colony is physically and imaginatively overlaid. Edward Said describes how settlers 'immediately began to change the local habitat; their conscious aim was to transform territories into images of what they had left behind'.⁹⁰ During the eighteenth century, Dublin – and indeed Ireland – underwent a radical, material transformation, deliberately modelled to emulate a European capital. The improvement of Dublin was primarily a means of controlling and policing the environment. By creating wide and well-lit boulevards, authorities could also monitor and control the behaviour of crowds, reducing incidents of violence, robbery, riots, revolution, mass rallies, and other unsavoury activities. Seán Murphy outlines in detail the level of faction fighting and rioting that existed in eighteenth-century Dublin, which took on a decidedly political hue towards the latter part of

⁸⁷ Edel Sheridan notes that much of the work undertaken by the Wide Streets Commission in the 1780s and '90s 'was not in fact completed until shortly after the Act of Union 1801'. Sheridan, 'Designing the Capital City: Dublin, c. 1660-1810', in *Dublin Through Space and Time*, ed. by Joseph Brady and Annagret Simms (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), pp. 66-135 (p. 127).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 527.

⁸⁹ Kincaid, p. xxii.

⁹⁰ Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage Books, 1994), p. 62.

the century in the run-up to the rebellion of 1798. Law and order on the streets of Dublin was a primary concern during this period; manipulating the fabric of the city was one method of establishing control over the free movement of people in a bid to maintain law and order.⁹¹

Barton's experiences on Dublin's unfinished and 'projected' streets acknowledge the city as a space that is growing and changing, both physically and politically. Barton repeatedly deviates from the prescribed routes across the city; instead he continues to pursue the half-formed road, which is perhaps a metaphor for the direction Ireland would take, a path that in 1794 'had as yet been merely laid out, and little more than the foundations' but in 1798 became irrevocably set in stone.⁹² In this vein, Barton is being punished for traversing these unauthorised streets. Had he kept his route along 'the long line of twinkling oil lamps which indicated the frequented streets', perhaps he would have continued undisturbed. However, despite cautions, Barton continues to 'follow precisely the course which he had trodden upon the night [...] as that on which his strange persecution had commenced'.⁹³ Barton is presented with the opportunity to change his course – of walking and thinking – but his wilful persistence is his downfall. I would challenge Daly's argument that 'this is a story whose historicism is a thin veneer, and that it is the pressure of the city of the present [1840s and 1870s] rather than the political past that is registered'.⁹⁴ While the pressures of the political present may indeed be 'registered', the historicism of the Bachelor stories is the key to their interpretation. In both 'The Watcher' and 'The Fatal Bride', characters are presented with opportunities to change their thinking, and therefore to change the unfortunate series of events that unfold. The setting of both in the years before the rebellion unquestionably instils the stories with a political charge that would not have been lost on readers of the mid-nineteenth century.

The reader is explicitly told that Barton has just returned from the radical outreaches of empire, having 'served in the navy with some distinction' during 'the greater part of the American war', by which he means the American Revolutionary War (1775-83). As he was in the British navy it is likely Barton was there to suppress the rebellion, although Barton is also

⁹¹ Seán Murphy, 'Municipal Politics and Popular Disturbances: 1660-1800', *Dublin Through the Ages*, ed. by Art Cosgrove (Dublin: College Press Ltd., 1988), pp. 77-92 (p. 91). Murphy details the faction fights of the Liberty and Ormond Boys during the first half of the eighteenth century, which 'appears to have reached its most vicious and sustained level in 1748' (p. 83), as well as the 'whig-tory, protestant-catholic riots in Dublin in 1713, and in succeeding years violent outbreaks tended to follow attempts by catholics [sic] to celebrate the Pretender's [Prince Charles Edward Stuart, "Charles III"] birthday' (p. 82). Murphy also notes the effect these riots had on government policy and procedure, remarking that 'On three occasions, in 1672, 1760 and 1786, we have seen that serious outbreaks of popular violence were followed by significant legislative alterations to the city's municipal government or police system' (p. 92).

⁹² 'The Watcher', p. 527.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 533.

⁹⁴ Daly, p. 87.

labelled ‘a reputed free-thinker’, which suggests that he has potentially revolutionary tendencies, perhaps having been radicalised by the push for American independence.⁹⁵ Moreover, Barton’s inclination towards “‘French principles’” and ‘Whiggism’ are made explicit, while the Catholic sympathy incumbent in such political leanings is left in no doubt. The Society of United Irishmen was established in 1791, inspired by both the American and French revolutions, and by 1794 – the year ‘The Watcher’ is set – had become an outlawed, underground movement with a determination to oppose British rule in Ireland.⁹⁶ Barton’s politics are exposed in a conversation ‘upon the evidences of revelation, which he [Barton] had disputed with the callous scepticism of a confirmed infidel’, a conversation that then ‘degenerated into one upon the supernatural and the marvellous’ in which Barton ‘pursued precisely the same line of argument and ridicule’.⁹⁷ Politics and the supernatural are here conflated, and though politically aligned with revolutionary principles in the inflammatory years before 1798, Barton’s scepticism on spectral matters moderates his outlook as somewhat rational. However, the spectral footsteps commence directly after this conversation about ‘revelation’, so it is not a stretch to infer that if politics and the supernatural are related here then Barton’s haunting is at least politicised, if not fully political. His journey across the lawless streets of Dublin is perhaps analogous to the pursuit of a radical line of thought.

The Watcher’s second appearance follows a theatre performance in Crow Street, where Barton is once again in the company of the Dowager and Miss Montague. At the time in question, the first Theatre Royal at Crow Street was under the management of Richard Daly, a noted duellist, gambler, and all-round libertine.⁹⁸ Upon leaving the theatre and reaching ‘the side of the dead wall which bounded the college park’, Barton hears the footsteps resume: ‘the

⁹⁵ ‘The Watcher’, p. 526.

⁹⁶ See Nancy J. Curtin, ‘Symbols and Rituals of United Irish Mobilisation’, in *Ireland and the French Revolution*, ed. By David Dickson and Hugh Gough (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1990), pp. 68-82 (p. 69).

⁹⁷ ‘The Watcher’ p. 527.

⁹⁸ Crow Street Theatre was ‘erected by Spranger Barry and Henry Woodward on the site of a music-hall in 1758, it became the Theatre Royal when Barry acquired the patent of Master of Revels in 1759. Thomas Sheridan [a relative of Le Fanu’s], manager of Smock Alley, opposed Crow Street in *A Humble Appeal to the Public* (1758) on the grounds that Dublin could not support two competing companies. In 1767 Barry leased Crow Street to his Smock Alley competitor, Henry Mossop. At Mossop’s failure in 1770 Crow Street was taken by William Dawson. In 1776 Dawson surrendered the lease to Thomas Ryder, who ran both theatres before surrendering Smock Alley to Richard Daly in 1779. In 1786 Daly acquired the Crow Street lease together with the patent of Master of Revels. In 1788 Daly reopened the extensively refurbished Crow Street Theatre Royal. In 1796 Frederick Jones obtained the patent. In the ensuing years, the fortunes of the theatre often flagged. In 1820 Henry Harris, proprietor of Covent Garden, acquired the patent and the management of Crow Street. After a season at the Rotunda Assembly Rooms in 1820, he removed the Theatre Royal to Hawkins Street where a new building was constructed’. Robert Welch, *The Concise Oxford Companion to Irish Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), <<http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780192800800.001.0001/acref-9780192800800-e-539>> [accessed 16 December 2017].

sounds followed, re-commencing almost simultaneously with his own steps'. It is significant that the echoing steps do not reoccur until Barton comes close to Trinity College, another landmark of Protestant authority at the heart of Georgian Dublin. Counter to the non-existent streets of the first incident, Barton is pursued here along the central thoroughfares of the city but once again the streets are 'quite deserted', recalling the emptiness of the wasteland described in the first encounter.⁹⁹ Barton later returns to Trinity College to consult a theologian, 'Dr. —', although as with his medical consultation, Barton receives no comfort.¹⁰⁰ Both Jen Cadwallader and Zoë Lehmann Imfeld (in their analysis of 'The Familiar'), consider Barton's haunting to be the result of a guilty conscience, that he is the victim of some form of psychotic derangement or mental breakdown stemming from his treatment of Yelland, either as a result of repressed guilt or desire for religious and moral atonement. The haunting is therefore a manifestation of that guilt or perceived sin, with the Watcher being an invention of Barton's subconscious. While Cadwallader does not offer any in depth analysis of 'The Familiar', she suggests that Barton can be compared with Jennings as two men who seek (and fail), to elicit sympathy or solace from medical physicians. In Barton's case, Cadwallader argues that he 'tries to describe his haunting experience and the guilt that underlies it to a doctor', but like Jennings, his 'words fail to move' said doctor. Furthermore, by seeking advice from a doctor of medicine and a doctor of divinity, Cadwallader claims that 'The Familiar' 'clearly shares similar concerns with the other tales' of *In a Glass Darkly*.¹⁰¹ Cadwallader suggests that Le Fanu was attempting to 'underscore the coldness and ineffectiveness of Hesselius and his ilk', which is in turn symptomatic of his own experiences with doctors, particularly with regards to the treatment of Le Fanu's own wife.¹⁰² While this may be true of the other stories of *In a Glass Darkly*, it cannot be true of 'The Familiar' given that Le Fanu's wife died in 1858, a decade after the original publication of 'The Watcher'. Although Cadwallader identifies a convincing pattern in the protagonists of *In a Glass Darkly*, 'whose lives are centred on or greatly changed by their use of an illicit or chemically altering substance', she admits that 'The Familiar' is the exception. Of course, understanding 'The Familiar' as a revised version of an earlier story

⁹⁹ 'The Watcher', p. 529.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 533.

¹⁰¹ Cadwallader, p. 47.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 44. Susanna Le Fanu is believed to have suffered from some form of mental illness, diagnosed at the time as nervous hysteria, which ultimately led to her death from 'an hysterical attack'. McCormack (and others), have shown that Le Fanu suffered a "crisis of faith" in both religion and medical science following her death, evidenced by the few scraps of journal entries that exist. McCormack remarks that 'the nervous self-interrogation about doctors and their measures is entirely understandable if Joseph and Susanna held diverging views on medicine'. *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 130. See also Jean Lozes, 'Fragment d'Un Journal Intime de J.S. Le Fanu: Document Inédit En Date Du 18 Mai 1858', *Caliban*, 10 (1974), 153–64.

explains its uneasy fit within the *In a Glass Darkly* collection; ‘The Familiar’ eschews the English and continental settings common to the other stories, as well as the overarching Swedenborgian inflection that marked Le Fanu’s later writing. The insertion of the Hesselius framework is also noticeably forced compared to some of the other stories of the collection.¹⁰³ ‘The Watcher’ was written over twenty years before the others, so naturally both Le Fanu’s style and influences became altered over time.

Imfeld, in her examination of theology in Le Fanu’s ghost stories, offers an expanded analysis of ‘The Familiar’ and its complicated orthodoxies, though at its core she identifies a relatively uncomplicated theme of sin and retribution in which ‘terror [is] the catalyst for salvation’,¹⁰⁴ with Barton eventually realising himself to be a ‘sinner’ and ‘a man in need of salvation’.¹⁰⁵ However, the theory of psychological guilt is complicated by the fact that Barton’s treatment of Yelland was revenge for Yelland’s cruel treatment of his own daughter, Barton’s lover, which ultimately led to her death. As such, neither Barton nor Yelland are entirely free from guilt in this instance, and Yelland certainly does not possess the moral high ground. If the story were truly a tale of retribution, surely Barton would be troubled by the girl he disgraced, and not by the man who was equally to blame for her death. After all, this is not the first time Le Fanu highlighted female mistreatment at the hands of authoritative men. The lack of any clear attribution of guilt troubles the revenge-plot theory. A further line of inquiry is the theological nihilism identified in ‘Green Tea’; Jennings’ crisis of faith has been compared to Barton’s apparent existential breakdown in ‘The Familiar’. The use of the metaphysical physician Dr Hesselius as a linking narrator imposes a connection between ‘Green Tea’ and ‘The Familiar’, which facilitates a reading of the texts that seems to show both characters experiencing some form of nervous, psychological trauma, potentially caused by the opening of the “inner eye”, thereby exposing them to the spectral plain.¹⁰⁶ However, without the unifying Hesselius framework, such a reading of the two stories is misleading.

¹⁰³ Although all of the stories of *In a Glass Darkly* were first serialised in various periodicals prior to their arrangement as a collection, all except ‘The Watcher’ were written/published between 1869 and 1872.

¹⁰⁴ Imfeld, p. 129.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 127.

¹⁰⁶ Le Fanu was influenced by the work of Emanuel Swedenborg, particularly in his later writings. Swedenborg posited that there was a relationship between the natural world and that of the divine, and as such there existed a “spectral plain” beyond the human universe that could be accessed through opening the “inner eye”. Cf. Emanuel Swedenborg, *Arcana coelestia quæ in scriptura sacra, seu verbo Domini sunt, detecta: hic primum quæ in Genesi*, 8 Vols (London: John Lewis, 1749-56). In ‘Green Tea’, Hesselius diagnoses ‘spectral illusions’, which he believes are ‘no less simply curable than a cold in the head or a trifling dyspepsia’. ‘Green Tea’, *In a Glass Darkly*, ed. and intro. by Robert Tracy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 5-40 (p. 39).

Although material and psychological rationales for Barton's metaphysical haunting have been posited, ironically a supernatural explanation is the most logical as it resolves the issue of the Watcher's omnipresence throughout the text, including his pre-emptive trip to Calais (a significant location in itself given the ongoing French Revolution), as well as his apparent transmogrification into the owl and the strange events surrounding Barton's death. If the Watcher is in fact a supernatural being, it is either the ghost of Yelland returned to haunt the living, or perhaps a composite ghost, a condensation of any and all of Barton's past sins. Le Fanu's use of ghosts is particularly complicated given the tri-fold interweaving of scientific, psychological, and religious rationalisation, while the 'loophole of doubt' in each system of enlightenment leaves a residue of uncertainty in its wake.¹⁰⁷ Le Fanu's refusal to neatly resolve issues of supernatural encounter is what unsettles the reader most. V. S. Pritchett's oft-quoted remark that 'Le Fanu's ghosts are the most disquieting of all: the ghosts that can be justified, blobs of the unconscious that have floated up to the surface of the mind, and which are not irresponsible and perambulatory figments of family history', though ambiguous in itself, nevertheless remains a fitting overview.¹⁰⁸ In other words, Le Fanu's ghosts are not mere pageantry, rather they embody a deeper significance; their very existence questions all systems of ontological reasoning in the nineteenth century given that both science and Anglican orthodoxy disqualify the idea of purgatory or other space from which ghosts can return. While in the Purcell stories the supernatural materialised primarily in the form of the Faust figure, rationalised either as a fantasy of Catholic superstition or the distortion of fact through the prism of history, such easy disqualification is less available in 'The Watcher'. Instead, this story is told by an eye-witness and in living memory of the original events, 'written' by the Bachelor in the present day of 1847, being 'now more than fifty years since the occurrences', fixing the action in 1794.¹⁰⁹ This specificity in terms of dating is a marked divergence from the third-party stories collected by Purcell 'sometime in the last century', further obscured by the intrusion of the anonymous *residuary legatee*.¹¹⁰

Barton's third encounter with the Watcher occurs at yet another politically significant location: the 'House of Commons', the Irish parliament that was to be abolished just a few years later. As the company 'were walking in at the passage' to the parliament, Barton is

¹⁰⁷ R. F. Foster, *Words Alone: Yeats and his Inheritances* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 114.

¹⁰⁸ V. S. Pritchett, 'An Irish Ghost', in *Reflections in a Glass Darkly: Essays on J. Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed. by Gary William Crawford, Jim Rockhill, and Brian J. Showers (New York: Hippocampus, 2011), pp. 127-31 (p. 127). Originally published in *The Living Novel* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1946).

¹⁰⁹ 'The Watcher', p. 526.

¹¹⁰ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh', *Dublin University Magazine*, 11 (1838), 313-24 (p. 314).

confronted face-to-face with his pursuer for the first time. Prior to this incident, Barton's haunting had retained a strictly aural character, but the second letter from the Watcher threatens forthcoming material revelation: 'I will see you as often as I please, and you shall see me, for I do not want to hide myself, as you fancy'.¹¹¹ Once again politics and haunting are compounded in this scene. Barton is a titled peer, being 'the younger brother of a certain baronet', and he is also a captain in the Royal Navy, and yet he has already been established as 'a reputed free-thinker', an incendiary combination of power and radical thinking of the same variety that led to the rebellion in 1798.¹¹² The various connections between radical politics and haunting are suggestive of a larger commentary on colonial anxiety, not least given that the story is set explicitly in 1794, at the height of the French Revolution (1789-99). There appears to be a strong correlation between Barton's political leanings and his current torment, and it is reasonable to infer that Barton has become radicalised either by the American revolution from which he has just returned, or by the French revolution which is still ongoing. Hugh Gough pinpoints the years between 1789 and 1791 as important in the Europe-wide attention to the events taking place in France: 'the scale of reform in France was certainly breathtaking [sic]'.¹¹³ Further, the Irish involvement in France – both ideologically and militarily – has been established by numerous historians.¹¹⁴ Such thinking is here signalled as dangerous by Le Fanu, and given the events that were to occur imminently thereafter, readers of the story in 1847 would plainly detect the link.

Patrick Fagan notes that in May 1794, The Dublin Society of United Irishmen (est. 1791), was 'dispersed by order of the government and its assets were seized. It was a predominantly middle-class organisation, consisting in the main of lawyers, physicians, wealthy merchants, master tradesmen and manufacturers. The majority of the members were Protestants'.¹¹⁵ As a result, Fagan demonstrates that the United Irishmen simply went underground, infiltrating other clubs and fraternities as a cover for their continued

¹¹¹ 'The Watcher', p. 529.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 526.

¹¹³ Hugh Gough, 'The French Revolution and Europe, 1789-1799', in *Ireland and the French Revolution*, ed. by David Dickson and Hugh Gough (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1990), pp. 1-13 (p. 2).

¹¹⁴ Cf. David Dickson, Dáire Keogh, and Kevin Whelan (eds.), *United Irishmen: Republicanism, Radicalism and Rebellion* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1993); Marianne Elliott, *Partners in Revolution: The United Irishmen and France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982); Liam Swords, *The Green Cockade: The Irish in the French Revolution, 1789-1815* (Dublin: Glendale, 1989); Pierre Joannon, and Kevin Whelan (eds), *Paris: Capital of Irish Culture: France, Ireland and the Republic, 1798-1916* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2017).

¹¹⁵ Patrick Fagan, 'Infiltration of Dublin Freemason Lodges by United Irishmen and Other Republican Groups', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, 13 (1998), 65-85 (p. 65). See also Sean Murphy, 'Irish Jacobitism and Freemasonry', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, vol. 9 (1994), 75-82. Nancy J. Curtin also corroborates the connection between the United Irishmen and the Freemasons: 'United Irishmen and Defenders adapted for their own purposes aspects of masonic allegory and symbology'. Curtin, p. 74.

revolutionary activities. Barton's fourth encounter with the Watcher – his final on the open streets of Dublin – occurs after an evening spent at 'a grand dinner of the Freemasons, of which worthy fraternity he was himself a brother'.¹¹⁶ The Grand Lodge of Ireland was established in Dublin in the early 1720s and by the early 1790s, as Fagan points out, 'There is evidence [...] of a proliferation of radical and republican clubs in which former or potential United Irishmen regrouped'.¹¹⁷ In particular, 'The secretive nature of the [Freemason] lodges made them from the start prime targets for illegal or subversive organisations seeking a base from which to carry on their activities under a cloak of respectability'.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, Fagan explains:

there was the point that historically freemasonry, especially on the continent, had been a vehicle for the advanced ideas of the Enlightenment. Some of the French philosophes – Voltaire, Rousseau, Helvetius – whose writings had helped to fuel the revolution were freemasons. There were those who maintained that masonry and the Jacobin were bedfellows. Certainly, an offshoot of masonry, the Illuminati, as that movement manifested itself in France and Italy, and indeed in Dublin, in the 1790s, was scarcely distinguishable from Jacobinism.¹¹⁹

With his theological scepticism and his Freemasonry, Barton is linked to the kind of free-thinking radical politics of Protestant revolutionaries of the late eighteenth century. Upon his homeward journey after an evening spent at the club, he again encounters the Watcher. Barton decides to traverse his original route along the 'projected' path where he first encountered the footsteps: 'he breathlessly pursued his path, a path which, spite of every effort of scepticism and reason, he felt to be infested by some (as respected *him*) malignant influence'. On this occasion, Barton is startled by 'The report of a musket at some two hundred yards behind him, and the whistle of a bullet close to his head', perhaps a hint of the revolution soon to come.¹²⁰

This final encounter and outward threat to his life instigates Barton's seclusion and ultimate demise. The course of his journey is linked to the course of his politics, with the implication that in both cases, Barton has taken a wrong turn. Given the circumstances that immediately precede each encounter with the Watcher, it is clear that Barton's haunting has political associations. Though Le Fanu presents the episode from Barton's past as a possible cause, he is also careful to avoid any categorical explanation for the Watcher or what he

¹¹⁶ 'The Watcher', p. 532.

¹¹⁷ Fagan, p. 66.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 68. Fagan further explains, 'In the first half of the eighteenth century there is convincing evidence that Jacobites in Britain and on the continent used the lodges as fronts for their interminable plotting, while in the 1750s and 1760s it is probable that Catholics in Dublin, pressing for relief from the Penal Laws, used certain lodges as meeting places', p. 68.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 69.

¹²⁰ 'The Watcher', p. 533. Original emphasis.

represents. Barton's haunting is activated through his interaction with the city's material surroundings, while his clear associations with radical politics mark him as a dangerous character, an enemy within, just as a French connection signifies corruption in the Purcell stories. Dublin's colonial history resonates in 'The Watcher' as important sites of Protestant authority – the parliament, Trinity College, and the Georgian streets – become 'Landscapes of fear', haunted by the spectre of the revolution to come.¹²¹ If the Watcher is a revenant of Barton's past misdeeds, then equally Barton is plagued by the prospect of his immediate future. His romance with Miss Montague never prospers and ultimately Barton is prevented from moving forward along his projected revolutionary path, a path that is confirmed by his association with the United Irishmen, signalled for the reader through a skilful use of dramatic irony. In the contested space of Dublin in the post-Famine period, Le Fanu recalls the city on the verge of revolution, although significantly it is the *inaction* of the characters that contributes to their demise. Barton's inability to change his course – literally – is evocative of the irreversible course of action that would lead to the events of 1798.

'The Fatal Bride' continues with an atmosphere of stasis in the city of the 1790s and was published in quick succession to 'The Watcher', appearing just two months later in January 1848 with the subtitle: 'Being the Second Contribution from the Reminiscences of a Bachelor'. In this second instalment, the Bachelor provides a lengthy introduction before supplying the main content of the story, as well as an indication that following the addition of 'my former contribution in your November number, this has determined me to despatch another, which, with like encouragement, may be followed by a third, and so on'.¹²² There is a strong indication here that Le Fanu intended to continue with the Bachelor stories, perhaps much in the same way as the Purcell stories, although for some reason he did not. McCormack identifies 1848 as a significant year for Le Fanu, specifically his dismay at the events of the Young Ireland Rebellion, and perhaps this experience curtailed his interest in pre-Union history.¹²³ Activated by the dissatisfaction of Westminster's response to the Famine, Le Fanu considered a softening of his Tory outlook and was introduced to Young Ireland by John Mitchel and Thomas Francis Meagher. In July 1848, both Mitchel and Meagher staged the Young Ireland rebellion, after which Le Fanu retreated from what he considered to be a close brush with radical politics –

¹²¹ Gladwin, p. 10.

¹²² 'The Fatal Bride', p. 16.

¹²³ McCormack pays close attention to the novella that followed the Bachelor stories, 'Some Account of the Latter Days of Richard Marston, of Dunoran', which appeared in three parts in the *D.U.M.* between April and June 1848, which he argues 'was written in the heady context of revolutionary alarm', although it is not as overtly historical as the two Bachelor stories. See *Sheridan Le Fanu*, pp. 104-10.

radical politics of the same ilk he had just recently been exploring in the Bachelor stories.¹²⁴ Both Bachelor stories were published (and likely composed) during this turbulent period, when extreme social and political pressures created the perfect atmosphere for revolt. In 'The Fatal Bride' the Bachelor himself plays an active role in the events that unfold. Although there is absolutely no supernatural element to this story, there are several commonalities between it and 'The Watcher'.

'The Fatal Bride' is set in the streets of Dublin after dark and there is a clear connection to overseas colonial activity. There is also a sense of something forbidding festering at the heart of the resident elite of the pre-Union city. The Bachelor situates the story back 'somewhere about half a century', fixing the events once again at about the 1790s, a time when 'Dublin was, in point of society, a very different city', its pre-Union setting confirmed by the fact that 'It had then a resident aristocracy'. The story concerns the Chadleigh family, headed by Sir Arthur Chadleigh, 'a deep player and a deep drinker', a 'man of the world' and 'a very determined duellist' who, though amiable in public, is 'arbitrary and severe' to his own family.¹²⁵ Sir Arthur is abandoned by his wife when she 'abscond[s] with the young Lord Kildalkin', later dying 'forsaken and heart-broken, in some obscure town in France', leaving Sir Arthur with three children: two sons and a daughter.¹²⁶ At the time of the Bachelor's narrative, we are introduced to two of the Chadleigh children at a ball in Dublin, the third, Captain Chadleigh, having 'died, or was taken, in some battle in India' a year and a half previous. Miss Mary Chadleigh, the Bachelor observes from across the room, seems quite invested in the 'devilish handsome' Captain Jennings, a friend of the Chadleigh boys.¹²⁷ It soon transpires that Jennings has had an illicit affair with Miss Chadleigh, who later gives birth to his son. The two are secretly married, though it is revealed that Jennings has another wife living in India, and so believes the marriage to Miss Chadleigh void (although she is unaware). When the Chadleighs discover the indiscretion, young Chadleigh challenges Jennings to a duel, which results in Jennings' death. It then transpires that Jennings' first wife has died – 'long previous to his marriage with Miss Chadleigh' – and furthermore that Captain Chadleigh is in fact alive and on route back to Dublin to inform Jennings of his bereavement. Jennings' marriage to Mary Chadleigh was valid after all, and the 'offspring of this inauspicious marriage', we are told at

¹²⁴ See *Sheridan Le Fanu*, pp. 101-05, in which McCormack outlines the extent of Le Fanu's affiliation with Young Ireland.

¹²⁵ 'The Fatal Bride', p. 16.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17. Lord Kildalkin is evidently a fictional name, but it has an aural similarity to Clondalkin, a Dublin parish, and to Lord Kilwarden (1739-1803), who resided there. Kilwarden, the Lord Chief Justice, was murdered along with his nephew during the Emmet Rebellion in 1803.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

the close of the story, became ‘a member of parliament, and the sole inheritor of the great Chadleigh estates in Ireland’.¹²⁸

The Bachelor – primarily through his role as a *flâneur* – comes to the fore in ‘The Fatal Bride’, and as a result he is directly implicated in the main action of the story. Both Baudelaire and Benjamin discuss Poe’s ‘The Man of the Crowd’ (1840), as the quintessential *flâneur* story,¹²⁹ and as we have seen with the locked room mysteries of ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue’ (1841), and ‘Chapter in the Secret History of an Irish Countess’ (1839),¹³⁰ the stories of Le Fanu and Poe regularly emulate one another.¹³¹ ‘The Man of the Crowd’ – like the Bachelor stories – ‘inaugurat[es] a new urban type, an isolated and estranged figure who is both a man of the crowd and a detached observer of it [...] an avatar of the modern city’.¹³² In ‘The Man of the Crowd’, the unnamed narrator becomes fixated on another man he spots in a crowded London street and begins to follow him aimlessly around the city. As with much of Poe’s fiction, the lack of character motive is the most disturbing element of the story. Similarly, both Bachelor stories involve characters walking the streets of Dublin, and both are also preoccupied with following and being followed. In ‘The Watcher’, Barton crosses the city on foot ‘upon his solitary walk homeward’,¹³³ with ‘the street quite deserted’.¹³⁴ Likewise, in ‘The Fatal Bride’, the Bachelor emphasises his solitude while on his midnight rambles around the city centre: ‘I was quite alone; and, as the reader is probably aware, the streets of Dublin were by no means so safe at night-time in the period of which I speak, as they now are’.¹³⁵ Moreover, the Bachelor describes the desolate and dimly lit laneways that lurk just behind the rows of the grand Georgian buildings:

silence and solitude encountered my advance. I was now just entering, in my devious ramble, a dingy stable-lane, whose entire length was enlivened by but three twinkling oil-lamps, whose dusky radiance scarcely extended a yard around the wooden posts that supported them. This dismal silent alley ran immediately behind the west-side of St. Stephen’s-green.¹³⁶

¹²⁸ Ibid., p. 44.

¹²⁹ Both Baudelaire and Benjamin discuss ‘The Man of the Crowd’ in their respective works concerning the *flâneur*, although they offer divergent interpretations.

¹³⁰ See Chapter One for the comparison between ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue’ and ‘Chapter in the Secret History of an Irish Countess’.

¹³¹ Cf. Schnepf, *The Protagonist’s Dilemma in Poe and Le Fanu* (2003).

¹³² Coverley, p. 60.

¹³³ ‘The Watcher’, p. 527.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 529.

¹³⁵ See note 87 above in which Seán Murphy details the various public disturbances of the period.

¹³⁶ ‘The Fatal Bride’, p. 25.

A map from the period suggests that this alley could be Stable Lane (now Cuffe Lane), leading on to French Street (now Mercer Street Upper), on the west side of St Stephen's Green, one of the most affluent neighbourhoods of Dublin at the time.¹³⁷ The description of the area behind this row of refined houses as 'dingy' points to a decay that exists behind apparent civility. During this nocturnal jaunt, the Bachelor stumbles upon the clandestine plot to move Miss Chadleigh from her home in St Stephen's Green to a safe-house, so that she might give birth in secret. Thus, his part in the events of the story is activated by his urban wandering, just as with Barton in 'The Watcher'.

The Commission for Making Wide and Convenient Ways, Streets, and Passages (The Wide Streets Commission for short), was established in 1757 and abolished in 1841, around the time the Bachelor stories were written. The Wide Streets Commission was charged with governing the layout of streets, bridges, and buildings in the city in what Kincaid has argued was a form of colonial control. The commissioners themselves were 'appointed by King George II' and were 'part of the Protestant ascendancy', the 'politically powerful group directly descended from those settlers, soldiers, merchants, and aristocrats who had arrived in Ireland during and after the plantations'.¹³⁸ Likewise, Christine Casey argues that the erection of large and impressive state buildings was a means of exhibiting colonial state power. Casey points out the parliament building in Dublin was 'the first purpose-built bicameral parliament house in Europe and as such is a remarkable testament to the desire of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy to assert its political authority in the wake of the Williamite Wars'.¹³⁹ Colonial settlement is most effective when visible and in Ireland during the eighteenth century, 'power was put on display in dramatic fashion'.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ Miss Chadleigh is moved from her home to a house in the Liberties, a working-class area located in the old core of the medieval city, close to Christ Church Cathedral. The general course taken from St Stephen's Green to the Liberties supports the rationale that the lane indicated by the Bachelor is Stable Lane, as the Liberties lie directly west of the green and the route between the two can be traversed more or less in a straight line via back-alleys, as described in the story.

¹³⁸ Kincaid, p. xxii.

¹³⁹ Christine Casey, *River, Rivalry and Revolt: History and the Built Fabric of Dublin City* (Dublin: Dublin City Public Libraries, 2009), p. 12.

¹⁴⁰ Kincaid, p. xxvi.

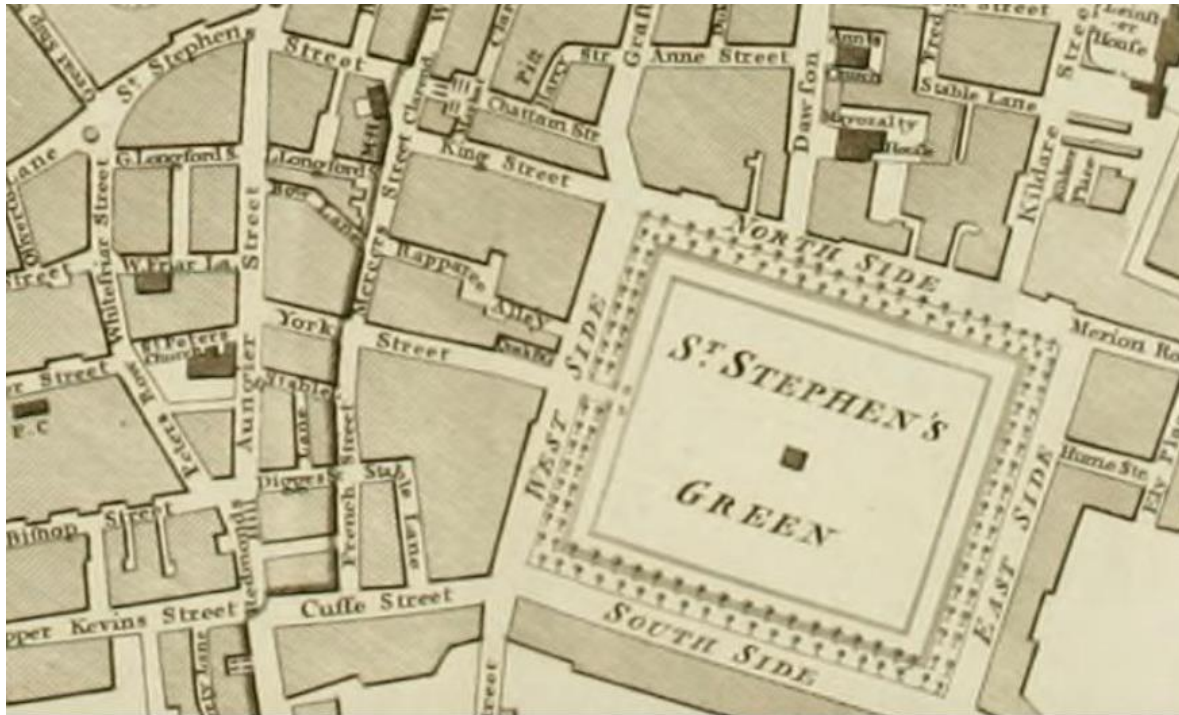


Figure 4: Close-up section of St Stephen's Green showing Cuffe Street, Stable Lane, and French Street behind the west side of St Stephen's Green.¹⁴¹

¹⁴¹ Pool and Cash, p. 6.

By widening and lighting the streets the city became far easier to police. Moreover, rerouting Dublin streets proved to be ‘a useful tool of population management’, directing the flow of people away from the network of narrow arcades and laneways that constituted the former centre.¹⁴² In connecting strategic locations north and south of the river, the city became a highly regulated space:

The Wide Streets commissioners, under the auspices of the ascendancy, sought to build a modern urban capital, but the wide streets and grand architecture of Dublin were never able to hide imperialism’s basic contradiction: that improvement was largely a cloak for dominance.¹⁴³

The ‘wide streets and grand architecture’ occluded – but did not erase – the back alleys and laneways of the old city, which the characters in the Bachelor stories continue to traverse. Located behind the noble mansions of Georgian squares, the activities in the back alleys are the central concern of ‘The Fatal Bride’, as are the ignoble actions hidden beneath the veneer of polite society.

In his introduction, the Bachelor laments the changes wrought to ‘the existing state Dublin society’ since the Union and, though not wishing ‘to offer any ungracious reflections’ on the present, nevertheless bemoans the absent aristocracy: ‘we have now, alas! More tuft-hunters than tufts to boast of’ who ‘strive and strain to fill the void, which a legitimate aristocracy have left’.¹⁴⁴ The Bachelor is here very consciously calling to mind for the mid-nineteenth-century reader the discrepancy between pre- and post-Union Dublin. The setting of the story in the 1790s, as in ‘The Watcher’, is therefore significant. In contrasting the two cities – Dublin of the 1790s and Dublin of the 1840s – Le Fanu is speculating on the course of history that leads from the former to the latter. In the Purcell stories, Le Fanu explored Ireland’s earlier colonial history through Jacobite-Williamite conflict; with these two later stories, he is essentially reviewing “what went wrong” in the run-up to 1798. It could be posited that Le Fanu’s return to such historically set fiction, after a break of some years, was reignited by the

¹⁴² Ibid., p. xxiii. Although a police constabulary of sorts operated in rural Ireland in the early years of the nineteenth century (from 1814 this was known as the Peace Preservation Force), The Dublin Metropolitan Police force was not established until 1836. Prior to this, Dublin was “policed” by watchmen, positioned at various points around the city. William Le Fanu remarks, ‘When I was in college a favourite amusement of the ingenious youth there was tormenting the old city watchmen or “Charleys” as they were called. They were the only guardians of the city by night; there were none by day; the metropolitan police did not then exist. These watchmen were generally old and often feeble. Many of them had in their earlier days been the domestic servants or retainers of members of the Corporation and of their friends’. *Seventy Years*, p. 81. William’s account reveals both a systematic weakness of guardianship in the city, and an inherent nepotism, the watchmen being former ‘servants or retainers of members of the Corporation and of their friends’. Policing in Ireland became a major issue for the government in Westminster after the Union.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. xxvi.

¹⁴⁴ ‘The Fatal Bride’, p. 16.

various socio-political traumas of the mid-1840s, which inspired him to review Ireland's colonial legacy once again. Meanwhile, Miss Chadleigh and Jennings' son – the 'offspring of this inauspicious marriage' named as Arthur Chadleigh – continues to be prominent in the next century as 'a member of parliament, and the sole inheritor of the great Chadleigh estates in Ireland'.¹⁴⁵ This closing statement suggests that although the resident aristocracy dwindled after the Union, the lineage of this corrupt family and period endured. In the last lines of the story, Le Fanu drags the past into the present, linking pre- and post-Union Dublin unequivocally. Le Fanu evidently saw links between Dublin of the 1790s and Dublin at the height of the Famine. Overall, Le Fanu's portrayal of Dublin in the 1790s is of a city whose veneer of respectability conceals immorality and violence, influenced by the infiltration of radical politics into high society. In sketching out Dublin's unstable landscape – literally and figuratively – in the years before 1798, Le Fanu is perhaps suggesting that the nobility were complicit in actuating their own demise, much in the same way as the Jacobite landlords of Purcell's stories, whose personal avarice leads to ruin. Dublin society's unstable foundations resulted in the inculcation of radicalism, which is a prophetic foreshadowing of the rebellion of 1848 that was shortly to come.

'A Dish of Village Chat':

'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod' and 'Some Gossip About Chapelizod'¹⁴⁶

Although it is only a small village-suburb west of Dublin city centre, Chapelizod is not unknown in the literary world. The name itself is believed to be a contraction of "chapel", a reference to the Anglo-Norman church that still stands in the village today, and "Isolde", the eponymous heroine of the legend of Tristan and Isolde.¹⁴⁷ Later, Chapelizod became immortalized as the setting for James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939), placing it firmly on the map of both Irish and international literature. Long before this, however, in 1851 Le Fanu chose Chapelizod as the setting for a series of ghost stories, and later again as the locus of his last

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 44.

¹⁴⁶ Charles de Cresseron, 'The House by the Church-yard: A Souvenir of Chapelizod', *Dublin University Magazine*, 58 (1861), 387-410 (p. 387). *The House by the Church-yard* was serialised in the *D.U.M.* in seventeen parts between October 1861 and February 1863 and attributed to the fictional Charles de Cresseron. In 1863, it was published by Tinsley Brothers and attributed to Le Fanu.

¹⁴⁷ Chapelizod is a former village outpost and now suburb of Dublin city. The story of Tristan and Isolde is believed to be linked to the Irish myth of Naoise and Deirdre, but also has Cornish and Norman antecedents. Isolde is also occasionally written as Iseult. The name Chapelizod also refers to its Irish language derivative "Séipéal Iosóid", also meaning Chapel of Isolde. The church in Chapelizod village – Saint Laurence's Church – was built in 1832 but extends from the much older tower that still stands, believed to have been constructed in the fourteenth century.

Irish-set novel, *The House by the Church-yard* (1863). Incidentally, the latter was one of the major source texts for Joyce's novel, yet despite this has remained largely overlooked.¹⁴⁸ As with the Limerick setting of the Purcell stories, where the mountains, forests, and folktales have biographical significance, so too the setting of Chapelizod is a noteworthy authorial decision. Geographically, Chapelizod is situated in the narrow strip of land between the river Liffey and the Phoenix Park, and Le Fanu makes constant use of both these natural features in his stories as peripheral sites of menace. Spectral encounters are instigated when characters enter these spaces, and Chapelizod is presented as a self-contained world with its own history, stories, and spectres: 'there is no such thing as an ancient village [...] unillustrated by its legends of terror'.¹⁴⁹

In the intervening period between the Bachelor stories (1848) and the Chapelizod stories (1851), Le Fanu's writing is erratic in terms of style and substance, perhaps reflecting both the turbulent editorial transition of the magazine, and the upsetting state of the country more broadly.¹⁵⁰ In an article about Le Fanu and Chapelizod, McCormack describes the Chapelizod stories as 'a slender footbridge from the fiction preceding the traumatic events of 1848 to that of Le Fanu's most secure decade as minor press baron and prolific novelist'.¹⁵¹ The Chapelizod stories were published in the immediate post-famine era, in a country and a city whose social demographic had been irrevocably changed.

¹⁴⁸ Robert Tracy remarks that 'We know that *The House by the Church-Yard* is one of the texts underlying *Finnegans Wake*, partly because of frequent references to the River Liffey in Le Fanu's novel, and partly because the novel is about different kinds of resurrection', 'Introduction', *In a Glass Darkly* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. vii-xxviii, (p. xv). I have also noted several other significant and extensive references to Le Fanu's novel in *Finnegans Wake* which are detailed in an unpublished seminar paper, 'The Forgotten Legacy of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu', presented at the Staff-Postgraduate Seminar Series, Trinity College Dublin, March 2017. See also McCormack, "'Whom We Name Not": *The House by the Churchyard* and its Annotation', in *Irish Gothics: Genres, Forms, Modes, and Traditions, 1760-1890*, ed. by Christina Morin and Niall Gillespie (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 147-67.

¹⁴⁹ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod', *Dublin University Magazine*, 37 (1851), 85-98 (p. 85). Hereafter cited as 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod'.

¹⁵⁰ In the decade between 1842 and 1856, the *D.U.M.* had three editors, each with very different approaches: Charles Lever between 1842-45, James McGlashan from June-July 1845, and John F. Waller from 1845-56. See Tom Clyde, *Irish Literary Magazines: An Outline History and Descriptive Bibliography* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2003), p. 94. See also McBride's thesis for further detail regarding editorial characteristics.

¹⁵¹ W. J. McCormack, 'Sheridan Le Fanu and Greater Chapelizod', in *The Shadow of James Joyce: Chapelizod and Environs*, ed. by Motoko Fujita (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2011), pp. 77-82 (p. 77).



Figure 5: Section of County Dublin Towns map, 1848. Detail shows the parish of Palmerstown and Chapelizod, including the section of Chapelizod village that runs between the river and the Phoenix Park. The Hibernian School is also indicated, where the Le Fanus resided until 1826.¹⁵²

¹⁵² n. a., *County Dublin Towns, 1848*, 'Chapelizod',
<<http://www.swilson.info/showcodub1848.php?pageid=chap>> [accessed 09 January 2018].

Dickson observes that ‘By the 1850s there were at least four distinct social layers across the greater urban area’ of Dublin – the still Protestant-dominated “professions”, the respectable “shopocracy”, the working class, and the destitute.¹⁵³ In all of these ‘permeable layers’ there existed further division: ‘the pervasive belief in a lost golden age, a middle class fractured by confessional rivalry, and an urban core where the degree of social inequality was extreme by English standards’.¹⁵⁴ Instead of focussing on ‘Ireland present’,¹⁵⁵ Le Fanu as usual elects to write stories set in the past, shifting westward from the streets of central Dublin to the self-contained village of Chapelizod, evoking the idiosyncrasies of village life from about ‘a quarter of a century ago, or more’.¹⁵⁶ In both ‘Ghost Stories of Chapelizod’ and ‘Some Gossip About Chapelizod’, the unnamed narrator (who, given Le Fanu’s tendency to unite places with a single narrator, we can presume to be the same), presents the village as having ‘once held a considerable, if not foremost rank’, though it has since regrettably fallen into disrepair and ignominy.¹⁵⁷ By contrasting the past and present states of the village in these stories, Le Fanu once again questions Ireland’s progress from pre- to post-Union. As with ‘The Watcher’ and ‘The Fatal Bride’, it is through the prism of the past that Le Fanu casts an oblique view on the present.

Though McCormack specifies that Le Fanu ‘first saw the light of day at No. 45 Lower Dominick Street’ in Dublin city centre, by the time his brother William was born two years later, the Le Fanu family were already resident in the Royal Hibernian Military School in Chapelizod where their father was rector, and remained there until 1826.¹⁵⁸ As such, the historic streets and buildings of the village were intimately familiar to Le Fanu, and following the Bachelor stories, after a short interlude of less than two years, Le Fanu returned to writing about a haunted Dublin.¹⁵⁹ ‘Ghost Stories of Chapelizod’ was published in the *D.U.M.* in

¹⁵³ Dickson, p. 306.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., pp. 306-07.

¹⁵⁵ McBride, p. 207.

¹⁵⁶ ‘Ghost Stories of Chapelizod’, p. 89.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 85.

¹⁵⁸ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 1. McCormack points out that while there is no official record of the place of Le Fanu’s birth, a note in his father’s prayer book would seem to confirm the location as Lower Dominick Street. See also *Seventy Years of Irish Life* in which William Le Fanu states that he was born in February 1816 at the Royal Hibernian Military School, p. 1. The Le Fanu family spent roughly a decade in the village, from c. 1816-1826.

¹⁵⁹ After publication of the ‘The Fatal Bride’ in January 1848, Le Fanu composed the three-part story (later published as an unabridged novella), ‘Some Account of the Latter Days of Richard Marston, of Dunoran’, between April and June 1848. The story is set ‘somewhat more than twenty miles from the capital of Ireland’ and has no supernatural aspects. *Dublin University Magazine*, 31 (1848), 473-97 (p. 473). Following this, two journalistic articles featured in the *D.U.M.* in June and July 1848 reporting on John Mitchel’s trial, the Young Irelander of Le Fanu’s acquaintance in which Le Fanu expresses his satisfaction and his relief at the conviction of Mitchell and O’Brien: ‘Every thinking man who has watched the history of the Irish agitation for the last six months, must perceive in this John Mitchel, not merely the ringleader, but the creator of the entire revolutionary system here, at least in its present armed and threatening attitude’, ‘The State Prosecutions’, *Dublin University*

January 1851 and comprises of a short section introducing the history of the village, followed by three shorter stories housed within it: ‘The Village Bully’, ‘The Sexton’s Adventure’, and ‘The Spectre Lovers’. In April of the same year, ‘Some Gossip about Chapelizod’ followed, and is described by Crawford and Showers as ‘A sort of coda to “The Ghost Stories of Chapelizod”’, rather than a short story in the strict sense of the word.¹⁶⁰ ‘Some Gossip about Chapelizod’ is made up almost entirely of ‘military reminiscences’, interspersed by more anecdotes concerning the erstwhile sexton, Bob Martin.¹⁶¹ Both the Chapelizod collections can be viewed as precursors or “coda” to *The House by the Church-yard* which would commence as a serial in the *D.U.M.* a decade later in 1861, a blend of history, fiction, and local colour. Many elements and characters – both historical and fictional – but briefly sketched in both compositions would later find their way into the novel.¹⁶²

‘The Village Bully’ is the first of the ‘Ghost Stories of Chapelizod’ and is set ‘About thirty years ago’ in the village, fixing the action somewhere about the 1820s. The tale concerns Bully Larkin, a man of ‘remarkable physical superiority’ and a fearsome pugilist, the undisputed ‘autocrat of the village’ who ‘lorded it over his fellows in a spirit of cowardly and brutal insolence, which made him hated even more profoundly than he was feared’ by his neighbours.¹⁶³ In one particular scene, Larkin instigates a duel with one Ned Moran, or “‘Long Ned””, a slight man and no physical match for Larkin. Following a brutal fistfight, Moran is left insensible but survives, only to weaken and die of consumption at a later date. Although ‘there was no actual proof to connect cause and effect’, the inhabitants of the village are in no doubt as to Larkin’s hand in Ned’s death.¹⁶⁴ Some years after this event, Larkin, whose custom it is to cross the Phoenix Park on his way to and from work, fails to return home one evening. He is found the next morning ‘lying in a state of utter helplessness upon the slope immediately overlooking the Chapelizod gate. He had been smitten with a paralytic stroke: his right side was dead; and it was many weeks before he had recovered his speech’. Larkin eventually recovers enough to explain that upon his return home after nightfall across the deserted park,

Magazine, 31 (1848), 785-88 (p. 785). ‘The Mysterious Lodger’ appeared anonymously in the *D.U.M.* in January and February 1850 and takes London as its setting. It was credited to Le Fanu by M. R. James in 1923. Following this, Le Fanu published ‘Billy Malowney’s Taste of Love and Glory’ and ‘Shamus O’Brien – A Ballad’ in June and July 1850 respectively.

¹⁶⁰ Gary William Crawford and Brian J. Showers, *Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu: A Concise Bibliography* (Dublin: Swan River Press, 2011), p. 8.

¹⁶¹ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘Some Gossip about Chapelizod’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 37 (1851), 427-34 (p. 432). Hereafter cited as ‘Some Gossip about Chapelizod’.

¹⁶² McCormack refers to ‘The Chapelizod fictions’ as comprising of *The Cock and Anchor*, the two short pieces of 1851, and *The House by the Church-yard*. McCormack, ‘Sheridan Le Fanu and Greater Chapelizod’, p. 82.

¹⁶³ ‘Ghost Stories of Chapelizod’, p. 86.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

he was confronted by a ‘figure climbing, with all the haste of one pursued, over the church-yard wall, and running up the steep ascent directly towards him’. As the figure gets closer, Larkin recognises him as Ned Moran who, ‘stripped naked from the waist upward, as if for pugilistic combat’ silently confronts him on the hill. Upon touching palms, Larkin felt ‘a thrill of unspeakable agony, run [...] through his arm’ and through his body until ‘he fell senseless to the earth’. Though he lived for many years afterwards, Larkin is physically maimed and unable to work, forced ‘to beg alms of those who had once feared and flattered him’.¹⁶⁵

The story contains elements that would later become part of the plot for *The House by the Church-yard*, namely the situation of a man being attacked and left for dead in the section of the park just behind the village. The staging of a duel on the Fifteen Acres is also employed elsewhere in fiction by Le Fanu, who likely witnessed such spectacles as a child.¹⁶⁶ The moral of the story is initially recognisable to readers of Le Fanu: that of mortal sin and supernatural retribution. The story is essentially about a dominant, oppressive force pitted against a weak but valiant entity who, despite defeat, rises again to elicit revenge. Le Fanu demonstrates what happens to small men when they are pushed to their limits and that revenge will eventually be meted out, even if they appear dead. Such a reading certainly has a political resonance given the atmosphere of revolt in 1840s Ireland. Weakened but still spirited, Ned returns to challenge his malefactor, ‘upon the very ground on which he had signalled the guiltiest triumph of his violent and vindictive career’.¹⁶⁷ Le Fanu, having recently witnessed both the trauma of the Famine and the Young Ireland rebellion in its wake, delineates clearly the relation between mistreatment and retribution, misconduct and rebellion. Although McBride records that the *D.U.M.* said precious little about the Famine throughout the course of the epidemic, he notes that there existed among Irish Tories a general frustration at the lacklustre reaction from the already unpopular Whig government to intervene in the plight of the people. At the time, a series of ineffectual commissions, reports, and reviews were authorised by Peel’s government in order to assess the Irish crisis, a response Bartlett describes as ‘at best inefficient and inconsistent and at worst [...] callous and ineffective’.¹⁶⁸ An unsigned article in the *D.U.M.* in April 1847 – later revealed to be by Isaac Butt – describes the situation thus: ‘But the malady under which Ireland labours, produced, [*sic*] though it may be now by an accident, is not the

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 88.

¹⁶⁶ The Fifteen Acres features in *The Cock and Anchor*, ‘The Fatal Bride’, and *The House by the Church-yard*.

¹⁶⁷ ‘Ghost Stories of Chapelizod’, p. 89.

¹⁶⁸ Bartlett, p. 285. It is worth mentioning that Bartlett attempts to adopt a less blinkered approach than has hitherto been applied in studies of the British government’s response to the Famine. He notes that ‘The view taken in the years after the Famine that successive governments and administrators failed in their duty of preventing mass famine and death in Ireland had not been successfully challenged by recent research’, p. 285.

result of that accident alone, but an aggravation of long settled constitutional disease'.¹⁶⁹ In the introductory section of 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod', the narrator jests about the lack of 'any statistical returns' for the 'numbers, activity, &c., &c.' of ghosts and goblins in residence in Ireland's towns. It continues:

And I am persuaded that a Commission to inquire into and report upon the numerical strength, habits, haunts, &c., &c., of supernatural agents resident in Ireland, would be a great deal more innocent and entertaining than half the Commissions for which the country pays, and at least as instructive.¹⁷⁰

This not-so-subtle invective against the 'apparently illimitable leisure, possessed by parliamentary commissions of inquiry' is quite plainly a reference to the various futile commissions published during the Famine years, as described by Butt.¹⁷¹

While the moral of this story hinges on a religious invocation of good versus evil, the narrative introduction suggests that the story also reflects the current tension directed towards the government at Westminster. The 'forlorn condition' of the village is repeatedly highlighted, and the narrator draws comparisons between the village of the past, when the 'town exhibited at one time an air of substantial and semi-aristocratic prosperity unknown to Irish villages in modern times', and the village of the present, 'forsaken by the order who originally raised them, and delivered up to poverty, and in some cases, absolute decay'.¹⁷² The narrator specifies the period at which the Royal Irish Artillery was 'disbanded' (under the Act of Union), as the turning point in Chapelizod's history. This issue is revived again in 'Some Gossip about Chapelizod', which makes plain its censure of 'the cold hand of Centralisation'.¹⁷³

The second story, 'The Sexton's Adventure', is set once again sometime during the 1820s and concerns Bob Martin, the parish sexton of Chapelizod. The theme of spirits and spirituality – in the same vein as 'The Drunkard's Dream' – is here explored. Cadwallader has pointed out that often Le Fanu's fiction 'connects a supernatural visitation to excessive drinking', although in this instance the previously intemperate sexton does not succumb to temptation and survives his supernatural ordeal.¹⁷⁴ Though Bob Martin's 'ecclesiastical revenues were by no means considerable', his 'fund of local anecdote was copious', and it was therefore his habit to trade stories for satiation in the public houses of Chapelizod. As a result,

¹⁶⁹ Isaac Butt, 'The Famine in the Land. What has been done, and what is to be done', *Dublin University Magazine*, 29 (1847), 501-40 (p. 525). For authorship see *The Wellesley Index*, <<http://wellesley.chadwyck.co.uk/>> [accessed 09 January 2018].

¹⁷⁰ 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod', p. 85.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁷² 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod', p. 86.

¹⁷³ 'Some Gossip about Chapelizod', p. 427.

¹⁷⁴ Cadwallader, p. 34.

Bob Martin ‘drank a good deal more punch than was good for his health, or consistent with the character of an ecclesiastic function’ and furthermore, ‘made a drunkard of “black Phil Slaney”, a local publican who subsequently runs into financial difficulties.¹⁷⁵ One morning, black Phil ‘having bolted the door, he took a loaded pistol, and clapping the muzzle in his mouth, blew the upper part of his skull through the ceiling’.¹⁷⁶ This incident frightens Bob Martin into becoming ‘an eminent example of temperance and sobriety’, until about a year later while returning home very late one evening, he encounters a stranger seated outside the public house of his former drinking companion. The stranger ‘pantomimically invited [Bob] to share his seat and his cheer. There was a divine fragrance of whiskey about the spot’.¹⁷⁷ Though tempted, the sexton remains steadfast in his resolution and continues to walk homeward, but the stranger is insistent and begins to follow him aggressively. Upon reaching his own doorway, the sexton pleads for admittance as ‘his pursuer furiously flung the contents of the bottle at Bob Martin; but instead of fluid it issued flame, which expanded and whirled round them’; concurrently, the stranger’s hat is blown off to reveal that ‘his skull was roofless’, before the sexton ‘fell senseless into his own doorway’.¹⁷⁸

At the close of this story, the narrator explains that the stranger ‘was acknowledged by all to have been the spectre of suicide, called up by the Evil One to tempt the convivial sexton into a violation of his promise’. Whereas in ‘The Drunkard’s Dream’, a relapse results in death, here Bob Martin manages to avoid the same fate. Although Cadwallader does not include ‘The Sexton’s Adventure’ (or any of the Chapelized stories), in her study of temperance in Le Fanu’s work, it would initially seem to fit with her hypothesis of substance abuse leading to ghost-seeing. As the narrator explains, ‘The moral of the above tale is upon the surface, apparent, and, so to speak, *self-acting*’, which therefore, according to the narrator, requires no further explication.¹⁷⁹ The narrator seems to make clear that Bob Martin’s experience ought to be viewed as a cautionary tale against excess, just as ‘The Village Bully’ can in one sense be understood as a moralising tract about the abuse of power, despite the fact that there is no confirmation of Bob Martin having thereafter changed his ways. However, I would argue that these stories go beyond mere moral didacticism, which in this case can be demonstrated through Le Fanu’s use of skulls. Skulls are replete throughout this short tale, made even more noteworthy due to the significance of the damaged skull found at the beginning of *The House*

¹⁷⁵ ‘Ghost Stories of Chapelized’, p. 89.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 89-90.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 91.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 92.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid. Original emphasis.

by the Church-yard.¹⁸⁰ Skulls are representative of the corporeal in terms of what we leave behind after the spirit has left for the afterlife, but are also representative of the mind: skulls are the receptacle that house the organ of enlightenment that connects the human with the divine. Bob Martin is described as ‘the man of skulls and shovels’, in charge of ‘lidless coffins’ and who possesses ‘a curious mind’.¹⁸¹ It is possible that Bob Martin, like Barton in ‘The Watcher’, has corrupted his skull/mind by exposing it to ‘tales of terror’, ‘graves and goblins’, and ‘sly frolics of all sorts’.¹⁸² The physical exposure of Phil Slaney’s skull/mind takes a different form; the violence visited on his skull consigns him to damnation after death, and significantly it is only when the sexton comprehends the lidless skull, ‘the gaping aperture, black and shattered’ that he is truly horrified. Beyond the surface of moral cautioning, these stories question the influence of what we choose to expose ourselves to and in turn, how such exposure affects us.

Le Fanu was briefly exposed to revolutionary politics prior to the Young Irelander rebellion – and was tempted by it – just three years before ‘Ghost Stories of Chapelizod’ was published. Moreover, during the famine years Le Fanu was exposed to extreme poverty and mass death, which is perhaps partly why he shifted his focus from the contentious streets of Dublin city to the familiar, vaguely pastoral village setting of his youth. Coverley comments on the connections between urban writing and the Gothic, arguing that ‘This sense of urban life as essentially mysterious and unknowable immediately lends itself to gothic representations of the city’, which in turn ‘paints a uniformly dark picture of the city as the site of crime, poverty and death’.¹⁸³ In retreating to Chapelizod, Le Fanu was perhaps attempting to sketch the “knowable” in the face of the unknowable, through his evocation of the village three decades previous, at a time he *knew* personally, and a time when ‘the town exhibited [...] an air of substantial and semi-aristocratic prosperity unknown to Irish villages in modern times’.¹⁸⁴ ‘Some Gossip about Chapelizod’ confirms this view given that it is largely an invective against Chapelizod’s current dilapidated state since the disbanding of the Royal Irish Artillery after the Union. Coverley’s assertion that an ‘obsession with the occult is allied to an antiquarianism that views the present through the prism of the past’ is certainly applicable here,

¹⁸⁰ Bob Martin is also the name of the sexton in *The House by the Church-yard*, charged with directing the burial of the mysterious coffin that arrives in Chapelizod at the beginning of the novel.

¹⁸¹ ‘Ghost Stories of Chapelizod’, p. 91.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 89.

¹⁸³ Coverley, p. 13.

¹⁸⁴ ‘Ghost Stories of Chapelizod’, p. 86.

as Le Fanu layers the past life of the village over the present, an approach that emerges fully in the third story, 'The Spectre Lovers'.¹⁸⁵

The third and final story of 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod' could be read as a cautionary tale against intemperance and idleness. The Temperance movement was both a social and political campaign and was at its height during the early 1840s.¹⁸⁶ After an evening spent carousing in the neighbouring parish of Palmerstown, the lazy, 'goodnatured [*sic*] slob of a fellow', Peter Brien, encounters the former military inhabitants of the village while walking home late at night. In 'The Watcher' it was shown that to be a "free thinker" or have a "curious mind" typically exposes one to the supernatural world. Here the intemperate and politicised Peter Brien, who had 'of late years begun to apply his mind to politics',¹⁸⁷ spent the evening in a public house 'enjoy[ing] himself to a very late hour with two or three choice spirits'. During the course of the evening he 'had talked politics and love, sung songs, and told stories', and while crossing the old bridge at Chapelizod directly afterwards, he witnesses a strange event. While leaning over the battlements of the bridge, Peter sees a row of 'white-washed huts and cabins' emerge on the bank of the river. Peter, 'who was a bit of a free-thinker' though not one to believe in 'that class of agencies', continues on his way home until, having arrived at 'the corner of the main-street [*sic*] of the little town, and casting a careless look up the Dublin road, his eye was arrested by the most unexpected spectacle'. Peter witnesses a 'column of foot-soldiers' marching steadily towards him, comprising of cavalry and heavy artillery, and 'headed by an officer on horseback'.¹⁸⁸ As the company passes by, he notices that like the row of cabins, 'the procession had a certain waving and vapoury character which perplexed and tasked his eyes not a little', and that the formerly dilapidated buildings of the town now appear prim and polished. Peter assumes that the soldiers are part of the French invasion, 'landed at last to give us a hand and help us in airnest to this blessed repale?', but upon encountering an officer walking alone before him, he discovers that the soldier is an Irishman.¹⁸⁹ The solitary soldier leads Peter towards a house and ascends to an upstairs bedroom. In it Peter encounters a woman, who greets the soldier with a sad embrace, and the two figures charge Peter 'To bring

¹⁸⁵ Coverley, p. 14.

¹⁸⁶ Studies such as Paul A. Townend's *Father Mathew, Temperance and Irish Identity* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2002), have estimated that as much as half of Ireland's adult population joined the cause in the per-Famine period. Elizabeth Malcolm's study *'Ireland Sober, Ireland Free': Drink and Temperance in Nineteenth Century Ireland* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1986), points out that the Temperance movement intersected with O'Connell's Repeal movement and the other popular agitations at the time, although she points out that Father Mathew was opposed to associating teetotalism with other political movements, p. 146.

¹⁸⁷ 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod', p. 92.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 93.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 94.

my lost treasure to the churchyard',¹⁹⁰ which transpires to be a new-born baby. Upon refusing this task, the scene dissolves and Peter awakens, 'chill and stiff, stretched between two piles of old rubbish'.¹⁹¹ Once home, Peter relays his experiences to his grandmother, who confirms that she remembers the village in its former days, complete with the cabins and the soldiers.¹⁹² Thereafter Peter is convinced of the existence of monetary treasure in the ruins of the old house where he encountered the three figures, and one day while 'climbing near the summit' of the ruins, 'his holding gave way, and he fell upon the hard uneven ground [...] and after a short interval died'.¹⁹³

In both 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod' and 'Some Gossip about Chapelizod', the narrator mourns the absence of the Royal Irish Artillery, equating their presence in the village with a time of pride and purpose. This is openly stated in 'Some Gossip about Chapelizod' but also present in 'The Spectre Lovers' through the palimpsestial comparisons between windowless buildings of the present, and the adorned sills of the past. Moreover, it is suggested that the likes of Peter Brien, whose mind has turned to politics but who spends his time drinking, would in previous times have perhaps found a *raison d'être* in the Royal Irish Artillery. As it stands, Peter's lack of opportunity and industry leads him to believe that he is 'destined to find a pot of gold', and while building castles in the sky he is abruptly brought down to earth when he falls to his death in the ruins of a once-splendid house. For Le Fanu the Royal Irish Artillery is a nostalgic symbol of Chapelizod's former life. McCormack has signalled the same function of the Royal Irish at work in *The House by the Church-yard*, when in a 'fervent note of nostalgia', Le Fanu contrasts the former nobility of the village and its resident soldiers against the "grim giant factory" that replaced the barracks: 'The novel then presents a narrative of the past explicitly as a retreat from the grimy present'. McCormack points out that 'the presence of the military' in Chapelizod 'ensure[d] the political orthodoxy [and Protestantism] of the community – a haven of historical loyalism created by Le Fanu amid the increasingly determined national resurgence of nineteenth-century Ireland'.¹⁹⁴ In his early Chapelizod stories, Le Fanu was already using the Royal Irish Artillery to similar effect, contrasting the village's former vitality against its 'forlorn' present.¹⁹⁵ Peter's 'horizontal

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 96.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p. 97.

¹⁹² Initially this woman is introduced as Peter's grandmother, but later this switches to 'his old mother', which is likely a simple error on Le Fanu's part. See 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod', p. 92 and p. 97.

¹⁹³ 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod', p. 98.

¹⁹⁴ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 139. McCormack cites from *The House by the Church-yard* (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1863), p. 4.

¹⁹⁵ 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod', p. 86.

movement across the topography of the city' is contrasted with 'a vertical descent through the past',¹⁹⁶ as the village 'suffered a metamorphosis' before his eyes and the previously dilapidated, roofless and windowless buildings of the main-street suddenly 'looked newer and cleaner', while the 'stained and ragged walls were now erect, perfect, and covered with pebbledash; window-panes glittered coldly in every window'.¹⁹⁷ The former life of the village is layered over the current one, with the 'dear, old Royal Irish again in the streets of Chapelizod'.¹⁹⁸ The semi-historical events recounted in 'Some Gossip about Chapelizod' go some way to explaining the history of the regiment in the village, in which Chapelizod is described as 'A place that is itself a shadow of things past, the living spectre of old times. Chapelizod is all a ghost'.¹⁹⁹

The Bachelor's romantic lamentation for a Dublin past and his reflection that 'it is but lost time sighing after the things that once were, or snarling at those that are',²⁰⁰ is replaced in the Chapelizod stories by a more caustic assessment of past and present Dublin: 'a suburban village of the once proud city of Dublin [is now] reduced to a marrowless skeleton'.²⁰¹ The village is rendered a graveyard, a 'silent tomb' containing 'Dead walls; dead trees overhanging them; dead lights instead of windows in the houses; the men grave, the women lifeless'. The narrator is incensed by 'the cold hand of Centralisation' that is to blame for this demise, first felt by the order to disband the Royal Irish Artillery. By "centralisation" is, of course, meant the Act of Union, which inaugurated 'the fatal centripetal movement from the house in College-green – which was perpetrated against Ireland', and resulted in the decommissioning of Irish governmental agencies – primarily located in Dublin – to be absorbed into their British and London-based equivalents: 'to merge their name in an undistinguished throng'.²⁰² The anxiety surrounding a breakdown of individuality under Union is suggestive of the settler struggle to retain autonomy in the face of strictures imposed by the colonial metropolis. Equally, as Connolly points out, the 'great majority' of Irish Protestants 'looked to the union their recent ancestors had opposed as their only security' in the face of an 'overwhelmingly' Catholic nationalism that developed from the 1840s onwards.²⁰³ In other words, the settler collective both requires and resists support from empire. In the post-Famine period, Le Fanu's Chapelizod

¹⁹⁶ Coverley, p. 14.

¹⁹⁷ 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod', pp. 95-96.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

¹⁹⁹ 'Some Gossip about Chapelizod', p. 427.

²⁰⁰ 'The Fatal Bride', p. 16.

²⁰¹ 'Some Gossip about Chapelizod', p. 427.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 427.

²⁰³ Connolly, 'Settler Colonialism in Ireland', p. 59.

stories warn against the political caprice of a disaffected population, demonstrating how the lack of opportunity and proper guidance leaves one vulnerable to radical thought, as it has done in the past.

Two Haunted Houses:

‘An Account of Some Strange Disturbances in an Old House in Aungier-street’ and ‘An Authentic Narrative of a Haunted House’²⁰⁴

While the Purcell stories reveal Le Fanu’s interest in the ruins and material relics of Ireland’s colonial history, a decade or so later this interest is sustained through an investigation of the historical materiality of Dublin city, explored through its streets and buildings. By the late 1850s, stories set in public streets give way to private residences, as Ireland’s violent history began to haunt the bourgeois, domestic setting. The final two additions to the Dublin Stories were published almost a decade apart, yet both retain a connection to one another and to the other Dublin-set fiction. The first, ‘An Account of Some Strange Disturbances in an Old House in Aungier-street’, was the next work of fiction to follow ‘Some Gossip about Chapelizod’, appearing in the *D.U.M.* over two years later, in 1853. The second, ‘An Authentic Narrative of a Haunted House’, did not appear until late in 1862, and in the intervening years much had changed for Le Fanu, personally and professionally, which requires some delineation. Between the publication of ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’ in December 1853 and the commencement of serialisation of *The House by the Church-yard* in October 1861, there are no records of Le Fanu having produced any (published) work, fact or fiction. The Victorian practice of anonymous publication could certainly be a factor here, and likewise Le Fanu may have been publishing in English or even American journals at the time. What is certain is that during this period Le Fanu’s beloved wife Susanna died, an event which understandably drew his focus away from writing. Within three years his mother, to whom he had been very close, followed suit. Prior to Susanna’s death in 1858, she had been in ill-health for some time, which likely also demanded much of her husband’s attention, having also four children to provide for. By the time he published ‘Narrative of a Haunted House’ in 1862, he was widowed, orphaned, and the new owner and editor of the *D.U.M.*, as well as maintaining interests in several other Dublin newspapers. Furthermore, he was engaged in a novel-writing contract with London publisher Richard Bentley, a relationship that would prove to be very fruitful over the course

²⁰⁴ ‘An Account of Some Strange Disturbances in an Old House in Aungier-street’ hereafter abbreviated to ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier-street’, and ‘An Authentic Narrative of a Haunted House’ abbreviated to ‘Narrative of a Haunted House’.

of the next decade. McCormack infers – I believe correctly – that Le Fanu’s period of productivity throughout the 1860s was necessitated by his need for money. As three-volume novels were then *à la mode*, Le Fanu moved away from short story writing in order to focus on this more lucrative arrangement. Of the very few short stories he did compose during the 1860s, they usually served to supplement whatever novel he was then serialising in the *D.U.M.*, since, as McCormack observes, as editor of the magazine, ‘every page he wrote was, in a sense, a free page’.²⁰⁵ Further to this, Le Fanu may have been using the *D.U.M.* as a “dry run” for testing the popularity of his serialized novels, something he could then bargain with when it came to negotiating terms of publication with Bentley or other potential publishers.

However, in the decade prior to Le Fanu’s stint as editor, during the time when the Chapelized stories and ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’ were written and published, McBride points to a certain fatigue evident in the management and content of the *D.U.M.* In the post-Famine period, the magazine noticeably lost much of the political vigour that had distinguished it in former times, commencing a ‘retreat to an emasculated literary sphere [...] the product of moral apathy concerning the Irish situation’. Thereafter the *D.U.M.* became ‘a broad-based literary miscellany at the expense of its distinctively Irish cultural integrity’ that had characterised the publication in the 1830s and early ’40s.²⁰⁶ This new attitude would not change under Le Fanu’s stewardship throughout the 1860s. Of *The House by the Church-yard* and *Uncle Silas*, both serialized in the magazine in the early 1860s, Wayne E. Hall notes that ‘Le Fanu’s characters expose the same ambivalence and paralyzing uncertainties that haunted Ireland’s Protestant ascendancy’ at the time,²⁰⁷ while McBride identifies a ‘loss of faith in the possibility of a new Ireland amenable to the Irish Protestant Tories’.²⁰⁸ In effect, the magazine ceased to be an ambassador for the Irish Protestant nationalist mission that galvanised its first two decades. As Tilley points out, ‘Magazines sell things, both ideological and material commodities’, and as such ‘The contents of the magazine can similarly be seen as commodities, as they sell an idea of Ireland and Irishness that helps construct an identity for the imagined reader’, who by this time, ‘is either English or Anglo-Irish’.²⁰⁹ By the mid-1850s, that

²⁰⁵ Sheridan Le Fanu, p. 199.

²⁰⁶ McBride, p. 337.

²⁰⁷ Wayne E. Hall, *Dialogues in the Margin: A Study of the Dublin University Magazine* (Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe Ltd, 2000), pp. 194-95.

²⁰⁸ McBride, p. 354.

²⁰⁹ Elizabeth Tilley, ‘Charting Culture in the *Dublin University Magazine*’, in *Ireland in the Nineteenth Century: Regional Identity*, ed. by Glenn Hooper and Leon Litvack (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), pp. 58-65 (pp. 64-65). Tilley identifies advertisements for English products in issues of the magazine from the 1850s, pp. 63-64. Further to this, both McBride and Hall point out that by the 1850s, the majority of the original founders and contributors to the *D.U.M.*, including Butt, Lever, McGlashan, Ferguson, and the O’Sullivan brothers had either

commodity of “Anglo-Irishness” had lessened its Irish emphasis, which is indicative of a wider shift in the conception of Irish Protestant identity post-Famine.

It is in these years of cultural and political despondency that Le Fanu retreats indoors, physically as well as in literary terms, moving away from the streets of Dublin and Chapelizod, instead staging two ghost stories in haunted houses, the first haunted house stories in his repertoire. These stories also anticipate Le Fanu’s later “Big House” novels such as *Uncle Silas* and *Wylder’s Hand* (1864), although like the big houses featured in the Purcell stories, the novels of the 1860s do not contain any supernatural element, focussing instead on human crimes.²¹⁰ ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’ tells the story of two cousins and medical students, Dick and Tom, who take up residence in an old house in Aungier Street in Dublin city centre. While resident, the two are disturbed by nightmares and visions of a sinister old man who, it transpires, is the deceased former owner of the house, “‘hanging judge’” Horrocks.²¹¹ The Judge is described as “‘an ould villain every way, an’ the hangin’est judge that ever was known in Ireland’s ground’”,²¹² who had ‘under an impulse of “temporary insanity”’, committed suicide by hanging himself over the banisters with a child’s skipping rope.²¹³ Cadwallader gives due consideration to this story in her investigation of spirit drinking and spirit seeing in Le Fanu’s fiction; the sheer number of references to alcoholic consumption in ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’ certainly reinforces her thesis on this occasion. Cadwallader also remarks on the ‘shift in Le Fanu’s attitude toward ghost-seeing’ at this stage, citing his increasing distrust of institutionally sanctioned explanations for spirits as the reason for this change.²¹⁴ She argues that Le Fanu presents and then discounts any material, scientific, or religious explanations for the supernatural, insisting that ‘nowhere in the story is the simple cause-and-effect relationship between sin and spiritual punishment that features so prominently in *The Purcell Papers*’.²¹⁵ As I have argued in my readings of ‘The Watcher’ and the

died or parted ways with the magazine (or the country). By the time Le Fanu was editor, he was the only long-standing contributor of the old school, with then only ‘a narrow stable of writers’ to draw from. Hall, p. 195. McBride also points to the continued, successful circulation of the *D.U.M.* in England, which supports Tilley’s indication of the magazine’s Anglo-centric focus by mid-century. McBride, pp. 181-82.

²¹⁰ ‘Passage in the Secret History of an Irish Countess’ (1838), and ‘A Chapter in the History of a Tyrone Family’ (1839), are the “Big House” stories of the Purcell collection, neither of which have supernatural elements.

²¹¹ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘An Account of Some Strange Disturbances in an Old House in Aungier-street’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 42 (1853), 721-31 (p. 722). Hereafter cited as ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’.

²¹² *Ibid.*, p. 730.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 722. This story would be later reworked for inclusion in *In a Glass Darkly* as ‘Mr Justice Harbottle’ (1872). The story is also very similar to a later story by Bram Stoker, ‘The Judge’s House’ (1891).

²¹⁴ Cadwallader, p. 35.

²¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

Chapelized stories, the equation of ghost-seeing with moral punishment is already in question long before ‘Strange Disturbances’, complicated by the revealed connection between ghost-seeing and radical, political thought. In ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’, neither Dick nor Tom has committed any misdeed, nor are their politics in question beyond the fact that if they are medical students of Trinity College, they are both unquestionably Protestant. Instead, Cadwallader argues that Dick and Tom are haunted by ‘bad judgement’, Judge Horrocks of course being literally a “bad judge”, while ‘Tom and Dick’s adherence to the scientific system’s understanding of spiritual phenomena, at the expense of a deeper truth both men initially intuit’ is their bad judgement of the situation in which they find themselves.²¹⁶ However, towards the end of the story it is revealed that the house was known to be haunted long before Dick and Tom ever took up residence, and furthermore, that several other individuals and families have been subjected to the same supernatural disturbances, some even resulting in death. This fact would seem to be a clear indication that it is not Dick and Tom who are haunted, but rather the *house* itself, while the demographic variety of occupants over the years suggests that the haunting is not limited to a specific individual, class, or creed (although the biography of the Judge does seem to be connected). Therefore, it seems prudent to focus on the background of the house rather than the background (or afterlife), of its occupants.

The events in the story are narrated in the present day of 1853 as the reminiscences of Dick, presumably of middle or old age, who recalls his time as a student living in the house, which situates the main action of the story somewhere in the early decades of the nineteenth century. We can infer then, that the fictional Judge Horrocks resided in the house some time during the eighteenth century. In order to dissect the intricate history of the house, it is most expedient to begin with its description in a direct quote from the story:

The house, to begin with, was a very old one. It had been, I believe, newly fronted about fifty years before; but, with this exception, it had nothing modern about it. The agent who bought it and looked into the titles for my uncle, told me that it was sold, along with much other forfeited property, at Chichester-House, I think, in 1702; and had belonged to Sir Thomas Hacket [*sic*], who was Lord Mayor of Dublin in James II’s time. How old it was *then*, I can’t say; but, at all events, it had seen years and changes enough to have contracted all that mysterious and saddened air, at once exciting and depressing, which belongs to most old mansions.²¹⁷

²¹⁶ Ibid.

²¹⁷ ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’, p. 721. Original emphasis. Le Fanu spells Hacket with one ‘t’, elsewhere Hackett is spelled with two.

Although it is not clear exactly which house on Aungier Street Le Fanu had in mind, the house dates at least from the seventeenth century, and as a Catholic property, was possibly confiscated after the Williamite victory in the 1690s. This historical setting is verified by the fact that Aungier Street remains one of the most historically significant streets in Dublin. A 2013 report from Dublin City Council designates it as ‘the first classically planned suburban block developed from the post-medieval city in the seventeenth century’, while ‘No other street in Dublin has such a collection of pre-1700 buildings’.²¹⁸ The street was the first residential area to be developed outside the old city walls, initially laid out in 1660 with the first wave of construction commencing around 1680, with another during the 1720s.²¹⁹ Prior to this, the area formed part of the estate of Francis Aungier (1558-1632), 1st Baron Aungier of Longford (1621), a former judge and Master of the Rolls in Ireland under James I and Charles I. The report by Dublin City Council records that, ‘In turn, all of this is layered on top of ancient ecclesiastical foundations, the ghosts of which can still be observed in winding street patterns and surviving religious institutions’.²²⁰

The area, then, has a layered colonial history, its buildings bear witness to shifting power dynamics in terms of their various owners, while the reference to Sir Thomas Hackett, the last Catholic Lord Mayor of Dublin (1687-88) before Daniel O’Connell took office in 1841, implicates the confiscated property as a commodity of seventeenth-century colonialism and a site of contested ownership.²²¹ The succession of residents recorded to have witnessed the ghost of Judge Horrocks – from ‘a rich old maiden lady’ to ‘Micky Byrne’, who ‘had a dhrop in him, the way he used now and again’ – further underscores the fact that this haunting is historically

²¹⁸ Dublin City Council, *Aungier Street: Revitalising an Historic Neighbourhood* (Dublin: Environmental Publications, 2013), p. 7.

²¹⁹ See *Aungier Street: Revitalising an Historic Neighbourhood*, pp. 13-17. The report adds that although initially laid out in the 1660s, ‘The street has evolved over the intervening centuries and each period has left its mark, combining to form a fascinating urban and social history of the development of our city’, p. 7.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 13. The ‘ancient ecclesiastical foundations’ are that of the Whitefriar Monastery maintained by the Carmelite order whose church still exists on the street today.

²²¹ Sir Thomas Hackett is listed in the records of Dublin City Council, *Lord Mayors of Dublin, 1665-2014*, <<http://www.dublincity.ie/sites/default/files/content/YourCouncil/LordMayorDublin/HistoryofLordMayor/Documents/LordMayorofDublin1665-2014.pdf>> [accessed 12 January 2018]. Sir Thomas Hackett is described by William King, Church of Ireland Archbishop of Dublin from 1723-29, in his biased tract, *The State of the Protestants of Ireland under the late King James’s Government* published in 1730: ‘Sir Thomas Hackett, whilst Lord Mayor of Dublin, did so many brutish and barbarous things of this nature, that it were endless to recount them; taking example from the Lord Tyrconnel, who made him Mayor, he treated every body with Oaths, Curses, ill Names, and barbarous Language [...] Sir Thomas was not content to execute his Authority within his own Precincts, but extended it where the Mayor’s Power was never owned [...] His brutish Passion would not give him leave to hearken to Reason, but upon all Occasions he proceeded in the same Method; which made every Body, that valued his Liberty, get out of his Power, and prevailed with a great many to leave their Estates and Concerns, and transport themselves, and Effects they could carry with them into England [sic]’, (Dublin: S. Powell, 1730), pp. 103-04.

inflected, rather than the result of any individual experience of religiously invoked revelation. Another resident of the house is named as Nicholas Spaight, although intriguingly, the narrator (Dick) does not furnish the details of the ‘strange story, which so piqued my curiosity, that I took occasion to visit the ancient lady, [the handmaid’s] mother, from whom I learned many very curious particulars’ about the house.²²² The Spaights are a family of English descent who settled in Ireland in the seventeenth century having procured estates in Limerick and Tipperary, very near to Abington. These estates were then sold under the Encumbered Estates Act in 1855, two years after ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’ was published. It is unclear why Le Fanu chooses to name the Spaights but not to divulge their (fictional) connection to the house, but the mention of the Spaights provides yet another connection to the idea of the house as a site of colonial forfeit and repossession.²²³

Although the house is ‘newly fronted’, behind the façade it seems to have physically absorbed the history of its occupants, contracting it like a disease: ‘it had seen years and changes enough to have *contracted* all that mysterious and saddened air’. Additionally, we are told that ‘there was something queer and by-gone’ in the fabric of the house, ‘in the very walls and ceilings – in the shape of the doors and windows [...] not to mention the singular solidity of all the wood-work’ which ‘hopelessly defied disguise’ by any modern embellishments. Even the wallpaper in the drawing rooms ‘looked raw and out of keeping’, as if the antiquity of the house cannot be overlaid or concealed, much like the city streets described in the Bachelor stories.²²⁴ Though the boulevards and thoroughfares of the Wide Streets Commissions gave the impression of a modern European capital, the city’s history continues to resurface through the cracks. This trope is an identifiably Gothic feature and was later used to great effect by the likes of Shirley Jackson in *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959), and by Stephen King in *The Shining* (1977), two texts that also expose postcolonial themes when the respective buildings are revealed to contain layers of history. The settler connection to material construction in the establishment of a colony means that in settler texts, the structures of colonialism are often figured as sites of haunting. Haunting in settler societies can reveal the denied presence of the colonised, as in *The Shining* when it is revealed that the Overlook hotel is built on a Native American burial ground. In Le Fanu’s Dublin stories, the city is repeatedly revealed to be a palimpsestic space in which the ghosts of the former city continue to haunt the present. Sugars

²²² ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’, pp. 730-31.

²²³ For details of the Spaight family estates see The Landed Estates Database, National University of Ireland, Galway, ‘Estate: Spaight’, <<http://landedestates.nuigalway.ie/LandedEstates/jsp/estate-show.jsp?id=1965>> [accessed 12 January 2018].

²²⁴ ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’, p. 721. My emphasis.

also points to haunting as a form of settler validation, as it signifies a history and belonging related to permanency of place: ‘the possibility of being haunted, after all, like recognition by the other, confirms one’s identity both as an individual and as a culture’.²²⁵

History continues to repeat itself inside the house, regardless of who occupies it. What ghosts signify for Le Fanu, then, has changed significantly from what they signified in the Purcell stories. There the Faustian visitants were the result of individual revelation activated through personal avarice or desperation, whereas in the Dublin stories, revenants signify political digression or a disturbed colonial history. Moreover, the very fact that Le Fanu’s ghosts invariably originate in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries – and not before or after – indicates that he continues to see Ireland’s present as haunted by a *specific* moment from Ireland’s past: that of the Jacobite-Williamite conflict and subsequent New English settlement. In an article on Le Fanu’s ghost stories, Patricia Coughlan explores the significance of the distinction between interior and exterior in Le Fanu’s fiction, suggesting that the interior domestic space has a ‘psychic referent’, representing the inner self of the protagonists, while the exterior, the Other, the uncanny, strives to gain access through windows, doors, and other shadowy interstices.²²⁶ Coughlan attributes due importance to the furniture that populates Le Fanu’s interiors, suggesting that ‘All are at once possessions and signs of their owner’s claim to permanence and control, and all become the ground of the undoing of control and the mocking of permanence’.²²⁷ Just as the grand buildings and streets of Georgian Dublin are revealed to be haunted spaces in ‘The Watcher’, in ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’, the permanence of the house is shaken by the presence of the supernatural and further destabilized by its chequered colonial history. The material world of the settler transpires to be an impermanent and uncontrollable space.

The theme of an old house haunted by residual ghosts is resumed almost a decade later in ‘Narrative of a Haunted House’. Upon publication in October 1862, the story was credited to the ‘Editor of the *University Magazine*’, who by this time was of course Le Fanu himself, and the story ran concurrently with *The House by the Church-yard*, then in its thirteenth instalment.²²⁸ In the decade since the publication of ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’, Dublin had undergone further significant changes in terms of demography. The ‘flight to the

²²⁵ Sugars, pp. 7-9.

²²⁶ Patricia Coughlan, ‘Doubles, Shadows, Sedan-Chairs, and the Past: The “Ghost Stories” of J. S. Le Fanu’, *Reflections in a Glass Darkly: Essays on J. Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed by Gary William Crawford, Jim Rockhill, and Brian J. Showers (New York: Hippocampus Press, 2011), pp. 137-60 (p. 146).

²²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 144-45

²²⁸ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘An Authentic Narrative of a Haunted House’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 60 (1862), 476-83 (p. 476). Hereafter cited as ‘Narrative of a Haunted House’.

suburbs' had commenced, which depleted the city's former vitality and resident nobility. Jacinta Prunty explains that this outward migration from the city centre 'was an important factor in the creation of a more socially segregated city', with those of more considerable means now resident on the far side of the Royal Canal.²²⁹ Coupled with this, the rural-to-urban migration brought about by the Famine increased the number of lower-class and destitute residents living in the city centre. Moreover, 'A heavy outflow of people was a feature of nearly every county in Ireland in the decades after the Famine', the country losing more of its population to emigration than to hunger and disease.²³⁰ As a result, 'The Catholic middle class began to prosper' in the city, while in the countryside the farming class became a politically formidable faction.²³¹ The 1861 census also revealed the extent of Protestant losses in terms of population, then making up only about 23 per cent, although Akenson reveals that Protestants still dominated in 'skilled trades, in professions, and in positions of power'.²³² The political makeup of the city (and the country), was also changing dramatically. Catholicism had proved to be 'a highly organized, coherent identity that helped Irish society cope with the psychological impact of disruption' to which people could turn in the post-Famine period.²³³ Conversely, what had been in the 1830s a coherent group of Irish Protestant Tory nationalists had, by the 1860s, become fractured and divided by the Young Ireland rebellion. By the time Le Fanu became editor of the *D.U.M.* in 1861, the Irish Protestant Unionist and nationalist cause that had fortified the magazine's inaugural decade was severely mitigated by the many changes in Ireland's socio-political climate. Dickson notes that 'During the 1850s, most Young Ireland veterans settled into a resolutely constitutional nationalist path, sharply distinguishing themselves from the democratic republicanism championed by Mitchel'.²³⁴ Moreover, the advent of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and the rise of Fenianism meant that 'After the Young Ireland rebellion revolutionary conspiracy was never off the Irish agenda'.²³⁵

²²⁹ Jacinta Prunty, 'Improving the Urban Environment: Public Health and Housing in Nineteenth-century Dublin', *Dublin Through Space and Time*, ed. by Joseph Brady and Anngret Simms (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), pp. 166-220 (p. 167).

²³⁰ Bartlett, p. 291. See also Sarah Roddy, *Population, Providence, and Empire: Churches and Emigration from Nineteenth-century Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014).

²³¹ Akenson, p. 212. See also Dickson, *Dublin*, pp. 339-42, and Foster, *Modern Ireland*, pp. 342-44. The rise of the farming class was incumbent upon a number of political reforms as well as the demise of both the cottier class and the landlord class.

²³² Akenson, p. 215. For population figures, see K. H. Connell, *The Population of Ireland, 1750-1845* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1975), and S. H. Cousens, 'The Regional Variations in Population Changes in Ireland, 1861-1881', *The Economic History Review*, 17.2 (1964), 301-21.

²³³ Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p. 340.

²³⁴ Dickson, p. 361.

²³⁵ Bartlett, p. 300.

It is within this context that Le Fanu's final Dublin story is written and published. The story is told by an unnamed narrator and introduced by 'The Editor' who 'submits the following very remarkable statement, with every detail of which he has been for some years acquainted'. The events of the story occurred 'Within the last eight years', making it 1855 or thereabouts, a relatively recent timescale for a Le Fanu ghost story. The house in question is located 'upon the sea-coast' in 'a fashionable watering-place, at a moderate distance from the city [...] connected by a railway', to which the narrator and his family have moved as advised by their physician.²³⁶ This could be Malahide, Dun Laoghaire, or Bray, all located on the east coast north and south of Dublin city centre and connected by rail from the mid-1840s. It is most likely to be Bray, however, as Le Fanu himself frequently retired there for his health, staying at 11 Brennan's Terrace, situated in a row of twelve terraced houses constructed in 1859 and located on the promenade facing the sea.²³⁷ In the story, the house is described as follows: 'The house I had taken was to all appearance, and in point of convenience, too, quite a modern one. It formed a cheerful row, with small gardens in front, facing the sea'.²³⁸ It seems likely that Le Fanu took inspiration from his retreats to Bray for the setting of 'Narrative of a Haunted House'.

The household consists of the narrator, his wife (also in ill-health), three small children under the age of ten, and six servants. From the moment the family take up residence they are plagued by strange disturbances, variable in character. The wife is the first to suffer a spectral encounter, 'insist[ing] that she had seen an unnaturally tall figure come beside her bed and stand there'. The servants continuously encounter an 'ill-looking woman' in their bedrooms and in the other areas of the house, 'squalid, and ragged in dress, her figure rather low and broad' as well as 'deeply pitted with the small-pox, and blind of one eye'.²³⁹ Later, a 'small man, with a very red face' is seen in the nursery,²⁴⁰ as is 'a young woman, with black, or very dark hair' and 'a dark streak across her throat, like a scar with blood upon it'. Invariably these figures are seen "lurking" or "rummaging" in various places, leading the occupants to believe that they are thieves and not supernatural phenomena: 'the object was simply to frighten us out

²³⁶ 'Narrative of a Haunted House', p. 476.

²³⁷ Le Fanu to R. Bentley, 5 May 1864 written from 11 Brennan's Terrace, Bray: 'My Dear Sir, I am suffering very much, & have been quite knocked up for nearly 10 days, by severe attack of influenza followed by bronchitis', Edens, p. 169. 11 Brennan's Terrace still stands today, its historic and architectural information is detailed on the *Buildings of Ireland* website, <<http://www.buildingsofireland.ie/niah/search.jsp?type=record&county=WI®no=16301100>> [Accessed 13 January 2018].

²³⁸ 'Narrative of a Haunted House', p. 476.

²³⁹ Ibid., pp. 477-78.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 480.

of the house by making us believe it haunted'.²⁴¹ Concurrently, there is a perpetual, rhythmic knocking on the ceilings and doors at night, 'like a soft hammering with a wooden mallet, as it seemed in the timbers between the bedroom ceilings and the roof', while the handle of the nursery is 'turned hurriedly as if by a person trying to come in'. The narrator explains that these aural disturbances bear a 'resemblance to what we hear described of "Spiritualism"'.²⁴² The spiritualist craze was then sweeping Europe and America, helped in no small part by the claims of the Fox sisters – Leah, Margaret, and Kate of New York – who insisted that they were communicating with spirits through a series of knocks and taps, or "rappings". Three months prior to 'Narrative of a Haunted House', the July issue of the *D.U.M.* featured an article on "Spiritualism" which proceeds to debunk the fantasy:

'Is any good, either of mind or body, gained by seeing tables and chairs walk about of their own accord? Does it in any way profit a man's soul to get some foolish question foolishly answered by the spirit of one no longer alive in the flesh?'²⁴³

In using these same phenomena in his story Le Fanu was clearly appealing to the popularity of this craze. A year prior to 'Narrative of a Haunted House', Le Fanu used the same device in 'The Story of the Tiled House', a chapter of *The House by the Church-yard* published in the *D.U.M.* in November 1861. The story concerns an old house in Palmerston that is plagued by the spectre of a disembodied hand. The hand proceeds to knock at the windows and doors of the house, as well as loiter in the dark recesses of bedrooms, similar to the incidents recorded in 'Narrative of a Haunted House'.²⁴⁴

The incorporation of this type of haunting – knocking, tapping, banging – can be explained by the popularity of spiritualism at time, rather than considering it an invention of Le Fanu's. Aside from the spiritualist aspect, the character of the house itself is revealed to be important in understanding the disturbances within, as with 'Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street'. The perceived newness of the house is a large factor in the rationale for denying supernatural agencies at work. The narrator speculates that the three figures had 'their respective parts in some dreadful tragedy enacted in this house' but admits that "A difficulty,

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 481.

²⁴² Ibid., pp. 478-79.

²⁴³ Lionel James Trotter, 'Spiritualism', *Dublin University Magazine*, 60 (1862), 3-13 (p. 4). *The Wellesley index* cites the author of the article as Lionel James Trotter, an Anglo-Indian journalist and writer, and regular contributor to the *D.U.M.* during the 1860s.

²⁴⁴ See *The House by the Church-yard*, Chapter VIII 'Some Talk about the Haunted House – Being, as I suppose, only Old Women's Tales', *Dublin University Magazine*, 58 (1861), 526-29, and Chapter IX, 'Some Odd Facts about the Tiled House – Being an Authentic Narrative of the Ghost of a Hand', *Dublin University Magazine*, 58 (1861), 529-33. 'Narrative of a Haunted House' was published eleven months later in October 1862.

however, which I cannot get over, exists in the cheerfulness, the great publicity, and the evident very recent date of the house”’.²⁴⁵ When a human jawbone is uncovered, buried in a shallow grave in the back garden, at the precise spot where the children had witnessed the poxed woman ‘stooping over the ground, and apparently grubbing in the loose clay in search of something’, a friend who remembers the town in former times reveals the true age of the house.²⁴⁶ He explains that “‘the house is *not* modern; it and those beside it formed part of an old government store, altered and fitted up recently as you see”’. He adds:

I remember it well in my young days, fifty years ago [c. 1810] before the town had grown out in this direction, and a more entirely lonely spot, or one more fitted for the commission of a secret crime, could not have been imagined.²⁴⁷

With the history of the house revealed it suddenly seems more probable that these disturbances are supernatural, as unless a building has a history, apparently it cannot be haunted. That the house is the site of a former ‘government store’ is intriguing, though precisely what type of store is unclear. A government *food* store would necessarily elicit connections to the Famine, as by their description, the three figures are clearly destitute and of the lower classes. Details from the Royal Irish Academy’s *Irish Historic Towns Atlas* indicates that Bray had a large manorial corn mill and store house located on the river Dargle that ‘continued to operate on approximately the same site until the end of the nineteenth century’.²⁴⁸ As to the true history of the house, the reader is left unsatisfied, as unlike ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’, there are no further ‘inquiries respecting either the antecedents or subsequent history of the house’, nor has the editor any ‘satisfactory explanation to suggest’.²⁴⁹

What remains important is that once again the haunting is related to the house rather than its occupants, with a vague history of past violence conditional upon it being haunted. While a politically inflected history is less directly apparent in ‘Disturbances in Aungier Street’ and ‘Narrative of a Haunted House’ (as compared with ‘The Watcher’ and the Chapelized stories), both houses have “reputations” for being haunted as a result of their violent histories, histories that have left a residual mark on the physical structures that cannot be “papered over”. The ‘completely modern character’ of the house in ‘Narrative of a Haunted House’ belies a history of violence centred around a former government building, while no amount of

²⁴⁵ ‘Narrative of a Haunted House’, p. 482.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 480.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 482. Original emphasis.

²⁴⁸ K. M. Davies, *Irish Historic Towns Atlas (IHTA)*, no. 9, *Bray*, ed. by Anngret Simms, H.B. Clarke, and Raymond Gillespie (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1998), p. 1.

²⁴⁹ ‘Narrative of a Haunted House’, p. 483.

decoration can conceal the antiquity of the house in Aungier street.²⁵⁰ The spirits that haunt these spaces are not religious or scientific in origin, neither are they the result of a crisis of faith nor ‘the invention of my poor stomach’, but rather they are the ghosts of Ireland’s colonial history.²⁵¹ It is perhaps significant that in both haunted house stories, the houses are not “owned” by the occupants; in both instances the residents are merely transitory, renting the properties for a short period before moving on. The history of Aungier street also reveals a succession of owners, which contrasts with the ancient homes of the Purcell stories, owned by the same families for generations. There is a transience to the buildings of Dublin not present in the castles and towers of rural Ireland. If Dublin is understood as the seat of colonial power, whereas rural Ireland is the space of the indigenous, then the city’s materiality is repeatedly undermined by the presence of the immaterial, a condition that reflects the settler’s unstable connection with the site of settlement.

Le Fanu’s Dublin-set fiction reflects the politics of mid-nineteenth-century Ireland, but it is defined by a significant moment in Irish Protestant history: the Act of Union. The Dublin described by Le Fanu is an ephemeral space underscored by its colonial past, a past that continues to haunt the present. While on one hand this does establish a sort of permanency within the site of settlement through the act of haunting (as Sugars asserts), ‘The paradox here is that the unsettling and uncanny experience of being haunted is what produces a feeling of familiarity and home’.²⁵² Equally, Dublin is blighted by the decisions made in the 1790s, which continue to affect the city of Le Fanu’s present. The politics of Union become closely intertwined with a spectral Dublin city that sees Le Fanu’s protagonists on course to inevitable destruction. A reading of his works as embedded within their original socio-political and publishing contexts reveals a level of engagement with the colonial history of Ireland that has hitherto remained largely unobserved in his work. Le Fanu’s use of the supernatural, as compared to that of the Purcell stories, sees a definite evolution in his fiction of the 1840s and 1850s. A further shift occurred in the last phase of his writing, characterised by a return to writing fiction set in rural Ireland, reminiscent of, but significantly different to, that of his earliest work. This chapter points to the significance of biographical fixity in Le Fanu’s work, moving from Limerick to Dublin-set stories in the middle period of his career. The chapter demonstrates Le Fanu’s continued engagement with postcolonial themes, this time through the evocation of the city in the years before the 1798 United Irishmen Rebellion and the Act of

²⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 476.

²⁵¹ ‘Strange Disturbances in Aungier Street’, p. 723.

²⁵² Sugars, p. 5.

Union, two important historical incidents in Irish Protestant colonial memory. Until now, Le Fanu's connection to the village of Chapelizod has only been discussed in biographical terms, but Le Fanu's evocation of the city and the village reveals a deeper engagement with the colonial fabric of Dublin in which he continues to reflect on the transference of power between classes and creeds.

CHAPTER FOUR

‘A final eclipse’: The Return to Writing Rural Ireland¹

This final chapter examines Le Fanu’s last five short stories with an Irish setting, published in 1861, 1870 and 1872. All five stories revisit the rural setting of east Limerick, three decades after the Purcell stories came to an end. The chapter begins by examining the last Limerick story to feature in the *Dublin University Magazine*, which sees a return to Purcell’s parish with its attendant Jacobite history. The chapter then moves to consider Le Fanu’s editorship of the *D.U.M.* within the wider socio-political context in the lead-up to the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869. Finally, the chapter examines Le Fanu’s last Irish-set stories published in the early 1870s, although this time in Charles Dickens’s popular weekly magazine, *All the Year Round*. The chapter considers the implications of the change in Le Fanu’s long-established pattern of publishing in the *D.U.M.*, as well as the material and editorial conditions that governed Dickens’s magazine. These final stories exhibit an entirely different perspective on rural Ireland, as Le Fanu moves away decisively from the historically inflected fiction of his early work and instead grounds himself in the tradition of Irish folklore, presented in the pages of a British periodical. As compared to the Purcell stories of the 1830s, these later Limerick-based legends reflect the broader changes that occurred in the approach to Irish folk culture between Thomas Crofton Croker’s work in the 1820s to Patrick Kennedy’s in the 1860s. Further, these stories speak to ‘A final eclipse’ for the landed class and in terms of the type of Irish Protestant nationalism that shaped and directed Le Fanu’s early life and work.² The chapter concludes with a summary of Le Fanu’s life and work following the publication of his final story with an Irish setting.

¹ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘Ulltor de Lacy: A Legend of Capperclullen’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 58 (1861), 694-707 (p. 694). Hereafter abbreviated to ‘Ulltor De Lacy’.

² Ibid.

Le Fanu's Jacobite Legacy: 'Ultor De Lacy: A Legend of Cappercullen'

Between 1861, when he purchased the *Dublin University Magazine*, and his death in February 1873, Le Fanu was at his most productive in terms of literary output. Aside from the five short stories that are the subject of this chapter, the bulk of Le Fanu's novels – thirteen of fifteen – were published within this twelve-year period. Le Fanu's deal with Bentley meant that after *The House by the Church-yard* in 1863, his writing about Ireland effectively came to an end, that is until he began writing for Charles Dickens's *All the Year Round* in October 1869. 'The Child that Went with the Fairies', 'The White Cat of Drumgunniol', and 'Stories of Lough Guir' were published in Dickens's journal in February and April 1870, while Le Fanu's final Irish-set story, 'Sir Dominick's Bargain: A Legend of Dunoran', featured in the same magazine in 1872. These stories concern rural Limerick, and although they intersect with the Purcell stories in certain ways, they are also quite different and thus reflect a different view of Ireland in the late nineteenth century, as well as a view of Ireland as seen from England. Prior to Le Fanu writing for Dickens however, 'Ultor de Lacy: A Legend of Cappercullen' appeared as a stand-alone story in the *D.U.M.* in December 1861, just after Le Fanu took over as owner and editor. The story was published concurrently with the serialization of *The House by the Church-yard* and did not bear the author's name, although the setting and subject are recognisably Le Fanu's. 'Ultor De Lacy' revisits not only the well-known terrain of county Limerick, but also the complex historical, religious, and political plots centred around eighteenth-century families alike to those first sketched out in the Purcell stories.

'Ultor de Lacy' follows the familiar plot of colonial haunting and familial retribution and is played out within the grounds of a semi-ruined, shape-shifting, 'Anglo-Irish' castle situated in the glen of Cappercullen in county Limerick.³ Known to the locals as "the Phooka's tower",⁴ the castle's familial and colonial entanglements are outlined in the opening section, 'The Jacobite's Legacy'. The De Lacy family were originally English though 'long naturalized in Ireland', having acquired their estate 'in the reign of Henry VIII, and held it, with some vicissitudes, down to the establishment of the revolution in Ireland, when they suffered attainder, and, like the other great families of that period, underwent a final eclipse'.⁵ The current head of the family, Ultor, is involved in 'the Rebellion of '45', the Jacobite uprising which confirms his Catholicism, and for which he was 'implicated treasonably in that daring

³ Ibid., p. 694.

⁴ Ibid., p. 696. Use of vernacular Irish "Phooka" in place of "Púca", a supernatural, shape-shifting creature in Irish folklore.

⁵ Ibid., p. 694.

and romantic insurrection', as a result of which he absconds to France with his estate in Capperullen as forfeit.⁶ De Lacy's two daughters, Alice and Una, remain living in an old part of the castle, leading a secret and ostracised life as their father comes and goes surreptitiously. The family is first troubled by the sudden appearance of a strange light issuing from the Bell Tower, a part of the castle where 'the De Lacys of those evil days used to sit in feudal judgement upon captive adversaries', and from the top of which they used to execute their enemies, whose hanging bodies served thereafter 'for a caveat and admonition to all evil disposed persons viewing the same from the country beneath'.⁷ After a time, a strange man is seen in this same place, 'a thin, ungainly man' in old-fashioned, Spanish dress, 'his hollow yellow cheeks being deeply stained on one side with what is called a "claret mark"'.⁸ This man with the claret mark eventually carries off De Lacy's youngest daughter, Una, the family's only hope for progeniture and restoration, in retribution for what transpires to be the sins committed by a De Lacy ancestor.

Alison Milbank has linked this story to the "Death and the Maiden" theme recurrent in Le Fanu's fiction. She identifies in 'Ultor De Lacy' the story of 'a ghostly avenger from the Elizabethan period [who] lures a maiden descendent of his enemy to her death, or some sort of ghostly existence', not unlike the plot of 'Schalken'. However, Milbank observes that in contrast to the other Death and the Maiden stories, 'the spectral revenant is not presented in particularly grotesque terms, nor is the tale particularly interested in theology or metaphysics but rather Irish history'.⁹ Indeed, the entire story is based on a pivotal episode in Ireland's colonial history, the Siege of Kinsale in 1601. The publication of 'Ultor De Lacy' in December 1861 marked the 260th anniversary of the Battle of Kinsale which occurred on Christmas Eve, 1601, which is obviously no coincidence. The battle is considered to have been a decisive conflict in the final resistance of the old Gaelic Order against English rule, followed eventually by the Flight of the Earls in 1607. Upon Ultor's death at the end of the story, his remaining daughter Alice – now Sister Agnes – discovers in her father's possessions a miniature portrait of the man with the claret mark (in homage to *Melmoth the Wanderer*, perhaps), as well as a document detailing an episode in the history of her family. It begins:

⁶ Ibid., p. 695.

⁷ Ibid., p. 699.

⁸ Ibid., p. 700.

⁹ Alison Milbank, 'Death and the Maiden: Theology, Gender and the Grotesque in Le Fanu's Fiction', in *Inspiring a Mysterious Terror: 200 Years of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed. by Jarlath Killeen and Valeria Cavalli (Bern: Peter Lang, 2016), pp.177-96 (p. 188). Milbank identifies the Death and the Maiden theme in *Uncle Silas*, 'Carmilla', and 'Schalken the Painter'.

A.D. 1601, in the month of December, Walter de Lacy, of Capperullen, made many prisoners at the ford of Ownhey, or Abington, of Irish and Spanish soldiers, flying from the great overthrow of the rebel powers at Kinsale, and among their number one Roderic O'Donnel, an arch traitor, and near kinsman to that other O'Donnell who led the rebels; who, claiming kindred through his mother to De Lacy, sued for his life with instant and miserable entreaty, and offered great ransom, but was by De Lacy, through great zeal for the queen, as some thought, cruelly put to death.¹⁰

Roderic O'Donnel swears that 'he would devote himself thereafter to blast the greatness of the De Lacys, and never leave them till his work was done', after which successive heirs to the family are alerted to this curse and bequeathed the portrait and the narrative as a warning.¹¹ In this story, there is plainly a process of post-colonial retribution played out at the site of colonial power, as embodied by the ancient castle. Though teetering on the borders of Gothic, fantasy and folklore, the narrative is purposely framed in a historical context (as noted by Milbank), and published on the anniversary of the conflict at its core. The fear of reprisal from these colonial deeds is carried down from father to son with the result that the De Lacy family line is erased after Una's disappearance, as is the case with the historical romances narrated by Purcell. A fixation on the end of a family line, as we have seen, is typical of Le Fanu's fiction.

The known facts of Irish history intersect his narrative at various points, another characteristic of Le Fanu's Irish-set stories. Hugh O'Donnell (1572-1602), along with Hugh O'Neill (1550-1616), are best known for their part in opposing Tudor conquest in Ireland during the Nine Years War (1594-1603). Both were also key players in the Battle of Kinsale: they marched south from Ulster to unite with the Spanish fleet encamped in south Cork. It is recorded that O'Donnell, while attempting to evade Sir George Carew (an officer who served under Elizabeth I), detoured through the area of Limerick and Tipperary where the De Lacy castle is supposedly situated amid the Slieve Phelim mountains on the Limerick-Tipperary border.¹² Le Fanu was no doubt aware of this nugget of local history from his time spent living in the area, just as he demonstrated his wide knowledge of the Jacobite-Williamite history in the Purcell stories. Furthermore, the name Roderic O'Donnel is significant given that Rudhraighe Ó'Dómhnaill (1575-1608), – often translated as "Rory" or "Roderic" O'Donnell – was Hugh O'Donnell's brother, and took over from Hugh as King of Tyrconnell after the Battle

¹⁰ 'Ultor de Lacy', p. 706. Le Fanu repeatedly switches between the spelling of De Lacy and de Lacy, as well as O'Donnel and O'Donnell. He is either attempting to indicate different branches or generations of the two families with different spellings, or these are simply mistakes. I have reproduced the spellings here as they appear in the original *D.U.M.* text.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Hiram Morgan (ed.), *The Battle of Kinsale* (Dublin: Wordwell, 2004). See p. 108 and p. 188.

of Kinsale, though subsequently fled Ireland with Hugh O'Neill in 1607.¹³ Le Fanu is here deliberately intertwining his own fictional narrative with the close facts of history. Walter De Lacy puts to death this fictionalised Roderic O'Donnel in support of the Queen's cause and his family are thereafter cursed by this ghost, despite the fact that less than a century later Ultor De Lacy's father suffers attainder for his role in 'the revolution in Ireland' (the Jacobite-Williamite War), on the side of the Jacobites. Meanwhile, Ultor himself is later implicated in the Jacobite rising of 1745 which sought, with French assistance, to restore the Catholic Charles Stuart (Charles III) to the English throne.¹⁴ In short, Walter De Lacy fought for the Protestant Queen Elizabeth I in 1601, while both Ultor and his father fought for the Jacobite restoration in 1745 and 1690 respectively. Le Fanu here exposes the complicated political allegiances that characterise the great Irish families of history. He troubles the sectarian narrative of Ireland's colonial history, pointing to – as he has elsewhere in his fiction – the fact that many families switched both political allegiances and denomination to reflect the principles of the day. Ultor, an advocate for the Stuart restoration and the Irish Catholic cause, is punished for the role of his ancestor in thwarting a related cause a century previous.

McCormack considers 'Ultor de Lacy' to be 'an isolated item in Le Fanu's writing', and indeed this is true in terms of its chronological position in Le Fanu's repertoire and his life.¹⁵ In order to account for the timing and significance of the story, McCormack locates some 'autobiographical traces', noting that the fictional De Lacy castle is likely modelled on Glenstal Castle near Abington, the seat of the Barringtons. William Le Fanu married Banky Barrington in 1857, which may have inspired Le Fanu to fictionalise the area in the years after this marital union.¹⁶ However, 'Ultor De Lacy' draws many parallels with the last heirs of Le Fanu's early stories, sharing more than just location. Though chronologically out of sequence, the story's central themes recall those of Purcell's waning Jacobites. Like Purcell's Jacobite families, the De Lacys are depicted as static and passive in their actions. Alice and Una spend their time waiting for their father's return which promises to free them from their isolated and liminal existence, but in fact Ultor's visits never usher any change in circumstance. It is only through the interventions of the spectral man with the claret mark that the stagnant life of the De Lacys is activated. The conflation of "attainder" and "stain" is also deftly applied. The De Lacys 'suffered attainder' in the 1690s and once again in 1745 when Ultor is 'one of the few Irishmen

¹³ The title of King of Tyrconnell was abolished in 1603 and replaced with Earl of Tyrconnell.

¹⁴ 'Ultor De Lacy', p. 694.

¹⁵ W. J. McCormack, *Dissolute Characters: Irish Literary History through Balzac, Sheridan Le Fanu, Yeats and Bowen* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993), p. 47.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

implicated treasonably in that daring and romantic insurrection' and 'in due course he was attained, and his little estate forfeited'.¹⁷ The word "attainder" is derived from the French 'atiandre, ateindre, i.e. to strike, accuse, condemn; Lat. *attingere, tangere*, to touch; the meaning has been greatly affected by the confusion with Fr. *tandre, teindre*, to taint, stain, Lat. *tingere*, to dye'. The De Lacys are "stained" by their insurrectionary history and they are also haunted by a man who is physically "stained", which suggests that neither party is completely free from the taint of insurgency.¹⁸ In her analysis of Le Fanu's 1872 novella, 'The Haunted Baronet', Patricia Coughlan discusses the conflation of the protagonist, Sir Bale Mardykes, with his ancestor, almost as if they were the same person: 'the present Sir Bale seems to carry in people's mind the guilt associated with his ancestor's evil deed. It seems that [...] as well as being himself [he] in some sense is also his ancestor'.¹⁹ As with Sir Bale, Ultor's inheritance – his taint of attainder – has stained his family line forever after, regardless of Ultor's own actions. Bad inheritance is a theme that endures in Le Fanu's later fiction, which points to his continued interest in examining the burden of history and the implications of colonial legacy.

In the stories of Jacobite heirs discussed in Chapter Two, it was argued that Le Fanu's fixation with the decline of the Old English nobility can be understood as part of a justification for the New English takeover. The families of the Ardaghs, the O'Connors, and the O'Maras are shown to be incompatible with Ireland after the Williamite victory, existing in remote pockets of the Irish countryside and unable to contribute much to society. The bad deals of their ancestors result in the decline of these once-noble family lines – as it does with the De Lacy family – while their Catholicism and French associations also render this class unsuitable to rule. At this point, Le Fanu's return to writing about rural Limerick evokes the same issues that preoccupied his writing twenty years previous. All the hallmarks of a Purcell story are present: an ancient castle in rural Limerick, connection to a colonial war, an escape to France, and the ruination of a family line. As the new editor of the *D.U.M.*, the magazine that housed his first stories, it is possible that the appearance of 'Ultor De Lacy' is an act of nostalgia. Mere months into his editorship, Le Fanu was perhaps seeking to revitalise the type of literature that

¹⁷ 'Ultor De Lacy', p. 695.

¹⁸ On attainder for treason, the criminal forfeited to the English crown his lands, rights of entry on lands, and any interest he might have in lands for his own life or a term of years, dependent upon the level of involvement in insurrection. See the conditions of attainder set out by Henry Hills and John Field on behalf of the crown: *An Act for the Attainder of the Rebels in Ireland: At the Parliament Begun at Westminster the 17th Day of September, An. Dom. 1656* (London, 1657), p. 2.

¹⁹ Patricia Coughlan, 'Doubles, Shadows, Sedan-Chairs, and the Past: The "Ghost Stories" of J. S. Le Fanu', in *Reflections in a Glass Darkly: Essays on J. Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed. by Gary William Crawford, Jim Rockhill, and Brian J. Showers (New York: Hippocampus Press, 2011), pp. 137-60 (p. 152). Original emphasis.

defined the early issues of the magazine, away from which the *D.U.M.* had moved in the intervening years. Indeed, submissions by the folklorist Patrick Kennedy (1801-73) in the early Le Fanu years certainly increased the quotient of material alike to that encouraged by the magazine in the 1830s.²⁰ Likewise, Le Fanu's serialization of *The House by the Church-yard* signals a renewed interest in Irish historical fiction. Michael Sadleir confirms this assessment of the magazine's development in the pre- and post-Le Fanu years. He observes that the magazine underwent a period of 'vague comprehensiveness' around the mid-1850s, in which 'The numbers become trivial and miscellaneous – mere random mixtures of short casual articles, stories and poems'. Following Le Fanu's takeover, Sadleir remarks that the *D.U.M.* was 'Immediately [...] improved and re-nationalised', although he remarks on the continued decline of Irish political content in the magazine throughout the 1860s.²¹ John P. McBride also defines 'the flavour' of the *D.U.M.* during the 1850s as 'miscellaneous, casual, and without distinction', with a focus on 'imperial rather than Irish politics, and in a bland tone that is liberal-conservative rather than Tory in emphasis'.²² The revived vigour evident in Le Fanu's early years as editor eventually gave way to a general despondency, impelled in part by the crisis surrounding the Established Church and Gladstonian land reforms, and with the advent of a renewed Catholic nationalism in the form of Fenianism. These various socio-political crises coincided with Le Fanu's departure from the *D.U.M.*, when after three decades of collaboration he finally cut ties with the magazine for good.

The End of an Era: The *Dublin University Magazine* and Disestablishment

Over the course of thirty years, Le Fanu's connection with the *D.U.M.* had helped form and inform his writing, his career, and his identity, from his first published story in 1838 to his sale of the magazine in 1869. McBride observes that by the 1850s 'the emotional and intellectual commitment to a sense of communal identity which characterizes the earlier period [of the

²⁰ Patrick Kennedy was a Catholic folklorist from Wexford who worked closely with Le Fanu during his years of editorship of the *D.U.M.* Kennedy is best known for his collection, *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts*, published in 1866. As discussed later in the chapter Kennedy's approach to folklore was quite different to that adopted by the likes of Croker, Charles Lever, and William Carleton in the pre-Famine period.

²¹ Michael Sadleir, *Dublin University Magazine: Its History, Contents and Bibliography* (Dublin: Bibliographical Society of Ireland, 1938), pp. 77-78. Sadleir notes the conspicuous absence of any commentary on the important general election in 1868, which returned a resounding victory for the Whigs.

²² John P. McBride, 'The Dublin University Magazine: Cultural Nationality and Tory Ideology in an Irish Literary and Political Journal 1833-1852', (unpublished doctoral thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1987), p. 343. McBride attributes the decline of political content to the absence of a good political analyst following the departure of the O'Sullivan brothers and Samuel Ferguson. McBride, p. 343.

D.U.M.] is never again matched'.²³ Elizabeth Tilley has also commented on the 'unobtrusive' nature of Le Fanu's editorship: 'No "Address to the Reader", no statement of editorial aim or agenda was discernible, and the Irish "colour" of the *DUM*, as had been noted elsewhere, was not particularly strong'.²⁴ However, while this is certainly true for the majority of Le Fanu's editorial reign, arguably the very early years evidence an attempt to return to the "Irish colour" of old. As mentioned, Patrick Kennedy's sustained contributions on Irish folklore are reminiscent of the magazine's content in the 1830s, although Kennedy's Catholicism is certainly a novelty in the context of the magazine. By this time it is clear that the ultra-Protestant identity sustained in the magazine's early volumes has softened considerably. Likewise the early volumes evince a blend of history, romance, and European literature akin to the type of content featured in the magazine's early years. For example, the following factual and fictional contributions are indicative of the *D.U.M.*'s general content between 1861-63 composed by regular contributors: Percy Fitzgerald's 'Melodrama in a First-Class Carriage' (1861) and 'Mildrington the Barrister: A Romance of Two Syrens' (serialised between 1862-63); Herbert Francis Hore's 'Irish Materials for History' (1861) and 'The Story of the First Earl of Tyrone, from original sources' (1861); Thomas Caulfield Irwin's 'The Prologue in Heaven; from Goethe's *Faust*' (1861); Mrs Clifden Mooney's 'Romance and Superstition in Poland' (1862); Lionel James Trotter's 'Rise and Progress of the Royal Academy' (1862), and James Anderson Scott's 'The Earlier Heroes of the Genevan Republic' (1863).²⁵ By the middle period of Le Fanu's editorship – from around 1864 onwards – there is a perceptible shift in the magazine's content and focus. Tilley has pointed to 'the increased number of gothic stories and general articles on the occult and the supernatural', which she considers to be indicative of an emergent insecurity surrounding of the Irish Protestant position: the 'inherent anti-Catholicism, questioning of science, and blurring of the boundary between self and other opens a new

²³ McBride, p. 343. See also the Appendix to this thesis for publishing details of Le Fanu's late fiction and the various changes of editorship of the *D.U.M.*, pp. 267-69.

²⁴ Elizabeth Tilley, 'J. S. Le Fanu, Gothic, and the Irish Periodical', in *Irish Gothics: Genres, Modes, and Traditions, 1750-1890*, ed. by Christina Morin & Niall Gillespie (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 130-46 (p. 130).

²⁵ Percy H. Fitzgerald, 'A Melodrama in a First-Class Carriage', *Dublin University Magazine*, 58 (1861), 743-51; 'Mildrington the Barrister: A Romance of Two Syrens (Part I)', *Dublin University Magazine*, 59 (1862), 88-96. Herbert Francis Hore, 'Irish Materials for History', *Dublin University Magazine*, 58 (1861), 661-72; 'The Story of the First Earl of Tyrone, from original sources (Part I)', *Dublin University Magazine*, 58 (1861), 732-43. Thomas Caulfield Irwin, 'The Prologue in heaven; from Goethe's *Faust*', *Dublin University Magazine*, 58 (1861), 484-84. Mrs Clifden Mooney, 'Romance and Superstition in Poland', *Dublin University Magazine*, 59 (1862), 410-21. Lionel James Trotter, 'Rise and Progress of the Royal Academy', *Dublin University Magazine*, 60 (1862), 643-60. James Anderson Scott, 'The Earlier Heroes of the Genevan Republic', *Dublin University Magazine*, 61 (1863), 568-85.

chapter in the continuing story of Irish Protestant paranoia'.²⁶ Likewise, as noted by Sadleir and McBride, what little political content remains, continues to recede over the course of the decade. The general avoidance of contemporary political commentary during the 1860s meant that on the rare occasions that such articles did appear, they are even more striking.²⁷ The focus on history also takes on a more general and international perspective over the course of the decade: articles such as 'Glimpses of Caesarean Rome', 'A Parisian Theatre Two Hundred Years Since', 'Ancient English Culture' and 'Glimpses of Pre-Historic Humanity', are representative of a generally retrospective outlook.²⁸ Wayne E. Hall comments on the 'more optimistic view in the early years of the 1860s' evidenced primarily by articles written by Le Fanu's sub-editor, James Anderson Scott: 'Scott dominated the political commentary for the magazine through the first half of the decade much like a cheery public relations man'. After the death of Lord Palmerston in 1865 – who was considered an advocate for the established church and for Irish Protestants – Hall observes that 'The magazine's deeper anxieties, so far confined to Le Fanu's fiction, broke through in Palmerston's obituary'. Thereafter Hall identifies a shift in the magazine's polemic, 'their political vision, swing[s] wildly between Scott's earlier optimism and a kind of Irish-gothic foreboding' while a 'growing apathy and discouragement over the course of Irish history' is traceable in the growing lack of political commentary as the decade wore on.²⁹ Overall, a view of the *D.U.M.* in the 1860s as generally backward-looking, rather than forward-looking, is certainly supportable. This perspective on the past is in marked contrast with the *D.U.M.* of the 1830s and '40s, which although concerned with ancient Ireland through its engagement with folklore and oral culture, was certainly more preoccupied with understanding how Ireland's past would shape Ireland's future. By the time of the sale in 1869, McBride observes that the *D.U.M.* 'had ceased to contemplate, in any

²⁶ Elizabeth Tilley, 'Charting Culture in the *Dublin University Magazine*', in *Ireland in the Nineteenth Century: Regional Identity*, ed. by Glenn Hooper and Leon Litvack (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), pp. 58-65 (p. 65).

²⁷ Political articles by Le Fanu, as cited in the *Wellesley Index*, include 'Fenianism', *Dublin University Magazine*, 67 (1866), 116-20; 'The Reform Bill of 1866', *Dublin University Magazine*, 67 (1866), 597-600; 'Recent Expositions of the Irish Question', *Dublin University Magazine*, 69 (1867), 231-240. Hall points out that after the general election of 1868 and disestablishment in 1869, 'only one political article can be found, titled "The Railway Problem in Ireland and Belgium" [by J. A. Scott]'. Wayne E. Hall, *Dialogues in the Margin: A Study of the Dublin University Magazine* (Buckinghamshire: Colin Smythe Ltd, 2000), p. 207

²⁸ T. C. Irwin, 'Glimpses of Caesarean Rome', *Dublin University Magazine*, 62 (1863), 275-82; Patrick Kennedy, 'The Grand Tour', *Dublin University Magazine*, 62 (1863), 311-23; Patrick Kennedy, 'The Bardic Triad of Wales', *Dublin University Magazine*, 65 (1865), 104-20; Patrick Kennedy, 'Celtic Romance', *Dublin University Magazine*, 65 (1865), 185-201; Patrick Kennedy, 'Social Life in Moray, A Century and a Half Ago', *Dublin University Magazine*, 71 (1868), 40-52; Patrick Kennedy, 'A Parisian Theatre Two Hundred Years Since', *Dublin University Magazine*, 71 (1868), 470-80; Patrick Kennedy, 'Ancient English Culture', *Dublin University Magazine*, 71 (1868), 603-18; Patrick Kennedy, 'Glimpses of Pre-Historic Humanity', *Dublin University Magazine*, 74 (1869), 584-600.

²⁹ Hall, pp. 204-05.

serious manner, the continuing contraction of the rights and privileges of the community it once represented'.³⁰

That the *D.U.M.* effectively “gave up” in the latter years of Le Fanu’s editorship is agreed by all scholars of the magazine. This may have been due in part to the natural lifecycle of the periodical; the magazine, after all, had been in operation for almost four decades by the time Le Fanu retired as editor. However, *The Wellesley Index* indicates that lacklustre journalism played a significant role in the magazine’s demise after Le Fanu, in particular noting ‘the amount of plagiarism in the years of Adams’ management’.³¹ Le Fanu’s departure from the *D.U.M.* coincided with a great crisis for Irish Protestants, the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1869. Under the Irish Church Act, the Anglican Church of Ireland was divested of its official and privileged status. Moreover, the Act ratified the withdrawal of financial state support and tithe payment, crippled the church’s primary source of income. Throughout the 1860s, the question of the legitimacy of the established church was debated in Ireland and throughout Britain. The foundation of the Catholic-led National Association in 1864, which Akenson describes as ‘an avowed political pressure group’, pursued a reformatory agenda including ‘the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland, the redistribution of land in Ireland, and state aid to denominational schools’.³² Concurrently, the rise and popularity of Fenianism throughout the decade was another indicator of the changing socio-political landscape in Ireland at the time. Whereas previous organisations such as O’Connell’s Catholic Association and Young Ireland had begun initially with a political agenda, lobbying for reform through parliamentary means and only then devolving into violent revolt, from the outset the Fenians had armed insurrection as their *modus operandi*.³³ R. F. Foster notes that ‘Political upheavals and land agitation from the 1870s would destroy Ascendancy power completely’, but significantly, ‘even before then, the establishment was no longer exclusively Protestant. And the isolation, or marginalization, of the Southern Irish Protestant had been mercilessly highlighted since the 1830s’ both by official religious censuses and ‘by less concrete demonstrations and threats’.³⁴

³⁰ McBride, p. 345.

³¹ *The Wellesley Index*, p. 208.

³² Donald Harmon Akenson, *The Church of Ireland: Ecclesiastical Reform and Revolution, 1800-1885* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971), p. 226.

³³ See Oliver Rafferty, *The Church, the State, and the Fenian Threat, 1861-75* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1999). The Fenian Brotherhood was founded in the United States in 1858 by Irish emigrants John O’Mahony and Michael Doheny. In Ireland, the movement was linked to the IRB (Irish Republican Brotherhood or Irish Revolutionary Brotherhood), founded in the same year. Both movements were committed to Ireland’s emancipation from English rule primarily through violent means.

³⁴ R. F. Foster, *Paddy & Mr Punch: Connections in Irish and English History*, (London: Penguin, 1995), p. 215.

Le Fanu sold the *D.U.M.* in July 1869, the same month that the Irish Church Act was passed. The disestablishment of the church removed one of the last remaining legal and parliamentary safeguards for Irish Protestants, and was quickly followed by Gladstone's Land Act of 1870, which set about further dismantling the landlord system in Ireland. All in all, the 1860s were a period of sustained withdrawal from the type of Irish Protestant nationalism advocated by the *D.U.M.* just twenty years previously. In questioning the status of Irish Protestant identity in the wake of the disestablishment, Foster remarks: 'their eventual marginalization manifested itself economically, politically and spiritually. Religiously, what is an Irish Protestant's country?'³⁵ This question, one that agents such as the *D.U.M.* had initially worked to clarify and celebrate, was by 1869 once more in doubt. It is no surprise that, following this period, Le Fanu's remaining stories depict rural Ireland as an increasingly lethargic place, a mausoleum of ruin and isolation. The trajectory from Purcell to this later Limerick is arguably a reflection of the decline of settler self-inscription, as evidenced by the *D.U.M.* more generally. Irish Protestant exploration of the settler identity began to recede from Le Fanu's work and the magazine at this point, as the previously cohesive group had gradually begun to split along political lines, beginning with the Young Irelander rebellion of 1848, and culminating in the Home Rule movement in the 1870s. Given the divisions that had emerged over the previous half century, it became more difficult to conceive of Irish Protestants as a distinctive group with a shared and unifying ideology. The Irish Protestant ethos championed by the *D.U.M.* was officially retired with the sale to London printer Charles F. Adams. Thereafter the magazine changed hands a number of times before officially dropping its Dublin (and Irish) connection in January 1878, when under London-based Hurst and Blackett it was rebranded as *The University Magazine: A Literary and Philosophical Review*.³⁶ Although Le Fanu continued to write both short fiction and novels right up to his death, after the sale he never again published his work in the *D.U.M.*, focussing instead on the British periodical circuit.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 217.

³⁶ The magazine was sold to Charles F. Adams in July 1869, who was editor and proprietor until May 1873. Le Fanu sold the magazine for a profit; it is estimated that he received at least twice what he paid for it. See Sadleir, p. 78 and Hall, p. 215. Moreover, McBride records that once the magazine was sold to publishers Hurst and Blackett in 1877, it became a 'new "cosmopolitan", London based journal', p. 346.

Capitalising on Culture: Three Limerick Legends in *All the Year Round*

Between the conclusion of his final novel, *The Wyvern Mystery*, in December 1869 and his death in February 1873, Le Fanu produced twenty published works. During this four-year period he disseminated his fiction across a number of prominent British magazines such as *Belgravia*, *London Society*, *Temple Bar*, *The Dark Blue*, *Cassell's Magazine*, and most notably, Charles Dickens's *All the Year Round*. Having freed himself from the editorship of the *D.U.M.*, Le Fanu returned with renewed energy to writing short stories as opposed to novels, arguably producing some of his best work in the post-*D.U.M.* period. In 1869, 'Green Tea' was the first of Le Fanu's stories to appear in Dickens's very popular weekly magazine which had commenced a decade earlier as an immediate successor to his previous weekly, *Household Words*. Dickens began *All the Year Round* in 1859 after disagreements with the publishers of *Household Words*, and as a result, Dickens ensured that he had full editorial control over his new venture.³⁷ Dickens was heavily involved in the magazine at every level; Elaine Ostry avers that 'Nothing went into the periodical without Dickens' consent or direction', to the extent that Dickens regularly 'revised the contributors' papers, often rewriting them completely to suit the periodical's style'.³⁸ This type of heavy-handed editorship was nothing new to Le Fanu, having previously conditioned his work to suit the requirements of Bentley and to a certain extent, Butt.³⁹ The stories he submitted to *All the Year Round* are in many ways influenced by the material conditions of magazine and wrought by the specifications of the its illustrious editor, as well as in reaction to changing trends in popular readership in the late nineteenth century, particularly in terms of presenting Irish stories for circulation in the British periodical press. As such, examination of these new material conditions in the post-*D.U.M.* period is important to understanding some of the changes in Le Fanu's later writing.

Le Fanu's connection with Dickens existed long before he first published in *All the Year Round*. Dickens's magazine commenced to much fanfare with the serial publication of *A Tale of Two Cities*, an immensely popular start to a magazine that already had a confirmed readership carried over from *Household Words*. John M. L. Drew notes that Dickens 'made

³⁷ *All the Year Round* ran for almost four decades until 1895. After Dickens's death in June 1870 his son, Charles Junior, took over as editor.

³⁸ Elaine Ostry, *Social Dreaming: Dickens and the Fairy Tale* (New York & London: Routledge, 2002), p. 108. In general, studies on Dickens as an editor seem to agree that he was meticulous and autocratic. A notable exception is Shu-Fang Lai, 'Fact or Fancy: What Can we learn about Dickens from His Periodicals "Household Words" and "All the Year Round"?'', *Victorian Periodical Review*, 34.1 (2001), 41-53. Lai argues that 'It defies common sense' that Dickens was able to oversee all content to such an exacting standard. Lai, p. 42.

³⁹ See Hall, *Dialogues in the Margin*, p. 81, and Sheridan Le Fanu, p. 55. Bentley's insistence on fiction written with an English setting and in modern times had, without a doubt, the most significant impact on the development of Le Fanu's writing.

several policy changes which affected the contents, preparation and distribution of *All the Year Round*. The most far-reaching of these was the decision to permanently “reserve[...] the first place in these pages for a continuous original work of fiction”.⁴⁰ It appears that Le Fanu adopted a similar approach when compiling the *D.U.M.*, as in the early autumn of 1861 he used *The House by the Church-yard* and his subsequent novels as lead stories in many issues.⁴¹ Furthermore, while petitioning Bentley to publish *The Rose and Key* in January 1870, Le Fanu used Dickens to further his cause: ‘Mr Dickens to whom I described the plot says “your sketch is very new, striking, & touching. It should make a remarkable story”’, adding a further endorsement that Dickens ‘has accepted every paper I sent him’ without revision (although we know from Dickens’s letters that this was mainly because he could not read Le Fanu’s handwriting).⁴² By the 1860s, Dickens was extremely influential in the publishing world. Not only was his magazine one of – if not the most – popular of the period, the mere mention of his name was seemingly enough to verify one’s own literary credentials.⁴³ Deborah Wynne remarks that *All the Year Round* ‘attracted considerably more readers than *Household Words*’, eschewing politics in favour of ‘the serialisation of novels by well-known authors’, arguing that its popularity was primarily ‘based on its delivery of sensational texts’ in line with ‘the vogue for sensation novels which emerged during the early 1860s’.⁴⁴ Likewise, Drew points to Dickens’s influence on serial publishing more broadly, outlining that through his ‘synoptic leading articles, the cutting edge of *Household Words* and its reforming agenda’, Dickens ‘made way for historical and “sensation” fiction. *All the Year Round*, no less than the *Examiner* or *Punch*, indexed the wider decline of radicalism in the 1860s’.⁴⁵ It was quite an accomplishment, then, that Le Fanu managed to place a number of stories in *All the Year Round* in between 1869-72, including ‘Madam Crowl’s Ghost’ in the Christmas issue of 1870 and in the Spring of the same year, the Irish-set trio: ‘The Child that went with the Fairies’, ‘The White Cat of Drumgunniol’, and ‘Stories of Lough Guir’. With his departure from the *D.U.M.*

⁴⁰ John M. L. Drew, *Dickens the Journalist* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p. 138.

⁴¹ McCormack notes that Le Fanu records the sale of the *D.U.M.* in the summer of 1861 and to include the July issue, but that the transfer of ownership was not registered until August 1861. *The House by the Church-yard* commenced serialisation in October 1861. *Sheridan Le Fanu*, pp. 198-99.

⁴² Le Fanu to George Bentley, 3 January 1870 in Walter Eugene Edens, ‘Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu: A Minor Victorian and his Publisher’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Illinois, 1963), p. 237. *The Rose and Key* was serialised in *All the Year Round* in 1871.

⁴³ *All the Year Round* had an average circulation of 100,000, and a peak circulation of 300,000 in the 1860s according to Alvin Sullivan (ed.), *British Literary Magazines: The Victorian and Edwardian Age, 1837-1913* (Connecticut and London: Greenwood, 1984), p. 11.

⁴⁴ Deborah Wynne, ““We were unhealthy and unsafe”: Dickens’ *Great Expectations* and *All the Year Round*’s Anxiety Stories’, *Journal of Victorian Culture*, 5 (2000), 45-59 (pp. 45-46).

⁴⁵ Drew, p. 138.

and a budding relationship with Dickens and the English press, 1869 heralds a change in Le Fanu's life and writing.

In addition to the stand-alone works published in the aforementioned British magazines, Le Fanu published his late novels and collections with a variety of London publishers including Chapman and Hall, Hurst and Blackett, and Tinsley Brothers. It is likely Le Fanu felt that the British market was more lucrative than the now-limited domestic domain. The issue of promoting a Protestant Irish nationalism in an Irish journal had moved down the agenda, while improving his income as best he could likely moved up. While Le Fanu was certainly adept at adapting to a trend, the demand for fairy and folk tales happened to coincide with own interests in writing about rural Ireland at a time when he found himself relatively free of other journalistic commitments. Jack Zipes demonstrates that there was a revival of the fairy tale from the 1860s onward, in which 'literary conservatism in children's book publishing was challenged by a new wave of innovative fairy tales'. Zipes points to 'the reissue of the Grimms' *German Popular Stories* (1868) [...] and William Allingham's *In Fairy Land* (1870)' as two notable examples of popular editions at the time.⁴⁶ Due to his time spent in Limerick, Le Fanu had a ready stock of raw material for such lore, which meant that he probably composed these stories fairly rapidly. Even though Le Fanu returned to writing Irish fiction set in the same region as the Purcell stories, the absence of a guiding metanarrative provided by the *D.U.M.* and the very different conditions of Irish society in the late nineteenth century mean that his perspective and agenda in writing these late rural tales changed quite significantly. Although the *D.U.M.* had always maintained a readership in Britain, and Le Fanu was also well-accustomed to writing 'of an English subject and in modern times', he was now required to write Irish stories for an English audience, as opposed to the Irish stories he composed for the intended reader of the *D.U.M.*: the educated, conservative, middle-class Irish Protestant.⁴⁷ A level of "distancing" was therefore inevitable.

While attempting to appeal to current trends in popular readership, Le Fanu also had to address a new challenge in presenting Irish fiction to a British audience. 'The Child that went with the Fairies', 'The White Cat of Drumgunniol', and 'Stories of Lough Guir' all evoke the locality of east county Limerick – a relatively unknown region of rural Ireland – yet as these stories were published in a London-based periodical, Le Fanu had to refract a view of Ireland for a British Victorian readership. Julie Anne Stevens in her examination of the "Irish scene"

⁴⁶ Jack Zipes, *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion: The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization*, 2nd edtn. (London: Routledge, 1983; 2012), p. 106.

⁴⁷ R. Bentley to Le Fanu, 26 February 1863. Edens, p. 164.

in the fiction of Somerville and Ross notes that in their work there is a ‘deliberate distancing of the [English] readers from the life of the [Irish-set] novel’ which is often ‘furthered by the narrator’s detachment from the characters whose caste is clearly lower than that of the narrator or implied readers’.⁴⁸ Whereas Le Fanu’s Purcell stories were narrated by the eponymous priest, distanced by his education but nevertheless of like class, creed, and country to the characters in his stories, the characters depicted in the three Limerick legends are presented through the lens of an outsider who becomes acquainted with the locality and its stories through the narration of a local. Kevin Whelan states that ‘The technical problems of writing Ireland while reading England could be insurmountable’, particularly in that the ‘auto-exotic or auto-ethnographic imperative created an unstable tone – at once moralizing, apologetic, defensive and didactic’. Essentially, at what pitch to write and at whom to pitch the tone was a deeply complicated affair given that Irish writers were ‘operating under the disabling weight of British perceptions’ as well as contesting (or complying with), colonial stereotypes.⁴⁹ Le Fanu’s depiction of the Irish scene, then, required the use of an outsider to act as an entry point for the British reader, whereas such artifice was not necessary for the Purcell stories. The presence of lexical explanations is a further indication of Le Fanu’s awareness of his new audience: ‘[...] a hawthorn tree beside a little lough, a large and deep pool, such as I have heard called a tarn in England’;⁵⁰ “‘When I was riding up the bohereen,” – the Irish term meaning a little road, such as leads up to a farm-house’;⁵¹ and later in describing an Irish wake, ‘The usual practice is to place the body in the great room, or kitchen, as it is called, of the house’.⁵² The material conditions of *All the Year Round* and its readership were evidently important factors in determining the composition of these stories.

However, Le Fanu explicitly grounds himself within the Irish folklore tradition in the three Limerick legends. The anonymous narrators of ‘The White Cat’ and ‘Stories of Lough Guir’ make specific reference to their roles as folklore collectors. In ‘The White Cat’ we are told that the narrator is ‘desirous of studying some Irish records which had fallen into my hands [...] inquiring for a teacher capable of instructing me in the Irish language’.⁵³ In ‘Stories of Lough Guir’, the narrator discusses his interactions with local storytellers the Miss Bailys, who

⁴⁸ Julie Anne Stevens, *The Irish Scene in Somerville and Ross* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2007), p. 23.

⁴⁹ Kevin, Whelan, ‘Writing Ireland: Reading England’, in *Ireland in the Nineteenth Century: Regional Identity* ed. by Glenn Hooper and Leon Litvack (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), pp. 185-98 (p. 189).

⁵⁰ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘The White Cat of Drumgunniol’, *All the Year Round*, 3.2 (1870), 420-25 (p. 420). Hereafter cited as, and abbreviated to, ‘The White Cat’.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 422.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 423.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 420.

‘were visited at their house at Lough Guir by Mr. Crofton Croker; and are, I think mentioned by name in the second series of his fairy legends’.⁵⁴ All three stories are informed by the early folklore collections by the likes of Croker, as well as Patrick Kennedy’s work in the post-Famine period, after which time attitudes to folk culture changed significantly. Le Fanu’s fiction is written in the style of oral storytelling, and the stories masquerade as folk and fairy legends based in the specific locality of Limerick. The distinction between organic, oral folk culture and the fabrication of written folk “lore” cultivated for mass consumption has caused much debate.⁵⁵ It is therefore important to understand the shift in thinking about folklore between the early and late nineteenth century, as compared to the presentation of the Purcell stories in the 1830s, these later tales engage with elements of the fairy realm not featured in his earlier fiction.

In order to contextualise the shift from pre- to post-Famine folklore writing, it is helpful to consider the development of folklore in chronological terms. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the emergence of philological antiquarianism had Romantic connotations and was connected to the genre of travel writing, of describing far-away places and far-away cultures to a domestic (British), audience, although where Ireland was concerned, the distance was usually cultural rather than geographical.⁵⁶ These collections sought to identify “primitive” cultures understood to be less developed than those of modern European countries. In the preface to the 1828 reprint of Croker’s *Fairy Legends and Traditions in the South of Ireland*, Croker defends his rationale in presenting and perpetuating the ‘delusion’ of an uneducated peasantry and their belief in supernatural phenomena:

On the contrary, my aim has been to bring the twilight tales of the peasantry before the view of the philosopher; as, if suffered to remain unnoticed, the latent belief in them may long have lingered among the inhabitants of the wild mountain and lonesome glen, to retard the progress of their civilization.⁵⁷

Croker makes clear that his aim is to present the ignorant superstitions of the peasantry in order to understand why these societies are less evolved, and thereby to assist them in becoming

⁵⁴ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘Stories of Lough Guir’, *All the Year Round*, 3.2 (1870), 493-98 (p. 493). Hereafter cited as ‘Stories of Lough Guir’.

⁵⁵ Richard Dorson has used the term “Fakelore” to describe ‘the synthetic product claiming to be authentic oral tradition but actually tailored for mass edification’, a brand of fiction particularly evident in the late nineteenth century. See Richard M. Dorson, *Folklore and Fakelore* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 5, and discussion in Chapter Two in relation to ‘Chapter in the History of a Tyrone Family’.

⁵⁶ This practice of travel writing was common throughout Europe but for the purposes of this argument I will consider writing about Ireland for a British (English) audience.

⁵⁷ Thomas Crofton Croker, ‘Preface’, *Fairy Legends and Traditions in the South of Ireland: Part II* (London: John Murray, 1828), pp. v-x (p. vii).

civilized.⁵⁸ Croker considered such backward thinking to be harmful to society; his objective was to highlight the existence of such ‘latent belief’ because he felt that had it continued to ‘remain unnoticed’, these societies could not ‘progress’.⁵⁹

By mid-century, folklore developed a scientific inflection, influenced by advances in evolutionary thinking by Charles Darwin (1809-82) and Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). Ó Giolláin explains that “‘social Darwinism’ [...] tended to dominate scholarly thinking’ and in turn, it also ‘influenced the study of folklore, not least through concentration on the scrupulous collection and publication of testimonials from living oral tradition’. Moreover, this scientific turn allowed folklore to ‘distance itself from Romantic orientations, which were becoming discredited in a more scientific age’.⁶⁰ The study of folklore, then, had moved from an understanding of folk culture as perverse and backwards, as a novelty for the educated readership, to a more preservationist approach. Anne Markey also signals a distinction between folklore of the 1820s and ’30s, compared to that of the post-Famine period, arguing that after the Famine ‘Its practitioners believed that folklore was a valuable resource threatened by the spread of literacy and changing material conditions’. Using William Wilde’s *Irish Popular Superstitions* (1852) as an example of this shift, Markey argues that Wilde ‘produce[s] a rambling commentary on Irish history and the threatened disappearance of the Irish language and popular traditions’, while his evocation of whimsical Irish characters is ‘offset by the acuity with which he identifies the causes of the poverty and misery that define the lives of the majority of the Irish population’.⁶¹ This type of approach to folklore was also adopted by Patrick Kennedy, who, in line with the Wildes, believed that folklore had intrinsic cultural and national value. In understanding Le Fanu’s late Limerick stories, his fiction can be seen as moving along the trajectory from Croker to Kennedy. Le Fanu’s close working relationship with Kennedy may have encouraged a renewed interest in the genre in the 1870s. McCormack argues that ‘Kennedy’s influence on his editor’s writing is more pervasive than merely convenient. As a collector of folklore [...] he surely directed Le Fanu’s remarkable return to

⁵⁸ See Anne Markey, *Oscar Wilde’s Fairy Tales: Origins and Contexts* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2011), pp. 24-25. Markey cites collections by Gerald Griffin, John and Michael Banim, and Mrs S. C. Hall as examples of ‘memoirs and sketches relating to folklore and rural life in Ireland’ that followed Croker’s and had a similar civilising agenda, ‘providing entertaining versions of traditional narratives for middle-class English and Irish readers’, p. 24.

⁵⁹ Croker, p. vii.

⁶⁰ Ó Giolláin, p. 50.

⁶¹ Anne Markey, ‘The Discovery of Irish Folklore’, *New Hibernia Review*, 10 (2006), 21-43 (pp. 30-31).

Irish traditional material in his later short stories and tales'.⁶² While “directed” in this instance may be too strong a word – in fact if anything, it was Le Fanu who “directed” Kennedy’s work, acting as patron of his early literary endeavours – it is possible that Kennedy was at least partly responsible for reigniting Le Fanu’s interest in such fiction.⁶³ Kennedy’s tendency to present stories from his home county of Wexford is not unlike Le Fanu’s habit of writing stories set in Limerick. Moreover, the concurrent shift in popular demand for such stories certainly bolstered a return to writing stories set in rural Ireland.

The crossover between fairy tales and folklore has caused some debate and warrants a brief explanation here before consideration of Le Fanu’s stories. Folklore, Caroline Sumpter explains, is generally understood as composed of stories from ‘those groups constructed as “the folk”, who were often depicted as surviving beyond the reaches of modernity’, but which could also include stories about fairies.⁶⁴ Although the fairy tale ‘originated within an oral storytelling tradition and was created and cultivated by adults’, generally the fairy tale is understood as a written form.⁶⁵ Though the fairy tale is often a story *about* fairies, this is not always the case. In general, the fairy tale has utopian qualities in that it inverts the order of the real world, often for the better, although once again this definition is not universally applicable as some fairy tales provoke negative inversions of society for subversive purposes. Ostry explains that ‘The strong moral connotations of the fairy tale make it fertile ground for social criticism. The good (and often disadvantaged) are rewarded; the bad are punished’.⁶⁶ Ostry also points out that Dickens himself believed in the subversive potential of the fairy tale: ‘Dickens felt that fancy and the fairy tale was charged with social and political significance, and thereby represented an imaginative alternative society that cherished fact over fancy’.⁶⁷ Le Fanu no doubt saw an opportunity to capitalise on this fairy tale trend; Dickens’s evident penchant for the genre

⁶² *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 239. On Kennedy’s collaboration with Le Fanu and the *D.U.M.*, Hall remarks that ‘Folklorist Patrick Kennedy published most of his more than two-hundred *DUM* contributions during Le Fanu’s editorship’, p. 195.

⁶³ Le Fanu provided patronage and a platform for publication for Kennedy’s work, and in recognition of this, Kennedy dedicated his 1866 book, *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts*, to Le Fanu: ‘To Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, Esq., [...] Dear Sir, I beg to offer this collection of Irish Legends to your acceptance, from respect for your high position among English writers, in consideration of your being a truly good man, and in gratitude for your kind encouragement of my own literary attempts. Without that encouragement I should probably never have an opportunity of penning a dedication to any one. I am, dear Sir, Your faithful Servant, Patrick Kennedy’. Author’s dedication, n. p.

⁶⁴ Caroline Sumpter, ‘Fairy Tale and Folklore in the Nineteenth Century’, *Literature Compass*, 6 (2009), 785-98 (p. 788). For the development of folk lore and fairy lore, see also Diarmuid Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore: Tradition, Modernity, Identity* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2000), and George Denis Zimmermann, *The Irish Storyteller* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), discussed in Chapter Two.

⁶⁵ Zipes, p. 3.

⁶⁶ Ostry, p. 7.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

provided him with the opportunity to further his relationship with *All the Year Round* following the successful submission of ‘Green Tea’ the previous winter. Le Fanu already possessed a wealth of fairy lore from his youth in Limerick that could be easily tailored as short sketches. However, Le Fanu’s late Limerick stories are not fairy tales, rather they ought to be understood as fairy legends, which places them specifically in the context of an Irish folk tradition, rather than within the broader emergence of the European fairy tale. Andrew Teverson formulates a ‘tripartite division’ of the folk narrative: ‘the myth, the legend and the folk tale’. In particular, Teverson points out that the legend ‘is a story that has become attached, at some point in time, to a specified historical personage, a specified locality, or specified event’.⁶⁸ Le Fanu’s stories are fixed on the specific location of Limerick, and within that, Lough Guir is described as ‘a kind of centre of the operations of the Munster fairies’.⁶⁹ Furthermore, fairy legends admit the use of a variety of supernatural creatures, such as the banshee and the púca, and are not strictly limited to the portrayal of fairies. The three Limerick legends display a renewed interest in the folk culture of rural Ireland towards the end of Le Fanu’s career and his life.

‘The Child that went with the Fairies’

Published in early February 1870, ‘The Child that went with the Fairies’ is Le Fanu’s first and only story to depict fairies in the strictest sense of the term, in that the plot concerns a child stolen by fairies. It is perhaps partly because of this singularity that the story has received some critical attention, while its companion pieces have remained relatively obscure.⁷⁰ ‘The White Cat of Drumgunniol’ and ‘Stories of Lough Guir’ do not portray fairies and instead are more concerned with supernatural omens and local legends. These stories are told in the first person by an anonymous narrator who assumes the position of an outsider (just like the supposed reader), either as a kind of amateur folklorist or a travel writer, offering sketches of Irish rural life and the superstitious peasantry who live there. All three stories were published anonymously and not attributed to Le Fanu until 1923 when M. R. James identified a number of Le Fanu’s unsigned tales for collection in *Madam Crowl’s Ghost and Other Tales of*

⁶⁸ Andrew Teverson, *Fairy Tale* (London & New York: Routledge, 2013), p. 15.

⁶⁹ ‘Stories of Lough Guir’, p. 494.

⁷⁰ See Andrew Smith, *The Ghost Story 1840-1920: A Cultural History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), pp. 152-54; Peter Bell, “‘The Child That Went with the Fairies’: The Folk Tale and the Ghost Story”, in *Reflections in a Glass Darkly: Essays on J. Sheridan Le Fanu*, ed. by Gary William Crawford, Jim Rockhill, and Brian J. Showers (New York: Hippocampus Press, 2011), pp. 418-28, and in the same volume, Simon Cooke, “‘A Regular Contributor’: Le Fanu’s Short Stories, *All the Year Round*, and the Influence of Dickens”, pp. 206-22; McCormack, *Sheridan Le Fanu*, pp. 239-43; and brief mention by Robert Tracy in his introduction to *In a Glass Darkly* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. vii-xxviii (p. xxiii).

Mystery.⁷¹ ‘The Child that went with the Fairies’ opens in the familiar setting of east county Limerick, on the Clare and Tipperary borders. The narrator describes the remote rural scene as follows:

For more than three Irish miles [the road] traverses a deserted country. A wide, black bog, level as a lake, skirted with copse, spreads at the left, as you journey northward, and the long and irregular line of mountain rises at the right [...] A scanty pasturage, on which browsed a few scattered sheep or kine, skirts this solitary road for some miles, and under shelter of a hillock, and of two or three great ash-trees, stood, not many years ago, the little thatched cabin of a widow named Mary Ryan.⁷²

The story is set in the remote area among the Slieveelim mountains (typically spelled elsewhere as Sliabh Phelim or Slieve Felim), and the bog in question is most likely Grageen Fen and Bog, situated among the Slieve Felim mountains, nearby Murroe wood and Glenstal Castle in the neighbourhood of Abington. The narrator is never revealed as a character in ‘The Child’ but their distance in describing the locality positions them as an outsider, as someone who has been to the area but is not “of” the area, and is describing the area to other outsiders. The topographical introduction is strikingly similar to that in one of Croker’s stories, ‘The Legend of Knocksheogowna’, which is set in Tipperary. The narrator of the story describes a hill in the area, ‘one of the most singularly shaped hills in the world. It has got a peak at the top like a conical nightcap thrown carelessly over your head as you awake in the morning’, that is supposedly the haunt of the fairies.⁷³ The hill of Lisnavoura on the Limerick-Tipperary border that features in ‘The Child’ is also described as having ‘a strangely dome-like summit’ and is the locus of the fairies.⁷⁴ It is quite possible that this is the same hill as described in Croker’s story, but regardless of this, what is clear is that Le Fanu’s story is modelled on the same folk tradition as that used by Croker, in which fairies are linked to certain topographical features such as hills and lakes. This same trope is evoked in ‘The White Cat’ and ‘Stories of Lough Guir’, in which supernatural phenomena are linked to bodies of water.

Upon returning from the bog one evening, the widow Ryan finds that her three youngest children are missing. Along with her eldest child, Nell, she frantically searches the vicinity, noting that the sun is setting rapidly behind ‘haunted Lisnavoura’, a nearby summit and the

⁷¹ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, *Madam Crowl’s Ghost and Other Tales of Mystery*, collected and ed. by M. R. James (London: G. Bell & Sons Limited, 1923).

⁷² Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘The Child that went with the Fairies’, *All the Year Round*, 3.2 (February 1870), 228-33 (pp. 228-29). Hereafter abbreviated to ‘The Child’.

⁷³ Thomas Crofton Croker, ‘The Legend of Knocksheogowna’, *Fairy Legends and Traditions in the South of Ireland*, second edn. (London: John Murray, 1826), pp. 3-8 (p. 3).

⁷⁴ ‘The Child’, p. 229.

‘lonely hill-haunt of the “Good people,” as the fairies are called euphemistically, whose strangely dome-like summit rose not half a mile away’.⁷⁵ Eventually, two of the children return, explaining that their brother has been taken: ““He’s gone away with the grand ladies””.⁷⁶ It transpires that while playing in the road, the children were startled by the appearance of an old-fashioned, gilded coach with two females seated inside, ‘A beautiful and “very grand-looking” lady’ and ‘a black woman [...] whom they did not like so well’.⁷⁷ The beautiful woman takes a liking to fair-haired Billy, lifting him up into the carriage. The carriage then departs, heading in the direction of Lisnavoura, while the two remaining children pursue the trail of apples that fall from the carriage window, until suddenly the carriage disappears entirely in a swirl of dust. The children ‘screamed their brother’s name after him, but their cries were lost in the vacant air. At the same time they thought they heard a hollow voice say, close to them, “Go home”’. Billy never returns to his family, although he is occasionally spied by his siblings ‘peeping in archly at the door’, only to disappear when they run to greet him.⁷⁸ The family accept Billy as dead, although ‘no grave received him’, and they are unable to bury his body on consecrated ground ‘in the old church-yard of Abington’.⁷⁹

Though the plot is quickly told, the story itself is remarkable for two reasons: Le Fanu’s depiction of the fairies themselves (which others have also commented upon), and the portrayal of the rural Irish landscape and its people, especially in light of the same scenes depicted in the Purcell stories. In previous analysis of ‘The Child’, critics have tended to centre their discussion on the interaction between the fairies and the children. McCormack detects mainly biographical links in ‘The Child’, rather than examining the story in any great detail. He considers the story to be about the ‘human acceptance of death’, when after Billy’s abduction, the family are reconciled ‘to the fact of his disappearance’, while the narrator is ‘at peace’ in his ‘remoteness’ regarding the reality of death’.⁸⁰ Indeed, many folk stories were used as coping mechanisms to help people make sense of tragedy, such as infant mortality or disability, or other unexplainable acts and forces of nature. They also functioned as cautionary tales. Angela Bourke has also pointed to the “rationalising” effect of folk narratives and their role in reinforcing standards of living.⁸¹ Ann Cahill remarks that ‘As with many other non-industrialised cultures, natural disasters were seen in terms of the supernatural’, while myths helped to explain human

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 229.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 230.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 231.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 232.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 233.

⁸⁰ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 240.

⁸¹ Angela Bourke, *The Burning of Bridget Cleary: A True Story* (London: Pimlico, 2006), pp. 33-38.

existence and legends memorialized human history.⁸² Other analyses of ‘The Child’ have concentrated on the description of the two females inside the coach as an example of Le Fanu’s skill in writing scenes of horror. The contrast between the beautiful woman and the black woman is striking, and while the children are seduced by the former, they are frightened by the latter who remains silent but is unnervingly ‘convulsed’ with ‘suppressed merriment’ throughout the encounter. The black woman – a designation that is presumably racial and deliberately exotic – ‘gathered a rich silk and gold handkerchief that was in her fingers up to her lips, and seemed to thrust ever so much of it, fold after fold, into her capacious mouth, as they thought, to smother her laughter’, though her eyes ‘looked angrier than they had ever seen eyes look before’.⁸³ This startling image is reminiscent of Madame de la Rougierre, the ‘smirking phantom’ in *Uncle Silas* who is described on a number of occasions as having a large mouth: ‘She eats like a wolf, she does, the great raw-boned hanimal [*sic*] and, oogh! such a mouth!’.⁸⁴ Her grotesqueness is amplified by her unnaturally large proportions, described as ‘a great gaping reptile’⁸⁵ with ‘large and rather hollow features [...] smiling unpleasantly on me [...] gobbling and cackling shrilly’.⁸⁶ Similarly, the footmen of the antique carriage in which the women sit are ‘diminutive, and ludicrously out of proportion with the enormous horses of the equipage’.⁸⁷ As with characters in the Purcell stories, physical deformities and ill-proportioned people indicate a deformity of character, a feature that is carried through to ‘Lough Guir’ and ‘The White Cat’. Jacqueline Simpson has also commented on this ‘unusual’ feature in Le Fanu’s writing that she believes to be the author’s own invention, noting that ‘In folklore, one quite often comes across bogies and spectres who swell up in height or to

⁸² Ann Cahill, ‘Irish Folktales and Supernatural Literature: Patrick Kennedy and Sheridan Le Fanu’, in *That Other World: The Supernatural and the Fantastic in Irish Literature and its Contexts*, ed. by Bruce Stewart, 2 vols (Gerards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1998), I (1998), pp. 307-19 (p. 307).

⁸³ ‘The Child’, p. 232. A similar scene is evoked in Le Fanu’s 1872 novella *Carmilla*, originally serialised in *The Dark Blue* between December 1871 and March 1872. Carmilla arrives in a carriage with two women, one of whom is ‘a fine looking woman for her time of life’, and poses as Carmilla’s mother, p. 441. The second woman is not noticed by all of the party as she does not leave the carriage. Her presence is only remarked upon later: ‘A hideous black woman, with a sort of coloured turban on her head, who was gazing all the time from the carriage window, nodding and grinning derisively towards the ladies, with gleaming eyes and large white eye-balls, and her teeth set as if in fury’, p. 444. This black woman appears to be identical to the black woman in ‘The Child’. Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘Carmilla’, Part I, *The Dark Blue*, 2 (1871), 434-48.

⁸⁴ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, *Uncle Silas: A Tale of Bartram-Haugh*, intro. by Montague R. James (Oxford: Oxford University Press; The World’s Classics, 1926), p. 19.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁸⁷ ‘The Child’, p. 231.

monstrous girth, but I cannot recall one that stretches out horizontally', as in Le Fanu's fiction.⁸⁸

Andrew Smith, in his reading of the story, focuses on the 'repeated references to laughter' which he argues is used to 'represent the "horror" of the encounter' as it 'does not invite the reader to participate in its humour, but merely to note the close conjunction between laughter and anger'.⁸⁹ Smith links the usage of laughter to Bhabha's theory of colonial mimicry, arguing that laughter has 'a political context' and that 'the moment of suppressed laughter which both damns the present and condemns the past and leaves the abducted Bill [*sic*] with nowhere to go'. Billy's new spectral existence, Smith argues, 'haunts the place as an invisible presence which, like a Catholic past and a marginalised Protestant present, cannot be properly discerned or accommodated'.⁹⁰ Smith's analysis forms part of a larger argument about how Le Fanu introduces in such stories a 'pre-Protestant Irish culture, which in turn renders spectral, or makes liminal, the politically marginalised Anglo-Irish' in the nineteenth century.⁹¹ Smith concludes that 'How to make the past truly dead is a central issue in Le Fanu's tales'.⁹² However, I would argue the opposite. Previously, Le Fanu's preoccupation with Irish history, specifically the country's colonial history, has shown that far from wishing to "make the past dead" Le Fanu is preoccupied with resurrecting it. Additionally, Le Fanu is rarely (if ever) concerned with exploring a pre-Protestant or "ancient" Irish history, rather he is fixated on the specificities surrounding New English settlement and the cross-over with Old English power in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As there is no direct reference as to the period in which 'The Child' is set, Smith's reading of a pre-Protestant Ireland is also somewhat misleading. The story is narrated in the present tense, and the narrator states that the Ryan cottage stood in the area 'not many years ago'; as such, it seems reasonable to infer that the

⁸⁸ Jacqueline Simpson, 'The Charm of Old Women's Tales: Le Fanu's Use of Oral Tradition', *The Green Book*, 1 (2013), 43-55 (p. 49). Simpson is referring specifically to 'The White Cat' and 'Stories of Lough Guir' on this occasion, both of which contain scenes where characters stretch out to great lengths.

⁸⁹ Andrew Smith, *The Ghost Story 1840-1920: A Cultural History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), pp. 153-54. Victor Sage has also examined this aspect of Le Fanu's fiction in his study of *Uncle Silas*, in which he notes that 'the whole narrative crosses the barriers of genre between the comic and the gothic in a strange and interesting way'. Sage cites the episode of the coach diversion and the intertextual references to Richard Brinsley Sheridan's play *A Trip to Scarborough* (1777) as contributing to the overall effect of the novel as 'a comedy upside down'. Victor Sage, 'Resurrecting the Regency: Horror and Eighteenth-Century Comedy in Le Fanu's Fiction', in *Victorian Gothic: Literary and Cultural Manifestations in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Ruth Robbins and Julian Wolfreys (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), pp. 12-30 (p. 20 and p. 23). See also Sage's 'Gothic Laughter: Farce and Horror in Five Texts', in *Gothick Origins and Innovations*, ed. by Allan Lloyd Smith and Victor Sage (Amsterdam & Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1994), pp. 190-203.

⁹⁰ Smith, p. 154.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 155.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 157.

story is not set in the distant past.⁹³ The mention of Sarsfield and King William in the past tense also suggests that the story is closer to the nineteenth century than the seventeenth. Moreover, the fairies are depicted as aristocratic, rather than primitive or pre-modern. The woman in the carriage is referred to as a ‘princess’, while the horse-drawn carriage itself is described as ‘old-fashioned and gorgeous’ with an ‘antique splendour [...] scarlet and blazing with gold’ and attended by ‘footmen behind in gay liveries, and three-cocked hats’ their hair powdered and ponytailed in the style of the early Georgian period.⁹⁴ The fairies, then, do not symbolize a pre-modern past, but rather reveal what we already know to be Le Fanu’s preoccupation with an outmoded landed class of the early eighteenth century. If we consider the fairies to represent an avaricious nobility who prey on the destitute, then what becomes clear is the shift from the declining (though noble) Old English Jacobite class of the Purcell stories, to a decidedly darker portrayal of class politics.

In contrast to the Purcell stories, the narrator evokes a scene seemingly remote in time and space that yet exists concurrently with electricity and mass transport but appears stagnant by contrast. The ‘little thatched cabin’ of the Ryan family is marvellously decorated with pagan totems of defence against superstitious malevolence: plants, horse-shoes, beads, and holy water, ‘the defences and bulwarks against the intrusion of that unearthly and evil power [...] the “Good people”’.⁹⁵ The Ryans appear to exist in complete isolation, a ‘solitary family’ disconnected and decontextualized from their surroundings.⁹⁶ This Limerick is ‘a deserted country’⁹⁷ in which the shouts of the children for their stolen brother are ‘lost in the vacant air’.⁹⁸ Billy, too, is decontextualized by his disappearance: ‘no grave received him’ and there is ‘no landmark to show where little Billy was hidden’.⁹⁹ His spectrality, as Smith argues, indicates an ‘invisible presence’, whereas in the Purcell stories the ruins and remnants of Cromwellian confiscation served to fix the characters in Irish history with a permanency that was unquestionably tangible and visible.¹⁰⁰ ‘The Child’ marks a turn in Le Fanu’s writing about Ireland. Wynne argues that what she calls Dickens’s “anxiety stories” are representative of ‘popular responses to fears of human degeneration brought to a climax in the late 1850s by new scientific theories which unleashed anxieties about the possibilities of reversion’. *All the*

⁹³ ‘The Child’, p. 229.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 231.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 229.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

¹⁰⁰ Smith, p. 154.

Year Round ‘reveals a panic response to theories of natural selection and degeneration which was manifested most strongly in the magazine’s short stories, many of which foregrounded the theme of reversion’.¹⁰¹ Though Le Fanu’s Limerick stories do not engage with the sort of biological reversion identified by Wynne (although arguably ‘Green Tea’ does), there is certainly a sense of temporal reversion in his description of the Irish scene as one frozen in time that, perhaps, reflects the Irish Protestant perspective in the 1870s.

Settler writing is particularly concerned in returning to periods of conflict as a way of working out contentious issues of the present. As discussed in Chapter Two, Le Fanu’s evocation of Jacobite-Williamite history in his early fiction served to validate the New English takeover in the eighteenth century, which in turn worked to reaffirm the idea of Protestant authority in the nineteenth century. In the 1830s, Le Fanu populated the Purcell landscape with a complex history of colonialism and class relations that fixed this rural area within the schematics of a larger national narrative. By contrast, ‘The Child’ was featured in an English periodical and as a result, the Irish colonial context was somewhat irrelevant. In the opening paragraph, the narrator remarks that the area of Limerick is ‘famous as having afforded Sarsfield a shelter’ before his ‘gallant descent upon the cannon and ammunition of King William, on its way to the beleaguering army’.¹⁰² This brief mention is reminiscent of the type of local history supplied in the Purcell stories, but its main function here is to create a link in the mind of the English readers between an obscure region of south-west Ireland and the English king. The fact that it refers to an incident of English defeat marks Limerick as a treacherous area, which adds historical credence to the story of supernatural child abduction that follows. As he was no longer writing stories in the interest of exploring Irish Protestant identity, Le Fanu’s use of history was necessarily modified at this point. Analysis of these late stories must be considered in light of the decline in Irish Protestant nationalist sentiment at the time, before it was revived in new ways towards the end of the century. The shift in Le Fanu’s perspective on rural Ireland could reflect a loss of cultural and historical “belonging” that was so persistently championed by Irish Protestants in the early decades of the nineteenth century, but which by 1870 was in decline. On disestablishment, Kevin B. Nowlan reports that while ‘the Disestablishment Act did not bring with it any great immediate social or political changes’ nevertheless ‘it was a formal recognition by the Government of the United Kingdom of the

¹⁰¹ Wynne, p. 47. Wynne argues that ‘Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species*, published in 1859, played a key role in highlighting fears of national and individual decline [...] Other scientific theories, particularly the work of Benedict-Augustin Morel on degeneration and Jacques-Joseph Moreau de Tours’ work on deviancy, had also filtered down to non-specialist readers by the early 1860s’, p. 46.

¹⁰² ‘The Child’, p. 228.

need for equality in Ireland', which along with 'the land struggle and the rise of Home Rule' would continue to challenge the position of the Ascendency in the remaining years of the century.¹⁰³ The disestablishment of the Church of Ireland removed the final vestiges of exceptionalism for Irish Protestants, while the concomitant rise of a new form of violent nationalism predicated on dismantling the landlord system prophesied the revolution to come. Whereas in the post-Union period the Protestant Ascendency rallied to conserve their position as a minority leadership, in part through the curation of Irish literature, history, and culture, by the 1870s this settler project had effectively failed. Lorenzo Veracini maintains that 'The stories settlers tell themselves about themselves are crucial to an exploration of settler colonial subjectivities', and it is clear that by this point, Le Fanu has stopped attempting to tell the settler story.¹⁰⁴

'The White Cat of Drumgunniol'

'The White Cat of Drumgunniol' was published in *All the Year Round* on Saturday, 2 April 1870, followed closely by 'Stories of Lough Guir', which was published three weeks later. The story returns the reader to the locality of east county Limerick, although the narrative introduction is more developed than that of 'The Child'. The anonymous narrator is constructed as an outsider once more, a traveller in the region who is 'desirous of studying some Irish records which had fallen into [his] hands'. In commissioning an Irish language translator, the narrator is recommended a Mr Donovan, 'dreamy, harmless, and learned', the Arnoldian Celt in every sense.¹⁰⁵ Matthew Arnold's treatise on Celtic literature was published in 1867, three years before Le Fanu's Limerick stories. Drawing from developments in theories of social evolution over the previous decade, Arnold's racial profiling was a persuasive intervention at the time. He identifies a 'feminine idiosyncrasy' and 'extravagance' in 'the sentimental Celtic nature': 'the Celt, undisciplinable, anarchical, and turbulent by nature, but out of affection and admiration giving himself body and soul to some leader, that is not a promising political temperament, it is just the opposite of the Anglo-Saxon temperament'.¹⁰⁶ In tandem with this type of scientific othering, Tilley has pointed to the emergence of visual othering in print

¹⁰³ Kevin B. Nowlan, 'Disestablishment: 1800-1869', in *Irish Anglicanism, 1869-1969*, ed by Michael Hurley (Dublin: Figgis, 1970), pp. 1-22 (p. 22).

¹⁰⁴ Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 103.

¹⁰⁵ 'The White Cat', p. 420.

¹⁰⁶ Matthew Arnold, *On the study of Celtic Literature* (London, Smith, Elder & Co., 1867), pp. 108-09. Charles Darwin's *The Origin of the Species* was published in 1859, while his *The Descent of Man* was shortly to follow in 1871.

culture towards the end of the century. She remarks that particularly after 1870, ‘Ireland was frequently in the English news’, while the increase in illustrations and political cartoons introduced a visual aspect to periodical culture, one that became increasingly racialized.¹⁰⁷ The ‘pictures, cartoons, and advertisements of these papers were part of a web or meaning that extended across formats’,¹⁰⁸ that introduced ‘an intelligent and insatiable audience’ into a ‘semiotic field as participants in meaning making’.¹⁰⁹ Though Le Fanu’s stories were not illustrated, they did contribute to a culture of othering in the British press through their characterisation of the Irish peasantry as an overwhelmingly agrarian, superstitious, and atavistic group. Further to this, Sumpter reports that ‘Nineteenth-century debates over the origin, evolution and dissemination of folktales [...] offer important insights into constructions of race, nation and prehistory, and indeed into the contested ways that Victorian culture viewed human origins’.¹¹⁰ In other words, the development of evolutionary science is linked to changing interpretations of folklore and fairy tales from mid-century. As such, the composition of these stories was also necessarily affected.

Though he has a ‘dreamy mind’ and a ‘proneness to the illusions of fancy’, we are informed that Donovan has been ‘educated as a Sizar in Trinity College, Dublin’ and ‘now supported himself by teaching’, a statement that attempts to present Donovan as somewhat rational.¹¹¹ Following the anonymous narrator’s heuristic introduction, Donovan commences the tale of the eponymous white cat of Drumgunniol who, it transpires, has been an omen of impending death for the entire Donovan family for almost a century. Jennifer Schacker identifies the role of “double-voicing” in Croker’s fairy legends in the 1820s, a combination of first-person narration that is persuasive in its ‘authenticity and immediacy’, framed within an ‘interpretive, editorializing voice [which] gains authority from scientific disinterestedness (the ability to “give them as they found them”)’.¹¹² The anonymous narrator operates as an entry

¹⁰⁷ Elizabeth Tilley, ‘Irish Political Cartoons and the New Journalism’, *Ireland and the New Journalism*, ed. by Karen Steele and Michael de Nie (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 81-100 (p. 81). Tilley notes that ‘legislative, technological, social, and political changes converged in the last decades of the nineteenth century to make Ireland a receptive location for the New Journalism’, p. 82. Technological innovations in printing and illustrating combined with reduced printing costs and a broadening educated and informed readership contributed to an increase in the number of papers published in Ireland and Britain at the time, pp. 81-83.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

¹¹⁰ Sumpter, p. 790.

¹¹¹ ‘The White Cat’, p. 420. Merriam-Webster defines a Sizar as ‘a student (as in the university of Cambridge) who receives an allowance toward college expenses and who originally acted as a servant to other students in return for this allowance’, <<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sizar>> [Accessed 4 February 2018].

¹¹² Jennifer Schacker, *National Dreams: The Remaking of Fairy Tales in Nineteenth-Century England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), pp. 52-53.

point for the English reader unfamiliar with Irish customs and culture, and with whose viewpoint the reader tacitly aligns themselves. Le Fanu had already used Purcell in this sort of role, but the narrator of ‘The White Cat’ is clearly marked by his outsider status, whereas Purcell was very much an insider. Donovan, who functions as the insider on this occasion, tells the story of the white cat, tracing its origin to his ‘grand-uncle, Connor [“Con”] Donovan’, a strong farmer who ninety years previous (c. 1780), had ill-treated a girl he had promised to marry. She died broken-hearted and later returned from the grave to exact her revenge on Con Donovan, appearing sometimes as herself, but more often in the form of a white cat. Since then, the cat has been attached to the Donovan family, foretelling the death of any member who sees it, including Donovan’s own father.

Le Fanu’s use of spectrality in these later stories is different both to the Purcell stories and the Dublin ghost stories; these later “ghosts” are not the spectres of history as before. Rather, the characters are haunted by spectres from the fairy realm, in particular the banshee and the púca. These spectres are connected to hereditary family lines: the Donovans by the white cat, the Ryans by ‘haunted Lisnavoura’ which casts its ‘lengthening shadow’ over the ‘solitary little cabin’, while in ‘Stories of Lough Guir’ the Magician Earl returns every seven years to plague the locality and the Baily family.¹¹³ Both the white cat and the Magician Earl of Lough Guir can be understood as púcas, haunting a specific area and taking various forms. W. B. Yeats in his 1890 collection, *Fairy and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry*, provides a universal definition for the púca: ‘The Pooka [púca] seems essentially an animal spirit [...] On solitary mountains and among old ruins he lives.’ Furthermore, the púca is connected with the ‘Water-horse [that] used to come out of the water to gallop on the sands and in the fields [the púca] has many shapes [and] Like all spirits, he is only half in the world of form’.¹¹⁴ The hereditary spectre that haunts the Donovan family is shapeshifter and connected to the area surrounding a lake. A spectral woman appears to Donovan while a young boy. She crosses a field opposite the lough where he is seated, and upon reaching the edge of the water, ‘instead of arresting her course at the margin of the lough [...] she went on without seeming conscious of its existence [and continued to] walk across the surface of the water’ towards him.¹¹⁵ Later, the white cat appears as an omen of death for Donovan’s father and other members of the family.

¹¹³ ‘The Child’, p. 229.

¹¹⁴ W. B. Yeats, *Fairy and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry* (London: The Walter Scott Publishing Co., 1890), p. 94.

¹¹⁵ ‘The White Cat’, p. 421.

Le Fanu's engagement with this type of legendary folk tradition in these later stories indicates a change in the settler narrative. The late rural stories were composed during an entirely different era in terms of Irish Protestant national consciousness. In broad terms, R. F. Foster points out the importance of folk and popular culture in Ireland over the course of the nineteenth century:

Rural popular culture, as prospected by Croker, would be built into the rediscovery and assertion of an individual national identity at the end of the century. And in this long process from the 1820s to the early 1900s, most of the prominent figures engaged in the exercise of reclamation were Ascendancy Protestants exploring the other side, indeed the "otherness", of their country.¹¹⁶

While this is evidently an accurate summation of the role of folklore in the nineteenth century, what Foster's sweeping overview does not address is that between the 1820s and 1900, the 'long process' fluctuated considerably. The objectives of Croker et al in the 1820s, though related, cannot be equated to Celtic revivalist fiction produced by the likes of W. B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, or Douglas Hyde during the Irish Literary Revival at the end of the century. Moreover, increasing interventions from Catholic folklorists from approximately mid-century onwards, challenge Foster's Protestant-only hypothesis. Rather, the 1860s and 1870s can be understood as a period of cultural withdrawal by Irish Protestants, and a general decline in a Protestant nationalist agenda of the kind exhibited in the pre-Famine period, as directed by magazines such as the *D.U.M.* While this Protestant nationalism was indeed revived by the likes of Yeats during the *fin de siècle* – although as Augustine Martin points out, the Protestant revivalists 'did not brandish the symbols of their separateness' as the earlier caste had done – the period leading up to the disestablishment saw Irish Protestant nationalism at a particularly low ebb.¹¹⁷

The Donovan family is plagued by the white cat for over a century, which suggests that this type of family – strong farmers – are in steady decline. Dan Donovan explains that one by one, various members of the family have passed away. Furthermore, the reader is told that the Coleman family who live nearby (the family of the girl betrayed by Con Donovan), are no longer extant: 'there are no Colemans there now at all, and that family passed away. The Famine years made great changes'.¹¹⁸ Ironically, the strong farming class continued to prosper after the Famine, and even more so after the land reforms of the 1870s. After the Famine, the

¹¹⁶ R. F. Foster, *Words Alone: Yeats and his Inheritances* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 101-02.

¹¹⁷ Augustine Martin, 'Anglo-Irish Literature', in *Irish Anglicanism, 1869-1969*, ed. by Michael Hurley, (Dublin: Figgis, 1970), pp. 120-32 (p. 121).

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 422.

sub-strata of cottiers largely disappeared from the Irish countryside, leaving the strong farming community to consolidate with one another, and with the Catholic Church ‘against external enemies, in the form of landlordism and the state’.¹¹⁹ Dan Donovan explains that his uncle jilted Ellen Coleman partly because ‘He tired of her’, but also because ‘he wanted to push himself in the world; and he married a girl of the Collopys, that had a great fortune [...] He married Mary Collopy and grew richer than before; and Ellen Coleman died broken-hearted’.¹²⁰ Con Donovan is therefore punished for his ambition, which affects his heirs thereafter. The depiction of this class as superstitious and anachronistic, as well as callously ambitious, is perhaps a criticism levelled against the upwardly mobile caste who continued to threaten the stability of the landed ascendancy from the post-Famine period onward, but particularly after the 1870s.¹²¹ Here their superstitious beliefs mark them as a class unfit to rule, while their determination to succeed at any cost indicates an anxiety surrounding the radical potential of a class takeover.

Just as with ‘The Child’, the evocation of the Limerick landscape is worthy of note. The unnamed narrator describes the area as though he is new to it; it is a ‘peculiar landscape’ with a ‘pervading sense of loneliness’, while its physical features such as the ‘roofless, ivied tower’ make it the perfect scene for ‘a wild and unearthly story’.¹²² In the Purcell stories, such ruin-strewn landscapes were evidence of a very tangible colonial history; the narratives are activated by the presence of such relics. In ‘The White Cat’ these anachronistic features contribute to a sense of fantasy and unreality, disconnected from the modern world rather than grounded in history. Christopher Morash has spoken of the ‘spatiotemporal disorientation experienced in Ireland in the 1840s’, caused by the ‘premodern colliding with the modern’, by which he means the simultaneous emergence of scientific advances such as the steam railway and the telegraph contrasted with the horror ‘of a famine that seemed to belong to the Middle Ages or the Book of Job’, a level of devastation and human suffering at odds with the “civilised” society of Europe in the Victorian age.¹²³ Furthermore, Morash points out that in 1866 when the first permanent trans-Atlantic cable was laid from Valentia in County Kerry to America, ‘at precisely the same years that the west of Ireland seemed most remote from

¹¹⁹ Sean Connolly, *Religion and Society in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1985), p. 41.

¹²⁰ ‘The White Cat’, p. 423.

¹²¹ See Paul Bew, *Land and the National Question, 1858-82* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1978).

¹²² ‘The White Cat’, p. 420.

¹²³ Christopher Morash, ‘Ghosts and Wires: The Telegraph and Irish Space’, in *Ireland and the New Journalism*, ed. by Michael de Nie and Karen Steele (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 21-33 (pp. 21-22).

modernity, it was in fact more intimately connected to the rest of the world than ever before'.¹²⁴ Ireland during this period was caught in the intersection of modernity and antiquity, 'a vast hidden Ireland that nonetheless existed outside the new informational order, its effects only fleetingly visible when a particularly acute food shortage or violent incident brought it into focus'.¹²⁵

Morash argues that the conflict between these modes of existence is evident in journalism and other writing of the time, in particular through recurring images of the spectre and spectrality. The Purcell stories, composed and published before the Famine, were enriched by their historical settings whereas by contrast, the *All the Year Round* stories are based in a folkloric realm. The ruins of the Limerick landscape are no longer 'evidences of greatness, of power, and of pride that survive the wreck of time',¹²⁶ instead the roofless tower 'still occupies its old place' in the landscape, not as a marker of the dynamic history of the region, but rather as an anachronism, as if nobody has thought to replace it with the modern equivalent.¹²⁷ The people who live in this landscape are, by association, also anachronistic and unsuited to the modern world. At a time when much debate surrounded the legitimacy of Protestant rule – particularly the landlord class in rural Ireland – Le Fanu's depiction of unindustrious peasants (the Ryan family), and of superstitious "dreamy" strong farmers (the Donovans), reveals a backwards Irish countryside incapable of progressing in the modern world. Robert Mighall observes that while setting is important in Gothic fiction, what is more significant is the *depiction* of that setting, which 'depends on the socio-political and cultural attitude which informs the writer's view of the geographical or institutional locale in question'.¹²⁸ When examining Le Fanu's fiction from the 1830s compared to that of the 1870s, the depiction of setting is markedly different. Drawing from Mighall, we can deduce that over the course of thirty years, it is not the setting that has changed (which is perhaps part of the problem), but rather Le Fanu's attitude towards it.

Writing about rural Limerick in the 1830s Le Fanu's fiction was engaged in a process of cultural reclamation and informed by the work of writers such as Croker and Carleton, as well as the general mission of the *D.U.M.* under Butt. The colonial history of the region inspired the plots of his stories and fed into a larger narrative concerning the New English presence in

¹²⁴ Ibid., p. 23.

¹²⁵ Ibid., p. 27.

¹²⁶ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, 'The Last Heir of Castle Connor', *Dublin University Magazine*, 11 (1838), 713-30 (p. 713).

¹²⁷ 'The White Cat', p. 420.

¹²⁸ Robert Mighall, *A Geography of Victorian Gothic Fiction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), p. xviii.

Ireland, of settlers telling stories about themselves.¹²⁹ By 1870, the depiction of Limerick is totally decontextualized, both from its colonial history and its master-narrative, as well as from modernity in general. The societies depicted in the stories are stagnant, which perhaps reflect Le Fanu's later views on Irish society as retrograde and incapable of change. The reason for the relative remoteness in Le Fanu's late rural stories can also be partly explained by their presence in a British magazine, a fact that necessitated a less familiar style and esoteric subject matter. Lorna Huet cites the importance of generating a shared identity in writing for the periodical press, as 'An essential part of the creation of an audience for a periodical is the ability of the reader to characterise themselves as part of a particular social or political group, and therefore to define themselves against other groups'.¹³⁰ Le Fanu had to compose these stories for a remote audience divested of any connection to the landscape and culture he evoked. As a result, the revenants and relics of the late stories lack the historic and national significance of those presented by Purcell; rather, they reflect an overly agrarian society populated by unenlightened people. While the fleeting reference to Sarsfield in 'The Child' is suggestive of Le Fanu's continued interest in such aspects of Ireland's colonial history, the notable absence of any such history in the two subsequent stories further underscores its irrelevance within this new material context.

Veracini discusses 'Telling the end of the settler colonial story' that follows in the wake of decolonisation.¹³¹ The process of decolonization can occur in two ways: first, the settler withdraws claims to settler nationality and retreats to the colonial homeland, as typified by the literal 'settler collective exodus' that occurred in Rhodesia, South Africa, Algeria, and Kenya, in which white settler collectives physically departed the colonies of settlement. Second, the settler collective remains *in situ* but are 'recoded as postcolonial migrant societies' based on their conception of themselves as 'an original sovereign settler foundation'. Settlers can thus assert independence from their former colonial overseers, while the settler's own history of colonial invasion and indigenous displacement is 'thoroughly concealed' by their bid for sovereignty.¹³² This form of "“deep colonising”" is best exhibited by the United States of America in which the War of Independence signalled a liberation from the colonial rule of Britain but conveniently "concealed" the continued suppression of the continent's aboriginal

¹²⁹ Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, p. 103.

¹³⁰ Lorna Huet, 'Among the Unknown Public: *Household Words*, *All the Year Round* and the Mass-Market Weekly Periodical in the Mid-Nineteenth Century', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 38 (2005), 61-82 (p. 67).

¹³¹ Veracini, *Settler Colonialism*, p. 104.

¹³² *Ibid.*, p. 108.

peoples.¹³³ The white settler contingent became the colonised. In Ireland, there was no settler exodus, rather a version of colonial concealment was enacted by bids for autonomy such as Young Ireland, the Home Rule movement and eventually, a bid for colonial independence in 1916. However, between the highpoints of settler nationalism in Ireland in the 1830s and the 1890s, low points of settler retreat are also traceable and exemplified, in this instance, by Le Fanu's Irish-set fiction in the disestablishment period of the 1860s and early '70s. Settler identity in the pre-Famine period had revolved around the idea of Irish Protestant settlers as distinct from the indigenous population but equally entitled to a form of indigenous belonging. Later versions of Irish Protestant identity would, to reiterate Martin, 'not brandish the symbols of their separateness', instead promoting an idea of shared Irishness, regardless of religion or heritage.¹³⁴ This later version of Irish identity would increasingly draw from a pre-colonial, ancient Gaelic past as a means to elide the division wrought by the New English takeover, a division that pre-Famine Irish Protestants celebrated.

'Stories of Lough Guir'

The final instalment in the Limerick trio of 1870 is 'Stories of Lough Guir', a composite of five short tales framed by a narrative introduction and set in Lough Gur county Limerick, 'a kind of centre of the operations of the Munster fairies'.¹³⁵ The Lough Guir stories resemble 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod' in that they evoke a locality from Le Fanu's youth replete with its own history and supernatural mythology. Lough Gur (as it is more commonly spelled), is a horse-shoe lake situated approximately twelve miles south of Abington at the base of Knockadoon hill. The area is an important archaeological site with evidence of stone circles, hill forts, ring forts, crannógs, and Neolithic settlement.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 109, quoting Deborah Bird Rose, 'Land Rights and Deep Colonising: The Erasure of Women', *Aboriginal Law Bulletin*, 3.85 (1996), 6-13.

¹³⁴ Martin, p. 121.

¹³⁵ 'Stories of Lough Guir', p. 494.

There also exists the remains of two castles: Castle Doon (also called Bouchier's Castle), and Black Castle, the latter of which is connected to the Earl of Desmond, the primary subject of the Lough Guir stories.¹³⁷ The narrative opens by introducing 'the present writer' who as 'a boy of twelve or thirteen' became acquainted with a 'Miss Anne Baily, of Lough Guir, in the count of Limerick', who along with her sister 'were the last representatives at that place, of an extremely good old name in the county'.¹³⁸ The Baily sisters – who were real people – are presented here in the same manner as Dan Donovan, as local storytellers in the oral tradition, although this time the unnamed frame narrator seems to be local to the area.

By way of introduction, the narrator mentions that the Bails were 'visited at their house at Lough Guir by Mr. Crofton Croker; and are, I think, mentioned, by name, in the second series of his fairy legends'.¹³⁹ This statement is half true. In his *Researches in the South of Ireland* (1824), Croker describes the area and history of Lough Gur, as well as mention of a Mr Baily and family. In his later *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland* (1834, a compendium of all three earlier volumes), both 'The Legend of Lough Gur' and 'The Enchanted Lake' concern legends relating to the area, although there is no mention of the Bails in the second edition.¹⁴⁰ No doubt this reference to Croker was employed with a view to ensuring credibility in the mind of the British reader; Croker was a well-known folklore collector, the "science" of which had become established over the course of the nineteenth century. George Denis Zimmerman explains that:

In the second half of the nineteenth century, collecting folklore could still be a mere hobby satisfying sentimental attachment to a local heritage and requiring

¹³⁷ On the history of Bouchier's castle: 'The Bouchiers had estates in county Limerick from Elizabethan times when they were granted some of the estate of the Earls of Desmond. Sir George Bouchier built Lough Gur castle in 1586 and his estate passed to the Fane family. However another branch of the Bouchier family acquired the nearby Kilcullane and Baggotstown estates [...] In the 1870s the Bouchier estate was comprised of 845 acres'. 'Bouchier/Bourchier (Baggotstown)', *Landed Estate Database*, NUIG, <<http://landedestates.nuigalway.ie/LandedEstates/jsp/estate-show.jsp?id=2259>> [Accessed 20 January 2018]. See also the Lough Gur Heritage Centre website for further details regarding the history and heritage of the area. <<http://loughgur.com/learn-more/history/>> [Accessed 20 January 2018].

¹³⁸ 'Stories of Lough Guir', p. 493.

¹³⁹ 'Stories of Lough Guir', p. 493.

¹⁴⁰ On Lough Gur, Croker states the following: 'About nine miles distant from Limerick, not far from the road, lies Lough Gur, formerly a place of consideration; its castle, which stood on an island, being out of the reach of musketry, and the ruggedness of the surrounding country rendering the approach of cannon a matter of difficulty. [...] The hill is about an English mile and a half in circumference, and on its south-west side is the largest part of the lough; there, at the distance of three or four hundred yards from the shore, formerly stood a square castle rising out of the water, on the vault of which was planted, as I was told by Mr. Baily the owner of the place [...] Near Lough Gur, and close to the road-side, a large Druidical circle of stones is to be seen'. Thomas Crofton Croker, *Researches in the South of Ireland: Illustrative of the Scenery, Architectural Remains and the Manners and Superstitions of the Peasantry with an Appendix containing a Private Narrative of the Rebellion of 1798* (London: Murray, 1824; repr. Dublin: Irish University Press, 1968), pp. 61-63. See also Thomas Crofton Croker, *Fairy Legends and Traditions of the South of Ireland* (London: J. Murray, 1834). 'The Legend of Lough Gur', pp. 163-65, and 'The Enchanted Lake', pp. 166-70.

no complex theorizing; it was enough to think that the “folk” in question consisted of rural social groups which were the backward part of a more modern world, and that their supposedly peculiar practices and beliefs were very ancient and fundamentally unchangeable (except that they might deteriorate and vanish and should therefore be documented and preserved before it was too late). But others treated folklore as a scholarly subject; what had been assembled had to be interpreted, according to hypotheses which some might soon treat as absolute laws. Theoretical principles could be borrowed from contemporary anthropology, philology or comparative mythology.¹⁴¹

The foundation of various learned institutes in Ireland and Britain is also testament to the increasing significance placed upon the curation of folk culture: the Society of Antiquaries of London was founded in 1751, while the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland was established from 1849, and later the Folklore Society of England founded in 1878. The allusion to Croker, then, was deliberate in aligning the ‘Stories of Lough Guir’ with the type of field-based research he (supposedly) conducted. As such the Lough Gur stories are presented as items of scientific record rather than imaginative fiction, although without the kind of anti-oral ideological leaning of the Croker texts.

It is conceivable that the ‘present writer’ who introduces himself at the outset is figured from the perspective of Le Fanu himself, and it is certainly possible that he met the Baily sisters in his youth: there is a record of a ‘Miss Bailee’ living in Lough Gur in 1837.¹⁴² Even if he did not know them or meet them, likely the stories of the Baily family were well-circulated in the region during the time the Le Fanus lived at Abington in the 1820s and ’30s. Once again Le Fanu is capitalising on (and possibly plagiarising), the stories he heard in his youth, exporting them for use in Dickens’s magazine that supports a conception of Ireland as a magical realm of fairies and banshees.¹⁴³ As with ‘The White Cat’, the introductory narrative of ‘Stories of Lough Guir’

¹⁴¹ George Denis Zimmermann, *The Irish Storyteller* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), p. 277.

¹⁴² The Le Fanus lived in Limerick from 1826 until the 1840s. On the Baily/Baylee family of Lough Gur: ‘In 1786 Wilson refers to Lough-Gur as the seat of Henry Baylee. This house was occupied by John “Boylie” in 1814 and by Miss Bailie in 1837. In the early 1850s William Evans was resident. He held the house valued at £11 from the Count De Salis. It was adjacent to the remains of a tower house known as Bouchier’s Castle. The property at this site is labelled “Lough Gur Farm” on the 25-inch map of the 1890s. The book edited by Mary Carbery, “The Farm by Lough Gur”, published in 1937, contains a description of the Baylee property at Loughgur. The original Baylee house is no longer extant’. ‘Loughgur Castle’, *Landed Estate Database*, NUIG, <<http://landedestates.nuigalway.ie/LandedEstates/jsp/property-show.jsp?id=2347>> [Accessed 20 January 2018]. The book referred to is Mary Carbery, *The Farm by Lough Gur* (London: Longmans, 1837).

¹⁴³ M. J. O’Kelly and C. O’Kelly recall the legend of the Earl of Desmond that is identical to Le Fanu’s rendering of the story: ‘Lough Gur is truly an “antique land” and many visitors will be conscious of the aura of mystery and magic which pervades it, whether in the bad weather when the lake can become unbelievably wild and forbidding, or in the golden evenings of summer when one can almost believe that at any moment Gearóid, Earl of Desmond, will come cantering over the water on his milk-white horse with the silver shoes. The legend says that he must do so once every seven years until the shoes are worn out and then he will be freed from the spell of Lough Gur’. M. J. O’Kelly and C. O’Kelly, *Illustrated Guide to Lough Gur, Co. Limerick* (Cork: C. O’Kelly, 1978), p. 8.

includes topographical details of the area surrounding Lough Gur and the Baily household. The narrator notes the ‘historic associations’ of the ‘huge square tower that rises at one side of the stable-yard [...] robbed of its battlements and one story, [it] was a stronghold of the last rebellious Earl of Desmond’. However, the “historic” associations are revealed to be more colloquial than factual, with the lake described as a magical realm where the ‘unearthly transmutation from the human to the fairy state’ occurs, and ‘beneath its waters lie enchanted, the grand old castle of the Desmonds’.¹⁴⁴ Ostry discusses the function of fairy tales in the nineteenth century as ‘increasingly popular as a form of social criticism’. She notes that the fairy tale ‘is a protean literary form that transmits social, cultural and political messages. It has been consistently linked to nationalism and the formation of a cultural identity’.¹⁴⁵ However, the characters in Le Fanu’s stories are not transformed by their experiences with fairies or other supernatural agents, as is typical of other fairy stories in which the social order is inverted, whether for better or worse. Instead the characters are plagued by these spectres in an endless cycle of haunting.

As already suggested by McCormack, the individual experiences narrated in the ‘Stories of Lough Guir’ are passive reactions to supernatural encounters. The fairies and other phenomena are the active agents in these stories and, more often than not, are portents of death. In the first two enclosed stories of Lough Gur, ‘The Magician Earl’ and ‘Moll Rial’s Adventure’, the Earl of Desmond, who is believed to be living ‘enchanted in his castle, with all his household, at the bottom of the lake’,¹⁴⁶ travels around the area attempting to elicit responses from various people in order to break the curse: ‘He had tried [...] to lead the [black] smith to speak to him. For it was well known that either for the purpose of abridging or mitigating his period of enchantment, [the Earl] seeks to lead people to accost him’.¹⁴⁷ As with the white cat that haunts the Donovans of Drumgunniol, the Earl can be understood as a type of *púca*: associated with the lake and with the surrounding area. Likewise, in ‘The Banshee’, the Baily sisters (Anne and Susan), hear the family banshee singing outside their window, which prophesies the death of their other sister, Kitty. Once again the Bails appear to be of the strong farmer class, with a house ‘built under the shelter’ of the former castle by the lough.¹⁴⁸ Furthermore, the sisters have a governess, which speaks to the family’s wealth.

¹⁴⁴ ‘Stories of Lough Guir’, p. 494.

¹⁴⁵ Elaine Ostry, *Social Dreaming: Dickens and the Fairy Tale* (New York & London: Routledge, 2002), p. 17.

¹⁴⁶ ‘Stories of Lough Guir’, p. 494. Cahill points out that Patrick Kennedy also wrote a story about the Earl, ‘The Enchantment of Gearoidh Iarla’, as part of *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts* (1866), and set in county Wexford. See Cahill, p. 312.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 496.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 494.

However, as with the families in ‘The White Cat’, the Baily family are in decline, the sisters being ‘the last representatives at that place, of an extremely old name in the county’.¹⁴⁹ In ‘The Governess’s Dream’ and ‘The Earl’s Hall’, the governess in question experiences two visions related to the Earl. The first appears to reveal the location of buried treasure in the old castle, but upon digging at the spot indicated in the dream, they find only ‘the circular impression of a vessel’ in the earth, indicating the place where the treasure used to be. In the second story, the governess encounters ‘a horrible looking little man’ while seated in the great hall of the castle, after which she dies of a fever.

In the wake of disestablishment, Edward Brynn comments that ‘The surrender of rural Ireland was implied in the abolition of benefices [which] left only Ulster and urban centres as a forum of influence of the Established Church’.¹⁵⁰ The “surrender” of rural Ireland and the Church’s newly restricted influence in that sphere is reflected in Le Fanu’s fiction at the time, which documents a folk-Catholic, pagan-esque, female-dominated landscape devoid of rationality. Alongside a metaphorical detachment, the later rural stories also reflect the physical remoteness in that Le Fanu was now writing about the region from memory while living in Dublin. Conversely, the Purcell stories were written at a time when the Le Fanu family still had a presence in the Irish countryside. The loss of this personal permanence divests the Irish countryside of any historical consequence. As with ‘The Child’ and ‘The White Cat’, Le Fanu eschews the settler narrative in the Lough Gur stories and glosses over the history that had so enriched his Purcell stories. In these later stories, rural Ireland has become an emasculated space, the realm of the dreamy Celt and populated primarily by women, the only exception being the feminized and adolescent Dan Donovan.¹⁵¹ In ‘The Child’ the Ryan family is a matriarchy, while the fairies in the carriage are also women. In ‘The White Cat’ the cat is believed to be the ghost of a young woman who returns to exact revenge. The Baily sisters come next in this sequence and relate stories that primarily concern female experiences of the supernatural: ‘Moll Rial’s Adventure’, ‘The Banshee’, ‘The Governess’s Dream’, and ‘The Earl’s Hall’, all of which have female protagonists. Considered in this way, the female ensemble of the later stories contrasts starkly with the overwhelmingly male heroics of the Purcell stories. The history becomes a her-story, as the region loses its connection to Jacobite

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 493.

¹⁵⁰ Edward Brynn, *The Church of Ireland in the Age of Catholic Emancipation* (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1982), pp. 421-22.

¹⁵¹ Donovan is feminized through his construction as the dreamy Celt, while his role in the stories he narrates concern experiences from his youth and adolescence. Likewise the male characters of the Ryan family in ‘The Child’ are pre-pubescent.

and Williamite sagas and is instead dominated by old wives' tales. Le Fanu's physical and metaphorical retreat from the countryside of his youth is indicative of a wider decline in Irish Protestant nationalism as a form of settler self-inscription, as the previously cohesive settler identity upheld by Irish Protestants in the post-Union period continued to disintegrate. Over the course of fifty years, the original cohort that revolved around the *D.U.M.* became divided over party politics, religious strife, and personal disagreements regarding Ireland's place in the empire. Le Fanu's final Irish-set story comes full circle, as 'Sir Dominick's Bargain: A legend of Dunoran' is a re-telling of one of his first stories, 'The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh'. As with Sir Robert, fortune is the subject of Sir Dominick's story, fortune in terms of finance and fortune in terms of fate, specifically, the fate of the landed class.

'Sir Dominick's Bargain: A Legend of Dunoran'

'Sir Dominick's Bargain' was published in *All the Year Round* in July 1872.¹⁵² By this stage, Dickens had been dead two years; his son, Charles Junior, took over as editor upon his father's death in June 1870 (just two months after Le Fanu's Lough Gur stories featured in the magazine). In the intervening period, Le Fanu had not been idle. 'The Bird of Passage' and 'The Haunted Baronet' followed the Irish-set stories and were published in *Temple Bar* and *Belgravia* respectively in May and November 1870, although both stories were set in England. Both stories were also subsequently collected as part of *Chronicles of Golden Friars*, a collection of short tales set in the fictional English town of Golden Friars, published by Bentley in 1871. Between August 1870 and February 1871, Le Fanu published his novel *Checkmate* in serial form with *Cassell's Magazine*, while the novel was subsequently published by Hurst & Blackett in 1871. October 1870 saw the return of Le Fanu to the pages of *All the Year Round* with his short story 'The Vision of Tom Chuff', while the December issue of the same year included his story 'Madam Crawl's Ghost', and in January 1871, serialization of Le Fanu's novel *The Rose and the Key* began, his first novel to feature in the magazine.¹⁵³ Four more short stories intervened before 'Sir Dominick's Bargain' was published, while his second novel to feature in the magazine, *Willing to Die* – which was to be his final novel – was published in September of the same year. Le Fanu died in February 1873, just two months after the final

¹⁵² Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, 'Sir Dominick's Bargain: A Legend of Dunoran', *All the Year Round*, 8.2 (1872), 186-92. Hereafter abbreviated to 'Sir Dominick's Bargain'.

¹⁵³ *The Rose and the Key* was serialised in *All the Year Round* from 21 January 1871 until 23 September 1871. In the same year, Chapman and Hall published the novel in three volumes.

instalment of *Willing to Die*.¹⁵⁴ In short, between the end of the Lough Gur stories in Spring 1870 and ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’ in the summer of 1872, Le Fanu was writing consistently and publishing extensively. The sudden return to writing about Ireland after a lapse of two years also sees a return to the historically inflected narratives of his Purcell stories. McCormack remarks that ‘By renaming Robert Ardagh as Dominick Sarsfield, Le Fanu also makes explicit the Jacobite loyalties of his early heroes’.¹⁵⁵ It is true that Le Fanu makes clear reference to the Jacobite and Catholic connection by the mention of Sarsfield, although it is unclear if the average reader of *All the Year Round* would have made the same connection. McCormack argues that ‘the admission of Jacobite loyalty in the characters results in a transformation of style’, which McCormack describes as ‘relaxed’ compared to the ‘distanced and distancing figure’ of Purcell. Overall, McCormack sees ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’ and the other late rural stories as the maturation of Le Fanu’s style. His analysis of the five stories as a group repeatedly employs words such as ‘peace’, ‘stylistic precision’, ‘relaxed distance’, and ‘acceptance’.¹⁵⁶ In this period of apparent authorial wisdom, McCormack sees Le Fanu as ‘use[ing] his material symbolically, without fear of a superficial interpretation’, though he admits that these stories ‘may be read as an oblique and indirect critique of current developments within the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland’, which would seem to undermine the sense of contentment and security previously identified.¹⁵⁷ That Le Fanu’s fiction can be read as an index of wider socio-cultural and political factors in Irish society is undeniable, but I would disagree with McCormack in terms of considering Le Fanu’s narrative remoteness and distance as indicative of authorial complacency. Rather, as with the late Limerick stories, the remoteness and distance of the narration is affected by both the context of the British periodical and by a diminishing Irish Protestant group identity in the 1860s and ’70s.

In her study of *Household Words*, Sabine Clemm asserts that the magazine sought to establish and qualify a specific national identity, not unlike the objective of the *D.U.M.* in the 1830s. She notes that despite contradictions in the use of the terms “English” and “British” throughout the entirety of *Household Words*, ‘the journal rarely doubts that an essential core of “Englishness” does exist, a body of characteristics, values, and morals that seems to be shared by “the English”’.¹⁵⁸ The ideological function of *Household Words* was carried over into

¹⁵⁴ *Willing to Die* was serialised in *All the Year Round* from 21 September 1872 until 14 December 1872. The novel was published in three volumes by Hurst & Blackett in 1873.

¹⁵⁵ *Sheridan Le Fanu*, p. 241.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 240-41.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 241-42.

¹⁵⁸ Sabine Clemm, *Dickens, Journalism, and Nationhood: Mapping the World in Household Words* (London & New York: Routledge, 2009), p. 49.

All the Year Round, and as such, the construction of Ireland and the Irish in the magazine contributes to a broader understanding of Englishness within the wider context of Great Britain. In order to define national character, Clemm identifies two strategies at work in the magazine: one is to ‘look at England through the mirror of travel-writings and plays by continental writers’, while the other ‘define[s] English independently of another source and without the direct comparison to another nation’.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, through the depiction of other cultures and other nations within Great Britain, for example the Welsh or the Irish, Englishness becomes crystalized by accentuating its *difference*: be that religious difference, economic difference, cultural difference, or, as per Matthew Arnold, a fundamental difference in racial “temperament” as compared to the Celtic peripheries of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Just as Le Fanu’s fiction had contributed to the formation of an Irish Protestant identity through the agency of the *D.U.M.*, his contributions to *All the Year Round* were now informing British perceptions of the Irish and therefore of themselves.

‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’ is a story comprised of two parts: the first is the framing narrative which opens ‘In the early autumn of 1838’, and is important in itself as it links the story to the other late rural tales.¹⁶⁰ Significantly, 1838 is the year in which ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’ was published, which is likely no coincidence seeing as Le Fanu is not usually so specific in terms of dating his stories. The date, like the connection to Sarsfield, would only make sense to a devoted reader of Le Fanu’s fiction, and would probably have had no significance for the general British reader of an unsigned story in a weekly magazine. However, Le Fanu was evidently well aware of this act of self-plagiarism, as in addition to these subtle connections, the stories of Sir Robert and Sir Dominick are also linked by plot and place, and indeed by caste. The stories share several similarities: both narrate the experiences of an isolated, desolate landlord forced to make a Faustian pact in order to save their estates from ruination, both are narrated (in part), by servants or former servants of their respective families, and both are set on the familiar borders of east county Limerick. The second part tells the story of the eponymous protagonist and heir of the Dunoran estate, Sir Dominick, ‘the last of the old stock’, who squanders his inheritance and makes a Faustian pact as a last effort to save his legacy.¹⁶¹ This story is set roughly two generations prior to the framing narrative, which places Sir Dominick’s story sometime in the early-to-mid eighteenth century. For the

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 49-50. Original emphasis.

¹⁶⁰ ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’, p. 186.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p. 187.

purposes of this argument, it seems most prudent to begin with the inner narrative of Sir Dominick and work outwards to the framing narrative.

Sir Dominick's story runs parallel to Sir Robert Ardagh's, at least, to the Sir Robert of the first narrative, who enjoys gambling and returns from a mysterious French sojourn. Of Sir Dominick, we are told:

There was no way of gettin' rid of his money and estates he did not try – what with drinkin', dicin', racin', cards, and all soarts, it was not many years before the estates wor in debt, and Sir Dominick a distressed man [...] he sould off his dogs, and most of his horses, and gev out he was going to thravel in France, and the like, and so off with him for awhile [sic].¹⁶²

Sir Dominick returns unexpectedly one night, much to the surprise of his long-serving butler, 'old Connor Hanlon', who along with 'old Juggy Broadrick' and a solitary stable hand, are the only remaining servants in the once-great house. Sir Dominick informs old Hanlon that "'The last guinea's gone'" and that the estate must be sold, and moreover that Sir Dominick is 'in the humour to make a bargain with [the devil] to-night', such is the level of his distress.¹⁶³ Sir Dominick informs Hanlon that he is going to take a walk through the estate's park, as 'he had made up his mind, if no better thought came to him between that and there, so soon as he came to Murroa Wood, he'd hang himself from one of the oak branches'.¹⁶⁴ Upon reaching the old wood, Sir Dominick relents on his suicide mission and resolves instead to enlist 'in the French king's army, and thry what that might do for him'. Given that the French monarchy was abolished soon after, the reader is left in little doubt as to the hopelessness of Sir Dominick's situation.¹⁶⁵ Upon reaching this decision, Sir Dominick suddenly 'sees a grand gentleman right before him [...] he wore a cocked-hat with gold-lace round it, such as officers wears on their coats, and he had on a dress the same as French officers wore in them times'. The gentleman offers Sir Dominick a bag of gold, with the promise of more to come, should Sir Dominick agree to his terms: "'I'll serve you seven years, and at the end of that time you shall serve me'".¹⁶⁶ Sir Dominick is given some months to decide, during which time he wavers in his resolve but ultimately submits to the bargain. Though cautious at first, eventually Sir Dominick

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 188.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 189.

¹⁶⁵ Louis XV was king of France from 1715 to 1774 (crowned in 1722). Based upon the date of 1838 provided in the opening narrative, it seems likely that the story of Sir Dominick is set during Louis XV's reign. His successor, Louis XVI, was crowned in 1775 and was the last king of France before the French Revolution of 1789-99. Louis XVI was guillotined in 1793.

¹⁶⁶ 'Sir Dominick's Bargain', p. 189.

‘took again to his old ways [...] and there was hounds and horses, and wine galore, and no end of company, and grand doin’s and diversion, up here at the great house [sic]’.¹⁶⁷

Eventually the stranger returns to settle the debt. When the time comes, as with Sir Robert, ‘a short square fellow, with a cloak on, and long black hair bushin’ out from under his hat’ arrives at Dunoran: “‘Tell your master [...] that I’m here by appointment’”.¹⁶⁸ The final scene bears the closest resemblance to ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’ in terms of both plot and dialogue. In ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, the stranger also appears at midnight and confronts the venerable servant of the house, stating “‘If Sir Robert will not come down to me, I must go up to him’”.¹⁶⁹ The words of Sir Robert’s Faust are echoed in ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’: “‘He says, sir, unless you go down to him, he’ll come up to you’”.¹⁷⁰ When Sir Dominick descends to meet the stranger, ‘the stranger take[s] a stride out to meet Sir Dominick, and catch him up in his arms, and whirl his head against the wall, and wi’ that the hall-doore flies open, and out goes the candles [sic]’, once again reminiscent of the final scene in the first narrative of Sir Robert. So ends the story of Sir Dominick, ‘the last of the old stock’ lying dead in the hallway of his great house.¹⁷¹ The story is a return to the subject that preoccupied Le Fanu’s earliest fiction: that of the ruined Jacobite landlord. Moreover, two years prior to ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’, serialisation of ‘The Haunted Baronet’ began, a novella published in *Belgravia* between July and November 1870. ‘The Haunted Baronet’ is yet another retelling of the Faust story, though this time situated in the fictional Golden Friars and with the plot expanded significantly. Raphaël Ingelbien discusses the Irish undercurrents of the Golden Friars stories, noting that the stories of the collection ‘betray [their] [Irish] origin’ through the recycling of plot structures used in Le Fanu’s earlier Irish-set fiction.¹⁷² After a gap of three decades, Le Fanu reverted to writing Faust stories published within two years of one another. Le Fanu’s habit of recycling plots has been the subject of much discussion and disagreement, not to mention confusion, and in the case of Sir Dominick, it appears that yet again we are dealing with an upgraded and expanded plot. A cynical approach would present Le Fanu as a lazy writer, endlessly reworking the same plots and disseminating them across a variety of outlets over the course of his career. However, another way of looking at this re-emergence of

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 191.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 192.

¹⁶⁹ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘The Fortunes of Sir Robert Ardagh’, *Dublin University Magazine*, 11 (1838), 313-24 (p. 316).

¹⁷⁰ ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’, p. 192.

¹⁷¹ Ibid., p. 187.

¹⁷² Raphaël Ingelbien, ‘Re-cycling Irish Short Fiction as English Narratives of Community: J. S. Le Fanu’s *Chronicles of Golden Friars* (1871)’, *Short Fiction in Theory and Practice*, 3 (2013), 161-73 (p. 161).

the Faust theme is that the plot became relevant once again, and there is a link between the use of the plot in 1838 and in 1872, which would explain the specific setting of ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’ in 1838.

The framing narrative, as with the other late rural stories, is important to understand the story contained within it. The anonymous narrator, while travelling through rural Ireland encounters a ruined house and decides to investigate. Once inside, he encounters ‘a dark-faced, sharp-featured, little hunchback’, who proceeds to relate the story of last master of the manor, Sir Dominick Sarsfield.¹⁷³ However, prior to meeting with his local guide, the narrator begins by describing his journey:

In the early autumn of 1838, business called me to the south of Ireland. The weather was delightful, the scenery and the people were new to me [...] full of the curiosity of an explorer, I commenced a leisurely journey of five-and-twenty miles on horseback [...] By bog and hill, by plain and ruined castle, and many a winding stream, my picturesque road led me.¹⁷⁴

As with ‘The White Cat’, the narrator is a stranger to the region, and probably also a stranger to Ireland, who adopts the mentality of an explorer in a foreign land. Once again, the countryside is devoid of people – though there is mention of “people” no other characters are presented – while much of the introduction is taken up with descriptions of the landscape. The introduction (which extends over a double-columned page), recalls the lengthy topographical descriptions of the Purcell stories, and although Limerick is not specifically mentioned, the familiar names of Dunoran and Murroa wood clearly indicate that Abington and its vicinity is certainly what Le Fanu had in mind.¹⁷⁵ The landscape is evoked in terms of the picturesque, with the narrator surveying the quaint aesthetic scene at his leisure. Regarding the picturesque in fiction and art, Patrick J. Duffy notes that ‘Our concepts of landscape are still powerfully influenced by a landscape aesthetic which emerged in Europe in the later seventeenth century’, and further, that ‘Artists and painters were selective in what they saw as being important in a scene, responding to their patron’s commission and the nature of contemporary landscape aesthetics’.¹⁷⁶ Now writing about Limerick for an English readership, Le Fanu is less specific with regards to the exact locality, but is attentive to the inclusion of certain symbols. He is

¹⁷³ ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’, p. 187.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 186.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 189.

¹⁷⁶ Patrick J. Duffy, *Exploring the History and Heritage of Irish Landscapes* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), 162.

careful to mention the ‘ruined castle’, the ‘old ruined house’, ‘little thatched village’, and the ‘turf-smoke’, all essential components in picturing any Irish landscape.¹⁷⁷

Duffy outlines the significance of pastoral scenes in eighteenth and nineteenth-century landscapes as constructed through ‘the privileged gaze’. Such ‘representations of landscape reflect cultural and ideological subtexts [...] where romantic and pastoral landscapes were drained of much reality and meaning, but were infected instead with a (pre-industrial) nostalgia, peace, serenity and leisurely freedom which belied the real historical experience’.¹⁷⁸ The Limerick landscape is once again drained of its historical significance, more romantic and less politically charged than before, and reduced to icons of Irishness: thatch, turf, and ruined towers. Sumpter points to ‘the literary as well as national agendas at play when folk material was adapted (and indeed invented) for literate nineteenth-century publics’,¹⁷⁹ and indeed it appears that the ‘lost country’¹⁸⁰ evoked in Le Fanu’s early writings – its familiarity and weight of history – differs greatly to the rural scenes recounted in *All the Year Round*. Stevens points out that ‘Not only did the British [periodical] audience recognize immediately the features of a well-conceived landscape [...] it also identified the character traits indicated by physiognomic coding’, meaning that the treatment of landscape by Irish writers for a British readership ‘demonstrates and awareness of the British audience’s expectations regarding the picturesque’, producing for and writing in an ‘industry that constantly reassessed and traded on popular images and [stereo]types’.¹⁸¹ By the end of Le Fanu’s writing career he would have been well aware of the mechanisms of the periodical industry; the heightened picturesque quality and quelled political imbrication of his Irish landscapes in the 1870s attest to this fact. Further, the changing aesthetic is perhaps reflective of the changing Irish Protestant mindset in the 1870s, which in Le Fanu’s case at least, underwent a political and cultural withdrawal after disestablishment.

Given that the landed estate has been ‘part and parcel of Irish history since the middle of the twelfth century’, Guy Felhmann observes that ‘The high walls of the Big House were to separate for seven centuries the Gaelic population from the English invaders and this partition gave birth to two separate worlds, both perfectly alien and yet close to each other’.¹⁸² The decay of the Irish Big House in a British magazine in 1872 had a clear resonance for both Irish and

¹⁷⁷ ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’, p. 186.

¹⁷⁸ Duffy, p. 162.

¹⁷⁹ Sumpter, p. 787

¹⁸⁰ ‘The Last Heir of Castle Connor’, p.39.

¹⁸¹ Julie Anne Stevens, *The Irish Scene in Somerville and Ross* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2007), p.94.

¹⁸² Guy Felhmann, ‘An Historical Survey’, *The Big House in Ireland: Reality and Representation*, ed. by Jacqueline Genet (Savage: Barnes and Noble, 1991), pp. 15-18 (p. 15).

English readers. Dunoran is the first ruined Big House to feature in Le Fanu's Irish-set fiction, as previously the old castles and towers of Munster were still occupied by their former masters. The level of description and apparent significance of the ruin points to a shift in Le Fanu's imagining of Ireland's ancient landed families. The reader encounters the house already in ruin and without the attendant family, whereas in the Purcell stories, though the castles and homes were ancient and set during the same period, the narrative does not reflect on the ruin but rather the family still living inside. Terry Eagleton described 'the encumbered nature of their estates' as 'the true nightmare of many an Anglo-Irish landowner', and indeed such a nightmare is revisited time and again in Le Fanu's fiction.¹⁸³ Degenerate landlords are driven to make Faustian pacts in order to save their ailing estates, while inheritance for women reduces them to objects of acquisition in the eyes of predatory male counterparts. The subject of inheritance is repeatedly questioned and is usually the source of grievance. The De Lacys inherit their ancestor's guilt, as does Sir Robert Ardagh, while the Donovans and Bailys inherit their respective púcas, and the residents of Lough Gur inherit the curse of the Earl of Desmond. Unlike Sir Robert, however, who inherited his estates in debt and disrepair, Sir Dominick is responsible for the demise of his own estate, which is further indication of a shift in Le Fanu's thinking with regards to the eighteenth-century landed class.

Bernice Murphy argues that 'The spectre of the colony that fails is one of the most powerful anxieties in the American psyche', and this statement is equally applicable to the Irish settler psyche, given that the spectre of the failed Big House looms large in Irish literature.¹⁸⁴ On the outskirts of the thatched village, the narrator spies the ruined manor house of Dunoran 'placed among the trees, about half way up the picturesque mountain-side'.¹⁸⁵ He decides to wander among the ruin, and so continues the lengthy descriptions of the house and its surrounds. The house is situated precariously on the edge of a ravine, as with Castle Ardagh: 'The road, as it approached the house, skirted the edge of a precipitous glen [...] and the silent house stood with its wide-open hall-door facing this dark ravine'.¹⁸⁶ Upon venturing inside, the narrator finds the house to be completely overgrown: 'I walked in and looked about me, through passages overgrown with nettles and weeds; from room to room with ceilings rotted [...] with tendrils of ivy trailing over it [...] The almost sashless windows were darkened also with ivy'. As the narrator penetrates further and further into the house, he discovers that 'the

¹⁸³ Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger*, (London: Verso, 1995), p. 194.

¹⁸⁴ Murphy, p. 48.

¹⁸⁵ 'Sir Dominick's Bargain', p. 186.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

flooring was quite gone' and the building 'very nearly un-roofed'. The narrator ruminates as to 'why so grand a house, in the midst of scenery so picturesque, had been permitted to go to decay', a seemingly innocuous question and yet a statement loaded with significance.¹⁸⁷ A scenario reminiscent of 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter' is revived in the exchange between the anonymous narrator and the hunchback he encounters inside the ruined house, who, it transpires, is the grandson of Sir Dominick's butler, Connor Hanlon. Just as the Neils narrate the story of their former landlords, the Phelims, in a Rackrentian dynamic of master-servant reversal, here too is the descendent of a former servant narrating the story of a now-extinct landed family. The narrator describes how he is startled by 'a voice that was drawling, and, I fancied, sneering, repeat the words "Food for worms, dead and rotten; God over all"'. This statement is followed by the refrain: "'If death was a thing that money could buy, | The rich they would live, and the poor they would die'"'.¹⁸⁸ No further comment is made regarding these statements, but their derisive intention is clear. Here again is the descendent of a former servant of a once-great family telling the tale of their demise. The collapse of this distinction between settler and indigenous, symbolised by the decaying Big House, preoccupied much of the literature of the nineteenth century. Tim McLoughlin argues that such 'underlying debates' of the Irish landed estates 'are about the legitimacy, power and responsibility of the settler on the land'.¹⁸⁹ The dissolution of the Big House signified the collapse of clear class distinctions between landlord and tenant, as well as a redistribution of power between the two, particularly towards the end of the nineteenth century with the advent of organisations such as The Irish National Land League (1878) and the Land War (1879-82).

The revival of a heroic past surrounding New English settlement and the appropriation of folk culture was a major factor in the formation of Irish Protestant identity in the early nineteenth century, as retelling the settler story served to reinforce settler claims to authenticity. However, by the late nineteenth century, and in the wake of disestablishment, Irish Protestant perspectives on history and culture – and on their place within it – were altered once again. Although Le Fanu continues to be preoccupied with waning families – the Sarsfields, the Bailys, the Donovans, and the De Lacys – he becomes less interested in detailing the history of colonial settlement, supplying only occasional cursory mentions as opposed to deep historical context. It seems that without the guiding principles of the *D.U.M.*, and given the

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 186.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 187.

¹⁸⁹ Tim McLoughlin, 'Settler Instability: Edgeworth's Irish Novels and Settler Writing from Zimbabwe', in *Irish and Postcolonial Writing: History, Theory, Practice*, ed. by Glenn Hooper and Colin Graham (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), pp. 89-108 (p. 92).

continued erosion of Irish Protestant authority, Le Fanu began to feel (and write) differently about the Irish Protestant experience. Le Fanu died just six months after ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’ was published, although in the interim he began serialization of *Willing to Die* in *All the Year Round*, which continued its run after his death. ‘Dickon the Devil’ and ‘Laura Silver Bell’ were published in December of 1872, in *London Society* and *Belgravia Annual* respectively. Although ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain’ was Le Fanu’s final Irish-set story to be published, curiously in August of 1884, *Temple Bar* published ‘Hyacinth O’Toole’, credited to Le Fanu and with an explanatory editorial note at the end:

This amusing story, by the gifted author of *Uncle Silas* and *In a Glass Darkly*, was left at the time of the author’s death unfinished as it is here, but the Editor ventures nevertheless to give it in this state to the readers of *Temple Bar*. Humour is not a product of this furiously earnest age, and we cannot afford to lose any contribution to our mirth which comes our way. – Editor¹⁹⁰

It is unclear how the editor came into possession of this unfinished piece a decade after Le Fanu’s death, although as with Graves and *The Purcell Papers*, Le Fanu’s fiction continued to be mined for any possible commercial value long after his death. The existence of ‘Hyacinth O’Toole’ as an unfinished manuscript indicates that Le Fanu was still interested in telling the Irish story, right up to his final days. The scene is Dublin, the protagonist is Catholic, and the subject is the rise of a new Catholic middle class. As the story is unfinished, it would be speculative to mount into any close textual analysis (which is perhaps why the story has remained unnoticed by critics). However, ‘Hyacinth O’Toole’ indicates the continued shift in Le Fanu’s writing about Irish Catholics. We move from the rural scenes and strong farmers of Limerick to an urban, domestic setting in which a party of foolish Catholics attempt a trip to the theatre. O’Toole himself navigates this class transition with difficulty, as do the other characters in the story, which is the source of the story’s comedic elements. O’Toole practices ‘sitting down and standing up’ before taking his ‘opera-hat’ and journeying by ‘hackney-coach, with a great coat-of-arms emblazoned on each door. Some Judge or Lord Mayor, or some other magnifico, seemed to have owned every one of them, fifty years before’.¹⁹¹ When he arrives at the townhouse of his friend, O’Toole is initially mistaken for a servant and is forcefully removed from the parlour before being admitted entry to this new social circle. In its subject, ‘Hyacinth O’Toole’ suggests the direction Le Fanu’s Irish-set fiction might have continued to take had he not died at the age of only 58. The story indicates yet another advancement in the

¹⁹⁰ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, ‘Hyacinth O’Toole’, *Temple Bar*, 71 (1884), 483-501 (p. 501). Hereafter cited as ‘Hyacinth O’Toole’.

¹⁹¹ ‘Hyacinth O’Toole’, p. 486.

trajectory from the decline of Old English landlords, to the profligate peasantry of rural Ireland, to the advancement of an emergent Catholic middle class: the unfit successors that now occupy the higher ranks of Irish society in place of the “magnificos” of the Protestant Ascendency.

This chapter examined Le Fanu’s return to writing about rural Limerick, almost thirty years after his original Purcell stories. The chapter outlined the change in socio-political and cultural conditions of the 1860s and ’70s, during the time of Le Fanu’s editorship of the *D.U.M.*, and traced the decline of Irish Protestant nationalism during the period. Following his departure from the magazine that had such an enormous influence on his work – and his life – the chapter discussed the new publishing conditions instilled by Charles Dickens’s *All the Year Round*. Furthermore, though Le Fanu returned to writing about the same area that featured in his earliest stories, the chapter shows that differing material and socio-political conditions affected Le Fanu’s writing. Ó Giolláin explains that ‘Folklore was distant from the observer, necessitating a journey outwards from the big cities, westwards towards the most remote, isolated and backward rural districts, and downwards, towards the poorest and most humble stratum of settled rural society’.¹⁹² In other words, folklore had to be geographically and culturally distant from those who consumed it, an artifice of representation that frames folklore as something on the verge of extinction. Le Fanu’s use of folklore in the Purcell stories was certainly outward and westward, but not necessarily “backward” and not always concerned with the ‘most humble stratum’. Instead it was a broad and historically motivated study across a spectrum of Irish society, an approach that allowed Irish Protestants to invent a cultural history. In writing about rural Ireland in the 1870s, the ‘isolated and backward rural districts’ are more in evidence, Le Fanu’s characters are arrested in time and living an anachronistic existence, a state of being that is compounded by cyclical patterns of haunting that refuse progression. Le Fanu’s investment in Irish Protestant settler history began to decline in tandem with the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland and the Gladstonian Land reforms, which sought to destabilize Irish Protestant exceptionalism and Irish Protestant power.

¹⁹² Ó Giolláin, p. 142.

CONCLUSION

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Irish Protestant nationalism began to look back to a pre-colonial, ancient Gaelic history of Ireland as a source of cohesive Irishness regardless of religion or historical permanence. S. J. Connolly points out that an emphasis on the ‘settler origins of Irish Protestants was incorporated into the nationalist political programme, from 1879 onwards, of a campaign against landlordism’.¹ In other words, the evocation of settler origins and identity that had previously served to support Irish Protestant exceptionalism and cohesion, as well as their right to rule, was now turned against them:

In the propaganda of the Land League, the root cause of the crisis of the 1880s lay in the Tudor and Stuart confiscations, through which control of Irish land had supposedly passed to a predatory foreign elite devoted to ruthless exploitation of their tenants.²

The shift in Irish Protestants’ conceptions of themselves before the advent of the Land Wars and the Gaelic Revival continues to remain overlooked in literary assessments of the period. A cohesive approach that incorporates theoretical, historical, literary, and material contexts reveals the extent of fluctuations in Irish Protestant identity, and indeed in Irish identity more broadly, over the course of the century. The untold stories of colonial experience are usually the stories of the colonised victim. However, in the Irish case, the settler perspective has remained largely overlooked, even if recent studies have pointed to a possible awakening. In the most recent collection on settler colonial studies, Lorenzo Veracini points to the emergence of Ireland as a site of settler-colonial inquiry: ‘the presence of settler colonialism as a mode of domination before and after the onset of modernity [...] suggests that Ireland was indeed a long-standing laboratory of settler colonial practices’.³ Despite this, only two essays in the extensive collection attempt to read Ireland as a settler colony: Connolly’s ‘Settler colonialism in Ireland from the English Conquest to the Nineteenth Century’ and Stephen Howe’s ‘Northern Ireland and Settler Colonialism to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998’.⁴ The settler perspective is not only a legitimate perspective to consider in any study of postcolonial Ireland, it is also an

¹ S. J. Connolly, ‘Settler colonialism in Ireland from the English Conquest to the Nineteenth Century’, in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, ed. by Edward Cavanagh, and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 49-64 (p. 59).

² *Ibid.*, pp. 59-60.

³ Lorenzo Veracini, ‘Introduction: Settler Colonialism as a Distinct Mode of Domination’, in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, ed. by Edward Cavanagh, and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 1-8 (p. 5).

⁴ Stephen Howe, ‘Northern Ireland and Settler Colonialism to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998’, in *The Routledge Handbook of the History of Settler Colonialism*, ed. by Edward Cavanagh, and Lorenzo Veracini (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 65-76. Connolly’s contribution cited in note 1 above.

indispensable perspective. With Imperialism (as historically understood) at an end, post-independent states ought to consider how contemporary conceptions of nationhood cannot be divested of their colonial origins. A measured study of Irish settler writing is fundamental in contributing to the discussion of postcolonial Ireland. The project of establishing an Irish Protestant national identity that occurred in the nineteenth century, orchestrated in no small part by the likes of the *Dublin University Magazine*, points to the emergence of a specific type of settler nationalism deserving of further exploration.

Ireland's colonial legacy haunts its literature, and while much work has been done in examining postcolonial literature of resistance, there is a dearth of adequate research surrounding pre-independence writing whose colonial position and political outlook were far more ambivalent. In his postcolonial re-reading of *Dracula*, Calvin W. Keogh asserts that 'Irish historiography can surely benefit from the application of a theoretical framework that is applied as a matter of course in the case of countries that present a less continuously postcolonial profile'. Moreover, Keogh cautions against the 'reduction of the postcolonial to a binary opposition of colonizer and colonized' and instead "yield to its multiple and varied conditions".⁵ Le Fanu was unquestionably working within a wider system of Irish Protestant consciousness that deliberately adopted the settler mentality when conceptualising its imaginative boundaries. This thesis demonstrates the need for a sustained reading of Irish Protestant literature under the purview of settler theory, particularly from the period between the Act of Union and disestablishment, before the advent of the Land Wars that would lead to a dramatic shift in Irish society and in Irish Protestant identity once more. This thesis positions Le Fanu's work within a wider movement surrounding Irish Protestant assertions of national identity in the post-Union period, as part of a larger reawakening of the settler perspective in the first decades of the nineteenth century, which then began to dissipate towards the end of the 1860s. It reveals the wide-reaching impact of various historical events, particularly in the aftermath of Act of Union, on both Le Fanu and conceptions of Irish Protestant identity more broadly. This thesis also highlights the importance of the *D.U.M.* in driving the renewal of Irish Protestant identity, and in shaping Le Fanu's fiction and outlook. In 1980, W. J. McCormack remarked on Le Fanu's biographical legacy of colonial settlement, highlighting its transient quality of displacement: 'His life was an interlude between journeys'.⁶ Reflecting on the time

⁵ Calvin W. Keogh, 'The Critics' Count: Revisions of *Dracula* and the Postcolonial Irish Gothic', *Cambridge Journal of Postcolonial Literary Inquiry*, 1 (2014), 189-206 (p. 190), quoting Glenn Hooper and Colin Graham, *Irish and Postcolonial Writing* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), p. 10.

⁶ W. J. McCormack, *Sheridan Le Fanu and Victorian Ireland* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 263.

at which he was writing, McCormack pointed to the ‘infantile stage’ of the ‘study of Anglo-Irish literature’, which he considered to be unfortunately confined to likes of ‘certain prominent and important figures – Yeats, Joyce, Synge – but neglectful of a larger body of writing amongst which the masters must ultimately be placed’.⁷

Almost forty years on from McCormack’s assessment, the study of “Anglo-Irish” literature has matured, but ‘the masters’ have continued to dominate the discussion. Studies of Irish (Protestant) writers have continued to maintain a focus on key figures such as W. B. Yeats, Lady Gregory, J. M. Synge, and Elizabeth Bowen. Even McCormack’s own book to follow his biography of Le Fanu: *Dissolute Characters: Irish Literary History through Balzac, Sheridan Le Fanu, Yeats and Bowen*, continued along the same line.⁸ Previous studies often access Le Fanu via more canonical figures, stretching backwards from the likes of Yeats, Joyce, Beckett, and indeed Bram Stoker, or forwards, figuring Le Fanu as a disciple of Charles Robert Maturin. This thesis points to the need to anchor Le Fanu within his own historical and cultural “moment”, and more specifically, within his publishing contexts. As the thesis has shown, previous critics have been led astray by neglecting these conditions in examining Le Fanu’s work. Through close examination of Le Fanu’s short fiction with an Irish setting, this thesis has revealed the extent of Le Fanu’s engagement with Ireland’s colonial history, particularly with re-telling the settler story, an aspect that has remained largely undocumented in studies of Le Fanu. Furthermore, this thesis points to a larger body of writing that could yield similar results in terms of understanding Irish Protestant outlook and identity formation between the Act of Union in 1801 and the Land Wars of the 1880s. Colonial events are everywhere in Le Fanu’s fiction, though most particularly in his Irish-set stories. Colonial wars frequently serve as narrative backdrops – the Jacobite-Williamite War (1688-1691), the Nine Years War (1594-1603), the Siege of Kinsale (1601) – an indication that these events loomed large in Le Fanu’s, and indeed in the Irish Protestant, consciousness. Le Fanu’s fixation with the transfer of power

⁷ Ibid., p. 266.

⁸ See, for example, W. J. McCormack, *Dissolute Characters: Irish Literary History through Balzac, Sheridan Le Fanu, Yeats and Bowen* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993); Marjorie Howes *Colonial Crossings: Figures in Irish Literary History* (Derry: Field Day Publications, 2006); R. F. Foster, *Words Alone: Yeats and his Inheritances* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Julian Moynahan’s *Anglo-Irish: The Literary Imagination in a Hyphenated Culture* (cited in note 5 above); Sharon M. Gallagher, *The Irish Vampire: From Folklore to the Imaginations of Charles Robert Maturin, Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, and Bram Stoker* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2017); Oona Frawley, *Irish Pastoral: Nostalgia and Twentieth-Century Irish Literature* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005); Margot Gayle Backus, *The Gothic Family Romance: Heterosexuality, Child Sacrifice, and the Anglo-Irish Colonial Order* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999); Paul E. H. Davies, *From Castle Rackrent to Castle Dracula: Anglo-Irish Agrarian Fiction in the Nineteenth Century* (Buckingham: University of Buckingham Press, 2011); Vera Kreilkamp, *The Anglo-Irish Novel and the Big House* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1998).

between the Old English landlords and the New English Protestant Ascendancy also points to larger issues surrounding settler legitimacy in the nineteenth century.

Le Fanu's fixation on this moment of colonial encounter is revealing: why is it specifically *this* period of history that interests him? In the 1980s and '90s the study of Anglo-Irish Gothic by the likes of Terry Eagleton and Julian Moynihan gained momentum as there seemed to be an undeniable connection between Irish Protestants, ghost stories, and colonialism. Since then, studies of Irish Gothic fiction have developed and debunked the exclusivity of the connection between Protestants and the Gothic, with many demonstrating the strong body of Gothic work by Catholic authors, as well as a broader understanding of what constitutes "gothic" literature and its history in Irish writing and Irish thought.⁹ However, the connection between Protestants and colonialism has remained, with many studies conducted on the decline of Protestant authority in the century following the Act of Union that culminated in the Anglo-Irish treaty of 1921 and the rise of Catholic Ireland in the twentieth century. The missing link, however, has been in recognising and understanding the nuances of the Irish colonial experience. The colonial settlement of Ireland conditioned generations of people, affected the way they lived and interacted and thought, and how they developed as a society. Other nations founded on or affected by settlement – such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand – acknowledge the role of settlement in the development of their culture and society. Understanding any of these countries today without consideration of the colonial legacy is unthinkable, and yet Ireland's history of settlement, as opposed to Ireland's history of colonialization (which was never "straightforward"), has remained largely unexplored beyond historical circles. Settler studies draws attention to the literal mechanisms of colonization which are important to understanding the ideological and discursive outcomes that developed later as a result. As such, postcolonial studies must work its way backwards. The field began by studying cultures after the withdrawal of empire and the establishment of "the nation" that the likes of Franz Fanon or Benedict Anderson have focussed on. Gradually it has worked its way back to the moment of cultural encounter. Irish postcolonial studies must enact the same backward progression in order to move forward.

In terms of Irish postcolonial studies more broadly, in its early stages much of the debate was concerned with defining Ireland's colonial status: whether Ireland was a colony,

⁹ See, for example, Jarlath Killeen's work on the Gothic: *Gothic Ireland: Horror and the Irish Anglican Imagination in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2005), and *The Emergence of Irish Gothic Fiction: History, Origins, Theories* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014). See also Christina Morin and Niall Gillespie (eds.), *Irish Gothics: Genres, Forms, Modes, and Traditions, 1760-1890* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

how it was different or comparable to other colonial projects. It is now time to depart fully from that conversation. It is imperative to understand Ireland as a unique and important site of postcolonial inquiry, one deserving of appropriate excavation. Much work has been done by the likes of David Lloyd, Joe Cleary, Glenn Hooper, Colin Graham, and more recently Eóin Flannery and Oona Frawley in developing an outward-looking framework of analysis that goes beyond the national model. Rather, these critics have examined power flows from core to periphery that include looking further than the English-Irish dynamic and instead connecting Ireland's colonial experience to the trans-Atlantic model or to wider European development, as well as Ireland's complicity in colonial projects abroad. Much Irish postcolonial theory also proposes the use of comparative analytical frameworks, and although this was certainly needed at the time, we must also understand the Irish colonial experience in and of itself, accepting that it is perfectly justifiable to analyse the Irish experience in isolation, using experimental and interdisciplinary methods of interpretation. The majority of this work on Irish postcolonial studies was published almost twenty years ago, though at the time Lloyd called for the establishment of 'postcolonial *projects*' of investigation rather than a homogenizing application of postcolonial theory. This thesis considers the intervention of the settler perspective as one such postcolonial project in that it seeks to drill down into the idea of postcoloniality as a totalising experience and instead reveals the various layers of colonisation which interrupt the typical binary of coloniser-colonised.¹⁰ I see my work as extending from Lloyd's treatise in a lot of ways, as an examination of postcolonial experience that looks beyond the state. My research examines the colonial state and the communities that existed within it, one that troubles the coloniser-colonised, Protestant-Catholic binary narrative that emerged after 1922. Postcolonialism has always challenged the idea of a linear, sequential history as a form of verisimilitude, hence the migration from the term post-colonial to postcolonial. However, history remains critical to postcolonial inquiry, even through the very fact of authorised history being challenged by postcolonial alternatives. Anne McClintock stated that postcolonialism is haunted by the history it sets out to dismantle, which is the perfect assessment of the symbiotic relationship between postcolonial studies and history.¹¹ This thesis relied heavily on historical sources, primarily as a way to justify the idea of nineteenth-century

¹⁰ David Lloyd, 'Regarding Ireland in a Post-Colonial Frame', *Cultural Studies*, 15 (2001), 12-32 (p. 13). Original emphasis.

¹¹ Paraphrasing McClintock's statement that 'the term "post-colonial [...]" is haunted by the very figure of linear "development" that it sets out to dismantle [...] an unbidden, if disavowed, commitment to linear time and the idea of "development"'. Anne McClintock, 'The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term "post-colonialism"', *Social Text*, 31/32 (1992), 85-98 (p. 85).

Protestants as descending from a settler culture, but it also adopted an historiographical approach in consideration of how history writing and the *idea* of history was so important to Irish Protestant identity formation in the post-Union period.

Edward Watts has pointed to the difficulty for settlers to ‘find a national voice’, particularly in the generations after first settlement, when the settler population has become “indigenized” in the site of settlement.¹² At this point in the process, settler writing can be understood as ‘enacting a difficult transition wherein settler writers struggled to reconcile their dependence on British literary modes, models, and markets with a need for local subjects and narratives reflecting the complexities’ of life in the colony.¹³ Previously, this issue has been raised in the Irish context in the form of Irish Protestant Gothic, with arguments suggesting that Irish Protestant liminality, insecurity and “guilt”, activated by their colonial status, led them to develop Gothic aspects in their writing: ‘As the Ascendency took to castellating their houses, they gothicized their fiction’, in response to ‘a process of marginalization and psychological insecurity [...] traceable from the early nineteenth century’.¹⁴ However, consideration of the settler perspective and the attendant search for Irish Protestant identity that occurred in the post-Union period, reveals that Irish Protestants were not uniformly insecure or marginalized or confined to writing Gothic fiction, but rather they sought to re-assert their colonial roots as a way to ‘find a national voice’ at a time when their identity was threatened from within and without.¹⁵ As the century progressed, this badge of difference became impractical and increasingly irrelevant as a new generation of Irish Protestants moved into a different phase of self-identification. The methodologies of settler theorists such as Tim McLoughlin, Stephen Slemon, Alan Lawson, Anna Johnston, and Lorenzo Veracini are incredibly relevant and applicable to the Irish context. This framework of analysis can be applied to many Irish authors of the early-to-mid nineteenth century, and will go some way to understanding the period before the Irish Literary Revival. Irish Protestant identity underwent another dramatic shift following the Land Wars, one that moved away decisively from the idea

¹² Edward Watts, ‘Settler Postcolonialism as a Reading Strategy’, *Early American Literature*, 45.2 (2010), 447-58 (p. 448).

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 447. Watts is specifically talking about New Zealand in this instance but argues that the same situation is relevant to other colonies of settlement.

¹⁴ R. F. Foster, *Paddy & Mr Punch: Connections in Irish and English History* (London: Penguin, 1993), p. 219. See Terry Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger* (London: Verso, 1995), in which Eagleton cites paranoia as ‘that most exemplary of all Gothic states of being’, noting that Gothic ‘is the nightmare of the besieged and reviled [and in the Irish case] of a minority marooned within a largely hostile people to whom they are socially, religiously and ethnically alien’, pp. 188-89. See also Julian Moynahan *Anglo-Irish: The Literary Imagination in a Hyphenated Culture* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995).

¹⁵ Watts, p. 448.

of asserting difference in terms of national belonging. The foundations for much – if not all – of the Revival can be found in the work of the authors and intellectuals of the early-to-mid-century period, an area that needs further examination. This thesis is positioned at the beginning of what could be a much larger project of nineteenth-century settler studies. Le Fanu came of age at a time when Irish Protestants were coalescing around the idea of a shared history of settlement, one that singled them out against their English forebears and their Irish countrymen. Settler identity became an active part of Irish Protestant identification with regards to their specific understanding of themselves and their nationality in relation to Empire. While Le Fanu often features colonialism explicitly as the subject of his fiction, such a legacy is also present implicitly in the use of the supernatural and the idea of haunting. From the middle period of his writing onwards this aspect comes more and more to the fore of his work, with characters haunted by the ghosts of history. Ghosts suggest an unease with the past, that something is left unfinished or unacknowledged, that something must be worked out to a conclusion. The correlation between settler fiction and supernatural fiction is strong, with the consensus that the coloniser is haunted by their colonial misdeeds, or that those silenced and suppressed by colonialism return in other forms such as the ghost, interrupting the master narrative. Le Fanu's fiction evidences an obvious and explicit connection to colonialism in its subject matter, one that is further supported by his implicit use of Gothic tropes that encompass instability, insecurity, violence, and the burden of history.

Attention to the *D.U.M.* is important for truly understanding the contexts of Le Fanu's fiction and how it was originally published and consumed. It is also important for understanding how he wrote, what he wrote about, and why. Extensive studies of the *D.U.M.* have already been mounted by the likes of John McBride, Michael Sadleir, and Wayne Hall, all of whom have pointed to the *D.U.M.* as a mutable force, affected by both contemporary politics and the influence of its various editors. They have all also pointed to certain elements of consistency, however, in terms of the magazine's fundamental political outlook and religious doctrine. The magazine, particularly in the earlier years, also defined and supported the notion of an Irish national identity that was specific to the Protestant community, one demarcated by a specific colonial history. The magazine, then, functioned as the cornerstone of Irish Protestant intellectualism and a fundamental cultural mechanism for much of the nineteenth century. The *D.U.M.* quickly emerged as an important text in relation to both Le Fanu's work and his life; the magazine defines Le Fanu as a writer, from his earliest forays to his final days. It is possible – indeed probable – that Le Fanu would not have developed into the writer he was had it not been for the *D.U.M.* and the influence and stewardship of its early editors, both in the

ideological formation of the magazine and in Le Fanu's social sphere. Beyond the magazine's undeniable significance in relation to Le Fanu, the importance of the *D.U.M.* within a wider context of literary formation in the period, of the extent of its political and cultural commentary and influence, and of its unique quality as a periodical in that it existed uninterrupted for more than half a century. In its discussion of the *D.U.M.* this thesis attempted to link both Le Fanu's fiction and the wider national and international influences of the period. The *D.U.M.* functioned within the wider political and cultural sphere, while Le Fanu's fiction functioned within the *D.U.M.* Indeed, there cannot be any proper discussion of Le Fanu or his work without due consideration of the *D.U.M.* and its influence, direct or indirect. Rather than attempting to offer an in-depth analysis of the magazine – which has been done successfully by others – this thesis attempted to read laterally in order to understand Le Fanu's motivations, and to try to understand how his fiction would be interpreted by his readers within the context of the other articles, poems, and literature present in the holistic discourse of the magazine. McCormack's conception of 'seriality'¹⁶ or what Elizabeth Tilley calls 'periodicity'¹⁷ is important if we consider that Le Fanu was deliberately crafting these stories to appear in the magazine: they were designed with the magazine in mind. Therefore, it stands to reason that the magazine is key to their interpretation, whereas hitherto many have only considered these stories as part of the 1880 *Purcell Papers* collection by A. P. Graves.

This thesis extended from McCormack's work on Le Fanu, which was a study of Le Fanu's fiction through biography. While biography was significant, this thesis expanded the context to include the wider socio-cultural factors of Le Fanu's life in Ireland from the 1820s to the 1870s, channelled through the *D.U.M.*, but also influenced by broader political factors and significant historical events. Alan Robinson remarks that 'How cultures and individuals deal with their history [is bound up in] two apparently contradictory phenomena: the desire to hold on to or restore a lost past, and the disturbing inability to relinquish its involuntary legacy'.¹⁸ Le Fanu's fiction evidences this contradictory compulsion: the desire to recapitulate the moment of settlement serves to ground post-Union Irish Protestants in a shared history that clarifies their distinction and yet sanctions their authority. However, as the moment of settlement necessitates a transfer of power, usually through violent and unjust means, retelling

¹⁶ W. J. McCormack, "'Never put your name to an anonymous letter': Serial Reading in the *Dublin University Magazine*, 1861 to 1869', *The Yearbook of English Studies*, 26 (1996), 100-15 (p. 104)

¹⁷ Elizabeth Tilley, 'J. S. Le Fanu, Gothic, and the Irish Periodical', in *Irish Gothics: Genres, Modes, and Traditions, 1750-1890*, ed. by Christina Morin & Niall Gillespie (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 130-46 (p. 130).

¹⁸ Alan Robinson, *Narrating the Past: Historiography, Memory and the Contemporary Novel* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), p. 150.

the settler story is conditional upon reawakening issues of illegitimacy, a legacy that is carried through generations of settlers. As an imaginative example of Robinson's point, illustrating the Janus-faced perspective of the settler looking backwards to a colonial history and forwards to the prospect of post-colonial belonging, it seems fitting to end with the words of Le Fanu. In his closing narrative, Father Purcell ruminates on rural scene before him as he gazes across the Limerick countryside at sunset:

Alas my country! What a mournful beauty is thine; dressed in loveliness and laughter, there is mortal decay at thy heart, – sorrow, sin, and shame have mingled thy cup of misery; strange rulers have bruised thee, and laughed thee to scorn, and they have made all thy sweetness bitter [...] thy miseries have been poured out upon thee by foreign hands [...] thou sore grieved, thou desperately beloved, – is there for thee, my country, a resurrection?¹⁹

Although the sentiments expressed come from the mouth of Le Fanu's Catholic priest, the combination of warmth and sadness expressed while surveying the pastoral scene is a poignant moment of settler-nationalist reflection. Though described as a 'glorious landscape', nevertheless the wounds of colonial violence are perceptible. The question of a resurrection reveals an anxiety surrounding the country's future: a fate, perhaps, in 'foreign hands'.²⁰ Oona Frawley comments on the function of nostalgia 'as a safety mechanism designed to bridge past and present for cultures that have experienced large-scale change'.²¹ Purcell's nostalgic reflection on Ireland's past, one that simultaneously questions Ireland's future, came at a pivotal moment in the Irish Protestant search to find a national voice.

¹⁹ Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu, 'The Quare Gander', *Dublin University Magazine*, 16 (October 1840), 390-94 (p. 390).

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Oona Frawley, *Irish Pastoral: Nostalgia and Twentieth-Century Irish Literature* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2005), p. 3.

APPENDIX

For convenience, the following chronology details some of the major historical events of the nineteenth century overlaid with the publication details and significant occurrences in Le Fanu's life.

1798 United Irishman rebellion 1800 Act of Union (takes effect January 1801) 1803 Dublin uprising under Robert Emmet 1814 Birth of Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu 1823 Daniel O'Connell establishes the Catholic Association 1824 Ordnance Survey of Ireland commences 1826 Le Fanu family relocate to Abington, County Limerick 1828-29 Daniel O'Connell elected to the British House of Commons 1829 Catholic Emancipation granted under the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829 1831 Irish National Education system established and implemented c.1831-38 Tithe War	1832 Le Fanu enters Trinity College Dublin 1833 Inaugural issue of the <i>Dublin University Magazine</i> is published (January) 1834 Isaac Butt takes over from Charles Stuart Stanford as editor of the <i>D.U.M.</i> 1836 Dublin Metropolitan Police force established 1837 Queen Victoria ascends the throne of Great Britain and Ireland 1838 Le Fanu's first story, 'The Ghost and the Bone-setter', appears in volume 11 of the <i>D.U.M.</i> 1838 Irish Poor Law enacted 1838 James McGlashan takes over as editor of the <i>D.U.M.</i> (December) 1840 National Repeal Association founded by Daniel O'Connell 1840 Final Purcell story published in the <i>D.U.M.</i> in October
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1841 Daniel O'Connell elected Catholic Lord Mayor of Dublin, the first in almost two centuries 1841 Death of Catherine Le Fanu 1842 Foundation of the <i>Nation</i> newspaper 1842 Charles Lever becomes editor of the <i>D.U.M.</i> in April 1843 Le Fanu publishes 'Spalatro' in vol. 21 of the <i>D.U.M.</i>, his first story since the culmination of the Purcell stories 1844 Le Fanu marries Susanna Bennet, daughter of George Bennet, Q.C. 1845 Death of Thomas Le Fanu, Dean of Emly; death of Thomas Davis 1845 The Great Famine begins 1845 John F. Waller becomes editor of the <i>D.U.M.</i> 1845 Le Fanu's first novel, <i>The Cock and Anchor – Being a Chronicle of Old Dublin</i>, is published by William Curry 1846 Kingsbridge (Heuston) railway station opens, providing unprecedented access to the remote south and west of Ireland 1847 "Black '47" designated the worst year of the Great Famine	1847 Le Fanu's second novel is published by James McGlashan: <i>The Fortunes of Colonel Torlogh O'Brien – A Tale of the Wars of King James</i> 1847 Le Fanu publishes 'The Watcher' in vol. 30 of the <i>D.U.M.</i>, his first story in over four years; 'The Fatal Bride' follows swiftly in January 1848 1848 April sees publication of the first of three instalments of 'Some Account of the Latter Days of Richard Marston, of Dunoran' in the <i>D.U.M.</i> 1848 Young Ireland Rebellion 1850 Formation of the Tenant League 1851 'Ghost Stories of Chapelizod' published (January). 'Some Gossip about Chapelizod' published (April) 1851 Famine considered to be at an end; Ireland's population falls by over 20% due to mass death and emigration 1853 'An Account of Some Strange Disturbances in Aungier-street' published in the <i>D.U.M.</i> 1856 Cheyne Brady becomes editor of the <i>D.U.M.</i> 1858 Susanna Le Fanu dies 1859 Fenian Brotherhood founded in New York
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1861
 Emma Le Fanu dies

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1861
 Outbreak of the American Civil War

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1861
 Le Fanu becomes owner and editor
 of the *D.U.M.* in July/August

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1861
 October sees the first instalment of
The House by the Church-yard
 in the *D.U.M.*

|
1861
 ‘Ultor de Lacy: A legend of Cappercullen’
 published in the *D.U.M.* (December)

|
1862
 ‘An Authentic Narrative of a Haunted
 House’ published in the *D.U.M.*

|
1864
 July: ‘Maud Ruthyn’ begins serialisation
 in the *D.U.M.*, undergoing several
 title variations before its final publication
 as a novel

|
1864
Uncle Silas: A Tale of Bartram-Haugh
 published in London by Bentley in 3 vols.

|
1865
 Henry John Temple, Lord Palmerston dies.
 Palmerston was considered the last ally of
 the Irish Protestant Church. Le Fanu
 composed Palmerston’s obituary for the
D.U.M. (vol. 66, November)

|
1869
 The Irish Church Act formally
 disestablishes the Church of Ireland

|
1869
 In July, Le Fanu sells the *D.U.M.* to
 Charles F. Adams

|

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1869
 ‘Green Tea’ is published in Charles
 Dickens’ weekly magazine, *All the Year
 Round* in October. The story is considered
 one of Le Fanu’s best-known works

|
1870
 ‘The Child that Went With the Fairies’ is
 Le Fanu’s second story to be published in
All the Year Round, followed quickly by
 ‘The White Cat of Drumgunniol’ and
 ‘Stories of Lough Guir’

|
1870
 The Landlord and Tenant Act (Ireland)
 passed by Gladstone’s government
 at Westminster

|
1871
 Le Fanu’s novella *Carmilla* begins
 serialisation in *The Dark Blue*

|
1872
 ‘Sir Dominick’s Bargain – A legend of
 Dunoran’ is Le Fanu’s final story to
 feature an Irish setting. Published in *All
 the Year Round* in July

|
1873
 7th February: Le Fanu dies in his sleep
 of a suspected heart attack, aged 58

|
1873
Willing to Die published posthumously
 by Hurst & Blackett; *Morely Court*
 published
 by Chapman & Hall

|
1873
 Adams sells the *D.U.M.* to
 London-based Durham Dunlop, thus
 ending the magazine’s forty-year run as an
 Irish-owned publication

|
1880
The Purcell Papers is published by
 Richard Bentley, introduction by Alfred
 Percival Graves

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