IRISH WOMEN IN MID-NINETEENTH-CENTURY TORONTO: IMAGE AND EXPERIENCE

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COURTNEY HARRIS

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ABSTRACT

IRISH WOMEN IN MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY TORONTO: IMAGE AND EXPERIENCE

Courtney Harris
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Advisor:
Dr. C.A. Wilson

This thesis uses the image and experience of Irish immigrant women to reassess the historiography of the Irish immigrant experience in mid-nineteenth century Toronto. Beginning with an analysis of the popular Victorian image of Erin as the embodiment of Ireland, the thesis asks the extent to which characteristics like virtue, purity, pre-modernity and ruralness informed an image of the Irish immigrant and supported Irish claims to respectability in the midst of industrializing Toronto. In the Irish households of mid-nineteenth century Cabbagetown, Irish women's behaviour and their image of irreproachable morality was held up by the Irish immigrant community to claim its status as suitable, and at times exemplary, model citizens. Using Irish domestic servants another case study, this thesis questions why the mistresses of Toronto's finer homes viewed girls from Ireland as suitable domestic servants and weighs the expectations of these mistresses against their Irish domestic servants' determination to marry and be respectable household mistresses in their own right. The final chapter takes the familiar character of the disreputable Irish immigrant as its subject. In the figure of the Irish prostitute, images of virtue, ruralness and naivety associated with Ireland cushion the reputation of Irish female misdemeanants and shield the Irish community as a whole from disreputability and undesirability.

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The greatest appreciation is owed to Matthew Curran, who has patiently endured my preoccupation, accepted my need for silence and nurtured my physical and emotional well-being. Rather than resentment, he was amused that I would convert our dates into long walks through Toronto's streets discussing the lives of past inhabitants. Thanks to him, the thesis is finished.

I would like to dedicate this thesis to two women from my family. To my great-grandmother, Mary White who, at the age of nineteen and without family, exchanged County Down, Northern Ireland for Kent County, Ontario. Also, to my maternal grandmother, Elizabeth (Manz) Powell who inspired me to think critically about women, work, immigration and national identity. Being the first Canadian-born daughter to a German-speaking family newly arrived in Saskatchewan in the early twentieth-century, my grandmother, as did her siblings, left school for waged work. At a very young age, she left her family and went to Regina to work as a domestic servant. It was her many stories of loneliness, discrimination, economic uncertainty, resentment blended with her excitedness, hope, adventure and love for her family that accompanied my thoughts through the course of this thesis. I am grateful for her company.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF TABLES AND CHARTS

Chapter One:
Introduction

The Irish population of Toronto from 1847-1880 provides a familiar subject, though in many ways an unknown group lost amid a stereotype of oppression, destitution and segregation. It was this stereotype that induced me to study the image of the Irish and how it related to the Irish immigrant experience in Toronto. The initial aim of this thesis was to explore the experience of Irish women to comment on what we already know about the Irish immigrant experience in mid-nineteenth-century Toronto. In looking specifically at Irish women and the role of gender in defining immigrant experience, however, I found a very different image of 'Irishness' based on the image of nineteenth-century Ireland as feminine, rural and virtuous. This finding led me to question the belief that the Irish immigrant was not accepted in mid-nineteenth-century Toronto and to contend that Torontonians believed in a positive, though nostalgic image of the Irish which marked their suitability as Canadian citizens. Most interesting of all, the Irish used symbols of Ireland alongside their material success in their new surroundings to promote themselves as respectable Canadian citizens. Thus, this thesis argues that despite a historiographical impulse to describe the Irish in Toronto from 1847-1880 as downtrodden, their 'peasant' image along with the hard work and determination of the Irish marked their suitability as immigrants to Canada.

The time period 1847-1880 was selected chiefly because of a need to rethink the history of the Irish in Toronto prior to 1880. Census material shows that 1847 to 1880 was a period of tremendous growth in population and industry in Toronto and the Irish were an intrinsic part of this growth. As well, this time period encompasses two crucial

events in the history of Irish immigration to Canada: the Famine migration and the Fenian raids. Finally, I wish to address the works of historian Murray Nicolson directly and thus his time period of "Victorian" Toronto was roughly followed. This thesis is about Irish experience, particularly the experience of Irish women both Catholic and Protestant, immigrant and Canadian-born. For the sake of clarity, "Irish" will be used to describe the general group of people from Ireland and of Irish descent to which both Catholics and Protestants - whether Presbyterian, Church of England, Methodist or of another Protestant denomination - belonged. When describing a particular subsection of this group, a more detailed nomer will be used. For example, Canadian-born Irish Catholic or Irish Protestant immigrant refer to two subsections differing in religion and place of birth. Irish nationalism in this thesis refers to the political/ideological movement inside and outside of Ireland, mostly comprised of Irish Catholics but not exclusively so, who were ideologically committed to extricating Ireland from British control.

Both Catholic and Protestant Irish, constituted a substantial proportion of Toronto's population. Arguably, as such, Torontonians and the Irish who had been there for some time would be one and the same. Certainly, the term Torontonian would include people of Irish descent, but the distinction would lie in those who saw themselves as Canadian and those who saw themselves as Irish. The *Examiner* made this distinction when it wrote, "To cherish the recollection of the country that gives us birth is a common instinct....But the moment we consent to quit our native shores, we must submit to the necessity of merging our nationality in that of the country of which we become permanent residents."[1] Upon arrival in Canada, immigrants were encouraged to adopt Canadian

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[1] *Examiner*, April 14, 1847.

ways. Historians accept that Irish immigrants were distinguishable from the Canadian host society and eventually integrated into Canadian society. This process of Canadianization is apparent and for the most part uncontested though historians disagree as to whether the Irish were willing or resistant participants.[2]

There exists a long and complex historiography of the Irish diaspora. The emotionalism and tragedy of the Famine, nationalist and loyalist struggles and ongoing violence in Ireland all contribute to the tone of writing about the Irish experience both on and off Irish soil. The resulting historiography is at the very least electric and at times inflammatory. Recent collaborations, like the five-volume *The Irish World Wide*,[3] attempt to avoid polemic and make an invaluable contribution to the history of Irish emigration. Despite histories like *The Irish World Wide*, however, the debate over who was Irish and what the Irish experience was in Canada is ongoing. Consistently, some scholars, notably those writing about the Irish community in Victorian Toronto, record the early Irish experience in Canada to be one of oppression, degradation and powerlessness. Yet other historians of the Irish in Canada are adamant that the Irish immigrant integrated with ease into nineteenth century Canada. These two schools, Irish as scum-of-the-earth/Irish as salt-of-the-earth, at times develop such opposing views of the Irish experience that it seems questionable whether the histories even share a common

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[2] Cecil Houston and William Smyth wrote that "the Irish became Canadians early in the creation of the country, and for that reason have tended to disappear." Houston & Smyth, *Irish Emigation and Canadian Settlement: Patterns, Links & Letters*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990: 4; D.S. Shea, "The Irish Immigrant Adjustment to Toronto: 1840-1860" in *Study Sessions: The Catholic Historical Association* (1972): 56. Even Murray Nicolson, the most outspoken proponent for an Irish cultural preservation in Canada admits that this notion of difference disappeared within a few generations. Nicolson, "Peasants in an Urban Society" in *Gathering Place: Peoples and Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834-1945*. Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1985.

[3] Patrick O'Sullivan (ed.), *Irish Women and Irish Migration: The Irish World Wide*. London; New York: Leicester University Press, 1995.

subject. Both views follow historiographical trends in the writing about immigration in Canada.

The study of immigration to Canada is a comparatively recent field in Canadian history. The history of the founding nations - the English and the French - constitutes what many Canadian scholars acknowledge or defend as the essential core of Canadian history.[4] Arguably, the Irish could be included in this core, but usually study of the nineteenth-century Irish falls under Canadian immigration history.[5] According to Franca Iacovetta in a recent review of immigration history, early immigrant histories focused on nation-building and immigrant contribution to Canada.[6] As such, *The Irishman in Canada*, the earliest study on the Irish in Canada, by Nicholas Flood Davin published in 1877, focused on the contribution the Irish had made to Canada and Canadian politics. Without distinguishing between Catholic and Protestant, he emphasized Irish loyalty to Canada.[7] In 1922, in the same manner, Reverend Kelly of St. Paul's Parish, Cabbagetown wrote a short book on the history of the parish.[8] As the oldest Catholic church in Toronto

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[4] J.L. Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History.* Toronto: HarperCollins Publishers, 1998.

[5] Ireland's role in Canada's development has received prominent recognition alongside tribute paid other "founding nations." For example, Canada's first national anthem "The Maple Leaf Forever," written in 1867, entwined the rose, thistle and shamrock together as the contributing nations. Another prominent example is the ceiling of the Senate Chamber in the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa which has been painted with the symbols of Canada's founding nations. In patterns of four squares the French fleur de lis, Scotland's lion, the three lions of England and the harp of Ireland are repeated over and over to cover the entire length of the Senate ceiling. Finally, in most modern sociological textbooks on immigration, the Irish are clearly considered a part of the Canadian core, see for example, Raymond Breton et al., *Ethnic Identity: Varieties of Experience in a Canadian City*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990.

[6] Franca Iacovetta, "Manly Militants, Cohesive Communities, and Defiant Domestics: Writing about Immigrants in Canadian Historical Scholarship." *Labour/Le Travail*. Vol. 36 (Fall 1995).

[7] Nicholas Flood Davin, *The Irishman in Canada*. London, Toronto, 1877: preface.

[8] Reverend E. Kelly, *The Story of St. Paul's Parish Toronto: 1822-1922*. Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto, 1922.

and known as the Irish Catholic parish for most of the nineteenth-century, the parish was depicted as a harmonious group co-operating with a host society to construct a social welfare net for the new city. Assured in their own membership in the centre of Canadian society, both Davin and Kelly highlighted the Irish contribution to the emerging Canadian nation.

In the 1960s, by contrast, historians defined the immigrant experience as one of alienation, dislocation and uprootedness. The key author of this school was American historian Oscar Handlin. Handlin, and others like him, did not deny the eventual assimilation of the immigrant group, but he depicted immigrants as pre-modern peoples whose encounters with the urban and industrial world modernized and hence Amercanized them.[9] Adopting this approach, Davin's and Kelly's filiopietistic descriptions of Irish success in Canada were replaced by an equally romantic theory that placed the Irish firmly on the margins of Canadian society.[10] In studies such as Kenneth Duncan's "Irish Famine Immigration and the Social Structure of Canada West," published in 1965, the 'peasant' Irish, rather than modernizing, became violence-prone and impoverished.[11] Historians such as H. Clare Pentland interested in working-class history viewed the Irish as the proletariat of nineteenth-century Canada.[12] In this view,

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[9] Oscar Handlin, *The Uprooted.* Boston: Little, Brown, 1951. Please see Iacovetta, "Manly Militants" for a full discussion on Handlin: 220.

[10] For a fuller discussion of pre-1960s immigration history in Canada see Gerald Friesen and Royden Loewen, "Romantics, Pluralists, Postmodernists: Writing Ethnic History in Prairie Canada" in *River Road: Essays on Manitoba and Prairie History.*Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1996.

[11] Kenneth Duncan, "Irish Famine Immigration and the Social Structure of Canada West." in *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*. Vol. 2, No. 1 (Feb. 1965): 31.

[12] See for example H. Clare Pentland, "Labour and the Development of Industrial Capitalism in Canada" (PhD dissertation) University of Toronto: 1960 or Michael B. Katz, *The People of Hamilton, Canada West: Family and Class in a Mid-Nineteenth Century City*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University

the Irish laboured in the canals and on the roadways of Ontario for little pay, in hazardous conditions and with frequent class conflicts. While useful for revealing working-class experience, these studies dangerously cast Irish immigrants as the oppressed victims of, rather than as contributors to, Canadian nation-building. These Canadian historians believed that because of an inherent cultural ineptitude, the Irish were unable to integrate and succeed in Ontario. In H.C. Pentland's words, they were "improvident, tradition-bound and superstitious...the Irishman was a primitive man, half a tribesman still."[13] This recasting of the Irish as 'peasant' included a parallel revisioning of Ireland as uncivilized. In Canadian history, the Irish 'peasant' quickly came to mean Catholic, urban, proletarian and poor.

Starting in the 1970s, historians looked for evidence of immigrants' agency, choice and resistance amidst the nativism they faced.[14] It became clear that the Irish experience in Toronto was divided by religion into two groups, Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants. In the case of Irish Catholics, historians of the Catholic Church in nineteenth and early-twentieth-century Ontario revealed Irish Catholic immigrants' contribution to Catholic institutions and a Catholic community in the face of dominant Protestant

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Press, 1975. More recently see such works as P.M. Toner, "Occupation and Ethnicity: The Irish in New Brunswick." *Canadian Ethnic Studies*. Vol. 20, (1988) or Donald Mackay, *Flight From Famine: The Coming of the Irish to Canada*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990. For an American example of this approach please see Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985.

[13] Harry Clare Pentland, "Labour in Canada in the Early Nineteenth Century" PhD dissertation. University of Toronto (1960): 222

[14] Iacovetta: 221; Friesen and Loewen: 186.

opposition.[15] Historians like Brian Clarke, Michael Cottrell and J.R. Miller have shown the degree of anti-Catholic sentiment in Ontario and the countering strength of Irish Catholic resistance.[16] The involvement of Irish Protestants in anti-Catholic and often imperialist movements like the Orange Order has received due attention by Hereward Senior, Cecil Houston and William Smyth, and Greg Kealey. These historians demonstrated the role of Orangeism in the identity of Irish Protestant immigrants who, as predominantly working-class, used the Orange order and its accompanying pageantry to assert their own position in their adopted country of Canada.[17] Studies on both Irish Catholic and Irish Protestant immigrants focused on the experience of the Irish immigrants in terms of success established by the immigrant community.

The new attention given immigrant communities marked a pluralist or a multicultural approach to the history of Canada.[18] Within this multicultural approach,

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[15] Mark G. McGowan, "'We Are all Canadians': A Social, Religious and Cultural Portrait of Toronto's English Speaking Roman Catholics, 1890-1920." University of Toronto (Ph.D. dissertation), 1988; Brian P. Clarke and Mark G. McGowan, *Catholics at the Gathering Place: Historical Essays on the Archdiocese of Toronto, 1841-1991*. Toronto: Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 1993; Gerald J. Stortz, "The Catholic Church and Irish Nationalism in Toronto 1850-1900" in *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada*; and finally McGowan's latest book entitled *Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish and identity in Toronto, 1887-1992*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999.

[16] Brian P. Clarke, "Lay Nationalism in Victorian Toronto." in *Catholics at the Gathering Place*; Michael Cottrell, "Irish Catholic Politics in Ontario." in *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada*; Michael Cottrell, "St. Patrick's Day Parades in Nineteenth-Century Toronto: A Study of Immigrant Adjustment and Elite Control" in *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. XXV, No. 49 (May 1992): 57-73; J.R. Miller, "Bigotry in the North Atlantic Triangle: Irish, British and American Influences on Canadian Anti-Catholicism, 1850-1900." in *Studies in Religion*. Vol. 16, No. 2 (Summer 1987).

[17] Hereward Senior, *Orangeism: The Canadian Phase*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1972; Cecil Houston and William Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore: A Historical Geography of The Orange Order in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980; Gregory Kealey, "Orangemen and the Corporation." in *Forging a Consensus: Historical Essays on Toronto*. Victor L. Russell (ed.) Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984; Gregory Kealey, "The Orange Order in Toronto: Religious Riot and the Working Class." in *Essays in Working Class History*. Gregory Kealey (ed.) Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1976; and Michael Cottrell, "Green and Orange in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Toronto: The Guy Fawkes' Day Episode of 1864" *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies*, Vol XIX (July 1993): 12-21.

[18] Friesen and Loewen: 187.

there was room to romanticize the culture left behind and to de-emphasize the process of assimilation. Some historians of the Irish, particularly of the Irish Catholics in Victorian Toronto, adopted the argument that emphasized cultural resistance rather than assimilation.[19] Irish Catholics thus became outcasts in urban ghettos or they deliberately chose to segregate themselves from a Protestant core. The explanation for this isolation either emphasized the exclusivity of the core or a self-imposed ghettoization of the immigrant group to protect their culture and to resist assimilation: what one historian of the Irish coined "the mental ghetto."[20] Thus, by romanticizing the culture of the homeland, the experience of the Irish immigrant was easily distinguishable from that of the host society.[21]

This nostalgic interpretation required Ireland to be pre-modern and static, a place where culture was undynamic and tradition was paramount. Whereas historians in the 1960s argued that the Irish Catholics were oppressed because of their primitiveness, historians in the 1980s claimed that Irish Catholics were defiant in their rusticity. This latter and prevailing approach lent agency to the immigrant group as they struggled to preserve their culture albeit a culture based on a fixed moment in time and place and hinged on peripheral status.[22] From this historiographical trend, the Irish experience in

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[19] Donald MacKay, *Flight from Famine*; Donald Power, *Anti-Irishness in Canadian School Texts: An Historical Perspective*. (PhD dissertation) Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1991; P.M. Toner, "Occupation and Ethnicity"; and such articles by Donald Power, William M. Baker and Mary Lassance Parthun in *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada*.

[20] Murray Nicolson,"Peasants in an Urban Society"in *Gathering Place: Peoples and Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834-1945*: 57.

[21] Franca Iacovetta, "Manly Militants": 222.

[22] Neil Bissondath argues that multiculturalism has commodified culture and distorts the actual lived experience of the home country in *Selling Illusions: the Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*. Toronto: Penguin, 1994.

Canada as one of ethnic outcasts has become the most easily identified and popular image to which Canadians of all Irish descent ascribe.[23]

The hegemony of this popular image of the Irish Catholic experience in Canadian historiography has met formidable opposition. As statistical analysis has grown more sophisticated, historians have discovered that the Irish in Canada were almost two times more likely to be farmers rather than labourers, to be rural rather than urban, and to be Protestant rather than Catholic.[24] Perhaps the best known proponent of the farmer/rural/Protestant school is Donald Akenson. Along with Cecil Houston and William Smyth, Akenson warns of the tendency to insert American images of the victimized Irish emigrant "uprooted by the Great Famine and immobilized in urban ghettos" into the backdrop of Canadian historiography.[25] Rightly, Akenson recognized the inaccuracy in the nineteenth-century portrayal of the Irish as Canada's oppressed, and convincingly he argued that the majority of Irish were rural, Protestant and successful.

In 1984 Akenson called for more focussed studies on the immigration and settlement patterns of specific groups of Irish immigrants and warned of the seductive call

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[23] See for example editorial page, *Toronto Star*, March 17, 1999. Also, Sheelagh Conway, *The Faraway Hills Are Green: Voices of Irish Women in Canada*. Toronto: Women's Press, 1992.

[24] See Donald Akenson, "Ontario: Whatever Happened to the Irish?" in *Canadian Papers in Rural History*. Vol. III, (1982); A. Gordon Darroch and Michael Ornstein, "Ethnicity and Class Transitions Over a Decade: Ontario, 1861-1871." in *Historical Papers/Communications Historiques*. Guelph, Ontario, 1984; Akenson, *Being Had: Historians, Evidence and the Irish in North America*. Toronto: P.D. Meany Publishers, 1985; Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario: A Study in rural History*, Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1984; Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* Toronto: P.D. Meany Company Inc., 1993; Gordon Darroch, "Half Empty or Half Full? Images and Interpretations in the Historical Analysis of the Catholic Irish in Nineteenth-Century Canada." *Canadian Ethnic Studies/Etudes Ethniques au Canada* Vol. XXV, No. 1, 1993.

[25] Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer*: 11; Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth, *Irish Emigration an Canadian Settlement: Patterns, Links and Letters*. Toronto: University of Toronto, Press, 1990: 5

to study the Irish in urban concentrations, which he predicted would be "magnified out of all proportion to its historical reality."[26] Since then, those who have conducted rural case studies of the Irish have contributed to an overall understanding of the diversity and complexity of the Irish experience in Canada. For example, Bruce Elliott's *Irish Migrants in Canada* examined a group of 775 Protestant Irish immigrants by tracing their "genealogies, movements, land-holding strategies and economic lives"[27] over several generations. Catharine Wilson, by comparing landlords and tenants in both Ireland and Ontario, made an unusual discovery that leaseholding strategies persisted in Canada to the benefit of the Irish immigrant.[28] Glenn Lockwood wrote extensively on the Irish in Montague Township in Eastern Ontario and their contributions to the successful development of this area.[29] These studies and Akenson's own studies on Leeds and Lansdowne Townships form a strong scholarly counter-argument that has dislodged the historical prevalence of the oppressed Irish immigrant, though not its popular attraction.[30]

Akenson proved the degree to which Irish immigrants were rural with hard statistical evidence. Drawing from the 1871 Canadian census, he showed that 77.5 per cent of people of Irish descent in Ontario lived in rural areas and that the Irish were as

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[26] Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario*: 223

[27] Bruce S. Elliott, *Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988: 1

[28] Catharine A. Wilson, *A New Lease on Life: Landlords, Tenants and Immigrants in Ireland and Canada*.Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994.

[29] Glenn J. Lockwood, *Montague: A Social History of an Irish Ontario Township, 1783-1980*. Smith Falls, Ontario: Corporation of the Township of Montague, 1980; and Glenn J. Lockwood, "Eastern Upper Canadian Perceptions of Irish immigrants, 1800-1867" (PhD dissertation), University of Ottawa, 1988.

[30] Donald H. Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario*.

likely to be rural as Canadians themselves.[31] Directly attacking the assumption that Irish Catholics tended to congregate in urban areas, Akenson found that the number of Catholics of Irish descent who lived in Ontario's urban areas in 1871 was only 14.7 per cent or one in seven.[32] This number certainly constitutes a minority of Irish Catholics in Ontario. With these fine examples of rural history and Akenson's strict warning against urban studies it is necessary to explain why this thesis focuses on the Irish in Toronto - the largest urban centre in Ontario.

The historical experience of the Irish in Toronto has been painted as one of oppression, destitution and segregation. This impression not only colours many studies of the Irish in Toronto, but also affects their place in Canadian history in general. Among the few to write specifically about the Irish in Toronto, Murray Nicolson has published a plethora of articles dealing with various aspects of the Irish urban experience.[33] Despite his questionable methodology and unsubstantiated evidence, he boldly extends his perception of Irish Catholics in Toronto to all Irish Catholics in the province. In his own words:

> With the rise of Irish Catholic institutions after 1850, Toronto became the cultural focus for the Irish in Ontario. It was from the areas of Irish Catholic concentration, with their interacting parish networks, that a

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[31] Akenson, "Whatever Happened to the Irish?": 235.

[32] Akenson, "Whatever Happened to the Irish": 233.

[33] See any of the following by Murray Nicolson, "The Catholic Church and the Irish in Victorian Toronto" (PhD dissertation), University of Guelph, 1981; "The Other Toronto: Irish Catholics in a Victorian City, 1850-1900." in *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban and Social History*. Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan. F.J. Artibise (eds.) Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1984; "Women in the Irish-Canadian Catholic Family." in *Polyphony*. Vol. 8, Nos. 1-2 (1986); "The Education of a Minority: The Irish Family Urbanized." in *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada*; "Irish Tridentine Catholicism in Victorian Toronto: Vessel for Ethno-Religious Persistance." in *Prophets, Priests and Prodigals: Readings in Canadian Religious History, 1608 to Present.* Mark McGowan and David Marshall (eds.) Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1992.

> distinctive culture arose and spread to the hinterland. Urban-rural ratios made little difference, for Irish Catholic culture was urban-born.[34]

Nicolson has been criticized for looking at a small and very specific group of Irish Catholics as representative of the Irish experience in Canada and further criticized for mis-representing that Irish Catholic experience.[35] Nicolson relies on anonymous oral testimony to comment on the "unacceptable moral standards of the Irish laity", illicit sexual relations, illegitimate births and a resulting high incidence of infanticide.[36] Also, Nicolson relies heavily on the papers of Bishop Charbonnel and Archbishop Lynch - who undoubtedly had a rigid and narrowly defined concept of the morality of their laity - and he uncritically reproduces the opinion of these nineteenth-century religious leaders as the history of the Irish. This thesis will take issue with Nicolson's weakly substantiated claims about Irish experience in Victorian Toronto.

Nicolson's questionable portrayal of the Irish lies in a romanticized view that Ireland and its people were simple, Gaelic, pre-modern and superstitious folk. He extends the cultural resistance and nativism outlined in articles about Fenianism and Orangeism to show that Toronto was a hostile and intolerant community where "Catholic institutions in the city grew in proportion to the inequity, intolerance, souperism and ill-treatment Irish Catholic immigrants experienced in public institutions."[37] Intrinsic to Nicolson's study is

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[34] Nicolson. "Peasants in an Urban Society.": 49.

[35] See Mark McGowan "'We Are all Canadians': A Social, Religious and Cultural Portrait of Toronto's English Speaking Roman Catholics, 1890-1920." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1988 for a critique of Nicolson's portrayal of Catholicism and the Irish. Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario*: introduction.

[36] Nicolson. "Irish Tridentine Catholicism in Victorian Toronto: Vessel for Ethno-Religious Persistance." in *Prophets, Priests and Prodigals*, p. 124

[37] Ibid: 121.

a notion of cultural uniformity and cultural persistance in the face of Canadianization. Nicolson's portrayal of the Irish Catholics asserts their cohesiveness as backward, drunken and immoral in opposition to a monolith of Protestant morés. But what if historians placed less emphasis on the Catholic/Protestant divide and examined other descriptors of identity?

It is the specific contention of this thesis that both the image of the Irish and the Irish experience were gendered and that gender as a determinant will help clarify the historical reading of the Irish in Toronto. Although currently the Irish in Canada are among the most controversial and documented immigrant groups, we know little about Irish women.[38] Irish women in Canada have recently become popular fictional characters[39], but this interest has yet to materialize in the field of scholarly history.[40] This absence of Irish women as historical actors is not unique to Canada, as noted in a recent issue of *Irish Historical Studies* which calls for an agenda for women's history in Ireland.[41] This rather belated call for attention to Irish women's or immigrant women's history comes at a time when the category of "woman" is being problematized and

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[38] Sheelagh Conway's book, the only book devoted to Irish women in Canada, was not researched to any historical depth. Sheelagh Conway, *The Faraway Hills Are Green: Voices of Irish Women in Canada*. Toronto: Women's Press, 1992.

[39] See Margaret Atwood, *Alias Grace*. New York: Nan A. Talese Doubleday, 1996; Jane Urquart. *Away*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993; *Canadian Woman Studies/Cahier des Femmes* (Summer/Fall 1997).

[40]Mariana Valverde's useful study of race, ethnicity and women's middle class movements in English Canada from 1885-1925 does not include the Irish as a group in *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1920*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Inc., 1991; *Toronto's Girl Problem*, by Carolyn Strange looks at unmarried women in Toronto from 1880-1930, but does not note a significant girl problem for the Irish; Nor does Karen Dubinsky use Irish as a category in her recent book on rape and heterosexual conflict in Ontario. Karen Dubinsky, *Improper Advances: Rape and Heterosexual Conflict in Ontario, 1880-1929*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

[41] Maria Luddy, "An Agenda for Women's History in Ireland: 1800-1900" *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. XXVIII, No. 109, (May 1992).

deconstructed in women's history.[42] Rethinking women's history, some scholars call attention to both masculinity and femininity as sociological and historical constructions rather than focusing on women.[43] In accordance with that approach this thesis will use gender as a framework but will not abandon its more in depth focus on Irish women. Because Irish women in Toronto have yet to be subjected to rigorous historical analysis, they will be featured characters in this study.

In this thesis I examine the role of gender in the immigrant experience and conclude that for the Irish, gender is inextricably tied to place of origin. Identity and its relationship to environment and place has become a growing basis from which to study how identity is formed. In Canadian history, Karen Dubinsky suggests that the powerful association of morality and gender to a geographical region influenced how Canadians perceived a particular region or its inhabitants. In her book, *Improper Advances*, Dubinsky argued that Northern Ontario's reputation as wild and masculine in the face of Southern Ontario's restful femininity affected settlement in the region. In terms of attracting the 'proper' sort of settler to Northern Ontarian communities in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, Dubinsky found that community leaders had to advertise their region as pastoral and virtuous.[44] Likewise, I argue that gender had a profound association with Irish identity. The perceived femininity of Ireland and its associated characteristics of purity, simplicity, pastorality and pre-modernity shaped the

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[42] See for example Joan W. Scott, "Woman's History". In *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*. Peter Burke (ed.) University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995.

[43] Kathryn McPherson, Cecilia Morgan and Nancy M. Forestell (eds), *Gendered Pasts: Historical Essays in Femininity and Masculinity in Canada*. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 1999: 11.

[44] Karen Dubinsky: 166

image of the Irish in Canada. This thesis does not accept the view that Ireland was pre-modern and simple without criticism. Instead the pre-modernity and simplicity of Ireland and its people are treated as perceptions that impacted on the experience of the Irish in Toronto, not as the description of that experience.

There is movement among Canadian historians of immigration and race/ethnicity to understand the complexity of immigrant experience by looking at distinctions other than ethnic identity. At the conclusion of her article on the historiography of immigration in Canada, Franca Iacovetta called for:

> a more integrative approach to the study of immigrants, one in which the interconnections of class, gender, and race-ethnicity are considered not as fixed and immutable entities but as processes -- processes that in some contexts might act in concert, mutually reinforcing each other, but at other times impose contradictory influences on women's and men's and girls' and boys' lives.[45]

Gerald Friesen and Royden Loewen also recognized that "in the late twentieth century, historians are focusing on the ephemerality of identity, recognizing that ethnicity may coexist with other identities, may acquire different types of meaning in different contexts, may affect and be affected by the identity of the wider society, and may pass through several stages of relevancy and irrelevancy."[46] These suggested approaches to immigrant history are useful to a study of the Irish in mid-nineteenth-century Toronto.

To understand the creation of Irish identity in Toronto, an historian must consider all angles which shaped the Irish experience. This thesis hopes to follow Akenson's recommendations by pausing to count the Irish in the 1871 census, and thus provide a

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[45] Iacovetta, "Manly Militants": 250-1.

[46] Royden Loewen and Gerald Friesen, "Romantics, Pluralists, Postmodernists": 193.

statistical context in which to judge the more qualitative evidence. After methodically working through mid-nineteenth-century Toronto daily newspapers, consulting political speeches, poems and songs written by and/or about the Irish and reading many religious and civic tracts, this thesis argues that anxieties about the city, about attracting the proper sort of citizens, and the image of Ireland acted as essential components in determining how nineteenth-century Torontonians viewed the Irish, how the Irish viewed themselves and how each of these groups in turn chose to create their own image.

Besides the image of Ireland and 'her' people, the context of Toronto is exceedingly important to this study. The city of Toronto in the mid-nineteenth-century had surpassed its importance as a colonial administrative outpost and was on its way to becoming a centre of manufacturing and small industry in Ontario.[47] In the 1860s, the arrival of a steam railway further changed Toronto from a colonial commercial outpost to the trading capital of Ontario.[48] It was a growing city which relied heavily upon immigration for its expansion. Since the time of the Famine migration to 1871, Toronto had more than doubled its population, reaching 56,092 by 1871.[49] Just over half of Toronto's population had been born outside of Canada. The majority of these immigrants hailed from England (37.4%), followed closely by a sizeable Irish immigrant population (34.9%) and a smaller group of Scottish immigrants (11%). As for the ethnic origin of Torontonians, however, Toronto had a rather Irish cast with 43 per cent of its inhabitants

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[47] Gregory S. Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-1892*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980.

[48] Goheen: 126.

[49] All statistics are based on calculations from Tables I-IV, *Census of Canada 1870-71, Volume I*. Ottawa: I.B. Taylor, 1873.

claiming Irish ethnicity, followed by those of English origin who constituted 37.8 per cent and the Scots, being the only other ethnic group of notable size, at 14.6 per cent of the city's total population. Toronto was overwhelmingly Protestant with almost 80 per cent of inhabitants attending Protestant Churches.[50] It is plausible and has been argued that the vast majority of Catholics in Toronto were of Irish origin.[51] Overall, the Catholics constituted 21.2 per cent of Toronto's entire population. Thus the Irish, both Catholic and Protestant, constituted a substantial proportion of Toronto's population.

In 1871, the city of Toronto stretched from the lakefront to Bloor Street in the north and from the Humber River in the West to the Don River in the east. The Irish could be found in all areas of the city and in all but two wards, they constituted the majority of inhabitants. According to the 1871 census, St. David's Ward and St. Lawrence Ward, located in the city's southeast corner, were heavily Irish, with the Irish constituting 48.5 per cent and 47.7 per cent of each ward's respective populations.[52] Located just west of St. David's Ward, in the centre of the city, were St. John's and St. James' wards. These densely populated wards were working-class strongholds, but also home to the labouring poor. It was in these two wards that some of the most disreputable haunts of the city could be found. In accordance with the historiography of the Irish in Toronto, the Irish should be over-represented among the poor and downtrodden population of these two wards. It was only in St. John's and St. James' wards, however,

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[50] Methodist Churches (17%), Presbyterian Churches (16%) or most likely the Church of England (36.9%)

[51] McGowan, "We Are All Canadians."

[52] By the turn of the century, St. David's and at times St. Lawrence wards, both predominantly respectable working-class, became known as Cabbagetown. George Rust-D'Eye, *Cabbagetown Remembered.* Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co. Ltd., 1993.

that the Irish numbered less than those of English origin and did not form the largest ethnic group.[53] Though the 1871 census for Toronto noted both ethnicity and religion of the population, it did not cross-reference these two categories. To find out the exact number of Irish Catholics as opposed to Irish Protestants in any particular ward would require an entry by entry analysis of the manuscript census. Such a study has not been done for the 1871 census, though historian D.S. Shea was able to isolate and locate Irish Catholics in each of Toronto's wards in 1851 and 1861.[54] D.S. Shea found in 1851 that the Irish Catholics were over-represented in St. David, St. James and St. Lawrence wards. By 1861, Irish Catholics had moved into the west end wards of St. Patrick's and St. Andrew's in significant numbers, but they were still concentrated in St. Lawrence and St. David's wards. There was a notable decline in St. James' ward and a dramatic under-representation in the newly created and poorest ward of St. John.[55] Thus, in each ward of the city of Toronto, the Irish could be found, and in particular, they were found in the respectable working-class areas of St. Lawrence and St. David's wards.

Despite the high proportion of Irish in Toronto's population, Toronto did not appear as an 'Irish' town.Torontonians stressed their civilized Britishness in contrast to crass American cities' association with wild Republicanism, rampant materialism and

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[53] Table III "Origins of the People" *Census of Canada 1870-71, Volume I.*

[54] D.S. Shea used census data collected by Father Jamot for the Archdiocese of Toronto in 1851 and 1861. Father Jamot's census material is housed at the Archives of the Archdiocese of Toronto. D.S. Shea, "The Irish Immigrant Adjustment to Toronto: 1840-1860" in *Study Sessions: The Catholic Historical Association* (1972).

[55] D.S. Shea. "The Irish Immigrant Adjustment": 59. In an even earlier study, Paul Romney found the same concentration of Irish Catholics in the South-east sections of the city and found Irish Protestants to the north and west. Romney. "A Struggle for Authority: Toronto Society and Politics in 1834" in *Forging a Consensus: Historical Essays on Toronto*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984: 11

evil.[56] With reform-minded individuals steadily gaining power in municipal politics, historian Paul Romney contended that Toronto was governed by a "pluralistic concensus [based] on a limited tolerance of diversity founded on unquestioned participation in a British and Protestant empire and a new dominant ideology of commercial and industrial advance."[57] Leading the defense of British imperialism were the many members of the Loyal Orange Lodge. In 1870, Toronto had seventeen Orange Lodges and a tradition of Orange dominance in local politics and patronage appointments was firmly established.[58] In Toronto, following the 1837 Rebellion through to the 1870s, the mayor's office and the legislative assembly were dominated by Tory politicians deriving their support from their affiliation with the Orange Order.[59] Orangemen were rewarded with civil posts in licensing, engineering, contracting for civic works and most notably in positions in the fire department.[60] Orangeism was a major component in Toronto's identity as the city moved into its industrial era.

Along with this sense of industrial progress was an expectation that civilization would advance in morality and culture. In *Forging a Consensus: Historical Essays on*

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[56] C.D. Mazoff, *Anxious Allegiances: Legitimizing Identity in the Early Canadian Long Poem.* Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998: 126 Also see Paul Romney "A Struggle for Authority": 35.

[57] Paul Romney, "A Struggle for Authority: Toronto Society and Politics in 1834" in *Forging a Consensus*: 35

[58] Houston and Smyth, *The Sash Canada Wore*: 49.

[59] Gregory Kealey, "Orangemen and the Corporation: The Politics of Class During the Union of the Canadas" in *Forging a Consensus: Historical Essays on Toronto.* Victor L. Russell (ed.) Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984.

[60] Until 1858, the police force was the domain of Orangemen. Following a riot in 1858 during which Orange policemen refused to intervene and arrest Orange rioters or to testify against Orange rioters, the City of Toronto, under Adam Wilson, a Reform mayor, established a Toronto Board of Police Commissioners which reformed the police department and forbade any member of the police force to belong to any secret society including the Orange Order. Kealey, "Orangemen and the Corporation": 71-72.

Toronto, Nicolas Rogers noted that Toronto embarked on an ambitious project "to establish a moral ethos consonant with the new industrial and commercial order."[61] It could be a matter of debate, whether Toronto was exceptional in its morality or conventional in its immorality. D.C. Masters traced the expansion of Toronto through the erection of its churches, yet in the papers of the time there was editorial outcry over the number of liquor licences dispensed by civic authorities.[62] Like all large cities Toronto was a centre of amusement, from public lectures and musical concerts to saloon revelry and bawdy houses. By the mid-nineteenth century, Torontonians questioned the moral fibre of their city and by the 1880s, Torontonians listed moral reform of their city as an urgent necessity.[63]

Toronto was not alone in its anxiety over the perceived moral pitfalls of urbanization. Victorian Canadians, like their English counterparts, measured industrial development, expansion of the city and uncertain change against the stability and idyllic harmony of a traditional, rural-based society. The city, in contrast to the country, emerged as a powerful emblem of corruption, danger and sin.[64] Toronto, although not as of yet relinquishing its title of 'Queen City,' was nevertheless aware of the association of urbanity with vice.[65] The mid-nineteenth century was a time of journalistic exposés of the

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[61] Nicolas Rogers, "Serving Toronto the Good" in *Forging a Consensus: Historical Essays on Toronto*: 133

[62] D.C. Masters, *The Rise of Toronto: 1850-1890*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1947: 30.

[63] Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, *Revenge of the Methodist Bicycle Company: Sunday Streetcars and Municipal Reform in Toronto, 1888-1897*.Toronto: P. Martin Associates, 1977: 7.

[64] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973: 35.

[65] Christopher Clark attacked Toronto's morally spotless image as the 'Queen City' in his book entitled *Of Toronto the Good, a Social Study: The Queen City of Canada as it is*. Montreal, 1898.

darker side of London and early sociological studies on prostitution and crime in American cities.[66] While Torontonians admired progress, it did not necessarily mean that they held faith in an urban environment. To keep Toronto civilized, productive and virtuous, citizens of commendable moral fibre were needed.

Thus, the formation of Toronto required more than the development of political and economic infrastructures, it also included a moral foundation in its creation.[67] It follows that a preoccupation about morality coincided with concerns about recruiting and shaping a suitable citizenry. Torontonians judged the experience of the Irish as newcomers to Toronto in terms of an ideal type of citizen.[68] Although it may be difficult to measure the degree in which citizenship figured in the daily lives of the inhabitants of nineteenth century Toronto, the daily newspapers indicated that acceptance into the community or rejection revolved around the rhetoric of citizenship. The Irish immigrants' response and, at times, active representation of themselves used this narrative of citizenship in what they hoped would herald their acceptance in a new country. Citizenship involved a conceptualization of Canada, its future goals and directions to determine who could be a profitable part of the new country. Industriousness, sobriety,

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[66] Please see Henry Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor* (1860) or for the history of moral crusades in New York, Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987.

[67] Later in the century, Northern Ontario would express the same anxieties. Karen Dubinsky, *Improper Advances*: 44.

[68] Historiographically, the use of citizenship to examine identity in nineteenth-century Canada is not exclusive to this thesis. For example, J.M.S. Careless deemed this consciousness, the development of a communal identity. J.M.S. Careless. *Frontier and Metropolis: Regions, Cities, and Identities in Canada before 1914. (The Donald G. Creighton Lectures 1987)* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989: 72; This thesis will use the term 'citizenship' rather than 'communal identity' because 'citizenship' includes achievement as well as ascription. Feminists have extended the term 'citizenship' to include social, and economic as well as political requirements. Please see Ruth Lister "Citizenship: Towards a Feminist Synthesis" *Feminist Review* (1997): 36.

loyalty to the British Empire and membership in a self-sufficient family unit all marked a citizen's suitability for the Canadian national project. Anti-Irish sentiments or images would be expressed as a failure to meet these required Canadian attributes.

Leading Toronto citizens publicly debated not only the necessity of immigrants, but also the type of immigrant they would welcome in the city. Canada needed immigrants in the mid-nineteenth century and the Canadian immigrant authorities along with the wider public deemed that the Irish, without religious distinction, would be suitable "British" candidates.[69] Even at the height of Famine immigration to Canada the Irish were welcomed as they were perceived to be rural, simple, virtuous and innocent. Perfect candidates for a Canadian immigration policy with a decidedly "agriculturalist fetish."[70] This policy assumed that Irish immigrants would move to rural areas to improve Canadian farmland and add to the country's moral strength, however, the Irish did not always do as was planned.[71] If Irish immigrants lingered too long in the Canadian city, Canadians and Irish-Canadians alike believed that the immigrants could fall into the snares of alcoholism, street-fighting, petty crime or prostitution. The Irish would then become glaring examples of what tragedy could befall the guileless in the city. The concern for Irish female immigrants alone in the city was particularly troublesome.

Chapter Two challenges the historical image of the Irish. Deconstruction of the image of 'Irishness' in Victorian newspapers is not by any standard a new task for

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[69] Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration Policy, 1540-1990*. Toronto & Oxford: Dundern Press, 1992: 30-2.

[70] G.J. Parr, "The Welcome and The Wake: Attitudes in Canada West Toward the Irish Famine Migration" *Ontario History*, Vol. LXVI, No. 2 (June 1974): 101-113.

[71] Joy Parr, "The Welcome and the Wake": 105.

historians, but a more gender sensitive lense, added to the historical microscope, challenges prevailing perspectives of the Irish image. This study will draw from a body of international literature which fastens the symbolism of masculinity and femininity to the Irish image. Both pictorial and written imagery of Ireland and its people will be studied to discover the origin of these images and to place these images within the context of an increasingly identifiable Irishness in Ireland. When reporting Irish success and/or failures in Toronto, parties as diverse as Archbishop Lynch to George Brown relied on images of Ireland as pastoral, feminine and simple. Recast against the backdrop of immigration to Victorian Canada and the immediate milieu of urban Toronto, these images played a principal role in defining the suitability of the Irish immigrant to the urban community.

Moving away from image, Chapter Three focuses on the Irish family's experience in Toronto. In particular, Nicolson's controversial but popular view of the nineteenth century, urban-dwelling Irish family as Catholic, poor and dysfunctional will be tested. In the city, the family home represented a haven from the industrial world and as a result Irish women had a heavy responsibility to project the appearance of this middle-class ideal. It will be argued that Irish women in Toronto were successful in achieving an appearance of respectability and that their success was a foundation to Irish immigrants' claims to citizenship in Toronto.

Chapter Four is a case study of Irish domestic servants. This chapter, heeding advice from an international body of literature on the history of domestic service, will not view domestic service as "an occupational dead-end." Rather it will be argued that young Irish women used domestic service as a stepping stone to their own respectable home. The tension which rose between a young Irish woman hoping to have her own respectable

household and the middle-class mistress whose own reputation depended on a faithful and committed domestic servant was often framed in reference to the servant's 'Irishness.' The married women of Chapter Three and the young Irish domestic servants of Chapter Four relied on the image of Irish women's respectability and by behaving accordingly, they contributed to the acceptance of Irish immigrants as suitable citizens to Toronto.

Whereas in Chapter Three the success of the family to maintain its home as a site of moral safety virtually guaranteed Irish respectability, the absence of a home as embodied in orphans and friendless women became the concrete example of the symbolic city of sin. This final chapter looks at Irish women and men who did not meet the standard of respectability established by their own immigrant community and Victorian Torontonians. Irish women are found in studies of prostitution, crime, reformatories and insane asylums.[72] These people have been held up as emblematic of the Irish community in Toronto, but this chapter will show how exceptional and unrepresentative they actually were of the Irish. While there were indeed marginal Irish people in Toronto, these citizens were perhaps the most adept at managing the image of Irishness to their own advantage as they struggled to survive in the city.

This thesis then seeks to address the historiographical debate over the Irish experience in Toronto by studying the image and experience of the Irish in a context of nineteenth century ideals of the city and the country and more specifically in Toronto's

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[72] Constance Backhouse, *Petticoats and Prejudice: Women and Law in Nineteenth-Century Canada*. Toronto: Women's Press, 1991; Wendy Mitchinson, "Reasons for Committal to a Mid-Nineteenth Century Ontario Insane Asylum: The Case of Toronto" in *Essays in the History of Medicine*. W. Mitchinson and Janice Dickin McGinnis (eds.) Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1988; Peter Oliver, "'To Govern by Kindness': The First Two Decades of the Mercer Reformatory for Women." in *Essays in the History of Canadian Law*. Jim Phillips et al. (eds.) Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.

burgeoning civic consciousness and desire for respectability. Also, through an interpretation grounded in recent writings in the gendered association of identity and space, the image of Ireland and the Irish will be shown to have played a significant role in how Torontonians viewed "Irishness." It is hoped that this approach will provide a greater understanding of the experience of Toronto's Irish population from 1847-1880 and more clearly define the Irish place in Toronto's immigrant history.

Chapter Two
The Image of the Irish: a Reappraisal

> We are being deluged by the advent of the poor, worthless, emaciate, human specimens transmitted to Canada by the Emigration societies.....They cannot, they will not work, and they sink into worthless drones and whining beggars.[1]

That the above quotation referred to English, not Irish immigrants to Toronto in the 1870s and was penned by an Irish Catholic newspaper contradicts prevailing historical scholarship which has cast the Irish immigrant in mid-nineteenth century as downtrodden. At the heart of this scholarly belief in a Toronto-based anti-Irish sentiment is an assumed correlation between image and experience. Thus evidence that Irish immigrants were predominantly unskilled labourers causes one to conclude that mid-nineteenth century Torontonians perceived 'Irishness' as improvident and impoverished, a terrible combination in an industrializing and reputation-building city like Toronto. What shaped Irish experience in nineteenth century Toronto, however, was a positive image of 'Irishness' based on perceptions of Ireland as feminine, pastoral, simple and pure. Both Torontonians and Irish immigrants used a rhetoric that focused on suitable citizenship, against which all parties measured the virtue of 'Irishness'and hence the Irish who arrived in Toronto.[2] The first part of this chapter will focus on a gender analysis of 'Irishness' and the significance of the wider British colonial context to its construction. Canadian

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[1] *Irish Canadian*, May 14, 1873.

[2] It is understood that citizenship as a term is associated with the latter half of the twentieth-century and specifically as a post-World War II concept capturing the relationship between the state and its people as set out in basic rights and responsibilities. The interest in citizenship is not in the conventional meaning of those who have the right to vote rather it is used to enable an analytical discussion of people's membership in a community or what some historians of immigration have termed 'respectability.' Please see James Hammerton, *Emigrant Gentlewomen: Genteel Poverty and Female Emigration, 1830-1914.* London: Croom Helm, 1979: introduction.

examples of how these images appeared and were manipulated will show how Canadians perceived Irish immigrants and how Irish immigrants perceived themselves to be a suitable addition to the Canadian nation because of their Irish background, rather than in spite of their Irish origin.

To peruse newspapers of mid-nineteenth century Toronto in search of the Irish newcomer is to uncover a complicated image of the Irish immigrant in a young city. The scope of newspapers surveyed for this chapter is not exhaustive, rather it is representative of the discussion surrounding the Irish in Toronto. The *Globe*, a daily newspaper unabashed in its Protestant pride, was selected for its popularity and consistent publishing during the Victorian period.[3] The *Irish Canadian* which ran from 1863-1872 provided a mouthpiece for the Irish Catholic community and quite often interacted with the *Globe* through editorial exchange.[4] *The Canadian Illustrated News*, a less partisan newspaper, provided the only caricatures of the Irish printed in Toronto before 1888 and has been examined in detail,[5] as were caricatures from the popular British periodical *Punch*.[6]

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[3] I looked at issues in the following years: 1847/48 to look specifically at the Famine coverage and to follow the example set by G.J. Parr, ""The Welcome and the Wake: Attitudes in Canada West Toward the Irish Famine Migration" in *Ontario History*, Vol. LXVI, No. 2 (June 1974): 101-113. I also looked at 1852/54 to follow up on the Famine Irish to see if those who had remained in the city had gained an unsavoury reputation. Also some of Murray Nicolson's more outrageous claims were based on research drawn from sources in the early 1850s. I also looked at 1864/65 to examine coverage of the Fenian raids on Canada. To augment the study while ensuring manageability Curtis Fahey's article on the *Toronto Mirror* was consulted. Curtis Fahey. "Irish Catholics and the Political Culture of Upper Canada: The Case of the *Toronto Mirror*, 1837-1867" in *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada*. Robert O'Driscoll and Lorna Reynolds (eds.) Vol. 2. Toronto: Celtic Arts of Canada, 1988.

[4] I looked at every issue during the 1863-1872 run.

[5] *The Canadian Illustrated News* began publishing on a weekly basis in 1861. I looked at every issue up to and including 1880. A study of *Toronto Saturday Night* (published 1889 forward) would prove very profitable for its caricature of the Irish, but was unfortunately out of the period.

[6] Although published in London, it is likely that *Punch* found its way across the Atlantic, as occasional reprints of its illustrations were printed by *The Canadian Illustrated News* and presumably are relevant to the Canadian context.

Newspapers not only provided an invaluable historical source of images and stereotypes, but also provided commentary and at times context for such images. Each newspaper openly divulged its political leanings, discredited opposing newspapers and published colourful editorials. Readers were not oblivious to the techniques of nineteenth century journalism, nor did the newspapers remain consistent in their tone. For example, in 1864, the Irish Catholic community press wrote "Like the miserable huxter, *Punch*, that flattens upon Cockney prejudices, and English stolidity, the *Globe* is ever on the alert to misrepresent our people and identify them with every act of insubordination that happens to occur."[7] By contrast, political alliances could override sectarian differences as in less than ten years after the above accusation, and notably in an election year, the *Irish Canadian* heralded the *Globe* and its editor, George Brown, for granting Catholics "fair play in its columns."[8]

Surviving political pamphlets, church decrees, novels, poetry, periodicals and ballads have also been examined for their creation and/or interpretation of an Irish image. At a glance, an endless parade of sundry characters marched through mid-nineteenth century newspapers, periodicals, pamphlets and popular culture. Nineteenth century public opinion was neither consistent nor united in its judgement of the newly-arrived Irish. Nor was it just influential Toronto residents who created an Irish image, but prominent members of the Irish community who doggedly promoted their own more positive self-image. Most importantly, both groups held similar views of Ireland and its 'peasantry' thus the constructed view of Ireland shaped the discourse about the Irish.

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[7] *Irish Canadian*, July 22, 1863.

[8] *Irish Canadian*, June 18, 1872

Canadian historians have spent some energy determining whether the image of the Irish was a negative or positive one in the nineteenth century. In the early 1970s, historian Joy Parr looked at Canada's reception of the Famine Irish in 1847/48 and concluded that the initial Canadian welcome of the Irish waned in the shadow of death and disease which accompanied the immigrants. While Parr's article does not tackle the image of the Irish directly, it is a superb analysis of how Canadians imagined immigration and the development of their colony. Parr found that as the catastrophe of 1847 unfolded, Canadians faulted their colonial status, rather than the Irish immigrants for the deluge of poverty and pestilence.[9] Through an analysis of Canadian perceptions of 'Irishness' in the mid-nineteenth century, it becomes clear why Canadians believed that they could welcome 100,000 impoverished Irish immigrants in the spring of 1847. It is not so clear, however, if Canadians' belief in the benefits promised by Irish immigration died by the end of the summer of 1847.

More recently, in an article on the image of the Irish in nineteenth century Nova Scotia, Terrence Punch successfully tested the veracity of stereotypical, literary images of the Irish with statistical evidence.[10] Subjected to Punch's statistical analysis, derogatory images of the Irish did not reflect the actual experience of the Irish in Nova Scotia. Likewise, Glenn Lockwood's detailed studies of the Irish in Lanark, Leeds and Renfrew found that criticism of the Irish from the non-Irish community was "undynamic and of

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[9] Parr: 111.

[10] Terrence M. Punch. "Anti-Irish Prejudice in Nineteenth-Century Nova Scotia: The Literary and Statistical Evidence." *The Irish in Atlantic Canada 1780-1900.* Thomas P. Power (ed.) Fredericton, NB: New Ireland Press, 1991.

minimal concern to the arriving Irish."[11] Lockwood reinforced his conclusions, drawn from a rich sampling of local newspapers, with an extensive study of immigration records and county development. Very much like the conclusions of this chapter, Lockwood found that positive characteristics of 'Irishness' far out-weighed the negative characteristics of 'Irishness'. Despite the admirable work of Punch and Lockwood, the placid acceptance of a negative Irish stereotype by some historians has helped to construct a history of a down-trodden and ghettoized Irish community in Toronto.

Why do the negative characteristics associated with 'Irishness' receive a disproportionate amount of historical attention? In his recent book, *Waning of the Green*, Mark McGowan argued that signs of discrimination and negative images of the Irish are held up as a badge of pride by descendants of Irish immigrants and as evidence of the adversity faced by their ancestors in contrast to their descendants' success in Canada.[12] These descendants may draw from a wealth of historical writing that tells an entertaining and fantastic story of oppression to the expense of thorough historical research and analysis. A fine example of exploring only the negative characteristics associated with 'Irishness' is Donald Power's dissertation on the image of the Irish in Canadian school textbooks.[13] So detrimental and discriminatory were the images of the Irish that Power contended that the "racist" portrayal of the Irish in nineteenth century Canada would

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[11] Glenn J. Lockwood. "Eastern Upper Canadian Perceptions of Irish Immigrants, 1824-1868" (PhD dissertation) University of Ottawa, 1988: introduction.

[12] Mark McGowan, *Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1992.* Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999: 7.

[13] Despite his controversial stance, Power's dissertation is valuable for its collection of caricatures and image of the Irish from *Punch, Harper's Weekly, Canadian Illustrated News,* and *Saturday Night.* Donald Power, *Anti-Irishness in Canadian School Texts: An Historical Perspective.* (PhD dissertation) Ontario Institute of Studies of Education, 1991: 36. See also Power's article in *The Irish in Canada: The Untold Story.*

shame school children of Irish heritage in late-twentieth century Canada.[14] Similarly, a formidable anti-Irish image has caused popular history to determine that "the Catholic Irish were as much discriminated against in Canada as in Ireland."[15] The most adept person at striking the chord of anti-Irish sentiment is historian Murray Nicolson who has alluded to a "derogatory stereotype of an ignorant Irish peasant" in nineteenth-century Toronto which prompted Irish Protestants to disassociate themselves from Irish immigrants and to drop their claim to Irish ethnicity.[16] This chapter does not deny the existence of the 'Irish peasant' as a salient image in nineteenth century Canada, in fact it concerns itself with the creation of this image in the press and popular culture of mid-nineteenth century Toronto.

Imagining Ireland and the Irish was not exclusive to Canadians, but was part of a much wider discourse in the nineteenth century that spanned Ireland, the United States and the greater British Colonial Empire. American historian L.P. Curtis' book *Apes and Angels* illustrated the history of Irish minority status and the extent of anti-Irish sentiment in both the United States and England by examining the visual stereotypes of the Irish found in Victorian periodicals like *Punch* and *Harper's Weekly*. Written in the shadow of the Kennedy ascendancy, Curtis and other American historians had good reason to document the Irish immigrant story in the United States. The rise of the Kennedy family

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[14] Power argues that stereotypes of the Irish are harmful for their "possible effects on the self-concept development of students of Irish heritage." Presumably, his objective was to stretch current Ministry of Education guidelines and multicultural initiatives to include the Irish as a disadvantaged minority group. Power, *Anti-Irishness*: 113.

[15] Sheelagh Conway. *The Faraway Hills are Green: Voices of Irish Women in Canada*. Toronto: Women's Press, 1992: 91.

[16] Murray Nicolson, "The Other Toronto: Irish Catholics in a Victorian City, 1850-1900" in *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban and Social History*. Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F.J. Artibise (eds.) Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1984.

to the apex of American political power epitomized what the American dream held out to Irish immigrants. As well, Curtis wrote at a time when minority groups in the United States exposed and contested structural barriers and inequalities, particularly those founded in racism and sexism. Presumably influenced by studies on the image of Blacks in America, Curtis wrote that the "science of man and the art of caricature...helped to harden as well as perpetuate the stereotypes of "white Negroes" and simianized Celts."[17] Constructively, Curtis noted the structural barriers of Anglo-Saxon institutions which excluded the recently arrived Irish, but his presentation of the Irish as victims of racial oppression is not entirely convincing.

Curtis' "Pat, an ape-like Caliban"[18] did represent a Victorian preoccupation with pseudo-scientific phrenology, but these racist illustrations depicted Fenians, Parnellites, Home Rulers or others involved in violent actions against British order and control, and not the Irish peasantry. Race denotes allegedly immutable and hereditary characteristics, but for the Irish, not all of them were tarnished with simian-like characteristics. For example, in figure 2.1 printed in *Punch* in 1867, Curtis noted the degree of prognathism in the stereotypical Fenian dynamiter, but did not comment on the facial and physical normality of the Irish mother and her children. Nor does an explanation for this contrast rest solely in age or gender. Two weeks after figure 2.1 was published, figure 2.2 appeared in *Punch*. These loyal Irish men share the same refined and elegant features of the Irish mother and children. Again in figure 2.3 the violence of the Repeal Movement is

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[17] L.P. Curtis, *Apes and Angels: The Irishman in Victorian Caricature*. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1971: 15.

[18] Curtis: 38.

represented in the Frankenstein creature, but Daniel O'Connell, an educated leader of the Repeal movement is well-dressed and well-formed. Curtis' book is an invaluable source of caricatures of Fenians, but should not be considered as the only portrayal of 'Irishness' in the Victorian era.

More recently, R.F. Foster, in the book *Paddy and Mr. Punch*, reevaluated the image of the Irish in nineteenth century Britain. Foster also disagreed with L.P. Curtis' racial explanation and saw *Punch*'s portrayal of the Irish as physiognomically similar to English plebians. Foster assigned class and religion, over race, a much more prominent role to explain the construction of the Irish image.[19] As Foster pointed out, it is important to see "Irishness as flexible identification" as "people can reconcile more than one cultural identity."[20] As will be shown, the Fenian dynamiter represented but one image of the Irish, albeit a derogatory and insulting one. Other images of 'Irishness' in *Punch*, as depicted by the loyal Irishmen and the disadvantaged Irish mother, show another side to mid-nineteenth century Ireland.

Regardless of the significance that historians attach to the meaning behind the image of the Irish, pointing at times to race, ethnicity, class or religion as the most plausible explanation, it seems that the above characteristics all fit into a larger nationalist discourse about Ireland. In the nineteenth century, amidst famine and a growing nationalist movement, Ireland and its people generated discussion in the streets through the pages of British newspapers, in the parlours through British literature, and in the halls

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[19] R.F. Foster. *Paddy and Mr. Punch: Connections in Irish and English History*. London: A. Lane, 1993: 193.

[20] Foster: xvii.

of Westminster. Indeed, the public imagination was bombarded with images of Ireland manufactured by crass journalists, sentimental writers and *laissez-faire* politicians. As well, a burgeoning Irish nationalist movement gave much thought to what represented Ireland. Nationalist movements engender imaginative symbolism of the nation and to this imaginative process Ireland was no exception.[21] Angela K. Martin adds that various representations of Ireland were not exclusive to Irish nationalism but were used by a wider population to imagine Ireland as a whole.[22] Given the prevalence of images of Ireland, it seems reasonable to include an analysis of what represented Ireland in order to understand images of the Irish in Toronto, a city that was very much connected culturally and intellectually to Britain in the nineteenth century.

Often it is the case in nationalist movements that the nation is represented as a woman: a motherland to be protected.[23] In the nineteenth century, there could be hardly a more recognizable symbol of Ireland than Erin or Hibernia.[24] (See figures 2.4-2.6) Even L.P. Curtis attested to the universality of this image. In his own words, ".....this figure of Erin, which was far more feminine than the virago known as Britannia, was the one symbol on which the cartoonists of London, Dublin, and New York were in more or less complete agreement."[25] Erin's appearance as a younger sister or a daughter of Britannia,

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[21] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. (revised edition) London: Verso, 1991.

[22] Angela K. Martin, "The Practice of Identity and an Irish Sense of Place" *Gender, Place and Culture* (1997): 89-119.

[23] Deniz Kandiyoti, "Identity and its Discontents: Women and the Nation" in *Millennium. Journal of International Studies*, 1991, Vol. 20, No. 3.

[24] For the sake of simplicity, this thesis will use the name Erin rather than Hibernia with the understanding that they are one in the same image.

[25] Curtis: 75.

shows the problem of seeing anti-Irish stereotype only in racial terms. Erin appeared most welcome at the side of matronly Britannia, a place not held by many indigenous people under British colonial rule. In addition, Erin did not simply represent Irish womanhood, rather, like Britannia, who represented Imperial order and power, Erin also represented the purity and pastoralism of Ireland. Vulnerable, virtuous, trusting and ultimately maidenly, Erin warranted British protection from menacing nationalists dangerous in their primitive masculinity.

In Canadians' minds the image of 'Erin' surfaced triumphant, though in retrospect one might suppose that the Fenian raids would cause the image of 'Pat' to raise his fearful face. This triumph was due in large part to the avid promotion of 'Erin' and her characteristics by Irish Canadians. For example, George Hodgins, President of the Irish Protestant Society in Toronto, included the following poem by Irish poet Thomas Moore in his proclamation of Irish moral superiority:

> Rich and rare were the gems she wore,
> And a bright gold ring on her wand she bore;
> But, oh! Her beauty was far beyond
> Her sparkling gems or snow white wand.
>
> "Lady, dost thou not fear to stray,
> So lonely and lovely, through this bleak way?
> Are Erin's sons so good or so cold,
> As not to be tempted by woman or gold?"
>
> "Sir Knight! I feel not the least alarm,
> No son of Erin will offer me harm;
> For though they love women and golden store,
> Sir Knight! They love honour and virtue more."
>
> On she went, and her maiden smile
> In safety lighted her round the Green Isle;
> And blest for ever is she who relied

Upon Erin's honour and Erin's pride![26]

It is these qualities that match Canadian characteristics of respectable citizenship. This was a connection not lost on Hodgins who proclaimed that, "It is this reverence for social virtue, -- this earnestness, sincerity and honesty of heart, apart from the prompting of religious feeling and religious principle, which lie at the very foundation of all that is truly noble in [Irish] national character."[27] With such noble qualities of person believed to be indigenous to Ireland, Canadians could look forward to a bright future in its Irish immigrants.

An heightened awareness of women's moral accountability, loyalty, purity and dedication accompanied the image of the nation as a woman.[28] The Irish Catholic press exhibited an intense preoccupation with women's appropriate sexual conduct. Often, however, the focus was on the immorality of Anglo-Saxon women in contrast to the Irish girl's claim as the most virtuous of them all. Disparaging remarks, directed to Orange associations like the Young Britons, were often accompanied by unfavourable commentary on their treatment of women. Describing a women's foot race held at a Young Briton's picnic, the *Irish Canadian* lamented the women's immodesty and brazenness and warned, "Verily, the morality of the country is running riot with

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[26] Appeared in J. George Hodgins (President of Irish Protestant Benevolent Society) *Irishmen in Canada: Their Union not inconsistent with the development of Canadian National Feeling*. Toronto: Lovell Brothers & Job Printers, 1875: 14. Poem written by Thomas Moore. It is a version of a story of a woman who traveled through the Ireland of Brien the Brave. Cultural critique Terry Eagleton wrote, "In his own lifetime, [Thomas Moore] enjoyed the fame of a modern rock star, rather than a writer. For posterity, he is less a person than an institution, which is at once a tribute to his extraordinary popular achievement, and a wry comment on the blandly impersonal nature of what is offered as a uniquely subjective vision." Terry Eagleton, "The Masochism of Thomas Moore" in *Crazy John and the Bishop and Other Essays on Irish Culture*. University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, IN., 1998: 157.

[27] J. George Hodgins: 14.

[28] Kandiyoti: 430.

madness."[29] In a similar vein, a political pamphlet revealed the depravity of Orangeism in Ireland by claiming that, "It seems that Orangeism and illegitimacy go together, and that bastards in Ireland are in proportion to Orange lodges."[30] Both men and women were indicted in this immorality as respect and preservation of women's delicacy was an honourable man's duty.

It is in the Fenian attacker, 'Pat,' that a second image of Ireland is found. Depending on the viewpoint, Pat could be either Erin's assailant or her protector. Irish nationalists espoused the femininity of Ireland and her need for protection, and they juxtaposed her moral purity and sexual innocence against her ruin and exploitation by the British.[31] As nationalists they put themselves in the position of her defender and protector. Toby Joyce, in his study of Fenians in Ireland in the mid-1860s, argued that the masculine ethos of nineteenth century nationalism was soldiering and that Irish nationalist militarism showed men fulfilling their assigned gender role under Irish nationalism: "to become soldiers and die, if necessary, for the country as a whole."[32] Whereas for the English the image of Erin linked Ireland to a past that was passive, pure, traditional and simple in its femininity, this same image of Erin was a call for radical action to Irish nationalists determined to protect these very same characteristics from the English. The following excerpted poem sent to Archbishop Lynch of Toronto by a Montreal seminary

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[29] *Irish Canadian*, Sept. 2, 1868.

[30] Bryan Lynch, *The Ulster Loyalists: A Reply to the Speeches of the Rev. Dr. Kane & Mr. G. Hill Smith delivered at Mutual Street Rink, September 9, 1886*. Toronto, 1886.

[31] David Cairns and Shaun Richards, "'Woman' in the Discourse of Celticism: A Reading of *The Shadow of the Glen*" *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* (June 1987): 44.

[32] Toby Joyce, "'Ireland's Trained and Marshalled Manhood': the Fenians in the mid-1860s" *Gender Perspectives in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: Public and Private Spheres*. Margaret Kelleher and James H. Murphy (eds) Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1997: 79.

student exemplified Canadian familiarity with the femininity of Ireland and the need for her protection:

> Her virgin, pure and spot-less gore
> Has flowed in streams, from shore to shore.
> Her children's tears and matron's sighs
> Resound through earth and heaven-ward rise
>
> Her valiant sons have vainly tried
> to dim the course of fortune's tide.
> To arise her honored flag on high;
> Or 'neath its folds in glory die.[33]

In Toronto, during the threatened invasion of Fenians, the *Globe* warned of nightly musters of (Irish) Catholic Canadians in preparation to aid their Fenian brothers.[34] Despite the *Globe*'s trepidation, Irish Canadians overwhelmingly rejected the Fenian call in their unwillingness to hold Miss Canada hostage in exchange for Erin's liberty.[35]

The image of Erin permitted Irish women to participate in a symbolic way in nationalist activities in Toronto. For example, in the nationalist parades in nineteenth century Toronto which were at once a very public symbol of "ethno-religious distinctiveness"[36] and a forum for Irish nationalist contests,[37] Irish women's involvement

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[33] ARCAT, LAE0656, January 25, 1881.

[34] *Globe*, Dec. 26, 1864.

[35] George Sheppard, "'God Save the Green' Fenianism and Fellowship in Victorian Ontario" in *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. XX, No. 39 (May 1987): 142.

[36] Michael Cottrell, "St. Patrick's Day Parades in Nineteenth-Century Toronto: A Study of Immigrant Adjustment and Elite Control." *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. XXV, No. 49 (May 1992): 63.

[37] Little has been written about the role of gender in these showcases of nationalist pride. In particular more research needs to be done on masculinity and Irish Nationalist movements. These nationalist societies most often limited their membership to "men only" and provided a site of fraternity and male comradery. Greg Kealey described the Orange Lodge as "a male society away from women and the pervasive influence of the middle class inspired cult of domesticity." Gregory S. Kealey, "The Orange Order in Toronto: Religious Riot and the Working Class" in *Essays in Working Class History*. Gregory S. Kealey (ed.) Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1976: 24. Scottish historians have done some work on gender

was used as a symbol of Irish women's characteristic respectability. For instance, on March 18, 1868, the *Irish Canadian* reported on the preceding day's festivities and boasted that:

> The large number of the fair sex observable on the sidewalks formed a remarkable feature in the day's history. Among the many colors worn by the ladies the green predominated, which took the shape of ribbons, bonnets, streamers, dresses, gloves, &c, &c. Nothing would please them but continual company, and they followed side by side with the sterner portion of the pedestrians to the end of the chapter. Their endurance and patience were worthy of great praise -- commendable qualities which should be appreciated in these days of women's rights and universal suffrage.[38]

The above quotation is evidence of a very tangible role that women played in displays of nationalist pride. The familiar comparison of Irish women's "commendable qualities" of "endurance and patience" to other women, in this case early suffragists, shows pride in true Irish womanhood. While they actively participated in the march by walking alongside their male counterparts, these women remained in their proper sphere and were commended for their orderly conduct and finery.[39] As much as the image of Erin brought Irish women into the forefront of nationalist discourse, it was the actual behaviour of Irish women which permitted the symbol of Erin its continuity and integrity.

The *Irish Canadian* applied the same qualities of appropriate morality to the

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and Irish nationalism in immigrant communities. Please see Kay Carmichael, "Protestantism and Gender" in *Sermons and Battle Hymns: Protestant Popular Culture in Modern Scotland*. Graham Walker and Tom Gallagher (eds.) Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1990.

[38] *Irish Canadian*, March 18, 1868.

[39] Writing about parades in nineteenth-century Saint John and Halifax, Bonnie Huskins concluded that public ceremonies in the Victorian era had the ability to build and to challenge social relations including gender ideology. Bonnie Huskins, "The Ceremonial Space of Women: Public Processions in Victorian Saint John and Halifax" in *Separate Spheres: Women's Worlds in the Nineteenth Century Maritimes*. Fredericton, NB: Acadiensis Press, 1994: 145.

activities of Orangemen. While the amount of energy expended by the *Irish Canadian* to discredit Orangeism attested to the strong Orange impetus in the city, it is telling that the *Irish Canadian* articulated their criticism of Orangeism through sarcastic refrain of Orange shortcomings in patriotism, intellect and masculinity. In 1872, the *Irish Canadian* lamented the existence of Orangeism in the following editorial:

> There must be something accurst of God and man at the bottom of the thing called Orangeism, when one who was born in old Erin – who, from his infancy, saw its glorious green fields smiling round him – who in boyhood trod its daisy-clad bills and bathed his limbs in its Banna, its Shannon, and Blackwater – who mixed with its brave and generous people – and who, above all there took to his heart at God's holy altar, his modest, beautiful Irish wife; and still does not love the land of his birth! It is inconceivable. It is unnatural.[40]

Not only does the above quotation comment on Orange unnaturalness, but also on Orange morality or more specifically Orange chivalry. By denying proper respect to the modest Irish woman, symbolic of the Irish nation, Orangemen, according to the *Irish Canadian*, showed their failure to be proper male citizens.

Besides Pat and Erin, there was a third national image of Ireland as a moral touchstone to a simpler, rural past in contrast to the chaos and brutality of the nineteenth century industrial city. The feminine image of Ireland which connected purity and passivity to pastoralness was an important aspect in the creation of a rural peasant identity accepted by British and Irish alike. Catherine Nash identified the West of Ireland as the place of origin that created cohesion in a "peasant" identity around which Irish national pride could rally.[41] Arguably, the West of Ireland was only relevant to Irish nationalism

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[40] *Irish Canadian*, July 17, 1872.

[41] Catherine Nash: 45; D.H. Akenson also criticizes Canadian historians for uncritically accepting the West of Ireland (Connaught and Munster) as the origin of Irish immigrants to Canada. Akenson, "Ontario: Whatever Happened to the Irish?" *Canadian Papers in Rural History, Volume VIII*. D.H.

and not to British loyalists of Ulster, but rural life was representative of most Irish experience, Protestant and Catholic, in both Ireland and Canada.[42] The perceived rural-origin of Irish immigrants marked them as desirable citizens to populate and cultivate the country. Thus, the 'crushed peasantry' of Ireland would easily become the 'hardy and independent yeomanry' of Ontario.[43]

According to the ruling British, Ireland had a transcendent quality which harkened back to a pre-modern time without the advancements of science and rational thought.[44] In England, where Ireland and support of the Irish was perceived as an economic drain on the Imperial coffers, the simplicity of the Irish was not always endearing. For example, *The Illustrated London News* coverage of the Irish Famine pointed to the Irish peasant as foolish and "inarear [sic] with the intelligence of the world" for his failure to diversify his crops and try new agricultural methods.[45] Unlike English newspapers, however, Canadian newspapers were not condemnatory in their association of primitiveness and the Irish. The *Globe, Mirror,* and *Examiner's* coverage of the Famine avowed sympathy for Famine immigrants and argued that the immigrants themselves were not responsible for their unfortunate circumstances, but old world decay and oppressive landlords were the

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Akenson (ed.): 222.

[42] Referring to the argument of Akenson and others about the ruralness of the Irish in Canada and adding that in Ireland at this time, most Irish did live in the countryside. Timothy Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish: Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland, 1850-1914.* Princeton, NL: Princeton University Press, 1997.

[43] *Globe,* March 6, 1847; G.J. Parr: 103.

[44] David Cairns and Shaun Richards, "'Woman' in the Discourse of Celticism: A Reading of *The Shadow of the Glen*" in *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies,* Vol XIII, No. 1 (June 1987): 44.

[45] Leslie Williams, "Irish Identity and the *Illustrated London News,* 1846-1851: Famine to Depopulation" *Representing Ireland: Gender, Class, Nationality.* Susan Shaw Sailer (ed.) Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida Press, 1997: 59-93.

culprits.[46] For example, in 1847, newspapers invited immigrants fleeing the starvation, destitution and disease of Ireland by welcoming them as "fellow countrymen."[47] The *Globe* portrayed Canada as a site of rejuvenation for impoverished immigrants and a solution to old world problems:

> Nothing will so effectually revive them as a complete change of scene and circumstance and it is impossible to doubt that the great mass of the emigrants... the lively and active sons of Erin...will resume all the characteristics so natural to them, when they have a fair field and encouragement for their exertions.[48]

Likewise, the Irish perception was that Canada presented "a field for every man, with capital or without, who is willing to work."[49] Canadians believed in a bright future on a Canadian farm for those immigrants fleeing famine and poverty in Ireland.

By comparison, immigrants from British cities, and in particular London, could expect a chilly reception. As nations industrialized and their cities swelled, questions arose about the consequent damage to society's moral fabric.[50] Criticism of Saxon immorality became a favoured pastime of the *Irish Canadian* as the newspaper feasted on stories of London's urban squalor. In 1871, the *Irish Canadian* referred to British industrialization as "the flood of iniquity which overspreads England, and which is gradually reducing the inhabitants from a forward civilization, to a debased and groveling

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[46] See for example Canadian reaction to Earl Grey's emigration scheme in the *Globe*, May 22, 1847 and August 25, 1847. Also G.J. Parr, " The Welcome and the Wake": 111.

[47] *Examiner*, Feb. 17, 1847

[48] *Globe*, April 21, 1847

[49] Lockwood: 350.

[50] Raymond Williams, *City and the Country*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973.

bestiality..."[51] Irish nationalists used the image of Ireland's lesser development to argue against the urbanism, industrialism and colonial exploitation of British imperialism in favour of the pastoralness, innocence and virtue of Irish nationalism.[52]

Irish Catholics also believed themselves to be ideal immigrants to Canada and used the same discourse of citizenship and rurality to credit themselves as they did to discredit others. For instance, in 1869 the *Irish Canadian* wrote, "Strong healthy, hard-working, industrious, sober men and women, who are willing to devote themselves to agricultural pursuits, would be a boon to Canada; but sickly, corrupted and illegitimate children of debauched and diseased men and women from the purlieus of an old country city would be a curse to the country."[53] Non-Irish Canadians shared a similar reaction to the emigration schemes of the 1860s and 1870s which sent the labouring poor and unemployed from British cities to Canada. The *Canadian Illustrated News* portrayed the British newcomers as "unwilling idlers" who would not "take kindly to the hard and laborious toil necessary to self support in Canada" and predicted that "a large percentage of them [would] gravitate towards our jails and penitentiaries."[54] Years later, the *Canadian Illustrated News* blamed the "perfectly callous, impudent, thankless seekers for charity who... have been brought up to take it for granted that the world owes them a

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[51] *Irish Canadian*, May 24, 1871.

[52] Catherine Nash, "Remapping and Renaming: New Cartographies of Identity, Gender and Landscape in Ireland." *Feminist Review* No. 44 (Summer 1993): 45; Also see Terry Eagleton, "The Good Natured Gael"in *Crazy John and the Bishop and Other Essays on Irish Culture*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.

[53] *The Irish Canadian*, April 21, 1869.

[54] *The Canadian Illustrated News*, Dec. 20, 1862 and Aug. 27, 1870.

living" on the 1870s emigration.[55] Perhaps the most damning critic of these emigration schemes was the *Irish Canadian*. A specimen of their outrage opened this chapter.

Self-sufficiency was imperative to desirable citizenship and on this issue of self-support, all seemed agreed. Canadians associated the virtues of self-sufficiency, industry and providence with farming. Perhaps cognizant of the desire that immigrants move to farmland, the Irish Catholic press eagerly promoted their community's providential intentions. Under the title "Be Prudent" the *Irish Canadian* wrote, "The first duty of a man to himself, in any country, is to gain, by honorable means, an ample independence... labour with diligence until you are able to buy the first town lot, or the first fifty acres of land."[56] The *Irish Canadian* was careful to note that industry and self-sufficiency could also materialize in the city. Intrinsically tied to representations of economic independence was social responsibility and women's role was imperative to fulfilling this social duty. In the literary journal *The Emerald,*[57] a serial story entitled "The Two Cottages" focused on Brady, an Irish immigrant who was the envy of his fellow workmen for his well-maintained home in Toronto. Brady attributed the success of his home to his choice of a wife. As Brady explained:

> ....You see, I believe that there is a God above us...I begged Him to direct me. Then I used prudence and reflection and was determined not to take the first flaunty, silly, showy-looking girl that I met with....till at last I met my Mary....she seemed to house both good sense and good principles, and her manner was always reserved and steady...never knew her to waste a

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[55] *The Canadian Illustrated News*, Jan. 3, 1880.

[56] *Irish Canadian*, Sept. 23, 1863.This zeal to project the industriousness and providence of the Irish Catholic community may indicate a counteraction to public accusations of contrary behaviour, however there was no evidence in the pages of the *Globe* that painted the Irish as "social ciphers."

[57] *The Emerald* was published in Toronto by and for its Irish community in 1873. The *Irish Canadian* promoted the first issue in their paper of Jan 15, 1873.

> morsel, or spend money uselessly on herself, although she was kind and generous to the poor.[58]

The truly successful citizen, one lauded by Canadian popular culture and sought after in the Irish community, included a self-supporting family and respectable home.

Another notable quality of pre-modern Ireland and 'her' people was their perceived good-nature, in-born poetry and grace. Helped by nineteenth century Celtic revivalists interested in Irish literature, the Irish gained notable reputations as poets begging the claim that if one were to translate Gaelic word-for-word into English, then the inevitable result would be poetry.[59] Observers of the Irish marveled at their story-telling. A journalist from the *Daily Telegraph* commented on Irish story-telling as:

> There is where he shines, where his oath, instead of being a mere matter of fact or opinion, rises up into the dignity of epic narrative, containing within itself all the complexity of machinery, harmony of parts, and fertility of invention, by which your true epic should be characterised.[60]

Commenting on the eloquence and success of Irish-Canadian politicians, it was agreed that the Irish "sensitiveness of feeling, and vividness of imagination [gave] them a facility and felicitiousness of speech...which [were] indispensible to public life and affairs."[61] The majority of Irish were imagined and imagined themselves to be the epitome of the rural peasant: charming, dutiful, warm-hearted and desirable citizens. When an aspect of Irish behaviour fell outside of the comportment of a desirable citizen, the glibly tongued Irish would blame the city of Toronto. The Irish lauded the image of

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[58] "The Two Cottages: A Sketch of Irish Domestic Life" in *The Emerald*, 1873: 12-13.

[59] Declan Kiberd, "From Nationalism to Liberation" in *Representing Ireland*: 19.

[60] William Carleton, "Geography of an Irish Oath" in *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*. Toronto: The Daily Telegraph Publishing House, 1871.

[61] J. George Hodgins: 15.

the 'Irish peasant' and the accompanying purity, poetry and simplicity associated with their pastoral background as a benefit to the Canadian city.

In Canadian minds, there was, however, one drawback to immigration from Ireland: Catholicism. When linked with Catholicism, the benign Irish characteristics of femininity, simplicity, poetry and passivity became associated with weakness and character flaw. Anti-Catholic thought decreed that Catholicism was inimical to material progress.[62] Furthermore, anti-Catholic bigotry questioned the loyalty of Catholic Canadians. During the 1854 election, when Tory victory hinged on securing the Catholic vote, the essentially Reform *Globe* rejected the legitimacy of a victory based on Catholic support since "Roman Catholics [were] bound in their political career to consider first the interests of the hierarchy with which they [were] connected."[63] Assertions of voter guilelessness was not exclusively reserved for Irish Catholics. The *Globe* attacked Orangeism along a similar vein rendering Orangemen "the tools of a few designing leaders."[64] As such, disparagement of the Irish was hidden in religious and political agendas.[65] The Irish were not uniformly condemned for their association with Catholicism because many Irish immigrants to Canada were Protestant and not Catholic. In fact, when the *Globe* produced its anti-Catholic rants, it did not refer specifically to the Irish.

Irish nationalism, however, was not irreconcilable with Canadian patriotism and the Irish Catholic community steadfastly worked to convince Toronto of their loyalty.

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[62] J.R. Miller, "Anti-Catholic Thought in Victorian Canada" in *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. LXVI, No. 4, (Dec. 1985): 479. See also "Popery and Despotism" *Globe*, June 1, 1854.

[63] *Globe*, June 22, 1854.

[64] *Globe*, October 16, 1847.

[65] Glenn Lockwood, "Eastern Upper Canadian Perceptions of Irish Immigrants": introduction.

Irish Catholic Canadians, prominent in both wealth and status, like John O'Connor, an Irish Catholic Member of Parliament, actively promoted the "loyalty, industrious and contented devotion to Canada shared by Irish Catholics."[66] Echoing O'Connor's sentiment a much applauded St. Patrick's Day address fused Irish nationalism and a future vision for Canada:

> Let us shoulder to shoulder build up our own country with a generous loyalty without forgetting the land of our birth. I expect to live and die in Canada, I have always endeavored, in my own sphere to identify myself with the best interests of the country. I wish to see it a great nation -- great in the morality of its people and that eminent prosperity which God bestows on dutiful and obedient children.[67]

Likewise, the St. Patrick's Association challenged its members to direct their virtues towards making Canadians a great, a free, and a prosperous people.[68]

Coexistence was a negotiated process which at times blurred divisions. A pamphlet produced by the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society, an association which deemed the religious differences of Ireland as irreconcilable, conceded that, "Irish residents of all creeds among us contribute to the new and growing confederacy of Canada."[69] Likewise, on March 17, 1860 the St. Patrick's Society, an Irish Catholic association, appealed to a unified Irish nation. On this occasion, William Halley stated, "it matters not to him whether the religion of the hero or benefactor of his race be Catholic,

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[66] John O'Connor, *Letters of John O'Connor, Esq. M.P. on Fenianism addressed to his excellency the Right Honourable Sir John Young.* Toronto: Hunter, Rose & Co., 1870: 2-6. Please see articles in Section VII "Thomas D'Arcy McGee and the Making of the Canadian Nation" in *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada, Volume I.* Robert O'Driscoll & Lorna Reynolds. Toronto: Celtic Arts, 1988.

[67] W.H. Waller Esq, *The Irish in Canada - A Lecture delivered in St. Patrick's Hall, Ottawa on June 26, 1877.* Toronto: Tribune Book & Job Printing Office, 1877.

[68] *Globe,* March 18, 1859.

[69] J. George Hodgins: 7.

Protestant, or Pagan.....on St. Patrick's Day at least, we should lift our banner high up in the face of nations and exhibit our strength,...show our achievements, and claim our conquests."[70]

In contrast to the prevailing historical belief that the Irish peasant was undesirable, the image of the 'Irish peasant' as feminine, pure, simple, rural and witty marked the Irish immigrant as a much sought after citizen for nineteenth-century Ontario. Though immigrants were encouraged to move onto Canadian farmland, for those Irish who found work in industrializing Toronto, they too used the image of the Irish 'peasant' to promote their respectability as citizens. These images of Erin's femininity, innocence and ruralness appeared at every stage of the research and form an important component of the following chapters. The Irish community and in particular the Irish Catholic community actively presented a very positive image of their members, one which would be welcomed in Toronto. The next chapter will measure their success in attaining this image of respectability.

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[70] William Halley, *Speech delivered at the Dinner of the St. Patrick's Society, Toronto, on the 17th of March, 1860, in response to the sentiment of "The Irish Race at Home and Abroad."* published at the request of a number of friends: 3-4.

Chapter Three
Meeting the Requirements of Citizenship: Marriage, Motherhood and Morality

Irish women's daily life experience, their behaviour and their achievements supported claims to Irish suitability as citizens in Toronto. In Toronto, the powerful ideals of morality, marriage and motherhood were clearly prescribed for Irish immigrant women, but not limited to them, rather these ideals were held out as aspirations for all women. Women were held accountable for the sanctity and security of the home, a home which as preserve of tradition, harmony and respite assumed increasing relevance in the midst of an industrializing city like Toronto. Irish women were deemed particularly adept at this role given the connection of Irish womanhood to irreproachable morality. The Irish community, both Catholic and Protestant, agreed that the morality, piety and domesticity of their women exemplified female deportment for the Canadian nation. Alongside this laudable image, Irish women contributed to their family's appearance of respectability through more practical tasks such as caring for dependents, and augmenting the family's income through housework and other labour lying outside the formal economy. Thus, the entrance to citizenship for Irish women lay in the realm of domesticity and morality which was a crucial element and indeed one held up by the Irish immigrant community to claim its status as suitable, and at times exemplary, model citizens.

This chapter will employ two separate methodological approaches to illustrate the experience and achievements of Irish immigrant women in Toronto. First, surviving textual documents record Irish women's success in exemplifying purity, piety and motherhood, and thus their claim as moral citizens. Both the Irish and Canadians believed motherhood was an essential role in society and thus nation-building. In addition to

raising the next generation, a woman's connection to tradition and religion further accorded her a position in nationalist discourse. As explored in Chapter Two, both the host society and the Irish community used standards of femininity and masculinity to measure and to proclaim Irish suitability as immigrants to the city of Toronto. Irish womanhood was a salient image in these claims, however, Irish women's manipulation of 'Irishness' is conspicuously absent from the discussion. A quick glance at the sources coupled with an understanding of a nineteenth century tendency to see and to record women as passive objects offers some explanation for the lack of surviving evidence. It is difficult to surmount this problem given the sketchiness of nineteenth century sources on women or written by women. In an effort to come to terms with this challenge, this chapter adopts a second approach similar to that used by Bettina Bradbury in her award winning study of family life in nineteenth century Montreal.[1]

The 1871 manuscript census of St. David's Ward, popularly known as Cabbagetown, has been selected for this study because it has figured prominently as the quintessential mid-nineteenth-century Irish urban community.[2] Indeed, St. David's Ward did have the highest number of Irish inhabitants of Toronto's seven wards. In total, St.

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[1] Professor Bradbury's book *Working Families: Age, Gender and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* won the Macdonald Prize for best new book on Canadian history in 1993. She looked at samples from the 1851, 1861, 1871, and 1881 census for Saint Jacques Ward in Montreal. Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996.

[2] See for example *Cabbagetown Remembered* or J.MS. Careless "The Emergence of Cabbagetown in Victorian Toronto" in *Gathering Place: Peoples and Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834-1945*. Robert F. Harney (ed.) Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1985. Murray Nicolson has used 'Cabbagetown' loosely as his focus group in his studies. Murray Nicolson, "The Catholic Church and the Irish in Victorian Toronto," (PhD Dissertation) University of Guelph, 1981; "The Education of a Minority: The Irish Family Urbanized" in *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada*. Robert O'Driscoll & Lorna Reynolds (eds.) Toronto: Celtic Arts of Canada, 1988; "Peasants in an Urban Society: the Irish Catholics in Victorian Toronto" in *Gathering Place: Peoples and Neighbourhoods of Toronto, 1834-1945*. Robert F. Harney (ed.) Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1985.

David's Ward had a population of 11,229 people of which 5452, or 48.5 per cent of the ward, claimed Irish origin.[3] A further 35 per cent were of English origin while the Scots, the only other ethnic group of significant number, were 12.4 per cent of the Ward's population.[4] While there were 3072 Catholics living in St. David's Ward who constituted 27.4 per cent of the Ward's population, members of the Church of England surpassed Catholics as the religious denomination claiming the highest number of adherents. A total of 3885 inhabitants in St. David's Ward belonged to the Church of England to constitute 34.6 per cent of the total population.[5] It is presumable that these two groups, Catholic and Church of England, described the majority of people of Irish origin found in St. David's population. Though the 1871 Census noted both ethnic origin and religious denomination it did not correlate these statistics to calculate how many people of Irish origin were Catholic. Looking at the manuscript census at each household, however, showed that in St. David's Ward approximately 67 per cent of people of Irish origin were Protestant.[6]

Found in the east end of the city of Toronto, in 1871 St. David's Ward stretched from Jarvis Street east to the Don River. The period of the late 1850s through the 1870s was a period of tremendous growth in population, housing, industry and social institutions in St. David's Ward. Immigration from England and Ireland helped to propel this dynamic growth. Of those listing Irish origin, 39.7 per cent had been born in Ireland

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[3] This calculation includes both those born in Ireland and those born elsewhere, but of Irish ethnicity. Please see Table III "Origins of the People" *Census of Canada, 1870-71, Volume I.* Ottawa: I.B. Taylor, 1873.

[4] Table III "Origins of the People" *Census of Canada 1870-71.*

[5] Other Protestant denominations like Presbyterian and Methodist constituted 14.7 per cent and 14.6 per cent respectively. Please see Table II "Population by Religions" *Census of Canada, 1870-71.*

[6] St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census.*

compared to 53.3 per cent of English inhabitants who had been born in England, thus the Irish community in St. David's Ward was not a recent one.[7] This large influx of immigrants, both Irish and especially English, along with property subdivisions sparked a housing boom which would not subside until the 1890s.[8] Along the lake, heavy industry like the Toronto Rolling Mills provided jobs for many Irish Catholic men, while the Gooderham and Worts Distillery and cattle sheds provided jobs for many of the Ward's Irish Protestants.[9] Most (72 per cent) of Irish families in St. David's Ward were working-class, but the financial constraints associated with being working-class did not interfere with society's expectations that they would achieve respectable (middle-class) lifestyles.[10]

From a distance, in nearby St. James' Ward, St. James' steeple, the tallest in Toronto, stood as a sign of the Protestant elite class while closer to home Little Trinity Church and Enoch Turner school house served to provide spiritual guidance and to educate the working-class Protestants in St. David's Ward. In spite of these Protestant

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[7] Table IV "Birth Places of the People" *Census of Canada, 1870-71.*

[8] Penina Coopersmith, *Cabbagetown: The Story of a Victorian Neighbourhood.* Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, Publishers, 1998: 46. Also, in Table I "Areas, Dwellings, Families, Population, Sexes, Conjugal Condition" it was noted that 104 houses were under construction in 1871. By comparison, other wards in Toronto averaged about 30 houses for that year, St. Patrick's Ward being the only other exception where 80 houses were under construction. Table I, *Census of Canada, 1870-71.*

[9] It is presumable from the many confrontations that the "Rolling Mills' Boys" had with the staunchly Protestant and notably Orange Toronto Firemen during the 1860s that Rolling Mills employed many Catholics. CTA. *Police Duty Books*, 1860-64. Gooderham and Worts financed the building of "Little Trinity Church" for their Protestant employees who could not afford the pew rents at St. James' Cathedral. Coopersmith, *Cabbagetown*: 32. I also noticed that the Gooderham and Worts families employed only Protestant domestic servants in their homes. St. David's Ward, *1871 Manuscript Census.*

[10] This calculation is based on men either of Irish ethnicity or married to Irish women. St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census.* St. David's Ward, Division One consisted of 404 households which included either an Irish man or woman or both plus their families. Households where the sole Irish occupant was a servant were excluded as Irish servants will be studied in detail in the following chapter. Though there were 404 households the actual number of families - meaning husband, wife and children or widowed parent and children - was 427.

landmarks, St. David's Ward was, if not the physical home, then certainly the spiritual home to Toronto's Irish Catholic community. St. Paul's Church, the first Irish Catholic Church in the city, and the Catholic House of Providence drew Catholics from across the city to St. David's Ward.[11] Life in St. David's Ward was not all work and religion. The picturesque Don provided the Ward's inhabitants with recreational swimming and boating and proved a popular site for the Victorian novelty of picnics. Moss Park and the Allan Horticultural Gardens, Riverdale Park and Zoo provided Victorian Torontonians with suitable leisure activities while the many taverns and hotels found in St. David's Ward provided a livelier if less sober entertainment.

By looking at the 1871 manuscript census returns for St. David's Ward, City of Toronto, Irish women's rate of marriage, age at marriage and number of children will dispel misconceptions about the Irish family in Toronto. The prime author of these misconceptions is Murray Nicolson. Unlike nineteenth-century Canadian and Irish social commentators who linked premodernity to purity and consequently a superior morality for Irish women, Nicolson characterized Irish peasant culture as detrimental to family life.[12] Nicolson wrongly portrayed the Irish family in Toronto as fragmented by abandonment, and consequently unstable and immoral. Nicolson's much published misconceptions about Irish Catholic immigrant families ignore the respectable image of the Irish and their success as citizens. This chapter will show how this detraction from the Irish family's claim to moral respectability would have been unfathomable to Irish

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[11] Reverend E. Kelly, *The Story of St. Paul's Parish Toronto: 1822-1922.* ARCAT, 1922.

[12] Murray Nicolson, "The Catholic Church and the Irish in Victorian Toronto," (PhD Dissertation) University of Guelph, 1981: 114.

immigrants living in mid-nineteenth century Toronto.

For Irish women marriage offered the socially-sanctioned arena for women's moral authority. As Paddy's requests of Judy in the following nineteenth century Irish love song demonstrate, morality, marriage and motherhood featured as appropriate vocations for women.

> And pray, where the deuce, did ye get your morality?
> Would you like your poor Paddy to hang on a tree?
> Sure Judy, that would be a bit of rascality,
> While the daws and the crows would be pecking at me!
>
> O name but the day, without more bother*ality*,
> Then the happiest of mortals your Paddy will be;
> Ere a year will go round, ye'll have more *motherality*,
> And that the whole town of Killkenny will see![13]

Presumably, motherhood followed the event of marriage closely and predictably, yet statistically fewer women in Ireland became mothers as the nineteenth century passed. The causes of the decline in birth rate in post-Famine Ireland have long been a topic of historical speculation and will not be discussed here. Suffice to say that scholars attribute population decline in Ireland to emigration, postponement of marriage and a rise in celibacy. In the last case, Timothy Guinnane placed the Irish experience in a wider European context and argued that though a rising rate of celibacy was not unusual in nineteenth century Europe, the Irish proportion of never-married persons, which climbed to 17 per cent by 1871, was much higher than any other European country.[14] It would seem likely that Ireland did not provide the opportunity for Irish women to marry and

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[13] "Irish Love Song" in *The Garland: A Collection of English, Irish, Scotch, Naval and other Songs by the Best Writers*. Toronto: H&W Rowsell & Hugh Scome, 1844: 195-196.

[14] See table 4.2 "Proportion Never Married in England & Wales, France, Germany and Ireland" in Timothy W. Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish: Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy in Ireland, 1850-1914*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997: 96.

become mothers.

Statistically, the emigration of Irish women and their subsequent marital rate in Canada conveys an impression that Irish women left Ireland to further their chances of marriage. According to Donald Akenson only 30.7 per cent of Irish women arriving in Canada during the mid-nineteenth century were married.[15] Unmarried Irish women emigrating to the United States constituted an even higher percentage of all Irish women emigrating to the United States in the late-nineteenth century.[16] American historians argue about why single women predominated in the flow of Irish immigrants to the United States in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Hasia Diner found that Irish immigrant women to the United States delayed or avoided marriage in order to have more financial security and to support family members who remained in Ireland.[17] Conversely, Jan Nolan found that Irish women emigrated to find husbands in the United States.[18] In mid-nineteenth century Toronto, economic security and marriage could not be separated. Irish women did not choose one or the other, rather, both men and women appeared to prefer economic security in marriage.[19]

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[15] Donald H. Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer*. Toronto: P.D. Meaney Co., 1993: 175.

[16] Patrick O'Sullivan (ed.) *Irish Women and Irish Migration: The Irish World Wide*. London; New York: Leicester University Press, 1995.

[17] Hasia Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth-Century*. Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983.

[18] Jan Nolan, *Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland, 1885-1920*. Lexington, KY: The University of Kentucky Press, 1989.

[19] In St. David's Ward, 80.3 per cent of all men and 79.1 per cent of all women, regardless of ethnicity, were either married or widowed. Since these numbers are drawn from aggregate statistics, it was not possible to calculate marital rates specific to those only of Irish ethnicity. The marital rates were derived from including all men and women over the age of 22 who were not married, their actual numbers being 460 unmarried men and 579 unmarried women. The age of 22 was selected because it corresponded to the average age of people at marriage and also because the aggregate statistics have divided the census returns according to age in categories of '21 and under' and 'ages 22-31' and so on. Please see Table I "Areas,

Statistical evidence suggests that Irish women came to Canada to marry. In comparison to the average age of Canadian women overall, the Irish married at a slightly younger age than Canadians.[20] In St. David's Ward the average age of Irish Protestant immigrant women at marriage was 22 years and the average age for Irish Catholic immigrant women was 23.2 years.[21] The average age at first marriage for women, regardless of ethnicity, in Ontario was 25.0 years, and in Québec it was 25.3 years.[22] By contrast Timothy Guinnane found that in Ireland in 1861 the average age of marriage for Irish women in Ireland was 27.5 years (as high as 27.8 in Ulster and as low as 26.9 in Connaught).[23] It is presumable that opportunities to marry were greater in Canada for Irish women than they had been in Ireland.

Early marriage did not translate into large families. Historians hypothesize that the decline in the fertility rate in nineteenth century Ontario may be attributed to economic

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Dwellings, Families, Population, Sexes, Conjugal Condition" and Table VII "Ages of People" in *Census of Canada 1870-71*. From these aggregate statistics it was not possible to calculate an actual number of how many Irish were married. The Canadian marital rate, however, could be compared to the marital rate of Ireland which was 70 per cent for Irish men and only 63 per cent for Irish women. Please see Timothy Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish*: 96.

[20] A sample population consisting of all 395 women living in Division One of St. David's Ward (Cabbagetown) was used to determine patterns of marriage and fertility. *1871 Manuscript Census.*

[21] To determine the age of women at marriage, women under the age of 45 listing dependent children were examined. The age of the eldest child plus one year was subtracted from the woman's age to roughly calculate the woman's age at marriage. Women over age 45 were excluded from this study because a number of their children, including the eldest, no longer shared the same residence as their mothers and therefore could not be identified. Bettina Bradbury employed a similar method. Please see Table 2.3 in Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families*: 232.

[22] Alison Prentice et al, *Canadian Women: A History*. Toronto: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1988: 385.

[23] Timothy Guinnane: 94-5.

opportunities for unmarried women[24] or choosing to limit family size.[25] Although there is evidence that birth control was exercised, the only public promotion of these practises was by neo-Malthusians and eugenicists.[26] Economic historian Marjorie Griffin Cohen suggests that the decline in the fertility rate in Toronto was a combination of more women of marriageable age, later marriages, fewer marriages and new economic opportunities in the city for women.[27] Marvin McInnis argued that unlike Ireland and other countries in Europe, Canadian women continued to marry at relatively young ages and consciously decided to limit their family size despite the lack of public support for birth control.[28] It would be a difficult task to discover why the historical Canadian family decided to limit their family size, but it would seem that Irish families in St. David's Ward followed this trend.

Historians of the Irish Catholics in Toronto contend that Irish fecundity led to large families in Cabbagetown,[29] though no such evidence was found to link the Irish in Toronto to a high birth rate. A careful examination of the numbers reveals that in St. David's Ward Irish Catholic women could expect to have five or six children on average,

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[24] Marjorie Griffin Cohen, *Women's Work, Markets and Economic Development in Nineteenth-Century Ontario*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988.

[25] R. Marvin McInnis. "Women, Work and Childbearing: Ontario in the Second Half of the Nineteenth-century" *Histoire sociale/Social History*. Vol. xxiv, No. 48 (Nov. 1991): 239.

[26] Lewis: 5.

[27] Griffin Cohen: 121-2.

[28] McInnis: 244.

[29] Murray Nicolson, "The Other Toronto: Irish Catholics in a Victorian City, 1850-1900." in *The Canadian City: Essays in Urban and Social History*. Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan. F.J. Artibise (eds.) Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1884, 336.

while their Protestant counterparts had between four and five children.[30] The Irish Catholics were, therefore, average in their level of fertility.[31] In 1871, Irish Canadian families throughout Canada were not as large as those of Scottish or French Canadian origin, but were larger than families of English origin.[32] In sum, the Irish in Toronto were more likely to marry, and at a younger age, than if they had remained in Ireland, but did not have extraordinarily large families.

Citizenship in the nineteenth century dictated specific roles for men and women though historians argue as to whether these roles were mutually exclusive in reality. Nineteenth century thought, supported by medical, scientific and anthropological studies, which conflated sex and gender specific differences constructed an ideology of separate spheres for men and women.[33] Recent American feminist scholars have determined that nineteenth century American society saw a split between the public sphere which encompassed politics, economics and religion, and the private sphere, which encompassed the home. Women, who exemplified purity, domesticity, morality and piety, were relegated to the private sphere to provide a haven for their menfolk from the harsh, competitive and corrupt public realm of business and politics.[34] Currently the relevancy of

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[30] St. David's Ward, *1871 Manuscript Census*. Like Bradbury's study, I calculated completed family size from mothers aged between 40-44 years. Bradbury: 232.

[31] Lorne Tepperman, "Ethnic Variations in Marriage and Fertility: Canada 1871" *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 11 (4) 1974: 332.

[32] Alison Prentice et. al, *Canadian Women: A History*: 163.

[33] Jane Lewis, "Motherhood Issues in the Late Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries" in *Delivering Motherhood: Maternal Ideologies and Practices in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*. Katherine Arnup, Andrée Lévesque and Ruth Roach Pierson. London & New York: Routledge, 1990: 4.

[34] Barbara Welter. "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860" *American Quarterly* 18 (1966): 151-174.

the cult of true womanhood and separate spheres for all American women has been challenged by historians through critiques based on race, ethnicity, class and sexual orientation who argue that an image of respectable womanhood could be used to condemn some women while privileging others.[35] In a recent collection of essays on women in the nineteenth century Maritimes, however, the authors argue that the ideology of separate spheres should not be dismissed for it was an "agenda set by the men and women of that time."[36] For women in nineteenth century Toronto, citizenship entailed untarnished purity and piety in the domestic sphere, characteristics easily recognized in the image of Erin and the ideology of separate spheres.

Canadians, the Irish and Irish-Canadians, all ideally placed women in the domestic sphere. In 1856, Robert Sedgewick argued against proto-feminist arguments and in favour of women's duty as "keeper at home" in his popular lecture entitled *The Proper Sphere*.[37] Likewise, social commentators in Ireland consistently connected women to a private sphere. It was prescribed that "after marriage, *home* is the abiding place of woman, the natural centre and seat of all her occupations, the cause of all her anxieties, the object of all her solicitude and it is a deranged state of society that encourages her to seek employment beyond its precincts."[38] Irish Canadians, both Protestant and Catholic,

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[35] Eva Cherniavsky, *That Pale Mother Rising: Sentimental Discourses and the Imitation of Motherhood in Nineteenth-Century America*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.

[36] Please see introduction of Janet Guilford & Suzanne Morton, *Separate Spheres: Women's Worlds in the Nineteenth Century Maritimes*. Fredericton, NB: Acadiensis Press, 1994.

[37] Robert Sedgewick, *The Proper Sphere and Influence of Woman in Christian Society, being a lecture delivered by Rev. Robert Sedgewick before the Young Men's Christian Association, Halifax, N.S., November 1856*, Halifax, N.S.: J. Barnes, 1856: 29.

[38] Patrick J. Keenan, *Report of Commissioners of National Education in Ireland*. Dublin, printed for H.M. Stationery Office, 1855. Seemingly, that 'deranged society' could refer to industrializing England. In the mid-nineteenth-century, horrific accounts of women working in mines and the believed consequent

placed substantial importance on the role of women in promoting their community's value as suitable citizens to Canada. In a publication of the Irish Protestant Benevolent Society, along with Irish genuineness, warmth, and quickness of perception, it was trumpeted that "as a people, none place a loftier estimate on the sanctities of home, the sacredness of domestic life, and the purity and virtue of individual character in man and women than [the Irish] do."[39] How well an Irish woman managed her household to create the appearance of a haven from the outside world added to the family's image of respectability and constituted an important part of a woman's citizenship.

As described in Chapter Two, the moral purity of Irish women was a nostalgic view of Irish womanhood which connected morality to the traditional lifestyle of a rural and pre-modern Ireland. A desire to return to an idyllic past and the role of the family in this nostalgia was a recurrent theme in Victorian literature.[40] In Victorian London, city dwellers lamented the loss of the healthy English family, secure in their home in a country village.[41] Efforts to house the swelling urban population repeatedly included a concept of a rural village in designs for working-class housing.[42] Although Toronto did

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decline in their reproductive capacities topped Victorian social concerns. See for example, Benjamin Disraeli, *Sybil*. London: F. Warne, 1868.

[39] J. George Hodgins, *Irishmen in Canada: Their Union not Inconsistent with the Development of Canadian National Feeling*. Toronto: Lovell Bros & Job Printers, 1875: 13.

[40] Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1973: 190.

[41] Leonore Davidoff, Jean L'Esperance and Howard Newby, "Landscape with Figures: Home and Community in English Society"in *The Rights and Wrongs of Women*. Juliet Mitchell and Ann Oakley (eds.) Harmondsworth, New York: Penguin, 1976.

[42] See for example James Hole, *The Homes of the Working Classes*. London: Longmans, Green, 1866; John Hollingshead, *Ragged London in 1861*. London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1861. As early as 1847, reports that English cities contributed to the physical deformity and ill-health of the populace reached Canadian audiences. See for example "The Health of Towns" *The Globe*, October 9, 1847.

not experience the crowding and filth of Victorian London until the early-twentieth century, its industrial expansion from 1847 to 1880 changed the image and outlook of the city from colonial outpost to urban centre.[43] Torontonians hoped to create an urban and industrial centre without destroying the purity, health and virtue they associated with their city. The association of women and the home to purity, morality and tradition became a moral touchstone for nineteenth century Torontonians. Irish womanhood's timeless image of health and virtue fitted them easily in Toronto. The nineteenth century city attributed purity and morality to a pre-modern past, an attachment that Torontonians viewed as undisturbed in Ireland.

This connection of Ireland to an undisturbed, idyllic past both benefitted and burdened Irish women. As the epitome of purity and tradition, Irish women would make ideal wives and mothers, but to create an exemplary appearance of blissful domesticity required a great deal of work and responsibility for women. Timothy Foley recently studied gender and political economy in nineteenth century Ireland. He found that in Ireland women were viewed as "the keepers of tradition, the exemplars of morality as traditionally defined, the disinfecting element in a morally dissolute society."[44] Given this prescription within the context of women's relegation to domesticity and the private

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[43] Kealey, *Toronto Workers' Respond*: 18. In the early twentieth-century St. John's Ward or more commonly known as 'The Ward' was viewed as an unhealthy, dangerous and immoral neighbourhood. Please see *What is "The Ward" Going to do With Toronto?*. Toronto: Bureau of Municipal Research, 1918. 'The Ward' was known to be an immigrant neighbourhood and Torontonians tied immigration to its deterioration. Please see Robert Harney & Harold Troper, *Immigrants: A Portrait of the Urban Experience, 1890-1930*. Toronto: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1975. The Irish Catholic press pointed to 'the Ward' as a source of moral degradation as early as 1873. Please see "Anglo-Saxon Immorality" *Irish Canadian*, April 22, 1873.

[44] Timothy P. Foley, "Public Sphere and Domestic Circle: Gender and Political Economy in Nineteenth-Century Ireland" in *Gender Perspectives in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: Public and Private Spheres*. Margaret Kelleher & James H. Murphy (eds) Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1997: 21.

sphere, Irish women presumably hoped to act as guardians of morality, a task which they could most easily fulfil as wives and mothers.

Entwined in women's role in preparing the next generation of moral citizens was the further verification of motherhood through religion which added divine authority to motherhood. William Alcott, a nineteenth century moral crusader, asked women to consider:

> Let her consider the structure of human society, let her consider well what is the first and most important nursery of thought and affection –....Let her remember the power, as well as the influence of maternal love....Let her hear, lastly, the voice that speaks from heaven, which prescribes her being's end and aim, her proud prerogative and her sacred responsibilities, and which assigns her reward.[45]

In Victorian Canada, science began to draw away from the churches' authority and in the face of material and intellectual doubts of the public sphere, religion retreated into the home and became associated with domesticity and a woman's duty.[46] Women were ideal for the task of preserving religion because of their domesticity and their role in moral development.

Although religious differences between Catholic and Protestant Irish gained much attention in the press, the confrontation between Orange and Green movements distorted the similarity in the roles of Irish Catholic and Irish Protestant women as defined by women's association to religion. The justification for women's role may have differed slightly between Protestant and Catholic, but the tasks did not. For example, in

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[45] William A. Alcott, *The Young Wife, or Duties of Woman in the Marriage Relation*. Boston: George Light, 1837. Republished in *Family in America Series*. David J. Rothman & Shelia M. Rothman (eds.), 1972: 87.

[46] Ramsay Cook, "Spiritualism, Science of the Earthly Paradise" in *Prophets, Priests, and Prodigals*. Mark McGowan & David Marshall (eds.) Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1992: 291-312.

Methodism, nurturing and protecting children in this doctrine were of the utmost importance to the congregation and women's role as nurturer fit this ideology of Christian stewardship perfectly.[47] For Catholic women, the Church attributed increasing significance to woman's duty as a moral nurturer within the home to protect Catholic social values from an increasingly immoral and non-Catholic outside world. A growing emphasis on Mary, heightened by the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception in 1854, contributed to the nineteenth century cult of Mary.[48] Catholicism deemed women, like the Virgin Mary, to be self-sacrificing helpers, protectors from the outside world, social guardians, and moral purifiers. Though lacking the powerful image of the Catholic Virgin Mary, Protestant women shared many of these roles of social and moral guardianship.

In mid-nineteenth century Toronto women's connection to religion formed an integral component of their duties as citizens. For Irish Catholic women, they also contended with specific demands of the Catholic Church to appear respectable within the Irish Catholic community of Toronto. The Archdiocese of Toronto joined the wider Catholic Church's mission to emphasize a very personal relationship with faith and salvation by advocating personal piety, prayers and devotion and encouraging women to join confraternities.[49] Irish Catholic immigrants in Toronto would not be unfamiliar with the Devotional Revolution. In mid-nineteenth century Ireland, Irish womanhood was

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[47]Neil Semple, "The Nurture and Admonition of the Lord: Nineteenth-Century Canadian Methodism Response to "Childhood" in *Histoire sociale/Social History*. Vol xiv, no. 27 (May 1981): 164.

[48] Brian Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1850-1895*. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993: 79

[49] Brian Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism:* 76; Marta Danylewycz, *Taking the Veil: An Alternative to Marriage, Motherhood, and Spinsterhood in Quebec, 1840-1920*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Inc., 1987: 41.

reinforced through a Devotional Revolution which stressed the cult of the Virgin Mary and encouraged regular confession, communion, involvement in confraternities, abstinence movements and championed self-sacrifice and sexual purity.[50] As early as 1861 Toronto's St. Paul's Catholic Church, a parish largely consisting of members from the Irish community, founded the Sodality of the Children of Mary. To join, young women pledged themselves "to labour for the acquisition of the virtues of a true child of Mary - Purity, Humility, Obedience and Charity." This devotional society proved so popular that St. Paul's Church was forced to hold receptions more than once a year to accommodate all those wishing to join.[51] Catholic women's involvement with devotional societies also served many practical purposes. In Brian Clarke's excellent chapter on Catholic lay women in Toronto he asserted that confraternities offered more to women than instruction in personal piety as they were also a time for women to come together, to form friendships and to establish support networks.[52] In addition to charitable benefits, through their membership in confraternities, women and their families gained respectability within the parish and also forged a connection with the local priest who became a valued friend in times of family crisis or need.[53]

In Victorian Toronto both Catholics and Protestants believed that religion and guardianship of faith was the woman's domain. A testament to this association of mothers and religion was the Catholic Church's tendency to rarely grant dispensations to

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[50] Angela Martin, "The Practice of Identity and an Irish Sense of Place" *Gender, Place and Culture* (1997): 100.

[51] Rev. E. Kelly: 252

[52] Clarke: 71

[53] Clarke: 74.

Catholic men hoping to marry Protestant women since the Catholic hierarchy feared that the children would follow the faith of their mother.[54] Evidence from the 1871 census largely supported this fear. For example in St. David's Ward, 60 per cent of Catholic women who married Protestant men raised their children as Catholic. Whereas for Catholic men who married Protestant women, only 37.5 per cent raised their children in the Catholic faith. Yet, close to 40 per cent is a substantial retention rate for men considering the emphasis placed on women and religion. Perhaps women's dominance in religion sometimes deferred to men's dominance in a patriarchal family.

The very public Keith case demonstrated how a father's authority could intercede on a mother's religious duty. In the Spring of 1872 Mr. James Keith, a Presbyterian man, charged his Catholic wife with abduction of three of their seven children. After years of harmoniously imparting both of their religions to their children, Mr. Keith had a change of heart. In the wake of finding out that his eldest two sons, aged 19 and 17, had become devout Catholics, Mr Keith secretly sent off the next two boys (twins aged 12) to Scotland to be raised as proper Presbyterians. While Mr. Keith arranged to remove the remaining three young children from the Catholic schools and their mother's influence, Mrs. Keith beat her husband at his own game. With Bishop Lynch's help, she hid her children from her husband. The case fell under the public eye when Mr. Keith's lawyer subpoenaed the Bishop. Eventually, the family resolved its crisis without legal

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[54] Murray Nicolson, "Education of a Minority: the Irish Family Urbanized" in *The Untold Story Vol. I.*: 767. Out of 360 Irish marriages surveyed in St. David's Ward, Division One, only 35 or 9.7 per cent were Catholic/Protestant unions. *1871 Manuscript Census*. Only 18 of these couples had children living with them. Most of the 'childless' couples were young and likely recently married. If they had children, the baptism of that child presumably sparked some discussion as to which religion the family would follow resulting in further conversion. In Ireland, mixed marriages celebrated by a Catholic priest were rendered null and void by an act of 1745 which was not repealed until 1870. Akenson *Small Differences*: 111.

intervention, but the incident had led many newspapers to speculate as to which side would win: a father's authority or a mother's duty.[55]

At times, being Catholic in mid-nineteenth century Toronto meant insult and discrimination, but Irish women's appearance and behaviour as morally upstanding mothers persuaded Torontonians of their overall suitability. Of greater concern to the Irish immigrant family, most of whom were from the labouring class, was the appearance of economic stability. Irish women's responsibilities of piety, purity and domesticity were essential to maintain an appearance of respectability, but their daily labour, waged and non-waged, was also essential to aid their families'economic stability and thus respectability. The extent to which Irish immigrant women in Toronto, particularly those who were working-class, remained within the 'private sphere' while contributing to their family's economy indicated their success, both symbolically and in reality, to appear as respectable citizens.

Upon marriage, ideally the wife would leave the workforce and set up her own household. In the story of "The Two Cottages," Mary outfitted the new cottage with linen, cookware and furniture purchased from the money she saved while a domestic servant.[56] Marriage guaranteed Mary's role as a mistress of her own household, but marriage also ended Mary's waged work outside the home and consequently ended her personal source of income. Furthermore, upon marriage, any property or goods belonging to the woman

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[55] *Irish Canadian* March 27, June 19, July 10, 17, 1872.

[56] "The Two Cottages," *The Emerald*, 1870.

would become the legal property of her husband.[57] Although late nineteenth century legal reform in Canada attempted to equalize the legal rights of husband and wife, these reforms had little impact on the lives of Irish women because the legal advancements only applied to women's claim to property and immoveable assets, items often beyond the means of Irish women.[58] Provided the marriage remained intact and family members stayed healthy, Irish women could be assured some economic stability. Nevertheless, women's labour that brought in some renumeration was at times a necessity for Irish working-class families. The degree to which Irish women managed to have their paid work remain within the home and thus not violate middle-class ideals of domesticity attests to the Irish family's measure of respectability.

From the 1871 census, it is evident that most Irish women followed Mary's fictional example. Upon marriage, only four women, or little more than 1 per cent of Irish women in St. David's Ward, worked for wages outside the home, thus almost 99 per cent of married Irish women lived, at least superficially, the ideal of a respectable, domestic life.[59] Historians agree that industrializing Canada offered few opportunities of waged work for women. Bettina Bradbury attributed women's non-participation in waged labour to a lack of employment for women outside the house and a need for full-time domestic

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[57] Constance Backhouse, "Married Women's Property Law in Nineteenth-Century Canada" in *Canadian Family History: Selected Readings*. Bettina Bradbury (ed.) Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1992: 332.

[58] Lori Chambers, *Married Women and Property Law in Victorian Ontario*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press for the Osgoode Society for Canadian Legal History, 1997: 4.

[59] This number refers only to marriages still intact, meaning single women or women living alone who claimed to be married or women who were widowed were excluded from this group. The occupations listed were servant, cook, fishmonger and saleswoman. Other occupations like seamstress and laundress were not included in this calculation as they were paid labour within the home. Only 6 per cent of all women worked for wages inside and/or outside the home. St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census.*

labour.[60] In nineteenth century Ontario, Marjorie Griffin Cohen found that unlike the process of industrialization in European countries, there was a limited amount and type of low-waged work available for women which was neither an adequate substitute for the necessity of household production nor easily combined with difficult domestic duties.[61] Marvin McInnis further argued that there was a lack of income-generating work for even unmarried women in nineteenth century Ontario.[62]

Ideological concerns about proper spheres dictated a rigid definition of respectability for women, but an explanation as to why most married Irish women in Toronto remained in the home rather than working outside the home for wages lies more with economic necessity than ideological commitment. It was true of industrializing Toronto, as it was of Montreal, that the usual secondary wage-earners were children, rather than wives.[63] For example, Mary McLaughlan and her husband John, both Irish Catholic immigrants in their early sixties, ran a tavern. Though Mary was not listed as working in the tavern, it is presumable that she, and her eldest daughter who also did not list an occupation, aided John in his business. The two younger daughters worked for wages, one as a teacher, the other as a dressmaker. Similarly, the children of Irish Protestant immigrants George and Deborah Cox worked as bookfolders and furriers and supplemented their father's carpenter wages while their mother remained in their home. It was economically sensible and key to the nurturing of the Irish family that the mother

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[60] Bradbury: 170.

[61] Cohen: 129.

[62] McInnis: 251-255.

[63] Bradbury: 14.

worked in the home.

For the few married Irish women who did work for wages, age, number of children and type of work determined their ability to work for income. Bridget Finn, a twenty-six year old Irish Catholic immigrant, was among those wives working in 1871 Toronto. Married to James, a fellow Irish Catholic immigrant, they had six children all under the age of ten in Ireland before immigrating to Toronto where James worked as a labourer and Bridget as a washwoman.[64] Their recent arrival, youth, religion, lack of skill and young, but large family make them a picture of the hardships encountered in Toronto. The Finn family, however, was an anomaly. Importantly, Irish married women working for wages had less to do with their husband's wages than with their own youth, number and age of their children. For example, in St. David's Ward, only eighteen married women listed an occupation, but eight husbands of these women were either professionals or skilled tradesmen. By far a more significant determinant in whether a wife worked was the type of her work and the size of her family. Over half of wage-earning wives were dressmakers or tailoresses who, like Bridget Finn, could work from their homes and another three women worked as grocers or saleswomen in a family business. The arrival of children was also a determinant in whether an Irish woman worked for wages or not as fourteen of the eighteen women had small families of three children or less. Overall, these were recently married women with very young families as the median age for the eldest child was only two years of age. It is likely that these women had worked in their jobs before marriage and continued to work until the demands of child care proved overwhelming.

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[64] St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census*.

The growing clothing industry, with its large network of outwork and subcontracting, offered one of the few occupations open to women in Toronto. The garment industry drew more women into waged labour where specialized tasks of stitching and sewing were deemed appropriate and believed to be well-suited to the small hands and precise attention of the female worker. In 1871 women and children accounted for 75 per cent of the garment workers in Toronto.[65] Most of this work was done in homes and could often become a family effort to complete the order in times of great demand. The Maguire family of St. David's Ward provides a case in point. John and Ellen Maguire, two Irish Catholic immigrants, both listed their occupations as tailors. Together they had twelve children, all born in Ontario, who aided in the family enterprise. Their eldest daughters aged 21, 19, 17, and 16 were all tailoresses and their two eldest sons were tailors. Younger children (a daughter 15, sons, 13 and 11) were engaged in sewing too. The Maguire family was unusual for its involvement of so many family members and because an eleven year old son sewed instead of attending school.[66] A much more typical example of families involved in the garment industry was the Hagarty family, next door neighbours to the Maguires. Like the Maguires, the Hagartys were an Irish Catholic immigrant family, however only the father was a tailor, and the mother, who did not list any employment, tended to their six children. Three of the Hagarty children, all daughters and over the age of sixteen, contributed to the household economy through their jobs as tailoresses and bookbinders.[67]

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[65] Census 1871. All of the working women in Father Jamot's census of Catholic ratepayers in 1861 were employed as charwomen or seamstresses as cited in Brian Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism*.

[66] The vast majority of Irish families listed children under twelve as attending school.

[67] St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census*.

Most waged labour took place outside the home, but women could gain some money by extending their domestic duties of cooking and cleaning to those willing to pay. To make ends meet 7 per cent of married Irish women took in boarders in St. David's Ward.[68] The private-world of separate spheres ideology was not a reality for these women who shared their homes with boarders or other families.[69] Caring, cooking and cleaning for boarders was also a source of additional work for Irish women. Marjorie Griffin Cohen found that the census only listed women as boarding-house keepers when this type of work was the predominant form of labour a woman performed.[70] Also it would seem that the census under-estimated women's work in boarding houses on the whole since it only noted the established boarding houses with many boarders and generally listed them under the husband's occupation. In the individual households which held one or two boarders and where the husband listed another occupation other than boarding house keeper, the extra work apparently fell to the wife, an assumption not recorded by the census.

An additional responsibility, and much more common task than work outside the home, was the addition of an elderly family member to the household. The care of dependent adults rarely fell to the unmarried son, but certainly to the unmarried daughters.[71] Nurturing, either for children or for adults, was a feminized task. Popular

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[68] These women were not included in the number of women working as tailoresses, servants etc. St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census*.

[69] Bradbury: 175.

[70] Cohen: 131.

[71] Any widowed person over the age of 65 and not a part of the nuclear family unit was counted as an adult dependent. Of all Irish households in the study, 15 per cent had an elderly relative living with either married sons and daughters or unmarried sons and daughters. St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census*.

culture in Ireland as represented in the following ballad indicated the duty of daughters to their parents:

> To me, my sweet Kathleen, the Benshee has cried,
> And I die — ere to-morrow I die,
> This rose thou hast gather'd, and laid by my side,
> Will live, my child, longer than I.
> My days they are gone, like a tale that is told;
> Let me bless thee, and bid thee adieu;
> For never to father, when feeble and old,
> Was daughter so kind and so true.[72]

It was a source of some nationalist pride to point to the filial loyalty of the Irish. Comparing the Irish to Carthage and her devotion to her mother Tyre, an 1860 St. Patrick's Day address, equated Irish-Canadian remittances back home to family affection. The Irish labourer and servant in Canada was held up as an example of "extraordinary love of kindred" for their loyalty and financial remittances home.[73] Non-Irish Torontonians also praised the Irish sense of duty to family. A heart-wrenching story of an Irish servant girl who saved enough money to bring her parents and siblings over from Ireland only to lose them all to illness upon their arrival caught the attention of the *Globe* in 1862.[74]

The example of Margaret O'Leary caring for nine children and her eighty-eight year old mother Julia O'Connor shows filial loyalty. Both Margaret and her husband Thomas were Irish Catholic immigrants who had been in Ontario for at least seventeen

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[72] "The Dying Father to his Daughter" in *The Garland*: 143.

[73] William Halley. *Speech Delivered at the Dinner of the St. Patrick's Society*. Toronto, March 17, 1860: 5-6.

[74] *The Globe*, June 12, 1862.

years.[75] Julia O'Connor was also an Irish Catholic immigrant. Thomas O'Leary being a merchant, his family had the benefit of a middle-class lifestyle, whereas 34 year old Irish Catholic immigrant Ellen Knox caring for six children under eleven plus her 65 year old mother Elizabeth Smith on a shoemaker's wage must have experienced great hardship and difficulty.[76] Caring for an elderly parent, however, did not always amount to a financial strain on the family. For example, Elizabeth Smith worked as a charwoman and presumably contributed to her daughter's household finances and assisted in childcare. The ability of the Irish family to absorb the aged and 'unproductive' members of society marked their suitability as non-burdensome citizens. That the aged were not always unproductive showed the necessity of all family members to contribute in some way to the financial security of the family.

The importance of both partners to the financial, physical and emotional maintenance of the household becomes more apparent in those families where husbands or wives were not listed. The death or desertion of a spouse fell hardest on women and it is in the circumstance of female-headed households that the inequality of women's economic status in mid-nineteenth century Toronto is revealed. A widower's greatest challenge was to replace a wife's housekeeping skills.[77] Widows, however, had to replace their husband's income.Unlike their married counterparts, Irish widows coped with the

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[75] Based on the age of their eldest child who was born in Ontario. St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census.*

[76] St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census.*

[77] Bradbury: 213.

loss of a husband's wages by working.[78] Compared to the 6 per cent of married Irish women who worked for wages, 53.4 per cent of Irish widows worked for wages. Most commonly they worked as charwomen (29.5%), washwomen (20%), boarding house keepers (18%) or sewing trades (13.6%).[79] Although Irish widows were known by the press to dominate the street trade in apples, oranges and the selling of other items,[80] only 16 per cent of them engaged in activities remotely linked to peddling.[81] To account for this reputation as pedlars, it is probable that Irish widows did engage in informal hawking and peddling as a means of survival though it was not noted in the census.[82]

Aside from working, Irish widows coped with economic hardship through creative living arrangements.[83] Few women, widowed or deserted, lived on their own and maintained their original household. Surprisingly, only 10.5 per cent of widows lived with married sons or daughters. These widows were among the oldest and often did not contribute to the household through wages. It was much more common for widows to remain in their own households with the support of their children. On average, these were young widows aged between 40 and 50 years with very few dependent children. Their

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[78] It is noteworthy that Irish widows tended most often to be Catholic (76.8%) than Protestant (23.2%) which could be explained by the greater proportion of Irish men working in dangerous conditions as labourers in Toronto and perhaps Famine migration.

[79] St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census.*

[80] Clarke: 20.

[81] Huckster, fishmongering, and apple-dealing were among trades assumed to be equivalent to peddling.

[82] John Benson. "Hawking and Peddling in Canada, 1867-1914." *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. XVIII, No. 35, May 1985: 76.

[83] There was no remarkable difference between Irish Catholic and Irish Protestant women in their living arrangements. All statistics in this paragraph are drawn from St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census.*

eldest child, either son or daughter, was over sixteen and contributed to the support of the household through waged labour. An interesting strategy for survival were the widows (24% of all) who made ends meet by living with other widows. These female headed households included two or three widows and their children living in one house. Since boarding is not listed in the census, it appears that Irish women, and in particular Irish Catholic women, pooled their resources. For example, Mary York, aged 66, and Bridget Driscoll, aged 60, were both Irish Catholic widows who lived together in Mary's house with the aid of Bridget's eighteen year old daughter who was a seamstress. The final strategy of widows was to live with other families, or in boarding houses. In the most desperate cases, women without the wages of their husbands could live in the House of Industry or the House of Providence. Often the most elderly of widows, these Irish women were deemed deserving of charity after their many years of caring for others.[84]

In mid-nineteenth century Toronto, women became involved in caring for the unfortunate and destitute of the city. Irish women, both Protestant and Catholic, organized and led groups concerned with the morality of families and with the well-being of their city, their country and even of the 'heathen' of other countries.[85] Women from leading Protestant families in Toronto helped to found and operate the Protestant Orphan's Home (1851), the Toronto Magdalen Asylum (1857), the Working Boys' Home (1867), the

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[84] In the House of Providence, a Catholic Home for the homeless poor, was home to another 28 Irish widows not included in the study because the House of Providence was located in Division Two of St. David's Ward.

[85] Please see Marilyn Färdig Whiteley. "Modest, Unaffected and Fully Consecrated: Lady Evangelists in Canadian Methodism," in *Changing Roles of Women Within the Christian Church in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995. For women's work abroad, please see Ruth Compton Brouwer. "Opening Doors Through Social Service: Aspects of women's Work in the Canadian Presbyterian Mission in Central India, 1877-1914." in *Prophets, Priests, and Prodigals*: 241-261.

Newsboys' Home (1868); the Infants' Home for Unwed Mothers (1877); and the Nursing-at-Home Mission & Dispensary for Women (1885).[86] The Sisters of St. Joseph, established in 1853, exemplified the involvement of women in social services. In 1851 they founded an orphanage. In 1854 they founded a girl's school as well as the House of Providence. In 1869 the St. Nicholas' Home for Boys was opened and in 1871, on the heels of the YWCA, the Sisters of St. Joseph opened Notre Dame des Anges, a boarding house for working women. Finally, in 1892, the Sisters of St. Joseph founded St. Michael's Hospital.[87] The activities of wealthy Protestant women and the female members of Catholic religious orders created a number of social welfare institutions to focus on the physical and moral well-being of women and children. In so doing, the women increased their own profile as pious as well as extending their nurturing roles to that of the Toronto community.

In the context of the Victorian era, propriety and morality were key to women's respectability. Irish women were no exception to this truth. In Toronto, an Irish community, who struggled for respectable citizenship, could be proud of the standards upheld by its wives and mothers. The different religions added their authority to women's distinct role in society. For most Irish women in Victorian Toronto, they married Irish men of the same religion; performed non-waged, yet essential work; and endeavoured to raise future Canadians in a physically and morally nurturing environment. Provided that the marriage lasted and that the husband remained employed, respectability was within

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[86]Listed in John R. Graham. "The Haven, 1878-1930: A Toronto Charity's Transition from a Religious to a Professional Ethos." *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. XXV, No. 50 (November 1992).

[87]Elizabeth Smyth. "Christian Perfection and Service to Neighbours: The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph, Toronto, 1851-1920" in *Changing Roles of Women Within the Christian Church in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995.

reach for these Irish women. This chapter has shown that the importance of a household was not only economic, but symbolic. Though women's work inside and outside the home was indeed arduous, popular culture commented infrequently if at all on women's labour. Toronto's preoccupation with women's role in raising future citizens commented on Irish women's own role as citizens. The hard work, both paid and unpaid, that Irish women performed though not endowed with the same weighty symbolism as their role as moral guardians was nevertheless a crucial unspoken requirement of the Irish family's claim to respectable citizenship in mid-nineteenth century Toronto.

Chapter Four
Bridget Works Towards Respectability: Irish Domestic Servants

In November 1843, news of the gruesome murder of Thomas Kinnear and his housekeeper Nancy Montgomery shocked Toronto. The discovery that Thomas Kinnear, Esq. and Nancy Montgomery had been lovers as well as master and servant added scandal to the horror. Perhaps most chilling, two trusted servants of Kinnear had committed the horrendous crime. In particular, one of the servants, Grace Marks, a sixteen year old Irish Protestant girl, caught the public's attention. Focus fell on the disobedience and intrepidity of Grace Marks, whose disrespect of her employer's life translated into disrespect for his superior station in life. Mid-nineteenth-century ideas about class were echoed by newspaper reports and accounts of the murders which not only found Grace's beauty and reserve irreconcilable with murder, but also with servitude. Although Grace Marks' crime was unusual, the description of her crime and behaviour as "rather above her humble station"[1] mirrored a middle-class preoccupation with a servant's deference and respectability. Grace Marks' Irish origin warranted only passing reference in all accounts and certainly the historical conditions of domestic service had more to do with ideas of appropriate class and gender behaviour than Irish ethnicity. Yet consistently in Canadian popular discourse about domestic service, servants were defined as Irish, in particular, as "Bridget."[2] What linked young Irish women - both Canadian born and those

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[1] Words that Susanna Moodie chose to describe Grace Marks. Moodie, *Life in the Clearings* (1853). Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1959.

[2] Marilyn Barber "The Women Ontario Welcomed: Immigrant Domestics for Ontario Homes, 1870-1930." in *The Neglected Majority: Essays in Canadian Women's History Volume II.* Alison Prentice and Susan Mann Trofimenkoff (eds.) Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1985; Marilyn Barber *Immigrant Domestic Servants in Canada.* Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1991; Elizabeth Jane Errington. *Wives and Mothers, School Mistresses and Scullery Maids: Working Women in Upper Canada 1790-1840.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995. Elsewhere domestic servants in Canada

directly from Ireland - to domestic service in Toronto?

As outlined in the last chapter, young unmarried women worked to financially assist their family. Irish girls laboured as seamstresses, worked in factories, enrolled in schools and worked from home to contribute to the economic survival of their family, but most often young Irish women worked as domestic servants in mid-nineteenth century Toronto. Canadian middle-class women saw Irish girls as pastoral, simple and backward yet deserving of rescue from Ireland's hardships. As rural, employers believed that Irish girls would be accustomed to the dirt and drudgery of nineteenth century housework; as simple, Irish girls would not question the necessary deference required for servitude; as backward, they would be unqualified for any other jobs available to young, unmarried women. Finally, because of their poverty and the plight of their country, bourgeois Canadians presumed that Irish girls would be grateful for their position and training as domestic servants. That many of the Irish domestic servants were Canadian-born attracted little attention, rather it was believed that all would benefit from training in middle-class standards. The Canadian expectation that Irish girls would come to Canada to be domestic servants was in sharp contrast to the Irish domestic servant's goal to marry and to manage her own household, a goal that indicated the very temporary nature of her term in domestic servitude.

From a very young age, family life, church and Toronto society prepared Irish girls for their future duty as mothers. The proposed training for these girls was largely

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were noted to be of Irish origin. Please see Alison Prentice et al., *Canadian Women: A History*. Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Canada, 1988: 123. Bettina Bradbury noted the preponderance of Irish girls in domestic service in industrializing Montreal. Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1996.

dependent on their class position. Bourgeois families had the resources and increasingly the institutions to which they could send their daughters for a suitable education. Religion formed the foundation of girls' education in the mid-nineteenth century and likewise stressed fulfillment of traditional gender roles of propriety, deportment and other qualities thought desirous in a young woman.[3] By 1871, working-class children under age twelve attended school in both public and Catholic institutions.[4] The quality of this literacy, given the likelihood that children's work in and outside of the home interrupted their school attendance, is immeasurable, but Irish children living in Toronto could expect a basic education.

Once beyond school age, little is known about unmarried women's lives. Careful examination of the activities of households containing young women provide some clues as to the young Irish woman's position within the family and the work that this entailed. Significantly the manuscript roles of the 1871 census indicate that almost every girl lived at home with her family or with another family. For the daughters of the Irish upper-class found in St. George's Ward, their lives had all the appearance of leisure, with their households containing more domestic servants than daughters.[5] These girls conformed to standards of respectability not only for their own image of propriety, but also for their

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[3] Elizabeth M. Smyth, "The Lessons of Religion and Science: The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph's Academy, Toronto, 1854-1911" (PhD dissertation) Ontario Studies in Education, 1989: 141 or Kate Rousmaniere, "To Prepare the Ideal Woman: Private Denominational Girls' Schooling in Late-Nineteenth Century Ontario" (MA thesis) University of Toronto, 1984: 40.

[4] Literacy statistics indicated that the vast majority of children received some basic instruction as very rarely were Ontario-born children found unable to read or write. Ian E. Davey, "Trends in Female School Attendance in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Ontario" *Histoire sociale/Social History*, VIII (1975).

[5] St. George's Ward, Divisions 1-3, *1871 Manuscript Census.*

family's reputation by awaiting marriage under the supervision of their parental home.[6]

At the other extreme in socio-economic terms, the daughters of the Irish in St. John's Ward, the poorest ward of Toronto at this time, did not list an occupation either.[7] Working-class families who could not afford a domestic servant could at least aspire to achieve the high standards of cleanliness and domestic order with the additional help of their daughters. Similar to industrializing Montreal, Toronto girls at mid-nineteenth century stayed home and helped their mothers with younger siblings and housework.[8] The labour of these young women has been doubly forgotten. In aggregate statistics they appear as unmarried, unemployed and dependent women and, much like the labour of their mothers noted in the last chapter, the census did not recognize the nurturing labour of daughters. Thus, the census listed no occupation for sixteen-year-old Irish Sarah Frazer who, upon the death of her mother in childbirth, had recently been thrust into the role of primary care-giver to her five younger siblings, including the surviving infant.[9]

Girls' work may have been valued in the home, but young women who worked outside of the home received less money for their labour than their equally young and unskilled brothers.[10] Industrialization and liberal economic theory dictate that workers are

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[6] The Irish upper-class was only 10 per cent of the entire Irish population in Toronto. Less than 1 per cent of the daughters of these families worked outside of the home. Those daughters who did work, held respectable occupations in teaching. St. George's Ward, St. James' Ward, St. John's Ward and St. Lawrence's Ward. *1871 Manuscript Census.*

[7] In St. John's Ward, less than 5 per cent of Irish girls aged 12 to 24 years listed a job. *1871 Manuscript Census.* By 1871, school was mandatory until the age of 12. Davey, "Trends in Female School Attendance.

[8] Bettina Bradbury, *Working Families*: 141-144.

[9] St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census.*

[10] Bettina Bradbury: 143.

pulled into factories indiscriminate of all characteristics provided that their labour is cheap, but economics in the Irish family dictated that sons rather than daughters were sent to waged-work in Toronto.[11] Virtually every son not in school and over the age of 12 years worked for wages in Irish households in St. David's Ward. Consequently, unlike the horror stories of the moral and physical degradation of young women working in the hazardous factories of industrial cities of England, the cities of Canada did not have the same reputation.[12] In the case of Toronto, only 7 per cent of young, unmarried, Irish women entered paid factory work.[13] The majority of these girls came from St. James' Ward, an ethnically mixed working-class neighbourhood. In St. James' Ward young Irish women worked in a nearby boot and shoe factory, or worked as sewing machinists, paper box makers or hoop skirt factory hands. Perhaps the greatest inducement for Irish girls in St. James' Ward to enter industrial factory work was their proximity to the workplace. Unlike the famous mill girls of Lowell, Massachusetts, Toronto girls who worked in factories lived at home with their families, under the supervision of their parents.[14] Those who worked in these factories lived in nearby houses with their families and contributed to the family economy.

For those girls who were employed outside of the home, by far the most common

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[11] St. David's Ward, Division One, *1871 Manuscript Census*.

[12] Canadian concern with women's employment in factories did not surface to any extent until later in the nineteenth-century. Most notably in Canada, *Report of the Royal Commission on the Relations of Labour and Capital*, volumes 1 & 5 (Ottawa: 1889).

[13] For comparative statistics please see table 1.2 "Female and Child Labour, Toronto 1871" in Gregory Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-1892*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980: 300.

[14] Thomas Dublin, *Women at Work: The Transformation of Work and Community in Lowell, Massachusetts, 1826-1860*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1979.

occupation was domestic service. Overwhelmingly, domestic service in Toronto was the job of young, unmarried Irish women.[15] Indeed, across Ontario Irish women constituted 70 per cent of all servants.[16] To understand just who these women were, the 1871 census was examined in respect to three wards: St. James', St. John's and St. George's (selected for their representations of different classes.) St. James' Ward, a predominantly working-class, but commercial ward with a smattering of middle-class professionals, contained 23.8 per cent of the city's domestic servants. Most of these domestic servants either worked in one-servant families or worked in taverns and hotels. St. George's Ward, home to the city's wealthy and professional class, employed 52.3 per cent of all domestic servants in Toronto, while the economically struggling St. John's Ward contained only 7.1 per cent of domestic servants. Those servants found in St. John's were generally younger and lived at home with their parents. Presumably their elder sisters could be found enumerated among the wealthy families of St. George's Ward, which showed a preference for older and consequently more experienced domestic servants to serve their grandiose households.[17]

Irish Catholic servants out-numbered Irish-Protestant servants by a margin greater than two to one. The exception being the impoverished St. John's Ward which had an even number of Irish-Catholic and Irish Protestant girls in service. Catholic servant girls

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[15] Darroch and Ornstein found that Irish male servants in Ontario in 1871 were only 1.9 per cent of the total occupations for Irish Catholic and 1.0 per cent of the population for Irish Protestants. Darroch and Ornstein, "Ethnicity and Occupational Structure in Canada in 1871: The Vertical Mosaic in Historical Perspective" *Canadian Historical Review*, LXI, 3 (1980): 326, table 7.

[16] Marilyn Barber, "The Women Ontario Welcomed."

[17] St. George's Ward, Divisions 1-4, *1871 Manuscript Census*; Claudette Lacelle, *Urban Domestic Servants in Nineteenth-Century Canada*. Canada: National Historic Parks and Sites, 1987: 9.

born in Ireland represented 44.4 per cent of all domestic servants in Toronto, followed by Ontario-born Irish Catholic servants at 23.4 per cent. Among Irish Protestant servants, they were divided almost equally in half as to whether they were Irish born or Ontario born and respectively represented 15.9 per cent and 16.3 per cent of the total number of Irish servants in Toronto. The predominance of Irish Catholic immigrant women among Toronto's domestic servant population was likely due to Irish women's increased emigration from two predominantly Catholic provinces of Munster and Connaught as compared to decreased emigration from Ulster province during the time period 1861-1881.[18] Thus, there were more Irish Catholic immigrant women in the domestic servant pool. Of those Irish domestic servants born in Ontario, it is presumable that some of these women came from the Irish Catholic immigrant families in St. David's Ward featured in Chapter Three.

According to Donald Akenson almost 70 per cent of Irish women arriving in Canada during the mid-nineteenth century came without spouses.[19] It is probable that many of these women became domestic servants for however briefly. For example, Mary White, an Irish Protestant woman, left County Down, Ireland in 1874 at age 19. She traveled alone to Canada and found her way to work as a cook in Kent County, Ontario.

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[18] This trend of Irish women leaving from Munster and Connaught continued into the twentieth-century. Please see table 4.4 "Cohort-Depletion Measures, by Province" in Timothy W. Guinnane, *The Vanishing Irish: Households, Migration, and the Rural Economy of Ireland, 1850-1914.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997: 102.

[19] Donald H. Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer*: Toronto: P.D. Meany Co. Inc., 1993: 175. The same trend is true in the United States. In the United States, Hasia Diner found that Irish immigrant women delayed or avoided marriage in order to have more financial security. On the other hand, Jan Nolan found that Irish women emigrated to find husbands in the United States. Please see for example, Hasia Diner. *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth-Century.* Baltimore & London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983. Jan Nolan. *Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland, 1885-1920.* Lexington, KY: The University of Kentucky Press, 1989.

Within the year, she met and married an English immigrant named John Harris who, together with Mary, cleared a farm and raised a family.[20] By this example, Canadian upper- and middle-class women's complaints about the scarcity of domestic servants may have reflected the fact that Irish women worked as domestics only for a short time before finding husbands and establishing their own households.

Marriage was not the only reason for a domestic servant's departure, the high demand for domestic servants enabled them to move around from position to position. An exchange of letters between Miss C.M. Spaight and Toronto emigration office agent David Spence provide a rare glimpse of a domestic servant acting to secure a desirable position. Within one week, Miss Spaight had written two letters to Mr. Spence from two different addresses. In both letters she indicated the temporariness of her situation. The first letter she wrote, "I know not yet how I should like the situation. I have learned that I have to take the principal care of a child 14 months old."[21] Evidently caring for the baby did not work out and by the end of the next week, Miss Spaight took occasion to write again:

> A line to say how I am getting on Mrs. F. appears to have a very good person. They are all now kind and well to me [but] no one ever lives long with her however...There is only myself in the dining room to wait on 30 people sometimes more and up at 5 o'c[lock]. I was thinking could I encroach on your kindness and ask you to send for my trunk to 572 Church Street as I cannot get out to look after them...I do trust you will look out for a good situation for me and I shall try to bear this patiently.[22]

These letters exhibit domestic servant's mobility and also indicate the living conditions of

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[20] Mary White, great-grandmother of author.

[21] PAO, RG 11, Excerpt of letter from Miss C.M. Spaight, June 4, 1878.

[22] PAO, RG 11, Letter from Miss C.M. Spaight to W. Spence, June 11, 1878.

domestic servants in mid-nineteenth-century Toronto.

Miss Spaight, although new to the country and new to the household, had already learned that Mrs. F had difficulty keeping domestic servants and the hardships of domestic labour in Canada. Most bourgeois homes in mid-nineteenth century Canadian cities had two or three floors, sometimes even four or five with a basement and attic in addition.[23] Waiting on thirty people in a dining room very likely located above the kitchen Miss Spaight, laden with hot dishes, would have had to climb the narrow backstairs to execute her duties. The many excursions up and down the stairs offered some respite from the hot, poorly-ventilated, dimly lit kitchens where the servant spent most of her day.[24] After the long day which, like Miss Spaight's day, began at five o'clock in the morning, she could hardly find repose in her living space. If domestic servants did not sleep directly in the kitchen, they usually occupied a sparsely furnished room in close proximity to the kitchen which was frequently in the basement. Household inventories from the mid-nineteenth century estimated the furniture in upper-middle-class homes to be valued at $4000 to $5000, but these same households valued the entire contents of their servant's quarters at $10 to $20. An iron bedstand, mattress, small table, a chair and possibly a washstand and mirror offered little comfort in an often unheated and unlit room.[25] Miss Spaight's inability to retrieve her trunk not only attested to the hectic workday of a domestic servant, but hinted at the constant surveillance and lack of freedom associated with the job.

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[23] Lacelle, *Urban Domestic Servants*: 98.

[24] Theresa M. McBride, *The Domestic Revolution: the Modernisation of Household Service in England and France, 1820-1920.* London: Croom Helm Ltd., 1976: 53-54.

[25] Lacelle, *Urban Domestic Servants*: 106-109.

It was true of Toronto, as it was elsewhere, that most domestic servants worked alone or with one other servant in smaller middle-class homes.[26] In Toronto, the situation may have been more pronounced, as Susanna Moodie noted even the "higher classes [were] encumbered with fewer domestic pests in the shape of pampered servants than their European counterparts."[27] Overall then, most Toronto homes did not achieve the mandatory number of servants outlined in Mrs. Beeton's *Book of Household Management,*[28] nor did they have the hierarchy of servants attached to Victorian domestic service. Toronto employers sought 'general help' from domestic servants. In an 1885 employment register 69 per cent of all advertisements called for 'general' help or maids. Only 19.2 per cent asked for cooks, 9.3 per cent for nurses, and a mere 2.6 per cent laundresses.[29] Cooks received the highest renumeration of $10 a month, while general help received on average $6-8 dollars a month. Nurses tended to be younger, but received $7-9 a month .[30] In Canada the nursery was not perceived as the domain of the skilled,

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[26] Leonore Davidoff, "Mastered for Life: Servant and Wife in Victorian and Edwardian England" *Journal of Social History.* Vol. 7, No. 4 (Summer 1974); Faye E. Dudden, *Serving Women: Household Service in Nineteenth-Century America.* Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1983; Pamela Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant.* Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1975; David M. Katzman, *Seven Days a Week: Women and Domestic Service in Industrializing America.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1978; McBride.

[27] Susanna Moodie, *Life in the Clearings*: 60.

[28] Mrs. Beeton in her book published in 1861 broke down the number of desired servants according to household income. Those with an income of £1000 a year should have a cook, upper housemaid, nursemaid, under-housemaid, a male servant; about £500 a year should have a cook, housemaid and nursemaid; those with an income form £150-200 should have a maid-of-all-work (and girl occasionally) as cited in Pamela Horn: 26-27.

[29] PAO, RG 11, "Female Domestic Servant Registry" The year 1885 is the only surviving register.

[30] The registry listed these ranges as the pay scale for domestic servants in Toronto in 1885. Similarly Jamie Snell found that in 1870, in Hamilton and Ottawa, female domestic servants made $6.00 plus board, In outlying areas like Brantford and Chatham, they made between 50 cents to a dollar less. Farm labourers could make twice or triple that amount plus board. J.G. Snell, "The Cost of Living in Canada in 1870"*Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. XII, No. 23 (1979): 190,192.

professional emigrant woman.[31] The following excerpt from a letter of a governess just dismissed from her job attests to the scarcity of employment for governesses. She wrote, "As here so few families keep Governesses...my circumstances are worse than if I was brought up as a maid of all work."[32] In Canada, clear distinctions among the servants did not exist since the duties of a general help could include child care and kitchen help much like that of a nurse or cook.

Despite the much lamented shortage of servants, some employers found room to discriminate against domestic servants based on their religion. Although not as outspoken as middle-class women in the United States who commonly specified "Protestant Only Need Apply,"[33] Canadian middle-class women occasionally specified "Protestant Preferred" in their newspaper announcements.[34] Since Catholicism, particularly that imported from 'antiquated' Ireland, was associated with superstition and secrecy and thus a potential and unpredictable threat to the advancement of bourgeois Protestant civilization, Toronto employers preferred Irish Protestant domestic servants for their assumed compatibility, respectability and trustworthiness. These "Protestant Preferred"

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[31] James Hammerton, *Emigrant Gentlewomen: Genteel Poverty and Female Emigration, 1830-1914*. London: Croom Helm, 1979: 154.

[32] PAO RG 11, Letter from L. Capelle to David Spence, June 10, 1878.

[33] See Katzman, *Seven Days* and Faye Dudden, *Serving Women*.

[34] Only 3 per cent of advertisements placed in the *Globe* for 1870 actually specified Protestant Preferred. Claudette Lacelle argued that girls seeking domestic service positions rarely used the classified section of the newspapers because to apply for a position, a domestic servant would have to apply to the newspaper office rather than to the employer directly. Finding the newspaper too indirect, Lacelle concludes that girls preferred to find employment by word of mouth. Without a doubt word of mouth would have been used, but newspapers should not be discounted entirely. Almost every advertisement placed in the *Globe* listed the employer's address, for example on October 27, 1870, one advertisement ran as follows: "Housemaid - Mrs. Cherriman, 49 Bloor street east, three doors west of Church street." Such specific instructions indicate that the custom was to apply in person to the house of the employer, thus newspaper advertisements are a valuable source for charting the requirements desired in a domestic servant.

advertisements did not escape the notice nor biting comment of the *Irish Canadian*, who wondered whether the advertisement for a Protestant matron to the Burnside Lying-In Hospital would "be provided with Protestant scissors, and a few skeins of thread manufactured in Derry...also if she were something of a vocalist [would she have] by heart select Orange tunes to please and set the babies.."[35]

Chances of "Protestant Preferred" being specified increased substantially when the position advertised included the care of children. The example of the United States and its anxiety filled middle-class mother who worried about the Catholic influence over her children exercised by the Irish Catholic domestics, however, was not echoed in Canadian newspapers.[36] In Canada, on the whole, nurse-maids, who tended to be Protestant, were selected from young girls aged fourteen to seventeen which could indicate Protestant mistresses faith in a combination of youth and Protestantism over youth and Catholicism. Servants represented an alien presence in the middle-class domicile,[37] and working within the proximity of children or taking principal charge of them, could result in the servant coming between the parent and child.[38] For this reason, Canadian Protestant employers might have perceived Irish Catholic nursemaids as wielding undue religious influence over their children. Furthermore, servants presented a fascinating link to the outside world, an outside world presented to the child from the

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[35] *Irish Canadian*, June 21, 1871.

[36] Katzman, *Seven Days*; Dudden, *Serving Women.*

[37] Magda Fahrni, "'Ruffled' Mistresses and 'Discontented' Maids: Respectability and the Case of Domestic Service, 1880-1914" *Labour/Le Travail*, 39 (Spring 1997): 69-97.

[38] Theresa M. McBride, *The Domestic Revolution*: 27.

servant's standpoint.[39] In the Irish-Canadian publication, *The Emerald*, Norah, an Irish domestic servant told her young charges, Lillie and Lulu, about the fairies of her "old country."[40] The storytelling session provided the young girls with pleasant dreams, but may not have been deemed suitable material for the children by their parents. A nurse's suitability would match the employer's definition of respectability and a Protestant girl would be a preferable nursemaid to a Catholic girl because of the perceived similarity of her 'Protestantism' to middle-class values.

That domestic service was a temporary situation in working-class girls lives and in particular the lives of Irish girls, is an acknowledged historical fact, but not a well-analyzed phenomenon.[41] Claudette Lacelle noted that between 1870 to 1875, only 10.2 per cent of servants in Toronto were aged forty years and over, thus few women made domestic service a career.[42] In the case of Irish domestic servants in Toronto in 1871, only 7.5 per cent were aged forty years and over. Furthermore, only 3.6 per cent were between the age of thirty-five and forty.[43] It appears that most Irish women in Toronto left domestic service by age thirty-five years and seemingly were more likely to do so than domestic servants from other ethnic groups. These statistics suggest that domestic service

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[39] Davidoff, "Class and Gender in Victorian England: The Diaries of Arthur J. Munby and Hannah Cullwick" *Feminist Studies* 5, 1 (Spring 1979): 95. Also, Judith Walkowitz in her analysis of prostitution examined the Victorian hype over Jack the Ripper in London homes in the late 1880s. Often it would be the servants who introduced the legends of Jack the Ripper and all the danger he represented to their young charges. Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*

[40] "A Midsummer's Night Eve" *The Emerald*, 1873.

[41] Claudette Lacelle, "Les domestiques dans les villes canadiennes au XIX[e] siècle: effectifs et conditions de vie" *Histoire sociale/ Social History* XV, 29 (May 1982): 204-206.

[42] See Table 15 "Live-In Servants by Age Group" in Lacelle, *Urban Domestic Servants*: 76.

[43] Calculation based on St John's, St. James', St. George's and St. Lawrence's Wards, *Manuscript Census 1871*.

was a transitory stage in the lives of young Irish women, both Catholic and Protestant, Canadian and Irish born. It is reasonable to conclude that Irish women viewed their stint as domestic servants as temporary. Understanding the temporary nature of domestic service in the lives of over 90 per cent of Irish domestic servants is crucial to understanding their experience.

Domestic servants could try to control their situation by selecting or restricting the type of labour that they were willing to do. Newspaper advertisements and the register of requests at the Emigrant Agent's Office specified the duties, number of family members, and whether the wash was sent out or was a chore of the servant.[44] Alongside choosing the tasks that they would or would not do, most domestic servants also approached their positions within the context of waged labour. In this sense, Irish domestic servants understood a great deal more about industrialization than their mistresses. As historian Christine Stansell wrote, "Unlike their mistresses, who liked to look on their help as extensions of themselves, servants themselves looked at service as an exchange of a given amount of labour for a wage rather than a moral obligation to a benevolent overseer."[45] Irish girls approached domestic service as an exchange of labour for cash and would move to a new situation if the financial or work arrangements did not suit them. In her diary, Elizabeth Hatherley simply noted that she moved from Lumbers, who paid her $7/month to Rankin's where she earned $8.50/month.[46] It was in the interest of the

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[44] See "Situations Vacant" *Globe*, October 2 to November 3, 1871 and RG 11, miscellaneous, "Request for Emigrant Domestic" for the year 1884.

[45] Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987: 166.

[46] PAO, Elizabeth Jane Hatherley's Memoranda and Accounts, 1890, 1891; Also see Lacelle, *Urban Domestics*: 204-206.

domestic servant to make as much money as possible before her impending departure from domestic service.

Typically historians have portrayed domestic servants as being forced into domestic service because of a lack of options.[47] The difficult work and dismal living conditions substantiate this claim, but by associating female domestic servants in Ontario with the marginal and rejected women of the time, the historian concludes that domestic service was "an occupational dead end."[48] Certainly prevailing bourgeois description in the nineteenth century labeled domestic service a base and undesirable job. Indeed, middle-class women saw their own bourgeois lifestyle, complete with appropriate gender roles as the only respectable mode of living, but historians should not make the same mistaken assumption. Undoubtedly domestic service was a difficult and disagreeable job, but the temporary nature of the job suited Irish women who looked forward to marriage and managing their own households in the near future .

That a domestic servant would make a suitable wife was an idea not lost on hopeful husbands. In England men were attracted to and married servants because of their domestic skills, certified character, steadiness, and the nest egg that many servants were presumed to have.[49] In the Irish Catholic community in Toronto, "The Two Cottages," a story laden with moral prescriptions and published in *The Emerald*, described the scrupulous selection process exercised by an Irish labourer in search of a suitable bride:

Neither would I take a wife out of those rich families where servants learn

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[47] Genevieve Leslie: 95; Barber: 104.

[48] David Katzman: 276.

[49] John Gillis, "Servants, Sexual Relations and the Risks of Illegitimacy in London, 1801-1900" *Feminist Studies* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1979): 152-154.

> such extravagant ways; so I was a long time seeking, till at last I met my Mary. She was second servant in a family where only two were kept; she had a great deal to do, and I liked her cheerful, hearty, busy way in doing her work...she seemed to have both good sense and good principles, and her manner was always reserved and steady. After a time, I asked her, and she said she would take a while to consider.....I saw her lady, and she told me she was a very good girl and just the one for a poor man's wife, for she never knew her to waste a morsel, or spend money uselessly on herself.[50]

"His Mary" having learned the habits of industry and thriftiness from her practical middle-class employer was a suitable catch. The story continued and Mary consented and spent her savings outfitting their little cottage. Eventually, their own daughters proceeded into domestic service, a pattern evidently worth repeating from their parents' perspective. Domestic service meant respectability for working-class families as their daughters obediently contributed to the family economy and prepared young women with the domestic skills necessary to one day run their own household.[51] The message in the story is quite clear; domestic service was a temporary and useful intermediary position for an Irish girl as she prepared both practically and financially for her own household.

Irish women's belief that domestic service was a temporary step on their way to marriage was not without some foundation. In England and the greater British Isles, Canada was portrayed as a haven for the young, much expended and abused women of British industrialization.[52] As figure 4.1 shows, Canada would mean a happy home and family to the exhausted and impoverished seamstress. Catharine Parr Traill echoed the common chorus of Canadian opportunities for unmarried immigrant women when she

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[50] "The Two Cottages" *The Emerald*, 1873.

[51] Magda Fahrni, "Ruffled Mistresses".

[52] John E. Morgan, *The Danger of Deterioration of Race* (1885) New York: Garland Publishers, 1985.

wrote:

> What an inducement to young girls to emigrate is this! Good wages, in a healthy, and improving country; and what is better in one where idleness and immorality are not the characteristics of the inhabitants: where steady industry is sure to be rewarded by marriage with young men who are able to place their wives in a very different station from that of servitude.[53]

Parr quite clearly believed marriage to be a reward when she articulated the Canadian expectation that emigrant women would be domestic servants. In this thought, Parr was not alone. Canadians looked to British immigrant women to meet their cries for domestic help.[54]

Yet, middle- and upper-class employers in Toronto ignored or rejected their domestics' plans of marriage and their expectation to eventually be mistress of their own household. To maintain respectable appearances, middle-class women needed committed and reliable domestic servants to aid in the labour involved in the upkeep of a mid-nineteenth century home and as a sign of the household's status.[55] Like domestic service in nineteenth century England, France and the United States, servants defined the middle-class in Victorian Toronto.[56] In mid-nineteenth century New York, Christine Stansell found that a growing number of middle-class women, who were not confident of their own middle-class positions, affirmed their status by distancing themselves from

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[53] Catharine Parr Traill, *The Canadian Settler's Guide* (1855) Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1969:10.

[54] Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-1990.* Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992: 46; Genevieve Leslie: 95; James Hammerton, *Emigrant Gentlewomen*; Marilyn Barber wrote that Ontario "suffered from a chronic shortage of domestics." Marilyn Barber, "The Women Ontario Welcomed": 102.

[55] Barber: 104.

[56] Barber: 104; McBride: 18.

domestics by complaining about them or finding displeasure in their work.[57] Likewise in Toronto, middle-class women not only distinguished themselves through complaining about their servants, but also by shunning the very work of their servants. Distancing themselves from dirt and disdaining housework as menial, middle-class women further emphasized the servant's inferiority.[58] The segregation of servants in the home and their relegation to the bowels of the home underlined in very spatial terms the middle-class connection of servants to lowliness and earthiness.[59] The need to prove a division between employer and servant resulted in an exaggeration of any perceived difference associated with the servant's class, ethnicity, religion or customs.

Who could be more appropriate for these base activities than Irish girls who were thought to be rural, deprived and accustomed to living and working in slop and waste? The association of Ireland with pre-modernity, pastoralness and impoverishment consequently marked Irish girls for domestic service. Furthermore, from the point of view of the established Canadian family, Irish girls because of their country's disadvantages were to consider themselves fortunate to have a position in Canada.[60] Perceptions of Ireland rendered Irish girls suitable candidates for domestic service, but they were not alone. Girls from poor families shared similar appellations, although without the cushion

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[57] Stansell: 161.

[58]Davidoff, *Class and Gender;* McBride, *Domestic Revolution.*

[59] Lacelle noted that two-thirds of Canadian servants slept underground. "Les Domestiques": 197-199; Davidoff, "Class and Gender": 95.

[60] To explore the persistence of this view of foreign domestic servants today as it relates to Caribbean and Filipina women, please see Seref Arat-Koc, "Immigration Policies, Migrant Domestic Workers and the Definition of Citizenship in Canada" *Deconstructing a Nation: Immigration, Multiculturalism and Racism in '90s Canada.* Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1992.

of nostalgia for the purity of the Emerald Isle.[61] At the same time though, domestic service became more and more often classified as a distinctly Irish pursuit.

Caricatures of domestic servants became unmistakably based on stereotypical representations of the Irish as simple, backward but well-meaning folk. In an "Irish Interior," an article printed in *The Canadian Illustrated News*, the writer exclaimed "God Bless the Irish" for their warm hearts and effort: "They do unearthly things...and are a grief of heart to the sorely-tried housewives."[62] In fine Irish-servant form, the servants foolishly set the drawer of tables toward the wall, carelessly "swooped" up private possessions when dusting, and created chaos by replacing the items, including toothbrushes, in new locations irrespective of their proper owners. Thus the author, faced with a servant who had performed her work but at an unsatisfactory level, did not condemn the Irish servant for her carelessness, but chose to describe her as "a diamond in the rough" for her "warm Irish heart" and "ruddy shyness." Following closely the thought that domestic service would train the errant Irish girl, the author approached Irish domestic ineptitude comically and even romantically. Concluding that the Irish, with the help of charity, will have "their civilization and Christianity brought abreast with their inborn poetry,"[63] the author reflected prevailing opinions of the simple, wild, beauty of the Irish: a wild creature with the potential to be civilized.

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[61] Peter Oliver found that in late-nineteenth-century Toronto, marginal women, like those women who were rehabilitated at the Mercer Reformatory, were trained and deemed suitable candidates for domestic service which reflected the prevailing middle-class notion of the baseness of domestic service. Peter Oliver, "'To Govern by Kindness': The First Two Decades of the Mercer Reformatory for Women"in *Essays in the History of Canadian Law*. Jim Phillips et al. (eds.) Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994.

[62] *Canadian Illustrated News*, April 12, 1873.

[63] *Canadian Illustrated News*, November 29, 1862.

It was a middle-class goal to train the servant and in the process to civilize future generations. The Irish servant girl in particular required a great deal of attention from her mistress. One domestic service guide warned:

> Just transferred from her sheiling and among implements never heard of, without skill, without instruction, hot-tempered, without self-control and without the habits of indoor labour.....She is fresh, emotional, strong, willing, full of the energy that sent her 3000 miles across the water, and so totally ignorant of any other civilized ways than ours that she is completely ready to be molded to our wish. It is true that stupidity and superstition work against us, but they are foes that reason and patience and the loving heart easily baffle.[64]

Since domestic labour in general was held to be unskilled and within the traditional realm of women, the belief that Irish girls required extra training reinforced the perceived backwardness and simplicity of Irish domestic servants. The conclusion, however, that the guidance of a paternalistic hand would cure Irish ill-behaviour begs the possibility that the Irish woman could become useful and even respectable.

Further grounds for middle-class amusement was a perceived Irish unfamiliarity with modern civilization. The irony of domestic work and service in the nineteenth century was that Irish girls were closer to the dirt and drudge of household maintenance, but household labour had become increasingly more complicated and mechanized.[65] Mirroring the industrial drive to rationalize work in the nineteenth century middle-class wives became supervisors in their own homes just as their husbands had become managers in the factories.[66] Though Victorian ideals cast the home in the image of a

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[64] Harriet Prescott Spofford, *The Servant Girl Question*. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1881: 19 & 42.

[65] McBride, Davidoff.

[66] Magda Fahrni.

refuge for men from the fast-paced and cruel world of industrialization, and indeed the parlor may have projected such an ideal, the inner workings of the household - the actual labour needed to create the tranquil atmosphere of a domestic sanctuary - echoed the industrialization of the man's world. In this context domestic service was indeed looked upon as skilled and precise labour by middle-class women who demanded efficiency, economy and a servant "who thoroughly [knew] her business."[67] In the United States historian David Katzman, concluded that homes as bastions of tradition "proved remarkably resistant to modernization" and that "the presence of servants probably retarded modernization in the household."[68] By contrast, the Canadian example emphasized efficiency and set high standards for cleanliness. Perhaps living conditions for domestic servants did not modernize, but household activities performed by domestic servants were increasingly governed by science and rationalization.

A series of drawings in *The Canadian Illustrated News* in late 1872 and early 1873 illustrated Irish servants' unfamiliarity and ineptitude with the advancements of household science. Measuring cups, new stoves, thermometers, written recipes which specified temperature and time all marked the mechanization of cooking. In the pictures, the upper- and middle-class Canadian woman and her daughters enthusiastically embraced culinary classes and quickly adjusted to the new method, but supposed that the Irish domestic could not learn. In "Science at a Discount" (see figure 4.2) after the daughter of the house stuck a thermometer into the meat pie, the Irish cook complained to her mistress of this interference and technology of culinary science in general. In "The

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[67] "Situations Wanted" *Globe* , October 12, 1870.

[68] David Katzman: 275.

Patent Grid Iron" (see figure 4.3) the servant, Biddy, a diminutive of Bridget, intruded on the peace of the parlor to complain to her mistress of the new method to cook meat. So unfamiliar was Biddy with the new techniques of cooking meat that she completely misunderstood the scientific jargon of her equally comical mistress. In "Biddy's Eccentricities," (see figure 4.4) the domestic servant rationalized her own tasks to prove more efficient. Unfortunately for "Biddy," but much to the amusement of the reader, so alien was efficiency to the Irish domestic that she foolishly carried Master's boots on Missus's chocolate cake up the stairs: a choice which doubtlessly caused "Biddy" a great deal more work, if not reprimand. "Biddy's" awkwardness with household rationalization served as further testament to the necessity of middle-class intervention in Irish servant girls' training.

Overall, paternalism seemed the favoured approach of mistresses to training their domestic servants. Catharine Parr Traill advised that, "Your servants as long as they are with you, are of your household, and should be so treated that they should learn to look up to you in love as well as reverence."[69] In the same breath, Traill unwittingly disclosed domestic servants' resistance to paternalism and the limits of mistresses' benevolence:

> There is an error which female servants are very apt to fall into in this country...This is adopting a free and easy manner, often bordering upon impertinence, towards their employers.... They should bear in mind that they are commanded to render "honor to whom honor is due. A female servant in Canada whose manners are respectful and well-behaved , will always be treated with consideration and even affection. Afterall, good-breeding is as charming a trait in a servant as it is in a lady.[70]

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[69] Traill: 7.

[70] Traill: 6.

In exchange for room, board and the time spent 'civilizing' the domestic servants, employers expected deference and loyalty in return. In the fictional example of "The Two Cottages" the Irish labourer respectfully asked the employer for permission to marry the servant Mary. In true fictional make-believe, the employer, in benevolent grace, consented to the match and granted Mary permission to leave. One can foresee a host of misunderstandings erupting from this arrangement in reality. As figure 4.5 depicts, the domestic servant's outside world conflicted with the dedication required by their masters who often viewed the personal lives of their domestic servants as interferences, inconveniences and unreasonable trespasses in their own smoothly operating households. The expectation of deference and loyalty clashed with the servant's goals to meet friends and to eventually leave domestic service for marriage.

Irish girls did not always wait until impending matrimony to leave an unsatisfactory position. The propensity for servant girls to leave without much notice became the bane of middle-class housewives' existence.[71] In an article entitled "On Home Service," the *Courrier des Dames* [sic], a "ladies' column"- written by women for a female audience - in *The Canadian Illustrated News*, lamented "the love of change, now so universal amongst servants" as a "great evil."[72] Earlier, Susanna Moodie had commented that although servants in Canada were often incompetent, they held the upper hand: "They can live without you, and they well know that you cannot do without them." Furthermore, "They turn upon you with a torrent of abuse; they demand their wages, and

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[71] Lacelle, *Urban Domestic Servants*: 98; In contrast English servants shifted every year or two. McBride: 83

[72] *The Canadian Illustrated News*, April 26, 1873.

declare their intention of quitting you instantly. The more inconvenient the time for you, the more bitter become their insulting remarks."[73] The Irish were particularly noted for their thoughtlessness, hot tempers and inconsiderateness. "All domestics either Bridgets or Noras , they rule the household, they dictate from the hearth by making life difficult....Threatening to leave or by leaving - they refuse to do work, refuse to entertain, refuse to wash, want to attend mass, and have devotional days."[74] The utmost dedication was expected from domestic servants, as in the case of Catharine Parr Traill who complained of the inconvenience caused when parents demanded leave for their daughters.[75] Even when the flight of a servant was precipitated by her family's necessity, employers viewed this behaviour as discourteous and disrespectful.

The Master and Servant Law of 1847 (in place until 1877) constrained the control domestic servants attempted to exercise over their situations. The contract for domestic servants was usually one calendar month under the Master and Servant Law of 1847.[76] If the servant left her position before the end of the contract she could be charged under criminal law; whereas if the Master broke the contractual obligations he/she could only be

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[73] Susanna Moodie, *Roughing It*: 146.

[74] Spofford: 42.

[75] Traill noted the discourtesy of domestic servants and their parents to demand leave at times of family crises, Traill, *Canadian Settler's Guide*: 3.

[76] Paul Craven, "The Law of Master and Servant in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Ontario" *Essays in the History of Canadian Law, Vol. I.* David H. Flaherty (ed.) Toronto: The Osgoode Society, 1981); Catharine Parr Traill noted in her advice to settlers that it was customary in Canada to engage domestic servants for one calendar month and farm labourers for 4 weeks or exactly 28 days, thus not only did farm labourers, predominantly male, receive more pay than typically female domestic services, but also were paid for each day worked whereas domestic servants were paid for a month varying from 28-31 days. Parr Traill, *Canadian Settler's Guide*: 7;

charged civilly for violating his or her side of the bargain.[77] Restricted as such, servants who disobeyed their masters could be charged, fined and even imprisoned. In June of 1857 the City Police arrested Catherine McMahon for disobeying and insulting her master. Attempting to leave her position two days before the end of the month, Catherine demanded her wages. Her master would not pay and subsequently, Catherine McMahon refused to "discharge any of the domestic duties." The final word on the case was made by the Mayor, acting as Chief Magistrate at the time. He commented on "the miseries employers suffer from their servants in this our good city of Toronto" and dismissed the case with costs.[78] Leaving employment or demonstrating disobedience could be a costly affair for domestic servants. In October of 1870 the Chief Magistrate ordered Mary Raymond to forfeit her wages and to leave her situation immediately for refusing to clean her master's boots, refusing to prepare dinner and "seeming determined to rule the roost."[79] The lack of deference to their employers occasionally brought domestic servants to police court and could partially explain why the crime rate for Irish women in mid-nineteenth century Toronto was so high. Legislation like the Master and Servant Law, rather than regulating and improving the conditions under which domestic servants toiled forced domestic servants to remain in undesirable circumstances.[80]

Middle-class perceptions of their servants' insubordination did not always reflect deliberate defiance on the part of servants. Mistresses held hierarchical ideas about class-

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[77] New Master and Servant Law of 1847 frequently ruled in favour of the Master. Paul Craven: 183.

[78] *Globe*, June 13, 1857.

[79] *Globe*, October 26, 1870.

[80] Craven: 187.

appropriate behaviour. The unknowing violation of these class prescribed roles could result in: middle-class anger at acts they viewed as openly defiant; middle-class ridicule of a servant's attempt to ape middle-class customs; or suspicion of a servant's appearance "as rather above their humble station in life."[81] Middle-class preoccupation with their servants' appearances and clothing emphasized the social position of both servant and employer. For example, in figure 4.6, 'Biddy' casually tried on mistress' hat much to the shock and horror of the spying mistress. In her study of domestic service in nineteenth century England and France, Theresa McBride explained the function of the uniform as a vivid illustration of the differentiation of social positions.[82] Similarly a servant's tendency to spend too much money on dress also over-stepped a perceived working-class duty to be thrifty and provident in the eyes of their mistresses.[83] Mariana Valverde noted that "servant girls who were in a position to learn the dress code of the upper classes and had physical access to cast-off finery were singled out for their perverse desire to dress in clothes which were elegant on their mistress but presumptuous on themselves. Servants themselves interpreted employers' insistence on plain dress as oppressive, and saw fine clothes as symbols of their scant leisure."[84] In the *Canadian Illustrated News* the *Courrier Des Dames* advised mistresses to control the dress of their servants to prevent

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[81] Susanna Moodie visited Grace Marks, "the celebrated murderess" in the Kingston Penitentiary in 1854 and described her of having the appearance "rather above her humble station in life" Moodie, *Life in the Clearings:*

[82] McBride: 24-25.

[83] Christine Stansell noted in her study of women in nineteenth-century New York that Irish servants desire to dress "New York" was associated with thriftlessness and improvidence on their part: 164.

[84] Mariana Valverde "The Love of Finery: Fashion and the Fallen Women in Nineteenth Century Social Discourse" *Victorian Studies* 32, 2 (Winter 1989): 182.

embarrassment for their servant's cheap imitation of respectable clothing.[85]

Working-class imitation of middle-class fashion and finery, not only led to ridicule, but also breached subtle codes of respectability and femininity. Along with challenging class distinctions, finery among working-class women was associated with prostitution. Perhaps what sealed the fate of Grace Marks in 1843 was her audacity to dress in her murdered mistress' clothing at the trial. In her accomplice's confession, James McDermott testified that Grace's motive lay in her jealousy of Nancy Montgomery's clothing and favours received from Thomas Kinnear. According to James McDermott, Grace resented Nancy's air of superiority: a claim that Grace felt belonged to a mistress, not to the lowly station of housekeeper, the position officially held by Nancy Montgomery.[86] Class distinctions could be mutually held by mistresses and servants as each expected appropriate behaviour from the other.

The middle class may have used domestic service to mentally and visually distinguish themselves from the lower classes, but domestic service was also "a unique spatial process that transgressed the physical segregation of the classes."[87] Live-in domestic service brought the two classes in close proximity to each other. The deprivation associated with working-class and, in particular, Irish living standards contrasted with the opulence of the Victorian parlor and marked the Irish domestic servant as a rather dubious trespasser. Employers cast an uneasy eye on their servants who worked closely with the finer material goods in the home and avidly read advice

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[85] *Canadian Illustrated News*, April 26, 1873.

[86] From James McDermott's testimony as recorded in Susanna Moodie, *Life in the Clearings*.

[87] Magda Fahrni, "'Ruffled' Mistresses": 70.

columns that encouraged the mistress to protect her property by asking for character references from prospective servants.[88] Like the following request for domestic servants, employers would specify honesty, "I would be glad if you could [send] me a servant girl from among the immigrants. One about 16 or 17 would suit us - but it would not matter about the age if we got a good trusty girl. If such could not be got, a trusty and respectable old lady would do us.[89] Dishonesty, like a servant's propensity to change situations, was understood as a violation of acceptable codes of deference rather than an act of criminal intent. Like preventing servants from changing stations, however, middle-class employers could enforce their servant's deference through the legal system.

Being an intruder in the bourgeois domain, the domestic servant would be a primary suspect if anything should be amiss in the home. According to the crime column in the *Globe*, many servants were accused of theft. The domestic servant was easily caught, and easily accused, but not easily indicted.[90] Often lacking evidence other than proximity to the crime, the appearance and certified character of the domestic servant could pronounce her innocence or guilt.[91] Nineteenth century sources are silent on whether the Irish domestic servant was more likely to steal. The perceived rural origin of Irish domestics may have projected an air of innocence and trustworthiness. At the very least the association of 'Irishness' to a rural origin was a pointed foil to expose the risks

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[88] *Canadian Illustrated News*, April 26, 1873.

[89] PAO, RG 11, Letter from Rev. William J. Smyth, Uxbridge, Ontario, April 28, 1878. Apparently the girl sent to him was unsuitable as he wrote on June 3, 1878 "I am not very well suited in the girl...her morals being very corrupt which had a bad influence on my children." Rev. Smyth asked for "one advanced in years" instead.

[90] McBride: 106-108.

[91] See for example the *Globe*, April 11, 1861 or Colonel George T. Denison, *Recollections of a Police Magistrate*. Toronto: The Musson Book Company Limited, 1920: 51-52.

of hiring non-Irish domestics. In the early 1870s, Elizabeth Rye's scheme to import wayward girls from English cities to Canada in hope that the new environment would transform the 'degenerates' into 'domestics' met with the following warning courtesy of the *Irish Canadian*, "[Rye's] servants...[had] an unmistakable desire to appropriate silks and silver spoons on which they had not the remotest claim."[92] Whether guilty or innocent, the consequence of indictment could mark the end of domestic service in one way or another. Without character references and sentenced to a jail term, the unfortunate servant girl would find herself among the other women inhabiting the mid-nineteenth century Toronto Gaol, namely prostitutes: an association which would condemn a young woman's reputation.[93]

By far the surest cause of dismissal and the quickest descent into disreputability derived from evidence of a servant's sexuality. The employer's expectation of a servant's celibacy coupled with the Irish domestic servant's desire for marriage was a source of conflict between mistress and servant. Tension over "followers" could be easily resolved in the employer's mind by forbidding any male visitors to their domestic servants. The *Courrier des Dames* suggested a less draconian measure to their female readership by advising that no visits be allowed initially until the domestic servant had established her respectability and trustworthiness to the satisfaction of the mistress.[94] Equally as

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[92] *Irish Canadian*, August 6, 1873.

[93] In 1839, Mary Anne Fraser was brought before Magistrate George Garnett by her former employer Colonel O'Hara for breaking her monthly contract. Found guilty Garnett commuted her prison term to avoid placing Mary Anne among the abandoned women of the prison. Paul Craven: 199. Also the *Canadian Illustrated News* recommended to employers that "The wise and good mistress who, having found out her servant in a flagrant act of dishonesty still longs to save her from utter disgrace and a miserable life and for that reason retains her in her service." *Canadian Illustrated News*, May 3, 1873.

[94] *Canadian Illustrated News*, April 26, 1873.

ridiculous was the supervision of one's servant's courtship as Bridget coyly reminded her mistress in figure 4.7.[95] The employers' control over their servants' private lives indeed held its problems for Irish servant girls who hoped to marry. Forced to date on the sly without their mistresses' knowledge, the servant would resort to impromptu rendezvous and risk taking. Sexual relationships thus conducted could often end in an unexpected pregnancy.[96] The consequences of a pregnancy could be costly and often meant dismissal.

Keeping the child a secret or stating that the child was legitimate, women could return to domestic service provided that the infant did not interfere with the operation of the employer's household. Helen Grant Macdonald, an employer who despite the questionable origin of a baby, kept her housekeeper on, would not allow the housekeeper to keep the baby in her home. In her diary she recounted her housekeeper's trials with an unexpected baby:

> She has boarded [the baby] out at $6.00 a month...[with] a woman who was highly recommended. After 2 days went down to see how it was, found it lying naked on bed woman drunk on floor....She had to borrow some clothes next door taking the child home in as the [drunk woman] would not allow her to approach either its clothes or the carriage which she had been obliged to buy.....Since then the housekeeper has been making at least bi-weekly visits to her child's late abode ....The baby is now with a woman recommended by G. Gillespie and doing well, charge $6 a month. Mother earns $10.[97]

Alternatively, domestic servants could disguise an unwanted pregnancy and ultimately

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[95] Illustration found in Lacelle, "Les domestiques": 200.

[96] In nineteenth-century England, illegitimacy was found to be highest among domestic servants. British historian, John Gillis determined that illegitimacy resulted from traditional courtship patterns among working-class men and domestic servants in the restricted setting of domestic service. John R. Gillis, "Servants, Sexual Relations and the Risks of Illegitimacy in London, 1801-1900" *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 1979): 143.

[97] Baldwin Room, Metro Toronto Library. Helen Grant Macdonald Diary, 1890-1894.

destroy the evidence through abortion or infanticide.[98] The secrecy of the pregnancy could be encouraged by a male employer or his sons in an effort to disguise their involvement in the child's paternity.

A tacit agreement that a house was a safe and moral environment distorted the actual danger that domestic service presented to a young Irish girl secluded by her employer's demands from her own family. Karen Dubinsky found in her study of rape and heterosexual conflict in late-nineteenth century Ontario that to an alarming rate domestic servants who worked in Canadian households were subjected to sexual assault by their employers.[99] Late in the nineteenth century, a book called *Toronto the Good* alluded to an universality of young boys having sexual relations with the domestic servants of the house.[100] In the notorious Victorian novel revealing the seedier side of Victorian life, *My Secret Life*, the author recalled that his first sexual encounter had been with his nursemaid.[101] Middle-class efforts to distinguish the servant girl as base, exotic and forbidden, created a very tantalizing conquest. In Irish women, the sexualization of the servant found further legitimacy. Their alien origins and close connection to prevailing Victorian nostalgia for rural simplicity rendered them earthy and passionate creatures.

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[98] Constance Backhouse, *Petticoats and Prejudice: Women and Law in Nineteenth-Century Canada*. Toronto: Women's Press, 1991: 113.

[99] More than half of the victims of work place assault were domestic servants in her study. Karen Dubinsky, *Improper Advances: Rape and Heterosexual Conflict in Ontario, 1880-1929*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993: 52.

[100] Christopher Clark, *Of Toronto the Good: a Social Study, the Queen City of Canada as it is*. Montreal: Toronto Publisher, 1898: 104.

[101] *My Secret Life* Introduction by G. Legman. Complete and unexpurgated ed. Secaucus, New Jersey : Castle Books, 1966. Reprint of the 1966 ed. published by Grove Press, New York. Originally published anonymously in an ed. of 6 copies in Amsterdam about 1890.

The Irish community's emphasis on the purity of their daughters did not protect Irish domestic servants from sexual assault from their employers nor did it prevent them from pursuing sexual relations with a master or his son in the hope of marriage. A sexual relationship with an unmarried employer or employer's son could, from the servant's perspective, be a profitable undertaking. For example the familiarity of Thomas Kinnear and his housekeeper Nancy Montgomery had catapulted Nancy into an authority position in the household over the other servants. Since Nancy Montgomery was pregnant with Kinnear's child and he had made no intimation of marriage, however, the intentions of Kinnear to his housekeeper remain a mystery. Grace Marks' belief that she could win her master's favour at Nancy's expense indicates a fickleness on Kinnear's part and Grace's belief that she too could woo her master. Evidently courting masters was not an isolated incident. Using middle-class perceptions of domestics' sexual prowess, or perhaps as an expression of their equality, domestic servants gambled dangerously by having sexual relations with their masters, a gamble that had punitive consequences for the servant only - her dismissal, an unwanted pregnancy and an end to her respectability as a domestic servant and as a woman.[102]

Established Toronto society intrinsically linked young Irish girls with domestic service and used stereotypical representations of Ireland and its people to naturalize this link. This perception ignored the scores of Irish girls who attended school, laboured as seamstresses or worked in the home to contribute to the family economy. In response to

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[102] McBride noted that nineteenth-century prostitutes claimed that they had been seduced by their master and "fallen" thus leading to their entrance into prostitution. McBride, *The Domestic Revolution*: 205; Christopher Clark wrote that masters seducing their servants resulted in the dismissal of the girl and her resorting to prostitution for survival. Clark, *Of Toronto the Good.*

their ghettoization as domestic servants, unmarried Irish women, both Catholic and Protestant, Canadian-born and direct from Ireland, rejected the inferior status implied by domestic service and pursued their own life goals. The Irish community's emphasis on respectability, combined with adherence to Victorian ideals about the "true" role of women, held marriage as the goal in young women's lives, a goal which defined domestic service as at most a temporary stage between the father's house and the husband's house for the Irish girl. Middle-class notions of domestic service and the actual time-consuming duties of the job restricted Irish girls' leisure time and courtship practices. Most Irish domestic servants adapted to these constraints and waited within the system until they could legitimately leave their employer's household. For other Irish domestic servants, constraints in the employer's house led to desperation and danger, a situation not addressed, or at worst ignored, by both middle-class employers and the Irish community. Their stories will be the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter Five
"The thousand snares which profligate cities throw in their way...:"[1]
Irish Misdemeanants in Toronto

Over the course of this thesis, numerous examples have shown that in both a symbolic and material sense, Irish immigrants in Toronto had been accepted under, and had accepted, the terms of respectable citizenship. Yet there exists a strong historiographical tradition in respect to the history of Toronto to see Irish immigrants, and more exactly when historians remember to specify - Irish Catholic immigrants - as Toronto's first downtrodden immigrant community. The industriousness, respectability and penchant for bourgeois morality so relentlessly pursued by the Irish immigrants featured in chapters three and four are lost among the many references in Toronto history to an Irish propensity to drink to excess and to figure largely in Toronto crime statistics. Any study on the Irish in nineteenth century Toronto would be remiss if these stereotypes presented by historians were not addressed. In that vein, this chapter takes the less fortunate and indeed the oppressed members of the Irish immigrant community as its subjects in an attempt to determine whether the behaviour of these few risked the reputation of the Irish immigrant community as a whole. While statistically the Irish were over represented in crime, Torontonians did not see the Irish as a threat to the city's morality. It is the contention of this chapter that the Irish claim to citizenship was not spoiled by the misfortunes of a few. Rather, the positive image of the Irish over-rode negative publicity. The Irish community was sensitive to crime statistics and endeavoured to overcome any negative association by pointing the finger of blame elsewhere.

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[1] Lynch Papers, *The Evils of Wholesale and Improvident Emigration from Ireland*, (1864) ARCAT, LAE 0701.

Likewise, Irish misdemeanants used the image of the Irish and its accompanying sense of humour, wit and kind-heartedness to avoid imprisonment. Finally, it will be argued that for the most part the wider 'respectable' Irish community agreed with Torontonians about the causes and remedies for Toronto's 'problem' population.

Again, the experience of Irish women, in this case Irish female misdemeanants, will be given special emphasis in this chapter. The pervasive presence of Irish women among Toronto's prostitutes in the mid-nineteenth century is in sharp contrast to the morally-spotless Erin, an image of Irish womanhood heralded by the Irish, hailed by Canadians and English alike, and recognized as a foundation of Irish claims to citizenship. It follows that the numbers of Irish among 'prostitutes' in mid-nineteenth century Toronto could substantially damage the claims made by the Irish to citizenship. The records left by Irish female misdemeanants are sparse. In mid-nineteenth century Toronto, however, church records and women's charitable work offer a glimpse at the lives of these 'troubled' women. In particular, the records of the Magdalen Asylum and Industrial House of Refuge for Females,[2] founded in 1853 by a group of women who represented very prominent Protestant families of Toronto, and records of West Lodge, "a home for penitent women" established by the Nuns of the Order of Our Lady of Charity or, as they were more commonly known, the Sisters of the Good Shepherd were of great

[2] The earliest surviving report of the Magdalen Asylum and Industrial House of Refuge for Females was printed in 1857. Until 1876 (excluding the year 1870 for which the report is missing) the Magdalen Asylum published an annual report. Administered by a female Board of Directors the Magdalen Asylum stated its origin in "several ladies [who] arranged a plan for statedly visiting the frail, to read, talk and pray with the inmates, in hopes of leading some to repentance and inducing them to abandon their crimes, and to seek shelter in the home provided for them."

use.[3] These records, along with jail registries, recorded proceedings from the criminal assizes, newspaper accounts and memoirs of retired judicial authorities form the core of this chapter's research.

Historiographically speaking, the existence of an Irish criminal element and their headquarters in the Irish ghetto was a certainty in mid-nineteenth century Toronto. Though few historians have researched the topic, the story of an urban slum occupied by poor Irish Catholics has been accepted as the story of the Irish in Toronto.[4] Murray Nicolson, the prominent proponent of an Irish ghetto theory, described Irish inhabitants of mid-nineteenth century Toronto as:

> disease-ridden, superstitious, uneducated and untrained [who] quickly formed a section of the lower-class, labouring population and consequently, the urban poor. Living on the periphery of society, they were despised as human vermin, and 'obsolete people' fit only for absorption or extinction.[5]

The echo of more recent rationales for twentieth century campaigns of genocide aside, Nicolson alludes to a distinct Irish underworld socially situated on the extreme margins of mid-nineteenth century Toronto. Later he wrote that the "Famine Irish Catholic survived in various areas of concentration and, with the aid of the church, developed a new urban culture....The famine Irish poured into old Cabbagetown.....In that whole area, peasant

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[3] The first reference to West Lodge was found in a letter to the *Irish Canadian* which made reference to Archbishop Lynch's allocution at the Annual Clerical Retreat of 1876. ARCAT, LB01.274. The records of West Lodge are not as comprehensive as those of the Magdalen Asylum. The author contacted the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, who remain an active religious community in Toronto and continue to occupy the original grounds of West Lodge, but was informed that no pre-twentieth-century records exist. Only those references found in the Archives of the Archdiocese have survived.

[4] Mark McGowan, *Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1992.* Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999: 7.

[5] Murray Nicolson, "Peasants in an Urban Society: the Irish Catholics in Victorian Toronto" in *Gathering Place.* Robert Harney (ed.) Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Toronto, 1985: 47.

culture had survived with its shebeen shops, wakes and wild wedding celebrations."[6] Furthermore, Nicolson's Irish ghetto escaped geographical boundaries as the 'peasant culture' of the Irish ghetto "carried mental conceptions that moulded them in a distinctive fashion.....a mental ghetto."[7] For Nicolson, it was the ethnic background of the people and not the poverty of the neighbourhood that created the culture. Nicolson selected Cabbagetown as the location of a marginal Irish ghetto based on the predominance of Irish in St. David's Ward. As Chapter Three of this thesis attested, Cabbagetown, was inhabited by the Irish, but certainly was not a slum; rather, for the most part, it was a picture of working-class respectability. It is not the intention to state that mid-nineteenth century Toronto did not have a slum or even one that could be called an 'Irish ghetto,' but that Cabbagetown was not home to such a neighbourhood.[8]

Nicolson's Irish ghetto, however, is not without some foundation. In a much commended study, Peter Goheen placed the slums of Toronto on the extremities of the city at both east and west ends of Queen Street in the 1860s.[9] Here, poor Torontonians lived beyond the city's rudimentary services on undesirable land. The distance to work would have been an obstacle and a limited demand for the renumerated work of women, such as taking in laundry, boarders or peddling, would have made a harsh existence even more difficult. It was not these areas, however, that attracted the attention of

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[6] Nicolson, *Gathering Place*: 53

[7] Nicolson, *Gathering Place*: 56-57

[8] For more on the respectability of Cabbagetown, please see: J.M.S. Careless, "The Emergence of Cabbagetown in Victorian Toronto," in *Gathering Place*: 25-45.

[9] Peter Goheen, *Victorian Toronto, 1850-1900: Pattern and Process of Growth*. Chicago: The University of Chicago, Department of Geography, Research Paper No. 127, 1970: 126.

Torontonians. Consistently, mid-nineteenth century sources referred to 'Stanley Street' as the rough area of town.[10] 'Stanley Street' was the most infamous of a few notorious addresses located in the densely populated and poor St. John's Ward.[11] Until this area was bulldozed in the 1930s, the "Ward" as it became known was a haven for crime and urban debauchery in the eyes of concerned Torontonians.[12] Though outspoken denunciations would not come until the early twentieth-century, the questionable activities of 'Stanley Street' did not escape the notice of mid-nineteenth century Toronto.

That 'Irishness' was associated with 'Stanley Street' also did not go unnoticed. In 1872, Henry Scadding wrote an early history of Toronto in which he described an Irish neighbourhood as follows:

> Across the road from the playground at York, on the south side [of Adelaide], eastward of the church-plot, there was a row of dilapidated wooden buildings inhabited for the most part by a thriftless and noisy set

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[10] Though three names of March, Stanley and Lombard were used to describe the same street during the time frame of this thesis the name of 'Stanley Street' will be used throughout this chapter. It was originally named March Street until an 1850 act by Toronto City Council designed to improve the street by renaming it Stanley. As one contemporary noted "the old saying that a rose by any other name would smell as sweet was verified in the opposite sense, for Stanley Street smelt as bad as March Street." See Chapter 28 of Colonel George T. Denison's *Recollections of a Police Magistrate*. Toronto: The Musson Book Company Limited, 1920. In the 1870s the street was renamed for a final time as Lombard Street and slowly overcame its reputation. For the duration of this paper, 'Stanley Street' will appear in quotation marks to signify its representation of a number of streets including but not limited to Dummer and Centre streets as well as such haunts as Colenzo's Terrace. Very much like the modern day Toronto tendency to refer to any crime committed in the city's north-west corner as occurring in 'Jane and Finch.' Though Stanley Street did stretch in to St. James' Ward, St. John's Ward was known as the disreputable ward and will be studied in detail for this chapter.

[11] In 1871 St. John's Ward contained 2039 households containing 10,868 people. Table I "Areas, Dwellings, Families, Population, Sexes, Conjugal Condition" *Census of Canada 1870-71, Volume I.* Ottawa: I.B.Taylor, 1873.

[12] Bureau of Municipal Research (Toronto, Ont.), *What is "the Ward" going to do with Toronto?: a report on undesirable living conditions in one section of the City of Toronto - "the Ward" - conditions which are spreading rapidly to other districts.*Toronto: Bureau of Municipal Research, 1918.

of people. This group of houses was known in the school as "Irish-town."[13]

Though published in 1872, Scadding's book is a memoir of a scenic walk through Toronto in 1840 where, with every passing street and turning corner, Scadding offered a pedestrian's account of the daily sights of Toronto, and its inhabitants. In another memoir of Toronto, though the Irish were not named, the locality of 'Stanley Street' was described as

> the most disreputable street in the city. It was the slum district of the time. The houses were nearly all of wood and many of them in a dilapidated and unsanitary condition. Fights and brawls on the street were frequent occurrence and respectable citizens would only go through it in the night time with much reluctance.[14]

In a most direct fashion, Colonel George T. Denison, another prominent Torontonian and Police Magistrate, connected 'Stanley Street' to the Irish and called it "one of the slums of the city, [which] had acquired a very unsavory reputation.....It was inhabited by Irish labourers, carters, woodsawyers, etc." Undoubtedly, the connection between the Irish and Stanley Street was well-established during the time-frame under discussion.

Actual population statistics provide conclusive evidence that Cabbagetown was not home to 'Stanley Street.' In comparison to St. David's Ward (Cabbagetown) where the Irish-born constituted 48.5 per cent of the Ward's total population, the Irish-born in St. John's Ward, itself, made up only 38.7 per cent of the total population. In fact, St. John's Ward had the smallest percentage of Irish-born inhabitants of all six wards in

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[13] Henry Scadding. *Toronto of Old.* Abridged and edited by F.H. Armstrong. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1966: 110.Written originally in 1872 by Henry Scadding (born 1813 in England, but raised in Toronto). Scadding was the son of Governor Simcoe's estate manager. He was educated at Bishop Strachan School (UCC) and Cambridge where he earned an MA and DD. Upon return to Toronto, he became rector of Holy Trinity.

[14] W.H. Pearson, *Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old.* Toronto: William Briggs, 1914: 74.

Toronto and was a full 4 percentage points below the city-wide average.[15] St. John's Ward was among the most diverse in ethnic make-up with the largest and most significant Black community in Toronto, as well as many recent English and Scottish immigrants and small numbers of Italians and Jews. It was a predominantly working-class area. To look specifically at Irish families in St. John's Ward, 89.5 per cent of Irish Catholic male head-of-households and 74.5 per cent of Irish Protestant male head-of-households were labourers. Compared to the Irish of St. David's Ward, there were very few Irish-owned businesses or Irish professionals of either religious denomination in St. John's Ward. Perhaps most surprising was that 85 per cent of the Irish in St. John's Ward were Protestant.[16] Yet, 'Stanley Street' itself was predominantly Irish Catholic. Clearly St. John's Ward in 1871 was not an Irish Catholic ghetto nor even an Irish one though it did contain notorious 'Irish' streets. In sum, St. David's Ward or Cabbagetown held the greatest proportion of Irish in the city, but was not home to an Irish ghetto. Rather, certain streets in St. John's Ward became known as poor Irish enclaves.

The Irish, and particularly Irish Catholics, did, however, swell the crime statistics in mid-nineteenth century Toronto. Indeed, Irish immigrant women were conspicuous in their dominating presence among those arrested. (Please see charts 5.1 and 5.2)[17] The annual statistical report of crimes distinguished between nationalities and ethnicity to deliver a picture of who was committing crime in the city. This annual report was

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[15] Please see Table III "Origins of the People" in *Census of Canada 1870-71*. Though the title does not state "Ethnicity' it is presumable that these statistics do reflect ethnicity because there was not a 'Canadian' category.

[16] Calculations based on St. John's Ward, Divisions 3-6, *1871 Manuscript Census*.

[17] Please see chart 5.1 "Number of Arrests by Nationality - Male, 1870-1880" and chart 5.2 "Numbers of Arrests by Nationality - Female, 1870-1880."

produced by the Chief of Police for the benefit of the City Council and was also published in the *Globe*. Irish men consistently constituted a large proportion of those arrested until 1875 when Canadian-born men surpassed them. On the other hand, no other ethnic/national group of women rivaled the unenvious position that Irish women held in rates of arrests. Irish immigrant women were arrested at over twice the rate of any other ethnic/national group. At first glance, there appear to be a great many Irish women committing crimes in Toronto throughout the 1870s. Canadian historians of crime uncritically accept Irish over-representation in crime statistics, and equate this phenomenon to the recent immigrant status and impoverished circumstance of some members of the Irish community.[18] While this is true, it should also be noted that if the actual jail registers are consulted, and names of arrested women indexed and cross-referenced, it becomes clear that there was a small, but active core group of Irish women who were arrested over and over again.[19] The rate of recidivism was well-known to mid-nineteenth-century reformers who commented:

> The path between crime and the prison, and from the prison to crime has become so well beaten that she thinks of no other and the poor outcast transgressor feels more at home within the prison walls or in sinful haunts and amid wicked companions.[20]

The Prison Inspector remarked that young women were usually incarcerated twenty to

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[18] Peter Oliver,*'Terror to Evil-Doers': Prisons and Punishments in Nineteenth Century Ontario*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

[19] I am grateful to Jack Choules of the Archives of Ontario who shared with me his data on the recidivism of Irish female misdemeanants in the 1840s. In his unpublished paper, Choules found that Irish prostitutes averaged 24 arrests per year.

[20] Magdalen Asylum, *Annual Report 1859*.

twenty-five times before the age of 25.[21] Despite the recidivism of a few, the fact remains that the entire Irish population looked to be responsible for much of Toronto's crime.

The Irish of 'Stanley Street' were clearly involved in illegal activities and were over-represented in crime statistics. Yet, there was no official outcry against an "Irish" criminal class.[22] For instance, not until 1874 did the Prison Inspector, Terence O'Neil, link crime to immigrants. He wrote that "a more stringent and careful observance of the Emigration Regulations by the Agents of the Dominion and the Province and the vessels carrying emigrants to this country [was needed], if [Canada] would not see [its] Public Institutions weighted with an undue proportion of the physical and mental defectives of other countries."[23] Importantly, O'Neil did not attribute rising crime to the Irish, rather he directly accused criminals from the United States of infiltrating Canada.[24] Presumably, O'Neil, himself an Irish Catholic immigrant who resided with his family in Cabbagetown, diverted attention from Irish misdemeanants, but more possibly O'Neil's ethnic background attested to the authority that Irish Catholic immigrants had gained within Toronto society by the 1870s. It is noteworthy that Irish immigration had dropped off by the late 1860s and had been replaced with a wave of poor English immigrants in the 1870s. *The Canadian Illustrated News* castigated the Imperial Government for aiding the

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[21] PAO. *Annual Report of the Inspector of Asylums, Prisons and Public Charities for the Province of Ontario, for the year ending 30th September 1867.*

[22] 'Official' refers to all *Statistical Reports on Crime &c., Committed in the City of Toronto* for the years 1870-1880; All *Report of the Inspector of Asylums, Prisons....*, for the years 1859-1880 PAO. B78, Reels 1-2.

[23] PAO. *Annual Report of the Inspector of Asylums, Prisons....1874*: 119

[24] It was not unusual for Canadian public authorities to link depraved Americans to criminal activity in Canada. Please see communications between Toronto Police Force and Police of New York State in the Toronto City Police Records. CTA, Duty Book, Series 92, File 2, Division One, 1860-61.

"ne'er-do-wells of Britain" rather than "assisting the thousands of deserving people who are anxious to exchange Ireland for Canada."[25] The absence of Irish in these reports did not mirror the actual crime statistics which showed a consistently high percentage of Irish misdemeanants. The intrigue lies in why Torontonians did not add the Irish criminal element to their concern and malaise over Toronto's growth in size, industry and crime.

That the Irish escaped being associated with criminality was not accidental. The *Irish Canadian* devoted some time to compare the harmless Irish consumption of "a glass too many" with the debauchery and corruption which stemmed from Protestant and English immorality:

> Toronto is gaining an unenviable notoriety for crime. Within the past few weeks no less than four persons have been charged with murder or an attempt to murder...Whilst the poor Irishman can be accused of nothing greater than drunkenness, the uneducated Englishman, or religious bigot, stops at nothing short of murder.[26]

Torontonians generally agreed with the benignity of Irish punishable offences. The Irish did not cause the concern for the 'dangerous classes' found elsewhere in the nineteenth century industrialized world.[27]

Compared to the devious and hardened city-dweller, the Irish projected an image of innocence and kind-hearted country folk. For example, in an assault case on which Denison presided, Denison fondly remembered the charity of the Irish when Maurice Cosmer, an Irish labourer, posted bail for Rooney, the very man who had uttered threats at him. When Denison asked for the reason to this apparent folly, Cosmer answered in

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[25] *The Canadian Illustrated News*, August 27, 1870.

[26] *The Irish Canadian*, April 22, 1863.

[27] Gareth Stedman Jones, *Outcast London: A Study in the Relationship Between Classes in Victorian Society*. Harmondsworth; Baltimore: Penguin, 1976.

characteristic brogue that "Rooney has a wife and childer, and they want him, and I would rather take the bating than see them wanting." A couple of months later, when Cosmer again appeared before Denison on a charge of drunkenness, Denison recalled Cosmer's kindness and released him without question.[28] Specific Irish claims to citizenship like innocence and generosity of spirit were used to describe and to defend Irish misdemeanants in mid-nineteenth century Toronto. The image of the simple, rustic, 'peasant' Irish was at work in the image of 'Stanley Street' as much as it was in the image of Biddy the domestic servant, or the hard-working but simple Cabbagetown family or the figure of Erin. And no one was more proficient at manipulating this image than the Irish themselves.

The Irish were clever in using the image of the Irish to their own advantage. Their manipulation of words and quick answers indicated an underlying intelligence and good-nature which the Magistrates rewarded with dismissal or commuted sentences. For example, Caroline Higgins was found prowling about the streets on Sunday morning between 1-2 o'clock, but she maintained she was "only doing a little shopping." The Magistrate advised her not to be found out shopping so late again, else he would send her down to where there is no shopping.[29] Often it was the eloquence and sharp use of the tongue which left lawyers speechless, court room onlookers in gales of laughter, and a bemused judge less severe when passing verdict.

Seemingly, there was a general expectation and consequent admiration for Irish wit. Dan Dwan, the Mayor of 'Stanley Street' whose clever use of charm and wit excused

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[28] Denison: 191

[29] *Globe*, March 7, 1870.

him from jail sentences, was a popular favourite in the Toronto Police Court. Denison recalled his characteristic wit in the story of "Black Maria," the van which transported convicted prisoners to the jail. Dan explained to the crowd of onlookers, "That's Cumel Dinison's team, and they are the fastest in the city...They would take you as far in half an hour as it would take you thirty days to get back."[30] This play on words was believed to be a particular talent of the Irish and Dan's subtle compliment to Denison showed a subversive manipulation of an elite man's authority. Denison regularly featured the humourous wit of the Irish of 'Stanley Street' in his memoirs. By contrast, Denison's humourous passages about the Black residents of St. John's Ward who found themselves in Police Court was at the expense of the Blacks and their perceived slow-wittedness.[31]

Irish wit did not, however, place the Irish above the law. Humour and its underlying humiliation could also disempower Irish misdemeanants. To trivialize their crime and alcoholism was to dismiss their poverty and desperation. The use of court room proceedings in newspapers, memoirs and as a daily live theatre to curious Torontonians further trivialized the criminal acts of the Irish.[32] Published daily in the newspapers like the *Globe*, reporters embellished the spectacle of the comedic Irishmen in the drive to entertain. The Irish of 'Stanley Street' became an open window for elite-class readers into

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[30] Colonel George T. Denison was a well-known fixture in the Toronto Police Court. An explanation to his rather cavalier approach to adjudication is found in the introduction to his *Memoirs* in which he proudly proclaimed his disdain for ruling according to legal precedent and his preference to judge according to his own instinct. Denison: 210.

[31] Denison: 142.

[32] For similar historical analysis of the court room, please see Paul Craven, "Ideology and the Toronto Police Court" in *Essays in the History of Canadian Law*. David H. Flaherty (ed.) Toronto: Published for the Osgoode Society by University of Toronto Press, 1981; Also, please see Karen Dubinsky, *Improper Advances: Rape and Heterosexual Conflict in Ontario, 1880-1929*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993.

an intriguing and socially energized community.[33] Whereas the goings-on of middle-class households were hidden behind closed doors, the hospitality and *joie de vivre* of the Irish in 'Stanley Street' was an entertaining spectacle and in stark contrast to the emotional reserve of elite Torontonians.[34] Through the diversion of Irish wit, the misfortune of the accused was neutralized, and their criminal activities were, in turn, pronounced harmless.

Leading Torontonians tended to agree with the conclusion that Irish misdemeanants were harmless. Irish characters like Harry Henry, who was arrested weekly for drunkenness, supported both the image of a drunken Irishman and his accompanying harmlessness.[35] In its daily review of the police court proceedings, the *Globe* captured the popular view of Irish crime when it wrote, "Harry Henry was charged with drunkenness. The prisoner is an Irishman, and possessed of a fair share of the wit attributed to his countrymen."[36] Colonel Denison affectionately recalled Harry's career:

> He would serve his thirty days, get out for a day or two, and go down again year after year for more than forty years....Harry Henry really looked upon the jail as his home, and was always employed by Governor Allen of the jail as a butler, and the strange thing about him was, that he was absolutely reliable for he had charge of the Governor's sideboard and liquors....Some of his friends made arrangements for Henry to be cared for, and the last two years of his life he was quite comfortable, and lived as a respectable

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[33] In her brilliant book *City of Dreadful Delight*, Judith Walkowitz explores the theme of spectacle, crime and class in Victorian London. Judith R.Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in late-Victorian London*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

[34] Terry Eagleton noted that in Britain the more sedate English reflected on the comedic antics of the Irish and illustrated English longing for a carefree, pre-industrialized past. Terry Eagleton, "The Good-Natured Gael" in *Crazy John and the Bishop and Other Essays on Irish Culture*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998: 88.

[35] Harry Henry first appeared in Toronto Police Court for his drunkenness in 1842 and regularly appeared until the late 1870s.

[36] "An Old Offender," *Globe*, November 11, 1854.

citizen.[37]

As a criminal, Harry Henry was neither feared nor hated as he was pure of heart and merely weak from alcohol. Reference to Harry's helplessness, obedience, harmlessness and neediness reflected the mid-nineteenth century paternalistic view of the Irish in general: guileless and in need of guidance.

Evidence indicates that Ontarions in the mid-nineteenth century associated the city of Toronto with drinking, entertainment and sex. Historian Christine Stansell, in her study of mid-nineteenth century New York, commented on the centrality of sex to metropolitan life and the link that ante-bellum Americans made between sex and evolving urbanity.[38] In a similar fashion, the directors of the Toronto Magdalen Asylum sounded early warning bells to awaken Torontonians to their city's "sins and sorrows" despite its newness and the country's youth.[39] Social reformers were not alone in their awareness of Toronto's burgeoning burlesque. A sampling of the criminal assizes attested to the prominence of sex, drink and a trip to the city in the leisure patterns of men from the surrounding areas of Toronto. The women charged in these files were well-known Irish misdemeanants who profited from these popular forms of entertainment.[40] The scant details of these cases echo the findings of historians that illicit sex was not unfamiliar to

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[37] Denison: 188-189.

[38] Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860.* Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1987: 175.

[39] Magdalen Asylum, *Annual Report*, 1859. Reference in this report is made to the book by Thomas Guthrie, *The City: Its Sins and Sorrows: Being a Series of Sermons from Luke XIX, 41. Second Edition.* Glasgow: Scottish Temperance League, 1875. The board of directors studied and discussed this book as well as the annual reports of rescue societies in London.

[40] See for example criminal assizes case files: #7315, Box 199, October 26-27, 1875; #7435, Box# 203, September 5, 1876; #7497, Box #206, December 21, 1876; #7521, Box# 206, October 3, 1877. PAO.

working-class and middle-class culture.[41] Far from the image of Erin, these Irish women educated others on the delights and risks of the city.

Nineteenth-century commentators saw these convicted prostitutes as the classic female counterpart to the common male criminal.[42] Some Canadian historians employ this same view and use the prevalence of Irish women engaged in prostitution as the case for Irish immorality. In Nicolson's study on the Irish in mid-nineteenth-century Toronto, he points to Irish prostitutes as unequivocal proof of a renegade Irish culture. Murray Nicolson raises the depraved figure of the Irish prostitute as both evidence of, and reason for, Toronto's social and economic isolation of the Irish.[43] This uncritical reproduction of a female figure to symbolize the Irish shows an acceptance of seeing women's morality as indicative of the social and moral state of a particular community, in this case an ethnic community. Just as in the nineteenth century Erin was used to herald Irish claims of moral superiority, Nicolson uses the shadowy figure of the Irish prostitute to argue that the Irish had a looser definition of morality. In compilations of Canadian women's history, Irish women receive specific attention as prostitutes.[44] Legal historian Constance Backhouse, author of many well-received articles on women and the law in mid-nineteenth century Canada, has described Irish women and their link to vagrancy and prostitution as conspicuously Canadian.[45] In Canadian history, Irish prostitution appears to be the

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[41] Linda Mahood, *The Magdalenes: Prostitution in the Nineteenth-Century*. London; New York: Routledge, 1990: 48.

[42] Kay Daniels, *Convict Women* St. Leonards, Australia: Allen & Unwin Pty Ltd, 1998: 33

[43] Nicolson, "Peasants in an Urban Society": 58.

[44] Alison Prentice et al., *Canadian Women: A History*: 154-155

[45] Backhouse, "Nineteenth-Century Canadian Prostitution Law: Reflection of a Discriminatory Society" *Histoire sociale/Social History*. Vol. XVIII, No. 36 (Nov. 1985): 401.

quintessential female counterpart to the drunken Irishman at home in the filth and chaos of the Irish ghetto.

With the assumption that all vagrancy charges equaled prostitution, these historians, like legal authorities in the nineteenth century, equated women and poverty to prostitution. These conclusions are not surprising: Canadian historians must grapple with a lack of prostitution records, and in York or the Home district the situation is even more pronounced where the category 'prostitution' was inexplicably not used. Annual submissions to the Inspector of Prisons showed no women arrested on charges of prostitution. Likewise, the Annual Reports of the Police Chief did not enter any women under the category 'prostitution.' In Toronto women were predominantly arrested for vagrancy, or drunken and disorderly behaviour. Thus all women charged under the Vagrancy Act have been assumed by historians to be prostitutes.[46] Indeed most prostitution charges were made under the Vagrancy Act, but not all charged under the Act were prostitutes.[47] While it is true that economic and social marginalization would lead a woman to prostitution, caution must be exercised so as not to label all women arrested on the streets of Toronto as prostitutes. That Irish women figured so prominently in crime

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[46] As well on average less than 5 per cent of arrested women were charged with keeping or inhabiting a bawdy house. Other annual reports from Ontario municipalities used the category 'prostitution' in their annual reports of crime to the Provincial Inspector. See for example the annual report for the Chatham, Ontario Gaol from 1864-1880.

[47] There was a Contagious Diseases Act passed in the United Provinces in 1865 which conceded the existence of prostitution through legal regulation, but caused little legislative or public debate. A year later, sparked by an Ontario Grand Jury recommendation to extend regulation, public debate was aroused on the side of the anti-regulationist and thus Québec and Ontario had no lock-hospitals. CD Act expired in 1870, again without debate. With this five year exception, up until the 1880s, prostitution was punished under a more generic law passed in 1869 entitled "An Act Respecting Vagrants" Backhouse, "Nineteenth-Century Canadian Prostitution Law": 391. Historian Jay Cassel agreed. He wrote, "Controlling VD was hardly a burning issue in nineteenth-century Canada." Jay Cassel *The Secret Plague: Venereal Disease in Canada, 1838-1939*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987: 91.

statistics does not prove that they were prostitutes, rather that Irish women were more prone to be arrested under the Vagrancy Laws. Mary Anne Poutanen, in her recent article on prostitution in early-nineteenth century Montreal, shows that often vagrancy was used as a blanket term for women arrested while peddling or begging, as well as women found congregating in the street or homeless. It was not simply a code word for prostitution.[48] Thus the aggregate statistics used by many historians to calculate prostitution rates do not reflect the multifarious criminal activities of women and they exaggerate the extent of the Irish prostitute.

The disagreement among historians as to who counts as a prostitute builds on the disagreement of reformers and public authorities in the nineteenth century. In the 1859 *Report of the Inspector of Asylums, Prisons of Ontario* it was noted that:

> almost all the female prisoners in our gaols are prostitutes for whom our prisons serve as boarding houses and places of shelter. The gaol is for them a resource in distress, a refuge during the inclement season, and a sort of common rendezvous.....They know exactly what misdemeanour or breach of the police regulations will secure their admission into the *public boarding-house*, with the certainty of getting out within a few days of whatever time may suit them.[49]

The directors of the Magdalen Asylum disagreed. They reported, "Instead of imprisonment being a punishment it is well known to the Committee that some have purposely committed offences that would send them to jail, as they found it more pleasant to be there than suffer from want, or to labour for their own support."[50] As well, the

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[48] Mary Anne Poutanen, "The Homeless, the Whore, the Drunkard, and the Disorderly: Contours of Female Vagrancy in the Montreal Courts, 1810-1842" in *Gendered Pasts: Historical Essays in Femininity and Masculinity in Canada.* Kathryn McPherson, Cecilia Morgan and Nancy M. Forestell. Don Mills, Ontario: Oxford University Press, 1999: 29-47.

[49] *Annual Report of the Inspector of Asylums, Prisons...1859.*: 11-12

[50] Magdalen Asylum, *Annual Report*, 1857.

Magdalen Asylum chose to add Industrial House to their name because many of the girls had been "imprisoned for drunkenness, theft and other crimes; who, though not considered the most abandoned, were lost to themselves and society."[51] Consistently in Ontario, the reports of gaol inspectors lamented the lack of segregated facilities for 'fallen women' and other female misdemeanants.[52] Likewise, Archbishop Lynch chastised Mother Louisa of the Sisters of Good Shepherd for sheltering 'straying girls' with 'fallen women.'[53] Thus, not all women arrested in mid-nineteenth century Toronto were prostitutes. Like Harry Henry who would turn himself in as a vagrant, so too did homeless women. Unlike male vagrants, however, reformers and public authorities scrutinized and determined the moral status of arrested women to speculate as to whether they were or were not prostitutes.

Whether prostitutes or vagrants or both, Irish women swelled the female population of the Toronto jail. Yet, Irish women were not viewed as immoral or even suited to prostitution. To the contrary, Erin's morality remained intact and rendered the 'fall' of an Irish woman more poignant and irrevocable. Archbishop Lynch captured the Irish view when he wrote:

> Hence, they fall - not an easy prey either, but after many struggles - into the thousand snares which profligate cities throw in their way, to obtain recruits for the incredible number of bad-houses which exist....It is humiliating, indeed, to see numbers of poor Irish girls, innocent and guileless, sitting around in those large depots in seaport cities, waiting to be hired....An Irish girl gives up all hope of ever getting honorably settled

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[51] Magdalen Asylum

[52] Until the Andrew Mercer Reformatory for Women was opened in 1880 the *Annual Report of the Inspector of Asylums, Prisons and Public Charities for the Province of Ontario* yearly complained of the inability to properly classify and segregate female misdemeanants.

[53] ARCAT, LB05.274 Letter to Mother Louisa from Archbishop, Dec. 16, 1887

> in life, even after an involuntary fall; while we know that such is not the case with respect to females of other countries. Hence, Irish girls look upon themselves as so degraded and despised, that, in their despair, they rush headlong to destruction.[54]

The perceived rural up-bringing, naivety and vulnerability of Irish women cushioned their reputation. Even in an instance of Irish prostitution which made national headlines, not all Irish women were assumed predisposed to be prostitutes. References to these prostitutes symbolically traced their origin to poorhouses in Irish cities not to Irish countryside. Furthermore, newspaper coverage of the event and its call for a "moral quarantine" incriminated all British cities for their "periodical deportation to Canada of the refuse populations."[55] The purity of these Irish women had been corrupted by their stay in Irish cities. Summarily, in spite of statistical evidence Torontonians did not attach 'Irishness' to prostitution rather they continued to accept the image of Erin and her association with ruralness, naivety, purity and simplicity. Irish women were not predisposed to prostitution, but because of their Irishness were more vulnerable to the corrupting elements associated with the city.

Torontonians and Irish immigrants also looked to reasons other than ethnicity as the cause of Irish women entering prostitution. The orphan status or common circumstance of living out and away from one's family was perceived and indeed most likely played a very real role in an Irish woman's entry into prostitution. In the jail registries, if a woman's occupation had not been prostitute, it was likely that of servant. As noted in the last chapter, servants were vulnerable to accusations of stealing and the

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[54] ARCAT. *Evils of Wholesale and Improvident Emigration from Ireland*

[55] *Globe*, May 29, 1865.

sexual advances of their employers which could lead to the servant being 'out of a position' and without references. The Annual Report of the Magdalen Asylum stated that most penitents were both orphaned and domestic servants. In the minds of the reformers, this combination of vulnerability and lack of parental supervision proved peculiarly attractive to the seducer.[56] In her monumental study of prostitution in Victorian London, Judith Walkowitz objected to the idea that prostitution began with a seduction by a middle-class rake, but she did stress the disruptive backgrounds of the prostitutes as a cause of their entrance into prostitution.[57] Irish immigrant women away from their families became a symbol of the exploitation and danger of the city.

This discourse was not altogether unfounded. Women who traveled without companions or arrived alone in the city could be perceived as 'out on the town.' In a brutal assault case in 1875, a fifteen year old Irish immigrant, newly arrived from Dublin was befriended by David Taylor who promised to find her shelter for the night. Once off the main streets, Taylor sexually assaulted the young woman repeatedly. Before the criminal assizes, Taylor confessed that he had mistaken the young woman for a prostitute. His noises of remorse and shame at having ill-treated a virginal girl resulted in his release.[58] That the assizes accepted Taylor's explanation of mistaking the lone girl for a prostitute indicates a prevailing belief that respectable women did not walk the streets of Toronto alone. If the employment, family or friends that a young women from Ireland had hoped to meet upon arrival in the city failed to materialize, her loneness could be

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[56] Magdalen Asylum, *Annual Report*, 1860.

[57] Judith Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class and the State.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980: 18-19.

[58] PAO. Criminal assizes case file #7362, Box #201, October 6, 1875.

mistaken as her disreputability.

For Irish women in Toronto, their immigrant status, which often placed them in a lone and vulnerable position, proved a most potent deciding factor as to why they engaged in prostitution, however episodically. It is possible that the high number of 'unattached' Irish women who immigrated to Canada in the mid-nineteenth century contributed to the significant number of Irish among arrested women who listed their occupation as prostitute.[59] Perhaps even more significant than the high numbers of Irish among women listed as prostitutes in the Toronto jail registry was the predominance of immigrant women in general who accounted for four-fifths of all prostitutes arrested.[60] Without family and friends to sanction their behaviour, without financial safety and the support of a family unit or without employment alternatives, these young women turned to prostitution to survive. The women reformers of the Magdalen Asylum used this image of the innocent 'friendless' woman as the former ego of the 'fallen' woman to garner sympathy for her plight and their cause. In haunting terms, they wrote, "Ours is a land of strangers - and, as such, it presents many dangers to the young and unprotected, and the friendless female. When she lands on the shores of our towns and cities, the tempter, and the seducer are not far distant."[61] Or in the slightly more political tone of the Catholic Archbishop:

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[59] Donald Akenson explained that the 30.7 per cent of seemingly 'unattached' Irish women who immigrated to Canada prior to 1871 probably did meet with family and friends already established in Canada, but it would seem likely that the high number of unmarried Irish immigrant women (73.4 per cent) as compared to other immigrant women (English - 19 per cent; American - 5.5 per cent; Scottish - 1.8 per cent) bears some correlation to the distinctly Irish pattern of immigration of 'unattached' women.

[60] PAO, RG 20 *Toronto (York) Jail Register, Home District Jail*, 1866/67. In 1866, the jail registry consistently began to note the occupation of the arrested person. Only those women whose occupation was listed as 'prostitute' were counted.

[61] Magdalen Asylum, *Annual Report*, 1859.

> This degradation commences with the breaking up of the happy and hallowed ties and associations of home, the absence of the watchful care of the Parish priest, the edifying example of neighbors frequenting Church and the Sacraments and the loss of a healthy public opinion. How heartrending the sight of these immigrants arriving on our wharves, surrounded by sharpers - the harpies of cities - destined to be swept like a torrent of rain, into the sewers of society!..

On the cause, consequence and remedy, Protestant and Catholic reformers agreed: the innocent Irish girl, pushed by necessity from the safety and security of her rural home and pastoral homeland, seduced by wily urban tempters was forced by shame into a life of prostitution. The image of Erin superseded any talk of an Irish propensity for prostitution but concurrently restricted any element of choice that may have factored in a woman's entrance into prostitution

A 'cult of sentimentality' around the figure of the prostitute appealed to the heart and pocket-book of the public.[62] A favoured form of the cult of sentimentality was to condemn the seducer. In the words of Archbishop Lynch:

> Alas! Who have been their first assassins, that murdered in a certain sense their souls, and more than degraded their bodies? Men, who perhaps to-day hold high heads in society. Let them repent and strive to undo the great and grievous wrong they have committed. They can strive at least to support in part a penitent in this institution.[63]

A little less direct in their appeal to financial support, the women reformers of the Magdalen Asylum raged, "[The] wicked companion, who has, so far as regards penalty or punishment, passed scatheless, and is still, it may be, going about or abroad polluting the breath of society, received into circles of fashion, caressed and courted, while the poor

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[62] Mahood: 55.

[63] ARCAT, LB01.274.

victim is deserted, shunned and pursued even almost to death."[64] From the allusions to fashion and society, it is presumable that the culprits were wealthy men.

It was of strategic importance to the female directors of the Magdalen Asylum to portray their clientele as redeemable and victimized. The Annual Report of the Inspector of Asylums, Charities and Prisons, which proposed funding formulae to the provincial government, scrutinized each charitable initiative for its preventative or reformative value to society.[65] Clearly the municipal jails and the penitentiary failed miserably to deter sexual misdemeanant recidivism. As the female warden lamented in 1864, "In most instances, I am sorry to be obliged to state that this class of degraded beings, after passing two or three years in this Institution, return to their old haunts of vice and prostitution." [66] The Magdalen Asylum was the self-proclaimed successful alternative to the jails which were but 'nurseries of vice.' It was not long before the Magdalen Asylum, however, had to reconcile its disappointing rate of reform to its directors and defend itself to subscribers and provincial inspectors.[67] Far more women who entered the Magdalen Asylum left on their own accord than were placed as respectable domestic servants.[68] This record was also clear to the provincial government who, upon the recommendation of the inspectors, withdrew its financial support of the Magdalen Asylum for the year 1868. Not to be

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[64] Magdalen Asylum, *Annual Report*, 1861.

[65] To see a more detailed account of how the charities interacted with the provincial government please see, Richard Splane, *Social Welfare in Ontario, 1791-1893: A Study of Public Welfare Administration*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965.

[66] PAO. *Annual Report of the Inspector of Asylums...1864*.

[67] Please see chart 5.1 for a summary of Magdalen Asylum statistics taken from *The Annual Reports*.

[68] Please see table 5.1.

deterred, the Annual Report of the Magdalen Asylum staked its claim to public support on their Christian duty to the 'Magdalen.' In the words of the recording secretary, Mrs. R.H. Brett, "Joy over the one, not the ninety-nine has become a model."[69] Though the dismal reformation rate plagued the affluent female directors, presumably it also marked the desperation of sometimes even resistance on the part of those women interred.

The Magdalen Asylum commented on the difficulty of domesticating "the wild, excited, and feverish" woman to the "calmness, submission, and contentment" of an obedient daughter.[70] This 'Decarceration strategy'[71] employed by the Magdalen Asylum met with the resistance of female misdemeanants who varied their actions from serving their time then unashameably returning to their former lives or more aggressive resistance like violence and escape. Though the rules stated that girls who entered the Magdalen Asylum must commit for one year and obey the rules, the Magdalen Asylum also relied on police "to enforce obedience, remove the disorderly and also to guide the liberated prisoner to [the] Asylum."[72] As historians have found to be true elsewhere, some female misdemeanants were not willing to play the role of the penitent daughter.[73]

The actual behaviour of some of the female penitents defied the preconceived

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[69] Magdalen Asylum, *Annual Report*, 1861.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Decarceration strategy is defined by Linda Mahood as "to entice women charged with sexual misdemeanors into direct care early in their careers, and personally to supervise their reformation. This involved persuading a woman to commit herself to a long period of 'voluntary' incarceration in a magdalene asylum, where she would undergo a strict regime of moral education and industry, trial training, and to be expected to conform to middle-class standards of femininity.": 55. Also see Walkowitz, *Prostitution*: 201. Toronto's own 'demarcation strategy' is set out in the Magdalen Asylum, *Annual Report*, 1858.

[72] Magdalen Asylum, *Annual Report*, 1859.

[73] Walkowitz, *Prostitution*: 20.

image of their victimization. In the records of the criminal assizes, it is very often the men who paint themselves as the victim.[74] In many cases, men appeared as innocent by-standers approached by slight of hand prostitutes. For example, in October of 1872, Annie Brown induced a man "to go cut a vacant lot with her" where she quickly stole fifty dollars from him.[75] The press had little sympathy for the men. After George Watson lost eighty dollars and a silver watch during an encounter with Mary Ann Murphy, the *Globe* commented on Watson's weak claim to naivety when he was described as "a youth of 60 summers who had deliberately put himself into her clutches."[76] Both Irish immigrants, Annie Brown and Mary Ann Murphy hardly fit the stereotype of an innocent and kind-hearted girl.

Women like Annie Brown and Mary Ann Murphy did not serve as suitable candidates for rescue by the mission of the Magdalen Asylum or West Lodge. Rather, reformers preferred to highlight the innocence, corruption and redeemability of an Irish girl. The following story, included in an early annual report of the Magdalen Asylum, showed subscribers in dreadful detail the necessity and success of the reform movement:

> Girl from Ireland went to service in a tavern, in -----; there she learned to drink to excess, and had to leave her place. Alone, she arrived in the city, at 5 o'clock p.m. in the winter, and being unable to find a place for the night, at 9 o'clock she was found by a lady and gentleman, crying in the street, -- they took her to a police station, in the morning she went to a "Registry Office," a woman engaged her and took her home; she seemed very kind and gave her whiskey freely; in the evening the house became filled with disreputable characters, and she fled into the street. A policeman met her, and, being much the worse for liquor, she was taken to

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[74] It should be noted that the criminal assizes would reflect a bolder prostitute since this court dealt with offences like stealing and assault rather than the more typical offense of vagrancy.

[75] PAO, RG 22-392, Box 191, Criminal Assizes, October 30, 1872.

[76] *Globe*, January 1, 1873.

> a station and in the morning sent to jail. For a month she associated with the most abandoned, and when discharged, said she did not care what became of her. The matron of the jail advised her to go to the "Refuge." She was admitted, and after staying long enough to gain the confidence of the committee, was sent to service in the country, were she lived in a farmer's family for seven months.[77]

All of the prerequisite elements were present in the above story. The girl's immigrant status and accompanying loneliness, her innocence and guilessness all described typical 'Irish' characteristics and marked her as an easy target for the disreputable characters who thronged the city. As well the presence of alcohol and her arrival in the city and finally the redemptive qualities of hard work and the countryside were all elements of mid-nineteenth century reform. The perceived healing or corrective power of rural life was very much a part of the discourse on the Irish and moral reform in the mid-nineteenth century.[78] There was no greater testament to the belief in the countryside than the move of the Magdalen Asylum to Yorkville in 1860. The female reformers touted the advantages of Yorkville as "[a] locality [which] removes them from the neighbourhood of former haunts and companionships, and gives them the benefit of a good deal of out-door exercise and employment."[79] Perhaps because of similar beliefs, West Lodge was located in the extreme west end of King Street. Certainly, Archbishop Lynch would agree that Catholic misdemeanants should be removed to the countryside. In fact, Lynch advocated the removal of all Irish immigrants to the countryside immediately upon their arrival. He refused to participate in any immigration schemes even those suggested by co-religionists

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[77] Magdalen Asylum, *Annual Report*, 1857.

[78] Karen Dubinsky found that the redemptive and healing powers of the countryside figured in turn-of-the-century discourse on moral reform. *Improper Advances*: 153.

[79] Magdalen Asylum, *Annual Report*, 1861.

and co-nationalists unless they included settlement on farmland.[80] Clearly, in the eyes of Torontonians even Irish morality was no match for the corruptive forces of the city.

In mid-nineteenth century Toronto 'Irishness' was perceived to be a redeeming quality rather than a predisposition to commit crime as some historians have argued. Despite the crime statistics, the Irish character was not labelled undesirable, rather Irish generosity, warmth, passion, earthiness, rusticity marked their acceptance, though also their vulnerability. To further assure their acceptance the Irish used their 'Irishness' in defence and no one was more adept at manipulating 'Irishness' than the Irish misdemeanant who stood accused. Employing all of the clever wit attributed to their nation, the Irish criminal appeared harmless to Torontonians who were sympathetic to Irish naivety and only too aware of their city's corruptive forces. Finally, it is through the 'fallen and friendless' Irish woman that the symbol of Erin is both challenged and reinforced. The perceived qualities of Irish women's superior morality blended seamlessly with a nineteenth century cult of sentimentality surrounding the image of the prostitute. The treatment of these women demonstrated the very similar approach to poverty, prostitution and social programs shared by the Catholic Church and Toronto's Protestants. As Archbishop Lynch fiercely argued and as many Torontonians agreed, it was the city, not the woman, who was the culprit. Thus, the checkered experiences of an Irish ghetto hardly sacrificed the moral reputation and claims to respectable citizenship made by the majority of Irish immigrants in mid-nineteenth century Toronto.

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[80] Please see series of letters dated 1864-1865, ARCAT, LAE06.02 and LAE07.02.

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, it has been argued that both in terms of image and experience, the Irish measured up to Canadian requirements of citizenship. Erin, splendid in her pastoral femininity, simplicity, and virtue was an image recognized and accepted by the Irish, Irish-Canadians and Canadians as distinctively Irish. Underlying the image of Erin was a wider nineteenth century discourse about the country and the city which influenced Irish experience in nineteenth century Toronto. In the process of examining the experience of nineteenth century Irish immigrant women, the themes of nation and citizenship emerged.

Historians agree that Erin is the most recognizable figure emerging from popular culture in nineteenth century Ireland. Cultural critics, historians of art and scholars of Victorian literature would go further and claim that Erin figured largely in the fine arts depicting Ireland in the nineteenth century and was a familiar emblem to the Irish.[81] The Irish recognized the importance of Erin and her attendant charms of ruralness, simplicity and virtue and they worked the image to their advantage.

The image of Erin reoccurs throughout the thesis as the Irish, Irish-Canadians and Canadians encountered each other on the streets of Cabbagetown, in the parlours of Rosedale and in the court rooms of the city. The Irish wives and mothers of Cabbagetown, alongside their husbands, children and elderly parents, worked to sustain,

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[81] Please see Angela Bourke, "Reading a Woman's Death: Colonial Text and Oral Tradition in Nineteenth-Century Ireland" in *Feminist Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Fall 1995): 553-586; Declan Kiberd, "From Nationalism to Liberation" in *Representing Ireland: Gender, Class, Nationality*. Susan Shaw Sailer (ed.) Gainesville, Florida: University of Florida Press, 1997; Catherine Nash, "Remapping and Renaming: New Cartographies of Identity, Gender and Landscape in Ireland" in *Feminist Review*, No. 44 (Summer 1993): 39-57.

in both symbolic and material terms, the respectable image of the Irish family. Since respectability for adult women was defined specifically within the bounds of marriage and motherhood, the Irish domestic servant of Chapter Four approached her employment as temporary. 'Biddy' reminds us that despite what Canadians expected from young female immigrants or immigrants' daughters, these young women had plans of their own - namely marriage. Finally, it is in the unlikely story of Toronto's Irish misdemeanants that the image of Erin proved strongest. In the minds of concerned Torontonians, the figure of the Irish prostitute represented the dangers of urbanization. In some ways, the vulnerable, naive Irish girl was the canary in Toronto's mine shaft of morality, as before the conclusion of the century, a moral panic would be upon Toronto.The concern for the young, unchaperoned Irish immigrant woman would soon be applied to Canadian girls who exchanged the moral security of the countryside for the excitement of work in the city.[82]

Today, in Canada, immigration and ethnic identity remain deeply significant themes for both scholars and the public imagination. In late-twentieth century Toronto, violent crime is linked to a Jamaican community, Roma refugees are deported for crowding out Canadian-born homeless people from city shelters, and Filipina women perambulating children not their own down the quiet, tree-lined streets of Rosedale are a familiar sight. Although the characters may have changed from the last century, the concerns of the present echo those of Victorian Toronto. Focusing on stories of discrimination, "racism" and misfortune in the Irish experience resonate in today's

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[82] Carolyn Strange, *Toronto's Girl Problem: The Perils and Pleasures of the City, 1880-1930.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995.

multicultural Canadian society, but these stories distort the complexity of the immigrant experience in favour of a simple, yet dangerous interpretation of Canada's past. Dangerous in that Canadian hostility to immigrants becomes a rite of initiation while the discrimination faced by immigrants becomes a rite of passage. Rather than challenge the wider discourse surrounding immigration...questions such as who belongs in Canada, who is deserving, who is a burden, or who is undesirable...it is accepted that these are questions posed uniformly to each successive wave of immigrants. By asking these questions of surviving sources, in essence measuring the Irish immigrant against Canadian ideals of citizenship, the experience of the Irish becomes a great deal more complex than simply the history of Toronto's first downtrodden. It is important to approach immigrant history in this way. In the words of one prominent historian of immigration "only if there is a sympathetic understanding of the complexities of the history of the early group will it be possible to construct sensible, accurate, and lasting histories of the groups which arrived later."[83]

[83] Donald Akenson, *The Irish in Ontario: A Study in Rural History*. Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1984: 7-8.

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Abbreviations
ARCAT Archives of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto
BR Baldwin Room, Metro Toronto Reference Library
CTA City of Toronto Archives
FRB Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto
PAO Public Archives of Ontario
UTA University of Toronto Archives

Primary Sources

Newspapers and Periodicals
Canadian Illustrated News 1861-1880
The Emerald 1873
Examiner 1847-1848
Globe 1847-1848, 1852-1853, 1864-1865
Irish Canadian 1863-1872

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Toronto City Police Duty Books, 1870-1872, CTA
Immigration and Agriculture Records, RG 11, PAO
Criminal Assizes, PAO
Toronto (York) Jail Register, Home District Jail, 1866/67,RG 20, PAO
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Figure 2.1
"The Fenian Guy Fawkes," *Punch*, December 28, 1867.
As found in L.P. Curtis, *Apes and Angels: the Irishman in Victorian Caricature.* Revised Edition. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1996: 39.

Figure 2.2
"A Hint to the Loyal Irish," *Punch*, January 4, 1868.
Curtis, *Apes and Angels*: 40.

Figure 2.3
"The Irish Frankenstein," ***Punch***, **November 4, 1843.**
Curtis, *Apes and Angels*: 32.

THE IRISH FRANKENSTEIN.

Figure 2.4
"The Fenian Pest," *Punch*, March 3, 1866.
Curtis, *Apes and Angels*: 25.

Figure 2.5
"The Mad Doctor," *Punch*, June 8, 1867.
Curtis, *Apes and Angels*: 38.

Figure 2.6
"Two Forces," *Punch*, October 29, 1881.
Curtis, *Apes and Angels:* 41.

Figure 4.1
"The Needlewomen at Home and Abroad," *Punch*, December 1, 1850.
As found in Constance Rover, *The Punch Book of Women's Rights*. New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1970: 19.

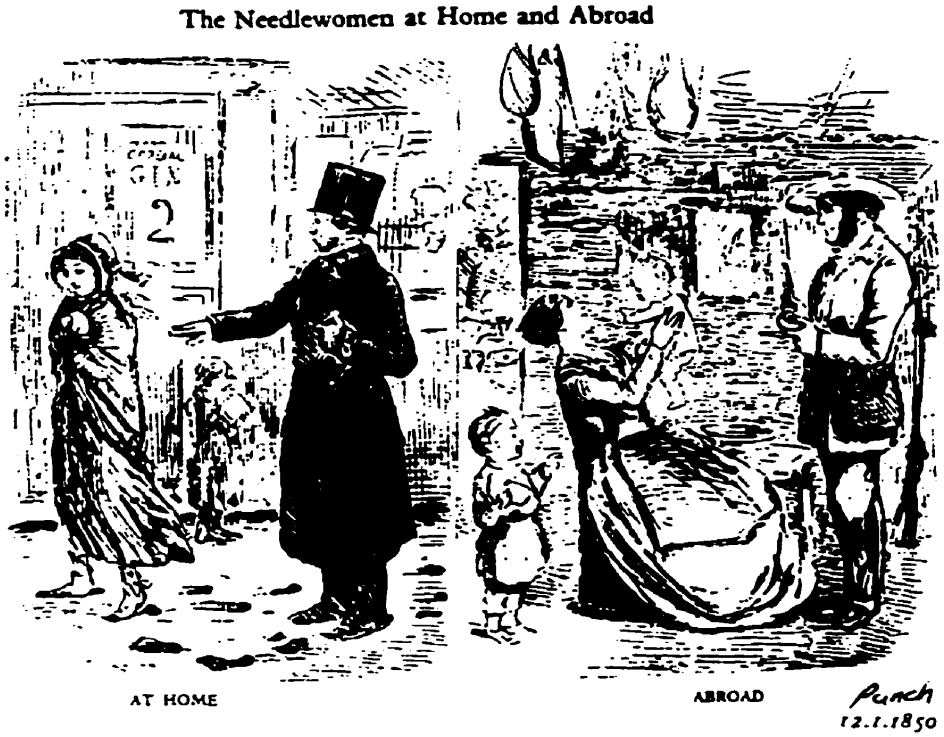


Figure 4.2
"Science at a Discount," *Canadian Illustrated News*, December 28, 1872.

SCIENCE AT A DISCOUNT

Figure 4.3
"The Patent Grid Iron," *Canadian Illustrated News*, January 4, 1873.

THE PATENT GRIDIRON.

Biddy.—"If ye plase, Ma'am, your new fanglings have dropped me mate in the fire." What'll I do?"

Mistress.—"Well, Biddy, Professor Cook tells us that only the carbonaceous portion undergoes combustion, so I suppose you can quickly rescue the fibrinous residue."

Biddy.—"Faith, Ma'am, an' if it's this rat trap of a toasting fork ye mane, I wish it gone toasted like the mate, shure I niver lost my stake thro' my fryin' pan that way."

Figure 4.4
"Biddy's Eccentricities," *Canadian Illustrated News*, May 14, 1870.

Master's boots and Missus's chocolate carried upstairs at once to save time.

Figure 4.5
"Off to the Sea-Side," *Canadian Illustrated News*, July 29, 1871.

MISTRESS — "But you know I engaged you to come next Monday, and my cook has left, and nursemaid goes to-morrow."
SERVANT — "Yes, mum, but I've changed me mind, and I think I'll go to the sea-side for a month or two."

Figure 4.6
"Biddy's Eccentricities," ***Canadian Illustrated News*, May 14, 1870.**

Figure 4.7

"One for Missus," *Canadian Illustrated News*, January 7, 1882.
As found in Claudette Lacelle, "Les Domestiques dans les villes candiennes au XIX[e] siècle: effectifs et conditions de vie" in *Histoire sociale/Social History*, Vol. XV, No. 29 (May 1982): 200.

ONE FOR MISSUS.

Mistress.—BRIDGET, I REALLY CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO RECEIVE YOUR SWEETHEART IN THE KITCHEN ANY LONGER.

Bridget.—THANK YOU KINDLY, MUM, BUT HE'S TOO BASHFUL FOR THE PARLOUR.

Source : Archives publiques du Canada, C-76969, *Canadian Illustrated News*, 7 janvier 1882, p. 14.

Table 5.1

Data Including Admissions and Releases by Method of Entry and Discharge of Women Confined to the Magdalen Asylum and Industrial Refuge, 1857-1876.

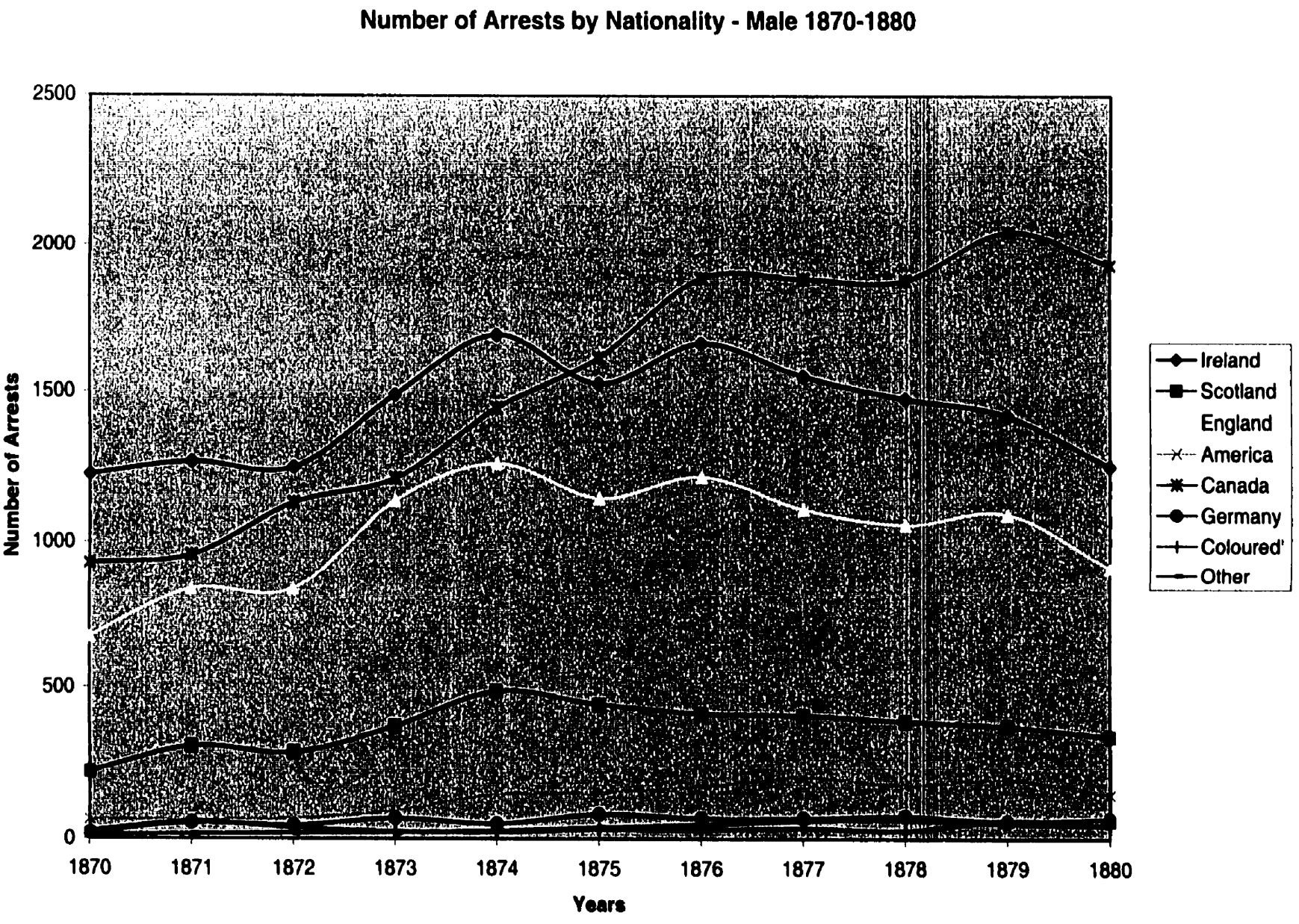
Year	Total	to domestic service	restored to friends	expelled	left/ escaped	hospital	remaining
1857	40	11	10	6	4	1 to lunatic asylum, 4 to public hospital	7
1858	33	12	7	4	2	1	7
1859	23	8	6	2 or 3		6	10
1860	57	12	13	0	4	8	20
1861	62	22	12	37	12	10 (+ 1 death)	26
1862	81	17	4	5	29	8	18
1863	87	18	7	4	24	8	22
1864	88	26	4	10	21	3 (+1 death)	23
1866*	114	34	8	5	34	3	30
1867	91	23	4	5	26	2	31
1868	71	14	5	3	20	2 to orphanage	26
1869	56	10	4	1	14	1 death	26
1871	76	15	3	0	0	1 death 1 to lunatic asylum	56
1872	82	20	0	3	20	1 death	38
1873	78	19	1	2	20	0	36
1874	69	12	2	3	20	2	33
1875	70	17	0	2	18	3 (+1 death)	74
1876	89	21	5	0	23	4 (+ 1 death)	35

* Annual Report Submitted in January of 1866. All other Annual Reports submitted in July of the appropriate year.

Statistics Collected from the Annual Reports of the Magdalen Asylum and Industrial Refuge, 1857-1876

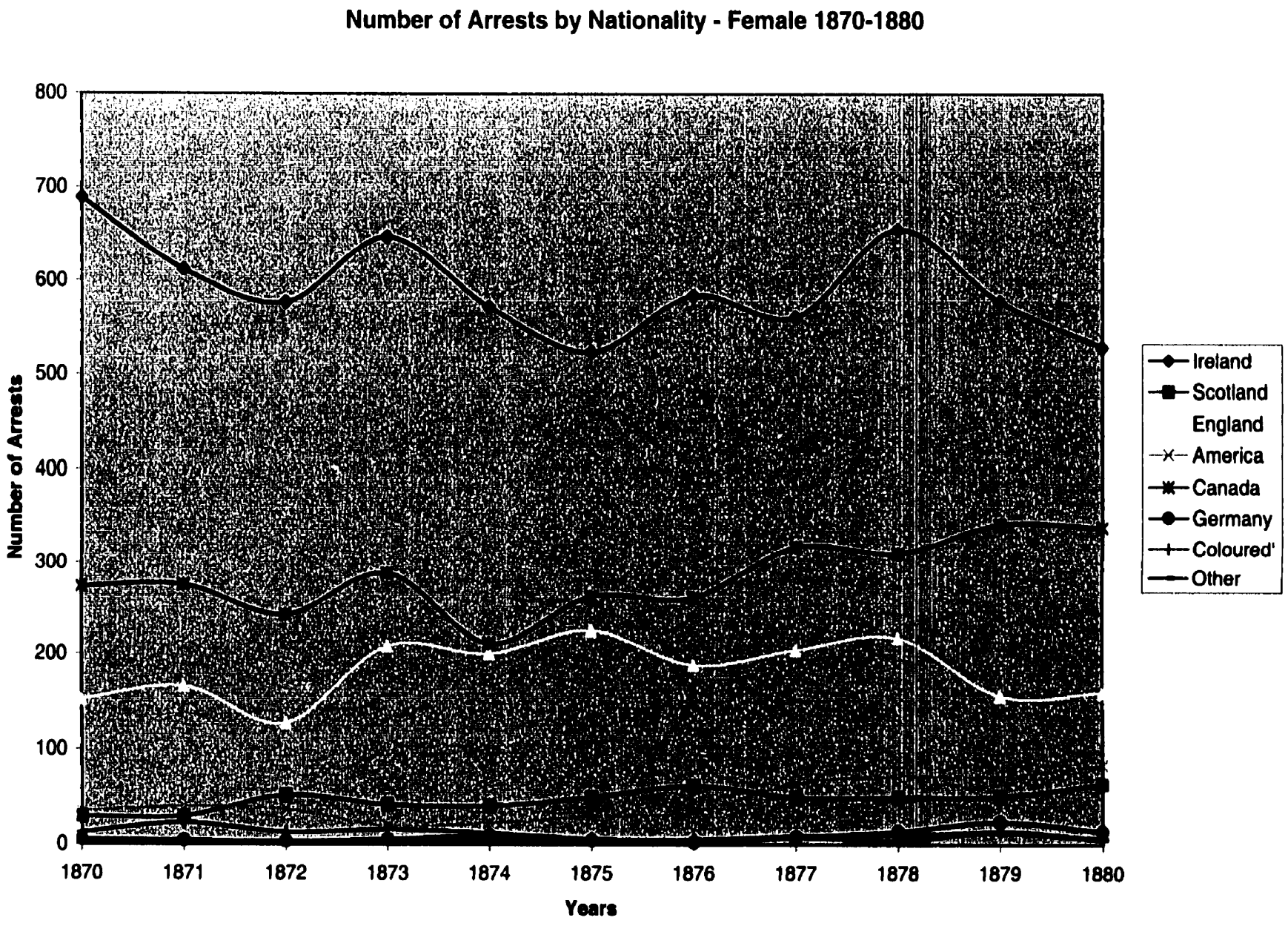
Compiled by Courtney Harris.

Chart 5.1



Source: CTA: Statistical Report of Crimes &c., Committed in the City of Toronto, Showing the Number of Offenders Apprehended or Summoned by the City Police, and how they were disposed of, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December.

Chart 5.2



Source: CTA: Statistical Report of Crimes &c., Committed in the City of Toronto, Showing the Number of Offenders Apprehended or Summoned by the City Police, and how they were disposed of, from the 1st of January to the 31st of December.