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“Out of Ireland”:  
Towards a History of the Irish in Pre-Confederation Canadian Literature

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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the works of five Irish-born writers who came to Canada between the mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries: Donnchadh Ruadh MacConmara, Isaac Weld Junior, Thomas Moore, Anna Brownell Jameson, and Adam Kidd. Collectively, these writers helped formulate, establish, and solidify impressions of the eventual Dominion. In turn, they played an invaluable role in encouraging immigration to Canada by providing would-be emigrants with valuable insight and information that would aid in their impending decision about where to seek a new home once they crossed the Atlantic: America or Canada. Essential to their respective experiences was the discovery that Canada could offer not only respite from the instability sweeping the British Isles but also that it was superior to the American Republic. To illustrate this point, the Dantean concepts of *inferno*, *purgatorio*, and *paradiso*, first suggested in Weld's work, are equated with America, Canada, and the Old World respectively. This paradigm is used both to conceptualize and assess the New World in relation to the Old, to compare Canada and America invidiously, as well as to encourage immigration to the former and divert it from the latter. In addition to providing a survey of the heretofore unrecognized contribution of five foundational Irish writers to the beginnings of Canadian literature, the thesis also exposes and challenges the early and present-day critical reception of their respective works in reviews and criticism that frequently propagate unfavourable stereotypes of the Irish. Its aim is partly to counter these falsely imposed myths and harmful stereotypes by drawing attention to the unsound practices of many biographers and critics.

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Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to the loving memory of my grandmother, Joyce Halliday (1914-2007), who, along with her three small children, made her own transatlantic journey from England to Canada in the late 1950s to begin a new life.

Out of Ireland have we come.  
Great hatred, little room,  
Maimed us at the start.  
I carry from my mother's womb  
A fanatic heart.

~ William Butler Yeats  
"Remorse for Intemperate Speech"

# **INTRODUCTION**

Context and Contribution:

Situating the Irish in Pre-Confederation Canada

“Whurrah! my boys!’ he cried, ‘Shure we’ll all be jontlemen!’”  
~ Susanna Moodie, *Roughing It in the Bush*

The persistent stereotype of the Irish in early Canada as a single homogeneous group of belligerent, uneducated, indolent, superstitious, dim-witted, and drunken immigrants, a figure which is partially a consequence of the writings of such canonical anglophile writers of the pre-Confederation period as Thomas Chandler Haliburton, Susanna Moodie, and Catharine Parr Traill, grotesquely falsifies the role of the Irish in Canadian literary history. Even as late as 1960, in his Governor-General’s award-winning novel *The Luck of Ginger Coffey*, Irish immigrant Brian Moore could still write in and against this stereotype. Early Canadian writers initiated this literary tradition that at times subtly and at other times overtly perpetuated the prejudicial assumptions and scathing stereotypes about the Irish that were generally held against them in the Old World. Indeed, that persistent prejudice (mainly British) accompanied the first wave of Irish immigration nearly three centuries ago, and distorted impressions of the sons and daughters of Erin were quickly and thoughtlessly transposed onto the Irish in Canada. Because they represented popular opinion, works such as *Recollections of Nova Scotia: The Clockmaker; or the Sayings and Doings of Samuel Slick, of Slickville* (1836), *The Backwoods of Canada: Being Letters from the Wife of an Emigrant Officer* (1836), and *Roughing It in the Bush, or, Life in Canada* (1852) found a wide readership in their day, securing their eventual status in the Canadian canon. As a result, it is to those derogatory images of the Irish that most students of Canadian literature are introduced. And this negative representation of the Irish continues to be conveyed to a large readership that may not be able to distinguish between what is historically accurate and what is biased by prejudice and ideology.

Best known among these odious and unflattering portrayals is the iconic image of an “extraordinary spectacle” (29) of “lively savages from the Emerald Isle” (32) in the opening chapter of Moodie’s *Roughing It in the Bush*, “A Visit to Grosse Isle.” This scene of a “motley crew” (29) of Irish immigrants laundering their clothes on the shoreline provides a fitting prelude to the prejudicial attitudes that developed later in the century and to the consequent historical distortion that persists. Arriving in the New World in 1832, the influential and celebrated author describes the Irish as “violent [...] incomprehensible [...] sun-burnt harpies,” “vicious, uneducated barbarians [...] perfectly destitute of shame, or even of a sense of common decency” (29), and so of course deeply inferior. However, the 1841 census indicates that the Irish who came to Canada between 1825 and 1845 were neither “the richest nor the poorest stratum of society” (Houston and Smyth, “Irish Immigrants to Canada” 31). In fact, among them were a “highly significant group of gentry, administrators, politicians, surveyors, barristers, doctors, clergymen, and other professionals” (*Irish Emigration* 338). Thus, Moodie’s attitude toward the ‘despicable’ Irish departs from historical truth, if not fact exactly. Additionally, before Moodie flees the “revolting” (29) spectacle, she mocks an Irishman’s initial reaction to the New World, stating that he “leap[t] upon the rocks, and flourish[ed] aloft his shilelagh [sic], bounded and capered like a wild goat from his native mountain” and exclaimed, “‘Whurrah! my boys!’ [...] ‘Shure we’ll all be jontlemen!’” (31). Moodie’s condescending illustrations not only dramatize her undisguised disapproval and “disgust” (29) of debased Irish customs, but they also underscore her all-too-typical deep-seated bigotry.

The tendency to make light of the plight of the Irish in her seminal work is itself a tragedy. What Moodie’s rendition of these events fails to disclose is that many of the



long-suffering Irish who landed on Canada's eastern shores were forced into circumstances that displayed them in an unflattering light. Most had been turned away from the United States, required to remain on crowded "coffin ships" to endure inhuman suffering, or kept in quarantine despite being healthy. Indeed, the Irish who embarked on the transatlantic voyage to the New World in the 1830s were forced to confront a more merciless and devastating fate than that from which they had fled. As a result, they became undeserved victims of misfortune. The ships that carried hundreds of Irish passengers as human ballast were overcrowded and infested with vermin and disease; they leaked, they provided only crude living quarters, and their rations of food and water often ran out. More accommodating and humane ships existed; however, they were reserved for comparatively wealthy immigrants of mainly English stock such as Moodie. Many Irish died as a result of barbaric and nonsensical quarantine conditions on boats where the healthy were required to remain in close proximity to the sick, a situation that exacerbated the spreading of disease. Grosse Isle, established as a quarantine station in 1832, became the epicenter of disaster and was soon labeled the "Isle of Death" and "Cholera Bay." It was not uncommon for those Irish migrants who survived the treacherous transatlantic journey to die within months of their arrival in Canada. So, while Moodie complains about dislocation, hunger, and boredom as she waits for her ship to dock, hundreds of Irish bodies, emaciated and worn, were being thrown into mass, shallow graves.

To avoid embarrassment (O Laighin 87) and to conceal the extent of the catastrophe (89), the Canadian and British governments misled the public regarding the enormity of what is often called the "hidden holocaust" (O'Driscoll and Reynolds, Introduction xx), thereby perpetuating Moodie's bias and her failure to address the prejudicial causes of the

suffering Irish immigrants. This cover-up generated historical amnesia regarding the gravity of the event. Padraic O Laighin notes that “[b]ooks devoted to official versions of the history of Canada [...] pay scant regard to the profound events [...] either ignoring the issue entirely, or [...] dismissing the whole matter in two or three lines with vague references to ‘hundreds’ of Irish dying in ‘emigrant sheds’ upon arrival in Canada” (81). While scholarship on the general history of Canada glosses over the devastating occurrence, deeming it minor in importance and less than a defining moment, Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth observe that studies that make the Irish in Canada their specific focus fixate on the tragic scene that befell this group at Grosse Isle in the 1830s and 1840s and, equally distorting, use it to characterize the entire Irish-Canadian experience (*Irish Emigration* 338). Consequently, when the Irish were not being ignored in historical studies, the image of destitute, unruly, and diseased Irish men and women was popularized and disseminated. Yet, as quoted earlier from Houston and Smyth, the reality is that Irish emigrants to Canada represented all strata of society. But whether historians minimize the plight of the Irish in Canada by making scant reference to it or dedicate a disproportionate amount of space to the tragic events at Grosse Isle, such historians, much like Moodie, have erred in treating Irish-Canadians as a homogeneous group whose experiences and behaviours were alike.

A further misconception that has been propagated by several historians is that the Irish immigrated to Canada only during and after the Great Famine, which began in the 1840s. According to several historiographers, these Irish men and women “adapted poorly to Canadian life; one reads of hard-living, hard-fighting and hard-drinking Irishmen [...] lacking the foresight and self-discipline to succeed” (Wilson, *The Irish in Canada* 12). However, in *The Irish in Canada*, David A. Wilson compares statistical

evidence of the Irish with the general Canadian population, including “place of residence, patterns of occupation and occupational success” (12), and reveals that the “stereotypical image of the ‘wild Irish’ is, in fact, a severe distortion of reality” (12). Nevertheless, this hackneyed representation is repeatedly imposed. The question then is why? And the answer is twofold. Firstly, until recently (historically speaking), “a pronounced anti-Irish bias” dominated scholarship conducted on Irish immigration to Canada (Conway 85). Secondly, Canadian historians erred in assuming that because “[t]he consequences of the Famine were significant in the American case, [...] the same held true for Canada” (Houston and Smyth, “Irish Immigrants to Canada” 30) and thus they mistakenly transferred American stereotypes of the Famine Irish as impoverished, lazy, violent, contaminated, and unlawful to their accounts of the Irish in Canada.

Because detrimental generalizations about the Irish were fostered on both sides of the Atlantic, the extreme oppression and racism they endured in their homeland followed them to Canada (Conway 22). According to Bruce S. Elliott, “[t]he biased and erroneous perceptions that prevail at home and abroad are not unrelated. To a major degree it is the folksy image North Americans have of Irish society which lies behind their tendency to view the Irish emigrant as ill-equipped for pioneer life – as a failure, a belligerent rebel, and a fundamentally emotional and irrational soul” (*Irish Migrants* 5). Consequently, reaction to the Irish in Canada was often hostile and they were frequently viewed with contempt. Prejudice prevailed, as non-Irish individuals who had “more money, privilege and education [would] look down on [the Irish], exclude [them], deride [them], and use [their] labour because they considered [them] less than, inferior to and even subordinate to them because [they] came from the bog or the mountain or even the countryside” (Conway 24). In fact, as a means “to promote anger and resentment against the Irish” (D.

Power 48), several newspapers, including the *Canadian Illustrated News*, began to publish cartoons and comics that depicted them “as members of a sub-human species, similar to apes, baboons, orangoutangs [sic] and gorillas” (37). Caricatures invariably found the Irishman in situations that revealed his reputedly “wild, mad, stupid, [and] uncivilized” (37) nature and emphasized that he was “not to be trusted” (40).

Significantly, much nineteenth-century canonical Canadian literature mimicked the objectives of these newspapers and their cartoons: they deliberately created and disseminated propaganda that promoted anger toward the Irish by emphasizing their “threat to the social order” (53). The result was inevitable: fictional and illustrative print publications “helped to grind racism ‘into the psyche of Canada’” (55).

Prior to the 1970s, there existed only a modicum of articles and studies that dealt with the Irish experience in Canada, the majority of which focused on scandalous incidents of tragedy, misery, and failure such as the Famine migration, “the Fenian ‘troubles,’”<sup>1</sup> and the 1880 massacre of the Irish Catholic Donnelly family in rural Ontario (W. Baker 60).<sup>2</sup> The 1970s, however, marked the beginning of a renewed interest in historical depictions of the Irish in Canada. In fact, “[o]f some three hundred entries in a preliminary biography on the history of the Irish in Canada, over 40% had a copyright date of 1970 or later” (63). Conferences held in the 1980s by such organizations as the

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<sup>1</sup> An Irish nationalist organization founded in 1858, the Fenians were dedicated to the establishment of an independent Irish Republic. In 1866, the American branch of the Fenians attempted to invade Canada with the ultimate goal of holding the British colony hostage in order to blackmail England into granting Ireland its independence. Although the incursion failed, it was considered a serious threat to the emerging socio-political culture and traditions Canadians had collectively come to value and deem essential to protect. According to Peter Berresford Ellis, and J.L. Finlay and D.N. Sprague, the invasion inspired Canadian nationalism and Confederation (537; 167).

<sup>2</sup> The Donnelly family was at the centre of a saga that plagued Biddulph Township for nearly forty years in the mid-to-late nineteenth century. Arriving in Canada in 1844, the Donnellys quickly developed a poor reputation and were a constant source of angst amongst their neighbours who grew to hate them and who blamed them for most crimes that were committed in the township. In the early morning of February 4, 1880, five members of the family were beaten and burned to death by a vigilante group. This haunting event is the focus of James Reaney’s *The Donnellys: A Trilogy* (1975).

*British Association for Canadian Studies* and the *Association of Canadian Studies in Ireland* made the role of the Irish in Canada their primary theme. In this same decade, a plethora of book-length studies, articles, and dissertations emerged that concentrated on Irish immigration to specific locations in Atlantic Canada, Ontario, and Quebec. General fabrications of the Irish as poor, lazy, and lawless were challenged by numerous contemporary historians such as Donald H. Akenson, Sheelagh Conway, Kildare Dobbs, Elliot, Houston, Smyth, and Wilson. Collectively, their research helped counter and demystify generic and false constructs about this disenfranchised group. For example, Akenson confirms that many Irish in Canada “were able to stand the loneliness and isolation of pioneering life” (“Data: What is Known” 17) and that those who resided in urban places were able to achieve “upward occupational mobility” (*The Irish in Ontario* 45). Additionally, the inclination to associate the Irish with drunken and disorderly conduct is contested by Wilson, who maintains that there is a substantial discrepancy between the image of the Irish holding a monopoly on violence in Canada and the reality. According to Wilson, most instances of violence occurred in urban centres; however, the majority of Irish-Canadians lived in rural areas (“Law, Order”). Furthermore, the Irish in Canada were known for their “innate conservatism [...] that helped to set the pattern of [our] Canadian national character: love of order and hierarchy; instinctive scepticism about social change and revolution” (Dobbs, “Ireland and the Irish Canadians” 5). This depiction of the moderate and abiding Irishman hardly “accords with the time-honoured stereotype of Paddy the Irishman laying about with his shillelagh of Irish violence and partisan malice” (5).

More important for the present study was the discovery that a rapidly increasing number of Irish left their politically and spiritually divided homeland for Canada as early

as the mid-to-late eighteenth-century. Indeed, large-scale immigration to Canada reached its peak in the first half of the nineteenth century, not, as is commonly assumed, during the Great Famine. Since their arrival, the Irish played a pivotal social, economic, and political role in the development of the Canadian cultural fabric. To take but one example, the two major political parties in the country were founded by Irishman Francis Hincks: liberals and conservatives (O'Driscoll and Reynolds, Introduction xvii).

Collectively, the Irish were in large part responsible for formulating, establishing and, such as it emerged, solidifying impressions of the newly forming Dominion. In turn, they played an invaluable role in encouraging immigration to the infant colony. Paramount if mostly unobserved is that Irish sojourners and settlers of the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century occupied a central place in Canada's burgeoning literary history.

Although the ubiquity of the Irish in Canada has inspired several Canadian historians to document Irish immigration, settlement, and adaptation, early Irish accounts of the New World, as well as Irish contributions to the development of Canadian literature, continue to be marginalized or mostly overlooked in literary criticism. With the advent of the twentieth century came the erasure of numerous Irish literary figures from the record of early nineteenth-century Canadian writing. Celebrated figures such as Isabella Valancy Crawford and Thomas D'Arcy McGee continue to garner considerable scholarly attention, and interest in once peripheral writers such as Kathleen (Kit) Coleman, James McCarroll (a.k.a. Terry Finnegan), and Standish O'Grady is now more prevalent. But there is still much work to be done, not only on these Irish-born figures but also on lesser known yet equally important pre-Confederation writers such as Donnchadh Ruadh MacConmara, Isaac Weld Junior, Thomas Moore, Anna Brownell Jameson, and Adam Kidd: thus the present thesis.

\*

As instability swept the British Isles in the mid-to-late eighteenth century, there emerged among the Irish incentive to find an alternate home that could offer improved opportunities, prosperity, and politico-religious freedom. Following the French Revolution (1789-1799), Europe looked westward, and before long an increasing number of visitors arrived on the shores of North America to assess its economic, social, and political conditions. While the territory that would become the United States of America had intrigued sojourners for centuries and inspired such literary musings as Thomas More's *Utopia* (1516), to its north a promising alternative began to attract attention as Europe prepared to usher in a new century of uncertainty. As a result, several travellers' itineraries included tours not only through the American Colonies but through the eventual Dominion as well. By the late 1700s and early 1800s, travel writing became a popular and distinct literary genre to which numerous Irish sojourners in Canada contributed. Essential to their respective experiences was the discovery that Canada could offer not only respite from the insurgences accosting the Old World but also an ideal haven far superior to that found in the American Republic.

Based on first-hand experiences in the New World, MacConmara's *The Adventures of a Luckless Fellow and Other Poems* (circa 1740s), Weld's *Travels Through the United States of North America, and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, During the Years 1795, 1796, and 1797* (London 1799), Moore's *Epistles, Odes, and Other Poems* (London 1806), and Jameson's *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* (1838) helped shape curious would-be emigrants' perceptions of the foreign and distant territory. These works also provided people in the Old World with valuable insight and information that would aid in their impending decision about where to seek refuge once

they crossed the Atlantic: America or Canada. Collectively, works composed by the latter three writers helped direct immigration to a colony whose growth and progress relied upon an expanding population of industrious labourers. Equally important, works by these writers had a lasting effect on later depictions of pre-Confederation Canada. It is surprising then that Irish travel writing of this period solicits so little scholarly attention, that its importance in Canada's literary history is questioned, and that it is frequently denigrated in literary value. In much the same way, the impressions of Canada formed by traveller-turned-settler Kidd are underrepresented in contemporary criticism. Whether it be travel or settler narratives, those writers of the period who are deemed pivotal and who receive critical attention are almost always of British, French, or Scottish extraction (for example, explorers Samuel Hearne and Alexander Mackenzie, and pioneers Susanna Moodie and Alexander McLachlan). The Irish voice is predominantly silenced, leaving unexplored significant areas of inquiry within these categories of literature.

The present project begins, then, to fill this gap by examining the contributions to Canada's literary culture of the most significant mid-to-late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Irish travellers and settlers. Using the peak of Irish immigration in the 1830s as its terminal point, the thesis casts a backwards glance at accounts of early colonial Canada by Irish-born writers who were in large part responsible for constructing the preliminary image of Canada that worked either to persuade or to discourage immigration to the British colony. The revealing ways in which the Irish conceived and portrayed the emerging nation are explored through a methodology that combines historical research and literary-critical analysis. Relevant historical context, biographical details, early reviews, letters, and contemporary criticism are considered alongside discussion of the authors' respective works. The goal here is to provide the necessary



foundation for a consideration of how the inter-relation of socio-cultural evolution and literary development engendered a distinct discourse between Canada and Ireland, and amongst the Irish in Canada. Prior to engaging in a close reading of each primary text, the thesis outlines the historical, political, and religious contexts within which the works were written, drawing on editorials and reviews to establish 'the official view' of the Irish that was dominant in the nineteenth century.

Before embarking on a more specific outline of this study, I want to address the usage of terms that recur throughout it. When referring to the British Colonies in North America between the time that the independence of the United States was acknowledged (1783) and Confederation was achieved among the Provinces (1867), the term 'British North America' is historically accurate. However, for stylistic reasons and convenience, I will mostly use the terms 'Dominion,' 'Canada,' and 'Canadian' when referring to pre-Confederation Canada. It is also necessary that a distinction be noted in how I label travel writers and settlers with respect to nationality. In the case of MacConmara, Weld, Moore, and Jameson, the term 'Irish' is used because these writers were born on the island, they identified themselves as Irish, and the objective of their sojourns was to spend only a brief period of time in Canada with the eventual goal of returning to the British Isles. Pre-Confederation writer Adam Kidd is identified throughout as 'Irish-Canadian' because, as a traveller-turned-settler, Kidd was aligned with both his native land and his adopted home. As a result, his work expresses a division, as he could identify himself as neither entirely Irish nor Canadian. Kidd experienced a 'hyphenated existence' in the New World. But because his prose and verse suggest a stronger association with the Old World than with the New, 'Irish' is placed before 'Canadian' in the hyphenation. Contrastingly, Irish-born writers who made Canada their permanent residence or who

published works following Confederation (Coleman, Crawford, Nicholas Flood Davin, McCarroll, and McGee) appear to resolve the tensions indicated here by hyphenation. The Canadian element of their identity eventually subsumes their Irishness, and for this reason, in the Conclusion of the thesis they are labelled ‘Canadian Irish.’<sup>3</sup>

The present project is constructed in two parts and its purpose is twofold. Focusing on key works by the five Irish-born writers who have been ignored, forgotten, or devalued in literary criticism, I show how MacConmara, Weld, Moore, Jameson, and Kidd contributed a strong strand to Canadian literature as it was developing and as it matured, and how they did so against prejudice and stereotyping. More specifically, the discussion centres on a comparative analysis of these writers’ impressions of the New World, while my analysis simultaneously exposes and challenges the early and present-day critical reception of their respective works in reviews and criticism that frequently propagate unfavourable stereotypes of the Irish. Spanning nearly one hundred years (1740s-1830s), Part One centres on a chronological discussion of two poets (MacConmara and Moore) and two prose writers (Weld and Jameson) who travelled to North America and made their impressions of Canada the central subject of works that were written and eventually published for a readership back in the British Isles. Discussion here is further divided into three sections: the first focuses on MacConmara, the second on Weld and Moore, and the third on Jameson. This investigation is then followed by a significantly more detailed discussion of Kidd, who in Part Two offers an intriguing ‘case study’ of the Irish-Canadian experience. Although Kidd arrived in Canada prior to Jameson and published his major work *The Huron Chief and Other*

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<sup>3</sup> This development mirrors the Canadian census of 1961, which for the last time “differentiated among Irish, English, Scots and Welsh” (MacKay 15). In other words, the de-racialization of the Irish in the Canadian census is echoed in the literature itself.

*Poems* (1830) eight years before the appearance of her travelogue, he is examined separately and lastly for two reasons. Firstly, while his Irish predecessors in Canada mused about the type of life the colony could offer potential emigrants, their stay in the New World was temporary and they did not have the time to test their ideas. Kidd, however, spent nearly half his life in Canada and was able to provide first-hand knowledge of the challenges and triumphs that come with immigration. Secondly, placing Kidd at the end of the thesis allowed for the pairing of travel writers who were in part responsible for encouraging Irishmen such as Kidd to cross the Atlantic and begin anew in Canada.

When determining which writers were most appropriate for this study, I based my selection on a number of factors. It was important that they were native to Ireland and that their formative years were spent in the Old World. It was also critical that the works examined represented the earliest recordings of Irish perceptions of Canada and that they were published before the Great Famine. But because few Irish-born travel writers and settlers wrote about their experiences in Canada prior to the mid-nineteenth century, there were actually few writers from which to choose, making the decisions obvious. In addition, it was important that the texts responded to similar historical and politico-religious factors on both sides of the Atlantic. For example, with the exception of MacConmara, the writers studied were profoundly affected by the Irish Rebellions (1798 and 1803) and the Act of Union (1801), and they were all affiliated with or influenced by the tenants of the United Irishmen (these events are discussed early in Part One). Having established which writers met these criteria, I then decided that only those works dealing directly with the Irish experience in and impressions of the New World would be selected

for this admittedly limited literary history (as the “Towards” of its subtitle is intended to signal).

A preliminary exploration revealed that each writer’s work aimed to govern the impressions and attitudes of people in the Old World regarding the New and provided commentary and advice regarding Irish immigration to Canada. Reaching as far back as the 1740s, Part One begins with an assessment of a series of miscellaneous verse, as well as *The Adventures of a Luckless Fellow*, composed by the now virtually unknown MacConmara. A seasonal fisherman in Newfoundland, MacConmara is included for a number of reasons: he was the first Irish-born poet to write about his experience in the infant colony; his poems reveal a prototypical ambivalence toward the New and an underlying allegiance to the Old; they attempt to dissuade immigration by emphasizing the dubious challenges faced by temporary residents of the future Dominion (1949 for Newfoundland); and they provide a telling contrast to later works by Irish writers whose portrayals of Canada are resoundingly positive. This last point proved useful in demonstrating that Irish attitudes regarding the merits of the New World evolved dramatically as Canada developed and as it became increasingly necessary for the Irish to seek an alternative home.

The positioning of MacConmara is followed by a comparative study of works by Isaac Weld and Thomas Moore, which are analyzed in tandem. Unlike MacConmara, Weld and Moore travelled to both America and Canada and did so less than a decade apart. Responding to an alarming emergency in Ireland at the turn of the nineteenth century, which led to the two failed rebellions (1798 and 1803), these Irishmen departed for the young Republic in order to evaluate what they presumed would be a favourable colony where an abundance of opportunities for potential immigrants could be had.

However, in the event, the time they spent in the lesser known Canadian territory led them to a surprising conclusion: it was the superior destination. Yet, although Weld and Moore acknowledged that Canada fostered religious tolerance, freedom, moderation, and economic prosperity, their positions on immigration to the British colony were opposed. Recognizing the ideal refuge it could offer the struggling Irish, Moore aspired to lure men and women of the Emerald Isle to Canada, whereas Weld, like MacConmara, was convinced that the Irish were better off if they remained in their homeland. By pairing these writers, it becomes apparent that their diverging opinions regarding the debate on immigration arose in part from their opposing religious affiliations: Weld was Protestant and Moore was Catholic.

Significantly, Moore's verse anticipates the supportive propaganda for immigration that is advanced in Jameson's *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, a travel narrative that highlights the author's remarkable affinity for Ireland and its people. Although Jameson is conventionally classified as British by most scholars, she is included in the present project because she was born in Dublin (where she lived until she was four), her father was closely associated with the nationalistic United Irishmen, she remained preoccupied with Irish politics prior to and following the time she spent in Canada, and she repeatedly refers to the Irish experience in Canada. Influenced by Weld's *Travels* and Moore's *Epistles*, Jameson likewise favours Canada over America, depicting its physical and social geography positively. As a means by which to encourage immigration, Jameson introduces readers to a series of complimentary images of the Irish in Canada. The relevance of these recurring encounters, however, has been overlooked by scholars. In its treatment of her travel narrative, the present study investigates the motivations underlying Jameson's repeated inclusion of real-life examples of

successfully transplanted Irish men and women in Canada, as well as speculates about the intended effect these were to have on readers. Because the goal of the writers included in Part One was to influence their compatriots' perceptions of the colony, it was important that they had established literary reputations in the British Isles, as such popularity was integral to facilitating the successful dissemination and propagation of their somewhat didactic writings. Indeed, Adam Kidd's possible familiarity with *Travels* and his obvious admiration of *Epistles* would have shaped his view of the Dominion and helped prompt his own relocation.

As conditions in Ireland became increasingly dire in the early nineteenth century and travel narratives were casting Canada as a suitable alternative, Kidd determined to leave his native soil and visit both America and the British colony in order to assess their merits and disadvantages. Putting the views of travel writers to the test, Kidd lived in Lower Canada for more than a decade and attempted to integrate into a new and foreign society. An exemplum of the Irish immigrant experience in Canada, *The Huron Chief and Other Poems* addresses the trials and triumphs immigrants faced and, more specifically, it speaks to Kidd's own struggle for acceptance. Despite the difficulties he encountered, Kidd's verse didactically promotes a message that echoes the texts it followed, underscoring the reality of a developing continuum: unlike America, Canada offered potential Irish immigrants an opportunity to achieve political, social, economic, and religious liberty, as well as equality and material betterment. While it encourages immigration to Canada, Kidd's poetry also insists that Canadians be wary of the ever-threatening Americans who seek annexation; and his warning gains in significance as it anticipates fellow Irishman Thomas D'Arcy McGee's instrumental support of Confederation for similar reasons. In fact, exposure to the colony impacted all five

writers' political, social, and spiritual attitudes. Not only is their work coloured by their Irishness, but the time spent in Canada played a critical role in formulating, renewing, or solidifying their pride in Ireland. Yet, the relevance of their Irish heritage and this nationalistic reciprocity has gone unacknowledged, and their unique impressions of the newly emerging colony, as well as the continuum of the tradition they comprise, are mostly ignored in literary-historical studies.

Although the thesis draws on, responds to, and challenges findings of several historians and literary critics who have contributed to the development of my understanding of the texts and authors discussed, it has been influenced most by the work of D.M.R. Bentley. As the leading scholar in nineteenth-century Canadian literature, Bentley's research has been fundamental in guiding most subsequent explorations of Weld, Moore, and Kidd. However, in most of that work, his presumptions are not queried and his conclusions are echoed, and this must be recognized as problematic for research in this area. That said, central to the coherence of the present project is an observation Bentley made in his analysis of Moore's "To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon from the Banks of the St. Lawrence." Bentley points to a footnote that references Dante's *Divina Commedia* and notes that "Moore envisaged his trip to America in Dantean terms, with the United States as an *inferno*, Canada as a *purgatorio*, and Britain as a *paradiso*" ("Near the Rapids" 357). But Bentley does not pursue the point, nor does he take into account evidence that complicates his hypothesis, both of which this thesis does. More importantly, my analysis of works by the remaining Irish-born writers found that this Dantean paradigm is recurrent and that it was used both to conceptualize and to assess the New World in relation to the Old, to compare Canada and America invidiously, as well as to encourage immigration to the former and divert it from the latter.

But the primary texts under study were not chosen *because* they fit a Dantean paradigm: the schema emerged in my reading of the material. In other words, the admittedly archetypal paradigm is used here broadly and descriptively and is not forced where it does not fit exactly. Nonetheless, it does work productively in drawing these writers together. Furthermore, I recognize that such a rubric could be found in numerous bodies of work and am not arguing that it is unique to the writers brought together here. But because the schema proved persistent, I determined that it was a useful way to understand these writers without imposing coherence on a diverse body of work. Where appropriate, the thesis investigates each author's use of the Dantean paradigm, expanding and complicating Bentley's model, as well as noting where revealing modifications occur.

MacConmara, however, does not 'work' the Dantean schema, though the archetypal journey motif he uses in *The Adventures of A Luckless Fellow* may well have provided Weld and Moore with a template to structure their own accounts of the New World. Regardless, a telling continuity regarding the Dantean paradigm can clearly be traced among the remaining four writers. In each case, the concepts of *inferno*, *purgatorio*, and *paradiso* are equated with America, Canada, and the Old World respectively. At some point during their travels, these writers or their speakers descend into an inferno (America), which is described as a dystopic wasteland of unruly society and uncivilized citizens. This bleak and unflattering portrayal of the American Republic is used intentionally to dissuade Irish immigration to the newly independent country. Once these travellers ascend out of the American undergloom, their journeys lead them to Canada, which they describe as an earthly paradise that recalls the Garden of Eden at the summit of the Mountain of Purgatory. Furthermore, in order to emphasize Canada's superiority,



each writer strategically describes it as something of a second-chance land where a life of equality, liberty, moderation, and tolerance can be achieved by both destitute and industrious Irish men and women. Just as Dante found temporary respite in the Garden of Eden while he awaited ascension to paradise, so too do these Irish travellers and settlers retreat to Canada's pseudo paradisiacal sanctuary as they await the restoration of Ireland's paradise to which they long to return. However, while Weld, Moore, and Jameson eventually return to the Old World, Kidd's journey, like Dante's, ends with but the anticipation of moving on to paradise. Significantly, commentary regarding Irish immigration to Canada is somewhat inconsistent amongst these writers. For example, while Weld insists that the Old World remains superior to the alternative found in Canada and discourages immigration, Moore, Jameson, and Kidd recognize that paradise can never be regained and therefore conclude that immigration to Canada would be advantageous for their Irish compatriots.

Before embarking on fairly extensive analysis of each primary work, the thesis summarizes early reception of these texts and challenges the ways in which the five writers are treated in early reviews and more recent scholarship. As I began to research what was intended as a straightforward critical history of the Irish in early Canada, a surprising discovery emerged: Irish recordings of early Canada are often undermined by critics both in their own time and ours because such critics are mainly interested in creating or embellishing, out of a series of assumptions and few facts, a controversial image of the Irish that draws on national stereotypes and ideational clichés. This practice, in turn, interferes with scholars providing a more objective and reliable analysis of this body of work. In many cases, contemporary reviews were biased by racism and served mainly to perpetuate an unflattering Irish stereotype. This point, however, has been either

overlooked or unacknowledged by modern critics. Consequently, twentieth-century scholars who have relied on early materials to formulate their own ideas of the texts and writers have often (unintentionally) transposed nineteenth-century cultural bias against the Irish into the present.

In some cases, this repeated error can be understood as an instance of “misprisioning.” A term popularized by literary theorists such as Harold Bloom and Stanley Fish, “misprision” denotes the intentional misreading of texts to satisfy ideological bias. In other words, critics mistakenly misunderstand, misinterpret, or distort in order to clear critical-imaginative space for their own beliefs. The substitution of their meaning for what can painstakingly be determined of the author’s is often so dominant that the original cultural work of the piece is forgotten. In the case of the five writers under study, over time critics have collectively replaced historical reality – which in what follows is best approximated according to the research of numerous modern historians of the Irish in early Canada – with prejudicial myth. The present project counters falsely imposed myths and harmful stereotypes partly by drawing attention to the unsound practices of many biographers and critics. Although varying degrees of prejudice are evident in the criticism on each author, such bias was most prevalent in the scholarship on Adam Kidd. Because I encountered persistent and consistent stereotyping in my investigation of all five writers, this issue seemed destined to become my focus in Part Two – but not because I went looking for such. As a result, Kidd is treated in greater length and becomes the project’s most instructive example. That project, this thesis, developed along two main lines then: secondarily as a study of what is best understood as critical misprisioning, but primarily as a survey of the heretofore unrecognized contribution of five foundational Irish writers to the beginnings of Canadian literature.

## **PART ONE**

“Out of Ireland have we come”: Mid-Eighteenth- to Early Nineteenth-Century  
Irish Travel Writers in Canada – A Visitor’s Perspective

Like all national histories, that of Canada has its share of myths and legends, distortions over time of historical fact, usually by romanticism and sentimentality. [...] But, while historians can and should devote a good deal of attention to the factors which underlie the perpetuation of national myths and symbols, this should not blind them to the fact that legend remains a distortion of historical reality.

~ C. Bruce Fergusson  
“The Expulsion of the Acadians”

Popular in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, English-Canadian travel writing was relegated to the shelves of archival storage by the late nineteenth century. By the twentieth century, it had been deemed incidental and of no significant literary merit by such noted scholars as Northrop Frye. In *Mnemographia Canadensis: Essays on Memory, Community, and Environment in Canada* (1999), D.M.R. Bentley points to Canadians' propensity toward "social amnesia" and their "refusal or inability to think back" (Russell Jacoby qtd. in Bentley xix) when evaluating their country's foundational literature. For Bentley, Frye's assessment of the value of early Canadian travel writing is pompous. It does a disservice to contemporary readers by encouraging them to ignore an integral portion of Canada's past simply because Frye considered travel writing to be "comical" and "artless" (14). Frye, however, is not alone in this sentiment. It is repeated in numerous critical appraisals of Canadian literature and history, including Carl F. Klinck's influential *Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English* (1976). In Alfred G. Bailey's "Overture to Nationhood" and David Galloway's "The Voyageurs," two essays featured in Klinck's survey, the importance of travel writing in Canada's literary history is denigrated. Bailey claims that the written accounts of those who sojourned in the American Colonies and then Canada did not possess "sufficient merit to warrant consideration as literature" (69). Galloway furthers this provocative proclamation by claiming that not only do these compositions fall short of "literary skill" (8) but (quoting William Beckler White) they also fail "to achieve any special effect" because they arose simply from "the unstudied and natural outpourings of men's expressions of what they saw and did" (Galloway 8).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> William Beckler White, "The Narrative Technique of Elizabethan Voyage and Travel Literature from 1550 to 1603" (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Lehigh University, 1955).

These scholars oversimplify in their selective studies of early Canadian travel writing and err in assuming that it consists of little more than straightforward reports, transcripts, or accounts that are based entirely on fact and are written without forethought. Many travel sketches may be crude in structure and thought and in some the motivation in writing them seems to amount to little more than a desire to “produce an account of the unusual things that they had witnessed” (Mesick 16). As a result, some travel narratives may not be intriguing to readers today. Another reason for this may be how the first-person narration, a common feature of travel literature, is used. Because the first-person narrative voice in these texts tends toward the factual, it generates a literature of information as opposed to imagination. The style is also less engaging for some readers because authors of travel literature are inclined to employ metaphors and symbols sparingly, preferring to convey events using simple, accessible language that lacks embroidery but that, in turn, adds credibility and authenticity.

In “Travelers’ tales: showing and telling, slamming and questing,” Marni L. Stanley attributes the appropriate label of ‘guide book’ to these travel accounts that place an emphasis on practical aspects, privilege society over nature, and focus on statistical social and economic data “relating to the newly acquired territory and its inhabitants” (Bailey 78). However, this term carries the negative connotation of something that lacks insight or complexity, and Stanley applies it to those works that do not attempt “to develop [the] persona for the narrated ‘I’” (53). Moreover, critics such as Bailey, Frye, and Galloway falter in their assessments of Canadian travel writing in treating all accounts written by sojourners to Canada as homogenous in nature. They do not acknowledge that accounts of travel embody a variety of different features and that, while some can qualify as ‘guide books,’ others could be placed under the more favourable category of ‘travel writing.’

‘Travel writing’ can be distinguished from ‘guide books’ because, as Stanley explains, the former term is able to balance the illustration of common pieces of factual information and observations with the more entertaining qualities of plot and character development “associate[d] with a novel or autobiography” (53). In much the same way, Klinck himself states in “Literary Activity in the Canadas (1812-1841)” that travel writing “may be called literature of quality if [it] perform[s] the higher literary functions of fiction and achieve[s] something of form, that is, if [it] go[es] beyond ‘statistical accounts’ and settlers’ handbooks to create the myth of the new country, and at the same time show affinity with journals, sketches, essays, autobiographies, extended anecdotes, and other ordered narratives” (155). Both Bentley and Wendy Roy’s examinations discredit Bailey, Frye, and Galloway and support the notion that exploration and travel narratives are more composite and valuable than these critics have claimed them to be. For Bentley, Canadian travel writing often reveals authors’ self-reflexive tendencies via extensive and self-conscious revision, while for Roy there are often elements of fiction within these accounts that encourage a variety of interpretations (“Here is the Picture” 97). When travel narratives are discussed in this section, they will be considered in the category of ‘travel writing,’ and the features attributed to this classification of texts by Stanley, Klinck, Bentley, and Roy will be explored when analyzing each author’s work.

Samuel Hearne (1745-1792), David Thompson (1770-1857), and Alexander Mackenzie (1764-1820)<sup>2</sup> are names that have become synonymous with ‘classic’ English-Canadian travel and exploration narratives. Their work has been integral in

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<sup>2</sup> Authors respectively of *Journey from Prince of Whales’s Fort in Hudson’s Bay to the Northern Ocean* (1795), *David Thompson’s Narrative of his Explorations in Western North America 1784-1812* (1916), and *Voyages from Montreal through the Continent of North America to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans in 1789 and 1793* (London 1801).

formulating much of what we know about the early Canadian social and geographical landscape. When scholarly attention is given to early Canadian travel accounts, it refers mainly to explorers and adventurers of British and French extraction, as it is they who made up the large majority of travellers to Canada in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries. But what of the marginalized figures who contributed to early English-Canadian travel literature but who came from elsewhere? More specifically, what about the Irish contribution to the genre of Canadian travel writing? From as early as the mid-eighteenth century, the Irish travelled to Canada and wrote of their experiences. In less than a century, they became the largest ethnic population to immigrate to Canada (Akenson, Mannion, O'Driscoll and Reynolds). So why is it that the perspective of this group, whose travel accounts functioned as platforms either to encourage or to dissuade their fellow Irish men and women to settle in Canada, is repeatedly overlooked? Why are Irish representations deemed of little importance when academics assess early Canadian travel accounts for their merit regarding our understanding of Canada's social, political, cultural, and geographical history? And why is it that when space is allocated to an analysis of accounts by the Irish of their observations while in Canada, the texts are treated as indistinct from those written by the British and are often mistaken as British in origin?

Critics are highly selective and often biased when deciding what passes as 'tradition' or 'canonical' in Canadian literature. They seem to suffer, as Bentley suggests, from amnesia when it comes to recognizing the importance of the Irish contribution to early travel writing in Canada. Whether they be in the form of poetry or prose, Irish travel accounts of Canada continue to be consigned to a secondary status and have yet to be regarded as separate from those recordings and observations made by British, French, and

Scotch writers. What is often unacknowledged is that the Irish contributed a strong strand to the genre of Canadian travel writing as it was developing. The style and focus of this work influenced many writers who, feeling inspired, followed them across the Atlantic either to begin a new life or to pursue an adventure that they, too, would record. While works composed by Irish writers who travelled to Canada may be considered by some to lack merit, it “is not always the specific merits [of the work], but the contrast”

(Tuckerman iv) found amongst the accounts written by people of the same ethnic group that adds value to an appraisal. Because of diverse cultural and religious identity, as well as the turbulent history of the Irish, one Irish point of view about the social landscape of the New World often departs from another. In those cases where the perspectives are similar, fruitful and meaningful parallels can be drawn. It is instructive, therefore, to discuss Irish travellers’ treatment of their time spent in Canada as a distinct category within the larger genre of English-Canadian travel writing. This is because our assessment and understanding of the social makeup of Canada during its infancy have privileged the British and French perspective. As a result, our knowledge of Canada’s formative years remains limited, neither fairly representational nor wholly accurate.

Among the most influential and popular Irish writers who made it their aim to provide an accurate portrayal of the emerging Canadian culture and social and geographical landscape were Isaac Weld Junior (1774-1856), Thomas Moore (1779-1852), and Anna Brownell Jameson (1794-1860). The following discussion will also include a lesser known but equally vital writer who was actually the first among this group to journey to the New World: Donnchadh Ruadh MacConmara (1715-1810). Composed for a readership back in the British Isles, the key texts to be examined are poet MacConmara’s *The Adventures of a Luckless Fellow and Other Poems* (circa mid-



eighteenth century but not published until 1853), which includes the title poem, as well as his “As I Was Walking One Evening Fair,” “Hugh O’Kelly,” and “The Fair Hills of Holy Ireland”;<sup>3</sup> Weld’s seminal *Travels Through the United States of North America, and the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada, During the Years 1795, 1796, and 1797* (London 1799; hereafter *Travels*); Moore’s *Epistles, Odes, and Other Poems* (London 1806; hereafter *Epistles*), a compilation of poems that had a lasting influence on numerous writers of the nineteenth century; and Jameson’s *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* (1838; hereafter *WSSRC*), which provides a woman’s perspective of the Irish in Canada, while serving as propaganda to enlist Irish compatriots to make a similar journey and begin anew in a picturesque country that practices religious tolerance for Catholics and dissenters.

What becomes immediately apparent when assessing the variety of writings by these Irish figures is that they are at once disparate and akin. Because they carried “with them both mentally and physically much of the world that they [had] ostensibly left behind” (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 9), the authors look at the New World “through the lens to which [their] vision is habituated” (Tuckerman 4). This, in turn, results in diverse impressions that are a reflection of “the motive of the respective writers” (4). Sifting “what they saw through their own interests and needs, social and economic, personal and national” (Waterston, “Travel Books” 362), MacConmara, Weld, Moore, and Jameson provide readers with observations, reactions, and opinions that, in certain cases, contain striking parallels. In other instances, the points of view are remarkably divergent because of the authors’ varied backgrounds, as well as the fact that, with the exception of Weld and Moore who travelled to Canada less than a decade apart, they came to the New

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<sup>3</sup> These poems comprise Appendix A and will be discussed further below.

World at different points in its history.<sup>4</sup> In *Highways of Canadian Literature: A Synoptic Introduction to the Literary History of Canada (English) from 1760 to 1924* (1924), J.D. Logan and Donald G. French suggest that those who sojourned to Canada during their formative years were apt to have minds that were “unformed and readily susceptible to Canadian influences, naturalistic, social, and spiritual,” while writers who travelled later in life were more mature and fixed in their attitudes (46). But when examining the works composed by these four Irish-born writers, what becomes evident is that they resist and complicate this classification. Both Jameson and MacConmara arrived in Canada when they were in their late thirties, while Weld and Moore were in their early twenties.<sup>5</sup> Yet, despite the spectrum of their respective ages, all four authors’ attitudes were profoundly affected politically, socially, and spiritually by their time in Canada. At the same time, their work is coloured by their Irish heritage, their religious affiliations, and their preconceived beliefs and opinions that are at times biased or misinformed as a result of their backgrounds and influences.

The period during which these Irish travel writers came to Canada spans nearly a century: 1740s-1837, so naturally their concerns, preoccupations, and opinions vary. While the changes that were taking place in Canada were remarkable and, for the most part, promising in their potential for progress, the events and changes occurring in Ireland from the mid-eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century were tumultuous, tragic, and taxing. Ireland remained in a state of flux with uncertainty occupying its people, a condition mainly of the oppressive and unwanted British presence. Witnessing the

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<sup>4</sup> MacConmara arrived in Canada sometime between 1740 and 1755, when it was still being referred to as the ‘Colonies.’ Weld arrived nearly half a century later in 1795, Moore in 1803, and Jameson in 1836, when Canada was known as ‘British North America.’

<sup>5</sup> MacConmara was somewhere between the ages of 30 and 45, Jameson was 32, Weld was 21, and Moore was 24.

ascension of five British monarchs in a period of one hundred years, the Irish, particularly the Irish Catholics, fell in and out of favour.<sup>6</sup> Religious tension and persecution seemed perpetual. Growing increasingly agitated regarding the stringent restrictions placed upon Catholics' rights and freedoms and inspired by the success of the French and American Revolutions of the latter 1700s, the Irish began to voice their dissatisfaction. 1791 saw the formation of the United Irishmen. Founded by Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763-1798), this organization consisted of both Catholic and Protestant members who fought alongside each other for religious equality and radical reform.<sup>7</sup>

Prior to 1792, Irish Catholics were not permitted entrance into college, they could not hold a civil or military office, they were denied the right to vote, and they could not be members of parliament, nor could they bear arms. The Catholic Relief Act of 1792 removed restrictions on Roman Catholics in education, marriage, and the professions. In 1793, Irish Catholics were admitted to the municipal and parliamentary franchise on the same terms as Protestants, with the right to bear arms and hold most civil and military offices except in Parliament. A time when Protestants and Catholics would be on par seemed possible for the first time. But as the eighteenth century drew to a close, the Irish government became increasingly concerned about the possibility of rebellion because the United Irishmen continued to be disgruntled. In 1796-1797, the Insurrection Act was passed, giving the British government repressive powers to deal with the disturbances led by the United Irishmen. The vision of equality espoused by the United Irishmen was quickly dashed as the Irish rebels who fought for this reformed society were defeated at Vinegar Hill and the Ulster rising was thwarted in 1798. Virtual martial law was

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<sup>6</sup> George II (1727-1760), George III (1760-1820), George IV (1820-1830), William IV (1830-37), and Victoria (1837-1903).

<sup>7</sup> Moore and Jameson's father were friends with several key figures among the United Irishmen.

established in 1799 and the Irish Parliament was abolished a year later. A second attempt to revive the fight was instigated by Robert Emmett (1778-1803) in 1803,<sup>8</sup> but this uprising was suppressed. Emmet, along with twenty-one other men, was executed. It would take another twenty-five years before the cause for which the United Irishmen died was actualized. With the support of Arthur Wellesley, the 1<sup>st</sup> Duke of Wellington (1769-1852) and Robert Peel (1788-1850), the Catholic Emancipation Bill passed in 1829, which admitted Catholics to Parliament and to almost all public offices. However, numerous restrictions were established alongside these new privileges. Voting would cost ten pounds, making it impossible for the majority of poor Irish citizens to participate in political decisions (Jordan 461). The charge applied to voting, as well as the controversial tithes Catholics were forced to pay, contributed to an atmosphere of increasing anxiety. “Open warfare had broken out in many parts of Ireland, and demands for greater Parliamentary representation, or, more widely, demands for the repeal of the Act of Union were being pushed” (488). Not too long after, in 1832, the Irish Reform Act was passed. But despite this political good fortune, the suffering of the Irish was not yet over. A new threat emerged: famine. In 1816-1817, the potato crops experienced partial failure, producing famine conditions in several regions. This was followed by a second crop failure in 1822 and then a yet more serious failure in 1836. It is for these reasons – the political instability, religious inequality, and agricultural collapse – that the Irish turned a hopeful eye to the New World.

Unlike the complex and unstable political and social conditions in Ireland during this one-hundred-year period, Canada was in the premature stage of its development and attracted little attention in the United Kingdom. That is, until the British overthrew the

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<sup>8</sup> A close friend of Moore's whom he met at Trinity College.

French on the Plains of Abraham in 1759 and France was forced to surrender Montreal to the British in 1760, granting a powerful monopoly. Preoccupied with trouble at home as a result of war with France<sup>9</sup> and Spain, Great Britain had demonstrated little interest in the region that was comprised only of three colonies<sup>10</sup> and made little time for its advancement and settlement until the late 1700s. Long after John Cabot arrived in Newfoundland in 1497, interest in the New World had bordered on indifference due to the land's remoteness and its apparent lack of profitability. But as its population increased and resources such as timber became more valuable when Britain entered war against Spain, Newfoundland was considered more seriously as a territory worth exploiting for its natural resources, including its fisheries, which would require the establishment of permanent residents on the island. Once the war between England and Spain ended, capital was available to invest in the chartered trading and colonizing companies, which focused on Newfoundland (Cell 46). Some progress was made by the mid-eighteenth century regarding the formation of Maritime Canada, which saw some settlement and expansion. However, by 1775, a new distraction in the form of a rebellion brewing in the American Colonies presented itself. As a consequence, its neighbours to the north were placed "in a state of almost continual turmoil by events beyond its borders over which it had no control and in which it had no direct interest" (Wade 230). Attention shifted from encouraging population and economic growth in Canada to investing monetarily and militaristically in the war effort against the Americans. Progress in Canada was no longer a priority.

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<sup>9</sup> Hostility continued to erupt between France and England, which led to a war between the rival countries in 1744, the Seven Years War in 1756, and a third war in response to the execution of Louis XVI, in 1793.

<sup>10</sup> In 1783, Canada consisted of Nova Scotia (which included the future New Brunswick), the Island of St. John, renamed Prince Edward Island in 1799, and the ancient province of Quebec, which since 1774 stretched west to include the Great Lakes region (Wallace and Bray 197).

When temporary Irish exiles MacConmara, Weld, Moore, and Jameson arrived in Canada, its economy was supported by the fur trade, as well as the fishing and timber industries. The country, still minimally populated, was comprised mainly of missionaries, farmers, fur traders, and soldiers. MacConmara's reasons for visiting Newfoundland and, later, the impetus behind Weld's, Moore's, and Jameson's travels to eastern regions, were multiple. For MacConmara, Moore, and Jameson, the purpose was specific: it was financial.<sup>11</sup> Yet, like so many other journeymen, all four Irish travellers were also inspired by a spirit of adventure, spurred on by a love of travel and an active life, as well as by a desire to gratify their curiosity in discovering the geographical unknown. Monetary gain, curiosity, and adventure, however, were not the only motives. These writers also intended to publish an account of their first-hand experiences, though the motivation for doing so varied among them. For MacConmara, who spent time solely in Newfoundland, life was difficult because the island was remote, its winters were unforgiving, and the land resisted cultivation, making settlement a challenge. A sense of disorder prevailed, as no system of government had yet been established, nor were any newspapers being produced because the population was not substantial enough to support such an endeavor.<sup>12</sup> MacConmara's verse underscores the discomfort and perils of his journey overseas, reflects the unruly qualities of his surroundings, and satirizes the tension between French and English, drawing astute parallels between it and the ongoing religious and cultural conflict between the Irish and the British. The aim of publishing his

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<sup>11</sup> MacConmara worked as a fisherman in Newfoundland. Moore received a position in Bermuda but quickly decided to quit his post. Because the ship that would take him back to England was in Halifax, Moore was able to travel through the northern states, as well as Upper and Lower Canada, before arriving at his destination in Nova Scotia. Jameson's presence in Canada was requested by her husband, and she agreed to join him partly because she was attempting to secure financial support from him if they could not reconcile their marital difficulties.

<sup>12</sup> It was not until 1791 that "[a]n elected assembly was set up; English civil and criminal law was to be used; the established religion was to be the Anglican" (Finlay and Sprague 77).

verse was likely twofold. Disconnected from his homeland, MacConmara expresses nostalgia for Ireland in his verse and was able to integrate, translate, and preserve his Irish heritage by privileging it in his recordings. The focus on Irish history and concerns in his verse could suggest an attempt to amalgamate Old and New World through a newly adopted double vision. It is more likely, however, that it reflects a resistance to assimilate into a new society by clinging to the old. Confirming stereotypes of the uncivilized conditions of the Colonies, MacConmara could be placed among that group of travel writers who made it their aim to warn potential immigrants of the harsh and unforgiving environment, which was lonely, remote, sparse, and forlorn, and which presented numerous obstacles that would repel any prospective journeyman or settler.

Nearly half a century after MacConmara's departure from Newfoundland, attention was redirected toward the expansion and development of Canada following the American Revolution (1775-1783). Opinion of the young Republic was low, and it was no longer favoured over its northern neighbour as a place to visit or for immigration. As a result, a demand for accurate and useful details about the political and social condition of Canada increased among the readership of the British Isles. As the European gaze shifted from the unruly United States to the more complacent Canada, superficial and infrequent references to it gave way to multifarious descriptions, evaluations, reports, diaries, and narratives. It was in part to satiate the public's increasing appetite that Weld, Moore, and Jameson recorded their observations as they journeyed through America and Canada. Their ambition to embark on a potentially perilous journey to the New World was lofty and invaluable because, in the case of all three writers, it was a means by which to "ascertain, by personal observation, the actual facilities which the New World offered, whereby the unfortunate could redeem and the intrepid and dexterous advance their

position and resources” (Tuckerman 193). Incentive to find a place to begin anew was high amongst the Irish in the late eighteenth century because instability abounded in Great Britain and on the Continent, as both were “plagued by a general breakdown of law and order” (Finlay and Sprague 5). With public virtue under question at the turn of the nineteenth century as a result apparently of rampant sin, private greed, famine, political turmoil, and industrial squalor, the New World offered the Irish opportunity and prosperity that had extraordinary appeal.

As it became increasingly obvious that there was a need to establish an alternative society across the Atlantic for the suffering Irish, Weld, Moore, and Jameson initially made it their goal to inspire potential immigrants to invest in a new life in Canada by highlighting its numerous positive qualities as compared to the problems and struggles at home. Their accounts emphasize the different opportunities afforded to the Irish in a country that could provide them with political reform, religious independence, and agricultural prosperity. Although it was still a relative hinterland<sup>13</sup> when Weld, Moore, and Jameson arrived, Canada’s heavily wooded landscape was being replaced by clearings, then towns and cities. The remote landscape was being linked through the establishment of different methods of transportation, and thinly populated regions were being settled by a growing immigrant population. A country once thought of as “covered with eternal [sic] snows, and scarcely fit for the habitation of a civilized being” (Cattermole iii), Canada was now being praised for its natural resources, settlements, hospitality, landscape, and farming. A refuge from persecution and an escape from

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<sup>13</sup> In *The Gay]Grey Moose: Essays on the Ecologies and Mythologies of Canadian Poetry: 1690-1990* (1992), Bentley applies this term to the “unpopulated (‘lonely’),” isolated, “‘rough’ and ‘savage’ wilderness” (5).



traditional degradation, Canada offered to the Irish a virtual *tabula rasa*, as it was “a land whose destinies yet lay undeveloped” (Tuckerman 14).

In fulfillment of Northern Irish poet AE’s (George William Russell’s) claim that the “outcast” Irish could “find no place in the present social order” (qtd. in Storey 140), the Irish saw in Canada the possibility of securing a place within a growing society that not only freed them from punitive rents, tithes,<sup>14</sup> and taxes, but also provided them with the freedom and opportunity to shape a new society into one that would mirror those values and traditions that for centuries had been under threat by imperial rule in their native land. Canada would become for the Irish, a place that “reflect[ed their] own ideals, and [embodied] that national soul which [had] been slowly incarnating in [their] race from its cloudy dawn” (Russell qtd. in Storey 141). Conceptualized as the prototype of a social, political, agricultural, and religious ideal, Canada began to assume the appearance of a veritable utopia. However, it is important to note that for Weld, Moore, and Jameson, this idyllic Promised Land functions more pragmatically as a middle ground between the established society of England and the chaotic and disorderly existence in the United States. Although their accounts are not unique in their tendency to imagine, dissect, and compare the political, religious, and social aspects of the New World and the Old, what makes them exceptional is the telling contrast they set up between Canada and America. Making both America and Canada part of their itinerary, these three writers weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the two countries in their respective works and, in each instance, Canada is privileged over America.

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<sup>14</sup> According to Herbert O. Mackey, “Under this tithe system one tenth of all the produce of the land was reserved for the clergy of a church alien to them and the collection enforced by a crushing system of penal enactments and decrees” (29).

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The aire in Newfoundland is wholesome, good,  
 The fire as sweet as any made of wood,  
 The waters very rich, both salt and fresh,  
 The earth more rich, you know it is no lesse.  
 Where all are good, fire, water, earth and air,  
 What man made of these would not live there?  
 ~ William Vaughan

The aire in Newfoundland unwholesome is, not goode,  
 One cannot goe outside without a hooode.  
 The Waters, salt and fresh, they are like ice.  
 All who fall in perish in a trice.  
 Fire is rare there is so little woode,  
 For growing ought the earth it is no goode.  
 Against life do all the elements conspire.  
 Man made of water, earth, aire and fire,  
 Hearken not to William Vaughan, he is a liar.  
 ~ Robert Hayman

### DONNCHADH RUADH MACCONMARA

The name Donnchadh Ruadh MacConmara is unfamiliar to most scholars of Canadian literature today, as it was even to Canadians who lived at the time when this Irish-language poet came to Newfoundland. In fact, most Irish scholars studying eighteenth-century Irish poetry are likely to have disregarded or never encountered this supposedly wayward figure of ill-repute. Yet the marginality of this poet and the current obscurity of his body of work do not diminish their value, particularly in the case of those poems MacConmara produced while enduring self-imposed exile in St. John's, Newfoundland, sometime between 1740 and 1755.<sup>15</sup> It has been speculated by those few scholars who have studied MacConmara's oeuvre that he wrote four poems while a temporary resident in St. John's. Records to confirm this are difficult to find because none of these poems was published until after MacConmara returned to Ireland. However, it is clear that "Hugh O'Kelly," "As I Walked Out One Evening Fair," and *The Adventures of a Luckless Fellow* (hereafter *Adventures*) are based on MacConmara's journey to and

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<sup>15</sup> Victor Power speculates that MacConmara was in Newfoundland for approximately five years between 1740 and 1745. He suggests that the poet spent two summers and a winter there (126), but he does not provide a source or an explanation. Richard Foley observes that no records exist of MacConmara between 1745 and 1755. It is during this time that he believes the poet was in Newfoundland. His findings do not support Victor Power's conjecture: instead, Foley suggests that MacConmara was a teacher near Youghal, County Cork, between 1740 and 1745, although he does not provide a source for this information.

impressions of Newfoundland while he was employed there as a fisherman. The first poem defends a fellow expatriate, Hugh O'Kelly, who struggled as a resident of Newfoundland, and it makes direct reference to the island. The second poem is a satiric, bilingual (Gaelic and English)<sup>16</sup> ballad that provides a rare glimpse of St. John's at a time when tensions between the Irish and English were high on both sides of the Atlantic. The third poem is a mock-epic about MacConmara's thwarted attempt to come to Newfoundland. What remains unknown is whether or not "The Fair Hills of Holy Ireland," a song of one who pines for his homeland, was written while MacConmara was in Newfoundland or in France.<sup>17</sup> In general, MacConmara's speaker is either an outcast traveller fearful and guilt-ridden for abandoning his homeland, or a spirited reveller, participating in the daily rough-and-tumble life of the island. The tone of his poems oscillates between satirical and woeful. At times, the speaker focuses on the social and geographical makeup of a newly forming Canadian society, and, at other times, he dwells on feelings of nostalgia for his native country.

Before embarking on an analysis of MacConmara's Canadian poems, it proves fruitful to look further at his biography and to summarize the scholarship conducted on this elusive literary figure who is one of the first Irishmen to write about his experience in Canada. What becomes immediately apparent is that the image perpetuated of this poet is

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<sup>16</sup> MacConmara composed all of his poems in Gaelic or Latin with the exception of every second line in this poem, which was written in English, as well as a few lines in the second part of *The Adventures of a Luckless Fellow*, also written in English. *Adventures* was translated by Percy Arland Ussher, "As I Was Walking One Evening Fair" was translated by James Clarence Mangan, "The Fair Hills of Holy Ireland" was translated by John O'Daly, and "Hugh O'Kelly" was translated by R.B. Walsh.

<sup>17</sup> According to Foley, MacConmara was not "on the Continent of Europe when he wrote that beautiful poem [... because Foley has] seen under the hand of Thomas Harney of Stradbally, who was [he] believe[s] a pupil of [MacConmara's], that it was composed while the poet was in Newfoundland, a fact which would seem to be borne out by internal evidence in an unpublished rann of the poem" (243). Byrne also states that the poem was written in Newfoundland ("Two Irish Poets" 36). Victor Power, however, believes the poem was written in France between 1730 and 1740 and states that it may be based on an earlier text but that the first three verses are entirely MacConmara's own (134).

inconsistent. The few facts that do not vary concerning his biography include that MacConmara was born in Cratloe, County Clare, Ireland; that he was sent to Rome to study for the priesthood at an ecclesiastical college but soon left;<sup>18</sup> that he travelled around the Irish countryside as a schoolmaster; that he spent time in France; that he temporarily resided in St. John's, Newfoundland, as a fisherman; that he was born a Catholic, converted to Protestantism, and then returned to his Catholic faith in the final years of his life; and that he died in Newton, Kilmacthomas, Ireland, at age ninety-five. Critical response to MacConmara's life and works ranges from those who champion him as a distinguished poet, an extraordinary man, and "an original genius" (James Hardiman qtd. in V. Power 126), who was admired because he "'possess[ed] that poetical eminence which ranked him amongst the most celebrated of the modern bards'" (Foley 245), to a playboy (V. Power 123) who "'was not a man of good life'" (John Fleming qtd. in Foley 241). Although MacConmara was a popular and "widely read" poet at a time when "[p]rinted books in Irish were extremely rare" (V. Power 126), his poems and songs that were once a part of the folklore in County Waterford died with the Irish language. Of significance is that W.B. Yeats, known for instigating the Irish Renaissance in the early twentieth century as a means to preserve Irish traditions and language, dismissed MacConmara's work in his Preface to *The Midnight Court and The Adventures of a Luckless Fellow*. Yeats does little to hide his dislike of the poet, stating that "though his poem<sup>19</sup> is of historical importance, [MacConmara] does not interest me so much. He knew Irish and Latin only, knew nothing of his own age, saw vividly but could not reflect upon what he saw, and so remained an amusing provincial figure" (n.p.).

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<sup>18</sup> At this time in Irish history, "the Roman Catholic aristocracy and middle class, to escape the Penal Laws, sent their sons to the Continent to be educated" (V. Power 127).

<sup>19</sup> Here Yeats is referring to *The Adventures of a Luckless Fellow*.

To date, little attention has been given to the study of this poet.<sup>20</sup> Of those that are available, the main purpose is to establish and, in most cases, embellish and romanticize MacConmara's controversial biography. MacConmara's poetic contribution is often undermined by nineteenth-century writers such as Dr. Standish Hayes O'Grady and John Fleming because they are mainly interested in creating, out of a series of rumours and few facts, a legend of the poet. In 1853, O'Grady published *Adventures of Donnachadh Ruah Mac Conmara, A Slave of Adversity*, which loosely follows the poet's life. Folklorist Fleming's biography provides a poorly sourced and unqualified assessment of the poet, and this is included in Tomas O'Flannghaile's edition of MacConmara's *The Adventures of a Luckless Fellow and Other Poems* (1897).<sup>21</sup> Together, the works by these two men promote an unflattering representation of MacConmara as an irresponsible, promiscuous, brawling drunk, a stereotype that remained active through the nineteenth century and, to a certain extent, continues generally to plague the Irish through the twentieth.<sup>22</sup>

In 1907, Richard Foley published "Notes on the Life of Donnchadh Ruadh Macnamara," with the intension of calling into question Fleming's "overdrawn" (244) account of the details of MacConmara's life. Maintaining that Fleming "erred frequently on the side of extravagance and cocksuredness [sic] respecting matters of which he had but the scantiest [sic] information" (241), Foley ardently refutes several key claims made

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<sup>20</sup> Because newspapers did not exist in Canada during the time MacConmara resided there, no records of a Canadian critical reception of his poetry are available.

<sup>21</sup> This work is no longer in print.

<sup>22</sup> The stereotype of the brawling Irishman is attributed to both Thomas Moore and Adam Kidd in scholarship written on both poets. In the case of Moore, all biographies make reference to a duel that took place between the poet and a reviewer who criticized his *Epistles*. The portrayal of MacConmara as disorderly and antagonistic can be seen as a precursor to the image attached to Kidd, who was often viewed as anti-establishment and accused of participating in several altercations. However, little evidence is provided to support these claims. Further discussion of these incidents occurs below in the sections on these poets.

by the author and attempts to dispel some of the myths that have plagued the Irish poet. The most notable myth Foley challenges is that MacConmara disgraced the Roman Catholic Church by engaging in unseemly escapades and that, at an early age, he was expelled from an ecclesiastical college due to his reckless indiscretions. Foley chastises Fleming for basing this biographical detail solely on the fact that because MacConmara was said to be disobedient in later life, the same could be said about the behaviour of his youth. Foley suggests instead that MacConmara left the priesthood because it was quite simply not the vocation for him (241). One of Foley's main concerns is that Fleming portrays himself as an authority but does not provide tangible evidence to support any of his claims. Instead, he relies on assumption, speculation, and stereotype. In Foley's words, "where [Fleming] saw a giant we may well assume there was only a bush" (241). To draw the conclusion that MacConmara "was not a man of good life" based on "the little of [his] story we have seen thus far" (Fleming qtd. in Foley 244) is a ridiculous logic for Foley, who accuses Fleming of possessing "a very fertile imagination" (244). Another point of contention for Foley regarding Fleming's research methodology is that it relies heavily on an interview Fleming conducted with MacConmara's grandson. Instead of taking this opportunity to uncover useful details about the poet's poetic process or inspiration, Fleming queried the man on silly and titillating gossip. From the grandson, Fleming discovered that MacConmara won his future wife, Mary Hogan, in a draw, and that both parties did not enjoy married life. This grandson also claimed that the reason for MacConmara's sudden departure for Newfoundland was because he was forced to vacate the schoolhouse where he worked and lived after an attractive woman in the area set fire to it in response to a satirical poem he wrote about her, which she did not appreciate (V. Power 129). And yet still another rumour is offered that the poet fled to Newfoundland in

order to escape the wrath of a family whose daughter he had impregnated. What becomes clear is that Fleming intentionally and repeatedly calls attention to alleged incidents in MacConmara's life that suggest that he was frequently insubordinate, intemperate, and disorderly—a stereotypically colourful Irishman. The problem is, however, that Foley's own article lacks supportive evidence to replace the popular and perhaps false image of MacConmara with the supposedly more flattering one that he promotes.

As a primary source often drawn on for information about the poet's life, Fleming's findings have been upheld by twentieth-century writer Francis MacManus and scholars Byrne (1985) and Victor Power (1986). In each case, these men perpetuate the image of MacConmara as an irresponsible drifter and social misfit as they, too, are more interested in maintaining the legend, basing their research on fictional, minimal, or nonexistent source material.<sup>23</sup> In his article "Two Irish Poets in 'The Wild Plantation,'" Byrne acknowledges that the reasons for MacConmara's expulsion from the seminary "remain unclear" (37). However, like Fleming, he then argues that they "can be guessed at from his subsequent career of mischievous, even profligate behaviour, and difficulties with the 'craytur' [alcohol] not unusual in the careers of Irish poets" (37). Furthermore, he maintains that MacConmara escaped to Newfoundland in order to make enough money as a clerk to lift himself out of his poverty, but he then states that MacConmara spent that money on drink and lost it playing cards. The problem here is that Byrne does not provide credible support for these claims. Instead, he references the speaker's description of his activities in Newfoundland in the poem "As I Was Walking One Evening Fair"

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<sup>23</sup> Byrne and Victor Power both rely heavily on Fleming as the main source of their information. They also make reference to Standish Hayes O'Grady's work as well as MacManus's fictional trilogy, which creates "a romantic biography of the poet" (V. Power 126): *Stand and Give Challenge* (1934), *A Candle for the Proud* (1936), and *Men Withering* (1939). The work by O'Grady is no longer in print.

(41), thus confusing the speaker with the poet. Victor Power is also guilty of sustaining the legend, calling MacConmara a “playboy” (123) at the outset of his article and claiming that the poet did not get along with his neighbours and made many enemies (140) due to his “bad reputation” (137). He also suggests that the poet went to Newfoundland because Mary Hogan’s family “probably” (131) gave their daughter something to make her “worthless” husband go overseas (Fleming qtd. in V. Power 131). The word “probably” suggests mere speculation and the word “worthless” reveals bias of course. Victor Power also proposes without just cause that MacConmara’s conversion to Protestantism was not genuine because it is likely he only converted in order to qualify for employment that would otherwise be denied to a Catholic. The oddest piece of information Victor Power includes in his article is that for the last sixty years of MacConmara’s life, he slept “in a deep, oaken, coffin-like chest” (139).<sup>24</sup> This is a rather humiliating tidbit, as it underscores the unusual habits of the poet, but again the alleged quirk is not substantiated. With little information or records available to a twenty-first century scholar, it is difficult to disprove the claims made by Fleming, Byrne, and Victor Power regarding MacConmara’s rakish and wayward status. My purpose, however, is not so much to prove these claims false as it is to draw attention to the irresponsible and academically unsound approach taken by these biographers and critics and to call into question the unfounded myth they have collectively concocted and perpetuated.

Even more significant, the formulation and preservation of this myth have distracted scholars from contributing more useful commentary on MacConmara’s body of work. While Foley’s article does not mention MacConmara’s specific works, Byrne’s

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<sup>24</sup> Perhaps Victor Power is confusing this biographical allegation with a reference made in MacConmara’s *Adventures* to the “big black chest so long and deep / ’Twould answer alike for store or sleep” (43-44).



article provides only partial analysis of three of the four poems MacConmara is said to have written in Newfoundland.<sup>25</sup> Victor Power's article, which supplies the most useful and detailed study of all four poems, is still lacking in insight.<sup>26</sup> In their respective studies of MacConmara's Newfoundland verse, Byrne and Victor Power fail to reflect on the relevance of the poems in relation to an Irish sojourner's unique impression of the new colony. They also do not comment on the impact these images would have had on an Irish reading public, which would have been eager to learn more about this strange new world and, more particularly, would have wanted to know if those Irish who went to Canada were successful and what the British colony could offer to those who struggled back at home. Byrne does, however, make the astute observation that MacConmara's poetry contributed to an emerging literary tradition, for although "we cannot call his verse native, it was certainly of the same world as are the folk ballads and verse which we recognize as forming a distinctive Newfoundland tradition" ("Two Irish Poets" 47). Byrne also notes that MacConmara's poems "exemplify a central problem in all early Canadian writing: the difficulty of accommodating settled attitudes and expressive modes from a stable, imperial culture to the realities of life in a new and unfamiliar physical circumstance where society was rough and transient" (48). Unlike poets such as Butler Lacy, whose work emphasizes a distance and disengagement from life in the New World, perhaps because of the inability to reconcile Old World convention and style with a more flexible and unstable New World reality, MacConmara's poems and songs underscore an

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<sup>25</sup> Byrne's article contrasts MacConmara to his contemporary, Butler Lacy (1670), who visited Newfoundland in 1729 and provides useful socio-historical information. Byrne does not discuss "Hugh O'Kelly."

<sup>26</sup> Victor Power's article is more concerned with providing a detailed overview of the social and geographical landscape of County Waterford, focusing on the prominent people of the Waterford area and the different places where MacConmara lived. He discusses the biography and works of MacConmara and his friend and fellow poet Tadhg Gaedhealach O Suilleabhain.

attitude that is both “immediate and involved” (35). His recordings reflect his direct experience, which suggests that he willingly immersed himself in the life and culture of Newfoundland.

Given that MacConmara readily absorbed himself into the Canadian culture that he in turn helped conceptualize through his Newfoundland verse, a brief description of the social and geographical setting of Newfoundland at the time will give some further necessary context to his poetry. Although numerous reasons for MacConmara’s journey to Newfoundland have been advanced, it is most likely (if still unsubstantiated) that the poet, like so many Irishmen before him, abandoned the life he knew and embarked on the treacherous journey in order to secure steady employment as a fisherman. In the early sixteenth century, not too long after Cabot’s discovery in 1497 that the waters were teeming with cod, the fish industry was established in Newfoundland.<sup>27</sup> Spain, England, Portugal, and France expressed interest in the Newfoundland fishing grounds, but they remained cautiously silent about the discovery of these riches in order to protect their interests.<sup>28</sup> By the late sixteenth century, France and England were both serious contenders for control of the Newfoundland fisheries, but it was France that ceded the territory to Great Britain in 1713 as a result of the Treaty of Utrecht.<sup>29</sup> By the early sixteen-hundreds, the harbour was a busy fishing centre, but the majority of the fishermen

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<sup>27</sup> It was on this industry that Canada was built, Tuckerman observes, because the Newfoundland fishery was “the original nucleus whereby originated” (21) large-scale emigration.

<sup>28</sup> The fisheries along the Grand Banks appealed to these countries because there was an increased demand for a “durable protein food, such as dried fish” (Cell 45) due to war both on land and at sea. At sea, there was “the heightened activities of pirates and privateers, [and] the unprecedented volume of intercontinental traffic” (45).

<sup>29</sup> Prior to this, the need to establish a permanent settlement in Newfoundland in order to protect the fisheries became imperative. In 1583, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, along with two hundred and sixty men, took possession of the island for the British Crown (Cell 43).

remained permanent residents of Great Britain.<sup>30</sup> It would take almost thirty years before the Newfoundland Company was established to promote English settlement in Canada (Cell 44), but this early venture was a virtual failure.<sup>31</sup> The conditions of the island posed an obstacle and contributed to the initial failure of any attempt at settlement. The soil was barren, as it was covered by stunted trees, and the island was veiled by heavy fog and was oppressively cold (44). Although the fish resources provided enough incentive for fishermen to journey across the Atlantic, these men were reluctant to take up permanent residence in a land that could offer little more than a “meager way of life” (57). Among these men was a large population of Irishmen who began arriving in Newfoundland, which can “lay claim to be[ing] the oldest Irish colony” (Byrne, “The First Irish Foothold” 171), as early as the fifteenth century. Procured by the British, who sought the cheapest labour possible, the Irish would play “a prominent role in the settlement, evolution and development of Newfoundland” (Doody 195). In fact, Irish was the dominant language in certain parts of Newfoundland until as late as the 1820s.

The New World that awaited MacConmara offered geographical and climatic conditions that were harsh and unforgiving, making life in this remote and barren land challenging. It is perhaps the difficulties of this extreme landscape and its great distance from the comforts of his home in Ireland that inspired MacConmara to compose “The Fair Hills of Holy Ireland” (see Appendix A). Known to all Irish students at a time when

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<sup>30</sup> The reasons for this were twofold. Firstly, charters were created forbidding the actual settlement of Newfoundland so as not to interfere with the exploitation of the territory as exclusively a resource holding. Secondly, in the seventeen-hundreds, although “the Banks were [considered an] inviting [...] resource base,” for men like MacConmara, “home was in [Ireland]. To [his homeland he] always returned” (Finlay and Sprague 19).

<sup>31</sup> Considered uneconomic, the enterprise was doomed to collapse unless a second exploitable commodity was discovered as a means to finance widespread settlement (Cell 55). Because costs to run the industry, to colonize Newfoundland, and to exploit the fishing market on a large scale were grossly underestimated, the only settlers of the Company who remained on the island by 1620 were those who could depend on their own enterprise (56), and of those men, many were “driven away by fishermen and pirates” (Story 740).

Irish was compulsory (V. Power 134), the poem is based on an earlier traditional folk song and is said to be MacConmara's earliest and most popular composition. The main theme of this poem is that of an exiled Irishman who, physically disconnected from his beloved homeland, feels an overwhelming spiritual suffering for his troubled people and country. In the first stanza, the speaker expresses his wish to impart a "blessing" (1) to Ireland, "the land of [his] birth" (1), and to "all who survive of Eibhear's tribe on earth" (3). The use of the word "survive" suggests that the Irish are defeated and near extinction. The speaker can do little more than pray for the endurance of his people, as he is powerless to protect them while absent from his homeland. The speaker notes that it is not just he who mourns the loss of his beloved land: all people of Ireland "[Seem] to pour lament for Erin's decay" (6). The stanza closes with the speaker asking why it is that he continues to "pine" for Ireland while he is "a thousand miles away" (7). The mood is one of frustration, and the statement reveals that no matter the physical distance between a sojourner and his homeland, his allegiance is with his country of birth because that is where his heart remains (the locus of his self-identity). His declaration also suggests either a reluctance to begin anew or an acknowledgement of the impossibility of creating a new life while away.

In the second stanza, the speaker shifts his focus to the beauty of Ireland's landscape with its "rich and soft" soil (9), its "tall and straight" woods (13), its "rising [...] grove" (13), and its flourishing trees (14). Thus, it becomes clear that the "decay" he refers to in the previous stanza is a spiritual one, not a physical one. The speaker highlights the majestic qualities of his physical surroundings in order to set up a contrast between favoured Ireland and the "rude land" (11) where he now resides. He asserts that even Ireland's "barest rock is greener to [him]" than this foreign landscape. But to which

“rude land” (11) is MacConmara referring? As previously mentioned, scholars agree that the poet spent time in both Newfoundland and France, but it is difficult to ascertain in which of these two places the speaker currently resides. However, given Byrne’s convincing argument that MacConmara’s Newfoundland poems emphasize the speaker’s active involvement in his social and geographical surroundings, it becomes difficult to imagine that MacConmara would have written “The Fair Hills of Holy Ireland” while in Canada. Also, the speaker states that he is “a thousand miles away” (7) from Erin, which is a more accurate estimation of the distance between France and Ireland than it is between Ireland and Newfoundland. The unflattering and pessimistic depiction of the “rude land” then becomes a commentary on France, not Newfoundland. This suggests that while MacConmara struggled to adapt to life in France, his experience in Newfoundland was more promising because his depictions of the island in the remaining poems are not as bleak. In the third and final stanza, the focus returns to concern for the current state of Ireland, home of a once “noble tribe” (17) that “in battle’s hour [is] unused to shrink or fail” (19), but which has now become “hapless” (17). The speaker bemoans the rising number of Irish casualties of war who “by Saxon sword” (22) have been “slain or scattered” (22) across the Irish landscape so that the “foreign spoiler” (23) can “horde” (23) and reap its treasures.

Unlike “The Fair Hills of Holy Ireland,” the location of the composition of both “Hugh O’Kelly” and “As I Was Walking One Evening Fair” (see Appendix A) is not disputed, as they both make direct reference to the island. The first poem centres on O’Kelly, a common Irishman who settled in Newfoundland but who, according to his critics, failed to adapt to the new culture and environment. The speaker admonishes O’Kelly’s Irish critics who maligned O’Kelly about his impoverished state in

Newfoundland (Byrne, “Two Irish Poets” 44-45), stating that “Whoever reproached Hugh with [...] / being on top of the flake, plagued by a barrow, that / person is damned and doomed if he [Hugh] comes to / Ireland” (9-12). Rather than be disappointed with his predecessor’s bad luck, MacConmara champions O’Kelly’s effort and turns him “from his rumoured position of enslaved drudge into a man of heroic proportions akin to the Fenian warriors of old or the favoured man of Ireland’s faction-fighters in [his] own century” (Byrne, “Two Irish Poets” 45). The opening stanza idealizes O’Kelly, who is described as charitable in war and hospitable in public life. The speaker praises O’Kelly as a man who would not hesitate to fight for the Irish cause and defend it against the oppressive British. A loyal man of honour, O’Kelly “wouldn’t / retreat from the men in Munster until the gout crippled / his feet and hands” (6-8). More importantly, however, O’Kelly is presented as a positive model of the early Irish immigrant who, despite hardship, obstacles, and criticism, refuses to surrender and return home. The repeated allusion to battle throughout the poem is made analogous to the conflict each Irish immigrant will face when attempting to start a life in Canada. O’Kelly, the hero in this war, represents the difficult fate that awaits so many of his fellow Irishmen, but MacConmara’s purpose is to encourage those men and women to make the journey despite the risk and to fight for a new and better life as O’Kelly did.

When MacConmara arrived in Newfoundland, its population was close to 20,000 and at least six judicial districts had been set up, yet its laws remained elementary and the “society unfolded without any of the normal accompaniments of British colonial tradition” (Finlay and Sprague 108). The unlawfulness of the Maritime environment is most notable in MacConmara’s “As I Was Walking One Evening Fair,” a poem that reveals his tongue-and-cheek sense of humour. According to Victor Power, the poem was

“composed and sung” by the author in a “public house in St. John’s, Newfoundland, in the company of some English soldiers and sailors and a few of MacConmara’s own countrymen” (131). The poem, clearly intended for two markedly different audiences, oscillates between the English and Irish language. Its function is to underscore the cultural divide in Ireland between the Anglo-Irish and the Gaels, as well as between the British and the Irish, which has been transported to the New World. As Byrne observes, port life in Waterford, Ireland, and Newfoundland was similar. Thus, the tension between the Irish, who were in the majority in St. John’s, and the British is seen in a “cheek by jowl” (“Two Irish Poets” 42) arrangement. What the poem reveals is that the sentiment expressed in Irish notably departs from that written in English. While the English lines give an ideal and romanticized account of the speaker’s experience as an immigrant fisherman in Canada, the Irish lines that follow each English line subvert contrapuntally this vision and reveal the speaker’s true feelings about his experience away from home. What makes the poem amusing is that while the Anglo-Irish or British audience would have understood only the English lines that emphasize the speaker’s positive experience, MacConmara’s Gaelic audience would have been privy to the negative reality as well as the joke.

The verses composed in English describe the events that take place one evening in Newfoundland when the speaker engages in revelry and debauchery as he mingles with Englishmen at a tavern. However, this appealing description of harmony among the once feuding Irish and British in the New World, a place that offers an easy life of drink and song, is ridiculed in the Gaelic lines that are interspersed throughout the poem. In the first stanza, the speaker addresses these “English blades” (3) as “courageous ‘men-of-war’” (7). This is an unexpected portrayal of the enemies of Ireland, who, when courageous in

battle, successfully slaughter the speaker's fellow countrymen. But MacConmara places the reference in quotations, suggesting that the label is insincere. A self-satisfied English audience, however, may overlook this detail. Furthermore, the title attributed to these men is ironic and they are unworthy of it given that they are overseas working while their fellow Englishmen are fighting in France.<sup>32</sup> Even more significant is that in the Gaelic lines that follow, the speaker mocks the "English blades" with whom he is cavorting, observing that their strength has been "*subdued*" (4) by the Irish.<sup>33</sup> He states that he is pleased to see the "*English retreating / And but few Irish*" (8-9) in the New World, as it is an inversion of the Old World hierarchy, where the British threaten and intimidate the Irish with their unrelenting strength and numbers. Even though the Irish are in a minority, they govern this Newfoundland tavern.

In the second stanza, the speaker refers to his life back in Ireland prior to journeying to Newfoundland to work as a "tradesman" (14).<sup>34</sup> He explains that he left Ireland because he was recklessly dedicated to drinking, fornicating, and gambling. The speaker champions Newfoundland because it has afforded him an opportunity to begin anew and rid himself of his sinful ways by directing his attention to labour as opposed to licentiousness. Yet in Gaelic the speaker reveals that he has no money to pay for his roguish adventures in the tavern and that he is in fact an inefficient and ineffective worker. The romanticized image of Newfoundland as a land of opportunity is thus challenged, as the speaker who came to the New World with nothing does little to change his situation. This suggests that old habits and attitudes are not left behind in the Old

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<sup>32</sup> Because MacConmara alludes to "Royal George" and his son who is in France, it is likely that the poem is referring to the war that erupted between France and England in 1744.

<sup>33</sup> The Gaelic translation was provided by James Clarence Mangan.

<sup>34</sup> In line 27, the speaker refers to "The last of August," suggesting that he journeys to Newfoundland during the spring and summer months to work at the fisheries.



World. In fact, they continue to impede the traveller in the New World. In the English lines of the third stanza, the speaker champions Newfoundland as “a fine plantation” (18), and he pledges his allegiance to it, declaring that he will remain loyal to it until he dies (19). This implies that he has no desire to return to Ireland. The idyllic representation of the New World is further emphasized when the speaker depicts the women on the island as “virtuous” (22) and “fair (23). Immediately following the speaker’s admiration of Newfoundland and its women, however, he admits in Gaelic that “*I’d rather be in Ireland / Selling garters or taking to the woods*” (20-21) and that the women are “*A pack of whores of the worst sort, / May my life be carried from the sight of them!*” (24-25). He also reveals in the fourth stanza that he is not a skilled worker on land or at sea and that if his good fortune wanes, he will flee his responsibilities and seek “*a little hideout*” / [...] *far from this place*” (32-33), meaning that he has no intention of staying in the New World.

Because he is in the company of Englishmen at the tavern, the speaker, in the final stanza, toasts to the health of “Royal George” (34), whom he refers to as “*Our Chief commander*” (35 my emphasis), and whom he champions as an admirable leader.<sup>35</sup> Yet, once again, in the Gaelic lines that follow, the speaker exposes his resentment of the monarch, a Protestant, who stood as an obstacle to Irish progress and religious tolerance. The toast that celebrates George II’s safety in battle is undercut by the speaker’s observation that, as a Protestant, George II is “*not blessed by Christ*” (36). The speaker then encourages his Gaelic readers to pray to Mary “*That he and his mob be cut down*” (38), and he himself prays that the king be “*defeated / By this son astray from us over in*

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<sup>35</sup> George II was the King of England and Ireland until 1760.

*France*” (41-42).<sup>36</sup> By ending the poem with a commentary on the current political woes of Ireland, the speaker discloses the reality that, despite the great distance, his thoughts remain with his homeland. Furthermore, he reveals that it is difficult to adapt to a new world that is ruled by the same country that oppresses his fellow Irishmen back home.

Reputed to be written about his second and aborted journey to Newfoundland, *The Adventures of a Luckless Fellow* (see Appendix A) is a fantastical and rambling account of an emigrant’s treacherous odyssey on board a ship that is attacked by a French raider and forced to return to Ireland.<sup>37</sup> As with “As I Was Walking One Evening Fair,” MacConmara’s longest poem (376 lines) is concerned with the internal division that a man feels when he abandons his homeland to strike out anew. More or less a parody of Virgil’s *Aeneid* (Yeats, Preface n.p.), *Adventures* mimics the popular conventions of epic poetry and mirrors the archetypal structure of the quest or grail motif. Divided into two parts, the poem opens with a cataloguing of the great men of Irish history, such as Brian Boru.<sup>38</sup> The speaker suggests, however, that while these men have been celebrated by numerous poets, “the fame of these fables poor will pale / When the world has heard of my own true tale” (5-6). Here, the speaker casts himself as the hero of his story and proceeds, in a tone filled with pathos and patriotism, to describe the desperate circumstances of his beloved country, which has become a wasteland because its “feebled [*sic*] and dispossessed” (9) people have been “Stricken beneath the strangers’ hand [England]” (8). This bleak image, along with the hero’s own dire situation as a teacher

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<sup>36</sup> The son to whom he is referring is King James II’s grandson, Prince Charles Stuart, a Catholic and Jacobite, who led a rebellion against England but who was forced to escape to France in 1746.

<sup>37</sup> The account is considered authentic because there was constant traffic between Waterford and Newfoundland at this time. Also, it was not uncommon for attacks to occur aboard fishing ships in European waters (Cell 46), which is where the speaker tells us this particular attack occurred.

<sup>38</sup> Boru (941-1014) became the high king of Ireland by right of conquest in the late 900s and defeated the Vikings in the Battle of Clontarf in 1014.

who despises his “irksome trade” (11) and who has little money because of his irresponsible spending habits, is offered as a catalyst for his decision to abandon Ireland and set off on his adventure. After experiencing a dark night of the soul, the hero comes to the realization that it would be “better, [if he] bide in Erin no more / [And left] the land for a kinder shore” (23-24). The “kinder shore” and “pastures new” (26) to which he refers is Newfoundland, a place where he plans to build a home and future. Unlike “The Fair Hills of Holy Ireland,” which celebrates Ireland’s beautiful landscape, the speaker in this poem refers to Ireland as a “churlish strand” (33), while Newfoundland is depicted favourably as “a bounteous land / Where parts and learning would not be spurned, / Where gold was plenty and easily earned” (34-36). With little money to afford the luxuries he desires, the hero is drawn to the financial prospects Newfoundland offers.

Once he has embarked on his adventure, the hero in epic poetry must face a series of obstacles that test his physical and spiritual strength.<sup>39</sup> Although he encounters a few humorous hurdles,<sup>40</sup> the most challenging and revealing obstacle is the violent sea, which functions on a literal and symbolic level. By situating the hero on a boat that struggles to negotiate the turbulent and unstable waters in a vast ocean, MacConmara creates an analogy for the Irish immigrant experience. Removed from their familiar surroundings,

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<sup>39</sup> Also in keeping with the classic epic pattern, the hero provides a humorous and lengthy description of his attire, which here consists not of a plaited armour and sword but rather a “stick, a stout ashen, / And a new felt hat with a flap in the fashion” (29-30). To ensure their hero’s safe journey, the community gathers to lavish him not with jewels and armoury, but with great stores of food and clothing that will sustain him physically on his long passage and “pull [him] thro’ perils by land and wave” (40). The lengthy catalogue is ridiculous and suggests either that the hero is well liked or that his people are eager to be rid of him. By keeping him well for some time, the community guarantees that it will be difficult for the hero to have an excuse to come back. In order to gain his strength and to prepare for the long journey that lies ahead, the hero finds lodging at an inn at Waterford, a shipping port, with a prostitute who is the object of his affection. It is at this time that the hero is anointed by the whore, who “powdered [his] wig like the sparks of the town / And dressed [him] fully from foot to crown” (73-74).

<sup>40</sup> Presenting themselves as obstacles to the hero’s attempt to board his ship on time are the prostitute’s “stingy mamma” (77), who chases the hero, demanding he pay her, and the officers who stop him on his way to Passage and bid him “briskly [his] name to say” (90-92).

the men become stricken with bouts of seasickness and homesickness, which symbolize both the difficulty in parting with their homeland and their inability to adapt to their new surroundings and experiences. Overwrought with sadness because they believe they will “never see wife or children more” (104) and “That the half of [them] would not see Erin again” (114), the men begin to wish that they had never left the country of their birth. The hero declares that he would “sooner be saved out of that distress / Than all the wealth in the world possess” (127-28), and he focuses on memories of his life in Ireland to get him through his darkest hours. Among the activities he wishes he could once again engage in are drinking with his neighbours, teaching, conversing with gentry and scholars, and returning to “Cratloe where [his] kindred dwell” (147). The rough waters that toss these men to and fro become a pathetic fallacy for the internal turmoil they must endure as they are pulled in two directions at once. Nostalgia for Ireland draws them home, while financial opportunity draws them to Newfoundland. The security that their monotonous lives on land provided them has been exchanged for the randomness of an unforgiving sea and an unruly New World. These men feel lost because, as perpetual wanderers, they no longer have a home and their fate is no longer in their hands.

The second part of the poem becomes fantastical in its description of the hero’s journey to the underworld, where he receives a boon of knowledge that he then conveys safely back to the Irish community. Cowering on the ship floor, the hero experiences a dream vision wherein he is visited by “The queen of Craglee, Eevell fair” (164), who then guides him into Hades. Described as a “trackless shore / By traveller’s foot ne’er trod before” (171-72), the underworld houses all Irishmen who have fallen in battle. Their spirits, which cannot return among the living, haunt the Stygian shores in a purgatorial state. Their liminal condition parallels the state of limbo in which the hero

finds himself, as he, too, feels that he may never return to his people and country. Perhaps as a means to teach the hero a lesson for his disloyalty, his guide, along with “Conan the Fenian bold” (204),<sup>41</sup> journey to “a meadow wide” (243), where the “names and histories” (246) of the Irish are recounted.<sup>42</sup> Inspired by the courage of those who came before him, the hero expresses his desire to fight alongside “the son of James” (281)<sup>43</sup> and blasts “The wicked four who quenched the light” (288).<sup>44</sup> It is this newfound nationalism and revived faith in Catholicism that Conan orders the hero to preach to his countrymen upon his return from the underworld.<sup>45</sup>

Finding himself back on the ship, the hero, who has been profoundly affected by his vision, pledges his commitment to return his boon of knowledge to Ireland. His pledge is immediately challenged when the ship is attacked by “a trim French frigate fresh-fitted for fight” (334), but the hero goes bravely into a battle that is so grand that “The fearful din of that dismal fray / Was heard in Cork many leagues away” (331-32). Following his triumph in battle, the hero spends months in Waterford, Ireland, recuperating, and his health is restored by God’s Son (366). Struggling to reconcile feelings of guilt for having forsaken his people and country, while combating the unshakable fear that comes when facing an unknown life on the other side of the ocean, the hero is compelled to recount the details of his epic journey. Anticipating Samuel Taylor Coleridge’s “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” (1798), the hero, after undergoing a frightening near-death experience

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<sup>41</sup> It is not Charon but rather Conan who conducts the Stygian boat.

<sup>42</sup> Hugh McCurtin (d. 1720), an antiquary, grammarian, poet, and author of the Irish dictionary, is championed above famous poets like Horace, Ovid, and Juvenal because, unlike them, he celebrates the Irish warriors in his verse. In turn, he resurrects their memory and raises them to a mythic level.

<sup>43</sup> James II, a Catholic, was replaced by his Protestant daughter, not his Catholic son, who was a Jacobite and who supported the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland.

<sup>44</sup> The four to whom he refers are Martin Luther, John Calvin, and “Henry and his harlot bride [Anne Boleyn]” (285).

<sup>45</sup> At this point in the poem, the hero is told that he must atone for his sins by praying, fasting, following God’s laws each day, and avoiding temptation.

at sea, returns home with the aim of repeating his tale as a means to rectify the wrongs of the past and to do penance for his sins. The message he now disseminates is a telling one. Apart from urging his listeners to preserve the memory of Ireland's past, to remain devout patriots to the Irish cause, and to give praise to God's Son, who will help them turn from temptation in order to secure entrance into heaven, the hero also stresses that under no circumstance will he leave Ireland's shores again: "Never again on a boat I swear / Will I go 'less you bind me and drag me there" (368-70). As these lessons come from the work of an Irish traveller who has visited Newfoundland twice, it would appear that the hero's goal is to discourage others from embarking on a similar journey by warning them of the unwarranted perils that await them should they consider leaving Ireland for the New World.

~ II ~

### ISAAC WELD AND THOMAS MOORE

Taking into consideration the biographical construction of MacConmara as a popular literary figure whose verse was widely read in Ireland during his lifetime, it can be speculated that his contemporaries, Weld and Moore, were likely familiar with and influenced by his Newfoundland verse. Indeed, several elements of continuity can be traced between MacConmara's impressions of the New World and those recorded some forty or fifty years later by Weld in his *Travels* and Moore in a sequence of poems relating to America and Canada found in *Epistles*. In the case of each writer, emotionally charged expressions of regret and trepidation occur while in transition between the two continents. This unease is a manifestation of the tension between a feeling of guilt for

having abandoned their homeland and a sense of adventure and inquiry that could lead to personal prosperity or to the discovery of an Edenic refuge for prospective immigrants. Sentiments of nostalgia and trauma caused by the transatlantic crossing are echoed in Weld's opening letter as well as in Moore's "To Lord Viscount Strangford, Aboard the Phaeton Frigate, off the Azores, By Moonlight" and "Stanzas."<sup>46</sup> Similar to MacConmara, Weld and Moore recognize that a means by which to measure the value of the new is to place it in opposition to the old. Thus, throughout their respective works, clear distinctions are established between the British Isles and America. Furthermore, the journey motif MacConmara uses in *Adventures* is mirrored and complicated by Weld and Moore. While all three writers use the quest pattern to highlight the trying and obstacle-ridden transition from Old World to New, Weld and Moore also use it to illustrate the movement from what is perceived to be a veritable paradise (England) to what is conceived as a postlapsarian inferno (America). Further, for Moore, the paradigm represents the passage from innocence to experience. Of most significance, however, is that the time all three men spent in North America played a critical role in formulating a renewed national pride for Ireland. While MacConmara asserts his patriotism continually and solidifies his allegiance to Ireland, Weld and Moore do so only in their later works, perhaps as a result of their experiences in the New World.<sup>47</sup>

Yet key disparities are evident within these larger points of comparison, underscoring the instability and complexity of the Irish perspective of the New World.

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<sup>46</sup> Bentley makes a similar observation regarding the metaphorical significance of immigrants crossing the Atlantic in "Breaking the 'Cake of Custom': the Atlantic Crossing as a Rubicon for Female Emigrants to Canada?" featured in *Re (Dis) Covering our Foremothers: Nineteenth-Century Women Writers* (1990).

<sup>47</sup> Interestingly, MacConmara, the only one of the five focal writers of this study who does not use the Dantean paradigm, refers to Virgil, author of the *Aeneid*, and Dante's guide through hell. Perhaps this curious connection relates to the difference in the travellers' goals, but I have been unable to make anything more of it.

Though each writer spent time in Canada and includes in his works a key archetypal feature of the adventurer returning to his community with a boon of knowledge following his quest for enlightenment, what each man concludes about Canada and the message with which he returns as a result of his experience in the New World vary substantially. As observed, the speaker in “As I Was Walking One Evening Fair” struggles with overwhelming feelings of nostalgia and quickly develops distaste for Newfoundland’s barren landscape and its uninviting society of unattractive women and British expatriates. Compounded, these elements prevent MacConmara’s speaker from successfully integrating into a new Canadian life. As a result of this unfavourable outlook, the boon of knowledge acquired by the speaker in this poem, as well as in *Adventures*, leads him to conclude that Ireland remains superior to the alternative found in Canada and causes him overtly to discourage immigration. It is important to note that as a seasonal fisherman, MacConmara had no reason to travel elsewhere in Canada or to America. Thus, his impressions of the New World are somewhat skewed and narrow in scope. This weakens his attempt to dissuade others from abandoning their homeland to strike out anew because his unfavourable assessment of life in Canada is based on such limited experience.<sup>48</sup> Weld and Moore, however, travelled extensively throughout North America, gaining a comprehensive knowledge of the two countries, which they could then draw on when choosing whether or not to encourage immigration. The broad geographical expanse their respective journeys covered and the length of time they remained in North America add credibility to their evaluation of its contrasting territories, which, as remarked, privileges Canada over America.

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<sup>48</sup> Indeed, if the case be that Weld and Moore read MacConmara’s poetry, his verse did not successfully dissuade them from embarking on their respective journeys to assess the conditions in America and Canada.



Despite their mutual preference for Canada over America, Weld and Moore return to the Old World with diverging messages. While Weld deviates from MacConmara by acknowledging numerous merits that can be found in Canada, he is like his predecessor in that he seeks to deter his readers from pursuing immigration. This is different again from Moore, whose verse anticipates the supportive propaganda for immigration that is later written by Jameson. Moore's endorsement, however, is somewhat indirect and retarded. Diverging from his fellow Irishmen, who left the New World with unwavering confirmation that the Old World remained the safest and most advantageous refuge available to their countrymen, he emerged from the underworld, mythically speaking, with the knowledge that once man has fallen (America), not only can he not regain paradise (England), but he ceases to recognize it as such. Thus, he must embrace a new model (Canada). As a result of this epiphany, Moore's sojourn became a catalyst that forced him to re-evaluate the course of Ireland's political and revolutionary future. While his youthful optimism was shattered after witnessing the fallen state of America, a country he had hoped would embody democratic liberty, Moore recognized that the toil and pain that came with his fall into experience led to invaluable knowledge that challenged his romantic revolutionary philosophy. As a result, he adopted and later advocated a tempered course of action for Ireland, one that emulated the distinctly developing Canadian approach of moderation or a middle way. In his Canadian verses, Moore presents Canada as a middle ground that fosters religious tolerance, freedom, moderation, and economic prosperity. Thus, following his return, Moore, who remained passionate about the Irish cause throughout his life, preached a pacifist philosophy in the hope that what was achieved in Canada without revolutionary independence could be actualized in his defeated and war-torn homeland.

In order to appreciate why Weld's and Moore's views about immigration to Canada are at variance, it is first necessary to investigate both historical and personal influences that contributed to the shaping of their socio-political attitudes. Such an investigation will also explain why, despite their diverging backgrounds, Weld and Moore reacted in what were actually complimentary ways to America and Canada: the former was viewed as a crude and uncivilized dystopia, the latter as a more progressive and hospitable middle ground (discussed further below).

Born in Ireland within five years of each other, Weld and Moore were confronted with similar socio-political and historical contexts whose troubles were mounting in Great Britain and Europe during their formative years. Following the Seven Years War (1756-1763), Great Britain, along with its colonial territories, which had been pitted against such countries as France and Spain, had become a supreme power. Stability and prosperity, however, did not follow. Instead, England was in a state of perpetual crisis as the final quarter of the century witnessed the catastrophic effects of the American Revolution (1775-1783), the French Revolution (1789-1799), and the Irish Rebellions (1798 and 1803). Ireland became the greatest casualty of the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815). The conflict crippled the country's economy and led to heightened discontent. Tensions rose considerably toward the close of the eighteenth century as a result of economic suffering, spiritual starvation, and cultural loss.<sup>49</sup> Theobald Wolf Tone, "a disciple of the French Jacobins" (de Ford 16), responded to his country's woes by convincing the French to take over Ireland and invade England, thus aiding in the

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<sup>49</sup> Restrictions continued to be imposed on trade with Ireland. This caused, among the rural population, some of the most devastating living conditions in Western Europe (Kelly 13). Irish Catholics were becoming increasingly financially burdened due to forced payment of "tithes to support the alien Anglican Church" (13).

establishment of a republic. Aware of the possibility of insurrection, an apprehensive Great Britain enforced martial law and disarmed peasants in the most disaffected areas. When bad weather thwarted the French incursion of Ireland, the United Irishmen rallied to overthrow British domination without the support of the French, which led to the disastrous 1798 uprising<sup>50</sup> and eventually the failed rebellion of 1803 instigated by Robert Emmet.<sup>51</sup> To make matters worse, “in England, public virtue had been corrupted by private greed and false principles. Effeminacy, luxury, and sin were rampant there, especially in the circles of government where wicked men pursued public business for private gain” (Finlay and Sprague 72). As a consequence of the rampant anarchy that wrought havoc in the British Isles for decades, alarmed citizens longed for relief from the devastating aftermath of war. With the recognition that the Old World could no longer provide them with security, safety, and opportunity, a large number of British and Irish citizens determined to emigrate. Perceived by many as a *tabula rasa*, the New World was appealing because it granted “the opportunity of going back to first and true principles in civil and social life” (Tuckerman 81) and appeared to offer asylum not only for the disadvantaged who struggled but also for the affluent who rejected the idea of investing money in their country’s fluctuating economy.

Weld and Moore responded to the public demand for information on North America with studies that would allow their readers to make an informed decision if the state of affairs were to become excessively dire in the British Isles. However, their immediate reaction to the chaotic surroundings of turn-of-the-century Europe diverged

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<sup>50</sup> Although the uprising lasted only a few weeks, over thirty thousand people died and thousands of others immigrated. Among those who died was Tone, who took his own life after he was placed in British custody following his escape onboard a French ship, and Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who died of wounds sustained in battle.

<sup>51</sup> Having survived the first uprising, Emmet initiated a second revolt in response to the 1801 union of Great Britain and Ireland.

substantially because of their opposing religious and political affiliations. As the descendant of “learned and pious clergymen” (Craig 924), Weld, a well-educated Irish gentleman of wealth, lived a life of leisure as a result of the financial security established by his ancestors. A member of the Protestant Anglo-Irish minority, Weld was part of the ruling class in Ireland. He identified strongly with British ideology and standards because of his Anglican faith and British ancestry. Consequently, Weld was adverse to Roman Catholicism and abhorred the French because the Napoleonic Wars, which were in full flood, had caused such instability in the British Isles and Europe. Given America’s open anti-British sentiments and its alliance with the French and Catholics, it is not surprising that Weld casts the country in a negative light in his *Travels*. According to Martin Roth in his Introduction to *Travels*, Weld identified himself more as an Englishman than as an Irishman (xxii-xxiii).<sup>52</sup> A supporter of the union between England and Ireland, the conservative Weld sympathized little with the Catholic majority. Therefore, it is to be expected that “there are [in his *Travels*] no asides, attitudes, tones, that suggest an interest in, much less a sympathy for, the home cause that would erupt in violence the year after his return” (xxii-xxiii). Indeed, Weld’s *Travels* did not include among its target audience downtrodden Irish Catholics. Instead, it appealed to a financially viable audience looking to invest their capital in a flourishing economy rather than in the unstable British and Irish markets.<sup>53</sup> Weld was acutely aware that if this middle-to-upper-class audience were to abandon the comforts and luxuries of European life to which they were accustomed,

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<sup>52</sup> Roth points to the absence of anything more than trifling references to the Irish in *Travels* as proof of this claim.

<sup>53</sup> According to Roth, Weld “is especially alert to the operational complexities of the American economic system – agricultural, mercantile, and financial – particularly as they differ from English usages. Agriculture and trade are the primary topics for [his descriptions of] country and city” (xxi-xxii). This preoccupation is evidence that his text catered to a middle-class audience keen to learn more about economic prosperity in the New World.

they would not fare well in the wilds of Canada. In the end, the discouragement of immigration to North America was in large part based on the knowledge that wealthy people would be offended by the manners and democratic system because they were elites who valued privilege and status. However, the most telling reason for Weld's open discouragement of emigration is that he may have wanted to stop the flow of tenants from Irish farms to those in America and Canada. As an Anglo-Irish land owner, Weld, along with others like him, would suffer a tremendous economic loss should the exploited Catholic tenants take their labour, as well as their tithe and tax money, to the New World. Significantly, Weld, who was absent from Ireland during the fifteen month period<sup>54</sup> that preceded the first Irish Rebellion, did not remain firm on this point. Having witnessed the catastrophic uprising of 1798, along with the large scale massacre that ensued, Weld adjusted his position on immigration and, in 1801, wrote a paper "to divert Western emigration to Canada" at the request of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland (xx).

Unlike Weld, who considered himself first an Englishman and then an Irishman, Thomas Moore was synonymous with Ireland. As an Irish Catholic, Moore, who was made to feel like "a foreigner in his own country" (Kelly 13), was influenced by the principles of his faith on both a private and a public level (Strong 198). Prior to departing for North America following the failed Irish Rebellions, an ambitious Moore was closely aligned with the United Irishmen. This organization's main objective was to overthrow British domination of Ireland and terminate the Anglican Ascendancy. While studying at Trinity College, Moore established a firm friendship with patriotic party leader Robert Emmet whose revolutionary Jacobin philosophy influenced an already Pro-Irish and Pro-

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<sup>54</sup> Weld arrived in Philadelphia in November, 1795, and returned to Ireland via New York City in January, 1797.

Catholic Moore. Moore, unlike Weld, supported and identified with the radical movement occurring in France because the country was predominantly Catholic and fought against British oligarchy. Despite his association with Emmet and his expression of hatred for Ireland's oppressors in a letter he wrote for *The Press*,<sup>55</sup> Moore maintained that he knew only the basic outline of the aims of the United Irishmen and was never a member. However, his biographers remain divided on the issue.<sup>56</sup> Regardless of whether or not Moore was an active member, his association with this revolutionary union, along with his position as an Irish Catholic and "his firsthand experience of what he called English 'bigotry and misrule'" (Vail 41), contributed to his anti-government stance and his support of Jacobin principles. These affiliations also help explain why an optimistic Moore looked to America as a model of democratic hope.<sup>57</sup> Furthermore, Moore's political idealism explains why he was deeply disappointed when he witnessed a debased American "nation of legalized slavery, factionalism, and degraded public discourse and

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<sup>55</sup> In 1797, Moore wrote this anonymous and controversial letter expressing his endorsement of the organization's platform. *The Press* was a radical paper run by the United Irishmen and was later shut down by the government. According to Jeffery Vail, the letter was infused with "[t]reasonous sentiments" and intentionally echoed "the imagery, tone, and lexicon of revolutionary French writing, and Moore even urged his fellow students to emulate Napoleon" (47).

<sup>56</sup> Consistent among several of Moore's biographers is the belief that Emmet discouraged Moore from joining his faction out of concern that Moore's overprotective and disapproving mother would rouse suspicion. As a staunch nationalist (Mackey 8), Anastasia Moore was captivated by politics and was devoted to the Irish Catholic cause, teaching a three-year-old Moore "to repeat a political couplet on Henry Grattan, the Irish statesman and advocate of the Irish Catholic cause" (Vail 43). However, when she read the contents of Moore's letter in *The Press*, Anastasia insisted that Moore promise her that he would never again write about his views on Irish politics because of the risk of being accused of treason. Charles Cavendish Fulke Greville (1794-1865), who was a student at Trinity College, claims that Moore was indeed a member of the United Irishmen. Because Moore referred minimally in his diary to his affiliation with the association and its activities, and because Lord John Russell excised extensively any passages from Moore's letters that may have pertained to his role in the organization, it is almost impossible to come to an accurate conclusion on the matter. However, Terence de Vere White suggests that omissions of such pivotal incidents as Emmet's capture, trial, and execution, from Moore's diary and letters were likely intentional: "[w]ritten evidence of concern could have been very dangerous" (27).

Russell's edition, *Memoirs, Journal and Correspondence* (London 1853-1856), consists of 447 letters.

<sup>57</sup> Having recently gained independence from England with France's military assistance, America represented the ideals upheld by the United Irishmen.

manners” (41-42). With his dreams of a Western utopia dashed, Moore’s American verse warns his target audience of the travesty that awaits them should they follow France and America into revolutionary war. While Weld’s *Travels* catered to a predominantly wealthy and economically ambitious readership, Moore’s *Epistles* was directed mainly towards influential British and Irish politicians and fellow idealists who upheld a vision of America as libertarian and utilitarian.<sup>58</sup> With conflict at its height in Europe and the dream of an ideal America tarnished, Moore recognized the pressing need not only to find an alternative refuge for those who shared his idealism but also to appease their need for a solution to Ireland’s political problems. Moore found in Canada a promising substitute dogma and a sanctuary for the Irish. By conveying to “the eye of friendship” (Preface, *Moore’s Poems* 7) his endorsement of immigration to Canada, Moore ran the risk of reaching only a narrow readership, but it was a markedly more commanding one that could use its position of favour to bring about effective, meaningful, and non-violent change in Ireland.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Moore dedicates his epistles to Lord Viscount Strangford (1780-1855) a.k.a. Percy Clinton Sydney Smythe. Smythe succeeded to the Irish peerage after the death of his father (1801) and went to Trinity College with Moore; Miss Moore (d. 1834), Moore’s sister Kate; Joseph Atkinson Esq. (d. 1853), an Irishman who, along with Francis, Earl of Moira, attempted to establish a poet laureateship for Moore, who declined it; W.R. Spencer (1769-1834), an English poet and wit who was friends with such leading statesmen as William Pitt (1759-1806), Charles James Fox (1749-1806), and Richard Brinsley Sheridan (1751-1816); and Lady Charlotte Adelaide Constantia Rawdon (d. 1834) of Irish peerage. It is also important to note that the volume was dedicated to Sir Francis Rawdon, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Moira (1754-1826). Moira fought on the side of the British in the American War of Independence from 1775-1781. He also assisted in repatriating the Loyalists to the Halifax area.

<sup>59</sup>In his youth, Moore, a self-proclaimed rebel, straddled conflicting political sides, befriending the Prince of Whales, the Earl of Moira, and Russell, while also supporting United Irishmen like Emmet and Fitzgerald. Moore’s protean political and national loyalties garnered him a colourful array of friends. A pampered favourite in British drawing rooms, Moore enjoyed the hospitality and attention he received from influential political men in England. However, his strong affiliation with members of the Whig party may have been strategic. While L.A.G. Strong insists that “[a]s a political thinker, Moore was unimportant” (212) and that he had no real influence over English politics (214), according to Linda Kelly, “[h]is favoured place among the Whigs, the only party committed to Catholic emancipation, gave him an influence he would never have had if he had stayed on in Dublin after the Act of Union” (2). Thus, it is possible that through his *Epistles*, Moore attempted to sway his companions to bring about change in Ireland.

What is curious, however, is that although Weld and Moore establish a similar vision of America and Canada, the immediate critical response to *Travels* and *Epistles* was remarkably different. Contemporary reviews show that while Weld's text was "enthusiastically received" (Roth xx) by British critics, who complimented his position on the New World, Moore was rebuked and his reputation was damaged despite promoting a comparable image. The question this raises is whether or not the treatment of their respective texts was not in some way biased due to their religious and political associations.<sup>60</sup> Weld and Moore were attacked in American periodicals (including the criticism of Washington Irving) for their damaging views of the Republic, and twentieth- and twenty-first-century critics continue to perpetuate biased and misguided treatment of the work of these Irishmen. Such modern critics do so by focusing only on positive reviews of *Travels* and negative reviews of *Epistles*.

A testament to the immense popularity and generally positive reception of Weld's *Travels* are the numerous editions and translations that were issued in quick succession. Translated into Dutch, Italian, French, and twice into German,<sup>61</sup> *Travels* appeared in both one and two-volume editions during the first two years of its publication in London. A final two-volume edition appeared in 1807, which was twice reprinted in New York (1968 and 1970). An abridged version appeared in London in 1801 and 1807. Written in epistolary form, Weld's *Travels* consists of thirty-eight letters, sixteen of which focus on

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<sup>60</sup> Despite being a favourite in British society, Moore "remained a staunch advocate of the Irish cause" (Strong 204). Thus, the poor treatment he endured in the press may have been motivated by reviewers' hatred for the causes he continued to support.

<sup>61</sup> Respectively: *Reizen door de staaten van Noord-Amerika, en de provintiën van Opper- en Neder-Canada*, translated by Sander van Hoek (3v., The Hague, 1801–2); *Viaggio nel Canada*, translated by Pietro Spada (3v., Milan, 1819); *Voyage au Canada, dans les années 1795, 1796, et 1797* (3v., Paris, [1799]) and *Voyage aux États-Unis d'Amérique, et au Canada* (2v., Paris, 1807). Isaac Weld's *des jüngern Reisen durch die staaten von Nord-Amerika, und die provinzen Ober- und Nieder-Canada and Reise durch die Nordamerikanischen Freistaaten und durch Ober- und Unter-Canada* (Berlin 1800). Two later two-volume editions appeared under different titles in 1800 and 1805 (Craig 925).



his journey through Upper and Lower Canada, which took place from July until October, 1796. Twenty-two letters frame his Canadian observations and contain commentary on the eleven months he spent travelling to Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey, and New York. For Weld, the trip through America was well thought-out and its intended purpose served a public function. Aware of the demand for accurate and detailed information on America, Weld writes in his Preface to *Travels* that he was “induced to cross the Atlantic, for the purpose of examining with his own eyes into the truth of the various accounts which had been given of the flourishing and happy condition of the United States of America, and of ascertaining whether, in case of future emergency, any part of those territories might be looked forward to as an eligible and agreeable place of abode” (iii). Disturbed over the troubles in Ireland and the distressing conditions of the Continent in general, Weld, who was pessimistic about the future of war-torn Europe, made it his goal to observe the emerging young Republic and record his findings. He did so in order to aid potential Irish immigrants who were prompted by political instability, religious intolerance, and financial woes to abandon their homeland. A topographical writer and traveller, Weld extended his visit with the express desire to observe the social, political, and geographical landscape in Canada and to assess whether or not it was better able than America to sustain a society agriculturally, politically, and communally.

The reason for the immediate and widespread popularity of Weld’s *Travels*, which was enthusiastically received by both the public and the press, was fourfold. Prior to his journey through North America, few other specifically travel writers had spent an extended period of time in the New World. The length of Weld’s journey necessarily implied that he would generate an abundance of material that would be invaluable to

readers who craved an accurate and comprehensive account of those territories they knew so little of and which could eventually become their permanent homes. This first contributing factor is inextricably linked to the second: timing. When Weld's *Travels* first appeared, it provided readers with an early or, for some, a first realistic, rather than romanticized, account of those characteristics of North American life either merely glossed by others or generally unfamiliar to his readership. Because few resources dealing with this much-sought-after information existed, Weld's travel text met with little competition.<sup>62</sup> What appealed most to the public regarding this "substantial piece of work" (Craig 925) were not only the vivid and precise verbal representations of nature and topography, but also the detailed maps and plates illustrated by Weld himself, which added authenticity to his journal (among some of the first sketches of famous and picturesque localities made available to the public). Of further interest were the wealth of economical and statistical facts and the useful discussions of the prospects for agriculture and commerce. The final source of appeal were the unflattering charges Weld placed against America for its poor and unpardonable treatment of Natives, its barbarous institutionalization of slavery, the repulsive and wretched state of American cities, "and the inefficiency of American agriculture" (Bentley, "Isaac Weld" 225).

The critical response to Weld's work was complimentary. A supportive two-part review of his *Travels* appeared in the *Monthly Review* in September and October, 1799, shortly after its publication. Interpretive commentary is absent from the review. Its aim instead is briefly to introduce readers to Weld's socio-political construction of America, drawing particular attention to observations "concerning the manners, customs, present

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<sup>62</sup> Bentley observes that the next book to discuss similar information was John Lambert's *Travels through Canada, and the United States of North America, in the Years 1806, 1807, and 1808* ("Isaac Weld" 224) and that the similar title suggests it is in part a response piece (225).

state, and internal policy of the American colonies” (207). Despite the “frequently inelegant and incorrect” (207) style of Weld’s composition, the reviewer points to the enriching and entertaining factors present in the travelogue and dedicates substantial space to those passages he deems valuable and informative. Among the descriptions highlighted by the reviewer are Weld’s summary of the Pennsylvanian jail, its laws, and its punishments for various crimes; his favourable rendition of the city of Washington, which he prophesizes will become “at a future day, [...] the grand emporium of the west, and a rival in magnitude and splendour the cities of the old world” (Weld, *Travels* I: 80); the celebration of General Washington’s birthday in Philadelphia; the abominable treatment of slaves; the challenging weather conditions; the awe-inspiring Falls at Niagara; and the devastating and cruel treatment of Indians by Americans, who wish to exterminate the Natives.

Of significance is the absence of commentary on Weld’s experience in Canada. Although almost half of the letters deal with Upper and Lower Canada, the only entry the reviewer includes is one that focuses on how Canadians are “immersed in ignorance and superstition” (10). This decision is surprising given the reviewer’s awareness of Weld’s position on emigration, which he summarizes immediately following this passage from the author. While Weld did not endorse the spirit of emigration sweeping his nation, he did believe ““that no part of America equals the vicinity of Montreal in Canada, for an English or Irish settler; there he will find himself surrounded by his countrymen; and there he will still see ample room for thousands of additional inhabitants”” (Weld qtd. in *Monthly Review* 11). If the purpose of his *Travels* was in part to inform prospective immigrants to choose Canada over America, as it was the more promising and prosperous of the two, Weld’s message is compromised by a reviewer who is keen to highlight the

ailments of America while overlooking the favourable remarks made about Canada. Taking into consideration that a reviewer's role is to draw attention to that which he believes will be of most interest to his readers, it is possible that his preoccupation with scornful portrayals of the young Republic simply mirrors public interest. If this is the case, it is plausible to conjecture that those who read Weld's *Travels* paid little attention to his position on Canada.

Because extensive reviews of Weld's *Travels* at the time of its publication are difficult to apprehend, the majority of them being out of print, twenty-first-century academics are limited to what is at their disposal and are forced to rely on summaries of reviews provided in earlier scholarship. For example, most scholars reference the *Monthly Review*, as well as *Historical and Miscellaneous Reviews*, which appeared in June, 1855. This, however, causes the perpetuation of skewed and inaccurate representations of reception because earlier studies overlook those reviews that indicate that Americans were incensed by Weld (Eldridge, "Anacreon Moore").<sup>63</sup> In *Historical and Miscellaneous Reviews*, *Travels* is mentioned in a review of half-brother Richard Weld's *A Vacation Tour in the United States and Canada* (1855). The popularity and lasting importance of Isaac Weld's text are confirmed by this reviewer who, fifty-six years after its first edition, dedicates his opening paragraphs to a flattering assessment of the book that "excited much respectful attention" (610). Pointing to the unavoidable inaccuracies and biases that arise when sojourners compose their accounts under pressure as they move hastily and impatiently across 'the colonies,' the reviewer praises Weld for providing his readers with "a sound, able, interesting work: no offspring of flippant haste;

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<sup>63</sup> In "Anacreon Moore and America," Herbert G. Eldridge claims that Weld's "supposed mercenary concerns made [him an] easy [target] for genteel critics" (54). Unfortunately, Eldridge does not refer to specific examples of these unfavourable reactions, nor does he cite his sources.

but the matured, well-considered result of three years' travel" (610).<sup>64</sup> Significantly, this criticism of the impossibility of conveying one's experience with impartiality while travelling in haste was directed at Moore by several of his contemporary reviewers who used it as validation for their dismissal of his evaluation of America.

With an appointment to the office of the Registrar of the Vice-Admiralty Court of Bermuda awaiting him, Moore arrived in Virginia on November 3, 1803, six years after Weld had completed his own sojourn. Although Moore was absent from Europe for almost the same length of time, he spent less than six months touring the United States and Canada.<sup>65</sup> For Moore, the original motivation to visit the New World was not to satisfy his curiosity, nor was it to aid his countrymen in determining whether or not they should flee their riotous and economically depleted homeland and invest in North America. It was purely financial.<sup>66</sup> In his Preface to *Epistles*, Moore indicates that it was his hope that the publication of his latest verse would help lift him out of debt. In fact, he goes as far as to say that had it not been for the appealing probability of financial gain, he likely would not have published his volume because he felt it was comprised of little more than disorganized trifles. By April, 1804, however, Moore had become increasingly displeased with his position in Bermuda and was determined to return to England. It was at this point that the purpose of Moore's sojourn took a turn. Instead of sailing to Halifax

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<sup>64</sup> As mentioned earlier, Weld was actually in North America only for fifteen months.

<sup>65</sup> Moore left England on September 25, 1803, and returned to England in October 1804; however, he spent four months in Bermuda at the outset of these travels.

<sup>66</sup> Concern about his pecuniary obligations is expressed in a letter to his mother written on board the *Boston* on May 11, 1804. The letter reveals Moore's preoccupation with fulfilling his contract with Carpenter: "My first object when I return shall be to discharge my obligations to Carpenter: as I must, for that purpose, seclude myself entirely, the less you say about the time of my return the better. The completion of the work I have in hand will much more than extricate me from all engagements I am under" (*Letters* 66). In an earlier letter written to John Dalby on Monday, September 5<sup>th</sup>, 1803, Moore expresses satisfaction with his decision to pursue a career abroad because it will lead to financial security: "I have every reason to expect it will be considerably advantageous [...] for a young adventurer like me, it would be silly to neglect such a promising opportunity of advancement" (44).

and then on to England, Moore took advantage of an opportunity to travel overland to places like Virginia, Norfolk, Richmond, Washington, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. On July 21, 1804, Moore crossed the Canadian border. He travelled to Chippewa and then on to Niagara before making his way down the St. Lawrence to Montreal and terminating his jaunt in Halifax. There, he spent three weeks waiting impatiently for the *Boston* to take him home.<sup>67</sup> The decision to prolong his return was inspired in part by his acknowledgement that the advancement of these countries, still in infancy, had become an “object of such interesting speculation” (Moore, Preface, *Moore’s Poems* 96). His work-in-progress could become, then, an invaluable resource that would inform his readership of a country that had been looked upon as a model of democracy and freedom. Eager for monetary relief, Moore may well have taken this opportunity to exploit his readers’ curiosity. He may also have deliberately infused his epistles with unflattering images of America, knowing it would make his volume more attractive to the resentful British public. Thus, he indirectly, but perhaps intentionally, drew their attention to the encouraging images of Canada in his verse.

Although a greatly admired Moore was infinitely more accomplished and internationally recognized than his contemporary both before and after his sojourn to North America, the critical response to his oeuvre never reached the consensus Weld’s singular work is said to have garnered early on. While Weld experienced mainly supportive and flattering reviews and public approval, the critical reception both at home

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<sup>67</sup> Moore discusses his intentions to tour North America in two letters to his mother, one composed from Bermuda on March 19, 1804, and the other written at New York on May 7, 1804. In the first letter, Moore writes, “I shall endeavour, if my purse will compass it, to see a little more of America than before I had an opportunity of doing” (*Letters* 63). In the second letter, he states, “my intention is, if I can manage it, to come up by land through the States, and rejoin him [Captain Douglas] at Halifax, from whence I believe he will be sent to England” (64).

and abroad of Moore's *Epistles* was resoundingly contentious and scathing.<sup>68</sup> With his moral character already in question following the publication of *Odes of Anacreon* (London 1800) and *The Poetical Works of the Late Thomas Little, Esq.* (London 1801), Moore, whose youthful compositions had earned him a "reputation for licentiousness" (de Vere White 18), was treated with contempt by critics. These critics lambasted him for "doing more to debase and undermine British morality than any force that had touched Britain in a century" (Jordan 63). Although *Anacreon* was published as a translation into English verse by Moore and the fictional character Thomas Little was credited with writing the verse that appeared in Moore's second volume, the roguish and debauched personas created in these works were nonetheless identified with the poet. Their morally offensive actions and devious thoughts plagued the critical reception of Moore's *Epistles* for two reasons. Because the lustful and corrupting persona of these past works made an appearance in several of the poems featured in *Epistles* and because, for the first time, Moore's name appeared on the cover of his collection, critics interpreted this as confirmation of their suspicion that Moore and his speaker were indeed interchangeable. The consequence of this charge was that Moore's socio-political views about North America were largely overlooked by outraged English critics who were preoccupied with the salacious and compromising material included alongside those poems dealing with America and Canada. If Moore published *Epistles* with the intention of educating his readership in the political, social, and geographical conditions of America and Canada with the hope that they, in turn, would make a sound decision regarding which of the two

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<sup>68</sup> *Epistles* consisted of approximately one hundred ballads, songs, descriptive lyrics, satires, epistles, and amorous verse that filled 341 pages. Some of the morally compromising verse was written before Moore left England, but all poems included in "Poems Relating to America" were composed while he was travelling through America and Canada.

countries would be more desirable for beginning life anew, his purpose was thwarted by unforgiving critics who urged the public to disregard Moore's text altogether because of its scandalous content.

The most caustic personal attack directed at Moore and his *Epistles* appeared in the *Edinburgh Review* in July, 1806. In his review, Francis Jeffery focuses on Moore's amatory verse and accuses the poet of polluting the minds of innocent readers by propagating immorality and corruption with his sexually suggestive poems (456).<sup>69</sup> What concerns Jeffery most is that by presenting "vile and vulgar sensuality" in the guise of "exalted feeling and tender emotions" (457), Moore will pervert the minds of his more delicate female readers. According to Jeffery, male readers, in their experience, will recognize the ludicrous nature of the encounters depicted by Moore and will view his verse with nothing but "disgust and contempt" (458). Undiscerning women, however, will not see that the "raptures" described by Moore are inspired by "the unhallowed fruits of cheap and vulgar prostitution, [...] casual amours, and the chorus of habitual debauchery" and not "innocent love, or the extravagance of a romantic attachment" (458). Furthermore, because Moore dedicates his epistles to reputable people with whom he claims to share an intimate acquaintance, an alarmed Jeffery prophesies the infestation of immorality among all levels of society.<sup>70</sup> Compelled by the need to warn the public of the morally compromising material, a distracted Jeffery makes only passing reference to

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<sup>69</sup> Belaboring this point, Jeffery maintains that a "truly despicable" and "cold-blooded" (456) Moore takes advantage of his unsuspecting readers by deliberately "concealing" his inappropriate and offensive verse under the guise of "refinement" (Jeffery 457). Unlike John Wilmot, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Rochester and John Dryden, who admit to their own "wickedness" and write not to "corrupt the principles of their readers" but simply to "indulge their own vein of gross riot and debauchery" (457), Moore, "without the apology of unruly passion or tumultuous desires, sits down to ransack the impure places of his memory for inflammatory images and expressions, and commits them laboriously to writing" (456).

<sup>70</sup> The reason given is that "[b]y these channels, the book will easily pass into circulation in those classes of society, which it is of most consequence to keep free of contamination, and from which its reputation and its influence will descend with the greatest effect to the great body of the community" (Jeffery 460).



the political and social commentary Moore makes in his American epistles. Although he maintains that “To Thomas Hume, Esq., M.D from the City of Washington” is “a very favourable specimen” (464), Jeffery insists that because “these passages [...] bear but a small proportion to the objectionable contents of the volume, [...] they] cannot be allowed to atone for the demerits of a publication which we would wish to see consigned to universal reprobation” (465). Restricting the reprinting of Moore’s political verse to only one poem in his review, calling for the banishment of *Epistles* because of the immorality found in the amatory verse, and omitting any mention of Moore’s Canadian verse suggest Jeffery did not appreciate the value of those observations made by Moore about American and Canadian society. Nor did he deem it necessary that the British public be made aware of them.

This was not the first time the editors of this periodical had taken aim at Moore. Derided in its pages for *Anacreon* and *Thomas Little*, Moore’s reputation was relatively unscathed because, at the time, the journal was new and had little influence.<sup>71</sup> By 1806, the conservative and traditional *Edinburgh Review* was well established and respected. Reputed for its valuable literary opinions, the periodical had considerable sway. Thus, its harsh tirade against Moore threatened not only his career, but his integrity as well. Based on his correspondence with both George Thomson and Mary Godfrey on Wednesday, July 11, 1806, it is clear that Moore was concerned with the *Edinburgh Review*’s reception of his latest volume, perhaps because its failure to endorse his work could mean poor sales. It is also possible that Moore recognized the likelihood that his discussions of the dispiriting state of America and the more encouraging scene in Canada would be overshadowed or entirely ignored by reviewers keen to attack the licentious content of his

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<sup>71</sup> *Edinburgh Review* was founded by Jeffery, Smythe, and Henry Brougham in 1802.

volume. Eager to read their assessment, Moore writes to Thomson: “The Edinburgh Review will be published by the time you receive this, and if you will immediately forward me a Copy of it under the covers I have mentioned, you will do me a kindness which I shall feel very grateful for” (*Letters* 100). Written the same day, an anxious Moore predicts rejection in his letter to Godfrey: “I wait but for the arrival of the Edinburgh Review, and then ‘a long farewell to all my greatness.’ London shall never see me act the farce of gentlemanship in it any more, and, ‘like a bright exhalation in the evening,’ I shall vanish and be forgotten” (101). As the letter to Godfrey reveals, Moore knew his salacious poems would likely cause controversy and that the *Edinburgh Review*’s response could jeopardize his career.

What Moore did not anticipate was the biting and embittered attack directed at his person. According to Linda Kelly, as a reviewer Jeffrey was free to be scornful of Moore’s poetry, “but he had no right to accuse him, as he had done, of a deliberate intention to corrupt his readers’ minds” (66-67). With his personal and professional reputation at stake, Moore challenged Jeffery to a duel.<sup>72</sup> Accepting the challenge, Jeffery met Moore at Chalk Farm and while waiting for their seconds to load their pistols, they conversed amicably. Once ready, both men prepared to fire their pistols, but the stand off was interrupted by the police who had been informed of the duel by William Spencer.<sup>73</sup> Moore and Jeffery were then taken to the Bow Street prison and placed in the same jail cell, where they struck up an immediate lifelong friendship. While this truce led to a

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<sup>72</sup> Notifying Thomson on August 6, 1806, of his disappointment in the article, which had “all the *malignity* [he] expected, but not half the *sting*” (*Letters* 102), Moore discloses his intention to visit Edinburgh. The reason for this trip is discussed in a letter written the same month to Viscount Percy Strangford, one of the founding editors of the journal and the inspiration behind Moore’s epistle I: “I have thought it proper to call out Mr. Jeffrey, who has been so long abusing you and me, and we are to fight to-morrow morning at Chalk Farm” (102).

<sup>73</sup> Spencer was one of Moore’s seconds. It was also to him that Moore dedicated epistle VIII. It is not known if he told the police of the meeting accidentally or intentionally.

public apology from Jeffery printed in the *Morning Post* on August 18, 1806,<sup>74</sup> the press turned the incident into a farce. This infuriated an already humiliated Moore, who, prior to the publication of *Epistles*, was “so feted and admired” (70).<sup>75</sup> Although he retracted his statement, Jeffery’s review influenced how other periodicals approached Moore’s *Epistles*. Taking their cue from Jeffery, “the *Beau Monde* accused him of prostituting his genius; the *Critical Review* hinted darkly that he was trying to initiate youth into ‘most impure mysteries’; [and] the *British Critic* announced sanctimoniously that it would not add to the evil it engendered by deigning to review his volume” (70).

What is most unfortunate is that the controversy generated by the duel continues to overshadow discussion and analysis of those poems dealing with Canada. For example, Stephen Gwynn’s *Thomas Moore: English Men of Letters* (1905), W.F. Trench’s *Tom Moore* (1934), Herbert O. Mackey’s *The Life of Thomas Moore: Ireland’s National Poet* (1951), and Miriam Allen de Ford’s *Thomas Moore* (1967), all make reference to the duel, but they do not examine the poems. In some instances, they pass “over [Moore’s]

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<sup>74</sup> Jeffery’s apology was recorded by Moore in a letter to Lady Donegal on August 29, 1806. In it, Jeffery states: “I feel perfectly for you how disagreeable it is to be obliged to start one’s self as the butt for all the wild constructions of the public; misrepresentation, in some way or the other, is the inevitable lot of every one who stands in such a predicament; but the squibs against you were only momentary, and a *fair tribute to the spirit with which you vindicated your character will remain*” (*Letters* 105). In an earlier letter written to Lady Donegal on August 17, 1806, Moore recounts Jeffery’s sentiments: “He acknowledged that it is the opinion, not only of himself but his friends, that the *Review* contained too much that was exceptionable, and that he is sincerely sorry for having written it” (104). Along with these letters, Moore also reported the developments to Joseph Atkinson, to whom he dedicated epistle V, in a letter written in late August or early September, 1806: “he assured me that if he had known the least of the character which I hold among those I live with, he never should have written such an article – confessed that it was exceptionable in many respects, and in short was very sorry it had ever appeared” (106). What is clear based on these examples is that Moore was consumed by the incident and spoke of little else.

<sup>75</sup> At first, Moore was criticized by *The Morning Post* when it reported that Jeffery’s pistol was not loaded while his was. On August 18, the paper retracted its claim when both parties maintained that their respective weapons were indeed loaded and that there was no cause to suspect foul play. However, *The Times* took this opportunity to ridicule the poet when it reported that “[t]he pistol of Mr Jeffries [sic] was not loaded with a ball, and that of Mr Moore had nothing more than a pellet of paper. So that if the police had not appeared, this alarming duel would have turned out to be a game at pop-guns” (Kelly 69). In addition, “[t]he *Star* made fun of the seconds, and their difficulties in measuring the right distance between the antagonists, ‘whether it should be a *hexameter* or a *pentameter*, of dactyls or spondees” (69).

strenuous expedition [in North America] as if it were a mere pleasure cruise” (Jordan 117).<sup>76</sup> L.A.G. Strong’s *The Minstrel Boy: A Portrait of Tom Moore* (1937), Terence de Vere White’s *Tom Moore: The Irish Poet* (1977), and, most recently, Kelly’s *Ireland’s Minstrel: A Life of Tom Moore: Poet, Patriot and Byron’s Friend* (2006) are more detailed biographies that dedicate entire chapters to the incident between Moore and Jeffery: de Vere White’s “The Challenge,” Strong’s “The Man of Action,” and Kelly’s “The Interrupted Duel.” In each case, however, commentary on the significance of the poems is absent and summary and observation about his travels are substituted. This preoccupation with the titillating scandal surrounding Moore’s personal life, as well as the legendary reputation for licentiousness constructed and upheld by critics and scholars for centuries, not only eclipses valuable discussion of the Canadian content in his *Epistles* but also points to a telling continuity. That is, such critical practice both recalls and anticipates, respectively, how fellow Irishmen MacConmara and Adam Kidd are dealt with by their critics. In each case, an unsubstantiated image of debauched and dissenting Irishmen is perpetuated at the expense of critically productive analysis. This is unfortunate, as such examinations could have revealed a distinctly Irish perception of Canada upon which future interpretations and conceptualizations of the country could reliably have been founded.

The gratuitously unforgiving reception of Moore’s *Epistles* in England foreshadowed, and to some extent fuelled, a series of vicious assaults directed at his character and verse, which were printed in reputable American periodicals following Jeffery’s infamous diatribe. Before embarking on a summation of the pejorative reception of Moore’s *Epistles* in America, it is important to stress that both the poet and his earlier

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<sup>76</sup> For example, de Vere White glosses Moore’s experience in Canada in three sentences.

works received warm and enthusiastic approval from American literary circles. This complicates understanding of the inflammatory American charges laid against Moore's morality following the publication of his controversial *Epistles*. During the period 1802 to 1806, Moore had become "the most extensively re-printed contemporary poet" (Jordan 118) in America.<sup>77</sup> As a result, a favoured Moore was both widely known and admired as the notorious author of *Anacreon* and *Thomas Little*, which "had so captivated America" (107) before he arrived in the New World. Moore's popularity and fame in America were made evident immediately to the poet, who speaks highly of the flattering reception of his work in letters to his mother.<sup>78</sup> Concerned that his literary status would go unrecognized in a country both unfamiliar and foreign to him, Moore expresses relief and gratitude in a letter written from Norfolk, Virginia on November 7, 1803, when he learns that he is not only welcomed but also equally feted in America as he had been back in England: "I saw some of my own songs among the music-books, and this morning I met with a periodical publication full of extracts from my *Anacreon* and *Little's* poems, and speaking of me in the most flattering terms of eulogium" (*Letters* 51). Similarly, on June 26, 1804, Moore writes of the encouraging public approval and gracious hospitality he received while at Philadelphia. This inspired him to consider that particular city the only place along his journey where he would have liked to have spent more time: "my name had prepossessed them more strongly than I deserve. But their affectionate attentions went far beyond this deference to reputation; I was quite caressed while there;

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<sup>77</sup> In 1802, Joseph Dennie reprinted excerpts from *Anacreon* and *Thomas Little* in the popular and influential *Port Folio* magazine. Other editors soon followed by republishing these same titles in Philadelphia (Maxwell 1804) and New York (Longworth 1805).

<sup>78</sup> Moore did not write many letters or have "much to say in those he did" (Dowden et al., Introduction xvii). For Moore, letters were primarily a "means of communication," not a "medium of artistic expression" (xvii). Letters that do possess aesthetic quality are found among those sent to his mother from America between 1803 and 1804 (xvii).

and their anxiety to make me known, by introductory letters, to all their friends on my way, and two or three little poems of a very flattering kind, which some of their choicest men addressed to me, all went so warmly to my heart, that I felt quite a regret in leaving them” (69). Among those men to whom Moore refers as actively promoting his work in America was Joseph Dennie. Seven complimentary poems about Moore were printed by Dennie in his *Port Folio* within the year-and-a-half that followed Moore’s departure. The steady publication of flattering verse dedicated to Moore by men who were part of Philadelphia’s literary circle reveals that Moore had won American public approval. It also suggests that Moore’s ethical character was not in question, as it was in England, even though American literary critics were well aware of the licentious content found in *Anacreon* and *Thomas Little*.

Immediately following the publication of *Epistles* in America, Moore experienced a reversal of fortune as resentful friends and critics alike turned against him, berating his work and person in reviews and banning his volume from bookstalls. American reviewers were not particularly offended by the sexually suggestive and morally compromising verse that catapulted Moore into scandal in England. Instead, they fixed their disgruntled gaze on his Juvenalian poems, which disclosed unfavorable commentary on American character, manners, politics, and culture.<sup>79</sup> Due to the vitriolic treatment of America in his epistles, Moore anticipated contentious reactions to his work and addressed these concerns in his Preface.<sup>80</sup> While the immediate response in America to *Epistles* was

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<sup>79</sup> These epistles include “To Miss Moore: From Norfolk, in Virginia, November, 1803,” “To Lord Viscount Forbes: From the City of Washington,” “To Thomas Hume, Esq. M.D.,” and “To the Honourable W.R. Spencer: From Buffalo, Upon Lake Erie.”

<sup>80</sup> Aware that people will take offence to his opinions and that his tone of satire may not have been the most appropriate choice, Moore remains resolute on the authenticity of his views regarding America. He writes, “All I presume to answer for is the fidelity of the picture which I have given; and though prudence might

neutral because “most American critics of the belles-lettres were Federalists and pro-British [...and because] almost everyone had made much of the charming Moore and his verse, [...] by the beginning of September, the press had about made up its mind that Columbia had indeed been egregiously insulted. Thereafter, editors and reviews fell into line to defend the national honor” (Eldridge, “Anacreon Moore” 57). Numerous points of disputation were levelled at Moore by his critics as a means to discredit his unflattering and damaging depiction of America. Among the most prevalent charges are that the time Moore spent in America was too brief to develop an accurate, fair, and comprehensive opinion;<sup>81</sup> that given his profession and the trifling, inconsequential, and disreputable nature of his earlier verse, he could not be trusted to provide his readers with an honest, ethical, or expert account of his experience;<sup>82</sup> that he came to America a pretentious snob

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have dictated gentler language, truth, I think, would have justified severer” (Preface, *Moore's Poems* 96-97).

<sup>81</sup> In *The Polyanthos*, a periodical based in Boston, the reviewer notes that “for a man to pass with such hasty strides through this country as he did, and yet to pour out so much ridicule and abuse, is not the mark of a gentleman or man of candour, but of a mind contracted, pragmatival, and censorious” (Eldridge, “Anacreon Moore” 60).

While the brevity of Moore's stay was a point of contention among several critics, who accused him of basing his assessment of America on too little information, these critics fail to note that Moore addresses this very issue in his Preface. He makes it clear to his readers that his assessment of American manners and customs is based on a brief glimpse from a distance. He calls on them to decide how much weight they wish to place on the merit of his observations: “My reader, however, is apprised of the very cursory observation upon which these opinions are founded, and can easily decide for himself upon the degree of attention or confidence which they merit” (*Moore's Poems* 97). By placing the power in his readers' hands, Moore challenges critics who attack his impressions as they are only meaningful and influential if his readers deem them to be.

Significantly, Weld was criticized by Washington Irving for basing his uncomplimentary impressions on a relatively brief sojourn, yet Weld's critics often fail to mention this point.

<sup>82</sup> In “Anacreon Moore *versus* America” (VI September 1806, 220), the reviewer argues that Moore's accomplishments “certainly do not imply any great capacity for impartially surveying the manners of a nation” (qtd. in Eldridge, “Anacreon Moore” 58). Eldridge elaborates upon this popular claim, stating that critics felt that “a facile talent for love balladry was hardly the best recommendation for judging national character or political innovation on a grand scale” (57-58). Additionally, in order to substantiate their claim that Moore was unqualified to assess the state of American society, reviewers used his previous licentious works, along with those poems of a similar nature included in *Epistles*, of which there were many, to discredit his morality and authority. Dennie, who once admired and praised Moore in periodic commendations featured in his *Port Folio*, claimed that Moore was not in a position to judge America. In “A Notice, Bibliographical and Critical, on Thomas Moore,” which accompanied the second American

who understandably, although not justifiably, loathed what he considered to be an uncivilized and barbarous society;<sup>83</sup> that his impressions were skewed by the anti-

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edition of *Epistles* published by John Watts in Philadelphia in September, 1806, Dennie points to “the frivolity and immorality of his verse” (59) as justification for this accusation. According to Eldridge this “kind of counterattack was successful enough for the time and occasion” (58). Dennie’s seventy-page diatribe “was by far the most serious and extended American literary critique of the whole controversy” (59). Its purpose was to forewarn the public of the sinful and corrupting content in Moore’s verse.

Given that Moore’s popularity and celebrity in America were firmly established *because* of the debauched verse for which his British reviewers had condemned him, the methods used by angry American critics to discredit the commentary made by Moore about the dire state of America in his *Epistles* seems hypocritical. If *Anacreon* and *Thomas Little* were well received, then accusations from American reviewers of Moore’s moral depravity lose their magnitude and effect because their earlier reception suggests these qualities were not compromising to them.

<sup>83</sup> It is true that prior to his departure for America, Moore had grown accustomed to the role of “petted darling” (de Ford 57) among British polite society. Once in America, Moore, who “was not made for rough provincial society [as he] was urban as well as urbane” (56), upheld gentlemanly customs. As a result, Moore was appalled and disgusted by the rudeness of Americans who lacked decorum. In de Ford’s words, “He liked nothing in America except the nearest approximation it could offer to the English circles so dear to him. [...] Some of his bias [...] must be credited (or debited) to his shrinking from the uncultured provincialism of rural and small town America in 1803” (56-57).

However, the slanderous attack featured in the *Norfolk Herald*, which then inspired a similar assault in *The Literary Magazine and American Register*, is unsound as it is based on a logical fallacy: *Argumentum ad Hominem*. By attacking Moore’s personality instead of substantiating why his depiction of America as “inchoate, amorphous, and ugly” (Gwynn 33) is false, reviewers rely on red herrings to distract their audience from the topic of the debate. For example, in the *Norfolk Herald*, the reviewer launches into a lengthy ridicule of the poet’s manners but does not explain why he thinks Moore’s assessment of America is incorrect: “this little cock-sparrow of a songster came hopping across the Atlantic, to sing his amours in the wilds of America. [...] He could make rhymes on any and every *little* thing; a nose, an eye, a cheek, a curl, a lip, the tip of an ear, a little fly, a flea, or a gnat’s toenail enchanted him. He looked like a being born in a jelly glass, handed round on a cake, fed on sugar plums, and educated among the dreams of fancy; the little spirit could hide himself under a lady’s eye lash, and expire with delight; in his odes he gets into a million of scrapes, jumps from a tendril, hides in a curl, sips from a lip, perches on a bosom.... Always singing, sighing, and evaporating” (qtd. in Eldridge, “Anacreon Moore” 58). When remarking on Moore’s commentary about Norfolk, Virginia, this same reviewer says, “we ought to pity him instead of being angry with him – for he was so near to the ground that every odour assailed him with double effect, and he had such microscopic eyes, that he could see worms in the fairest face; but he could neither see any thing large, or write on any subject that required a capacious mental survey” (58).

Such humiliating descriptions of Moore’s person and personality were popular and helped appease public outcry. The public demand for such demeaning rebuttals is evident, as this review was reprinted in *The Literary Magazine and American Register* (6 Sept 1806, 220-22), the *Richmond Enquirer* (16 Sept 1806), and the *New York Evening Post* (7 Nov 1806). In *The Literary Magazine and American Register*, Charles Brockden uses the *Herald* review as a springboard for his own rebuke: “What would have claimed his respect? A knowledge of his general character, and a perusal of his works, will tell us *what*. He must have found plenty of excellent Madeira; many admirers of such writers as Anacreon, Tibullus, and Secundus; many who conceive the highest human excellence to consist in keeping up a contest of singing, drinking, and jesting till midnight, over a dinner table, in producing an extemporary epigram, or quoting a luscious description. They must be learned; that is, they must be able to retail sentences of Greek and Latin in common conversation. They must be polite; that is, they must give suppers, and preside at them with well adjusted elbows, a cravat fresh from the laundress, and indefatigable attention to the great man who is their guest” (Brockden qtd. in Eldridge, “Anacreon Moore” 58).



Jeffersonian and British partisan company he kept;<sup>84</sup> and, that he perpetuated a prejudicial tradition of travel writing that purposefully cast America as crude and chaotic in order to gain popularity in England.<sup>85</sup> In “Anacreon Moore,” Herbert W. Eldridge offers a revealing explanation for why Moore’s character was under siege: it was necessary that Moore’s “vices and follies” be exposed and that his character be defamed and vilified in order to reverse supportive “public and private opinion” (57) and subvert

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<sup>84</sup> Because he heard numerous disparaging descriptions of America from British consuls and naval officers on board the *Phaeton* and because his imagination was exposed to unflattering images perpetuated by friends in British drawing rooms, Moore arrived in America with a somewhat biased perception of the country. Once in America, he spent nearly all his time in the company of Federalists in Philadelphia and was influenced by “the Merrys, who felt themselves vastly superior to this wretched land to which they were being sent” (Jordan 93). However, Moore states in his Preface that he “went to America with prepossessions by no means unfavourable” (*Moore’s Poems* 97). According to Jordan, Moore had been exposed to “visions of idyllic life, noble savages, and pantisocracies” (94-95) promoted by Crèvecoeur and Imlay, which explains why he developed hopeful expectations of the New World. Due to rampant discontentment within Ireland, Moore expounds in his Preface, an exaggerated and “illusive” image emerged of the Western world as a place that facilitated a pure form of government and fostered a “primitive happiness” among its people (*Moore’s Poems* 97). Like so many others desperate to witness the actualization of such an “elysian Atlantis,” Moore indulged himself in the myth surrounding the New World (97). That is, that the West could offer to those “persecuted patriots” who endured “real or imaginary oppression,” “a retreat” where they would “be welcomed by kindred spirits to liberty and repose” (97). Therefore, his discomposure and his embittered response to America may have been less a product of the company he kept than a result of “his excessively high hopes” (Jordan 94-95).

<sup>85</sup> In *America and Her Commentators* (1961), Henry T. Tuckerman provides a detailed study of American travel literature, focusing specifically on nineteenth-century British reactions to the young Republic. Tuckerman argues that negative portrayals of America were written “in the interest of British prejudice” (212) and that travel writers intentionally upheld false and stereotypical images of the country and its people out of resentment. In Tuckerman’s words, “[w]hen the choicest jewel of her crown had been wrested from the grasp of Great Britain, numerous flaws therein became at once evident to the critical eyes of English travellers” (267). The source of the growing British hostility toward America was “a deep-seated antipathy toward the meaning of America [...]; there is a disposition to anger which expresses itself in forms that still draw upon the moral rhetoric of the Revolution, an already prepared interpretation of the American experiment as a fall from civilization” (Roth xii). Gathering “the most damning material they [could] find or invent” (xiv), British travel writers promoted skewed and biased opinions about America that many British citizens blindly accepted.

In his Introduction to Weld’s *Travels*, Roth points to Weld as the first to usher in this tradition of travellers who promoted a contemptible perception of America. A reviewer for the Philadelphian periodical *Aurora* (8 Oct 1806) suggested that the motivation behind these biased depictions was “to get ahead in Albion [by writing] libel against the United States” (qtd. in Eldridge, “Anacreon Moore” 60), and he points to the success of Weld and Moore in England as evidence. However, because Moore arrived in America with an open mind, the accusation that his critical views were premeditated is weak. Also, while Moore’s *Epistles* sold well in England, it was likely not because of the American critique but more because of the scandalous and controversial material that had generated so much attention. Additionally, Moore’s popularity and critical acclaim in England were not assured until the publication of *Irish Melodies* (1807-1835).

his inflammatory views on America. Adored and feted in America prior to the publication of *Epistles*, Moore had far to fall, but fall he did.<sup>86</sup>

Despite the disquietude and outrage *Epistles* caused on both sides of the Atlantic, it soon disappeared from public interest and inspired only minimal scholarly contemplation. The cause of this neglect was in part the publication of Moore's *Irish Melodies* (1807-1835), *Lalla Rookh* (1817), and *Life and Death of Lord Edward Fitzgerald* (1831). It was to these successful nationalist works, which secured Moore's widespread fame, that scholars directed their attention.<sup>87</sup> However, by the twentieth century, Moore, who was once "the recipient of hysterical praise" (de Ford 107), was relegated to the status of a merely tolerated second-rate poet. If he was not being ignored by even the most thorough scholars, this obscure poet was "belittled" (Kelly 5) or "made the butt of ridicule and contempt" (de Ford 107) by literary critics and historians who "treated him as 'an outcast'" (Trench 3). While some attempt has been made to resurrect interest in Moore through the steady publication of numerous biographies, critical analysis and discussion of the literary merit of Moore's verse have been superficial and the representation of his work in anthologies has been inconsequential. When *Epistles* is discussed by twentieth-century scholars, it is often merely to supply a backdrop to summations of Moore's life. More times than not, if analysis of individual poems is provided, it is fruitless and

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<sup>86</sup> It was not until the publication of *Lalla Rookh* in 1817 that Moore regained favour with the American public.

<sup>87</sup> Moore became second in popularity only to George Gordon, Lord Byron (1788-1824), who greatly admired him and would later bequeath to Moore the task of composing his biography, *Life of Byron* (1830). Placed among such famous poets as Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832), and Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) in terms of esteem and appreciation, Moore's poetic success translated into financial gain, and he made more money than William Wordsworth (1770-1850). However, with his work read by thousands, a modest Moore believed that the imbalance of interest between himself and Wordsworth was a sign of bad taste among the public (Strong 239).

redundant, as similar interpretations are replicated among critics.<sup>88</sup> Absent from all critical treatment of *Epistles* are discussions of the significance of Moore's poems regarding his experience in Upper and Lower Canada.<sup>89</sup>

Weld's *Travels* has fared better. More than one-hundred-and-fifty years after its original publication, *Travels* continues to be recognized by literary historians as a watershed text in the development and construction of travelers' impressions of North America at the turn of the nineteenth century. In *America and Her Commentators* (1961), Henry T. Tuckerman highlights this lasting impact, stating that "[s]carcely any contemporary writer of American travels was more quoted and popular, sixty years ago, than Isaac Weld" (207). The fact that Tuckerman suggests that Weld's influence on literary consciousness remained intact for more than one hundred years is significant certainly. Furthermore, two frequently cited and often consulted resource texts of Canadian literary history, Norah Story's *The Oxford Companion to Canadian History and Literature* (1967) and Klinck's *Literary History*, pay tribute to the indisputable and enduring magnitude of Weld's travelogue in Canada.<sup>90</sup> Given the consistently supportive reaction of his contemporaries to *Travels*, it is surprising how little attention Weld's epistolary journal has received from scholars within and without Canada both before and since those approving statements of Tuckerman, Story, and James J. and Ruth Talman over thirty years ago. And, perhaps needless to say at this point, no literary critic has read Weld or Moore with respect to their Irish-Canadianness.

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<sup>88</sup> What remains at the forefront of these modern examinations are the controversial poems that challenge the romanticized vision of America as a free and democratic utopia.

<sup>89</sup> If reference is made to these works, it is exclusively "Ballad Stanzas" and "A Canadian Boat Song" that garner mention; however, what is said about these poems is mostly trite.

<sup>90</sup> In her entry for Weld, Story maintains that *Travels* "became one of the best-known works on North America" (103) and James J. and Ruth Talman uphold this view, claiming that it is "[p]robably the best-known description of Upper and Lower Canada" (102).

In recent decades, however, one leading Canadian academic has exercised something of a monopoly on scholarship dealing with what he convincingly posits is the critical and reverberating influence of Weld's *Travels* and Moore's "Poems Relating to Canada"<sup>91</sup> on numerous nineteenth-century Canadian poets and prose writers: D.M.R. Bentley. Were it not for Bentley's rigorous and meticulous research in this field, few would be aware of the vital impact these Irishmen have had on the development of Canadian literature, culture, identity, and immigration.<sup>92</sup> There is no disputing Bentley's compelling claim that *Travels* "had a seminal influence on the poetry written in this country between the turn of the nineteenth century and the onset of the Confederation period" ("Isaac Weld" 223). Bentley makes this argument briefly in *The Gay]Grey Moose: Essays on the Ecologies and Mythologies of Canadian Poetry: 1690-1990* (1992) and then expands it in "Isaac Weld and the Continuity of Canadian Poetry" (1993) and "Supplement 2: The Pioneer Picturesque and Settler Sublime" (1999). In these

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<sup>91</sup> In 1993, D.M.R. Bentley published those poems dealing with Upper and Lower Canada separately in his *Early Long Poems on Canada* (1993) under the title "Poems Relating to Canada." Before then, Moore's Canadian poems were published alongside his licentious and American verses. Thus, they were overshadowed.

<sup>92</sup> To date, Bentley remains the sole contributor of in-depth analysis of Moore's poems on Upper and Lower Canada. An entry for Moore is absent from the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* (2000), whereas Weld is not excluded. Furthermore, despite Thomas D'Arcy McGee's insistence that Moore's "Written on Passing Deadman's Island" "be included in any future Canadian Anthology" (qtd. in Bentley, "Near the Rapids" 366), *Selections from Canadian Poets* (1864) and *Songs of the Great Dominion* (1889) "apparently considered Moore's brief sojourn in Canada [in]sufficient to qualify even 'Ballad Stanzas' and 'A Canadian Boat Song' as Canadian poems" (366).

Although Bentley considers Moore's sojourn through the two provinces to be "one of the most intriguing and under-appreciated events in this country's early literary history" ("Thomas Moore in Canada" v), he reveals that the poet's visit went relatively unnoticed. Reports of his arrival and departure were absent from newspapers in Montreal, Quebec, and elsewhere (v). Despite this lack of recognition in public records, such poems as "The Lake of the Dismal Swamp," "Written on Passing Dead Man's Island," and "A Canadian Boat Song" were quickly reprinted in *The Quebec Mercury*. "A Canadian Boat Song" achieved international popularity, becoming the most recognized poem about Canada in the decades that followed its publication as separate sheet music by Carpenter in 1805, as well as its original publication on May 11, 1807, in the *Quebec Mercury*. Inspired by the manners of French *voyageurs* and his recollection of the song they sang, Moore's poem played a pivotal role in shaping the "'mythical image' of the *voyageur*" (*Early Long Poems* 57; Conrad Gross qtd. in "Near the Rapids" 361). By the 1820s, the poem was well known among residents of Lower Canada and was "part of the tourist experience on the St. Lawrence" (363).

investigations, Bentley points to Weld as a principal source of information in various long narrative poems, including J. Mackay's *Quebec Hill* (1797), Thomas Cary's *Abram's Plains* (1798), Cornwall Bayley's *Canada* (1806), Oliver Goldsmith's *The Rising Village. A Poem* (1825), John Richardson's *Tecumseh; or, the Warrior of the West* (1828), Alexander McLachlan's *The Emigrant* (1861), and Isabella Valancy Crawford's *Malcolm's Katie: a Love Story* (1884).<sup>93</sup> Bentley also suggests that a number of prose works were influenced by Weld, including Catharine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada*, Jameson's *WSSRC*, and Susanna Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush*. According to Bentley, Weld's *Travels* provided his contemporaries, as well as future Canadian writers, with a vision of Canada against which they could measure and compare their own first-hand impressions. More importantly, numerous descriptive images or scenes in *Travels* became touchstones that would later be associated with a then emerging Canadian identity. Weld's response to key visual landmarks – for example, the awe-inspiring falls at Niagara, the squalid inns and their ill-mannered keepers, and the expansive destruction of trees – inspired a national discourse upheld by several key literary figures. Apart from those already named, these writers include Moore, Jameson, Crawford, and Kidd, who were inspired by Weld's observations to create their own unique impressions.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> For example, Bentley observes that Goldsmith, Richardson, and McLachlan make reference to the Whip-poor-will introduced to them by Weld.

<sup>94</sup> According to Bentley, Weld's imagery, conveyed intermittently throughout *Travels*, not only haunted the imaginations of leading nineteenth century literary figures but also influenced emigrants' concept of Canada for generations ("Isaac Weld" 223-26). Moore, Bentley claims, carried a copy of Weld's book with him while travelling through Canada and used *Travels* "as a point of departure" for "Ballad Stanzas" and "A Canadian Boat Song" (223). Bentley traces Moore's reference to a woodpecker in "Ballad Stanzas" back to Weld's description of the same bird in a New York forest. He also suggests that "A Canadian Boat Song" was inspired by Weld's description of the "rowing duet" (224) sung by French Canadians as they marked the time "with each stroke of the oar" (Weld qtd. in Bentley, "Isaac Weld" 224).

Weld's impact is both far reaching and cross-generational. For example, Bentley observes that Kidd, who dedicates *The Huron Chief and Other Poems* (1830) to Moore, would have been at least indirectly

In his extensive scholarship, Bentley places particular emphasis on Weld's response to the jagged tree stumps and blackened, barren landscapes that once boasted dense and lush forests. While this image appealed to agricultural settlers, who viewed land "unencumbered by 'the boundless forest'" (*Mnemographia* 82) as the embodiment of "profitable beauty" (83), Bentley suggests that these destructive scenes were bemoaned by Weld. Referring to the sympathetic recollection of a fire "deliberately started to clear the land of trees" (85),<sup>95</sup> Bentley claims that Weld placed "his admiration for 'uninterrupted woods' and 'beautiful cascade[s]'" in juxtaposition to "'[t]he generality of Americans'" (Weld qtd. in Bentley, *Mnemographia* 83). Because Americans had "become satiated with the sight" (83) of trees and were motivated to expand their agricultural territory for profit, they viewed trees only as troublesome obstacles. They preferred "'the sight of a wheat field or a cabbage garden'" (Weld qtd. in Bentley, *Mnemographia* 83) and admired the man who could level the most trees and clear the

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influenced by Weld through his familiarity with Moore's Canadian verse (224). In another instance, while Weld is central to Adam Hood Burwell's flattering depiction of the Lake Erie region in *Talbot Road: A Poem* (1818) (Bentley, *Gay/Grey Moose* 122), Burwell challenges Weld's "low opinion" of the Talbot region, choosing instead to emphasize "the present amenities and the future prospects of [that] area" ("Isaac Weld" 228). In a similar way, the passages Goldsmith includes in his long poem that deal with "the tavern and its denizens [...] is a refutation of Weld's denigrating comments about similar establishments in rural areas in the United States" (*Gay/Grey Moose* 122). This intertextual dialogue created within an "imaginative space" becomes the catalyst for an important exercise, one that leads to "an emotion that is surely essential for the development of any regional or national poetry: local pride" ("Isaac Weld" 227). Because he was heavily influenced by the then popular theories of the picturesque and the sublime, Weld, Bentley argues, used these aesthetic principles, which would have been familiar to his audience, to portray the Canadian landscape in *Travels*, as well as in the engravings that accompanied the text. By using this aesthetic technique, however, Weld inadvertently created an expectation among Canadian settlers who felt assured that "their adopted country was at least as well endowed with sublime sights and picturesque scenes as Europe or the United States" ("Supplement 2" 79). For such emigrants as Traill and Moodie, who, Bentley maintains, read *Travels*, a sense of "acute disappointment" arose upon arriving at the site of their homesteads because they recognized a "disjunction between [...] the aesthetic expectations generated by [...] Weld" and the reality that surrounded them (79-80).

<sup>95</sup> Finlay and Sprague explain why fires were set deliberately, resulting in waste: "A gang of six men working through the winter could produce nearly six hundred timbers. But to obtain this amount of exportable lumber they had to lay waste a forest" (87). Another cause of the fires was that "the dead trees, and the slabs and chips produced in squaring, provided tinder for forest fires; in the summer, when the loggers had left the woods, the lightning storms would spark fires among the slash littering the ground, and destruction would be complete" (87).

most land in the least amount of time (84). Bentley's interpretation of Weld's reaction as melancholy is significant because he suggests that a tradition emerged from these environmentally conscious expressions that were repeated by Burwell, Crawford, Jameson, Moodie, and Traill. However, in his Introduction to *Travels*, Roth aligns Weld's attitude with that maintained by Americans. Roth states that "Weld was very much committed to eighteenth-century equations which identified freedom with trade and liberty with economic growth. He is especially alert to the operational complexities of the American economic system – agricultural, mercantile, and financial – particularly as they differ from English usages. [...] To the eyes of this middle-class Irishman, the well-cultivated field was as delightful an object as the romantic vista" (xxi-xxii). While Roth's and Bentley's interpretations conflict with and complicate each other, they equally support my position regarding the mercenary motivations behind Weld's unfavourable portrayal of North America. Given that Weld went to the New World to assess the economic advantages offered to wealthy agricultural investors, it makes sense he would focus on images of prosperity. However, in the end Weld was determined to discourage emigration, so he strategically emphasizes images of destruction and inefficiency in order to dissuade the economically ambitious from emigrating to North America, and so too the destitute farmers whose labour could be exploited in the Old World to benefit Anglo-Irishmen like himself.

In a similar manner, Bentley convincingly argues in a series of thorough investigations<sup>96</sup> that Moore was among the first sojourners to create and define a distinct

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<sup>96</sup> "Thomas Moore in Canada and Canadian Poetry" (1989) marks the beginning of what would become Bentley's extensive inquiry into the relevance of the time Moore spent in Canada and the resonating influence his verse had on later conceptualizations of the newly emerging British colony. The objective of this article, however, is not to analyze Moore's work. Instead, it provides only a cursory glance at themes

and unique Canadian character through his descriptions of the Canadian landscape and culture. According to Bentley, the scenes and impressions privileged in Moore's "To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon from the Banks of the St. Lawrence," "Ballad Stanzas," and "A Canadian Boat Song" played a critical role in establishing a consistent discourse in nineteenth-century Canadian literature and influenced immigration to Canada.<sup>97</sup>

However, in both "Thomas Moore: Poems Relating to Canada" and "Isaac Weld and the Continuity of Canadian Poetry," Bentley suggests that Weld's description in *Travels* of the spiritually enlightening falls, the uncanny "stillness of the North American forest" (*Early Long Poems* 57), and the duets sung by the voyageurs (58), directly influenced

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and concerns Bentley develops later in "Thomas Moore: Poems Relating to Canada" in *Early Long Poems*, "Thomas Moore, Poems Relating to Canada" in *Mimic Fires: Accounts of Early Long Poems on Canada* (1994), "Thomas Moore's Construction of Upper Canada in 'Ballad Stanzas'" (1994), and most recently, "Near the Rapids: Thomas Moore in Canada" (2002). In some cases, Bentley presents the gist of his argument in one article then later expands and reworks his ideas. These ideas then appear in a chapter study or are developed in another article using more elaborate or different textual evidence dealing with similar, although, not identical concerns.

<sup>97</sup> In his preliminary examination, "Thomas Moore in Canada," Bentley briefly summarizes Moore's impressions of Canada, focusing specifically on his response to Niagara Falls. Overwhelmed by a sense that it would be impossible to express in words the feelings aroused within him by the awesome cataracts, Moore "did not attempt an extended description in verse" (vi). He does, however, refer to Niagara Falls briefly in "To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon" (vi). Bentley maintains that this poem was the most widely influential, as Moore's response to the majestic scene is echoed in Kidd's *The Huron Chief*, Charles Sangster's *The St. Lawrence and the Saguenay*, XIV, Crawford's *Malcolm's Katie*, Mackay's *Quebec Hill*, Cary's *Abram's Plains*, several poems by Kevin Roberts, and paintings by Emily Carr.

Additionally, in "Isaac Weld," Bentley suggests that the vision of a peaceful woodland, where woodpeckers reside and wherein lies a quaint cabin, promoted in Moore's "Ballad Stanzas," influenced not only works by literary figures, including Kidd's *The Huron Chief*, O'Grady's *The Emigrant* (1842), and McLachlan's "The Log Cabin" featured in *The Emigrant* (1861), but also historical essays and non-fictional accounts of pioneer life in Canada such as those described in John Galt's *Bogle Corbet* (1831), William Cattermole's *The Advantages of Emigration to Canada*, and William Kirby's *Annals of Niagara* (1896).

Finally, in "Near the Rapids," Bentley draws connections between Moore's depiction of French boatmen singing to the rhythmic beat of their oars as they rowed down the St. Lawrence from Kingston to Montreal in "A Canadian Boat Song" and Archibald Lampman's "Between the Rapids," as well as works by "Canadians of Irish descent and origin" for whom the poem "had a special appeal" (365): Kidd, Standish O'Grady, Emilie Nelligan, and James Reaney. Bentley proposes that Moore also left an indelible mark on Joseph Howe, who refers to him with approval in *Acadia*, and A.J.M. Smith, who casts the poet as a bawdy figure in "Thomas Moore and Sweet Annie."



how Moore conveyed his own perceptions of and emotional reactions to parallel scenes.<sup>98</sup> This observation is significant because it not only establishes a link between Weld and Moore, but it also confirms that a continuum exists between Weld and those writers influenced by Moore. Thus, Moore assumes the role of mediator. Missing from Bentley's analysis, however, is any consideration as to why it is an Irish perception of Canada that has had this profound and lasting impact on Canadian writers. Just as many Canadian institutions, traditions, and political concepts are in large part founded on Irish models,<sup>99</sup> so too are foundational aspects of Canada's literary imagination.

What is most contributory to my reading of both Weld's *Travels* and Moore's *Epistles* is the paradigm Bentley outlines in his analysis of "To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon," which is first found in *Early Long Poems on Canada* (1993) and later expanded in "Thomas Moore's Construction of Upper Canada in 'Ballad Stanzas'" (1994) and "Near the Rapids: Thomas Moore in Canada" (2002). Because a zealous Moore was appalled by the social scene in America, which he saw as infested with "vice, rudeness, and arrogance" (*Early Long Poems* 58), and because he was gravely disappointed in its political state, which mistreated Natives and condoned slavery, Bentley argues that the young Republic figures as an inferno in this poem.<sup>100</sup> Pointing to

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<sup>98</sup> Bentley points to a letter Moore wrote to his mother about the accuracy of Weld's account of Niagara Falls as proof that Moore consulted *Travels* throughout his journey and that it was Weld's description that inspired Moore to visit the falls in order to witness first-hand the scene that had left his fellow Irishman speechless. Once in the presence of the overwhelming grandeur of the Falls, Moore reacts in a similar manner as Weld, because he too recognizes an inability to express accurately or justly the sublime power of the majestic scene before him. Bentley maintains that, as a result, Weld and Moore created a discourse surrounding the spiritually enlightening effects that Niagara Falls had on its viewers. And as mentioned, Bentley draws a further connection between the little cottage hidden in a wooded landscape and Weld's description of a New York forest.

<sup>99</sup> For example, according to Wilson, "[t]he Royal Irish Constabulary provided John A. Macdonald with an organizational model for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police [, and] the structure of law enforcement in the Northwest Territories was based on Irish precedents" ("Law, Order").

<sup>100</sup> The same can be said of several of Moore's American epistles where the country is identified repeatedly as a chaotic Hell. However, Bentley does not include in his study specific examples of how Moore upholds

a footnote referring to Dante's *Divina Commedia* at the close of this epistle,<sup>101</sup> Bentley claims that "Moore envisaged his trip to America in Dantean terms, with the United States as an *inferno*, Canada as a *purgatorio* [and earthly paradise], and Britain as a *paradiso*" ("Near the Rapids" 357). Cast as a dark foil to its more civil and fertile neighbour to the north, America becomes a place of temptation, corruption, and sin, its landscape disorderly and barren. Bentley then postulates that in "Ballad Stanzas" Canada occupies a liminal space between the binary oppositions of Paradise and Hell. This poem promotes the British colony as a model of agricultural prosperity, "complete with an Earthly Paradise centred on human love" (*Early Long Poems* 59). Having "found in Canada a deferential and pious society that was much more congenial to his conservative (and Roman Catholic) sensibilities" (58), Moore describes the country as a retreat that embodies unity, abundance, and natural growth, a place that is "more pristine and habitable" than America ("Thomas Moore's Construction" 5; "Near the Rapids" 357). Significantly, Bentley proposes that Moore in his ten-volume *Poetical Works* (1840)<sup>102</sup> intentionally removed certain poems that were previously situated between "Ballad Stanzas" and "A Canadian Boat Song" in order to highlight this pattern and so had come self-consciously to endorse this favourable portrayal.<sup>103</sup> By deliberately placing "Ballad

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this image in other poems. It is likely that Bentley chose not to examine those American verses that anticipate this negative association because his argument focuses on the often overlooked Canadian poems. A further reason may be because explorations of the bleak representation of America in Moore's epistles have been conducted in detail in appraisals by other academics. It is for these reasons, too, that I will not give substantial space to an analysis of Moore's American epistles.

<sup>101</sup> At lines 137-40, Moore writes: "Borne, without sails, along the dusky flood, / While on its deck a pilot angel stood, / And, with his wings of living light unfurled, / Coasted the dim shores of another world!" (*Moore's Poems* 185). This passage echoes Canto II (Purgatory) in *Divina Commedia*, when Dante and his guide, Virgil, behold a vessel conducted by an angel and headed for Purgatory.

<sup>102</sup> Moore collected and published a series of poems from *Epistles*. He titled the sequence "Poems Relating to America."

<sup>103</sup> All editions of Moore's *Epistles* that were subsequently published mirrored "this new order, with its apparently sharp (though unmarked) division of 'Poems Relating to America' into those set in the United States and those set in British North America" (Bentley, *Early Long Poems* 59).

Stanzas” between “To the Honourable W.R. Spencer: From Buffalo Upon Lake Erie” and “A Canadian Boat Song,” Moore, according to Bentley, encourages readers to interpret the poem as a celebratory homecoming for a relieved speaker, who, having completed his “hellish sojourn in republican America” (357), arrives at an Elysium of tranquility and ease “found on British soil” (357). Despite Moore’s flattering depiction of Upper Canada in this poem, Bentley concludes that in the closing poem of the series, “To the Boston Frigate: On Leaving Halifax for England, October 1804,” Moore equates England with Dante’s *paradiso*. In Bentley’s words, the sentiments expressed by the speaker about England imply that, in the end, Canada cannot offer a “satisfying substitute” (*Early Long Poems* 58) for the Old World.

The Dantean schema advanced by Bentley complements the archetypal pattern I will apply to Moore’s transatlantic sojourn. However, my approach expands and complicates Bentley’s model. It will also expose several key factors that Bentley omits from his evaluation in order to, it would seem, skew Moore’s vision to suit his proposed paradigm. As the sole Canadian academic to contribute detailed studies of Moore’s Canadian verse, Bentley’s thesis has gone untested, which is problematic. A consideration of Bentley’s scholarship on Moore reveals that his proposed paradigm simplifies our understanding of the poet’s conceptualization of America, Canada, and England. Given that Bentley establishes that Moore’s Canadian poems share numerous impressions found in Weld’s *Travels*, it is surprising that he does not recognize that Moore’s Dantean construction of the trinity of countries may also find its origin in Weld’s text. Because Weld expresses in his *Travels* a preference for Canada over America and England over both, the Dantean model can justifiably be applied to his

journey.<sup>104</sup> Weld's aim was to discourage immigration to North America. Therefore, he constructs the young Republic as an unruly, uncivilized, and dystopic wasteland that houses rude and slovenly individuals whose freedom is perceived ironically. Also not unforeseen, the Anglo-Irish Weld's evaluation of Canada, a British colony, is largely positive, which is in keeping with Dante's concept of *purgatorio*.<sup>105</sup> For Weld, Canada presents as a pseudo-paradise. As a vibrant, civil, and orderly territory inhabited by both hospitable and intelligent citizens, it offers respite from the undergloom of America. But despite Canada's countless merits, at the close of his travels Weld nevertheless concedes England's superiority, equating it with Dante's *paradiso*. Thus, the time Weld spends in Canada is finite, as was Dante's stay in purgatory, and his journey concludes in England, his true spiritual home.

Bentley's proposition that Moore casts America as an inferno is not under dispute. Also conceded are the two principal sources Bentley suggests fuelled Moore's hostility toward America and thus contributed to his vision of the country as a virtual underworld. Firstly, Bentley maintains that Moore's antagonistic attitude was inspired by "the alliance of the United States with France against Great Britain and Ireland in the Napoleonic War that recommenced in earnest in May 1803" ("Near the Rapids" 356). Secondly, Bentley suggests that Moore depended substantially on Weld's "more or less anti-Republican" (356) *Travels*, which provided him with a biased understanding of American society and history. If the parameters Moore used to appraise America were defined and established predominantly by a prejudiced Weld, it is possible that *Travels* supplied Moore with the

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<sup>104</sup> However, unlike Moore, Weld does not refer explicitly to Dante's *Divina Commedia* in *Travels*.

<sup>105</sup> Once Dante has passed through the nine circles of Hell, he ascends out of the underworld and climbs the mountain of purgatory. At its summit is the Garden of Eden, where Dante is returned to a state of innocence that existed before the sin of Adam and Eve caused the fall from grace.

inspiration for his depiction of America as an inferno. In fact, Moore's sequence of American and Canadian verse replicates the overarching journey motif implemented by Weld in *Travels*. Before embarking on a discussion of their corresponding treatment of America, it is important to outline briefly this complimentary mode of organization. Such a description simultaneously confirms that Weld's archetypal pattern influenced Moore's own Dantean configuration of America, Canada, and England and, what is more surprising and relevant to the present study, that Irishman MacConmara's *Adventures* may well have been a source for the overall classic structure his countrymen employ in their works.

Similar to MacConmara, Weld and Moore begin the cyclical journey featured in their respective works with the departure of an anxious, yet optimistic traveller who is forced to contend with obstacles at sea before reaching the 'underworld.' At the outset of his first letter, Weld provides an epigrammatic retelling of his harrowing Atlantic voyage: "Our passage across the Atlantic was disagreeable in the extreme. The weather for the most part was bad, and calms and heavy adverse gales so frequently retarded our progress to the westward, that it was not until the fifty-ninth day from that on which we left Ireland, that we discovered the American coast" (*Travels* I: 1). While Weld's account of his traumatic experience is literal, the description of rough seas and strong winds responsible for complicating and impeding his passage from Ireland to America also serves as pathetic fallacy, symbolizing the apprehension felt by a young and inexperienced traveller as he embarks on a challenging odyssey into an unknown realm. In his *Epistles*, Moore devotes the first two poems to his physically and emotionally trying crossing of the Atlantic. In the first poem of the sequence, "To Lord Viscount Strangford: Aboard the Phaeton Frigate, Off the Azores, By Moonlight," a nostalgic

speaker expresses “dark regrets” (*Moore’s Poems* 99: 44) at having left behind beloved companions and the comforts of home in order to pursue “happy dreams / [that] gave [his] soul such tempting scope” (99: 36-37). Desirous “to be a wanderer more” (99: 42), the speaker is roused by a “delusive hope” (99: 43) that his optimistic vision of the New World will be proven accurate. It is this belief that soothes him into “tranquil sleep” (99: 48) on board his ship. The description of the “calm” (99: 54) sea that “[g]ently” (99: 55) lulls his vessel and allows his slumber to go undisturbed also reflects this speaker’s state of mind, which is tranquil as a result of his resolve to discard his past and strike out anew. However, the fact that the boat rests near the Azores suggests that the peaceful scene is equated with the Old World and that it is because the speaker is in the initial stage of his journey that his feelings of trepidation are minimal. It is only when the naïve speaker prepares to move further away from home that a lone “envious cloud [...] lowers” “And, scowl[s] at this Heaven of light” (99: 57, 60), threatening to upset his passage and spoil his foolish optimism, and showing yet again that readers are in the realms of the Romantic pathetic fallacy.

In “Stanzas,” the second poem in the sequence, this menacing morning storm has subsided, but “the wave, [...], / Still heaved, as remembering ills that were o’er” (100: 3-4). This reminds the speaker to be vigilant and sober, as his current safe condition is transitory. Recognizing that his poetic energies, like the once passionate wind, “were sleeping, were mute as the dead” (100: 6), the speaker contemplates the reason behind the fleeting state of his talent. He concludes that his youthful past of leisure, revelry, and sinful pleasure is responsible. The fact that the speaker views England as the source of his corruption challenges Bentley’s argument that Moore in his Canadian verse associates the country with paradise (discussed below). Having erred, the speaker prays to “that Spirit

who lighted the flame” (100: 17) to help him preserve his “purity” (100: 18) and prevent it from being further “sullied” (100: 19) by temptation. God answers the speaker’s prayers by showing him “an opening to Paradise” (*The Poetical Works* 97: 22) located “to the west” (*Moore’s Poems* 101: 25). Thus, at the outset of his journey, the speaker believes that America and its cloudless sky (101: 26) will offer him salvation. Despite his ominous sentiments about journeying far from home, the speaker carries with him hopeful expectations and an open mind about America, as did Weld and Moore themselves. This would explain why the young Republic is perceived as a veritable paradise at the outset of their respective works. It is only after witnessing the hypocrisy of the country that Weld and Moore altered their opinions and thus repositioned America as an inferno, a response both defend in their prefaces.<sup>106</sup>

When parallels are drawn between these Dublin-born writers’ descriptions of the young Republic and their hopes, it becomes clear that Weld’s Dantean vision of America influenced Moore. It is true that on several occasions throughout *Travels*, Weld acknowledges that America exemplifies many commendable qualities;<sup>107</sup> however, his overall estimation is critical and reproachful. The initial scene Weld encounters in the

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<sup>106</sup> In his Preface to *Travels*, Weld states that the language he uses to depict America should “not be ascribed to hasty prejudice, and a blind partiality for every thing that is European. He crossed the Atlantic strongly prepossessed in favour of the people, and the country, which he was about to visit; and if he returned with sentiments of a different tendency, they resulted solely from a cool and dispassionate observation of what chance presented to his view when abroad” (iv). In much the same way, Moore writes that he “went to America with prepossessions by no means unfavourable, and, indeed, rather indulged in many of those illusive ideas with respect to the purity of the government, and the primitive happiness of the people, which I had early imbibed in my native country, where, unfortunately, discontent at home enhances every distant temptation, and the Western world has long been looked to as a retreat from real or imaginary oppression, as the elysian Atlantis, where persecuted patriots might find their visions realized, and be welcomed by kindred spirits to liberty and repose” (Preface, *Moore’s Poems* 97). Additionally, in a letter to his mother written prior to his arrival on October 10, 1803, Moore expresses his confidence in what this idyllic and prosperous foreign land could offer him and his family, exclaiming “there is every hope, every prospect of happiness for all of us” (*Letters* 48).

<sup>107</sup> For example, when commenting on the city of Washington, Weld states that “there is a good foundation for thinking that the federal city, as soon as the navigation is perfected, will increase most rapidly; and that at a future day, if the affairs of the United States go on as prosperously as they have done, it will become the grand emporium of the west, and rival in magnitude and splendour the cities of the old world” (I: 80).

New World appears at first glance to be encouraging. A shoreline covered with majestic trees creates the illusion that America is a “vast forest” scattered with farm-houses, villages, and towns that are well-cultivated (Weld, *Travels* I: 3). Upon closer inspection, however, Weld confronts a succession of offensive impressions in both rural and urban areas. Marked by tasteless architecture, “stiff wooden houses,” and buildings crumbling to pieces due to negligence, the American town is forlorn in its remoteness and has “a heavy, dull, and gloomy aspect” (I: 232). What unsettles Weld most is the “havoc” (I: 39) generated by the innumerable desolate vistas distinguished by mangled and protruding tree stumps (I: 232) or that are “totally stripped of the trees, which have been cut down without mercy for firing, and to make way for the plough; neither are there any hedges, an idea prevailing that they impoverish the land wherever they are planted” (I: 32). Americans, Weld tells his readers, are also guilty of abandoning the land once they have exhausted it. Instead of attempting to recover that which they have destroyed, Americans move on to richer soil and proceed to fell and burn more trees. The consequence of this excessive exploitation of natural resources is that the romantic countryside is quickly replaced by a suggestively modern wasteland. In fact, the reference to “fires in the woods” (I: 159) as well as to “a prodigious column of fire [that] appeared in a part of the wood where some brushwood had been burning; [and where] in many places the flames rose considerably above the summit of the trees [... so that it] increase[d] to a most alarming height [...] overtak[ing runners who were] endeavouring to escape from the flames” (I: 161) can even be seen to advance an image of America as apocalyptic. When compounded, Weld’s references to towns devastated by fire; graveyards desecrated by roadways (I: 138); Blue Ridge Mountain infested with venomous copper snakes (I: 202);



forests swarming with frogs and mosquitoes;<sup>108</sup> cities diseased by yellow fever (I: 6);<sup>109</sup> streets overwhelmed by a prevailing stench caused by filth, dirt, and fecal sewage (I: 6); extreme and sudden variations in weather marked by stagnant and oppressively hot weather that is quickly replaced with black clouds, tremendous gusts of wind, thunder and lightning, trees torn up by their roots, “hail stones,<sup>110</sup> about three times the size of an ordinary pea [... and] a torrent of rain [...] pouring down, nearly as if a water-spout had broken overhead” (I: 248) – all of this recalls the plagues prophesied in Exodus, or, in the case of the last image, the Flood. Thus, it is possible Weld intentionally alludes to these biblical warnings to promote a vision of America as a hell on earth and to suggest that God has forsaken and cursed it. This land, to understate the case, would aid in Weld’s discouragement of immigration.

At the heart of this underworld is a race of people who resemble collectively a living Lucifer. For Weld, Americans are inferior to all others regarding their character, manners, and ethics. Given to extreme bouts of aggression, Americans “fight just like wild beasts, biting, kicking, and endeavouring to tear each other’s eyes out with their nails [...] these wretches in their combat endeavour to their utmost to tear out each other’s testicles” (I: 192). As a result, many of them resemble the monstrous Cyclops, as “every third or fourth man appears with one eye” (I: 193). Generally, Americans are characterized as restless, dissatisfied (I: 108), covetous, distrustful, and solipsistic. In an attempt to uphold the tenets of democracy, Americans resist authority and demonstrate impertinence because they believe that civility is incompatible with freedom and equality.

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<sup>108</sup> The second plague consists of an influx of frogs (Exodus 8:1-15), while the fourth plague (Exodus 8:20-32) is comprised of a deluge of flies.

<sup>109</sup> Yellow fever decimated populations in Philadelphia (1793), Baltimore (1794), New York, and Norfolk (1795).

<sup>110</sup> The seventh plague (Exodus 9:13-35) consists of hail that threatens the lives of those left outdoors.

According to Weld, democracy necessarily breeds a substandard culture that is incapable of refining its manners and taste. Instead, Americans remain inhospitable, “indolent” (I: 206), “boorish” (I: 102), and spiritually impoverished (I: 177). This debased form of society is also founded on hypocrisy. While it “boast[s] of [its] love of liberty and independence” (I: 150-51), it stakes a “[gang] of negroes [...] at a horse race” (I: 150) and turns an unsympathetic and disgusted eye from its destitute, oppressed, emaciated slaves, who are forced to run around naked (I: 140). Together, these scenes support the concept of America as a place of strife, misrule, and degeneration. Because it privileges independence and self-reliance, America is destined to remain politically unstable. Weld warns readers of the massive political and social unrest that will continue to mount, particularly in the form of “widespread racial violence [, which is... the] future promise” (Roth xxvii) of a country that denies liberty to slaves, who will eventually seek it “with a vengeance” (Weld, *Travels* I: 94 n.).

In many ways, Moore’s portrayal of the landscape between Batavia and Buffalo in “Song of the Evil Spirit of the Woods” is similar to Weld’s overall assessment of the American geography, as Moore’s also exemplifies a hellish and apocalyptic atmosphere. In this poem, a lone and spiritually vulnerable Christian traveller attempts to navigate his way through a postlapsarian forest replete with obstacles to his safe passage. As a dense, humid, “misty ether” (Moore, *Moore’s Poems* 165: 3) descends upon the speaker, he is forced to tread blindly through a “maze of night and terror” (166: 30) and “O’er the deep and dark morass” (166: 40), exposing him to nearby wolves (165: 10). Significantly, Moore’s reference to a “pale witch [who] feeds her snakes” (165: 16) recalls Weld’s poisonous copper snake. Allegorically, these events could be seen to allude to the sinister presence of Satan (French Jacobinism) who, disguised as a serpent (freedom’s cant), stole

into the Garden of Eden (vision of America as a utopia)<sup>111</sup> to tempt Adam and Eve (Thomas Jefferson and George Washington) into corruption and sin. Furthermore, Moore's description of the "taint" of "the bull-toad" (166: 51) and the hovering "mosquitoes [sic]" (166: 52) that swirl around a decomposing corpse in this hedonistic forest echoes Weld's evocation of the plagues divined in Exodus. These same sinister qualities are attributed to the scenery described in "A Ballad. The Lake of the Dismal Swamp: Written at Norfolk in Virginia," a poem inspired by the folkloric tale of a man who likely starved to death in the dense wilderness where he sought to recover his lover. Defenceless against the harsh natural elements that surround him, the man stumbles through a hellish labyrinth of "tangled juniper, beds of reeds, / Through many a fen, where the serpent feeds" (111: 13-14). In his slumber, a "copper-snake breath[es] in his ear" (111: 22) as Satan did Eve's, and his flesh blisters (111: 20) from exposure to a "deadly vine [that] weep[s] / Its venomous tear" (111: 18-19). This image calls to mind the sixth plague in Exodus 9: 8-12, where festering boils appear on the flesh of man. Just as a suicidal Dante wanders aimlessly through a dark wood, accosted by she-wolves and unable to locate the path to salvation, so too is this dying man threatened by a "she-wolf" (111: 21) as he struggles against temptation and sin in faithless America.

Telling comparisons can also be drawn between Weld's uncomplimentary summation of a motley American culture and the "unpolished," "rude" (Preface 97) society that populates Moore's wretched and nightmarish underworld.<sup>112</sup> While the amusing and light-hearted verse in *Anacreon* and *Thomas Little* offered Moore escape

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<sup>111</sup> In the Edenic myth of the New World, America was perceived as a place where the ills of European society could be corrected by starting anew and righting the wrongs of years of feudalism.

<sup>112</sup> For Moore, Norfolk, Virginia was the hub of American mayhem. In a letter to his mother composed on November 7, 1803, Moore describes Norfolk as "a most strange place; nothing to be seen in the streets but dogs and negroes, and the few ladies that *pass for white* are to be sure the most unlovely pieces of crockery I ever set my eyes upon" (*Letters* 50).

from the catastrophic instability that raged throughout Europe during his youth, his American epistles provided him with a forum to discuss openly for the first time “the issues of freedom, empire, and political corruption” (Vail 52). For example, in “To Thomas Hume,” the speaker emphasizes the fraudulent habits of a “half-organized, half-minded race / Of weak barbarians” (Moore, *Moore’s Poems* 152: 34-35), who, having been poisoned by the “drug of French philosophy / That nauseous slaver of these frantic times” (*The Poetical Works* 109: 74-75), become tainted with “crime” (*Moore’s Poems* 152: 42) and yield to “anarchy” (152: 42). Additionally, in “To Lord Viscount Forbes: From the City of Washington,” Moore criticizes the materialistic values privileged in a greed-driven society that worships gold, a treasure which “palsied every grasping hand” (142: 109). In this same poem, Moore juxtaposes man’s humanitarian dreams, his lofty claims, and his foolish hopes, with the inglorious realities of his moral and political performance. Although the aim of the young Republic was to “stamp perfection on this world at last!” (141: 36) by granting freedom, justice, and equality for all classes, creeds, and races, the speaker reveals that this “golden dream” (141: 57) has been “poisoned, and her heart decays! / Even now, in dawn of life, her sickly breath / Burns with the taint of empires near their death” (142: 76-78). Furthermore, Moore shares with Weld distaste for slavery and expresses in this poem his overwhelming disappointment and disgust when confronted with the realization that the revolutionary process in America led not to freedom and equality but to enslavement and political instability. For Moore, America is a nation “where bastard freedom waves / Her fustian flag in mockery over slaves” (143: 153) and where “The brute [is] made ruler and the man made brute!” (144: 158). A similar sentiment regarding the corrupt political life in America is echoed in “To the Honourable W. R. Spencer,” in which the speaker denounces the American model of

democracy by identifying the young Republic as a place “Where every ill the ancient world can brew / Is mixed with every grossness of the new; / Where all corrupts, though little can entice, / And nothing s [sic] known of luxury but vice!” (169: 43-46). For Moore, freedom in America is excessive to the point of regressing people to a savage state.

Bentley is correct in viewing the deprecating charges Moore places against America’s physical and socio-political landscape as rooted ideologically in his aversion to French Jacobinism and as influenced by Weld’s own conceptualization. But his argument that Moore cast America as an inferno is limited because it fails to acknowledge a third and equally critical source of Moore’s unfavourable impressions of the young Republic; namely, that the vulgar conditions Moore repeatedly confronted were a by-product of a succession of catastrophic events that dramatically altered America’s social and geographical landscape. Having engaged in combat with the British for nearly ten years (1775-1783), America was on the verge of economic ruin, its landscape was devastated by warfare, and its system of government remained unstable, tentative, and disorderly. Exacerbating an already dire situation were the yellow fever that threatened populations in major cities, such as New York and Philadelphia, and the continuous fires that annihilated wooden buildings, leaving in their wake derelict towns “without adequate drainage, tainted by odours from rotting matter at the docks, and plagued by streets that turned into quagmires of knee-deep mud” (Jordan 94). Simply put, Moore “could hardly have chosen a more unpropitious time [...] to take impressions of the nation” (Eldridge, “Anacreon Moore” 54-55). It is, therefore, not surprising that America was viewed by him as a hell on earth. Not only do these dire circumstances help explain why Moore was repelled by America, but they also call into question Bentley’s

exuberant celebration of Moore's favourable impressions of the Canadian provinces.

There are three critical questions that Bentley fails to address in his analysis of Moore's Canadian verse. Did Moore figure Canada as an earthly paradise simply to further his vilification of America and to authenticate his vision of the young Republic as degenerate? Did Moore privilege Canada over America and champion it as a potential alternative to the Old World because of the extensive advantages it offered prospective Irish immigrants? Does Canada surpass America simply because it fairs better when compared to the Yankee hell?

It is difficult to provide definitive answers to these questions. However, what a comparative analysis of the original and revised configuration of Moore's Canadian verse<sup>113</sup> reveals is that by the time *Epistles* was published in 1806, the poet had not yet fully formulated or finalized his conceptualization of Canada. By initially surrounding his Canadian sequence with miscellaneous poems, Moore minimized their relevance to his overarching archetypal narrative, while he simultaneously distracted his readers from what would later become his intention of encouraging immigration preference—should emigration prove necessary—for Canada. Prior to refiguring his verse in 1840, Moore's response to Canada varied minimally from Weld's resoundingly positive evaluation, which identifies Canada with Dante's concept of *purgatorio*. Until Weld's North American sojourn, few men had travelled to both America and Canada. Those who made

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<sup>113</sup> In the initial publications of *Epistles*, Moore included several miscellaneous verses between his Canadian poems. The original sequence consisted of "To the Honourable W.R. Spencer," "A Warning," "To \_ \_," "From the High Priest of Apollo to the Virgin of Delphi," "Woman," "Ballad Stanzas," "To \_ \_," "A Vision of Philosophy," "To \_ \_," "Dreams," "To Mrs. \_ \_," "A Canadian Boat Song," "To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon," "Impromptu," "Written on Passing Deadman's Island," "To the Boston Frigate," "To Lady H \_ \_," and "To \_ \_." Moore later omitted several poems from the series so that the new arrangement included only "To the Honourable W.R. Spencer," "Ballad Stanzas," "A Canadian Boat Song," "To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon," "Impromptu," "Written on Passing Deadman's Island," and "To the Boston Frigate."

America their focus participated in what would eventually become a tradition of travel writing that aided in the construction of a distinct identity for the Republic. However, before Weld's visit to Upper and Lower Canada, little attempt had been made by travel writers to attribute and define those characteristics that made Canada distinct. In much the same way as MacConmara, who, perhaps inadvertently, had helped shape a preliminary impression of the Canadian spirit by placing it in opposition to the distinctive traits of the British Isles, Weld endeavoured to establish a distinguishing identity for Canada by measuring the value of the British colony against the recently independent Republic.

Weld deliberately outlines clear distinctions between Canada and America throughout his Canadian letters, underscoring in each instance that the lifestyle and atmosphere in Canada "pleased him more" (Story 103) and that, not surprisingly, he felt more at home on British soil. Unlike the apocalyptic scenes that defined Weld's journey through America, Canada is a demi-paradise replete with "extremely grand and picturesque" (Weld, *Travels* I: 301) scenery that is "inconceivably beautiful" (I: 423), "rich," and "diversified" (I: 335) "when seen at a distance, [as well as, significantly, upon] close inspection" (I: 356). Contrasted to the dilapidated towns and uncultivable fields in America are the "neat country houses and gardens" (I: 316) and the "beautiful disposition of the towns and villages" (I: 335), as well as vistas that are "covered with trees" (I: 336) and "extremely fertile" (I: 379) land that "continues to yield plentiful crops, notwithstanding its being worked year after year" (I: 380). In fact, Weld was so enamoured with the enchanting surroundings in the upper town of Quebec that he declared they "surpasse[d] all that [he had] hitherto seen in America, or indeed in any other part of the globe" (I: 354) and that they would, thus, be most "suitable to an English

or Irish settler” (I: 418). While spiritually devoid Americans desecrate sacred resting grounds by building roads through their church yards, devout Canadians pray in the streets when their chapels become overcrowded with parishioners (I: 306) and adorn their landscape with “the spires of [...] churches [that] sparkl[e] through the groves” (I: 336). A further distinguishing feature that “serve[s] to convince you, that you are no longer in any part of the United States” (I: 306) are the “genteel people” (I: 352) who are “remarkably hospitable and attentive to strangers” (I: 315) and who “salute you as you pass” (I: 306). While Americans achieve financial prosperity by isolating themselves deep in the forest, sacrificing social connections, Canadians, Weld tells us, privilege communal bonds above all else (II: 9). For example, during their long winters, Canadians adapt easily by amusing themselves with group activities and “keep[ing] up such a constant and friendly intercourse with each other, that it seems then as if the town were inhabited but by one large family” (I: 315).<sup>114</sup>

Aware that his *Travels* would be marketed to a readership keen for information on the agricultural conditions of the two countries, Weld dedicates considerable space to an evaluation of rural settlement in Canada in order to aid potential immigrants in making an informed and confident decision. According to Weld, Canada’s agricultural prosperity is superior to America’s. Weld explains that while the cost of land in America is “exorbitant” (I: 414) and unlikely to increase in value for some time, it is plentiful in Canada. Also, an immigrant who applies to the government could be granted “one hundred acres of excellent uncleared land, in the neighbourhood of other settlements” for

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<sup>114</sup> Similar observations of a distinctive, comparative Canadian sociability and communalism can be found from Frances Brooke’s *A History of Emily Montague* (1769) to Stephen Leacock’s *Sunshine Sketches of A Little Town* (1912) and beyond. Indeed, this remarking of a communal Canadian identity may find its origins in Weld.



free after an oath of allegiance is taken (I: 408). While those who emigrate to America are forced to renounce their homeland and swear “allegiance to a foreign power,” Canadian immigrants “would be able to consider with heartfelt satisfaction, that [they were] living under the protection of the country wherein [they] had drawn [their] first breath; that [they were] contributing to her prosperity, and the welfare of many of [their] countrymen, while [they were] ameliorating [their] own fortune” (I: 417). Furthermore, the expenditures required to settle the land and become established in Canada are considerably cheaper than those in America, and Canada offers greater opportunities to “young men acquainted with any business or profession that can be carried on in America” (I: 414). Therefore, immigrants will experience less anxiety about the future and will know ease and success in Canada (I: 414). Given these advantages, Weld surmises that “great numbers of people from the States actually emigrate into Canada annually, whilst none of the Canadians, who have it in their power to dispose of their property, emigrate into the United States” (I: 408).

Despite Canada’s agricultural prosperity, its religious tolerance (I: 371; 415), its “morality and good order” (I: 416), its civil liberties, and its “genial and healthy climate” (I: 356), Weld nevertheless determined to quit the country permanently and return “to [his] native land, now dearer to [him] than ever” (II: 375). At the close of *Travels*, Weld confesses that he “shall leave [North America] without a sigh, and without entertaining the slightest wish to revisit it” (II: 376). In the end, Weld was of the mind that the people of the British Isles would be foolish to abandon their native land for the New World, as it simply did not offer more than what could be achieved at home. As an earthly paradise, Canada was indeed imbued with numerous encouraging qualities: vis-à-vis the United States of America. However, these features paled in comparison to the paradise still

waiting in the Old World. Following his return to Ireland, Weld directed his attention to the publication of topographical and scientific texts dealing with the country for which he had gained a new appreciation as a result of witnessing the under-civilized and disorderly revolutionary society of America with its nonsensical roadways and unattractive landscapes. Weld's navigation of the Lakes of Killarney led to the publication of *Scenery of Killarney and the Surrounding Country* (1807), which he illustrated with his own drawings. He later compiled the *Statistical Survey of the County of Roscommon* (1832) for the Royal Dublin Society, of which he became the Vice President. In both cases, Weld focused on pleasing descriptions of the Irish landscape, drawing attention to the agricultural wealth and beauty that continued to flourish at home in Ireland.

When placed against Weld's consistently encouraging portrayal of the youthful country, Moore's vision of Canada also resembles the Dantean concept of *purgatorio*, as Moore's too is predominantly positive. In his sequence of Canadian poems, Moore's speaker perceives Canada as a place where purification occurs as he waits temporarily for his soul to be made ready for heaven. In other words, after ascending out of hell in "To the Honourable W.R. Spencer," the speaker, who "sigh[s] for England" and whose feet are "weary" (Moore, *Moore's Poems* 171: 119), spends a finite amount of time in an Edenic land until the *Boston Frigate* is prepared to take him back to his English paradise. With "many a mile to journey" (171:120) before he returns to his beloved home, the travel-worn speaker, who endured difficult trials in the American inferno, finds solace on British soil when in "Ballad Stanzas," a poem replete with positive imagery, he comes across a cottage hidden in a pristine garden. Declaring that "If there's peace to be found in the world, / A heart that was humble might hope for it here" (175: 3-4), Moore's speaker imagines an idyllic existence in Canada where natural and human order coexist

harmoniously (Bentley, “Thomas Moore’s Construction” 8). According to Bentley, the poem “implies that an edenic [sic] state (in both the existential and the political senses of the term) remains a real possibility in Upper Canada” (“Near the Rapids” 359) and that the “‘elysian Atlantis [of] ... liberty and repose’ that Moore failed to find in the American Republic exists in the most westerly region of British North America” (“Thomas Moore’s Construction” 5).

To further substantiate his claim that Moore equated Canada with an earthly paradise, Bentley points to “A Canadian Boat Song” and “To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon: From the Banks of the St. Lawrence.” In the former poem, Canada is depicted as a place populated by spiritually devout Christians, as it is in Weld’s *Travels*. The speaker admires the French Canadians who make God and church an integral part of their lives by “sing[ing] at St. Ann’s [their] parting hymn” (Moore, *Moore’s Poems* 181: 4). In the latter poem, Canada is portrayed as a demi-paradise of abundance with its “massy woods,” its “islets flowering fair” (182: 31), and its “shades of bloom” (182: 32). Significantly, it is to this Canadian Eden that the speaker surmises “the first sinful pair” (182: 32) were “banished” (182: 34). Of concern, however, is that Bentley’s analysis disregards the equally flattering depiction of Bermuda, another British colony, in earlier poems that appear in Moore’s *Epistles*. While Bentley would like his readers to presume that Moore privileged Canada based on his depiction of the country in “Ballad Stanzas,” in “To Joseph Atkinson, Esq.: From Bermuda,” Bermuda is also referred to as an “Elysium” (129: 16), a “paradise” (129: 28), and a “miniature Heaven” (129: 36). Additionally, in a letter to his mother, written on May 7, 1804, Moore pronounces that as “barren and secluded as poor Bermuda is, I think it a paradise to any spot in America that

I have seen” (*Letters* 64). Nowhere in his correspondence does he express the same sentiments regarding Canada.

Given that Moore espouses a similar attitude about America and Canada as did Weld, it is not surprising that he reaches the same conclusion at the end of his journey: that England supersedes Canada and remains “where [his] heart is enshrined” (*Moore’s Poems* 188: 50). In spite of the peaceful respite the speaker discovers in Canada, he aligns himself with England in the final poem of the sequence, “To the Boston Frigate.” In this poem, the triumphant (187: 1) speaker eagerly anticipates his return to “the flourishing isle of the brave and the free” (187: 4). Referring to Nova Scotia as an “unpromising strand” (187: 5), he pledges that this “Is the last [he] shall tread of American land” (187: 6). In his discussion of this poem in “Near the Rapids,” Bentley argues that Moore completes the Dantean paradigm by equating England with *paradiso*. But Bentley’s reading requires some serious qualification. While the notion that Moore viewed England as a paradise is intriguing, the catastrophic state of Europe at the time – and especially considering that Moore was Irish – complicates this suggestion. Indeed, how could an Irish separatist and supporter of the United Irishmen view England, the oppressor, as an ideal society? Why would an Irish Catholic praise a country whose Protestant politicians continued to hinder Catholic emancipation? And why, given its chaotic and unstable condition, would Moore point to England as a society worth emulating?

While I agree that Moore’s speaker *believes* England to be a heavenly paradise, when the images associated with that country at both the outset and finale of the speaker’s journey are taken into account, Bentley’s argument that England is championed as a paradise falters. For example, in “To Lord Viscount Strangford,” the speaker’s life in

England is described retrospectively using positively charged words, including “kind and sweet” (98: 8), “brilliant joy” (98: 15), “fresh” (98: 17), “rapture” (98: 20), and “Delicious” (98: 21). However, Bentley fails to recognize that the speaker’s thoughts about the Old World are inspired by nostalgia and that they arise from youthful recollections that are grounded in his now lost innocence. Furthermore, Bentley overlooks the fact that the speaker’s life in England is deemed idyllic simply because it allowed him to pursue frivolous desires, immature and leisurely pastimes, and inconsequential encounters of debauchery. England also fostered a self-centred existence, where the speaker’s feeble principles went unchallenged. Leading a charmed life of revelry and luxury, he was governed by “whim and soul” (98: 21) as he moved from “mirth to mirth again” (98: 17) and used his knowledge only “To gather bliss from all [he] knew” (*The Poetical Works* 96: 20). In “Stanzas,” the speaker, much like the persona in MacConmara’s *Adventures*, continues to pine for his rakish and roguish life “when to pleasure alone / [His] heart ever granted a wish or a sigh; / When the saddest emotion [his] bosom had known / Was pity for those who were wiser than [he]!” (*Moore’s Poems* 100: 9-12). Thus, it is to this debased and sinful life that the speaker eagerly returns at the close of his journey, and not to the Dantean paradise Bentley envisions.

It is important to note that by the close of Moore’s poetic cycle, the speaker has not yet returned to England, which means he has not perceived it through experienced, ‘fallen’ eyes. It is mainly and understandably for this reason that he continues to remember it with general fondness and longs to go back. It was ironically as a consequence of abandoning those blissful days “when life was new, / When, lulled with innocence and you” (“To Miss Moore” 103: 1-2) and especially of descending into the American inferno, that the speaker was no longer able to recognize England as a paradise.

This is because his perception is permanently tainted as a result of his fallen state (his journey through the experience of America and Canada). In one of the final poems, “To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon,” a now altered speaker can refer paradoxically to the New World as “beautiful” (183: 38), while he bemoans the condition of men in the Old World who are unable to dream of “miracles” (182: 35) because they remain “Caged in the bounds of Europe’s pigmy plan” (182: 36). More pragmatically, the speaker is also desirous to return to England because he has fulfilled the goal of his quest: to acquire a boon of knowledge. By moving beyond the limited scope of his home, the speaker has challenged his political and philosophical beliefs. Enlightened by the socio-political conditions he witnessed in the New World, the speaker imparts to Americans and, perhaps to his fellow Irishmen a lesson about the responsibilities that must accompany a permanent cutting of ties with England, warning that although “freedom is bliss, [...] honour is strength; / That though man have the wings of the fetherless wind, / [...] / Unblest is the freedom and dreary the flight, / That but wanders to ruin and wantons to blight!” (“To the Boston Frigate” 187: 8-9, 13-14). According to Bentley, Moore was “[o]f course [...] bent neither on encouraging nor discouraging emigration to Upper Canada” (“Near the Rapids” 360). Despite Moore’s apparent neutrality on the subject, Bentley surmises that the hopeful and serene vision championed in “Ballad Stanzas” acted as “a signpost directing emigrants away from the United States and towards Upper Canada” (“Thomas Moore’s Construction” 5). Additionally, Bentley maintains that it “played at least a small part in generating the flood of emigrants that increased the population of Upper Canada by over fifty percent in the early 1830s” (“Near the Rapids” 360).<sup>115</sup> Here, though, Bentley commits the *post hoc ergo propter hoc* logical fallacy. He

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<sup>115</sup> According to Bentley, as a means to endorse British immigration to Upper Canada, John Galt, a director,

claims that because there was an influx of immigration to Upper Canada following the widespread popularity of “Ballad Stanzas,” the poem contributed to British and Irish settlement in that region during the 1830s. What Bentley’s proposal overlooks is that recurring war and famine in the Old World were the predominant factors that led to increased immigration to Canada. Furthermore, Bentley maintains that Moore’s hopeful vision of Canada as a *purgatorio* was established only when he removed a selection of poems from his 1840 *Poetical Works*. If it was this representation of Canada that inspired immigration, Bentley’s argument becomes somewhat anachronistic. Bentley’s proposition is also complicated by the fact that Moore’s *Epistles* sold well not because of its Canadian content but because of the licentious verse and American epistles that had elicited controversy. Thus, the notion that immigrants were inspired by “Ballad Stanzas,” one of only six Canadian poems hidden amongst eighty-three poems on Bermuda, America, and miscellaneous themes, is a bit of a stretch.

While I concede that Moore was indifferent about the topic of emigration when he left North America, it is important to recognize that in the years that followed his perception of America and England were critically altered. As a result, his apathetic view of emigration to Canada changed as well. Profoundly affected by the political, social, and geographical conditions he witnessed while in America, Moore returned to England questioning his youthful vision of an autonomous Ireland. For Moore, the nightmarish scene of disorder and pompous entitlement he found in America was an exemplary model of the consequences that would befall Ireland were it to fulfill its fervent desire to sever

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and Cattermole, an “agent of the Canada Company, which was responsible for settling some two million acres of Upper Canada between 1826 and 1843,” referred to “Ballad Stanzas.” They did so because “literary resonances were believed to add to the appeal of North American locales for prospective emigrants” (“Near the Rapids” 360).

its ties with England. Despite this, Moore's experience in America did not convert the poet to conservatism upon his return. In fact, in time Moore came to regret the "flippant comments on temporary social incongruities" (Tuckerman 214) he found in America and apologized for them in the Preface to his *Poetical Works*. Eventually, Moore would not only "speak of the young republic as a laudable example of a free and democratic nation, especially after he watched with disgust the resurgence of monarchy following the final defeat of Napoleonic France" (Vail 57), but he would also "[move] on from attacking American republicanism to attacking English authoritarianism" (58).

At the outset of his career, Moore was the pampered favourite of British high society, including the Prince of Wales, who openly approved of Moore's controversial *Epistles* and to whom Moore dedicated *Anacreon*. However, following his return from North America, Moore became political enemies with "the bright future Star of England's throne" (Moore, "To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon"; *Moore's Poems* 186: 167). He also recognized that the English government and Protestant Ascendancy "were all too capable" of "barbarity and injustice" (Vail 43) and that "England's treatment of Ireland [would continue] to be, cruel, unfair, and provocative" (52-53). For Moore, England was far from the paradise his speaker yearned for at the close of "To the Boston Frigate." Having experienced a fall from innocence when his idealized revolutionary hope for Ireland was thwarted, and as a result of his experience in America, an initially disappointed Moore eventually recognized that his journey across the Atlantic brought him invaluable knowledge. For example, his time in Canada "taught him the value of moderation, restraint, and realism in the pursuit of political change" (58). It led him to the conclusion that an existence of moderation was necessary if political reform was to be achieved in Ireland. It also allowed him to measure the systems of the Old World against



those of the New. Forced to re-evaluate his perception of England, Moore came to the conclusion that paradise could not be regained and that England was in fact blighted. Feeling betrayed by the British, Moore became an Irish mouthpiece for his age, pouring “his wrath upon the oppressors of his country and of his religion. In defence of the Catholic religion and in denunciation of religious persecution everywhere” (Mackey 10). Turning his attention to the troubles of his beloved homeland, Moore asserted his allegiance to Ireland by reviving patriotic and national themes in his work. For example, his popular *Irish Melodies* – songs set to Irish music and published in ten parts – functioned as propaganda that supported Irish interests. Additionally, *Memoirs of Captain Rock* (1824) championed the Irish struggle for freedom, *Fitzgerald* honoured and immortalized an Irish rebel and leader of the 1798 Irish Rebellion, and *Lalla Rookh* demonstrated his pride in men like Emmet who fought against stasis and contributed to changing the course of Ireland’s history. With the interests of his country at the forefront of his mind, Moore’s works became catalysts to reawaken his fellow Irishmen’s patriotic sentiment and political entitlement.

By 1840, Moore’s once questionable reputation had been firmly redeemed, and the poet became “a symbol of his country” (Jordan 487). At the height of his success and when Ireland was in crisis due to repeated potato crop failures, Moore determined to revise his *Epistles*. Reduced to thirty-four poems, “Poems Relating to America,” featured in his *Poetical Works*, placed greater emphasis on the archetypal journey by omitting several miscellaneous verses that had previously interrupted the sequence. More importantly, as Bentley observes, by removing four poems between “To the Honourable W.R. Spencer” and “Ballad Stanzas,” five poems between the latter and “A Canadian Boat Song,” and the two final poems of the original edition, Moore highlighted the six

Canadian verses that had once been lost amongst a motley collection. However, Bentley does not consider the possibility that Moore's reformulation of his Canadian verses was inspired by his increasingly contentious relationship with England and growing concern for the plight of the Irish. For example, Moore's altered perception of England is made evident in "To the Honourable W.R. Spencer" as he calculatedly and self-consciously modified his speaker's expression of longing for "England" (*Moore's Poems* 171: 129) to the ambiguous "home" (*Poetical Works* 111: 119). Furthermore, by making his Canadian verses the focal point at the close of the sequence, Moore deliberately refigures his speaker's journey and thus consciously promotes a divergent vision and message from that espoused in *Epistles*. While Bentley maintains that Moore did not intend for "Ballad Stanzas" to endorse emigration, these revisions in his *Poetical Works* suggest otherwise. Acutely aware that his fellow Irishmen would soon need to seek refuge elsewhere, Moore may well have used his amended collection to sway immigration to Canada by drawing readers' attention to the tranquil and Edenic scene in "Ballad Stanzas," as well as to the favourable portrayal of the country in "To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon." Because Moore's reputation had been vindicated, he was now able to promote his message with added authority. In effect, his reconfigured "Poems Relating to America" became in 1840 the voice of an Irishman speaking to Irishmen about Canada.

~ III ~

ANNA BROWNELL JAMESON

Although Anna Brownell Jameson, like Weld and Moore, was born in Dublin, Ireland, she is treated and classified as a British author by scholars of her eclectic oeuvre.<sup>116</sup> Yet, on numerous occasions in her correspondence with Otilie von Goethe and Robert Noel,<sup>117</sup> and, more importantly, in *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* Jameson identifies herself as an Irishwoman and aligns herself with the people of Ireland.<sup>118</sup> In analyzing her life and letters, what becomes apparent is that Jameson grew increasingly preoccupied with and invested in Irish political and social issues. Although she spent a brief time in Ireland prior to moving to Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England, in 1798, as a result of the fast approaching Irish Rebellion, Jameson, a Protestant, remained committed throughout her life to several political and social concerns that plagued her homeland, particularly the rights of Irish Catholics. Her father's association with the United Irishmen, the literary and political Irish affiliates she befriended (novelist Maria Edgeworth and Sir Maziere Brady, lord chancellor of Ireland, for two), and her travels abroad left a lasting impression on Jameson.

Jameson was born "in the midst of all the commotions of one of the most stormy periods of modern history" (Macpherson 1). Her father, like so many other young Irishmen of the time, including Thomas Moore, was roused by the contagious spirit of revolution, which was inspired by the momentous events that had recently taken place in France. As a result, Denis Brownell Murphy became a staunch Irish patriot. Described as "typically Irish" (Erskine 12), Murphy expressed affectionate sympathies with and loyal

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<sup>116</sup> Jameson published over twenty books, including romances and criticisms on German art.

<sup>117</sup> Otilie was Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's daughter-in-law. Robert Noel, Lady Byron's cousin, remained intimate friends with Jameson until 1854. When Jameson broke off her friendship with Lady Byron, she discontinued her relations with Noel as well. It was Noel who introduced Jameson to the Goethe family.

<sup>118</sup> Having achieved popularity on an international scale, Jameson was conveniently appropriated by the British as one of their own, and, as a result, her Irish ancestry is often overlooked.

interest in the United Irishmen. He became a member of this organization, as did some of his friends (Macpherson 2). As mentioned in the preceding section, Moore declined repeated encouragement by college associates to become a member of this revolutionary group. Thus he was able to avoid being implicated in the failed rebellion of 1798.

Murphy, “a vociferous and therefore endangered patriot” (Thomas, *DCB* 649), however, narrowly escaped a devastating fate when he immigrated to England with his wife and daughter immediately prior to the uprising.<sup>119</sup> Because her father was a member of the United Irishmen, Jameson would have been exposed to political views that supported religious equality among the Irish and that encouraged the expulsion of Britain’s oppressive rule from Ireland. Yet, despite her father’s overt support of the Irish, Jameson grew up in England at a point in history that was “marked by outbursts of anti-Catholic feeling” (K. Adams 3). As a consequence, she was immersed in a culture that espoused a prejudicial and intolerant attitude toward Irish Catholics, and, more generally, the Irish people who demanded freedom from British rule. As tempting as it may have been to maintain the status quo and align with the prevailing mentality of her host country, Jameson remained openly committed to advancing the causes of the Irish throughout her life.

Given Jameson’s extensive and consistent interest in Irish politics, society, and culture, it seems careless then on the part of her critics, particularly interpreters of *WSSRC*, to dismiss the importance of her Irish heritage. *WSSRC* marks the beginning of an expression of fidelity and pride for her country of birth, as well as for its people, whom she repeatedly depicts as respectable, courageous, intelligent, selfless, and

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<sup>119</sup> Those not so fortunate included the rebellion’s leader, Henry McCracken (a Protestant Belfast manufacturer), Colonel James Napper Tandy, and Theobald Wolf Tone.

adaptable. Jameson's complimentary image of Irish-Canadians as successful and steadfast challenges the stereotype of the lazy, dirty, simpleminded, simian-like Irish-Canadians popularized in periodicals and magazines, as well as in such canonical texts as Thomas Chandler Haliburton's *The Clockmaker* (1835-1836) and Catherine Parr Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836), both of which Jameson read prior to writing *WSSRC*.<sup>120</sup> By accentuating the remarkable achievements of the Irish in Canada, *WSSRC* not only attempts to rectify the unflattering image of the Irish that was being perpetuated, it also functions itself as propaganda. As conditions in Ireland became increasingly destitute as a result of political instability, religious tension, and a disastrous potato famine in 1836,<sup>121</sup> Jameson's countrymen began in large numbers to contemplate emigration. *WSSRC* became for Jameson a way to encourage her fellow Irishmen to make Canada, not America, their destination of choice. Jameson believed that both the monetary and labour contributions of the Irish would have a profound impact on Canada's ability to prosper and advance.

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<sup>120</sup> In a letter to Miss Sedgwick written on board the *Quebec* in late February, 1837, Jameson refers to "this Yankee book, 'Sam Slick the Clockmaker'" (Macpherson 138) as something that "has amused me infinitely, and displeased me sovereignly. I dislike the spirit in which it is written, it plays discord upon mine" (138). Given that Haliburton includes disparaging accounts and characterizations of the Irish in his sketches, it is possible that this is an element that Jameson found off-putting. For example, in "Conversation at the River Philip," Sam Slick is told that "the poor labourer does not last long in your country, with new Rum, hard labour, and hot weather, you'll see the graves of the Irish each side of the canals for all the world like two rows of potatoes in a field that have forgot to come up" (Haliburton 32). And still later, Sam Slick states that "the Irish, they never carry a puss, for they never have a cent to put into it. They are always in love or in liquor, or else in a row; they are the merriest shavers I ever seed" (83). In "Mr. Slick's Opinion of the British," John Adams tells Slick that the British "supply us with labour on easier terms by shippin out the Irish. Says he, they work better and they work cheaper, and dont [sic] live so long" (84). Of course, these are the views of the prototypical Yankee character, though that is a distinction that may have been lost on Jameson, and perhaps rightly so.

According to Judith Johnston, it is likely that Jameson read Traill's *Backwoods* as it was "reviewed favorably in the *Athenaeum* in February 1836 and was doubtless available in London from around that date" (111). Clara Thomas also maintains that Jameson read Traill's book before coming to Canada (*Love and Work* 239 n. 11.4).

<sup>121</sup> Prior to this, a partial failure of the potato crops occurred in 1816-1817, as well as 1822, producing famine conditions in several areas. These events as causes of emigration do not, however, contradict my earlier remarks on the critical-historical error in thinking that the majority of Irish immigrants to Canada came during and after the Great Potato Famine towards the middle of the nineteenth century.

Feminist propagandist, biographer, art critic, romance novelist, and cosmopolitan globetrotter are all descriptives that have been ascribed to Jameson by her biographers, as well as by scholars of her opus of twenty books. But it is *WSSRC*, Jameson's contribution to the prototypically masculine genre of travel writing, that established her importance in the Canadian canon. Considered a watershed text in the literary history of Canada's travel literature, *WSSRC* has been consistently reprinted here and abroad since its debut.<sup>122</sup> However, it is often omitted from bibliographies compiled of Jameson's work.<sup>123</sup> A popular author whose professional reputation was firmly in place almost a decade before she embarked on her journey overseas in an attempt to settle issues in her troubled marriage,<sup>124</sup> Jameson experienced both critical and commercial acclaim with the publication of seven books, including *The Diary of an Ennuyée* (1826), *Shakespeare's Heroines: Characteristics of Women, Moral, Poetical and Historical* (1832), and *Visits and Sketches at Home and Abroad* (1834). It is on these more internationally recognized works that scholars outside of Canada tend to focus. As a result, they frequently gloss over the significance of *WSSRC*. In a similar way, an interest in Jameson's personal life, which inspired the publication of her memoirs and correspondence<sup>125</sup> as well as a detailed biography by Clara Thomas, *Love and Work Enough: The Life of Anna Jameson* (1967),

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<sup>122</sup> The original text was published as three volumes in London (1838) and then in two volumes in New York (1839); selections were printed in two volumes by Longmans in 1852 under the title *Sketches in Canada and Rambles Among the Red Men*; and it was reprinted in Toronto in 1972 and 1990.

<sup>123</sup> In its summary of Jameson's accolades, the *Oxford Companion to English Literature* (2000) refers to her contribution to and interest in art history and criticism, theology, biography, and social causes (all topics that appear in *WSSRC*), but it fails to mention her travel text or even that she spent time in Canada.

<sup>124</sup> Although her marriage to Robert Jameson was unhappy almost from the outset, it was to her husband that Jameson owed the opportunity of becoming part of a literary circle of contemporary, prominent and influential writers: Hartley Coleridge (1796-1849), Charles Lamb (1775-1834), and Henry Crabbe Robinson (1775-1867). It was also to him that she owed the opportunity to travel unescorted to such places as Germany and Canada, a freedom that was rarely allotted to unmarried women.

<sup>125</sup> These include Gerardine Macpherson's *Memoirs of the Life of Anna Jameson* (1878), Mary Stuart Erskine's *Anna Jameson: Letters and Friendships (1812—1860)* (1915), and *Letters of Anna Jameson to Otilie von Goethe* (1939).

shifted focus away from her Canadian contribution. It was not until the last quarter of the twentieth century that scholars began to express a renewed interest in Jameson's *WSSRC*, which till then had received little or no critical attention. Marking the beginning of a new genre known as the 'feminist picaresque,' Jameson's book has inspired numerous debates, dialogues, and investigations regarding a plethora of themes that are pertinent to popular nineteenth-century concerns and interests, including the woman question, colonialism, immigration, and Native culture. While the consistent publication of essays and full chapter studies of Jameson's *WSSRC* have solidified it as a Canadian classic, to date scholarship has failed to explore the significance of Jameson's Irishness. This seems a major oversight for a number of reasons. Firstly, Jameson makes frequent reference to her encounters with Irish-Canadians throughout *WSSRC*. Secondly, the letters she wrote prior to and during her stay in Canada reveal a kinship with her native countrymen. Lastly, the letters she wrote following her return to England voiced resounding support for several Irish causes, such as the removal of the Anglican Church and the abolition of tithes laws. This newly politicized, Irish-nationalist Jameson was born of her experiences in Canada.

When it first appeared on bookshelves in England in the fall of 1838, *WSSRC* garnered much attention. Encouraging reviews began to appear in several popular and respected British literary periodicals, including *The Athenaeum* (1838), *The Spectator* (1838), *The British and Foreign Review* (1839), and *Gentlemen's Magazine* (1839). Although numerous newspapers and periodicals were available in Canada, several of

which Jameson refers to in *WSSRC*,<sup>126</sup> they consisted mainly of “[p]aragraphs printed from English or American papers, on subjects of general interest, the summary of political events, [and] extracts from books or magazines” (*WSSRC* 153). Because these publications do not contain literary reviews or critical assessments of Jameson’s work, information regarding the public and critical reception of *WSSRC* at the time of its original publication can only be gathered from British sources. Consistent among these is a summary and evaluation of those commentaries Jameson made on the woman question, her treatment of the picturesque landscape, the political and legal system established in the British colony, and the eccentricities of Native life. None even makes passing reference to her treatment of Irish-Canadians.

Overall, *WSSRC* was an immediate critical success that helped solidify what was already a burgeoning literary reputation. In a letter to Noel (Fall 1838), Jameson expressed satisfaction regarding the positive public reception of her work: “I am glad to say, my success is entire, and I have never been so popular as now” (Macpherson 149). A similar sentiment is disclosed in a letter to Miss Sedgwick<sup>127</sup> (December 15, 1838): “At this moment I have fame and praise for my name is in every newspaper” (152). But the reviews were not unanimously flattering. For example, when *WSSRC* was published in New York at the end of 1839, the *Monthly Review*<sup>128</sup> announced that “‘She is in truth a philosopher’ but immediately undercuts this statement by calling her philosophy idiosyncratic” (J. Johnston 120-21). Also, among the aforementioned reviews, the commentaries made by the individual reviewers were not consistently approving, and

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<sup>126</sup> Jameson had access to the British *Foreign Review* (*WSSRC* 181), which she claimed was “not very well done” (181), as well as the *Quebec Mercury* and *Albion*, the last a paper printed in the United States that brought her much reading pleasure.

<sup>127</sup> American novelist Catharine Maria Sedgwick (1789-1867).

<sup>128</sup> “Mrs. Jameson in Canada” is no longer available.



“the tone [was often] one of careful and sometimes admonitory consideration” (Thomas, *Love and Work* 139).

Published as two separate notices in *The Athenaeum*, “Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada” warns the book’s potential readership that it will “be greatly disappointed” (871). Curious and concerned about the rebellions that broke out in Lower and Upper Canada in 1837, shortly after Jameson departed for England, the British reading public would have been tempted to purchase *WSSRC* with an expectation that it provided insight into immediate political interests. Pointing to Jameson’s Preface, which explains her need to omit commentary on many pressing political issues due to her marriage to a politician, the reviewer suggests that the book is better suited for a readership that admires and delights in similar “works of its class” (871). It is not appropriate for a readership who, having been misled by the inclusion of “Canada” in its title, would “hurry anxiously over its pages in search of information relating to those great questions which just now excite so stirring an interest among us” (871).<sup>129</sup> Claiming that the book would not have garnered much critical or public attention had “Canada” not been included in the title, the reviewer, in the second notice, focuses on the features of *WSSRC* that would amuse the general reader: the contemplations about German art and the woman issue, the sublime and picturesque descriptions of the Canadian landscape, and the discussions of various people she encountered.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> The first review focuses on politics and institutions in Canada. It includes lengthy excerpts from *WSSRC* that deal with facts, descriptions, and opinions relating to Torontonians society, the proposed union of the provinces, the appropriation of the clergy reserves, the establishment of an endowed University, and the difficulties immigrants faced when attempting to buy or hold land.

<sup>130</sup> While passages on German art and women’s rights are left out, the reviewer includes Jameson’s description of her encounter with Colonel Talbot, the dances and legends she learned from her Native companions, and a comparison of the roles of men and women in Native culture to those in European culture.

Unlike *The Athenaeum*, *The Spectator*<sup>131</sup> advertises that Jameson's text provides a wealth of valuable information on current political and social affairs. The reviewer also maintains, rather condescendingly, that this information is more useful than that discussed by any male author because, being a lady, Jameson is "less likely to be tinged by party bias" (1166). Because her readership was looking for some explanation of the impending rebellion, this reviewer argues that Jameson's explanation for the discontent felt among Canadians was an important contribution. Jameson observed that the dissatisfaction was not a result of an aversion to Britain, but rather it was caused by a feeling of neglect and mistreatment by the larger British public, who responded apathetically to the problems in Upper and Lower Canada. For this reviewer, the most appealing features of *WWSRC* include Jameson's insightful portrayal of the unfamiliar world of Natives, as well as her sketches of various places and people. However, he conveys impatience with Jameson's lengthy criticism of German authors and her musings on German actresses.<sup>132</sup> Although the reviewer insists that there is "no necessity" to discuss such topics in a book on Canada (1166), his overall assessment of the work remains complimentary. Despite Jameson's presenting her readers with volumes that abound "profusely" with miscellaneous matter (1167), as well as "sentimental reflection or elegant reverie" that is not always sound (1166), the reviewer maintains that Jameson, overall, adds "a freshness and truth" (1166) to her recordings.

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<sup>131</sup> A weekly newspaper that began in Britain in 1828 and is still in circulation.

<sup>132</sup> Jameson's decision to include detailed examinations of German art and literature was deliberate and justified, in her mind, as she recognized that such topics had lately become popular among her British readership. Despite some hesitation that her target audience would not be prepared for such intellectual musings into a relatively unfamiliar area, Jameson believed her audience would react to the newness of German culture in much the same way as to the foreign aspect of Canada: with insatiable interest and inspiration. Jameson has since been credited with having made the study of German art reputable.

In “Mrs. Jameson’s Winter Studies and Summer Rambles,” featured in *The British and Foreign Review* (January, 1839), Henry Francis Chorley praises Jameson’s latest contribution to her already impressive series of literary accomplishments.<sup>133</sup> At the outset of the review, Chorley commends Jameson for not writing the type of dogmatic and contrived travel book the public had suffered to endure. Instead, he argues that Jameson presents readers with a text that contains “original speculation” from a “genuine artist” who offers her curious audience “new secrets of that mysterious inner world” as well as insight into “some new breathings of the outer and ever-changing airs of opinions” (134).<sup>134</sup> According to Chorley, it was because Jameson struggled in Toronto’s aloof and unsophisticated society that she was able to achieve such “powers of picturesque observation” (148). He goes on to say that Jameson’s ability to blend “thought [...] with graphic power [...] distinguishes her from other lady travellers [...], from the Mrs. Trollope and the Miss Pardoes – the false and the flippant, – who return from foreign parts yet more self-complacent in their ignorance than when they left their own firesides” (148). Despite this overall friendly and encouraging review, Chorley does rebuke Jameson’s feminist zeal, which, he observes, recurs in her work and weakens it.<sup>135</sup> Aware of these types of critiques, Jameson claimed in a letter to Noel that the “one or two most

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<sup>133</sup> Chorley lived with Jameson’s friend Henry Reeve and worked as a journalist for *The Athenaeum* (a London literary magazine published between 1828 and 1921) and *The British and Foreign Review* (also known as *The European Quarterly Journal*).

<sup>134</sup> Particular features admired by Chorley in the “Winter Studies” section include Jameson’s musings on art, painting, and music, “the personal and biographical sketches they contain” (137), the “bright pictures of scenery and manners” (142), and the honesty with which she depicts her disappointment when “viewing [Niagara Falls,] this marvel of the western world” (144). When discussing her “Summer Rambles” section, Chorley focuses on Jameson’s description of the time she spent with Colonel Talbot, as well as the intimate friendships she developed with several Native women.

<sup>135</sup> Chorley alludes to the fact that in previous evaluations of her work, he has expressed dislike for Jameson’s views on what she considers an unbalanced relationship between men and women. He also expresses “general protest of grave and entire disapproval” (137) at her suggestion that the treatment of women by men among the Natives is favourable to that which exists among European men and women.

brutal attacks upon me personally from personal motives [...] have only called forth stronger expressions of sympathy and approbation” (Macpherson 149).<sup>136</sup>

While *The Athenaeum*, *The Spectator*, and *The British and Foreign Review* provide commentary on the literary merit of Jameson’s *WSSRC*, the reviewer for *Gentleman’s Magazine* (1839) spends little time assessing the critical value of Jameson’s text. He chooses instead to summarize at length her findings regarding the Canadian Parliamentary system, the customs and stories of the “Red Men,” the unhappiness among Canadian women who feel like princesses in exile, and the destruction of the Native people as a result of European exploitation and alcohol abuse. Opening with the maxim that “every book is a good one” (115), this reviewer proposes that *WSSRC* upholds the claim. Describing Jameson as not only a “careful and curious observer” but also “an intrepid traveller” (115), the reviewer catalogues Jameson’s major accomplishments while in Canada, which include enduring its harsh climate, travelling in solitude, building mutually respectful relationships among the “Wild Indians,” and being initiated into the customs and lifestyle of the “Red Men.” The reviewer champions Jameson’s courage to abandon her stifling and depressing Toronto home and sojourn among the unfamiliar Indians, as well as her confidence in journeying into potentially dangerous landscapes that had yet to be traversed by a white woman. The information Jameson imparts to her readers about the traditions and day-to-day lives of the then dying race of Indians is considered invaluable to this reviewer.

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<sup>136</sup> In a letter to her sister Charlotte (1838), Jameson refers to a friend’s dismissal of such misogynist views: “Mrs. Procter writes me that the book is universally relished, and says, ‘A fig for reviewers.’ ‘The men,’ she says, ‘are much alarmed by certain speculations about women; and,’ she adds, ‘well they may be, for when the horse and ass begin to think and argue, adieu to riding and driving’” (Macpherson 150).

Despite the immediate and wide-reaching attention *WSSRC* attracted, it had fallen into relative obscurity by the late nineteenth century. Nearly a century and a half would pass before academics investigated its critical merit. However, when Canadian scholars recognized the value of recovering Jameson's text, it once again inspired a mixed and, at times, mean-spirited response. As late as 1965, a condescending advertisement printed on the back cover of an abridged reprint of *WSSRC* stated that "[a]s an intellectual and thereby somewhat eccentric lady of society, Anna Jameson's vivid diary-style description of life in Upper Canada remains perennially popular nearly one hundred and thirty years after she disdainfully shook the mud of Muddy York from her satin slippers" (qtd. in J. Johnston 123). Three years later, Ray Palmer Baker suggested in *A History of English-Canadian Literature to the Confederation: Its Relations to the Literature of Great Britain and the United States* (1968) that although Jameson "is given a niche in the Canadian hall of fame [, she did not leave] any impress on Canadian literature" (117). However, reactions soon shifted. In 1976, Carl F. Klink, in *Literary History*, championed *WSSRC* as "a remarkable book of travel, observation, and research" ("Literary Activity in the Canadas (1812-1841)" 157). He exclaimed that Jameson's "controlled sentiment, shrewd comments, delightful style, and an 'impertinent leaven of egotism' gave Upper Canada one of the masterpieces of North American travel literature and a remarkable document of womanly independence" (157). Echoing this assessment, Elizabeth Waterston argued that *WSSRC* was "deservedly the best known of all Canadian travel books" ("Travel Literature" 800).

Topics that have stimulated considerable dialogue among critics of *WSSRC* in the late twentieth century and that are most relevant to my own discussion include Jameson as artist, Jameson as feminist propagandist, Jameson as subjective biographer, and

Jameson as strategist in the formulation of her apologia. In recent decades, Lorraine M. York and Wendy Roy have formulated compelling arguments regarding the importance of art in Jameson's travel text. Looking at *WSSRC*, as well as other texts written by Jameson prior to her trip to Canada, York discusses how a background in the traditions of European art and knowledge of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theories of the picturesque and the sublime influenced the author's perception of nature.<sup>137</sup> Creating a tension between reality and fancy, image and word (43), repeating the word 'picturesque,' and casting herself as a painter-poet, are examples York provides of the debt Jameson owes to the European tradition of the picturesque.<sup>138</sup> York argues that Jameson desired to see in the desolate Canadian landscape the features of European art she knew and loved and that she implemented "concepts of artistic composition – form, order, symmetry – in her attempts to perceive in the New World the familiar, comforting structures of the old" (51). It is, then, according to York, not surprising that Jameson's memoir repeatedly sets up contrasts between winter and summer, Old and New World, high and low, and nature and civilization, because doing so is a reflection of the "struggle between the inner spirit and the harsh external forces of her environment" (54).<sup>139</sup> York

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<sup>137</sup> By combining "verbal and visual sensitivity" (York 45), Jameson is able to translate the mundane into a thing of "heightened significance" (45). However, she is criticized for doing so by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, who maintains that Jameson had a habit of seeing all through a painterly lens, which, in his opinion, was a common failure among Europeans who did not view the American frontier as it actually was (45).

<sup>138</sup> The Romantic idea of the sublime, popular at the time, also dictated the elements Jameson would focus on when describing the landscape (York 46). However, she was confronted with the fact that the Canadian expanse was not one of "awesome grandeur, but one of barren desolation" (47).

<sup>139</sup> For example, York observes that Jameson often depicts the openness of the Canadian landscape as oppressive and enclosed (48) and suggests that this oxymoron reveals Jameson's sense of psychological enclosure because she lacked the social circle in Canada that she had in England and Germany (49).

further postulates that Jameson draws comparisons between the Old World and the New so that her readers can relate to the image and better picture it (45).<sup>140</sup>

The significance of York's observations to my exploration of Jameson's *WSSRC* is twofold. Firstly, it highlights Jameson's self-conscious effort to ensure that her audience was receptive to her work by making it relatable through replication.<sup>141</sup> Secondly, it explains why Jameson repeatedly merges Old and New World in her verbal descriptions of the visual. As mentioned in the previous section, this habit of juxtaposing or drawing parallels between England and Canada is also apparent in Weld and Moore. All three authors compare the newly emerging society to that upon which it is modeled: England.<sup>142</sup> Weld, Moore, and Jameson also set up contrasts between England's now independent and rebellious offspring, America, and her more moderate and complacent child, Canada. What will be made clear in my analysis of specific passages from *WSSRC* is that while Jameson challenges the negative portrayal of America and often casts the country in a favourable light, by and large she upholds Weld's and Moore's treatments of Canada as superior to its rivalling sibling. This is critical because, as stated earlier, Jameson's aim was to convince Irish immigrants to begin anew in Canada as opposed to the seemingly more appealing alternative of immigration to America.

In both her chapter study and article,<sup>143</sup> Roy explores Jameson's role as artist, as opposed to art critic. She does so by analyzing Jameson's etchings, sketches, and watercolours, which illustrate the journey she took throughout Upper and Lower Canada,

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<sup>140</sup> But as she progressed through her journey, Jameson became increasingly aware of limitations that language placed on her attempts to render her experience to her audience (York 46).

<sup>141</sup> The relevance of this point will be made clear during my discussion of Jameson's Preface to *WSSRC*.

<sup>142</sup> The same can be said of MacConmara, although the comparisons he makes are between Canada and Ireland.

<sup>143</sup> Roy's article, "'Here is the Picture As Well As I Can Paint It: Anna Jameson's Illustrations for *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*" appeared in *Canadian Literature* in 2003. In 2005, Roy expanded her findings in a chapter for *Maps of Difference: Canada, Women, and Travel*.

and by juxtaposing them with the verbal descriptions they accompany.<sup>144</sup> Roy's argument centres on the discrepancy between Jameson's verbal descriptions and visual depictions of identical Canadian landscapes or Native people. By pointing out the contrasts between visual and verbal images, Roy highlights the often mistaken assumption that travel writing and the sketches, maps, and photographs authors include are straightforward and based entirely on fact, thus requiring no interpretation. For Roy "[v]isual representations of travel are never value-free, since they are inflected by—and demonstrate—their creators' often complex subject positions" ("Here is the Picture" 97-98). Applying a postcolonial lens to her interpretation, Roy argues that Jameson's illustrations represent her literal and symbolic "progress beyond what she calls 'the bounds of civilised humanity.' [...]" Together, the two media demonstrate the way in which complex constructions of self and other are shaped by the politics of colonialism, 'race,' culture, class, and gender" (98). According to Roy, the inconsistency between the written text and the illustrations underscores the tension between an artist who is aligned with the British imperial venture and her subjects who were disenfranchised as a result of that colonial enterprise.<sup>145</sup>

Roy's discovery of this underlying tension between Jameson's allegiance to England and her recognition that what that country was attempting to accomplish in

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<sup>144</sup> Jameson produced roughly forty sketches and water colours during her travels throughout Upper and Lower Canada with the aim of including them in the original publication of *WSSRC*. However, her publishers decided against their inclusion. To date, Jameson's sketches and water colours have not been published. G.H. Needler published a booklet of eight etchings that were based on Jameson's sketches.

<sup>145</sup> What some of the etchings reveal is a tendency "to construct First-Nations peoples as part of the scenery, or as 'types' or ethnographic specimens. At other times, Jameson individualizes First-Nations acquaintances to the extent that their features are distinct and their portraits are named. She also put herself in the picture, providing complex visual constructions of the pre-to-early Victorian woman traveler that enrich and challenge parallel textual representations in her book" (Roy 98-99).

The images that receive the most attention in Roy's analysis are Jameson's sleigh sketch; "The canoe on Lake Huron," which exposes her often inaccurate claim of journeying alone; the man next to the waterfall; the images of Kim,e,wun, Mokomaun,ish; and three dancers in motion. These illustrations simultaneously objectify and individualize her First Nations subjects (101, 106-7, 109, 112).



Canada came at a detrimental cost to Natives and their culture<sup>146</sup> supports my argument that witnessing these gross injustices may have inspired Jameson to become more publicly supportive of the need to improve the conditions in Ireland, a country also struggling under England's despotic control. For example, toward the close of *WSSRC*, Jameson draws a telling parallel between the children and living conditions of the Irish and Native people: "A number of little Redskins were running about, half, or rather indeed wholly, naked – happy, healthy, active, dirty little urchins, resembling, except in colour, those you may see swarming in an Irish cabin. Poor Ireland! The worst Indian wigwam is not worse than some of her dwellings" (*WSSRC* 490). What is most significant is Jameson's realization that while these two groups share similar domestic conditions of squalor, it is the Irish who suffer the greatest disadvantage because they remain "*poor-slave[s]*," whereas the Natives "at least Lord o'er" themselves (490). Likely awakened by such devastating scenes, Jameson returned to England and became increasingly concerned about the living conditions among the Irish. In fact, after witnessing the destitute state of the Irish following the disastrous Potato Famine (1845-1850), Jameson, who visited Ireland in 1848, wrote letters to various politicians to raise awareness of the alarming situation and to demand that changes be implemented.<sup>147</sup>

A second topic that draws considerable scholarly attention is Jameson's keen interest in the roles and rights of women, which was in part inspired by a historical period of fast-developing feminist consciousness. Jameson's feminist treatises can be traced throughout *WSSRC* and have stimulated numerous scholarly investigations regarding her

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<sup>146</sup> After visiting several Native settlements, Jameson recognized the dilemma facing these people: that as a result of the imperial presence, Natives were declining in numbers because of an increased rate of mortality and forced assimilation (Fowler 168).

<sup>147</sup> An exploration of Jameson's correspondence following her return to England will be provided later.

position and contribution to this controversial topic of debate, including Marian Fowler's *The Embroidered Tent: Five Gentlewomen in Early Canada* (1982), Kimberly VanEsveld Adams's *Our Lady of Victorian Feminism* (2001), and Shirley Foster and Sara Mills's *An Anthology of Women's Travel Writing* (2002). An early, conservative feminist, Jameson was vocal about the lack of both public and private opportunities granted to women in European society.<sup>148</sup> She insisted on the need to improve women's rights in law, and she dedicated a significant amount of space in *WSSRC* to discussions regarding the importance of better education for women.<sup>149</sup> Jameson's preoccupation with the woman question and her feminist commentaries in *WSSRC* are well known and have been analyzed at length by Fowler,<sup>150</sup> K. Adams,<sup>151</sup> and Foster and Mills.<sup>152</sup> For this reason,

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<sup>148</sup> Jameson encouraged her patriarchal society to allow women to work outside the domestic sphere, as it was her belief that it was the obligation of both men and women to contribute directly to the larger social good.

<sup>149</sup> As the eldest of five daughters, it fell to Jameson to support her unmarried sisters when her father was too unwell to do so himself. As can be seen in numerous lengthy passages in *WSSRC*, the education of women was of the utmost importance to the author. It is not surprising then that Jameson financed the education of family members.

<sup>150</sup> Fowler observes that Jameson's comments about the position of women in Native culture function to highlight "the unhappy lot of white women in civilized life" (160) and that her constant juxtaposition of the two societies provides "a convenient soap-box for feminist propaganda" (168).

<sup>151</sup> Advancing Fowler's position, K. Adams discusses how Jameson uses *WSSRC* to promote her commitment to women's rights and the need for equality among the sexes, particularly with regard to education and more generally with regard to politics, economics, intellect, and morality (45, 46). According to Adams, Jameson related her own life to the cause of single women because she herself became one as a result of her failed marriage, which was exacerbated by the unbearably harsh domestic and environmental conditions of the home her husband built for her in Canada. Jameson, however, remained optimistic because of her belief that the concept of 'woman' would alter over time and that, as a result, her "powers and abilities and the social understanding of her nature [would] all expand" (48). But unlike Fowler, who sees Jameson as privileging the treatment and roles of Native women over European women, Adams argues that Jameson states "her belief in the superiority of Western civilization and Christianity to native American cultures" (113).

<sup>152</sup> Foster and Mills investigate "what it means to travel as a woman of a particular race and class and what factors weigh on the codification of that material when women write about these experiences" (1). They argue against the homogenization of women's travel writing, emphasizing that diversity is prevalent because "[g]ender interacts with other variables, such as race, age, class and financial position, education, political ideals and historical period" (1). Furthermore, they posit that the differences found in travel literature are not so much among male and female accounts as they are among those written by different types of women (3).

In the early nineteenth century, women like Jameson began to travel unchaperoned to potentially dangerous and unexplored areas as explorers, missionaries, pioneers, or as a type of leisure (2). Yet, despite

they require little discussion here (if summarized at some length in the footnotes). In the same way that Fowler maintains that Jameson became a public feminist and committed herself to improving the status of women only after witnessing how a stunted education continued to hinder women in Canada despite their having access to “opportunities for new freedoms” (172), I will argue that Jameson’s Irish nationalism and sympathies were sparked as a result of her numerous encounters with successful Irish immigrants in Canada. In addition, just as *WSSRC* functions as a tool by which to instruct women on how to strive for equality and improved social conditions, so too does it function as a manual to encourage the Irish to aspire toward a life of justice, religious tolerance, and equal opportunity, which, she instructs them, can be achieved by immigrating to Canada.

Another view that complements my interpretation of Jameson’s treatment of the Irish is that of the travel text as personal and subjective memoir or journal, and how this category of writing influences and skews representation. In “Anna Jameson’s *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada* as Epistolary Dijournal” (1992), Helen M. Buss investigates the complex function of memory in the creation of autobiography. Buss

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their iconoclastic pursuits, these women were acutely self-conscious about upholding “socially acceptable gendered behaviour” (2) because their writings would be “judged to be different by critics and the reading public who [...] may read [them] from an essentialist viewpoint” (4). According to Foster and Mills, Jameson was aware of the fact that she represented Britain whilst away and that, as a female traveller, she was compromising her respectability by engaging in activities deemed unfeminine. Therefore in *WSSRC*, she was cautious to emphasize the “necessity of dressing and behaving ‘correctly’ and being judged to be doing so” (8). However, Foster and Mills suggest that by focusing on the “domestic aspects of foreign life,” women like Jameson were not “adher[ing] to accepted notions of literary ‘femininity’” (10). Rather, they were empowering themselves by giving voice to topics and concerns ignored by male travel writers, and because they foregrounded gender-specific concerns in their works, they subverted “the familiar hero/adventure/action paradigm of male travel narratives and generate[d] and control[led] their own discourse” (10).

More specifically, Foster and Mills, who, like Roy, apply a postcolonial approach to their interpretation of Jameson’s account of her experiences in Canada, discuss Jameson’s treatment of Native women. Arguing that Jameson places herself “adjacent to, rather than in opposition to [the] objects of [her] observation” (11), Foster and Mills interpret her sympathy for and interest in the domestic situation of Native women as yielding two alternative conclusions. Firstly, it simultaneously challenges the oppression of both indigenous and Western women who suffer under patriarchal injustice. Secondly, it recognizes “that other patterns of female behaviour offer more freedom or opportunities than Western women enjoy” (14).

argues that because memory cannot be entirely based on fact, as it straddles the realm of actuality and imagination, an autobiography that is based on retrospective musings is always problematic.<sup>153</sup> When recounted retrospectively, the image of the self being depicted is neither stable nor consistent (43). Interestingly, on several occasions Jameson acknowledges that her responses to people and events are preconditioned by her own cultural assumptions and biases (43). Therefore, it is possible that her warm and positive accounts of the Irish are a reflection of a deeper sympathy and growing affection she had for the people of her native land. Also important is Buss's examination of how the journal form highlights the fact that Jameson's "journey through selfhood" parallels her "actual journey in the new land" (44) and that this, in turn, underscores Jameson's personal growth as she becomes more actively involved in her Canadian experience. According to Buss, the division in Jameson's perspective and attitude is emphasized by the division between the winter and summer sections in her book. Buss characterizes Jameson in the first part of *WSSRC* as a lonely, discontented, disappointed, and helpless individual (Jameson as wife), who is preoccupied with troubles of the heart due to her unhappy marriage. Thus, she sees everything through a frame of mind that is tainted by feelings of neglect and dejection (45). In the "Summer Rambles" section, a remarkably different personality is revealed: that of "the rambling, adventurous, and independent voyageur (her imagined Canadian self)" (45). However, Buss is not the first to notice this alteration in mood, nor is she the first to point to its connection to "the device of seasons-as-structure" (Fowler 158). Ten years earlier, Fowler outlined the dramatic personal changes

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<sup>153</sup> Buss states it is significant that Jameson chose to construct *WSSRC* as "part practical journal, part diary, part letter" (44) because the amalgamation of these styles provides Jameson with the comfort and intimacy she needs in a place of isolation. The intimacy of diary recordings and addresses to close friends and family whom she informs of the practical and everyday experiences reasserts a familial connection (44).

that occur in Jameson's subject position as she progresses from an isolated and pessimistic traveller to an engaged and empathetic observer who discards her Old World class biases and prejudices and claims ownership of her own judgments and opinions (168).<sup>154</sup>

What is most pertinent about their respective arguments is that Buss points to Jameson's trip to Niagara as "the vehicle by which she [could] effect personal change while overcoming the sense of helpless passivity that her husband's place, Toronto, impose[d] on her" (47), and Fowler takes this one step further by suggesting that the specific catalyst for Jameson's transformation is her encounter with an Irish family while at Niagara (158). Fowler, however, does not explain why it may be relevant that this family, who indeed had a profound impact on Jameson, is Irish. Instead, she simply explains that after conversing with this family in Niagara, Jameson gains the inspiration and confidence to plan a journey alone that will take her to areas of the Ontario wilderness that a white woman had never been to before (158). But what becomes clear when looking closely at Jameson's description of her interactions with this Irish family is that for the first time she felt as though she belonged to a community in Canada. Her sense of acceptance and inclusion was a result of her ability to identify with this family through a shared Irish heritage. Not only did their hospitality and nurturing disposition affect the author, it was the lessons Jameson learned from them about adaptation and

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<sup>154</sup> Reluctant to engage in the new social and physical landscape out of a bitter resentment for having been forced to abandon her close friend Otilie and the German literary circle she loved in order to resume her role as wife to her estranged husband, Jameson, Fowler claims, casts herself as an isolated wanderer, much like the Byronic hero. Furthermore, she incessantly refers to her German friends and the culture of their country with nostalgia, which demonstrates an unwillingness to discard the past and embrace the new (151).

perseverance that reinvigorated her once depleted spirit and motivated her to strike out anew.<sup>155</sup>

Critical to my approach regarding the portrayal of Irish-Canadians in *WSSRC* are those articles and chapter studies conducted by K. Adams, Bina Friewald, J. Johnston, and Foster and Mills that dedicate space to assessing Jameson's intentions in writing *WSSRC*, focusing specifically on her Preface. On the one hand, Jameson, who "wrote to publish and to meet contemporary literary demands, in order to support financially not only herself but also her parents and unmarried sisters" (Thomas, *Love and Work* 101), was motivated for financial reasons. With the secured popularity of her work on the Continent, in England, and in America, Jameson was confident in "the salability of an informal, candid, peep-over-the-shoulder memoir, particularly in 1838, when Lord Durham's conduct of the post-Rebellion difficulties made the Canadas especially newsworthy" (128).<sup>156</sup> There is also evidence that she planned to use notes to make a book before she even left England (Thomas, *Afterword* 545).<sup>157</sup> On the other hand, Jameson hoped her work would serve an ideological and social function by providing her English readers with an opportunity to be informed and thus improved. Therefore, in order to secure its publication and to ensure that its social commentary would be disseminated without censorship, Jameson made the strategic decision to open *WSSRC* with an apologia. In their respective examinations, each critic comes to this same

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<sup>155</sup> A more thorough analysis of this encounter will be conducted later.

<sup>156</sup> In a letter written on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1837, from Niagara Falls, Jameson discusses the need to publish her work in order to support her familial dependents: "I have written much of my new book. [...] On my return to England I *must work very hard*, I want money for my sisters, as well as you and I must get it somewhere" (*Letters* 93).

<sup>157</sup> On May, 1838, Jameson writes to Noel: "I brought with me from Canada a diary I kept there about all manner of things [...]. My intention **was** to have used these notes only as *material*, but I have been persuaded to print the diary in its original state, only with a few omissions" (Macpherson 140 **my emphasis**). Jameson's discussion of her original intentions suggests she had plans to publish her work in some form or other prior to returning to England.

conclusion: that the apologia, a particularly feminine practice (J. Johnston 105), was employed by Jameson as a means to divert potential critics and to guarantee that her views would not be censured.

What Jameson's apologia reveals is a self-conscious awareness of the importance of appeasing the tastes of her target audience and of not offending the public by addressing taboo or masculine subjects such as science or politics.<sup>158</sup> Constructing a likeable and non-threatening persona through the use of a modest and self-effacing tone, Jameson apologizes for "the insignificance of [her] (personal) utterance" (Friewald 65). Furthermore, she confesses that she is able to discuss only the trivial due to a lack of knowledge in masculine topics of interest. Claiming that she is "unambitious, producing books only for her own pleasure, [Jameson] played down her expertise largely to satisfy the expectations of the critics" (K. Adams 73). According to J. Johnston, this was necessary because "Victorian morality" placed "discursive constraint[s]" on publications and reception (120). Thus, Jameson had to be careful about *how* she presented her ideas and opinions. Because she was entering masculine territory by writing a travelogue, Jameson was forced to contend with the rigid limitations placed on women writers at the time. In response to this, Foster and Mills make the compelling argument that Jameson subversively pushes the boundaries and challenges these constraints (10) by strategically creating a guise of self-devaluation and self-imposed censorship in her disclaimer (Foster,

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<sup>158</sup> This awareness of pleasing her audience is underscored within her text as well. For example, although she was determined to translate a manuscript volume of Johann Peter Eckermann's *Conversations with Goethe*, a task she began in Toronto, she stopped because she felt it was "too German for a general British audience" (K. Adams 18). She also acknowledges that "a translation of this clever tale [Sternberg's the *Two Breughels*] would please generally in England" (WSSRC 189).

*Across New Worlds* 54), which “overturn[s] the anticipated accusations, preempt[s] their premises, and introduce[s] her own frame of reference” (Friewald 65).<sup>159</sup>

More importantly, Jameson recognized the fine balance she had to maintain between writing a saleable account of her experiences that relied on an acute awareness of her audience’s sensibilities and the need to satisfy them, and being able to tell the truth about important issues that had to be re-evaluated, challenged, or demythologized, and particularly, I will argue, with respect to the Irish. The necessity to provide a truthful representation of events, images, and people is expressed repeatedly by Jameson throughout *WSSRC*. The declaration that she wishes “that truth may be able to follow [lies], and undo the mischief thus done – through some unintentional mistake perhaps, – but not the less *mischief* and *injustice*” (*WSSRC* 141) is a telling one, and it could be viewed as Jameson’s mission statement for her treatment of the Irish in *WSSRC*. As Marni L. Stanley observes, many sojourners to Canada stayed on the path most traveled. As a result, their impressions were skewed and the recounting they gave to the world about Canada only represented a small fraction of the vastness of the Canadian experience (55-56). Jameson reiterates this claim when discussing the practices among her contemporaries: “Now, when a traveller goes to a foreign country, it is always with a set of preconceived notions concerning it, to which he fits all he sees, and refers all he hears[. They] are withal the most unsafe guides any one can have” (*WSSRC* 155-56). Challenging the Chinese proverb that “‘A lie [...] has no feet, it cannot stand’” (141), Jameson warns that it may not have feet, “but it has wings and can fly fast and far enough” (141). In order to clip the wings of those lies, Jameson records her

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<sup>159</sup> The complimentary reviews Jameson received in various periodicals following the publication of *WSSRC* suggest that her “manipulation of the discourse” was successful (J. Johnston 120).



unconventional opinions and observations in *WSSRC* about such controversial topics as the woman question, Native stereotypes, and, I will argue, the Irish.

Although her discussion of the Irish is not overt, as are her treatment of the woman question and Natives, Jameson nevertheless peppers her book with commentary and observations about the Irish, all of which are positive. Scholars agree that by writing *WSSRC*, Jameson confronted her readers with re-evaluating the roles of women in Western society and altering their views about a disadvantaged and misunderstood Native culture. They also agree that the book serves as an instructive manual, informing and teaching its readers about the importance of German Art, as well as the complexities of Canada's politics and the sublime beauty of its landscape. But *WSSRC* also functions as a platform for this Irishwoman to defy and thus change the ill-conceived notion of the often disdained people of her native land, a detrimental image upheld by her British audience and espoused at the time by anglophile Canadian writers such as Haliburton and Traill.

A rousing interest in Ireland, its culture, history, and people can be traced back to Jameson's correspondence with Otilie in the years immediately prior to her journey to Canada.<sup>160</sup> In a letter written from Dresden on September 27, 1834, Jameson reveals an interest in Irish literature, as she reports "all your Irish books and Music are now arrived" (*Letters* 24). This suggests that Jameson discussed her passion for Irish history and culture with her close friend, who responded by sending her some desired material. On Monday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, 1836, five months before departing for Canada on October 8th, Jameson describes a painting she had just seen at the Exhibition of the Royal Academy of

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<sup>160</sup> Jameson destroyed many of her private letters and papers, including her journals, before she died. The largest collection is undoubtedly Jameson's correspondence with Otilie, a woman with whom she quickly developed a deep and loving friendship.

Painting as “[o]ne of the most thrilling pictures by Wilkie.”<sup>161</sup> The image of “the interior of the cabin of an Irish Rebel” (39) can be interpreted as an illustrative expression of sympathy for the Irish cause. Jameson’s enthusiastic response to the work underscores her own alliance with the Irish struggle. Likely a member of the United Irishmen, the Rebel “is sleeping, his little naked child by his side, his wife watching him” (39). The rebel, like the United Irishmen, is unaware that the enemy is fast approaching and that his peaceful dreams of a free and tolerant Ireland will soon be thwarted. The child could embody a new age for Ireland. Indeed, her naked body could stand for purity and a prelapsarian innocence that precedes the fall of Ireland, which occurred as a result of the failed rebellions of 1798 and 1803. Jameson goes on to observe that “A neighbor comes to tell her [the vigilant mother] that the soldiers are about to surprise her husband, -- the expression of the two female heads wonderfully beautiful and the whole picture admirable” (39). This image of a familial trinity may even have recalled to Jameson her own family, who uprooted themselves from Ireland immediately prior to the first rebellion in 1798. At the time of their departure, Jameson was the only child of the family brought to England. It could justifiably be speculated, therefore, that her interest in the painting comes from a subconscious recognition that the Rebel is similar to her father and from identification with the child.

When Jameson arrived in Canada in 1836, a remarkable sixty percent of its immigrant population was Irish (O’Driscoll and Reynolds, Introduction xiii).<sup>162</sup> It is not

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<sup>161</sup> Sir David Wilkie (1785-1841) was a Scottish painter.

<sup>162</sup> Jameson departed for Canada in October, 1836, not out of a spirit of adventure and exploration, as was the case to a certain extent for Weld and Moore, but in a last attempt to resume her marriage. She sailed from London on October 8, 1836, landed at New York in early November, and arrived in Toronto in mid-December. She spent six months in Toronto with her husband, then journeyed without him to Niagara Falls and the western regions of Upper Canada by carriage. She proceeded by steamship to Detroit and the American island of Mackinac in Lake Huron, then by a bateau to Sault Ste. Marie and Manitoulin Island.

surprising, then, that throughout her sojourn she often encountered people from her native Ireland. What is intriguing is that she witnessed multiple examples of hope and triumph among Irish immigrants in Canada. This departs drastically from the scathing accounts written by her British contemporaries. As mentioned earlier, when scholars discuss Jameson's work, it is always in the context of treating her as a British author. However, as early as the second page of *WSSRC*, Jameson aligns herself with her Irish heritage and people. She attributes certain dominant characteristics of her personality, including the "desire to know, the impatience to learn, the quick social sympathies, the readiness to please and to be pleased" to her "Irish blood" (*WSSRC* 16). She also integrates Irish expressions in her writing, such as being able to "at least listen, like the Irish corn-field, 'with all my ears'" (245),<sup>163</sup> as well as references to contemporary Irish literary figures Moore<sup>164</sup> and Thomas Crofton Croker.<sup>165</sup> Recalling an evening when she exchanged ghost stories with Baron Sternberg and the Grand Duke, Jameson tells a story taken from Croker's "history of the Irish banshee, and particularly of that identical banshee, whose visitations as the hereditary attendant on my own family I had painful reason to remember" (127). She also draws a parallel between Germany and Ireland, saying that "[i]t should seem that Germany is still like Ireland, the land of the supernatural, as well as the land of romance" (126). This statement could even explain Jameson's affinity for German culture.

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Lastly, she journeyed by canoe to Penetanguishene. The entire trip took two months (Roy, "'Here is the Picture'" 98). She returned to England in September, 1837.

<sup>163</sup> In her correspondence with Otilie, Irish superlatives "abound in the expression of her sentiments," so much so that the editors were "tempted to deduct liberally" (*Letters* viii).

<sup>164</sup> See footnote 178.

<sup>165</sup> Croker (1798-1854) was born in Cork, Ireland, and is known largely for devoting his life to collecting ancient Irish poetry and folklore. He and Moore were friends, although Croker attacked Moore in print after his death (Kelly 82).

Isolation and a sense of overwhelming loneliness are present in all of Traill's, Susanna Moodie's, and Jameson's accounts of life in Canada. However, while Traill and Moodie display disgruntled tolerance of the Irish in Canada with whom they reluctantly interact,<sup>166</sup> Jameson finds refuge from her oppressive sense of solitude in the friendships she builds with numerous Irish men and women in Canada. While still in London preparing to depart for the New World, Jameson describes in a letter dated September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1836, the demographic of immigrants who would also be on board the *Ontario*: "78 poor emigrants [...] who pay only 4£ (24 dollars) for their passage, find their own provisions, and are all put together in one large cabin in the steerage, -- but not so ill off. Many of these are Irish families, I hear, and I think I shall make more friends among *them* than among my own company, among whom are several ladies, American and English" (*Letters* 56-57). This statement about the Irish is conveyed in an odd tone, a form of reverse snobbery, or inverted elitism. Jameson uses a familiar divisive rhetoric that places her on the side of the wealthy and well-mannered English in opposition to the Irish whom she labels "*them*." The significance of this description is twofold: it is evidence that Jameson's interactions with the Irish influenced her from the start of her journey and altered from bigoted to celebratory and accepting; and secondly, despite her snobbish attitude, Jameson is obviously signalling that she will likely be more

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<sup>166</sup>Throughout *Roughing It in the Bush*, Moodie makes crude references to the Irish she encounters. In "Our Journey Up the Country," she notes the "half-clothed, red-haired Irish servant" (58) and complains of "the uproarious conduct of a wild Irish emigrant, who thought fit to make his bed upon the mat before the cabin door. He sang, he shouted, and harangued his countrymen on the political state of the Emerald Isle, in a style which was loud if not eloquent. Sleep was impossible, whilst his stentorian lungs continued to pour forth torrents of unmeaning sound" (61). Similarly, in "Tom Wilson's Emigration," Moodie describes "an impudent, bare-legged Irish servant-girl" (81). Likewise, in "A Trip to Stony Lake," Moodie recounts the story of Mr. Y., a Catholic from the south of Ireland who immigrated to Canada with nine children. According to Moodie, Mr. Y. got his sons drunk at a young age in order to discourage them from taking up the habit. He boasts that only one of his children is now a drunkard (330-31).

comfortable among the Irish than among the Americans or the English because she anticipates a greater compatibility with her own people.

Depicting her circumstances as tragic when she arrives in Toronto unacknowledged by her husband, Jameson bemoans the lack of communal engagement among the people of the city and often casts herself as a lone sojourner even when accompanied by a small entourage.<sup>167</sup> This discontinuity between reality and Jameson's perception of it underscores her inability to connect with two particular groups: Americans and British expatriates. It is only when in the presence of these companions that Jameson conveys the division between appearance and reality that Wendy Roy describes. When Jameson does build successful and intimate relationships, it is on most occasions with the Irish-Canadians she encounters.<sup>168</sup> She expresses relief and elation when she stumbles upon old Irish friends in Niagara who were "ready to welcome [her] with joyous affection; and surely there is not a more blessed sight than the face of an old friend in a new land!" (WSSRC 55). These same friends from the old country are described in a letter to Otilie composed at Toronto, on February 12, 1837, where Jameson identifies the husband as the son of an old friend of her father who "settled as a merchant" (*Letters* 78) in Canada. Disappointed in the Great Falls, the Niagara region, and its inhabitants who leave a poor impression, Jameson's spirits are raised as a result of her interactions with this Irish family who, she tells Otilie, received her "most hospitably and affectionately" (78). Witnessing the constructive characteristics they embody, Jameson concludes that both husband and wife "have true Irish hearts" (78), as they fill her own with much

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<sup>167</sup> For a more detailed discussion of this discontinuity, see Roy's "'Here is the Picture As Well As I Can Paint It.'"

<sup>168</sup> Jameson also establishes close ties with several Native men and women while in Canada, and perhaps for similar antipathetic (with Americans and British) reasons.

contentment. This warm reception is placed in stark contrast to the indifferent and distanced response Jameson recalls she received from her Torontonians neighbours when she first arrived in Canada: “I met no familiar face, no look of welcome. I was sad at heart as a woman could be” (*WSSRC* 20). Furthermore, immediately following her confession that she was feeling “very disconsolate” (216) while standing on Table Rock, meditating on the beauty and sublimity of the Falls, Jameson’s spirits are raised once again by the unexpected presence of an Irishman who “suddenly exclaimed, in a most cordial brogue, and an accent of genuine admiration – ‘Faith, then, that’s a pretty dacent dhrop o’ water that’s coming over there!’” (216). And I cannot resist drawing attention to the diametrical contrast in attitude that this encounter offers to Moodie’s harshly unsympathetic depiction of the Irishman dancing on the rock of the New World.

What is also striking is that Jameson, who was able to develop intimate and loyal friendships with several women back home, is incapable of engaging with most women in Canada. In a letter written from Niagara Falls on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1837, Jameson complains to Otilie that after nearly six months in Canada, she has “here no friends to tell you about” and that “[t]he women are good-natured and generally insipid; they do not interest [her], and cannot understand [her]” (*Letters* 93). In this same letter, however, she points to Captain Fitzgibbon, who is Irish, as well as “a young Irishman who has written me most glowing verses” (93) as men who interest her.<sup>169</sup> Despite finding the women in Toronto boring, Jameson develops an intimate relationship with two Irish women in the “Summer Rambles” section of her book. The first is Jane Johnston, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft’s wife,

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<sup>169</sup> Echoing these sentiments in a letter written at Toronto on January 18, 1837, Jameson describes with fervour the only person for whom she feels affection: Captain Fitzgibbon. An examination of the significance of Jameson’s friendship with Captain Fitzgibbon will be given later.

whose father was an Irish fur trader and who visited Ireland in 1809.<sup>170</sup> The second is “a most agreeable little Irish-woman, with all the Irish warmth of heart and ease of manner,” with whom Jameson began “an acquaintance which is likely to prove very pleasant” (WSSRC 380). What is interesting about the latter female acquaintance is that she “emigrated with her husband some years ago, and settled near St. Joseph’s, in Michigan” (380). Thus, Jameson’s positive interactions with the Irish occur in America as well. However, while this particular Irishwoman “has her piano, her music, her French and Italian books” (380),<sup>171</sup> the majority of the Irish who immigrated to America in the first half of the nineteenth century were like the “twenty or thirty poor ragged Irish emigrants” (363) on board the same American steamboat as Jameson. These Irish emigrants with their “good-natured potato-faces, and strong arms and willing hearts” (363) struggled in America while those who immigrated to Canada thrived.

Of the various accounts given by Jameson in *WSSRC* of the Irish experience in the New World, the only one that casts them as impoverished and unhappy is the one that takes place in America. Although it is only a passing reference to Irish-Americans, this passage is nonetheless significant as it sets up a stark contrast to the repeatedly hopeful images of Irish-Canadians. This disparity between the opportunities granted to the Irish in Canada as opposed to those available to them in American is complicated, however, by Jameson’s fluctuating impression of the two countries. Unlike Moore and Weld, who

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<sup>170</sup> John Johnston succeeded Alexander Henry in exploring Lake Superior. Jameson provides a short digression on the background of this man who came from a “good Irish family” (WSSRC 467) and who had “such strong letters of recommendation to Lord Dorchester, that he was invited to reside in the government house till a vacancy occurred in his favour in one of the official departments” (467). Described as “a very clever, lively, and eccentric man, and a little of the *bon vivant*” (470), Johnston, who fell in love with and married the daughter of an Indian Chief, Susan Johnston, lived happily with her for thirty-six years. He died prior to Jameson’s journey to Canada.

<sup>171</sup> Later, Jameson describes paddling in a canoe with this same Irish woman, “singing Irish melodies and Italian serenades” (WSSRC 437). Although Jameson does not specify, the Irish melodies to which she refers quite possibly included those written by Moore.

consistently favour the people, socio-political systems, and geography of Canada, Jameson often points to America as superior, as more advanced and civilized. Of course, she may have been impressed by America for self-serving reasons. In New York, where her reputation preceded her,<sup>172</sup> Jameson received a warm welcome and was much sought after and entertained by the literati.<sup>173</sup> This public recognition was flattering and may have created a biased perspective from the outset of her journey. The radically contrasting welcome Jameson received in Toronto may also have contributed to her skewed perception. She was forced to play second fiddle to her politician husband<sup>174</sup> and remained anonymous in what she felt was an uncultured and “negligible [society that] was intolerably stiff and conservative for her tastes” (Thomas, *Love and Work* 112).<sup>175</sup> With an extensive social network that included intimate friendships with Lady Byron, Robert and Elizabeth Browning, Otilie, and Maria Edgeworth, Jameson had grown accustomed to recognition and attention.

Motivation aside, Jameson praises the “bustle, animation, [and] activity” (WSSRC 220) of the Americans in Buffalo, whose industry is expanding. Opposite this scene, a disappointed Jameson reveals, is the “sleepy Canadian shore, where a lethargic spell seems to bind up the energies of the people” (220). For Jameson, American prosperity

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<sup>172</sup> Jameson learned of her popularity and publishing success in America when she received “a present of books and a letter from an unknown person in America, telling [her] that they were printing the second American edition of [her] writings” (Macpherson 92).

<sup>173</sup> In a letter addressed to her family on November 29, 1836, Jameson boasts of having “had a long visit yesterday from Washington Irving, who has a most benevolent and agreeable countenance, and talks well” (Macpherson 113).

<sup>174</sup> Robert Jameson was recently appointed attorney general of Upper Canada.

<sup>175</sup> Several letters written to her family and Noel prior to her journey to Canada underscore the importance Jameson placed on being recognized and respected among an international reading public. Therefore, it is not surprising that she remained disappointed throughout her time in Toronto because her status as a popular writer of the Victorian Era went unnoticed. In a letter to her parents dated July 30, 1833, Jameson remarks: “It is gratifying to find that I am no stranger in this foreign country [Germany], that my name and the opinions and sentiments I advocate are well known even to those who have not read my little books” (Erskine 102-3). Jameson was happy in Germany and acknowledged that her “head was turned” due to all the fuss that was made over her (127).



was a product of an admirable go-ahead attitude, something that was absent from the Canadian cultural fiber. In Detroit, a puzzled Jameson notes the same remarkable divergence between the affluent American city “with its towers and spires and animated population, with villas and handsome houses stretching along the shore, and a hundred vessels or more, gigantic steamers, brigs, schooners, crowding the port, loading and unloading; all the bustle, in short, of prosperity and commerce” (344), and the pitiable Canadian city (Windsor), which is comprised of “a little straggling hamlet, one schooner, one little wretched steam-boat, some windmills, a catholic [sic] chapel or two, a supine ignorant peasantry, all the symptoms of apathy, indolence, mistrust, hopelessness!” (344). Having witnessed these extreme variations repeatedly, a frustrated Jameson asks the imperative question: “What can be the reason that all flourishes *there*, and all languishes *here*?” (346). Her answer is morally charged. Canadians, she maintains, privilege leisure over more pious pursuits and, as a result, fall easily into temptation and develop sinful habits. Jameson’s proof is architectural: when the more ethically sound Americans develop a town, they erect a court-house, then a jail, then a school. Canadians build a mill, then a tavern (235). This comparative assessment is a reversal of that provided by Weld and Moore.

This image of America as a place of order and abundance and Canada as unlawful and slovenly departs dramatically from Bentley’s Dantean paradigm for Moore (and behind him Weld), which figures America as an inferno and Canada as a purgatory. In fact, Jameson, like Moore himself, further disrupts Bentley’s paradigm, as she too does not cast England as paradise. Similar to Weld and Moore, Jameson draws parallels between England and Canada, but she does not necessarily privilege the former over the latter as did Weld or as Bentley suggests Moore did. For example, Jameson remarks that

Lake Ontario displays the *same* majestic features as “that great ocean, when I lived beside it” (179). Even though discovering this similarity allows her to connect to an otherwise foreign landscape, transforming it into “the face of a friend” (179), Jameson portrays the two bodies of water as equal in value. When comparing the changing seasons in Canada and England, Jameson does, however, reveal a preference. Using personification, she describes spring in England as a person waking with repeated hesitation from his slumber. This is unlike the Canadian spring, which “springs, like a huntress for the chase, and dons her kirtle of green, and walks abroad in full-blown life and beauty” (178). Jameson’s invidious evaluation of these two countries moves beyond the trivial. Following a description of the despairing conditions of jails in Canada, Jameson reminds her English readers “that this state of things is not worse than that which prevailed in rich and civilised England only a few years ago” (100). This statement accomplishes two things simultaneously. Firstly, it pardons the primitive state of Canadian jails as something to be expected, as it is a by-product of a colony still in infancy. Secondly, it implicitly criticizes the English penal system for allowing the same injustices to have occurred for a prolonged period.

The most revealing excerpt is Jameson’s account of officer S. His story can be interpreted as an allegory of the potentially corrupting influence Britain has over its innocent and youthful colony. Seduced by a misleading British officer, who eventually discards her, a Canadian girl from a reputable family finds it impossible to reintegrate into society because “the sources of innocent pleasure were poisoned” (73). As was the case with Adam and Eve, she too has been cast out of paradise for her transgressions. In this fallen state of experience, the young woman is taken to postlapsarian England by a devoted colonel. Years later, she is discovered by officer S. at a “house of infamous

resort" (73), where she has become an "impudent, degraded, haggard, tawdry thing" (74). Despite urging her to return to Canada with him, where she could begin anew and be removed from temptation, the woman refuses to leave. Thus, the tragic story figures Canada as a "second-chance land," and England as the hub of sin and temptation from which no one can be saved.

This vision of Canada as a place where people could begin anew, shed their past, and escape the judgment of others was upheld by Jameson prior to her departure for the New World. This can be seen in a letter written in London on June 27, 1836, where Jameson asks Otilie, "If I find there is a possibility of living with content in that place [Canada] and if the world treats you hardly, if you find difficulties about your child, will you come to me there? If I can arrange the means and a home for you with me or near me?" (Erskine 128). Fearing the repercussions that may befall her beloved friend as a result of conceiving a child out of wedlock with Charles Sterling, Jameson suggests Canada as an alternative residence that may offer Otilie the solace she sought from harmful gossip. Although it is clear, based on the aforementioned criticisms, that Jameson did not find the terrestrial paradise she sought in Canada, the few positive attributes she associated with America do not outweigh the plentiful favourable characteristics she was exposed to while travelling in the British colony. Despite personal disapproval of her reception in Toronto, Jameson remained objective when it came to assessing which country would best suit her fellow countrymen. Aware that her book would function in part as a manual for potential immigrants seeking information about the conditions in Canada and whether or not it would be fruitful to invest in the British territory, Jameson drew on several sources of travel literature to add credibility to her own observations and opinions in *WSSRC*. Among those sources are Henry Rowe

Schoolcraft's *A Narrative Journal of Travels Through the Northwestern Regions ...to the Sources of the Mississippi River* (1821),<sup>176</sup> as well as "Cooper, Washington Irving, Charles Hoffman, and others" (WSSRC 402). The "others" she refers to include "[William] Cattermole, the author of a very clever little book addressed to emigrants, and also a distinguished inhabitant of the place" (229). However, it is Alexander Henry's *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories, Between the Years 1760 and 1776* (1809), a book that was out of print and that Jameson went to great lengths to acquire, that receives the most credit, particularly in the "Summer Rambles" section of her book.<sup>177</sup>

It is surprising given Jameson's keen interest in both travel literature and, more specifically, Irish literature, that she does not acknowledge Moore or Weld as influences. When describing the Canadian boatmen, Jameson directs her readers to Henry, as well as Irving's "Astoria" (439), but does not mention Weld or Moore, who popularized these uniquely Canadian men in *Travels* and "A Canadian Boat Song." In fact, when discussing her canoe voyage and the French songs sung among the men who conduct the bateau, Jameson mentions that "[t]his peculiar singing has often been described" (525) but fails once again to acknowledge Moore.<sup>178</sup> Although Jameson refers to Weld only once in her

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<sup>176</sup> Schoolcraft (1793–1864) was an American geographer, geologist, and ethnologist, noted for his early studies of Native American cultures.

<sup>177</sup> In WSSRC, Jameson writes this of Henry: "Plain, unaffected, telling what he has to tell in few and simple words, and without comment – the internal evidence of truth – the natural sensibility and power of fancy, betrayed rather than displayed – render not only the narrative, but the man himself, his personal character, unspeakably interesting" (WSSRC 367). Weld also relied heavily on Henry in his *Travels*.

<sup>178</sup> Considering they kept similar company in British high-society (Moore being long-time friends with Lord Byron and Jameson the intimate companion of Lady Byron, who detested Moore), it is surprising that they never met and that neither writer cites the other as a literary influence. Even more surprising is that, despite the fact that Moore shared many similar impressions and opinions with Jameson and worked fervently for the Irish whom she loved, Jameson does not pay homage to him. Jameson was certainly familiar with Moore's work, as she compares him to Friedrich Ruckert, saying "there is the same sort of *efflorescence* of wit and fancy, the same felicity of expression, the same gem-like polish, and brilliance, and epigrammatic turn in his exquisite little lyrics" (WSSRC 159) as there is in those composed by Moore.

text, several similarities suggest he was a larger influence than she acknowledges.

Jameson mimics Weld's method of cataloguing the physical and architectural landscape in the various towns she visits, including how many churches are present and of which denomination, as well as the construction of the houses and roads. She too discusses the "shrill and perpetual chorus" (178) of the frogs, complains about the infestation of mosquitoes, and compares birds in Canada to those commonly seen in England. And Jameson curses the poor conditions of the roads and inns, exclaiming, "Bad roads, bad inns – or rather *no* roads, no inns" (180). However, Jameson maintains that "the manners of the country innkeepers in Canada [were] worse than anything [she had met] with in the United States, being generally kept by refugee Americans of the lowest class, or by Canadians who, in affecting American manners and phraseology, grossly exaggerate both" (235). This conflicts with Weld's assessment. Finally, and most importantly, Jameson reveals an environmental consciousness that is similar to Weld's when she bemoans the senseless and callous destruction of nature. As mentioned earlier, in *Mnemographia* Bentley refers to the forest fire Weld witnessed and argues that his "evocative account of the event established a precedent for several later Canadian writers" (85). Bentley then observes that Jameson echoes Weld's depiction when she personifies nature, comparing "the killing of a tree by encircling its trunk with a deep cut so that 'by degrees it droops and dies,' to the destruction of 'a woman's heart by sorrow'" (84-85). Troubled by Canadians' ambivalent attitude toward trees, Jameson declares that she is not yet "a true Canadian" (WSSRC 231) because she "cannot look on with

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Both Jameson and Moore had close bonds with their parents (Moore with his youthful, Irish Catholic mother and Jameson with her artistic, Irish nationalist father); Moore was friends with John Russell, who informed Jameson that the Queen had bestowed a pension on her; both travelled extensively on the Continent and in North America, recording their observations for a predominantly British audience; they were well received both at home and abroad; and their respective publications on the time they spent in Canada met with some controversy but were soon forgotten.

indifference, far less share the Canadian's exultation, when these huge oaks, these umbrageous elms and stately pines, are lying prostrate, lopped of all their honours, and piled in heaps with the brushwood, to be fired, - or burned down to a charred and blackened fragment" (231-32).

While Jameson admired the industrial expansion she saw in America, she was troubled by its disfigurement of the natural landscape she cherished. Worse than the recurring image of mutilated and charred trees were the "horrid red brick houses, and other unacceptable, unseasonable sights and signs of sordid industry" (210) that were being erected in their place at a fast-pace in America. Advocating a more moderate approach to progress, Jameson repeatedly rebukes the rapid expansion, for example, in the surrounding area of the American Niagara Falls and warns that with industrialization will come "moral pollution [...] far more degrading" (218). Furthermore, although America was indeed a land of opportunity and commercial growth, Jameson reminds her readers that it was not a land of freedom because it continued to condone slavery. America, therefore, is often cast as Canada's dark foil in *WSSRC*, as it is in Weld's and Moore's works. Unlike America, Canada is described by Jameson as a "superlatively beautiful" (218) country with "glorious capabilities for agriculture and commerce" (303). Canada is "in truth the very paradise of hope" (303), where people can exchange "want, servitude, and hopeless toil at home, for plenty and independence and liberty" (303). Unlike America, Canada admonishes the heinous system of slavery, and this key distinction factors largely into Jameson's decision to promote immigration to Canada: "Here, as in all the British dominions, God be praised! the slave is slave no more, but free, and protected in his freedom" (198). When measured against its model (England) and its foil (America), Canada, for Jameson, appeared to have an abundance of

favourable characteristics. Yet it did not flourish. Jameson's solution to this puzzling discrepancy was consciously and strategically to dissuade wealthy and respectable men from investing in and choosing America over the British colony. She accomplished this by deliberately constructing Canada as prosperous, particularly for Irish immigrants, because she believed they could dramatically improve the state of Canada.

If there was any doubt as to where Jameson's allegiance fell, the episode she recounts of a man travelling to both Canada and America to determine where he should settle makes it clear that she indeed preferred Canada. With a large family and little capital, this man struggled in England and, upon immigrating to America, became prosperous as he was "the only one of his trade in a flourishing country town" (224). However, with expansion came competition, and this man, along with six other families, found himself in a compromising position. As he recounts his plight, Jameson is pleased to hear he prefers Canada to America because she believes he "appeared to be, in every respect, just the kind of settler we want in Upper Canada" (225). Jameson believes the man's philosophies are compatible with those found in Canada because "His notions on education, his objections to the common routine of common schools, and his views for his children, were all marked by the same originality and good sense" (225). As a result, Jameson does her best "to encourage him in this favourable opinion, promising [herself] that the little [she] might be able to do to promote his views, that [she] *would* do" (225-26). Curious to learn of the decision to which he later came regarding where he would make a permanent home, Jameson is disappointed to see that his name does not appear in the registry for land purchasers in Canada. However, based on her own observation, she is not surprised that those with money continue to invest in America instead of Canada. The solution she offers is for the government to "do something to remove the almost

universal impression, that this province is regarded by the powers at home with distrust and indifference – something to produce more confidence in public men and public measures, without which there can be no enterprise, no prosperity, no railroads” (230).

As propagandist literature, *WSSRC* aims to recruit “a higher grade” (99) of Irishmen because they, like Colonel Thomas Talbot (1771-1853) and Peter Robinson, would be integral contributors to the progress and achievement of a colony that is in a static state because it attracts “the Scotch and Irish paupers who now locate themselves on small portions of land, and who aid but little in developing the immense resources of this magnificent country” (99). For this reason Jameson records favourable examples of the plentiful opportunities available to the Irish in Canada. Additionally, Jameson, who proclaims “the superiority of the Irish to the English and the Scottish settlers in Canada” (K. Adams 254 n. 22), intersperses her work with numerous accounts of the selfless acts of courage and undeniable successes that were achieved by Irish immigrants in the Dominion, which makes all the more puzzling the lack of critical attention to her Irishness. Her reason for doing so is twofold: she hoped to infuse a sense of pride and confidence in those Irishmen considering immigration, and she intended to enlighten her British audience by challenging the demeaning stereotypes of the downtrodden, lazy, uneducated, and subservient Irishman upheld by such writers as Haliburton, Richardson, and Traill.<sup>179</sup> These unflattering images were familiar to her audience, and they must bear some responsibility for reinforcing British prejudices against the Irish. Significantly, Jameson’s description of Irish-Canadian servants as “in general honest, warm-hearted,

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<sup>179</sup> When referring to her encounter with eight Irish rowers, Traill notes that they “were under the exciting influence of a keg of whiskey, which they had drunk dry on the voyage” (67). Later she states, “You would be surprised to see how soon the new comers fall into this disagreeable manner and affectation of equality, especially the inferior class of Irish” (75). In *Wacousta*, Richardson describes Murphy, a soldier from Ireland, as a “rude, vulgar, and illiterate” man who, despite “having risen from the ranks,” was unable to “shake off” his “coarseness” (66).



and willing” (*WSSRC* 151) departs significantly from Moodie’s later denigration of these same servants as lazy and incompetent.<sup>180</sup> Although Jameson agrees that Irish servants are sometimes inefficient and that “they are not the most eligible persons to trust with the cleanliness and comfort of one’s household” (151-52), she does not, unlike Moodie, chastise them for this behaviour. Instead, Jameson provides sympathetic justification for their conduct, arguing that people should not expect the Irish to be skilled housekeepers when in Ireland they never saw “anything but want, dirt, and reckless misery” (151).

Witness to the destruction of a series of houses by a raging fire in the dead of winter, Jameson champions the bravery exhibited by her countrymen. Without hesitation, these Irish-Canadians came to the aid of their neighbours and with “their fine attitudes” and “recklessness,” “flung themselves into the most horrible situations” and “risked their lives” as they moved “to and fro amid the blazing rafters” (71). Although Jameson tells us that people were maimed and killed while attempting to help, her attention rests on the Irishmen who “are sure to be the first” “in all good – all mischief – all frolic – all danger” (71).<sup>181</sup> However, Jameson chose to omit from *WSSRC* an equally remarkable and tragic example of the fortitude of the Irish that occurred only days earlier.<sup>182</sup> In a letter to Otilie, Jameson recounts the tragic drowning of sixty-eight people who were aboard a

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<sup>180</sup> In “The Land-Jobber,” John Wedderburn Dunbar Moodie notes that Mrs. S – “had plenty of Irish ‘helps’ in the kitchen; but they knew as much of cookery as they did of astronomy” (239). Since Moodie includes this in her book, it is fair to assume that the sketch expresses a prejudicial view she condones, as was generally the case with this husband and wife team. Additionally, it is an Irish servant who accidentally sets fire to Moodie’s home in “The Fire.” Significantly, according to Sheelagh Conway, it became common to recruit Irish women for immigration to Canada for farm and domestic help because they were a people who could be abused and mistreated without repercussion or guilt. Irish servants were often accused of being incompetent, which led to employers placing disclaimers in their newspaper ads, requesting that the Irish not apply (98).

<sup>181</sup> Again identifying herself with the firefighters, Jameson recounts this same incident to Otilie: “The Irishmen risked their lives with a fearful bravery. God help my Countrymen! for certainly wherever there is something to be done -- good or mischief -- they are sure to be first” (*Letters* 80).

<sup>182</sup> The incident with the fire occurred on February 21, 1837, whereas the drowning occurred on February 19, 1837.

ship enroute to Canada from England. Wrecked only “15 miles from the harbour and in view of the people on the shore” (*Letters* 83), the ship carried on board “an Irish gentleman well known here named Donnelly with his wife, mother-in-law, children” (83). This man, Jameson reports, went to drastic measures to help others to safety regardless of their class, religion, or country of birth. Additionally, he refused twice to secure his own safety until he was able to save his family, as well as the women who remained in danger. Sadly, Donnelly was left to perish when the storm made it impossible for the men on shore to retrieve him. Despite offering “all her fortune to the boatmen to attempt once more to reach the wreck” (83), Donnelly’s wife “*saw* her husband perish before her eyes, a victim to his affection and gallantry!” (83). Jameson may have decided to exclude this story from *WSSRC* because she did not want to bring to the attention of her Irish readers the realities of the life-threatening aspects of a transatlantic journey. Furthermore, in order successfully to encourage immigration, she may have consciously accentuated only the positive experiences she witnessed of the Irish in Canada.

In a similar way, Jameson highlights the upstanding reputation and respectable social position that have been attained by the Irish in Canada. She centres specifically on Captain Fitzgibbon, Charles Magrath, Colonel Talbot, and Peter Robinson. In each case, these men achieved remarkable success in Canada, and Jameson presents them as models of hope and resilience to her fellow Irish men and women.<sup>183</sup> In “A Soldier of Fortune,” Jameson offers her “invaluable” friend who “would have pleased [her] anywhere”

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<sup>183</sup> Although mentioned only in passing, Jameson draws her readers’ attention to the fact that the members of legislative council who “represent the aristocracy of the country” include “twenty-one [...] Scotch and Canadians, and nine English, Irish, and Americans” (*WSSRC* 91). Also, while visiting the London District (Woodstock), Jameson admires the region because it is comprised of “several gentlemen of family, superior education, and large capital, (among whom is the brother of an English and the son of an Irish peer, a colonel and a major in the army,) [who] have made very extensive purchases of land, and their estates are in flourishing progress” (242).

(*WSSRC* 79) as an example of the forward-looking attitude of the Irish who improve their circumstances and are, thus, triumphant in Canada.<sup>184</sup> Jameson champions Fitzgibbon for becoming the Captain of his Regiment in Canada after performing “a most brilliant exploit” (82) during the last American war when previously he had been only a common soldier in the old country.<sup>185</sup> Emphasizing his ability to overcome adversity, Jameson records Fitzgibbon’s recollection of his time as a soldier in Holland. While there, he was forced to face the disappointment and brutality of war and was taken prisoner. However, he prevailed under these dire circumstances and was promoted. In a letter to Otilie, Jameson attributes this man’s achievement to his admirable “bravery and merit” (*Letters* 75). This assessment is repeated in *WSSRC* when Jameson states that “he owe[d ...] everything to his own good heart, his own good sense, and his own good sword” (80), as well as his “bravery and talent” (81). In both the letter and her book, Jameson then summarizes the fruits of Fitzgibbon’s personal and professional accomplishments: “[h]e is now a proprietor of land and has a high civil office” (*Letters* 75), and he is “the father of a fine family of four brave sons and one gentle daughter” (*WSSRC* 82). Thoroughly impressed, Jameson commends his character, which she considers “original” (*Letters* 75), and she ascribes his “strong mind and [...] most excellent heart, with that overflow of animal spirits, that *superflu de vie*” (75) as something that “seems peculiar to my dear

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<sup>184</sup>Jameson introduces readers to Fitzgibbon when he narrates his emotional reaction upon hearing a lark in a town in Canada. The sound and sight of it transport him back to “poor Ireland” (*WSSRC* 80), where he “was again a wild slip of a boy, lying on [his] back on the hill-side above [his] mother’s cabin, and watching, as [he] used to do, the lark singing and soaring over [his] head” (80). This tale reiterates the idea that the immigrant keeps the love of Ireland in his heart and always yearns to return, which recalls similar sentiments expressed by Weld and Moore.

<sup>185</sup> In a footnote, Jameson tells us that “Colonel Fitz Gibbon, a very *preux chevalier* of bravery and loyalty, who saved Toronto, on the fourth of December, by placing the pickets before M’Nab came up” (*WSSRC* 539), was given five thousand acres of land as acknowledgement for his service (539). She then maintains that “[t]here is no sense of injustice that would shake the loyalty and principles of such a man as Colonel Fitz Gibbon” (539).

Countrymen” (75). In much the same way, Jameson labels Fitzgibbon “*originalissimo*” in *WSSRC*, meaning he is the most original of originals (82). Given that she claims that the men who interest her the most are those who are “self-educated, and what are called originals” (82), Jameson hereby pays Fitzgibbon her highest compliment. Mirroring her letter once again, Jameson completes her introduction of Fitzgibbon in *WSSRC* with a catalogue of favourable qualities that he possesses and which she maintains are distinctly Irish, particularly his “overflowing benevolence and fearless energy of character, and all the eccentricity, and sensibility, and poetry, and headlong courage of his country” (83). Although she claims to Otilie that she and Fitzgibbon “have not yet absolutely sworn an eternal friendship” (*Letters* 75), Jameson declares that she likes him (75),<sup>186</sup> and she draws comfort and reassurance from him when she embarks on a steam-boat for Niagara in the spring: “Fitzgibbon, always benevolent, gave me sensible and cheerful encouragement as we walked leisurely down to the pier” (*WSSRC* 194). The fact that Jameson chooses on numerous occasions to inform her closest friend and her readers of the bond she develops with this man underscores the important role he played in influencing her perception of and affection for the Irish in Canada.

In another episode, which occurred two months after departing from Captain Fitzgibbon, with whom she had secured a respectful and loyal friendship, Jameson encounters Charles Magrath.<sup>187</sup> Magrath is a clergyman and magistrate of the district at Erindale, a “romantic residence” named by its proprietor “in fond recollection of his native country” (*WSSRC* 167). The appellation given by Magrath to the region in Canada

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<sup>186</sup> Prior to her departure from Toronto, Jameson teases Otilie in a letter written on April 1, 1837: “I have an Irishman here who would delight you, a *genuine* finehearted fellow -- but old! and that will not do for you. He is a soldier and a brave one, yet tender as a girl. He loves me with all his honest heart. I like him truly” (*Letters* 85).

<sup>187</sup> *Authentic Letters from Upper Canada* (1833) “offers correspondence from the Magraths, who settled near York” (Klinck, *Literary History* 267).

in which he resides accentuates his commitment to remain proudly connected to his Irish roots. Paying tribute to his native land by merging elements of his old home with his new one makes Magrath a model of the emerging Canadian mosaic. His story is also a reminder that it is not just our institutions of government, education, and law that were based particularly on those established in Ireland, but that the Canadian landscape, too, has been stamped by the Irish who transplanted various place-names to the New World.

It was the state of instability in Ireland, caused in part by disgruntled Irish Catholics who rebelled against the forced payment of tithes to their Protestant landowners, which placed men like Magrath in danger. Unpredictable and tumultuous, Ireland no longer offered safety to Magrath and his family, who were “not only unable to collect [their] tithes,” but who “never went out unarmed, and never went to rest at night without having barricaded [sic] their house like a fortress” (169-70). With a sympathetic tone, a Protestant Jameson describes the desperate situation in which this family found itself. This is significant as it reminds us that despite her public support of Irish Catholic rights and the need to abolish tithes laws, Jameson loved her fellow Irishmen equally and, regardless of their faith, empathized with any who suffered. Furthermore, Jameson’s decision to introduce her readers to examples of both valiant Irish Protestants and Irish Catholics in Canada suggests that she saw potential success for both in the Dominion.<sup>188</sup> This idea is reiterated when Jameson declares “that Canada has become an asylum, not only for those who cannot pay tithes, but for those who cannot get them” (170).

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<sup>188</sup> While at a tavern in Woodstock, Jameson met an Irish farmer who was also “prospering with a large farm and a large family – here a blessing and a means of wealth, too often in the old country a curse and a burthen” (*WSSRC* 239). This “good-natured fellow” insists that Jameson accept “a glass of whisky out of his own travelling-store, genuine potheen, which he swore deeply, and not unpoetically, ‘had never seen God’s beautiful world, not the blessed light of day, since it had been bottled in ould Ireland’” (239).

After Magrath sought refuge in Canada along “with four fine sons from seven to seventeen years old, and one little daughter” (170), having “convert[ed] his Irish property into ready money” (170), his prosperity, Jameson tells us, increased rapidly as a result of his ingenuity, toil, and perseverance. Marvelling at the comfort and beauty of the home he built, Jameson catalogues his many accomplishments, perhaps to provide her readers with an agenda they, too, should follow if they are to thrive as immigrants. She may also have done so to highlight the idea that together it takes only a few people to achieve great things if they unite and work toward a common goal: “they have now one hundred and fifty acres of land cleared and in cultivation; a noble barn, entirely constructed by his sons [...] a carpenter’s shop [...] a forge; extensive outhouses; a farmyard well stocked; and a house comfortably furnished, much of the ornamental furniture being contrived, carved, turned, by the father and his sons” (170). Of importance is Jameson’s decision to dedicate space to an evaluation of Magrath’s sons, as they represent the next generation of Irish immigrants in Canada. Additionally, their achievements outline what the children of Irish immigrants can hope for and aspire toward. According to Jameson, “[t]hese young men, who had received in Ireland the rudiments of a classical education, had all a mechanical genius, and here, with all their energies awakened, and all their physical and mental powers in full occupation, they are a striking example of what may be done by activity and perseverance” (171). By using the word “awakened” to describe their physical and mental reactions in Canada, Jameson conveys an image of rebirth. This vision is fitting as these men, along with their “gentle sister” (170), who resembles an “azalea” (170) and blooms in the reinvigorating environment, are much like Adam and Eve in a renewed Eden. Jameson’s representation of sons and daughter carefully and dutifully tending to the landscape, as well as her note that “[t]he whole family appear to

have a lively feeling for natural beauty, and a taste for natural history” (171), further supports my biblical metaphor. Because there are no idle hands in God’s Kingdom, Adam and Eve were constant gardeners in Eden.

The example of Magrath also highlights Jameson’s belief that it is essential for immigrants to cast aside their pride and move beyond an Old World mentality of class division if they expect to flourish in the New World. Unable to provide the type of assistance his sons would require in order to establish themselves in the community and marry, it was left to Magrath to set them up as storekeepers. Yet, despite their succeeding “beyond his hopes” (172) as a result of “their intelligence, activity, and popular manners” (172), Magrath explains to Jameson with shame his initial inability to “reconcile himself to the idea of his boys serving out groceries in a Canadian village” (172) because he could not overcome the “family pride of the well-born Irish gentleman, and the antipathy to anything like trade, once cherished by a certain class in the old country” (172). But Jameson does not rebuke Magrath for perpetuating “the foolish national prejudice of [her] country” (172), as he expects she might. Instead, she explains that because he developed the facility to conquer his intolerance eventually, she can look upon his case with “approving sympathy” (172). For Jameson, Magrath’s confession demonstrates that he has an “honest, generous spirit” (172), and she presents him to readers as a person to admire and emulate for two reasons. He recognizes that his bigotry has no place in the New World and embraces the opportunity to discard it, and he places his family above his pride, which secures “the future independence of his children” (172) and thus, by extension, the future of Canada. This is important because Jameson, who had no familial relations in Canada except for her absentee husband, values the qualities of unity and mutual support honoured by this family. As a result, she proposes that a harmonious

family that embodies the compromising Canadian middle-way approach to life secures success in the New World. This point is underscored by Jameson when she recounts Magrath's discovery that his parish suffers in large part because children sever ties with their families prematurely in order to work to pay for whiskey. Jameson relates that "[t]his fact, and its consequences, struck [Magrath] the more painfully, from the contrast it exhibited to the strong family affections, and respect for parental authority, which, even in the midst of squalid, reckless misery and ruin, he had been accustomed to in poor Ireland" (174). The message to her readers is, then, to be moderate and to preserve the family unit at all costs to avoid destitution, as sin and temptation are as prevalent in the New World as they were in the Old. What is interesting here is that Jameson clarifies the misconception that it is mainly the Irish who fall into vice due to a weakness for alcohol. While several British writers point to the Irish as the predominant group in Canada who abuse alcohol, Jameson challenges this stereotype by suggesting that no one lacking the proper values instilled by a righteous family is safe from this immigrant's rake's progress.

Expressing gratitude for being welcomed as kin into a home where "[t]here is an atmosphere of benevolence and cheerfulness breathing round, which penetrates to [her] very heart" (171), Jameson admits, "I know not when I have felt so quietly – so entirely happy – so full of sympathy – so light-hearted" (171). And, thus, it is of crucial significance that Jameson chooses to close the "Winter Studies" section of her book with an account of her time spent with this family. Characterized mainly by its tone of dejection and detachment, the "Winter Studies" section ends on a high note that enlightens both Jameson and her readers. As Buss and Fowler have observed, the encounter with the Magraths functioned as a catalyst to shift Jameson's mood from one



of disconsolate isolation to one of adventurous and embracing participant. However, these critics fail to recognize the significance of an Irish family's inspiring Jameson to seek out new challenges and immerse herself in a culture that at first appeared markedly foreign but now is viewed as familiar. Jameson maintained she would "never forget" (174) this "excellent family" (the Magraths), a family that, because of its Irish-Canadian hospitality, allowed her to return "to Toronto with [her] heart full of kindly feelings" (174).

Dedicating two sections, nearly thirty pages, to Colonel Thomas Talbot,<sup>189</sup> Jameson once again attempts to demythologize the damaging preconceptions about the Irish and to propose another example of fortitude and refinement to her countrymen. Of the Irishmen she distinguishes in *WSSRC*, Talbot was for Jameson the most undeniable proof of the remarkable accomplishments one Irishman could achieve, and she reveres his unwavering sacrifice and ambition. The descendent of a noble Anglo-Irish family, Talbot came to Canada in 1790 to act as personal secretary to John Graves Simcoe, Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada. Within a decade,<sup>190</sup> Talbot, who was keen to assist in the development and settlement of Upper Canada, was granted five thousand acres of land. Eventually, he oversaw the development of sixty-five thousand acres on the north shore of Lake Erie. Alan G. Brunger maintains that it was because of Talbot's stipulation that the roads in his settlement be navigable and maintained by the settlers, as well as his insistence that Crown and clergy reserves be removed from the main roads, that Talbot Settlement became exceptionally prosperous and, as Jameson notes, rose "fast into

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<sup>189</sup> In 1818, Adam Hood Burwell wrote the long poem *Talbot Road* in honour of this same entrepreneur and local founding father of a large settlement on the north shore of Lake Erie.

<sup>190</sup> During this time, Talbot was called back to England to fight against the French in Holland, a war Fitzgibbon participated in as well.

importance” (*WSSRC* 269). Despite his significant contribution to the progress of Canada, many of Talbot’s contemporary biographers suggest that he suffered from “[c]ertain eccentricities – alcoholism, snobbery, reclusiveness, and alleged misogyny” (Brunger). Jameson, however, deliberately challenges this apparent misrepresentation by replacing the myth of a man whose solitude “turned his brain” (*WSSRC* 277) with that of a benevolent gentleman who displayed “invincible courage,” “enthusiasm,” and “perseverance” (277), qualities she maintains “he derive[d...] from [his Irish] blood and birth” (276). Once again, Jameson’s own presumptions about the Irish are altered due to this encounter and, in turn, she attempts to change her readers’ prejudiced opinions by conveying this flattering portrayal of Irish success in Canada.

Using a rhetoric of praise, an inspired Jameson refers to Talbot as a beacon of hope, who, “by strength of his own right hand and trusting heart, achieve[d] miracles” (275). What is most miraculous for Jameson is that through his “heroic self-devotion to the completion of a magnificent plan, laid down in the first instance, and followed up with unflinching tenacity of purpose” (278), Talbot not only secured his immortality (279), but he created a veritable paradise (283) to which the struggling Irish immigrant was welcome. Abounding “in roses of different kinds” (282), the Talbot settlement offered to immigrants “just what they had long felt the want of – a well-settled, opened, and cultivated country, wherein to obtain estates for themselves, their children, born and unborn, and their whole kith, kin, and allies” (279). Evidence that both poor and prominent Irish families made up a significant portion of the immigrant population residing in the Talbot region can be found in the catalogue of encounters Jameson recalls: the Irishman who directs her to Talbot’s residency; the “ragged, black-bearded, gaunt, travel-worn and toil-worn” (285) Irish whom Jameson meets outside her apartment; John

B, her Irish chauffeur; the Irish family with whom she becomes acquainted at Campbell's Inn; and the Irish workman who had the "air of a nobleman" (296) and who "was a member of one of the richest and most respectable families in the whole district, connected by marriage with [her] driver" (295).

It is perhaps John B and the Campbell clan who offer the most noticeable contrast with each other. They remind Jameson's readers that the Irish of both high and low birth were welcome and were offered the same opportunities to prosper in Canada, and prosper they did. John B's educated Protestant father was in possession of a small capital, which he invested in Canada once he determined it "could not be safely or easily invested in the old country" (289). Conversely, the family at Campbell's Inn, who "spoke nothing but Gaelic" and consisted of "a brood of children, ragged, dirty and without shoes or stockings," were "quite savage" and "had come out destitute, and obtained their land gratis" (291). Despite the striking contrast in their circumstances and outer appearance, success was awarded to both hardworking families. John B's family was soon able to clear a large portion of land, the first grazing farm Jameson had seen, and build a log house and a barn (289) for their livestock, which consisted of "thirty cows and eighty sheep" (289). Although they were wretched in appearance (291), the family at Campbell's Inn had cleared and cultivated sixty acres of their two-hundred acre plot and were able to sustain "five cows and forty sheep" (291). Classified by Jameson as "settlers of a higher grade" (289), John B's family contributed "considerable improvement[s]" (289) to their land, and the family of a lower station was able to alter their existence of "abject poverty and want to independence and plenty!" (291). Appropriately, Jameson then opens her discussion of Talbot with a quote from Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus*, which holds that "Man is, properly speaking, based upon hope," and that she follows this

quotation with her affirmation that Canada “is the land of hope, of faith, ay, and of charity” (275).

With perfect symmetry, Jameson concludes her “Summer Rambles” section as she had “Winter Studies”: with homage to the Irish in Canada. As she composes “a series of Edenic scenes of great poetic eloquence” (Friewald 66), Jameson sits aboard the Peter Robinson steamer. This is significant because thousands of Irish migrants owe their reversal of fortune to Robinson. In the 1820s, Robinson went to great lengths to transport poverty-stricken families from Cork, Ireland, to what is now known as Peterborough. On all sides, Jameson witnesses a testament yet again to the ingenuity of a single Irishman who helped develop a “‘new born world’ of exceeding beauty” (*WSSRC* qtd. in Friewald 66). It is to this fine land of “prosperous estates [...and] well-cultivated farms [...where e]verything told of prosperity and security” (*WSSRC* 542) that a once “houseless and penniless” (542) Irish labourer arrived. In just seven years, “the same man was the proprietor of a farm of two hundred acres of cleared and cropped land, on which he could proudly set his foot, and say, ‘It is mine, and my children’s after me!’”(542). Jameson leaves her readers with this vision of hope and, equally significant, independent land-ownership for Irish men and women and families.

Witness to countless illustrations of remarkable successes attained by the Irish in Canada, upon her return to England an inspired and confident Jameson seemed to pledge an almost unwavering devotion to the advancement of her people. Although she did not transplant her own permanent roots into the Canadian soil, the New World appeared to offer Jameson, as it did the Irish families she encountered there, an opportunity for rebirth. Significantly, Jameson’s time in Canada gave birth to an increasing passion and

concern for Irish political and social improvement.<sup>191</sup> With rising religious tension, reverberating suffering following a potato famine in 1836, and unrelenting resistance by the British Parliament to relinquish its ultimate control over political matters concerning the Irish, Ireland was (again) in crisis. All eyes were on the country with trepidation by the time Jameson arrived in England in the fall of 1837. In a state of perpetual economic flux and alarming political instability, Ireland was also plagued by overpopulation, poverty, ignorance, and violence: “a situation close to anarchy existed over wide areas of rural Ireland” (O’Tuathaigh 165). In a letter written to Otilie from Ealing, Middlesex on July 16, 1843, Jameson refers to the mounting troubles in Ireland, of which she stayed abreast by consulting British newspapers and periodicals that covered Catholic politics, and she expresses concern for the methods proposed by the British Parliament to control the situation. She states that “Ireland occupies *all* minds” (*Letters* 146), including her own, as information regarding the lengthy and drawn-out debates in Parliament on Irish affairs circulates. Knowing that the debates will conclude with the disarming of the Irish, Jameson voices concern that this solution “will not be the *end* of the troubles” (146). In a tone of great empathy, Jameson prophesies a worse fate for the Irish, who will be thrown into “a state of fever” as they are being “turned out of work” because people will refuse to “risk their money there in improvements or speculations” (146). Stating that she “feel[s] it all deeply” (146), Jameson, with alarmed concern, discusses the disastrous

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<sup>191</sup>It was also at this time that Jameson demonstrated a desire to expand her knowledge of Irish history, as well as a want to share her zeal for Irish literature with Otilie. In letters 71 (April 26, 1839), 72 (May 30, 1839), and 74 (June 23, 1839), Jameson discusses her desire to find Irish novels for Otilie, who shares her fervent interest in Irish literature. In letter 72, Jameson refers to her disappointment in not being able to get Rory O’More, and her frustration that the only book available by Lady Morgan is *The Princess*. In letter 74, she informs Otilie that she will be sending Irish books to her shortly. On August 13, [1851?], Jameson records the books sent to her by Noel. Their titles point to her interest in politics and social concerns: *National Education in Ireland*, “Instruct, Employ, don’t hang them” (rare tract), *Industrial Reforms of Ireland*, *Essay on Ireland and Irish Affairs* (Sir Charles Napier), *The Saxon in Ireland* (the latest work on Ireland of interest or authority), and *Handbook of Irish Antiquities* (*Letters* 180).

consequences that will follow should a civil war break out because “the country *can* not stand against the English power; it will be again conquered, to be again and worse enslaved” (146).

During these turbulent and distressing times, a liberal-minded Jameson championed Daniel O’Connell (1775-1847) in her correspondence with Otilie and Noel.<sup>192</sup> A Catholic and advocate of democracy, religious tolerance, and the separation of Church and State, O’Connell, for Jameson, was an emblem of hope for Ireland. In a series of letters written between 1844 and 1846, Jameson demonstrates her commitment to the people of Ireland by rebuking the Coercion Bill<sup>193</sup> and by supporting O’Connell’s recommendation to quash the powerful reign of the Anglican Church in Ireland. Jameson’s aversion to the Coercion Bill is highlighted in a letter to Noel, written in March, 1846: “I abhor this proposed *Coercion* Bill of Lord St. Germain’s” and “pray against it with all my heart” (Macpherson 216). Composed on April 4, 1846, her letter to Otilie reiterates this sentiment: “this commencement, this ‘Coercion bill’ as it is called, which is to forbid any man from being out of his house after sunset or before sunrise will

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<sup>192</sup> Considered by many to have been “the greatest single political force in Ireland” (O’Tuathaigh 160), O’Connell formed the Society for the Repeal of the Union in 1830 and spearheaded a campaign that called for the abolishment of burdensome tithes owed to the Anglican clergy. Advocating Irish emancipation and the need for drastic political changes, O’Connell argued that positions of power be allotted to ambitious Catholics and that Catholic viewpoints be given proper representation in parliament. His demands, however, were ignored. O’Connell then proposed the restoration of the Irish Parliament, which would honour the rights of both Protestants and Catholics. Although this proposition was interpreted by members of Parliament as a potential revolutionary movement, O’Connell’s intention was merely to resurrect the “old system under new and better management” (162). A member of the United Irishmen, O’Connell, a social conservative, was in fact against the earlier rebellions. He believed it was through the use of Parliament, not rebellion, that political and religious equality could be actualized. Concerned that “the electorate for this suggested Irish Parliament would have a majority of Catholics” (163), “all groups in Parliament [...] were united in their opposition to Repeal, [and they] were prepared to call on all their resources to ensure its defeat” (164). O’Connell was arrested by the government in 1843 for “sedition and conspiracy and sentenced to a year’s imprisonment and a fine, but judgment [was] reversed in the House of Lords” (Cook and Stevenson 255).

<sup>193</sup> Concern for law and order in Ireland and the need to thwart a potential civil war led to the proposal of the Irish Coercion Bill by Prime Minister Robert Peel. Peel felt that an effective way of dealing with rising tensions would be to restrict Irish protests during the Potato Famine.

do very little good” (*Letters* 157). The disestablishment of the Anglican Church was something Jameson also strongly approved, as can be seen in letters to both Ottilie and Noel. To Ottilie (February 2, 1844), she points to a description of Ireland in the *Edinburgh Review* as providing a fair and accurate summary “of the evils under which Ireland is suffering” (149). With a tone of disdain, Jameson casts an ominous eye on the “English Church party,” which she calls “our protestant bigots” (150), the source of most misery in Ireland. Claiming that the remedies proposed<sup>194</sup> would likely be thwarted due to their prejudice and rigidity, Jameson, in a letter to Noel (July, 1846), labels the Anglican Church a “pest” that should “be done away with” (Macpherson 226). If the state of the Irish Church were settled, Jameson would “trust to the *social* regeneration of the people as well as the physical amelioration” (*Letters* 157). In the event, such hope for Ireland was transient. In 1847 O’Connell died and Jameson surrendered herself temporarily to the belief that nothing could be done for her “wretched country” (160) because there was no longer “one man to take the lead” (160). She concluded that “the folly, violence and madness of some of the popular demagogues has spoiled and blighted for the present that righteous cause” (Ealing, March 27, [1848] 160).

But with the same spirit that motivated her to charge down the Canadian rapids rather than sit idly in her unaccommodating Toronto home, Jameson soon refused to remain a distant and passive observer in the Irish conflict. Confessing to Ottilie on February 20, 1846, that she had “thoughts of going to Ireland [in order...] to see with [her] own eyes how things are going on” (157), Jameson “fulfilled [her] long-cherished intention” (Macpherson 251) when, in 1848, ten years after her sojourn in Canada, she

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<sup>194</sup> One of the proposed solutions was that a parliament occasionally be held at Dublin, although no one knew yet what to do about the Roman Catholic Church (*Letters* 149-50).

travelled to Ireland for three months. When she arrived, the population of Ireland had been more than decimated by the unrelenting Potato Famine (1845-1850). With fully half its population gone as a result of starvation or emigration, Ireland was at the nadir of destitution. Everywhere Jameson turned, she witnessed “enough to make [her] hopeless” but “yet [she] hope[d]” (255). Although she assures herself that “there may be [...] redemption for [Ireland] some time or other” (253), Jameson was overwhelmed with sadness upon witnessing a most devastating scene, which she recounts to Mr. Longman on October 24, 1848: “I saw yesterday the departure of a troop of half-starved emigrants from their desperate families; I have not yet recovered from the spectacle – it was a terrible tragedy” (253). Feeling “sick at heart [upon] viewing the horrible misery which met [her] at every step – large buildings, *once* mills and manufactories, all empty, idleness and desolation and starvation everywhere” (December 16, 1848; 255), Jameson left Ireland with a strong and determined will to exploit her celebrity in order to bring it justice. According to K. Adams, Jameson had been previously introduced to Robert Peel, and she took advantage of this connection by writing “an almost hysterical letter [...], asking him to do something about the widespread starvation and death she had witnessed” (26). Furthermore, Jameson “sought out Anglo-Irish leaders concerned with relief measures – for example, Maziere Brady, the lord chancellor of Ireland, Richard [Whately, Anglican A]rchbishop of Dublin, and Maria Edgeworth, the novelist and author of a book on the potato – and discussed policy proposals” (113).

Just as Jameson completes *WSSRC* with a vision of Canada as a refuge of hope for the Irish emigrant, she completes her discussions of the plight of Ireland in her letters with a parallel image of optimism and restoration. Returning to Dublin in July, 1853, she declares: “Ireland is beautiful at this season, so *green*, so bright! and certainly more



*prosperous* than it has been for many years” (*Letters* 191). In August, 1853, she reports “that the improvement in all respects in the whole country, in spite of the enormous numbers who have emigrated, is very great and very hopeful” (192). A devoted Irishwoman throughout her life, Jameson died suddenly (and appropriately) on St. Patrick’s Day, 1860.

## PART TWO

“Great hatred, little room, / Maimed us at the start”:

Adam Kidd – A Case Study of an Irish-Canadian’s Impressions of  
Pre-Confederation Canada

I was an alien  
in the village where  
I was born,  
three thousand miles away,  
am as much  
and no more  
an alien here.

...

So nobody tries to change me  
or even dreams it possible  
for me to behave  
in any other way.

~Alden Nowlan  
“In an Irish Village”

In the British Isles, the first half of the nineteenth century was distinguished for a mass exodus of three million people, an emigration that peaked in the 1830s. Fleeing their homelands because of political turmoil, industrial squalor, religious strife, famine, and economic instability, many of these emigrants were lured across the Atlantic by travel writings and newspapers that described the New World “as a promised land on a scale that was without precedent” (Finlay and Sprague 99) and that openly encouraged them to begin anew in a not yet industrialized and minimally settled Canada.<sup>1</sup> Despite being undercivilized, Canada thrived agriculturally and a large measure of self-government was soon realized.<sup>2</sup> With nothing but dire prospects at home, the New World was attractive to emigrants because it had an abundance of cheap, available land, which guaranteed them prosperity and independence. Canada also appealed to emigrants because passage to the New World through the port of Quebec was inexpensive (100).<sup>3</sup> Thus, a symbiosis was achieved through the immigration process: while Canada offered the above-mentioned rewards, it too benefited from immigration. According to Sigmond Diamond, such a practice secured a much needed population growth that would yield and sustain necessary agricultural production and ultimately reduce “the overhead costs of administrating the colony” (88). Altered substantially by English-speaking immigrants, the social, political,

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<sup>1</sup> As mentioned previously, among those Irish travel writers of the pre-Confederation period who, in various degrees, endorsed emigration to Canada were Weld, Moore, and Jameson.

<sup>2</sup> This progress, however, was thwarted by racial intolerance and religious conflict, which soon made a stable government difficult to establish. By 1834, the colony was at a critical point with Upper and Lower Canada on the brink of rebellion. In 1837, things came to a head as William Lyon Mackenzie’s camp “sought reform of the colonial system by constitutional means,” while Louis-Joseph Papineau’s faction “believed that [...] radical change in the constitution” was necessary (Story 696). An attempt to settle these political and constitutional grievances led to the Durham Report, which inevitably failed, the establishment of a responsible government, and the unification of the colonies (Parker 374).

<sup>3</sup> The fare was economical because a large number and variety of cargo ships repeatedly made the journey across the Atlantic from England to Quebec as part of the timber trade and used the passenger fare to finance their expensive westward voyage (Houston and Smyth, *Irish Emigration* 335-36).

and religious character of Canada was, in essence, a by-product of this colossal European exodus.

More importantly for present purposes, this heightened influx of immigration dramatically transformed Canada's literary landscape as there emerged an extensive opus dealing with the trials and triumphs of settler existence recorded by Canadian-Émigré writers.<sup>4</sup> Prior to the nineteenth century, pre-industrialized Canada was minimally populated. As a consequence, Ray Palmer Baker and Norah Story observe, settlers "were too preoccupied by the relentless demands of settlement and pioneer commercial enterprise to devote much time to writing" or "to bequeath a distinct heritage to succeeding generations" (Story 457; Baker 7). There was also little incentive to contribute prose or verse to the few newspapers and magazines that were in circulation at the time because it was generally understood that a market readership was virtually non-existent. Literacy rates were low and the more pressing concern of survival made impractical the allocation of time to peruse publications. Emigrant guide books flooded the European market and were influential in enlightening potential expatriates about the costs and benefits of immigration to Canada, such as William Watson's *Emigrant's Guide to the Canadas* (1822), William Bell's *Hints to Emigrants: in a Series of Letters from Upper Canada* (1824), William Cattermole's *Emigration: The Advantages of Emigration to Canada* (1831), and the anonymously written *The Emigrant's Informant; or, A Guide to Upper Canada* (1834), and Ex-Settler's *Canada in the Years 1832, 1833 and 1834; Containing Important Information and Instructions* (1834). As informative, descriptive, detailed, and straight-forward as these texts were, they did little to inspire or

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<sup>4</sup> In *Highways of Canadian Literature*, Logan and French define Canadian Émigrés as those men and women who wrote poetry and prose in Canada and who were permanent residents of the country but who were not born in Canada (46).

develop a distinctly Canadian literature. However, popular works by travel writers of the Pre-Confederation period, including those of Weld, Moore, and Jameson, were integral in drawing “attention to the fact that Canadian life and culture needed expression,” and they awakened in Canadian-Émigré writers “the ambition to undertake this expression in verse and prose” (Logan and French 54). This new wave of writers then made it their goal to articulate the social and geographical elements that comprised the distinct and complex Canadian experience. In some cases, positive references were made to abundant forests, new settlements, farming, native customs, and local hospitality. In others the focus became the melancholy, wild, rugged, remote, sublime hinterland filled with obstacles that left the subject feeling disenchanting.

Canadian-Émigré literature, however, was often dismissed or entirely overlooked by twentieth-century critics who maintained that it lacked inherent merit in its crude form and outmoded structure. Instead, most scholars directed their attention toward exhaustive explorations of works composed by nineteenth-century native-born poets such as Oliver Goldsmith (1794-1861), Major John Richardson (1796-1852), Charles G.D. Roberts (1860-1943), Bliss Carman (1861-1929), Archibald Lampman (1861-1899), and Duncan Campbell Scott (1862-1947). Yet as J.D. Logan and Donald G. French observed in 1924, it was Canadian-Émigré literature that “engendered in the native-born the ideal of expressing the consciousness of a Canadian homeland and spirit in literature which should possess originality in substance, and beauty in form and in technical artistry” (54).

Recognizing the fundamental value of such works, the leading critic of nineteenth-century Canadian poetry, D.M.R. Bentley, has published numerous book-length studies that deal at least in part with the impact key Canadian-Émigré writers had on the development of Canada’s nationalist literature. These include *The Gay]Grey Moose*

(1992), *Early Long Poems on Canada* (1993), *Mimic Fires* (1994), and *Mnemographia Canadensis* (1999). According to Bentley, writers of the pre-Confederation period whose works were paramount in conceptualizing the settler experience and vocalizing unique impressions of Canada's social, geographical, topographical, and lyrical landscape include novelist Frances Brooke (1724-1789), immigrants Alexander McLachlan (1817-1896), Catharine Parr Traill, Susanna Moodie, and native-born Adam Hood Burwell and Goldsmith.<sup>5</sup> While some of these writers explore the advantages of pioneer life, others catalogue the disadvantages, and while some accentuate the potential success that could befall a particular social group regarding adaptation and integration into a foreign environment, still others highlight the inevitable failures. For example, Burwell's *Talbot Road: A Poem* (1818), Traill's *The Backwoods of Canada* (1836), and McLachlan's *The Emigrant* (1861) champion the successful transplantation of society from Old World to New. Additionally, Goldsmith's *The Rising Village. A Poem* (1825) celebrates the establishment of a thriving and prosperous community in Canada. However, Brooke's *The History of Emily Montague* (1769) and Moodie's *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852) are more pessimistic in their treatment of immigrant settlement in Lower and Upper Canada.<sup>6</sup>

Generally speaking, scholarship on Canadian-Émigré writings is somewhat unbalanced. Poets and novelists who are deemed pivotal to the construction of a uniquely

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<sup>5</sup> Bentley's analysis of several of these works reveals that Irishmen such as Weld and Moore were a crucial influence. Furthermore, in *The Confederation Group of Canadian Poets, 1880-1897* (2004), Bentley maintains that these same Irishmen were frequently alluded to in works composed by Confederation poets and that Thomas D'Arcy McGee and the literary philosophy espoused by the Young Ireland movement also left an indelible impression on them.

<sup>6</sup> In Brooke's historical fiction, key characters Emily Montague and Colonel Ed Rivers return to England, which is depicted as a prelapsarian Eden. Although her novel is full of praise for Canada, Brooke imposes on her assessment of the New World the same paradigm used later by Weld, Moore, Jameson, and Kidd. For Brooke, an Irishwoman, Canada is a *purgatorio* and England is a *paradiso*. Therefore, despite its positive qualities, the Dominion also presents discomfiting challenges, and happiness and security found there is transient. Consequently, the New World does not measure up to the admirable values and systems upheld by the Old.

Canadian voice are typically of British or Scottish extraction. For example, Bentley's chapter "Emigrant Remembering and Forgetting" featured in *Mnemographia* provides a composite and valuable analysis of the major topics and concerns found in Canadian-Émigré literature, yet it focuses solely on works written by or about British and Scottish immigrants.<sup>7</sup> This creates the somewhat skewed impression that the only relevant and influential immigrant voice in Canada was of British or Scottish origin. This is surprising for several reasons, some of which have been given earlier in this study but which deserve rehearsal. Firstly, the Irish made up a disproportionately high number of the immigrant population in Canada during the nineteenth century. Secondly, many Canadian-Émigré writers of Irish origin contributed to key literary and political movements that emerged throughout the nineteenth century: the Canadian long poem (Adam Kidd,<sup>8</sup> Standish O'Grady, and Isabella Valancy Crawford), the immigrant narrative (O'Grady and Crawford),<sup>9</sup> and the Canada First movement as well as Confederation (Thomas D'Arcy McGee). And thirdly, the Irish journalistic voice was prevalent in numerous Upper and Lower Canadian newspapers and magazines: Kathleen (Kit) Coleman (1864-1915),<sup>10</sup> Nicholas Flood Davin (1840-1901),<sup>11</sup> James McCarroll

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<sup>7</sup> In that chapter, discussion centres on works by Brooke, Traill, Moodie, and McLachlan. Although Brooke was born in Ireland, like Jameson she is classified as British. Furthermore, it is her British characters, not those of Irish descent (such as Captain Fitzgerald), that garner critical attention. At no point during his analysis of *The History of Emily Montague* does Bentley comment on the Irish status of the author or of her characters.

<sup>8</sup> Kidd's *The Huron Chief* is considered "the first example of a genuinely Canadian poem by an *émigré* writer" (Logan and French 48).

<sup>9</sup> Bentley claims that O'Grady's long poem was "the first [...] to concern itself principally with the issue of emigration to Canada" (*Mimic Fires* 188).

<sup>10</sup> At age twenty, Kit Coleman immigrated to Canada and within five years she was publishing works in *Saturday Night*. In the 1890s, Coleman had a weekly column, "Woman's Kingdom," in the *Toronto Mail* that attracted the attention of such prominent figures as Wilfrid Laurier. In addition, Coleman was the first female journalist in Canada to be in charge of her own section of a Canadian newspaper. Coleman, who continued to write for the *Mail and Empire* until 1911, also gained an international reputation when she began to print colourful accounts of her travels to Ireland, England, North America, and the West Indies. In 1904, her status as a woman in journalism was recognized when she was made the first president of the

(a.k.a. Terry Finnegan [1815-1896]),<sup>12</sup> Kidd (1802-1831), and McGee (1825-1868). So why are nineteenth-century Irish-Canadian writers overshadowed by those of British or Scottish descent and often relegated to a tertiary status within Canadian scholarship? And why, still surprisingly, are they repeatedly excluded from studies that make immigrant narratives their focus? Perhaps answers to these questions can be found again in the popular misconception of Irish history in Canada.

Until recently, a false myth, created and perpetuated by numerous historians, has led to a common misconception: that the majority of the Irish began arriving in Canada in the 1840s as a consequence of the Great Famine, which began its devastating course in 1841.<sup>13</sup> This was not the case. The misconception may, however, explain why some

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Canadian Women's Press Club (Freeman *DCB*). See further, Janice Fiamengo, *The Woman's Page: Journalism and Rhetoric in Early Canada* (121-152).

<sup>11</sup> Shortly after immigrating to Canada, Davin became a literary critic for the *Toronto Globe* and a contributor to the *Mail*. Later, he established the *Regina Leader* (1883), a political mouthpiece for the Conservative Party, which was a resounding success within a month of its inception.

<sup>12</sup> Born in Lanesboro County Longford, McCarroll immigrated to York (Toronto) with his family in 1831 and became a resident of Peterborough, where a large number of Irish farming families had been established by Peter Robinson in 1825. Editor of the Peterborough *Chronicle* (1843-1846) and the Cobourg *Courier* (1847), as well as music critic for the *Toronto Leader* and the *Toronto Colonist*, McCarroll became a favourite amongst Canadians with the weekly publication of his popular Toronto magazine column *Letters of Terry Finnegan, to the Hon. D'Arcy McGee* (Toronto, 1864). These satirical letters also appeared in *Grumbler, Momus, The Pick*, and McCarroll's own *The Latch-Key* between 1861 and 1865 (Peterman, *James McCarroll* 21).

<sup>13</sup> At the turn of the century, the Irish population was approximately five million; by mid-century it had nearly doubled to eight million as a result of early marriage and increased birthrate. Questions regarding how such a rapidly expanding population could sustain itself agriculturally and economically caused increasing alarm. The solution, however, came in an unexpected form: the Great Famine. It prompted chronic emigration and increased mortality. Several historians, including Sheelagh Conway, have deemed the Great Famine a genocide, as well as the most obvious consequence of British rule in Ireland, due to its religious-political colouring: it appeared to target Catholics and the poor labouring class who made up the majority of the deaths (48). The Famine has been deemed a "conspiracy" (O Laighin 87) and a "holocaust" (O'Driscoll and Reynolds, Introduction xxi) because approximately ninety percent of those who fled Ireland were Catholic. Indeed, it has been said that for British officials the Famine was regarded as a blessing. It was a means by which to rid the country of its most prominent blight – the backward Irish – and to "leave Ireland open to the progressive forces upon whose foundation the success of Victorian Britain had been built" (Boyce 336). Blame is placed on the British because English landlords shipped Ireland's abundant resources, including wheat and other grains and vegetables that had grown successfully in Ireland's rich soil, to England. Despite the fact that potato crops throughout Europe had failed, it was only the Irish who suffered famine because one in three Irish persons relied on the potato as a basic food source. The Famine was viewed by Fenians "as a crime committed by the British Government against the Irish people, [...] and they placed the guilt for this on the Government which had allowed it to happen – a British



critics overlooked works by early nineteenth-century Irish writers: they assumed Irish migrants began contributing their literary impressions of Canada only at mid-century. The reality is that while a million-and-a-half Irish immigrated to North America at the peak of the famine between 1841 and 1845, the vast majority either went directly to the United States or used their cheap passage to Canada, which had less severe entrance requirements, as a thoroughfare to their final and intended American destination. This discrepancy in the Canadian historical narrative has led to the promotion and dissemination of an unflattering image of Irish-Canadians and their experiences in Canada. According to Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth, the popular image of uneducated, diseased, and impoverished Famine Irish Catholics living in overcrowded urban slums, which has been painted so often by American historiographers, was frequently borrowed by Canadian historians in lieu of their own research and imposed on their depictions of the Irish in Canada (“Irish Immigrants to Canada” 27). As a consequence, the misery, squalor, and failure that marked the Famine migration became the primary focus of historical studies of the Irish in Canada. These investigations then generalized the episode so that it came to symbolize the whole of Irish immigration to Canada in the first half of the nineteenth century. It was not long before all Irish-Canadians were stigmatized as lazy, dirty, poor, inferior, drunks who were “less entrepreneurial” and “given to blarney” (*Irish Emigration* 5). This damaging portrait may

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Government. [...] The scenes of desolation from which [emigrants] had fled and the sufferings endured on the dangerous voyage, combined to leave them with a deep-seated hatred of that which they identified as the root of all Irish misfortunes – British misrule in Ireland” (O Tuathaigh 226-27). By the time the damage caused by the Famine had subsided, the population of Ireland had been “cut in half” (Conway 49). England, wanting to shed the responsibility of such a large-scale loss of human life, continued to point to overpopulation as the real cause of the Potato Famine. Removing the focus from their own role, English politicians claimed that the Irish had used these healthy crops to pay off land debts to avoid eviction (49).

have fostered in some literary critics prejudicial misconceptions that, in turn, caused them to ignore works by Irish-Canadian-Émigré writers.

Of course not all Canadian literary critics have excluded the Irish from their studies, especially in recent decades. Books, articles, and dissertations on nineteenth-century Irish-Canadian prose and verse have been published by such scholars as Robert Alan Burns, Wanda Campbell, Mary J. Edwards, Michele Holmgren, Carl F. Klinck, Mary Lu MacDonald, Kelly McGuire, Gerald Noonan, Michael Peterman, Charles R. Steele, and Brian Trehearne. Furthermore, although Bentley overlooks Irish writers in “Emigrant Remembering and Forgetting,” a lack of Irish representation is not typical in his scholarship.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, Bentley has had a decisive influence on the increased attention nineteenth-century Irish-Canadian poets have begun to receive from many contemporary critics. Apart from devoting chapter-length studies to long poems by Kidd, O’Grady (179?-1841), and Crawford (1850-1887) in *Mimic Fires*, works by Kidd and Crawford also appear in Bentley’s anthology on the nineteenth-century long poem. Extensive, albeit intermittent, discussion of Irish-Canadian poets also occurs throughout *The Gay]Grey Moose and Mnemographia*. Following the publication of Bentley’s full-length studies of Crawford (1987) and Kidd (1989), Brian Trehearne became the principal

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<sup>14</sup> In *Early Long Poems on Canada*, representation is give to three Irish writers: Moore’s *Poems Relating to Canada*, Kidd’s *The Huron Chief*, and Crawford’s *Malcolm’s Katie*. Additionally, other works in the anthology allude to important Irish figures, underscoring the invaluable influence the Irish had on the Canadian cultural imagination. For example, Burwell’s *Talbot Road* (1818) celebrates the accomplishments of Irishman Colonel Thomas Talbot, Goldsmith’s *The Rising Village* (1825) is modelled after the Anglo-Irish Goldsmith’s poem *The Deserted Village*, and Joseph Howe’s *Acadia* (1874) refers to Moore (*Early Long Poems* 372: 38), alludes to Goldsmith’s *The Traveller* (399: 1005-15), and tellingly describes the Irish emigrant experience:

And here the wanderer from green Erin’s shore  
Tastes of delight he seldom knew before.  
He toils beneath no law’s unequal weight,  
No rival parties tempt his soul to hate;  
No lordly Churchman passes o’er his field,  
To share the fruits the generous seasons yield. (393: 783-88)

scholar on O'Grady with his comprehensive critical edition of *The Emigrant by Standish O'Grady* (1989). Additionally, Holmgren, who studied under Bentley, has produced several comprehensive and detailed explorations into the substantial influence Irish-born poets Kidd, O'Grady, McGee, and Crawford had on the development of Canadian literary nationalism.<sup>15</sup>

What remains problematic is that although Irish poets take centre stage in these critical investigations, the relevance of their Irish heritage, their status as immigrants, their unique impressions of the pioneer experience, and the continuum of the tradition they comprise are often disregarded when analysis of their work is provided. For example, Crawford's prose and shorter poetry are frequently neglected despite their significant commentary on Canada and Ireland.<sup>16</sup> Instead, studies favour her long poem *Malcolm's Katie* (1884), which deals with *Scottish* pioneers. In a similar way, postcolonial interpretations of Kidd's treatment of Natives in *The Huron Chief* (1830) eclipse interest in his miscellaneous poems about the Irish immigrant experience in Canada.<sup>17</sup> And to date Kidd's description of the Irish experience in Canada has actually

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<sup>15</sup> These include her dissertation *Native Muses and National Poetry: Nineteenth-Century Irish-Canadian Poets* (1997), "Ossian Abroad: James Macpherson and Canadian Literary Nationalism, 1830-1994" (2002), and "*The Emigrant's* 'Highminded Pole': Nils von Schoultz and the Literary Construction of a Tragic Rebel" (2008). The shared premise of these studies is that a great literary debt is owed in Canada to Irish immigrants because their literary contributions and allegiance to Irish nationalism, as outlined by the United Irishmen and later Young Ireland, have had a reverberating effect on concepts of nineteenth-century Canadian identity and literary nationalism (*Native Muses* 2).

<sup>16</sup> Research by Peterman and Burns are the exceptions.

<sup>17</sup> For example, in "A Richer Variegated Vest," Wanda Campbell employs a postcolonial reading of Kidd's *The Huron Chief*, arguing that the vision he promotes of an Edenic world that has at its centre the noble savage is "essentially masculine" (41). In every instance, Kidd constructs binaries that emphasize a typically colonial hierarchy. The ideological stance of the speaker, who as a white interloper stands at the periphery of each scene, privileges man over woman, artist over model, and spectator over spectacle (41). It is of course not surprising in a critical climate of postcolonialism that scholars have focused on Kidd's treatment of Natives in his long poem, as it was the first work of Canadian literature to sympathize wholly with their culture. In *The Gay]Grey Moose*, Bentley notes that Kidd was "one of the first poets to view the Indians as equals (indeed, betters)" (156), and Lawrence M. Lande states that Kidd was "[a]n early champion of the North American Indian in Canada" (165). The complexities and problems that arise when

been undermined by critics both of his time and our own. This is because interest in embellishing the controversies and mysteries of the poet's biography detracts from productive, unbiased study of his work.<sup>18</sup> Even astute scholars such as Bentley commit the common error of confusing legend and verifiable fact. In fact, numerous Anglo-Colonial misconceptions commonly held against the Irish in the Old World have been transferred to the Canadian literary mind and carelessly maintained by twentieth-century critics. Among these assumptions is the stereotypical depiction of the Irish as a single homogeneous group who were violent, reckless, uneducated, untrustworthy, irresponsible failures. Additionally, when determining the cause of the alleged Irish inability to adapt successfully in the New World, historians are quick to blame the Irish themselves, who they maintain were ill-prepared and lacked adequate pioneering skills. Consequently, two prominent and unflattering stereotypes about the Irish in Canada have been transposed into discussions of Kidd and his work. The first is that the struggle to adapt to his new life in Canada was a product of Kidd's own design. The second is that Kidd was single-handedly responsible for creating social discord between himself and ecclesiastical and secular centres of authority because of his licentious and disagreeable nature. Thus a corrective analysis of the critical reception of *The Huron Chief and Other Poems* (1830; hereafter *HCOP*) proves illuminating.

In the 1980s, general fabrications regarding the Irish were challenged by numerous historians, including Donald H. Akenson, Bruce S. Elliot, Houston and Smyth, and David

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an unfamiliar culture is appropriated and given voice by one of the dominant hegemony, however, are not the focus of the present study.

<sup>18</sup> This was, recall, also the case with MacConmara and Moore.

A. Wilson.<sup>19</sup> Collectively, they argue convincingly that the unfavourable and damaging image of the downtrodden and uncultivated Irish-Canadian was “wildly inaccurate,” “virtually racist” (Akenson, “Data: What is Known” 22), severely distorted (Wilson, *The Irish in Canada* 12), and had “little basis in reality” (Elliott, “Regionalized Migration” 309). The reality is that “[b]y the time of the great famine,” Irish immigration to Canada “had largely come to an end” (Byrne, “The First Irish Foothold” 174). In fact, it was only in the first half of the century that the Irish settled predominantly in Canada. In the 1820s, thousands of Irish immigrants were part of full-scale colonization schemes sponsored by the British government. The A.C. Buchanan, Richard Talbot, and Peter Robinson experiments<sup>20</sup> were designed to alleviate rural poverty and unemployment in Ireland, as well as to secure a necessary pioneering population for an underdeveloped Canada by dissuading valuable citizens from immigrating to the United States.<sup>21</sup> Despite the success of such ventures, they were never repeated. The reason for this was twofold: they were costly, and by the early 1830s migration to Canada had reached a fevered pitch and no longer required such measures of encouragement.

With the absence of publicly assisted schemes, early nineteenth-century Irish migrants were left to finance their own immigration and resettlement. As a result, the majority of Irish emigrants who left their homeland for Canada did so voluntarily and were typically young, ambitious, financially secure middle-class farmers or tradesmen who risked loss of economic status if they were to stay in Ireland. Members of the Irish lower class were almost entirely excluded from making the journey to the New World

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<sup>19</sup> The following historians have also done much to dispel widely upheld myths: William M. Baker, Cyril Byrne, Robert O’Driscoll, Lorna Reynolds, and Peter Toner.

<sup>20</sup> In 1825, Colonel Peter Robinson assisted in the settlement of some two thousand Irish immigrants from County Cork in what is now Peterborough (Wilson, *The Irish in Canada* 3).

<sup>21</sup> Often provided were assisted passage, free land grants, and funding for supplies needed to settle the land, including tools, seeds, and livestock.

because they could not afford the fare and the necessary provisions for the voyage, nor could they support themselves while they awaited employment once in Canada. Thus, the stereotype that these immigrants “came from the most ignorant and poverty-stricken stratum of Irish society” is false (Wilson, *The Irish in Canada* 5). Because only Irishmen with “some capital could afford” the transit and settlement expenses, Protestants comprised fifty-five percent of the total Irish immigrant population to Canada (Conway 86),<sup>22</sup> and the outcome of their investment was by and large successful. Between 1825 and 1845, 450,000 Irish resided in Canada (85), representing sixty percent of immigration to the country (O’Driscoll and Reynolds, Introduction xiii)<sup>23</sup> and making up one-fifth of the entire Canadian population.<sup>24</sup> Their dominance was obvious in the Atlantic regions of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick, as well as in Lower Canada and Upper Canada, where the Irish comprised the largest ethnic group (Elliott, *Irish Migrants* 116). Based on this evidence, the disjunction between the actuality of events and the propagated stereotype is glaring: Irish-Canadians were chiefly financially secure, not destitute; they were mainly Protestant, not Catholic; they resided in rural areas, not urban slums; and they successfully, not ineffectively, transferred their varied agricultural and entrepreneurial skills from Old World to New.

Whether they participated in assisted immigration programs or departed on their own initiative, the Irish who relocated to Canada in the first half of the nineteenth century did so for a number of reasons. It is important, then, to rehearse briefly the calamitous

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<sup>22</sup> In the case of many Protestants, emigration was essential following the rapid increase among the Catholic population in Ireland, which polarized the religious factions. Due to this fluctuation in birth rate, Protestants were now a minority forced to face an ever-demanding and dissatisfied Catholic majority (Elliott, *Irish Migrants* 31).

<sup>23</sup> By the 1850s, Irish immigrants outnumbered those of English, Scottish, and Welsh extraction (Smyth, “Irish Background”).

<sup>24</sup> According to the Canadian census of 1851, 2,414,519 people resided in Upper Canada, Lower Canada, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland (*Statistics Canada*).

historical events that caused this first wave of mass migration across the Atlantic. Framed by the rebellions of 1798 and 1923, nineteenth-century Irish history was one of provisional stability, bloodshed, oppression, and resistance. The outset of the century witnessed economic prosperity<sup>25</sup> and an increased “agricultural output” that secured “an expanding export market” for a growing British population (O Tuathaigh 117). Additionally, a sense of security, although tentative and superficial, was achieved in 1801 with the Act of Union (with England). It was reinforced by the establishment of far-reaching and necessary police and law enforcement, which was governed by a strong British administration in Ireland. While the unification of England and Ireland brought with it a long period of “ordinariness and quiescence” (Boyce 338), Irish politics under the Union were nonetheless a “politics of impotence” (333) and prejudice. As an arbitrary, biased, and coercive system, the constabulary frequently suspended *Habeas Corpus* and imposed martial law. This served to disenfranchise Catholics and the poor, whose welfare was not a priority. By implementing strict militaristic regulations, the Government actively and intentionally impeded the destitute and persecuted from demanding fair treatment, threatening them into subservience.

Irish citizens, however, did not respond with obedience. Instead, malaise and seething discontent with British oppression, Anglican domination, and religious inequality erupted (leading to two later failed rebellions in 1848 and 1867<sup>26</sup>). To make matters worse, in the 1830s a cholera epidemic broke out, and critical areas of Irish industry gradually declined and decayed (O Tuathaigh 119). This exacerbated rural poverty, unemployment, a defective agrarian system, social backwardness, and landlord-

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<sup>25</sup> This was primarily the result of England’s “demand for provisions during the Napoleonic Wars” (Houston and Smyth, *Irish Emigration* 43).

<sup>26</sup> The first rebellion was led by Young Ireland, the second by the Fenians.

tenant discord. Such dissonance often manifested in the form of violence and murder at the hands of peasant secret societies. Amid this social disorder emerged the Young Ireland movement, which provided a much needed agent for the disgruntled people of the nation. Spearheaded by a politically charged and literarily conscious group of journalists, including McGee,<sup>27</sup> who in 1842 founded *The Nation*, Young Ireland propagated a doctrine of Irish nationalism and supported Daniel O’Connell’s campaign to repeal the Act of Union and restore Ireland’s parliament.<sup>28</sup> The movement helped achieve a sense of unity among a diverse and contentious Irish population by directing its focus toward a common goal: the independence of Ireland from British rule. Nevertheless, the desire to escape deteriorating and uncertain economic conditions, to resolve social stress, to ease religious discord, to better themselves, and to establish a secure future for relatives and subsequent generations were incentive enough for approximately one million Irish to leave behind the green hills of Erin. Indeed, it was the pre-existing conditions combining to produce these continuing events that had already inspired Adam Kidd to seek more favourable socio-political conditions and opportunities in the New World.

Pre-Confederation Irish-Canadian-Émigré writer Kidd confronted comparable social, political, cultural, and geographical conditions to those witnessed by the Irish travel writers discussed in Part One. In turn, he encountered class struggle and religious prejudice. For these reasons, Kidd’s impressions of Canada’s foreign and sparsely inhabited environment are often akin to those recorded by temporary exiles. However, some intriguing variations are also evident in his conceptualization of the New World.

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<sup>27</sup> In his youth, a Catholic McGee fought vehemently for Irish independence, as well as Catholic rights, and became closely affiliated with Young Ireland. When a planned revolution was aborted, however, McGee, who was falsely arrested as a co-conspirator, sought exile in the United States.

<sup>28</sup> The Young Ireland group later criticized their hero for contemplating the possibility of creating a federal Ireland within the United Kingdom. Irrate at the incapacity of Irish leaders to bring independence to Ireland, Young Ireland became increasingly radical following the Famine of 1847 and instigated a failed rebellion.



The root cause of these discrepancies is multifaceted. As Houston and Smyth observe, because the “linguistic, religious and economic conditions varied greatly from place to place in Ireland” (“Irish Immigrants to Canada” 30), the experiences and behaviours of Irish-Canadians would necessarily differ substantially. Additionally, the conditions the Irish encountered once in Canada, including “variations in natural resources, land economies, degrees of accessibility, opportunities for social mobility and the extent of ethnic intermixing,” also impacted the spectrum of experience (30). A number of pertinent divergences between Kidd and those Irish predecessors discussed earlier produce incongruous reactions to and portraits of the New World. These differences include their respective motivations for going to Canada, the goals they expected to accomplish following their arrival, and the permanent versus finite duration of their stays. What an examination of Kidd’s verse illuminates, however, is that a telling continuity can also be traced between his representation of Canada and that established by Weld and Moore, and later reiterated by Jameson. More specifically, a complimentary Dantean paradigm that casts America as an *inferno*, Canada as *purgatorio*, and the Old World (Ireland) as a lost *paradiso* is reinforced in *HCOP*, thus underscoring just how closely the Irish immigrant’s impression of pre-Confederation Canada was in accord with those of the Irish travellers.

In *Mimic Fires*, Bentley notes that it was within the budding genre of the Canadian long poem that first-hand expressions of the Dominion’s physical and social landscape became the focus and that migrants of the New World became central characters (9). For this reason, a focused discussion of Kidd’s *The Huron Chief* proves to be especially productive with respect to the present study. An examination of Kidd’s miscellaneous verse also proves useful as several of these shorter poems make the immigrant and his

impressions of Canada their focus. Prior to the analysis of his verse, I will consider early reviews and contemporary criticism of *HCOP* alongside Kidd's biography. Because little is known of Kidd's life, critics have constructed a somewhat fictitious, uncomplimentary, and misleading persona that is often based on mere speculation in the absence of fact. It is through the lens of this partially fabricated identity that scholars analyze letters composed by Kidd as well as the prefatory material and poetry of *HCOP*.

As an English-speaking Protestant Irishman residing in French-speaking Catholic Quebec, Kidd was a minority confronting three solitudes. Consequently, he faced oppression, class-consciousness, racism, and abuse, circumstances he would likely not have been exposed to given the favoured position Protestants still held in Ireland. Although he achieved a modicum of success as a poet in Canada,<sup>29</sup> Kidd was frequently accused of discordant behaviour by his contemporaries. Any effort to embrace his new home seems to have been thwarted to some extent by external forces beyond Kidd's control. An anti-Irish prejudice, most evident in reviews of his work, appears to have been largely responsible for jeopardizing his attempt to integrate into Canadian society. Given Kidd's trying experiences in the New World, what is surprising is that both his romanticized idyll on Indian themes *The Huron Chief* and his miscellaneous verse are frequently highly favourable in their representation of Canada and are often optimistic rather than nostalgic in tone. His poetry also reveals a conscious attempt to integrate into the local culture despite the disconcerting and discomfoting emotions inspired by a

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<sup>29</sup> Given that Kidd was just twenty-nine when he died and had been publishing in Canada for less than ten years, the degree of recognition his verse did receive in the pro-Irish newspapers was respectable. For example, in just two and a half weeks, *The Vindicator* (Montreal) published three poems by Kidd: "Stanzas: Addressed to the Honble [sic] and Right Rev. Chas. Jas. Stewart, Lord Bishop of Quebec" (Tuesday, February 23, 1830), "Sacred Melody" (Tuesday, March 1, 1830), and "Song of an Indian Queen" (Friday, March 5, 1830). Additionally, Kidd's poems and articles appeared in the *Quebec Mercury*, *Canadian Courant and Montreal Advertiser*, *Canadian Spectator* (Montreal), *Canadian Freeman* (York [Toronto]), *Kingston Chronicle*, and *Irish Shield* (Philadelphia).

foreign social and geographical landscape. For both Kidd and his poet-speakers, adaptation and assimilation are attractive because the Dominion offers a chance at personal regeneration. It also provided Kidd with an opportunity to restore and preserve the threatened Irish traditions and legends that colour his poems. Significantly, Kidd's tendency to oscillate between references to Canada and Ireland exposes the cultural identity crisis he and his speakers struggle to reconcile. In their liminal state, both speakers and poet cling to the Old World not only out of fear of losing their connection to it but also out of concern that sacrificing ties to the Old will not necessarily yield acceptance into the New. Thus, the pre-Confederation Irish-Canadian-Émigré experience is defined, as immigrant experience is generally, as one of double division, where the Irish occupy a 'hyphenated' existence that privileges their place of origin over their adopted identity. They are neither residually Irish nor newly Canadian. Instead they are that new construct: Irish-Canadian.<sup>30</sup>

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### **ADAM KIDD AND *THE HURON CHIEF AND OTHER POEMS***

George William Russell once said that “‘typical humanity [...] exists in germ in the spiritual and intellectual outcasts of our time, who can find no place in the present social order’” (qtd. in Storey 140). In many ways, this declaration speaks to the marginal status of Irish-born poet Kidd. Having arrived in Canada as early as 1818, Kidd attempted to adapt and integrate into the Canadian socio-cultural landscape by seeking employment with the Anglican ministry in Quebec, working as a teacher, and actively publishing

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<sup>30</sup> Irish is placed before Canadian because Kidd's work suggests that there is still a stronger identification with the Old World than with the New.

journalism and verse in various pro-Irish newspapers.<sup>31</sup> Despite these efforts, Kidd was denied a secure position in the *New World*. Rejected by the Venerable Archdeacon George Jehoshaphat Mountain (1789-1863) in his application to be a Clergyman,<sup>32</sup> Kidd's character was further defamed by non-Irish contemporaries who, in local newspapers as well as in marginalia to copies of *HCOP*, directed slanderous attacks at this self-proclaimed Canadian patriot.<sup>33</sup> These derogatory remarks, along with public disputes with the Mountain and Buchanan families, have led Bentley to label Kidd an "outcast Irishman" (Introduction, *HCOP* xxxi), and in doing so has continued a categorization that has been sustained in scholarship on the poet for nearly two centuries.

What is problematic is that twentieth-century critics use Kidd's "outcast" status to suggest that he intentionally placed himself on the periphery of society. However, there is evidence to support a counter-argument that Kidd was snubbed by the prevailing society that denied him a sense of belonging. Critics' somewhat misleading conclusions derive from the fact that they continue to base their interpretation of Kidd's private life and public works preponderantly on biographical speculation. This has contributed directly, although perhaps unintentionally, to the perpetuation of a nineteenth-century cultural bias against the Irish. Indeed, prejudicial classifications persistently assigned to Kidd, such as "irresponsible, temperamental" (Klinck, "Literary Activity in the Canadas (1812-1841)" 144), "antiestablishment" (MacDonald, *DLB* 185; Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 154), and "hazardous flamboyance" (Bentley 1987, 1992, 1993, 1994, and 1998), have played a critical role in the scholarly treatment of his verse. It proves revealing, then, to

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<sup>31</sup> Most notably, *The Vindicator* (Montreal) and the *Irish Shield* (Philadelphia).

<sup>32</sup> He "was a member of the famous ecclesiastical Mountain family: his father was the first Bishop of Quebec, his brother was the Rev. S. J. Mountain of Cornwall, and he himself was subsequently the third Bishop of Quebec" (Bentley, *HCOP* xi-xii).

<sup>33</sup> A letter published in *The Vindicator* on March 16, 1830 was signed "K. Patriot."

deconstruct the unflattering and erroneous legend of the “radical Irishman” (Introduction, *HCOP* xii) that continues to be imposed on Kidd. But before launching into an investigation of critics’ fallacious creation of Kidd’s persona, it is necessary to consider the factual evidence surrounding Kidd’s short life. Knowledge of the socio-political and historical landscape in which Kidd was immersed will help distinguish discernible truths from those fictions that have developed over the past two centuries.

Kidd was born in 1802 to a Protestant farming family in Ulster, Northern Ireland, during a time when it was the epicenter of conflict. His introduction into the world was framed by two failed Irish rebellions (1798 and 1803) that resulted in the executions of Irish nationalist heroes Thomas Russell (1767-1803) and Robert Emmet. Reeling from the tragic events, Ireland suffered a further setback a year prior to Kidd’s birth with the establishment of the Act of Union, whereby Ireland lost its independent parliament. Thus, the political and economic upheavals that prompted Weld and Moore to sojourn in Canada in search of an alternative home for disheartened Irish men and women who were collectively facing an alarming crisis comprised the troublesome reality into which Kidd was ushered. Because the majority of Protestants in Ulster were tenants, not landlords, they did not control rents and had little political influence. Consequently, families like Kidd’s were not immune to financial disaster caused by a poor harvest or increased rents any more than were their Catholic neighbours (Holmgren, *Native Muses* 31). Holmgren hypothesizes that these dire circumstances, compounded by the “agricultural depression that followed the end of the Napoleonic war” (31), forced Kidd and his father to immigrate to North America as early as 1818.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> The fact that the potato crops experienced partial failure in 1816 and 1817, producing famine conditions in several regions, may also have inspired their departure.

The time of Kidd's departure from Ireland and the motivation for leaving, however, have been disputed. Mary Jane Edwards advances two alternative causes: the first supports the broader socio-political emergency Holmgren points to and the second highlights Kidd's personal ambition, a quality that drove many Protestant Irish to settle in Canada during the first wave of migration. Drawing on Kidd's own account, Edwards postulates that the poet either worked for six years on his parents' farm until the early 1820s when "the hopeless and sinking situation, of then oppressed Ireland, forced [him] to seek a scanty pittance in a foreign land" (qtd. in *DCB* 375), or that he left for 'America' voluntarily and under no immediate pressure in 1818 or 1819 once he realized that his aspiration to be either a Church of Ireland clergyman or a teacher would be impossible to achieve in Ireland because "his family lacked the influence to get him a job" (375). Scholars concur that Kidd immigrated to Canada sometime between 1818 and 1822 (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 155). A poem signed 'A.K.' in the *Quebec Gazette* on February 22, 1822, as well as numerous other works signed 'Slievegallin,' a mountain near Kidd's birthplace,<sup>35</sup> in the *Canadian Courant*, the *Montreal Advertiser*, and the *Canadian Spectator* between 1822 and 1825 (155), provide proof that Kidd was a resident of Quebec in the early 1820s. Additionally, on July 24, 1824, Kidd's name "appeared on a list of candidates in a document sent by Archdeacon Mountain at Quebec to Archdeacon G.O. Stewart at Kingston" (Klinck, "Adam Kidd" 496-97).

What is intriguing about this record is the classification given to Kidd by Mountain. Among the three classes of divinity students – "(a) Students actually enjoying scholarships; (b) Students not actually rejected, but proceeding at their own risk; (c)

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<sup>35</sup> Kidd's "village lay nestled at the foot of Slieve Gallion, a seventeen-hundred-foot-high peak" (Holmgren, "United Irishmen in Canada" 46).

Possible candidates” – Kidd is listed fourteenth in category ‘c’ and is said to be “Supporting himself” (qtd. in Klinck, “Adam Kidd” 497). Mountain’s notation is telling. It confirms Kidd’s fervent desire to succeed and improve his station, as he was willing to take on the financial burden to pursue a vocation that was not within his grasp in Ireland but was so in an adopted home that afforded him fresh opportunities. Given that Kidd “did not reap financial reward” as a writer (MacDonald, *Literature and Society* 73), Mountain’s classification suggests that the poet may have arrived in Canada with some capital or that he worked as a teacher to finance his candidacy. If the former was the case, then it is likely that Kidd’s personal ambition, more so than a wide-scale calamity or an impoverished state, caused him to make the transatlantic journey. Additionally, historians maintain that most Protestant Irish were financially secure and actively pursued immigration to North America at this time, which further substantiates this premise. Despite this evidence, it is difficult to come to definitive conclusions regarding the motivation and means of Kidd’s emigration from Ireland. Also unclear is whether or not Kidd journeyed to America prior to settling in Quebec City. If America was Kidd’s original destination, then his decision to make Canada his permanent home is noteworthy, as it suggests that Kidd weighed the merits and vices of the Republic and the eventual Dominion and came to the same conclusion as Weld, Moore, and later Jameson: Canada was superior.

In “Emigrant Remembering and Forgetting,” Bentley notes that the conditions under which emigrants left the Old World greatly impacted how they conveyed their perception of and experience in the New. More specifically, as Holmgren observes, “the political, economic and cultural events that explained how [the Irish] came to be in Canada affected the way in which they interpreted events in their new home, and, more

important, determined what hopes and fears they possessed for Canada's future" (*Native Muses* 2-3). Knowing whether Kidd's emigration was forced or voluntary would, therefore, be valuable when attempting to evaluate his impressions of Canada. Pre-Confederation Émigré narratives, a genre in which Kidd is rightfully if not often classified, share several recurring themes and preoccupations that are outlined by such historians as Margaret MacDonell, Robert O'Driscoll, and Lorna Reynolds, as well as by scholars Bentley, Holmgren, A.J.M. Smith, F.R. Scott, and Story. Generally speaking, reluctant departure from the Old World frequently provokes profound feelings of melancholy and nostalgia, whereas emigrants who leave willingly and are forward-looking often project their optimistic and encouraging sentiments onto their impressions of the New World. Based on this dichotomy, it is plausible to assume that an analysis of the speaker's tone, attitude, and preoccupations in both *The Huron Chief* and Kidd's miscellaneous verse, which focus in part on the complexities of the immigrant experience, would imply the cause of Kidd's migration and thus highlight his possible bias for or against his new home. However, an examination of several of his works reveals that this is not the case. Instead, Kidd's representation of the Irish-Canadian-Émigré experience in Canada is inconsistent and resists essentialist categorization.

The destabilized sentiments and fluctuating positions of Kidd's speaker in several poems are not surprising considering Bentley's and Smith and Scott's observation that the predominant characteristic at the heart of most Canadian-Émigré literature that concerns itself with the immigrant perspective is an acute ambivalence toward displacement (*Mnemographia* 187). Significant for present purposes is Bentley's argument that ambivalence toward old and new creates "a tension between remembering and forgetting: especially at moments of heightened emotion, emigrants to Canada may



be visited by one or other – or both – an outpouring of affection for the new that resembles the motivating impulse of their emigration or an influx of nostalgia for the old that compels them back mentally (and, eventually, perhaps, physically) to their place of origin” (187). The tone and focus of the work can oscillate between one of hopeful optimism as the subject contemplates a future in a new and prosperous land of abundance and freedom, and one of deep anxiety and uncertainty ushered forth by the difficult confrontation with and adjustment to “an alien and often hostile environment” (Fahey 812). Similar to feelings of ambivalence and alienation, another common feature found in Canadian-Émigré narratives of the early-to-mid-nineteenth century is homesickness (Story 641). Grateful for the opportunities afforded to them in the New World, immigrants still bemoan the loss of the pastoral “landscapes of their childhood” and express sadness at having to leave family and friends behind. Such nineteenth-century works underscore their authors’ reluctance, inability, or unwillingness to commit to a complete identification with their new home (641). This, in turn, creates an uncomfortable hyphenated existence.

Tension between Old and New World, nostalgia and a forward-looking attitude, individual and community, marginalization and centrality, defeat and triumph is prevalent in those works by Kidd that make the immigrant experience their subject. The recurrence of such dualities raises several questions. Is the speaker’s ambivalence simply a by-product of competing desires simultaneously to remember and forget, as Bentley claims? Or is it also a reflection of a heightened awareness that his ardent effort to succeed and adapt will repeatedly be thwarted by factors beyond his control? In other words, are the speaker’s impressions of Canada, as well as his conceptualization of his position within it, influenced solely by internal forces or are external factors also at play? Is his sense of

displacement the result of a self-conscious reluctance to integrate and embrace the New? Or, are feelings of disconnection and alienation caused by external obstacles such as societal prejudice against the Irish that works to inhibit an otherwise active attempt to immerse the self into a new culture? What a detailed exploration of Kidd's biography and journalism, as well as the critical reception of his work, shows is that Kidd himself was not disinclined to assimilate into Canadian society. Rather, he was unable to do so despite his efforts because that society rejected him.

A concern for the welfare of Ireland and its people, an unwavering pride in his heritage, and a firm longing to preserve his ties to the Old World are preoccupations voiced frequently by Kidd in his prose and verse. Having spent his formative years, as well as more than half of his short life, in Ireland, Kidd was no doubt profoundly affected by the politically motivated rebellions and executions that produced further religious and economic instability in his homeland and that necessarily shaped his character. According to Holmgren, journalism and poetry composed by Kidd in Canada reveal "that he may have imbibed [...] a mixture of resentments, ideals and cultural propaganda brewed by the United Irishmen and the French Revolution, and liberal Protestants who supported at least some dismantling of Ascendancy rule in Ireland" (*Native Muses* 35-36). Similar to Moore, Kidd reveals Jacobin sympathy in "Napoleon in Exile." Yet, like his predecessor, he espoused a pacifist approach to Ireland's plight rather than a revolutionary or violent one (Kidd, *CP* online 15).<sup>36</sup> In this poem, Kidd's speaker acknowledges that Napoleon's remarkable and admirable achievements were costly and led to his inevitable downfall. He does not, however, spurn his accomplishments, nor does he admonish his efforts

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<sup>36</sup> Originals of Kidd's shorter verses featured in his *HCOP* are available to consult at Bentley's *Canadian Poetry* website, [http://www.canadianpoetry.ca/longpoems/other\\_poems\\_huron/index.htm](http://www.canadianpoetry.ca/longpoems/other_poems_huron/index.htm). All references to these works are taken from this site and will appear as (*CP* online).

(Steele, *Canadian Poetry in English* 111). Rather, he expresses veneration for the “worldly attainments” (Kidd, *CP* online 111) acquired by the “greatest of mortals” (14) and the “dethroner of tyrants” (13). Significantly, while Kidd attributes the image of a liberator to the French ruler, which is in keeping with the attitude of the United Irishmen, “this role was most often assigned by the early poets of Lower Canada to Britain. They advocated that Britain, as the unique possessor of true freedom and right order, should help other countries to establish the same” (Steele, *Canadian Poetry in English* 111-12). As an Irishman exposed to the misrule and oppression of Ireland by England, Kidd appears unable to pledge allegiance to the source of such grief. The tone of the poem is melancholy, as the speaker mourns the “[d]ark fate” (Kidd, *CP* online 2) of exile and imprisonment that ushered Napoleon to his death. The glory and the “pleasures” (31) that come with fame and conquest, he concludes, are fleeting and “[a]re not worth one half of the cares they command!”(32).

Moreover, the socially progressive and liberal-minded position Kidd expressed in his journalism between 1829 and 1830 reverberates throughout *HCOP* and is a direct product of his Irish background. Similar to MacConmara, Weld, Moore, and Jameson, in his work Kidd asserts his Irish patriotism and solidifies his allegiance to Ireland. For this reason, critics assume that Kidd’s nostalgic sentiments necessarily interfered with a proper attempt to amalgamate into his new surroundings. It is critical, however, to recognize that first and foremost, Kidd was committed to assessing and championing the merits Canada offered its immigrants and that it was the promise of a better life presented to the Irish in Canada – one that could not be achieved in America or the British Isles – that was Kidd’s predominant interest. At the same time, Kidd was resolved not to

compromise his convictions in order to gain public approval. It is perhaps for this reason that he was often the target of malicious attacks in the press.

Kidd was troubled by the religious hypocrisy and political strife that plagued his fellow Irish men and women, and he did little to censor his opinions. What his journalism highlights is an anxiety over the possibility that Old World prejudice and religious intolerance would be transferred and disseminated in the New. Witnessing the shared plight of the otherwise duelling Catholics and Protestants in Ulster may have humbled Kidd, who later expressed in his Canadian works a distaste for Catholic disenfranchisement. A keen interest in Irish politics, and more particularly in the debate surrounding Catholic Emancipation, is at the forefront of Kidd's journalism and is revisited in the poem "Monody: To the Memory of the Right Hon. George Canning." Here, Kidd celebrates moderate British Tory Prime Minister Canning (1770-1827) as a "loved patriot" (6) who carried "Liberty's torch" (9) for Ireland and thus kept the hope for freedom alive in his own Anglo-Irish father's home. During the brief time he governed the country (119 days), Canning campaigned vigorously for unity between the Irish and the British and never wavered in his allegiance to Ireland's prosperity. With a successful alliance formed between Tories and Whigs, Canning pushed for Catholic Emancipation; however, the bill was defeated in 1825. Despite this set back, Canning worked hard to keep the issue of Catholic rights "in the forefront of Parliamentary affairs, [even though he faced] royal opposition from George IV and the Duke of York" (Holmgren, *Native Muses* 45). Because of his strident efforts, Ireland in Kidd's poem believed "her prayers [would] be heard" and that "the land of *Fitzgerald* [would] soon flourish again" while "low in the dust, / Oppression [would] struggle and gnaw her own chain" (Kidd, *CP* online 17, 18, 19-20). Telling here is Kidd's allusion to Irish Protestant

martyr Edward Fitzgerald, leader of the 1798 Irish Rebellion, immediately following his remark that George IV is “just” (17). As Holmgren astutely observes, such a reference “may be intended to remind Britain of past Irish rebellions should the king be too hesitant in exercising that justice” (*Native Muses* 45-46). From this, Holmgren states that “[e]ven if Kidd did not condone the later United Irish commitment to violent revolution, he seems to have shared Moore’s view of rebellion as the final action of a patriot provoked by repeated English injustices” (“United Irishmen in Canada” 51-52). Entering the debate on these controversial issues in his verse, as well as in journalism published in *The Vindicator*, Kidd assisted in keeping current in the minds of his Canadian readers the affairs of Ireland, “while at the same time acknowledging British rule in his new home” (Holmgren, “United Irishmen in Canada” 48).

Similar to his Protestant contemporary, Jameson, Kidd expressed with open defiance his support of Catholic Emancipation in *The Vindicator* on January 20, 1829.<sup>37</sup> Under the guise of the pseudonym “Slievegallin,” Kidd defends the Editor of the *Quebec Mercury*, whose declaration that all individuals regardless of their religious backgrounds were to be treated equally had offended some readers. In particular, Kidd applauds the Editor’s proclamation that ““*We have ever considered it both unjust and impolitic to create civil disqualifications, on account of religious opinions*”” (qtd. in Bentley, *Appendices, HCOP* 126).<sup>38</sup> Aligning himself with such “dignified, noble and manly” words that recall the politics of “FOX, PITT, BURKE, AND GRATTAN,” Kidd calls for the dissemination of this philosophy, which “the enlightened of every nation and every

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<sup>37</sup> As mentioned in Part One, the Catholic Emancipation Bill passed in 1829.

<sup>38</sup> Although I have examined all the original documents, for the reader’s convenience and ease of accessibility, I reference Bentley’s critical edition of *HCOP*, which contains reliable transcriptions of entries that appeared in *The Montreal Gazette* and *The Vindicator*.

creed must heartily appreciate” (126). With an impassioned tone and bitterly sarcastic rhetoric, Kidd challenges his opponents to “throw down [their] prejudices” and to embrace “the cause of universal and unrestricted Liberty” (126-27), a characteristic Americans boasted their Republic possessed but that Kidd, along with his Irish predecessors, recognized was tentative and contingent in the young Republic.

Native culture is then presented by Kidd as a model of this idealized equality and reciprocity, traits he will later celebrate in *The Huron Chief*. It was to this ethnic group that Kidd cast “an envious eye [as he felt Natives were] free of the kinds of arbitrary sectarian divisions that had been imported from Europe to Canada: ‘Man is naturally kind to his fellow creature, unless poisoned by prejudice, by bigotry and ignorance. The Indian who enjoys the bounties of his wild inheritance, contends not for superiority over the brothers of his tribe—every man stands on an equal footing, until he has signaled himself by some noble achievement’” (Holmgren quoting Kidd’s letter, *HCOP* 126; “Ossian Abroad” 78 n.7). Reiterating a keen dislike for elitism, Kidd chastises the “imaginary superiority” that inspires some to “disqualify” individuals due to their religious affiliations even when they have proved “in every emergency; that they are, and ever have been, the unshaken defenders of the British Throne” (Bentley, Appendices, *HCOP* 127). As will be discussed later, these ardent views confirm that Kidd’s clash with the Mountain family was more likely political and ethical than personal: he could not align himself with a ministry that did not acknowledge the rights of Catholics, nor could he support a family who used God and the Church to justify and perpetuate the maltreatment of those it deemed inferior, including Catholics and Natives (and even the poet Byron, as will be discussed below). Significantly, it was perhaps Kidd’s controversial stance on these issues that led clergymen Job Deacon, who was closely

affiliated with the Mountains, to view him as a renegade and to spitefully accuse him of 'immoral' behaviour.

In letters written to *The Vindicator* on December 11, 1829 and February 2, 1830, the integrity of the Irish clergy, the imposition of Methodism, and the spiritual state of Ireland are at the centre of a debate between Kidd and the editors of the *Christian Guardian*, American Methodist Preachers Kidd labels ““officers from the Court of Anti-Christ”” (February 2, 1830, 129). What these letters underscore is that religion and morality were of great concern to Kidd throughout his short life. In the latter correspondence, Kidd, whose religious principles have often been wrongfully called into question by critics, proclaims that he is “not an enemy to Methodism” (130), and in the former he attacks the *Christian Guardian* for its “pompous” (128) and presumptuous declaration that the ““neglected poor of Ireland”” (128) have thankfully been converted rapidly to Methodism. Offended by the implication that the souls of the Irish poor were lost prior to the introduction of Methodism, Kidd accuses this sect of “deceit and hypocrisy,” chastises their self-congratulatory attitude, and insists that the Irish in Canada and the old country have suffered as a result of Methodist influence (December 11, 1829, 129). He then defends the Irish clergy by defining it as “*educated,*” “*enlightened,*” “*pious,*” and “*talented*” (128) in its unwavering commitment to provide benevolent instructions throughout Ireland and beyond the Continent (128). This respectful depiction of the Anglican ministry confirms that a devout Kidd conceded the value of both the institution and its creed. Certainly, Kidd’s commemorative piece “Stanzas, to the Lord Bishop of Quebec” highlights the poet’s humble submission to the glory of God, and his acknowledgement of the blessings that come to those “who feel Religion’s power / In

Gospel's truths" (Kidd, *CP* online 9-10).<sup>39</sup> Moreover, such testimonies suggest further that the contentious relationship the poet had with the Mountains was not a product of a bruised ego but rather an effect on his abhorrence for a family whose exclusivity and duplicity compromised the tenets of the Protestant faith.

More important, Kidd lambastes American Methodists for "pollut[ing] the shores of Canada, and endeavour[ing] to destroy the manly spirit of loyalty, for which the first settlers of the country are so honourably distinguished" (February 2, 1830; Bentley, *Appendices, HCOP* 130). Kidd also casts America as the seat of corruption and as a country whose Republican ideology and loose religious strictures threaten to infect the purity and order of the Dominion's social and spiritual landscape. This representation is of particular relevance as it recalls the paradigm implemented by Weld, Moore, and later Jameson, each of whom equates America with Dante's *inferno*. Furthermore, it anticipates and justifies Kidd's decision to portray America the same way in his verse. The embodiment of evil, in Kidd's view, American Methodists spread "political poison" (December 11, 1829, 128) throughout Upper Canada, rendering its residents "miserable" (129) and financially destitute; they seek not to unite but to divide, conquer, and menace into subservience their neighbours to the North in order to secure a position of authority and to rule their new flock without resistance. The concern then is that, similar to the suffering endured by the Irish in Ireland at the hands of oppressive British forces, America will bring about strife and tyranny in Canada, a place that offers its immigrants

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<sup>39</sup> Veneration for Charles James Stewart (1775-1837), an honourable and "worthy delegate from heaven" (Kidd, *CP* online 12), who often "bestowed" on Kidd his "tender friendship" (14), solidifies further the poet's affinity with the Church and juxtaposes the true piety of this Bishop of Quebec (1825-1837) and the debased morality of Mountain. The fact that Kidd established a bond with Stewart suggests not every member of the Quebec ministry disapproved of the poet.



an opportunity to right the wrongs of the old country and establish a true democracy that champions liberty and equality for all.

On February 2, 1830, an insulted Kidd challenges the presumptuous and false claim made in the *Christian Guardian* that the people of Upper Canada are much like Americans in their Republican spirit and that they would willingly support annexation. Kidd feared that such propaganda not only disregarded but also deliberately attempted to undermine and compromise the “good faith and *proved* loyalty of a manly and independent people” (130). Anticipating McGee’s concern that Canada’s unique socio-political and literary identity would be overwhelmed and overshadowed by its abrasive and competitive neighbour,<sup>40</sup> Kidd, who prized the same qualities in his adopted home that McGee later fought to preserve and protect, warns his readers of America’s intention to monopolize and consume the British colony in its infancy. Again, Kidd criticizes American Methodists for disrupting the “united, comfortable, and happy” people of Upper Canada with their “Yankee-System of Redemption” and for reducing several respectable families “faithfully attached to their King and Country” (130) to a state of poverty. Portrayed as a tempter, America threatens to corrupt the ‘earthly paradise’ actualized in Canada. Thus, it is the sinister American influence that is in large part to blame for difficulties faced by pioneers in the Dominion. Without its infectious presence, Canada could remain an idyllic refuge for the Old World’s exiled sons and daughters.

These published letters underscore Kidd’s awareness that it was necessary to caution Canadians of the caustic American threat and to awaken in them the desire to preserve their demi-paradisiacal existence. They also further emphasize that Kidd was not

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<sup>40</sup> McGee imported and “applied the cultural programme of Young Ireland [...] to Canada, arguing that the new nation required a literature of its own, in order to survive being overwhelmed, culturally or politically, by older, powerful countries such as America and Britain” (Holmgren, *Native Muses* iv).

the immoral, debauched misfit critics have continuously claimed him to be. Indeed, Kidd's reasons for criticizing both the Mountain and Buchanan families (more below) later in his journalism and verse were similar: they, too, endangered the integrity and purity of Canada's social, political, religious, and physical landscapes. Curious, however, is Kidd's decision to mask these politically charged sentiments by composing them under a pseudonym. While he was keen to associate his Christian name with *HCOP* and with the socio-political statements he makes in those poems, Kidd consciously links his journalistic persona with a mountain in Ireland. But by doing the latter, Kidd underscored the lasting importance his place of origin had on his concept of identity and stressed that he remained rooted in Irish traditions, history, and landscape.<sup>41</sup>

~II~

**THE CRITICAL HISTORY**

That Kidd occupied a peripheral and contentious position in literary society is not under dispute. What is interesting, however, is that when *HCOP* was first published in 1830, it was "widely noticed" and "generally praised" (MacDonald, *DLB* 185) in the two colonies, it was promoted and reviewed with encouragement in Philadelphia's *Irish Shield*, and it sparked a witty and biting repartee in *The Vindicator* and the *Montreal Gazette* between "A LOVER OF POETRY" and "Q." The first review of Kidd's volume appeared on February 26, 1830, in *The Vindicator*, a newspaper that openly supported

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<sup>41</sup> In "United Irishmen in Canada," Holmgren draws the same parallel and conclusion: "While walking on the slopes of Slieve Gallion, Kidd would no doubt have encountered its eponymous stone-age cairns and chambered grave, reminders of a millennia-old culture. That this feature of the landscape was closely tied to Kidd's own identity is suggested by the fact that he signed the name 'Slievegallin' to several poems and letters published in Canadian newspapers" (46).

Irish authors (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 155). Favourable in its tone and appraisal, the newspaper expresses excitement following receipt of the “long expected volume” and compliments its “chaste and elegant” external appearance, which it concludes is most “suitable” to “the productions of genius” it encloses (Appendices, *HCOP* 109). To avoid “hasty opinion,” the Editors promise to say something about *HCOP* in their next issue when judgment of the material could be done “calmly and with due and impartial consideration” (109). In the meantime, *The Vindicator* refers readers to its previous issue (February 23) in which “Stanzas: Addressed to the Honble [sic] and Right Rev. Chas. Jas. Stewart, Lord Bishop of Quebec” serves as an example of “Mr. Kidd’s complimentary powers” and extracts for its current issue “Rangleawe – The Roving Bard,” which “please[d them] very much (109).”<sup>42</sup> But instead of furnishing readers with its projected review, on March 1 *The Vindicator* simply publishes Kidd’s “Sacred Melody.” Surprisingly, their assurance of a review is never fulfilled. In its place, *The Vindicator* prints “Song of an Indian Queen” on March 5 and “Ode to Hope” “inscribed to Adam Kidd Esq. from the *Irish Shield*” on March 19 (see Appendix B). Repeated references to Kidd on these dates, as well as on April 9 and 13,<sup>43</sup> suggest that the poet and his *HCOP* did not escape their attention. What is curious, then, is that a second commentary on the volume never materialized. This absence could indicate a number of things: Kidd’s volume sold well and did not require further endorsement,<sup>44</sup> the volume escaped public recognition and the newspaper determined not to waste additional space on an overdue

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<sup>42</sup> Holmgren remarks that *The Vindicator*’s inclusion of “Rangleawe,” a poem that conveys nostalgia for the speaker’s boyhood home in Ireland, was not at all surprising because “backward cast” poems fulfilled the editors’ intentions to give recent Irish Catholic immigrants “a voice in Upper Canada” (Holmgren, *Native Muses* 29).

<sup>43</sup> On April 9, *The Vindicator* writes, “We have received the March number of the *Irish Shield*. It contains a review of Mr. Kidd’s Work, *The Huron Chief* – The contents in our next.” Then on April 13, the newspaper prints only the following: “Contents of the *Irish Shield*” and lists “Critical Notice of Mr. Kidd’s Poems.”

<sup>44</sup> In the Preface to *HCOP*, Kidd claims to have sold 1500 advance copies of his works.

review, or the “Buchanan Affair” (discussed below), publicized in *The Vindicator*, detracted attention from the poetry.

The positive attention given Kidd’s volume by *The Vindicator* was quickly substituted with unforgiving evaluations printed in non-Irish periodicals. Although Upper and Lower Canadian pro-Irish newspapers demonstrated support by consistently publishing Kidd’s shorter verse and journalism and extracting sections of *HCOP*, the general public’s response was mixed and appears to have been divided along political, linguistic, and religious lines. As with Moore, Kidd was treated harshly by some perhaps because of his political stance, as well as his public support for equality amongst all races and religious sects.<sup>45</sup> For example, on March 4, 1830, the *Montreal Gazette* greeted *HCOP* “with pleasure” (Bentley, Appendices, *HCOP* 109) and commended its poet for helping to fill a literary gap. However, the newspaper subverts its flattering review by printing “Q’s” mocking dissection of Kidd’s work, which is laced with caustic insults. This gesture could imply that the Editors appreciated the callous sentiments or wished to solicit controversy to increase sales.<sup>46</sup> In his attack published on June 7, 1830, “Q” belittles the volume’s merit, stating that it is comprised of “pure nonsense,” and he accuses Kidd of plagiarizing Moore and criticizes his lack of original “thought or expression” (112). He then catalogues a series of examples where Kidd all too frequently rhymes “minute” with “in it,” where he presents his readers with awkward combinations such as “‘mountain’ and ‘fountain’ – ‘reposes’ and ‘roses’ and ‘around me’ and ‘bound me’,” and where he creates disyllables out of monosyllabic words: “‘hour and bower,’

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<sup>45</sup> Moore expresses outrage at America’s failure to abolish slavery while it boasted freedom and liberty for all, and Kidd criticizes the unfair treatment of Natives in the Republic.

<sup>46</sup> As will be discussed later, the Editors rejected an editorial letter composed by Kidd on March 17, 1830 because it conflicted with their personal views. Therefore, their decision to include ‘Q’s’ correspondence implies that they condoned his position.

[...] ‘fire’ and ‘power,’ ‘turn,’ ‘world,’ ‘girl,’ ‘lyre’” (111-12). Finally, “Q” rebukes Kidd for his indirect but malicious treatment of the Countess Dalhousie in one of his occasional verses and closes with the disparaging revelation that he has perused a friend’s book and does not feel it necessary to buy his own copy as it is not worth the half a crown for which he would be charged.

Spirited rebuttals to this harsh critique believed to be composed by Kidd appeared on June 15 and 18, 1830 in *The Vindicator*. In his initial response, Kidd ridicules “Q” in his effort to highlight with minute detail each blemish in the volume and consciously to overlook “the beauties of poetry” (June 15, 1830, 114) in an attempt to showcase his wit. Acknowledging that the volume is not immune to error, Kidd argues that the “beauties” far outweigh the imperfections and that most defects are the fault of the printer.

Significantly, the response that appeared on June 18 alludes to prejudice as the reason behind the unfavourable review. Rather than reveal “Q’s” potentially bigoted intentions, Kidd first expresses the need to “protect [the] merit” of the text “from the low, vile, and unfeeling attack” (116) and to determine whether or not the volume’s integrity was impugned as a result of the reviewer’s bias. He calls attention to the unbalanced evaluation of an arrogant critic who is more interested in promoting his own sense of self-importance than in providing the public with an honest and impartial assessment. Furthermore, Kidd reminds “Q” that writers in Canada are forced repeatedly to overcome obstacles when trying to get their works published and that “Q’s” duty then is not to quash their efforts but to encourage their “budding genius” (116). Dismissing accusations of plagiarism and pointing to great works and writers who also use excessive alliteration, Kidd makes a significant revelation: the motives of the *Montreal Gazette* reviewer’s attack lie far beneath the surface and had he, Kidd, expressed an opinion that was “more

congenial to the ‘right divine’ of the powers that *were*” (118), *HCOP* would not have aroused such an unfair and heated response. While the motives behind the editorial attack are never made clear, Kidd’s insistence that the cause of the criticism he has had to endure is more complex than what it appears could be an allusion to general animosity toward the Irish in Lower Canada. The letters that support (*The Vindicator*) and reject (*Montreal Gazette*) Kidd’s work are divided along cultural battle lines, which reflect the rift that existed in Quebec between the Irish and the French.<sup>47</sup>

While reviews that both attack and defend the literary merit of *HCOP* began to appear in Montreal newspapers as early as February 1830, contemporary critical interest in Kidd’s poetry did not emerge until Carl F. Klinck published “Adam Kidd: An Early Canadian Poet” in 1958. Seminal to scholarship on Kidd, Klinck’s article renewed curiosity in the marginalized poet and brought into the spotlight a volume that had elicited minimal attention in the mid-to-late nineteenth and the early-to-mid twentieth centuries. This earlier neglect may well have been intentional and can perhaps be explained by Akenson’s observation that “[h]istorians love winners, but the Protestant Irish [...] were not part of the romantic, victorious, and memorable tradition of Irish nationalism, and are hence easily (although wrongly) consigned the role of reactionary, uninteresting, and, in the context of Irish historiography, forgettable losers” (*Being Had* 96). Considered seminal in the treatment of Kidd’s verse, Klinck’s study focused primarily on establishing and clarifying a series of biographical details in order to dispel myths that had compromised an accurate understanding of Kidd’s work and character.

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<sup>47</sup> For example, Irish and French Canadians struggled “for control of parishes and dioceses in Quebec. [...] During the nineteenth century [, the conflict] had roots in these attitudes [. Both groups saw themselves as “the elect of their faith”] as well as in anxieties about language” (Dobbs 9). For more information on the tensions that existed between French-Canadians and the Irish in Quebec, see Kildare Dobbs’s “Ireland and the Irish Canadians” (1988).

More specifically, Klinck challenged a previously upheld assumption regarding a key incident in Kidd's life, which coloured nineteenth- and early twentieth-century interpretations of *HCOP*. Pivotal was Klinck's discovery that Kidd's memorable and curious reference in his Preface to *HCOP* to "an accidental fall from the cloud-capped brows of a dangerous Mountain" (*HCOP* 4) was meant metaphorically, not literally. Kidd did not fall from a hill in Ulster, Canada, or America. The allusion is not romantic nor is it geographical. Instead, Klinck argues, the figurative injuries sustained by the poet were a by-product of his encounter with Bishop Mountain, which led to a fall from social grace.

Prior to Klinck's critical revelation, Kidd's prefatory comment had puzzled scholars. Historians such as Ray Palmer Baker (1920) and Lawrence M. Lande (1957) took the reference for fact and from it constructed a romantic image of Kidd as at once reckless and heroic.<sup>48</sup> This stigma, later termed "hazardous flamboyance" by Bentley (*Early Long Poems* 293), was rejected by Klinck, who offered in its place "[s]ufficient proof" ("Literary Activity in the Canadas (1812-1841)" 144) to support his own theory. Refuting evidence came in the form of marginalia attributed to Churchman Job Deacon, "a fellow divinity student of Kidd's in Quebec" (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 156), whose notes were found in a copy of *HCOP* dated October 4, 1830.<sup>49</sup> In marginal notes written next to the poet's remark about "pain" caused by "A Mountain Demon" (*HCOP* 28-29: 795-96), Deacon accuses Kidd of sullyng his chances for the Anglican ministry. It was this comment that alerted Klinck to the fact that Kidd suffered emotional distress because he

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<sup>48</sup> According to R. Baker, Kidd's excessive devotion to Byron caused an absentminded stumble over a cliff, a gesture he presents as both admirable and foolish (*A History* 157). An impressed Lande boasts that despite his injuries, Kidd was able to sell 1500 copies of his work (165).

<sup>49</sup> This copy of *HCOP* is housed in the Baldwin Room of the Metropolitan Toronto Reference Library.

fell out of favour with Bishop Mountain, not physical anguish because he tumbled down a mountain. Deacon's justification for why he felt Kidd was to blame can be found in marginal glossing next to an earlier passage in *The Huron Chief* where the speaker declares his love for the Native girl Kemana (18: 476). It is here that Deacon accuses Kidd of a "perverted taste, to be first attracted by a squaw!" (Deacon qtd. in Klinck, "Adam Kidd" 497) and insinuates that it was this "foolish wayward inclination" (497) that led to his expulsion from the candidacy for the ministry (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 159). From this, Klinck determined that Kidd's dismissal was a result of his "weakness for Indian girls" ("Literary Activity in the Canadas (1812-1841)" 144).

Although Klinck's findings shed new light on the motivation behind ambiguous references to "Mountain" made in Kidd's Preface and poem, they simply replace the legend of "hazardous flamboyance" in mountain climbing with an equally detrimental falsehood: Kidd was licentious, he was a religious renegade, and he was a political dissenter. This new legend inspired critics such as Bentley and C.D. Mazoff to reinterpret *The Huron Chief* as a satire on Quebec City's prominent Mountain family, disguised as a romanticized idyll on 'Indian' themes (Mazoff 33). Acknowledging that Kidd's long poem is "ostensibly about the Canadian Indians," Mazoff proposes that it "is really motivated by a personal vendetta against Bishop Mountain" (84). This impertinent claim calls into question the legitimacy of Kidd's sympathy for Natives, which Mazoff argues is nothing more than "a fictional construct" used to camouflage "the poet's deeper intentions of self-legitimation and revenge, through which he had hoped to gain the reader's sympathy for himself" (43). Thus, for Mazoff, Kidd's motives for providing a written memorial to a supposedly dying race were disingenuous. The following stanza is



used by various critics to substantiate similar readings, as well as to support the claim that Kidd was deliberately controversial:

For me, I hate all whining cant,  
 And, doubly so, the Churchman's rant,  
 If even sent from sides of iron, [...]  
 Against the great, immortal BYRON!  
 In all the poisoning of a M\*\*\*T\*\*N,  
 Who nothing loves, but what's his own,  
 Or some *thing* else that wears a gown. (Kidd, *HCOP* 19: 509-11, 513-16)

According to Bentley, this passage underscores Kidd's "aggressive" (Introduction, *HCOP* xv) and "vitriolic hatred for the ecclesiastical" family (xiii). Edwards and Charles R. Steele concur, arguing that each reference to "Mountain" reflects Kidd's "grievances against [the family]" (*DCB* 376) and that these allusions are motivated by a desire to "[vent] personal animosity" (*Canadian Poetry in English* 132). Taking this a step further, Mazoff suggests that "[o]n a psychological level the narrator's dream visions provide him with an antidote to the pain and dejection he has experienced as a result of Bishop Mountain's refusal of preferment" (39). The stanza is also seen to pronounce Kidd's "defiant love" (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xiii) for one of his poetic models, Byron, whose work Bishop Mountain found distasteful.

Bentley's and Steele's use of negatively charged language to describe this undeniably biographical stanza is telling as it helps secure an image of Kidd as juvenile, temperamental, and spiteful. Furthermore, Bentley uses this passage to uphold his theory that Kidd placed himself "on or beyond the peripheries of Lower Canada's official culture, sniping, as it were, at the representatives of its social and sacred centre" (xiv).

But it is important to recall that Kidd may not have invited or instigated this marginalization. His dissenting voice appears to have emerged only after he was ostracized by the ruling authorities of the time. That Kidd's rant reflected his resentment of the Mountain family is not under dispute. However, Kidd's anger appears to be directed more towards Mountain's influential role in the Church of England's decision not to allow Byron to be buried in Westminster than towards Mountain's refusal to award him a position in the ministry. In "Monody, To the Shade of Lord Byron," Kidd reprimands the prideful (*CP* online 9), partial, and hypocritical Dean of Westminster for determining that the controversial Romantic poet was "unfit to lie" (4) in "consecrated earth" (20) due to his supposedly offensive writings and immoral conduct. Because Mountain agreed with this judgment, Kidd chastises him as well for his reactionary and closed-minded position. Impassioned, in a footnote to the poem Kidd challenges the ruling, arguing that Byron's conduct would be deemed both "pure and spotless" when placed against "the literary foibles" and unethical behaviour of his fellow versifiers, not to mention the "pious Dean" (*CP* online). The speaker, however, finds comfort in knowing that while recollections of the "haughty *Dean*" (29) will "rot" (31), "Byron's actions and writing will be incorporated into a literary posterity that encompasses past and future" (Holmgren, *Native Muses* 44). Once again, Kidd's criticism is based on principle and seems designed to call readers' attention to the hypocrisy of a Church that creates a prejudicial hierarchy and unfairly deems, with regard to Kidd's candidacy and perspective, who is suited for ordination and who is worthy of burial at Westminster. It is the blatant disregard of the principles of equality and justice that most angers Kidd.

For Bentley, Kidd's decision to model his work after two radical political figures – "atheistic and libertarian Byron" (*Early Long Poems* 293) and Irish Catholic patriot and

Romantic poet Thomas Moore – is also consistent with his “‘decentring’ tendencies” and highlights his “resistance to the official culture” (Introduction, *HCOP* xiv). Accordingly, it is such tendencies that make him a hinterland poet.<sup>50</sup> Mazoff supports Bentley’s categorization of Kidd as oriented towards the hinterland, stating that Bishop Mountain’s rejection of Kidd’s candidacy for the Anglican ministry was possibly a catalyst for Kidd’s “rejection of Canadian society and his embracing of the hinterland and the Indian way of life” (39).<sup>51</sup> However, several Canadian poets of the nineteenth century draw on Byron’s de-centering works (for example, George Longmore and John Richardson), yet Bentley and Mazoff do not categorize them as distinctly hinterlandish. In fact, Bentley seems particularly set on classifying Irish poets such as Kidd and Crawford as hinterland-oriented, which carries with it the negative image of peripheral individuals who deliberately reject established structures. By aligning these Irish poets specifically with the hinterland orientation, Bentley implies that their ethnic group has a propensity toward instability. The contrary is, however, closer to the truth. Historically, the Irish in Canada were, according to Kildare Dobbs, innately conservative, and they had a “love of order and hierarchy” (“Ireland and the Irish Canadians” 5). But for Bentley, Kidd’s alignment with Moore further underscores his “anti-establishment truculence” (*Early Long Poems* 293), and while Bentley makes much of Kidd’s use of Moore, he does not draw the same

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<sup>50</sup> In *The Gay]Grey Moose*, Bentley conceptualizes Canadian space as being divided into binary categories, which he labels “baseland” and “hinterland.” For Bentley, baseland landscape and literature embody a positive sense of “order,” stability, and “structure” (5). In opposition is the hinterland, which Bentley characterizes as an aesthetic of “openness, process, and change”; it is “unpopulated (‘lonely’) and attractive” (5).

<sup>51</sup> This causal theory supports my own mentioned in the previous paragraph: that Kidd voiced disapproval following his rejection.

conclusions when analyzing Joseph Howe's borrowings from Moore's works, a reading (Bentley's) which is at least oddly inconsistent.<sup>52</sup>

In her biographical entry on Kidd, Mary Lu MacDonald makes a critical observation: "[t]here is no evidence to support [Klinck's] hypothesis" (*DLB* 184) about Kidd's roguish behaviour. Yet contemporary critics, including Bentley (1989), Holmgren (1994), Campbell (1998), Mazoff (1998), Kelly McGuire (2000), and Edwards (2000) continue to draw on Klinck's article and, without providing additional support or evidence, persistently perpetuate the argument that Kidd fell afoul of the Mountains because of his womanizing tendencies, which led to his dismissal from candidacy for the priesthood due to a clash of ethics.<sup>53</sup> But this presumption is based on evidence that is highly subjective in nature. It is important to recall that Job Deacon "was ordained by Bishop Jacob Mountain in 1822 and was rector of Adolphustown from 1825 to 1850" (Klinck, "Adam Kidd" 497). Thus, the compromising charge levelled against Kidd comes from a man whose allegiance was undoubtedly to Mountain, so by no means an impartial witness. Indeed, Deacon's commentary is tainted with bias and racism. Scathing statements such as "your base scurrility" and "inharmonious doggerel" (qtd. in Klinck, "Adam Kidd" 497) make it clear that Deacon detested Kidd and that his accusations were founded on personal objection. Therefore, by relying on Deacon's marginal glossing to support their interpretations of *The Huron Chief*, later twentieth-

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<sup>52</sup> At the outset of *Acadia*, Howe aligns himself with Moore, claiming that he wishes to create a sense of nationhood in his own country that is similar to the Irish nationalism promoted by the patriotic Irish figure with whom he aligns himself.

<sup>53</sup> In the Introduction to *HCOP*, Bentley notes that Kidd's rejection "*seems*...to have had something to do with his fondness for Indian women" (xi, my emphasis). Bentley, however, does not cite a source for this speculation. This can be seen as tantamount to the Englishman Alfred's crowning indictment of Max in *Malcolm's Katie* when he informs Katie that Max has taken a Native wife (Crawford, Part VI, 51-53). Mazoff postulates that references to the speaker's amorous affection for various native women in *The Huron Chief* may have been a method by which to "titillate" Kidd's audience, or it could be proof that the poet was excised from the ministry due to "his weakness for Indian women" (40).

century scholars risk perpetuating one man's prejudice against Natives and the Irish-born Kidd.

Equally problematic, Deacon's charge is based solely on the assumption that the character's fondness for Kemana can be ascribed to Kidd's alleged attraction to Native women. This may not be the case. In a footnote to his long poem, Kidd mentions that he attended a party in the summer of 1826, at "the request of a Huron Queen" (*HCOP* 44). It is possible that this encounter with a Native community was his first and that it may have occurred after Mountain's rejection.<sup>54</sup> Thus, Deacon and later scholars may be drawing an anachronistic parallel. In fact, further evidence to support Deacon's claim that Kidd had a fondness for Native women, or for women more generally, does not exist outside references made in *HCOP*. However, critics remain persistent in their endorsement of Kidd as a womanizer. In MacDonald's words, Kidd's questionable reputation "seems to fit the persona [he] created for himself. Certainly he appears to have loved, poetically, the many young women to whom his lyrics are often dedicated" (*DLB* 184).<sup>55</sup> Herein lies the same quandary Moore faced. Because his speaker was occasionally cast in a licentious role in *Epistles*, and because Moore himself dedicated amorous ballads to various women in this volume, critics presumed that poet and speaker were interchangeable. Even if, in the case of Moore and Kidd, the persona and poet were virtually one and the same, scholars would still be erring in their construction of what that persona is – they are too quick to attach to these men the negative and unflattering qualities their speakers exemplify as opposed to recognizing the multifaceted image these poets portray in their

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<sup>54</sup> In his Introduction to Kidd's poem in *Early Long Poems*, Bentley states that "After his studies towards the priesthood at Quebec in the mid-eighteen twenties, he apparently travelled extensively in Upper Canada and the United States, very likely gathering material for *The Huron Chief, and Other Poems*" (293).

<sup>55</sup> Kidd's volume "contains numerous poems addressed to Clara, Sophia, Mary, Susan and others, suggesting that he may have been what used to be called a 'womanizer'" (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xxxix n.6).

works. Indeed, Kidd includes numerous devotional lyrics and emotionally charged elegies in *HCOP* that reveal a profoundly spiritual nature.<sup>56</sup> If his critics readily use allusions to debauchery, as well as his dedications to various women, to justify their claims that the poet himself was licentious and, thus, unsuitable for the priesthood, they do so repeatedly only by overlooking references in *HCOP* that display an image of the speaker as spiritual and humbled by the grace of God. Thus, scholars continue to misconstrue Kidd's intentions, undermine his achievement, and malign his character as Irish.

Disconcertingly, when Kidd scholars refer to Klinck's proposition, they repeatedly fail to recognize or inform readers of the subjective and discreditable source of that information.<sup>57</sup> The failure to investigate Klinck's primary material and challenge his understanding of it has led scholars further away from the truth: that the very information on which so much of the assessment of Kidd and his work has been predicated is prejudicial. To date, no proof has been provided to corroborate the claim that Kidd was dismissed from the priesthood for salacious reasons. It is at least equally likely that Kidd either voluntarily withdrew his candidacy or was ejected from the ministry because of his public allegiance to Catholic Emancipation, his expressed frustration at the hypocrisy of the Church, and his distress over the Mountains' agreement that Lord Byron should be denied burial at Westminster.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> They include, "Paraphrase of the 29<sup>th</sup> Psalm," "To the Memory of Henry R. Symes," "Sacred Melody," "Stanzas: To the Memory of a Friend," "Elegy: On the Death of Captain John McMichael," and "Stanzas: Addressed to the Hon. and Right Reverend Charles James Stewart, Lord Bishop of Quebec."

<sup>57</sup> With the exception of Bentley and MacDonald, all other critics refer to Klinck's conclusion but do not allude to the source of that information, the biased Job Deacon. Although Bentley and MacDonald do mention Deacon, they do not question his credibility.

<sup>58</sup> Holmgren advances a similar argument in "United Irishmen in Canada." She notes that in his long poem Kidd "rejects arbitrary sectarian divisions as unnatural" (50). She then points to a letter published in *The Vindicator* on January 20, 1829, where Kidd expresses a similar position: "'Man is naturally kind to his

The unflattering image of Kidd as a controversial, debauched, dissenting misfit with “a personal grudge against the presiding religio-political order in Lower Canada” (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xii) is arguably little more than a critical misconception, or misprisioning. Indeed, since *HCOP* first appeared, scholars have collectively crafted a scandalous persona of the poet by repeatedly leveling allegations against him that are based primarily on conjecture.<sup>59</sup> Common to all major and minor studies conducted on Kidd is the apparent need to sustain the legend of the “radical” or “Paddy” Irishman. This is accomplished at the outset of most investigations via a rehearsal of Kidd’s professional failures and the various public humiliations that erupted immediately following the publication of *HCOP*. References to Kidd’s supposed offence against Bishop Mountain, his licentious inclinations, and the “Buchanan Affair” (discussed below) colour the dramatic openings of most studies of the poet. Consequently, the formulation and propagation of these myths distract critics from contributing more objective analyses of Kidd’s work, particularly with respect to his shorter verses. This constitutes a serious oversight because Kidd’s lyrics contribute significant commentary on the Irish immigrant experience in Canada.<sup>60</sup>

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fellow creature, unless poisoned by bigotry and ignorance. The Indian ... contends not for superiority over the brothers of his tribe – every man stands on an equal footing, until he has signalised himself by some noble achievement, which entitles him to distinction; and then, as a matter of right, he becomes the elevated of his nation. ... [T]ell me if you do not feel ashamed of your imaginary superiority, and of your right to disqualify your fellow-subjects, on account of their religious profession” (Kidd qtd. in Holmgren 50). From this, Holmgren postulates that “Kidd’s attitude may help explain his failed career as a minister in a specific creed, and why he opposed any incident where he believed that merit was unjustly denied, as when the Dean of Westminster refused to allow Byron to be buried in Westminster Abbey” (50).

<sup>59</sup> Despite my repeated and forceful disagreements with Kidd’s critics, I want here to acknowledge the value of their contributions and to recognize that the construction of such a persona may even have been allowed because it helped draw attention to Kidd’s poetry.

<sup>60</sup> Of the forty “other” poems included in *HCOP*, Holmgren discusses nine in her dissertation and merely glosses their potential significance. Revised for publication as “United Irishmen in Canada,” Holmgren’s analysis of these works received less attention. Holmgren is particularly interested in Kidd’s Derry poems that champion Irish historical figures. These lyrics centre on how posterity and memory are preserved best through the oral tradition of song or through recorded verse as opposed to the erection of monuments that

As the leading Canadian academic on Kidd, Bentley has played a large role in upholding, shaping, and disseminating a portrait of the poet that underscores his alleged propensity toward being radical, immoral, and subversive. Consequently, the proverbial torch was passed to scholars such as Mazoff and Holmgren who repeat Bentley's (mis)construction.<sup>61</sup> Opening each of his studies of *The Huron Chief* with the statement that Kidd was "the most *colourful* and *controversial* poet of pre-Confederation Canada" (*Mimic Fires* 154; *Early Long Poems* 293; Introduction, *HCOP* xi; my emphasis), Bentley seems set on maintaining the uncomplimentary legend of Kidd's 'notorious' reputation. When "Kidd's seemingly *irrepressible* reputation for *hazardous* flamboyance" (Introduction, *HCOP* xi; my emphasis) is temporarily challenged in Klinck's article (1958), Bentley sounds disappointed: he states that Klinck's discovery "tarnished" Kidd's infamous reputation (*Mimic Fires* 154; *Early Long Poems* 293), implying that Klinck somehow did Kidd a disservice by lifting from him the stigma of a clumsy, dim, eccentric, and possibly drunken romantic who had a great and literal fall. Additionally, Bentley champions MacDonald for reviving Kidd's reckless and contentious image in the *Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature* (1983), following her discovery of records of a "public thrashing" Kidd endured in the streets of Montreal in retaliation for a footnote he included in *The Huron Chief* where he chastises James

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are subject to decay and vandalism. In Holmgren's studies, very little mention is made of how the New World is perceived by Kidd's poet-speakers (with the exception of her discussion of "Cathleen" and "Apostrophe").

<sup>61</sup> Although Holmgren has emerged as a new voice in discussions of Kidd, her treatment of the poet's background departs only marginally from Bentley's. For example, in her dissertation, the opening of the discussion of Kidd is nearly identical to Bentley's: in the order she catalogues the information, in the nature of the content selected, and in the language used to express biographical details. Stating that Kidd was "colourful and controversial" (*Native Muses* 28), Holmgren promptly lists his failures: he was "an unsuitable candidate for the Anglican ministry in Quebec" (28), he resisted "settl[ing] quietly into the English-speaking, Anglican-dominated social milieu in early 19th century Montreal" (28-29), he waged war with the Mountains with the use of his pen (29), and he was responsible for the "public thrashing" he received by Buchanan's followers because he was intentionally anti-establishment (29).



Buchanan (*HCOP* 31: 876n.). In her entry on Kidd, MacDonald opens with the remark that the poet “has received more attention from modern critics than the quality of his work merits” (*The Oxford Companion* 406). She then claims that it was not Kidd’s work but rather his “flamboyant personality, and the tragedy of his early death” that really made “him a sympathetic subject for study” (406). Therefore, the contemporary reader’s (most likely student’s) introduction to Kidd suggests that the poet had little talent and was interesting only because of his unusual personality and his untimely demise.

Bentley repeatedly attempts to solidify his tendentious representation of Kidd through a rehearsal of the details surrounding the poet’s premature death. The facts are as follows. According to the *Canadian Freeman*, Kidd became ill while in Kingston and was confined there for months until he was advised by his physicians to embark on a sea voyage, which would restore his declining health. He made it only as far as Quebec before succumbing to tuberculosis on July 5, 1831 (July 21, 1831). An entry in the Chapel of the Holy Trinity’s records states that Kidd’s father, Alexander Kidd, and Hugh McGuire were, apart from the minister, E.W. Sewell, the only people in attendance. The parish record does not recognize Kidd’s Irish heritage nor does it mention his vocation as a poet. Instead, it claims that he was ““of the city of Quebec, formerly a Teacher”” (qtd. in Klinck, “Adam Kidd” 506). From this, Bentley states in several studies that Kidd was “virtually unmourned,” “peremptorily noticed,” and either “scarcely” or “hardly missed” (“From the Hollow” 235; *Mimic Fires* 155; Introduction, *HCOP* xii). Not only is Bentley quick to minimize the public impact of Kidd’s death, he also appears to dismiss or deliberately omit information that could undermine the diminishing portrait he wishes to advance. In each case, Bentley qualifies his dismissive language with the observation that it was only in newspapers “whose sympathies were Irish or radical or both” that Kidd’s

death inspired sympathy (*Mimic Fires* 155). The logic here is fallacious. To argue that Kidd's death was insignificant because mainstream newspapers did not announce it privileges one biased media source over another and makes an unsupportable generalization: that because many newspapers did not dedicate space to Kidd's death, his life and poetry were considered of little value. What Bentley fails to recognize, and what his discovery perhaps unintentionally confirms, is that the absence of a death notice in conservative newspapers does not necessarily imply that Kidd was "peremptorily noticed." Instead, the omission could as well have been intentional and thus reflective of a prejudice against the Irish that was very much alive in Canada. Indeed, the lack of representation of Kidd's prose and verse outside pro-Irish newspapers was likely less a product of his supposed controversial behaviour or lack of poetic merit and more a result of anti-Irish bias.<sup>62</sup>

Bentley's propensity to amend the list of newspapers he deems "radical" and pro-Irish is likewise problematic. In a footnote in *HCOP* (1987), Bentley points to the *Canadian Freeman*, *Le Canadien*, *The Irish Vindicator* and *Canadian Advertiser*, and *The Kingston Chronicle* as liberally inclined newspapers that printed obituaries for Kidd (Introduction xxxix n.7). Yet one year later in "From the Hollow, Blasted Pine" (1988), Bentley mentions only the *Canadian Freeman* (235), and then in *Mimic Fires* (1994) he reinserts *Le Canadien* into this revised list (155) but fails to mention the *Kingston Chronicle*, which includes a most heartfelt and revealing commemorative poem in its August 20, 1831 edition. While *Le Canadien* (July 6, 1831) simply mentions that "Ce jeune Monsieur s'était fait une certaine réputation comme Poète" (This young gentleman had made a reputation for himself as a poet), the *Canadian Freeman* expresses a more

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<sup>62</sup> See Donald Power's "The Paddy Image: The Stereotype of the Irishman in Cartoon and Comic" (1988).

detailed and genuine “regret” upon hearing of Kidd’s passing (July 21, 1831). Unlike the parish records, the *Canadian Freeman* demonstrates a familiarity with Kidd, acknowledging that he was a poet originally from Ireland. Favourable in its depiction, the newspaper maintains at the outset that Kidd came from “a very respectable family” (July 21, 1831). While twentieth-century scholars repeatedly draw on such newspaper reviews and notices to assemble a comprehensive image of Kidd’s character, none includes this positive description. And although Bentley alludes to the *Canadian Freeman* in each of his studies, he glosses over the importance of its contents and fails to acknowledge that its resoundingly warm sentiments complicate his general conclusion: that Kidd’s death was of little consequence.

If the *Canadian Freeman*’s assessment of Kidd’s reputable familial background is accurate, it could indicate a number of things. It could support the supposition that Kidd’s family was well established in Ireland and that they departed voluntarily in order to maximize capital that would otherwise have dwindled rapidly in an economically unstable Ireland. It could also confirm that Kidd was able to support his candidacy for the priesthood with money secured by his family in the Old World. However, given that Kidd claims that his family lacked adequate connections to assure him a position in the Anglican ministry in Ireland, it could also corroborate the argument that Kidd and his father, with some capital from home, were able to improve their station and establish a position of respectability once in the New World. Notably, although the pro-Irish newspaper *Canadian Freeman* recognized the reputable status of the Kidd family, standard media sources did not. This oversight underscores that mainstream society may well have rejected father and son and made it difficult for them to adapt and prosper despite their recognized social station in the Irish community.

The space allocated in *Le Canadien* and the *Kingston Chronicle* to memorialize Kidd is markedly different. Why, then, does the most current version of Bentley's study of Kidd prioritize a newspaper that tersely addresses Kidd's passing as opposed to one that refers to his death in two separate editions and openly praises his public role by including a poem that says as much? Moreover, why does Bentley choose to direct readers to an ambivalent source rather than this flattering one? More curious still is Bentley's decision to dismiss the significance of the reprinted poem that memorializes Kidd, as well as the cordial preface that precedes it, that appeared in the *Kingston Chronicle* on August 20, 1831. No substantive difference exists between the initial announcement of Kidd's death in the *Kingston Chronicle* on July 16, 1831, and that which appeared in *Le Canadien*. The *Chronicle*, too, simply states the location and date of Kidd's death, as well as his age and that he was the author of *HCOP*. This redundancy could explain why Bentley did not feel it necessary to allude to both newspaper entries in later discussions of Kidd's biography. What might be seen as dubious, though, is Bentley's decision merely to acknowledge the eulogizing poem in a footnote to his *HCOP* (Introduction xl n.7). This decision is questionable because the poem provides evidence that Kidd's death made a significant public impression. Thus, while the broader Canadian community's non-Irish members marked Kidd's death with little regret, Kidd's fellow Irish men and women grieved the loss and celebrated his life and talent.

Originally published in the *Irish Shield* (Philadelphia), "On the Death of Adam Kidd, Esq. author of the 'Huron Chief,' and other Poems" was composed by fellow countryman "Carolan" and consists of "very feeling and appropriate lines to [Kidd's] memory" (*Kingston Chronicle*, August 20, 1831). The *Kingston Chronicle* must have resolved to reprint the commemorative verse because its editors recognized that the sense

of loss felt by Irish-Americans would be shared by its Irish-Canadian readership. The reasons given by the *Kingston Chronicle* for the relevance of the poem are twofold. It felt that readers on either side of the border would read the poem “with sympathy” because their “minds unite with attachment to their own or their father’s land, a just pride in the abilities and energies which are so frequently displayed by its sons in various and distant countries” (August 20, 1831). Thus, the poem accentuates the satisfaction Irish men and women would feel upon receiving confirmation that it was possible to achieve success as an immigrant in the New World. Also, the editors argue that the poem assures “Parent Kingdoms ... that the names – the genius and the efforts of those who are destined to close their careers far from their shores, are not allowed to sink into oblivion; but that there is a uniting and unextinguishable [sic] spirit which still binds together the hearts of their offspring, more particularly in the New World” (*Kingston Chronicle*, August 20, 1831).

By composing these lines in honour of Kidd, “Carolan” hopes to secure his fellow Irishman’s posterity and defend his value as a poet (see Appendix C). Addressed to the Hurons whose threatened customs and legacy were championed by “The minstrel druid” (3), the poem calls on this ethnic group to weep for Kidd because in death he will no longer “sweep / The cord of sorrow [...] / That sigh’d thy sorrows [...] / Which often o’er thy wrongs has wept” (3-4, 10, 12). Even though he was not one of them, this “youthful child of song” (8) loved the Hurons like kin and his empathy stirred in him the desire to reveal their woes to the public (13-16). The speaker expresses concern that with Kidd’s passing, no one “will sing the hunter’s love, / Or toll the Huron warriors’ fame” (17-18). The poem then becomes political in its commentary on those “tyrants” who “from [Ireland’s] idol earth” (27) forced one of its children “To wander o’er the world,

exiled” (28). This description conjures the image of Ireland as a prelapsarian holy land. England is cast as an evil entity that exploited Erin’s innocent people and plundered its natural resources until it stood barren, no longer able to support its growing population. Consequently, native-born sons such as Kidd were ejected from this lost paradise only to roam homeless in a fallen world. Yet, despite oppressive England’s efforts to impede the success of the Irish by expelling them from their one-time Edenic homeland, men such as Kidd find temporary respite in Canada’s earthly paradise. The fact that Kidd’s “name shall live / Emblazon’d on her storied roll” (29-30) stands as a testament to the perseverance of the Irish who, despite obstacles, are able to adapt in the New World and embrace its promise of a brighter future than that offered in a now postlapsarian Ireland. Not only will the memory of “lov’d Kidd” (48) be recorded by Ireland’s “sorrowing sons” (31), but Huron women will “Weep o’er their worship’d minstrel’s bier” (36). Thus, the gravity of the loss is cross-cultural, and both the Irish of the Old and New Worlds and Natives in the New will express in song the reverberating effect Kidd had on their respective communities. The oral tradition and written documents will, in turn, work collectively to memorialize the lost minstrel whose memory will now be preserved on both sides of the Atlantic.

In *The Gay]Grey Moose*, Bentley makes a germane observation: Kidd was “excluded from the privileges assumed or sought by [his] fellow poets in early Canada” because he was “a transplanted Irishman” (129). Although Bentley suggests that Kidd’s segregation was either “the cause *or* the result of [...] *radical tendencies*” (129 my emphasis), the stress he and scholars such as Edwards, Holmgren, and MacDonald place on the “Buchanan Affair,” along with their one-sided interpretation of the incident, deliberately promotes the unflattering, and prejudicial, possibility. The incident in

question occurred as a result of a footnote Kidd included to line 876 of *The Huron Chief*: “the proud ST. LAWRENCE — which the impudent BUCHANAN would sell for a bag of *flax-seed* — still maintains its purity [...] It is a great pity [Buchanan] was not appointed one of the Commissioners for settling the *boundary line*; and then the Americans might have got all the ST. LAWRENCE to themselves. We have already experienced the effects of such wisdom as MR. BUCHANAN’S. He had better commence brewing, on a stream separate from the majestic ST. LAWRENCE” (*HCOP* 31).<sup>63</sup> In this notation, Kidd rebukes the British consul in New York, James Buchanan, for his pro-American policy that would allow wheat destined for Britain to be shipped through Canada via the St. Lawrence, thus polluting its pure waters. The plan was that this wheat would “be classified as Canadian and, hence, [Americans would be able] to take advantage of the preferential treatment extended to Canada under the Corn Laws” (*Mimic Fires* 9). In retaliation for the reference to their father, Robert Stewart Buchanan (1806-1893) and Alexander Carlisle Buchanan (1808-1868), along with a friend, attacked Kidd on a Montreal street, subjecting him to a public thrashing. Following the altercation, numerous accounts of the event were published in *The Vindicator* and the *Montreal Gazette*, with embellishments. Once again, the underlying conflict between the French and the Irish of Quebec with respect to Catholic dioceses and church ownership is highlighted in the press.

In his appendices to *HCOP*, Bentley includes six letters that contain various conflicting versions of the street brawl involving Kidd. The first letter, published in *The Vindicator* on March 12, 1830, recounts the mid-day attack on Kidd by Buchanan’s sons and Mr. James Hayes, who, the anonymous writer insists, struck the first blow. The

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<sup>63</sup> The text following the ellipsis is a footnote within a footnote.

writer champions Kidd's decision to defend himself against his attackers, describing his efforts as "heroic" (*HCOP* 120). Highlighted is the vulnerability Kidd felt following the publication of *HCOP*, as he is said to have carried a stick to guard against potential abuse as a consequence of the courageous reprimand he levelled "against the omnipotence of Consular power" (120). This account, however, is immediately challenged in a letter printed in the *Montreal Gazette* on March 15, 1830, by Mr. James Hayes, who adamantly denies his involvement. Postulating that it was not the Editor of *The Vindicator* who wrote the original correspondence but rather Kidd (120), Hayes accuses the poet of possessing an "excited imagination," of basing the details of his account on "pure fiction," and of using the event as an opportunity to promote his status as poet in the press (121). To add insult to injury, Hayes states that Kidd's "nose [was] pulled" and that he "received severe chastisement" (121). The original version of events is then corroborated in a second anonymous letter printed in *The Vindicator* on March 16, 1830. This sympathetic account reiterates the dire position into which Kidd was placed as a consequence of being outnumbered by his "cowardly" assaulters and states "emphatically" that the narrative printed earlier in *The Vindicator* matches his own recollections (122). Promising to provide a "correct version of the scandalous attack," the unnamed eyewitness proceeds to discredit Hayes's "contradicting facts" (121). More importantly, the writer undermines Hayes's credibility when he avows that Kidd was in fact not the ghost writer. He defends his position by calling into question the coincidental correlation Hayes sets up: that is, that because there are poetical allusions in the original recounting of events, it must have been written by Kidd. Hayes is then ridiculed for his arrogant belief that he is "able to discover the style and manner of a writer" and thus come to the conclusion that the original editorial was indeed written by Kidd (121).



Further proof that Kidd may not have been responsible for earlier editorials sent to *The Vindicator* comes from the poet himself. On March 17, 1830, Kidd composed a letter that proclaimed he was “enter[ing] the arena of disputation” for the *first* time to offer with “reluctance” his version of the controversial incident (124). Yet, the details of his description echo those published earlier in *The Vindicator*, which could explain why many critics have surmised Kidd wrote all of them. For example, Kidd accuses Hayes of stealing the stick he carried with him in order to defend himself against “those who have neither the courage, nor the talent, to attack [him] on lawful grounds” (125). However, Kidd’s statement that the Buchanan family should “come forward, and vindicate [James Buchanan’s] improprieties — the PRESS is as open to them as it is to me” (125) is of most significance. Kidd’s assurance that freedom of expression and an unbiased press were alive and well in Canada proved to be false.

Originally intended for the *Montreal Gazette*, Kidd’s letter that pronounces liberty of expression in all Canadian newspapers was rejected for publication by its Editor, A.H. Armour. Consequently, the poet was forced to solicit the pro-Irish paper *The Vindicator* to bring his defence to the public’s attention in their March 19<sup>th</sup> issue. The grounds for refusal are transparently prejudicial. Although he recognized that a platform should be given to individuals who wished to respond to material printed in the *Montreal Gazette* that may have affronted or compromised their character, Armour nevertheless denies Kidd the opportunity he affords all others (124). He does so because of personal reservations that are not specified. Kidd is then instructed to seek publication in another newspaper that may see the situation differently (124). Offended by the double standard upheld by Armour who willingly published Hayes’s “virulent attack” but “then refuse[d] Kidd] an opportunity of defence,” Kidd has *The Vindicator* include in its publication

Armour's letter "in order that the public may see with what *generous* and *manly* spirit His Majesty's *Montreal Gazette* is conducted!!!" (124). In other words, Kidd was aware that the hypocritical slight was a product of intolerance against his socio-political views, and he refused to ignore such bigotry. Kidd's later suggestion that the harsh criticism *HCOP* received in the *Montreal Gazette* on June 7, 1830 was deep-seated and chauvinistic in its motivation (*The Vindicator*, June 18, 1830, 118) may be an allusion to the unbalanced and unfair treatment he received in the same newspaper regarding the "Buchanan Affair." Indeed, the contradictory rehearsal of events mirrors the tension found in reviews of *HCOP* printed in *The Vindicator* and the *Montreal Gazette*. While the former expressed enthusiasm for Kidd's work and disapproval of the unsolicited chastisement, the latter welcomed harsh and uncomplimentary assessments of the volume and privileged accounts that justified the physical attack on Kidd.

Although the facts of Kidd's public thrashing remain unsubstantiated, twentieth-century critics such as Bentley and Edwards continue to privilege Hayes's version of events and disregard Kidd's assertion that he did not submit anonymous letters for publication. Yet additional evidence to substantiate Hayes's account is not provided in their respective discussions. Perhaps Kidd's own declaration (March 17, 1830), as well as the earlier letter (March 16, 1830) that professes Kidd did not write the original report, is not enough to discount Hayes's theory. It is nonetheless important to interrogate contemporary critics' assumption that letters that both support and flatter Kidd could only have been written by the poet himself. Could it not be that like-minded individuals felt inspired to defend the poet, or that fellow Irish-Canadians wished to speak out against the dominant French voice in Quebec? Equally dubious is Bentley's decision to attach an adverb to his description of the event that is unfavourable in its connotation. In Bentley's

words, “Kidd was cudgelled [sic] on the streets of Montreal for *cheekily* disagreeing with a scheme, proposed by the British consul in New York” (*Mimic Fires* 9 my emphasis). This word choice is problematic for two reasons. Firstly, “cheekily” creates a mischievous as opposed to a respectable image of the poet’s action, which shows that Bentley endorses Hayes’s account and not the one repeated in *The Vindicator*. Secondly, the intention of Kidd’s footnote was not to appear ‘cheeky’; rather, the comment stemmed from Kidd’s commitment to Canada’s integrity, which he had in the forefront of his mind. Unlike Buchanan’s “swaggering” loyalty (March 19, 1830, 125), Kidd vows that his allegiance to his new home is unwavering, even though he does not receive financial compensation for his service to the Dominion: “my cause is the cause of CANADA, and an endeavour to protect her rights against the speculating intrigues of Pseudo-Loyalists. This is my object, although I have never tasted one crumb of Government bread nor can all the fire and mock spirit carried from Nassau Street, New York, force me from my purposes” (125). Whether or not Kidd invited the controversy, as Bentley and Edwards suggest he did, why infer from this one disputatious and disputed event that Kidd was reckless and reactionary throughout his life?

By relying on humiliating editorial reports to support their claim that Kidd was socially delinquent and had a less-than-admirable reputation, critics transpose nineteenth-century stereotypes into twentieth-century analyses. This is because, according to Donald Power, until about 1900, Canadian newspapers actively promoted “anger and resentment against the Irish” (48) by depicting them as “anarchist[s]” who threatened the established “social order” (53). For this reason alone, the decision to cast Kidd as a marginal character who intentionally “placed himself in opposition to the high centres of secular and ecclesiastical authority in Lower Canada and the United States” (Bentley, *Mimic*

*Fires* 154) should be contested. Furthermore, by treating Hayes's reports as reliable, Bentley and Edwards, along with those critics who rehearse their findings, fail to recognize that "[t]here was commonly more violence in the newspaper reports [...] that followed than in the events themselves" (Dobbs, "Ireland and the Irish Canadians" 5). Such critics also overlook the fact that newspapers often fabricated events in order to ensure a large readership and to promote their politically biased views. Therefore, the motivation behind the submission and publication of these letters should be examined with suspicion. In this case, further telling are the comparisons that can be drawn between Kidd and Moore. Both poets were rebuked for expressing anti-American sentiments in their verse, they were publicly reprimanded for comments deemed offensive by their peers (Moore, recall, challenged his adversary to a duel and Kidd was battered in the street), and accounts of these events were increasingly exaggerated in the media, with both men becoming the target of mockery.<sup>64</sup> More important, just as Moore's duel with Jeffrey overshadowed and coloured critics' analysis of his character and *Epistles*, so too does the "Buchanan Affair" preoccupy Bentley, Edwards, Holmgren, and MacDonald in their prejudicial assessments of Kidd's temperament, social position, death, and poetry.

~III~

**THE PREFACE TO *THE HURON CHIEF AND OTHER POEMS***

To solidify Kidd's questionable reputation and to further enhance the 'legend' of the 'elusive' poet, which "has indeed its charm and uses" (Klinck, "Adam Kidd" 495), critics

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<sup>64</sup> Significantly, in his response to accusations that he plagiarized Moore, Kidd acknowledged, in a letter to *The Vindicator* on June 18, 1830, that "there is a strong resemblance between them as *men*, for they each run a most excellent chance of being damned for their *politics*" (Bentley, Appendices, *HCOP* 118).

such as Bentley, Klinck, and MacDonald point to a reference made in his Preface. At its close, Kidd claims he sold “fifteen hundred copies” (*HCOP* 4) of *HCOP* prior to its publication at the office of the *Herald and New Gazette* on January 25, 1830 and to its distribution in mid-February by canvassing door-to-door for subscriptions.<sup>65</sup> In their respective studies, these critics somewhat pettily challenge the validity of Kidd’s declaration. Bentley would have us believe that Kidd toured Lower Canada “foisting *The Huron Chief* on anyone in Québec who would pay attention and half a crown” (“From the Hollow” 235 my emphasis). The legitimacy of Kidd’s statement is also suspected because, as MacDonald observes, the number of subscriptions “is more than double the recorded sales of any other pre-Confederation literary work” (*The Oxford Companion* 406; *Literature and Society* 73) and would have yielded Kidd “nearly £190, and again as much on delivery” (Klinck, “Literary Activity in the Canadas (1812-1841)” 144). True, Kidd’s earnings seem excessive for the time and the number of issues sold is untypical, but scholars commit a logical fallacy in lieu of evidence to confirm that Kidd exaggerated his figures. They imply that because sales had never exceeded 600 copies (MacDonald, *Literature and Society* 73), Kidd must have been dishonest. Additionally, Bentley argues that because the final version of *HCOP* reduced the number of engravings from three to one and because advertisements appeared repeatedly in *The Vindicator* in June and September, 1829, there was a “possible shortfall in subscribers” (Introduction, *HCOP* xxxii). Once again, this implies that Kidd lied about sales figures. This rationale, however, disregards “Q’s” personal account in the *Montreal Gazette* (June 1, 1830) of

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<sup>65</sup> The sale of *HCOP* was so encouraging, Kidd planned to collect further information on Natives and to revisit the topic in a projected volume entitled “The Tales and Traditions of the Indians.” This volume was never printed due to Kidd’s early death (*Early Long Poems* 293).

Kidd's "voluminous scroll," which contained numerous pages filled with "respectable" signatures (Appendices, *HCOP* 110).

Kidd's eager and intimate involvement in soliciting advertisements for and securing publication of his forthcoming *HCOP* has been ridiculed by several scholars. What they fail to consider is Kidd's possible industriousness and entrepreneurship. As testament to his determination, diligence, and ambition, Kidd travelled extensively throughout Upper Canada, selling subscriptions for *HCOP* as early as the fall of 1828 (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xxxii). Although it was common for authors to pay for the printing of their works with money earned from advanced subscriptions (MacDonald, *Literature and Society* ii), Kidd was particularly earnest and active in his attempt to promote *HCOP*. For instance, "he contacted the newspaper office in each community" he visited (MacDonald, *DLB* 185). The poet's efforts were rewarded as "editors obligingly mentioned him in positive terms" (185) when advertisements and excerpts from his forthcoming volume appeared as early as December 30, 1828, in the *Quebec Mercury*. Similar announcements ran in *The Vindicator* between June 2 and October 6, 1829, as well as in the *Brockville Gazette and General Advertiser* (March 12, 1830) and the *Montreal Gazette* (June 7, 1830) (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xxxi-xxxii). If it is true that Kidd did secure 1500 subscriptions – and there is no compelling reason to suggest he did not – then the public appears to have supported the poet's endeavours noticeably. Given that "the number of readers [...] considerably exceeded the circulation figures [because...] there was probably more than one reader per household [and...] people borrowed their publications rather than subscribing for their own copy" (MacDonald, *Literature and Society* 75), Kidd's sales technique would have secured an impressively

far-reaching readership that likely included “Upper and Lower Canada and the United States” (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xxxiv).

The degree to which Kidd promoted his work suggests that the message he had to convey was of the utmost importance and that he was concerned it could be met with resistance. In his Preface, Kidd anticipates such rejection. Explicit is his expectation that there will be “consequences” for having composed the volume, which “may prove [...] serious before the ordeal of Criticism” (*HCOP* 3). Additionally, Kidd was convinced *HCOP* would elicit displeasure and provoke “the censure of many” (3). Indeed, *The Vindicator*’s initial review of the volume on February 26, 1830, confirms Kidd’s apprehension, as it states that the public could be both “critisizing [sic] and ungracious” (Appendices, *HCOP* 109). When compared to prefaces that accompanied long poems by admired and respected poets Thomas Cary (1789) and Oliver Goldsmith (1825; rev. 1834), Kidd’s preoccupations are notably different. While both Cary and Goldsmith briefly state their desire for public acceptance, their tone is confident, and they do not dwell on the possibility of poor reception of their work. Kidd is self-effacing. This could indicate self-conscious awareness that as an Irishman, he was at a significant disadvantage and would have to work that much harder to convince the public of his poetic merit. At the outset of his Preface, Kidd professes inferiority to poetic models Byron and Moore and betrays anxiety about his abilities as a poet. Alluding self-consciously to errors that appear throughout his volume, Kidd attempts to justify their presence. Such errors, he argues, are inevitable given the poem’s length and the conditions under which it was composed. By drawing readers’ attention to the compromised construction of the volume, Kidd highlights its improvisational qualities. His is not a pre-fabricated and imitative response to his surroundings, nor is it provoked

by “emotions recollected in tranquility” (Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads* 151). His thoughts and experiences are unique and intimate; their translation onto “mem’ry’s page” (Kidd, *HCOP* 25: 676) is immediate, as were Byron’s in *Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*.<sup>66</sup> This distinction, along with the fact that the “Indian warriors to whom [his long poem had] been communicated” (4) were impressed, functions “to validate the ‘literariness’ of [his] work” (McGuire 38), its authenticity, and generally to justify Kidd’s claim that his volume should be placed among those publications of the “highest polish” (*HCOP* 3).

Because he occupied a position on the fringe of Canadian society, Kidd was conscious that he and his work risked being misunderstood and misrepresented. It was, therefore, critical that he make his thesis explicit in a preface. For W.H. Herendeen, prefatory material “begins the process of defining the form and interest of the work, implicitly by identifying its readers and their relationship to the text and explicitly, as the author states the form and intention of the work and suggests its level of seriousness” (41). By including a preface, an epigram by James Macpherson, a dedication to Moore,<sup>67</sup> and copious footnotes in his volume, Kidd provides readers with a strong and internally consistent authorial voice that guides them in their reading of *HCOP*. In his Preface, Kidd gives the motivation for composing his long poem: “The innocent, and unassuming, friendly treatment that I experienced among the Indians, together with the melancholy recital of the deep wrongs which they received from those calling themselves ‘Christians,’ induced me to undertake this dramatic poem” (*HCOP* 3). In Mazoff’s view, Kidd’s purpose was “to exonerate the Indians from the taint of savagery and to draw

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<sup>66</sup> A sense of immediacy and proximal involvement in both the physical and the social landscape of Newfoundland is similarly stressed in MacConmara’s poems. In both cases, the emphasis on direct experience underscores a willingness to embrace a new life and culture.

<sup>67</sup> “To Thomas Moore, the Most Popular, Most Powerful, and Most Patriotic Poet of the Nineteenth Century, whose Magic Numbers have Vibrated to the Hearts of Nations, these Poems are Dedicated, by his Most Ardent Admirer, Adam Kidd.”



attention to their abuse, particularly at the hands of the Americans” (38). Through the “rhetoric of blame,” Kidd then appeals to his readers’ emotions (39). Mazoff elaborates: “because [Kidd] could reach out to and succour the savage, [he] is a ‘real’ Christian. The reader, of course, if he is a ‘real’ Christian himself, will want to readily identify with and approve of both the narrator’s actions and his censure of those wolves in sheep’s clothing who have taken advantage of the poor unfortunates” (39). Kidd makes it abundantly clear that there is a dire need to rehabilitate and resuscitate Native culture by preserving its memory on the written page. This was essential because “the remaining Nations [...] will scarcely leave a memorial to perpetuate their names, as the once mighty rulers of the vast American regions” (*HCOP* 3). While Cary and Goldsmith see their work as merely “little” ventures (Bentley, *Early Long Poems* 13; 199), Kidd foregoes the trope of humility. Instead, he emphasizes that his project is of great relevance, not because it is inspired by poetic genius but because it is an authentic record of the erasure of Native culture – something to which he could relate his own experience as an Irishman. As with Kidd’s Celtic culture, the Hurons and their traditions were under threat of imminent extinction. As an immigrant, Kidd was intensely aware that Irish traditions and customs could be erased not only because of Britain’s oppressive influence and dominance but also because of Diaspora.

Equally paramount was the need to create an authoritative, credible, and likeable authorial persona so that Kidd’s voice would be heard. According to Chaim Pearlman, the success of an argument is dependent on an audience’s confidence that the writer has the “qualifications for speaking on his subject” and that he is “skilful in its presentation”; otherwise, he would “appear ridiculous” (52). For this reason, Kidd begins *HCOP* with a preface that “appeal[s] to personal experience” and employs a “tone of sympathy, both

part of the rhetoric of honesty that [...would] authenticate his poem and, by extension, himself” (Mazoff 39). For example, Kidd informs his readers that he witnessed the life and customs of the Hurons firsthand, underscoring the authenticity of his impressions.<sup>68</sup> He also declares that the threat of censure is of “no consideration, since [he] can fairly and honestly plead the *correctness* of [his] observations” (*HCOP* 3). This adamant statement reiterates the reliability and accuracy of his comments. By referring to influential travel narratives by James Buchanan, Alexander Henry, and Alexander Mackenzie, and alluding to Homer, Horace, Juvenal, and Ovid (Bentley, *Early Long Poems* 294-95), Kidd emphasizes his empirical methodology and classical training, which adds further authority to his work. Moreover, Kidd establishes prophetic parallels between the victimization and subjugation of Ireland and that faced by the Hurons as a consequence of European betrayal (Edwards, *DCB* 376). By doing so, he confirms that his sympathy for Natives who have been “driven from their homes and hunting-grounds [ ..., who] have now become totally extinct [ ..., and who] will scarcely leave a memorial to perpetuate their names” (Kidd, *HCOP* 3) is abundantly genuine. As an Irishman in the early nineteenth century, Kidd would have witnessed the suffering of peasant-farmers who were driven from the land and rendered destitute by the British. By including on the volume’s title page an epigraph taken from a note to “Croma” in Irish writer Macpherson’s *The Poems of Ossian*, Kidd solidifies further the connection he wishes to draw between these disenfranchised peoples.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Basing his opinion on Kidd’s footnotes, Bentley concludes that Kidd “certainly seems to have made personal contacts with the Hurons at Lorette (near Quebec City) and elsewhere” (*Early Long Poems* 294).

<sup>69</sup> The quoted lines– “Where are our Chiefs of old? Where our Heroes of mighty name? The fields of their battles are silent – scarce their mossy tombs remain!”–reiterate that the plight of the Irish and Hurons is the same. Holmgren elaborates that the “choice of quotation calls attention to the ignored or neglected cultural and archaeological sites that remind European settlers of the presence of an older culture in America, while casting over the poem an elegiac gloom suitable to both Ossian’s fallen heroes and a beleaguered native

Kidd's desire to establish a proprietary claim to *HCOP* "by having his name printed on the title page" (MacDonald, *DLB* 184) is telling as well. Kidd was "only the second writer in the Canadas [...] to break with the socially accepted convention of anonymity" (184).<sup>70</sup> Although print lent itself to an author's attempt at self-promotion, Kidd could as well have published his name to help secure the integrity of the volume. Significantly, his unconventional decision to acknowledge authorship mimics his mentor Moore, who used the pseudonym "Thomas Little" until the publication of *Epistles* in 1806, the volume that contains his Canadian verse. Once again, several revealing points of continuity can be traced between Kidd and his Irish predecessor. For instance, both poets were explicit in confirming authorship of publications that were notably didactic, whereas particularly bawdy works containing a wayward and licentious speaker were previously aligned with their respective pseudonyms. Pertinently, both Moore and Kidd were keen to associate themselves with works that espoused a positive vision of Canada and promoted a hopeful and encouraging message to potential emigrants and current settlers. Understandably, then, when Kidd's objective in *HCOP* was misunderstood, he lashed out at his detractors in numerous newspaper letters.

By demonstrating "great personal investment" (Mazoff 33) in the construction and content of *HCOP*, Kidd fulfills those requirements outlined by Pearlman. Aware of his vulnerable position as an outcast Irishman in Canada, Kidd actively "superintended" the production of his collection "through the press" and "confer[red] not a little portion of praise on the printer" (*The Vindicator* February 26, 1830; Bentley, Appendices, *HCOP*

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culture" (Holmgren, "Ossian Abroad" 60). The reference "suggests that emigrant poets in Canada recognised that the way to develop local affection in their Canadian readers was to call attention to the unwritten history of their new home" (62).

<sup>70</sup> MacDonald does not mention who was the first.

109). Kidd's direct involvement is important, as the manufacturing of a text and its intended meaning are often inextricably linked. In Kevin Donovan's words, "books as material, physical objects are not merely neutral, passive, inert receptacles of verbal meaning: books are understood to participate in writers' and readers' creation of meaning through their formal organization of readers' experience" (60). By providing his audience with an elegant cover for his volume, Kidd, according to the Editors of *The Vindicator* (February 26, 1830), reveals his "anxiety [...] to please the public" (Bentley, Appendices, *HCOP* 109). Kidd's decision to be personally responsible for the production of his volume could have been strategic. His full participation in the publishing process would allow him to affect the reader's experience directly and to preserve his "autodidacti[c]" (Bentley, "From the Hollow" 237) profile. Additionally, the focus of Kidd's Preface, as discussed, along with his sudden decision to substitute "To the Rev. Polyphemus"<sup>71</sup> with "three innocuous descriptive and religious pieces"<sup>72</sup> (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xxxvii) point to a self-conscious author attempting to promote himself as credible, honest, devout, and diplomatic, not dissident and radical.<sup>73</sup>

It is true that Kidd's emendations caused an "eleventh-hour printing" (xxxii), and John Strachan's marginal comments confirm that the allusion to 'Polyphemus' was meant

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<sup>71</sup> Polyphemus was a one-eyed Cyclops, or giant, in Homer's *Odyssey*. A shepherd who lived on an island near Mount Aetna, Polyphemus confined Ulysses and his companions in his cave and ate some of them (Klinck, "Adam Kidd" 498). When intoxicated, Polyphemus was attacked and blinded by the survivors who then made their escape.

<sup>72</sup> Appearing in the volume but not in its Table of Contents are "Lines, Written on Visiting the Falls of Chaudiere, 1827," "Verses, Written on Visiting the Sand-Banks on the Shores of Lake Ontario, near Hallowell, 1823," and "Paraphrase of the 29th Psalm."

<sup>73</sup> Kidd's decision to close his miscellaneous verse with "Stanzas, Addressed to the Hon. and Right Reverend Charles James Stewart, Lord Bishop of Quebec" may well have been strategic. The closing image of the poet is thus a spiritual one.

as an offence against Bishop Mountain.<sup>74</sup> Yet, critics such as Bentley and Mazoff are quick to use these details to discredit Kidd, arguing that this poem was likely malicious and motivated by revenge for his dismissal from the ministry. The “sad” and “serious disappointment” (4) that Kidd claims inspired him to compose “To the Rev. Polyphemus,”<sup>75</sup> however, may not be a reference to his rejection from the ministry. It is as likely an allusion to Mountain’s refusal to support Byron’s burial at Westminster. More important, scholars fail to note that Kidd acknowledged the inappropriate severity of the satirical poem in his Preface and apologized for it (4). If anything, his deletion of “To the Rev. Polyphemus” demonstrates restraint and a diplomatic, calm, and rational approach to the feud. Moreover, replacing the insulting diatribe with a devotional piece further accentuates Kidd’s morality, or at least his desire to present himself as devout.

~IV~

SHORTER LYRICS

Prior to the publication and distribution of *HCOP*, Kidd’s prose and verse had appeared mainly in newspapers with pro-Irish editorial policies, such as *The Vindicator* (1828- )<sup>76</sup> and the *Canadian Freeman* (1825-1834). These presses were established primarily to promote Irish politico-religious views and support the literary ambitions of Irish-

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<sup>74</sup> In marginalia found in an 1830 copy of *HCOP*, Strachan writes that by excluding “To the Rev. Polyphemus” from his volume, Kidd “deprive[s his] volume of what with posterity, would have given it some value” (qtd. in Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 156).

<sup>75</sup> As far as I can determine, this poem was never published. The title appears in the Table of Contents to *HCOP*, even though the poem does not appear in the edition.

<sup>76</sup> Prior to 1829, *The Vindicator* was known as the *Irish Vindicator* (Holmgren, “United Irishmen in Canada” 47).

Canadians.<sup>77</sup> The fact that much of Kidd's work was not published in mainstream papers suggests one of two things: Kidd was strategic and deliberate in his decision to publish solely in newspapers that encouraged Irish writers; by doing so, he could assert his Irish patriotism and direct his work to a specifically Irish-Canadian audience. Or, Kidd was limited regarding where he could and could not publish his work because of bigotry against his Irish ethnicity and disapproval of his socio-political views. Indeed, Armour's rejection of Kidd's letter of defence to the *Montreal Gazette* concerning the "Buchanan Affair" gives credence to the latter supposition. Whether Kidd intentionally reserved most of his lyrics and journalism for Lower Canadian newspapers with Irish connections or was forced to do so by intolerant and conservative editors and publishers, he would have been aware of his audience: namely Irish-Canadians. This is helpful when attempting to decipher the potentially didactic intentions of *HCOP*, as excerpts of this work were published separately in these papers. Therefore, Kidd's determination to go door-to-door to gather subscriptions suggests again that he was eager to have his volume reach a broader Canadian readership.

Several of the occasional poems in *HCOP* were "conciliatory and formal [...and] either appealed to British statesmen by name, or praised them for any action seen to benefit Ireland" (Holmgren, *Native Muses* 37).<sup>78</sup> This may indicate that Kidd intended his

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<sup>77</sup> The most outspoken of Irish newspapers in Canada, *The Vindicator* promoted O'Connell's non-violent Catholic Emancipation movement and welcomed poetry that asserted Irish Catholic rights.

<sup>78</sup> In the poem "The Hibernian Solitary," Kidd states in a footnote that "the greatest statesman that ever adorned the British Cabinet derived his title" from Londonderry, which is "situated close to [his] native village" (*CP* online). This is a reference to Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh (1769-1822). Born in Dublin, Ireland, Castlereagh was an Anglo-Irish politician who played a key role in securing the passage of the controversial Irish Act of Union. Further examples include Kidd's "Monody" to British politician George Canning, who later briefly became Prime Minister; a footnote in "Apostrophe," where he commends Wellington for "happily procur[ing] for Ireland her long sought freedom" (*CP* online); and an allusion in "Spencer-Wood" to hero Michael Henry Percival (1791?-?), "who, with his British troops, nobly ascended [Wolfe's Cove...] and took possession of the plains of Abraham" (*CP* online).

book to reach an even wider audience in the British Isles. In *The Politics of Irish Literature*, Malcolm Brown notes that “Irish political writing of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century was rarely restricted to an Irish audience: ‘English good opinion was courted through the invention of a specialized mode of indirect address which presumed to be a high-minded dialogue on Ireland between Irishmen, but was really designed to be overheard abroad by hesitant English well wishers....They [the Irish] understood the power of England too well to suppose that a disorganized hysterical rage could ever prevail against it’” (qtd. in Holmgren, *Native Muses* 36). However, unlike the works of Weld, Moore, and Jameson, Kidd’s *HCOP* appears not to have reached such an audience nor does it seem that it was reviewed in contemporary British newspapers.<sup>79</sup> A number of factors could explain this absence. For example, while Weld, Moore, and Jameson had firmly established a supportive relationship with publishers in England prior to their departures for Canada, Kidd lacked the necessary connections, having embarked on his poetic career only once he was in Canada. Additionally, in the nineteenth century writers themselves sent their work to newspapers for review, so a lack of means may also explain why Kidd’s volume did not reach a readership overseas. If Kidd did intend to address a British readership, then it is likely, going from his expressed views, that like Weld, Moore, and Jameson, his concern would have been to govern the impressions and attitudes of people in the Old World regarding the New, to champion and defend Ireland, and to encourage immigration to Canada and divert it from America.

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<sup>79</sup> No record of the text exists in the British Library, Cambridge has only Bentley’s edition of *HCOP*, and Oxford acquired its copy on March 16, 1903. This last point was confirmed by Sue James, Senior Library Assistant at the Bodleian Library (February 11, 2009). Additionally, no research conducted on Kidd thus far references critical reception of his work in Britain.

Like Weld, Moore, and Jameson, Kidd travelled extensively through America and Upper and Lower Canada following his departure from Ireland. In fact, Kidd could be classified as initially a travel writer if references in “Cathleen” and “A Fugitive Garland” are to be interpreted as direct reflections of the poet’s own ambivalent sentiments about the Dominion. In the former poem, Kidd’s speaker expresses empathy for exiled Irish immigrant Cathleen and vows that once the economic and political stability of their homeland have been restored and “*Loved Erin*” is “proclaimed / [...] *free*, [he’ll] cross the ocean wave, / And to thy mountain-cot thyself restore” (Kidd, *CP* online 45, 44-46). This chivalric declaration underscores the speaker’s allegiance to his native country, as he and his distressed damsel are set to live out their days not in Canada but in Ireland’s recovered paradise. In the latter poem, Kidd’s footnote to “this exotic plant” (21) emphasizes his uncertainty about remaining in Canada as well. Having discovered “a solitary Shamrock” on George F. Cooke’s defaced grave,<sup>80</sup> Kidd admits in a footnote that he stole the “respected emblem of *St. Patrick*” and brought it back to his “own **temporary abode**” (**my emphasis**). He then announces he will go back to Erin and “plant it on the green summit of the flowery mantled *Slievegallin*, in the county of Derry.” While the temporality of his residence could refer to the finite length of his trip to America where the famous actor is buried, the footnote makes clear that Kidd anticipated an eventual return to his native soil. Telling is that in these poems, as well as in *The Huron Chief* and several other miscellaneous verses, Kidd casts his speaker as a

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<sup>80</sup> George Cooke (1756-1812) was a celebrated actor of British parentage born in Dublin. He initiated a theatre movement that brought a romantic style of performance to the stage. He toured England, Ireland, and eventually America in 1810, where he was well-received. Forced to remain in America because of the outbreak of the War of 1812, Cooke died of liver disease in New York. He was interred in the Stranger’s Vault in New York, then at St. Paul’s churchyard in 1821 (*DNB* 82-84; Wilmeth qtd. in Holmgren, *Native Muses* 47).



wanderer, not a settler. From this, one could again surmise that Kidd contemplated ultimately leaving Canada.

However, an investigation of Kidd's body of work does not deliver definitive proof that the poet advanced an agenda similar to MacConmara's, Weld's, Moore's, and later Jameson's: committing only to a limited stay in the Dominion with the full intention of making Ireland the terminal point of his circuit. Furthermore, the duration of Kidd's time in Canada far exceeded that of his Irish predecessors and Jameson. This could imply that although the poet originally identified himself as a visitor and expected to return to Ireland, he found that Canada boasted greater opportunities and determined it would be more advantageous to settle here than to risk a perpetually unstable life of poverty and toil in his homeland. As suggested earlier, Kidd's departure from Ireland may have been voluntary and thus inspired by curiosity, potential financial security, and ambition, as it was for his Irish predecessors and Jameson. Once in the New World, Kidd toured various regions within Upper and Lower Canada, as well as in the northern States, between 1828 and 1831. The primary purpose was to acquire materials for *HCOP* and a projected volume on "The Tales and Traditions of the Indians" that he mentions in its Preface. These excursions, as well as tours he participated in as early as 1818, also allowed Kidd to evaluate and compare the socio-political conditions and natural resources of the two countries. From this, Kidd accumulated information and observations on which he could base a qualified assessment of the merits and disadvantages of immigration to determine whether or not fellow Irish men and women should be persuaded to make the arduous journey and in which country they should make their new home. Familiar with "Poems Relating to America," an inquisitive Kidd may have embraced the occasion to experience first-hand the earthly paradise of Moore's "Ballad Stanzas" and to assume the role of a

test-subject for Irish settlement in Canada. Unlike those writers previously discussed, Kidd speaks, therefore, from the position of a traveller-turned-settler, one who participated in his own experiment and then, from his findings, drew a conclusion he could publish. By covering a broad geographical expanse and committing to a life in Canada, Kidd's position on immigration could have a greater impact, assuming his originally intended readership included Ireland and England.

Elements of continuity can be traced between Kidd's poetry and the works of others previously discussed. For example, in each case complimentary parallels are highlighted between Old World and New, stark differences are emphasized between America and Canada, and a conclusion is drawn regarding immigration that stresses the superiority of orderly Canada over the seditious Republic. In several studies Bentley postulates that Kidd was directly influenced by Moore's "Poems Relating to America" and through it indirectly by Weld's *Travels* ("Isaac Weld" 224).<sup>81</sup> From this, Bentley argues that the shape of Kidd's impressions of both Canada and America are indebted principally to descriptions gathered from Moore's collection. And as I have suggested, Moore's Dantean schema that equates America with an inferno and Canada with Weld's "demi-paradise" is implemented by Kidd in *The Huron Chief*. However, because there is no discernible pattern to Kidd's shorter poems, the overarching journey motif that acts as a guiding organizational principle in Weld and Moore is tentative in the "other poems" of *HCOP*. Thus, the Dantean model is more approximate than exact when applied to his shorter verses. Despite the difficulty in charting the progress of the speaker's journey,

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<sup>81</sup> For example, Bentley points to Weld as the source of Kidd's reference to the Whip-poor-will, and he maintains that the opening lines of Kidd's *The Huron Chief* mirror those in Moore's "Ballad Stanzas" ("Isaac Weld" 224).

what remains clear is that in several lyrics Kidd equates America with an apocalyptic wasteland and Canada with an earthly Eden. Moreover, Kidd's treatment of the Dantean rubric not only anticipates the implication for immigration of Moore's structural revisions in the 1840 edition of his *Poetical Works* but also presents readers with a prophetic warning.

As previously stated, Moore's sojourner moves from a *paradiso* (Old World), to an *inferno* (America), to a *purgatorio* (Canada), then back to what is initially perceived as a prelapsarian Eden (Old World) only to be recognized later through fallen eyes as a postlapsarian garden. It is only when the altered state of the Old World is acknowledged by Moore some thirty years later that Canada is recast as a paradise where immigrants are encouraged to seek refuge and begin anew. However, Kidd challenges and complicates the schema somewhat by positioning his speaker in a fallen state prior to his departure from Ireland. Works by Weld, Moore, and later Jameson, do not make clear the specific geographical location within the British Isles that they deem analogous to paradise. Generic terms such as "home" are often used instead. When describing his childhood in poems such as "The Fairy-Boat" and "The Hibernian Solitary," Kidd's nostalgic speaker, however, draws an explicit connection between a prelapsarian Eden and *Ireland*, not England or generally the British Isles. Significantly, when referring to his contemporary Ireland, a notably mature speaker repeatedly imbues his native home with postlapsarian qualities, underscoring that his archetypal transition from innocence to experience has already occurred. While Moore's speaker falls into experience as a consequence of his removal from an Old World paradise, as well as from his exposure to corruption and lawlessness in his descent into an American inferno, Kidd's speaker moves from innocence to experience while still in Ireland. The damaging and reverberating effects of

the emergency that inspired Weld and Moore to investigate alternatives available to immigrants in North America were at their peak during Kidd's formative years. This may explain why Kidd's speaker begins his journey to the New World in a fallen state: a consequence of his Edenic homeland being converted into a wild garden infested with pestilent British weeds.

Recalling Weld and Moore, Kidd aligns the Old World, and more specifically Ireland, with a number of complimentary qualities associated with paradise. Positively charged words are used to describe the speaker's happy childhood, which is defined by scenes of natural abundance, friendship, family, and harmonious love. The landscape of the speaker's boyhood is portrayed as an idyllic garden situated "mid the smiles of Heaven" (Kidd, *CP* online; "The Hibernian Solitary" 1) and is distinguished by an adornment of "opening blossoms" (4). The magnificence of nature's "varied scenes" (9), where lush horticultural specimens "profusely swell" (8), are "unequaled [in] grandeur" (9) and are presented as unique to Slievegallin. Filled with "sunshine" ("Rangleawe" 13; "Apostrophe" 13) and "happy joys" ("Fairy-Boat" 13), the speaker's early years are trouble-free and the path of life among his "native hills" is "strewed with flowers" (8, 7). With a life of ease and leisure that is absent of obstacles, the speaker is "reckless of earth-born cares" ("The Hibernian Solitary" 5) and spends "blissful hours" (18) with "friends then dearest to [his] bosom" (25), as well as "with the maid [he] loved" (29). These fraternal and amorous companions rouse feelings of belonging, unity, and liberation. The speaker is free to "pleasingly stray" ("To Clara" 4) without consequence along a "bright" (11) course where "every joy, / [...] / Danced [...] without alloy" ("To - -" 13-15), and he and his betrothed are safely housed in a "heaven of love" ("To Clara" 23).

Subverting these cheerful sentiments are the use of past tense, the irregular tone that is at once jovial and melancholy, and the stanzaic transitions that serve to juxtapose a tranquil and stable past with a fruitless and tainted present. Compounded, these poetic strategies emphasize not only the transient quality of Erin's prelapsarian state but also that the speaker's ameliorative youth in Ireland's Elysium can be accessed only through nostalgic reveries. The temporal and seasonal setting of the speaker's romance suggests that the couples' affection has reached its climax and will quickly and inevitably usher forth a denouement, or fall. The initial phase of romantic love is usually conventionally signalled by a spring morning used to convey a sense of the exhilaration inspired by the budding courtship. Kidd, however, situates his lovers' ramblings during the "summer even" ("To Clara" 12; "The Hibernian Solitary" 52). In agricultural terms, the summer signifies a period when there is a wealth of lush vegetation. The fact that these poems are set at the close of summer's day implies that the time to reap the harvest is fast approaching and that it will not be long before the frost sets in. As a consequence, youthful love will subside, the comforts of home will vanish ("The Hibernian Solitary" 19), and the "sunny moments" (23) shared with "inmates dear" (19) will be extinguished. Kidd's speaker acknowledges as much, stating that "soft joys" ("To Clara" 13) are "hurried" (17) and cast only a brief "beam on life's pathway, / Long shadowed by woe" (19-20). In other words, amnesty from toil and pain is granted only in childhood, and in its stage of experience, life's course is long and arduous. Questioning the absence of his entourage of "dear companions" as well as his beloved ("The Hibernian Solitary" 38-39) from his present circumstances, the speaker concludes that he has been banished from a "Heaven [that] has proved severe" (44), "Crush[ing his] hopes, just in their morning

bloom” (45). Accordingly, the joy associated with the age of innocence has faded as quickly as it flourished, and love, much like Ireland’s paradise, is fleeting and transient.

The devastating repercussions of the Rebellions of 1798 and 1803, the destitution caused by recurring famine early in the century, and the disheartening blow to the Irish spirit following the dissolution of Ireland’s Parliament in 1801 prematurely thrust Kidd into a state of experience. Unlike Weld and Moore who left Ireland before the resounding effects of the political and economic calamity set in, Kidd was not shielded from the demoralizing and disconcerting consequences that defined this era in Irish history. It is not surprising, then, that the dismal conditions through which Kidd’s mature speaker must wander while still in Ireland are infused with postlapsarian elements. The fall of Ireland’s paradise is most noticeable in Kidd’s Derry poems, which are infused with a tone of pathos. Pastoral landscapes that defined the speaker’s carefree childhood are replaced with graveyard scenes distinguished by loss and dissolution. For example, in the opening stanza of “My Brother’s Grave,” the description of a “declining ray” (1) that casts but a single beam “faintly o’er Slievegallin” (2) is dispiriting and bleak, as it symbolizes the “Ruin” that has long since “marked” (9) the poet’s once prosperous village. As Holmgren observes, Kidd came of age at the end of the Napoleonic wars, which resulted in farmers and labourers being driven off the land. Consequently, he would have “witnessed the slow death of villages like his own” (“United Irishmen in Canada” 47). From this, Holmgren surmises that Kidd “may have already known that his own eventual migration was inevitable” (47). Although intriguing, this theory is complicated by the speaker’s prediction that “death shall bring / My heart to moulder by thy side” (Kidd, *CP* online; “My Brother’s Grave” 19-20). This closing statement

emphasizes that, like his speaker, Kidd was not prepared to abandon his homeland and that he anticipated the course of his journey would begin and end in Ireland.

As he navigates his way through Ireland's wasteland, Kidd's speaker is assailed by a series of disconcerting scenes. Harpist Dennis Hampson (c.1695-1808), who once recounted Ireland's victories in song, inspiring "proud bursts of glory, / And thrills of delight" ("Apostrophe" 15-16), is "now dead" (6), and beloved bard Francis Dowling's lips are "now hushed" ("Rangleawe" 12). Rangleawe's slumbering harp (11) and Hampson's "wrecked lyre" ("Apostrophe" 21) with its "chords [...] all torn" (6) become for the speaker "True emblem[s] of Erin" (22). Their destruction mirrors Ireland's extinguished traditions and its dire economic and political condition. Because of the ephemeral quality of Ireland's culture in its fallen state, Kidd commemorates Irish artists, art forms, and architectural landmarks such as the "famed Fort" ("The Hibernian Solitary" 34) and "bowers of green / [...] seats of classic lore" (59-60) situated in his native Tullinagee, all of which risk being effaced from memory. In these elegiac poems, Kidd also meditates on the cause of Ireland's inadequate present and concludes that England is responsible for "Erin's wrongs, and Erin's woes" ("My Brother's Grave" 12). Unlike Protestant predecessor Weld, who had an affinity for England, Kidd chastises the country's sinister and corrupt treatment of Ireland, a sentiment later adopted by Moore and Jameson following their departure from Canada.

In Kidd's monody to George Canning, the speaker observes that if Ireland were ruled with justice and wisdom, its glory would "flourish" (17-18). In Erin's current position, however, "peace no longer crowns her hills" ("The Fairy-Boat" 21). Instead, she is tortured by the "foul" and "unholy chain" (41) of "the Demon of party" ("Rangleawe" 28) and its "tyranny" (29). Consequently, England's relentless dominance of and

damaging presence in Ireland force the speaker to acknowledge the necessity of abandoning his native home. By recording in verse those historical events, places, and figures that collectively constructed Ireland's idyllic past, both Kidd and his speaker actively preserve their homeland's rapidly disintegrating cultural identity and simultaneously "shed the big and parting tear" ("The Hibernian Solitary" 62), bidding them "a last farewell" (63). Just as childhood cannot be recaptured after a fall into experience, neither can the speaker return to Ireland once he has determined to leave. Thus, it is critical that he commit to memory and fix on the written page those patriotic emblems of Ireland's rich and celebrated past, as he will see them no more.

When they embarked on their respective travels to North America, Weld and Moore carried with them an optimism that the nineteenth century would usher in a brighter future for Ireland and its disenfranchised citizens. The question of whether or not their journey would end in Ireland was, therefore, moot. It is perhaps for this reason that they continued to perceive the Old World favourably throughout the duration of their obstacle-ridden journey in America's *inferno* and their brief reprieve in Canada's rejuvenating *purgatorio*. Kidd, on the other hand, did not share their idealism. While Kidd's fallen speaker vows to go back to Ireland, his return is contingent on the restoration of Ireland's freedom ("Apostrophe" 32), which will be achieved only when England's "tyranny" "writhe[s] in her chain" ("Rangleawe" 29). The conditions placed on the speaker's hypothetical homecoming hint that Kidd's own evacuation from Ireland may have been forced as a result of the country's increasingly riotous socio-political climate. It also reaffirms that the poet's allegiance was first to his birthplace and that he would only settle in Canada if the state of Ireland remained unfavourable.



Similar to Moore, Kidd includes among his miscellaneous works two poems that make the speaker's sentiments about leaving his native country their primary focus. In "My Irish Home," the speaker possesses the foreknowledge that his ties to the Old World will likely be severed permanently and that there is little probability that he will see Erin again. This, in turn, fosters feelings of trepidation regarding departure. Unlike the forward-looking speaker in Moore's "To Lord Viscount Strangford," who embraces the opportunity to improve his spiritual and economic station in the New World, the "lingering" gaze of Kidd's speaker is "backward cast" (3). And while Moore's speaker declares his ambition to be "a wanderer more" (*Moore's Poems* 99: 42), Kidd's speaker yearns for "some happier day [that] / May teach [him] not to roam" (Kidd, *CP* online 5-6) and instead "bless [him] with the smiles so gay / That cheered [his] Irish home" (7-8). Fraught with regret, the anxious speaker mourns the loss of Ireland's "green-clad hills" that "Recede too fast from view" (9-10). The poem is likewise replete with images that underscore the finality that comes with separation. For example, as the "night-shades dim, / every vista disappears" (20-21). Consequently, the speaker can no longer locate "in evening's gloam, / The twinkling star of night" (22-23) that would serve to direct him homeward once more.

The sadness expressed in "My Irish Home" is echoed in "The Fairy-Boat"; however, in the latter poem the speaker discloses his conscious awareness of the necessity to seek out a surrogate home. At the outset, the speaker oscillates between feeling uncertain about abandoning the Old World and optimism about a future that could bring him prosperity, abundance, and freedom. For example, the poem begins with a description of "hushed" "winds" and "still" "waves" (1) that grant the speaker a "calm" (3) transatlantic crossing. As was the case with Moore's "To Lord Viscount Strangford,"

this allusion to temperate weather functions as a pathetic fallacy, highlighting the speaker's easeful resolve to begin anew in a foreign land. However, Kidd's speaker is almost immediately afflicted with pangs of grief brought on by recollections of "happier hours" (5) and "joys of other years" (12) "that now are gone" (4). This again recalls sentiments expressed in Moore's poem. These melancholy feelings are soothed once the speaker catalogues "the scenes o'er which [he has] wept" (15) and acknowledges Ireland's current postlapsarian state. From there, the speaker willingly determines to leave his "own dear lakes" (33) and his "cottage maid and humble home" (34) so that he can "wander [...] through woods and brakes, / Where free as air the Indians roam" (35-36). Because what he leaves behind is a lost Eden, the speaker can take comfort in his decision to seek refuge in a new realm that offers liberty in place of oppression. Recognizing that a return to the Old World is disadvantageous and only possible once "that foul, unholy chain" (41) is shattered by "The patriot-hand" (42), the speaker shifts his hope to Canada.

Although the speaker in "The Fairy-Boat" elects to leave Ireland, the knowledge that a desired return is conditional and that the length of his stay in Canada is, thus, indeterminate arouses a profound sense of homesickness in "Cathleen." These nostalgic feelings are then projected onto the subject of the poem, a dispossessed fellow Irish immigrant. Centering on the disadvantages of pioneer life and the discomforting challenges it presents, the poem emphasizes the trauma, isolation, and loss that accompany immigration. In the opening stanzas, life in Canada is described in unfavourable terms. Because the decision to leave Ireland was not her own to make, Cathleen, who was "forced" (4) to seek refuge in an unfamiliar land far removed from the comforts of home, is "doomed" (5) to a life of alienation in the New World. In solitude

Cathleen weeps (2) over the “dark misfortune” (3) that has led to her exile. Yet rather than offer her solace and hope, Canada does little to improve her station, as financial security is not guaranteed and its source is “unknown” (6). Instead, Cathleen must perform manual labour under “[a] sun more fierce” (7) than that which she was accustomed to in Ireland. Consequently, the harsh and unforgiving climate “mark[s] her care-worn cheek with brownest hue, / And tinge[s] her brow with deep Canadian die” (9-10). The convergence of Cathleen’s old and new identities – symbolized by her Irish complexion being coloured by the Canadian sun – is not conveyed as a positive example of hybridity. The implication is that the Canadian element(s) will overpower the Irish. Of particular significance is the potentially deliberate misspelling of “die.” If interpreted as a pun, the word implies not only that the requirement to adapt to the youthful country leads to angst and toil that dye the flesh but also that it may cause a premature death of body and soul. Thus, Cathleen’s trying transition from Old World to New serves to warn Irish immigrants that they are not exempt from taxing work in Canada, that the paradise they seek is little more than a mirage, and that Ireland’s traditions and heritage will fade for them.

Despite the unflattering depiction of Canada, the speaker acknowledges that Cathleen’s miserable plight is emblematic of all Irish immigrants regardless of where they seek refuge (17-18). This distinction is important, as Canada is not deemed responsible for the sad predicament which has befallen Irish immigrants such as Cathleen. Instead, contempt is reserved for England, the culprit in all of Ireland’s woes. Inspired by sympathy for Cathleen, Kidd breaks from his narrative to chastise England for its complicit role in Ireland’s misfortunes. However, because he has been accused of expressing “freely” (20) and “too oft” (19) his dismay at Britain’s oppression of Ireland

and for “stray[ing]” (20) from loyalty he “owes to England’s king” (21), the poet refrains from engaging in such an indictment. This decision to exercise restraint regarding the source of Ireland’s suffering is subverted when the struggle of the disenfranchised woman is read allegorically. As Holmgren observes, “Cathleen ni Houlihan is one of the female personifications of Ireland” (*Native Muses* 38). From this, Holmgren surmises that “Cathleen’s lost beauty may symbolize the loss of Ireland itself” (59). The analogy also underscores that a pure and innocent Cathleen (Ireland) has been banished to a fallen state of experience in the New World because of British misrule. As a result, her spirit is broken and her character is tarnished. The fourth stanza further encourages this archetypal reading. Cathleen (Ireland) is said to be thrust “too soon” onto the “chequered path of life” (Kidd, *CP* online 24) and is left defenceless and “Without a guide” in the postlapsarian world, with the exception of “the All-ruling Power” (26). Significantly, it is her unwavering devotion to her faith (Catholicism) that saves her, and it is rewarded by God who “confers a boon, / On worth and innocence so chaste as [hers]” (28-29). Ireland is exempt from blame for its dire conditions; the ability to exercise religious freedom should be encouraged, not thwarted. The speaker then prophesizes that the Irish will avenge Britain for “refus[ing] to grant [them] their religious and constitutional freedoms” (Holmgren, “United Irishmen in Canada” 53). At the poem’s close, the speaker prays for “a brighter day” (Kidd, *CP* online 39) when “what Heaven designed” (41) for Ireland is restored, strongly suggesting that the Ireland of the past can indeed be seen as synonymous with Dante’s *paradiso*. In the meantime, the speaker “offers shelter and fellowship for Cathleen in Canada” (Holmgren, *Native Muses* 39). This proposition is noteworthy, as it underscores that the political reform and religious independence sought by the Irish in their homeland are fostered in Canada and that the Dominion provides a

temporary refuge for displaced immigrants. However, by juxtaposing a forlorn and remote scene at the outset of the poem to the final image of a communal haven, Kidd stresses that the success of the Irish in the New World is better secured if they support each other and work together to build a promising future in their adopted home. Equally relevant, Cathleen is offered an opportunity to construct a new life in Canada but is not expected to sacrifice her loyalty to Ireland. Indeed, Canada welcomes and nurtures Cathleen (Ireland) and together they achieve a positive and reciprocal union.

Whereas Cathleen's journey concludes in a hospitable Canadian sanctum that offers dispossessed Irish immigrants religious and constitutional freedom, the speaker in "To Mary" and "A Fugitive Garland" wanders perpetually through a barren and disorderly American landscape that recalls the apocalyptic scenes found in works by Weld and Moore. Compounded, these poems function to dissuade Irish immigration to America by casting it as an unruly dystopia that impedes adaptation and exacerbates migrants' struggles. The first poem centres on a speaker who is "tortured" (Kidd, *CP* online 8) by his decision to abandon his homeland in order to travel through a country whose "boasted charms, / Are merely fleeting shades of bliss" (17-18). This vision of America as a "false Eden" was likely influenced by Moore (Holmgren, *Native Muses* 31), who embarked on his journey to the Republic with enthusiasm only to be sorely disappointed once there. Following Kidd's speaker's declaration that America has failed to yield the paradise it promised travellers and settlers, the speaker remarks that his "every onward step alarms – / Some lurking reptile" (Kidd, *CP* online 19-20). By echoing Moore's reference to snakes in "Song of the Evil Spirit of the Woods," as well as Weld's allusion to venomous copper snakes that plague Blue Ridge Mountain in *Travels*, Kidd conjures a comparable image of America as an inferno where sin and temptation lie in wait. Forced to trudge "alone"

(15) “through dreary wilds, unknown” (13), the melancholy speaker goes “unheeded” (15) and his song of mourning is heard by no one. Unlike Cathleen, who is able to communicate her pathetic tale to a fellow Irish-Canadian who then assists her in establishing herself in the Dominion, this lonely and disenchanting traveller must contend with “chance” (16) as he navigates his way through America’s obstacle-ridden wasteland. Furthermore, while Cathleen (Ireland) eventually enjoys a peaceful home in Canada, the solitary speaker in “To Mary” rejects America’s antagonistic and foreign landscape altogether. Longing for “his own green hills” (21) where “happier days” (25) were spent, the speaker confesses his desire to be buried next to his beloved, thus making Ireland the terminal point of his journey and life.

The cruel fate that befalls Irishmen who die in America is explored in “A Fugitive Garland,” a poem that discourages immigration to the Republic by illustrating that the Irish are unlikely to survive there. On a pilgrimage to the grave of cherished Irish actor, George Cooke, the speaker must manoeuvre his way through an apocalyptic labyrinth of tombstones, one of which has been “erected” by a “FRIEND” (10) to commemorate Cooke’s death. As he approaches the site with “reverential tread” (1), the speaker is appalled to see that “some impious hand has dared to touch” (9) the sacred resting place of one of Ireland’s sons. Rather than respectfully mourn Cooke, impertinent and degenerate Americans insult his name (8) by vandalizing his headstone. The moral character of Americans is questioned here, as it was by Weld who observed in *Travels* the desecration of sacred resting grounds by spiritually devoid Americans. Just as Weld contrasted the absence of American spirituality to the palpable devotion of Canadians, Kidd juxtaposes Cooke’s “Demon-defaced” (7) tombstone to Rangleawe’s and Hampson’s graves, which are tended faithfully by “the sweet smiling daughters of Erin”

(“Rangleawe” 19) (Holmgren, *Native Muses* 53). The last stanza is of particular significance as it draws attention to “a solitary Shamrock” that has “taken shelter close by the corner of the monument” (Kidd footnote, *CP* online). Emblematic of Ireland, the shamrock is the only living specimen on America’s otherwise “naked mound” (22). Despite its ability to grow in America’s barren wasteland, the displaced shamrock (Irish immigrants) has a “tender frame” and is under constant threat of being “bruise[d]” (26) underfoot by abusive and thoughtless America. If the shamrock were to remain in the young Republic, it would be susceptible to corruption. Therefore, the speaker determines to transplant the budding shoot to Irish soil where it will be safe from the “folded reptile” that would otherwise “slumber on its breast” (27). When the description of Canada in “Cathleen” is juxtaposed to the portrait of an uncivilized and disorderly America in “To Mary” and “A Fugitive Garland,” it is clear that, like Weld, Moore, and later Jameson, Kidd clearly preferred the Dominion as the superior destination for Irish immigrants.

In a series of occasional verses, Kidd provides valuable insight into the Irish immigrant experience in early nineteenth-century Canada. Overall, he presents readers with an encouraging portrait of a youthful country that is consistent with what is outlined in works by Weld, Moore, and Jameson. For example, in “Verses: Written on Visiting the Sand-Banks,” Canada becomes a paradise “colonised” (14) by “Oberon, and Mab his queen” (13) and populated with immigrants from “Erin’s green” (15). The infant colony is also equated with an Elysium because the shadows that dance on the sand dunes remind the speaker of Ireland’s prelapsarian “fairy ground” (12). Likewise in “Lines: Written on Visiting the Falls,” the “splendid joy[s]” (10) unveiled in the Canadian landscape arouse nostalgic “visions” (13) of the speaker’s “boyhood” “prime” (14) and inspire him to draw comparisons between the landscape of the Old and New World.

Gazing upon a “leafy grove” (7) “Suspended” (6) above the sublime Chaudiere Falls, the speaker remarks that a grander and more beautiful spectacle “ne’er shone to man” (18). However, the “bow of heaven” (19) is perceived as remarkable and majestic in part because of the “fairy span” of its embrace (20). This tendency to transpose elements of the Old World onto the New is addressed by Bentley who notes that “emigrants [...] take with them both physically and mentally much of the world that they have ostensibly left behind, and they impose an order on their new environment that makes it resemble as much as possible the lost homes of their hearts. In short they value both their new, independent status and the old, established society, making between the two a culture of compromise, a ‘middle ground’” (*Mimic Fires* 9).

Resoundingly positive depictions of Canada are echoed further in “Spencer-Wood” and “The Canadian Girl.” In the first, an earthly retreat that embodies unity, order, abundance, and civility is described. As he tours the grounds at Spencer-Wood, the speaker is surrounded by pastoral images of “green groves,” “deep receding bowers” (Kidd, *CP* online 1), and “blushing arbours” (13) that recall the lush and vibrant landscape of his childhood, as well as the “massy woods” (*Moore’s Poems* 182: 31) and “shades of bloom” (182: 32) described by Moore in “To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon.” Immigrants who settle in the idyllic realm of Spencer-Wood are considered “bles[sed]” because they are granted an opportunity to create “a happy home” (Kidd, *CP* online 17) where they can live out their days “without one throb of care” (18). In a similar way, the second poem reconstructs the pristine garden and quaint cottage Moore’s speaker happens upon in “Ballad Stanzas,” which suggests Kidd also recognized in Canada a harmonious realm where natural and human order could coexist. Possessing several Edenic qualities, including a “grove / Adorned in nature’s gay perfection” (21-22) that



“Form[s] a blushing arbour sweet” (23), the Canadian landscape embodies “a pure—a sacred bliss” (25), which the speaker longs to “share / With [his] beloved Canadian fair” (29-30). Bentley suggests that “Ballad Stanzas” attempted to direct immigrants to settle in Canada as opposed to America, and the same can be said of these lyrics by Kidd.

Yet perhaps because Kidd was denied full absorption into Canadian society and because his time in Canada might have been provisional, his vision of the Dominion resembles predominantly the Dantean concept of *purgatorio*. It is also classified as a middle ground that is largely positive but nonetheless challenging because Kidd’s speaker fell into experience prior to his arrival. In “Verses: Written on Visiting the Sand-Banks,” Kidd’s fallen speaker searches for a temporary alternative in Canada’s terrestrial paradise and quickly recognizes its superiority to the current disorderly condition of both America *and* Ireland. At the close of the poem, the speaker proclaims his willingness to travel “far” (29) in order to secure shelter “from oppression’s rod, / Where in devotion’s happiest hour / No man can *tax* the praise of God” (30-32). As a liberal Protestant, Kidd championed Canada’s readiness to foster in its citizens a religious freedom absent in his homeland because of the Anglican Ascendency. In fact, Kidd’s position replicates a similar sentiment expressed in Moore’s “To the Lady Charlotte Rawdon,” a poem that celebrates attainable spiritual liberty in Canada and chastises the inability of those in the Old World to actualize their rights because they remain “Caged in the bounds of Europe’s pigmy plan” (*Moore’s Poems* 182: 36).

While Canada provides immigrants with a hospitable haven of legal and religious independence, the happiness and security found there are transient, making it a purgatory. For instance, when the speaker in “To Miss E – R –” listens to an Indian melody that awakens “a joy here unfelt before” (Kidd, *CP* online 12), he longs to “pause with

pleasure” (5). However, he acknowledges with disappointment that “such moments” do not “last for ever” (13). Although he maintains that he would not seek an alternate home “for purer bliss” (14), the desire to make his stay in Canada’s pseudo-paradise permanent is inevitably thwarted. Despite the Dominion’s fleeting qualities, the speaker in “Lines: Written on Visiting the Falls” seeks aggregation and is keen to begin anew. In a postlapsarian world, the light of joy is rarely shed “Across the lonely path we tread” (34), and the “bliss” shared on earth “is not so sweet” (61) as that which will eventually be experienced in heaven. Therefore, the speaker gladly embraces “the good” (65) he finds but briefly in “the cheerful wood” because Canada embodies several characteristics that are akin to “home, and heaven, and rapture” (67-68). In much the same way, the speaker in “To Miss Eveleen” gazes upon a “miniature bow, / Commingled with heaven’s pure essence of green” (11-12) and notes that Canada offers Irish immigrants a tranquil asylum superior to all others, which will house them until they are prepared to move on “to that heavenly clime, / Where the waters of Eden in quietness flow” (15-16). Just as Dante found temporary respite in the Garden of Eden while he awaited ascension to Paradise, so too do Irish immigrants retreat to Canada’s paradisiacal sanctuary as they await the restoration of Ireland’s paradise and their return to it.

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### ***THE HURON CHIEF***

In his major work *The Huron Chief*, Kidd again envisions Canada as a pure, authentic, terrestrial paradise that serves the same purpose it did for Weld, Moore, and Jameson: it is a second-chance land where a life of equality, liberty, moderation, and tolerance can be

achieved by both destitute and industrious Irish citizens who have been banished from Ireland's postlapsarian garden. Somewhat remarkably (as I observed in my introduction), 130 years later Brian Moore is still constructing Canada (Montreal) as a land of second chance for Ginger Coffey in the ironically titled *The Luck of Ginger Coffey* (1960). Much of the long poem centres on a description of Canada's physical and social landscape from the perspective of its central character, an Irish migrant. Cast as a perpetual wanderer, Kidd's speaker begins his journey in Canada's Elysium, a retreat that shares in common many positive features associated with Ireland before the fall. Described as "A world of peace — a world of love — / A type of all that dwells above" (Kidd, *HCOP* 42: 1241-42), the Dominion is infused with heavenly characteristics and is the embodiment of a Golden Age of harmony, abundance, and tranquility. In the opening stanza, Kidd's speaker happens upon an intimate scene reminiscent of that portrayed in Moore's "Ballad Stanzas" and is transported to a state of blissful joy.<sup>82</sup> As he "wander[s] undisturbed and free" (5: 3), the speaker is struck by the rich and inviting Canadian landscape with its "groves," "plants," and "waters" (5: 12), and throughout the poem, he attributes numerous positively charged words such as "harmony," "pleasure," "rapture," "beauty," "joy," "peace," "Eden," and "heaven" to his description of this "splendid world of fairy bliss" (6: 35). Touched by "nature's richest hue" (5: 18), Canada's surroundings are unblemished and insurmountable in their beauty, which, in turn, suggests to the speaker that "No foot, before, had ever bended [there], / Save the great Spirit's of the wood" (5: 20-21). The picturesque landscape also stands as a testament to the ameliorative state of a pre-industrialized and pre-colonized New World. Indeed, the fact that this natural habitat

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<sup>82</sup> Bentley was first to make this observation (*Mimic Fires* 82-83, 157). Kidd's "Nor heard a sound, save wood-doves cooing, / Or birds that tapped the hollow tree" (*HCOP* 5: 4-5) is almost identical to Moore's "I heard not a sound / But the woodpecker tapping the hollow beech-tree" (*Moore's Poems* 176: 7-8).

has not been “subjugated by European interlopers” is precisely what makes it “reminiscent of Eden” (Bentley, *Gay]Grey Moose* 164).

At the centre of this paradise are the civilized and cultured Hurons whom Kidd associates with the admirable and virtuous qualities of wisdom, eloquence, affection, and diplomacy. Paragons of equality, the Hurons make decisions democratically around a “Council-fire” (Kidd, *HCOP* 5: 24) and respect their leaders who demonstrate righteousness, charity, and forgiveness despite tremendous adversity. In spite of suffering numerous atrocities at the hands of “Christian whites” (52: 1492), the Hurons refuse to make of them a “sacrifice” (9: 152). Instead, they remain charitable to any who are in need regardless of their prior actions, offering them shelter, food, and the opportunity to atone for their wrongs (9:153-56). Throughout the poem, Kidd praises the peaceable way of life amongst the Hurons and points to Skenandow as most worthy of veneration because he exemplifies “grace” (9: 159) and nobility (9: 157) and is “a saint divine” (9: 160) or “holy man” (14: 313) who speaks with the tongue of an angel (McGuire 12). According to Steele, the modesty and simplicity by which the noble Hurons live “becomes equivalent to Eden-like innocence as Kidd evokes overtones of the Biblical Garden [...] and implicitly claims for the Indian the status of unfallen man” (*Canadian Poetry in English* 123). In the Canadian hinterlandscape, the Hurons are “linked in social, tender love” (Kidd, *HCOP* 17: 433) and “resemble Adam and Eve in their harmonious closeness to nature and the angels” (Bentley, *Gay]Grey Moose* 165). More importantly, this paradisiacal residence fosters innocent communion and protects its citizens from the “tyrant hand” (Kidd, *HCOP* 5: 32) that in the “thorn-choked and snake-infested wilderness” (Mazoff 32) of America inhibits freedom from social and religious repression.

This idealized portrait would be alluring to Irish immigrants, as it suggests that the religious tolerance and humanitarianism modelled by the Hurons could be actualized by the Irish in Canada. Kidd's stance on immigration to Canada is furthered in his reference to a "summer-day / When all things bloomed with beauty gay" (*HCOP* 5: 1-2). Thus Canada is portrayed as vast in its fruitful bounty. This agricultural surplus would be attractive to any prospective immigrant, as it suggests guaranteed prosperity. Indeed, partly for this reason Kidd's speaker declares his desire to "make [his own] happy dwelling" (6: 36) in the New World. However, while works by Weld and Moore accentuate the appeal of the Dominion's uncultivated wilderness in order to lure assiduous Irish entrepreneurs and farmers to Canada, it becomes evident later in *The Huron Chief* that Kidd calls for temperance and cautions against the potentially damaging effects of the Imperial process of colonization.

Regardless, in an effort to promote Canada as a paradisiacal retreat for Irish immigrants, Kidd periodically identifies and celebrates those qualities shared in common with a prelapsarian Ireland. If the days of joy in Erin are past, then it is logical that her exiled sons and daughters would seek refuge in a place that most resembles their original home before its troubles began. According to Smith and Scott as well, emigrants did not of course entirely discard ties to their homeland. In fact, the work of Émigré writers underscores the need to bridge old and adopted cultures and to perpetuate cherished elements of their heritage in Canada by "imitat[ing] and re-establish[ing] the attitudes and habits of the old" within the New (xviii). In *The Huron Chief*, Canada's social and physical geography is replete with positive attributes the speaker associates with his youth in an ideal Ireland. For example, when Kidd's speaker declares his love for Kemana, Ireland is "viewed through a sentimental haze" (Wilson, *The Irish in Canada*

21). In this digression, the speaker's identity merges with that of the poet as he contemplates the bliss of his Irish childhood, which he links to the serene paradise of the Natives:

Oh! never since my boy-hood's days,  
 When o'er SLIEVEGALLIN'S mantled braes,  
 [... Have] I strayed with heart as light as a feather,  
 [... Or] Have joys so stainless touched my heart,  
 As those which now their bliss impart. (*HCOP* 19: 493-94, 496, 499-500)

By establishing parallels between memories of childhood innocence in Erin and positive emotions elicited in Canada, the speaker simultaneously wards off feelings of alienation and attempts to embrace his new surroundings and create a sense of home. Moreover, the amalgamation of his ancestral culture and the details of the Canadian landscape could be indicative of a newly adopted double vision. However, the tendency to slip into nostalgic references to Ireland while describing his Canadian experience also highlights the enduring dislocation that comes with immigration and exposes the cultural identity crisis Kidd himself struggled to reconcile. Both speaker and poet preserve memories of the Old World not only out of fear that they may lose their connection to their Irish heritage but also out of concern that sacrificing ties to the Old will not necessarily yield acceptance in the New.

Although Kidd's travel-worn speaker seeks Canada's hinterland for respite from the tribulations accosting Ireland, both his fallen condition and his immigrant status prevent him from integrating successfully into the Native prelapsarian society of which he longs to be a part. Kidd's own position as an outcast is reflected in his speaker, who also was frequently marginalized and denied entrance into the secular and ecclesiastical

community in Canada.<sup>83</sup> As a wayward figure, the speaker seeks connection with the people and landscape of his new existence. His efforts to embrace his Canadian home are, however, repeatedly thwarted. At the outset of the poem, Kidd's speaker is set apart from the action and his solitary state is underscored by the frequent repetition of the first-person pronoun. Finding his loneliness disagreeable, the speaker expresses a desire to "share" (a word that is repeated seventeen times in the first 180 lines) in the Native experience: "in this spot alone, / With one kind heart to dwell forever, / With one that I could call my own" (Kidd, *HCOP* 5: 27-29). Immediately following this statement, the speaker accidentally overhears the Huron Queen's song of grief. Although he wishes to "share" in "[h]er pangs of sorrow" (8: 122), as he has also endured loss and can empathize with her plight, he quickly acknowledges that such an act of trespassing "would be far more than madness" (8: 126). Thus, a complete integration into her private ritual of mourning is disallowed.

According to McGuire, Kidd's speaker is a "fully cognizant" border dweller who "stands upon the threshold of the action and partakes of the 'secret art of invisibleness' that [Homi] Bhabha claims is the chief characteristic of the migrant" (28). Indeed, throughout the poem, the suggestively voyeuristic speaker is removed from the action and can only eavesdrop on songs of pathos recounted by male and female Hurons. Yet the possibility of connection is actualized briefly through the "mutual converse" (Kidd, *HCOP* 10: 181) established between the speaker and his guides, Skenandow and Alkwanwaugh. Following his first encounter with the Huron Chief, the "I" statements are replaced with "we" statements, marking a shift from individual to communal that draws

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<sup>83</sup> Several biographical references provide proof that Kidd's Irish heritage and the discrimination he suffered as an Irishman in Canada lie beneath the surface of the poem. For example, see especially lines 509 to 516.

attention to the speaker's initiation into Native life. Further, when the speaker comments that "[f]or one short month we loved to trace, / And from the SACHEMS gather all / Their deeds of war, and feats of glory" (36: 1020-22), "his presence and that of Alkwanwaugh become virtually undifferentiated from each other. On a grammatical level, then, the speaker strives to identify himself with the Native community" (McGuire 27). Yet in each instance, the speaker eventually withdraws from the physical action.

References to necessary and unavoidable departure recur throughout the poem and highlight the profound sense of instability that comes with being an outcast migrant. Early in the poem the speaker states that "[u]ntil the fleeting glass of time / Had number'd up life's closing minute, / And I might turn, to take one view / Of earth's last joys — then breathe adieu!" (Kidd, *HCOP* 16: 389-92), and still later he declares: "And thus, my life's first happy day, / 'Midst scenes the purest, moved away" (24: 655-56). While Mazoff suggests that this failure to integrate underscores Kidd's incapacity to break free of European influences and that it reflects his own hesitation to be part of a community for which he feels only artificial sympathy (40-41), it more obviously represents the broader issue of adaptation and settlement. It expresses Kidd's own inability to assimilate into Canadian society because of the pervasive discrimination he was forced to endure because of his Irishness. The constant mobility of his speaker, moreover, could be indicative of an immigrant surveying the landscape to determine the best place to settle, or it could mirror the speaker's desire to seek only temporary relief in Canada's Garden of Eden as he awaits the hoped-for restoration of and return to Ireland.

The difficulty the speaker faces when trying to negotiate his new social and physical surroundings draws attention to the fact that Canada is primarily a purgatory for Kidd's immigrants. But paradoxically all immigrants who have been exiled from their



paradisiacal homeland can never reside in a heavenly Eden again. Unlike Moore's speaker who contemplates settling in the peaceful woods and propagating the New World through unification with a potential paramour, Kidd's speaker recognizes not only that his time in Canada's Elysium is finite but also that the idyllic Canadian scene is a fleeting illusion. As Campbell observes, Kidd's use of "conditional words such as 'seemed' and 'as if'" as early as the third stanza emphasizes that "the poet's dream of sharing this garden with an Indian Eve free from a 'tyrant hand' [Kidd] (32) is already impossible" and that the "myth of the restoration of Eden is only a myth" ("A Richer Variegated Vest" 43). Throughout *The Huron Chief*, temporal shifts are used for several reasons: they make it difficult to distinguish speaker from poet, they call into question the historical context to which the poem refers,<sup>84</sup> and, most significantly, they work to reiterate that Canada is at once a heavenly paradise and an earthly purgatory. This tendency to oscillate between competing visions of the Canadian hinterlandscape can be explained this way: by bringing the pre- and the postlapsarian condition of the New World into close dramatic contact in the poem, Kidd emphasizes the damage done to Native society by the fallen settler Imperial power.

Similar to his Irish contemporary, Jameson, Kidd visited several Native regions and recognized a dire dilemma: imperial advancement and European settlement in Canada came at a detrimental cost to the Huron population, its culture, and its idyllic territory. For Kidd, the process of civilization in North America was a mixed blessing (Steele, *Canadian Poetry in English* 124), and he reveals his displeasure with Europeans and their customs by using unflattering language such as "artificial," "polished," "cold,"

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<sup>84</sup> In his discussion of the poem, Bentley notes that its "context is both the past and present" (Introduction, *HCOP* xxi). It is at once "set at the end of the War of 1812 (when Tecumseh [...] was of course killed)," as well as "in the 1820s (when Archdeacon Mountain was in ascendancy in Lower Canada)" (xx-xxi).

“mawkish,” and “studied” to describe them (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xv). Stating “That Europe’s pomp [he’d] quick resign, / To dwell within [the Chief’s] groves of pine” (Kidd, *HCOP* 14: 319-20), Kidd’s speaker demonstrates that his allegiance has shifted (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xxiii). The repeated construction of binary oppositions stresses further that the speaker favours “[n]atural decorum [...] above European formality: the quiet life above the ambitious; Ta-poo-ka above ‘eastern beauties’; peaceful pursuits above greedy plundering; Indian generosity above sophisticated treachery; the religion of the forest and stream above sectarian missionary enterprise” (Klinck, “Adam Kidd” 502). More important, Kidd was alert to a central point of comparison: much like the Irish, the Hurons were “outcasts of the human race” (Kidd, *HCOP* 48: 1378), as the Natives too were driven from their land and forced to endure religious persecution. To foreground this shared history, Kidd catalogues numerous factual incidents of white cruelty toward the Natives and links their story of woe “indirectly through language and form to his ‘oppressed Ireland’” (Edwards, *DCB* 376).

Bentley too has observed that “a history of political and cultural repression was one of the links that connected the Hurons and the Irish in Kidd’s mind” (*Mimic Fires* 163). This cultural linkage is remarked generally by Dinal Déiseach, who points to a Chief of the Ojibway Tribe who claimed “that of all the people who came from Europe the Irish seem to have understood the Indians best” (O’Driscoll and Reynolds, Introduction xvii). As an oppressed Irishman, Kidd empathized with the plight of the “innocent” and “friendly” Natives and championed their way of life while simultaneously “condemning the missionary activities of European ‘Creeds-men’ (1251)” (Bentley, *Early Long Poems* 293). Early in the poem, Kidd “compares the freedom and instinctive justice enjoyed by the Hurons to that enjoyed by the Irish peoples before the introduction by their

conquerors of plantations, penal laws and enclosures” (Holmgren, *Native Muses* 77). For example, the speaker is reminded of his peaceful childhood in Ireland when he overhears the Huron Queen’s song about the “Happy and blest” (Kidd, *HCOP* 6: 41) days she shared with her kin prior to the introduction of the suppressive colonial enterprise. In that Golden Era, the Hurons were “Undisturbed” (6: 61) and enjoyed a life of ease, “delight” (6: 43), and abundant “pleasure” (6: 42). However, because European missionaries believed they possessed “A nigher way to march to heaven” (44: 1258), they planted in the Dominion’s Edenic garden “Sectarian seeds, which rankly grew” (42: 1250). Consequently, their attempt to convert the Hurons ushered in the ravages of war and the ruthlessness of exploitation (Steele, *Canadian Poetry in English* 136), which are also conditions of post-conquest Ireland. Kidd denounces the hypocrisy of Europeans who exploited the Hurons and the Irish in the name of religion (124) and points to the irony of attempting to “disseminate Christianity [and] to propagate the gospel—amongst the people who already possess moral and spiritual qualities that are equal or superior to those of the Christians” (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xix). By drawing parallels between the wrongs Ireland suffered at the hands of the British and the plight of the Hurons, Kidd advances the argument that his homeland was not to blame for its downfall. Instead, Ireland, like the Hurons, was a victim of “Europe’s crimes, and Europe’s errors” (Kidd, *HCOP* 38: 1078). This conviction, along with the speaker’s newly acquired knowledge of the Hurons’ insurmountable “sorrow[s]” (9: 145), formulates the boon of wisdom Kidd is compelled to disseminate to the Irish and colonizers in both his native and his adopted homes.

Because of their geographical proximity to America, the peaceable Hurons are also under constant threat of invasion (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 163) from their rivalling

neighbours. On several occasions, Kidd cautions his readers that Canada's idyllic promised land risks extinction and "must be protected from commercial exploitation and pollution by the likes of James Buchanan, the British Consul in New York whom the poet attacks [...] for advocating 'Free Trade' in the form of 'opening the St Lawrence to all nations,' not least the United States" (*Gay]Grey Moose* 165). Kidd solidifies his position that America was "a more hostile environment than Canada for the Native peoples" (*Mimic Fires* 163) in a footnote at line 1256 and declares in his Preface that "Many of the Indian Tribes have emigrated into Canada — and are now prospering, and happily enjoying the manly protection of the British Government" (*HCOP* 3). Such a statement could be interpreted as an endorsement of Irish emigration to Canada. As Holmgren notes, "If [...] Kidd's Irish readers were invited to draw comparisons between the history of white mistreatment of Hurons and English misrule in Ireland, then his endorsement of Canada as a refuge for native Americans from the injustices and intolerance characteristic of life in the United States was also a message for emigrants fleeing an earthly hell of poverty and persecution in Ireland" (*Native Muses* 12). Indeed, Kidd recognized, as did his successors Jameson and Thomas D'Arcy McGee, that the treatment of Protestant and Catholic Irish in Canada was vastly superior to that in America. And if a compliment to "the British Government" was necessary to that all-important point, then so be it.

In simultaneously encouraging Irish immigration to Canada and away from the unruly American territory, Kidd reinforces Weld's and Moore's bleak and unflattering portrayals of the Republic. Much like his Irish predecessors, Kidd depicts Americans as covetous, distrustful, and solipsistic. With "kind words" (Kidd, *HCOP* 55: 1575) and "artful smiles" (55: 1577), the "cold — unfeeling — Christian whites" (52: 1492), American interlopers, deceive the Hurons into believing they are honourable and that

they wish to do no harm to them. The duplicitous nature of these “white usurper[s]” (52: 1500), however, is unmasked at the close of the poem. As “foul invaders” (52: 1491), Americans bring not peace but “misery” (55: 1578) to the Hurons whose “rights” (52: 1491) they strip, whose homes they ravage, and whose race they seek to annihilate (52: 1493-94). Thus, America is vilified as the seat of corruption and sin, and as a territory that breeds violence and vengeance in its demonic citizens. Moreover, Kidd suggests that the Hurons’ Edenic existence is transformed into a hellish wasteland as a result of the incursions of evil white missionaries from the south (48: 1375-77) (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 163). While the wedding sequence at the end of the poem hints that Canada’s paradise will be restored with the return of Adam (Alkwanwaugh) and Eve (Ta-poo-ka), whose marriage is conducted under the watchful eye of a benevolent god (Skenandow), things turn tragic in an epic battle sequence that echoes “Milton’s War in Heaven” (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xxviii). Casting Tecumseh as a true Christ-like figure and “the Christian foe-men, three” (Kidd, *HCOP* 47: 1357) as “a demonic version of [... the] unholy trinity of Satan, Sin, and Death” (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xxvii), Kidd creates an allegorical confrontation between virtue and vice. In the aftermath of the conflict in which Huron homes are destroyed and Alkwanwaugh and Ta-poo-ka are massacred, the righteous Tecumseh and Skenandow determine to release “The captive *three*” (Kidd, *HCOP* 58: 1638), asking only that they no “further roam, / To rob the Indian of his home” (56: 1593-94). However, the sinister American invaders later ambush the forgiving and unassuming Native leaders, confirming that there is “no end to the treachery and destructiveness of the white man” (Bentley, Introduction, *HCOP* xxx). Consequently, Kidd’s speaker does not ascend out of Hell. Instead, his journey ends in it. Because *The Huron Chief* ends on a “less than fully positive” note, it is likely that Kidd

“harboured certain misgivings about the present and future state of society in [Canada]” (Bentley, *Mnemographia* 134). But it is only when influenced by American Republicanism, with its infectious intolerance, chauvinism, and corruption, that Canada’s paradise is as transitory and finite as was Ireland’s. If shielded from America’s caustic influence, Canada could emerge as a veritable Elysium much like the former state of Ireland prior to the infiltration of British oppression and domination.

As was the case with the works of the four writers previously discussed, Kidd’s *The Huron Chief* serves a didactic function. His message is clear: a similar fate suffered by Ireland due to British domination will befall Canada if its citizens are not cautious of the infectious influence of its rebellious and unlawful neighbour to the south. This prophetic warning, which is confirmed at the close of *The Huron Chief*, is of particular significance as it anticipates McGee’s adamant endorsement of Confederation on similar grounds. In fact, Kidd’s decision to include Tecumseh (1768-1813) in the battle sequence that closes the poem may well have been deliberate (despite the apparent anachronism), as it would oblige readers to draw parallels between the Creeds-men’s invasion of the Huron encampment and the American assault on the infant colony in the war of 1812. By demonstrating that the Americans will continue to betray the Hurons, Kidd emphasizes the warning that until Canada secures its autonomy, the ever-looming threat of annexation will not subside. Thus, the collapse of the Canadian earthly paradise is inevitable if preventative measures and due diligence are not practiced. Given that *The Huron Chief* and much of Kidd’s journalism stress the poet’s commitment to protecting the interests of his adopted home, it can be speculated that Irishman Kidd would have been a staunch promoter of Confederation and an ardent Canadian nationalist.

In their Introduction to *The Untold Story: The Irish in Canada*, Robert O’Driscoll and Lorna Reynolds maintain that “a nation without a sense of its own history is no nation at all, but merely a conglomerate of individuals held together by ignorance, amnesia, and the prospect of mutual manipulation. Nations, though, like individuals, often operate out of a selective memory, and history is sometimes defined by certain interest groups to the exclusion of others” (xix). This declaration can certainly be applied to the exclusionary treatment of the Irish in Canada during the nineteenth century. It is particularly significant when discussing Kidd and *HCOP* for two reasons. Firstly, it was in reaction to the Anglo-Colonial ignorance of Native culture that Kidd set out to provide an accurate documentation of Native existence in Canada. Secondly, it is because of the selective memory of Kidd’s contemporaries as well as our own that a falsely contrived persona of Kidd as a ‘radical Irishman’ has been sustained by scholars for two centuries. Relying heavily for evidence on “stories about Kidd as in *The Huron Chief* itself” (Bentley, *Mimic Fires* 154) to conclude that “through his attitudes and activities [Kidd] placed himself in opposition to the high centres of secular and ecclesiastical authority in Lower Canada and the United States” (154), and by failing to question the biased historical context out of which such views emerged, critics resurrect the stereotypical image of the Irish as radical and impose it on Kidd. Taking their cue from Bentley, such critics as Campbell, Edwards, Holmgren, MacDonald, and Mazoff perpetuate the myth of the Irish as rebellious, the stereotype that was transferred to the Canadian literary imagination through nineteenth-century English bigotry, arrogance, prejudice, and ignorance. As this detailed analysis of contemporary reviews and editorials, prefatory material, miscellaneous short poems, and *The Huron Chief* has shown, Kidd’s reputed poor social standing is in large part a critical construction, a misprisioning that maintains

prejudice about the Irish. For Kidd, the detrimental label of the 'radical Irishman' continues to thwart unbiased critical evaluation of his work. Until critics discard the speculative biographical lens through which they read his poetry, the merits of Kidd's exploration of the nuances of dispossession, cultural oppression, and the complexities of the Irish emigrant experience in Canada will remain undervalued.



## **CONCLUSION**

Calling Canada Home: Challenging Stereotypes and Reconstructing the  
Irish-Canadian Past in Post-Confederation Canada

The nineteenth century saw the continuing production of works by Irish-Canadian authors who made the Irish immigrant experience in Canada their main subject. In the mid-nineteenth century, immigration patterns changed, with the majority of the Irish making the United States their preferred North American destination.<sup>1</sup> As a result, works by mid-to-late nineteenth-century Irish-Canadian writers became less about trying to encourage immigration to Canada and more about “celebrat[ing] the liberties and prosperity” (Holmgren, *Native Muses* iii) recently immigrated Irish men and women enjoyed in Canada. These works “also helped to establish a Canadian national [literature] which celebrated the unique landscape, history and cultures of the country” (iii). Isabella Valancy Crawford, Kathleen (Kit) Coleman, Nicholas Flood Davin, Thomas D’Arcy McGee, James McCarroll (a.k.a. Terry Finnegan), and Standish O’Grady played pivotal roles in cultivating and shaping perceptions of the Irish in nineteenth-century Canada via historical accounts and political speeches, as well as in poetry and prose. Collectively, their works represent the distinct yet diverse ways the Irish perceived their role in the burgeoning country and emphasize the place the Irish made for themselves as active participants in the formation of a new ‘Canadian Irish’ identity.

Considered “the severest and almost the only negative estimation of Canada” (Steele, *Canadian Poetry in English* 223), O’Grady’s long poem *The Emigrant* (1842) expressed a deep-seated cynicism regarding immigration to Canada, a firm resistance to

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<sup>1</sup> Canada ceased to be a primary transatlantic destination in part because by the 1850s cheap land was scarce, all good arable land was occupied, the Emigrant Tax had doubled, major urbanization and industrialization had not yet occurred, and adequate economic development required to support such a massive influx of immigrants was lacking (Houston and Smyth, *Irish Emigration* 26, 25). Furthermore, the United States had established better networks to aid new immigrants. The Canadian Census of 1871 indicates that Irish-Canadians, at 850,000, comprised a quarter of the national population (188-89); however, their numbers declined dramatically thereafter. Throughout the twentieth century, Canada attracted only a small fraction of the Irish migrant stream, with Britain and the United States remaining the primary destinations.

integration, and an unwillingness to substitute or amalgamate Old and New World traditions. Indeed, O'Grady's work shares several features and preoccupations that were seen in MacConmara's verse, which was composed a century before. Both departed from Ireland reluctantly and struggled unsuccessfully to combat a profound sense of cultural displacement. As a result, a melancholy tone caused by an unwavering nostalgia for the homeland pervades their works. By making repeated references to Ireland, its traditions, and legends, their speakers also highlight their limiting, enduring, and acute sense of dislocation. Yet, while MacConmara's *The Adventures of a Luckless Fellow* arrives at the resounding conclusion that the Irish are best served if they stay in Erin, O'Grady acknowledges that eventually "[t]his expanded and noble continent will no doubt furnish fit matter for the Muse" (Preface, *The Emigrant* n.p.), a sentiment Davin echoes years later.<sup>2</sup> Despite this optimistic note, O'Grady warns potential immigrants against exaggerated expectations and aims to "[correct] the propagandistic misconceptions of Canada purveyed in Cattermole's *Emigration* (1831) and other works" (Bentley, *Mnemographia* 80), such as those published by Moore and Jameson. O'Grady, like MacConmara, felt exiled and was unable to achieve a true sense of integration; however, his speaker recognizes the necessity of emigration for some and therefore encourages immigrants to choose Upper rather than Lower Canada as their new home.

O'Grady's hyphenated nationality, employed here to signify an inability to amalgamate Old and New World allegiances, preoccupations, and traditions, appears to be substituted in Irish-Canadian writing only following Confederation. By then it has evolved into a more accommodated double identity, possessing a middle ground and

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<sup>2</sup> This statement anticipates the platform of the Canada First movement, as well as sentiments expressed by Davin some forty years later in his *Eos: A Prairie Dream and Other Poems* (1884).

expressing a double vision, where subject and writer find a balance between loyalties to homeland and adopted home. Such Irish immigrants shift their focus from a need to safeguard memories of Ireland to recognizing that an authentic 'Canadian Irish' identity is one that acknowledges that to be Irish is an essential part of being Canadian. The works of such post-Confederation Canadian Irish writers no longer centre on homesickness and alienation. Instead, they celebrate Canada's national and imperial accomplishments. According to Michele Holmgren, W.H. New, and Katrin Urschel by the eighteen-eighties, the frequency of allusions to Irish subject matters and overt Irish frames of reference began to decline in Canadian poetry and fiction ("Ossian Abroad" 67; 540; Abstract). This statement, however, implies that the experience of the Irish in Canada was strictly one of assimilation. The reality is that the process did not involve the discarding of a former identity. Instead, it prefigured the distinctively Canadian acculturation process of reciprocal adaptation (neither melting pot nor multiculturalism), an immigrant people's contributing to the forging of an identity and voice that fused Irish and Canadian. Indeed, it was not that the Irish had to become more Canadian but that to be Canadian began to carry with it certain characteristics or influences that were Irish. The Irish continued to contribute their distinctive skills and energy to the creation of the newly emerging nation;<sup>3</sup> they had a profound impact on organized politics,<sup>4</sup> and they

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<sup>3</sup> A significant number of Irishmen aided in the construction of wharves, warehouses, and railways, as well as the Shubenacadie Canal in Nova Scotia, and "a new fortification on Citadel Hill, beginning in 1828 and continuing for thirty years" (Punch, "Gentle as the Snow" 217). The majority of those labourers who helped build the Rideau Canal (1826-1832) were Irish; hundreds of them died of malaria or work-related injuries. In 2002, a Celtic cross was erected in their honour in Douglas R. Fluhner Park in Kingston. In addition, the Irish were also part of the timber industry and worked as unskilled labourers in towns and cities (W. Baker 62).

<sup>4</sup> Davin, known as the voice of the North West, was the first MP for Assiniboia West, and McGee was elected to the first Canadian Parliament in 1867.

were prominent in journalism,<sup>5</sup> economics, and religion<sup>6</sup> (Elliot, *Irish Migrants* 6; Dobbs, “Ireland and the Irish Canadians” 4): “[t]o a remarkable degree, [the existing culture] underwent assimilation to [the Irish]” (Leeds and Lansdowne qtd. in W. Baker 68).

The two critical changes occurring in the socio-political environment of mid-century Canada that anticipated and inspired the shift from ‘double division’ to ‘double vision’ seen in Irish-Canadian literature were Confederation and the Canada First movement. Also responsible for establishing and solidifying this trend that eventually led to the development of Canada’s evolving national identity (an inevitably continuing process in a country such as ours) were three Irishmen who left their imprint on the Canadian literary and cultural fabric: Nicholas Flood Davin, James McCarroll, and Thomas D’Arcy McGee. At the time that these writers appeared on the scene, Canada was witnessing a growing sense of nationalism, which in its encouragement of unity amidst diversity resulted in the formation of the federation of the provinces in 1867.

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<sup>5</sup> Between the 1820s and 1860s, Irish-Canadians found representation of their politico-religious views and support for their literary ambitions in a series of newspapers conceived or edited by fellow Irishmen, including *The Vindicator* (1828- ), *Literary Garland* (1838-1851), *Canadian Freeman* (1825-34), *Canadian Correspondent* (1832-37), *Toronto Mirror* (1837-1865/66), and *Irish Canadian* (1863-1892). The most outspoken of Irish newspapers in Canada, *The Vindicator*, promoted O’Connell’s non-violent Catholic Emancipation movement and welcomed poetry that asserted Irish Catholic rights. The *Literary Garland* was conceived by Irishman John Lovell and John Gibson and published works by Irish-born Anna Brownell Jameson and Rosanna Leprohon, who was of Irish-Catholic descent. Amalgamating information published in Irish newspapers, *Toronto Mirror* aimed to preserve Irish culture and heritage by including reports on current events in Ireland, speeches by O’Connell, articles on Irish history and geography, and publications of Irish poetry and fiction (Fahey 813). A mouthpiece for the Hibernian Benevolent Society, the *Irish Canadian* was edited by Irishman Patrick Boyle and was the longest running ethnic Irish newspaper. It published works by Irishmen such as McCarroll.

<sup>6</sup> The transference of the Orange Order (a political and religious organization that supported Protestant institutions and defended the British constitutional monarchy), its traditions, and its Lodges from Ireland to the Dominion by Ogle Robert Gowan in 1815 had a resounding effect on the Canadian politico-religious landscape. Orange Lodges and the values they espoused evolved in the New World and eventually became part of the Canadian experience. For example, by the turn of the twentieth century, more lodges existed in Canada than in Ireland (Houston and Smyth, *Irish Emigration* 187). Within the last decades of the century, the ideals upheld by the Orange Order were being adopted by one-third of all Canadian English-speaking men, including “John A. Macdonald, J.J. Abbott, and Mackenzie Bowell, [as well as] members of Parliament, premiers, mayors, reeves, councillors, wardens and members of legislative assemblies” (Conway 90).

Nationhood was further solidified by the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and yet further encouraged by the American Civil War, a military threat that awoke in Canadians a need for common defence to protect them from the acute possibility of invasion along its borders by the powerful Union Army. These events, along with the Fenian invasion in 1866, reinforced support for Confederation.<sup>7</sup> Significantly, McGee, who was vehemently opposed to the Fenian organization,<sup>8</sup> was instrumental in convincing the Irish population to support Confederation.<sup>9</sup> Like Moore, whom he admired and discusses in several speeches and addresses collected in *D'Arcy McGee: A Collection of Speeches and Addresses* (1937), McGee eventually recognized that Ireland's attempt to gain freedom from its British oppressors through revolutionary means would be futile, and he saw Canada, not America, as the solution to Ireland's

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<sup>7</sup> Although the 1866 Fenian invasion of Canada is often viewed in hindsight as something of a fiasco, with "comic-opera overtones" (Kirwin 529), the uncoordinated and disastrous affair alarmed Canadians at the time. Because Great Britain stubbornly insisted on withdrawing its British defences from Canada following the American Civil War, the Fenian invasion was "an exploitable crisis" indeed (Finlay and Sprague 167). Responsible in large part for the embarrassing debacle was the fact that the Fenians relied on sympathetic French Canadians and disaffected Irish Catholics to join them in the battle to free themselves and their homeland from their British oppressors (Kirwin 528). Instead, Irish-Canadians "responded patriotically to the crisis" (530) by viewing the rebellion as an opportunity to solidify their allegiance and loyalty to Canada. According to William Kirwin, "[t]he Irish in Canada, it seemed, had been mollified, if not transformed, into loyal subjects, primarily as a result of an enlightened immigration policy that had offered conditions which approached those of full citizenship, a policy that McGee had done much to formulate" (528). Significantly, the large support for Confederation was directly linked to the Fenian invasion: "[t]o be against the confederation proposals was the equivalent to being pro-Fenian, republican and disloyal" (Ellis 537). Thus, anti-Fenianism was openly advocated. It inspired, according to Peter Berresford Ellis, J.L. Finlay and D.N. Sprague, and Kirwin, Canadian nationalism and led to Confederation (537; 167; 530). Prior to the attack on Canada, little enthusiasm regarding Confederation had been shown. A sense of nationhood arose from the fact that Canadian volunteers had banded together to fight the enemy attack without British aid, generating "a confidence that they could rely increasingly on their own initiative" (Kirwin 530).

<sup>8</sup> Because the fortunes of Irish-Canadians had become increasingly favourable as their economic and social conditions improved, they began to gain the respect of their fellow Canadians. If they were to support the Fenians, old suspicions and animosity could have been ignited.

<sup>9</sup> The constitution bore many marks of his influence, especially in the clauses which attempted to protect the rights of religious minorities.

problems at home and for its emigrants.<sup>10</sup> For McGee, Canada could bring together disparate ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups, offering a true sense of liberty and equality to immigrants, particularly those from Ireland.

This idea of egalitarian freedom, as well as the discovery that Canada was a worthy and inspiring muse, was upheld by McGee and Davin, who were integral in cultivating and shaping perceptions of the Irish in nineteenth-century Canada and thus helped ‘Canadian Irish’ writers such as Crawford to achieve a measure of success and acceptance. Considered an early visionary and founding father of Confederation, McGee has long been associated with Canadian political and literary nationalism. Recognizing that the construction of a new nationality could be achieved not only through the unification of the provinces but also by developing a distinctive Canadian literature, McGee became a spokesperson for a short-lived, if highly influential, patriotic movement known as Canada First. In the late 1860s and 1870s, this movement set out to foster and promote a Canadian national spirit. In *Canada First; or, Our New Nationality* (Toronto, 1871), one of the leaders of the movement, W.A. Foster, outlined its social, creative, and political objectives: to stimulate a sense of pride in what the pioneering community had accomplished in Canada, to advance literature and the arts, and to attain a mature political position either as an independent nation or as part of a federation with the British Empire (Story 146).

Inspired by this platform, McGee insisted that “there could be no new nationality without a national literature” (Ballstadt) in Canada. As an Irishman whose culture and

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<sup>10</sup> McGee, who was becoming increasingly critical of his adopted home, encouraged his fellow Irishmen to choose Canada over the United States, particularly because it recognized Catholic rights. “Canada seemed, to him, to offer an alternative to England’s oppression, on the one hand, and American exploitation on the other” (Kirwin 533).

traditions were continually under threat by the British, McGee instigated and encouraged cohesion amongst those who contributed to Canadian letters as a way to create a Canadian identity that would protect them from, in O'Driscoll and Reynolds's words, such "menacing agents" as the United States and Britain (xiii). In "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion" (1867) and his Preface to *Canadian Ballads and Occasional Verses* (1858), McGee argues that in order to inspire national pride and unity, historical works and ballads that reflect the characteristics, geography, and history of the Canadian people must be composed (Ballstadt). McGee encouraged Canadians to embrace a "new patriotism" that, acting as a "solvent," would allow them to *blend* their different nationalities (McGee, "An Exception Answered"). McGee's encouragement of synthesis shows that the generalizations made by Holmgren, New, and Urschel are misleading, as they maintain that works by post-Confederation Canadian Irish writers indicate that they became wholly Canadian by divorcing themselves from their Irish past. This was certainly not the case for Crawford. In both her poetry and short fiction, Crawford continues to include commentary on Ireland, while simultaneously celebrating the merits of and expressing allegiance to her new home. What is also significant is that, unlike Kidd and O'Grady, when Crawford discusses Ireland, her perception of it is not an idealized one and her tone is not nostalgic. Instead, there is an insistence that Irish immigrants should redirect their focus away from what could have been for Ireland to what shall be and is in Canada.

Two important works that confirm further the misleading tendency of those claims made by Holmgren, New, and Urschel and that underscore the falsity of the myth that the Irish experienced little success in nineteenth-century Canada are Davin's *The Irishman in Canada* (1877) and *Eos: A Prairie Dream, and Other Poems* (1884). In the first, Davin,



who was a relatively prominent poet and journalist, as well as a colourful conservative, nationalist, and imperialist, provides a detailed account of Canada's Irish settlers. Considered to be Davin's most important work, this 700-page anecdotal history narrates the significant contributions Irishmen made to all facets of Canadian life, including politics, economics, culture, and communal development and well-being. In producing this compendium, Davin wanted to "sweep aside misconceptions, to explode cherished fallacies, to point out the truth, and so raise the self-respect of every person of Irish blood in Canada" (*The Irishman in Canada* 3). He not only encouraged all Irish immigrants to strive for a better future in their new home but also challenged those who were prejudiced against the Irish to reassess their perceptions in light of the irrefutable proof he provided. In the title poem "Eos: A Prairie Dream," Davin assessed the merits of Canada as an adopted home for the Irish. He draws on classical myth as his speaker travels in a chariot from Ireland to Canada. From his aerial point of view, the speaker surveys the Canadian landscape from coast to coast. Comparing new and old forms of civic life, the speaker "denounce[s] the brutish characteristics brought out by [American-style] democratic rule" (Story 203). However, he comes to the conclusion that although it is still in its infancy, Canada not only presents to Irish poets the promise of creative inspiration, and to Irish politicians a model vastly superior to American Republicanism, but also that reveals the potential for "wisdom [that] will come with maturity" (203).

Noticeably absent from Davin's decisive study is James McCarroll, who was instrumental in Crawford's success in the United States, as he championed the publication of her short stories (Peterman, *James McCarroll* 31).<sup>11</sup> A model of the

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<sup>11</sup> A regular contributor to Frank Leslie's New York publications, Crawford and her work were familiar to McCarroll, who worked as an editor for Leslie in New York.

achievements a literary Irishman could accomplish in the Dominion (and later also in the Republic), McCarroll was influential in both political and literary circles. Labelled a poet, story writer, editor, journalist, literary critic, satirist, and newspaper contributor and correspondent, he was much admired and received resounding support for his verse and prose. Impassioned by the plight of the Irish and the wrongs committed against them in the Old World, McCarroll made it his aim in *Letters of Terry Finnegan, to the Hon. D'Arcy McGee* to draw attention to the state of the Irish in Canada, a people whom he held "close to his heart" (22).<sup>12</sup> By creating the persona of Terry Finnegan, a proud Irishman graced with poetical talent, "McCarroll drew upon the conventional stage Irishman" and self-consciously positioned himself as the voice of the future for the Irish in Canada (22). In Michael Peterman's words, "the emergence of the Terry Finnegan phenomenon can be linked directly to the development of a culture of political commentary and social satire that flourished in Toronto during the Confederation decade"(20).

Collectively in their distinct ways, these three Irish immigrants did much to alter the socio-political and literary climate of post-Confederation Canada. More importantly, they also helped to reshape the unflattering image of the Irish in Canada to reflect a more favourably representational portrait. This was accomplished primarily in their writings and political activities, but also in their modelling of the success that could be attained by the Irish in Canada.<sup>13</sup> Their lives and works offered their fellow country men and women

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<sup>12</sup> In these letters, McCarroll also discussed with McGee the behaviour and interests of both Irish Catholics and Protestants in Canada, and, with caution, he counselled his hero on his political pursuits (Peterman 22).

<sup>13</sup> Davin had a successful career in politics, which led to close associations with such key historical figures as Louis Riel and Sir John A. Macdonald. While living in Regina, he lobbied for parliamentary representation of the North-West Territories. Davin's request for assistance, expansion, and representation was granted when he became the representative for the Assiniboia West. The terminal point of Davin's political career, however, was marked by a series of harsh disappointments. Eventually, an erratic and

hope and inspiration, as they proved that the obstacles that were once firmly in place as a consequence of anti-Irish bias transferred from the Old World could be overcome and eventually eliminated in the New. Such prejudice against the Irish was minimized as a result of the public's exposure to respectable, accomplished, and influential figures such as Davin, McCarroll, and McGee. Had these Irishmen not contributed a strong strand to Canadian culture as it was developing, had they not in their lives contradicted the prejudice and stereotyping against the Irish, and had they not in fact made such bigotry work for them, it is questionable whether Canadian Irish writers such as Crawford would have met with the same degree of national and international success.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, Crawford was familiar with each of these men<sup>15</sup> and she, along with all the other Canadian Irish writers who followed, owes a great deal to them.<sup>16</sup>

In works of prose and verse, Crawford champions those unique elements deemed essential to the Canadian experience: she highlights the vast, majestic, and diverse geographical landscape; the freedom and mobility achieved with the transcontinental

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depressed Davin committed suicide. It is also true that although McCarroll and Crawford managed to make successful literary careers in Canada and the United States, that success was by no means lavish.

<sup>14</sup> In 1884, Crawford's *Old Spookses' Pass, Malcolm's Katie, and Other Poems* (1884) was published. It received critical praise within and without Canada, and her verse and prose received impressive representation in various newspapers. Early in her career, Crawford's work appeared in the *Favourite* and the *Toronto Mail*. In her most productive period (1879-1887), Crawford contributed numerous serial novels, novellas and popular verse to Toronto and New York publications, including *The Globe* and *The Evening Telegram*, where her poems continued to be published by-monthly for the next seven years, and to various of Frank Leslie's North-American publications.

<sup>15</sup> According to Robert Alan Burns, Crawford produced a parodic fragment that was intended as a sequel to Davin's *Eos: A Prairie Dream* and that lampoons its author. Burns suggests that Crawford may have resented Davin's conservative leanings, as well as his ability to publish inferior work "in an attractive format free of the sort of printer's errors that appeared on nearly every page of *Old Spookses' Pass*" ("Crawford, Davin"). Although Davin worked for the *Mail*, which published Crawford's poetry, it is likely that the two never met because he became affiliated with the paper only later. However, Crawford knew of Davin, both as a poet and as a politician, and she may have followed his career closely.

<sup>16</sup> In fact, McGee's efforts to channel the aspirations of Canadian artistic talent in a way that would distinguish Canadian letters and provide Canadians with a unique voice could be said to have prepared the way for the fruitful literary movement of the 1880s, which included native poets Charles G.D. Roberts, Bliss Carman, William Wilfred Campbell, Archibald Lampman, Duncan Campbell Scott, and, most importantly for present purposes, Crawford.

railway that connects a dispersed nation; the racially mixed environment that continues to define Canada; the sense of brotherhood that is actualized when true democratic equality is practiced; even the climatic variations; and the prosperity achieved through tempered industry and commerce. Significantly, the features that Crawford catalogues as Canadian are the same as those that Weld, Moore, Jameson, and Kidd explored as distinguishing Canada from its Republican neighbour. Additionally, Crawford expresses a balanced loyalty to Ireland and Canada, as well as concern for their respective futures, in her extensive verse. Significantly, nostalgia for the homeland is absent, and the once conflicting and competing 'Irish-Canadian' identity most prevalent in Kidd is reformulated as a complimentary and non-hyphenated 'Canadian Irish' identity. Unlike her Irish predecessor, Crawford does not oscillate between discussions of Old World and New in any single poem; thus, the habit of drawing comparisons between Ireland and Canada to determine the superiority or inferiority of one over the other is not a component of her writing. Consequently, the internalized double division that is underscored by such a practice has been replaced with a reconciled double vision, where homeland and adopted home are discussed in separate verses. Although Crawford's poetry is as diverse in subject matter as her prose fiction, such an overriding narrative and social commentary can be said to be part of her writing.<sup>17</sup>

In some of her verse, a patriotic Crawford highlights qualities in Canada's social and physical geography that she deems admirable. Additionally, she shares with her readers an intimate knowledge of nature and embraces the strange newness of her surroundings, unlike Irishmen such as MacConmara and O'Grady who regarded similar

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<sup>17</sup> A similar observation is outlined by Robert Alan Burns in "The Poet in Her Time: Isabella Valancy Crawford's Social, Economic, and Political Views."

scenery with disdain. However, despite frequent optimistic references, Crawford also engages in thought-provoking commentary on the potential flaws inherent in Canada's socio-political and economic systems, an argument that recalls similar commentary made by Weld, Moore, Jameson, and Kidd. Of primary concern is the notion that industrial expansion and commercialism have a dehumanizing effect and lead to isolation, greed, and the destruction of nature. The message in such poems is a passionate plea for brotherhood, pacifism, and respect in using the resources of the natural world.

Crawford's anti-imperialism is also evident in poems that focus on Ireland. In "Erin's Warning," for example, she addresses the dire situation in Ireland, which is caused by unrelenting famine, unstable politics, and a rise in violence and acts of terrorism (R. A. Burns, "The Poet in Her Time"). In response to the crisis in Ireland, Crawford published "A Hungry Day," which openly encourages the victims of famine to relocate to Canada where opportunity and success await those who work hard and sacrifice ("The Poet in Her Time"). In *Malcolm's Katie*<sup>18</sup> and "The Coming Days," Crawford presents her readers with an example of a triumphant settler experience as well as an optimistic prophecy of Canada's future. The image of Canada she conveys in such works is congruent with the one described and constructed by Weld, Moore, Jameson, and Kidd.

In 1949, nearly a century after McGee, one of the Fathers of Confederation, declared Canada "'the freest country left to Irishmen on the face of the earth'" (qtd. in Introduction, O'Driscoll and Reynolds xv), Lester B. Pearson pointed to Ireland as "'one of the mother countries of Canada'" (qtd. in Introduction, O'Driscoll and Reynolds xvi).

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<sup>18</sup> Crawford's long poem closes with an Edenic vision of Canada that suggests emigration offers hope, opportunity, and regeneration. Although it is about Scottish (if therefore Celtic) immigrants, it is nevertheless a poem about triumphant transplantation and adaptation written by an Irish immigrant.

The continuity represented by these two statements is authoritative testimony to the extent to which the Irish influenced the shaping of our nation's history, culture, and consciousness. Significantly, the first half of the twentieth century witnessed a favourable transformation in public opinion regarding the Irish and those of Irish ancestry, who, in that time, made up approximately one-third of the Canadian population (xiii).<sup>19</sup> Observed with the inauguration of the new century was a substantial decline in hostility between Irish and non-Irish Canadians. Perhaps the dissipation of this tension was partially a result of the fact that Irish immigration to Canada dropped substantially when the majority of the Irish began selecting the United States as their destination of first choice. As a result, the Irish were replaced by immigrants from central and Eastern Europe. Ireland achieved a measure of self-government in 1922, and this development also contributed to the decrease in Irish emigration. Removed from the unfortunate spotlight of inevitable racial discrimination against new immigrants, the Irish in Canada were better able to adapt successfully to the existing Canadian society that, as this thesis has argued, had itself undergone adaptation to the Irish.

In the twentieth century, the Canadian Irish experience continued to be more about adaptation and establishing a place and voice than being colonized or assimilated. As stated earlier, it was not that the Irish had to become more "Canadian" but that to be Canadian came to carry with it certain definitively Irish characteristics and influences. The literature of the Modern period in Canada (say, 1920 to 1960) mirrors this change in perception. Just as Canadian identity began to be defined as that which is also inherently

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<sup>19</sup> For example, in 1909 a monument-memorial to the deaths of tens of thousands of Irish immigrants, in the form of a Celtic cross, was erected on the western end of Grosse-Ile. Furthermore, with the outset of the Great War came further change in perception, as the Irish in Canada were now seen as allies, fighting alongside other Canadians who swore allegiance to the British Crown. By the time of the Second World War, military posters in Toronto's *Globe and Mail* (29 July 1944) championed the loyal Irish Regiment of Canada, calling them the "Valiant Irish" (Horgan 603).

Irish in feature and character, discrepancies between the two broad categories of Irish and non-Irish writing reconciled their depictions of the Irish in Canada; difference is broken down in such literature and the once ‘hyphenated’ existence of the ‘Irish-Canadian’ is replaced with a wholly ‘Canadian Irish’ identity, with the Canadian Irish providing an example of a sort of anti-postcolonialism. Additionally, the inclination of Canadian Irish writers to concentrate on Irish concerns decreased; instead, the literary intention was ‘simply’ to contribute in individualistic ways to the larger body of Canadian literature. Although Irish themes and characters are not the focus of their works, such major Canadian authors of Irish descent and Catholic background as Leo Kennedy (1907-2000), Sheila Watson (1909-1998), and Morley Callaghan (1903-1990) made definitive contributions to the development of Canadian Modernism in poetry and fiction.

Equally important, texts such as Patrick Slater’s *The Yellow Briar: A Story of the Irish in the Canadian Country Side* (1933), Edward McCourt’s *Home is the Stranger* (1950), Brian Moore’s *The Luck of Ginger Coffey* (1960), and Harry J. Boyle’s *The Luck of the Irish* (1975) both explore and confirm the de-racialization of the Irish that is substantiated in the Canadian census.<sup>20</sup> Demythologizing and challenging persistent stereotypes ingrained in Canadian consciousness by canonical works of earlier Anglophile Canadian writers, Canadian Irish writers were able to establish alternate and truer images of Canadian Irishmen. Because their Irish identity was not surrendered in order for them to become part of Canadian society, such Canadian Irish writers disprove David Wilson’s claim that the Irish finally “achieved their ultimate objective” of no longer being Irish (*The Irish in Canada* 21). Instead, as Leeds and Lansdowne argue

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<sup>20</sup> 1961 marked the last time the Canadian census differentiated among Irish, English, Scots, and Welsh (MacKay; Wilson, *The Irish in Canada* 11).

more convincingly, Canadian society re-thought itself to recognize the “Irish” that had long been there as part of what defines and distinguishes Canada. In fact, the year 1962 can now be seen as something of a watershed year for the Irish in Canadian literature, as it marks the recognition of the contribution of Canadian Irish writers with the awarding of the Governor General’s Award to Irish immigrant Brian Moore for his now classic novel about the Irish immigrant experience, *The Luck of Ginger Coffey*.

The 1970s saw a renewed interest in historical representations of the Irish in Canada both in fiction and in non-fiction, an interest that continues. Not only was there a dramatic increase in the amount of work produced but the range of topics expanded as well. This revived interest was inaugurated by the reissuing in 1969 of Davin’s own classic *The Irishman in Canada* and confirmed most recently by the Governor General’s Award being presented to Peter Behrens in 2006 for *The Law of Dreams*, a novel that is set in Ireland during the worst time of the Potato Famine and ends with the immigration of its main character, Fergus, to Canada. Behrens’ novel illustrates a distinguishing feature of more recent fictional treatments of the Irish in Canada. Whether the authors are of Irish descent or not, Canadian literature no longer positions its Irish characters in a contemporary context. Instead, such authors as James Reaney in *The Donnellys: A Trilogy* (1975), Jane Urquhart in *Away* (1993), Margaret Atwood in *Alias Grace* (1996), and Wayne Johnston in *The Colony of Required Dreams* (1998), like Behrens, further probe popular myths of the Irish and Canadian Irish and reinvestigate depictions of key Irish-Canadian figures who continue to have a dark cloud cast over their stories.

Collectively, such contemporary authors revisit and rewrite the early history of the Irish in Canada as a means to introduce readers to alternative interpretations and representations of such key historical events and figures as the infamous Donnellys; the



destitute famine Irish; accused murderess Grace Marks; and Joey Smallwood, who helped persuade Newfoundland to enter into Confederation.

Although in recent decades numerous socio-cultural studies and accounts have been published in articles and books by contemporary historians in an attempt to challenge the common misconceptions about the Irish in Canada, work remains to be done in terms of investigating how later twentieth-century Canadian literature that emerged alongside these studies reflects changes in perception. Such historical fictions reflect a continuing interest in not only the varied depictions of nineteenth-century Irish-Canadians but also an intent to destabilize traditional notions and myths by reconfiguring the past. By rendering a new version of what happened, their objectives are in keeping with the continuity of Irish, Irish-Canadian, and Canadian Irish writings from the beginning to the present: to confront the stereotypes and prejudices that have surrounded Canadians' understanding of significant events in our history concerning the Irish, and to offer alternative positions to contest those false depictions. But it is not my intent in this conclusion to draw conclusions about contemporary expressions of my study's subject; rather, merely to close by giving some sense of its continuing relevance to Canadian culture.

## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX A

## “BAN CHNOIC EIREANN OIGH” OR “THE FAIR HILLS OF HOLY IRELAND”

Take a blessing from my heart to the land of my birth  
 And the fair hills of Ireland, oh!  
 And to all who survive of Eibhear’s tribe on earth  
 On the fair hills of Ireland, oh!  
 In that land so delightful the wild thrush’s lay  
 Seems to pour lament for Erin’s decay  
 Alas! Alas! Why pine I a thousand miles away  
 From the fair hills of Erin, oh!

The soil is rich and soft, the air is mild and bland,  
 Oh! The fair hills of Erin, oh!  
 Her barest rock is greener to me than this rude land –  
 Oh, the fair hills of Erin, oh!  
 Her woods are tall and straight, grove rising over grove,  
 Trees flourish in his glens below, and on her heights above –  
 Oh, in heart and soul, I shall ever, ever love  
 The fair hills of Erin, oh!

A noble tribe moreover are the now hapless Gael,  
 On the fair hills of Erin, oh!  
 A tribe in battle’s hour unused to shrink or fail  
 On the fair hills of Erin, oh!  
 For this is my lament in bitterness out-poured  
 To see them slain or scattered by Saxon sword  
 Oh, woe of woes, to see a foreign spoiler horde  
 On the fair hills of Erin, oh!

## “AODH O CELLAIG” OR “HUGH O’KELLY”

He is the merry champion who would spend the pounds, who would distribute the ale, and would set out [?] the table; who would punch in the eye any fat Englishman and would help Irishmen in time of need. He constantly has in his fist a keg, a jug, a foaming can and a stick that would bend into a curve; he wouldn't retreat from the men in Munster until the gout crippled his feet and hands.

Whoever reproached Hugh with pulling the seine or being on top of the flake, plagued by a barrow, that person is dammed and doomed if he [Hugh] comes to Ireland – the poets sanctify his fame in deeds of valour. The Irish would rather he were amongst themselves, standing in the midst of the uproar and striking fear into everybody – there now for you is a storm from the sky in Newfoundland – there's a testimonial [sic] to Aodh O Ceallaigh from me.

“AS I WAS WALKING ONE EVENING FAIR”

As I was walking one evening fair,  
*(and I lately arrived in St. John's town)*  
 I met a gang of English blades  
*(and they being subdued by the strength of their  
 enemies')*  
 I boozed and drank both late and early,  
 With those courageous “men-of-war”;  
*(And sweet it was for me to see English retreating  
 And but few Irish there.)*

I spent my fortune by being freakish,  
 Drinking, raking and playing cards;  
*(Although I had no money or jewels  
 Nor anything in the world that was of value!)*  
 Then I turned a jolly tradesman,  
 By work and labour I lived abroad;  
*(But by my soul, that's a great lie,  
 'Twas little work I did with my hands!)*

Newfoundland is a fine plantation,  
 It shall be my station till I die,  
*(Alas, I'd rather be in Ireland  
 Selling garters or taking to the woods;)*  
 Here you may find a virtuous lady  
 A smiling fair one to please your eye,  
*(A pack of whores of the worst sort,  
 May my life be carried from the sight of them!)*

I'll join in fellowship with “Jack-of-all-Trades,”  
 The last of August could I but see;  
*(But Costello knows, and he's a ship's captain.  
 That I'm as unhandy at sea as on shore!)*  
 If fortune smiles then, I'll be her darling,  
 But if she scorns my company  
*(I'll manage for myself “a little hideout”  
 And it's far from this place I'll be again.)*

Come drink a health, boys, to Royal George,  
 Our Chief commander,  
*(not blessed by Christ,  
 And let our prayers to Mother Mary be  
 That he and his mob be cut down:)*  
 We'll fear no Cannon, nor “War's Alarms,”  
 While noble George will be our guide,

*(Oh Christ! may I see the brute defeated  
By this son astray from us over in France.)*

*THE ADVENTURES OF A LUCKLESS FELLOW*

Part One

I could tell you a tale of the ancient time  
 Of deeds and names renowned in rime,  
 Of Brian Boru or the Fenians' lustre  
 Or the great MacLobus's mighty muster,  
 But the fame of these fables poor will pale  
 When the world has heard my own true tale.  
 Hard was my lot in a hapless land  
 Stricken beneath the strangers' hand,  
 Her people feebled [*sic*] and dispossessed [61]  
 And warfare wasting the blood of her best.  
 Teaching in school was my irksome trade  
 And 'tis known that that is but poorly paid,  
 But I banished my woes with wenches and wine  
 Without thought for the morrow each hour that was  
mine,

And I made no store for the time of need  
 But shilling I earned I spent with speed.  
 One night as I lay on my lonely bed  
 I thought of the dreary life I led,  
 How heavy with toil, how light my gains,  
 And better it would repay the pains  
 To work for a farmer at shovelling clay  
 Or guiding horses or driving a dray,  
 Or, better, to bide in Erin no more  
 But leave the land for a kinder shore  
 And embark with the first fair breeze that blew  
 To try my fortune in pastures new.  
 I lightly leapt from my bed next day  
 With the joy of the thought and would make no stay,  
 I eagerly grasped my stick, a stout ashen,  
 And a new felt hat with a flap in the fashion,  
 And I said farewell to each friend and neighbour, [62]  
 And to some I said it with no great labour,  
 And the first ship leaving this churlish strand  
 Should bear me, I swore, to a bounteous land  
 Where parts and learning would not be spurned,  
 Where gold was plenty and easily earned.  
 Be it known to all what the neighbours brought  
 Of victuals and drink for my support,  
 And what provisions and goods they gave  
 To pull me thro' perils by land and wave.  
 There were seven stone oatmeal and enough

Of scrapings out of the kneading-trough  
 And a big black chest so long and deep  
 'Twould answer alike for store or sleep;  
 A barrel of red potatoes too  
 That many a day would see me thro',  
 A piece of meat of a mighty size,  
 A crock of butter with salt likewise;  
 There were seven score eggs of ducks and hens  
 To carry me to my journey's ends  
 And a cask of ale that had sailed from Spain  
 And might put life in the dead again;  
 I had tidy jackets to press my hips  
 And shoes, and shirts to my finger tips, [63]  
 And blankets and sheets my limbs to wrap  
 Tied to my trunk with a stout leather-strap,  
 And a beaver and wig my crown to fit  
 And many things more that I here omit.  
 Thus bold as Conan of old straightway  
 To Waterford town I made my way  
 And got lodging and board with a maiden bland,  
 The loveliest lass in all the land;  
 A grace in her gait and a light in her look,  
 With lips that smiled or with laughter shook,  
 Buxom and blithe and fond of a jest,  
 Kind and complacent to every guest;  
 She was quick to heed and a handy drawer  
 And each tippie you took she'd taste before,  
 And by word or deed you could not offend –  
 At least if she knew you had money to spend.  
 The ways of a woman I can't explain  
 But the smile from me made her smile again.  
 She powdered my wig like the sparks of the town  
 And dressed me fully from foot to crown,  
 And never intruded the curst account  
 But gave me credit to any amount.  
 Her stingy mamma was a different tale, [64]  
 She'd have every penny paid down on the nail  
 And would never forgive me a quart or a day  
 Tho' I should go on my knees and pray.  
 For a few days' space did I there abide  
 For a ship to start o'er the waters wide  
 Till I met a skipper about to sail  
 And the bargain was clinched o'er a glass of ale.  
 I paid my score and I packed my kit  
 And with eager haste did my quarters quit,  
 To Passage I drove with the postman's hack  
 And a load of herrings behind my back.



The officers there were at drink and play,  
 They bade me briskly my name to say,  
 But Latin and Gaelic were all I spoke,  
 So the clerk wrote 'M' in the book with a stroke.  
 My trunk and stores were stowed in the hold  
 Whilst I quaffed and sang with the captain bold.  
 E'er long we launched, the sails were spread,  
 We passed the pier, we cleared the head,  
 We bounded into the ocean vast,  
 Aeolus drove us, the ship flew fast.  
 But 'twas short till our joy was turned to pain  
 And we wished we were safe on shore again, [65]  
 Keelty O'Keefe refused his food  
 By nausea gnawed and pangs subdued,  
 Teigue O'Leary sobbed and swore  
 He'd never see wife or children more,  
 Peter O'Dowd with a violent fit  
 Freely spued over Felim's kit,  
 Gerald O'Dower had speechless grown  
 And Michael and Murty were making moan,  
 Terence and Tim in tearing throes  
 Were drawing my bung to drown their woes,  
 Shamus O'Toole on the floor had rolled  
 And Carbry was suffering woes untold,  
 Dermot declared, distraught by pain,  
 That the half of us would not see Erin again;  
 Thus did they all their anguish vent,  
 Wearied and worn, by sickness spent,  
 And myself in no happier plight than they  
 Stretched on the floor exhausted lay  
 Like a sack, of ease and of rest bereft  
 With no kick or whistle or cry in me left,  
 Like a slaughtered ox, without speech or motion,  
 And retching with every heave of the ocean –  
 But shame forbids I should treat at length [66]  
 Of the ills I endured till returned my strength.  
 'Twas often I prayed to end my pain  
 That a storm might blow us to port again,  
 I had sooner be saved out of that distress  
 Than all the wealth in the world possess  
 Or all the riches of Croesus' court  
 Or the golden fleece that Jason sought,  
 Or than win for my wife that Deirdre bright  
 For whom fell Usna's sons in fight,  
 Or the treasure King George did in Flanders stow  
 When he fled to Hanover from the foe.  
 I'd have given, I swear it, these and more

To be safe in port and my suffering o'er  
 Or back in the home I had left behind  
 Drinking the ale with the neighbours kind,  
 Or teaching the urchins in school again  
 Or selling my trenchers on fair Finisk's plain,  
 With the priest who taught me when I was young  
 Or in Georgetown the gentry among  
 With fair Richard the best of the Powers  
 Or with Peter Kennedy chatting for hours,  
 Or in famed Slieve Gua of goodly cheer,  
 Retreat to scholars and scribblers dear, [67]  
 Or in far Cratloe where my kindred dwell  
 Or Clancullen of fighters hard to quell,  
 Or in Limerick of ships by Shannon's shore  
 When many's the pint I drank of yore,  
 Or in the pleasant boreens of Kill  
 Where I used to court and my heart is still,  
 Or with William Moran who'll drop the tear  
 And keen an old song over my bier –  
 A hundred blisses I dreamed were true  
 As folk in distress are wont to do. [68]

## Part Two

Now heed me well the while I tell  
 What wonders ne'er before befell.  
 Amidst my moans and grievous sighs  
 There came a dame of gracious guise,  
 Her cheek was red, her eye was kind,  
 Her tresses hung down loose behind,  
 Her face and form did both declare  
 The queen of Craglee, Eevell fair.  
 Upon my brow her hand she placed [69]  
 And bore me o'er the weltering waste,  
 A thousand leagues of sea and land  
 Thro' vacant space with speed we spanned,  
 O'er Afric's sands and Arctic snows  
 Where earth extends or ocean flows;  
 We halted on a trackless shore  
 By traveller's foot ne'er trod before,  
 Beneath a bank with briars about  
 Appeared a cave whence wind rushed out;  
 I asked my guide with air forlorn  
 To what dread lair I had been borne,  
 To which the answer swift gave she: –

'Fear nought that you may hear or see.  
 Far in my rocky Munster home  
 I heard your prayer upon the foam,  
 A glimpse of marvels you shall gain  
 To recompense you for your pain,  
 Of living men you are the first  
 That into this abode has burst.'  
 The maiden ceased and bold as brass  
 We clambered thro' the gloomy pass  
 Until by eve's declining gleam  
 We saw the glassy Stygian stream; [70]  
 To this shore every mother's son  
 Drifts when his share of days is done;  
 A thousand sad ghosts flock before  
 The flood that they may ne'er pass o'er,  
 Tho' not as pagan Vergil [sic] writes  
 The unburied corpses' unblessed sprites,  
 The hosts that muster on the brink  
 Were broke thro' dice and drabs and drink,  
 Blew all their means in making merry  
 And hadn't a fluke to pay the ferry.  
 That same pretender idly wrote  
 'Twas Charon steered the Stygian boat;  
 The rascal lies – a jovial cock  
 We there beheld, of Irish stock,  
 A whacker stout of warlike mould,  
 To wit, Conan the Fenian bold;  
 A ewe's black fleece was round him thrown  
 Which sign sufficed to make him known;  
 From every Saxon he would ask  
 A silver sixpence for the task,  
 And from him Gaelic's all you'd hear.  
 Soon as he saw what folk drew near  
 He darkly frowned and dropped his oar [71]  
 And furious as a bull did roar: -  
 'You curst old crust and stinking hag,  
 What thing is this you dare to drag  
 Within a clime where never clay  
 Has entrance found until to-day?  
 I've half a mind, to tell you true,  
 To soundly trounce the pair of you.'  
 'Give ear,' replied the gentle queen,  
 'And cease from this unseemly scene,  
 This man by troubles tossed and worn  
 Is of our noble nation born.'  
 At that the hero gave a shout  
 That sounded the whole world throughout,

The heavens trembled at the tone  
 And hell gave forth an echoing groan.  
 We boarded straight the waiting craft  
 Which swift us o'er the wave did waft;  
 Upon the river's further brim  
 The portal stood of portent grim;  
 Before its base a mastiff lay  
 Which howled and growled the livelong day;  
 The pagan thief here, I confess,  
 Speaks truth, 'twas Cerberus, no less; [72]  
 A heap of vetch-straw formed his bed  
 On which his loathly length was spread.  
 Within a trice our warrior tough  
 Had seized the monster by the scruff,  
 With fearless grip he held him fast  
 While we in mortal dread ran past  
 Nor dared a moment's space to stop  
 Until we gained a hillock's top.  
 From thence we viewed a meadow wide  
 With multitudes on either side,  
 We paused and lent attentive ear  
 Their names and histories to hear.  
 'Behold yon host,' our hero said,  
 'The Gaels, who ne'er from battle fled;  
 See how they tear up roots apace  
 And fling them in the foemen's face;  
 The vanquished Dananns to a man  
 Make off as quickly as they can,  
 The valiant Gaels pursue with howls  
 And strew the plain with brains and bowels.  
 The Greeks and Trojans yonder stand  
 Who vaunt their deeds by sea and land;  
 The escaping band who scorch like blacks [73]  
 From blazing Troy are making tracks;  
 Mark well the labouring pair who lay  
 The stones of Rome which stand to-day;  
 Observe the poets who delight  
 Their amorous ditties to indite [sic];  
 There Horace with Maecenas still  
 In vitriol dips his dreaded quill,  
 There Ovid on a bank reclines  
 And languid pens his wanton lines,  
 There Juvenal with righteous rage  
 Rebukes the vices of his age;  
 But Hugh McCurtin of our race  
 Puts all these in the halfpenny place,  
 His verse's sweetness might avail

The buried from their shrouds to hale.  
 Next notice, distant a few perches,  
 Those mighty men as tall as churches,  
 These for the noble Fenians know  
 Who were the dread of every foe.  
 Alas, Finn, what would I not give  
 That you and I one hour might live  
 To friend our country in her need  
 And spiflicate [sic] her foes with speed! [74]  
 We would bring o'er the son of James  
 With Scotland's help to back his claims.  
 See Luther there, the turncoat mean,  
 And Calvin, swoll'n with fat and spleen,  
 And Henry and his harlot bride  
 To malefactors' gibbets tied;  
 All heretics who pass them smite  
 The wicked four who quenched the light,  
 But those beyond whose limbs are free  
 The Kingdom of God's Son shall see.  
 Return, O man of Irish race,  
 With this news to your native place,  
 Not long shall James's loyal folk  
 Groan under the usurper's yoke;  
 A hero shortly shall appear  
 Who'll make the Saxon curs look queer,  
 The golden age he will restore  
 And end our woes for evermore.  
 Shun sin that stains all Adam's kind,  
 To prayer and fasting give your mind,  
 Obey God's mandates every hour,  
 And heaven's bliss shall be your dower.  
 Farewell, a summons calls me back [75]  
 From some of Luther's cursed pack,  
 The French have slain a host of late  
 And now at Styx's wave they wait.'  
 He ceased, and bounded out of our sight,  
 And we went forth, how I know not quite,  
 As a rabbit is by a handspit driven  
 We came out to the light of heaven.  
 That I woke from sleep is the next I know  
 Stretched on my bunk with my trunk below;  
 'Twas long indeed e'er I could recall  
 What brought me in such a place at all,  
 But most of all, as you may believe,  
 Did the notion I had been dreaming grieve.  
 But now a man at the maintop signed  
 That a ship approached with the wind behind,

I heard the captain cry '*Helm alee!*'  
 - Sweet, I swear, was the message to me –  
 '*Gunner give fire, we'll fight the negroes,*  
 '*We'll conquer or die, my Irish heroes!*  
*All hands aloft!*' I was soon on the scene  
 In my shirt and bearing a cutlass keen,  
 Muskets and powder round were passed,  
 1the italicized lines are in English in the original. [76]  
 Thunder and lightning pealed and flashed,  
 Side by side our decks we drew  
 Blazing away till all was blue,  
 Dead and wounded were round me falling,  
 Great was the groaning and shouting and bawling,  
 The fearful din of that dismal fray  
 Was heard in Cork many leagues away.  
 'Twas a trim French frigate fresh-fitted for fight  
 And 'twas not long till we took to flight,  
 The fire of her forty guns was more  
 Than our men could bear or had bargained for,  
 Pools of blood on the deck lay deep  
 And heads and limbs in a hideous heap,  
 From a wound in my side the pain was fierce,  
 And another piece did my temple pierce;  
 '*Haul yards, stand by and hoist the mainsail,*  
 '*Haul tacks and sheets and free the staysails.*'  
 But at length if the bare truth must be told  
 We were captured and laid below in the hold;  
 There we were penned in piteous plight,  
 Famished and dry, for a day and a night,  
 Faint with fasting, fatigue and pain  
 And seeking for means of escape in vain, [77]  
 Till a barrel of ale mid the bales we spied  
 And we drank a draught and our weakness died,  
 We burst a road thro' the roof and poured  
 On Lewis's folk and a victory scored,  
 We took them and clapped them clear and clean  
 In the crib where ourselves before had been.  
 To east we turned as the day was failing  
 Straight for the ports of Ireland sailing;  
 Of the Frenchmen's crew were killed a score  
 And the number of men who were maimed was  
 more,  
 Three of our company were laid low  
 And fifteen bruises and wounds could show;  
 The captain's boy had received a shot –  
 He had stolen my cap and I pitied him not.  
 Safe at Passage we landed at last

And I rode alone to Waterford fast,  
A month I was stretched in piteous pain  
Till God' Son gave me my health again.  
Then I came home without more delay,  
And believe my word or not as you may,  
Never again on a boat I swear  
Will I go 'less you bind me and drag me there. [78]  
To Christ the Author of all be praise,  
Strengthen and succour us all our days,  
Loosen, we pray, our bonds of sin  
That into Thy Kingdom we may come in,  
Free us and fit us to share Thy glory  
And friend us ever. Here ends my story. [79]

## APPENDIX B

“ODE TO HOPE”  
INSCRIBED TO ADAM KIDD ESQ.

O thou, that lov'st to roam on gilded wing,  
 To distant regions of ideal joy,  
 Where fancy forms an ever blooming spring,  
 Where no misfortunes reach, nor cares annoy;  
 Come, smiling Hope! And bring with thee  
 Firm faith, and heavenly charity,  
 And patience, and content, with looks serene,  
 The sweet attendants of thy balcyon (?) reign. [cheer  
 When, from thine air-built bowers thou com'st to  
 The dark abode of wo, where grim despair  
 And pining sorrow hold their gloomy state:  
 Soon as they feel thy genial presence nigh,  
 Beneath the scattering mists the monsters fly,  
 And all the daemons which their power await.  
 Thou choicest gift of heaven, how poor is he –  
 How poor, whom harshest fate deprives of thee  
 The hapless victim of affliction keen!  
 His soul no dawning ray of comfort knows,  
 Rack'd by a thousand forms of fancied woes,  
 A monstrous brood on care begot by spleen!  
 In vain for him returns the smiling spring –  
 No joys for him returning seasons bring:  
 Adversity's rough, storms deform the year,  
 And every opening prospect grown more dear.  
 Does doubt disturb the christian's dying hour.  
 While yet life struggles in his panting breast?  
 Thou; too, almighty Love! Power must own!  
 When long indifference chills thy growing fire,  
 In vain each subtle art thou try'st alone,  
 In tedious bonds thy captive to retain:  
 Tis HOPE alone makes lovers hug the chain,  
 And in the bosom keeps alive desire!  
 Nor is the dungeon's gloom/ Impervious to thy ray; -  
 The hapless wretch whom some stern tyrant's  
 doom  
 Condemns no more to see the light of day –  
 Though years of pain and misery are past  
 Since he has heard the cheering voice of man,  
 Still pleas'd he hears thee whisper, that at last,  
 He shall enjoy society again.



My faltering footsteps to sustain  
Thro' life's rough paths do thou, O Hope! Attend;  
Still pointing onward the bright'ning plain,  
Till death the chequer'd scene shall end''

MARY<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Several poems by Kidd are addressed to or refer to "Mary." It is perhaps interesting as it is written by "Mary"  
– Kidd dedicates and refers to Mary in several poems, but they suggest she has returned to Ireland.

## APPENDIX C

“ON THE DEATH OF ADAM KIDD, ESQ. AUTHOR OF THE ‘HURON CHIEF,’  
AND OTHER POEMS”

Weep, Huron! Bid thy daughter’s weep;  
No more beneath the forest tree,  
The minstrel druid e’er shall sweep  
The cord of sorrow – joy to thee.  
No more upon thy Em’rald wave  
His light canoe shall bound along,  
Yet still that wave bedews the grave  
Which wraps thy youthful child of song:

Weep, Huron! Weep, the cord is mute,  
That sigh’d thy sorrows as ‘twas swept,  
And silent is that plaintive lute  
Which often o’er thy wrongs has wept.  
He was not thine, but for thee felt,  
As lovers for their lov’d ones feel;  
And as beside thy lake he knelt;  
He bade his harp thy woes reveal.

Who now will sing the hunter’s love,  
Or toll the Huron warriors’ fame?  
The Indian maid, through every grove;  
Repeats her sylvan poet’s name.  
Well, Huron, may thy daughters mourn  
And summer’s brightest flowrets braid  
To deck their minstrel’s humble urn,  
Beneath the forest’s leafy shade.

And, O! Isle which gave him birth  
Shall ne’er forget her tuneful child,  
Whom tyrants from her idol earth,  
To wander o’er the world, exiled.  
But vain their hopes – his name shall live  
Emblazon’d on her storied roll,  
And oft her sorrowing sons shall give  
A tear to him from memo’ry’s soul.

And often in the future time,  
The wanderer in those wilds shall hear  
The dark-browed maidens of this clime,

Weep o'er their worship'd minstrel's bier;  
And see them in the dawn of spring,  
The flowers of brightest, earliest bloom,  
Wet with the dews of morning, bring  
To scatter o'er their poet's tomb.

Weep, Huron! Bid thy daughter's weep,  
No more beneath the forest tree,  
They minstrel druid e'er shall sweep  
The chord of sorrow – joy to thee.  
For death his bosom's glow has chilled,  
And life's deep pulses all are o'er,  
And silent is that harp that thrill'd,  
For Kidd, lov'd Kidd, is now no more.

CAROLAN

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