Forging an identity on Central Victoria's colonial landscape: Patrick Cooke and the Irish influence 1845-1903

Loretta Mary Dynan

Bachelor of Arts (Honours) University of Melbourne

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Research Practice

Victoria University

Footscray Park, Victoria, Australia.

26 November 2021

Abstract

This thesis analyses the impact of life experience on Irish settlement patterns in colonial Victoria. It represents the first scholarly analysis of a settler farmer in the Pyalong district. The thesis focuses on how Irish settler Patrick Cooke adapted successfully to life in the Antipodes and how he forged a relationship with the land on which he settled. The significance of the study goes beyond one individual's experience of late-nineteenth colonial settlement. With emphasis on the spatial connection between people and place, it provides new insights into the relationship of individuals to the geographical space they inhabited during settlement in inland Victoria.

The thesis draws on extensive Irish and Australian research data, to locate Cooke's life in the context of Australia and Ireland, the places in which he lived. By focusing on an under-researched rural district in central Victoria it furthers historical understanding of colonial settlement and shows how Irish immigrants redefined themselves and gave meaning to their lives in their new land.

Declaration

I, Loretta Mary Dynan, declare that the Master by Research thesis entitled ***Forging an identity on Central Victoria's colonial landscape: Patrick Cooke and the Irish influence, 1845-1903*** is no more than 50,000 words in length including quotes and exclusive of tables, figures, appendices, bibliography, references and footnotes. This thesis contains no material that has been submitted previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated, this thesis is my own work.

I have conducted my research in alignment with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research and Victoria University's Higher Degree by Research Policy and Procedures.

Signature 

Date 7 December 2021.

Acknowledgments

I wish to express my sincere thanks to all who supported me in the course of this project. My appreciation must first go to my supervisors, Associate Professor Dianne Hall and Professor Robert Pascoe. Their support and enthusiasm was exemplary throughout as they urged me to delve ever more deeply into a complex subject. So too was the support of Professor Ron Adams, whose formal lectures and mentoring motivated me to be the best historian I can be. The critical appraisal of my work from each of these people was invaluable and is most appreciated.

My thanks also go to those who assisted with essential information. These include descendants of the Cooke family in Australia, Ireland and America. In Australia, Chris Cooke's early life at the *White Hart* offered insights unavailable elsewhere. Information provided by John Carroll, Dennis Kilmartin, Gilbert Cooke, and Martin McKenna, complemented that of the late Grace Maguire whose meticulous preservation of a large material and photographic archive was second to none. Thanks also go to Brendan and Therese Ryan who allowed access to their collection of memorabilia, and to Andrew Woods from Independent Commodity Services (ICS) for providing wool production tables. Marsha Thomas in Chicago, USA, provided valuable photographic material. In Ireland I am indebted to Emeritus Professor Catherine O'Brien who passed on the recollections of her father, Thomas Cooke; and to Limerick historians, Willie McAuliffe and Dr Edmond O'Dea, who provided transcripts, maps and commentary during my inquisitive excursions throughout Ireland.

In Melbourne my thanks go to Colin Ryan for his painstaking transcription of an oral interview with the late Thomas Cooke in Knockainy (conducted by the Irish Life and Lore Oral History Project), which added hitherto unknown information relating to the Cooke's early land tenancies in County Limerick.

Most important of all, I acknowledge the support from my family—my husband, John, and the families of Catherine, John, Luke, Lucy, Thomas and Matthew, which include seventeen grandchildren.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PROLOGUE

Eucalypts shimmer on the horizon where the long road twists before me…
We are not pinned by misfortune, like a bird with a broken wing.
Zorba's leap is mine, he sings his song and we dance to the melody.[1]

Figure 1: Patrick & Mary Cooke, *White Hart Hotel*, Pyalong, Victoria, c. 1880

They went to their grave long before my time. Yet I am captivated, you might say, by the intriguing figure at the centre of this grainy nineteenth-century photograph. There's no mistaking it, he's a commanding character and a man of authority, someone who has 'made it' in this world.

His stance is proud, confident—even slightly smug. Yet beneath that somewhat rugged exterior I know there's a charm that belies the image. Decked out in knee-high leather boots and wide-brimmed bushman's hat, it's easy to imagine him gripping the reins as he wheels his horse and heads for home. He's a man… shaped by the past… and the evocative romance of the Australian bush.

But who was Patrick Cooke…?

[1] Loretta Dynan, 'Untitled', in '…and grass seeds in our socks…', unpublished anthology, 2007.

In the past few years I've come to the view that all history is cross cultural.[2] Little did I understand the meaning of that phrase when as a young child I listened intently to the stories of my Irish ancestors. At that time I was seduced by the intriguing tales and the pithiness of their telling—by the trials and tribulations of people who left their homeland for a strange place on the far side of the world. But as time went by, I gradually realised that their stories were not simply about numbers and statistics. These were *real people* that I was hearing about; people with *real experiences* just like you and me. What I didn't know was what led them to suddenly forsake the country of their birth for an unknown life in the Antipodes.

Before I began this study, people like Patrick and Mary Cooke were vague figures who lived in times beyond my imagination. Theirs was a different world from today, one that lacked so much of what we take for granted. But the more I learned of their lives, the more beguiling they became. So much so, that I became ever more curious about the people and times in which they lived. It was a challenge, because it meant I had to listen to, and interpret, an unspoken narrative—the silent voices of the dead.

At first, I thought Patrick and Mary were rather typical Irish immigrants. Patrick was the youngest in a family of ten, and as in many farming families the issue of inheritance was a source of tension. And in the aftermath of *An Gorta Mór* (the Great Famine), he was hardly unusual in joining the masses who headed for the colonies in search of a better life.

But there is more to his story than that. Patrick was better-off than most emigrants because he had money in his pocket from the sale of land in County Limerick. And things were looking up in Ireland. So why would he take such a life-changing step when his country's economy was showing signs of promise?

This was a turning point in my research. I began to question the extent to which his personal ambitions in the colony were influenced by his Irish background. I wondered about his experiences before immigration, and how he adapted to life in the colony. I soon realised that my role as an historian was not just to tell his story but to observe and interpret, to *re*present his life according to the culture of the times in which he lived. Rather than taking his story at face-value I had to analyse his experiences; to allow his voice to speak. This meant I had to rethink my preconceptions and assumptions about the nature of colonial settlement; it meant questioning my notion of the 'average' farmer (if indeed there was one). And it meant gauging

[2] Greg Dening, 'Performing Cross-Culturally', *Australasian Journal of American Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (December 2006), 1-11.

the impact of colonial society on newcomers like Patrick, and on their wives and families. For me, it was a journey of self-discovery and reflection—as well as a new way of looking at the past.

From the first it was clear that Patrick was a man of action. Unstoppable. Reports in local newspapers showed he had no patience for those who squatted under the gum trees waiting for action. Soon after disembarking from the *Fitz-James* in 1854 he went headlong into gold mining, land selection and the hotel industry; and he left no stone unturned when it came to developing infrastructure at Pyalong, a small, ramshackle bush outpost slotted neatly between a line of towering granite outcrops. So I queried whether his approach to settlement conformed to others in the district, and whether he stood out from the crowd in the local community… if so, in what way. And why? These were difficult questions, but I suspected it was the way he and Mary adapted to colonial life that created their sense of belonging*ness* in the strange scrubby place that they were soon to call home. Certainly, the press made much of Patrick's activities—and his cockiness—and especially the fact that, by the 1890s he had three terms as President of the local Shire Council under his belt. When in 1871 he sold liquor without a licence on the Pyalong racecourse the police were hot on his heels. But his jailing for one hour made no difference to his growing reputation. By then he was fast becoming a big fish in a small pond—an insider you might say, and a man of influence. No doubt it was gratifying.

Examining Cooke's life in this way changed my understanding of colonial settlement in the Australian bush and the way I should approach this thesis.

When an unknown cameraman clicked the shutter that day—somewhere around 1881—there was no way of knowing how Patrick would one day intrude on my world. When he breathed his last at the *White Hart* in 1903, a place where he put down his roots and saddled his horses, his work was done, and it had its rewards. But what of unfinished business in Ireland? He left no clues.

In truth, he would have been puzzled by this attention now. Astonished that this photograph, passed down through the generations, would speak so vividly of the crossing of cultures and the places we inhabit. How it would tell a story of home and the heart, and our need to belong.

INTRODUCTION

> It is our human condition to make histories. No sooner is the present gone…than we make sense of it as past. We tell stories about it. We interpret the meaning of gestures made, of words spoken, of actions done.[3]

Research question

This thesis sets out to make history in the way Dening implies. It attempts to make sense of the past, to tell a story about it. To interpret the meaning of gestures made, of words spoken, of actions done. In examining the life of an Irish free-settler and his family who immigrated to the central Victorian district of Pyalong in 1854, it aims to shed light on both the nature and diversity of immigration to Australia in the latter half of the nineteenth century through the prism of a settler family. It analyses how a group of settlers well-known to one another in the home country maintained an exceptionally strong group affiliation and forged a new identity in the Australian habitat. This is an important feature of the study, as there has been no previous study of farming in this part of central Victoria focusing solely on a group of close-knit Irish immigrant settlers. With the emphasis it gives to the pre-immigration experience in Ireland, the thesis examines how a couple and their family adapted to colonial life and forged an identity in an undeveloped rural outpost in central Victoria, where they became farmers and hotelkeepers. Although the scope of the research is limited by the lack of a family diary and personal correspondence, the study draws on a significant body of archival material in official and private repositories, oral history, and family memories in both Ireland and Australia as the means for interpreting the past as it was experienced by Patrick and Mary Cooke.

Rationale

By locating the story in the context of Limerick County history of the 1840s-1890s the study adds a new dimension to Irish-Australian historiography by documenting Patrick and Mary Cooke's Irish background within the context of the social, political and cultural times in which they were reared. As some have noted, similar historiographical studies invariably begin at the point of arrival in a new location, an approach that does not adequately account for the experiences of individuals over a lifetime.[4] This thesis shows that both pre- and post-immigration phases are essential for a full understanding of colonial settlement in Australia.

---

[3] Greg Dening, *Performances,* Melbourne University Publishing, 1992.
[4] Bruce S. Elliott, *Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach* (Belfast, Northern Ireland: The Institute of Irish Studies, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), xiii.

The literature review reveals that historians have previously focused on localities other than Central Victoria and on individuals very different from Patrick Cooke and his kin. Drawing on Cooke's personal story the study provides a contrasting perspective whereby the financial status of some immigrants set them apart from those who, for various reasons, succumbed to poverty and failure. It analyses the life of an immigrant family which was neither one of the squatting class nor one with limited experience and capital. Without denying the critical importance of redressing the historiographical silences around frontier violence, Indigenous dispossession and impoverished settlers, this study of a successful colonial family helps fill an area in historiography that continues to neglect the 'silences' in colonial settlement, and how ordinary families forged a sense of belonging on the land. It shows the extent to which the home country experience, financial backing, personal characteristics and aspirations, agricultural skills and close family ties, led many to prosper after transplantation.[5]

The colonial settlers were not the first occupiers of the land. For thousands of years, the Australian landscape had been occupied by First Nations Australians, whose attachment to the land was based on a spirituality that meant the native people were part of the environment in a very real, tangible sense. The landscape was a 'sacred' *life force*, inscribed with meaning and sustained for millennia through the generations.[6] To a European value system based on different definitions of achievement, the colonial landscape was a wilderness to be sequestered and justified in the name of progress.

'Achievement' and 'progress' were an indelible part of the colonial lexicon. In 1836 the New South Wales Surveyor General, Major Thomas Mitchell, lauded Australia's future in terms of untrammelled prosperity guided by the hand of God: 'We have at length discovered a country… with all its features new and untouched as they fell from, in terms of Australia's development the hand of the Creator!'[7] Mitchell omitted any reference to Australia's 'pristine' habitat as the work of the Indigenous people for at least forty thousand years before the arrival of white settlers.[8] Instead, with God on the side of settlers, agricultural advances symbolised

[5] Ashley Barnwell, 'Keeping the Nation's Secrets: "Colonial storytelling" within Australian Families', *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 46, Issue 1 (2021), 46.
[6] Tony Dingle, *Victorians: Settling* (McMahon's Point, New South Wales: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, 1984), xii-xiii. For this reason, landscape was not simply a site of pleasure or enjoyment; it was also a site of pain and loss.
[7] Sir Thomas Mitchell, *Three Expeditions into the Interior of Eastern Australia* (2 volumes, London, UK, 1839), Vol. 2, 171, cited in Lindsay Proudfoot & Dianne Hall, *Imperial Spaces: Placing the Irish and Scots in Colonial Australia* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2011), 134.
[8] See Eric Rolls, *A Million Wild Acres: 200 Years of Man and an Australian Forest* (McMahon's Point, New South Wales: Hale & Ironmonger, 30th Anniversary Edition, 2011), 246, 250-51, for an understanding of how the ecology of the Pilliga Forest in New South Wales was preserved by intermittent burning by First Nations peoples. As the Indigenous people were displaced by Europeans regular burning ceased. Management of the

by their ingenuity highlighted the assumptions that many white settlers had of First Nations peoples as the lowest in the hierarchy of races.[9]

In thematic terms the project draws together the Irish story within the broader question of how European immigrants changed the Australian environment and were, in turn, changed by it; and how the act of migration was central to the definition of the immigrant self. The Cooke family story is an excellent example of this process in action, as demonstrated by Patrick's return to Ireland in 1887 in an unsuccessful attempt to reclaim his Irish inheritance. Although return trips to the homeland were unrealised by most settlers, they were an important indication of how some immigrants existed in a liminal state for decades after leaving Ireland. For many, the notion of 'home' continued to straddle both countries long after formal ties were severed.

These issues are central to this thesis because of the way in which people connected with their new habitat and developed a sense of belonging on a landscape that had few similarities to what they had known. The main significance of the study lies in its key theme—the *meanings* underpinning the social narratives of late-nineteenth-century Irish settler colonialism. That is, it concerns people and place, the relationship of individuals to the geographical space that they inhabited after immigration.

Literature review

A review of the literature shows there was little interest in both Irish-Australia and the nation's agricultural history during the inter-war period. Although Patrick O'Farrell addressed the former in the 1980s with his controversial book, *The Irish in Australia*, the only substantial work on agricultural history during the same period was a study of colonial land settlement by S. H. Roberts in 1928.[10] It was not until the mid-1950s that this situation changed with studies by A. R. Callaghan, A. J. Milligan and Edgars Dunsdorfs.[11] These studies were followed by D. W. Meinig, G. L. Buxton and Michael Williams between 1962 and 1974, and Tony Dingle in 1984.[12] Although these were excellent histories, agricultural settlement in central Victoria's

area thus changed under white control due to a lack of understanding of how burning was essential for keeping unwanted growth in check.

[9] Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians: A History since 1800* (Crows Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2005), 2.

[10] Patrick O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia* (Sydney, NSW: New South Wales University Press, 1986); S. H. Roberts, *A History of Australian Land Settlement, 1788-1920* (Melbourne, Victoria: Macmillan, 1924).

[11] A. R. Callaghan & A. J. Millington, *The Wheat Industry in Australia* (Sydney: Angus and Robertson, 1956), and Edgars Dunsdorfs, *The Australian Wheat-Growing Industry, 1788-1948* (Melbourne, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1956).

[12] D. W. Meinig, *On the Margins of the Good Earth: The South Australian Wheat Frontier, 1869-1884* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1962); G. L. Buxton, *The Riverina, 1861-91: An Australian Regional Study* (Melbourne:

less well-known rural districts was not satisfactorily addressed until 1984-2014 when Charles Fahey, Dmytro Ostapenko, Michael Murray and Patricia Grimshaw et al, published studies on regions adjacent to Pyalong.[13]

Within Fahey's large body of work is a stand-out study of the wealth of northern Victorian farmers. Fahey challenged conventional wisdom by introducing new variables through study of probate files, birth and death records and statistics in the districts of Bendigo, Gunbower and Rodney. Unlike Geoffrey Serle who argued that very few selectors prospered from the start, both Fahey and Buxton concluded that settler farmers as a group fared well owing to their growing understanding of Australian conditions, and generally left considerable assets when they died.[14] Fahey's findings are compelling since they were supported by quality evidence and detailed statistical method.

Fahey also challenged McQuilton's assertions (gleaned principally from local newspapers and land files) that the Land Acts by the late 1870s created a 'culture of poverty' in which social banditry could breed, and that selectors came to Victoria with little farming experience.[15] These views are not entirely representative since evidence shows that many came with considerable farming expertise and in general were remarkably successful. Unlike my case study which focuses on a successful group of settlers, McQuilton and Serle emphasised failure at the expense of the many who seized opportunities and created viable, progressive farms despite drought, bushfire, crop failures and economic downturns.

Melbourne University Press, 1967); Michael Williams, *The Making of the South Australian Landscape: A Study in the Historical Geography of Australia* (London: Academic Press, 1974); Tony Dingle, *The Victorians: Settling* (Sydney: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, 1984).

[13] Charles Fahey, 'The Wealth of Farmers: A Victorian Regional Study, 1879-1901', *Historical Studies*, Vol. 21, Issue 82, 1984, 'Two Model Farmers: Ann and Joseph Day of Murchison', *Victorian Historical Journal*, Vol. 71, No. 2, 200, 'A Fine Country for the Irish', *Australian Journal for Irish Studies: 4* (Special Issue), 2004; Ostapenko, Dmytro, 'Does Farming Pay in Victoria?: Profit Potential of the Farming Industry in Mid-nineteenth-century Victoria', *Australian Economic History Review*, Vol. 54, No. 1, 2014, 'Generating New Production Knowledge: Competitive Agricultural Events in the British Australian Colony of Victoria, c. 1840-1890', *Agricultural History*, Vol. 92, No. 4, 2019, 'Establishing Themselves on the New Land: Port Phillip crop-growers in the 1840s', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 16, 2014, 'Growing Potential: Land Cultivators of the Colony of Victoria in the late 1830s—1860s', Ph.D. diss., La Trobe University, 2011; Michael Murray, 'Prayers and Pastures: Moidart Immigrants in Victoria, 1852-1920', Ph.D. diss., Deakin University, 2006; see also Patricia Grimshaw, Marilyn Lake, Chris McConville & Ellen McEwen (eds), *Families in Colonial Australia* (Sydney, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1985).

[14] Geoffrey Serle, *The Rush to be Rich: A History of the Colony of Victoria, 1883-1889* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1971); Serle asserted that only one or two thousand selectors prospered from the start, and that only a minority came through at all, at least at the first attempt.

[15] Charles Fahey, 'A Fine Country for the Irish', 192; John McQuilton, 'The Kelly Outbreak, 1878-1800: The Geographical Dimension of Social Banditry', Ph.D. diss., University of Melbourne, 1977. The term 'social banditry' refers to the social unrest that occurs when people believe they are persecuted unjustly.

Although Ostapenko confined his analysis to colonial crop farmers, he made an attempt to narrow the focus of earlier authors with attention to the 'average' farmer in Victoria, that is, the large number of small to middle-scale producers.[16] By means of an exacting methodology, newspaper reports, and reference to several individual families, he showed how settlers' early experiences in the home country paved the way for the transition to Victoria.[17] The experience of the village market in Ireland, for example, prepared immigrants for the commodity exchanges that developed on the Australian frontier. The aim of this thesis is to further refine Ostapenko's focus by scrutinising the life of a single farming family in an unexamined part of central Victoria.

While a compilation of excellent social history essays (edited by Patricia Grimshaw in 1985) examines unexplored aspects of immigrant settlement, they overlook a central theme in this thesis: the *deeper meanings* beneath the experience of being uprooted from the homeland.[18] In these essays there is no sense of belonging as defined by S. S. Anant in 1966 which he describes as 'a personal involvement in a social membership of a group …to the extent that a person feels himself or herself to be an indispensable and integral part of the system'.[19] And unlike Robyn Ballinger who also examined settler consciousness in terms of 'place', Grimshaw's compilation lacks insight into how the immigrant sense of purpose and self-definition developed in their new surroundings.[20] Such focus would have been a valuable addition to an excellent social history compilation.

In addition to Ballinger, several other works have provided inspiration for this study. Michael Murray's 'Prayers and Pastures: Moidart Immigrants in Victoria, 1852-1920', examined how Scottish settlers known to one another in the home country made the transition

---

[16] 'Average' means the majority of small- to medium-scale farmers.

[17] For further perspectives on the intersection of Victorian local conditions with immigrants' Irish backgrounds see Malcolm Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics and Society in the United States and Australia*, 1815-1922 (Madison, Wisconsin, The University of Wisconsin Press, 2008); Malcolm Campbell, *The Kingdom of the Ryans: The Irish in Southwest New South Wales, 1816-1890* (Sydney, NSW: University of New South Wales Press, 1997); David Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation: Personal Accounts of Irish Migration to Australia* (Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press, 1997); Kate Darian-Smith, 'Up the Country: Histories and Communities', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 118, 2002, 90-99; Brian Fitzpatrick, 'The Big Man's Frontier and Australian Farming', *Agricultural History*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1947, 8-12; Terry G. Jordan, & Alyson L. Greiner, 'Irish Migration to Rural Eastern Australia: a Preliminary Investigation', *Irish Geography*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 1994, 135-142.

[18] Patricia Grimshaw et al, *Families in Colonial Australia*.

[19] S. S. Anant, 'The Need to Belong', *Canada's Mental Health*, 14, Issue 2, 1966, 21, cited in Bonnie M. K. Hagerty, Judith Lynch Sauer, Kathleen L. Patusky, Maria Bouwsema & Paggy Collier, 'Sense of Belonging: A Vital Mental Health Concept', *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing*, Vol. VI, No. 3 (June), 1992, 173.

[20] Robyn Ballinger, 'Frontierland and Homeland on the Northern Plains of Victoria, 1841-1869', *Journal of Colonial History*, Vol. 13, 2011, 49-64; Proudfoot & Hall, *Imperial Spaces*, 45-74; Patricia Grimshaw (ed), *Families in Colonial Australia*.

to a state of relative comfort and financial security in Australia. He noted how it was not unusual for parents to secure their children's future through the purchase of additional properties, a pattern typical of Patrick and Mary Cooke's inter-generational planning.[21] Of all works mentioned, Malcolm Campbell's *The Kingdom of the Ryans*, and Proudfoot and Hall's *Imperial Spaces* stand out as exemplars for this study. Campbell's study of the Ryan family at Boorowa in New South Wales individualises the Irish immigrant story by analysing one Irish farming family's engagement with the geographical space on which they settled.[22] Proudfoot and Hall's study of four Victorian towns, including central Victoria's Kilmore, is a place-centred analysis of regionally important agricultural centres. These analyses provide an important backdrop for a study of settlement at Pyalong through the lens of the Cooke family's activities.

Among these works are studies relating to mid-nineteenth-century land tenure and inheritance in Ireland. Sources by Irish scholars such as Solow, Solar, Donnelly, Ó Gráda, Fitzpatrick and others are essential given the project's emphasis on Cooke's early life in Knockainy.[23] These works are complemented by local studies of farming in Knocklong, Bottomstown, Bruff and Baggotstown during the 1840s and 1850s by McAuliffe, Fenton and Lee, which focus on locations on Ireland's Golden Vale which were the mainstay of the Cooke family livelihood for two generations.[24]

---

[21] Murray, 'Prayers and Pastures', 293.

[22] Malcolm Campbell, *The Kingdom of the Ryans: The Irish in Southwest New South Wales 1816-1890*, (Sydney, NSW: University of New South Wales, 1997).

[23] Barbara Lewis Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy, 1870-1903* (Cambridge MA, USA: Harvard University Press, 1971),'A New Look at the Irish Land Question', *The Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 12, No. 4, 1981; Peter M. Solar, 'Why Ireland Starved and the Big Issues in Pre-Famine Irish Economic History', *Irish Economic and Social History*, Vol. 42, Issue 1, 2015; Peter Solar, 'The Irish Butter Trade in the Nineteenth Century: New Estimates and their Implications, *Studia Hibernica*, No. 25, 1989-1990; Peter Solar & Luc Hens, 'Land under Pressure: The Value of Irish Land in a Period of Rapid Population Growth', *The Agricultural History Review*, 1730–1844, Vol. 61, No. 1, 2013; J.S. Donnelly, 'Cork Market: Its Role in the Nineteenth-century Irish Butter Trade', *Studia Hibernica*, Issue 11, 1971; James S. Donnelly, *The Land and the People of Nineteenth-century Cork: The Rural Economy and the Land Question* (Cork, Ireland: 1975); James S. Donnelly, Jnr, 'The Irish Agricultural Depression of 1859-64', *Irish Economic and Social History*, Vol. 3, Issue 1, 1976, 33-54; Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland Before and After the Famine: Explorations in Economic History, 1800-1925* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1988).

[24] William McAuliffe, 'The Famine of 1845 to 1849 in the Parish of Knockaney, County Limerick', typescript, 7 August 2015, 6 (copy courtesy William McAuliffe, Rochestown, Co. Cork, Ireland); C. Lee, 'Certain Statistics from the United Parishes of Knockainy and Patrickswell (Diocese of Emly, Co. Limerick) for the years 1819-1941', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, Vol. 47, No. 165, 1942; Laurence Fenton, *After the Famine: The Economy of Limerick County and City in the 1850s*, History and Folklore Project, Limerick Civic Trust, 2007, 1-12; Laurence Fenton, 'The Economy of Limerick in the aftermath of the Great Famine', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, Vol. 51, 2011, 93-10. The *Golden Vale* is an area of rolling pasture-land in the civil province of Munster in southwestern Ireland. It covers parts of three counties, Limerick, Tipperary and Cork, and is said to have the best dairy farming land in the country.

Methodology

The study is designed as a case-study using qualitative methodology. The case-study framework is eminently suited to an understanding of the spatial aspect of Cooke's settlement and for exploring his economic, social, cultural and religious experiences both before and after immigration. While a family journal and letters are lacking, a large body of primary source data provides multiple perspectives for identifying, cross-checking and analysing key aspects of Cooke's life before and after migration, which previously have been known only through vague, unsubstantiated stories passed down through several generations of the family. The evidence relating to Patrick Cooke's eighteen-month return visit to Ireland in 1887 is more concrete and specific, with archival material in Dublin's public repositories available for testing the family's oral history. Together, the oral and the archival sources span more than 60 years and provide valuable insights into the cultural world that gave meaning to why Patrick and Mary acted as they did in 1854.[25]

Sources

The study analyses several chronological phases in Cooke's life: his early Irish experience, the liminal, or transitional state during the voyage, settlement in Central Victoria, his eighteen-month sojourn in Ireland, and the consolidation of his farming and hotel interests at Pyalong. The material comprises shipping records and logs, probate files, wills, Catholic parish registers, estate rental records, land and census files, family correspondence to newspapers and government bodies, birth, death and marriage records, local newspaper reports, oral recordings aired on Irish radio, and publican registers. Other records include a detailed passenger log of the Cooke family's initial voyage in 1854 and evidentiary material through personal communication with Irish descendants and historians relating to Mary Cooke's three-and-a-half-year return visit to Ireland between 1855 and 1858.[26] Various sources which add considerably to a micro-history study such as this have been retrieved from private family repositories and are examined for the first time.

---

[25] Jane O'Keeffe, *Irish Life & Lore: An Archive of Oral History: Kerry Collection Seventh Series, Thomas Cooke, Parts 1 and 2,* 2014; oral history by Australian descendants; professional recordings of an interview with a 97-year-old Cooke descendant from County Limerick all provide a detailed exposition of the Cooke landholdings, inheritance and political views in the social and cultural context of the mid- to late-nineteenth-century period under study; *Irish Calendar of Wills and Administrations, 1858-1920*, National Archives of Ireland (NLI), https://search.findmypast.com.au Accessed 06/06/2018; Edmund O'Dea, *Commentary on Cooke Landholdings, Ireland*, series of personal correspondence to Loretta Dynan, 22-28 May 2018.

[26] William Shiress, *Diary of William Shiress: Voyage of the* Fitz-James*, Liverpool to Melbourne, 15 June to 13 September 1854* (National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, UK., MSS/81/059.0 (Ref. TN4862); Grace Maguire & Loretta Dynan, *Cooke Family Collection: Photographs, Documents and Artifacts 1848-2019*, in possession of author.

One of the most significant private repositories to which I, as a Cooke descendant, have privileged access, is the Maguire Archive, a repository maintained by Grace Maguire (1921-2014), a 93-year-old great-granddaughter of Patrick and Mary Cooke who devoted much of her life to maintaining the Cooke family history. After the death of her mother in 1971, Maguire was entrusted with a comprehensive collection of family artifacts which had passed intact through several generations descended from Patrick and Mary's daughter, Margaret, following her marriage to John Carroll in 1877. In an attempt to preserve the family collection before her death in 2014, Maguire distributed many items among trustworthy family members throughout Victoria. Others were donated to the Old School Museum in Myrtleford, Victoria, where they are now on permanent public display. Among an extensive collection too large to list in full is a large 19th century photographic collection comprising photos taken in Ireland between the 1840s and 1890s, and a host of 19th and 20th century items which include silverware, crockery, jewellery, needlework, kitchenware, bereavement cards and correspondence. Complimenting items donated to the Museum is a recorded interview with Maguire whose interest in the family history and preservation of memorabilia has contributed much to the methodology of this thesis.

As the following chapters demonstrate, a wide range of secondary material—such as published studies of the farming industry in peer-reviewed books and journal articles, conference papers, typescripts and theses—are used in the thesis, providing both context for and triangulation of the primary sources. Texts relating to the early post-Famine years in Knockainy, and the Irish land tenure system, are particularly useful for shedding light on why a financially stable individual from a strong farming family suddenly took flight when the Irish economy was showing early signs of recovery.

The absence of a family diary and personal papers is in part compensated for by documents in official archives (probate files, census records, statistics and demographics), minor local histories, newspapers, family stories, and memorabilia. These provide important information concerning colonial legislation which enabled the family to enlarge their holdings through selection. They throw light on Patrick's civic commitments within the Pyalong Shire Council, Roads Board, Racing Club and school committee.[27] Irish newspaper accounts relating to family disputes in Knockainy over water rights and rising tenant rents, and widely publicised

[27] Nicholas Cooke, Correspondence to Victorian Education Department & J. G. Duffy, MLA., 1888-1890, (VPRS n/a).

litigation between Patrick Cooke and his Irish relatives when he revisited Ireland in 1887 reverse previously unsubstantiated oral history accounts. Memorabilia and other material artifacts provide a particularly important entry point into Patrick and Mary's world and hint at how the couple defined themselves physically and symbolically vis-a-vis the objects, symbols, rituals and traditions that constituted their cultural world. Methodologically, entering that world has been via what Clifford Geertz, borrowing from British philosopher Gilbert Ryle, dubbed 'thick description', a term which refers to human social action and its interpretation.[28]

Chapter Outline/Structure

The first chapter analyses the Cooke family's historical background in Knockainy, exploring the Cooke tenancies in the context of pre- and post-Famine Ireland. Chapter two examines the liminal or transitional space occupied during the voyage to Australia on the *Fitz-James*. Chapter three covers settlement on the land in Central Victoria, a venture into the hotel industry, and an attempt by Patrick to reclaim family land in Ireland in 1887. The fourth chapter focuses on Mary Cooke's role as a mother, landowner and businesswoman and the way a cluster of Irish immigrants developed a new identity in the colony. Chapter five teases out some of the nuances of remembrance through an investigation of material culture and memorialisation. The various elements are brought together in the Conclusion, which makes recommendations for future research.

[28] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York, USA: Basic Books, Inc., 1973),18; 'thick description', comes from British philosopher Gilbert Ryle in 'The Thinking of Thoughts: What is "Le Penseur" Doing?', in Gilbert Ryle, *Collected Papers, Volume II: Collected Essays 1929–1968* (Bristol, UK: Thoemmes Antiquarian Books Ltd, 1990).

CHAPTER 1

Ireland: Knockainy and its people

As you gaze upon the Galtee Mountains from the small rural district of Knockainy, a sense of quietude prevails. It is Winter. A soft mist falls on the splendour of a sweeping mountain range. This is the space that nurtured a young Patrick Cooke—the place that marked him as 'blood' in the land of his birth. It was 'home'. That is, until emigration intruded in 1854.

The aim of this thesis is to explore Patrick and Mary Cooke's migration experience to the Australian colony of Victoria as a case study of migration during Australia's colonial period. This chapter traces the fortunes of the broader Cooke family on their County Limerick lands from the late eighteenth century to the mid-1850s. In doing so, it examines a large body of public and private evidentiary data relating to the Cooke land holdings, family marriage patterns, inheritance, and the challenges posed by the system of land tenure in Ireland. Although there is no direct record for why Patrick and Mary left the homeland, much can be extrapolated from the way Ireland's agricultural industry had an impact on a strong farming family, and how tensions over family land during and immediately after the Famine possibly paved the way for their decision to migrate.[1]

Figure 2: The Galtee Mountains
https://bing.com.images.search Accessed 12/02/2021

[1] 'Three Generations of the Cooke Family', Appendix 1.

The Galtees (*Na Gaibhlte*), as they are known, are situated on the Golden Vale, a picturesque tract of land about 32 miles long and three miles wide that winds resolutely through Counties Cork, Limerick and Tipperary to Ireland's north.[2] At its centre is the 'golden vein', an eleven-mile-long district stretching from Effin (near Kilmallock) towards Cullen, a former market village in south-east Limerick that lies on the border with Tipperary. The Vale has a special place in Ireland's agricultural history and Knockainy is at its heart. The district's name derives from *Cnoc Aine*, a mythical sun-goddess in ancient times who had her palace on the summit of a hill named after her.[3] In 1780, the English writer, Arthur Young, referred to Knockainy's beauty and the fertility of its soil in glowing terms, describing it as the richest he had ever seen.[4] Again, in 1837 well-known editor and publisher, Samuel Lewis, wrote:

> From the banks of this river [Shannon] stretches south-eastward a vast tract of land which is justly considered to be the richest in Ireland, the soil being in general a deep mellow loam, for the most part based on limestone and fit for every kind of culture.[5]

Not only is the Vale known for its beauty. It is also known as the most productive terrain in Ireland. The 100,000-acre expanse takes in Knocklong, Baggotstown, Bottomstown and Bulgaden, an overwhelmingly Catholic area and the most sought-after dairy-land in the Province of Munster.[6] The Cooke family home on the Vale was situated at Bottomstown (*Baile na Tóna*, meaning 'town of the bottom land') in the parish of Knockainy, where their landholdings were located. The earliest evidence of the family tenancies dates from April 1798, the momentous year of the failed Irish rebellion that tried to put an end to British rule in Ireland.[7] In the midst of this turmoil Patrick's parents, Nicholas Cooke and Margaret Cleary,

---

[2] Sean Spellissy, with photographs by John O'Brien, *Limerick: The Rich Land* (Ennis, Co. Clare: Spellissy/O'Brien Publishers, 1989), 9. See Appendix 2. Caoimhghín ua Danachair, 'Traces of the Buaile in the Galtee Mountains', *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 75, No. 4 (Dec. 1945), 248-52; the Golden Vale is about 32 miles long by three miles wide; the 'golden vein', about eleven miles long by three miles wide.

[3] Sean Spellissy, *Limerick: The Rich Land*, 189.

[4] Arthur Young, *Arthur Young's Tour in Ireland (1776-1779)*, Vol. 1 (London: George Bell & Sons, York St., Covent Garden, 1892), 381.

[5] Samuel Lewis, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Volume II, (UK, London: S. Lewis & Co., 87 Aldersgate Street, 1837), 263.

[6] Jennifer Ridden, *'*"Making Good Citizens": National Identity, Religion, and Liberalism among the Irish Elite, c. 1800-1850', Ph.D. diss., London, Kings College, University of London, 1998, 39. Ridden notes that there were differences in the way people practised their faith in Limerick in the first half of the nineteenth century. For example, 'strong' farming families and their servants in Bruff, near where the Cooke family lived, worshipped in separate chapels until the 1860s. Mary Fogarty (who lived in Bruff and is thought to be connected to the Cookes through marriage) noted that her family adhered to orthodox Catholic religion (angels and saints), while the maids in her household had an old Irish view of religion based on early Gaelic beliefs concerning fairies, witches and banshees. Such practices highlighted an important distinction between the two social groups.

[7] Tom Donovan, 'The United Irishmen and Limerick', *The Old Limerick Journal*, 35 (Summer 1998), 6-9; the failed uprising erupted in May 1878. The Irish Parliament, which had existed since the thirteenth century, was abolished, and under the Act of Union (1800) Ireland was then ruled directly from London until 1922. The uprising failed to take root in Munster to the extent that it did on Ireland's anglicised, more literate east coast.

obtained a life-long lease over more than 66 statute acres of farmland on which was a crumbling old chapel and tombstone dated 1744.[8] The tenancy was on what was then a 1,305-acre townland in Baggotstown West, about two miles south-east of Bruff, on the road to Elton. In the 1830s the townland was divided into three smaller areas: Baggotstown, comprising 387 acres, Baggotstown East, 457 acres, and Baggotstown West, 460 acres.[9] Obtaining the lease was a fortuitous move since, until the last quarter of the eighteenth century, severe restrictions were placed on property ownership by Irish Catholics ensuring that land was almost exclusively the preserve of a privileged Protestant minority. When the Cookes obtained their lease, only five per cent of Irish land was held by Catholics.[10] It was a situation that highlighted the sectarian power and prestige that dominated Irish society before Catholic Emancipation was achieved in 1829.

It is unknown how the couple acquired this tenancy in Knockainy on the small seven-mile area stretching from Lough Gur—a strikingly picturesque piece of water in the north—to Elton in the south. However, a boom in farm prices between 1790 and the end of the Napoleonic wars in 1815 possibly benefited those who had acquired land many years earlier.[11] Anxious to push ahead as their family grew to ten children, Nicholas and Margaret added to their holdings with further leases between 1815 and 1833. By 1850, sons Nicholas, Thomas, John and Patrick held around 180 acres. In 1851, Patrick managed around 75 Irish acres (122 statute acres) in a joint lease with neighbour Daniel Halpin at Baggotstown.[12] This acreage may have been held 'at will' initially, and later converted to a seven-year lease.[13] The

Counties like Limerick, which were mainly Irish speaking were largely impervious to the new radicalism; it is believed Nicholas Cooke and Margaret Cleary were married circa 1794.

[8] Thomas Cooke, *Irish Life and Lore*; on the Cooke land at Baggotstown are the remains of a chapel and altar, and a tombstone inscribed with the name, Boucher, dated 1744. The grave probably relates to a member of the well-known Bouchier family who had a history of land-owning in Baggotstown. The paddock is marked on local maps as the 'church field'. See also *Census, Land and Surveys, Ireland*, Valuation date 29 September 1848, County Limerick, Barony of Small County, Parish of Knockainy, Townland Bottomstown https://www.search findmypast.com.au Accessed 01/02/2019. Cooke family land holdings 1848 Appendix 3.

[9] *Irish Townlands, Baggotstown West, Co. Limerick*, https://townlands.ie/limerick Accessed 14/03/2021; the townland now comprises 1,856 acres; see Willie McAuliffe, 'The Famine of 1845 to 1849 in the Parish of Knockainy, County Limerick', unpublished 6-page typescript, 7 August 2015, 2.

[10] Terence A. Dooley, 'Estate Ownership and Management in Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-century Ireland' in T. Dooley, *Sources for the History of Landed Estates in Ireland*, Dublin Irish Academic Press, 2000, 1, http://www.askaboutireland.ie/ Accessed 15/09/2018; Solow, *The Land Question*, 201.

[11] McAuliffe, 'The Famine of 1845 to 1849', 1; James S. Donnelly, Jnr., *The Great Irish Potato Famine* (UK, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2002), 4.

[12] Daniel Halpin was most likely a sibling or first cousin of the four Halpin cousins who emigrated with the Cookes on the *Fitz-James* in 1854.

[13] Edmond O'Dea, Co. Limerick, email, 23 May 2018; see also, Solow, *The Land Question*, 7; tenancies 'at will' permitted the occupation of land at the pleasure of the lessor and which could be determined by either party at

immediate lessors (landlords) were Patrick Sherin and Patrick Bluett.[14] Until the hitherto unknown fungus, *Phytophthera Infestans*, attacked the potato crop (Ireland's main staple) on the eve of the Famine in 1845, many farmers in the district were wealthy.[15] The Cookes were no exception. By then, they occupied around 200 acres of first-class land, and their future was secured by several lifelong leases and tenancies at will through middlemen from various landlords.[16]

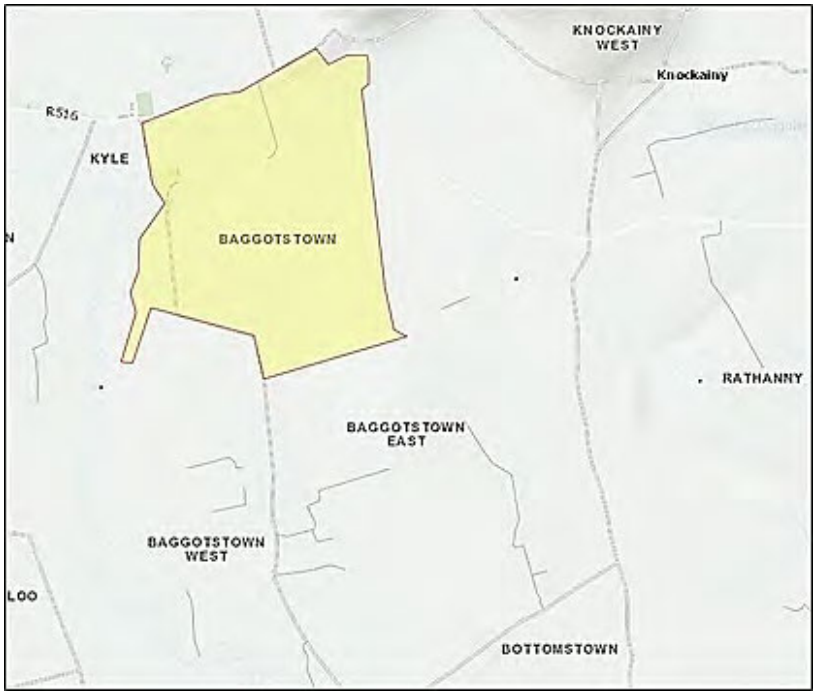


Figure 3: Townlands Co. Limerick, Parish of Knockainy
https://logain.ie/en/3111.aspx
Accessed 12/02/2021

A diversified approach to farming, through a combination of dairying, cropping and sheep and cattle grazing, added to the family's financial stability. The system of farming in Knockainy was comparatively uniform, with milk production and cattle-rearing predominant.[17] This meant that the Cookes were in the top five per cent of landholders before the Famine

will. Such tenancies were rare in Ireland, the most common in the mid-nineteenth century being the yearly tenancy at around 70-75 per cent.

[14] *Landed Estates Court Rentals (1850-1885)*, County Limerick Estate, https://www.irish-geneaography.com/landed-estates-court-rentals-1850-1880 Accessed 04/07/2015.

[15] Young, *Arthur Young's Tour in Ireland*, 382; McAuliffe, 'The Famine of 1845 to 1849', 6.

[16] Griffith's Valuations, *Landed Estates Database*, NUI, Galway www.landedestates.nuigalway.ie Accessed 02/04/2020; these valuations identified owners of the estate and occupiers and sub-agents in each townland. The purpose was to identify parish and county and determine liability to pay rates to the Poor Law Union which provided aid to the needy; Tithe Applotment Books, *Ask About Ireland Database,* www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/ Accessed 02/04/2020; the books are based on a survey of land in a civil parish and were compiled between 1823 and 1838 to determine the payment of church tithes.

[17] McAuliffe, 'The Famine of 1845 to 1849', 1.

struck, with Patrick, the youngest of the ten children, having substantial property in his name by 1848, only two years after marrying at the age of twenty-seven. Such holdings, on Ireland's most productive 100,000-acre tract of land, far exceeded the one-to-five acre lots held by 45 per cent of the farming population at that time.[18]

Figure 4: '*...down the fields at Baggotstown*',
home of Nicholas Cooke & Margaret Cleary, Co. Limerick, Ireland
(Marsha Thomas, Chicago, Ill, USA)

The Cookes were clearly better-off than most farmers, but the Famine's effect between 1845 and 1849 was nonetheless disastrous in east Limerick. The Irish census of 1851 shows that the townland of Baggotstown West, where Patrick tenanted land, was one of Ireland's most prosperous regions. Yet it was one of the worst hit. A combination of famine and emigration saw the population fall over 70 per cent from 246 to 73 between 1841 and 1851, wiping out 21 of the 31 families.[19] In nearby Bottomstown where three of Patrick's brothers held land, the population fell by over 55 per cent and the number of houses declined from 58 to 31.[20] The loss in the civil parish of Knockainy was just under 26 per cent, a figure matching that for the

[18] S. H. Cousens., 'Regional Death Rates in Ireland during the Great Famine, from 1846 to 1851', *Population Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1, July 1960, 55.
[19] *Census of Ireland for the Year 1851, Part VI, General Report* (Dublin, Ireland: Alexander Thom & Sons, 1856); south-east County Limerick suffered less than many other parts of Ireland from the famine because the population was less dense and better-off areas were generally less dependent on the potato than poorer regions; McAuliffe, 'The Famine of 1845 to 1849', 4.
[20] *Census of Ireland 1851,* cited in McAuliffe, 'The Famine of 1845-1849', 3.

whole of Ireland.[21] The dramatic fall in population in these districts may be partly explained by the activities of middlemen in the eastern part of the county sub-letting small parcels of land at high rents, which led to small pockets of high density.[22] But it is also clear that the Cookes were among a group of farmers who were anxious for the future. Despite their relative affluence, whole families with sufficient funds and farming skills to better their lives elsewhere emigrated from these districts.[23] Rising death rates, large-scale emigration and falling birth and marriage rates right across Limerick's rural communities thus ensured that the population of Limerick went from about 330,000 in 1841 to 262,000 a decade later, and 146,000 by the time of the first census of the twentieth century.[24]

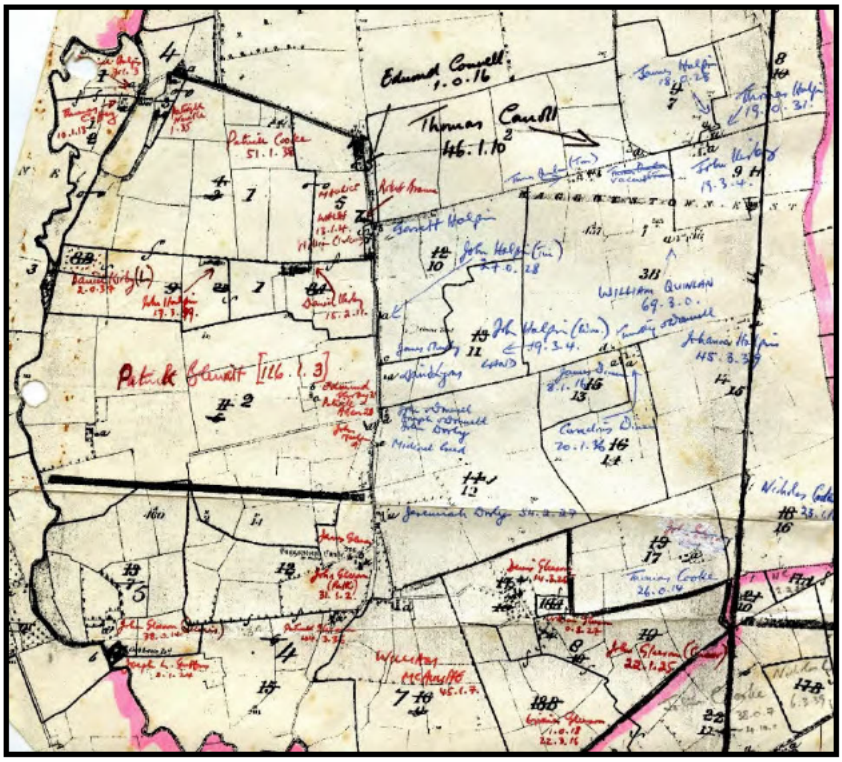


Figure 5: Patrick Cooke, Baggotstown, 1852
51 acres 1 rood 38 perches
(Willie McAuliffe, Rochestown, Co. Cork, Ireland. Hand drawn map (2017) from Field Books 1848)

[21] *Census of Ireland 1851*, cited in McAuliffe, 'The Famine of 1845-1849', 3.
[22] Cousens, 'Regional Death Rates in Ireland', 55 & 67; nonetheless, despite these figures Cousens notes that the majority of Limerick parishes for which records exist, show the decline in deaths was more akin to the counties of eastern Ireland which had a low excess death rate. This was in marked contrast to death rates in the south and west counties where the rate exceeded forty per thousand.
[23] Peter Gray, *The Irish Famine* (London, UK: Thames & Hudson, 2010), 100; see also Val Noone (ed.), *Nicholas O'Donnell's Autobiography* (Ballarat Heritage Services, Bakery Hill, Victoria, 2017), 31.
[24] Laurence Fenton, *After the Famine: The Economy of Limerick County and City in the 1850s*, History and Folklore Project, Limerick Civic Trust, Sept. 2005–Feb. 2006 & Jan. 2007–May 2007), 1; during this period the population of Ireland fell from a high of 8½ million in 1845 to 6½ million in 1851, and to just under 4½ million in 1901.

The great increase in mortality across Ireland in the winter of 1846-47, was particularly brutal because this was not just an ordinary subsistence famine. Although the potato crop had failed somewhere in Ireland in thirteen out of the seventeen years between 1828 and 1845, *An Gorta Mor* was given impetus by several factors relating to Ireland's pre-famine economic history: rapid population growth, dependence on the potato, and the role played by Britain in Ireland's economy.[25] Combined with the blight, these factors were devastating, with the result that the demand for relief significantly outstripped the measures employed.[26] So bad was the situation by early 1847 that Fr John Ryan, in a letter to the *Limerick Chronicle*, stated that the number of deaths in his parish of Knockainy from October 1846 to April 1847 was 66 from the age of fifteen upwards in a population of 4,531, up from 22 for the same period the previous year.[27] With public works shut down and thousands of workers laid off, on 7 August 1846 reformer Fr Theobold Mathew called upon Charles Trevelyan, then assistant secretary to the British Treasury, for assistance:

> Divine Providence, in its inscrutable ways, has again poured out upon us the vial of its wrath. A blast…has passed over the land' he wrote, 'and the hopes of the poor potato cultivators are totally blighted, and the food of a whole nation has perished…last month I passed from Cork to Dublin…the wretched people were…wringing their hands and wailing bitterly the destruction that had left them foodless.[28]

Nonetheless, despite the grim statistics in parts of east Limerick, the Cookes were not among the worst affected.

In Ireland's most densely populated far-west regions—counties Mayo, Sligo, Galway, Clare and Roscommon—the combined impact of rapid population growth and the Famine was calamitous. These regions were hopelessly overcrowded as a result of Ireland's pre-famine population explosion and heavy reliance on the potato, with many cottiers eking out a living on undeveloped, infertile plots of one to five acres.[29] An entrenched system of subletting and

---

[25] Janet A. Nolan, *Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland 1885-1920* (Kentucky, USA: The University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 43; Peter M. Solar, '*Why Ireland Starved* and the Big Issues in Pre-Famine Irish Economic History', *Irish Economic and Social History*, Vol. 42, Issue 1, 2015, 62.
[26] Christine Kinealy, 'The Irish Famine 1845-52', *North Irish Roots*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 1990, 159.
[27] *Limerick Chronicle*, April 1847; *Census of Ireland 1851*; see also Michael O'Sullivan, *A History of Hospital and its Environs*, Hospital, Co. Limerick, Michael F. O'Sullivan, 1995, 71; O'Sullivan wrote that Rev J. McGrath, P.P. Knocklong, in a diocesan report in August 1848 stated that people were unable to attend Mass due to poverty and lack of clothes.
[28] Gray, *The Irish Famine*, 1 & 48; Fr Theobold Mathew (1790-1856) was a Catholic priest and reformer known as the 'Apostle of Temperance' after he established the Cork Total Abstinence Society in 1838.
[29] Gray, *The Irish Famine*, 94; the cottier class referred to the most impoverished small tenant-holder who rented between one to five acres; for comment on estimates see Donnelly, *The Great Irish Potato Famine*, 1; Donnelly cites P. M. A. Bourke's estimate that as many as 4.7 million people out of about 8.5 million depended on the potato as the predominant item in their diet before the Famine. Most were poor landless agricultural labourers, cottiers, and tenants with less than 20 acres of land.

subdivision into unsustainable lots gave small farmers little hope of providing for a family and placed them in constant fear of eviction for non-payment of rent.[30] This was in stark contrast to the fortunes of Patrick's family who had farmed on the premier land of the Golden Vale for more than half a century.

Further, there is no record of how the Cookes, as members of the Catholic Church, perceived the Famine. As a family they clearly took their religious faith seriously given their adherence to Catholic birth, marriage and death rituals over a lifetime. However, some suggest that many Catholics saw the Famine as another, albeit extreme, stage in Ireland's long history of sectarian tension. In the decades before 1845, for instance, issues concerning political representation and the control of schools had drawn a vociferous Catholic response long before the Famine erupted.[31]

Nonetheless, even with a large family to support, the Cookes maintained financial independence for several decades without the need to subdivide their Knockainy properties into smaller, unproductive units—despite Limerick suffering from a fall in butter prices in 1816, and regular partial famines from the 1820s.[32] Before the Famine the Cookes were not dependant on the potato and had the capacity to take advantage of new agricultural technology by purchasing essential farm machinery. Even at Famine's end they remained relatively well-positioned, since their holdings were on fertile soil admirably suited to dairying, grazing and mixed farming, and at a time when changes in the agricultural industry increased the value of their livestock.[33] Cattle raising was particularly lucrative in east Limerick and prices for calves after the Famine rose dramatically as farmers sold off growing numbers of fattened yearlings

[30] Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland Before and After the Famine: Explorations in Economic History, 1800-1925* (New York, USA: St Martin's Press, 1988), 1-2.
[31] Niall Ó Ciosáin, 'Approaching a Folklore Archive: The Irish Folklore Commission and the Memory of the Great Famine', *Folklore*, Vol. 115, No. 2, August, 2004, 227.
[32] Timothy P. O'Neill, 'Clare and Irish Poverty, 1815-1851', *Studia Hibernica*, No. 14 (1974), 7; Nolan, *Ourselves Alone*, 43; potato famines were not uncommon in Ireland given that in thirteen out of the seventeen years between 1828 and 1845 the crop failed somewhere in the country.
[33] W. E. Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants in Ireland 1848-1904: Studies in Irish Economic and Social History* (Ireland: Dundalgan Press, Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, 1994), 4. See also Proinnsias Breathnach, 'Agricultural Change and the Growth of the Creamery System 1855-1920', in *Monaghan: History and Society* (Dublin, Ireland: Geography Publications, 2017), 618-26; climatically, Ireland was more suited to pastoral rather than tillage agriculture. In 1855, 71 per cent of all agricultural land was devoted to meadow (for haymaking) and pasture. The main tillage crops were oats and potatoes, primarily for on-farm consumption. Given the dominance of pastoralism, predictably beef and butter were the leading commercial products.

for the beef export trade.[34] This gave the family a degree of security that was not available to most farmers.

	Nicholas Cook (RIP 1842)& Mgt Cleary	Thomas Cooke (1802- 1884)& Mgt Gleeson (2nd son of Nicholas Cook & Mgt Cleary)	Nicholas Cooke (1796-1870) (jun)& maria English (1st son of Nicholas Cook & Mgt Cleary)			
Tithe Applotments 1833	66 (+) Statute Acres (1st Class land) **Bottomstown**	77 (+) Statute Acres (1st Class Land) **Baggotstown**	48.8 Statute Acres (1st Class land) **Bottomstown**			
Field Books October 1848		Thomas Cooke Baggotstown, Land house & office 26 statute acres at yearly rent of £51.00. no lease also held **Bottomstown** 3.24 statue Acres at yearly rent of £4.00 (lease date 1815 for 3 lives) (not on field book say this Thomas live in Baggotstown	Nicholas Cooke Had House,office & Land 21 acres at yearly rent of £34.3.2 (lease for on life or 21 years date 1813) Also held Land in two lots total 9.72 acres at yearly rent of £24. (lease for 3 lives date 1815) also held 11..34 acres at yearly rent £16.7 (Leased one life or 21 years date 1813)	John Cooke (1813-1887) 5th (5th son of Nicholas Cooke and Mgt Cleary) House, Office & land 4.86 Statue acres at **Bottomstown**, yearly rent £7.15.6. (leased for one life or 21 years date 1822)	Patrick Cooke Baggotstown (7th son of Nicholas Cooke and Mgt Cleary) 51 acres, yearly rent £88.00 No lease	Nicholas Cooke (lives in Bottomstown)– Land in Baggotstown 22.68 statute acres, yearly rent £37.00. No lease
House Book 1848		**Thomas Cooke** Thatched house built with Stone wall with mud mortar, slightly decayed but good repair. This House also had Stable and Barn both thatched and in good repair	Nicholas Cooke's house was a thatched stone house build with lime mortar in good repair, this was an extension on to an older thatched house build with stone and mud mortar, The farm also had a barn, cowhouse, turf shed & Piggery	John Cooke (1813-1887) 5th (5th son of Nicholas Cooke and Mgt Cleary) **Bottomstown** This John had a newly build slated dwelling house built with cut stone and lime mortar with a superior solidity and finish, this appears to be built on to an older thatched house built with Stone wall with mud mortar, slightly decayed but good repair. The farm also had a Dairy, stable, cow house and piggery	Patrick Cooke **Baggotstown** 7th son of Nicholas Cooke and Mgt Cleary Thatched house built with Stone wall with mud mortar, slightly decayed but good repair. The house had a newer built porch stoned walled with lime mortar. This holding also had Barn, Stable & Turf House and Cow house	
Griffiths Land records 1855		**Thomas Cooke** (Lot 19a) 26-0-14 House office & land **Baggotstown** & (Lot 21) Land 3-2-5 Land **Bottomstown**	**Bottomstown** Lot 15- Land 11-3-39 & Lot 16a House office & land 22-1-2 & Lot 171 &17b Land 8-5-61 Total land 53 Acres	John Cooke son of Nicholas Cooke and Mgt Gleeson (lot 22a) House Office & land 38-0-17 **Bottomstown**	Patrick Cooke Lot 4a House Office & Land 51 -1-35 **Baggotstown**	Nicholas Cooke Lot 18 Land 23 acres-1-16 **Baggotstown**

Figure 6: Cooke Land holdings 1833-1855.
(Source: Dr Edmond O'Dea, Limerick, Co. Limerick, Ireland, 23/05/2018)

[34] J. S. Donnelly, Jnr, 'Cork Market: Its Role in the Nineteenth Century Irish Butter Trade', *Studia Hibernica*, Vol. 11, 1971, 135.

With dairying the Cooke family's main income-earning activity, the east Limerick locale was particularly advantageous since it provided ready access to the Cork butter markets. This was especially so when changing market demand at Famine's end saw the beginning of a twenty-year rise in the price of Irish butter, dairy and store cattle, mutton and other agricultural products. Of all cattle more than one year old in 1854, about 50 per cent were milk cows—Shorthorn Cross noted for the quantity and quality of its milk. Data from the 1855 agricultural census demonstrates the superior milk yields of the typical dairy herd in Counties Limerick and Tipperary.[35] In those counties, cows averaged 5-10 per farm, compared with only 2-3 in the less productive County Monaghan.[36] Thus business at the Cork Butter Exchange would have been a boon for the Cookes, who held more land than most and delivered large quantities of milk. In short, more milch cows meant more milk, butter and cheese from the family farm.

Other factors contributed to east Limerick's wealth, not least the shift from tillage to pasture in the late 1840s and early 1850s. The agricultural labour force (which grew steadily in the two decades before the Famine) declined sharply as a result of the shift, relieving pressure on farm finances.[37] Similarly, growing demands for high-quality Irish butter from an increasingly affluent and accessible Britain, and even Australia, enhanced farm productivity in the region, resulting in the establishment of more than 25 small butter markets in Munster country towns.[38] So spectacular were prices for Irish butter in Australia that a shipment to Melbourne was described as a seller's paradise, 'better than a huge find at a gold creek'.[39]

---

[35] Hans Staehle, 'Statistical Notes on the Economic History of Irish agriculture, 1847-1913', *Dublin: Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, Vol. XXVIII, Part IV, 1950/1951, 466, http://www.tara.tcd.ie/handle/2262/3692 Accessed 12/12/2019. See Appendix 4.

[36] Donnelly, Jnr, 'Cork Market', 132; Fenton, *After the Famine*, 2; Proinnsias Breathnach, 'Agricultural Change and the Growth', 622-26; *Census of Ireland* for the year 1841, p. xxxi, cited in Lynn Lees, 'Mid-Victorian Migration and the Irish Family Economy,' *Victorian Studies 20*, Autumn 1976, 27; in 1841, the average small farm of less than five acres contained 0.7 cattle and 1.3 sheep.

[37] Ó Grada, *Ireland Before and After the Famine*, 33; Fenton, *After the Famine*, 2; the plight of the rural labourer was severe, with many living in unremitting poverty at the end of the Famine. The shift away from intensive tillage farming in the late 1840s (it was well under way by 1855) and the emergence of new technologies and farm machinery meant continued unemployment, underemployment, and emigration for these workers. On the eve of the Famine tillage farming (wheat, oats, barley, potatoes, and root crops) was the dominant sector, contributing more than three-fifths to Ireland's agricultural output. Between 1847 and 1852 the acreage planted to wheat fell by more than 50 per cent as pasture farming took hold. Livestock numbers rose accordingly. The altering market demand for butter, store cattle, mutton and other products rose by 30-50 per cent in the twenty years after the Famine.

[38] Donnelly, 'Cork Market', 133; Laurence Fenton, 'The Economy of Limerick in the Aftermath of the Great Famine', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, Vol. 51, 2011, 94.

[39] Donnelly, 'Cork Market', 131; the price boom lasted until 1862 when the bottom dropped out of the Australian market as the standard of living rose and Britain became increasingly self-sufficient. By 1864, the butter trade to Australia had disappeared almost entirely.

Dairying was then the third main strand of Irish agriculture, and even after a short-lived drop in butter prices in 1849 it remained steadfast in importance to the economy.[40] For the Cooke family, the opening of the Great Munster Fair in 1853 (showcasing advances in Limerick's agricultural industry) and the construction of Ireland's railway system, would have been promising signs of economic recovery after the Famine.[41]

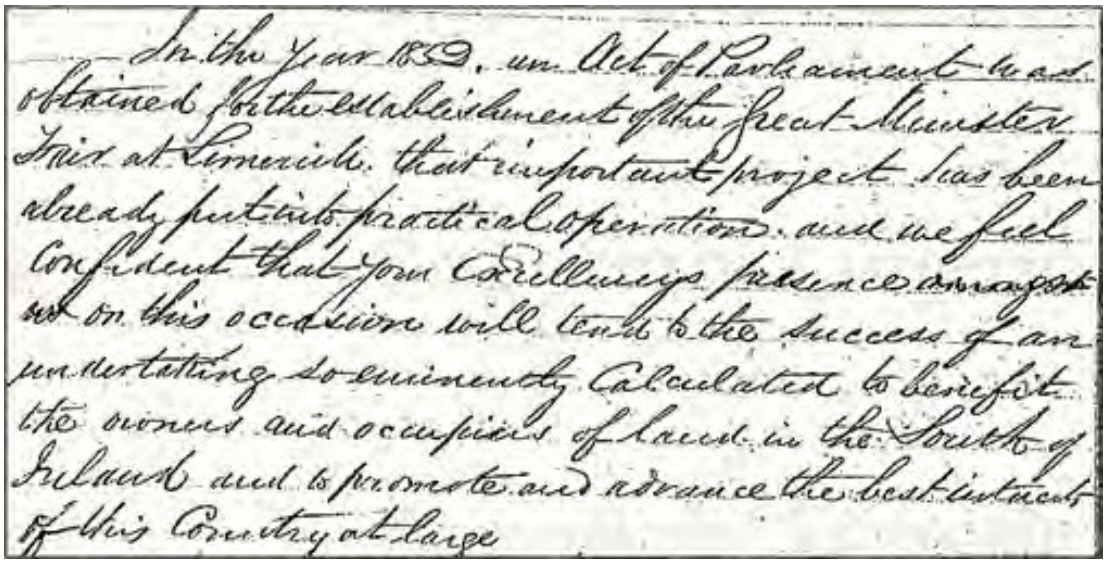

In the Year 1852, an Act of Parliament was obtained for the establishment of the Great Munster Fair at Limerick, that important project has been already put into practical operation, and we feel confident that your Excellencies presence amongst us on this occasion will tend to the success of an undertaking so eminently calculated to benefit the owners and occupiers of land in the South of Ireland and to promote and advance the best interests of this Country at large

Figure 7: Great Munster Fair, Commissioner Minute Books,
23 September 1853. GMF-1. 23 June 1852-4 to 4 September 1867.
https://s3-eu-west1.amazonaws.com
Accessed 10/07/2021

With these advantages, the Cookes were clearly cushioned by their circumstances, and they weathered the Famine and the total failure of the potato crop in 1846 far better than most. With a history of financial security from the late eighteenth century they were not exposed to financial ruin to the same extent as farmers in less productive regions. As such, they were able to acquire further land in 1815-1822 and 1833 when three million people were at the poverty level according to the Poor Enquiry of 1832.[42] As comfortable, 'strong farmers', they had a degree of control over their lives, and in doing so, enjoyed a level of status.

A useful indicator of the importance and prosperity of Ireland's tenant farmers was the growing proportion of people living in 'good houses' where the value of a house was judged according to the size and quality of accommodation. Assessments were made according to the number of rooms and windows, the quality of the flooring, and the home's solidity and

[40] Fenton, 'The Economy of Limerick', 94.
[41] Fenton, *After the Famine*, 4.
[42] Angèle Smith, 'Mapped Landscapes: The Politics of Metaphor, Knowledge, and Representation on Nineteenth-Century Irish Ordnance Survey Maps', *Historical Archaeology*, Vol. 41, No. 1, *Between Art & Artifact*, 2007, 82.

durability as shown by wall and roofing materials. Of the four classes of homes, the fourth-class one-room mud cabin was the lowest, and in 1845 nearly half of Ireland's rural population was living at this level. Third-class homes were mud cottages with two to four rooms and windows; second class were usually good farmhouses with five to nine rooms; first-class homes were far superior to all dwellings with glass in the windows.[43] In 1841, only 17 per cent of people lived in houses with five or more rooms; ten years later the figure was 27 per cent.[44] Photographs taken at *Galtee View*, the Cooke family home at Bottomstown in the mid-1850s, portray an imposing, thatched-roofed, double-storeyed mud-built home with attractive furnishings, glass-panelled windows and substantial out-buildings. Still occupied by the Cooke family in 2021, it dates to the eighteenth century and housed three generations of the family before 1900. Although the home did not match the large country homes of the grand demesne, *Galtee View* bore no similarity to the windowless mud cabins and hovels of the poverty-stricken, where furniture was sparse and a bed a luxury.[45]

Why, then, did such a prosperous farmer as Patrick Cooke and his wife uproot their young family from their country of birth just when Ireland's agricultural industry and economy were showing signs of recovery? What prompted that decision when farming had for decades provided their family with a standard of living that far surpassed that of most landholders?

As historians have noted, the catastrophe of 1845-50 stands out as a radical marker in transforming the thinking of the Irish population, especially in the way rural people dealt with their lives and with each other in later decades.[46] The way of life that they had known was swept away by the Famine, threatening many conventions of the past. As this occurred, attention turned to issues concerning rural life, marriage patterns, family property and inheritance, and personal aspirations. East Limerick stood alone as a prosperous region, and it is hard to understand why early signs of recovery failed to prevent some of the 'better class', like Patrick and Mary Cooke from seeking independence elsewhere.

---

[43] *Parliamentary Gazetteer of Ireland*, 1844-45, Vol. 1, A-C. (Dublin, London, Edinburgh: A. Fullarton & Co., 1846), cxliv.
[44] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants*, 4.
[45] Grace Maguire & Loretta Dynan, *Cooke Family Collection: Photographs, Documents and Artifacts 1848-2019*, in possession of author; the grand Irish country house was part of a designed landscape that was not granted out in freehold territory, but rather, was retained by the lord of the manor for his own use or occupation; Maria Luddy & Mary O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland 1660-1925* (Port Melbourne, Victoria: Cambridge University Press, 2020), 242.
[46] Tracy English, '"Big Wages, Glorious Climate and Situations Guaranteed": A Study of the Migration of Irish Women to Great Britain for the Period 1861 to 1911', MA, Centre of Newfoundland Studies, Canada, 1999, 34.

At the end of the Famine, grievances were widespread across Ireland's rural community, with two-thirds of all Irish landholders who held less than fifteen statute acres before the Famine still living in poverty.[47] Remedies such as protection and lower taxation were viewed with scepticism, poor-law rates and tithes were as unpopular as rents, and tenant-landlord relations were fraught with problems.[48] The founding of the Tenant Right League in August 1850 as the economy was on the cusp of improvement offered some hope, initially through the adoption of Ulster custom, that is, the legalisation of tenant-right through fixity of tenure, fair rents and freedom to sell an interest in a holding.[49] With rising numbers of aggrieved emigrants leaving for Australia, newspapers in the colony hailed the League's benefits to Irish agriculturalists and hoped it would bring about 'the downfall of the tyrannical and truculent feudalism of Irish landlordism'.[50] Predictably, the League was short-lived. After initial progress, conflicts of interest emerged between Catholic and Protestants over territorial rights, and between large tenant farmers and small holders—the former prioritising fixity of tenure, the latter fair rents—issues that had important implications for the Cooke tenancies.[51] Despite the League's demise by 1859, it laid bare the complexity of Ireland's post-Famine economic, religious and political systems and the ever-present issue of anti-imperialist sentiment—captured five years later in Lady Wilde's lament: 'the stranger reaps our harvest, the alien owns our soil'.[52]

While Patrick's family was not in the 'big' league of Irish landholders (whether as owners or tenants) of a thousand acres or more, his situation was not comparable to that of small farmers who were in constant danger of losing their livelihood. Thus, while farmers' expectations for the future would have depended on how the Famine impacted their families,

---

[47] Cormac Ó Gráda, 'The Investment Behaviour of Irish Landlords 1850-75: Some Preliminary Findings', *The Agricultural History Review*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1975, 141.
[48] Ó Gráda, 'The Investment Behaviour of Irish Landlords', 34.
[49] Joseph Coohill, *Ireland: A Short History* (Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications, 2000), 82-3; see also W. E. Vaughan, 'A Study of Landlord and Tenant Relations in Ireland between the Famine and the Land War, 1850-78', Ph.D, diss., Trinity College, Dublin, 1973, 302; Vaughan notes that the concept of Ulster custom was nebulous since it was based on the concealment of the true relation between rents and tenant right.
[50] *South Australian Register*, 12 December 1850.
[51] Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy*, 4; a move to form a Tenant League was first mooted in 1835 by Sharman Crawford, M.P. for Dundalk, to amend the law of landlord and tenant in Ireland. As well as seeking to secure the adoption of the Three Fs, the bill embodied a modest demand for tenants upon eviction to be compensated for improvements, although as mentioned, these tenants generally did not have the money to make improvements and landlords would have been reluctant to do so. In 1850 Charles Gavan Duffy and Frederick Lucas founded the League and for a short time united Catholic and Protestant tenant interests, although this dissipated after the introduction of the Ecclesiastical Bill by the British Government in February 1851, whereby disputes erupted over Catholic Church territorial rights. The League gradually lost influence and petered out by 1859.
[52] Solow, *The Land Question*, 141; Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants,* 6; Lady Wilde, 'The Famine Years', *Poems by Speranza* (Dublin, Ireland: James Duffy, 1864), 5, https://us.archive.org/26/items Accessed 14/04/2020.

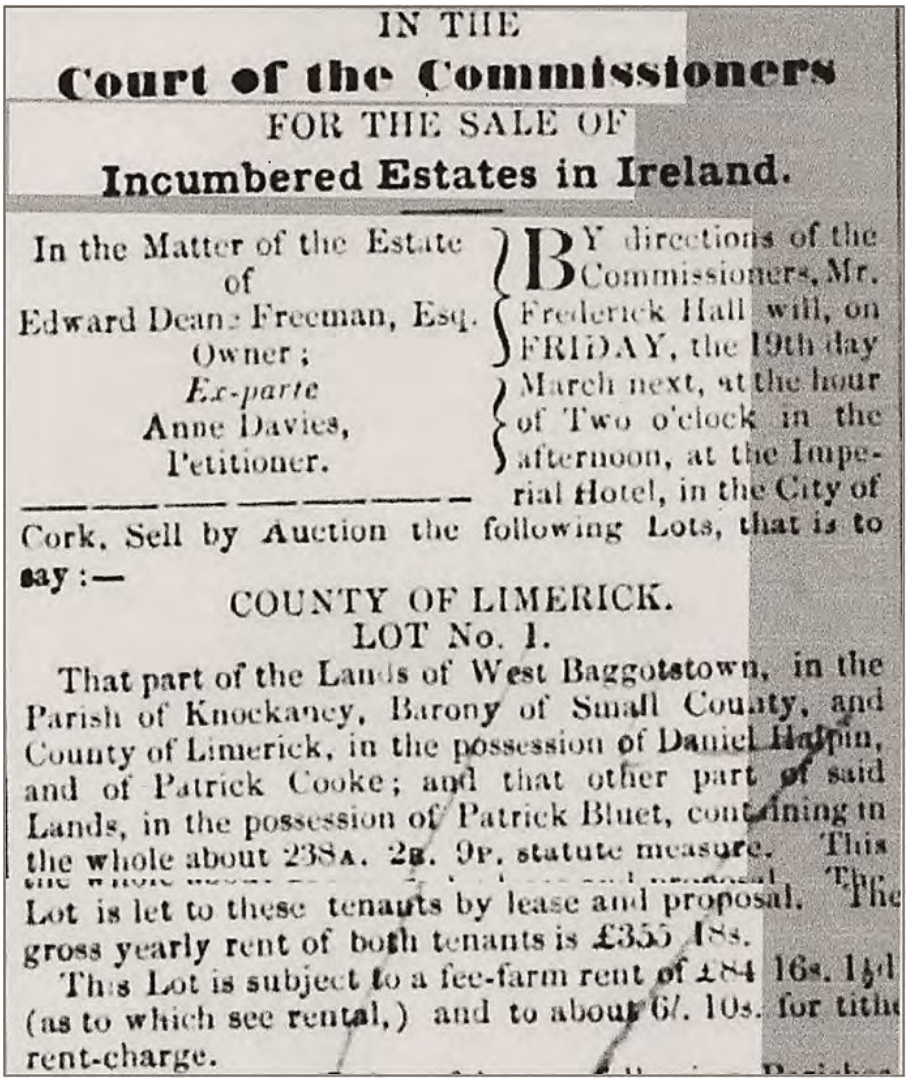
there is no clear evidence as to why Patrick and Mary chose to emigrate. According to Irish descendants and a local historian (whose ancestors were neighbouring landholders in Knockainy), land was central to his dilemma and was the catalyst that propelled him to leave Ireland.[53] They suspect Patrick was alienated within the family, and that he feared his farming ambitions would never be realised in Limerick.[54] While it is impossible to know with certainty why he decided to emigrate, clues can be found in the broader context in which such decisions were made.

The fact that Patrick Cooke ***did*** emigrate, suggests that growing prosperity and an accompanying mood of optimism in the rural community at the end of the Famine was not sufficient to keep people from leaving. Many of the gains of the post-Famine period were yet to be experienced, and while better-off farmers who survived the Famine relatively intact may initially have viewed the future optimistically, it is also possible that the Famine led to extra caution, even as the economy showed early signs of promise from 1850. The growing number of bank deposits lodged in the 1860s and 1870s suggests farmers were in the habit of protecting their savings by reducing working expenses and unnecessary expenditure when circumstances demanded. However, such protection also had a downside, since curbed spending slowed investment.[55] To what extent the Cookes reduced their spending and hoarded their cash is unknown, although their history clearly shows that they were adept at managing their finances through both the good and the bad times.

The lack of organisation across Ireland in improving the lot of tenant farmers after the Famine may have fuelled Patrick and Mary's disenchantment. In general, Irish farmers were not powerful agitators, and as a group lacked the ability to develop strong collective action to counter the landlord oligopoly, or even to settle on realistic aims.[56] Political movements may have been too remote, and confidence in the Tenant League may have been thin from the outset—a factor borne out by the organisation's demise by 1859.[57] Coupled with Prime Minister Russell's *laissez-faire* leadership during the Famine and inadequate government

[53] Edmond O'Dea, Co. Limerick, email, 14 June 2018.
[54] Thomas Cooke, *Irish Life and Lore, Recordings and Books, Oral History Collection, County Limerick*, Thomas Cooke (1914-2014), Parts 1 & 2 (2014). Transcribed by Colin Ryan.
[55] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants*, 31-2.
[56] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants*, 35.
[57] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants*, 35.

response, it was clear that the sheer epic proportions of the 1840s catastrophe demanded prompt, effective decision-making to restore the country to economic stability.[58]



IN THE

Court of the Commissioners

FOR THE SALE OF

Incumbered Estates in Ireland.

In the Matter of the Estate of Edward Deane Freeman, Esq. Owner; *Ex-parte* Anne Davies, Petitioner.

BY directions of the Commissioners, Mr. Frederick Hall will, on FRIDAY, the 19th day March next, at the hour of Two o'clock in the afternoon, at the Imperial Hotel, in the City of Cork, Sell by Auction the following Lots, that is to say:—

COUNTY OF LIMERICK.

LOT No. 1.

That part of the Lands of West Baggotstown, in the Parish of Knockaney, Barony of Small County, and County of Limerick, in the possession of Daniel Halpin, and of Patrick Cooke; and that other part of said Lands, in the possession of Patrick Bluet, containing in the whole about 238A. 2R. 9P. statute measure. This Lot is let to these tenants by lease and proposal. The gross yearly rent of both tenants is £355 18s.

This Lot is subject to a fee-farm rent of £84 16s. 1½d (as to which see rental,) and to about 6l. 10s. for tithe rent-charge.

Figure 8: Incumbered Estates in Ireland
Limerick Reporter, 24 February 1852
https://findmypast.com.au
Accessed 12/08/2018

What confidence, then, would an impatient, go-ahead farmer like Patrick have in Ireland's future when the good times were so long in coming? Better, perhaps, to take advantage of opportunities elsewhere. Was he being prescient in 1854 with an agricultural depression just around the corner (1859 to 1864), in which the weather was so harsh that the

[58] Ó Gráda, *Ireland before and after the Famine*, 111; Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York, USA: Oxford University Press, 1988), 284 & 386; Prime Minister Russell believed that Ireland's public and private institutions, not the government, should take responsibility for the purchase, importation, and distribution of food. In 1847 when an election returned a high proportion of MPs hostile to spending money on Irish relief, Russell either could not or would not face the issue. He was an ineffective leader with a Cabinet faction that often made a shamble of his leadership.

losses of many strong farmers exceeded those of the late 1840s and early 1850s.[59] Did he anticipate that wheat, oats and potato crop yields would fall as steeply as they did during the depression, and that extreme weather conditions (drought and flood) would see a sharp decline in pig breeding and the size of the national dairy herd? Did he have any inkling that butter production would be cut drastically at the Cork Butter Exchange in those five years?[60] In choosing emigration did Patrick ponder whether his ambitions for a higher standard of living would be satisfied, given that the Australian economy was still very much in the early stages of development? There is no evidence to answer any of these questions definitively.

Nonetheless, some idea of the reasons behind Patrick's emigration may be gleaned from an advertisement in the *Dublin Evening Post* on 16 May 1850. On that date, a parcel of land at West Baggotstown, Parish of Knockainy, was listed for sale as an Incumbered Estate. The land referred to was Lot 11, part of 238A 2R 9P, leased by Patrick Sherin and Patrick Bluett and sublet to tenants, Patrick Cooke and Daniel Halpin.[61] Barely three weeks later (4 June 1850) rental documents noted that '[t]his farm is at present under eviction for non-payment of rent; *habere* executed [proof of ownership]; time for redemption not expired'.[62] Patrick and Daniel were in arrears with rent to the tune of £117 12s 4½d, although it seems the debt was paid before the due date, or the parties came to some other arrangement, as both Halpin and Cooke were again named as co-tenants when the block was put up for sale on 7 June 1850.[63] The Lot initially failed to attract a bidder, but was later sold to Thomas Poole for £3,500, as a lifetime lease at a yearly rate of £322 12s 4d.[64] When it again changed hands in November 1852 it was purchased by Thomas Brownrigg, Esq. for the sum of £4,500 with Patrick and Daniel remaining as tenants.[65] Patrick was a sitting tenant on this land at that time but left the

[59] James S. Donnelly, jnr., 'The Irish Agricultural Depression of 1859-64', *Irish Economic and Social History*, Vol. 3, 1976, 33-7.
[60] Donnelly, 'The Irish Agricultural Depression of 1859-64', 33-7 & 43; records were gleaned from Cork, Kerry and Limerick, the three counties from which supplies were almost exclusively drawn. Outbreaks of swine fever accompanying the depression caused heavy mortality in many districts. The fall in potato production also made the breeding of pigs much less profitable.
[61] *Dublin Evening Post*, 16 May 1850.
[62] *Dublin Evening Post*, 16 May 1850; *Landed Estates Court Rentals 1850-1880*, 'Rental of the County Limerick Estate Lands', Lot 11, Baggotstown, for Sale Notice, 4 June 1850, https://www.irish-geneaography.com/landed-estates-court-rentals-1850-1880 html Accessed 01/04/2015; the Encumbered Estates Act was enacted by the British parliament in 1849 to enable the sale of estates that were bound in legal entanglements thus removing barriers to the free flow of capital. The Latin term *habere* relates to entitlement, custody and possession. See also, Vaughan, 'A Study of Landlord and Tenant Relations in Ireland', 186, who notes that resistance to landlord demands by tenacious tenants often caused embarrassment to landlords who did not wish to be exposed to critical publicity.
[63] *Dublin Evening Post*, 'Sale of Incumbered Estates', 7 June 1850.
[64] *Cork Examiner*, 5 June 1850; *Limerick Reporter*, 7 June 1850.
[65] *Cork Examiner*, 'Incumbered Estates Court', 29 November 1852.

area 18 months later. The threat of eviction in 1850 thus raises questions over the management of the tenancy, landlord-tenant relations, and even the possibility of a rift between Patrick and his co-tenant, Halpin. It is possible that a dispute over this land played a role in his decision to leave Ireland and, indeed, was the source of his funds for his move to Victoria.

How Patrick found himself in this tense family predicament in 1850 is unclear, but it bears all the hallmarks of a stoush over rent, even if eviction was averted when arrears were paid. Several explanations are possible. Though better-off than most farmers (and possibly more affluent than his co-partner), Patrick's finances would have suffered during the Famine. The effect of economic instability and a short-lived drop in cattle prices in 1849 most likely hit hard, reducing the value of his assets and limiting his ability to reinvest.[66] Second, he may have objected to what he considered excessively high rents on the lush Golden Vein (as distinct from the much broader area known as the Golden Vale), although in general landlords tried to keep rents low for fear of losing reliable tenants like the Cookes.[67] Figures show that rates *were* kept down during the Famine and rose only slowly and 'stickily' over the next decade.[68] Third, the issue of compensation for permanent improvements such as houses and out-buildings, fences and gates, the clearing of waterways and reclaiming extra-marginal, unproductive land might have been a thorn in Patrick's side. In Ireland it was not uncommon for tenants to bear the cost of infrastructure that permanently enhanced the value of their properties, although secure tenants could sometimes persuade landlords to contribute to these expenses.[69] In general, the law presumed that permanent improvements belonged to the landlord, even when they were the work of tenants.[70] The issue of compensation was important to all farmers, not just those considering emigration, since it had the potential to affect land values and investment, and because tenant-right in Ireland lacked any statutory basis until 1870.

---

[66] Donnelly, *The Great Irish Potato Famine*, 64.

[67] Timothy W. Guinnane & Ronald I. Miller, 'Bonds without Bondsmen: Tenant-Right in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (March 1996), 116; Caitriona Clear, 'Agriculture' (Chapter 1), in *Social Change and Everyday Life in Ireland, 1850–1922* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2007), 18; on the broad Golden Vale in Co. Limerick, farms of 50 acres and over made up less than a quarter of all holdings between 1850 and 1922.

[68] Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy*, 71.

[69] Ó Ǵrada, 'The Investment Behaviour of Irish Landlords', 141; Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy*, 8-12.

[70] Vaughan, 'A Study of Landlord and Tenant Relations in Ireland', 4, 117-20; the amount of money which Irish landlords spent on improvements was influenced by the size of the tenant holding and the character of agricultural production which discouraged expensive outlays, and the fact that the poor state of cultivation on small farms provided landlords with an excuse to carry out only cheap improvements. Even though the social motives for landlord investment were strong—because they cemented good relations between landlords and tenants—improvements were often piecemeal and erratic and thus contributed to friction between landlords and tenants.

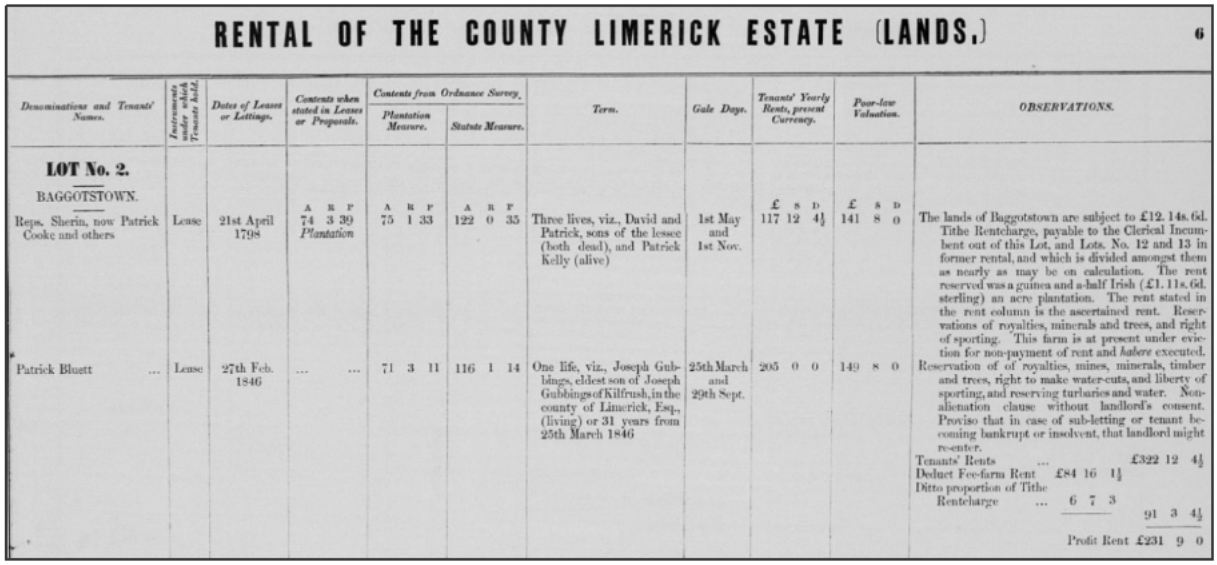
This meant that an evicted tenant had few legal claims for improvements before that time.[71] Like all outgoing tenants, Patrick would have needed every shilling if he were to set himself up in a developing colony where the agricultural industry was still in the early stages of expansion and where land management bore few similarities to the situation in Ireland.

Ejectment decrees were the landlord's first legal step in recovering overdue rent and were designed for that purpose alone—not for clearing away tenants.[72] Most evicted tenants were heavily in arrears. It is unlikely that Patrick was in this category, although he may have temporarily withheld payments when objecting to a rent rise on his land—as did his nephews, Nicholas and John Cooke and neighbour, Maurice Keane, in 1883 when landlord, Thomas Wyse, threatened to sell up their land at Bottomstown.[73] Before 1851 the right to eject for unpaid rent was limited to holders of written leases, although landlords were later compelled to reinstate tenants if arrears and costs were paid in a reasonable time, usually within one year.[74] After the immediate post-Famine years, evictions fell substantially and were only a fraction of those of the 1840s. By 1855, they were rare. In 1849 family evictions across Ireland totalled 16,686; in 1855 there were 1,849.[75] The decline in evictions continued for decades, apart from small rises in the mid-1860s and during the upheaval of the Irish Land Wars in 1879 and 1880.[76]

Perhaps the reasons for Patrick and Mary's decision to emigrate are to be found, not at the level of calculations about economic recovery and livestock prices, but at a deeper personal level. Perhaps the Cooke family's strong attachment to the land over more than half a century was itself a decisive factor. Could it have been—as poet Seamus Heaney later observed of his

[71] Guinnane & Miller, 'Bonds without Bondsmen', 116.
[72] Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy*, 54; see Joanne McEntee, 'The State and the Landed Estate: Order and Shifting Power Relations in Ireland, 1815-1891', Ph.D. diss., Dublin, National University of Ireland, 2013, 42-44; ejectment decrees were the legal process adopted by the landlord which enabled him to remove a tenant from the holding when that the tenant refused to quit the holding voluntarily. The decrees were served mainly for non-payment of rent and used as a means of controlling the behaviour of tenants, especially those considered unruly or troublesome. During the 1840s, tenants could be evicted for non-payment, overholding, or failure to prove entitlement to possession. Tenants were deemed to be overholding if they continued to remain on site and pay rent after their tenancy agreement had expired.
[73] Vaughan, *Landlords and Tenants*, 24; *Flag of Ireland*, *Dublin*, 20 January 1883; Patrick's nephews, Nicholas and John Cooke and neighbor, Maurice Keane, were active in pushing for tenant rights and were members of a local group that met regularly to discuss land issues.
[74] Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy*, 9-10.
[75] *Return, by Provinces and Counties, of Cases of Evictions Which Have Come to the Knowledge of the Constabulary in Each Year, 1849 to 1880*, P.P. 1881 (C. 185) LXXVII, cited in Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy*, 55-6; these figures are not entirely representative, and are believed to be lower than portrayed here since they do not include the number of families readmitted as caretakers or tenants; Guinnane & Miller, 'Bonds without Bondsmen', 116.
[76] Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy*, 55-56.

own family—that his father's broad shadow would 'not go away'?[77] Did Patrick feel trapped under an overarching burden of social, cultural and political power, family expectations, and a feudalistic land system that shaped and restricted his aspirations?



RENTAL OF THE COUNTY LIMERICK ESTATE (LANDS.) 6

Denominations and Tenants' Names.	Instruments under which Tenants hold.	Dates of Leases or Lettings.	Contents when stated in Leases or Proposals.	Contents from Ordnance Survey. Plantation Measure.	Contents from Ordnance Survey. Statute Measure.	Term.	Gale Days.	Tenants' Yearly Rents, present Currency.	Poor-law Valuation.	OBSERVATIONS.
LOT No. 2. BAGGOTSTOWN.			A R P	A R P	A R P			£ s d	£ s d	
Reps. Sherin, now Patrick Cooke and others	Lease	21st April 1798	74 3 39 *Plantation*	75 1 33	122 0 35	Three lives, viz., David and Patrick, sons of the lessee (both dead), and Patrick Kelly (alive)	1st May and 1st Nov.	117 12 4½	141 8 0	The lands of Baggotstown are subject to £12. 14s. 6d. Tithe Rentcharge, payable to the Clerical Incumbent out of this Lot, and Lots. No. 12 and 13 in former rental, and which is divided amongst them as nearly as may be on calculation. The rent reserved was a guinea and a-half Irish (£1. 11s. 6d. sterling) an acre plantation. The rent stated in the rent column is the ascertained rent. Reservations of royalties, minerals and trees, and right of sporting. This farm is at present under eviction for non-payment of rent and *habere* executed.
Patrick Bluett ...	Lease	27th Feb. 1846	... ...	71 3 11	116 1 14	One life, viz., Joseph Gubblings, eldest son of Joseph Gubbings of Kilfrush, in the county of Limerick, Esq., (living) or 31 years from 25th March 1846	25th March and 29th Sept.	205 0 0	149 8 0	Reservation of of royalties, mines, minerals, timber and trees, right to make water-cuts, and liberty of sporting, and reserving turbaries and water. Non-alienation clause without landlord's consent. Proviso that in case of sub-letting or tenant becoming bankrupt or insolvent, that landlord might re-enter.
										Tenants' Rents ... £322 12 4½
										Deduct Fee-farm Rent £84 16 1½
										Ditto proportion of Tithe Rentcharge ... 6 7 3
										91 3 4½
										Profit Rent £231 9 0

Figure 9: Threat of Eviction, Rental Co. Limerick Estate Lands, 4 June 1850
https://findmypast.com.au
Accessed 09/07/2015

Change was certainly in the air in Ireland's mid-nineteenth-century rural society. After decades of adherence to strict conventions relating to inheritance, marriage patterns and family roles, there was a break with the past in the aftermath of the Famine. Cultural and social morés were exposed to scrutiny, with significant changes in the status of the family unit. The large Cooke family would not have been exempt from these changes. They lived according to a strict code of ethics informed by their Catholic faith, and, as the last of the family to marry, Patrick would have been sensitive to the links between tenant marriages and farm structures and their repercussions on the future of farming estates. Subdivision of land inevitably followed many marriages and sometimes proprietors assumed they had a right to oversee the marriages of their tenants.[78] Under these circumstances, how would any young man with a wife and children view the future?

The depressed land market at the end of the Famine and the unpredictability of tenant rents would have been concerning for Patrick and Mary. When the Encumbered Estates Act

[77] Seamus Heaney, 'Follower', from *Opened Ground: Selected Poems 1966-1996* (Farrar, Strauss & Giroux,1999), LLC, http://us.macmillan.com/fsg Accessed 14/04/2020.
[78] Patrick J. Duffy, 'Colonial Spaces and Sites of Resistance: Landed Estates in Nineteenth Century Ireland' (First published as Chapter 18, in L. J. Proudfoot and M.M. Roche (eds), *(Dis)Placing Empire* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005), 15-40.

was legislated in 1849, giving the state the power to sell estates in financial difficulty, land values fell to rock bottom for the next couple of years, despite early signs of a recovering economy. At the rate of ten to fifteen years' purchase of current rents, the return on investment during those years was far below the rate in the 1830s when it rose to around 20-25 per cent.[79] These factors may have stiffened Patrick's resolve to emigrate. It is believed he sold his property sometime during this trough (between 1852 and 1854) and that it was widely known at the time that he was disappointed with the price.[80] Adding to his problems was bitter in-fighting within the family over the prickly issue of succession.[81] With various sons and their wives residing in the Knockainy home for a time after marrying, stories abound of constant bickering over inheritance and the size and quality of land allocations to each child.[82] The instability of this period may have marked a watershed in Patrick's life.

Disputes over inheritance were not unusual in Ireland, and in general there was no fixed norm for succession. Before the Famine the practice of succession tended to favour the division of property amongst all children (ultimogeniture) although a trend toward primogeniture (selection of the oldest son and the dowering of only one daughter) was slowly gaining traction at that time.[83] After the Famine, primogeniture became far more common with properties left to a single male heir, usually the eldest son.[84] In some instances, the father simply selected the most able, unless he was clearly unsuitable or destined for another occupation, or for religious life.[85] While primogeniture might have been more effective in the Cooke family because of Nicholas's longer life experience (Nicholas was 22 years older than Patrick), both practices

[79] Dooley, 'Estate Ownership and Management', 4.
[80] Cooke, *Irish Life and Lore;* the interviewee, Thomas Cooke, was Patrick Cooke's great grandnephew. He was born in Bottomstown, Knockainy, County Limerick. His early education was at Bulgaden national school before boarding at Rockwell College and Warrenstown Agricultural College. He farmed in Knockainy and was active in agricultural circles and was a founding member of the Golden Vale Marts Group. As a competent sportsman he achieved national fame, winning the All-Ireland medal. He lived his entire life at the Knockainy family property, *Galtee View*, until his death at the age of 99 in 2014 (Personal communication, Edmond O'Dea, Knockainy, Co. Limerick, 24 August 2017.) Family stories also suggests Patrick was given 'his share' of the farm in cash and that it may have been done as a gentleman's agreement without a legal process (Catherine O'Brien, Cork, Co. Limerick, email to author, 19/12/2020).
[81] Thomas Cooke, Knockainy, County Limerick, personal communication October 2011; Willie McAuliffe, Rochestown, County Cork, August 2017; Cooke, *Irish Life and Lore'.*
[82] Thomas Cooke, Knockainy Co. Limerick, October 2011; Willie McAuliffe, Rochestown, County Cork, October 2017; Catherine Cooke-O'Brien, Cork, Co. Cork, 10 August 2004.
[83] Conrad M. Arensberg & Solon T. Kimball, *Family and Community in Ireland* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), cited in Cormac Ó Gráda, 'Primogeniture and Ultimogeniture in Rural Ireland', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 3 (Winter 1980), 491; see also Kenneth H. Connell, 'Peasant Marriage in Ireland: Its Structure and Development since the Famine', *Economic History Review,* New Series, Vol. 14, No. 3, 1962, 502-23.
[84] Ó Gráda, 'Primogeniture and Ultimogeniture', 491-92.
[85] Ó Gráda, 'Primogeniture and Ultimogeniture', 491-92.

had implications for marital strategy, family structure and income, and, not least, for family harmony. In effect, both conventions disinherited remaining siblings unless they were provided for in other ways—an insurmountable prospect in many families of this size. Since Patrick's parents died intestate in 1842 and 1852, their succession plans were unclear, and their offspring were without the responsibility of caring for them in their later years.[86]

Without further evidence there is no way of knowing whether Nicholas or Patrick (as eldest and youngest respectively) was favoured, or whether rivalry arose when other siblings coveted the position. If so, the question of *which* son should take over the farm may have assumed mammoth proportions given five of the six surviving sons were possible contenders and that several sons already occupied land in the district. Although one daughter may have been dowered, clearly out of the race and permanently out of reach of any further claim were three daughters, Catherine, Johanna and Deborah.

In the meantime, ill-feeling over inheritance may have reached a climax at the end of the Famine given Patrick's land allocation was well in excess that of his brothers. Records from 1848 to 1855 show that initially John inherited 4.8 statute acres, Thomas 29.24, Nicholas 42.06, and Patrick, 51 acres, which is thought to have been held 'at will'.[87] How this came about is unexplained, as is the origin of Patrick's allocation and whether it was part of his parents' original holding. With John holding only 4.8 acres, it appears that he may have taken over Patrick's share after Patrick emigrated. The seemingly inequitable distribution may have unleashed jealousies which ultimately led to his emigration. It may never be known whether Patrick left because of a family split, under pressure to relieve home finances, or simply because he was impatient to bolster his status and further his interests independently. If he was pushed, who among his siblings wanted him out of the way? And why? Considering the size of his assets, poverty was hardly the issue. Given the large numbers of impoverished leaving Ireland, historians suggest that small tenants were more likely to leave than the better-off.[88] For Patrick, however, the issue of inheritance would have been critical.

---

[86] Nicholas Cooke, born 1772, died 16 April 1842; Margaret Cleary-Cooke, born 1772, died 1 May 1852 (inscription Ardkilmartin graveyard, Kilmallock, County Limerick, Ireland).

[87] *Griffiths Valuation/Office Books/Ireland Census*, John Cooke, Nicholas Cooke, Thomas Cooke & Patrick Cooke, County Limerick, Barony of Small County, Parish Knockainy, Townland Bottomstown, 1821-51, http://census.nationalarchives.ie Accessed 16/04/2020; the net annual value of Patrick's land was £56 15s 0d; the lessor Philip Maher. Maps of the Baggotstown district show Patrick's land some distance from that of his brothers which may indicate that his land was not part of the original estate (Edmund O'Dea, Co. Limerick, email, 23 May 2018).

[88] Trevor McClaughlin, Stephanie James & Simon O'Reilly, 'Migration to Australia Mid-nineteenth Century: Emigration from the Shirley Estate at the Time of the Famine', *Clogher Record*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 2010, 290.

Figure 10: Patrick Cooke & Mary Walsh
Wedding Day, 23 February 1846.
(Maguire/Dynan Archive)

Despite the difficulties, Patrick was clearly better placed for marriage than most young men, since the Cooke and Walsh families were clearly acceptable to one another given their history of intermarriage from at least the 1820s. It was well known that the Cooke family looked to the future by swiftly rejecting a 'match' with a woman from 'a small farm' or family lacking 'a good fortune'. Two members of the family eloped when their partners were considered unsuitable.[89] Typically, preparation for Patrick's marriage demanded consultation with his prospective in-laws (Rathanny farmers, John Walsh and Mary Quish) and it is unlikely that Mary had any say. More likely she sat in silence as others determined her future.[90] Finance, however, would have been crucial to the discussion since the provision of a dowry, however small, was expected from her parents.

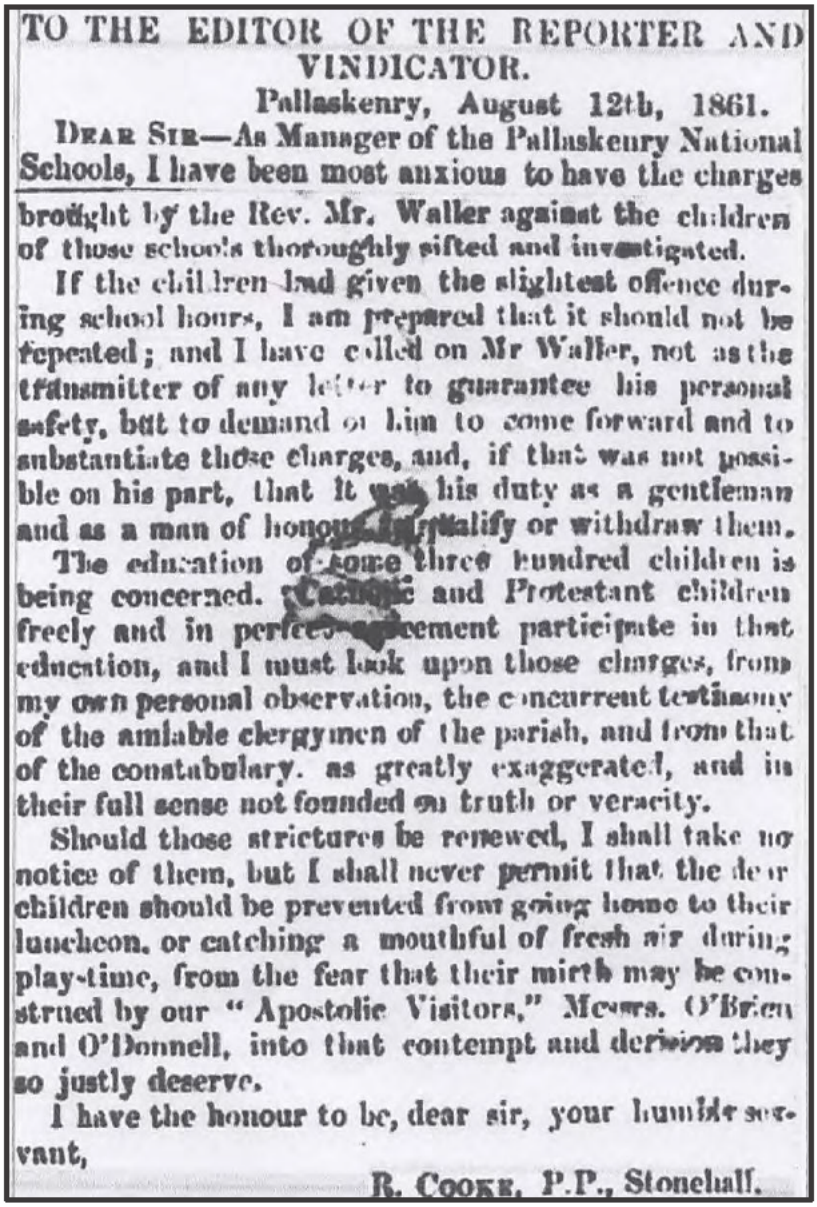
[89] Cooke, *Irish Life and Lore;* one Cooke daughter was advised to marry a wealthy land-owning man who was a year older than her father, rather than remain single. In later generations members of the Cooke family eloped because the bride was not considered a suitable match.
[90] Rathanny was a 713-acre townland a few miles south of Knockainy; see Luddy & O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland*, 128. Given Patrick's father was deceased in 1842, discussions may have taken place with his mother (Margaret Cleary) who died aged 80 years in 1852.

Patrick's assets show that his prospects for the future were promising. Alongside his initial holding of 51 acres in 1846 was a life-long lease on 74a 3r 39p in partnership with neighbour, Daniel Halpin, at Baggotstown; and a further lease on 64a 2r 42p in partnership with Maurice Walsh (possibly an uncle of Mary Walsh) at Baggotstown West. It is thought the partnership with Halpin may have helped finance Patrick's migration to Australia after the tenancy was transferred privately to his brother (John Cooke) in the early 1850s. The latter partnership with Maurice Walsh (held by the Walsh family from the mid-1820s) was likewise listed jointly with Patrick by 1850.[91] The circumstances surrounding the creation of the partnerships are unclear. However, they show that Patrick and Mary's assets before emigrating were considerable.

In mid-nineteenth-century Ireland, marriage arrangements continued to influence the economic structure of rural society.[92] Matrimony was not solely a sacred contract, even for committed Catholics like Patrick and Mary. It was also a calculated, financial agreement between families (with affection sometimes lacking) whereby prospective partners were judged according to their value to the union, and to society.[93] It was an arrangement defined by religion and money, and the social standing and personal qualities of the young couple. For farmers, it ensured continuity of descent and contiguity of ownership.[94] A further advantage for Patrick and Mary was the prestige of having a priest in the family—Patrick's cousin, outspoken Rev. Richard Cooke, PP. (1812-1864), who was to gain notoriety during the Pallaskenry riots in Limerick in 1861.[95] The 'good blood' of Irish families with members in religious life was something that prospective marriage matches eagerly sought and any groom with a relative a

[91] Valuation Books, County Limerick, Parish of Knockainy, Barony of Small County, Townland Bottomstown, John Walsh, 4 May 1850; Maurice Walsh, 14 July 1848; 9 July 1850 http://genealogy.nationalarchives.ie Accessed 17/04/2020; the valuation on the John Walsh property was not entered in the record. Some land transactions were carried out informally between families and may have consisted only of a verbal agreement.
[92] Luddy & O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland*, 1.
[93] Nolan, *Ourselves Alone*, 20; David Fitzpatrick, 'Divorce and Separation in Modern Irish History', *Past and Present*, Vol. 114, 1987, 184; Connell, 'Peasant Marriage in Ireland', 503.
[94] Ó Grada, *Ireland Before and After the Famine*, 166. See Samuel Clark, 'The Importance of Agrarian Classes: Agrarian Class Structure and Collective Action in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 29, No. 1, March 1978, 22-40; Patrick's acreages were far in excess of the cut-off point for small farmers who had around twenty acres. Catherine Cooke & James Walsh, Marriage 31 January 1826, *Catholic Parish Registers, NLI,* Knockainy & Patrickswell, Diocese Cashel & Emly, Co. Limerick. Ireland, Microfilm 02428/01; see also Cooke, *Irish Life and Lore;* throughout this period to the early twentieth century intermarriage between the Cooke and Walsh families was consistently based on the assets of contracting parties; see also Pauline Jackson, 'Women in 19th Century Irish Emigration', *The International Migration Review*, Vol. 18, No. 4, Special Issue: *Women in Migration*, Winter 1984, 1009, who notes that arranged marriages in pre-Famine Ireland were not entirely unusual, but they tended to be confined to more prosperous farmers, the upper classes and the aristocracy.
[95] For details of Rev. Cooke ministry and intervention in the Pallaskenry Riots saga see Appendix 5.

priest (particularly a brother) stood out above the ordinary.[96] With this background, Mary's marriage at the young age of 18 years, four years below the average, would have been acceptable to her parents, even though the better-off tended to consider early marriage unwise and linked more to the rural poor.[97]



TO THE EDITOR OF THE REPORTER AND VINDICATOR.

Pallaskenry, August 12th, 1861.

DEAR SIR—As Manager of the Pallaskenry National Schools, I have been most anxious to have the charges brought by the Rev. Mr. Waller against the children of those schools thoroughly sifted and investigated.

If the children had given the slightest offence during school hours, I am prepared that it should not be repeated; and I have called on Mr Waller, not as the transmitter of any letter to guarantee his personal safety, but to demand of him to come forward and to substantiate those charges, and, if that was not possible on his part, that it was his duty as a gentleman and as a man of honour to qualify or withdraw them.

The education of some three hundred children is being concerned. Catholic and Protestant children freely and in perfect agreement participate in that education, and I must look upon those charges, from my own personal observation, the concurrent testimony of the amiable clergymen of the parish, and from that of the constabulary, as greatly exaggerated, and in their full sense not founded on truth or veracity.

Should those strictures be renewed, I shall take no notice of them, but I shall never permit that the dear children should be prevented from going home to their luncheon, or catching a mouthful of fresh air during play-time, from the fear that their mirth may be construed by our "Apostolic Visitors," Messrs. O'Brien and O'Donnell, into that contempt and derision they so justly deserve.

I have the honour to be, dear sir, your humble servant,

R. COOKE, P.P., Stonehall.

Figure 11: ***Tipperary Vindicator & Limerick Reporter***
13 August 1861
Letter to the Editor, Pallaskenry, from Rev. R. Cooke
https://www.findmypast.com.au
Accessed 01/01/2021

[96] Connell, 'Peasant Marriage in Ireland', 505.
[97] English, "Big Wages, Glorious Climate and Situations Guaranteed", 35-6.

Like Patrick, Mary was a 'good' match and not just in terms of money and respectability. Mary was young and healthy and likely to contribute to the family finances by bearing sons who would reduce the need for hired farm workers. This was an important consideration since family members were generally the main source of labour on large pasture holdings.[98] At the same time, women's ability to work, whether paid or unpaid, was almost always essential to family survival, even in better-off households—though it rarely led to a woman's financial independence, instead reinforcing male supremacy.[99] In many ways, Patrick and Mary's marriage would have been unremarkable for mid-nineteenth century Ireland. Before it took place, for example, it would have been customary for the couple's finances to be determined with little or no input from the prospective spouses or their mothers.[100] Since women owned nothing in their own right and had no direct say in such matters, they remained economically controlled and dependent on the goodwill of their husbands.[101] In this way, the economic management of farming estates became another means of reinforcing the patriarchal structure of the family.

The children were similarly affected by this system of control, since they along with landless labourers who were often members of the farmers' families, were considered economic assets, with the expectation that they contribute to the workload through paid and unpaid work within the household and on the farm. As with their mother, labour was organised around the family's needs—the greater the number of children, the more mouths to feed, the more they were expected to pitch in.[102] Before the Famine, it was not uncommon for women and children to be directly involved in physical farm work, undertaking tasks such as tending animals, digging potatoes, carrying peat, binding corn and working in the fields during harvest.[103] Women's wages from cottage industries such as spinning, lacemaking, milking cows, raising pigs and poultry, and the sale of fruit and vegetables, were an important supplement to farm income, accounting for as much as 40 to 60 per cent of the household

[98] K. H. Connell, 'Marriage in Ireland after the Famine: The Diffusion of the Match' (Paper read before the Society in Dublin on 16 December 1955, and in Belfast on 20 January 1956), 84, https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/ Accessed 01/12/2019.
[99] Wilma A. Dunaway, 'The Double Register of History: Situating the Forgotten Woman and Her Household in Capitalist Commodity Chains', *Journal of World-Systems Research*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 2001, 2-29; such practices are sometimes termed 'housewifization'. See also Linda McDowell, 'A Woman's Place?', book chapter in Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minnesota, USA: Minnesota University Press, 1994), 191.
[100] Nolan, *Ourselves Alone*, 33-4.
[101] Nolan, *Ourselves Alone*, 33-4.
[102] Nolan, *Ourselves Alone*, 33-4.
[103] Lyn Lees, 'Mid-Victorian Migration', 26-30; Nolan, *Ourselves Alone*, 30; Luddy & O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland*, 242.

income by the 1890s.[104] However, despite women gaining a degree of financial independence through such work, it was a gendered employment pattern of household labour since women's 'less skilled' paid work was not necessarily recognised in economic structures and government systems. In this way, the practice was a paradox since it was a contest between two competing spaces—capitalism and patriarchy. While females made a valuable contribution to the national wealth the process nonetheless reinforced male supremacy and further subjection of their sex.[105]

However, Mary was better-placed than her spinster sister, Catherine Walsh—perhaps the loneliest group of all—who was particularly vulnerable after the Famine when the earning capacity of single females was already weakened by mechanisation and the switch from tillage to pasture. The loss of income was a double blow at this time, since from the mid-1840s gradual inroads by males into traditional female occupations such as milking cows and raising poultry had doomed many women to a life of penury.[106] At that time two-thirds of Ireland's males above the age of fifteen were already engaged in producing, preparing or selling food.[107] Not only did large numbers of women lose their livelihood during this period, some suffered subordination in a way that was exclusive to their gender.

Compounding an already diminished life as a single woman, Catherine was under the influence of a patriarchal church that was rapidly tightening its grip and using its power as an instrument of social control. Historian Donald Akenson goes so far as to say that Ireland after the Famine became the most sexually repressed society in the world.[108] Not only were women socially constrained (men were permitted a public life), the pervasive new puritanism reinforced the subordinate position of women by viewing them as 'deadly perils' and an 'occasion of sin' for males.[109] Without an inheritance, and with limited work opportunities, the disparaging link between women's sexuality and religious faith ensured a bleak future. Unless Catherine found a suitable marriage partner in Ireland, as did Patrick's sisters (Catherine, Johanna and Deborah), she was destined to live without an income, an intimate relationship, or

---

[104] Anne O'Dowd, 'Women in Rural Ireland in the Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries—How the Daughters, Wives and Sisters of Small Farmers and Landless Labourers Fared', *Rural History*, Issue 5, No. 2, 1994, 175-78, cited in Katie Barclay, 'Place and Power in Irish Farms at the End of the Nineteenth Century', *Women's History Review*, Issue 21, No. 4, 2012, 4.
[105] Wilma A. Dunaway, 'The Double Register of History, 2-29; such practices are sometimes termed 'housewifization'. See also Linda McDowell, 'A Woman's Place?', book chapter in Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minnesota, USA: Minnesota University Press, 1994), 191.
[106] Nolan, *Ourselves Alone*, 36.
[107] *Parliamentary Gazetteer of Ireland 1844-45*, Vol. 1, lxix.
[108] Donald Harman Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* (Toronto, Canada: P. D. Meany Company, Inc., Publishers, 1996), 26.
[109] Nolan, *Ourselves Alone*, 36.

the chance to have a family.[110] Her only alternative was religious life or emigration. Convent life may not have appealed to Catherine since it also required a dowry, which may not have been forthcoming. If a woman joined a convent without a dowry her life as a lay sister was little better than a servant.[111] For others, it was an attractive proposition because it kept them close to their families and provided a permanent home, money, educational opportunities, and a level of social status.

Figure 12: Catherine Walsh,
sister of Mary Cooke, *White Hart,* Pyalong, c. 1880
(Maguire/Dynan Archive)

In June 1854, Catherine joined Patrick and her sister, Mary, on the voyage to Australia. The reasons for her emigration are unknown although it is possible she went as a companion to her pregnant sister, who was travelling with four young children. Catherine's bond with her sister was possibly close given Mary's ailing infant son, John, was entrusted to her care in Victoria when Mary returned to Ireland in 1855. Although Catherine remained single after emigrating, she may have baulked at a lifetime of servility and the loss of her independence

[110] Cooke, *Irish Life and Lore*; The situation was looked upon so dimly in the Cooke family that a Cooke female in a later generation was advised to marry a man who was older than her father, rather than remain single.
[111] Gloria McAdam, 'Willing Women and the Rise of Convents in Nineteenth-century England', *Women's History Review*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1999, 412.

had she remained in Ireland.[112] In Victoria, she had a chance to determine her future on a landscape free of Ireland's social and religious constraints. Catherine lived permanently with Patrick and Mary, and although her life may be seen as one of servility within their household—caring for her sister's children and working as a domestic in the hotel—she nonetheless gained a degree of independence by purchasing land, and by having the chance to take part in the hotel's active social life, as discussed in chapter four. As increasing numbers of women emigrated to the colonies, the combination of social change and emigration resulted in an important demographic shift in Ireland's marriage market and birth rates. In the Catholic Parish of Knockainy between the decades of the 1840s and the 1870s, the Catholic population fell by more than 35 percent, Catholic marriages by 54.8 per cent, and baptisms by 51.9 per cent.[113]

As a woman married into a well-known, well-off Knockainy family, Mary was relatively privileged. Yet the raising of her family may have limited her ability to add to the coffers through traditional female occupations, lowering her status within the household (the census listed farmer's wives alongside single females and unpaid servants as 'inactive' members of the household).[114] On the other hand the marriage settlement, or dowry, may have provided her with a level of authority when it came to ancillary female occupations. Studies show that the dowry provided no such protection, with wives sometimes accused of meddling with their husband's rights over family property even when it came to accepted female tasks such as poultry raising and selling eggs.[115] While this seems unlikely in Mary's case, a more pressing problem may have arisen had she and Patrick moved into the *Galtee View* home alongside Patrick's brother and his family. Living under the same roof with another family was hardly ideal—since Mary's arrival may have threatened family dynamics, and the status of a much older sister-in-law who perhaps considered she alone had the right to oversee household management, and to deal with domestic servants and unruly children.[116]

---

[112] Catherine Fogarty, *Diary of Catherine Fogarty*, April 1925-January 1926, 3; the author of the diary was an immigrant niece of Patrick Cooke who made a return visit to Ireland in 1925. She deplored the state of some of her unmarried female relations in her home country, describing them as 'crabbed' old women.
[113] Domhnall MacCarthaigh, 'Marriage and Birth Rates for Knockainy Parish, 1882-1941', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, Vol. 47, No. 165, 1942, 4-8; Nolan, *Ourselves Alone*, 13-4; Akenson, 25; Akenson argues that this demographic shift was already in train before the Famine but was accelerated and deepened in the following years, due to the redefinition of the family.
[114] Jackson, 'Women in 19th Century Irish Emigration', 1009.
[115] Luddy & O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland*, 244-5.
[116] O'Brien, personal communication 10 August 2004; it is believed that Patrick and Mary may have lived for a time with the family of Patrick's brother, Thomas, at *Galtee View* before they emigrated; see also Luddy & O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland*, 244.

Life in a middle-class Knockainy household might have ameliorated Mary's situation to some extent, given she had more comforts than most. Domestic help, of which there is evidence in the family, may have provided her with a better social life than other wives, although this too may have been curbed by the toll of childbearing.[117] Of the first eight years of her marriage, more than half were spent in pregnancy and Mary's views on the situation can only be guessed at. However, given her proven fertility it was hardly necessary for Patrick to 'bounce a boot off her now and then', as did one husband in a childless marriage in late nineteenth-century Ireland.[118] Yet there may still have been an emotional cost to her travails since it was generally believed that the wider the age-gap between spouses, the greater the husband's power within the family.[119] This authority also applied to intimate relations and coincided with a belief that Irish wives were treated badly by their husbands in a way that was not tolerated in England.[120] There is no evidence that Patrick treated Mary badly, or that Mary was resentful of the life she lived at *Galtee View*, but given the restrictions imposed on women generally in mid-nineteenth century Ireland, the prospect of emigration to a more liberal environment might have loomed large. As sisters, Mary and Catherine may have discussed these issues at length and in this way reinforced their resistant views.

In the first week of April 1849, five years before Patrick and Mary's departure to the Antipodes, the *Tuam Herald* described harrowing scenes at the Knockainy railway station as friends and relatives gathered to farewell people they knew seeking a new life.[121] Of note was the departure of Mr Joseph Gubbins, Esq., a wealthy landlord from Kilfrush House in Knockainy, who left with his family for America—the land of 'liberty and prosperity'.[122] In

---

[117] *Ireland Court of Petty Sessions Order Books 1842-1913*, CSPS 1/1425, 9 September 1885, https://www findmypast.com.au/articles/world-records/ Accessed 03/09/2016; these records show that Patrick's siblings and married nephews and nieces had hired domestic help, and legal action was taken on occasion when a hired domestic servant sued for unpaid wages.

[118] Mary's children were born in quick succession: Nicholas 1847; Margaret 1848; Nicholas 1850; Bridget 1851; John 1853; Catherine 1854, *Catholic Parish Registers, NLI*, Knockainy & Patrickswell, Diocese Cashel & Emly, Co. Limerick. Ireland, Microfilm 02505/03; Conrad M. Arensberg & Solon T. Kimball, *Family and Community*, 109, cited in Fitzpatrick, 'Divorce and Separation', 178.

[119] Nolan, *Ourselves Alone*, 34. There was a ten-year age gap between Patrick and Mary.

[120] Luddy & O'Dowd, *Marriage in Ireland*, 242.

[121] *Tuam Herald*, 'Emigration', 7 April 1849.

[122] McAuliffe, 'The Famine of 1845 to 1849', 2; when relief committees were set up around the country to raise money for the poor at a local level soon after the first failure of the potato crop, a committee headed by Joseph H. Gubbins covered the parishes of Knockainy and Hospital. Twenty-eight families subscribed to the fund managed by Catholic priest Rev. Fr Ryan, contributing a combined total of £50. The figure included a donation of £10 by Edward Deane Freeman, Esq. from Castlecor, County Cork, a wealthy landlord with extensive property in Knockainy. See also *Rochester Catholic Journal* (USA), 22 March 1907, which stated that Joseph H. Gubbins remained in America with his family and disposed of his property at Bottomstown, Knocklong, in 1907. The report said that his land was always let at reasonable terms to the tenantry and that the friendliest relations existed between the tenants and Mr Gubbins and with his respected father, who in times of distress and agitation never

recent weeks some sixty farming families of wealth and distinction had left from the same platform, 'farmers from the better class' who were no longer willing or able to live under British rule and the tyranny of 'pestilence and death'. Melancholy hardly described the mood as around one thousand sorrowing relatives and friends gave a 'parting grasp' and the 'long last look' to around 200 dear ones.[123] It was a scene that was to play out many times over in Knockainy in the next five years.[124]

Figure 13: 'The Immigrant's Farewell, the Lord be with you (1853)'
National Library Australia (NLA)
Cited in Mary Kruithof, *Fever Beach* (Mt Waverley, Vic: Quality Insights, 2017).

In the heady atmosphere of post-Famine migration Ireland's national press was a compelling medium which played on the hopes and fears of prospective emigrants. As if to soften the harrowing departure scenes, Australia's colonies were touted as 'a golden land' to which 5000 emigrants embarked every week, the majority lured by gold and the hope of making

unduly pressed the tenants. When Gubbins disposed of his Irish land in 1907 it was sold for 25 shillings per acre to be paid off over 22 years, with all arrears wiped out.

[123] *Tuam Herald*, 'Emigration', 7 April, 1849; McAuliffe, 'The Famine of 1845 to 1849', 2; see Noel Murphy, *Gubbins Family Notes*, http://www.limerickcity.ie/media/limerick%20families%20112.pdf Accessed 01/05/2020; Members of the Gubbins family were well-known wealthy landlords in Knockainy, barony of Small County, in the mid-nineteenth century. The family acquired Kilfrush House at Knocklong which continued their line in the district to the twentieth century. From Kilfrush they moved into Maidstown and then into Hospital/Kenmare Castle.

[124] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 23 June 1854; the paper reported that unprecedented numbers were applying to emigrate at that time, with the Mayor of Limerick having taken the names of more than 800 persons who indicated a wish to go to Australia.

a fortune. The 'beggars of today' stated one newspaper jubilantly, 'may be princes tomorrow'.[125] New arrivals, they said, were assured of abundant work for all classes, whether labourers, artisans or servants, whether rich or poor. Women of good character, of all ranks and ages, would improve the tone of society, but were so few that the supply never equalled the demand.[126] This was especially true of Australia's remote rural regions, where the imbalance in some districts was as high as 17 males to each female.[127] The agricultural industry was similarly promoted, with life on the land considered the best means of attaining wealth.[128] One satisfied immigrant suggested that a married man with a family on about 40 acres of land, who possessed a bullock team, dray, plough and harrow, two or three cows, a few pigs and a little poultry, was already independent and would soon be rich.[129]

Such columns may have lifted Patrick and Mary's spirits considerably, given their plans, but other reports were more circumspect. Only ten days before the Cookes set sail the *Liverpool Standard* hailed with alacrity a large gold find at Fryer's Creek, a mining district adjacent to Central Victoria's Mt Blackwood to where Patrick initially proceeded.[130] While awaiting departure in the Liverpool Emigrant Depot, Patrick might have been buoyed by the report—had it not been for others warning of destitution, profligacy and intemperance on the goldfields, and the presence of felons, thieves, cut-throats and swindlers in a place that was described as a modern version of Babel.[131]

Either way, sentiments such as these must have been disturbing for a family of young children, especially when immigrants were confronted with the poor state of education and religion in the colony. In 1852 Irish newspapers not infrequently painted Australia as a barren, irreligious place where it was feared a lack of scriptural instruction might give rise to 'Roman Catholic Propagandism'.[132] In 1854 Patrick and Mary's children were aged between five years

---

[125] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 4 August 1852; gold was discovered in New South Wales in May 1851 by Edward Hargreaves, and in Victoria in June 1851 by James Esmond, although it is claimed that it was discovered earlier by Aboriginal Australians.
[126] *Dublin Evening Mail*, 4 August 1852; 23 June 1854.
[127] Malcolm Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922* (Madison, Wisconsin, USA: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 16.
[128] *Cork Constitution*, 30 September 1852; *Dublin Evening Mail*, 23 June 1854.
[129] *Mayo Constitution*, 1 February 1853.
[130] *Liverpool Standard and Commercial Advertiser*, 6 June 1854.
[131] *Evening Mail*, 4 August 1852.
[132] *Cork Constitution*, 30 September 1852; this was a reference to the sectarian rivalry in Ireland whereby the Penal laws were enacted in 1695 under Oliver Cromwell attempting to force Irish Catholics and Protestant dissenters to accept the Established Church of Ireland. The laws were removed in 1829. Among others, the purpose of the Penal laws was to strip Irish Catholics of their religious freedoms, entry into the professions, and of land in their possession; for a discussion on the subject see Samantha Howell, 'From Oppression to Nationalism: The Irish Penal Laws of 1695', University of Hawai'i at Hilo, *HOHONU*, Vol. 14, 2016, 1-3.

and 18 months and Mary was six months pregnant with their sixth child (Catherine) when they set sail in June 1854.[133] For Catholic parents at the point of departure these issues must have been concerning—alongside money worries, housing, and the uncertainty of employment.

Although Patrick travelled with considerable capital from the sale of his Irish property, the trip to Australia was expensive, at five times the fare to America's east coast.[134] By the 1850s advanced ship-building technologies produced larger, better-fitted vessels which justified more expensive passages. Vigorous competition thus ensued between the Black Ball and White Star shipping lines with newspaper advertisements extolling the superiority of their ships and the swiftness of their passages. Among the newest ships was the *Fitz-James* which was about to embark on her third major voyage in mid-1854. Dublin Agents, Pilkington and Wilson spruiked the vessel as one of the fastest passenger-ships available, having already made a shorter crossing from Quebec to Liverpool in a record fifteen days.[135] Ships were not generally credited as a success unless they had made at least one east-bound dash from America in fourteen days or less.[136] Before 1851 ships sailing between the British Isles and the Australian colonies were ill-equipped, with passages sometimes taking five months in poorly ventilated and overcrowded conditions. The outmoded vessels were cumbersome and no match for those of the 1850s which were celebrated for streaking across the oceans at the rate of 250 nautical miles a day.[137]

The full rigged, three-masted wooden barque, *Fitz-James*, measuring 186 feet x 32.5 feet, was built by Jardine shipbuilders in Richibucto, Canada, in 1852. Fashioned from hackmatack, birch, spruce and pine, the vessel was felted and sheathed with yellow metal and

---

[133] Nicholas Cooke, Baptism 8 May 1847, *Catholic Parish Registers NLI*, Knockainy & Patrickswell/Diocese Cashel & Emly, Co. Limerick, Ireland, Microfilm 02505/03; Patrick and Mary's first child, also named Nicholas, was born and died in Ireland in 1847.

[134] Rob Mundle, 'The Ships that Changed Australia', edited extract from Rob Mundle, *Under Full Sail* (Sydney NSW, ABC Books, 2016), in *The Australian*, 23 December 2016; Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds*, 16.

[135] *Liverpool Standard and Commercial Advertiser,* 'White Star Line of Packets for Melbourne', 6 June 1854; Captain E. A. Woods, *The White Star Sailing Packets*, 23 October 1943, 59-61, http://org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/96-3-woods.pdf Accessed 30/04/2020; many shipping firms were brokers before being owners, and very often the ships mentioned in their lists were initially chartered by them. The owners of the White Star Line, Pilkington and Wilson, started as shipbrokers in 1845; see also, Basil Lubbock, *The Colonial Clippers* (Glasgow, Scotland: James Brown & Son, 2nd edition, 1921), 35; speed was the essence and was demonstrated by regulations adopted in 1855 when the *Fitz-James* was one of several White Star ships licensed with the Postmaster-General for the carriage of mails to Australia. Ships undertaking the task had to land the mail in Australia in 68 days or pay a penalty of £100 per day for every day over that time; Charles E. Park, 'The Development of the Clipper Ship', *American Antiquarian Society*, 1929, 49; initially the clipper was designed for speed at the expense of carrying capacity, owing to a slender hull and graceful lines that offered the least resistance and drag. By the 1850s the need for speed was fuelled by world trade and the pressure of global market opportunities.

[136] *Encyclopedia Britannica*, https://britannica.com/technology/ship/technology Accessed 21/03/2021.

[137] Mundle, 'The Ships that Changed Australia'.

iron bolts for added strength and holding power. Without durable hull fastenings early seafaring vessels could not have plied the seas with safety.[138] Until 1854 the *Fitz-James* traded across the short Atlantic route from Liverpool to New York. However, in June that year, Captain M. J. Hamilton was commanded to undertake the lengthy voyage to Australia, with entitlement to carry 456 passengers and 60 crew.[139]

Figure 14: *Fitz-James*.
Ship Index Album XA; Call No. XA31b; n/d. B & W; 9 x 14cm.
State Library Western Australia
https://catalogue.slwa.wa.gov.au
Accessed 03/11/2021

Fares to Australia on the *Fitz-James* were handled by travel agent Allen Nicholl in Dublin.[140] In the early days of sea travel shopkeepers and businessmen at various locations throughout the Irish countryside acted as agents for shipping companies. In the 1850s locals began to handle bookings for Liverpool ships, a move which saw increased competition for passengers, and agents visiting towns on market days touting for trade in likely catchment

[138] Michael P. Palmer, *Palmer List of Merchant Vessels* (Claremont, California, USA: Michael Palmer, 2000), http://www.geocities.com Accessed 30/04/2020; for a detailed account of the construction of early clipper ships see Michael McCarthy, *Ships' Fastenings: From Sewn Boat to Steamship* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, Ed Rachal Foundation Nautical Archaeology, 2005), 121, https://trove.nla.gov.au/work/9792816 Accessed 08/05/2020.
[139] Nathan Richards & Sally K. May, 'South Australia's 'Floating Coffin': The Diseased, The Destitute, and the Derelict *Fitz-James* (1852-c. 1900)', *The Great Circle*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 21.
[140] *Dublin Weekly Nation*, 3 June 1854.

areas.[141] The fare to Australia was fairly standard between companies, ranging between £16 16s and £45, with the landing of passengers and luggage free of charge at Melbourne's wharf.[142] Although steerage tickets were the cheapest, it was a significant expense for the Cookes given they were accompanied by four children and Mary's sister, Catherine, to whose fare they may have contributed. A pre-emigration deposit was also required alongside provisions for the voyage, relocation expenses and money for travel from Knockainy to County Cork's south coast departure point at Queenstown (Cobh).[143]

The key that gave viability to emigration to Australasia was the unique and highly organised assistance of Colonial and Imperial Government subsidies, either in full or in part, for the cost of the passage. No passage was entirely free. Initially the schemes were an attempt to improve the moral fibre of the colonies and during the peak years of emigration between 1848 and 1859 the numbers receiving some sort of assistance rose to 53 per cent.[144] The availability of the scheme may also have reinforced Patrick's self-image as a person of moral fibre, which was perhaps not sufficiently recognised in Ireland and within his family. In the aftermath of the Famine more than four-fifths of Irish emigrants to the Australian colonies were state–assisted.[145] The subsidies were handled by private 'bounty' contractors and Emigration Commissioners, and many were enhanced by generous remittances from relatives and friends

---

[141] Deidre M. Mageean, 'Emigration from Irish Ports', *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 13, No. 1, *European Ports of Emigration*, Fall 1993, 17.

[142] *Dublin Weekly Nation*, 3 June 1854; Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australia's History* (Melbourne, Victoria: Sun Books, 1970), 197; in the early 1850s Melbourne's bay had a dangerous approach and wharves could only be reached along shallow rivers. In the absence of a jetty, large stationary clippers had to unload their cargo onto lighters, and passengers on to boats, to be ferried eight miles upstream to Melbourne. It was an expensive process and even in late 1854 when Australia's first railway linked Melbourne and the bay, the single pier was unable to berth large ships.

[143] Robin Haines, Margrette Kleinig, Deborah Oxley and Eric Richards, 'Migration and Opportunity: An Antipodean Perspective', *International Review of Social History*, Vol. 43, No. 2, August 1998, 246; Queenstown was Ireland's major emigration departure port during the nineteenth century. It was named Queenstown after a visit from Queen Victoria in 1849 but reverted to its original name of Cobh in 1920; see also Mageean, 'Emigration from Irish Ports', 6.

[144] Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds*, 16; Robin Haines, 'Indigent Misfits or Shrewd Operators? Government-assisted Emigrants from the United Kingdom to Australia, 1831-1860', *Population Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 2, July 1994, 223; Robin Haines & Ralph Shlomowicz, 'Nineteenth Century Government-Assisted and Total Immigration from the United Kingdom to Australia: Quinquennial Estimates by Colony', *Journal of the Australian Population Association*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 50; these authors estimate a slightly lower figure for the entire nineteenth century of about 47 per cent for free immigration (non-convict) from the United Kingdom to Australia.

[145] Fitzpatrick, 'Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century', *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 86, September 1980, 131; Robin Haines, *Life and Death in the Age of Sail. The Passage to Australia* (Sydney, New South Wales: University of New South Wales Press, 2003), 14; such was the standard of record-keeping in both Britain and Australia at the time that the movement of nineteenth-century government-assisted emigration to Australia provided more information about the United Kingdom's workers at an individual level over a long period, 1837-1901, than any other source. To name just a few, the great body of work encompassed passenger lists, ships and surgeons' logs, manuscripts of all description, birth, marriage and death records, health and hygiene records on passenger ships, and private passenger diaries.

at home and from people already settled in Australia.[146] Between 1853 and 1855 aid from both state and private sources was crucial to the Australian trade since the cost of the fare was beyond the means of many. For Catherine Walsh, assistance was critical since unmarried females held little hope of securing a future in Ireland. From the 1850s, all Australian colonies offered government benefits to single female immigrants by way of cheap passages.[147] Munster was noted for its support of the schemes, having suffered heavily from the spread of grazing; and although the Cookes seemed financially well-off, they too most likely benefited to some extent from these resources.[148] Patrick's occupation was recorded on the shipping list as 'labourer', rather than 'farmer', which may have been to his advantage when applying for assistance since 89 per cent of the Irishmen in this category who disembarked in Victoria in the 1850s were highly sought as unskilled labourers.[149] To gain access to the funds applicants had to meet certain conditions which entailed repayment of a portion of the fare on arrival, either £13 or £15, which it was hoped would make the system self-supporting and give emigrants a sense of independence.[150] Prospective applicants had to put themselves forward for selection and the Colonial Land and Emigration Commission in London had the final say.[151] A last resort for those who failed to meet the criteria was to seek private subsidies from parish unions, local charities and emigration societies.[152]

The self-perpetuating 'chain' system of migration (by which those already settled in Victoria sponsored and paid for others) was a feature of Australian immigration. And although the Cooke departure cannot be defined as a 'chain' migration comparable to that of Malachy Seymour (known as 'the Godfather') at Willomavin in Central Victoria, the presence on board ship of fifteen family and friends in the Cooke party and the arrival of numerous others in later

---

[146] David Fitzpatrick, 'Irish Emigration 1801-1921', in Peter Roebuck and David Dickson (eds), *Studies in Irish Economic and Social History* (Dundalgan Press, Ltd., The Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, 1985), 19; Fitzpatrick, 'Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century', 133.

[147] Janice Gothard, 'Pity the Poor Immigrant: Assisted Single Female Migration to Colonial Australia', in Richards, E., (ed.) *Poor Australian Migrants in the Nineteenth Century* (Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, 1991, 97-116.

[148] Fitzpatrick, 'Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth-Century', 134.

[149] Shipping Register, *Fitz-James*, 14 June 1854-13 September 1854, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV); Neil Coughlan, 'The Coming of the Irish to Victoria', *Historical Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 45, 1965, 84.

[150] *Dublin Weekly Nation*, 11 February 1854; the scheme divided applicants into two classes whereby those in first class had to pay, either before embarkation, or after arrival, the sum of £13; the figure was £15 for second class passengers. The proportion to be paid varied according to the age and class of the emigrant. To enforce the payments an act was passed in February 1854 setting out conditions and timing of payments.

[151] McClaughlin et al, 'Migration to Australia mid-nineteenth century', 289.

[152] Robin Haines, '"The Idle and the Drunken won't do there": Poverty, the New Poor Law and Nineteenth-century Government-assisted Emigration to Australia from the United Kingdom', *Australian Historical Studies*, 27:108, 1997, 5; see also Richard Reid, *Farewell My Children: Irish Assisted Emigration to Australia, 1848-1870* (Sydney, New South Wales, Anchor Books, 2011), for a detailed account of Irish immigration to Australia.

years suggests a substantial chain connection.[153] The inclusion of Mary's sister in the party suggests she too travelled under Patrick's sponsorship. Accompanying the Cookes on the *Fitz-James* were various others known to them in Ireland. These included cousins, Martin and Michael McKenna, and four Halpin cousins whose families had close connections with the Cookes through shared land tenancies in Ireland. The friendship with the Halpins continued in Victoria after selecting farming properties at Pyalong, Kyneton and Emu Flat. Among those who immigrated around the same time were members of the O'Keane, Fogarty, Walsh, Ryan and Barry families who settled around Pyalong. John McNiff arrived in Victoria in October 1854 from County Leitrim, sailing via New York on the *Gertrude*. McNiff and his wife, Anne Barry, selected land at Redesdale, a rural district west of Pyalong, and between 1901 and 1909 held the licence of the Redesdale Hotel. In 1894 their daughter, Catherine, married Patrick Cooke's youngest son, Richard.[154] This close-knit group of emigrants who were closely connected before emigration, strongly suggests a collective decision-making process had been at play in Ireland.

A broad kinship network thus developed in Central Victoria, with Pyalong the nucleus of an area bordered by Seymour and Tallarook to the east, Kilmore to the south, Heathcote to the north, and Kyneton to the west. For immigrants who had close connections with one another in Ireland, adjustment in the colony was probably easier when among people with common interests and background. Data on the origins of the Cooke chain—derived principally from public records in Ireland and Australia, newspaper reports, and family histories—shows that this tight-knit group of setters was a well-informed, literate group with initiative and a strong desire for independence. Had they not had this collective security, the group might never have undertaken the shift to Australia.

---

[153] Malachi Seymour emigrated from Nenagh, County Tipperary in 1842 as a 16-year-old bounty emigrant on the *Thetis*, after serving time in prison for an unknown offence. His large family selected land at Willowmavin and Tallarook in Central Victoria. What stands out in Seymour's chain is that he sponsored and provided employment for a huge number of Irish relatives, including whole families, across several generations of the Seymour family. Many were set up for life as a result. The Irish migration of 1841-42 was the largest inflow of immigrants before the goldrushes. And although small by transatlantic standards, the arrival of more than 20,000 free immigrants in less than a year in Sydney and Port Phillip was the largest government-financed migration achieved in the history of European emigration. For a detailed discussion on this pre-Famine period of Irish emigration see John McDonald and Eric Richards, 'The Great Emigration of 1841: Recruitment for New South Wales in British Emigration Fields', *Population Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 1997, 352.

[154] Other immigrants already known to the Cookes were members of the Hiscock, Ryan, Carroll and Leahy families; *Register Births Deaths Marriages*, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), Marriage Reg. No. 2507, Richard Cooke and Catherine McNiff, 4 April 1894.

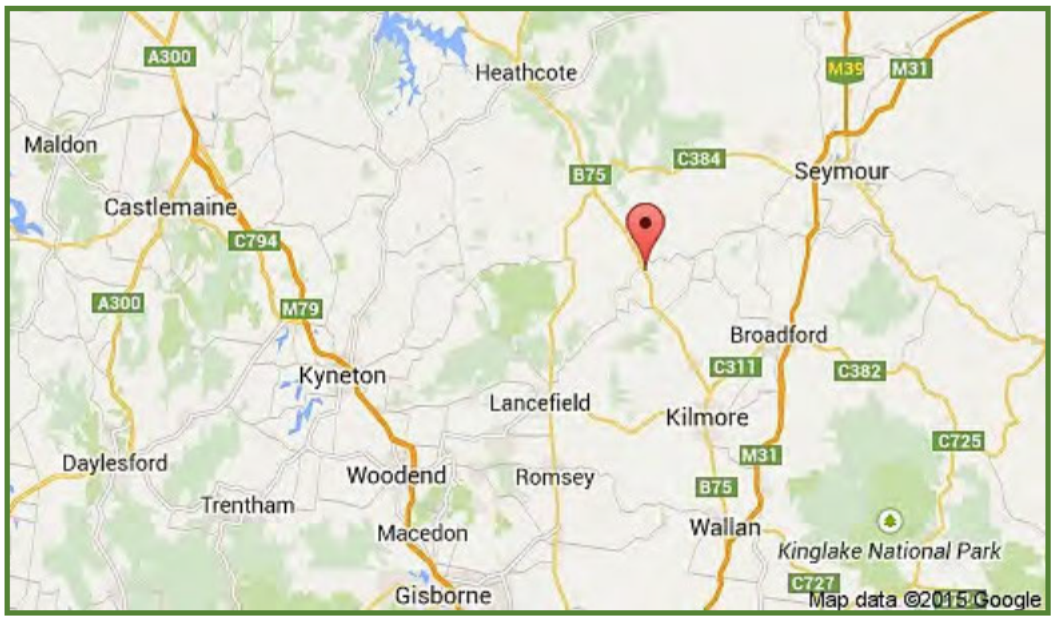


Figure 15: Map showing districts: Heathcote, Seymour, Kyneton, Pyalong, Victoria.
https://bing.com/images/search
Accessed 03/011/2021

Conclusion

Like all those contemplating emigration in the post-Famine years—Mary's sister, Catherine, cousins Martin and Michael McKenna, the four Halpin cousins, the O'Keane, Fogarty, Walsh, Ryan and Barry families, John McNiff and his wife Anne Barry—the Famine was a defining moment for Patrick and his family. Between 1847 and 1855 it upended the lives of an estimated 1,700,000 people who fled Ireland in search of a better future.[155] Apart from a slight dip in emigration in 1854, the decade from 1851 saw 19 per cent of Munster's population leave Ireland; Clare lost 22 per cent, Tipperary 25 per cent. Galway and Kilkenny, from which Melbourne drew heavily, lost 16 and 22 per cent, respectively.[156] It was a sad legacy and many acquaintances of the Cookes were among them.

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide an understanding of the circumstances that impinged on Patrick and Mary Cooke and their close-knit group of friends and relations before they immigrated to Australia—as a case study of families (particularly Irish families) who may have made a collective decision to migrate to Australia during the colonial period. Supported by a large body of data in Irish newspapers, public and private repositories accessed via the Internet, and personal communication with Irish descendants and local historians, the

[155] Oliver MacDonagh, 'Emigration from Ireland to Australia: An Overview', in *Australia and Ireland 1788-1988: Bicentenary Essays* (ed. Colm Kiernan) (Dublin, Ireland: Gill & MacMillan, 1986), 121.
[156] Coughlin, 'The Coming of the Irish to Victoria', 73.

chapter has argued that there was insufficient family land in Knockainy to satisfy the Cookes' aspirations, and that Australia was an attractive proposition that offered social and economic independence that, for various reasons, was unavailable to many Irish farmers at that time.

We do not know what the family—Patrick and Mary, Catherine Walsh, and the children, Margaret, Nicholas, Bridget and John—felt as they made their way to the Knockainy railway station in the warm genial summer of 1854. But whatever their feelings on that mid-June day, when the crops were 'blooming with a radiant verdure', there was no going back to the 'church field' at Baggotstown with its 1744 tombstone and crumbling old chapel. Like Icarus, they dared to look at the sun.[157]

[157] *Freeman's Journal*, 'Limerick', weather report, Friday 16 June 1854. For a discussion on the need to look inward for an understanding of oneself see Henry Samuel Levinson, 'Meditation at the Margins: Santayana's "Scepticism and Animal Faith"', *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 67, No. 3, July 1987, 290; see also discussion on aspirations and decision-making in Caroline Sarojini Hart, 'How Do Aspirations Matter?', *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 2016, 324-341. See also *Limerick and Clare Examiner*, 5 June 1850. Various local newspapers in the province of Munster, that may have been read by the literate Cooke family, frequently referred to the mythical figure of Icarus in their literary columns. A Greek legend tells how Daedalus, an ordinary man with a talent for invention, made a flying machine for his son Icarus, instructing him not to fly too close to the sun because the feathers and wax from which the craft was constructed would melt. Icarus defied his father, flew too close to the sun, and fell into the ocean and drowned. The story symbolises hope, courage and aspiration, and the human desire for liberation in the face of adversity. See also *The Southern Reporter and Cork Commercial Courier*, 15 October 1853, which published an oration at a prize-giving evening in Cork in which the epic poem was quoted at length in the newspaper.

CHAPTER 2

Across the water to the Antipodes

I turn off
The harsh yellow
Porch light and
Stand in the hall.
Where is home now?[1]

A little before noon on Thursday 15 June 1854 the White Star clipper, *Fitz-James*, finally weighed anchor from Liverpool and was towed by steam tug some fifty miles out into the English Channel. The 1,307 gross ton, three-masted barque had lain in the Mersey for four days.[2] It was the final preparation for the voyage to the Antipodes with 468 poop, intermediate and steerage passengers now setting out on the longest sea route in the age of sail.[3] Now, as never before, Patrick and Mary were trapped in a liminal space, caught between a past that they knew, and a future yet to be known.[4]

***

This chapter explores the in-between space in which Patrick and Mary Cooke, and their children, and Mary's sister, Catherine Walsh, found themselves as they migrated from Ireland to Australia. Their cramped quarters on board the *Fitz-James* was quintessentially hybrid space straddling the Old World and the New, which serves as an apt metaphor for the migration experience. Drawing on a large volume of evidentiary material in Australian shipping archives at the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), Irish newspaper columns, family photos, oral

---

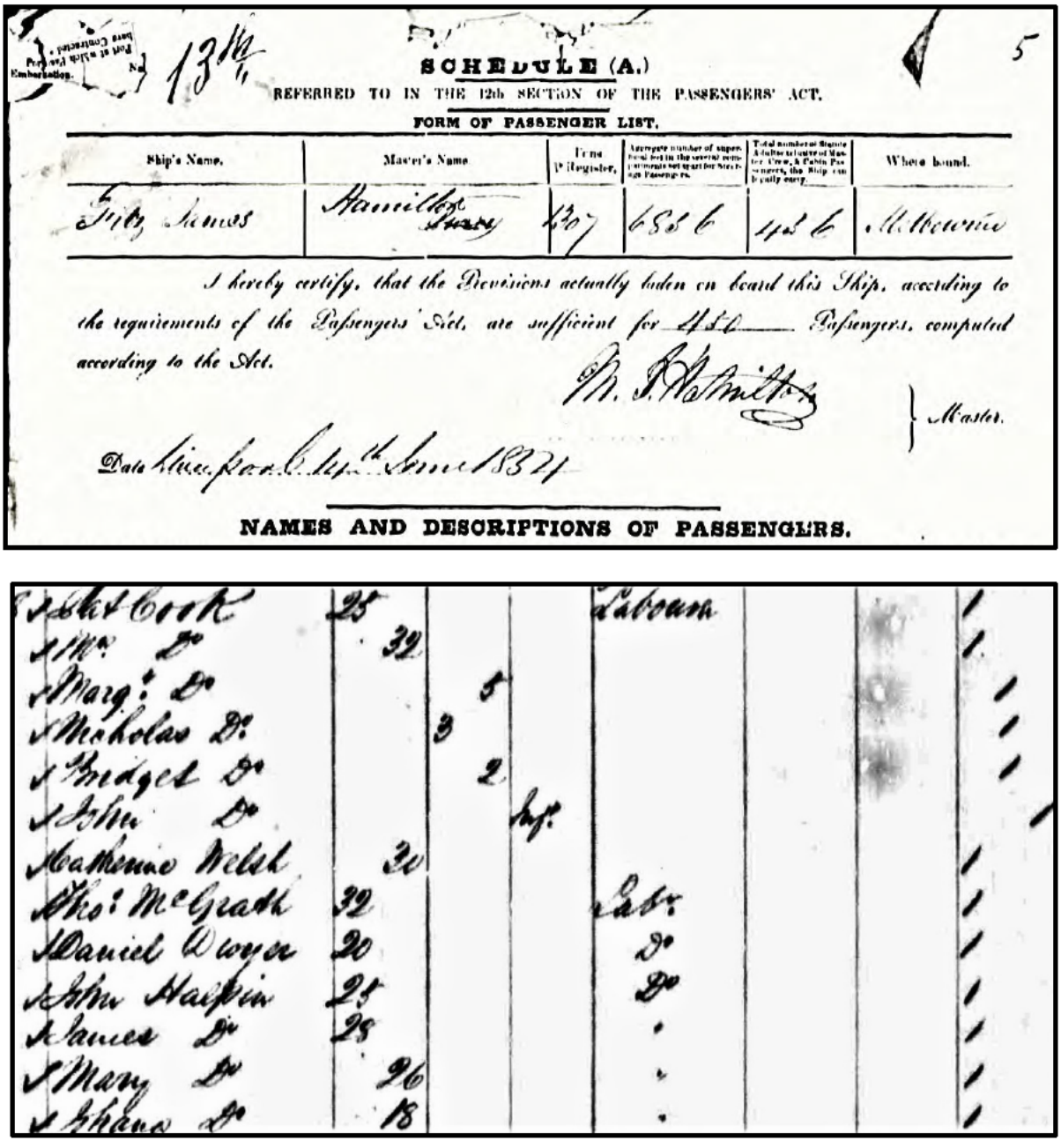
[1] Eavan Boland, 'Anna Liffey', *In a Time of Violence* (New York, USA: Norton 1944), 41-46. Boland (1944-2020), was an Irish poet whose early work was informed by her growing awareness of the troubled role of women in Irish history and culture. Her poetry subverts traditional constructions of womanhood and her poem, 'Anna Liffey' demonstrates how history, mythology and contemporary society influenced her world view. See also Review, 'Eavan Boland 1944-2020', Poetry Foundation website https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/eavan-boland Accessed 30/10/2021.

[2] *Seaports—Sea Captains: The Maritime Heritage Project, San Francisco 1846-1899*, maritimeheritage.org Accessed 14/06/2020; a shipping ton is a measure of cubic capacity for cargo rather than weight, being approximately equal to 100 cubic feet. A barque is a three-masted vessel with square-rigged sails on the front two masts and fore-and aft rigged (triangular) sails on the rear mast. This configuration meant that barques needed fewer crew than 'full-rigged' ships and were almost as fast. A full-rigged ship was square-rigged throughout.

[3] William Shiress, 'On board the *Fitz-James*, Thursday 15 June 1854', *Diary: Voyage of the Fitz-James, Liverpool to Melbourne*, 15 June-13 September 1854 (National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, UK. MSS/81/059.0: Ref. TN48620). Before departure passengers were mustered on the poop deck and a roll call taken, with the vessel searched from stem to stern for stowaways. The poop deck was the highest deck of a sailing ship where it typically formed the roof of a cabin in the rear (or stern) end of a ship. The elevated position enabled commanders and crew to observe work and navigational proceedings during the voyage.

[4] Greg Dening, 'Review Essay: Between Worlds', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 29, Issue 112, 1999, 172; Dening explains how a sense of in-between*ness* is intrinsic to the human condition because people's lives are permanently fixed between past and future and the present moment cannot be frozen 'without destroying its living qualities.'

history and the diary entries of William Shiress—a privileged cabin passenger on the *Fitz-James*—the chapter paints a picture of the Cooke family's dislocation and disorientation as steerage passengers. It then documents what can be gleaned from the records of their initial experiences of life in the colony, with particular focus on Mary's agency as a wife and mother under conditions that were far removed from anything they knew in Ireland. The chapter concludes with Mary's hasty return to Ireland with four of her five children, leaving Patrick to prepare the home he had promised his family.



SCHEDULE (A.)

REFERRED TO IN THE 12th SECTION OF THE PASSENGERS' ACT.

FORM OF PASSENGER LIST.

Ship's Name.	Master's Name	Tons [illegible] Register,	Aggregate number of superficial feet in the several compartments set apart for Steerage Passengers.	Total number of Steerage Adults to which the Master, Owner, & Cabin Passengers, the Ship can legally carry.	Where bound.
Fitz James	Hamilton	430	6886	458	Melbourne

I hereby certify, that the Provisions actually laden on board this Ship, according to the requirements of the Passengers' Act, are sufficient for 458 Passengers, computed according to the Act.

W. S. Smith } Master.

Dated Liverpool 6th June 1854

NAMES AND DESCRIPTIONS OF PASSENGERS.

Robt Cook	25			Labourer			✓
Wm Do	32						✓
Marg[t] Do		5					✓
Nicholas Do		3					✓
Bridget Do		2					✓
John Do			Inf.				✓
Catherine Welsh	30						✓
Thos McGrath	32			Labr.			✓
Daniel Dwyer	20			Do			✓
John Halpin	25			Do			✓
James Do	25			"			✓
Mary Do	26			"			✓
Thos Do	18			"			✓

Figure 16: Shipping Register (PROV), *Fitz-James* 14 June 1854
https://prov.vic.gov.au
Accessed 01/02/2007

Without the benefit of family correspondence during the voyage, the diary by cabin passenger, William Shiress, opens a window into how the family made the transition to Australia.[5] The log is an 18-page, upper-class monologue written by a youthful 26-year-old druggist from Brechin in the county of Forfarshire in northern Scotland.[6] Shiress travelled with his sister, Jeannie, and was an analytical chemist who presented himself as an erudite upper-class passenger on the *Fitz-James*, competent in all fields in which he worked.

The diary contains a wealth of information concerning Shiress's privileged status in cabin accommodation, but no insights into the transition for emigrants like the Cookes who travelled in steerage—the most basic lodgings in the ship's hierarchy.[7] Entries in his diary focused on his comforts in cabin, daily weather observations, latitude and longitude measurements, and cynical observations of fellow passengers and crew. In general, Shiress was satisfied with the ship's management although he railed against the drunken behaviour of some passengers and crew and made no secret of his contempt for the Purser, who 'neglected his duties and never changed his shirt'.[8] For a man of his education who was captivated by sunsets and albatrosses, he seemed unaware of those below decks where families like the Cookes experienced the voyage, and emotionally detached when children were 'thrown overboard' soon after they died.[9] Given the likelihood of illness, there may have been a sense of inevitability about children's deaths at sea, but there was no indication Shiress understood how steerage passengers negotiated their domestic lives when housed in fetid, overcrowded spaces where water was sometimes cut off as a way of punishing troublemakers.[10]

On only the second day out, Shiress and his sister, Jeannie, set to work organising the erection of a library and cultural activities for passengers. Concerts, plays and poetry readings became regular features that filled in time and gave meaning to the sea passage for a select group of passengers. Shiress's experience of the voyage was a world away from that of Patrick

[5] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*; Shiress and his sister, Jeannie, migrated from Brechin in the County of Forfarshire in northern Scotland. After settling in Bendigo in north central Victoria, William worked as an analytical chemist in the medical and pharmaceutical professions. He died aged 47, owing to his lack of precautions dealing with noxious fumes. It was a surprising demise for a man with an eye for scientific detail. The diary contains daily entries and appears to have been rewritten after arrival in Victoria since its neat, evenly formed handwriting shows no sign of smudge or scrawl caused by the rolling of the ship. It is presented in book form with a formal title page. How the diary was preserved and who presented it to the Greenwich, UK, library archive is unknown.
[6] *Bendigo Advertiser*, 3 April 1875.
[7] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, Sunday 18 June; Monday 19 June.
[8] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, Saturday 15 July.
[9] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, Thursday 22 June; Wednesday 12 July; Monday 17 July. There was no mention of a religious burial service having taken place before the bodies were consigned overboard.
[10] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James,* Monday 7 August.

and Mary Cooke who may have had little time for such pursuits and no chance of becoming trusted acquaintances of the captain as did Shiress. Shiress wrote from an upper-class perspective where his privileged lifestyle enabled him to join the captain in card games on the poop, and regularly share his table.[11] Shiress's time at sea was a period of stability compared with the disorientation of young families in lower-class accommodation where the responsibilities of caring for children may have left parents with neither the time nor the inclination for his leisure activities. More likely, Patrick and Mary's time below decks was limited to mess duties, preparing food, and tending to their four young children who contracted Measles during the passage.

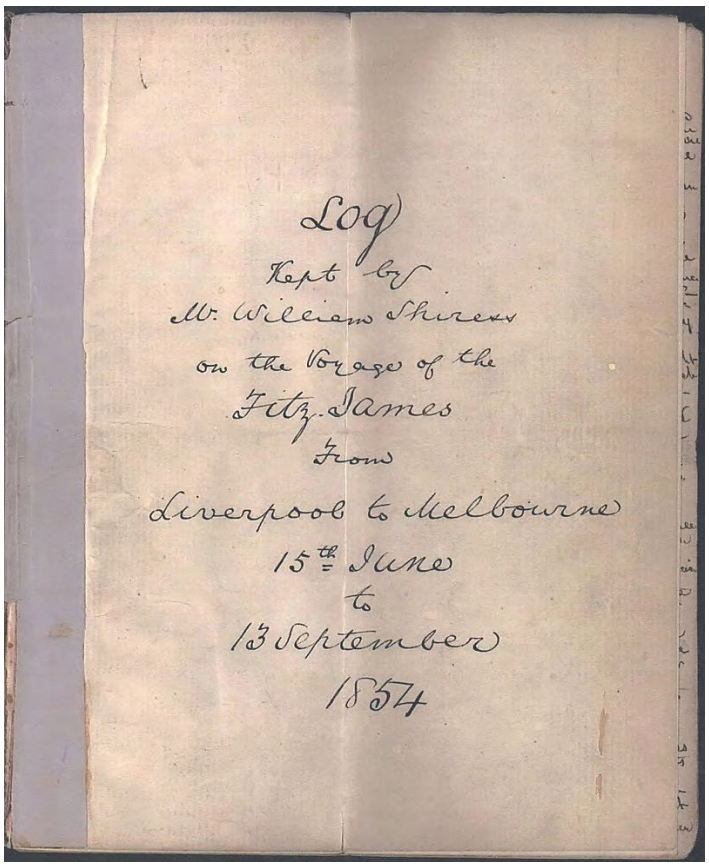


Figure 17: William Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James, Liverpool to Melbourne, 15 June-13 September 1854*
(National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, UK, MSS/81/059.0: Ref. TN48620)

It was a privileged passenger's diary with a certain haughtiness towards the lower classes, particularly farmers who '[spoke] of little but horses, sheep and turnips and the weather'. Such conversations were expected of farmers and might have been appreciated by the Cookes given Patrick and Mary's experience of farming in Ireland, and their intention to

[11] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, Thursday 17 August.

take up land in Victoria.[12] As a dispassionate account of fellow passengers which lacked the intimacy of journals written for a family audience, the diary may have filled in idle hours. However, it was a nuanced, somewhat pretentious account, presumably intended for the ears of a select group of people whom Shiress later wished to impress. Had Mary Cooke been the author, she might have painted a very different picture of the challenges and disorientation when caught between two worlds, the old and the new, as she and Patrick made the transition to a new life. Her family's experience confined in cramped quarters below decks, was a world away from that of William and Jeannie who travelled with the comforts of a spacious private cabin with bed linen supplied, and who had the luxury of being waited on at table and the services of staff to attend to their daily needs.

Little did Patrick and Mary know of these challenges as they sat in limbo at the Liverpool depot after arrival from Cork. However, the dislocation and profound sense of loss after their departure from Knockainy must have been disturbing, to say the least.[13] To prepare passengers for what lay ahead, authorities were duty-bound to condition them to life at sea. The southern route across the Atlantic could be perilous; but it was also tedious with ships sometimes making little headway for weeks on end when the wind dropped to a breeze and the sea was becalmed in the tropics.[14]

To address these issues depots were set up at the Liverpool and Plymouth departure points where at each site between 400 and 600 English, Irish and Scotch emigrants were billeted in shipboard-like accommodation. While there Patrick and Mary would have been given pre-embarkation checks which included scrutiny of papers and clothing, medical examinations, and instruction in ways to cope while at sea. It was a necessary initiative given the inertia that beset passengers on long voyages. Emigrants were taught how to manage cooking and cleaning while on board ship, the use of water closets, the organisation of berths, and the like; and how to occupy their time through skills such as rope making, straw plaiting, bag making and basket weaving.[15] Some in the Cooke party benefited. Michael and Martin McKenna, friends of the

[12] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, Thursday 29 August.
[13] Richard Reid, 'Aspects of Irish Assisted Emigration to New South Wales, 1848-1870' (Ph.D. diss., Australian National University, 1992), 43; the journey from Cork to Liverpool took around 36 hours, that from Cork to Plymouth around 30 hours; Birkenhead refers to the Liverpool depot; Robert Scally, 'Liverpool Ships and Irish Emigrants in the Age of Sail', *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 17, No. 1, Autumn 1993, 10.
[14] Mary Kruithof, *Fever Beach: The Story of the Migrant Clipper Ticonderoga, its ill-fated Voyage, and its historic impact* (Mount Waverley, Victoria: Publicious, Pty Ltd., 2nd Ed, 2005), 35; Robin Haines, *Doctors at Sea: Emigrant Voyages to Colonial Australia* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK: 2005), 3.
[15] Haines, *Life and Death in the Age of Sail: The Passage to Australia* (Sydney, New South Wales: University of New South Wales, 2nd edition, 2006), 146; 'Birkenhead Emigration Depot', *The Illustrated London News*, 10 July 1852, 518 & 520; Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, Friday 23 June 1854; Tuesday 29 September 1854; during

Cookes whom Shiress described as 'hearty [Catholic] fellows' from Carrick-on-Suir, made a whimsey bottle while at sea.[16] It was no mean feat since it demanded the construction of a miniature wooden ship which was inserted and reassembled inside a glass bottle before it was filled with water and sealed with a waxed cork. The unsigned and undated bottle has survived intact for more than 167 years in a private family archive and is now preserved by fifth-generation Cooke descendants who recognise its value as a precious family heirloom. Given that many descendants are unaware of its existence it seems the bottle has been hidden from public view. The survival of the bottle over such a long period shows that it holds special meaning for its keepers because its existence is a constant reminder of the hardships of emigration and the way in which the family's ancestors coped with the 'rootlessness' of the sea voyage.

Figure 18: Whimsey Bottle constructed by McKenna cousins on board *Fitz-James* 1854 (Private Archive).

Instruction in such activities during the long sea passage to Australia was considered essential to alleviate boredom. In the ten years after 1845 well over a million people left Ireland

---

the passage Jeannie Shiress (William's sister) made use of her cooking skills and on one occasion baked two dozen bannocks (a Scottish flat loaf of bread similar to a scone or biscuit and made with oatmeal or barley flour); on another occasion she provided various food items for a friend's birthday party; see also Richard E. Reid, *Farewell My Children: Irish Assisted Emigration to Australia 1848-1870* (Sydney, New South Wales: Anchor Books, 2011), 45.

[16] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, Tuesday 29 August 1854; Shiress described the McKennas as Catholics from County Tipperary who were intent on going to the diggings; personal communication, Rev. Fr Tony Hill, PP., Euroa, Victoria (descendant of Patrick and Mary Cooke); the whimsey bottle constructed by the McKenna cousins was typical of many at the time which contained ships constructed in miniature form and reassembled inside the bottle.

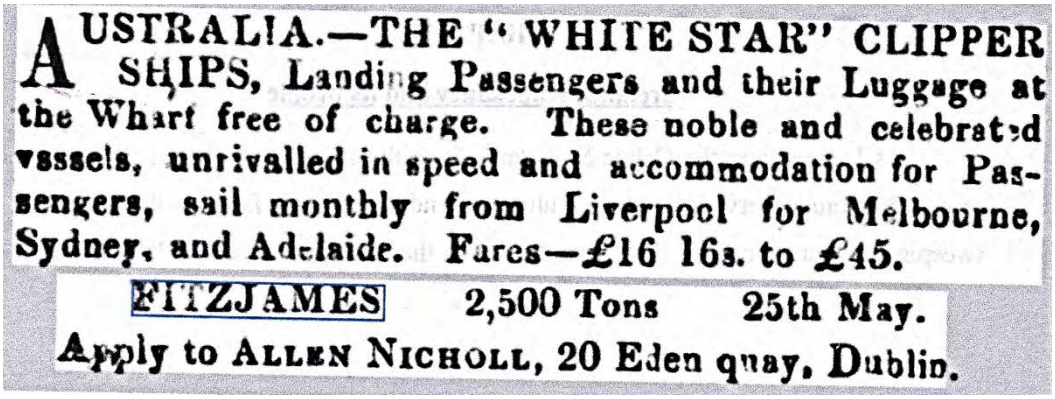
permanently. At least a million left between 1845 and 1850, and two-thirds of a million between 1851 and 1854. The province of Munster became the most important source of Irish-Australian immigration from the 1840s and 1850s.[17] From County Limerick alone, the years up to and including 1854 saw upwards of 8,000-10,000 people departing annually, many of whom were landless rural labourers.[18]

The large influx of agricultural labourers and farming families into Australia in the early 1850s may provide some understanding of why a group of reasonably well-to-do farmers from Limerick would forsake a comfortable life for settlement in the Antipodes. A strong indicator, however, was the outlook for agriculture in Australia and the rush for gold in the early 1850s, both of which provided strong economic incentives for those who felt constrained in their ambitions at home. Even the economic hardship following the Australia-wide depression of the 1840s failed to dent confidence in the colonies' economic future, ensuring that long-term prospects for the Irish in Australia remained positive.[19]

Although the need to conserve cash before such a venture was essential, it is unknown why the Cookes sailed on the cheapest tickets available. A single fare to Australia in the mid-1850s was approximately five times the price of a ticket to the United States (roughly equal to the average labourer's wage of between £10 and £15 per annum) and it is no surprise that the shorter distance to the east coast of America was the favoured destination at that time.[20] With the combined cost of travel from Limerick to Liverpool, the passage to Australia, and an extra £13 or more for fitting out the family of six with clothing and other necessities, Patrick and Mary may have thought better class lodgings were out of the question given the capital needed

[17] Patrick O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia* (Kensington, New South Wales: New South Wales University Press, 1988), 93.
[18] Laurence Fenton, *After the Famine: The Economy of Limerick County and City in the 1850s*, History and Folklore Project, Limerick Civic Trust, Sept. 2005 – Feb. 2006 & Jan. 2007 – May 2007, 6.
[19] Malcolm Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922* (Madison, Wisconsin, USA: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 38; B. Bessant, *The Land Hunger: Commentary and Documents* (West Melbourne, Victoria: Thomas Nelson Australia Pty Ltd, 1980), 22-24; the Australian colony expanded in a remarkably short time during 1838-40 as a result of heavy investment in property and easy access to bank loans. The buoyant economy that resulted from the over-supply of capital increased speculation in real estate, particularly in the Port Phillip District. These factors, combined with falling wool prices and a drop in English investment in Australia, inevitably led to collapse with investors unable to repay their debts; for further analysis of the 1840s depression see Brian Fitzpatrick, *The British Empire in Australia 1834-1939* (Melbourne, Victoria: Macmillan, 1969), 71; S. J. Butlin, *Foundations of the Australian Monetary System 1788-1851* (Sydney, New South Wales: Sydney University Press, 2nd edition 1968), chapters 8-10.
[20] Janet Nolan, *Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland, 1885-1920* (Kentucky, USA: The University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 44; the average cost of a fare to the United States was around £12; O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, 62-65, 69.

for resettlement in Victoria.[21] Had it not been for remittances by friends and relatives at home and abroad, and subsidies from colonial government schemes from the 1830s, the passage would have been beyond the means of most emigrants.[22] On the other hand, if Patrick was flush with cash from the sale of his Irish land, it is puzzling why he subjected his wife and family to the hazards of low-cost accommodation given the tragedies that befell passenger ships on the south Atlantic route in 1852 and 1853, details of which were widely reported in Irish newspapers of the day.[23]


AUSTRALIA.—THE "WHITE STAR" CLIPPER SHIPS, Landing Passengers and their Luggage at the Wharf free of charge. These noble and celebrated vessels, unrivalled in speed and accommodation for Passengers, sail monthly from Liverpool for Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide. Fares—£16 16s. to £45.

FITZJAMES 2,500 Tons 25th May.

Apply to ALLEN NICHOLL, 20 Eden quay, Dublin.

Figure 19: *Dublin Weekly Nation* 3 June 1854
www.findmypast.com.au
Accessed 01/02/2019

Given what is known of Patrick's life, in all respects he seemed financially secure. Yet with on-going tension over land at home he may have seen emigration as a likely step—especially as positive news spread throughout the Knockainy district concerning the future of agriculture in Australia, and on learning that friends and neighbours had decided to leave. Further incentives would have been the chance for independence and the ready availability of farming land in Victoria. Migration was in many respects a liberating experience

[21] Immigration Remittance Regulations, 1848, Clause 7, cited in Reid, *Farewell My Children*, 34. From 1848 to 1854 the regulations put a male outfit at £4 10s and a female at £5. The cost of children's outfits depended on the child's age. In 1848 colonial authorities calculated that £5 would clothe either three children under 7, or two between the ages of 7 and 14. By 1856 the official estimate for clothing the same number of children had fallen to £4. However, the kit of a 'well-grown' boy or girl of 13 would cost as much as an adult kit. Although it is impossible to know precisely what the Cooke family outlaid for clothing, since they would have brought some clothing from home, their expenses rose sharply given transport from Knockainy to Cork and then by sea to Liverpool.

[22] Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds*, 16-17. With the discovery of gold in Victoria making Australia an attractive destination for emigrants, the colonial government schemes were central to facilitating the passage alongside a host of private schemes and ventures.

[23] *Southern Reporter and Cork Courier* 25 January 1852; *Newcastle Guardian and Tyne Mercury* 14 May 1853; the *Ticonderoga* and the *Beejapore* landed in Melbourne in November 1852 and January 1853 respectively, with record numbers of deaths from Typhus and other infectious diseases during the passage. Further deaths occurred when both ships were placed in quarantine.

for the Irish since any movement outside their locale was considered a major undertaking.[24] Australia's scattered pattern of settlement may have appealed to a plucky individual like Patrick as a welcome change from the limitations of life in Ireland.

Less plausible is that the Cooke family finances were somewhat precarious in the wake of the Famine. Land productivity dropped slightly in the early 1850s and Patrick's recovery might have been slower than expected in an era of labour shortages and rising wages if a substantial part of his land was sown to crop—a strong possibility given the fertility of the soil on the Golden Vale. With on average around 8.3 per cent of farming land sown to hay in 1854, Patrick would have had to shell out for expensive labour during the cutting season, yet the crop would have contributed little to his income because most was fed to on-farm stock.[25] However, this should be balanced against Patrick's earnings from dairying given that the butter market to Britain remained buoyant to the end of 1847.[26] It seems more likely that a dramatic fall in land prices at Famine's end (1849, 1850 and 1851) set him back somewhat—a crucial time since preparations for the sale of his Limerick estate were presumably underway.[27] Unfortunately no documentation on the sale of his land has come to light, although it is known that he was disappointed with the price when his land was sold around 1852.[28] Combined with the high cost of moving his family and possessions to a distant location, and the unpredictable outlay during resettlement in Victoria, the booking in steerage might have been a calculated move to conserve his dwindling cash.

Whatever the state of his finances, it seems Patrick's decision to emigrate was deliberate and well thought out, signifying a more complete break from Ireland than had he migrated to America. Had it been temporary Mary and the children would hardly have accompanied him. In general, the Irish were adept at weighing up the pros and cons of such a move, although

---

[24] David, Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation: Personal Accounts of Irish Migration to Australia* (Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press, 1994), 610.
[25] Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland Before and After the Famine: Explorations in Economic History, 1800-1925* (New York, USA: St Martin's Press, 1988), 69; by 1854 the value of agricultural output had dropped by about 17 per cent; Kevin O'Rourke, 'Did the Great Irish Famine Matter?' *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 51, No. 1 March 1991, 7.
[26] Christine Kinealy, 'Food Exports from Ireland 1846-1847', *History Ireland Magazine, 18th-19th Century History, Features, The Famine*, Issue 1, Vol. 5 (Spring 1997), 3, www historyireland.com/18th-19th-century-history/food-exports-from-ireland-1846-47 Accessed 24/06/2020; see also, Christine Kinealy, 'The Irish Famine 1845-52', *North Irish Roots*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 1990, 158-61.
[27] Barbara Lewis Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy, 1870-1903* (Cambridge, UK: Oxford University Press, 1971), 60.
[28] *Irish Life and Lore, Recordings and Books, Oral History Collection, County Limerick*, 'Thomas Cooke (1914-2014), Parts 1 & 2, 2014. Transcribed by Colin Ryan 2021.

emigrants were sometimes under-informed.[29] Exaggerated newspaper accounts of how money could be made on the goldfields, for example, helped lure the unwitting, and this may explain why Patrick rushed quickly to Victoria's Mount Blackwood diggings. A report in the *Wexford Independent* was typical of others when it announced 'astounding' news from Victoria in 1852:

> New diggings have been discovered at Mount Blackwood, about half-way between Melbourne and Mount Alexander. The miners in this locality [are] doing wonders... [C]lerks are leaving their offices, labouring men their occupations; and it is expected that goods will soon remain on the wharves for want of hands to house them…money here is plentiful…the number of people at the different diggings at this time is estimated at about 50,000… [W]here on earth will it all end?[30]

Despite such glowing reports, the outcome for most miners was disappointing. Eight out of ten made no more than the equivalent of reasonable wages, paid their way, or lost money. Around half gave up after a few weeks, especially when the average return steadily declined after 1852.[31] Like some for whom goldmining was essentially a passing phase, Patrick quickly set about settling on the land. On 27 March 1857 he purchased his first 88 acres of grazing land at Pyalong at public auction—barely two and a half years after arriving in Victoria.[32] Somewhere between 1862 and 1864 he purchased Pyalong's *White Hart Inn*, a lucrative, established hotel on the major route to the Heathcote and Bendigo goldfields.[33] These were significant purchases and can only be explained by Patrick having considerable capital under his belt when he left Ireland, or access to family cash reserves and bank loans—or in the unlikely event that he had a windfall on the goldfields which he kept secret.

The upheaval of migration was not limited to men. Relocating to far-off locations represented a similar disruption for women, both married and single, especially when there was no hope of ever making a return visit to the homeland. Particularly concerning was the welfare of unmarried women who travelled to Australia without companions or family. Most single women, by virtue of their application for financial assistance from the Emigration Commission, were construed as dependent and powerless individuals. They were at the mercy of the imperial governments, categorised as objects of charity in need of protection, and subjected to a level of scrutiny in a way that was not applied to their married counterparts.[34] This was a category

---

[29] O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, 65.
[30] *Dublin Evening Packet and Correspondent*, 9 October 1852.
[31] Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age: A History of the Colony of Victoria* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1977), 85-86.
[32] Personal communication, Grace Maguire, 10 October 2014. See Appendix 6.
[33] Gazette 19, 1840-1859, 24 February 1857, *Victorian Government Gazette Online Archive 1836-1997*, State Library Victoria, http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au/archive/1840-1859 Accessed 06/01/2019.
[34] Janice Gothard, ' "Pity the Poor Immigrant": Assisted Single Female Migration to Colonial Australia', in Richards, E., (ed.), *Poor Australian Migrants in the Nineteenth Century* (Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, 1991), 97-98.

that diarist Shiress completely overlooked, despite his single sister, Jeannie, accompanying him on board ship, although it is unlikely Jeannie was considered in need of protection given she was a cabin passenger travelling with her brother. And given her privileged travelling conditions, it is most unlikely that she experienced the scrutiny and disorientation that beset those in steerage like Mary's sister, Catherine Walsh, who was a member of the Cooke party.

Single women like Catherine in fact made up the largest cohort of Ireland's female emigrants from the 1850s, with almost 90 per cent aged between 15 and 35.[35] Responsibility for their wellbeing was in the hands of the ship's matron who was often selected and trained for the role by the British Ladies Female Emigration Society (BLFES), a group affiliated with an evangelical arm of the Church of England. As a philanthropic Christian organisation set up in 1850, the initial purpose of the BLFES was to assist the emigration of London's poor women to the British colonies where there were better opportunities for employment and marriage.[36]

In an attempt to prevent disorder and immorality during the passage the BLFES and SPCK expected matrons and sub-matrons to 'exercise a moral influence over all the ship', a role that went well beyond the duty of care set down by the Emigration Commissioners.[37] Matrons thus acted as chaperones and supervisors to vulnerable females, adopting an authoritative role at the point of departure distributing religious tracts, improving literature and mandatory kits which contained basic necessities such as clothing and mess utensils.[38] Spiritual and practical guidance was provided throughout the voyage by means of Scripture and literacy classes, with instruction in various activities to keep idleness at bay. To ensure single females used their time constructively, they were encouraged to develop habits of industry by attending needlework classes.[39] It was hoped that instruction in sewing skills would

---

[35] Janet Nolan, *Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland 1885-1920* (Kentucky, USA: University of Kentucky Press, 2009), 48-50; Connaught matched Munster with the largest group of single women emigrants between 1851 and 1855.

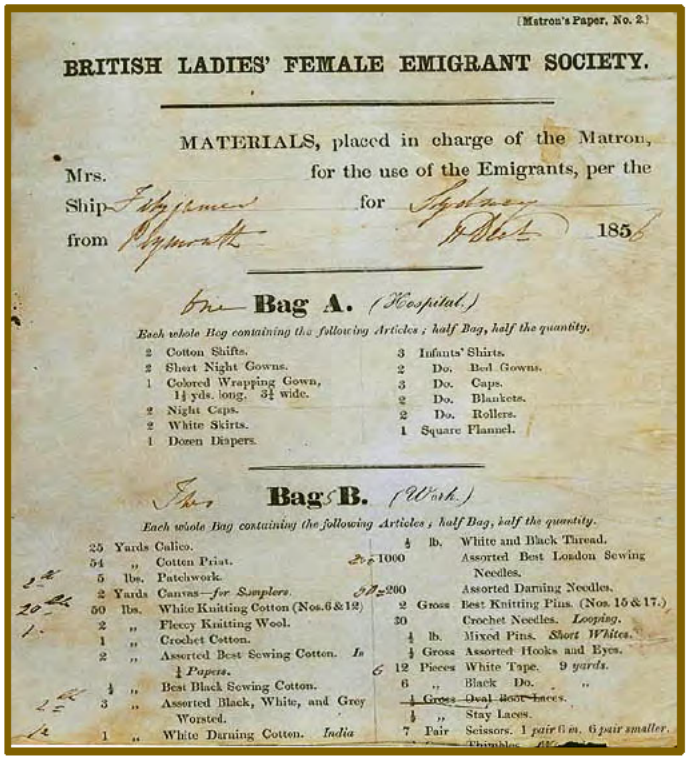
[36] Haines, *Doctors at Sea*, 119-21; *The Illustrated London News*, 12 March 1853, 204; the BLFES was one among several societies set up at the time to assist the single female emigrant, the most prominent being the Fund for Promoting Female Emigration established by Sydney Herbert in 1949 which specialised in the recruitment of unemployed needlewomen. Donations of more than £22,000 to Herbert's fund saw the emigration of 1,071 women to Australia within the first three years; and the Family Colonisation Loan Society which was devoted to supporting Caroline Chisholm's work on female welfare and improving the conditions on ships, and which sent its first ship of emigrants to Australia in 1850. Prospective matrons were often middle- or lower- middle-class unmarried women, or widows in reduced circumstances, for whom a free passage and gratuity, funded by the Church of England Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (SPCK), was often their only means of earning a livelihood.[36]

[37] Haines, *Doctors at Sea*, 118-19; many applicants for the job of matron were the wives of men who had suffered financial loss; Hassam, *No Privacy for Writing*, xix-xxi.

[38] Haines, *Doctors at Sea*, 119-21.

[39] Haines, *Doctors at Sea*, 119-21; single women were expected to attend the classes on all weekday afternoons.

enhance their chances of obtaining paid employment in the colony as domestics and seamstresses.[40]



[Matron's Paper, No. 2.]

BRITISH LADIES' FEMALE EMIGRANT SOCIETY.

MATERIALS, placed in charge of the Matron, Mrs. for the use of the Emigrants, per the Ship for 185

Bag A. (Hospital.)

Each whole Bag containing the following Articles; half Bag, half the quantity.

2	Cotton Shifts.	3	Infants' Shirts.
2	Short Night Gowns.	2	Do. Bed Gowns.
1	Colored Wrapping Gown, 1¼ yds. long. 3¼ wide.	3	Do. Caps.
		2	Do. Blankets.
2	Night Caps.	2	Do. Rollers.
2	White Skirts.	1	Square Flannel.
1	Dozen Diapers.		

Bag B. (Work.)

Each whole Bag containing the following Articles; half Bag, half the quantity.

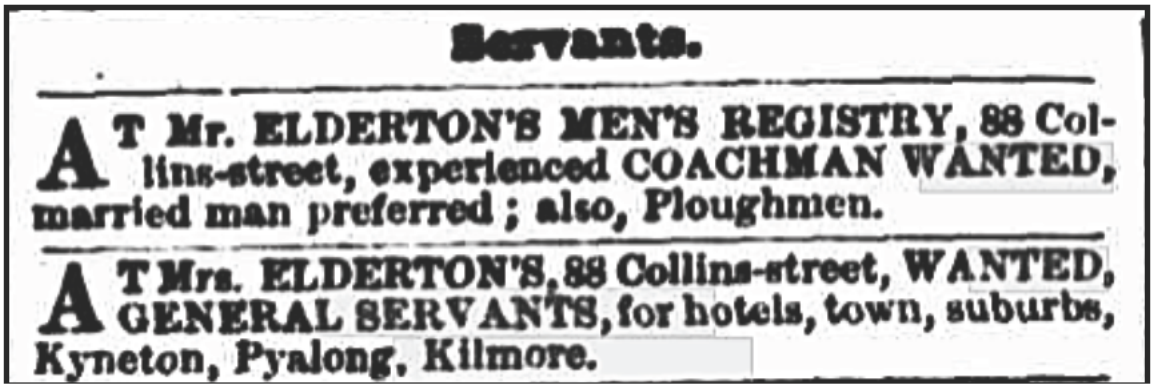
25	Yards Calico.	¼	lb. White and Black Thread.
54	,, Cotton Print.	1000	Assorted Best London Sewing Needles.
5	lbs. Patchwork.	200	Assorted Darning Needles.
2	Yards Canvas—*for Samplers.*	2	Gross Best Knitting Pins. (Nos. 15 & 17.)
50	lbs. White Knitting Cotton (Nos. 6 & 12)	30	Crochet Needles. *Looping.*
2	,, Fleecy Knitting Wool.	¼	lb. Mixed Pins. *Short Whites.*
1	,, Crochet Cotton.	½	Gross Assorted Hooks and Eyes.
2	,, Assorted Best Sewing Cotton. *In ½ Papers.*	12	Pieces White Tape. 9 *yards.*
		6	,, Black Do. ,, ,,
¼	,, Best Black Sewing Cotton.	½	Gross Oval Best Laces.
3	,, Assorted Black, White, and Grey Worsted.	½	,, Stay Laces.
		7	Pair Scissors. 1 *pair 6 in. 6 pair smaller.*
1	,, White Darning Cotton. *India*		Thimbles.

Figure 20: British Ladies' Female Emigrant Society, Instructions to the Matron on board the *Fitz-James* in 1856. Requirements in Work Bags A & B.
Matron's Paper No. 2, Digital ID 5239_a022 https://www.records nsw.gov.au/archives
Accessed 08/06/20.

To this end Catherine would have been expected to utilise the large quantity of sewing materials she was required to pack in 'Work Bag No. B', an essential accoutrement for all women travelling on the *Fitz-James* in the mid-1850s.[41] The intention of the guidance was to shape women like Catherine into compliant domestic servants and suitable marriage partners for newly arrived immigrant males, and very often it was the price they paid in return for an assisted passage. Although Catherine's work plans may have been tenuous before settling at Pyalong, had she read Melbourne newspapers she may have been impressed by the number of advertisements for general servants, nursemaids, parlour and housemaids at hotels in Kyneton, Kilmore and Pyalong.[42]

[40] O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, 86.
[41] *British Ladies' Female Emigrant Society*, 'Instructions to the Matron on board ship', Matron's Paper No. 2, *Fitz-James* Plymouth to Melbourne, 23 December 1856; amongst a huge list of sewing materials female emigrants on the *Fitz-James* were required to pack 54 yards of cotton print, 25 yards calico, 5 lbs patchwork, 50 lbs white knitting cotton (Nos 6 & 12), 30 crochet needles, 200 assorted darning needles, 13 pairs scissors, thimbles and a host of other items too numerous to mention.
[42] *Argus*, 11 February 1863; 24 February 1864; 24 October 1865; 13 August 1867.

With the single woman's existence becoming more superfluous as work opportunities rapidly declined in Ireland, emigration throughout the 1840s and 1850s was an attractive option. All Australian colonies offered assisted passages through the Colonial Land and Emigration Commissioners (CLEC) scheme which was centralised under government control in 1840.[43] With such assistance from the state, younger impoverished females—many of whom were poorly educated fifteen or sixteen-year-old girls deemed in need of protection—might have willingly accepted a degree of supervision, although many resisted when it came to opening their letters. In 1857, a young English girl on the *Fitz-James* was chastised for infringing the rules when her letter to a sailor was intercepted by the captain.[44] For mature females like Mary's 30-year-old unmarried sister, Catherine, however, surveillance of any kind may have been considered an extension of the controls in Ireland.[45] On the other hand, her mature age and her place in the Cooke party may have excluded her from such scrutiny; in fact she may have been eager to contribute to the cost of her fare, bedding and ship kit, since it acknowledged her responsibilities as an independent adult—something that would not have come to pass had she stayed at home.[46]



Servants.

AT Mr. ELDERTON'S MEN'S REGISTRY, 88 Collins-street, experienced COACHMAN WANTED, married man preferred; also, Ploughmen.

AT Mrs. ELDERTON'S, 88 Collins-street, WANTED, GENERAL SERVANTS, for hotels, town, suburbs, Kyneton, Pyalong, Kilmore.

Figure 21: *Argus* 13 August 1867
https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper
Accessed 08/06/2020

Fundamentally, although social change in Ireland weakened the unmarried woman's position after the Famine, Catherine was not rendered entirely powerless as she still had a choice in determining her future. When it came to emigration some women chose to

[43] Leone Huntsman, 'Bounty Emigrants to Australia', *Clogher Record*, Vol. 17, No. 3 (2002), 802.
[44] Reid, *Farewell My Children,* 68.
[45] Haines, *Doctors at Sea*, 119; the matrons were trained by members of the BLFES and were mainly the wives of bishops, parliamentarians and gentry.
[46] *The Illustrated London News*, 10 July 1852; the contribution, which applied to single females, was calculated at around £1 to £5 depending on the occupation, age and character of the individual; Gothard, 'Pity the Poor Immigrant', 116; the process of control of single women reached its zenith under the colonial government schemes whereby it was defined in terms of 'protection'.

remain at home, while others decided to leave—whatever their reasons or discontent.[47] The consensus among historians is that most women saw emigration as an opportunity, rather than exile.[48] What is important however, is the way females experienced the transition, since the state bureaucracy impacted women's agency in ways that were not applicable to men.

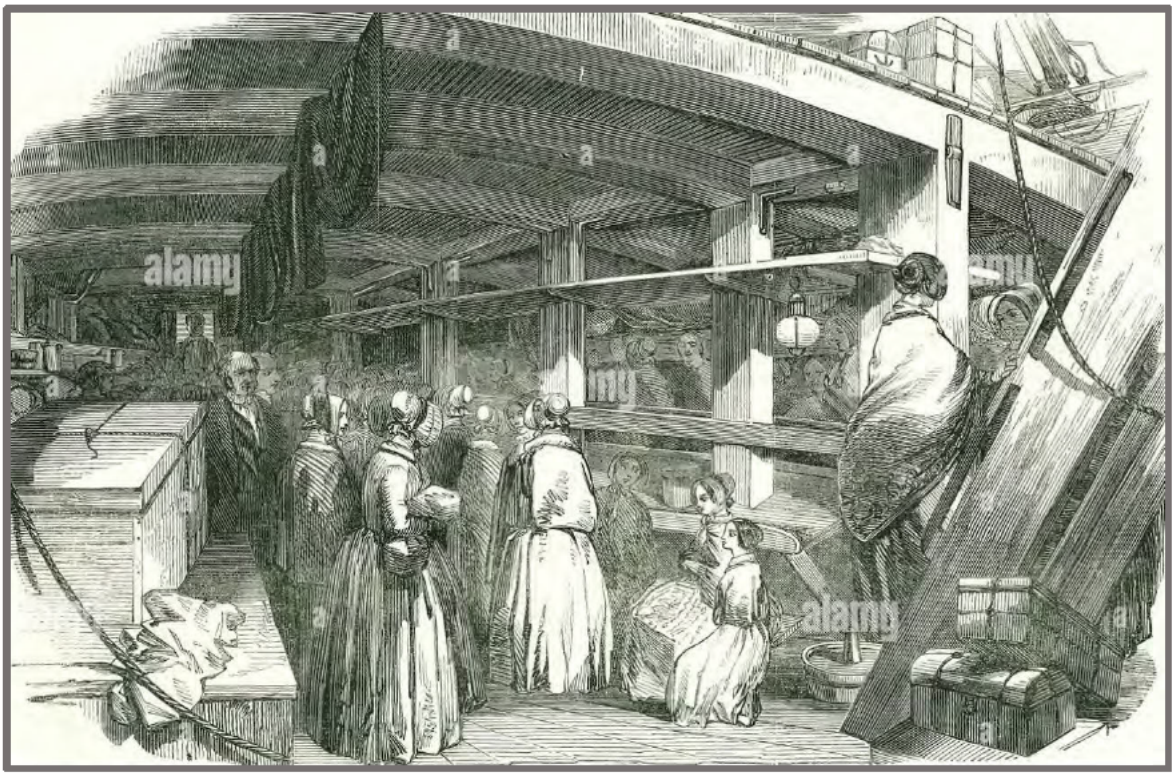


Figure 22: *Illustrated London News,* 17 August 1850.
Scene between decks on an immigrant ship carrying poor needlewomen to Australia. During the 1850s skilled workers were given sponsored passages to emigrate to the colonies https://www.alamy.com
Accessed 04/11/2021

For a married woman like Mary, the sea passage was a different experience from that of her sister, or even from Patrick. Had she and Patrick been living independently before they emigrated Mary may have wielded considerable authority within her household. On the other hand, had she been *sharing* the domestic space with an older, married in-law at *Galtee View* (the family home), her authority as a mother may have been weakened somewhat by her youth and her inferior position in the family hierarchy.[49] Once on board the *Fitz-James* she may have

[47] Donald Harman Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* (United Kingdom: Institute of Irish Studies, Belfast, Northern Ireland: 1996), 36.
[48] Kevin Kenny, 'Diaspora and Irish Migration History', *Irish Economic and Social History*, Vol. 3, 2006, 49; Kerby Miller, 'Emigration, Ideology, and Identity in Post-Famine Ireland', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 75, No. 300, Winter, 1986, 520-27: 526; Miller likewise rejects the nationalist view that characterised the exodus from Ireland as a reluctant emigration enforced by British oppression and religious and political persecution. This belief was reinforced by the concept of exile which was entrenched in the Irish psyche.
[49] Personal communication, Catherine Cooke-O'Brien, Cork, Ireland, to the author, 10 August 2004.

been similarly curtailed since her agency as a wife and mother while at sea was controlled by Emigration Commission rules which allowed little deviation from shipboard routine. William Shiress provides no insights into the domestic environment that Mary had to negotiate each day during the three-month passage. And although the Emigration Commission was always mindful of the upheaval to embarking families with more than two children under seven, or three under ten years of age,[50] the unavoidable proximity to other passengers, unacceptable noise levels, and a rigid shipboard routine, may have been a something for which she was completely unprepared.

In fact, most emigrants had no idea what to expect at sea since they were not seasoned travellers and rarely moved beyond their local market town.[51] Thus in an environment where shipping lines competed for the fastest passages, advertisements catered mainly to the 'superior class' passenger by lauding the salubrious accommodation on newly fitted ships.[52] The *Fitz-James* boasted lofty ceilings and sumptuous furnishings, a saloon with a library and piano, and cabins with baths and bedlinen supplied. A menagerie of live animals was carried to supplement cabin rations. A milch cow provided fresh milk—but again, the Cooke children were not among its recipients since it was only for the benefit of the upper class.[53]

By contrast, comment on below decks lodgings in shipping line advertisements was generally limited to improvements in lighting and ventilation and the presence of an experienced surgeon—a requirement of the 1852 Passenger Act which applied to all ships carrying more than 500 passengers.[54] The need for steerage passengers to carry a raft of basic necessities and food to supplement their diet was not mentioned.[55] Rations were often cause for complaint from upper class passengers. On only the second day out disappointed cabin passengers on the *Fitz-James* complained of poor-quality food and a lack of service during

[50] Robin Haines, *Life and Death in the Age of Sail*, 70.
[51] Scally, 'Liverpool Ships and Irish Emigrants in the Age of Sail', 10; for the poorer class of emigrant, the small tenant and cottier, and even many better-off who lived in Ireland's farming localities rarely moved beyond the market town, that is, beyond the common marriage circle of around 15 miles. For most, life outside that narrow region would have been completely unfamiliar; Geoffrey Blainey, *Our Side of the Country: The Story of Victoria* (Sydney, New South Wales: Methuen Haynes, 1984), 40.
[52] *Wexford Independent*, 21 June 1854; *Saunders's Newsletter*, 20 June 1854. See Appendix 7.
[53] *Dublin Weekly Nation*, 3 July 1858; *Hull Advertiser and Exchange Gazette*, 14 April 1854; Robin Haines, *Life and Death in the Age of Sail*, 185; the *Pestonjee Bomanjee* which left London for Melbourne on 17 June 1854, a day after the departure of the *Fitz-James,* was typical of many ships at the time carrying live animals which were slaughtered towards the end of the journey to provide fresh meat.
[54] *Wexford Independent*, 3 June 1854.
[55] Don Charlwood, *The Long Farewell Farewell: Settlers Under Sail* (Ringwood, Victoria: Allen Lane Publishers, 1981), 107.

mealtimes. Shiress joined the chorus, laying blame at the feet of authorities for sending 'bad cooks.[56]

As these incidents show, a lengthy sea passage was particularly challenging in steerage. People lacked privacy, slept in bunk beds and ate communally. Most had never been to sea. Although Mary had the assistance of her sister in caring for her children, the confined space meant that they continually rubbed shoulders with strangers—people with different personalities, habits, nationalities and religious backgrounds—and they had no way of escaping bad behaviour. Law-abiding passengers were often helpless when others became quarrelsome, imbibed too heavily, exhibited anti-social behaviour or flaunted the rules of decorum and hygiene. Shiress noted in his diary the violent behaviour of an upper-class passenger, a 'most repulsive looking fellow' who brutally assaulted his wife in front of passengers. An improvised court in which Shiress took part resulted in the perpetrator's banishment to steerage while his wife remained on the poop deck in the luxury of their cabin.[57]

Under these conditions the ship's Surgeon Superintendent's level of authority was paramount.[58] An inquiry into emigration in 1852 noted that steerage passengers were at their 'wits end' dealing with people who refused or were unfamiliar with the use of water closets.[59] Similarly, drunkenness was a recurring problem amongst passengers and the *Fitz-James* crew in 1854.[60] Before they were far out to sea the Cookes would have realised that social norms no longer applied. Their daily routine was disrupted, and they were forced to mix with people with manners and personal standards very different from their own. And Mary, in particular, may not have understood the extent to which bureaucratic intervention would impose on her agency as a wife and mother. The constant renegotiation of space, and lack of choice, to which she and other parents below decks were subjected while at sea was another example of the disruption to their lives when emigrants were caught between two worlds: the old familiar

[56] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, 18 & 19 June 1854; Haines, *Doctors at Sea*, 97-8; the Charter Party was the legal agreement between shipping lines and the Emigration Commission on behalf of the colony of Victoria, which covered the cost of carrying, equipping, and provisioning of each immigrant landed alive in Australia. As such, ship's captains had a vested interest in landing passengers alive. Although children's rations improved, adult rations improved little between 1848 and 1885, the main changes being greater quantities of the basics such as bread, cereals, meat, and vegetables. It was not until 1856 that all ships were required to carry both an experienced cook and a qualified baker.
[57] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, 8 July 1854; Haines, *Life and Death in the Age of Sail*, 159.
[58] Haines, *Doctors at Sea*, 76.
[59] Charlwood, *The Long Farewell*, 107.
[60] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, 6 August 1854. When the *Fitz-James* cook was found drunk and unfit for duty, he was placed in irons and forced to drink an emetic, his hands chained to the railings.

world which they had left behind; and the uncertainty of the world into which they were heading.

And there were other challenges which may have led to regret in some passengers over their choice to leave the safety of their homeland. This was especially so when captains competed for record-breaking passages. Fuelled by the demands of emigrants leaving for the Australian goldfields the newly discovered Great Circle route was adopted as a means of shortening the voyage by around one thousand miles.[61] To avert disaster when vessels were pushed into freezing conditions and pack ice, a modified route was introduced whereby ships were to carry chronometers and directed not to sail above latitudes higher than 47-53 degrees south. Not all ships heeded the warning.[62] Although Captain Hamilton respected the rules, he was unable to avoid a hurricane-like storm in August which 'roar[ed] like thunder' above the ship, tearing rigging and topsails from the masts and hurling passengers from one end of their lodgings to the other. Shiress wrote:

> The ship has much the look of a tree in Autumn with most of its foliage off… It is no easy matter keeping in bed of a night for when a squall takes us she goes down to the bulwarks on the starboard side and we get to a sharp incline of 45˚ with scarcely a moments notice... The whole talk is about our escape… pieces of canvas and wood have floated past today, and a lifebuoy, supposed to be from some ship on our course but no sail in sight.[63]

For five days 120-foot-high waves crashed over the ship, setting cabin berths afloat and 'wetting the folks dreadfully' on the lower decks. Jeannie Shiress was convinced that all on board would end up 'at the bottom ~~of the sea~~'.[64] However, there was no mention in Shiress' diary of the suffering of those in steerage. Rather, he remained focused on food and his social life, and the return of bugs and fleas that had invaded his cabin.[65] He had little in common with the Cookes and seemed to lack understanding of the emotional cost of such events to families with young children.[66] Why, then, did Mary agree to go?

---

[61] Kruithof, *Fever Beach*, 20. Great Circle map see Appendix 8.
[62] Haines, *Doctors at Sea*, 3. Most vessels sailed non-stop to Australia from the 1850s. On the newly discovered Great Circle 'modified' or 'composite' route vessels sailed further from the Cape of Good Hope where weather conditions were unpredictable and dangerous: Geoffrey Blainey, *The Tyranny of Distance. How Distance Shaped Australia's History* (Melbourne, Victoria, Sun Books, 1970), 38-40.
[63] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, 28 August 1854.
[64] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, Thursday 24 August—Tuesday 29 August 1854; passengers reacted in very different ways to such experiences; the Purser was rather more prosaic, suggesting his wife 'kneel down and pray' while he fetched another bottle of brandy.
[65] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, Monday 31 July 1854; Tuesday 29 August.
[66] Andrew Hassam, *No Privacy for Writing: Shipboard Diaries 1852-1879* (Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press 1995), xviii.

Whether Mary went willingly to Australia, or was pressured by Patrick, is unknown. As a dutiful wife she may have felt bound to support her husband. She may have resented the passage taking a huge chunk from their savings; and given the vast distance there was no guarantee she would ever make a return visit to Ireland. Illness, shipwreck or giving birth on board ship was a concern—she was six months pregnant when they embarked—and like many women, she may have taken her chances despite advice to the contrary.[67] If Patrick lacked understanding, or if Mary had little input, the relationship may have been strained long before leaving Liverpool, and it might help explain her sudden return to Ireland so soon after landing.

Although travelling in steerage was less than desirable given Mary's pregnancy, strict regulation of the Australian emigration industry in the 1850s meant that conditions were far superior to those on voyages to America.[68] The colonial process was systematically advertised, organised and monitored, and opened to public scrutiny. Sanitary and hygiene routines were upgraded; diet and cooking facilities improved. Regular inspections on all aspects of the voyage included the suitability of medical personnel and practice, and on ways to safeguard passenger's morals.[69]

The changes were a vast improvement on the past and may have been reassuring for the Cookes. However, long sea journeys were hazardous for families when ships carried large numbers of infants and children, a category more susceptible to illness than adolescents or adults.[70] With a total of sixty children on board the *Fitz-James*—forty-four between one and fourteen years of age, and sixteen under the age of one—the Cooke children were in the high-risk group.[71] Whatever precautions taken by their parents, they were endangered by airborne infectious diseases which raced out of control even on the best kept ships. Gastric and diarrhoeal conditions, measles, scarlatina, whooping cough and flea-borne typhus were worsened by seasickness and spread rapidly in the close confines in steerage.[72] Despite precautions on board ship, all four Cooke children contracted measles during the passage. The

[67] Haines, *Life and Death in the Age of Sail*, 62-64; despite the high death toll of infants at sea, during 15 years in mid-century, 90 per cent of babies born on board ship survived. However, the fact that Mary was six months into her pregnancy when they left Ireland meant there was a strong possibility of giving birth during the voyage.
[68] O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, 66; in contrast, Irish emigrants to America were left to fend for themselves and were often maltreated, preyed upon, and cheated in a way that made the experience of migration a disheartening experience for many.
[69] O'Farrell, 66; Haines, *Life and Death in the Age of Sail*, 230.
[70] Haines, *Life and Death in the Age of Sail*, 60.
[71] Shipping Register, *Fitz-James*, 16 June 1854, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) https://prov.vic.gov.u Accessed 01/02/2007.
[72] Haines, *Doctors at Sea*, 98.

three eldest, Margaret, Nicholas and Bridget survived; eighteen-month-old John died of complications several months after landing in Melbourne.[73]

WHITE STAR LINE AUSTRALIAN PACKET
SHIP FITZJAMES.

We are happy to be enabled to quote from the *Melbourne Argus* the following copy of an address presented to Capt. Hamilton, of the Ship "Fitz-James," on the arrival of the Ship in Melbourne :—

DEAR SIR,

As Passengers by the "Fitz-James" from Liverpool to Melbourne, we cannot separate without expressing our warmest thanks for your constant kindness, attentive and gentlemanly conduct during our happy and prosperous voyage. We also beg to convey through you to the owners our perfect satisfaction with the dietary scale, with the very excellent quality of provisions served out on the passage, and our entire approval of all the arrangements made for our comfort and convenience. Wishing you health and happiness.

(Signed) JOHN DUNEY, and 49 others.

An equally high compliment, both to Captain Hamilton and the Owners, was presented, signed by John Johnson, a passenger, and 43 others.

The writers of the latter dwell particularly on the comfortable fitting-up of the ship, and the faithful fulfilment by the owners, of their "engagements with regard to provisions," and the kindness experienced during the voyage from both Captain, officers and crew.

Figure 23: *Wexford Independent* 13 December 1854
www.findmypast.com.au
Accessed 01/02/2019

Undoubtedly, the death toll on the *Fitz-James* would have been higher had the CLEC's health and hygiene standards been compromised. On departure Captain Hamilton stated that health regulations on the vessel were more 'complete' than those laid down by the board of health, and that more attention than usual would be paid to cleaning and ventilation.[74] Despite similar measures on other ships, emigrants from Ireland and Scotland's most impoverished farming areas were often singled out for a lack of cleanliness and hygiene, deemed 'less

[73] Grace Maguire, personal communication, 3 September 2009; although infant John's name was recorded on the *Champion of the Seas* passenger register on Mary's return journey to Ireland in February 1855, health authorities refused him permission to board the ship. He was left in Victoria with Patrick and Mary's sister Catherine. He died several weeks later before Mary and the children reached Ireland.
[74] *Wexford Independent*, 21 June 1854.

healthy' than the English, and considered more likely to contract and transmit disease.[75] The tally of five deaths during the *Fitz-James'* passage—two from accidents, one from natural causes and two from ailing children—was low compared with those on other ships at the time.[76] When the *Ticonderoga* docked at Port Phillip in November 1852 , for example, it was learned that 168 passengers and crew, including the doctor had died at sea or soon after landing.[77] Despite Patrick and Mary's difficulties and the illness of their children, the voyage went better than it might have done. Before making a decision to emigrate they may have weighed up the risks and decided to take their chances. A glowing news article published in Ireland two months after the *Fitz-James* docked noted only the excellent quality of the ship's fittings and provisions, and the passengers' gratitude at the Captain's 'kindness' and 'gentlemanly' conduct.[78]

When the *Fitz-James* landed on Wednesday 13th September, Shiress noted it dropped anchor alongside the celebrated *Great Britain* which arrived three weeks earlier with two cases of smallpox.[79] In an abrupt ending to his journal, he wrote that the *Fitz-James* arrived 'in 90 days exactly and landed all in good condition'.[80] It was an unceremonious ending to his daily ritual, a performance aimed at making sense of the in-between space between the old world and the new.

On landing, the Cookes may not have been aware of the jubilant mood in Victoria that day. Gold was holding its price at £4 per ounce; an Inn had just opened at Lancefield—a new township only a stone's throw from Pyalong; and Melbourne's 'millionaire' tradesmen were readying themselves for Lady Hotham's Grand Ball of the Year. The inauguration of Australia's first major railway system was underway—an invitation-only event at Hobson's Bay that hailed the beginning of a revolution in Australian transport.[81] Had 26-year-old Shiress

---

[75] Haines, *Doctors at Sea*, 25; Reid, *Farewell My Children*, 73. One immigration Agent stated that most single females in 1854 and 1855 were so filthy that some were not clean enough to be hired on arrival.[75]

[76] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, various entries; apart from the death of two children from unspecified illnesses, an adult male named Jackson died of consumption which he had contracted before boarding; an unnamed seaman drowned after falling overboard; and a young boy by the name of Arnott was killed when he fell 90 feet to the deck after being ordered to repair a mast.

[77] *Argus*, 5 November 1852.

[78] *Wexford Independent*, 13 December 1854; the testimonial was signed by 94 passengers.

[79] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, 13 September 1854.

[80] Shiress, *Voyage of the Fitz-James*, 13 September 1854; see also Hassam, *No Privacy for Writing*, 58-63, who notes that boundaries on board ship were demarcated according to social hierarchies and the expectations of those who occupied its spaces.

[81] *Argus*, 13 September 1854; 13 & 15 September 1854; Lady Hotham was the wife of the Governor of Victoria., Sir Charles Hotham; see also Blainey, *Tyranny of Distance*, 234-235, 242, 244; by 1881 Australia had around 4000 miles of railway. However, railways advanced only very slowly after initial promise in the early 1850s with suitable railway construction to inland Victoria only beginning in the close of that decade. It was not until State

read the newspapers, he might have disembarked with a sense of elation at what the future held for him and his younger sister, Jeannie. But what of Mary Cooke, who, with four young children ailing from the measles, would give birth within a couple of weeks? And Patrick…what was passing through his mind as he took in the strange sights and sounds of ships unloading cargo at the wharf, and the frenzied activity of burly unkempt bullockies and horsemen who spat and cursed alongside drays and carts piled high with shovels, sieves, buckets and picks as they readied themselves for the diggings?

Whether Patrick realised it or not, Victoria was a very different place from only ten years before. By 1854 Melbourne had expanded to four times the circumference of Limerick city. Only months before the Cookes' arrival, a Limerick man wrote of his astonishment at Melbourne's spaciousness and standard of living but was somewhat bemused by its contradictions:

> 'the climate is a beautiful one' he wrote, and 'no person need starve here… [yet] I never saw such a place for drinking… [A]t seven o'clock in the morning you would see the public houses full… [but] if a fellow murder[s] on Monday, he is tried on Tuesday, and hung on Friday… they hang here for very little cause… [P]ublicans here… are the people that make money in a short time… £40 clear profit before nine o'clock in the morning… I would advise any man with a little capital to come… money flies about here. They'll think as little of a sovereign here as of a penny at home… [E]very fellow… has lots of it… and you are a fool if you do not think of coming out here—and the sooner the better'.[82]

Where the Cooke family lodged after arrival is unknown. However, on 2 October 1854, barely three weeks after landing in Melbourne, Mary gave birth to a daughter. Although civil registration of births was compulsory in Victoria from 1853, Catherine's birth was not registered. Nothing is known of the birth, where it took place, who was present, or of the attendance or otherwise of medical personnel. Meagre documentation in Victorian archives, however, provides a glimpse into her parent's religious beliefs and the ethos that they followed throughout their lives. Catherine was baptised within a week of her birth at Melbourne's St Francis' Church. Thomas Barry was a sponsor.[83] Barry came from Bruff, County Limerick, a farming district adjacent to Knocklong. The Cooke and Barry families were well-known to one another through intermarriage in Ireland, Australia and America.

---

railways had begun to advance towards the goldmining towns of Ballarat and Bendigo by around 1862, that Australia's railway age effectively took off. The first long railway line was to the Victorian river port of Echuca, 156 miles from Melbourne. As a result, until Echuca was superseded by other ports along the river, the township retained its position as the main depot along the main Murray River system.

[82] *The Limerick and Clare Examiner*, 28 January 1854.

[83] St Francis' Church/St Patrick's Cathedral Archive, Baptism Certificate, Catherine Cooke, 9 October 1854. Accessed 4 July 2016; Fr Gerald Ward performed the baptism ceremony. St Francis Church was built before the goldrush between 1841 and 1845; it is situated in central Melbourne and is the oldest Catholic church in Victoria.

Despite a lack of documentation, there is little doubt that this period was a turbulent time in Mary's life. Only a few weeks before the baptism she had set foot in a world that was unlike anything she had known; she had no roots and was without a permanent home. She had survived a difficult passage and the birth of a baby; her husband was without work at a time when a 'tidal' wave of free immigration was causing problems on the labour market; and her children were still recovering from illness.[84] It is now known that Mary decided to return to Ireland almost immediately after landing, since a search of shipping records show that return passages were booked on two ships, the first of which left Port Phillip for Liverpool in early December 1854—only eight weeks after arrival in Victoria. However, infant John's health remained precarious which possibly led to her later departure on the second ship (*Champion of the Seas*) in early February 1855. John was again refused permission to board because of his illness, and he remained in Victoria in the care of his father and Catherine Walsh. He died several weeks after his mother had left for Ireland.[85]

Only scant attention has been paid by a handful of scholars to the phenomenon of return migration to Ireland although the chance to return was an option open to the vast majority if they had the money to do so. Patrick and Mary were clearly in this category since Mary travelled in upper-class accommodation on the return journey in 1855.[86] No account of her return voyage has been found and only fragments of her story remain. Family folklore has it that Mary was distressed on arrival and resented her living conditions. She issued an ultimatum to Patrick, saying she would return to Knockainy—and only return to Victoria when he provided her with 'a decent home'.[87] Had she read an Irish press report in December 1854, exactly twelve weeks after arrival in Victoria, her fears may have been heightened since Patrick was still out of work when she left Melbourne, and a grim picture of life up country was emerging. One letter-writer was particularly concerned at the living conditions and lack of employment:

> …the townships are infested with rats: in fact, they seem to have possession of Melbourne, as they walk boldly thro' the streets at night, and run over the beds of the inhabitants of the tents;

---

[84] *Argus*, 25 September 1854. A string of correspondence from concerned immigrants was published in the *Argus* over several weeks.
[85] Shipping Register, *Champion of the Seas*, 14 February 1855 (PROV); the first of two ships booked was the *Arabian* which left Port Phillip on 15 December 1854. The reason for not travelling on this passage was because infant John was ill and was refused permission to board. His death was not recorded on the Victorian civil register and the location of his grave is unknown.
[86] Dianne Rose Dunnigan, 'Irish Return Migration from America at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century, 1890-1920', Ph.D. diss., National University of Ireland, Maynooth 2011, 2. Traditionally, focus on return migration has centred on one-way traffic between Ireland and Australia, North America, Britain and New Zealand.
[87] Personal communication, Aunt Cooke, Pyalong, to Mary Ryan, Pyalong in 1944/to author c. 1996.

> their numbers are attributed to the large quantity of meat which is thrown out during the summer months, being frequently unfit for use on the day after it is killed.[88]

Nonetheless, further reports in May 1855 when Mary arrived in Ireland may have offered some comfort. By then, Irish newspapers were increasingly hailing the importance of agriculture in Australia. Victoria's rapidly rising population in the mid-1850s, and growing need for breadstuffs meant that more land than ever was being sown to edible grains like wheat rather than hay.[89]

Nonetheless, compounding Mary's concerns before she left Melbourne was her fear of the Indigenous inhabitants. At the funeral of her son, Nicholas, in September 1931, it was said that his mother feared for the safety of her family because 'at that early period in Victoria the blacks were very treacherous'. It may have been another reason given for her sudden return to Limerick in 1855.[90] Indigenous people on Melbourne streets would have been a strange sight for Mary and it was probably the first time she and Patrick had encountered people with dark skin.

Before the encroachment of white people, the Indigenous population in Victoria in 1835 was estimated at between 10,000 and 15,000. By 1853 it had declined to around 1,907 through death, disease and dispossession.[91] Although some Indigenous people gained employment, others, sometimes termed 'intemperate vagrants', were reduced to begging in the streets.[92] Nicholas' obituary highlights Mary's fears for her family's safety in Victoria but says nothing of Patrick's attitude towards Aboriginal people. It is possible he shared Mary's views and

---

[88] *Limerick & Clare Examiner*, 13 December 1854.
[89] *Dublin Weekly Nation*, 26 May 1855.
[90] Mr Nicholas Michael Cooke, Obituary, *Advocate* 17 September 1931.
[91] Leigh Boucher & Lynette Russell (eds), *Settler Colonial Governance in Nineteenth-Century Victoria* (Acton, ACT: ANU Press and Aboriginal History Inc., 2015), 184; Len Smith, Janet McCalman, Ian Anderson, Sandra Smith, Joanne Evans, Gavan McCarthy & Jane Beer, 'The Political Arithmetic of Aboriginal Victorians', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 38, No. 4, Spring 2008, 535.
[92] Boucher & Russell (eds), *Settler Colonial Governance*, 37-38; in Melbourne, what was often perceived as 'begging' by the Kulin people was in fact a means of trade and exchange in an attempt to participate in the white economy. Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians: A History since 1800* (Crow's Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2005), 62, 79, 146. In November 1837 (seventeen years before the Cookes' arrival), a massacre occurred to the east of Pyalong on the Goulburn River killing at least ten people including women and children. On that occasion Daungwurrung people hunting possum were slaughtered by Fitzherbert Mundy who had established a pastoral station on Taungurong land. After offering Aboriginal people flour to make damper, Mundy and his party rode up and shot several dead as they were eating: Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*, 62 & 146. Although the aim of the Protectionist policies was to protect Indigenous people, in effect, the reserves were a system of control whereby the state assumed power over Aboriginal employment, residence and the care of children. See also Elizabeth Malcolm & Dianne Hall, *History of the Irish in Australia* (Sydney, New South Wales: NewSouth Publishing, 2018), 52-54; Ann McGrath, 'Shamrock Aborigines: The Irish, the Aboriginal Australians and their Children', *Aboriginal History*, Vol. 34, 2010, 56.

encouraged her to return to Ireland until he could ensure his family's safety. Most likely both he and Mary failed to understand how the lives of Australia's First Nations peoples had been fundamentally changed by violence and disease, and dispossession by white settlers.

For Mary, life in the colony was a major adjustment. The Australian environment was unlike anything she had known, and given Australia's distance from Ireland, her sense of separation and loss was probably more intense than for friends and relatives who left for America. Family letters have not survived. But studies of nineteenth-century immigrant letters reveal a deep sense of alienation and disturbance in some newcomers when they found themselves in a land of strangers.[93] Although Mary was not pushed to the extreme, the author of one settler diary found the isolation in Victoria's interior spaces overwhelming. Catherine Currie felt the Gippsland bush with its towering trees, bushfires, dingoes, reptiles, and brooding darkness signified danger from every quarter; and although she lived out her life with extraordinary courage, the impact of moving to such a locality eventually pushed her to insanity.[94]

Despite Mary's reaction on arrival in Melbourne, she ultimately displayed a strength of character demonstrated by many immigrant women as they adjusted to life in the bush. Her immediate return to Ireland shows she had the courage (and money) to act in her own interests, whatever the circumstances, and whether or not she was supported by Patrick. And this time she and the children did so in style, travelling in cabin and accompanied by a servant—on the *Champion of the Seas*, the largest and most elegant of all clipper ships to enter Port Phillip Bay.[95] It was a far more dignified experience than her earlier passage on the *Fitz-James* when the children fell ill, and although more costly, throws light on the Cookes' access to funds.[96] Mary thus had opportunities that were not available to all migrants, especially women. Even so, she faced an uncertain future given disturbing reports of conditions in the colony in Dublin

[93] Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation*, 24; Margaret Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday: A Social History of the Western District of Victoria* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1963), 188-189; in Melbourne two small rooms were let on average for around £4 and £6 per week, those more sparsely furnished at approximately £2 per week.

[94] McLeary & Dingle, *Catherine: On Catherine Currie's Diary*, 70-71; see also Sara Mills, *Gender and Colonial Space* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2005), 85. Mills observes that a woman's experience of being alone in a natural environment is unlike that of a man owing to the particular difficulties that arise from woman's position in the domestic, rather than the public sphere.

[95] Shipping Register, *Champion of the Seas*, 12 February 1855 (PROV); *Argus,* 13 February 1855; the Shipping Intelligence column of the Melbourne *Argus* listed 'Mrs Cooke, four children and servant' as cabin passengers on the *Champion of the Seas* when it left Melbourne on February 12.

[96] *Argus*, 13 February 1855; Personal communication, John Davies to the author, 22 May 2013; the unidentified woman was said to be either a distant relative of the Cooke family or possibly a woman of convict origin wanting to return to her family.

newspapers soon after arrival in London. Many who arrived in Melbourne with the Cookes on the *Fitz-James* were disillusioned. One report noted that:

> The majority of the passengers on board the Champion of the Seas 'are comparatively new arrivals in the colony, who, not having found affairs in Victoria as they anticipated, are returning in disgust to England. The doleful account which will be circulated by these faint-hearted adventurers, on their arrival home, will doubtless tend materially to check the tide of emigration to Australia.'[97]

Mary may have realised that she was not alone in returning to Ireland at that time. On 26 September 1854 a New South Wales newspaper reported that 200 immigrants who arrived in Victoria on the *Fitz-James* with the Cookes were already making plans to return. Many were unable to find work with the result that some had resorted to breaking stones for the roads.[98] The report was one in a string of correspondence to the *Argus* complaining that a temporary lull in employment in mid-1854 had created a surplus of labourers which left many newcomers without the means to earn a living. Although Patrick was in a better financial position than these immigrants, setting up on the land was a massive outlay given the cost of machinery and stock, and high wage rates in the mid-1850s.[99]

Figure 24: *The Champion of the Seas*, East Boston, USA. Circa 1854.
Southworth & Hawes. Dimensions: Plate 21.7 x 16.7. Credit Line: Gift of Richard Parker in memory of Herman Parker. Accession No. 1994.122 https://collections.mfa.org/objects Accessed 03/04/2021

[97] *Dublin Evening Post*, 15 May 1855.
[98] *Empire* (Sydney) 26 September 1854.
[99] Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday*, 198-199.

Little is known of Mary's stay in Ireland. John died in Victoria while she was at sea, a letter from Patrick said to have reached the family home in Knockainy around the time of Mary's arrival in County Limerick.[100] However, a group photograph of Mary seated beside Patrick's brother's family at *Galtee View* (taken between 1855 and 1858) suggests Mary may have maintained a close relationship with the Cooke family. Taken by an unknown photographer, the image is thought to have been taken soon after Mary's arrival in Knockainy in 1855 when she was mourning the death of her infant son, John, or, as a parting gesture before she returned to Victoria three-and-a-half-years later. The photo depicts Mary and three of her four surviving children seated beside the family of Patrick's brother, Thomas, at the thatched roofed Knocklong home where it is believed Mary and her children stayed during their return trip.

Figure 25: Cooke family group, *Galtee View*, Knocklong, Co. Limerick, 1854-1858.
Patrick's brother, Thomas Cooke & his wife, Margaret (nee Gleeson), pictured with Mary Cooke seated far right next to daughter, Margaret, standing. Unnamed children from both families. (Maguire/Dynan Archive).

The image demonstrates the challenges settlers faced in choosing to migrate, and in particular the effect on wives and children as they were uprooted from the security of the place they knew as 'home'. It also demonstrates the gendered experiences that impinged on women and men for very different reasons during the emigration process. In this way, the lengthy

[100] Personal communication, Catherine Cooke-O'Brien, Knocklong, Co. Limerick, to the author, October 2011.

three-and-a-half-year separation was especially significant for Mary because it meant she had no sense of a permanent home until she re-joined Patrick at Pyalong in 1858.

The original group image, passed on by Grace Maguire and now held privately, has survived into the fifth generation in Australia. It is a further example of the value early family photographs have within the Cooke family today, and of how their preservation is crucial to understanding the socio-cultural meanings behind them. The taking of the photo in 1858 was clearly important to Mary—and possibly Patrick—since it is believed she brought the only copy to Australia when she returned to Victoria in 1858. Until its circulation by Grace Maguire, Irish relations living in the Knocklong home were unaware of its existence.

Before Mary's return, Patrick worked for a time in Melbourne before moving to the Mount Blackwood goldfields where it is thought he joined Michael and Martin McKenna. Life on the goldfields was dangerous and tough—especially for women. Drunkenness and immorality were rife, with Australia declared the most drunken country in the world.[101] Until 1851, few women went to the goldfields, but this gradually changed as housing became more permanent.[102] When Patrick arrived at Mount Blackwood, women already had a legal right to work on the diggings and, of the 80,000 people on the entire Victorian goldfields in January 1854, one in three, or 32 per cent, was a woman or child.[103] There is no suggestion that Patrick intended to take his family to Mount Blackwood. And it is most unlikely that Mary wished to accompany him given the difficulties of raising a family in a bush setting lacking the amenities to which she was accustomed.[104]

For Patrick, however, the years between 1854 and 1855 were significant. In December 1854, diggers were aggrieved since they had neither land nor votes. Barely three months after the Cooke party arrived in Victoria, a violent rebellion (the Eureka Stockade) erupted on the Ballarat goldfields which loosened the power of the squatters and paved the way for less well-off immigrants to purchase land.[105] Whatever Patrick thought of the uprising's tally of dead,

---

[101] Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday*, 188-90.
[102] Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday*, 193; Clare Wright, *The Forgotten Rebels of Eureka* (Melbourne, Australia: The Text Publishing Co. (2013), 162-68.
[103] Wright, *The Forgotten Rebels*, 28; 164. women were granted the right to work on the diggings in 1851.
[104] See also Steven Eldred-Grigg, *Diggers, Hatters and Whores: The Story of the New Zealand Gold Rushes* (Auckland, NZ: Random House, 2011), 370; cited in Nicola Johanna Lemberg, 'Writing the Goldfields of Victoria and Otago, 1851-1871: Australasian Narratives and their Representations', MA, The University of Waikato, 2015, 17; the term 'camp followers' referred to women on the goldfields who worked as barmaids, hotelkeepers, domestic servants, entertainers and prostitutes.
[105] John Molony, *The Penguin Bicentennial History of Australia: The Story of Two Hundred Years* (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books Australia, 1987, 107-109; more than thirty men and women lost their lives during the

the reforms were promising for those hoping to acquire farming land and may well have been the drawcard that secured his family's future and helped bring Mary back to Victoria in 1858.

By the time Mary returned to Australia, Patrick was settled on his first 88 acres at Pyalong in the County of Dalhousie, alongside immigrants he had known in Ireland.[106] It was on this property that he erected the new home promised to Mary, and in which the family lived until they purchased Pyalong's *White Hart Inn* from Fred Thompson in the early 1860s. Many years later, the original farming property, known as *The Pines*, became the home of Patrick and Mary's son, Nicholas and his family of thirteen children, after his marriage to eighteen-year-old Margaret Ryan. The Ryans were an Irish immigrant family from Tipperary. They were known to the Cookes in Knockainy and settled at the Black Springs on the northern outskirts of Pyalong.

In terms of duration, the Cooke voyage constituted only a small period of time in their lives to that point. But as this chapter has argued, it was a critical period, the bridge between two worlds, a liminal space where lives were put on hold, and where immigrants lacked the familiar reference points that gave their lives stability in the homeland. Patrick and Mary's time on the ocean in 1854, and Mary's return to Australia in 1858, presaged the way they would adapt to life on a new, unfamiliar landscape—as will be discussed in chapters three and four.

***

When the *Africa* arrived at Port Phillip on 11 August 1858 after a 119-day passage from Liverpool, Mary disembarked with Margaret, Nicholas and Bridget, and a four-year-old daughter whom Patrick had not seen since she was an infant. Included in the party were Mary's agricultural labourer cousins, David and Cornelius Walsh who settled at Pyalong, and 23-year-old Daniel Comans who settled in Kilmore.[107] Patrick met the family in Melbourne and they made the week-long journey to their new home at Pyalong by bullock dray, on a road that was a quagmire of 'bogs, gluepots and stiff pinches', sleeping at night under a covering strung

uprising; Wright, *The Forgotten Rebels*, 169; every person resident on the goldfields was required to pay the mining fee regardless of their success in finding gold.

[106] *Victorian Government Gazette Online Archive 1836-1997*, State Library Victoria (SLV), Gazette 19, 1840-1859, February 24th 1857, http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au/view.cgi?year=1857 Accessed 23/07/2020.

[107] Shipping Register, *Africa*, 16 April 1858—11 August 1858 (PROV). Margery Grant, a 40-year-old servant listed alongside the Cooke party may have been travelling with the family; *Freeman's Journal*, 17 November 1858. Five adults and ten children died during the passage; two mothers gave birth. Reports in the Melbourne *Argus*, 19 August 1858 and *Bendigo Advertiser*, 23 August 1858, noted how two men who assaulted the captain while the ship was at sea were fed bread and water and kept in irons for 28 days; and on landing, serious allegations of a 'private' nature concerning females were made against the captain and lodged with the Emigration Commission.

between the dray and a tree branch.[108] Particularly memorable was crossing Victoria's Great Dividing Range at 'Pretty Sally', a name that Patrick and Mary's ten-year-old daughter, Margaret, would fondly recall years later.[109] For Mary it was the beginning of a new chapter, yet she was still to put down her roots:

> Make of a nation what you will
> Make of the past
> What you can
>
> There is now
> A woman in the doorway
>
> It has taken me
> All my strength to do this…[110]

[108] Description of the trip from Melbourne to Pyalong passed down through the generations by Patrick and Mary's daughter, Margaret, who was ten years of age at the time. Description of the road cited in Maya V. Tucker, *Kilmore on the Sydney Road* (Kilmore, Victoria: Shire of Kilmore, Civic Centre, 1988), 66.
[109] Personal communication Aunt Cooke, Pyalong, to Mary Ryan, Pyalong in 1944, and to author c.1996; *Pretty Sally Hill*, was named after Sally Smith who operated an unlicensed grog shop at the top of a steep hill (near Wallan) on the main route to Sydney in the 1840s.
[110] Boland, 'Anna Liffey', 41-46.

CHAPTER 3

Pyalong: Settlement at a waterhole

'a wilful, lavish land…'[1]

In the autumn of 1837, only three years after landing in Sydney from the Isle of Wight, Alexander Fullerton Mollison made a 400-mile overland trek from his pastoral station in New South Wales to the Western Port District in the hope of occupying further land suitable for grazing. Mollison's initial claim was on a 60,000- to 70,000-acre tract of hinterland on the Coliban River near Malmsbury. He then pushed further to the east where he occupied another 64,000 acres of land on lightly timbered, undulating granite country, all splendidly watered, which he named Pyalong—a place name meaning 'two waterholes excavated by the black gins with yam sticks'.[2] The claim was on the traditional land of the Indigenous Kulin people—the Taungurung and Daungwurrung clans.[3] The station was considered one of the finest in the colony for breeding and fattening stock. In 1838 it was known as Pyalong Run, No. 138, Western Port District and it ran 30 horses, 1650 cattle, and 11,706 sheep—for an annual lease of £90/3/0.[4]

---

[1] Dorothea MacKellar, 'My Country', in *Core of my Heart*, Poemhunter.com-The World's Poetry Archive, Classic Poetry Series, 2012, ebooks/pdf/dorothea_mackellar_2012_7.pdf Accessed 25/04/2020.

[2] J. F. H. Mitchell (1859-1921) list of Aboriginal names and their meanings, undated, cited in *Kilmore Free Press*, 'Pyalong's Past', 2.

[3] Richard Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians: A History Since 1800* (Crow's Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2005), xxi; Lindsay Proudfoot & Dianne Hall, *Imperial Spaces: Placing the Irish and Scots in Colonial Australia* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2011), 110. 'Squatting' is defined as the illegal occupation of land without title. Legislation enacted in 1844 allowed the purchase 320 acres of a run at the minimum (upset) price of £1 per acre, enabling the occupier to secure possession of the remainder of a run for the next eight years. Further legislation in 1847 allowed the purchase of the entire run at the upset price; *Taungurung Land and Waters Council*, Broadford, Victoria, 2020 https://taungurung.com.au/culture/ Accessed 27/08/2020. The Taungurung people occupy much of Central Victoria. Their Country is defined by the upper reaches of the Goulburn River north of the Dividing Range; from the Campaspe River to Kilmore in in the west, eastwards to Mount Beauty, and from Benalla in the north down to the top of the Great Dividing Range.

[4] J. O. Randell, *Pastoral Settlement in Northern Victoria, Vol. 1 & 2: The Coliban District* (Carlton, Victoria: Queensbury Press, 1979), Vol. 1, 95-100; Vol 2, 213-17; 220; *Geelong Advertiser and Squatters' Advocate*, 5 October 1847; *Kilmore Free Press*, 8 January 1948. Alexander Fullerton Mollison (1802-1885) sailed from the Isle of Wight on the *James Harris* on 27 October 1833, arriving in Sydney on 1 May 1834. Although *Coliban Station* was Mollison's initial purchase he ran most of his cattle on *Pyalong Run* which was further to the east on the northern side of the Great Dividing Range. Documents show that in March 1839 there were 3763 sheep on *Pyalong Run* although carrying capacity was estimated at 20,000. When *Coliban Station* was sold in 1848, *Pyalong Run* continued as an outstation under the supervision of overseer, Donald McLean, and head stockman, Thomas Coleman, the latter a highly respected ticket-of-leave convict. Along with his brother, William (1816-1886), Alexander became heavily involved in the affairs of the colony. He was elected President of the Melbourne Club in 1877, and as a member of Parliament was an avid supporter of Separation. In 1850, Alexander sold *Pyalong Run* to his brother, William who remained on the property until 1866 when he sold it to William Bogle Hamilton, the owner of adjoining *Glenaroua Station*, reputedly for £20,000. The Mollison brothers managed other small outstations at nearby Sailor's Waterhole, Bald Hills and Emu Flat: *Pyalong HPM RUN, 249, 1862*, State Library of Victoria (SLV), *Historic Maps & Plans Collection, RUN 249* (Microfiche); 365. See also Charles Daley, 'Early Squatting Days, From the Papers of the Late Alexander Fullerton Mollison', *Victorian Historical Magazine*, Vol. IX, No. 1, July 1922, 10; the first Europeans to settle in the area were Captain George Brunswick Smyth and Lieutenant Alfred Miller Mundy who were operating *Pyalong Station* by 1838 and William Hamilton who occupied nearby *Glenaroua Run* during the

In later years it carried more than 20,000 sheep.[5] The Mollison properties comprised a total of 89,000 acres of Crown Land. To the west of *Coliban Station* was *Wolfscrag* or *Wild Duck Creek Station*, Dr Thomas Baynton's *Darlington Station* and George Simmons's *The Den*. To the north and east of Pyalong were *Tourbouric* and *Glenaroua Station*. The Great Dividing Range was on the southern-most fringe of this fertile area.

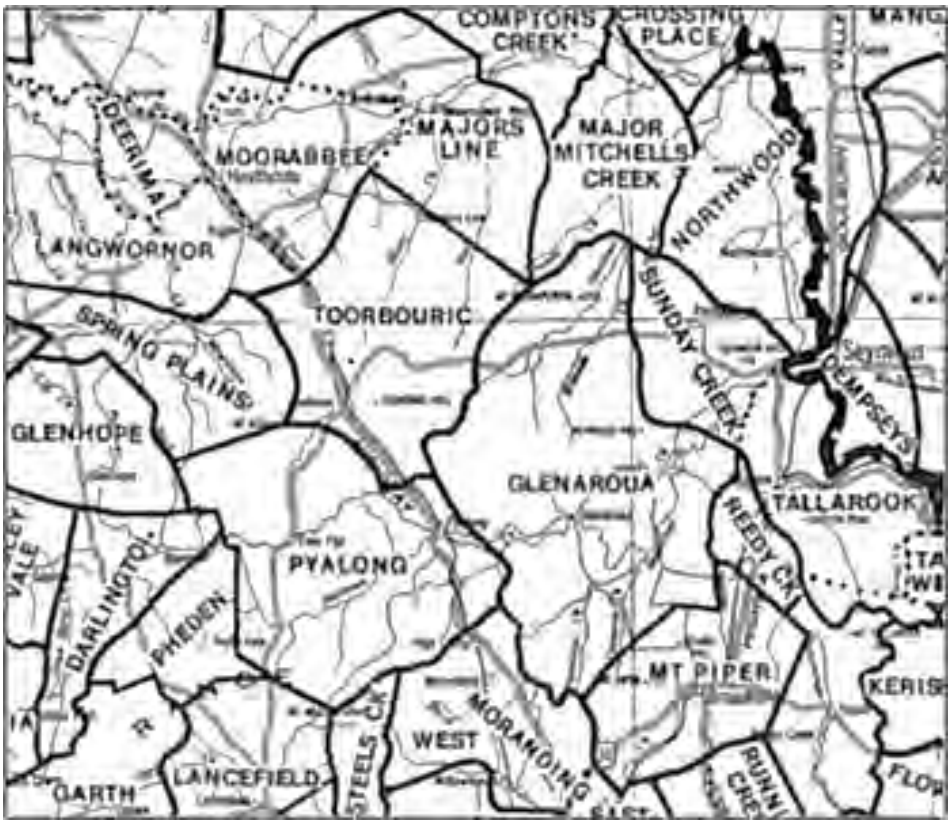


Figure 26: Pyalong, Tooborac, Glenaroua
Spreadborough, Robert & Anderson, Hugh, *Victorian Squatters*, Red Rooster Press, Ascot Vale, Victoria
https://planning.vic.gov.au
Accessed 07/08/2015

An 1856 map of the *Parish Plan of Pyalong* shows the extent of the Mollison lease, and the location of a small township on the main route from Kilmore to Bendigo. The track to the McIvor goldfields is clearly visible on the north side of the Mollison Creek.[6] According to Alexander Mollison in 1848, the run was on 'very pretty country', almost entirely encircled by ranges of varying heights which formed an easily defined natural boundary, and the fledgling

same period. See also Martin Williams, 'Charles Bonney and the Fertile Kilmore Plains', *Victorian Historical Journal*, Vol. 90, No. 1, June 2019, 106-12. In 1840, fourteen years before the Cookes arrived in the colony, only 549 cattle were branded on the Mollison property at Pyalong. See Appendix 9.

[5] Randell, *Pastoral Settlement*, Vol. 2, 215. See Appendix 10.

[6] Victoria, Surveyor General's Office (1857), *Agricultural Allotments on Mollison's Creek adjoining the Township of Pyalong,* Parish of Pyalong, County of Dalhousie [cartographic material] /Alexander Black, Assistant Surveyor, Heathcote, December 4, 1856; Surveyor General's Office, Melbourne, February 28, 1857; lithograph by R. Meikle, Melbourne: Surveyor General's Office. State Library Victoria (SLV).

township that sprang up on its northeastern rim drew its lifeblood from a meandering sandy waterway running through its middle. To the east was Seymour's fast-flowing Goulburn River; to the north, the Campaspe at Heathcote and Kyneton. The Mollison Creek was described thus by an early unnamed observer: 'It was a fine stream… a long line of deep pools of water, some over twenty feet deep, well stocked with fish. Red gums and white gums overhung the water'.[7]

When Patrick Cooke acquired his first acreage of farming land in 1857 it was only a few miles from the picturesque Mollison; the *White Hart Inn* which he purchased around 1862 was only a short stroll from the creek's banks.[8] In the early days a survey party predicted a prosperous future for those who might settle at Pyalong, so lush was '[t]he beautiful undulating country'.[9] Both Cooke investments were made at a time when pastoralists had effectively locked the lands by securing more than a million acres of Victorian freehold, and several years before Patrick and Mary were gripped in the frenzy of land selection.[10] When Patrick died in 1903 much was made of his long association with Pyalong where it was said he spent his life 'grazing on a large scale'.[11] To Patrick and his descendants, there was no place in the world quite like it.

***

Where did this young couple from County Limerick fit into the story of colonial settlement in the last half of the nineteenth century? How did they form their own migrant identities within the developing nation? This chapter aims to answer those questions in terms of Pyalong's development from rural outpost in the 1840s to thriving pastoral district in the early twentieth century. A search for official land and legal documents in Australian and Irish public repositories shows how the Cooke family adapted to settlement and overcame nostalgia for Ireland while forging a new life as selectors and hotelkeepers, and with no apparent consideration of the rights of the Indigenous people. Through a thorough newspaper search the chapter covers the actions not only of Patrick and Mary, but also of their children, in particular their son, John,

---

[7] Unattributed quote cited in Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 9; also cited in *Kilmore Free Press*, 8 January 1848; Alexander F. Mollison, *Letters to his sister, Jane*, dated Pyalong, 25 June 1848 & 11-15 June 1859, State Library Victoria (SLV).

[8] *Victorian Government Gazette Online Archive 1836-1997*, State Library Victoria (SLV), Gazette 19, 1840-1859, 24 February 1857, 348, http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au/view.cgi?year=1857 Accessed 23/07/2020; the 'upset price per acre' was the reserve or lowest price at which an intending buyer was permitted to bid. Any bid that fell below the fixed price was unacceptable; Robert K. Cole, *Index of Victorian Hotels: 1841-1849*, Vol. 9, Page 53, *White Hart*, Pyalong, MS 7592, State Library Victoria (SLV). The *White Hart Inn* is thought to have been built in the 1850s and was purchased by Patrick Cooke somewhere between 1862 and 1864.

[9] *Kilmore Free Press*, 'Pyalong's Past', 2; see also Mills, Sara, *Gender and Colonial Space* (UK: Manchester University Press, 2005), 71-101, for a discussion on how landscape was viewed and represented in the past and the way immigrants mapped out their spatial territories in the colony.

[10] J. M. Powell, *The Public Lands of Australia Felix*, 75.

[11] *Age*, 5 May 1903.

whose wealth, acquired through family and property development, eclipsed that of his parents. It also deals with Patrick's 18-month return visit to Ireland in 1887 to pay his dying brother, John, one last visit and perhaps to secure an interest in his property when he died. The latter caused a rift with his Irish family, and subsequent legal action saw Patrick return to Victoria empty-handed. The outcome of the case demonstrated that Patrick's 'home' was no longer in Ireland but Pyalong, a place where he was accepted as part of the community, and now truly belonged.

Figure 27: PYALONG in CENTRAL VICTORIA
https://bing.co./images/search
Accessed 06/11/2021

Before gold was discovered in 1851, Victoria's white population numbered around 75,000. Over the next ten years it reached 540,000, of whom 125,000 settled in the Melbourne metropolis. Indigenous people were not counted in the census. In the mid-fifties the Cookes were among the colony's 40,000 Irish-born immigrants, most of whom were from Munster: Counties Cork, Kerry, Clare, Limerick, Waterford, and Tipperary. Immigrants from these counties were a diverse group of people, divided by gender, class and religion, as well as by language, identity, and loyalties.[12] Patrick and Mary shared some of their characteristics but

[12] Coughlan, Neil, 'The Coming of the Irish to Victoria', *Historical Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 45, October 1965, 5. 68; Elizabeth Malcolm & Dianne Hall, *A New History of the Irish in Australia* (Sydney, New South Wales: NewSouth Publishing, 2018), 5.

were financially better off than most, having come from a family that flourished for decades on the most desirable farming land in Ireland. Only a month after their arrival at Port Phillip in September 1854, Melbourne's *Age* newspaper made a glowing assessment of the rising tide of immigrants surging into Victoria, and of the benefits they were bringing to the colony:

> The last few years have been eventful, to a degree that borders on the fabulous; we have seen changes brought about which it would take centuries to effect in the ordinary course of things. In this brief interval the population… has risen at a bound… In Melbourne itself, the increase has been equally wonderful…[13]

Many immigrants chose to settle in the coastal areas of Melbourne and Geelong. Others dispersed to regions where Irish concentrations were high—the result of early legislation aimed at developing densely settled agricultural communities of small tenant farmers. The implementation of the Rutledge Special Survey at Kilmore and Willomavin in 1841 thus saw Kilmore thrive as an inland area with political influence.[14] William Rutledge, an Irish immigrant from County Cavan, was the architect of a unique tenant farming system which enabled farmers with little or no capital to obtain a secure lease on small acreages which later gave them the option of purchase within a designated area.[15] Smallholding settlements would have been impossible without the Survey because large pastoral runs were already established in the area. As a legal entity the Survey also gave storekeepers, coach operators, flour millers and others a secure foundation to set up in business. The maximum acreage for farmers was 126 acres, although only five buyers purchased more than 100 acres.[16] As a result, Kilmore's population of around 600 in 1849 more than doubled by 1851, rising to around 2,500 by 1854, making it the only inland place in Victoria with such a dense population. Situated sixteen miles to Kilmore's north, sparsely settled Pyalong was not included in the precinct although it had a similar

---

[13] *Age*, 17 October 1854.
[14] Williams, 'Historical Notes: Charles Bonney and the Fertile Kilmore Plains', 117.
[15] *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 10 June 1876, 14; Rutledge was born in Ireland and immigrated to Victoria in 1833 with his uncle, Dr Foster (formerly a member of the 1st Royals). He initially ran a financially successful business supplying provisions to the Government before purchasing land in New South Wales at Kissing Point near Parramatta and another estate named *Molonglo* at Queanbeyan. In 1840 he took up 5,120 acres of land (then called a special survey) in Central Victoria at Kilmore, and another at Farnham near Port Fairy. Rutledge later became a member of the Legislative Assembly for Belfast (later re-named Port Fairy).
[16] Williams, 'Historical Notes: Charles Bonney and the Fertile Kilmore Plains', 113-116; Stuart F. Dodd, *Looking Back at Willowmavin* (Melbourne, Victoria: Impact Printing, 1984), 12-13; many farmers who could only afford small acreages soon left because the holdings were unprofitable at that size; *Geelong Advertiser*, 'Special Survey', 24 April, 1841; the early Land Acts allowed for the sale of 'Special Surveys' which were offered to British capitalists in England. In 1841, Irishman William Rutledge purchased, by Special Survey, 5,120 acres of agricultural land near Kilmore at the upset price of £1 per acre, with the intention of subdividing and selling it to settlers who could afford the small acreages; lots on the Survey were advertised for public sale in the *Weekly Free Press and Commercial Advertiser*, 3 July 1841 and 25 September 1841; Jim Lowden, *Rutledge's Special Survey* (Kilmore, Victoria: Local History Workshop, 31 March 1985), 1-20.

concentration of Irish, Scottish and British settlers, most of whom were farmers from a mixture of socio-economic classes.[17]

When the Cooke party disembarked from the *Fitz-James* in 1854, infrastructure at Pyalong was almost nonexistent; and in 1854 the Mollison tenure on *Pyalong Run* was not due to expire for another twelve years, ensuring that small acreages of farming land remained inaccessible to less well-off settlers. The district was without schools; roads were little more than rough tracks through scrub; and Alexander Mollison was among those who complained that the road between Kilmore and Pyalong was 'bad beyond anything you have ever seen'.[18] A decade passed before a much-needed local Roads Board was proclaimed.[19] Patrick and Mary had no formal place of worship until a small church was built in 1871—the same year that Pyalong was declared a Shire.[20] However, the discovery of gold in the Shire of McIvor in 1852 (to which Pyalong then belonged) held promise for the district's future, so much so that in March 1854, six months before the arrival of the Cookes, the *Victorian Government Gazette* announced that a new township was to be developed on the Mollison Creek.[21] In 1857 Pyalong was lauded for its proximity to Kilmore which was described as the 'nucleus of one of the greatest inland towns in the colony'.[22]

Thus, when land abutting the Mollison Creek was surveyed in 1854 it was generally believed that Pyalong was on the cusp of major development. Victoria's acclaimed Surveyor General, Robert Hoddle, was engaged to lay out a town plan having made a name for himself in 1837 with his design for Melbourne's Central Business District.[23] The first house lots listed for public sale in April and May 1854 comprised more than 86 building blocks: 17 to the south of Mollison Creek, 70 to the north, and land for a Police Reserve.[24] The lots were snapped up at an average reserve price of £8 per acre.[25] With the main road to the McIvor and Bendigo

[17] Williams, 'Historical Notes: Charles Bonney and the Fertile Kilmore Plains', 114.
[18] Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History,* 8; Alexander F. Mollison, *Letters*, 11-15 June 1859; *Argus*, 4 August 1862.
[19] Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 12; the Pyalong Roads Board was proclaimed 2 September 1863. The first election took place on 31 October 1863 at Joel Cooper's property at Moranding. Messrs Bourke, White, O'Connor, O'Brien, Griffiths and Quinlan were elected from eight candidates.
[20] Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 8.
[21] *Victorian Government Gazette Online Archive*, Gazette 24, 24 March 1854, p. 748. Accessed 23/07/2020.
[22] *Argus,* 10 March 1857.
[23] Robert Hoddle, 'Grid Plan', *eMelbourne. The City Past and Present,* School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, University of Melbourne, 2008, http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs Accessed 06/08/2020. Robert Hoddle was Officer-in-Charge of the Port Phillip Survey Department from 1837 and became the first Surveyor General of Victoria in 1851. He was a central figure in the history of surveying, cartography and geography in Victoria.
[24] *Pyalong Rural Town Precinct*, Volume Five of five: Precinct Documentation, Mitchell Shire Stage Two Heritage Study (2006), 50 & 71. Accessed 09/01/2017. See Appendix 11.
[25] *Argus* 8 April 1854.

goldfields passing through the town, trade sprang to life from an assortment of commercial businesses. Traders initially comprised a blacksmith and shoemaker, two hotels and two stores, all of which catered to the needs of travellers and gold-seekers who required overnight accommodation and the changing and stabling of horses.[26] During the next fourteen years the township expanded owing to more than a decade of goldrush traffic on the road between Kilmore, Heathcote and Bendigo, the connection of a telegraph line in 1859, and the benefit of a mail coach passing through the township three times a week.[27]

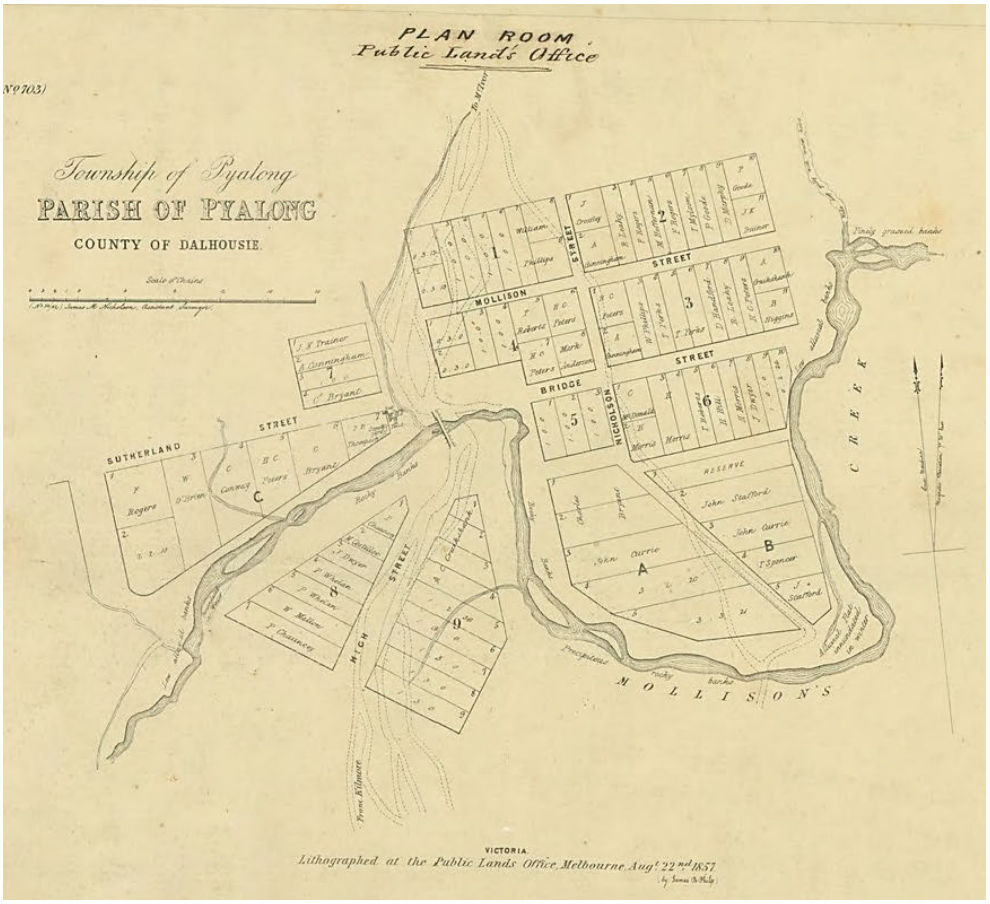


Figure 28: Township of Pyalong, Parish of Pyalong, County of Dalhousie, Victoria. Public Lands Office (1857) SLV
https://www.slv.vic.gov.au Accessed 10/10/2020

[26] Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 8; Gus Farrell, 'Pyalong: A History (Written for the Centenary of the Shire of Pyalong 1871-1971)', Typescript, 1972, 1; After Mollison settled in Pyalong in 1837 there was little progress for several years as far as settlement was concerned. A site for a township was surveyed but there was no made road on either side of the area designated. The original track to McIvor went through the paddock on either side of the Catholic Church, then crossed the present Northern Highway on top of the Pyalong Hill into several paddocks towards the Black Springs where the Ryan family settled in the early 1860s. An earlier obsolete township plan drawn by Jas Nicholson shows stockyards on the block where the *White Hart Hotel* was later built by Fred Thompson, possibly between 1852 and 1854. A bark hut and two tents are shown on the road reserve in front of Thompson's block.
[27] Mary McKenzie McHarg, *Eliza: The First Mrs Zoch in Australia* (Box Hill, Victoria: PrintQwik, 2000), 14.

Such was the district's development that the 1868 *Bailliere's Victorian Directory* listed Pyalong as a 'Postal and Road Board Town' with a Police Station, Registrar of Births (Hugh Doogan), and a Postmaster (Michael McCulla). These people sat at the top of an Irish social hierarchy; while publicans, blacksmiths, saddlers, shopkeepers, and council workers were part of the tier below.[28] Listings included publicans, Patrick Cooke and Hugh Doogan; storekeepers, Henry Cathery, Patrick Whelan and Robert Leemon; and wheelright Michael Maher. The majority were farmers, among them, Thomas Ryan (also a road contractor), William Eades, Charles Maher, David and James Walsh (cousins of Mary Cooke), and John Halpin from Knockainy. Those of English and Welsh origin were the Wade, Fields, Taylor and Leech families. Charles Knight was a teacher; Thomas Green a painter; Patrick Murtha a bootmender—known as 'Paddy the Snob'. Those of Scottish origin were the Campbells and Crawfords; the Chalmers were Welsh. Farmer and carrier, Samuel Ming, was the sole Chinese. In spite of such early promise during the gold boom years, Hoddle's adventurous plan for a larger metropolis failed to eventuate when auriferous gold began to peter out from the late 1850s.[29]

The sense of euphoria that surrounded the wave of township developments during this period was palpable, since outlying districts within a radius of 15 miles of the Kilmore 'nucleus' were expected to bring great benefits to the colony.[30] However, growing resentment towards squatters—wealthy pastoralists with large swathes of freehold on long leases—saw town planners accused of having a 'mania' for such developments when small farmers were crying out for land for cultivation.[31] Most settlers hoping to take up farming faced a battle since squatters held the power in both houses of the Victorian Parliament simply by virtue of their

---

[28] Michael Cannon, *Life in the Country. Australia in the Victorian Age:2* (West Melbourne, Victoria: Thomas Nelson, Australia, 1973, 240-241; the development of such a hierarchy was more noticeable in towns of any size; and given that Patrick Cooke was also one of the district's wealthier landowners he may have straddled the line between upper and lower classes.

[29] *Pyalong Rural Town Precinct*, 52.

[30] *Argus*, 10 March 1857.

[31] *Argus*, 14 July 1853; 8 April 1854; 6 June 1854; 20 April 1854; see Margaret Kiddle, *Men of Yesterday. A Social History of the Western District of Victoria 1834-1890* (Parkville, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 3rd Ed., 1963), 201; 213; although much of the land selected by squatters was suitable for cultivation, little was used for this purpose. Legislation ensured that large runs were utilised for grazing sheep and cattle, and it was a condition of their occupation that they held the land on pastoral licences. This was an attempt to safeguard against the monopolisation of the land by squatters. The *Argus* newspaper was prominent in championing the cause of the small farmer and was responsible for coining the slogan 'Unlock the lands'. By 1855, only months after Patrick Cooke's arrival, goldfield activity saw the price of meat and livestock skyrocket. The Western district Manifold family, for example, were then running 8,000 to 10,000 head of cattle on their Purrumbete station which made them wealthy almost overnight. See also *Pyalong Rural Town Precinct*, 43; following the *Australian Constitutions Act* (1842) the Imperial Government enjoyed the control and revenue over the 'waste lands' (i.e., lands not yet set aside for a particular use) of the Australian colonies and the distribution of land was by 'executive fiat' (government decree). Land could be obtained directly from the Crown (originally by grant, but later by purchase or lease), or from another individual to whom land had been granted.

status and wealth. In 1854 there were 351 squatting runs in Victoria, although this figure fell to 278 by 1857.[32]

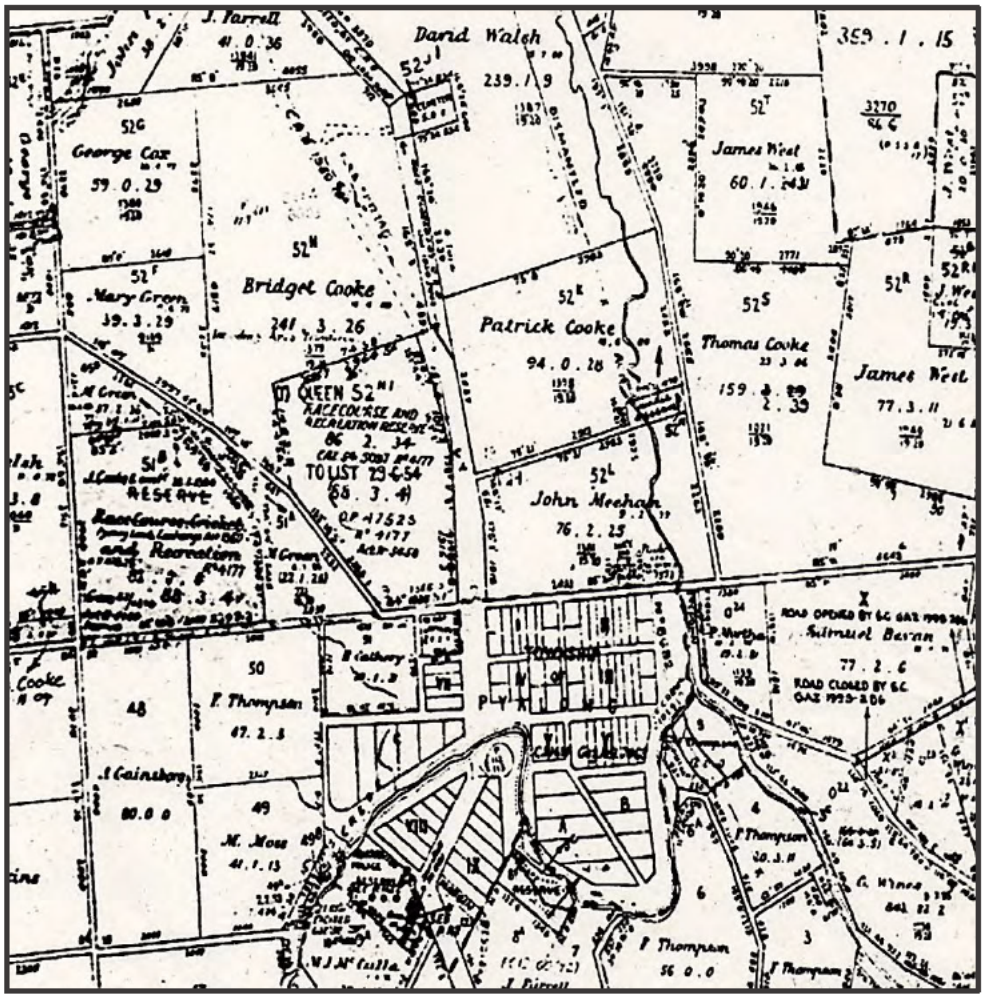


Figure 29: Agricultural Allotments on Mollison's Creek adjoining Pyalong Township.
Assistant Surveyor Alexander Black, December 4, 1856, SLV.
https://www.slv.vic.gov.au
Accessed 11/10/2020

Only when Charles Gavan Duffy, MLA. (Minister for Lands in the O'Shanassy Ministry) introduced a series of Acts in the 1860s was agricultural land made available to smaller farmers. The Acts were to allow free selection before survey at a uniform price of £1 per acre. However, Amendments in 1869 limited selection to 320 acres (under licence for three years), during which selectors had to reside on the land and provide improvements such as clearing, fencing and cultivation. The acts were a step forward but the £5,000 needed to set up even a small sheep station was beyond the reach of most.[33] Those with less start-up capital than the Cookes, whom

[32] John Quick, *History of Land Tenure in the Colony of Victoria* (Melbourne, Victoria: Samuel Mullen, Collins Street, East, 1883), 14.
[33] B. Bessant, *The Land Hunger: Commentary and Documents* (West Melbourne, Victoria: Thomas Nelson Australia Pry Ltd 1980), 27. See Appendix 12.

the acts were supposed to help, frequently ended up with 100-acre lots of marginal land where they could ill-afford improvements. Most became indebted to banks and storekeepers and were forced off their holdings after only a few years.[34] Had it not been for the sale of his Irish estate, Patrick may well have joined their ranks. His financial situation enabled him to secure larger acreages than most and compete for the best land in the district. He was similarly favored when land went to public auction after tender.[35] In general, the Land Acts were a failure, and no doubt Patrick realised this, since the upper limit of 320 acres was considered too small to sustain a family, and because both squatters and selectors evaded the law by 'dummying' and 'peacocking'.

Patrick's lack of success on the goldfields may have precipitated his return to farming sooner than expected although there is no indication of why he settled in Pyalong. In Ireland he may have been influenced by friends and neighbors already in the colony, and during the voyage by fellow travelers who knew that good grazing, wool-growing, and cropping land was readily available in the district. Travelling with the Cooke party in 1854 were others who were known to them in Ireland and who also settled in central Victoria: the earlier-mentioned McKennas who selected land further to the west at Kyneton, and the Halpins who settled at Pyalong. Nothing is known of Thomas McGrath and Daniel Dwyer who also travelled with the party. Several years later the Cookes were joined by Knockainy farmer Thomas Boran who took up land at nearby High Camp Plains in 1865; and Thomas Ryan (also known to the Cookes in Ireland) who settled at the Black Springs in 1863, a farming district on the northern route to Heathcote.[36]

The positive outlook for wool on the export market was another incentive for Patrick's move. During the early 1850s, Australian wool was bringing consistently high prices in Britain, and with land freely available, the colony was an attractive proposition for the Cookes and others who were disenchanted with Ireland's tenant system.[37] Even by 1850, British imports of

---

[34] Lionel Frost, 'Australian Agricultural Historiography: A Survey', *Agricultural History*, Vol. 71, No. 4 (Autumn, 1997), 486; Patrick O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia* Kensington, New South Wales: New South Wales University Press1986), 137.

[35] Charles Fahey, 'The free selector's landscape: Moulding the Victorian farming districts, 1870-1915', *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes*, Vo. 31, Issue 3, 98.

[36] Shipping Register (PROV), *Fitz-James*, 16 June 1854; Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 17; Shipping Register, (PROV), *Champion of the Seas*, 25 September 1863; Farrell, *Pyalong: A History*, 1; in the early days Black Springs was a popular camping place because of its plentiful supply of fresh water.

[37] *Cork Constitution*, 17 December 1853. See Laura Panza & Jeffrey G. Williamson, 'Australian Squatters, Convicts, and Capitalists: Dividing up a Fast-growing Frontier Pie 1821-1871', *Discussion Paper No. 2017-02*, April 2017, Centre for Economic History, the Australian National University Discussion Paper Series (ANU), 7-8. Also fuelling emigration was the economic impact of global events on commodity prices during the half-century before the 1870s. Several factors were responsible: a world transport revolution which lowered the cost of moving goods between

Australian wool exceeded that of all other suppliers combined despite a volatile market on average equal to 11.5 per cent during 1850-1870.[38] The Irish press noted this upward economic trend and was optimistic for Australia's future. The *Limerick Reporter* and the *Cork Constitution* which were most likely read in the educated, literate Cooke household, provided regular commentary on colonial affairs, and singled out farming as the best means of attaining wealth. One report claimed that sheep runs on Melbourne's doorstep made Victoria 'the most luxuriant district in the island', where even a small acreage would make a married couple independent.[39]

Patrick's departure from Ireland was thus at a time when confidence in Australia's economy had begun to lift as the agricultural sector expanded rapidly after Victoria separated from New South Wales. Before 1851 it was difficult to purchase small farm holdings anywhere in the Victorian inland because the government's land sales policy did not adequately meet the demand for small-scale ventures. With its proximity to Melbourne, fertile soil and permanent water, Kilmore was among the best localities for close agriculture and grazing, in spite of weather conditions that occasionally put crops in jeopardy.[40] At the end of October 1867, local schoolteacher and farmer, James McManus, was delighted that local potato crops were flourishing on 'grass beautiful and green' despite floods only a few weeks earlier that soaked the ground and made roads impassable.[41] North of the Great Dividing Range the light sandy soil and warmer weather conditions meant Pyalong was admirably suited to grazing, dairying, wool-growing and sheep breeding, and to a lesser extent cropping, though less suited to potato growing which flourished in the heavier volcanic soil and colder climates at Kilmore and Lancefield.[42] Proximity to Melbourne's markets also reduced cartage costs, a factor that was given a major boost when the railway line between Kilmore to Pyalong was opened in 1890.[43]

---

home and foreign markets; a liberal trade policy move in Europe and the colonies (especially free trade with Britain); increased global demand for traded goods, and plentiful resources at the frontier.

[38] *Panza & Williamson,* 'Australian Squatters, Convicts, and Capitalists*'*, 7-8.

[39] *Cork Constitution*, 30 September 1852; *Wexford Independent*, April 1853; *Enniskillen Chronicle and Erne Packet*, 10 June 1852; *Mayo Constitution*, 1 February 1853.

[40] Williams, 'Historical Notes, Charles Bonney and the Fertile Kilmore Plains', 116.

[41] James McManus, *A Diary of James McManus, 1867-1880*, Pat Clarke & Brian Clancy (eds), Typescript 1997, 3.

[42] *Victorian Farmers' Journal and Gardeners Chronicle*, 7 July 1860.

[43] Keith W. Turton, *Farewell to the 'Timber Line': The History of the Heathcote Junction to Bendigo and Associated Railways*, Australian Railway Historical Society (Victorian Division), Melbourne, 1968, 13, cited in *Mitchell Shire Stage Two Heritage Study*, 2006.

Figure 30: *The Pines*, Pyalong West
Google Earth Maps https://earth.google.com/web
Accessed 06/011/2021

Patrick's initial purchase of 88 acres of farming land at Pyalong West in 1857 was large by Irish standards. The lot was one of 44 suburban and country allotments offered for public sale (auction) at *Percival's Inn* on 27 March 1857, at the upset price of £1 per acre, terms 10 per cent deposit.[44] With cash in hand Patrick possibly had an advantage since the prospect of purchasing Crown land was limited due to the excessive prices which were often paid at auctions.[45] Most Pyalong farmers focused on dairying, cattle-fattening and commercial cropping (wheat, barley and oats), although the Cookes' acreage under crop is unknown. Hay cutting was essential for feeding stock during dry summers and drought.[46] The district was also ideally suited to wool growing and sheep breeding. Although the Cookes lacked experience of Australian farming conditions and practices, they probably coped with environmental challenges by

[44] *Victorian Government Gazette,* No. 24, 24 February 1857, 768; *Age*, 27 March 1857.
[45] Dmytro Ostapenko, 'Establishing Themselves on the New Land: Port Phillip Crop-growers in the 1840s', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 16, 2014, 133.
[46] In Victoria the Cooke properties also concentrated heavily on fat lamb breeding and wool growing. See Dmytro Ostapenko, *Growing Potential: Land-Cultivators of the Colony of Victoria in the late 1830s-1860s,* Ph.D.diss., La Trobe University, 2011), 106 & 314; in the 1860s small-scale farming boomed in central Victoria. Most were small capital landholders on just under 100 acres.

following the advice of immigrants who preceded them and who knew the district's potential, and by reading question-and-answer columns of popular agricultural newspapers such as the *Weekly Times* and the *Victorian Farmers Journal and Gardeners Chronicle*.

Patrick's move to Pyalong was providential for other reasons too. His first land purchase was made more than a year before Mary and the children returned to Victoria from Ireland in 1858, giving him time to fulfil his promise to build a 'decent home' like that in Baggotstown.[47] This he did by building a slab house with an earthen floor—and a canvas or calico roof rather than shingles. Daughter Margaret who was ten years old when they returned, told how her father's nostalgia for Ireland saw him ignore local advice by insisting on features of an Irish home. When the rains came the house was flooded and Margaret said it was no time before the roof conformed to others in the district.[48] Solid slab homes with shingle roofs withstood the heaviest storms, were cool in summer, and relatively fireproof.[49] As much as the voyage was a liminal space that disturbed his security, Patrick's arrival in Victoria was equally unsettling, to the extent that he needed to recreate something of his life in Limerick that connected him to his new environment.

Underlying these expectations, however, was a sense of entitlement that in some ways mirrored the class backgrounds from which the Cooke family came, wherein power, money, status, and opportunity, paved the way to success. This aspect of the transition to Australia was an anomaly considering the injustices of land ownership in Ireland over the centuries and the similar unjustified appropriation of Indigenous land in Victoria. The effect of white encroachment on Victoria's Indigenous population was massive. As a result of death, disease and dispossession Victorian numbers plummeted from an estimated 50,000-60,000 before the arrival of Europeans, to 1,067 by 1877.[50]

The invasion on Aboriginal land was similarly destructive, with freehold sales in 1854 putting the land legally beyond Indigenous control, leaving the Aboriginal people with little or no say in the government of their country.[51] Patrick and Mary probably understood little of the

---

[47] Thomas Cooke, *Irish Life and Lore, Recordings and Books, Oral History Collection, County Limerick*, Thomas Cooke (1914-2014), Parts 1 & 2 (2014). Transcribed by Colin Ryan. The latter was a common expression used by Thomas Cooke's grandson (Thomas Cooke) in conversation and in the interview series.
[48] Personal communication, Aunt Cooke, Pyalong, to Mary Ryan, Pyalong in 1944, to author c.1996; Mary Ryan, Leaflet, *A Brief History of Patrick Cooke and His Family*, c.1970.
[49] Cannon, *Life in the Country*, 24.
[50] *Argus*, 9 October 1854; Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*, xxi, 97, 146-147; Neil Coughlan, 'The Coming of the Irish to Victoria', 68.
[51] Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*, 97.

Indigenous affinity with the landscape, nor of how they were trespassing on land that rightfully belonged to others. What was sometimes described as untrodden space, was in fact a habitat that had supported a coherent homogeneous Indigenous community for centuries, along with the preservation of a complex system of kinship, trade and cultural exchange.[52] As such, the land was considered by Aboriginal people in terms of 'ownership'.[53] Six weeks after arrival in 1854, Mary made no secret of the fact that she considered the colony a dangerous place, her fear of Indigenous 'treachery' possibly fuelled by lawlessness on the goldfields and newspaper reports of Aboriginal savagery.[54] Patrick and Mary's longing for security almost certainly blinded them to the disruption they were inflicting on traditional owners. Like others in their party, their attitudes to settlement were framed by notions of whiteness, whereby the expropriation of Indigenous land was considered their right.

Mary's fears for the safety of her young family were not altogether unusual, since it is likely she had never before encountered people of colour whose ways were at odds with anything she knew.[55] Unknown to her, Indigenous people were often acknowledged as highly capable stockmen and domestics (though few allowances were made when resistance to white encroachment ended in cruelty).[56] Despite the disruption to their way of life, Aboriginal clans made repeated attempts to preserve their traditions. One early settler observed with astonishment a corroboree enacted in the ranges at Kilmore East. In 1845, J. C. Hamilton wrote:

> I witnessed their great national event—the Coayang. I suppose there would be 150 to 200 of the Goulburn Valley, Kilmore, and other tribes present: the place of meeting was in the ranges to the east of Kilmore. We crept through the bushes until we got within a hundred yards of the blacks, and beheld a scene that rivalled Tam O'Shanter's Dance of the Witches. Fires burned brightly, and on a space cleared of grass painted warriors (naked except for a girdle around their waists and neat bundles of boughs around the ankles) danced backwards and forwards along the lines of spectators ranged in groups. The women supplied music and kept wonderful time, their

[52] *Age*, 11 June 1855; the term 'wastelands' with its connotations of uninhabited territory was readily used by official government sources. For example, an 1855 enquiry into the system of tenure on Victoria's agricultural land was entitled *Report of the Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Tenure of the Wastelands of the Crown*; Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*, xxii; see also Tony Dingle, *Victorians: Settling*, Book 1, (Sydney, New south Wales: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon Associates, 1984), xii.
[53] Broome, *Aboriginal Victorians*, 18. See also Robyn Ballinger, 'Frontierland and Homeland on the Northern Plains of Victoria, 1841-1869', *Journal of Colonial History*, Vol. 13, 2011, 49-64, for an understanding of the sense of place' that was important to both white settlers and Aboriginals.
[54] *Argus*, 18 December 1854.
[55] Malcolm and Hall, *A New History of the Irish*, 54; *Argus* 28 October 1854; 20 November 1854; 18 December 1854.
[56] Henry Reynolds, *With the White People. The Crucial Role of Aborigines in the Exploration and Development of Australia* (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1990), 231-35. *Argus*, 13 September 1854; 18 December 1854; 20 November 1861.

> instruments being stretched opossum skins beaten with small sticks, whilst there was a chorus of not unmusical voices.[57]

Although Hamilton complimented the women's musical prowess, he misunderstood the significance of the event, associating it with the demonic powers of the underworld. His view from a white standpoint lacked any understanding of the performance as a glorification of Aboriginal spirituality and mythology, or as a festive celebration of 'belonging'.

The unjust treatment of Central Victoria's Aboriginal people is unlikely to have registered on Patrick, whose enthusiasm for acquiring land in the area took off in earnest. In the 1860s he expanded his holdings by means of selection, and later, by private sale. After his initial purchase of 88 acres in 1857, further acquisitions enlarged the property to well over 2,000 acres by the early 1870s. By this time, more than 600 acres were in Patrick's name, with the remainder held by his children.[58] Although the value of Pyalong farming land was rising steadily by the late 1880s, this was to his advantage given his access to finance.[59] He was better placed than most since land purchased in the name of his children meant that he was more likely to succeed if his farm was worked as an extended family business.[60] Applications for land by Patrick's children enabled him to circumvent the statutory 320 acres imposed under the Land Acts. This created a larger, more viable holding, and gave him a better chance of providing for their future.[61] Patrick's daughter, Bridget, was barely 17 years of age when she applied for a license on 80 acres of land at Doctor's Range in 1868.[62] Land was also purchased in the name of Mary's sister, Catherine Walsh, who lived at the *White Hart*. When Patrick died in 1903 his probated share of an estimated 7,000 acres was limited to 546 acres owing to the legal amalgamation of selections with family members over the years. He was in freehold possession of the farm at the time, with no land under lease or license to the Crown.[63]

---

[57] J. C. Hamilton, *Pioneering Days in Western Victoria: a narrative of early station life* (Exchange Press, Melbourne, 1912), 96-98, http://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-40129670 Accessed 21/08/2020; see also Paul Haw & Margaret Munro, *Footprints across the Loddon Plains: A shared history* (Boort, Victoria: Boort Development Inc., 2010) for a comprehensive account of Indigenous history in the Loddon district of northern Victoria and the intrusion of Europeans in 1843. The district of Boort was one of the last areas in Victoria to be settled by whites.

[58] Land Selection and Correspondence Files (PROV), 1856-1984, Crown Lands Department, VPRS 5357, multiple entries; Farrell, *Pyalong: A History*, 16.

[59] *Kilmore Free Press*, 28 March 1886; in March 1886 Thomas Ryan purchased 195 acres at more than £10 per acre.

[60] See Patricia Grimshaw, Chris McConville & Ellen McEwen (eds), *Families in Colonial Australia* (Sydney, Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1985).

[61] Charles Fahey, 'The Wealth of Farmers: A Victorian Regional Study 1879-1901', *Historical Studies*, Vol. 21, No 82, 1984, 36. Charles Fahey, 'John Sweeney and the Making of an Australian Farming Landscape: A Micro-level Study of Baulkamaugh and Katunga 1877-1955', *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, 2011, Number 10, 1.

[62] *Kilmore Free Press*, 1 January 1869.

[63] Patrick, Cooke, 1903, *Wills & Probate 1841-2016* (PROV), VPRS 28/P2, 87/352; James Cooke, Benalla, Victoria, to the author, 12 October 2006; James Cooke was a grandson of Patrick Cooke; Chris Cooke, Personal

Figure 31: John & Margaret (Barry) Cooke c. 1900
(Maguire/Dynan Archive)

At the same time, the overall wealth of the family was boosted by Patrick's son, John, who ventured into the pastoral industry in a big way as a farmer and property developer. Among a succession of deals were syndicate shares in several New South Wales properties: the 70,000-acre *Burkenberg Estate* on the Murrumbidgee River; the *Buckingbong Estate* at Narrandera; and the 44,000-acre *Kyogle Estate* on the upper Richmond River.[64] The 'Great Kyogle Land Deal', in which he was a partner, was described by stockman Harry H. Peck in 1984 as the most 'profitable country land deal in Australia's history'.[65] Further partnerships were with pastoralist

communication, 10 October 2020; Jim Shovelton, *McCormack Family History*, undated, Document 7; after Patrick's initial land purchase of 88 acres, he purchased a further two lots which comprised 94 acres to the north of the township and 76 acres to the west. Daughter, Bridget selected lots comprising 241 acres and 77 acres; Margaret, 78 and 94 acres; Catherine, 319 acres; and Nicholas, two lots totalling 299 acres. John Cooke's Pyalong acreages were listed as 1278 acres when his mother died in 1890; in 1890 Thomas owned 1110 acres. At death, Mary Cooke owned two allotments totalling 321 acres and had a selection from the Crown of 233 acres. When she died in 1890 her estate was valued at £1290 and bequeathed to Patrick.

[64] *Traralgon Record*, 31 July 1906; Harry H. Peck, *Memoirs of a Stockman* (Melbourne, Victoria: Stock and Land Pub. Co., Pty. Ltd., Reprint 1984), 221.

[65] Peck, *Memoirs of a Stockman*, 221; such was the fertility of the well-watered black soil flats on the *Kyogle Estate* that Mr Greaves, the manager of Messrs Manifold's Runnymede Station, *Wingadee*, near Skipton in Victoria, who was present at an inspection of the Kyogle property, said at the time, 'I don't know any district which the Creator has done so much for and man so little as this'. Although the property carried around 10,000 Devon and Devon-

Hugh Ross in the *Serpentine Estate* on the Loddon River in north-western Victoria, and *Daandine Estate* in southern Queensland (both over 36,000 acres). Victorian interests included properties in Gippsland. In 1908 he sold his *May Park*, Toolamba, property to Sir Rupert Clarke for £14 14s per acre.[66] Before his sudden death in 1910, John purchased a large double-storey home in upmarket Highbury Grove, Kew, where he remained until his death.[67]

How John made the initial transition from the family farm at Pyalong is unclear. There is no evidence of financial assistance from his father even though Patrick had ridden the crest of the wave of expansion to this period. In the 1890s Patrick's Pyalong property was limited to 800 acres of freehold—hardly sufficient to finance his son's early investments.[68] Data suggests John's burgeoning wealth arose from subdividing agricultural land into small 80-100 acre lots immediately after purchase. Although his early deals may have been secured through credit, huge profits after subdivision possibly covered his debt and helped finance later investments. At the end of the 1890s recession, he subdivided 1000 acres at Poowong in South Gippsland where land prices rose from £2 12s per acre in 1900 to £20 per acre in 1904.[69] When he died aged 49, he left an estate worth £127,569, with ongoing pastoral interests in Queensland, Victoria, New South Wales, and Tasmania.[70]

Although John's activities were an extreme example of pastoral wealth, his investment pattern says much about the attitudes passed on by his parents whose emigration was spurred by a belief that farming property was the key to security and a way of providing for their families. Unlike the Irish system where the principle of impartible inheritance became the custom after the Famine, the succession plans of the first two generations of Cookes in Victoria were more akin to the *older* (partible) Irish system of inheritance where estates were divided among all children. However, this strategy was not followed by all Victorian farmers since the selection

---

Shorthorn cross cattle which were in great condition when inspected, the potential for development was quickly realised and it was decided to purchase the estate for immediate subdivision into farms of 50 to 500 acres. John Cooke was one of the partners and was appointed to the eight-member Board of Directors.

[66] Jim Shovelton, *McCormack Family History*, undated, Document 7.

[67] Matthew J. Fox, *Fox's History of Queensland, Its People and Industries, 1919-1923*, Vol. 1, Fox, Matthew J., States Publishing Co. 1923, Archive Digital Books, 217-218, http://espace.library.uq.edu.au/.../AU4021 UQeSpace. Accessed 06/09/2020; *Brisbane Courier*, 'The Forward Movement: Southern Squatters Enterprise', 5 June 1908; soon after purchasing the Dalby estate John Cooke was involved in the historic transportation of 7,000 sheep by steamer from Victoria to various Queensland properties. Included in the consignment were 171 Lincoln rams destined for *Daandine Station*; *Kilmore Free Press*, 7 July 1904; *Ovens & Murray Advertiser*, 6 February 1902; *Great Southern Advocate,* 12 June 1902; Robert A. Baker, *Kew Historical Society Newsletter*, No. 107, June 2014 https://kewhistoricalsociety.org.au/ Accessed 14/01/2021. Gippsland properties included the *Mt Vernon Estate, The Priory*, and *Elderidge Farm*.

[68] *Probate & Administration Files* (PROV), Mary Cooke, 2 July 1891, VPRS 28/P0, 45/680.

[69] *Ovens & Murray Advertiser*, 8 February 1902; *Kilmore Free Press*, 7 July 1904.

[70] John Cooke, 1910, *Wills & Probate 1841-2016* (PROV), VPRS/P0002, 115/057. See Appendix 13.

acts failed to establish a class of prosperous small landholders in places where farming required high capital input.[71]

While not all settlers achieved John Cooke's wealth, the enactment of legislation enabling newcomers to take up land before it was surveyed was crucial to his father's early prosperity. In 1869 the Grant Acts enabled Patrick to purchase land on credit with the stipulation that it be paid off over a prescribed number of years (usually ten years). The Acts of the 1860s were the first serious attempt to open land to small farmers—and Patrick was again advantaged as he could field off competition.[72] A one-hundred-acre block could be acquired at a uniform price of £1 an acre which was generally far lower than that paid at Crown auctions.[73]

Nonetheless, Patrick's experience of an agricultural industry based on a stringent feudal system of tenant/landlord relations in Ireland meant he had to quickly adapt to Victorian conditions. He had to familiarise himself with the concept of absolute ownership of land and chattels, and cope with a habitat that was nothing like that in Ireland. He had to negotiate the rules and regulations of property acquisition, selection, and private sale, and gain an understanding of local husbandry—climate, soils and topography, stock management, farming practices, and so on. He had to comply with the legal clauses of the Land Acts concerning clearing, fencing and cultivation, and the erection of buildings on selections. And although the gritty Pyalong soil was lightly timbered the task of grubbing and clearing sometimes took years to complete. As both farmer and publican, Patrick sometimes dealt with a testy bureaucracy when he failed to comply with the rules of selection. An application for a lease on 95 acres in 1873 was not uncommon. On 26 November 1873, district assessor, MacPherson, wrote:

> The conditions of Residence and Cultivation have not been complied with, reasons assigned being that the licensee is a hotel-keeper at Pyalong and has made extensive cultivation upon his freehold of 513 acres in the vicinity of this allotment which is stated to be unfit for cultivation.[74]

---

[71] Fahey, 'The Wealth of Farmers', 35-37; W. E. Vaughan, 'A Study of Landlord and Tenant Relations in Ireland between the Famine and the Land War, 1850-78', Ph.D. diss., Trinity College, Dublin, 1973, 38; Vaughan notes that the bulk of farmers' agricultural capital was from livestock and crops since the average farmer did not have access to capital other than his own savings.

[72] Chris McConville, *Croppies, Celts & Catholics: The Irish in Australia* (Caulfield East, Victoria: Edward Arnold Pty. Ltd., 1987), 50; see Fahey, 'The free selector's landscape', 98-9.

[73] Dmytro Ostapenko, 'Does Farming Pay in Victoria?' Profit Potential of the Farming Industry in Mid-nineteenth Century Victoria', *Australian Economic History Review*, Vol. 54, No. 1, March 2014, 48; Charles Fahey, 'A Fine Country for the Irish', *The Australian Journal of Irish Studies*: 4 (Special Issue), 2004, 192; Charles Fahey, 'Agricultural Settlement in Victoria's Last Frontier: The Mallee, 1890-1951', *The Agricultural History Society*, Vol. 91, No. 2, Spring, 2017, 187. By the late 1880s settlers began to disperse to all parts of Victoria such as the Mallee, where broad acres were cheap and could be quickly sown to crop with new labour-saving machinery.

[74] Land Selection Files, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), Section 33, Land Act 1869, Patrick Cooke, Application for Lease or Crown Grant by Licensee, No. 1378/19/20, 26 November 1973; Patrick Cooke; the rules of selection required selectors to adhere to conditions that were designed to improve the value of the land. They were required to cultivate 10 per cent of the holding within the first three years; completely enclose the block with

Patrick clearly had no intention of providing a dwelling on this selection given his legal requirement to lodge at the hotel. As such, he made only minimal improvements, which consisted of post and rail fencing, and the felling of timber at a total cost of £102 7 6. Unaccounted for by the assessor, however, but clearly an issue for Patrick, was the cost of shepherd's huts, and the stocking of the property which was considerable at the rate of one sheep per acre; and the provision of water, since the allotment was completely devoid of dams, bores, and natural streams.[75]

These were not the only difficulties Patrick and Mary faced. Through trial and error, they weathered economic downturns brought on by bad seasons, grasshopper infestation, stock and crop diseases such as scab and rust (the latter a major problem in wheat crops between 1878 and 1881), and pests such as caterpillars that could wipe out an oat crop in three days.[76] Although 1861 was a good year for the Cookes' wheat, oats and barley crops, periods of drought, bushfires and heavy rain between 1858 and 1864 caused huge losses, as did another fire a decade later when temperatures soared to 110° Fahrenheit in 1875.[77] In 1889 a fire between Puckapunyal and Pyalong burnt 50,000 acres of farming land. The Cookes were the worst affected, losing 1,000 acres of their finest grazing pasture and many miles of fencing.[78] A further outbreak in 1899 destroyed grass and crops on Cooke, Zoch, Rainey, Farrell, and Walsh properties.[79] Towards the end of the century rabbit plagues became increasingly common as a result of land clearance and drought, and in 1890 Patrick Cooke and David Walsh were fined in the Kilmore Police Court for failing to clean up their properties which were said to be 'swarming' with thousands of rabbits.[80] Problems for agriculturalists continued unabated throughout the 1890s when a glut on the wool market and a massive shearers' strike in Queensland were followed by

a ring fence; erect and reside in a house that was permanently attached to the soil; and to make improvements to the value of £1 per acre; see Ailsa McLeary & Tony Dingle, *Catherine: On Catherine Currie's Diary, 1873-1908* (Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1998), for an account of land clearing in a heavily timbered forest locality that was far more arduous than that in Pyalong.

[75] PROV, Land Selection Files, Section 33, Land Act 1869, Application for Lease or Crown Grant by Licensee, No. 1378/19/20, 26 November 1873; hotel licensees were required by law to reside on the hotel property. See Appendix 14 for *White Hart* hotel history.

[76] John Powell, 'Farming Conditions in Victoria, 1857-1865: a prelude to selection, *Australian Geographer*, Vol. 10, Issue, 5, 1968, 352-353; Fahey 'The Wealth of Farmers', 33; *Kilmore Free Press* 5 December 1878.

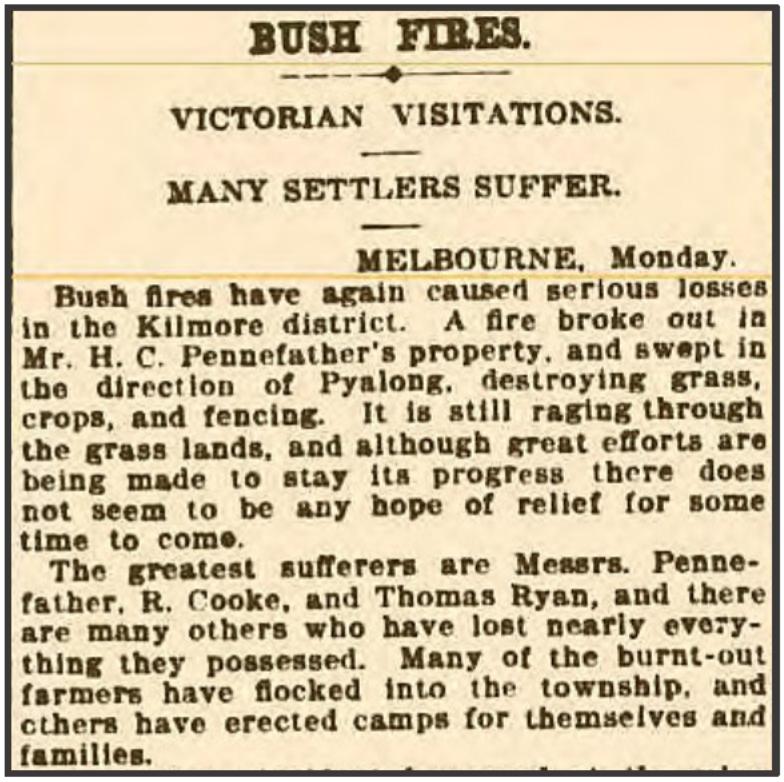
[77] *Age*, 15 January 1861; Powell, *The Public Lands of Australia Felix*, 114; McManus, *A Diary of James McManus*, 7; Fahey, 'Moulding the Victorian Farming Districts', 99.

[78] *McIvor Times*, 4 January 1889; *Weekly Times*, 12 January 1889.

[79] *Advocate*, 14 January 1899.

[80] *Kilmore Free Press*, 30 October 1890; see D. W. Meinig, *On the Margins of the Good Earth: The South Australian Wheat Frontier 1869-1884* (Chicago, Illinois, Rand McNally & Co., c.1962), fn. 53, 74; when rabbits were introduced into Victoria in the 1860s they soon became a menace to the agricultural and pastoral industries.

the Federation drought from 1895 to 1903, plunging Australia's east coast into recession.[81] Although natural disasters were beyond their control, the Cookes minimised their risk through careful management and the ability to adapt to local conditions and changing circumstances.



BUSH FIRES.

VICTORIAN VISITATIONS.

MANY SETTLERS SUFFER.

MELBOURNE, Monday.

Bush fires have again caused serious losses in the Kilmore district. A fire broke out in Mr. H. C. Pennefather's property, and swept in the direction of Pyalong, destroying grass, crops, and fencing. It is still raging through the grass lands, and although great efforts are being made to stay its progress there does not seem to be any hope of relief for some time to come.

The greatest sufferers are Messrs. Pennefather, R. Cooke, and Thomas Ryan, and there are many others who have lost nearly everything they possessed. Many of the burnt-out farmers have flocked into the township, and others have erected camps for themselves and families.

Figure 32: *Sydney Morning Herald*, 28 December 1909
(Maguire/Dynan Archive)

These setbacks all cost money, as did the initial expense of land settlement which required finance for the erection of a family home at *The Pines*, outbuildings, stables, fencing, machinery and the purchase of stock. Stock purchases were a major expense and if Patrick had any sense of foreboding over his situation it was hardly evident since he accumulated almost 300 acres of land between 1857 and 1863, when he and Mary were still in the very early stages of developing their farm, and when they were on the brink of shelling out for the hotel. And despite his ebullient personality, he would hardly risk all for the thrill of it. He was also in a better position than most settlers since his expenses were offset by his access to capital and the availability of cheap land in a region with a reliable 24-inch annual rainfall. As the Cooke children grew, their assistance reduced the cost of hired labour and even for better-off farmers'

[81] Bessant, *The Land Hunger*, 80-83; several factors led to the depression, not least the large amounts of bank lending and overseas capital that poured into Australia during the boom years of the 1880s, much of which was invested in the pastoral industries; Fahey, 'A Fine Country for the Irish', 194.

survival depended on the cooperation of family members.[82] This strategy was not uncommon in Ireland. Few Irish families relied solely on the income of the male head of the household. Most depended on the contribution of their children and on female occupations such as carding and spinning long before the introduction of machines which left many without employment.[83]

However, Patrick's early farming experience possibly enhanced his chances of running a viable enterprise in Victoria. For example, he knew the importance of dealing with common weeds which were a problem in Knockainy.[84] In Bottomstown his elder brother, Thomas, forged a reputation as a 'great farmer' because he rendered his farm weed-free after designing a special spade to deal with *geosadáns*, a harmful, rapidly spreading yellow thistle.[85] And, like all newcomers, the Cookes worked hard at Pyalong, digging their dams by hand and using reaping hooks to cut crops before threshing machines gained popularity in the 'seventies and 'eighties.[86] When farming techniques were not fully understood, however, mistakes were sometimes made. In the 1860s Mary's cousin, Cornelius Walsh, planted a wheat crop on 100 acres at Pyalong known as *Con's Paddock* without realising it had been furrowed in the wrong direction. It was a disaster for soil erosion, the effects of which can be seen today.[87] Despite these challenges, Patrick's situation was hardly comparable to the plight of the less well-off farmer since he had the added security of an assured cash flow from the hotel.[88]

---

[82] Among many others, those who adopted this strategy were the Halpin, Hiscock, Walsh, Keane, Rainey and Eades families.

[83] Tracy M. English, '"Big Wages, Glorious Climate and Situations Guaranteed": A Study of the Migration of Irish Women to Great Britain for the Period 1861 to 1911', MA, St John's, Newfoundland, April 1999, 46 & 50.

[84] Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland Before and After the Famine: Explorations in Economic History, 1800-1925* (New York, USA: St Martin's Press 1988), 138; common weeds were the target of extermination campaigns from the Registrar General's office in the post-Famine decades and from the Department of Agriculture (DATI). It was claimed in 1872 that weeds were costing Irish farmers as much as £1.5 million to £3 million annually, or 3-6 per cent of total output.

[85] Cooke, *Irish Life and Lore.* 'Geosadans' derives from the Latin 'Arundo' which refers to the shaft or arrow of a small genus of coarse tall grasses. See 'Arundo', *Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/arundo Accessed 11/08/2021.

[86] Chris Cooke, Personal communication, 10 October 2020; *Kilmore Free Press*, 1 July 1864 & 25 January 1866. Steam threshing machines were seen in Pyalong by the late 1860s with at least fifteen in use in Lancefield by January 1866. Mr Walter was one of the earliest users at Pyalong, purchasing a threshing machine for use on his *Table Top* property some time before 1864. *Kilmore Free Press*, 'Pyalong's Past', 2, provides an account of the operation of the first steam-threshing machine in cutting a crop at nearby High Camp Plains which drew a crowd of more than 300 onlookers; see also Ostapenko, *Growing Potential*, 259. The stump-jump plough was a major innovation in clearing and across Victoria the average cost of agricultural machinery and implements per farm between 1866 and 1869 was highest in central Victoria.

[87] Personal Communication, Chris Cooke, October 2020.

[88] Ostapenko, 'Does Farming Pay in Victoria?', 47; when the gold discoveries boosted the demand for agricultural land in Central Victoria in the mid-fifties, large areas of land were opened which glutted the local land markets and kept prices down. As a result, even small farmers were able to purchase their farms directly from the Crown during this period; see Fahey, 'The Wealth of Farmers', 36; it was through selection that prospective farmers gained access to capital which was vital if they wished to expand.

Further, with Pyalong considered a reliable farming locale, a rise in land values greatly enhanced the value of Patrick's assets over the years. Land purchased at £1 per acre in the 1850s and 1860s was valued at £4 an acre when he died in 1903, an increment of 300 per cent.[89] In 1903 his probated estate was worth £5396 7s 4d, a figure considerably higher than probated estates in the northern Victorian regions of Rodney, Gunbower and Bendigo which then averaged £1,363.[90] Despite regional differences (where marginal land must be considered) records show that Victorian farmers held almost 60 per cent of probated estates over £1000 in 1892, even though farmers comprised only 16½ per cent of deaths.[91] Data also show that the net assets of Pyalong farmers listed in the 1868 *Victorian Gazette* who died between the 1880s and 1903 (including those on small acreages) were well in excess of those of merchants, storekeepers, carriers, teachers or rate collectors. Several landholders did exceptionally well: William Crawford, David Rainey, and David Walsh (Mary Cooke's cousin), left real estate, livestock, machinery, carriages, and personal property to the value of between £6,500 and £9,000. Those who combined farming with hotelkeeping also fared better than most. Hoteliers, typified by Fred Thompson, Hugh Doogan and Patrick Cooke each bequeathed net assets at death worth between £4,000 and £9,000, which was well above the assets of most who settled in Pyalong in the 1850s and 1860s.[92] Between 1884 and 1906, Patrick's youngest son Richard further consolidated the Cooke property, increasing the acreage to more than 7,000 acres by buying out his siblings and land belonging to the Walsh brothers.[93] After Patrick died Richard took over the entire property and built a new mechanised shearing shed which was the first in the district with modern technology.[94]

What is striking about this immigrant cluster (which included the Keanes, Halpins, Ryans, Kennys and others), is that they were far more successful as farmers in Victoria than they would have been had they remained in Limerick—despite the considerable security of land

[89] Patrick, Cooke, 1903, *Wills & Probate 1841-2016* (PROV), VPRS 28/P0002, 87/352.
[90] Patrick Cooke, *Wills & Probate*, Patrick's ownership of only a chaff cutter, horse works and a wool press when he died suggests that his property was principally under grazing rather than crop, and he may have borrowed machinery from family members when needed; see Fahey, 'A Fine Country for the Irish', Table 3, 198; also Fahey, 'The Wealth of Farmers', 33; Fahey notes that throughout the nineteenth century duty was only charged on net estates of £1,000 or more.
[91] Janet L. Doust, 'Two English Immigrant Families in Australia in the Nineteenth Century', *History of the Family*, 13 (2008), 22.
[92] William Crawford, 1900, *Wills & Probate 1841-2016* (PROV), VPRS 28/P0002, 75/80; David Rainey, 1905, VPRS 28/P0002, 95/375; David Walsh, 1903, VPRS 28/P0002, 89/457; Frederick Thompson, 1881, VPRS 28/P0002, 22/994; Hugh Doogan, 1881, VPRS 28/P0002, 21/569; Patrick Cooke, 1903, VPRS 28/P0002, 87/352.
[93] Chris Cooke, Personal Communication, 10 October 2020.
[94] *Weekly Times*, 22 December 1917; Chris Cooke, Personal Communication, 10 October 2020; prior to mechanisation, sheep were shorn by hand with shears.

tenure at home by the 1880s and Ireland's increasing prosperity after the Famine.[95] Newcomers transformed the Pyalong landscape by forging new identities as farmers; and they not only integrated into civic life—they became community leaders. Despite few resources on arrival (though none with the financial stability of the Cookes) they achieved varying levels of affluence by seizing opportunities and meeting the challenges of Australia's young economy. They reassessed old farming habits and moved on from subsistence farming. Religious faith, clan loyalty and strong kinship ties fortified them. They employed one another on their properties; Patrick hired Mary's cousins (David and James Walsh) as labourers, for example, soon after their arrival in 1858.[96] These features may not have been radically different from other immigrant groups although it was well-known that Pyalong settlers were tenacious and had a reputation for hard work. In 1867 the *Argus* and the *Bendigo Advertiser* noted that after Pyalong farmers had finished for the day they were in the habit of working at night, clearing, grubbing and fencing their allotments by torchlight and the light of the moon.[97]

Also remarkable is that the initial Cooke chain comprising 15 immigrants increased substantially when further members arrived in Victoria in the latter half of the nineteenth century. These included several nephews of Patrick Cooke: John Cooke (1835-1894) who settled in Queensland; brothers, John Joseph Cooke (1860-1913) and Nicholas George Cooke (1863-1928) who settled in Melbourne; and Patrick's grandnephew, Catholic priest, Monsignor Richard Joseph O'Regan (1882-1965) who served for many years in Sydney's Catholic parish of Rose Bay.[98] Numerous members of the Walsh family immigrated in later years, including David Walsh's 64 year-old sister, Hannah Fogarty from Knockainy, who joined 11 of her 14 children in Melbourne in 1900.[99] Whatever the reasons for its heterogeneity, the Knockainy cluster was distinctive in that it remained remarkably intact after leaving Ireland despite the disruption of

[95] James S. Donnelly, 'Cork Market: Its Role in the Nineteenth Century Irish Butter Trade', *Studia Hibernica*, No. 11, 1971, 132. Ireland's butter prices rose by as much as 45 per cent between the 1840s and 1870s. See also Vaughan, 'A Study of Landlord and Tenant Relations in Ireland', 163, who notes that after the 1850s most evictions resulted from tenants being in arrears. Further, the incidence of evictions was closely related to the poverty or prosperity of individual families whereby evictions were less likely in families who had tenanted land for several decades.

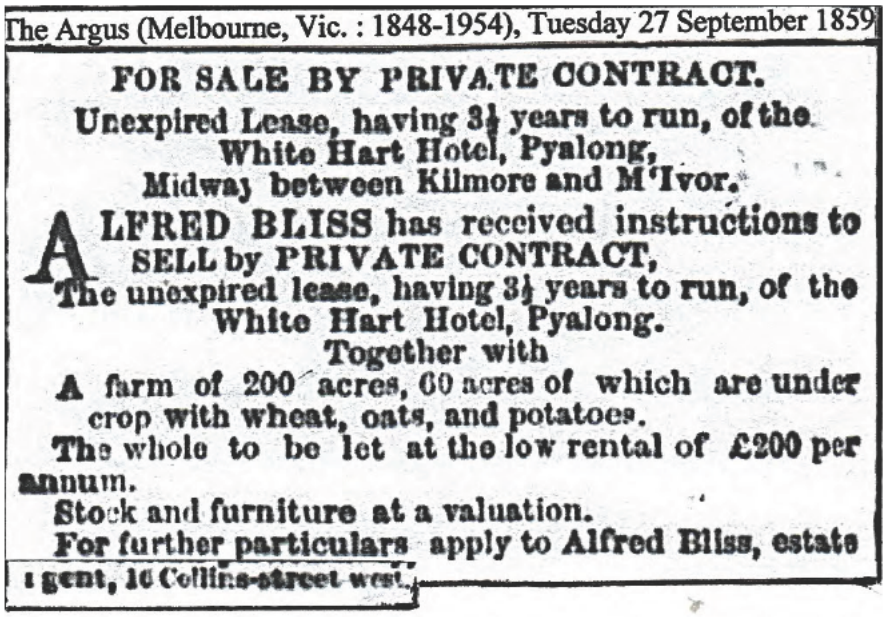
[96] *Argus*, 17 February 1871. Mary Cooke employed her Walsh cousins (James and David Walsh) as labourers at both the *White Hart* and at *The Pines.*

[97] *Argus*, 5 June 1867; *Bendigo Advertiser*, 6 June 1867.

[98] For a rigorous discussion on immigrant origins, chain migration and settlement patterns see David Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation* (Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press, 1994). See Appendix 15 for further details of Cooke chain migration history.

[99] *Kilmore Free Press*, 30 July 1903. Eleven of Hannah Fogarty's 14 children had progressively emigrated to Victoria. One son had died in Ireland; son, William emigrated to America; and daughter, Mary, remained in Ireland with her father (Hannah's husband, William, who died in Dungarvan in 1908, five years after his wife's departure for Australia).

emigration and resettlement. As a group, they were advantaged, sustained by background and purpose, Irish nationalism, and a mutual interdependence that cemented attachment to one another and the locale in which they settled.



The Argus (Melbourne, Vic. : 1848-1954), Tuesday 27 September 1859

FOR SALE BY PRIVATE CONTRACT.

Unexpired Lease, having 3½ years to run, of the White Hart Hotel, Pyalong, Midway between Kilmore and M'Ivor.

ALFRED BLISS has received instructions to SELL by PRIVATE CONTRACT, The unexpired lease, having 3½ years to run, of the White Hart Hotel, Pyalong.

Together with

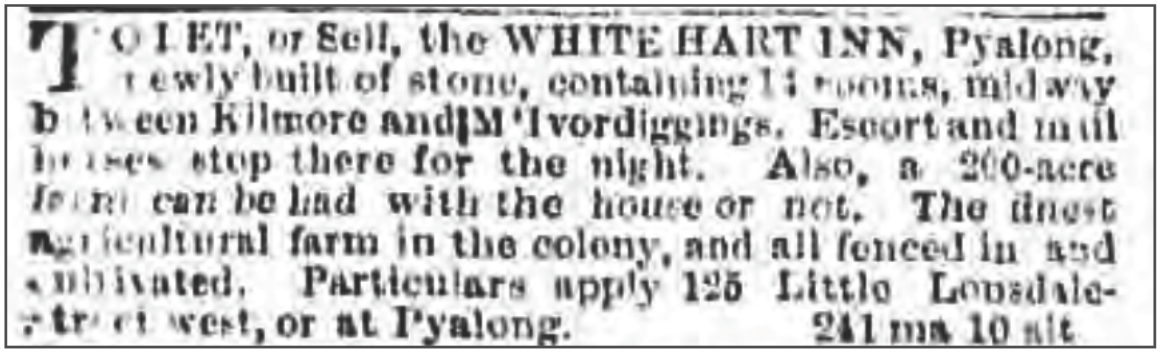
A farm of 200 acres, 60 acres of which are under crop with wheat, oats, and potatoes.

The whole to be let at the low rental of £200 per annum.

Stock and furniture at a valuation.

For further particulars apply to Alfred Bliss, estate agent, 16 Collins-street west.

Figure 33a: ***The Argus*****, 27 September 1859**



TO LET, or Sell, the WHITE HART INN, Pyalong, newly built of stone, containing 14 rooms, midway between Kilmore and M'Ivor diggings. Escort and mail horses stop there for the night. Also, a 200-acre farm can be had with the house or not. The finest agricultural farm in the colony, and all fenced in and cultivated. Particulars apply 125 Little Lonsdale-street west, or at Pyalong. 241 ms 10 ait

Figure 33b: ***The Argus*****, 30 April 1858**

Following Patrick's launch into the property market in 1857, he and Mary then looked to other ways to achieve financial independence. This they did by venturing into the hotel industry. Sometime between 1862 and 1864 they purchased the *White Hart Inn*, a lucrative hotel adjacent to the Mollison Creek bridge on the main road to Heathcote and Bendigo. The hotel was built by Fred Thompson around 1852, with a publican's license granted to Michael Nugent in March 1856.[100] In April 1858 Thompson advertised the property for lease or sale along with a 200-acre

[100] Robert K. Cole, *Index of Victorian Hotels: 1841-1849*, Vol. 9, P. 53, MS 7592, *White Hart*, Pyalong, SLV; *Kilmore Examiner*, 7 March 1856, n/p, 'Early Kilmore', Part ii, article reprinted in *Kilmore Free Press*, 23 April 1914.

farm which was described as the 'finest agricultural farm in the colony'. The newly built stone residence had fourteen rooms, seven of which were for family and servants, as well as overnight accommodation for gold escorts and mail services.[101] In September 1859, under instructions from Alfred Bliss of Collins Street, Melbourne, the property was again advertised for sale by private contract as an unexpired lease with 3½ years to run, together with the 200-acre farm, of which 60 acres were under crop with wheat, oats and potatoes. The complex was advertised at the 'low rental' of £200 per annum, with stock and furniture supplied on valuation. On 11 August 1864, the *Kilmore Examiner* reported that Patrick had applied for a publican's licence.[102] In 1868 he is listed as a publican in *Bailliere's Victorian Directory*.[103]

Figure 34: Earliest known photo of *White Hart Hotel,* Pyalong, c. mid-1850s.
Two cottages were joined to form a 14-room hotel and family residence.
In foreground is bridge over Mollison Creek.
(Maguire/Dynan Archive)

The first formal records of commercial hospitality in the Port Phillip District appear in 1836 when the colony was officially approved for private settlement. At that time liquor licenses were issued at a cost of £25 per annum.[104] The first public house in Port Phillip had been erected

[101] *Argus*, 30 April 1858; *Kilmore Free Press*, 26 November 1886.
[102] *Argus*, 27 September 1859; *Kilmore Examiner,* 11 August 1864.
[103] Cited in *Mitchell Shire Stage Two Heritage Study*.
[104] G. Barry O'Mahoney, 'Uncontested Space: Case Studies of the Irish Involvement in the Hospitality Industry in Colonial Victoria', *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, Vol. 1. No. 3, 2007, 205.

for Mr John Pascoe Fawkner in late 1835.[105] The number of hotels across Victoria ballooned after the discovery of gold in 1851, creating a massive upsurge of travellers seeking food, drink and accommodation on the 80-mile route between Kilmore and Bendigo.[106] In 1852 the Licensing Act required Patrick to provide a minimum of six bedrooms although many licensees believed the provision of accommodation was unprofitable.[107] Regular advertisements in the 1860s for experienced housemaids and general servants at Pyalong hotels however suggest business was thriving in this location.[108] By the early 1860s hotels were classified according to grand hotels, drinking taverns (which lacked accommodation, or provided it at a low standard), and coaching inns.[109] Alongside a busy bar trade, the *White Hart* offered accommodation, and with 14 rooms it most likely met the six-bedroom minimum, meeting the needs of travellers requiring meals and bedding for the night. It was also a designated location for the overnight stabling and changeover of gold escort horses. With these features the *White Hart* was possibly deemed a coaching inn, a rating far less opulent than the best hotels in large rural towns. The business was a successful investment for Patrick, and it possibly explains his rapid expansion into the land market by the 1870s.

With little accommodation in the district in 1865 the only competition facing Patrick was from the 11-roomed *Pyalong Hotel* which was run by Irish Catholic Hugh Doogan from County Clare.[110] In 1859 both hotels were described as unsurpassed in the 'respectability, commodiousness… urbanity and attention displayed by their respective landlords'.[111] Both did a roaring trade after gold was discovered in 1851, and both had a bright future when surveying commenced on 88,000 acres of Crown land in County Dalhousie in 1861, much of which surrounded Pyalong.[112] Although the rush to the northern diggings had slowed by the time Patrick purchased the *White Hart*, more than 17,000 adult males remaining on the Bendigo

[105] Thomas O'Callaghan, 'Early Inns of Port Phillip and Victoria', *The Victorian Historical Magazine*, Vol. IX, No. 1, July 1922, 26.
[106] O'Mahoney, 'Uncontested Space', 205; Farrell, *Pyalong: A History*, 1.
[107] G. Barry O'Mahoney, & Ian D. Clark, 'From Inns to Hotels: The Evolution of Public Houses in Colonial Victoria', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 2013, 180.
[108] *Argus*, 11 February 1863; 24 February 1864; 24 October 1865; 13 August 1867.
[109] R. E. N. Twopenny, *Town Life in Australia* (Elliot Stock, London, 1883), cited in O'Mahoney, 'Uncontested Space', 181.
[110] Cole, *Index of Victorian Hotels: 1841-1849*, Vol. 9, p. 54, MS 7592, *Pyalong Hotel*; *Argus* 22 September 1860; *Argus* 11 December 1861. Doogan's hotel had a rocky history. In 1856 it was licensed to William Percival, and later, to Michael Nugent who became insolvent in 1861. It was purchased by Doogan in 1864, around the same time that Patrick purchased the *White Hart.*
[111] *Kilmore Examiner,* 22 December 1859, letter republished in the *Kilmore Free Press*, 23 December 1937.
[112] *Age*, 26 October 1861; *Argus*, 9 January 1849; County Dalhousie encompassed an area of 1,185 square miles in Central Victoria.

goldfields helped sustain the business through a stream of passing traffic to and from Melbourne.[113]

Much was also made of the district's development. There were four stores at Pyalong in 1859, as well as a blacksmith and wheelright, all with excellent reputations and the latter described as 'second to none' in the metropolis. There was a post office and police barracks and schools where the young were 'licked into shape'. At the watchhouse the sole occupants were 'itinerant criminals'—the author clearly distinguishing between blow-ins and law-abiding locals. According to the correspondent, Pyalong was fast becoming a town of importance in central Victoria.[114] Yet an important item was lacking—government money. Infrastructure was poor, and the only means of crossing the Mollison Creek in 1859 was via an old bridge that was completely unsafe. It was into this milieu of tentative progress that Patrick threw himself with gusto, and it was no time before the *White Hart* became the hub of the district's civic and social activity. The hotel became a popular meeting place for locals and visitors alike, with regular patrons like the McKennas drinking among a select group whose personally inscribed beer tankards were hung above the bar.[115] The hotel retained this capacity for the next five decades until Patrick surrendered his publican's license in 1901, leaving the township without a licensed premise for the first time in more than 50 years.[116]

Patrick and Mary's entry into the hotel industry was also significant for other reasons. It provided the family with a public face, elevated their social standing, and defined them as important business identities as well as landowners. It was from this precinct that Patrick embarked on a lifelong commitment to the affairs of the district, amongst which was his appointment as Manager of the newly proclaimed Pyalong Farmers Common along with George Proud and Hugh Doogan.[117] The Farmers Common was a feature of the 1860 Nicholson Act whereby land was set aside by the Crown to provide small settlers with additional grazing areas. Although Pyalong's initial allocation was limited to 392 acres it was extended to around 4,000

[113] Geoffrey Serle, *The Golden Age: A History of the Colony of Victoria 1851-1861* (Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1977); citation from Appendix 4, Commissioner's and Warden's estimates, 388-389; O'Mahoney, 'Uncontested space', 205; see also *Mitchell Shire Stage Two Heritage Study*; an early plan of the Pyalong township shows stockyards on the land where the present building is situated, and tents and a bark hut located on the main road immediately in front of this land.
[114] *Kilmore Examiner,* 22 December 1859, letter republished in the *Kilmore Free Press*, 23 December 1937.
[115] Marie Cooke-McKenna, in conversation with the author, 18 November 2017; the beer tankards are part of a valuable collection of memorabilia preserved by the family.
[116] *Kilmore Free Press*, 24 January 1901.
[117] *Victorian Government Gazette*, No. 136, 29 September 1865, p. 2238.

acres by 1868.[118] This appointment was only the beginning of Patrick's activities. With a lack of infrastructure in the district he helped develop a Racing Club, a recreation reserve, the erection of schools and a Catholic church.[119] As the district grew in importance, so did Patrick's reputation as a community leader.

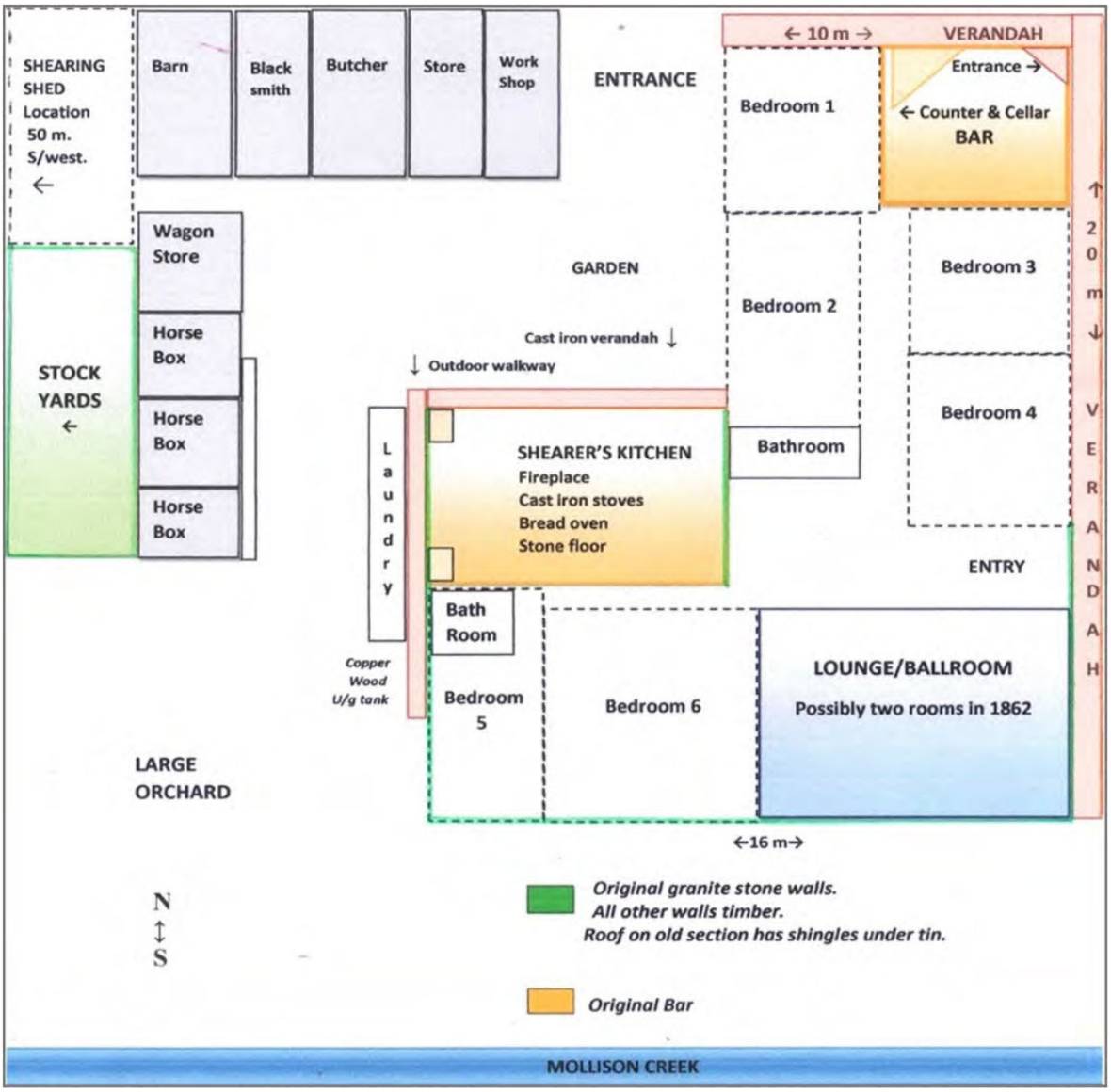


Figure 35a: *White Hart Hotel*, interior plan after alterations.
(Dynan Archive 2021)

[118] Powell, *The Public Lands of Australia Felix*, 80-81; *Argus*, 27 February 1861; *Leader*, 26 September 1868; see also, Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 13; in the 1860s charges for running stock on the commons were rated at an annual fee of 2/- per head for cattle, horses, 4/- per head and goats, 8d. per head. Most commons were less than 5,000 acres, but some exceeded 10,000 acres.

[119] *Kilmore Free Press*, 18 July 1867; 18 November 1886; both the *White Hart* and Doogan's hotel were registered as polling booths for annual elections. Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 8; *Advocate*, 16 November 1872; *Victorian Government Gazette*, No. 127, 28 October 1862, p. 2097; L. J. Blake, *A Centenary History of State Education in Victoria*, Vol. 3 (Victoria, Australia: Education Department, Victoria, 1973).

Figure 35b: *White Hart Hotel* 2019
(Dynan Archive)

When the Pyalong Roads Board was formally proclaimed in 1863, Patrick was a founding member along with Irish immigrants, John Loughnan and Hugh Doogan, and from 1869 meetings were shared between Doogan's *Pyalong Hotel* and the *White Hart*.[120] However, the district was still without a new bridge over the Mollison's Creek (the issue was ignored in favour of discussion over a privately leased tollway at Moranding), and although a call for tenders was made and accepted as early as 1859, no headway was made until 1871 when Patrick Cooke, Hugh Doogan and David Walsh succeeded in their push for the creation of the Shire of Pyalong. At that time, a portion of territory in the McIvor Shire was annexed to the Pyalong Road District. At the first Council meeting on 26 May 1871, after ceding from the Shire of McIvor, tenders were again called for the bridgework to begin.[121]

---

[120] *Victorian Government Gazette,* No. 88, 1 September 1863, p. 1918; *Pyalong Rural Town Precinct*, 52; *Victorian Government Gazette*, No. 38, 6 August 1869, p. 1187; Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 12-13; in 1864 properties within the Pyalong Roads Board jurisdiction were valued at the rate of one shilling in the pound. Three men were appointed as joint valuers, and crown lands under lease as well as pasturage land were valued and rated. The Pyalong Roads board banked with the Colonial Bank in Kilmore. Members of the Board had the right to propose motions reducing valuations on properties when circumstances demanded. In March 1865 eleven valuations were reduced by 30% for property owners who had suffered from recent fires.

[121] Farrell, *Pyalong: A History*, 9; *Victorian Government Gazette*, No. 38, 18 March 1859, 510; *Argus*, 31 December 1859; the contract was accepted at a cost of £2685 11s 9d. Before the formation of the Shire of Pyalong, the district was controlled by the Roads Board which had toll gates along the main road at which travellers had to pay to proceed. A push for separation of Pyalong from the McIvor Shire was evident from the 1860s and was complicated

The proclamation of the Pyalong Shire marked the beginning of Patrick's civic life. Membership of the body gave impetus to his leadership and was the vehicle through which he and a tight-knit group of fellow immigrants who were neighbors in Ireland—Maurice O'Keane, John Halpin, and brothers, David, Con, James and Maurice Walsh —set to work developing the district. John Halpin served on the Council for more than 40 years. Patrick's membership spanned almost 35 years, during which he served several terms as Shire President.[122] It was an intergenerational commitment by both families; for the Cookes it was the beginning of three generations of service over more than a century.[123]

The newly constituted Shire Council on 1 June 1871 was a memorable occasion, celebrated by a picnic and bonfire on the aptly named, treeless Bald Hills on Pyalong's north-eastern rim.[124] It was attended by Shire President Doogan and councillors Bradley, Gorman, Halpin, Walsh and Cooke, all Irish immigrant farmers from Counties Limerick and Clare (Doogan) who went on to play a major role in the development of the district.[125] In a lengthy agenda during the Council's first meeting the stand-out topic for discussion predictably concerned the Mollison Creek bridge on which progress had stalled miserably. Tenders were again called for work to begin, and at the meeting Patrick was entrusted with the responsibility of signing cheques in conjunction with the President.[126]

The Council's inaugural meeting was unusually quiet, but the body soon gained a reputation for being heavy-handed. Then, in September 1873, only two years after its constitution as a Shire, Pyalong faced court on a charge of bullying and tyrannical behavior when it was accused of claiming revenue from across shire boundaries.[127] Tensions again boiled over when ratepayers rose up against their Shire Engineer, Denis Fennelly, who continued to accept payment after requesting formal leave of absence from his dual role of Engineer and Shire Secretary.[128] Patrick was embroiled in 'vigorous' discussions over the matter since the Pyalong Shire was heavily in debt and he and another councillor were the only members who had objected

---

by the fact that many selectors for various reasons were not resident on the land in question, with some even deemed to be 'dummy selectors'. In November 1867 the 'legitimate result' recorded a total of 21 signatures for separation according to land rates valued at £1582; those against separation totaled 14 names on rates valued at £1056.

[122] Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 31.

[123] Farrell, *Pyalong: A History*, 55.

[124] Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 14; the Pyalong Shire comprised an area of approximately 150 square miles, with three ridings and three councillors representing each riding.

[125] *Kilmore Free Press*, 1 June 1871.

[126] *Kilmore Free Press*, 1 June 1871.

[127] *Kilmore Free Press,* 18 September 1873.

[128] Farrell, *Pyalong: A History*, 59; *Kilmore Free Press*, 18 September 1873.

to Fennelly's dual role, the cost of which could have been reduced had a tender at a lower rate of pay been accepted.[129] A leading article in the *Kilmore Standard* summed up the situation:

> At the last meeting, there was a host of tall talk and small talk in reference to the engagement of a Secretary and Engineer at a salary of £280 per annum, the providing of free dinners for the Councillors and calling upon the ever generous ratepayers to pay mine host of the Pyalong Hotel the price thereof, and many other little items of interest to the Pyalong residents, who it appears are calling loudly upon seven members of the nine to resign and retire into private life.[130]

At the heart of the matter was a push for sections of the Pyalong Shire to be amalgamated with neighbouring shires—a move that Pyalong ratepayers resisted vociferously following earlier neglect of their region by the Shire of McIvor. During similar skirmishes at council meetings, it was not unusual for Patrick to leave the chamber.[131]

Nor were the Cookes and David Walsh unfamiliar with the Kilmore and Heathcote Magistrates Courts. Over the years they were frequently on the wrong side of the law, charged with various offences relating to the illegal impounding of stock, the trespass of sheep on neighboring properties, throwing stones, swearing in a public place, truancy (refusing to send a child to school), and on one occasion, the unlawful assault of a schoolteacher by Mary's cousin, David Walsh. In 1878, schoolteacher, James Cody, accused Walsh of forcing his way into a classroom at the Pyalong Catholic school where in full view of the pupils Walsh threatened Cody with a clenched fist, struck and shoved him causing him to stagger, and said he would 'kick him out of the blessed school' for keeping in five children for not learning their lessons. Included in the group of children was David Walsh's 'delicate' 12-year-old 'adopted' daughter, Hanora Halpin, who had been kept in more than half a dozen times and 'could not stand going without her dinner'. After mediation with Kilmore Catholic priests, Frs Farrelly and Maddock, who were summoned to the *White Hart*, Cody was urged to withdraw his case from the Kilmore Court, the inference being that his discipline was inappropriate despite there being no complaints against him during his fifteen months at the school. He refused to comply, saying he could no longer live among such people—and was promptly removed from his post.[132] Walsh was charged with

---

[129] Farrell, *Pyalong: A History*, 58-59.
[130] *The Kilmore Standard*, 3 October 1874, cited in Farrell, *Pyalong: A History*, 59.
[131] *Kilmore Free Press*, 11 February 1886 & 27 August 1885.
[132] *Kilmore Free Press*, 14 December 1866; *McIvor Times*, 25 February 1871 & 3 April 1879. Hanora Halpin was the daughter of James Halpin and Maria Franklin, and niece of David Walsh. Hanora was not formally adopted but lived for most of her life with David and Mary Walsh who were childless and who considered her as their 'daughter'. Hanora's father, James Halpin, was one of the four Halpin cousins who accompanied the Cookes on the *Fitz-James* in 1854.

unlawful assault, but when Cody's two best witnesses (pupils) failed to turn up, the case was promptly dismissed with charges unproven.[133]

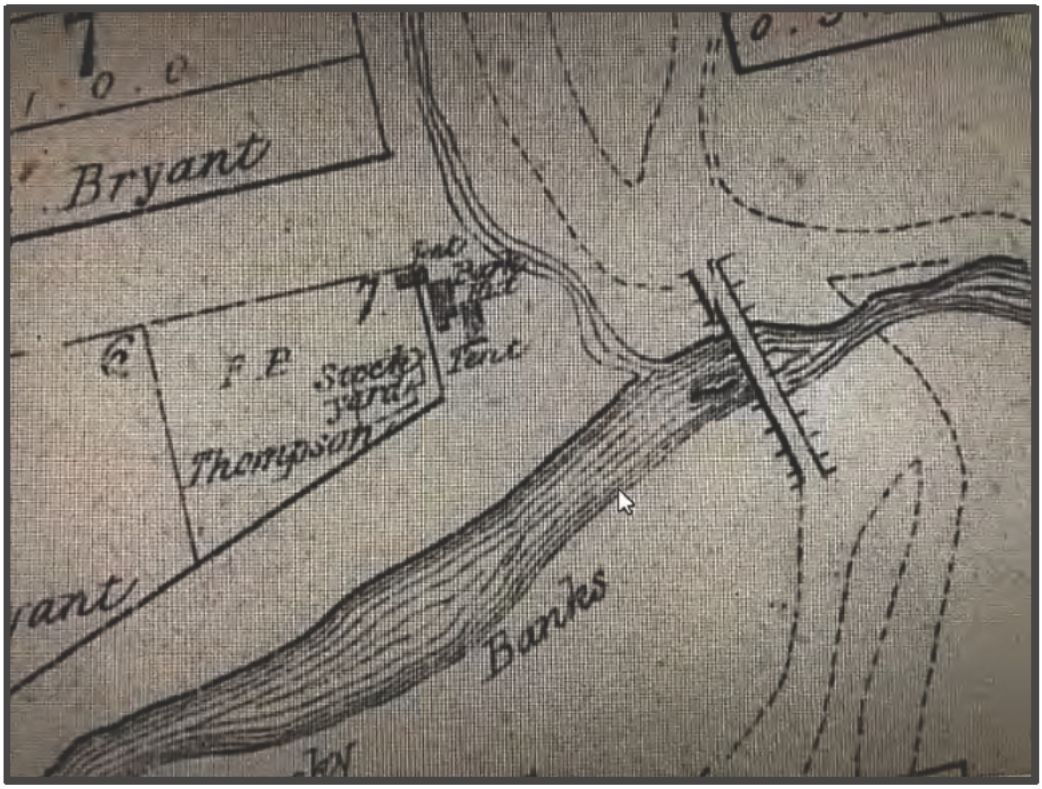


Figure 36: Pyalong Township detail showing White Hart site with stockyards, bark hut and tents 1857.

Victoria Public Lands Office, 1857, 37 x 48 cm, ID2038013, SLV.
Accessed 10/02/2019

As a well-patronised precinct with a plentiful supply of alcohol, the *White Hart* was no stranger to such altercations where fights, obscene language and drunk and disorderly behavior erupted at intervals.[134] Several incidents between a group of inebriated patrons (which included David Walsh and Patrick's sons, Nicholas and John) after the Boxing Day races in December 1885, were hardly unusual. During a heated argument uncouth language and a smattering of Irish words were bandied about along with curses and blasphemies in the vernacular whereby each labelled the other as 'b—dy dogs', with threats by Walsh to ram a stick down Nicholas Cooke's 'b—dy throat'.[135] Their behaviour was typical of the coarseness common to the pastoral

[133] *McIvor Times,* 3 April 1879; Mr Scott, appearing for the plaintiff (Cody) stated that two pupils were paid to appear but failed to turn up.
[134] *Kilmore Free Press*, 13 August 1885.
[135] *Kilmore Free Press*, 16 January 1885; Colin Ryan, 'Baile na Tóna.docx' [email to author] 04/03/2021; Colin Ryan, Book Review, Wolf, Nicholas M. (2014), *An Irish-Speaking Island: State, Religion, Community, and the Linguistic Landscape in Ireland, 1770-1870*, posted by Tinteán Editorial team/EMcK, 6 May 2015, https://tinteanmagazine files.wordpress.com/2015/04/images-41.jpg Accessed 27/10/2021. Ryan argues that in the 1850s and for some time afterwards there were still many Irish speakers in County Limerick. He notes that the commonly accepted view that the Irish language suffered a calamitous collapse in the nineteenth century is largely

frontier whereby hard riding, hard swearing and hard binge drinking were commonplace throughout the nineteenth century. These behaviours threatened the social boundaries at the hotel and since the Cooke sons were involved some in the community may have looked dimly on Patrick and Mary as parents.[136] In court, Walsh described himself as a 'peaceful man' despite imprisonment for common assault after causing grievous bodily harm to local farmer, John Nugent, at the *White Hart* hotel. In 1876 Walsh rendered Nugent senseless from a blow to the head with a stone, an injury that left Nugent prostrate and incapable of working for months.[137] After several hours of drinking on the hotel verandah in 1885, the situation reached new heights when a drunken combatant was labelled 'a scrubber and the scrapings of Pyalong.'[138] A brawl was only narrowly avoided, and women who overheard the incident from inside the hotel were particularly distressed. The offenders ended up in the Kilmore Court charged with drunk and disorderly behavior for which they were fined 10 shillings, with costs of £2 4s 6d. Patrick's sole contact with the law to this time was hardly comparable. On 26 January 1867 he and Hugh Doogan were summonsed to the Kilmore Magistrates Court for selling liquor on the Pyalong racecourse without a licence. Both were gaoled for one hour.[139] A later brush with the law again involved alcohol. In 1885 a charge of drunk and disorderly behaviour at Seymour saw him narrowly avoid prison when he insisted that 'a stroke of the sun [had] affected his head'.[140]

Yet these challenges on the home front failed to dampen Patrick and Mary's enthusiasm for public life and the way they saw themselves as part of the local landscape. When the couple landed in the colony in 1854, they had well-defined notions of what kind of society they wished to create. Material success was only one aspect of that vision. They arrived with a set of values formed by generations of Irish traditions and firmly entrenched religious mores, as well as views

---

rejected by Nicholas Wolf. Although the overall number of Irish speakers was in decline by the end of the century there is strong evidence that the Irish language was in fact central to daily life and the institutions and processes that helped modernise Ireland. The Irish-speaking community was drawn from all classes and occupations including farmers and their servants. Ryan also notes that County Limerick was very largely Irish-speaking when the 1851 census was taken. See also, Vincent Buckley, *Cutting Green Hay: Friendships, Movements and Cultural Conflicts in Australia's Great Decades* (Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1983), 13, who notes however, that the link with the Irish language was broken for most ethnic Irish by the second generation.

[136] Such behaviour was often seen as the result of poor parenting. For a discussion on the issue see Penny Russell, *Savage or Civilised? Manners in Colonial Australia* (Sydney, NSW: University of Sydney Press, 2010), 48.

[137] *McIvor Times*, 23 November 1876; In November 1876 David Walsh was charged with unlawfully and maliciously wounding John Nugent at Pyalong. Mary Cooke was called as a witness when the matter went to court.

[138] *Kilmore Free Press*, 15 January 1885; the term 'scrubber' is an insulting, derogatory slang term with sexual overtones and refers to people who have failed to make it in life.

[139] *McIvor Times*, 26 January 1867.

[140] *Seymour Express*, 18 December 1885.

on what constituted a healthy society. This was demonstrated by their civic activity and again when education became a major issue for Pyalong parents during the 1870s and 1880s.

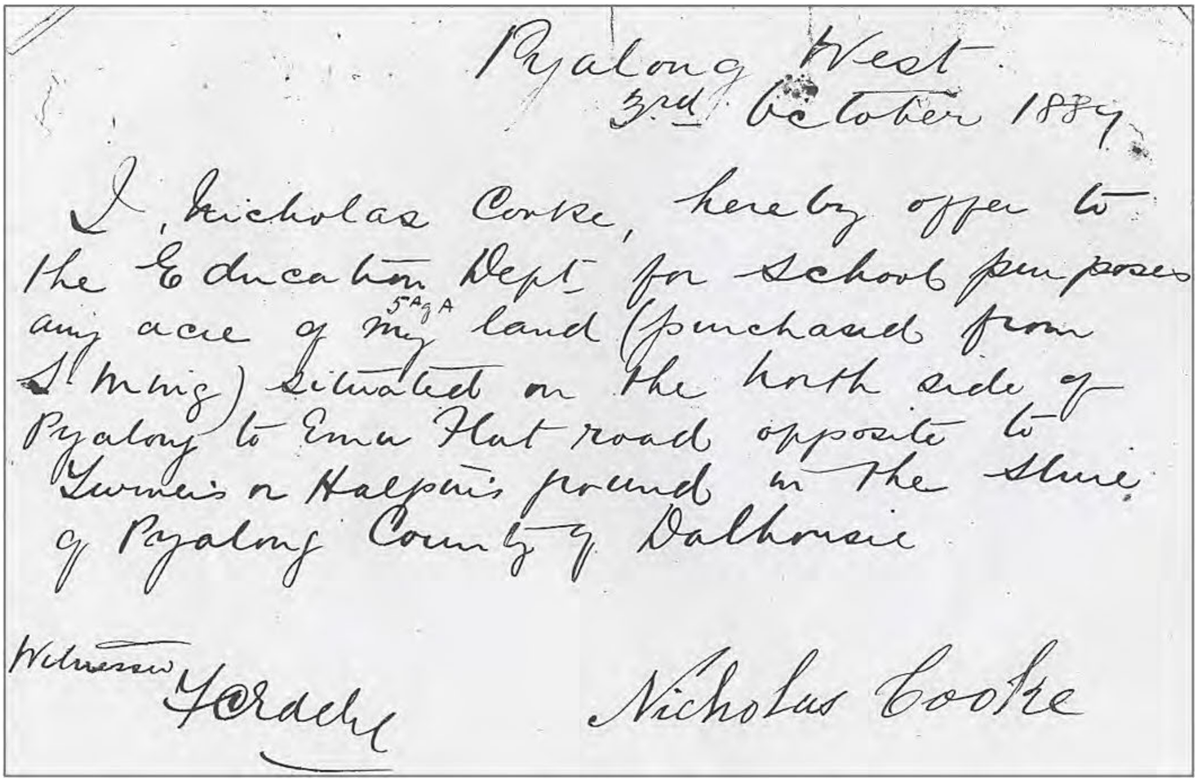
The churches had previously been the main educators in the colony. However, by mid-century a decentralised education system militated against country schoolchildren. A lack of money prevented the erection of schools and education was rudimentary at best. Many children received no schooling at all.[141] Truancy was high. In 1872 the Victorian Government enacted legislation (Education Acts) which introduced compulsory, free and secular education for all children, regardless of religious affiliation. This was significant for Catholic parents since the Catholic school was near another Protestant school that catered for all denominations. The Catholic school was erected in 1859 and functioned for 18 years with families contributing about sixpence a week to support the teacher. [142] Although typical of many at the time, it provided only the bare essentials being a 'Slab building with earthen floor, 12 feet wide by 16 feet long with walls 7'6" high'.[143] The Catholic school lost its capitation allowance when the Education Acts were introduced. It closed its doors in 1877. A new State School (No. 2005) was built in 1880, only a few hundred metres from the *White Hart*. Rachel Rainey, the daughter of immigrants from Newtownards, County Down, in Northern Ireland, was the first pupil enrolled.[144]

Although Catholic parents fought against the withdrawal of funding for their schools, the state education system at very least enabled all children to receive an education. However, archival material provides a glimpse of the difficulties country parents still faced. At Pyalong West, Nulla Vale and Sailor's Waterholes many children still remained unschooled because the distance to Pyalong was too far for them to walk. From the late 1870s to 1890, letters and

---

[141] D. H. Rankin, 'An Early Victorian Legislator—Sir John O'Shanassy', *Victorian Historical Magazine*, Vol. XXV, No. 3, December 1953, 102.
[142] *Kilmore Free Press*, 'Pyalong's Past', 2.
[143] Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 8-9. The school and a teacher's residence on the church site were established by Fr. T. O'Rourke from St Patrick's, Kilmore. It opened with 33 children and for many years maintained an average attendance of above 30 children from the Cooke, Kennedy, Nugent, Ryan, Doogan, Whalan, Dwyer, Doherty, Mallon, Loughman, Figgins and Turner families. John Manning was the first teacher; see *Kilmore Free Press*, 'Pyalong's Past', 2; the first Catholic schools established at Pyalong and nearby High Camp Plains were known as Common Schools. Children contributed sixpence a week each to help support the teacher; see also *Mitchell Shire Stage Two Heritage Study*; the first school at Pyalong was established by the Church of England in 1857 although it catered for all denominations and received aid from the Denominational School Board.
[144] Blake, *Vision and Realisation*, 678; Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, 9 & 40; *McIvor Times,* 19 June 1879; owing to long delays in erecting state school No. 2005, local resident Henry Cathery, the elected member of the Board of Advice for the School District of Pyalong, let a house for school purposes at a rent of 8/- per week until 6 May 1878 when it was expected that the new school would be complete. William Harvey was the first teacher. Between 1888 and 1891 when the railway line was being constructed in the district there were 46 navvies' children on the state school register.

petitions implored authorities to provide more schools in the region, with one ‘concerned parent’ at Sailor’s Waterholes asserting that ‘70 children were growing up in a state of barbarism’. With no action forthcoming by 1889, the Cookes then offered the Education Department an acre of their land on the Emu Flat Road for the erection of a new schoolhouse.[145]


Pyalong West.
3rd October 1889
I, Nicholas Cooke, hereby offer to the Education Dept for school purposes any acre of my 5A 3A land (purchased from S. Murray) situated on the north side of Pyalong to Emu Flat road opposite to Turner's or Halpin's ground in the Shire of Pyalong County of Dalhousie

Witness [illegible] Nicholas Cooke

Figure 37: Nicholas Cooke to Education Department 3 October 1889
Education Department Files, VPRS n/a, PROV.
Accessed 20/05/2010

Progress nonetheless continued at a snail’s pace. And Patrick’s son, Nicholas, had cause for concern: by then he was well on the way to fathering thirteen children, and exhortations from priests frequently reminded Catholic parents that their ‘own hopes for heaven [were] bound up in [the faith] of their children’.[146] With still no sign of a building at Emu Flat by 1890 Nicholas was then forced to appeal to his local member, and friend of his father, J. G. Duffy, MLA.[147] On 24 March 1890 he wrote:

> Dear Sir, I have been waiting for some time about this school of ours but there is no progress made with it yet. Will you kindly see at the department and get them to hurry the school on as

[145] Blake, *Vision and Realisation*, 679; Nicholas Cooke, correspondence to Victorian Education Department, Education Department Files, PROV, VPRS n/a, 3 October 1889. Nicholas Cooke letter to John Duffy, 1888-89.
[146] ‘A Catholic Obligation, To the Editor of the Advocate’, *Advocate*, 5 September 1874.
[147] J. R. J. Grigsby, ‘Duffy, John Gavan (1844-1917’, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/duffy-john-gavan-3451/text5267 published first in hardcopy 1972. Accessed 19/04/2018. Duffy was the member for the Catholic seat of Dalhousie and was then serving his second term of office from 1887-1904. He was a staunch champion of Catholic teaching in schools. See Appendix 16.

> the children are really going wild. So hurry them on and very much oblige [sic], Yours sincerely, Nicholas Cooke.[148]

Parents were to remain in limbo for yet another year until a portable school (without teacher's quarters) was provided in 1891. Ellen McMahon was appointed Head Teacher, followed by May West in 1899. Between 1891 and 1912, eleven teachers passed through its doors, no doubt partly due to the difficulty of finding accommodation.[149] Despite the Cooke family's activism, their children had only a basic education. None proceeded to higher study, and none received a university education.

In the midst of these issues, Patrick made his only return visit to Ireland after the death of his two brothers: Thomas in 1884; and James in 1886.[150] On 10 March 1887 the *Kilmore Free Press* announced:

> Mr Patrick Cooke, J.P., President of the Shire of Pyalong, took his departure for the old country per the *Potos*i on Friday. Mr Cooke only purposes [sic] being away a few months, and we wish him a pleasant tour and speedy return, to be welcomed by his numerous friends in the district.[151]

Mary applied to conduct the hotel business during Patrick's absence and a permit was granted until 30 June 1888.[152] It was not uncommon for women to work behind the bar in nineteenth-century colonial Australia; nor was it rare for them to run, manage and own their own hotels.[153] In the past research has paid attention to the leadership qualities of the colony's middle-class men with somewhat less attention to the impact of sexual difference on family dynamics and female work opportunities.[154] By necessity male breadwinning often relied heavily on the contribution of women, especially when it involved a further business interest alongside farming.[155] In applying to manage the hotel in her husband's absence, Mary challenged the limits of female independence; and like many bush women, put her feistiness on public display in a way that was not unlike her decision to return to Ireland in 1855.

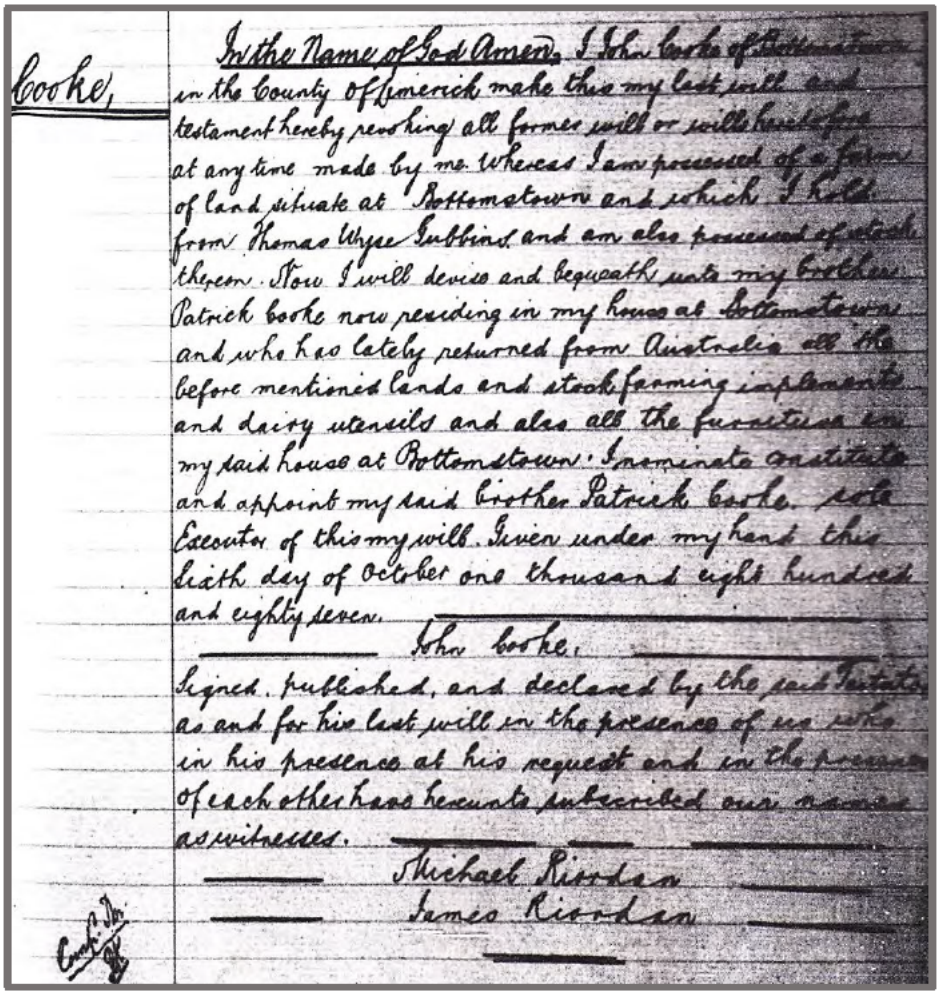
---

[148] Nicholas Cooke, Correspondence to J. G. Duffy, MLA, Education Department Files, PROV, VPRS n/a, 26 March 1890.
[149] Blake, *Vision and Realisation*, 678; teachers were Ellen McMahon, May West, A. Predennick, G. Toliffe, Mrs J. Breen, G. Burston, A. Ellsworth, Mrs Woods, Miss A. Baskin, A. Moroney and Mary Sweeney. The school closed in 1912.
[150] Civil Death Record, Thomas Cooke, 16 August 188; James Cooke, 7 December 1866, *Roots Ireland*, http://www rootsireland.ie Accessed 03/06/2008.
[151] *Kilmore Free Press*, 10 March 1887; *Kilmore Free Press*, 22 December 1887.
[152] *Kilmore Free Press*, 22 December 1887.
[153] Diane Kirkby, "Beer, Glorious Beer': Gender Politics and Australian Popular Culture', *Journal of Popular Culture*, Issue 37, No. 2, 2003, 244; see also Clare Wright, 'Of Public Houses and Private Lives: Female Hotelkeepers as Domestic Entrepreneurs', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 116, 2001, 57-75.
[154] Leonore Davidoff & Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850*, 3rd ed., (Oxon: Routledge, 2006), 16.
[155] Penny Russell, *Savage or Civilised*, 212.

Figure 38: *S.S. Potosi,* c. 1880-1930
Postcard, 8.8 cm x 13.8 cm approx. BIB ID: 1659428. Filename: pc000983. SLV.
Accessed 01/11/2021

Patrick left Melbourne for London at 4.30 am on 4 March 1887, travelling in second saloon on the Orient Line, *S.S. Potosi*, an iron-screw steamer built in Glasgow, Scotland, by John Elder and Co. in 1873.[156] He was listed as a 50-year-old farmer although he was then aged 68. The *Potosi* arrived at Plymouth Sound in the English Channel at 10.30 am on 15 April after a 41-day voyage sailing via Adelaide and Naples.[157] Amongst a large cargo of 1,254 bales of wool and sundries, was a consignment of refrigerated meat from 5,394 sheep and lambs from several Victorian squatting properties, including those of Sir William Clarke from Lancefield, a farming district south of Pyalong; and the well-known Western District properties of Messrs J. and P. Manifold (Purrumbeet) and the late Mr Niel Black (Noorat).[158] It was a sign of the sustained demand for Australian agricultural products.

[156] *South Australian Register*, 8 March 1887; *Passengers in History. An Initiative of the South Australian Maritime Museum*, https://passengers.history.sa.gov.au Accessed 16/10/2010.
[157] Shipping Register (PROV), *Potosi*, 4 March 1877-15 April 1877; although Patrick was aged 68 in 1887, he was recorded as 50 years on the passenger list.
[158] *Argus*, 7 March 1887.



Cooke,

In the Name of God Amen. I John Cooke of Bottomstown in the County of Limerick make this my last will and testament hereby revoking all former will or wills heretofore at any time made by me. Whereas I am possessed of a farm of land situate at Bottomstown and which I hold from Thomas Wyse Gubbins and am also possessed of stock thereon. Now I will devise and bequeath unto my brother Patrick Cooke now residing in my house at Bottomstown and who has lately returned from Australia all the before mentioned lands and stock farming implements and dairy utensils and also all the furniture in my said house at Bottomstown. I nominate constitute and appoint my said brother Patrick Cooke sole Executor of this my will. Given under my hand this sixth day of October one thousand eight hundred and eighty seven.

John Cooke.

Signed, published, and declared by the said Testator as and for his last will in the presence of us who in his presence at his request and in the presence of each other have hereunto subscribed our names as witnesses.

Michael Riordan

James Riordan

Figure 39: WILL, JOHN COOKE, Bottomstown, Co. Limerick, died 11 October 1887 Original Will Registers Ireland 1858-1920. Limerick Will Books District Registry 1883-1888. https://willcalendars nationalarchives.ie Accessed 12/10/2020

On arrival in County Limerick, Patrick stayed in the home of his ailing, single brother, John, who leased a farm at Bottomstown.[159] While there he helped his brother make a will. Patrick was designated as both sole executor and beneficiary of the estate, which was then under tenancy to landlord Thomas Wyse Gubbins, a member of a wealthy landowning family originally from Kilfrush House, Knockainy.[160] In the will John Cooke stated:

> I devise and bequeath unto my brother Patrick Cooke now residing in my house at Bottomstown and who has lately returned from Australia all the before mentioned lands and stock farming

[159] *Irish Times*, 10 December 1887.

[160] *Weekly Irish Times*, 19 November 1904; Thomas Wyse Gubbins died on 7 August 1904, leaving an estate worth £92,715 2s 5d, which included £38,187 19s 1d, in England. Gubbins lived at Dunkettle, Cork, a large property built circa 1790 which he purchased sometime in the 1870s. His Will stipulated that the estate (personal effects and extensive land holdings) be distributed amongst his two sons, four unmarried daughters, and his wife, Frances Gertrude Gubbins, to whom was left an annuity of £600, the large Dunkettle mansion and a host of chattels. See also *NUI Galway, OÉ Gaillimh, Landed Estates Database*, https://landedestates nuigalway.ie Accessed 22/03/2020.

> implements and dairy utensils and also all the furniture in my said house at Bottomstown. I nominate constitute and appoint my said brother Patrick Cooke sole executor of this my will.[161]

Witnesses to the will were Michael and James Riordan, the latter married to Patrick's niece, Deborah Cooke. The effects of the estate, which included house, stock, and machinery, were valued at £2,821. Not mentioned in the will was a deposit receipt in the National Bank at Bruff for £2,300 which had been lodged in John and Patrick's joint names.[162] John died on 11 October 1887, only five days after the will was made.

After attending his brother's funeral and burial at the Ardkilmartin cemetery, Kilmallock, Patrick returned to John's home to find it locked and under siege by hostile relatives who claimed there was more than enough room for Patrick in Australia, and a bedsheet hanging from the clothesline carrying a blunt message: *'*Get back to Australia!'[163] With growing animosity between Patrick and his Irish family over the estate, the matter was contested in court in December 1887. Litigation and letters of protest to the press were not unusual for the Cookes, especially when they faced intractable property issues and when landlords threatened to raise rents on their holdings.

This was demonstrated in 1883 when Patrick's nephews, Nicholas and John Cooke, and neighbor Maurice O'Keane, received notoriety across Ireland after complaining of the injustice of rising rents and the threatened sale of their properties at Bottomstown. The trio addressed a satirical letter to their wealthy landlord, Mr Thomas Wyse Gubbins, of Dunkettle, Cork, who had promised to reduce their rent if ever he came into money.[164] After publication in the Irish newspaper *Flag of Ireland* in January 1883, the letter appeared a month later in the *Cincinnati Catholic Telegraph*, a widely read Catholic broadsheet in America. The *Telegraph* ran the letter as an item poking fun at an unsympathetic Irish landlord who failed to live up to his promise to reduce rents when he grew rich from a family inheritance.[165] The reasons for publication in Cincinnati may be explained by the city having an exceptionally large population of influential

---

[161] Will, John Cooke, Bottomstown, Co. Limerick, Ireland, died 11 October 1887. Ireland Original Will Registers 1858-1920. Limerick Will Books, District Registry: 1883-1888, Item 2, Folio 518. Calendar of Wills & Administrations, 1858-1922. National Archives of Ireland (NLI), http://www.willcalendars.nationalarchives.ie Accessed 25/09/2018.

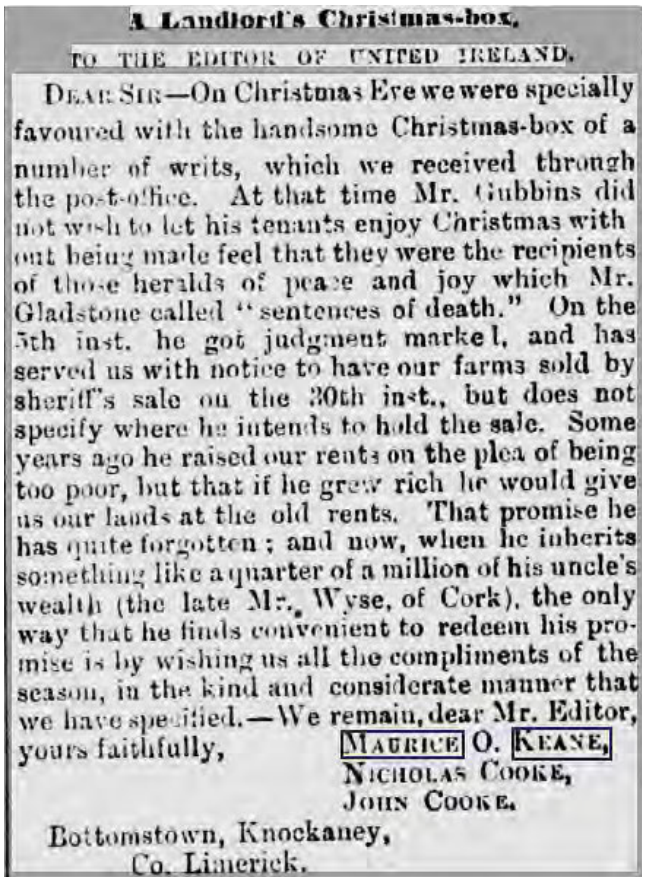
[162] Will, John Cooke, Bottomstown, Co. Limerick, Ireland, http://www.willcalendars nationalarchives.ie Accessed 25/09/2018.

[163] Cooke, *Irish Life and Lore*.

[164] Vaughan, *A Study of Landlord and Tenant Relations in Ireland*, 62; Vaughan notes that after the 1870s the growing prosperity of farmers probably made them more confident in making demands to landlords, even if those demands were considered unreasonable. For details on O'Keane family see Appendix 17.

[165] *Flag of Ireland*, 20 January 1883, Vol. 11, No. 72; *Cincinnati Catholic Telegraph*, 15 February 1883. For information on Maurice O'Keane see Sr Mary Camillus, *The O'Kane Family History as I know it* (undated), and Frances O'Kane Hale, *A Family Background: The O'Keane (O'Kane) Family in Ireland* (1982, Revised 1996).

Irish Catholic immigrants at that time, many of whom made a major contribution to the Cincinnati Catholic church, and who, more than any other immigrant group in the city, maintained a rich ethnic heritage and unusually close ties to their homeland.[166]



A Landlord's Christmas-box.

TO THE EDITOR OF UNITED IRELAND.

DEAR SIR—On Christmas Eve we were specially favoured with the handsome Christmas-box of a number of writs, which we received through the post-office. At that time Mr. Gubbins did not wish to let his tenants enjoy Christmas without being made feel that they were the recipients of those heralds of peace and joy which Mr. Gladstone called "sentences of death." On the 5th inst. he got judgment marked, and has served us with notice to have our farms sold by sheriff's sale on the 30th inst., but does not specify where he intends to hold the sale. Some years ago he raised our rents on the plea of being too poor, but that if he grew rich he would give us our lands at the old rents. That promise he has quite forgotten; and now, when he inherits something like a quarter of a million of his uncle's wealth (the late Mr. Wyse, of Cork), the only way that he finds convenient to redeem his promise is by wishing us all the compliments of the season, in the kind and considerate manner that we have specified.—We remain, dear Mr. Editor, yours faithfully,

MAURICE O. KEANE,
NICHOLAS COOKE,
JOHN COOKE.

Bottomstown, Knockaney,
Co. Limerick.

Figure 40: *FLAG OF IRELAND* 20 January 1883

Again, in 1894 two Cooke cousins (nephews of Patrick) were involved in long-running litigation in Cork over the obstruction and diversion of a watercourse on their neighboring properties at Baggotstown and Bottomstown. The issue was only resolved in 1904 after years of bitter in-fighting between the families and the intervention of close family friend and local Catholic priest, Fr Keane, who acted as mediator during counterclaims in court.[167]

---

[166] Kevin Grace, Interview, *Immigration in Cincinnati*, https://cincinnatiimmigration.weebly.com/irish.html Accessed 19/12/2020; see also Kevin Grace, *Irish Cincinnati (*Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publications), 34-37.

[167] *Cork Examiner*, 19 March 1894; *The Irish Daily and Independent*, 9 February 1904. Nicholas Cooke and Patrick Cooke were first cousins, sons of Patrick Cooke's elder brothers, Nicholas and Thomas. Patrick Cooke claimed £200 damages from his cousin, Nicholas Cooke, for having obstructed and diverted a watercourse on his farm. Nicholas Cooke denied the right of the plaintiff to the water which had run unhindered on the property for more than 100 years of Cooke ownership. When Catholic Priest, Fr Keane was called as a witness at the hearing in 1894, he testified that ill-feeling between the two families indicated that in the interests of peace the water should be divided equally. The case remained unresolved until 1904 when the court upheld an 1894 decision to share the watercourse and ordered damages to be split between parties.

In light of these events, and the animosity between parties when John died, the action taken by Patrick's relatives over the will in 1887 was hardly unusual. On 10 December, barely eight weeks after John's death, the Irish *Freeman's Journal* reported that a suit involving Cooke v Cooke had been established to test the validity of the will. Representing a large group of next-of-kin was Patrick's nephew (also Patrick Cooke).[168] The case was heard before the Right Hon. Judge Warren and a Common Jury with Patrick Jnr arguing on grounds of 'undue execution, that the deceased was of unsound mind, and did not know or approve of the contents, and that [the will] was procured by undue influence'.[169]

For the plaintiff, Patrick's counsel, Messrs John Atkinson, QC., J. Roache, QC., and Myles Kehoe (instructed by Mr W. F. O'Shaughnessy), stated that the case had been settled but argued that their client had a valid claim on the £2,300 joint bank deposit in the National Bank at Bruff by right of survivorship. However, the defence counsel, Mr McDermott, QC., and Mr W. McLaughlin, QC., and Mr D. B. Sullivan (instructed by Mr P. S. Connolly) argued that the deposit should be considered an asset of the deceased despite not being mentioned in the will. Patrick not only lost his battle to inherit his brother's property; he failed to retain his half-share of the bank deposit when the court deemed it should be treated as if the testator had died intestate. An order was made for the money to be divided amongst the defendant's next of kin. Costs were awarded against Patrick and an order made for the estate to be admitted for probate.[170] There is little doubt Patrick would have been well out of pocket.

In the absence of family correspondence, a family ledger or diary, and only fragmentary oral history, the reasons for Patrick's return to Ireland are not easily understood. Research shows that the land question was a central issue when immigrants returned to Ireland towards the end of the 1890s, with 50 per cent of all male returnees doing so due to inheritance and family obligations.[171] Prominent were unmarried sons and widows, with the former often expected to take over the family farm as parents aged. For some, emigration was a short-term strategy.[172] This was hardly the case for Patrick since both parents were deceased by 1852, two years before

[168] The defendant, also named Patrick Cooke, representing the Irish relatives was the son of Patrick's elder brother, Thomas. Simon and James Riordan were close friends of the Cooke family, James being married to Patrick Cooke's niece, also named Deborah Cooke.
[169] *The Freeman's Journal*, 10 December 1887.
[170] *The Irish Times*, 10 December 1887; *The Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 December 1887; *The Daily Express,* 10 December 1887.
[171] Diane Rose Dunnigan, 'Irish Return Migration from America at the turn of the Nineteenth Century, 1890-1920', Ph.D. diss., National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 2011, 123; Dunnigan cites studies by Brannick and Foekin, although it is believed that the figure was closer to 15 per cent.
[172] Angela McCarthy, 'Personal Letters and the Organisation of Irish Migration to and from New Zealand, 1848-1925', *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 33, No 131 (2003), 318.

he left for Australia. The assumption in Victoria was that Patrick's return was a last chance to reunite with his surviving siblings. Yet archival material suggests that the prospect of retrieving an inheritance may have been a trigger, especially if Patrick believed he was not fully compensated for his land in 1854, or if his Irish family had considered him an ambitious troublemaker and 'pushed' him to emigrate. Or, after making money in Australia Patrick may have intended to reclaim his Irish land and settle permanently in a place that he nostalgically still called 'home'. Permanent resettlement seems unlikely, however, given the difficulties of managing farming property from afar, and since most of his children, as future inheritors with few memories of Ireland, were married. How would he fit in after spending so much time away?[173] What would Mary have thought of the idea? As John Tosh notes:

> However honest and coherent statements of intention may be, they are unlikely to tell the whole story' since 'consequences cannot simply be read off from the stated motives of protagonists, for the simple reason that latent or structural factors so often come between intention and outcome.[174]

Whatever Patrick's intention, the saga was humiliating. Three months after the case ended, he was evicted from his brother's house.[175] With details of the litigation aired widely in the Irish press before he left, Patrick possibly knew that he and his Australian descendants might be forever known as 'the Black Cookes'.[176]

On 24 May 1888, five months after the case closed, Patrick left London for Melbourne. He occupied a two-berth, first class saloon cabin priced at £70 on the 6,116 ton steamer *R.M.S. Ormuz*, a vessel described as 'the ship of the age' with the 'most luxurious wealth of adornment' and with baths cut out of solid marble.[177] Of the 694 passengers, 186 were in first and second saloon and for Patrick it was a very different experience from the 1854 passage.[178] Amongst the passengers were six newly ordained clergymen from the Catholic seminary at Maynooth, Ireland, who were appointed to Victorian dioceses at the invitation of Melbourne's Archbishop Carr—one of whom, the Rev. J. Walsh, was appointed to Kilmore.[179] The journey was a

---

[173] See David Ralph, '"Home is where the Heart is?": Understandings of "Home" among Irish-born Return Migrants from the United States, *Irish Studies Review*, Vol. 17, Issue 2, 2009, 183. Although return migration often satisfies an unfulfilled dream it may also represent return to a place that is unfamiliar. In this way returnees may be both 'insiders' and 'outsiders', that is, they belong in neither.

[174] John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History* (Edinburgh, UK: Pearson Education Ltd., 2010), 151-57.

[175] Cooke, *Irish Life and Lore*.

[176] *The Irish Times*, 10 December 1887; *The Dublin Evening Mail*, 9 December 1887; *The Freemans' Journal*, 10 December 1887; *The Daily Express*, 10 December 1887. The reference 'black' was not uncommon in Ireland and was often used when families severed ties after a falling out. To this day, Patrick's descendants in Australia are known as 'the Black Cookes'.

[177] Shipping Register, (PROV), *R.M.S. Ormuz*, 24 May 1888; *Sydney Morning Herald*, 29 January 1897.

[178] *Bendigo Advertiser*, 18 July 1888.

[179] *Advocate*, 28 July 1888. The Irish priests were part of a contingent of Irish clergy sent to Victoria during a period of ecclesiastical reform in the Australian Catholic Church. Victorian appointments were M. Barry, St

contrasting experience from Patrick's earlier passage in 1854 when his children fell ill with the measles, and because the shorter Mediterranean route enabled a stopover at Naples where he had an 'opportunity [to view] objects of interest in nature and art'.[180] Patrick arrived in Melbourne on 17 August during a week of cloudy but fine winter weather with temperatures hovering around 60 degrees Fahrenheit.[181] The Australian mainland was a vastly different space from whence he came. Soon after leaving Limerick, the British Isles experienced one of the coldest summers on record for the month of July.[182]

Patrick's return to Pyalong was greeted with elation by friends and neighbors who convened to arrange a suitable welcome.[183] In August 1890 he was again elected Shire President, taking over from David Walsh who occupied the chair in his absence and whose appointment to the presidency was noted with apprehension by the *Kilmore Free Press.* On 22 September 1887 the paper expressed misgivings concerning Walsh's ability to conduct business harmoniously and in a manner that would do credit to himself and the district.[184] The unease was well-founded. Tensions within the Council reached a climax in July 1888 with councillors dead-locked over the failure to appoint returning officers, and a highly unpopular proposal to realign electoral boundaries. If successful, the realignment would have disenfranchised large areas of the Pyalong Shire by attaching them to territories with which Pyalong had nothing in common.[185]

On 26 July 1888, barely a year into David Walsh's first term as president, tensions reached breaking point when Walsh lost control of the situation and a brawl erupted during a regular council meeting.[186] Within minutes the fight was 'raging fiercely' with shearers' swearing ringing above 'the clang of battle and the groans of the wounded'. During the affray members threw chairs at Walsh while one enraged councillor, after having his hair pulled out, hat trampled and clothes torn, ran to the blacksmith's shop to collect a one-hundred-pound iron bar with which he then let fly in the chamber. Amidst the chaos people were insulted, defamed, and libelled. Deceased relatives were accused of bribery, corruption and stealing horses.

Patrick's Cathedral; J. Aherne, Williamstown; T. Considine, assistant to Rev. M. P. Carroll, Clifton Hill; R. Collins, Castlemaine; J. Walsh, Kilmore; J. O'Brien, Dandenong.

[180] *Argus*, 20 July 1888.

[181] *Argus*, 20 July 1888.

[182] *Weatherwebdotnet, Weather in History 1850 to 1899 AD*, https://premium.weatherweb.net/ Accessed 17/10/2020. The northern winter of 1888 was particularly severe. In March 1888 a blizzard known as the Great White Hurricane caused massive damage and loss of life on the east coasts of America and Canada.

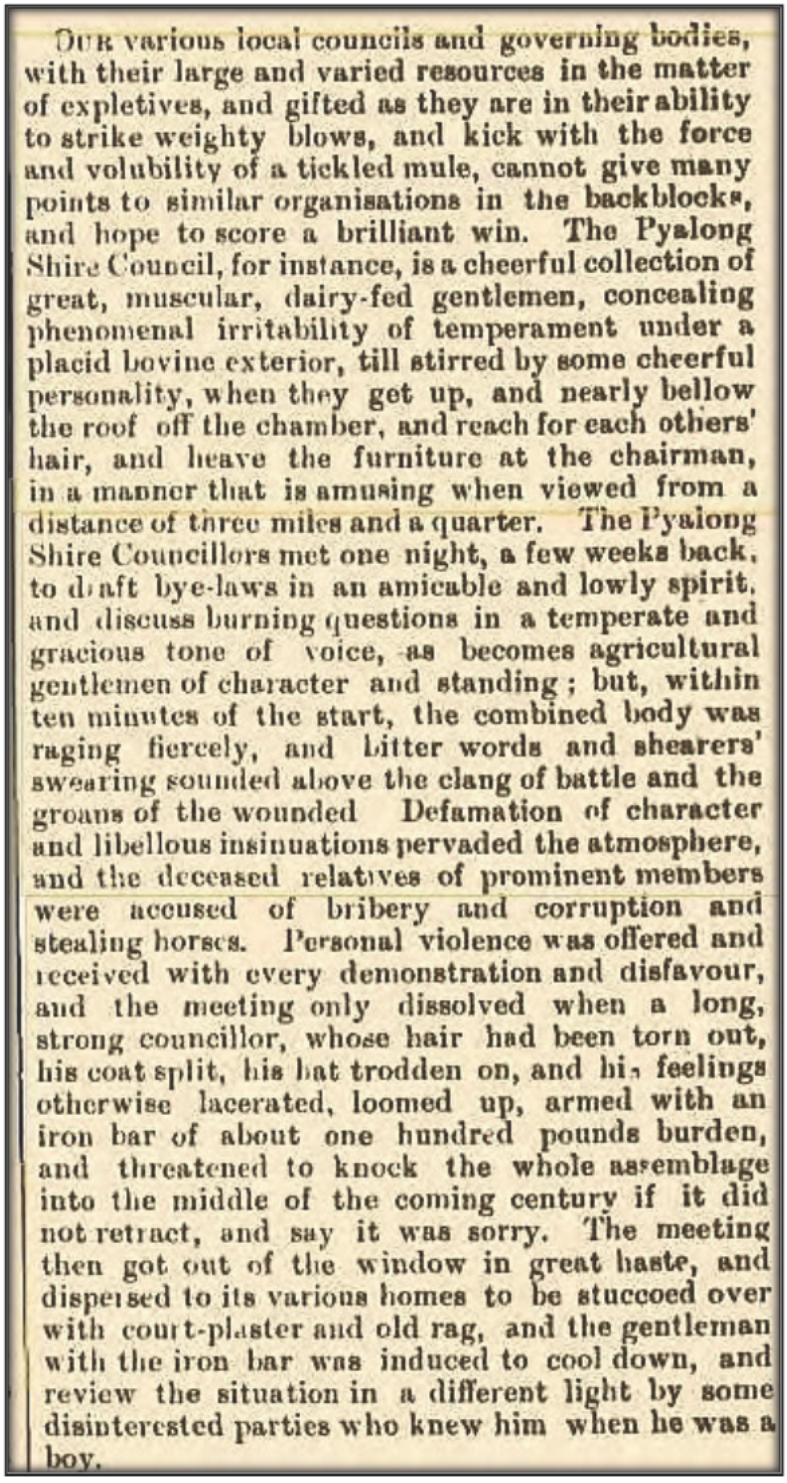
[183] *Kilmore Advertiser*, 14 July 1888.

[184] *Kilmore Free Press*, 22 September 1887.

[185] *McIvor Times*, 27 July 1888; *Kilmore Free Press*, 11 October 1888.

[186] *McIvor Times*, 27 July 1888.

Councillors Eades and Kenny sparred for a duel. The disarray was only halted when a member seated at the table (Paterson) was pounced upon by three councillors who lifted him bodily from his chair and dumped him outside the shire hall to prevent the formation of a quorum.[187]



OUR various local councils and governing bodies, with their large and varied resources in the matter of expletives, and gifted as they are in their ability to strike weighty blows, and kick with the force and volubility of a tickled mule, cannot give many points to similar organisations in the backblocks, and hope to score a brilliant win. The Pyalong Shire Council, for instance, is a cheerful collection of great, muscular, dairy-fed gentlemen, concealing phenomenal irritability of temperament under a placid bovine exterior, till stirred by some cheerful personality, when they get up, and nearly bellow the roof off the chamber, and reach for each others' hair, and heave the furniture at the chairman, in a manner that is amusing when viewed from a distance of three miles and a quarter. The Pyalong Shire Councillors met one night, a few weeks back, to draft bye-laws in an amicable and lowly spirit, and discuss burning questions in a temperate and gracious tone of voice, as becomes agricultural gentlemen of character and standing; but, within ten minutes of the start, the combined body was raging fiercely, and bitter words and shearers' swearing sounded above the clang of battle and the groans of the wounded Defamation of character and libellous insinuations pervaded the atmosphere, and the deceased relatives of prominent members were accused of bribery and corruption and stealing horses. Personal violence was offered and received with every demonstration and disfavour, and the meeting only dissolved when a long, strong councillor, whose hair had been torn out, his coat split, his hat trodden on, and his feelings otherwise lacerated, loomed up, armed with an iron bar of about one hundred pounds burden, and threatened to knock the whole assemblage into the middle of the coming century if it did not retract, and say it was sorry. The meeting then got out of the window in great haste, and dispersed to its various homes to be stuccoed over with court-plaster and old rag, and the gentleman with the iron bar was induced to cool down, and review the situation in a different light by some disinterested parties who knew him when he was a boy.

Figure 41: *Melbourne Punch*, 2 August 1888

[187] *Seymour Express*, 22 June 1888; *Melbourne Punch*, 2 August 1888.

Melbourne *Punch* seized on the issue, mocking the Pyalong Council under Walsh's leadership and describing its members as a cheerful collection of 'great muscular, dairy-fed… irritable… swearing… bovine' gentlemen.[188] Interstate newspapers followed suit, describing scenes of unparalleled disorder, and noted how Walsh on his first and only term as Shire President did his level best to destroy the Council's reputation by allowing meetings to descend into chaos and vulgarity.[189] Such scenes were hardly a surprise to those who knew Walsh given his temperament, liking for alcohol and history of provocation. However, such scenes also signalled the tensions that settlers faced as they grappled with life in a developing environment.

Nor was the irony lost on the local press. After Patrick's milestone re-election (which the *Kilmore Free Press* predicted on 17 July 1890 would be a walk-over and a deserved compliment for Patrick) readers were reminded somewhat smugly of the high esteem in which he was held by his brother-councillors and ratepayers.[190] The press also noted with some satisfaction the customary celebration at the *White Hart* 'where the newly-elected President's health was drunk with enthusiasm'.[191] For 'mock president' Walsh, it was another story.[192] In 1890 he announced he would no longer offer his services to the Pyalong ratepayers.[193] And he faced further ignominy at a council meeting on 23 January 1891 when he was dismissed as 'not a fit and proper person' to be appointed a Justice of the Peace. It was a double blow: the motion to reject the application was moved by John Halpin and seconded by the newly returned Shire President, Patrick Cooke—David Walsh's uncle.[194] It was a stinging rebuke from those who had remained loyal to him over the years despite his unconscionable behavior.

The merriment at the *White Hart* was short-lived. Only four months later the celebratory mood was marred by unexpected grief.[195] On Christmas Day 1890 the *McIvor Times* announced that 'a very sad and shockingly sudden death' had occurred 'which caused quite a sensation' at Pyalong. Patrick's wife, Mary, had been ailing for some time but on 19 December she expressed a wish to see a hay crop. Soon after leaving the *White Hart* in the buggy she complained of not feeling well. Patrick immediately returned to the hotel, by which time Mary was 'spitting blood',

[188] *Melbourne Punch*, 2 August 1888.
[189] *Seymour Express*, 29 June 1888; *The Australian Star*, 23 July 1888; *Melbourne Punch*, 2 August 1888.
[190] *Kilmore Free Press*, 17 August 1890.
[191] *Kilmore Free Press*, 17 July 1890.
[192] *Seymour Express*, 22 June 1888.
[193] *Kilmore Free Press*, 17 July 1890.
[194] *Seymour Express*, 23 January 1891. David Walsh's mother was Patrick Cooke's sister, Catherine Cooke. Catherine Cooke married James Walsh in Knockainy, Co. Limerick, in 1826.
[195] *Kilmore Free Press*, 14 August 1890.

the cause of which was the rupture of a blood vessel. On return to the hotel she faded quickly, and to her daughter Catherine seated at her bedside, she uttered her last words: 'I am dying—the Lord have mercy on my soul'.[196] To the last, Mary's demeanor reflected the religious faith that had sustained her throughout her life.

Mary Cooke was an 'exceedingly popular' figure in the district, an accolade that was well-deserved according to a friend's heartfelt appraisal published in the *Kilmore Free Press* in January 1891. It read:

> I have a long and very kindly recollection of Mrs Cooke, whose demise you announced in the last issue. It is many years since I first met her at her home in Pyalong, and her good-natured and hospitable reception on the occasion led to what has since continued uninterrupted—a genuine friendly feeling on my part. She was always a cheerful, good-hearted, kindly lady, and one whom to know was to respect. I share most heartily in the universal regret at her death, but I am sure she has only been called upon to reap the reward of one who well performed her duties here below.[197]

Mary died of Phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis) aged 62, thirteen years before Patrick, and barely three years after the death of her beloved sister, Catherine Walsh.[198] As 'a kind-hearted good neighbour' and 'affectionate wife and mother', she held fast throughout the ordeal of settlement and the difficulties of rearing a family in the colony. For Patrick, her death was a major blow, since he took little interest in the hotel after she died.[199] Following a Requiem Mass celebrated by Fr Farrelly at the Pyalong Catholic Church on Sunday 21 December, the cortege to the Kilmore cemetery was followed by one of the largest funeral processions in the district.[200]

Mary's funeral was a fitting end for a woman who more than three decades earlier fled at the prospect of life in a strange land, but who steadfastly returned to put down her roots. Through close examination of newspaper reportage and public repositories, this chapter has shown how Patrick and Mary adapted successfully to life in Victoria despite the difficulties of life on the land and the challenges of raising a large family. They acquired property and entered the hotel business which led to financial security and community respect. Mary's contribution to hotel life was pivotal to the family's success. All members of their family became successful farmers, with son, John, acquiring extreme wealth. The chapter shows how Patrick's attempt to

---

[196] *Kilmore Free Press*, 25 December 1890; see also Pat Jalland, 'The Transmission of the Culture of a Good Christian Death', in *Australian Ways of Death: A Social and Cultural History 1840-1918* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2002), 66, https://ebookcentral-proquest-com Accessed 01/09/2020. Mary showed the contrition and resignation that was expected in a good Catholic death.
[197] *Kilmore Free Press*, 1 January 1891.
[198] Mary Cooke, Death certificate, Reg. 17253, 19 December 1890, Register BDM (PROV); Mary Cooke, 1890, *Wills & Probate 1841-2016* (PROV), VPRS 28/P0000, 45/680; in 1890 Mary Cooke left an estate valued at £1,230.
[199] *Kilmore Free Press*, 25 December 1890; 7 May 1903.
[200] *Kilmore Free Press*, 25 December 1890; *Seymour Express & Goulburn Valley Advertiser*, 30 December 1890.

regain land in Ireland resulted in unsuccessful legal action and a rift with his relations. The following chapter will elaborate further on the centrality of Mary's role in forging an identity through her dual role in the colonial space, and through her considerable investment in the social, cultural, and economic aspects of life at Pyalong.

CHAPTER 4

The woman in the doorway

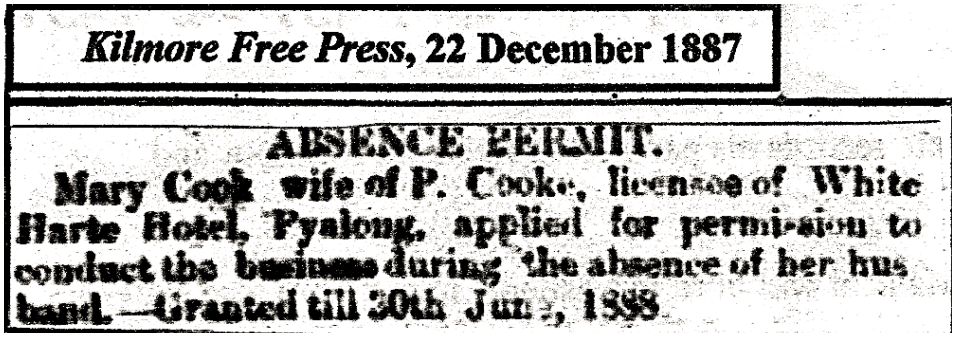
This chapter demonstrates the central role Mary played in adapting to life in Victoria and in forging an identity in the place where they settled. Through extensive newspaper reportage of activities in the Pyalong-Kilmore district and published and unpublished local histories, the chapter traces her active role in the community alongside that of her husband highlighting the desire they both had to be seen as respectable members of the community. Mary took on major social, cultural, and economic responsibilities at the hotel which contributed significantly to the family's success. The chapter will show how she exercised her moral authority on the hotel precinct and faced the challenge of her unruly sons. It will demonstrate how Mary's activities played a key role in furthering the gentrification of the Cooke family.

As the previous chapter has shown, Mary's life changed significantly when the family moved from *The Pines* to run their newly purchased hotel. The shift provided her with a degree of independence and opportunities unknown to most farmers' wives. It gave her status, and she may have been envied by some in the community for her prominent position and her strength and resilience in taking on such responsibilities—qualities that were ably demonstrated by her three-and-a-half-year stay in Ireland from 1855 to 1858, and her adroit management of both the farm and hotel during Patrick's lengthy stay in Ireland between 1887 and 1888.

While Patrick was in Ireland, Mary's responsibilities increased considerably. She was granted a publican's licence to manage the hotel in his absence and took on tasks that were previously his responsibility. Among others, these included involvement in public fundraising activities and the collection of donations for local charities and various Irish political groups which she and Patrick supported with vigour: the Irish National Land League Fund and the Evicted Irish Tenants Relief Fund.[1] Within weeks of Patrick's departure she helped organise a concert with a supper free of charge at the Pyalong State School in aid of the New South Wales

[1] *Kilmore Free Press*, 2 August 1888; 23 February 1888. See also Chris McConville, *Croppies, Celts & Catholics: The Irish in Australia* (Caulfield, Victoria: Edward Arnold, 1987), 77-91, for an account of Irish interest in home country politics and institutions. See *Advocate* 6 May 1899. Along with other funds such as the Maguire Fund, the O'Grady Memorial Fund, and the Victorian Children's Fund, right to the end of his life Patrick was also a faithful supporter of Catholic causes when religious institutions such as the Redemptorist Fathers launched state-wide appeals for money. His last known donation to the Redemptorists was in 1899 when he donated 10s.

Bulli Disaster Relief Fund. The concert was dubbed the most successful affair ever held at Pyalong.[2] Another important cause was the Kilmore hospital fund. Donations were crucial since the 1850s building was completely inadequate by the 1880s.[3] In Patrick's absence Mary rose to prominence as a trusted employer and community leader, a capacity that freed her not only from the social and spatial constraints of life in the bush, but also from some of the patriarchal power structures provided by a male 'head' of the household. The demands of hotel life gave her the opportunity to achieve respectability on her own terms.



***Kilmore Free Press*, 22 December 1887**

ABSENCE PERMIT.

Mary Cook wife of P. Cooke, licensee of White Harte Hotel, Pyalong, applied for permission to conduct the business during the absence of her husband.—Granted till 30th June, 1888.

Figure 42: *Kilmore Free Press*, 22 December 1887
News item re Mary Cooke's application for a hotel licence.

For most nineteenth-century women, however, life in a small country outpost was hardly comparable to the life Mary led as a financially well-off farmer and hotelier. Markets for selling livestock and farm produce such as bacon, butter and eggs often meant travelling long distances to the nearest town. This was exemplified by a young Irish widow whose husband died on board ship prior to docking in Melbourne in 1853. Eliza Zoch buried her husband in the sand on a beach near Williamstown, possibly at Gellibrand Point where a quarantine camp for immigrant ship fever victims was set up close to the shore in 1842.[4] She remarried but was again widowed in 1859. Undaunted, she forged ahead, and with experience

[2] *Kilmore Free Press*, 21 July 1887. On 23 March 1887, a disaster occurred at the Bulli colliery in New South Wales which left many mining families destitute. A methane gas explosion from the tunnel mouth killed 81 men and boys. It was the first major mining disaster in Australia. The concert raised between £13 and £14 for the victim's families.

[3] *Kilmore Free Press,* 10 May 1888; Maya V. Tucker, *Kilmore on the Sydney Road* (Kilmore, Victoria: Shire of Kilmore, Civic Centre Kilmore, 1988), 108-10,112-16. Only 46 patients were treated at the hospital in 1857 and in the 1850s and 1860s the facility was quickly overwhelmed by the influx of people from the McIvor diggings. In order to collect funds subscription boxes were placed in outlying districts like Pyalong and Emu Flat in an effort to raise money for extensions and improvements. A certain amount of money had to be raised by the community before the hospital was eligible for Government assistance.

[4] Andrew Lemon & Marjorie Morgan, *Buried by the Sea: A History of Williamstown Cemetery* (Balwyn, Victoria: Rivka Frank & Associates, 1990), vii & 7-19; In the 1840s the remains of hundreds of people including seafarers, convicts, wardens, and children, many of whom died on immigrant ships, were buried on the small one-acre site before they were later exhumed and reburied in a new cemetery at Williamstown in 1858. In 1842 the *Manlius* arrived at Port Phillip with Irish and Scottish assisted immigrants, many of whom were ill with fever.

of the alcohol industry in her parents Dublin wine shop, she established a wine and spirits store in Swanston Street, Melbourne. On the advice of her solicitor (John O'Shanassy, Victoria's Chief Secretary) she then selected two 80-acre blocks of farming land at Pyalong West on which she set up a dairy herd in 1861. At a time when local produce was conveyed by bullock and horse dray to the diggings, she found a ready market for her butter on the McIvor goldfields at five shillings a pound but had to set off early in the morning to walk the 15 miles to Heathcote carrying the butter on her head. Having no-one to care for her two small sons while she was away, she locked them in a room of her Pyalong West cottage, leaving them with all they needed for the day, until her home-made butter sales enabled her to buy a horse and cart.[5] The only relief came when a grocer from Kilmore organised a monthly butter collection from Pyalong dairies. After selling the women's butter he promptly returned in his horse and dray with a supply of groceries.[6]

Fortunately, by the mid-1890s most small farmers were in a far better position than Eliza owing to the introduction of the cream separator in 1888, although the journey to and from the nearest market towns was often problematic.[7] Thomas Boran made a regular trip in a horse and trap from Glenaroua to Kilmore to have his bacon cured. But with the road little more than a dirt track he had to constantly maneuver under trees to avoid potholes and quagmires which threatened to overturn the vehicle.[8] It was only when a butter cooperative opened in the old Kilmore gaol in 1892 that the Cookes benefited from mechanisation. For the first time their cream was processed by machines rather than by hand, and in far more hygienic conditions than before.[9] It was the beginning of the end for the eight creameries in the Pyalong

[5] Mary McKenzie McHarg, *Eliza: The First Mrs Zoch in Australia* (Box Hill, Victoria: Printqwik, 2000), 7, 14, 75. Eliza was the daughter of Michael and Margaret (nee Lonergan) Ryan who lived near the Rock of Cashel in Tipperary. Before she immigrated Eliza had early experience of the wine industry as her mother's family were wine merchants in Dublin. Following the custom of beach burials in Ireland during and after the Famine oral history has it that she buried her husband herself and then 'sat down on a stump close by to rest'. She most likely funded her land purchases from her (three) deceased husbands' estates, from paid domestic work, and as a wine shop operator in Melbourne's central business district. Rate notices show that Eliza owned all her land by 1872. She died in 1905 and is buried in the Pyalong cemetery.
[6] 'Pyalong's Past', *Kilmore Free Press*, 8 January 1948.
[7] Tucker, *Kilmore on the Sydney Road*, 134.
[8] Tucker, *Kilmore on the Sydney Road*, 67, 134-135. Throughout the 1850s, even the main road out of Melbourne was a mess owing to the damage incurred by heavy drays *en route* for the diggings.
[9] Tucker, *Kilmore on the Sydney Road*, 134; *Kilmore Free Press*, 14 June 1894 & 3 December 1896; the cream separator was introduced in Victoria in 1888 and within two years of opening the Kilmore Butter Factory was one of the most successful in Victoria and considered far more advanced mechanically than those in Ireland. See also Cormac Ó Gráda, *Ireland Before and After the Famine: Explorations in Economic History, 1800-1925* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1988), 139. The switch to the cream separator in Ireland spread rapidly and in lush dairying areas such as County Limerick's Golden Vale, the change to the new technique was almost complete by 1910. In areas such as Clare and Connacht, where poor land quality carried lower numbers of cattle, traditional methods persisted for longer.

Shire.[10] The cooperative was an important step for farmers, but the significance of the local dairy's ethnic heritage was not lost on those who helped develop the venture. Etched into the design on the Kilmore butter moulds were images of the shamrock, the thistle, and the rose—an indication perhaps of the pride that many in Kilmore's large immigrant population had in their work, and in their attachment to their roots.[11]

Figure 4*3*: Eliza Zoch and the stone house erected in 1868 at Pyalong West.
Cited in Mary McKenzie McHarg, Eliza: The First Mrs Zoch in Australia (Box Hill, Vic: Printqwik, 2007).

Although the running of both farm and the hotel had its challenges, Mary's circumstances were not exactly comparable to the extreme situation in which Eliza found herself. To the contrary. At the hotel Mary lived in pleasant surroundings, enjoyed the company of nearby neighbors, and could be confident of greater financial security owing to the horde of gold seekers on their way to the northern diggings. Hotel life also meant that she had a freedom that was not available to all farmers' wives, and protection from the physical dangers common to life in the bush. And although Patrick as hotel licensee was notionally the head of the household, Mary and her family clearly had his trust in 'running the ship' while he was away. Her position as hotel mistress gave her a public face and a level of respect that placed her alongside her husband as a person of substance.

Nonetheless, the move to the Pyalong township's nerve centre came with a heavy workload. Not only was Mary responsible for the domestic obligations of a commercial entity with paying guests, the hotel's immediate environs also came under her care. As in Ireland this meant she was responsible for the care of poultry and pigs, the maintenance of hotel

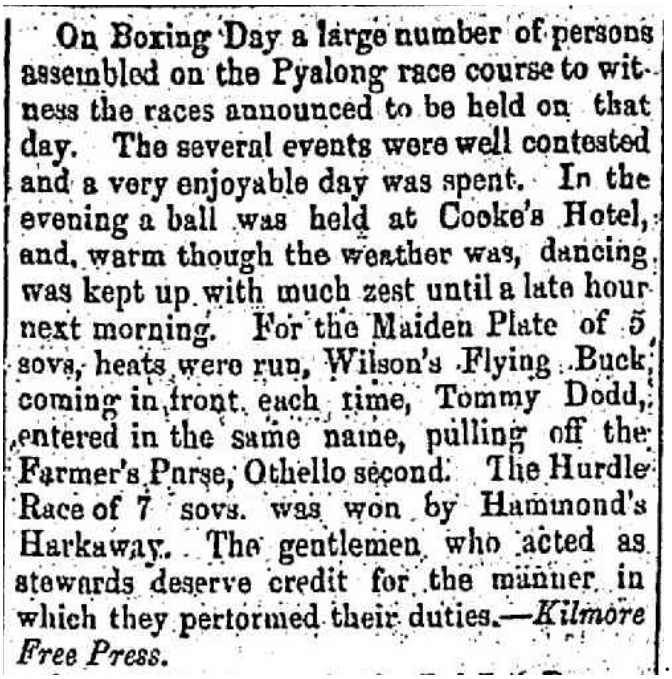
[10] Gus Farrell, 'Pyalong: A History (Written for the Centenary of the Shire of Pyalong 1871-1971)', Typescript, 1972, 25.
[11] Tucker, *Kilmore on the Sydney Road*, 134.

grounds and gardens, and overseeing a large orchard and the growing of fruit and vegetables. Apart from potatoes which she and Patrick sent to market, products from the orchards were utilised for family and hotel consumption. Adding to her responsibilities was the organisation of a dairy where cows had to be daily fed and watered and milked by hand. Daughters, Margaret, Bridget and Catherine (deemed 'dairymaids' on land selection documents) possibly assisted her in these tasks until they moved away after marriage. The primary responsibility of Mary's sons was working the farm according to a seasonal calendar, overseeing cropping and stock, including their transportation to market; shearing, managing blacksmith and butcher shops, and helping out in the hotel bar.[12] Although the farm and hotel bar were principally masculine zones, it seems Mary had considerable say in the day-to-day running of both enterprises, one aspect being the hiring of farm labourers, some of whom were newly arrived immigrant relations from Ireland who were seeking work. In the early 1870s Mary hired her cousin, James Walsh, as a labourer at *The Pines*; and when George Ellis was charged with depositing offensive matter in a public place in December 1885 (washing manure from sheep belly wool in the Pyalong school's drinking water) he testified in court that 'Mrs Cooke' was his employer, and that it was she who authorised him to draw water from the hole.[13] Mary's role in farm and hotel management went well beyond domesticity; her responsibilities were central to the family's success.

The domiciliary obligations of a public venue made demands on Mary in other ways too, since the Cooke family lived in close confinement with guests at the hotel. This meant that the hotel's public and private spaces had to be negotiated with care by both staff and guests alike. When the *White Hart* was advertised before sale in 1858, seven of the fourteen rooms were demarcated as family space, the remainder as guest accommodation, public dining, and bar trade. Although by law, hotels were deemed public institutions, the spatial economy was in reality a blend of public and private spheres determined by the relationship of its occupants to the institution itself.[14] The *White Hart* maintained this dichotomy. It functioned as a private family home yet operated as a public venue where shire council and racing club meetings, card nights, musical soirees, dinners and so on, were regular fixtures. Although the precinct had a somewhat dubious clientele, at another level it was a coveted venue for social events such as

[12] Outbuildings included shearing shed, stockyard, stables, wagon and machinery sheds, storage and workshop, and a wood storage facility.
[13] *Argus*, 17 February 1871; *Kilmore Advertiser*, 19 December 1885. Wage payments for farm labourers may also have been Mary's responsibility.
[14] Clare Wright, 'Of Public Houses and Private Lives: Female Hotelkeepers as Domestic Entrepreneurs', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 32, Issue 116, 2001, 59.

balls, the pinnacle of which was Pyalong's Grand Race Day Ball held annually on Boxing Day.[15]



On Boxing Day a large number of persons assembled on the Pyalong race course to witness the races announced to be held on that day. The several events were well contested and a very enjoyable day was spent. In the evening a ball was held at Cooke's Hotel, and, warm though the weather was, dancing was kept up with much zest until a late hour next morning. For the Maiden Plate of 5 sovs, heats were run, Wilson's Flying Buck coming in front each time, Tommy Dodd, entered in the same name, pulling off the Farmer's Purse, Othello second. The Hurdle Race of 7 sovs. was won by Hammond's Harkaway. The gentlemen who acted as stewards deserve credit for the manner in which they performed their duties.—*Kilmore Free Press.*

Figure 44: *McIvor Times & Rodney Advertiser* 7 January 1875

Whether or not Mary sought the social spotlight on such occasions is doubtful although the race day ball clearly defined her as a respected member of Pyalong society. In fact, she may have relished her position as hostess since it enabled her to openly display her commodious home and accoutrements (which included a piano, English ceramics, and silverware) and to demonstrate the family's growing affluence and social accomplishments. A piano was a luxury and an important status symbol in Victorian times which helped fulfil social pretensions, and it was not unusual for the Cookes to lend their piano to other groups on occasion.[16] By the late nineteenth century women's educational aspirations were being taken more seriously and owning a piano may have meant Mary was a relatively educated, cultured woman, with some of the accomplishments of genteel society. Moreover, sometime around the 1870s Mary and Patrick sat for formal studio portraits and acquired a set of *Cartes de Visites*

[15] *Kilmore Free Press*,12 June 1902 and multiple advertisements over several decades; with racegoers coming from as far afield as Kilmore, Heathcote and Knowsley, the ball was well-patronised with people dancing to the tunes of the violin. Ryan, *Pyalong: A Brief History*, Back-to-Pyalong Committee (1968), 11; two local musicians at the Race Day Ball took turns and were paid with complimentary tickets, and before David Walsh built a hand squared local granite hall in 1902, locals were accustomed to regular entertainment by fiddlers on the hall's grassy site and at the Pyalong State School. See also Farrell, 'Pyalong: A History', 23; the first entertainment held in the hall in 1902 was the Rifle Club Ball.

[16] *Kilmore Free Press*, 1 March 1894; one such occasion was a fundraising concert at Pyalong in February 1894 in aid of the Kilmore Hospital; Mary Burgan, 'Heroines at the Piano: Women and Music in Nineteenth-Century Fiction', *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1, Music in Victorian Society and Culture, 1986, 1-2.

(visiting cards), acts that signified a wish for social prestige and identification with the mannered class.[17] The subtle messages in these items reinforced cultural values and upward social mobility, and their meanings were probably well understood by the Cookes who likely used them to foster their own image of respectability.[18]

Mary's hopes for upward social mobility may have been influenced by the changing social mores that resulted from the progress of liberal ideology and increasing wealth and consumerism. For middle-class women like Mary who straddled positions as both hotelier and landowner, the dual role was both liberating and constricting. As in many country hotels, accommodation at the *White Hart* was shared between family and strangers, a situation that weakened the boundary between home life and the demands of the working world.[19] And although servants reduced some of the drudgery of housework for Mary, her public face at the hotel meant she had to keep up appearances and conform to particular standards of refinement. It also meant that the nature of hospitality sometimes placed her in an invidious position where she felt obliged to exercise moral judgement over the behaviour of her hotel clients. Two incidents at the hotel show that such judgments could land her in court.

In 1871 Mary appeared as a witness before a jury in Melbourne's Criminal Court, concerning an alleged murder when a local man (William Wiltshire) bled to death at the *White Hart* after having his throat cut. Drunkenness played a part, with one of two men accused of the murder admitting he was 'blind drunk' when he left the *White Hart* premises. To what extent Mary's testimony as proprietor of the hotel influenced the jury is unknown.[20]

A further incident occurred in November 1886 when Mary appeared as a witness to the abduction and sexual assault of a 14-year-old girl by a middle-aged man who forced the girl to pose as his wife when seeking accommodation at the hotel. During an exchange, Mary told the girl she 'looked rather young to be married', and when questioned, the girl did not

[17] Mary Burgan, 'Heroines at the Piano', 1-2; McConville, *Croppies, Celts and Catholics*, 88; well into the 1870s most Irish brides were listed as domestic servants although signs of change emerged in the 1880s when more females began to enter the public workforce.
[18] Barbara, Rusch, *The Secret Life of Victorian Cards*, The Ephemera Society of America (Presented at Ephemera Conference 25, 2005 [ENv24n1, 2005, 17-24]) http://ephemerasociety.org/the-secret-life-of-victorian-cards/ Accessed 16/08/2021.
[19] Paul O'Leary, 'Networking Respectability: Class, Gender and Ethnicity among the Irish in South Wales, 1845-1914', *Immigrants and Minorities*, Vol. 23, Issue 2-3, 263. A mark of respectability was that a respectable man should be able to maintain his wife without her having to 'coarsen' herself through waged work.
[20] *Kilmore Free Press*, 23 & 47 February 1871. The victim was a man named William Wiltshire, a resident of the area somewhere between Kilmore and Heathcote. After drinking with two men at Cooke's hotel an altercation occurred resulting in Wiltshire's mutilation and death. Local newspapers denounced the outcome when a jury concluded that cutting a man's throat, stabbing him, battering his skull with a fencing rail, smashing his face, and killing him by a series of extremely cruel and bloodthirsty actions was merely manslaughter.

know her husband's name. Despite her reservations, Mary provided the pair with the hotel's one remaining vacant room furnished with a double bed. At a trial in Melbourne in which the man was charged with abduction and carnal intent of a girl of 14 years, a six-year term of imprisonment was imposed with stretches of hard labour and solitary confinement.[21]

Although Mary may not have relished making moralistic character judgments in the course of her daily work, her testimony was crucial because it led the Chief Justice to say that he had never seen a case in which a more deliberately planned attempt had been made to ruin a child, and that the events were carried out with criminal intent rather than sudden passion or affection.[22] The comments may have underlined his faith in Mary's handling of the situation, since there was an accepted view in the nineteenth century that the female sex was responsible for 'civilising' and 'redeeming' a morally deficient society.[23] Although not explicitly stated, Mary emerged from the trial as a woman of respect who was prepared to speak up in an industry that was often judged on the integrity of its hotelkeepers and the quality of its patrons. Mary's testimony presaged legislation many years later when the presence of a woman was considered an essential condition in the licensing of a hotel to a single man.[24] The legislation was an important step forward because it acknowledged women's potential at a time when the achievements of males were lauded repeatedly, and when masculinity permeated civic institutions and local press reportage.

At the same time the demands of Mary's move to the hotel may have weighed heavily in other ways still, since her unruly offspring had for years threatened to undermine the image of respectability that she and Patrick were fostering as a family and as community leaders. Advertisements for the sale of the *White Hart* in 1858 were an indication of what might be in store. As required for coaching inns, the *White Hart* was classified according to domestic and commercial functions.[25] Implicit in the advertisement was that any transgression into the private sphere would be a violation of social norms and the unwritten rules of conduct.

As we have seen, an unwelcome transgression into the *White Hart's* private space occurred in 1885 when the behaviour of a group of inebriated hotel patrons escalated out of

---

[21] *Kilmore Free Press,* 11 November 1886.
[22] *Age*, 26 November 1886.
[23] Stuart Macintyre, *Colonial Liberalism: The Lost World of Three Victorian Visionaries* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1991), 207.
[24] Wright, 'Of Public Houses and Private Lives', 60-61. Figures demonstrate the importance of women to the hotel industry: by 1876 females comprised 22 per cent of the licensees for metropolitan and inner-city Melbourne; in 1906, 55 per cent of Melbourne's 644 urban pubs had female licensees.
25 *Argus*, 30 April 1858; *Kilmore Free Press*, 26 November 1886.

control after the Boxing Day races. When the offenders faced charges in the Kilmore court the discussion focused on the constitution of public and private space, and how offensive language on a hotel verandah might affect people in the vicinity. The court made it clear that the verandah of a hotel was a public space no less than a road, and that the Boxing Day patrons had no case to answer since the affray occurred late at night *after* hours when the hotel licence had lapsed.[26] The finding offered little consolation to the women inside the hotel who witnessed the altercation since the demarcation of hotel space completely ignored their rights in an area that was under their remit.

Figure 45: The hotel veranda where the Boxing Day fracas occurred and some of its players. Catherine Cooke, William Percival, Thomas Cooke, Catherine Walsh, Patrick Cooke, Nicholas Cooke, Mary Cooke. (Maguire/Dynan Archive)

Despite the courtroom logic, the case demonstrates the spatial implications of pub life where the area between public and private was often blurred. In fact, no area within the *White Hart* was entirely private owing to the building's configuration and the movement of people, which by necessity, was cheek by jowl as people moved through passageways from one area to another. The belief, therefore, that the domestic space offered protection from encroachment

[26] *Kilmore Free Press*, 15 January 1885. There was no mention of the men's drinking habits or lack of manners towards their hosts, although the police sought a heavy penalty since such cases were 'getting rather common' in Pyalong. Apart from visitors to the hotel, Catherine Walsh and Catherine Cooke were most likely among the women who witnessed the incident.

no longer held true. Under such conditions, the Cooke 'home' was never completely free from outside intrusion—or danger.[27]

In a society where the stereotype of the hard drinking, swearing, mannerless male was common, the Cooke sons were no exception.[28] To some, such behaviour was seen as a symptom of poor parenting and in this regard, Mary and Patrick had a job on their hands.[29] As the literature shows, uncouth behavior in the colony was often a sign of camaraderie and mateship, and it may have been a way of coping for Patrick's sons who were under pressure to improve their station.[30] Nonetheless, for their parents bad behaviour would have been hard to take given their efforts to keep up appearances as respectable community leaders. By the mid-1880s, when the Boxing Day fracas occurred, the family had sufficient material wealth to justify their claims to respectability and from as early as the mid-1860s Patrick was admired as a worthy Justice of the Peace. Even so, the scenes at the *White Hart* were hardly new to Patrick since he grew up in an Irish family where drinking was part of the social milieu and where physical violence, stone-throwing and court litigation were the chief means of settling disputes. Between the 1850s and 1880s the males in his Irish family faced court in Limerick on more than 20 occasions for assault and drunkenness, issues concerning domestic servants and waged labourers, driving unregistered carriages on public roads, and for allowing their stock to roam unchecked beyond boundaries. In Ireland, as in Australia, these were serious offences.[31] With a plentiful supply of alcohol on tap, the hotel bar was an ideal setting for things to get out of hand. Conviviality was encouraged at all hours of the day and night, and despite parental concern possibly hastened the demise of Patrick and Mary's son, Thomas, in 1921. In many ways the hotel space was a paradox: it signalled harmony and sociability as well as disorder.

---

[27] See Penny Russell, '"Unhomely Moments": Civilising Domestic Worlds in Colonial Australia', *History of the Family*, 14 (2009), 327, for a discussion on the negotiation of public and private space in public buildings and how there can never be a truly 'private sphere', immune to the intrusion of public concern.; see also Wright, 'Of Public Houses and Private Lives', 59.

[28] Penny Russell, *Savage or Civilised? Manners in Colonial Australia* (Sydney, NSW: University of New South Wales Press Ltd., 2010, 48.

[29] Russell, *Savage or Civilised*, 214.

[30] See Walter Stone & Pro Hart, *Poems of Banjo Patterson/Poems of Henry Lawson* (New Holland Australia: New Holland Publishers, Pty. Ltd, 2010) for an example of how themes of mateship and acceptance were part of colonial thinking.

[31] *Ireland Court of Petty Sessions Order Books 1842-1913*, CSPS 1/1425, 9 September 1885 https://www findmypast.com.au/articles/world-records/ Accessed 03/09/2016. In 1867, Patrick's brother, John Cooke, was charged with allowing his ass to run loose on a public road in Baggotstown. Various Charges involved Patrick's brothers and nephews. The Cooke family also resorted to litigation when dealing with land disputes and water rights. See Appendix 18.

Although the move from the farm to the hotel altered the material and spatial context of Mary's life in both positive and negative ways, her agency during settlement did not end at the farm gate; nor did it end at the door of the hotel. In the midst of these events, her family increased to ten children. High fertility was not entirely unusual during Mary's generation as 50 per cent of married women in the colonies experienced nine or more births.[32] However, the family also suffered loss. Following the death of their first child as an infant in Ireland, and that of 18-month-old John in Victoria in 1855, twelve-year-old James died from a brain disease in 1874; Mary's sister, Catherine, died in 1888 during Patrick's visit to Ireland. Daughter, Catherine, died suddenly in 1895 as a result of Rheumatic Fever (five years after her mother).[33] Both Cooke children and their aunt died at home, rather than in the Kilmore hospital which admitted mainly accident and charity cases.[34] The Cookes could afford to be treated at home by virtue of their social and financial position. Until the last years of her life Mary was a physically strong woman, surviving pregnancy at a time when childbirth was risky when complications arose.

With poor understanding of the origins of disease, and inadequate sanitary and water management, the chance of dying from illness in the nineteenth century was high. In the 1850s authorities were still debating the origins of typhoid fever and whether it was spread by contagion.[35] Infectious diseases such as phthisis (Pulmonary Tuberculosis), typhoid, influenza, bronchitis, diphtheria, whooping cough, measles and scarlet fever spread rapidly.[36] In rural areas the sick and injured had little access to medical care and relied on self-medication and home care ministered by family and friends.[37] Although carers sometimes waited too long

---

[32] Janet L. Doust, 'Two English Immigrant Families in Australia in the nineteenth century', *History of the Family*, 13, 2008, 10.

[33] *Register Births Deaths Marriages*, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), https://prov.vic.gov.au/explore-collection/explore-topic/births-deaths-and-marriages Multiple accessions 2009-2019: John Cooke, Catherine Cooke, Thomas Cooke, John Cooke (2nd), James Cooke, Richard Cooke; Patrick and Mary's first child (also named Nicholas was born and died as an infant in Ireland in 1847); *Catholic Parish Register NLI*, Knockainy & Patrickswell/Diocese Cashel & Emly, Co. Limerick, Ireland, Microfilm 02505/03; *Catholic Parish Registers NLI*, Knockainy & Patrickswell/Diocese Cashel & Emly, Co. Limerick, Ireland, https://www nationalarchives.ie/article/records-birth-marriage-death/ Accessed 06/06/2019.

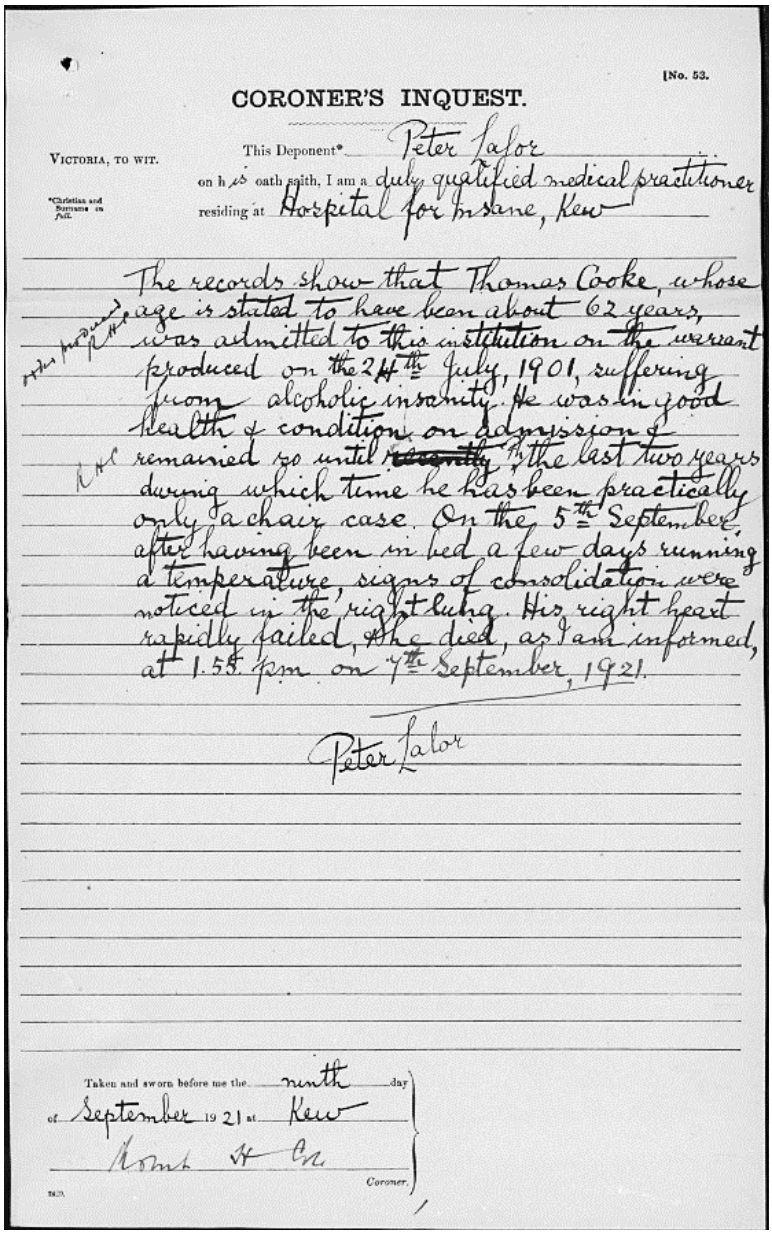
[34] Tucker, *Kilmore on the Sydney Road*, 116; *McIvor Times*, 17 April 1885; the Colony's first caesarian section was performed in 1885 when Mary was well past childbearing age.

[35] Robyn J. Pryor, 'Morbidity and Minerals: Health and Mortality in Victoria in the 1850s', *Working Papers in Demography 5*, Department of Demography, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, Canberra, A.C.T., Australia, 1977, 4, https://www.worldcat.org/title/morbidity-and-minerals-health-and-mortality-in-victoria-in-the-1850s Accessed 10/11/ 2020.

[36] Pryor, 'Morbidity and Minerals', 4-5.

[37] John Pearn, '"Where there is No Doctor": Self-Help and Pre-Hospital Care in Colonial Australia', *Health and History*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2012, 162.

before seeking medical help, it was not uncommon for Pyalong residents to lose their lives because of the time it took for the doctor to arrive on horseback.[38]



[No. 53.

CORONER'S INQUEST.

VICTORIA, TO WIT.

This Deponent* Peter Lalor

on his oath saith, I am a duly qualified medical practitioner

residing at Hospital for Insane, Kew

*Christian and Surname in full.

The records show that Thomas Cooke, whose age is stated to have been about 62 years, was admitted to this institution on the warrant produced on the 24th July, 1901, suffering from alcoholic insanity. He was in good health & condition on admission & remained so until recently, the last two years during which time he has been practically only a chair case. On the 5th September, after having been in bed a few days running a temperature, signs of consolidation were noticed in the right lung. His right heart rapidly failed, & he died, as I am informed, at 1.55 pm on 7th September, 1921.

Peter Lalor

Taken and sworn before me the ninth day of September 1921 at Kew

Coroner.

Figure 46: Thomas Cooke, Hospital for Insane, Kew. Victoria,
(Inquest Deposition Files, State Coroner's Office, 9 September 1921, VPRS/P0, Unit 11011, Item 1921/911)

Alcoholism posed another problem for the Cookes. In 1901, at the age of 42 years Thomas Cooke was admitted to Melbourne's Kew Hospital for the Insane where he was incarcerated for more than 20 years with 'alcoholic insanity'. The last five years of his life

[38] Anne O'Reilly, *Inquest Deposition Files*, State Coroner's Office, 7 February 1880, VPRS 24/P0, Unit 413, Item, 1880/36 (PROV) www.prov.vic.gov.au Accessed 10/11/2020; in 1880 Anne O'Reilly, the wife of Pyalong's Police Constable died 'unexpectedly' during childbirth. The gravity of her condition was underestimated, and the Kilmore doctor not summoned in time.

were spent in the hospital ward at the asylum. An inquest heard that he remained in reasonably good health until his last two years when he became 'a chair case' and died of myocarditis (heart disease) and consolidation of the lung in 1921 at age 62. He died alone apart from the presence of a 'Christian Attendant', was not visited by relatives, and was last seen by an 'Official Visitor' two days before his death.[39] Like many at the time who were affected by alcohol or mental illness, he may have been locked away for years with little or no contact with his family. It is possible that they were embarrassed by the stigma of his condition and the effect it might have on their reputation. In the mid-nineteenth century intemperance was a major problem in the colony, leading one physician to note that drunkenness in Port Phillip in 1891 'abounded to an alarming extent…vastly exceed[ing] that of any country in which a statistical return had been taken… and no class of colonists seemed to be free'.[40] The same doctor noted that well over half the cases in asylums when the Cooke family arrived in 1854 were the result of intoxication.[41]

In the midst of illness which ultimately claimed the lives of members of the Cooke family, Mary's children and her sister, Catherine, played an important part in the running of the hotel and the management of the farm. Unlike Patrick and Mary's sons, Mary's sister and daughters lived dutiful lives which conformed to the notions of gentility that were expected of the female sex. Nonetheless, by 1890 when Mary died, her sons were aged between 25 and 40 years by which time a lack of newspaper reportage suggests their behaviour and drinking habits had mellowed somewhat as they took on civic and family responsibilities. By then Mary was already accustomed to the absence of her elder daughters, both of whom had married hard-working Irish immigrant farmers. After Margaret's marriage in 1877 on 'one of the jolliest days the little township of Pyalong had witnessed', she and her Irish immigrant husband John Carroll, (from Knocklong, County Limerick), moved to *The Laurels*, the Carroll property at

[39] Thomas Cooke, Death Certificate, 7 September 1921 (PROV); Thomas Cooke, Victoria, Mental Health Institutions, 24 July 1901, VPRS 7680 (PROV); Thomas Cooke, *Inquest Deposition Files*, State Coroner's Office, 9 September 1921, VPRS/P0, Unit 1011, Item 1921/911. In January 1901 the Cooke family decided to sell off parts of the estate of Patrick's son, Thomas, before he was committed to Melbourne's Kew Hospital for the Insane in July 1901. The property consisted of a three-year lease on 1,604 acres of farmland: 534 acres at Sandy Creek; 252 acres in the parish of Tooborac; 320 acres at Panyule; and 498 acres at Pyalong, all well-watered and securely sheep-proof fenced and subdivided, along with 740 crossbred ewes and wethers, 450 comeback lambs, 18 heifers, two stock horses and one thoroughbred colt.

[40] Pryor, 'Morbidity and Minerals', 8; quote attributed to Singleton, J., *A Narrative of Incidents in the Eventful Life of a Physician*, 1891, https://www.victoriancollections net.au published online 15 May 2012. Accessed 10/10/2020.

[41] Pryor, 'Morbidity and Minerals', 8; according to Singleton, many cases of intoxication were the result of experiences on the goldfields where intemperance was rife. In 1855, 75 per cent of the deaths of Victorian criminals, were attributed to drinking as well as 60 per cent of the deaths of the insane, 35 per cent of the deaths of adult males, and 33 per cent of cases heard in the coroner's court.

Mudgegonga in north-eastern Victoria.[42] In 1882, Margaret's younger sister, Bridget, married Thomas McCormack, the son of an Irish immigrant farmer. Bridget and Thomas worked several farming properties, one of which was *May Park* at Toolamba, which was later sold to Sir Rupert Clarke. Both Margaret and Bridget absorbed the values of their parents in selecting Catholic partners who were influential members in their local communities; and when they died, their material success was evident in the substantial legacies left to their children.[43]

Patrick and Mary's son, Nicholas, possibly the most disruptive member of the family in his youth, remained on the farm at Pyalong after marrying 18-year-old Margaret Ryan in 1882. Margaret was the daughter of immigrant parents who migrated from Tipperary in 1863 and settled on farming land abutting part of the Cooke property at the Black Springs, near Tooborac.[44] By 1890 Nicholas was settled with several children. In August 1887 he followed in his father's footsteps by taking on civic responsibilities, for the first time winning council representation for the east riding of the Pyalong shire.[45] He fathered 13 children between 1882 and 1902 and was said to be a rigid disciplinarian.[46] After mending his errant ways, Nicholas threw himself into community affairs, was a keen member of the Pyalong Turf Club and Shire Council, and was a devoted supporter of the Catholic Church and local schools.[47] During the Great War, he and Margaret suffered the loss of their 20-year-old son, Richard, in France.[48] In 1915 both the *Kilmore Advertiser* and the *Free Press* made much of the need for recruits from the district and with equal denigration of the 'shirker'.[49] These reports may have played a part

---

[42] Shipping Register (PROV), *Rockhampton*, 1 February 1865; *Probate and Administration Files* (PROV), John Carroll, VPRS 28/P3, Unit 118, Item 15/271. See also *History of the John Carroll family at Mudgegonga: The Carrolls of 'The Laurels*, (n/d, author unknown). After arrival in Victoria (and before his marriage in 1877) John Carroll prospected for gold before purchasing a bullock team which he used for a carrying business between Myrtleford, Stanley and Beechworth. When the *Land Act* of 1869 was passed, he selected his first 320 acres, becoming one of the original land selectors in Mudgegonga. Before marriage in 1877 he supplemented his income by mining for gold on the Yackandandah goldfields. When John Carroll died in 1910 their 3,000-acre estate, *The Laurels*, was valued at £9,363.

[43] *Shepparton Advertiser*, 11 October 1928.

[44] Shipping Register (PROV), *Champion of the Seas*, 6 July-25 September 1863.

[45] *Kilmore Free Press*, 4 August 1887.

[46] Personal Communication, Thomas Celsus Ryan, Pyalong, c.1980; Nicholas demanded that his children were to marry only in order of their birth. In the process many suitors were deemed 'not good enough' for his daughters; Dennis Kilmartin, [email to author], 19/06/2021.

[47] *Kilmore Free Press*, 16 November 1899.

[48] *Australian Military Force (AMF), Attestation Papers*, Pte Richard Thomas Cooke, No. 1889, 23rd Battalion, B2455, National Archives Australia (NAA) https://www.awm.gov.au/ Accessed 10/19/2017. Richard was killed during a battle at Fleurs, France, when a grenade landed in a trench as he was preparing to take leave at the end of a shift. He died at the age of 20 years and nine months and is buried with 4000 troops in a cemetery at Fleurs only a short distance from the town of Albert.

[49] *Kilmore Free Press*, 28 January 1915; 28 October 1915; recruitment campaigns were often accompanied by attempts to flush out shirkers; see also Pte Richard Thomas Cooke, letter from Heliopolis published in *Assumption College Annual 1916,* Assumption College, Kilmore, Victoria; also Agnes Cooke, *Agnes Cooke Notebook, 1915-1916*, in which Richard's 14-year-old sister dedicates the notebook to 'my dear brother Dick', before closing it

in Richard's decision to enlist. Richard's enlistment was probably a test of loyalty to Empire for the Cooke family, however, since Nicholas was well-known throughout Pyalong as a fiercely anti-British, Irish nationalist.[50] Whatever Richard's parents' views, they were required to consent to his enlistment since he was underage.[51]

Mary's daughter, Catherine, was a responsible woman who assisted her mother and aunt at the hotel until she too died suddenly after contracting Rheumatic Fever in 1895, aged 39.[52] Unlike many unmarried women who lived in domestic obscurity, the demands of managing a public venue after the deaths of her mother and aunt meant that Catherine was far from invisible, although she never attained the wealth of her brothers and sisters.[53]

Single son Thomas remained a hard-working, progressive farmer at Pyalong before admittance to the Kew Hospital for the Insane where he died after the 20-year incarceration as an insane alcoholic. As Thomas' mental state deteriorated, the family may have had no choice but to intervene, and possibly colluded to have him admitted to hospital. Although part of his estate was sold to family members when he was hospitalised in 1901, Thomas left a considerable estate for distribution among his siblings when he died in 1921.[54] The administrators were his brothers, Richard and Nicholas, and Patrick's neighbor and close friend, Thomas Ryan, whose father (Thomas) was an Irish immigrant.[55]

John Cooke similarly shed his youthful indiscretions. He became a committed member of the Pyalong community and a respected Justice of the Peace before marriage in 1896 to Irish immigrant, Margaret Barry from Knockainy.[56] He acquired enormous wealth as a squatter and pastoralist, before settling at Poowong in Gippsland before his early death in Melbourne in 1910. Like others in the Cooke family he was a devout Catholic and regularly donated large sums of money to the church, the pinnacle of which was a £50 donation and the presentation

---

abruptly on learning of his death. Unlike her father, Agnes' notebook shows she was strongly in favour of loyalty to Empire, since she hailed her brother's death with pride, describing it as an heroic sacrifice 'for home and country'.

[50] Dennis Kilmartin, [email to author], 18 July 2021.

[51] *Australian Military Force (AMF), Attestation Papers*, Pte Richard Thomas Cooke, No. 1889.

[52] *Kilmore Advertiser*, 15 June 1895.

[53] *Probate and Administration Files* (PROV), Catherine Cooke, VPRS 28/P2, Unit 424, Item 60/004. In 1895 Catherine left a modest estate valued at £1,163 which included 320 acres of farming land.

[54] *Probate and Administration Files* (PROV), Thomas Cooke, VPRS 28/P3, Unit 1197, Item 181/176; *Kilmore Free Press*, 26 November 1901. The sale of stock, comprising cattle, horses and sheep was sold under instructions from the Master-in-Lunacy. When he died in 1921, his estate was valued at £7431 3s 7d.

[55] Shipping Register (PROV), *Champion of the Seas*, 6 July-25 September 1863. The Ryans and Cookes were known to one another in Ireland. After immigrating in 1863 Ryan settled at the Black Springs, a district adjacent to Pyalong.

[56] Margaret Barry, Baptism 15 July 1876, Microfiche 02505/03, *Catholic Parish Registers NLI,* Knockaney & Patrickswell, Diocese Cashel & Emly, Co. Limerick, Ireland.

of a 'magnificent high altar' to a newly erected church in Loch, Gippsland, in 1903, as a tribute to the memory of his late father, Patrick Cooke.

At the dedication of the church, much was made of Cooke's generosity. Fathers Keating and Collins exhorted parishioners to remember Cooke and his departed father in their prayers, and likened John Cooke's gesture to the sacrifices made by his Irish forebears.[57] John's gesture signalled a growing desire for recognition and respectability on the part of the Cooke sons as they came to maturity. The Catholic faith was important to them, despite the 'moral' lapses of the past. It was a point demonstrated many years earlier by their father. During a court hearing in 1885 Patrick was asked the nature of his avocation. Without hesitation he replied, 'I am a publican, your worship, and a sinner too'.[58]

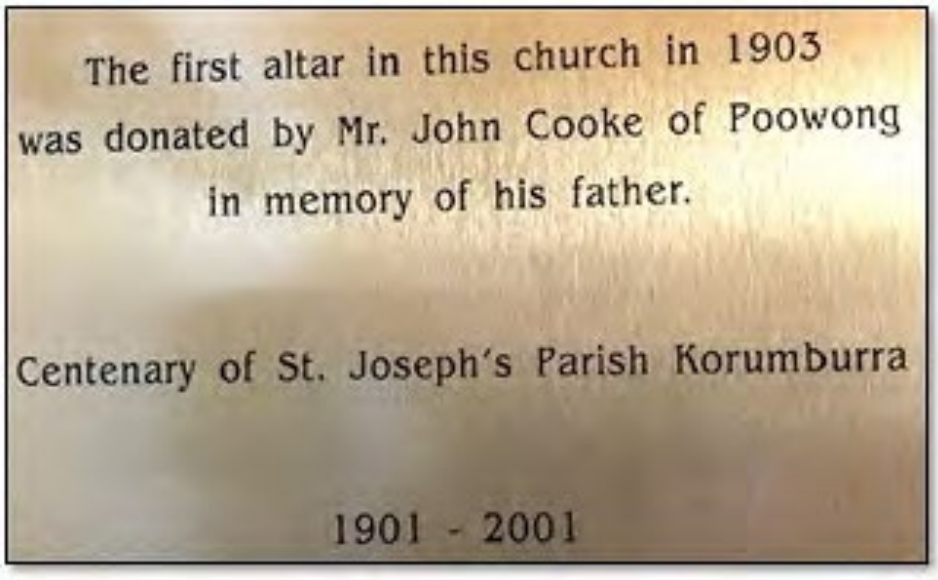


Figure 47: Plaque, St Joseph's Catholic Church, Korumburra, Victoria.
(Dynan Archive, 2019)

Youngest son, Richard was aged 25 when his mother died. He was a respectable citizen and seemed to avoid the aberrations of his brothers. In 1894 he married Catherine McNiff, the daughter of John McNiff from Leitrim, County Limerick.[59] As Patrick aged, Richard gradually assumed responsibility for the Pyalong property and the management of a large stable of racehorses. He won election to his father's seat in the West Riding of the Pyalong Shire in

[57] *Great Southern Advocate*, 20 August 1903.
[58] *Kilmore Advertiser*, 19 December 1885.
[59] *Age*, 9 August 1952; the friendship between the Cooke and McNiff families originated in Ireland. John McNiff & Mary Cooney, Marriage Reg. 2560/1860, *Register Births Deaths Marriage* (PROV); Shipping Register, *Gertrude* (PROV), 20 October 1854. Catherine McNiff's father, John, arrived in Victoria from New York, on the *Gertrude* in 1854, landing in Melbourne a month after the Cookes. He settled in Redesdale in Central Victoria where he was a farmer and publican.

1899, was a Justice of the Peace by 1906, and served several terms as shire president.[60] When he died there were no bequests to the Catholic Church or charitable institutions—a sign perhaps that he had an ambivalent attitude to the Church, or that he had gradually drifted away from practice. [61]

Of the Cooke children who married, all enjoyed a high standard of living as property owners with commodious homes and household servants; and all chose Catholic partners from immigrant families known to their parents in Ireland. It was a côterie of intermarriage in Victoria that was not unlike the custom in Knockainy, where a tight social and religious kinship was established between families over many decades. This outcome may have been particularly satisfying for Mary as a lot was expected of her as an Irishwoman in the rearing of her children, since it was considered the Catholic mothers' duty to ensure children remained true to the Faith. Mixed marriages were condemned by the Catholic Church. Women like Mary bore a heavy responsibility. A letter in Melbourne's Catholic *Advocate* in 1874, for example, stated that priests were 'at a loss to know how Irish mothers could fail thus' given that such unions posed [such] a serious threat to the Catholic faith.[62]

Like Mary's daughters, her unmarried sister, Catherine's life in a public house enabled her to engage with people far more openly than would have been the case in Ireland. Catherine assisted Mary with the management of the *White Hart* and mixed daily with the public. It is unknown whether she was a waged member of the household or whether her remuneration was in the form of permanent board and lodging. Either way, her hotel responsibilities, and the fact that she was a local landholder almost certainly gave her economic independence and a degree of status.[63] An examination of wills in this study shows that, with the exception of Catherine, all members of the immigrant generation who migrated with the Cookes in 1854 left sizable endowments in the form of cash, real estate or farming land. It was a considerable feat given the risks they took in a foreign environment and given most arrived with little capital.

---

[60] *Kilmore Free Press*, 5 April 1894; 31 August 1899; 22 February 1906.
[61] *Probate & Administration Files* (PROV), Richard Cooke, VPRS 28/P3, Unit 1684, Item 210/495; VPRS 7591/P2, Unit 740, Item 210/495. When Richard died in 1926 he left a 4,825-acre estate valued at £23,313 to be distributed between family members. His wife, Catherine McNiff, received a life annuity of £200; cousin, Mary Hill, Euroa (£1,000). The remainder was shared equally between his four children.
[62] O'Leary, 'Networking Respectability', 262; *Advocate*, 5 September 1874; the letter was written by J. J. D., parish priest of Moyhu, Victoria, on 18 September 1874.
[63] *McIvor Times*, 13 July 1866. Catherine's first application for land was made in 1866; Catherine Walsh, 1888, *Probate and Administration Files,* (PROV), VPRS 28/P0000, 38/171. At death in 1888 Catherine left a small estate (net value £297 1s 6d) comprising 233 acres of land on which there were no improvements. Probate was granted to her sister, Mary.

As his family reached adulthood, Patrick pressed on as a community leader, even as his health declined within months of Mary's death. The first inkling of ill-health was at a Council meeting in September 1891 when Patrick requested two months leave of absence.[64] However he continued to renew his hotel license, supported the racing club (which showed only a small debit balance in 1898), oversaw monthly stock sales at the *White Hart*, hosted meetings, card nights and social occasions such as concerts and balls at the hotel, and attended to Council duties.[65] He continued acting as a Justice of the Peace, administering the oath of Allegiance to 52-year-old German immigrant, Stephen Zoch in 1897.[66] Patrick's claim that he had known Zoch for 25 years was an indication of the camaraderie that existed among Pyalong immigrants for many years after migration.[67]

Fortunately Patrick was able to survive the downturns of the 1890s. He may have been insulated from the effects of the recession, having ridden the crest of the wave during the buoyant economy of the 1870s and early 1880s when harvests were prolific and wool prices high, especially if his borrowings were low. And although the drought almost certainly forced him to reduce stock numbers, the addition of a large, new room at the *White Hart*, the building of a new, commodious shearing shed, and the ability to restock when the drought ended, suggests he made a quick recovery.[68] Further improvements included labor-saving farm machinery and the installation of five mechanised shearing stands in the *White Hart* shearing shed.[69] By 1916 the number of sheep shorn annually in the Cooke woolshed had risen to around 12,000.[70]

When the recession ended, market reports between 1903 and 1917 also show that Richard's continued focus on sheep breeds best suited to the locality was a shrewd economic decision. Sought-after breeding lines of crossbreds and comebacks, and merino wethers noted

---

[64] *Kilmore Free Press,* 10 September 1891.
[65] *Kilmore Free Press*, 15 December 1892; 1 March 1894; 23 December 1898.
[66] *Kilmore Free Press*, 9 December 1897. In 1865 Patrick sat on a jury panel inquiring into the death of five-month-old Martha Ming; and in 1886, was the sole juror in an inquest into the death of an abused child at Emu Flat. 1897 he fined Pyalong farmer, Thomas Kenny, for behaving in an insulting manner.
[67] *The Brisbane Courier*, 5 September 1864; McKenzie McHarg, *Eliza: The First Mrs Zoch*, 19-20, 27; Stephen was a lawyer from Schonlanke, Germany. He migrated to Australia in June 1864 and was the first Zoch to come to the colony. He farmed 80 acres of land at the Black Springs where he lived in a primitive hut before building a granite stone house with a shingle roof. He left the Black Springs in 1899 after selling 438 acres of arable farming land to Nicholas Cooke for £500, Nicholas paid his initial rate instalment on the property (two pounds and eight shillings) in February 1900.
[68] *Kilmore Free Press*, 1 October 1903; one of his first purchases was a lot of 1650 merino wethers from Wycheproof farmer, D. Macvean in October 1903; Chris Cooke, Personal Communication, 10 October 2020. For wool production tables 1840-1890 see Appendices 19, 20 and 21.
[69] *Seymour Express*, 1 December 1916.
[70] *Weekly Times*, 22 December 1917; this figure almost certainly included sheep from neighboring properties.

for their high-quality fine wool, were particularly suited to the Central Victorian environment.[71] Although Pyalong was primarily sheep country, much of the Cooke land was stocked with fat cattle which were transported to Melbourne's Newmarket saleyards. Cropping consisted of wheat, barley and oats. With its agricultural potential Pyalong compared favourably with the best land in Victoria's Western District. The locale was thus promoted with alacrity when properties were advertised for sale. When 18,000 acres of freehold on both the *Glenaroua* and *Pyalong* estates was listed for sale in 1886, much was made of early settlement by the Mollisons. Advertisements noted that both estates were proximate to a newly constructed railway and adjacent to the 'famous fattening paddocks' of 'Messrs Cooke, Rainey, Walsh and Paterson'.[72]

At the same time, Patrick's emergence from the recession was not without challenge. During the recession and after, he suffered from a spate of bushfires that took a toll on his finances through the loss of stock, pasture, crops and fencing. More than five serious bushfires occurred between 1889 and 1901 with an outbreak in 1900 causing more damage at Pyalong than any since the district was settled.[73] In 1897 the *White Hart* and Pyalong's Catholic Church were only saved from destruction by a sudden change of wind. All fires during the period affected the properties of Cooke, Rainey, Ryan, Eades, Halpin, Paterson and Walsh.[74] Several shepherd's huts on the original Cooke property (*The Pines*), and the original home which Patrick built in the 1850s, were razed by a bushfire in 1901, the only remnants being a solid brick chimney and palm trees and the stonework of slab-walled, bark roofed workmen's huts.

As the effects of the 1890s recession took hold in eastern Australia within five years of Mary's death, further tragedy occurred when Patrick's 39-year-old daughter, Catherine, died suddenly. For several years she had managed the *White Hart* where 'travellers and callers always had a kind word for poor Katie' whose bright disposition made her a general favourite. After a funeral Mass conducted by Fr Farrelly at Pyalong, 50 vehicles and 28 horsemen followed a large cortege to the Kilmore cemetery, with mourners travelling long distances 'to pay the last token of respect to one so universally esteemed'. Among the large attendance was

[71] *ABS, Year Book Australia, cat. No. 1301*.0 (2003), ABS, Canberra; various editions from 1901, file:///E:/DataStore/Pictures/SHEEP%20NUMBERS Accessed 10/11/2020.
[72] *Advocate*, 18 December 1886.
[73] *Argus*, 8 February 1900.
[74] *Kilmore Free Press*, multiple entries. In a bushfire on 28 December 1909 the Cooke and Ryan families were among those most affected.

the Hon. J. Gavan Duffy, Postmaster General, a sign that the Cooke family had gained social acceptance and the respect of people in high places.[75]

In 1897, a large part of Patrick's community work came to an end when his close friend and co-immigrant, John Halpin, was unanimously elected president of the Shire Council, taking over at a time when the municipality was out of debt.[76] For Patrick, it was the end of his commitment to public service. A letter written only a few years earlier summed up the esteem in which he was held. On re-election in 1886, an unnamed Emu Flat correspondent wrote:

> My much respected friend, allow me to congratulate you on your safe return to the old seat in the Council. I was highly delighted this morning when I heard it, and I have also won as much whisky over it as I can drink for a week or two. Old Paddy the Snob has got to hand me out a bottle which I am in more glee over than any of the rest. Long life and success to you my old friend, and long may you be able to hold and perform your duties in your old seat in the Council. My best wishes to you and all your family yours, very respectfully (name withheld).[77]

Finally, on 31 August 1899 Patrick's son, Richard, who had already assumed management of the Cooke property, was elected to his father's seat in the west riding of the Shire which Patrick left debt free when he retired in 1897.[78] When Richard was elected president of the shire in September 1905, he was the youngest member ever to hold the office.[79] In the last years of Patrick's life, Richard's election to the position would have been a source of pride, since he had the satisfaction of knowing that his own commitment to public service had been passed on to the next generation.

On 12 October 1899 a lavish banquet was held at the *White Hart* in recognition of Patrick's service to the Shire. Tables were laid in a 'new and nicely decorated room at the rear of the hotel', with the occasion presided over by Shire President, Cr J. Paterson, who was seated alongside the member for Dalhousie, Mr J. G. Duffy, MLA., the Very Rev. Fr Farrelly, Mr T. Hunt, MP., and the guest of honour, Patrick Cooke. In the presence of around sixty 'gentlemen'

---

[75] Catherine Cooke, Registry of Births Deaths Marriages, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), 10 June 1895; *Kilmore Advertiser*, 10 June 1895. The newspaper report stated that Catherine Cooke died after a 'trying illness' of a few weeks' duration. Her death certificate stated the cause of death as the result of Rheumatic Fever.
[76] *Kilmore Free Press*, 23 September 1897.
[77] *Kilmore Free Press*, 19 August 1886; Patrick Cooke was returned by a majority of five votes, the losing contender being Cornelius Lehane. The author of the letter is unknown, but the person referred to as 'Paddy the Snob' was Irish immigrant, Patrick Murtha (b. 1831), the town bootmender. Murtha had many confrontations with the law involving land, debts, wilfully damaging property, drunkenness and perjury. Several court cases concerned members of the Cooke family against whom he brought charges for allowing their sheep to trespass on his land.
78 *Kilmore Free Press*, 31 August 1899; the seat was contested by A. Zoch, the count being 99 votes to 66. Four months after Patrick died, the youngest member of the Council, Patrick's son, Richard, was elected shire president.
[79] *Kilmore Free Press*, 21 September 1905; 23 September 1905.

who paid 5s a ticket to attend, Mr Duffy presented Patrick with an illuminated address, and in his speech traced his career from the early pioneering days to the present, stating that 'it was people like [Patrick] who had built this great nation'. He referred to Patrick's illustrious eight terms as shire president and hoped that the worthy guest would long live amongst them, and that his sons would follow the example set by their father.[80] The address ran thus:

> We the undersigned, on behalf of the Councillors and Ratepayers of the Shire of Pyalong desire to record our appreciation of the very valuable services you have rendered in the interests of the Shire almost uninterruptedly for the long period of 35 years, indeed, since the formation of local government in the district.…you have ever displayed the greatest energy for the welfare of the district at large, and the manner in which you have at all times performed your duties as a representative of the Ratepayers and as a Citizen have commanded the respect and admiration of all, who will miss your presence at the Council table in the future, and sincerely regret that declining health should necessitate your retirement…[81]

Patrick responded 'very feelingly in brief but suitable terms, thanking all those present for their manifestations of kindness and goodwill'. A lengthy list of toasts followed (including two by Patrick's sons, Nicholas and Richard) in which all speakers concurred in eulogising 'the worthy guest.[82]

Patrick maintained an interest in running the farm until his health failed completely, employing a newly arrived 32-year-old Irish laborer, Thomas Kelly, in 1899, who helped out on the farm for the last years of Patrick's life.[83] He renewed his publican's licence for the last time on 14 December 1899. During his long residence at Pyalong he guarded his position as sole hotelier jealously and was no doubt relieved when an application by George Stephens in 1884 was refused. Patrick opposed Stephens's application arguing that it was not in conformity with the Act, that another hotel was not required, and that the plan lacked sufficient accommodation.[84]

On 31 December 1900, 15 months after the banquet, Patrick closed the hotel doors. The closure was a major loss as the *White Hart* was a landmark that had served the Pyalong community for more than 50 years. It was deeply regretted by residents who were left without a gathering place where they could 'assuage their thirst', and by passing travellers on the old

---

[80] *Kilmore Free Press*, 19 October 1899; *Seymour Express*, 13 January 1899.
[81] *Testimonial to Patrick Cooke, Esq., Pyalong*, Illuminated Address, 12 October 1899.
[82] *Kilmore Free Press*, 19 October 1899.
[83] *Kilmore Advertiser*, 18 September 1909; Thomas Kelly arrived in Victoria in 1899 and immediately went to Pyalong where he was employed by Patrick Cooke for three years. The reasons for him going directly to Pyalong are unknown although the job may have been pre-arranged by Patrick. It is possible his emigration was sponsored by Patrick who may have had connections with Kelly's family in Ireland. Kelly then became a groom to Rev. Fr Martin in Kilmore. While in the priest's employ he was killed in a motor accident on the road from Darraweit Guim to Wallan while driving a motor buggy with Fr Martin in 1909.
[84] *Kilmore Free Press*, 18 December 1884.

McIvor Road who were without accommodation.[85] Still without a licensed victualler in the township in December 1901, a local option poll then made way for the erection of two hotels by Denis Griffin and Catherine Zoch (wife of Eliza Zoch's grandson, Albert), to be known respectively as the *Pyalong* and *Coronation* hotels.[86] Ever ready to exploit new opportunities, Patrick applied for a rate reduction on the hotel property in 1902, arguing with some irony that the *White Hart* was no longer a licensed house—but a mere family home. It was a final acknowledgment, perhaps, that Australia was his home. [87]

By this time Patrick's longstanding friends were passing away. The first to go was John McCormack, father-in-law of Bridget Cooke, who died at his Tallarook property, *Landscape,* in 1890.[88] Ex-seminarian, Maurice O'Keane, whose immigration was sponsored by his uncle, Patrick Cooke, died in 1900.[89] O'Keane's well-off Irish farming family made a significant contribution to the ranks of Ireland's Catholic clergy.[90] The hooligan David Walsh died in 1903. Despite his discreditable behavior, he and Patrick were possibly on friendly terms given their familial relationship, and the fact that David lived at the *White Hart* for a period in his youth.[91] An obituary portrayed him as a prominent Pyalong landowner who had amassed 'a considerable fortune' (valued at £10,379).[92] It was a benign character sketch revealing much about his hard-working life but nothing of how he forged his identity in the colony through power and control. As his marriage to Mary Halpin was childless, his chief beneficiary was his 'daughter', Hanora, in gratitude for her 'assiduous' care of his wife, to whom she 'gave all the attention that could be expected from the most devoted daughter'.[93] Legacies to beneficiaries in Australia and Ireland revealed a more positive side of his character and his unbroken allegiance to his Catholic faith and Irish connections. [94] His wish for remembrance

[85] *Kilmore Free Press*, 21 January 1901.
[86] Cole, Robert, *Coronation Hotel*, Pyalong, Index to Defunct Hotel Licenses, VPRS 8159/P2, Item C (PROV); *Kilmore Free Press*, 19 December 1901; McKenzie McHarg, *Eliza: The First Mrs Zoch*, 87. The *Coronation Hotel* was named in honour of Queen Victoria's son, King Edward VI, who was crowned in 1901.
[87] *Kilmore Free Press*, 13 February 1902.
[88] John McCormack, 1890, *Probate and Administration Files* (PROV), VPRS 28/P0002, 44/254. John McCormack left an estate valued at over £22,408.
[89] *Advocate*, 30 June 1900.
[90] Frances O'Kane Hale, *A Family Background: The O'Keane (O'Kane) Family in Ireland* (1982, Revised 1996).
[91] Catherine Cooke, Patrick's sister, married James Walsh in Knockainy, Co. Limerick, in 1826.
[92] *Kilmore Free Press*, 30 July 1903.
[93] Hanorah Halpin was the daughter of James Halpin (railway employee) and his wife Maria Franklin who married in 1859. Hanorah was the youngest of their four children and for reasons unknown was 'adopted' by James' brother, John, as a young child. For much of her life she lived and worked in the household of David and Mary (Halpin) Walsh who were childless and to whom she was devoted. She remained single and died in Melbourne in 1933 aged 63 years. Hanora received a vast legacy from the Walsh will consisting of cash, real estate, farming property, and valuable residential real estate comprising a hotel and the Pyalong Shire Hall.
[94] *Kilmore Free Press*, 19 September 1907. David Walsh, 1903, *Probate and Administration Files* (PROV), VPRS 28/P0002, 89/457. His estate was divided between his wife, Mary, and his adopted daughter, Hanora Halpin,

was demonstrated by placing conditions on the future distribution of his assets and the construction of a grand Celtic cross over his grave for which he left the princely sum of £200 for its upkeep.[95] It might indeed have been a grand legacy had it not been for his predilection for thuggery.

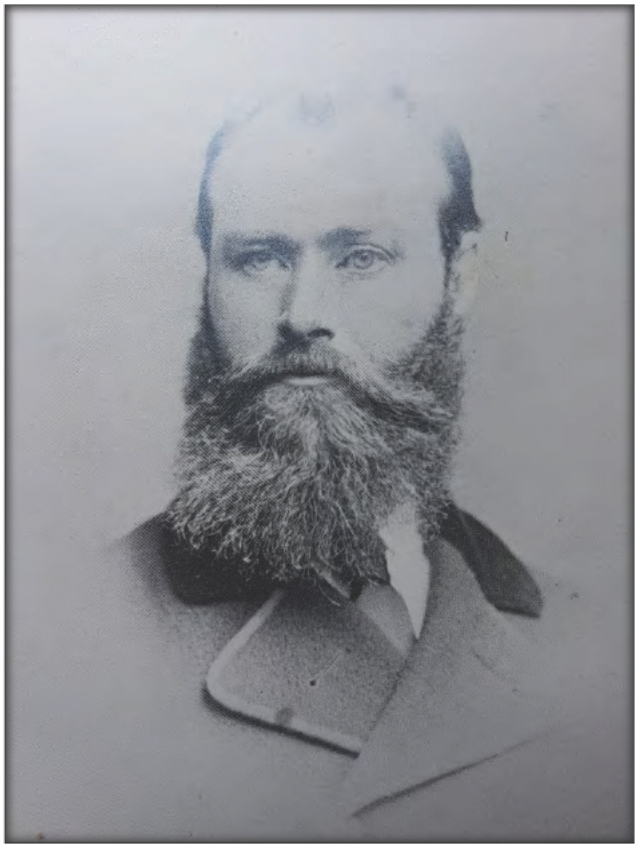


Figure 48: Martin McKenna n/d.
(Private Archive)

The last to go to their graves were the McKennas and John Halpin. The McKennas died leaving valuable estates. Martin in particular achieved extreme wealth, with net assets valued at £51,512 6s 1d when he died in 1907.[96] He acquired status as a large landowner and founder of the Kyneton Brewing Company, and as a member of Victoria's Legislative

three sisters in County Limerick—Margaret Gleeson, Catherine Leahy, and Mary Kane [sic] received cash payments. His three immigrant brothers, James, Maurice and Cornelius, received property bequests, while his sister, Hannah Fogarty, who immigrated to Victoria in 1900, received £300. Other recipients included his nephew, James Walsh (St Kilda), and various friends, priests, and charitable institutions, including the Little Sisters of the Poor at Northcote.

[95] David Walsh, 1903, *Probate and Administration Files* (PROV), VPRS 28/P2, 89/457. David Walsh stipulated that his farming land was to remain in the hands of his beneficiaries for life, without encumbrances, and that on their death the land was to be passed to their offspring.

[96] Martin McKenna, 1907, *Probate and Administration Files* (PROV), VPRS 28/P0002,104/305; Michael McKenna, 1906, VPRS 28/P0000, 100/701. After moving to Euroa in north-eastern Victoria, Michael McKenna took up farming and entered the hotel industry, erecting the grand 48-roomed *North Eastern Hotel* in 1889 at a cost of £9,000.

Assembly. Described as a 'typical Irish gentleman squire', he was a member of Melbourne's exclusive Athenaeum Club and was known for strutting the streets decked out in a silk top hat and frock coat.[97] Throughout their lives Martin and Michael were frequent visitors to Pyalong where they drank at Patrick's *White Hart* from inscribed beer tankards reserved for them above the bar.

Figure 49: John Halpin, Emu Flat n/d.
(Private Archive)

John Halpin, one of the four cousins from Knockainy, died in 1935. The Halpins and Cookes maintained a lifetime friendship after establishing shared tenancies in Ireland in the early 1850s.[98] John's two return trips to Ireland indicated his connections with Ireland remained strong although it was said he 'was never happier than when mounted on a spirited

[97] Obituary, Martin McKenna, *The Australian Brewer's Journal*, 20 May 1907; Sylvia Morrissey, 'McKenna, Martin (1832-1907)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/mckenna-martin-4107/text6565 published first in hard copy 1974. Accessed 15/11/2020. *Table Talk*, 29 January 1892 & 15 December 1893; Harry H. Peck *Memoirs of a Stockman* (Melbourne, Victoria: Stock and Land Pub. Co., Pty. Ltd., Reprint 1984), 103. It is thought Patrick Cooke accompanied the McKennas to the goldfields before Martin and Michael went into business together in Kyneton. Alongside Martin's prolific business interests was his 5,000 acre *Glen Erin* farming property at Kyneton. His marriage to Catherine Wheeler of Carlsruhe produced eleven children who were imbued with the same religious fervour as their parents. One of their six sons was a Catholic priest who was appointed ship's chaplain in the Australian Expeditionary Force during the Great War; three of their five daughters became nuns.

[98] Daniel Halpin (Patrick Cooke's Irish co-tenant) is believed to be a sibling of one of the four Halpins who emigrated with the Cookes.

horse acting as clerk at race meetings [during] Pyalong's palmy racing days'. Like Patrick, he devoted 40 years of community service to the Pyalong Shire Council, serving several terms as shire president. He was an upright, genial man who was never called upon to contest an election during his time as a council representative, so satisfied were the ratepayers with his services.[99]

As an active and assertive group of newcomers these Irish immigrants exerted an enduring influence over the developing Pyalong locality. Fortified by common values and close friendships, their aspirations led to material success and a level of status; they were quick to adapt to life in the colony and were generally more robust than the Famine immigrants who went to America. With one exception, all were appointed Justice of the Peace while making a significant contribution to the communities in which they settled. They left considerable legacies for their children. All retained close links with their families in Ireland, although only two made a return visit to the homeland. With their passing, however, the family connection with Ireland was diluted, indicating the effect of generational change within the Irish migrant community. For the most part, the Australian-born descendants of the group cast aside their 'Irishness' and identified as 'Australian'.

Patrick Cooke died on 1 May 1903 at the age of 85.[100] His £5,462 2s 4d estate was divided amongst his children. Farmland and a ten-roomed brick and timber dwelling, the now defunct *White Hart* hotel, were listed as assets.[101] Under the care of a 'skilled' nurse and Dr Brock of Kilmore, Patrick passed peacefully away from 'a long-suffering malady' in the afternoon of 1 May.[102] Family members were at his bedside, and until the end he remained fairly robust, recalling 'several of the most prominent and interesting events' that took place in the colony after his arrival in 1854.[103]

In accordance with custom, a wake may have taken place at the *White Hart*, with a priest from Kilmore leading mourners in prayers and hymn singing as they moved in single file

---

[99] *Kilmore Free Press*, 3 October 1935. Marriage Certificate, John Halpin & Mary-Anne Connolly, Reg. No. 4077, 26 December 1869, *Register Births Deaths Marriage* (PROV); John Halpin was the son of James Halpin and Johanna Seddon, Co. Limerick, Ireland. He emigrated on the *Fitz-James* in 1854 with cousins, Mary and James Halpin (parents Daniel Halpin and Honorah Toomey, Co. Limerick); Johanna Halpin (parents Timothy Halpin & Ellen Toomey, Co. Limerick). Not to be confused with unmarried cousin John Halpin (son of Daniel Halpin and Honora Toomey, Co, Limerick) who emigrated on the *Africa*, also in 1854, and who died from a fall from a horse at Pyalong in 1881.
[100] Death Certificate, Patrick Cooke, Reg. 7305, 1 May 1903, *Register Births Deaths Marriage* (PROV).
[101] Patrick Cooke, 1903, *Probate and Administration Files* (PROV), VPRS 28/P0002, 87/352.
[102] *Kilmore Advertiser*, 9 May 1903; Patrick was diagnosed with Prostate enlargement.
[103] *Argus*, 2 May 1903 & 9 May 1903. Patrick's death was announced in the Melbourne *Argus* on Saturday, 2 May 1903.

around the open coffin. Accompanied by music and song, the wake was part of the traditions that Irish Catholics brought with them to the colony.[104] The occasion enabled mourners to share memories and take a last glimpse of the deceased before the coffin was closed. For Catholics, it was an opportunity to plead for the soul of the departed:[105]

> Give him eternal rest, O Lord,
> And may your light shine on him forever. RIP.[106]

On the morning of Sunday 3 May, Patrick's body was carried from the hotel to All Saints in preparation for a Requiem Mass celebrated by Kilmore parish priest, Fr Michael Farrelly, one of Patrick's 'oldest and warmest friends'.[107] Patrick had known the priest since his appointment to Kilmore in 1871 and possibly had much to do with him when population growth necessitated the erection of a Catholic Church at Pyalong in 1872.[108] The Cookes may have considered the friendship a sign of social acceptance and respectability. Fr Farrelly was a frugal-living social reformer. When he died, he lacked even the funds for his own funeral, and Patrick may have looked up to him as a model for his own religious faith and community work. [109]

Mourners included members of the Pyalong Shire Council and surviving relatives and friends who immigrated to Victoria from the 1850s. Prominent were several Victorian parliamentarians: the Hon. J. G. Duffy, MLA., 'a personal friend' who 'travelled from Melbourne especially, to pay the last tribute of respect to Mr Cooke'; Mr Thomas Hunt, MLA (journalist and founder of the *Kilmore Free Press*); and Sir John O'Shanassy, MLA (three

---

[104] Roger Grainger, 'Let Death be Death: Lessons from the Irish Wake', *Mortality*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1998, 132-37. For the mourners the wake represents an existential crisis in which the integrity of existence has been shattered and an awareness that the world will never be the same following the death of a loved one.
[105] Grainger, 'Let Death be Death', 137.
[106] *More Catholic Prayers for the Dead and Dying* https://www.artofdyingwell.org Accessed 13/02/ 2021. As part of the traditional Catholic Liturgy this prayer was recited immediately after death, during the Blessing at the end of the Requiem Mass and at the graveside during the Committal. The acronym, RIP, is a common engraving on Catholic headstones, meaning *Requiescat in Pace*—Rest in Peace.
[107] *Kilmore Advertiser*, 9 May 1903.
[108] *Kilmore Advertiser*, 9 May 1903; *Leader* (Melbourne), 9 June 1894; J. A. Maher, *The Tale of a Century: Kilmore 1837-1937*, Number Three—Historical Reprint Series (Kilmore, Victoria: Lowden Pub. Co., 1972), 72. After arriving in Kilmore Rev. Farrelly took over the building of a Catholic Church at Romsey that began in 1868. He also established new churches at Lancefield and Emu Flat (1872), Broadford (1887), Strath Creek (1888) and Wandong (1897).
[109] *Kilmore Free Press*, 10 December 1908; 19 August 1909. *Advocate*, 27 October 1896. Fr Farrelly was born in Co. Cavan, Ireland, and migrated around 1851. He was the one of the first students at the University of Melbourne and the first Catholic priest ordained in Victoria by Archbishop Goold. At a memorial celebration in his honour in 1908, Fr Farrelly was counted among responsible clerics who believed that their brethren had absolutely no hope of salvation if they were to cause the loss of a single soul during their ministry.

times Premier of Victoria).[110] An assembly of carriages and horsemen carried the coffin 17 miles to Kilmore. On entering the township, the cavalcade was met by residents lining the streets with heads bowed and hats doffed, in a mark of respect for the 'esteemed' gentleman.[111] Mourners were already gathered at the gravesite, grieving for one who died 'in full hope of the life to come'.[112] An obituary stated that Patrick was held in such high esteem that 'his name [was] a household word throughout the whole of the district…and [a man] whose word was his bond'. To his late wife, Mary, the newspaper also paid tribute: 'a more genial and hospitable lady one could not wish to meet'.[113]

The graveside service was led by Irish immigrant, Fr D. T. Lawton, an outspoken, patriotic Irish Nationalist who was said to be a splendid example of the *Soggarth Aroon*—an Irish priest who protected his parishioners from the depredations of unscrupulous landlords. His appointment to Kilmore may have been made in light of his experience with the farming community in Ireland. In 1905 he told Kilmore parishioners that he never knew what it was to be a free man until he landed in Australia, saying that the land from which he came was still a land of slaves.[114] Patrick may well have concurred given the opportunities that Australia offered his party of Irish immigrants in the 1850s.

Although Patrick had close connections with prominent political figures, he was reluctant to flaunt his status. His grave in the Kilmore cemetery is a relatively low-key memorial for one of his stature given the pivotal role he played in developing the district. Enclosed by a low-slung cast iron fence, it bears a simple inscription noting his age and date of death, and that he lies alongside his 'beloved wife', Mary, and two of his ten children, Thomas and Catherine. Irish iconography symbolises his pride in his Irishness. Unlike some

---

[110] *Kilmore Advertiser*, 9 May 1903; J. R. J. Grigsby, 'Duffy, John Gavan (1844-1917)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/duffy-john-gavan-3451/text5267 Accessed 29/01/2021; K. Simpson, 'Hunt, Thomas (1841-1934)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/hunt-thomas-3823/text6065 Accessed 29/01/2021; S. M. Ingham, 'O'Shanassy, Sir John (1818-1883)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/oshanassy-sir-john-4347/text7059 Accessed 29/01/2021.

[111] *Argus*, 2 May 1903.

[112] *Argus*, 2 May 1903; *Weekly Times*, 2 May 1903; 9 May 1903.

[113] *Kilmore Advertiser*, 9 May 1903; Patrick's obituary was published in no less than six regional newspapers, several referring to his large pastoral holdings and his 50-year residency in the colony: the *Argus*, 2 May 1903; *Age*, 5 May 1903; *Kilmore Free Press*, 7 May 1903; *McIvor Times*, 7 May 1903; *Australasian*, 9 May 1903; *Ballarat Star*, 4 May 1903.

[114] *Kilmore Free Press*, 27 April 1905; *Advocate*, 4 April 1908; *Dictionary of Irish Biography* (Cambridge University Press (2021) https://dib.cambridge.org/viewReadPage.do?articleId=a3672 Accessed 12/02/2021. The ballad of *Soggarth Aroon* ('Dear priest') was written by John Banim in 1831. It expresses the feelings of the Irish towards priests who fought to protect their parishioners from the depredations of landlordism. Fr Lawton was appointed curate at St Patrick's Church, Kilmore, in November 1902 after time at Gisborne in central Victoria.

graves, his tomb bears no hint of his impressive leadership—nor any sign of self-aggrandisement.

Figure 50: Patrick Cooke and Mary Walsh, Pyalong, Victoria, n/d.
(Dynan Archive)

This chapter has examined the goals that the Cooke party sought during settlement. It has demonstrated the importance of Mary's role in forging an identity on colonial space and traced the extent to which she contributed to Pyalong's social, cultural, and economic development. The chapter shows her contribution to settlement was fundamental to the family's success. In settling in a place distant from Ireland, Patrick and Mary Cooke's achievements surpassed the expectations they had for their future in the homeland. They forged a new way of life in Pyalong and were a model for their children. They made a significant contribution to public life and maintained lifetime ties with members of their immigrant party. Mary died long before Patrick; but had she lived to see him buried on that fine day in May, she might have recalled an earlier quip that bore witness to the rugged Australian bushman more realistically than those who eulogised him at the end: 'I am a publican, your worship, and a sinner too.'[115]

[115] *Kilmore Advertiser*, 19 December 1885; Mr Shuter issued a 'mild' rebuke to Patrick stating, 'The court did not want to hear anything like that'.

CHAPTER 5

MEMORY

…maker of places, remembrances…[1]

On the roads around Pyalong only scattered remnants of the past remain. The landscape is dotted with the crumbling ruins of abandoned shepherds' huts, rotting timber fences and chimneys that once warmed the home. It is an Australian landscape at once of the present, but at the same time reminiscent of times past. My aim in this chapter is to 'read' the landscape within which the Cookes lived and laboured, as well as make sense of the more immediate spaces that surrounded them, like the layout of their home and hotel, with a view to uncovering Patrick and Mary's nineteenth-century world. To do that means acknowledging the significance of memory (theirs and mine and several generations in-between) in attaching meaning to the material elements of house and church, family memorabilia, bereavement cards, cemeteries and headstones—as well as non-material elements—such as religious faith, the naming of homes and ships and the hotel. The chapter argues that reading both elements, the material and the non-material, as public and private sites of remembrance, points us to the Cookes' attachment to particular places or spaces (*loci*), through which their fading emotional attachment to Ireland and their emerging new identity in the colony can be understood.

Australian historian Ken Taylor says landscape is a ubiquitous term referring to patterns of occupation, and customs and ways of doing things. It is an artefact no less than a material object, the morphology of which connects cultural values, customs, and practices 'a cultural construct …encoded with meaning' which satisfies the unshakeable need of all humans for identity and belonging.[2] Richard P. Gabriel also notes:

> Landscape is not limited to physical setting but includes people, events, ideas, concepts, principles, words, works, and just about anything subject to memory. Because experience is filtered through memory, memory becomes landscape.[3]

---

[1] Eavan Boland, 'Anna Liffey', *In a Time of Violence* (New York, USA: Norton 1944), 41-46, https://www ronnowpoetry.com Accessed 15/06/2020.

2 K. Taylor, 'Landscape and Memory: Cultural landscapes, Intangible Values and Some Thoughts on Asia', paper to 16th general Assembly and Scientific Symposium, Quebec, Canada, 2008, 1-2, http://www.significanceinternational.com/Portals/0/Documents/ Accessed 24/03/2021.

[3] Richard P. Gabriel, *Memory and Landscape in the work of James Wright*, 8, http://www.dreamsongs.com/Files/EssayBook.pdf cited in Oksana Kovsele, *Emotional Landscape and Memory in Skaidrite Andersone's Sketch Book Fragrant Traces*, 2013, https://www.researchgate net/publication/ Accessed 24/03/2021. See also Ashley Barnwell, 'Keeping the Nation's Secrets: "Colonial Storytelling" within Australian Families', *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 46, 2021, 47; Paul Antze & Michael Lambek (eds), 'Introduction: Forecasting Memory', *Tense Past: cultural essays in trauma and memory* (Routledge 1996), xvii.

Emotional identification with Ireland remained strong from the 1850s. Despite facing vitriol for their Irishness, figures such as the Duffys and John O'Shanassy had a profound influence on the public mind. As exemplars of Irish nationalism, they may have played a part in fostering Irish sentiment and pride in the large concentrations of Irish who settled in pockets throughout Victoria. The potato-growing area near Ballarat known as 'Tipperary Gully' was compared favourably with Ireland as 'wild Irishman country'. Kilmore was described as 'a small Irish village' where the people, the township, and surrounding agricultural districts were said to be Irish to the bootstraps.[4] The Kilmore Special Survey (Rutledge) offering small farming allotments drew many Irish to the area from 1841.[5] Within these concentrations the Irish-Catholic laity invested heavily in church buildings adorned with Irish symbolism.[6] Kilmore's impressive Gothic-styled St Patrick's Church—dedicated to Ireland's patron saint and blessed in March 1871—was typical of others in Victoria which captured the triumphalist tone of post-Famine Irish Catholicism. Over the years it was the pulpit for a stream of Irish-born priests whose home country traditions appealed to Kilmore's large Irish population.

Alongside those who filled the pews in Kilmore were Irish born immigrants who worshipped at Pyalong's modest weatherboard All Saints Church, a building that had none of the pretensions of St Patrick's, the only adornment being simple Gothic styled windows. Unlike the dedication of St Patrick's which reinforced the notion of an 'Irish' church, the blessing of All Saints in 1872 represented a universal church that met the needs of all ethnicities, not just the Irish. Unlike Kilmore's St Patrick's, All Saints reflected a distinctly 'Australian Catholic Church' with traditional Catholic images hung as memorials to deceased parishioners. In this way, the church became an important site of remembrance. Among others were memorials to Nicholas and Margaret Cooke's son, Pte Richard Cooke (killed in the Great

4 O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, (Kensington, New South Wales: New South Wales University Press, Reprint 1988),136. See also Oliver MacDonagh, 'The Irish in Victoria', *Historical Studies VIII*, Papers read before the Irish Conference of Historians, Dublin, 27-30 May 1969 (Dublin, Ireland: Gill and Macmillan Ltd., 1971), 68-69; 73. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, Victoria's immigrant population's identification with Ireland was extremely powerful. In eight censuses taken in Victoria between 1851 and 1901, dependence on assisted immigration fuelled the volume of Irish immigrants, increasing Victoria's population by 1,200 percent between 1851 and 1891. Kilmore was exceptional for its catholicity and high rate of small farming units.

5 Jim Lowden, *Rutledge's Special Survey* (Kilmore, Victoria: Lowden Publishing Co., 1985).

6 Lindsay Proudfoot and Dianne Hall, *Imperial Spaces: Placing the Irish and Scots in Colonial Australia* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2011), 207; *Kilmore Free Press*, 28 August 1873; the high altar was designed by B. F. Wardell in Melbourne; and constructed by Farmer and Brindley in London. Total cost to Kilmore parishioners was £800. The altar was consecrated on 31 August 1873 by Melbourne's Archbishop Goold in the presence of Archbishop Polding from Sydney, on what turned out to be one of the grandest occasions witnessed in Kilmore.

War), and Patrick and Mary's son, Richard, who died in 1926.[7] However, with the difficulties of ministering to outlying parishes with few resources and irregular church attendance, many Irish clergy in the 1870s came to the belief that the Australian church lacked fervour. This led to a period of church reform and may have been the reason why Jesuit Fr Kelly's homily during the dedication of All Saints struck a foreboding note on such a celebratory occasion:

> Suddenly a furious storm came up on the lake, so that the waves swept over the boat. But Jesus was sleeping. The disciples went and woke him, saying, "Lord, save us, or we perish"![8]

Although parishioners listened 'with almost breathless attention' when praised for raising such a handsome edifice, the text may have been a deliberate warning to the congregation of the ecclesiastical and educational reforms that were endangering the church at the time.[9] Only one month later, state aid was withdrawn from Catholic schools at Pyalong and Emu Flat.[10] This would have been disappointing for the Cookes who identified strongly with the Roman Church and who had fought hard to retain their Catholic schools by providing land, financial assistance, and accommodation for teachers. Religious faith was an important part of Patrick and Mary's identity, a trait passed on to their children who made similar bequests to their parishes and religious institutions. As noted in an earlier chapter, Nicholas provided land for a school at Emu Flat in 1889, and in 1903 John donated a high altar to the Loch Catholic Church in Gippsland in memory of his father, Patrick Cooke.[11] It is notable that many second-generation families also chose religious institutions as the proper place to remember their dead. The £50 collected at the opening of All Saints in 1872, thus not only helped reduce the church debt: it signalled a turning point from an essentially 'Irish' Catholic church to one that was

---

[7] Although these families were dedicated to the faith, their attendance was possibly irregular given the difficulties of priests ministering to outlying districts on horseback. Patrick and Mary's children were baptised Catholics in Ireland and Australia. Details of the Cooke family's church attendance in Ireland are likewise unknown, although records at the National Library of Ireland (NLA) show that the Cooke families baptised their children in the Catholic Church from at least the late 1790s. The memorial to Pte Richard Thomas Cooke, KIA, Somme, France, 7 November 1916 was an image of St Joseph and the Infant Jesus; the donation in memory of Richard Cooke who died on 11 August 1926 was a well-known Catholic image of the Holy Family.

[8] Proudfoot and Hall, *Imperial Spaces*, 209. Gospel of St Matthew 8: 24-25.

[9] *Advocate*, 16 November 1872. *Kilmore Free Press* 17 December 1914; it is interesting to note that All Saints featured an entry porch and small sacristy and was designed and built by John Leach, Kilmore.

[10] *Advocate* 16 November 1872. Little is known of Pyalong's first Catholic Church which was erected in 1860. The dedication of *All Saints* in 1872 was performed by Bishop Gould, with the opening sermon preached by the Rev. Fr Kelly, SJ. State aid to Catholic schools was withdrawn on 17 December 1872; *Kilmore Free Press*, 9 March 1876; Catholic schools were situated at Pyalong, Emu Flat and High Camp Plain.

11 *Great Southern Advocate* 20 August 1903. Bequests to the Church by the Catholic laity were not unusual. Last testaments show that financial support for the Church was significant at the grass roots level. This is an area that requires further investigation given Patrick O'Farrell's somewhat slanted focus on the importance of the church hierarchy in *The Irish in Australia* (Sydney, NSW: New South Wales University Press, 1986).

distinctively Australian. It was an important marker for how Pyalong's immigrant Catholics identified as Catholics.

Figure 51: All Saints Church, Pyalong, c. 1950s.
Almost all the worshippers pictured, including collector and altar boy, are descendants of Cooke family.
(Dynan Archive)

Despite a change of focus within the Australian Catholic Church, regional newspapers during the latter half of the nineteenth century showed that Irish acculturation and nostalgia for the land left behind continued to flourish in Victoria (2000 people took part in St Patrick's day celebrations in Kilmore in 1871) until immigration gradually slowed in the early twentieth century.[12] One of the strongest expressions of Irishness at the time was in the mnemonic space of the home. As in all societies, homes were central to family life, and many acted as repositories for valuable collections of memorabilia. Homes like *The Pines* and the *White Hart* provided more than shelter. They were arsenals of memories that migrants brought with them as a means of solace and pride, and signifying a wish for continuity, stability, and permanence in their new location.

[12] *Kilmore Free Press*, multiple entries, 1854-1900; *Advocate*, 1 April 1871; Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (Oxford University Press, New York, USA: 1985), 569; Irish emigrants to Australia and New Zealand between 1851-55 numbered 53,801. After rising to 82,917 between 1861-70, numbers dropped sharply to 11,885 between 1901-10. See also Proudfoot and Hall, *Imperial Spaces*, 206-32, which also notes that, despite its similarities with Irish ritual, late nineteenth-century Catholicism in the colony was never expressed in exactly the same way as it was in Ireland in earlier decades.

Figure 52: Memorial to Pte Richard Thomas Cooke, KIA, 1916
(Assumption College, Kilmore, Vic.)

Many settler properties were replete with collections of photographs, ornaments, jewellery, needlework, linen and perfumery, and precious childhood toys—powerful semiotic objects that reminded their owners of the homeland and stimulated the senses in some way or other. Emotions were reflected in the design and configuration of the home, choice of décor, the arrangement of furniture and ornaments, and the touch, feel and smell of photographs, books, fabrics and clothing. Limerick lace wedding veils, stitched in Ireland and Australia, were symbiotic markers that fostered connections within Australia's wider Irish Catholic community. Many veils became family heirlooms and like other costumery, represented status and ethnic ties.[13] Patrick and Mary's Australian-born granddaughters followed tradition with

[13] Sophie Cooper, 'Something Borrowed: Women, Limerick Lace and Community Heirlooms in the Australian Irish Diaspora,' *Social History*, Vol. 45, No. 3, 2020, 306 & 326. The reasons for displaying Irish symbolism on clothing ranged from an acknowledgement of the wearer's heritage, a Catholic upbringing, current fashion, or to demonstrate social standing. See also E. Casey and D. Clemente, 'Clothing the *Contadini*: Migration and Material

Irish crochet and lace adorning their wedding finery, while one granddaughter wore a gold-framed image of her Irish grandfather on the bodice of her wedding gown.[14] Images of parents left behind—and mostly never seen again by their emigrant children—were given prominence, framed, displayed, and carefully preserved for future generations. Alongside other precious objects such as the McKenna whimsy bottle and inscribed beer mugs at the *White Hart*, is a collection of original photographs brought from Ireland between 1854 and 1858, and preserved by Patrick and Mary's daughter, Margaret, who later passed them on to members of the next generation.[15]

Several mid-nineteenth century portraits taken in Ireland are visual reminders of the social and familial networks that defined the family as respectable members of the Knockainy community. One image depicts a well-dressed group of young mothers—possibly Mary's sisters-in-law—posing with young children who bear a striking resemblance to members of later generations. The image evokes kinship, harmony and affection, of home as a haven (*dulce domum*).[16] Yet subtle nuances also hint at emotional baggage behind a façade of family cohesion. Family members may have had mixed emotions concerning emigration. Some may have admired Patrick and Mary for their courage and their departure may have been a welcome relief since it eased pressure on land at home. While others may have been deeply disappointed, angry, or even jealous of the opportunities that the couple had to improve their prospects. Other images were a mixture of both comfort and sorrow. One particularly sombre photo taken at the family home in Limerick between 1855 and 1858, is thought to have been taken when Mary was mourning the death of her infant son, John, in Victoria, or as a parting memento before she returned to Australia. Other images may have evoked a mixture of happiness and sorrow. Patrick and Mary's wedding portrait taken in 1846 was a reminder of a significant occasion in her life. But it may also have signalled that adherence to wedding vows sometimes

---

Culture, 1890-1925', *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 36, No. 4, 2017, 5, for a discussion on how clothing for Italian migrants relocating to America was simultaneously a public declaration of one's social, cultural, and economic self and an intimate object worn on the body.

[14] *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 1 December 1906; 4 May 1912; marriages of Margaret Cooke's granddaughters, Catherine, Ellen and Margaret Carroll.

[15] Tanya Evans, 'How Do Family Historians Work with Memory?', *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 46, Issue 1, 95; Evans notes that women are generally the keepers of family stories.

[16] *Dulce domum* (English translation 'sweet home'); David Ralph, 'Home is where the Heart is'?: Understandings of "Home" among Irish-born Return Migrants from the United States, *Irish Studies Review*, Vol. 17, Issue 2, 2009, 184. Ralph examines how the returnees' understanding of home is shaped by their own memories of the homeland. Although return migration often satisfies an unfulfilled dream it may also represent return to a place that is unfamiliar. In this way returnees may be both 'insiders' and 'outsiders', that is, they belong in neither realm.

came at great cost. Mary's loyalty in returning to her husband in 1858, for instance, meant that she was unlikely to see her homeland again. Alienation from family has been cited as one of the most common characteristics of migration.[17]

Figure 53: Group of Cooke family members, Knockainy, Co. Limerick, n/d
(Maguire/Dynan Archive)

Commemorative memorial cards were another medium that evoked lasting memories. Although the funeral was the most important part of the Catholic death ritual, bereavement cards became fashionable following the death in 1861 of Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert, providing consolation at a time when Catholics emphasised the importance of a 'good death'. Catherine Cooke's memorial card was typical of designs of the 1890s. It featured gold printed lettering, embossed etchings of angels and doves, and expressed a hope that the Blessed Virgin had 'woven for [Catherine] a crown of unfading bliss'.[18] A similar, though less florid

[17] Kevin Kenny, 'Diaspora and Irish Migration History', *Irish Economic and Social History*, Vol. 33, 2006, 49. For an account of the many aspects of homesickness and nostalgia after emigration see also, David Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation: Personal Accounts of Irish Migration to Australia* (Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press, 1994).

[18] Catherine Cooke (died 10 June 1895), Memorial Card, The Art Engraving Company, 8 Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. Details noted only that Catherine was the daughter of Patrick Cooke. There was no reference to her mother. *Cardinal Newman's Prayer for the Holy Souls* was sometimes recited as part of the Catholic Rosary and was a reference to the after-life as a place of perfect happiness; see also Pat Jalland, 'The Transmission of the Culture of a Good Christian Death', in *Australian Ways of Death: A Social and Cultural History 1840-1918* (UK: Oxford University Press, 2002), 65-6, Accessed 01/09/2020. A good Catholic death comprised confession of sins, sincere contrition, piety, and resignation to God's Will. The Catholic Church taught that people could be purified through prayers of intercession, thereby reducing their time in Purgatory before entering Heaven. Jalland also

card was posted to the *White Hart* after Patrick's brother, Thomas, died in Bottomstown in 1884. Since Patrick was unable to attend the funeral, or join in a wake, his nostalgia for Ireland was probably heightened and the card may have been a reassuring sign that his brother was appropriately farewelled in accordance with his religious beliefs.

Along with similar mourning customs such as the writing of condolence letters and home visitations, memorial cards and letters were often saved as keepsakes alongside a lock of hair or trinket—or pieces of childhood ephemera like thirteen-year-old Margaret Cooke's 1861 embroidery sampler.[19] Whatever mood they evoked at the time, many objects were sacralised, reminding those left behind that a loved one was in a very real sense living among them still. In this context, the public space of the *White Hart* hotel (*cadres sociaux*), in its dual capacity as a private family home with a collection of meaningful objects, was a spatial site of remembrance when visitors gathered on the precinct to offer condolences after the death of a family member.

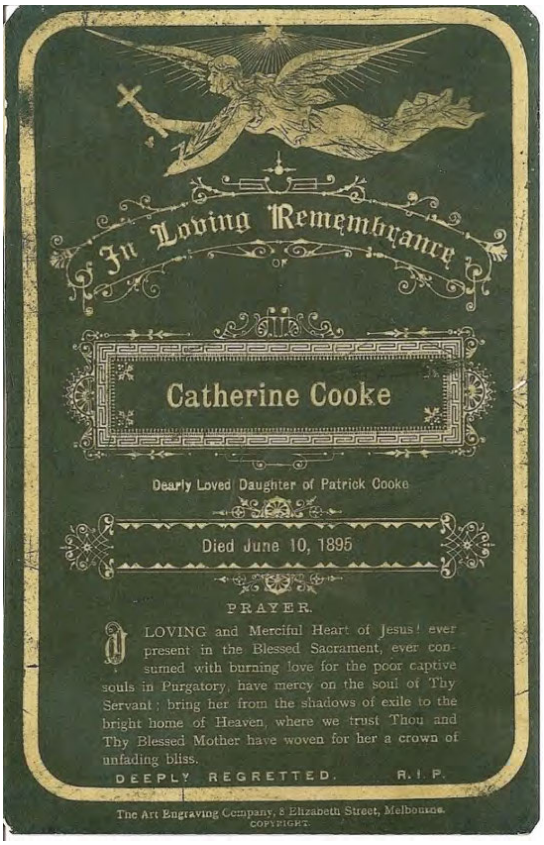


Figure 54a: Bereavement Card, Catherine Cooke, 1895
(Maguire/Dynan Archive)

notes the difficulty of sustaining Catholic cultural practices in outlying colonial districts at a time when the Christian culture of death was being undermined by secular and scientific thinking in the late nineteenth century.

[19] 'Margaret Cooke, Pyalong, May 22, 1861', is stitched into the sampler.

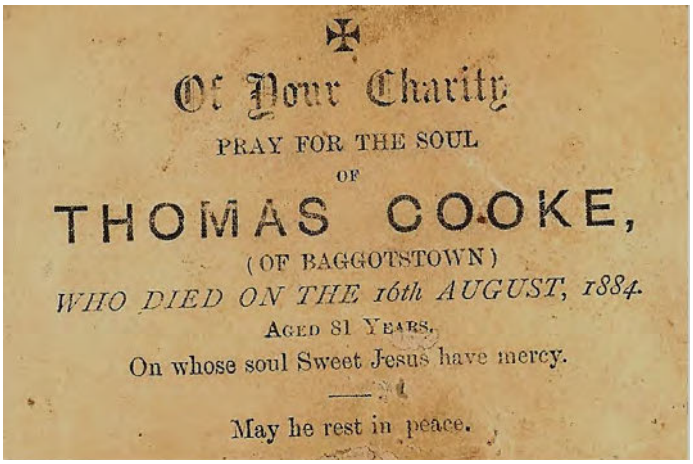


Figure 54b: Bereavement card, Thomas Cooke, Baggotstown, Co. Limerick, 1884
(Maguire/Dynan Archive)\

In this capacity, the *White Hart* was typical of zones where social relations were imbued with multiple meanings and symbolism, where people of different ethnicities, cultures, religions and occupations worked, drank and socialised—servants, workers, guests, family members, friends and neighbours, and people fulfilling their duties as members of local organisations'.[20] Public and private memories were interwoven by men, women and children under one roof and expressed in ways that were germane to their subjective experiences.[21] According to Doreen Massey:

> What gives a place its specificity is not some long-internalised history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus.[22]

Although various items were lost in 1901 when Patrick and Mary's Pyalong home, *The Pines*, was destroyed during a bushfire, what is significant is the survival to this day of such a large collection of artifacts held by descendants in Cooke, Ryan, Carroll, Dynan and Hill archives. These items have been preserved (and some carefully repaired) by mainly women

[20] *Cadres sociaux* refers to a core social group; see Maurice Halbwachs, 'Space and the Collective Memory', in *The Collective Memory* (Chicago, USA: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 1-4, for a discussion on the importance of a group to its location, and how displacement from familiar surroundings may lead to a sense of disequilibrium and deep-seated grief. See also, Astri Erll, 'Locating Family in Cultural Memory Studies', *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 3, 2011, 303-318, for a discussion on how the past is created and recreated within sociocultural contexts.

[21] See Harriet Shortt, 'Liminality, space and the importance of transitory dwelling places at work', *Human Relations,* Vol. 68, No. 4, 2015, 634-37, for a discussion on the difficulties experienced when public and private spaces overlap. Such spaces are not simply physical constructions—they also encapsulate interpretation and *imagination*.

[22] Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minnesota, USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 154 & 164. According to Massey, 'the spatial' in this context can be seen as constructed out of a multiplicity of social relations ranging from the highest echelons of *global* power to the humble *local spaces* of the home and workplace.

descendants who realised their importance to the family heritage and the reconstruction of the local history in which the family is embedded. Unlike in many country families where objects

Figure 55: L to R:
(a) Embroidery sampler worked by Margaret Cooke in 1861.
(b) Meakin Dinner set (1877) & Primrose Vaseline Glass set (c. 1890), giftware in Carroll household.
(c) Margaret Cooke & John Carroll, wedding day, All Saints, Pyalong, 26 September 1877.
(d) Brooch worn by Katie Carroll on wedding day to John Broughan, 1906.
(e) Beer mug inscribed 'M. McKenna' hung over bar at *White Hart* (All held in Private Archives).
(f) Sr M. Celsus, RSM, wearing Limerick lace before final profession, Melbourne, 1908 (Maguire/Dynan)

have been lost, discarded or overlooked as irrelevant in modern times, this collection not only helps fill the blanks in the family's past. It also highlights the role of gender during settlement, particularly women's roles, and how micro-histories can be a valuable method utilised by others in furthering knowledge of rural settlement across Victoria.

In a similar way, some private homes became sentimental monuments to homeland locations or even a ship on which immigrants travelled. The sound of a familiar name triggered memories for people who still longed for home or just wanted to remember the place where they once slept, ate, prayed, milked cows, and went about their daily activities. Typical of regional and personal identities on the Pyalong landscape were *Tullamore*, *Ardsley* and the *White Hart* which conjured memories of places in Ireland and Britain; *Con's Paddock* was named after its owner, Mary's Irish immigrant cousin, Cornelius Walsh; the Leahys named their Tallarook property after Ireland's well-known district of *Killarney*.[23] *Mollison Park* (once part of *Pyalong Run*), is a memorial to the original overlanders and possibly their English roots. The names of other properties, *Rockbank*, *Ridgemount*, *Hollymount* and *Hillview*, on the other hand, echoed local geographical features rather than any obvious link to the homeland, possibly reflecting a wish to belong to the new 'place' on which they settled. The naming of *The Pines* referred to the grand plantings at the entrance to the property, a sign perhaps of Patrick and Mary's nascent shift toward identification with the Australian landscape. Though far less common, the naming of a home after an immigrant ship may have reminded newcomers of the dangers and sense of dislocation during the passage, or even exhilaration at the thought of a new life in Australia.[24]

As the naming of properties shows, for some immigrants the pull of the homeland was particularly strong, although return migration was fairly rare and probably less common among

[23] G. P. Walsh, 'Pennefather, Hugh Frank (1894-1964)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, national Centre of Biography, Australian National University, https://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/pennefather-hugh-frank-11365/text20303 Accessed online 30 August 2021. The *Ardsley* property at Pyalong was built by Hugh Claude Pennefather (descendant of politician and writer, Edward Curr). See also Ben Johnson, 'Pub Signs of Britain', *Historic UK, the History and Heritage Accommodation Guide*, https://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/Pub-Signs-of-Britain/ Accessed 09/04/2021. The naming of inns and hotels was relatively common in Britain by the 12th century. In 1393 King Richard II passed an Act making it compulsory to have a sign on a hotel building (his own livery badge being the *White Hart*) since most people were illiterate. *White Hart* was popularised in colonial Australia in the naming of inns and taverns.

[24] Three consecutive double-storied villas in Pigdon Street, Princes Hill, Victoria, are named after nineteenth-century emigrant ships: the *Ormuz*, *Orotava* and the *Oruba*. Patrick Cooke returned to Victoria on the *Ormuz* in 1888.

the Irish than any other ethnic group by the early twentieth century. [25] John Halpin was one of very few who made two return trips to Ireland, while Patrick spent a year and a half in Limerick between 1887 and 1888. For families like the Halpins and Cookes, who survived the Famine with a level of financial security, and who had the capacity to make an informed decision to emigrate, memories of the catastrophe were hardly comparable to those of the destitute who were forced to flee in large numbers to America and Canada.[26] John Halpin and Patrick clearly cherished their Irish connection; but Patrick may also have clung to a hope that he was still considered a *landowning* Irishman.

Nonetheless, when Patrick returned in 1887, he found a changed Ireland. Ireland had begun to modernise—and to prosper. People had adapted to changing market forces and new legislation which dislodged barriers to the movement of capital, opening the way for free trade in land.[27] The standard of living had risen as a result of a threefold increase in the average income between 1845 and 1914.[28] The gradual consolidation of the agricultural sector meant that strong dairy farmers like the Cookes, O'Keanes and Halpins on the Golden Vale were well-placed to enlarge their holdings. Between 1861 and 1887 unviable farms of one to five acres declined by more than one-third; those of five to fifteen acres by one-quarter.[29] With larger than average herds the strong farmer also benefited from a growing export market as Britain made increasing demands for Irish livestock and dairy products from the 1860s.[30] By 1887 the old feudalistic system of land management and property rights had largely lost relevance. By then, Ireland was very much a foreign country, and Patrick's memories, like those of other returned migrants, were out of date.[31]

Nonetheless, ongoing Home Rule agitation in Ireland ensured that homeland politics remained of great interest to many colonial settlers. Many who immigrated in the 1840s and 1850s remained fiercely Irish.[32] Irish political news thus featured regularly in the columns of the Catholic leaning *Kilmore Free Press* (under the proprietorship of Thomas Hunt, MP, a

[25] David Fitzpatrick, *Irish Emigration 1801-1921* (Ireland: The Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, 1984), 5.
[26] Fitzpatrick, *Irish Emigration 1801-1921*, 3-13.
[27] Barbara Lewis Solow, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy, 1870-1903* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA: Harvard University Press, 1971), 3. Changes in the 1860s included amendments to the Deasy Act and the removal of the Encumbered Estates Acts.
[28] Malcolm Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2008), 132-33.
[29] Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds*, 132.
[30] Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds*, 132.
[31] Solow, *The Land Question*, 196.
[32] Maya V. Tucker, *Kilmore on the Sydney Road* (Kilmore, Victoria: Shire of Kilmore, Civic Centre, 1988), 149.

lifelong Irish nationalist) and its competitor, the Protestant leaning, *Kilmore Advertiser*.[33] The bulletins were an important source of information for those who welcomed change in Ireland. By the 1880s moreover, the Cookes and their Pyalong compatriots were generally successful farmers with a level of social status, well able and keen to support clubs and groups dedicated to the Irish cause. Among others, they made regular donations to the National Land League Fund, the Maguire Fund, the Poor Orphan Boys Fund, and the Evicted Irish Tenants Relief Fund.[34]

At the same time, it was not until the late 1870s and early 1880s when Ireland suffered an agricultural downturn, that immigrants' fears for the livelihoods of their Irish brethren saw a marked resurgence of Hibernian loyalty.[35] As Ireland's newly formed Irish Parliamentary Party raised hopes for land reform and political independence in 1882, public displays of Irishness in Victoria became particularly meaningful and colonists rallied with financial support.[36] In August 1883, Irish Home Rule advocate, John Redmond (later leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party), and his brother William, toured Australia seeking funds for their electoral campaign and the Irish Land League.[37] Kilmore contributed £210 19s 6d to a total of £25,000 from across Victoria. Near the top of the list of Pyalong farmer donors were Patrick Cooke, David Walsh, William Eades, Nicholas Cooke, Thomas Boran and Thomas Ryan, who gave up to 3 guineas each.[38] The Cookes and their circle were deeply committed to homeland causes and Nicholas Cooke was well-known around Pyalong as an outspoken supporter of Irish nationalism, a stance possibly fuelled by his family's experience of living under British rule in Ireland.[39] Like his father's election to the position of chairman on a committee formed in honour of Ireland's Daniel O'Connell in 1875, Nicholas' commitment was more than lip-

[33] Tucker, *Kilmore on the Sydney Road*, 149. See also Chris McConville, *Croppies Celts & Catholics* (Caulfield East, Victoria: Edward Arnold (Australia) Pty Ltd, 1987, 78-9; Michael Davitt's Land League was formed in 1875. Australia's Irish newspapers supported the Land League campaigns only in so far as their reports were perceived to have no negative effect on Australian politics.
[34] *Kilmore Free Press*, 2 August 1888; 23 February 1888.
[35] Paul O'Leary, 'Networking Respectability: Class, Gender and Ethnicity among the Irish in South Wales, 1845-1914', *Immigrants and Minorities*, Vol. 23, Issue 2-3, 2005, 265. In another context O'Leary notes how the enactment of public displays of Irishness were used to demonstrate the values of respectable society.
[36] McConville, *Croppies Celts & Catholics*, 78-9.
[37] John Redmond (1856-1918) was elected leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party when it reunited in 1900. His brother, William Redmond (1861-1917), was also an outspoken Irish nationalist who enlisted (at the age of 53) in the Royal Irish regiment during the Great War. He was killed in France on 7 June 1917.
[38] *Advocate*, 4 August 1883; the Irish National League (INL) was the name given to the Irish nationalist political party founded by Charles Stewart Parnell in October 1882 after the National Land League was suppressed. Parnell served in Parliament from 1875 to 1891. His party held the balance of power in the House of Commons during the Home Rule debates from 1885 to 1886; see also McConville, *Croppies Celts & Catholics*, 82-83; in 1883 the Redmond brothers visited Australia as representatives of the Irish Parliamentary Party and the National Land League. Although their tour was not a great financial success it raised awareness of the political issues.
[39] Dennis Kilmartin, [email to author] 19/06/2021.

service.[40] He regularly donated to Irish funds, and for years occupied positions on local fundraising committees.[41]

The new mood was also reflected in public welfare bodies such as the Hibernian Australian Catholic Building Society (HACBS) which ran a series of debates on Home Rule despite excoriation by Melbourne's Archbishop Goold. Goold claimed the Society's interest in the issue was incompatible with its mission as a friendly society providing support for the needy.[42] Despite this opposition, the attendance of one thousand people at a HACBS sponsored sports day on the Kilmore racecourse in 1883 was an indication of the strength of support for Irish causes.43 Similar support intensified for local St Patrick's Day parades, Irish pipe bands and Irish social, literary and sporting clubs (an Irish hurling club was formed in Kilmore in 1877), all while the question of Catholic loyalty to the British Empire was continually held up to scrutiny.[44] Such events were a powerful indication of the Irish collective memory in Kilmore and Pyalong, and the affection the Irish retained for the homeland.[45]

While support groups were important fields of remembrance for Irish immigrants, the local cemetery reflected a more permanent sense of memory through religious ceremonies, funeral rites, and mourning practices. In the 1860s, well-maintained cemeteries in Victoria

[40] *Advocate*, 17 July 1875, reported the formation of a committee at Pyalong in support of the Melbourne Central Committee's plans to celebrate the approaching centenary of the death of Ireland's Daniel O'Connell. Patrick Cooke was elected chairman supported by a committee comprising Hugh Doogan, David Walsh, M. Dillon, Thomas Ryan and R. Fennelly. In 1829, O'Connell won emancipation for Catholics which gave them civil rights and the right to be elected to the British Parliament.

[41] *Kilmore Free Press*, 8 March 1888; 2 August 1888; 23 February 1888.

[42] McConville, *Croppies, Celts and Catholics*, 79-8; Roland Wettenhall, 'Pursuit', *Australia's Friendly History*, University of Melbourne, https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articlesl Accessed 25/08/2021. The HACBS was a church-based support network for the needy founded in 1868 by a group of staunch Irish immigrant supporters of Irish affairs. In the 1880s the HACBS strongly resisted attempts by the church to curb the focus on Irish politics by introducing measures to return its members to a more spiritual focus.

[43] *Advocate*, 24 March 1883.

[44] Tucker, *Kilmore on the Sydney Road*, 149; McConville, *Croppies Celts & Catholics*, 79-81; *Kilmore Free Press*, 19 July 1877 & 22 July 1886. See also *Argus*, 5 July 1883 and *Advocate*, 29 September 1883, which highlight the difference of opinion between groups over Irish Home Rule. In July 1883 objections were raised against the Redmond brothers giving a talk in Kilmore on grounds that it was calculated to create disharmony and dismemberment of the British Empire. In contrast, members of the HACBS Fitzroy branch showed their support for Home Rule in September 1883 by taking up collections in aid of the parliamentary fund.

[45] See also Laurence Geary, 'Charles Gavan Duffy, the Great Famine in Ireland, and Famine Memory in Colonial Australia', *Australasian Journal of Irish Studies 7*, 2007-2008, 62-3; Geary notes that memories of the Great Famine were seared upon the collective memory of the expatriate Irish in colonial Australia. According to Irish emigrant and Member of the Victorian parliament—Charles Gavan Duffy—emigration stripped Ireland of the most enterprising and independent members of the labouring and farming class as a result of their complete rejection of the *system* of land tenure.

were a sign of stability in a rapidly developing colony.[46] As elsewhere, Kilmore and Pyalong graveyards are replete with symbols of Irish, Scottish, Welsh, and British ethnicities, and the occasional Chinese and German ethnicities. Two members of the Cooke family were buried at Pyalong in the 1870s and 1880s among a cluster of immigrants who came to Victoria around that time. The first recorded burial at the Kilmore General cemetery was in 1850.

In 1872, Limerick born, John Gorman (an early member of the Pyalong Roads Board and Shire Council) was 'the first silent occupant' in Kilmore's Catholic cemetery.[47] In Australia separate Catholic cemeteries were unusual, since most metropolitan graveyards followed British tradition by having separate sections for other denominations. Early Jewish burials in Melbourne's General Cemetery at Carlton, for example, occupied commanding positions and provided valuable insights into different faith beliefs and ways of memorialising the dead.[48] What is important, however, is that death rituals were exercises in place-making and identity construction. Although Pyalong and Kilmore graveyards lacked the formal grandeur of many urban cemeteries, the opening of a separate Catholic Cemetery at Kilmore in 1872 was a sign of civic progress and the status of the Catholic population. However, for people of different denominations the opening might have been seen more as a sign of alienation and separatism.[49]

The Pyalong general cemetery, gazetted on 27 June 1859, is a small country graveyard with none of the status of Kilmore's Catholic cemetery, and unlike the large Kilmore cemeteries it contains only 148 graves dating from 1866.[50] Among the 21 children buried there

---

[46] Dianne Hall & Lindsay Proudfoot, 'Memory and Identity among Irish Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Stawell', *Australasian Journal of Irish Studies 7* (2007/8), 71.

[47] *Port Phillip Pioneers Group,* https://portphillippioneersgroup.org.au/ppg5ka.htm Accessed 25/04/2021; *Argus* 12 June1850, death of John Wheeler; *Kilmore Free Press,* 10 December 1914 quoting article in *Early Kilmore XXXV*, published 11 January 1872. When the Catholic section of the Kilmore General cemetery ran out of space in 1871 a new Catholic cemetery was founded in 1872 and consecrated on 22 May 1880 by Archbishop Gould.

[48] Chris McConville, 'Cities of the Dead: The New Cemeteries of the Nineteenth Century', *Urban Futures Journal*, No. 22, June 1997, 2-3. The Melbourne General Cemetery adopted many elements of British cemeteries by having separate sections for various denominations, among others, Jewish and non-Christian burials. The placing of pebbles on graves was a symbolic Jewish practice as evidence of a gravesite visit. Chinese customs were symbolised by burial urns and burning towers from which ashes would be returned to China. See also Humayun Ansari, '"Burying the Dead": Making Muslim Space in Britain', *Historical Research*, Vol. 80, No, 210, 2007, 547: in Muslim tradition soil is especially significant in the death ritual and explains why so many Muslims until recently wanted their bodies to be sent back to their homelands.

[49] McConville, 'Cities of the Dead', 3; many Australian metropolitan and country cemeteries followed a European landscaping tradition with plantings with conifers or some other dark-leafed evergreen trees. Such plantings perpetuated sombre funereal tones which were meant to provide visitors with a sense of dignity and reflection.

[50] 'Historic Pyalong Cemetery: Pyalong Restoration Group Management Plan', *Pyalong Historic Cemetery, Council Submission*, August 2004, 55-8.

is Patrick and Mary's twelve-year-old son James who lies beneath one of few clearly identifiable headstones. Approximately 58 per cent of burials are unmarked and local information suggests there are others not officially recorded. Most graves are simple structures although several are the exception. Those of the civic-minded Greenshields and Paterson families (Scottish), and the Eades and Rainey families (Irish), are costly granite tombs which say much about the way their occupants wished to be remembered. They contrast starkly with

Figure 56: Pyalong Cemetery
(Dynan Archive)

the modest graves of Limerick born Eliza Zoch who trod several miles to Heathcote to sell her butter; and that of 49-year-old Scottish born Alexander Laing, who died in 1874 while labouring on Mollison's *Pyalong Run* station.[51]

In accordance with its lowly status, and unlike the opening of Kilmore's Catholic cemetery in 1872, the opening of the Pyalong cemetery was celebrated without fanfare. The first burial was that of eleven-year-old Elizabeth Hayes Purks (*Perkes*), the daughter of British immigrants, who was laid to rest on 6 July 1866 in a grave that is now unidentifiable; 38-year-old Pyalong storekeeper, Robert Leemon, was buried a week later on 13 July.[52] Leemon

[51] *Historic Pyalong Cemetery*, Eliza Zoch, died 27 June 1905; Alexander Laing, died 5 February 1874.
[52] *Register Births Deaths Marriages*, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), Death Certificate, Elizabeth Hayes Purks/Perks, Reg. 8886/1866; *Register Births Deaths Marriages*, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), Death Certificate, Robert Leemon, Reg. 8887/1866.

migrated from Derry, Co. Roscommon, in 1857, and was the first Irish immigrant death recorded in the district. His grave consists of a simple slab devoid of iconography, which now lies as a forlorn memorial to a life ended before its time. The inscription is not unlike that on many graves and may have been inspired by a catalogue sample.[53] The message left little consolation for Leemon's mourners, and was a grim reminder of what might be in store for them:

> Sacred to the memory of Robert Leemon who departed this life 11 July 1866 aged 38 years. Like crow[d]ed forest trees we stand and some are marked to fall. The axe will smile at God's command and soon will smite us all.[54]

The headstone provides no inkling of Leemon's life or reference to his young childless wife, to his Irish heritage, or to his family in Ireland. There is no sense of fealty to his adopted country. The epitaph is a mere reflection on a life cut short, conveying regret at lost opportunities and what might have been. As a line from a Protestant hymn on an unadorned headstone, the inscription nonetheless says much about the strength of his Protestant faith and his belief in the afterlife. The grave is one of many which show how cemeteries sometimes represent the past: how the choices made by the deceased or their grieving relatives, may enliven or silence a narrative through what is known, unknown, forgotten or deliberately omitted.

Not all colonial tombstones reveal so little, however. Many graves memorialise the lives of the dead through the symbolic idealisation of the personal qualities, background, and cultural landscape of the deceased. Cemeteries were one of the most enduring places where inscription and architectural features were used to invoke meaning and pay homage to a loved one.[55] Many headstones incorporated decorative Irish filigree and reference to birthplace, and as such were as much a symbol of the past as were churches, libraries and civic buildings and could be described (like Mechanics Institutes) as 'an imported cultural institution planted in a foreign environment'.[56] With a concentration of Irish and Scottish settlers in central Victoria,

---

[53] See Hall & Proudfoot, 'Memory and Identity', 71.

[54] *Historic Pyalong Cemetery*, 43; *Herald*, 17 November 1867. Leemon was one of Pyalong's early settlers. He married Martha Clark in Limerick in 1856 and was resident in Victoria for nine years before his death. His early career was as a police foot-constable (No. 683) at Reedy Creek near Broadford. Within a year of his death his wife, Martha, married Pyalong schoolteacher, Charles Knight, in a ceremony conducted at her Pyalong home: William Cowper, *Verses about Nature*, 'Stanzas Subjoined To The Yearly Bill Of Mortality Of The Parish Of All-Saints, Northampton. Anno Domini 1787', https://keytopoetry.com/william-cowper Accessed 26/08/2021. The epitaph is from a Protestant hymn written by Cowper in 1787.

[55] Proudfoot & Hall, *Imperial Spaces*, 213.

[56] McConville, 'Cities of the Dead', 1; see also Donald Barker, 'Funding Communal Culture: Opportunism and Standardisation of Funding for Mechanic's Institutes in Colonial Victoria', *The Australian Library Journal*, Issue 51, No. 3, August 2002, 247.

Pyalong and Kilmore cemeteries are thus striking examples of the ethnic presence. Irish names such as Ryan, O'Connor, Cooke, Halpin, O'Dwyer, Leahy and Walsh stand out against the Scottish and Welsh eponyms of McKenzie, Mackay, Campbell, Crawford, and Chalmers.

At the same time, in terms of architectural features, the Pyalong cemetery was typical for its period and place. Most nineteenth-century tombstones were relatively cheap, slab structures, low in stature with few or no architectural embellishments. In 1870 the cost of an 'ordinary' adult grave in the Kilmore General Cemetery was £1 10s; the grave of a child cost 10s—the fee Patrick and Mary most likely paid when their son James was buried in Pyalong in 1874. A fee of 10s 6d was charged for adult headstones and £1 12s 6d for a large upright pedestal or monument. Land for family vaults was charged at the rate of £1 per foot for a grave of up to 12 feet in width with extra for adornments.[57] More expensive vaults were constructed of granite or stone, replete with obelisks, funerary urns etc., and elaborate iconography symbolising the origins and stature of their occupants. Some headstones indicate the name of the stonemason. A single headstone in the Pyalong cemetery displays the name Jageurs, a family of prize-winning monumental masons who strongly identified with Irish political causes and whose name is found throughout Victorian cemeteries with large numbers of Irish burials.[58]

Nonetheless, grave marker attributes on local immigrant graves are generally sparse. Personal information consists mainly of name, date and place of death and the relationship of the deceased to family members. Few inscribe place of birth or demonstrate any sense of the deceased's character or life's work. John Halpin's modest, roughly hewn 1930s granite headstone is like many which are a mute reflection of the humble disposition of the deceased. There is no religious or floral imagery, only a proud declaration that he was a 'Native of Co. Limerick, Ireland'. This may be due to changing tastes where information on headstones became less elaborate after the 1920s.[59] Or it may have been a silent reflection of the tensions

[57] *Kilmore Free Press*, 24 March 1870.

[58] Other Pyalong graves carried the names of Wilson & Co., Lee, and Corbin. See also, Pamela O'Neill, 'Michael Davitt and John Davitt Jageurs (1895-1916)', *Australian Journal of Irish History (AJIH),* Vol. 6 (2006/7), Peter Jageurs was born in Tullamore, Ireland, in 1834 and was a prize-winner in Dublin in 1865 for his design of the Celtic Cross. He emigrated to Australia on the *Landsborough* in 1865 and was well-known in Ireland and Australia for his nationalist political leanings. In Australia his son, Morgan Jageurs, became an important figure in Irish-Australian circles as an outspoken supporter of the Irish Land League, of which he was a founding member in Melbourne. He later became president of Melbourne's United Irish League and was a central figure in establishing Melbourne's Celtic Home Rule Club. The Jageurs family held Michael Davitt (founder of the Irish Land League in 1879) in high esteem. Davitt was the godfather of Peter Jageurs's eldest son whom they named after him in 1895. John Davitt Jageurs, KIA 1916, described himself as 'Irish Australian to the backbone' when pleading with his father to allow him to enlist during the Great War.

[59] Hall & Proudfoot, 'Memory and Identity', 71.

between his gradually fading Irish identity and his increasing affinity with an Australian identity.

Figure 57: John Halpin (1838-1935), Kilmore Cemetery
(Dynan Archive)

Unlike the Halpin grave, other monuments were designed to carry a great deal of emotional content. The double grave of James Cooke and his aunt, Catherine Walsh, at Pyalong, is a silent witness to the kinship ties within the Cooke and Walsh families. Catherine's headstone reveals nothing of her life, just the fact that she lived, but her death may have evoked memories of her close bond with her sister, Mary. Burial with her twelve-year-old nephew suggests a strong family connection since Catherine emigrated with Mary and Patrick in 1854, was entrusted with the care of their infant son until he died in 1855 and lived and worked for the remainder of her life in the Cooke household.[60] Her burial beside James suggests she may have been particularly devoted to him, especially during his illness, although there was no mention of them meeting again in eternity.

Some graves tell a different story altogether. David Walsh's costly tomb in Kilmore, for which he left £200 towards its upkeep, is a bold statement of pride as a 'native of Co. Limerick, Ireland'. Like his last will and testament, it shows how prosperous he had become and how his attachment to his roots never waned. He maintained close contact with his Irish family and in his will provided names and addresses of Irish relations who were to receive bequests after his death. The monument is replete with traditional Christian symbolism, the Irish harp and shamrocks, and a majestic Celtic cross. Crosses gained popularity in Australia

[60] The burial place of 18-month-old John Cooke is unknown. Given he died in early 1855 it is likely he was buried on the Queen Victoria Market site.

at the turn of the twentieth century when the 'Gaelic Revival' created new interest in the Irish language and material culture. Of the various meanings ascribed to the Celtic cross, most symbolised pride in the deceased's religion and ethnic origins, with some read as political statements of resistance to the British presence in Ireland. [61]

Figure 58: James Cooke (1862-1874) aged 12, and Catherine Walsh (1826-1888) aged 62. Pyalong Cemetery
(Dynan Archive)

What input Walsh had in the design of his grave is unknown, but like some other graves his resistance to severing his ties with the homeland reflected the tension immigrants experienced in maintaining an Irish identity in the face of greater identification with Australia as the years went by. The grave is an impressive memorial, however, that may indicate how he, or possibly Mary and his adopted daughter, Hanora Halpin, wished him to be remembered—deflecting memory perhaps from his recalcitrant ways. Unlike those who knew him, the casual observer would have no inkling into the turbulence of his life, nor the strains settlers experienced when finding their place in a new locale.

Even more impressive than the Walsh grave are those of Patrick's immigrant friends, Martin and Michael McKenna who are buried in the Kyneton cemetery. Their soaring granite monoliths speak loudly to social attainment and wealth, with ethnic commemoration and evocations of 'home' a matter of great pride. Hidden beneath the triumph of success, however,

[61] Lindsay Proudfoot,' Landscape, Place and Memory: Towards a Geography of Irish Identities in Colonial Australia', in O. Walsh (ed.), *Ireland Abroad: Politics and Professions in the Nineteenth Century', Society for the Study of Nineteenth Century Ireland*, 6, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), 182.

are the hardships that propelled their exit from Ireland and Martin's experience on the goldfields when he was dangerously ill with Typhoid Fever. As burials in Kilmore and Pyalong show, immigrant cemeteries were contested sites, demonstrating different viewpoints and allegiances which signified the pull between assimilation and attachment to roots.[62] There is no indication that the McKennas were destabilised in this way since there is evidence that they maintained strong links with Ireland even as they worked prodigiously to readjust to the colonial environment.[63] More likely, Ireland's political situation and the suffering of Martin's brother in New York strengthened their connection to their homeland. In 1866 Patrick McKenna was forced to flee the British 'bloodhounds' when he was betrayed by a vile 'wretch' in the ranks of the Fenian Brotherhood. Finding himself destitute and friendless in a strange land, Patrick wrote of his adversity after striving to alleviate the misery of his downtrodden country:

> It would be utterly impossible for me to give you the faintest conception of the misery and privation I have endured… I [have tasted] the bitter fruit of disappointment in all its shapes … forced to take leave of … mother, friends and country, all that was dear to me on earth on St Stephen's Day 26th December 1866 … and would to Heaven I only had a field … to exercise my energy and ability…[64]

The pomp and ceremony of Martin's funeral in 1907 was an acknowledgment of his identification with both Australia and Ireland. Unlike Martin who made a deliberate choice to migrate, Patrick's letter exemplified the *placelessness* and loss of identity when *forced* from the homeland that gave meaning to his life.

Though to a lesser extent, the tensions of emigration were again reflected in Cooke family burials throughout Victoria. Many members of the family are buried in Kilmore,

---

[62] Laurie Stanley-Blackwell & Michael Linkletter, 'Inscribing Ethnicity: A Preliminary Analysis of Gaelic Headstone Inscriptions in Eastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton', *Genealogy*, Vol. 2, No. 29, 2018, 1.

[63] Patrick McKenna, New York, *Letter to Martin McKenna, Australia*, 20 July 1866, Martin McKenna Private Archive, Kyneton, Victoria.

[64] See also *The Australian Brewer's Journal*, 'Obituary: Death of Martin McKenna, JP, Founder of the Kyneton Brewery and Malting Company, Kyneton, Victoria', 20 May 1907, 533-34. Beneath a spray of shamrocks the inscription included details of Martin's birthplace at Carrahill, Co. Kilkenny, and that of his wife, Catherine, who was born at Loch Sheehan, Co. Cavan. During a Solemn High Mass which was attended by 41 clergymen, bells rang out and flags flew at half-mast. See also McKenna, New York, *Letter to Martin McKenna* (McKenna states he arrived in America in December 1866; this should read, December 1865). The letter was a tragic account of how Patrick Mckenna fled Ireland after a tip-off from a lawyer friend in a Dublin Legal Office who found his name on a list of 30 Irish Nationalists who were to be arrested by the British constabulary. Patrick believed the Fenian Brotherhood was 'the only means of salvation for his country'. After his name was discovered, he was warned his life was in such danger that he had only two days to prepare to leave Ireland. Not having time to ready himself for a long voyage to Australia he fled to America before papers for his arraignment were sent to Dublin Castle. Soon after arrival in America he became impoverished, ill and unemployed, and was anguished that the only people he knew were 900 miles away. He felt he had suffered dearly for his devotion to alleviating the suffering of his 'persecuted, impoverished and downtrodden' country, and for supporting the nationalist cause. He delighted in Martin's prosperity and believed his 'best brother' was blessed in coming to Australia.

although only sixteen graves carry the Cooke name.[65] Unlike the shamrocks and grand Celtic cross that dominate the grave of Nicholas's sister, Margaret Carroll, in Myrtleford, Victoria, her brother's tomb in Kilmore is notable for its austerity. As in the 1920s, the lack of decoration may be explained by a shift in funerary tastes and new understandings of what was appropriate to inscribe on a headstone.[66] Cost may have been a factor since Nicholas died at the height of the Depression and spare cash was probably tight after wheat and wool prices plummeted in 1925. Nicholas and his wife, Margaret (Ryan) survived the downturn better than most, but for the majority, funerals were a huge outlay when unemployment rose to 29 per cent country-wide in 1932, and given a farm labourer's wage then averaged only £156 per annum.[67] The simplicity of the grave may also signify Nicholas's fading emotional attachment to Ireland given his youth when he left in 1858, and a gradual recognition over the years that he identified more with Australia.

Figure 59: Margaret (Cooke) Carroll, keeper of the Cooke family collection (Maguire/Dynan Archive)
Figure 60: Grave Margaret Cooke (1848-1935) & John Carroll, Myrtleford Cemetery, Victoria.
(Dynan Archive)

[65] The tally is far higher when direct descendants with name changes are included.
[66] Hall & Proudfoot, 'Memory and Identity', 71. Towards the end of the nineteenth century it was evident that stonemasons' tombstone representations differed in local areas and from one region to another.
[67] *Year Book Australia, 1937,* 1301.0, Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Canberra, State Library Victoria (SLV), 589, https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs Accessed 27/08/2021; *Year-Book Australia, No. 24-1931*, 1301.0, 483, https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs Accessed 21/08/2021; between 1929 and 1930 wool prices dropped by 35 percent; see also *Victorian Year-Book 1930-31, 1301.2, 349,* https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs Accessed 18/08/2021. In 1930-31 the annual wage for a married couple working on farms was £260 without rations; female servants £104 annually without rations. The highest wage rates were in the printing and allied industries, the lowest in the agricultural industry.

Patrick and Mary's memorial is inscribed only with the names and dates of death and the relationship of its occupants to one another. The grave lacks reference to their birthplace; there are no Gaelic inscriptions, the only adornments being delicate shamrocks that pay due homage to ethnicity. A small unpretentious Celtic cross and Latin references demonstrate adherence to the Catholic faith (*Gloria in Excelsis Deo*). A pair of funeral urns signal a wish to be remembered by family and friends, a means of consolation and strengthening of bonds perhaps for those who filled them with flowers on special occasions and a sign that the relationship with the deceased did not end at death. The memorial is somewhat restrained, however. There is no hint of Patrick's impressive leadership or how he left his mark on the district, nor any indication of the couple's 49-year span as colonists. The inscription is somewhat ambiguous, since it reflects, not their own, but the views of their surviving children who may have designed the headstone. Nonetheless, the modest Celtic cross and ethnic motifs, simple though they are, show that Patrick and Mary's affection and identification with Ireland remained undimmed to the last.

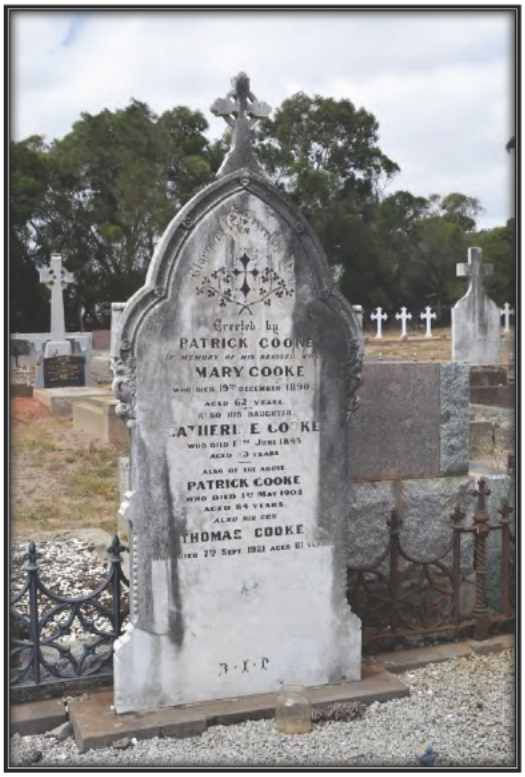


Figure 61: Patrick (1818-1903) & Mary (1828-1890) Cooke, Kilmore Catholic Cemetery
(Dynan Archive)

This chapter has argued that, for the Cooke party, personal narratives were kept alive through the meanings imbued in mnemonic devices and sites of remembrance. These consolidated a sense of the self and assured an affinity with the old world left behind and the

new world they were entering. This was demonstrated in the preservation of household memorabilia such as portraits and bereavement cards, in the naming of properties, in the demarcation of the hotel site, in their churches and schools, and in the arrangement of cemeteries. The memories evoked by these elements show how circumstance and environment, personal traits, and prevailing notions of what it meant to be 'Irish'—and in time 'Australian'—helped define life on the geographic spaces on which immigrants settled. As argued in this chapter and throughout the thesis, these fundamentals and the particular character of the Pyalong landscape, gave meaning to Patrick and Mary Cooke's lives and to the lives of those who accompanied them to the colony in 1854.

CONCLUSION

Is it only love
That makes a place?[1]

In 1854 Pyalong was set to be the heartbeat of a new Victorian metropolis. It was an adventurous plan that failed to eventuate. Yet a group of enterprising immigrants from County Limerick left their mark on the district. This thesis is an analysis of colonial settlement in central Victoria through the lens of the free-settler Cooke family who interacted with an unpredictable local environment that was far from anything they had known. As they forged a new life in the Antipodes the newcomers shaped and were in turn shaped by the place on which they settled. The study is a micro-history of farming settlement in central Victoria, and the evidence presented shows that family case studies of agricultural settlement are crucial to an understanding of Australia's early settler societies. The pattern of settlement in this part of central Victoria has been neglected by scholars in the past, and a micro-history such as this allows for more detailed focus on this area than was possible in studies with a wider lens.

In the past Australia's settlement history has been canvassed from many different angles from regions scattered across country Victoria. In a broad sense, however, some of the fundamental characteristics that played a crucial role in the formation of immigrant identity were relatively neglected. Comprehensive works written many years apart by Blainey, Dingle, Fahey, Grimshaw, Kiddle, McConville, McQuilton and Serle, to name just a few, undoubtedly made an important contribution to the richness of colonial historiography. However, further works by Ballinger, Fitzpatrick, Murray, Proudfoot and Hall were among a small sub-stratum that provided a more complex understanding of how ethnic identity was reconfigured in the colony. Their work looks at how the process of *re*acculturation on foreign soil was imbued with meaning by Irish newcomers. In a place-centred analysis that focused on the local, Proudfoot and Hall argued that the world that settlers 'created, inhabited and imagined' on a daily basis was the key to understanding their sense of identity and purpose.[2] It was a new way of thinking that does justice to what being Australian really meant. Building on the work of these writers, this study has addressed the hiatus left by earlier scholarship which did not

[1] Eavan Boland, 'Anna Liffey', *In a Time of Violence* (New York, USA: Norton 1944), 41-46.
[2] Lindsay Proudfoot and Dianne Hall, *Imperial Spaces: Placing the Irish and Scots in Colonial Australia* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2011), 3.

adequately consider the semiotic issues inherent in land ownership and placemaking—issues that were central to how immigrants went about reconfiguring their lives.

The scope of this study ranges from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century, since the upheaval of the Irish Famine and new opportunities in Australia were the catalysts that propelled an influx of post-Famine farming families in the 1850s.[3] Even 'strong farmers' like the Cookes were affected by the strictures imposed by Ireland's feudalist land system and the deprivations of an increasingly oppressive social, religious, and cultural milieu. Patrick Cooke was neither an impoverished Famine refugee, nor among the wealthiest class of Irish farmers. Rather, he was an established Irish farmer who made a deliberate choice to better his prospects in a place where there was a demand for agriculturists; where his ambitions could be satisfied; and where legislation ensured that farming could be conducted with a degree of independence. The Introduction laid the groundwork for the historical context of the analysis by exploring the Cooke family's Irish background within the social, political and cultural times in which they were reared. In this concluding chapter, I draw the themes together and show how space and place were integral to the way the Cooke family identified with the landscape. The conclusion ties together the themes addressed in the study and makes a case for such micro-histories.

Chapter one was concerned with understanding the Cooke family's place in Irish society before emigration. By presenting a detailed analysis of their farming activities from the late eighteenth century, important questions shed light on their experiences in Ireland by focusing on the effects of the Famine on Ireland's agricultural production, the problems associated with the family land tenancies, marriage relationships and inheritance; and the difficulties faced in preparing for emigration. The aim of the chapter was to identify the extent to which these factors may have influenced Patrick and Mary's decision to move to Australia and provided a template for how they set about constructing their lives in Australia.

Chapter two analysed the subtleties peculiar to sea passages as temporary, transitory living spaces, with particular attention to Mary Cooke's agency as a mother during the 1854 voyage. It argues that for most immigrants the liminal space of the voyage was a period of instability, of *placelessness*, since immigrants were without the security and comfort of a space where they knew they belonged. Little understanding of this perspective was gleaned from an

[3] Dmytro Ostapenko, 'Growing Potential: Land-Cultivators of the Colony of Victoria in the Late 1830s-1860s', Ph.D. diss., La Trobe University, Melbourne, 2011, 314.

upper-class passenger diary written by a young single man. As a privileged cabin passenger, William Shiress only indirectly provided insights into the experiences of the majority of emigrants who travelled in far less salubrious conditions below decks.

In contrast to the *de*stabilisation occasioned by the voyage to Australia, chapter three dealt with the *re*stabilisation for Patrick and Mary as their aspirations to acquire land were gradually realised as Australia's agricultural industry gained momentum during the latter half of the nineteenth century. It showed how working the land, alongside entry into the hotel industry on a major route to the goldfields, ultimately led to financial security, despite economic downturns and the vicissitudes common to life on the land. As the chapter argues, for families like the Cookes who had decades-long experience of farming in Ireland, the purchase of land was more than a money-making venture: it was at the core of family identity.

Chapter four covered the period of consolidation in the colony, showing how material assets, civic activities and upward social mobility defined the Cookes as integral to the locale on which they settled. The chapter argues that Pyalong was not just a destination for Patrick and Mary, but that their interaction with the locale and community imbued the space in which they settled with meaning for their lives and became part of who they were. The chapter paid particular attention to Mary's role during this period, and how her moral authority as a wife and mother, and her skilful involvement in farm and hotel management, demonstrated her considerable power in determining the success or otherwise of the settlement process. What emerges from the chapter is that Mary was the key to Patrick's success as a highly proficient farmer and publican which underpinned the family's success.

Chapter five introduced the concept of 'spatial templates' to demonstrate how spatial elements, ranging from the layout of houses for the living and cemeteries for the dead, to household memorabilia, kept alive powerful narratives of Irishness, which changed over time to give greater prominence to an emerging Irish-Australian identity. The chapter focused on gravestones as a case study within a case study and demonstrated how they can be read as important markers of identity and as evidence of how bonds with the deceased through memorialisation of commonality of background and values enabled the dead to live on in the future through remembrance.

What distinguishes this study from others is that it began with the family background in Ireland rather than at the point of arrival in the colony. The argument that emerges is that

focussing on the specificity of space in both countries has provided a more nuanced assessment of rural settlement in nineteenth-century Victoria and avoids essentialist conclusions about the migration experience by showing how the outcome for a group of migrants—such as the Cooke family and kin—was contingent on a multiplicity of factors, including the personal. For this reason, this close-up micro-historical study has utilised a diverse range of sources commonly used by family historians to 'individualise' and 'humanise' their stories. The use of this methodology has resulted in a 'thick description' of colonial settlement in Pyalong to complement the broader studies of nineteenth-century Victorian colonial history. As historian Tanya Evans has observed, the scope of such case studies and microanalyses is admirably suited to the experiences of 'ordinary' people who are easily overlooked in the national narrative.[4] Although this thesis has benefitted greatly from advanced technology and access to public archives in several countries, it has also benefitted from a wealth of hitherto unexamined primary material stored in private repositories in Australia, some of which dates to the 1840s, 1850s and 1860s and which has now been analysed for the first time. Unfortunately many families lack access to this type of data since it has been discarded by accident or lack of interest, or because it was considered of little importance, with the result that the everyday lives of the vast majority of free settlers are largely unknown.

In this context, the wider significance of the study relates to a paucity of case study-based research into this part of central Victoria. Most studies in this locale have focused on the lives of prominent Kilmore immigrants—none of whom came from Knockainy. William Rutledge (instigator of the Rutledge Survey), came from Ireland's County Cavan; while Thomas Hunt, MLA, prominent landowner and founder of the *Kilmore Free Press*, hailed from Tipperary. Both were public figures which meant that extensive documentation was created. There has been no systematic study of an immigrant cluster from Ireland's Golden Vale, a region unique in its agricultural sustainability and its number of relatively prosperous landholders. One of the strengths of this thesis is the attention paid to the particular Irish background of an ordinary farming family from a neglected region of Ireland and the values and practices they brought with them to Australia. This thesis is the first in-depth study of a

[4] Tanya Evans, 'How Do Family Historians Work with Memory?', *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 46, Issue 1, 2020, 93; also Tanya Evans, 'Secrets and Lies: The Radical Potential of Family History', *History Workshop Journal*, No. 71, 2011, 52; Ashley Barnwell, 'Keeping the Nation's Secrets: "Colonial Storytelling" within Australian Families', *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 46, No. 1, 2021, 48.

group of Irish immigrant settlers in this locale, and to date the broader story of settlement on this part of the frontier has not been canvassed.

Another strength of this thesis is its use of a large quantity and range of primary source information gleaned from family archives and local and overseas newspaper sites in several countries, which not only provided a glimpse into the Cooke family's social and cultural activities in Ireland and Australia, but also opened a window into the family's personal political, religious and civic aspirations. Of significance was that press reportage was chronicled through the eyes of non-family members whose purpose as journalists was to disseminate information to local communities. In this way, newspapers were invaluable to the study since they demonstrated how immigrant families utilised the Pyalong locale to realise their ambitions, and how individuals like Patrick and Mary Cooke reached a level of economic and social independence beyond anything possible in Ireland. And although their prosperity was enhanced by the security of land tenure in Victoria, their personal ambition and strong work ethic also played a part. Unsurprisingly, the actions of this group of immigrants displayed many of the distinguishing features that led some farmers to great wealth. With the support of those in their circle, the Cookes navigated the pressures of placemaking in the colony, though at the expense of Indigenous rights.

The Cookes were not alone in this, and the project has been a case study not just of a particular family, but of a cluster of migrants. Future research would benefit from other detailed case studies of hybrid immigrant clusters, which would show that immigrants were not an homogenous group sharing the same characteristics and viewpoints. Their experiences in Ireland were as many and varied as were their reactions to settlement. Despite the upheaval of leaving the homeland to which most would never return, many established new lives and meaningful identities in their place of settlement. 'Ordinary' people like this group of settlers thus deserve an equal place in the history of this nation.

Since the dislocation of identity was inevitable when emigrants moved from one culture to another, questions are raised concerning the motivations of newcomers as they sought to identify with a particular geographic space. Were some immigrants more highly motivated than others, and if so, why? Did some have a stronger work ethic? It was noted in chapter three that Pyalong settlers were widely admired for their dogged determination to develop their properties. Future research might focus more closely on immigrants' personal traits, with particular attention to the mental zones in which identity and a sense of self was embedded.

What were the differences, if any, between the values of those who migrated compared with those who remained in the home country? These are important avenues of research given that immigrant communities were made up of people with a range of backgrounds, interests and ambitions, educational standards and psychological traits, and given that much of the literature has focused on the physical and economic aspects of the migration experience.

By adopting an intensive local approach, this dissertation has gone beyond the approach to colonial settlement demonstrated by many earlier historians. It has considered the complex meanings inherent in the distinct physical, social and symbolic dimensions that are integral to negotiating identity and belonging when a group of people relocate to a new culture. In an age where large numbers of people are moving from one part of the globe to another, the study highlights the fundamental characteristics of the need of all people to identify with a space they can call their own. In the process of nineteenth-century colonial settlement, newcomers shaped, and indeed were shaped by the environment in which they settled. Had they lived today, this realisation may not have been lost on Patrick and Mary Cooke, a dynamic immigrant couple who sought inspiration from Ireland as they gave voice to the contradictions of placemaking in the unyielding reaches of the Australian bush.

In the end
Everything that burdened and distinguished me
Will be lost in this:
I was a voice.[5]

[5] Boland 'Anna Liffey', 41-46.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Assumption College Annual 1916, Kilmore: Marist Bros., Assumption College,1916.

Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Land Tenure and Settlement', 1301.0-Year Book Australia, 1911, http://abs.gov.au/ausstats/abs@.nsf/featurearticlesbytitle Accessed 27/08/2020.

Australian Military Force (AMF), Attestation Papers, Pte Richard Thomas Cooke, No. 1889, 23rd Battalion, B2455, National Archives Australia (NAA) https://www.awm.gov.aul Accessed 10/19/2017.

St Francis' Church/St Patrick's Cathedral Archive, Baptism Certificate, Catherine Cooke, 9 October 1854. Accessed 4 July 2016.

British Ladies' Female Emigrant Society, 'Instructions to the Matron on board ship', Matron's Paper No. 2, *Fitz-James* Plymouth to Melbourne, 23 December 1856.

Calendar of Wills and Administrations, 1858-1922, Limerick Will Books: District Registry: 1883-1888; National Archives of Ireland (NLI) https://willcalendars.nationalarchives.ie/search Multiple accessions.

Catholic Parish Registers NLI, Knockainy & Patrickswell/Diocese Cashel & Emly, Co. Limerick, Ireland, https://www.nationalarchives.ie/article/records-birth-marriage-deathl Accessed 06/06/2019.

Census of Ireland for the Year 1851, Part VI, General Report (Dublin, Ireland: Alexander Thom & Sons, 1856), www.census.nationalarchisecondaryves.iel Accessed 07/04/2020.

Civil Death Record, Thomas Cooke, 16 August 1884; James Cooke, 7 December 1866, *Roots Ireland*, http://www.rootsireland.ie Accessed 03/06/ 2008.

Cole, Robert K., *Index of Victorian Hotels: 1841-1849*, Vol. 9, Page 53, *White Hart*, Pyalong, MS 7592, State Library Victoria (SLV).

Cooke, Agnes, *Agnes Cooke Notebook, 1915-1916*. Private Collection. Brendan Tobin, Costerfield, Victoria.

Cooke, Nicholas, Correspondence to Victorian Education Department & J. G. Duffy, MLA., 1888-1890, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) (VPRS n/a).

Dictionary of Irish Biography. Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Fogarty, Catherine, *Diary of Catherine Fogarty*, April 1925-January 1926. Private Collection, Martin Thomas, Perth, Western Australia.

Fox, Matthew J., *Fox's History of Queensland, Its People and Industries*, 1919-1923, Vol. 1, Fox Matthew J., States Publishing Co., 1923.

Great Munster Fair. Commissioner Minute Books. Wednesday 21 September 1853. GMF-1. 23 June 1852-4 September 1867, https://s3-eu-west1.amazonaws.com/archives.limerick.iel Accessed 08/07/2021.

Griffiths Valuations, Landed Estates Database, NUI Galway, www.landedestates.nuigalway.ie Accessed 02/04/2020.

Hamilton, J. C., *Pioneering Days in Western Victoria: A Narrative of Early Station Life*, Melbourne: Exchange Press, 1912.

Inquest Deposition Files, State Coroner's Office, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), www.prov.vic.gov.au Accessed 10/11/2020.

Ireland Court of Petty Sessions Order Books 1842-1913, CSPS 1/1425, 9 September 1885, https://www.findmypast.com.au Accessed 03/09/2016.

Irish Calendar of Wills and Administrations, 1858-1920, Limerick Will Books: District Registry, 1883-1888, National Archives of Ireland (NLI), https://search.findmypast.com.au Accessed 06/06/2018 & 10/08/2019.

Irish Townlands, Baggotstown West, Co. Limerick, https://www.townlands.ie/ Accessed 14/03/2021.

Kevin Grace, Interview, *Immigration in Cincinnati*, https://www.cincinnatiimmigration.weebly.com/irish.html/ Accessed 19/12/2020.

Land Selection Files, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV).

Landed Estates Court Rentals (1850-1885), County Limerick Estate, www.irish-geneaography.com/landed-estates-court-rentals-1850-1880 Accessed 07/04/2015.

Lewis, Samuel, *A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, Volume II, London: S. Lewis & Co., 1837. Accessed 01/08/2019.

Maguire/Dynan, Collection: Original Photographs, Documents and Artifacts 1848-2019. Author's private collection.

McCarthy, Michael, *Ships' Fastenings: From Sewn Boat to Steamship*. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, Ed Rachal Foundation Nautical Archaeology, 2005.

McKenna, Patrick, New York, letter to Martin McKenna, Australia, 20 July 1866, Martin McKenna Private Archive, Kyneton, Victoria.

Mollison, Alexander F., *Letters from Victorian Pioneers*, 1848-1859. Melbourne: Robt. S. Brain, Government Printer, 1898.

NUI Galway, OÉ Gaillimh, Landed Estates Database, https://landedestates.nuigalway.ie Accessed 22/03/2020.

Parliamentary Gazetteer of Ireland, 1844-45, Vol. 1, A-C. (Dublin, London, Edinburgh: A. Fullarton & Co., 1846).

Passengers in History. An Initiative of the South Australian Maritime Museum https://passengers.history.sa.gov.au Accessed 16/10/2010.

Port Phillip Pioneers Group https://portphillippioneersgroup.org.au/ppg5ka.htm Accessed 25/04/2021.

Pyalong Rural Town Precinct, Volume Five of five: Precinct Documentation, Mitchell Shire Stage Two Heritage Study, 2006, https://cdn.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au/ Accessed 09/01/2017.

Register Births Deaths Marriages, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV).

Seaports—Sea Captains: The Maritime Heritage Project, San Francisco 1846-1899 https://www,maritimeheritage.org/ Accessed 14/06/2020.

Shipping Register, Unassisted Passenger Lists (British Ports, Foreign and New Zealand) Record Series (PROV).

Shiress, William*, Log Kept by Mr William Shiress on the Voyage of the* Fitz-James*, Liverpool to Melbourne, 15 June to 13 September* 1854. National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, UK. MSS/81/059.0: Ref. TN48620.

Singleton, J., *A Narrative of Incidents in the Eventful Life of a Physician*, 1891, https://www.victoriancollections.net.au published online 15 May 2012. Accessed 10/10/2020.

Tithe Applotment Books, *Ask about Ireland Database*, www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-he-valuation/ Accessed 02/04/2020.

Valuation Office Books/Ireland Census Land and Surveys, County Limerick, Barony of Small County, Parish Knockainy, Townland Bottomstown, 1821-51, http://census.nationalarchives.ie Accessed 16/04/2020.

Victorian Government Gazette Online Archive 1836-1997, Gazette 19, 1840-1859, State Library Victoria (SLV), http://gazette.slv.vic.gov.au/view.cgi?year=1857 Accessed 23/07/2020.

Victorian Year-Book 1930-31, 1301.2, State Library Victoria (SLV), https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs Accessed 18/08/2021.

Weatherwebdotnet, Weather in History 1850 to 1899 AD, https://premium.weatherweb.net/ Accessed 17/10/ 2020.

Wills & Probate & Administration Files 1841-2016, Public Record Office Victoria (PROV).

Year-Book Australia, No. 24-1931, 1937, Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Canberra. https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs Accessed 21/08/2021.

Young, Arthur, *Arthur Young's Tour in Ireland (1776-1779)*, Vol. 1 London: George Bell & Sons, York St., Covent Garden, 1892.

Maps

Pyalong HPM RUN, 249, 1862, State Library of Victoria (SLV), *Historic Maps & Plans Collection, RUN 249* (Microfiche).

Satellite Maps, https://bing.com/maps=pyalong+victoria+satellite+map-37.116268 Accessed 02/07/2021.

Townlands, Co. Limerick, Parish of Knockainy, http://logain.ie/en/3111.aspx Accessed 06/07/2021.

Victoria, Surveyor General's Office (1857), *Agricultural Allotments on Mollison's Creek adjoining the Township of Pyalong,* Parish of Pyalong, County of Dalhousie [cartographic material]/Alexander Black, Assistant Surveyor, Heathcote, December 4, 1856; Surveyor General's Office, Melbourne, February 28, 1857; lithograph by R. Meikle, Melbourne: Surveyor General's Office. State Library Victoria (SLV).

Newspapers

Advocate
Age
Argus (Melbourne)
Australasian
Australian Town and Country Journal
Ballarat Star
Bendigo Advertiser
Brechin Advertiser
Brisbane Courier
Cincinnati Catholic Telegraph
The Clare Journal
Cork Constitution
Cork Examiner
The Daily Express (Dublin)
The Dublin Evening Mail
Dublin Evening Packet and Correspondent
Dublin Evening Post
Dublin Weekly Nation
Empire (Sydney)
Enniskillen Chronicle and Erne Packet
Flag of Ireland
Freeman's Journal
Geelong Advertiser and Squatters' Advocate
Great Southern Advocate
Irish Freeman's Journal
Herald (Melbourne)
Hull Advertiser and Exchange Gazette
Illustrated London News
Kilmore Advertiser
Kilmore Free Press
Kilmore Examiner
Leader (Melbourne)
Limerick Chronicle
Limerick Reporter
Liverpool Standard & Commercial Advertiser
Mayo Constitution
McIvor Times
Melbourne Punch
Newcastle Guardian and Tyne Mercury

Ovens & Murray Advertiser
Rochester Catholic Journal (Ireland)
Saunder's Newsletter
Seymour Express
Shepparton Advertiser
Southern Reporter and Cork Courier
South Australian Register
Sydney Morning Herald
Table Talk
Tipperary Vindicator & Limerick Reporter
Traralgon Record
The Australian Star
The Irish Daily and Independent
The Irish Times
The Limerick and Clare Examiner
Tuam Herald
Victorian Farmers Journal and Gardeners Chronicle
Weekly Free Press &Commercial Advertiser
Weekly Times
Wexford Independent

Theses

Dunnigan, Diane Rose, 'Irish Return Migration from America at the Turn of the Nineteenth Century, 1890-1920', Ph.D. diss., National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 2011.

English, Tracy M., '"Big wages, Glorious Climate and Situations Guaranteed." A Study of the Migration of Irish Women to Great Britain for the Period 1861-1911', MA, St John's, Newfoundland, 1999.

Lemberg, Nicola Johanna, 'Writing the Goldfields of Victoria and Otago, 1851-1871: Australasian Narratives and their Representations', MA, The University of Waikato, 2015.

McEntee, Joanne, 'The State and the Landed Estate: Order and Shifting Power Relations in Ireland, 1815-1891', Ph.D. diss., Dublin, National University of Ireland, 2013.

Murray, Michael, 'Prayers and Pastures: Moidart Immigrants in Victoria, 1852-1920', Ph.D. diss., Deakin University, 2006.

McQuilton, John, 'The Geographical Dimension of Social Banditry: The Kelly Outbreak, 1878-1880', Ph.D. diss., University of Melbourne, 1977.

Ostapenko, Dmytro, 'Growing Potential: Land Cultivators of the Colony of Victoria in the late 1830s-1860s, Ph. D. diss., La Trobe University, 2011.

Reid, Richard, 'Aspects of Irish Assisted Emigration to New South Wales, 1848-1870', Ph.D. diss, Australian National University, 1992.

Ridden, Jennifer, '"Making Good Citizens": National Identity, Religion, and Liberalism among the Irish Elite, c. 1800-1850', Ph.D. diss., London, Kings College, University of London, 1998.

Vaughan, W. E., 'A Study of Landlord and Tenant Relations in Ireland between the Famine and the Land War, 1850-78', Ph.D. diss., Trinity College, Dublin, 1973.

Recordings

Irish Life and Lore, Recordings and Books, Oral History Collection, County Limerick, *Ireland*, Thomas Cooke (1914-2014), Parts 1 & 2 (2014). Transcribed by Colin Ryan, 2021.

Typescript

Dynan, Loretta, 'Untitled', in '…and grass seeds in our socks…', unpublished poetry anthology, 2007.

Farrell, Gus, *Pyalong: A History*, Centenary of the Shire of Pyalong 1871-1971: Typescript 1972.

McAuliffe, Willie, 'The Famine of 1845 to 1849 in the Parish of Knockaney, County Limerick', 6-page typescript, 07/08/2015.

McManus, James, 'A Diary of James McManus, 1867-1880', Pat Clarke & Brian Clancy (eds), Typescript 1997.

Murphy, Noel, *Gubbins Family Notes*, http://www.limerickcity.ie/media/limerick%20families%20112.pdf Accessed 01/05/2020.

O'Kane Hale, Frances, *A Family Background: The O'Keane (O'Kane) Family in Ireland*, Victoria, n/pub.1982, Revised 1996.

Ryan, Mary, 'A Brief History of Patrick Cooke and His Family', Leaflet, c.1970.

Shovelton, Jim, 'McCormack Family History', undated, Document 7.

Sr Mary Camillus, *The O'Kane Family History as I know it* (undated).

Testimonial

Testimonial to Patrick Cooke, Esq., Pyalong, Illuminated Address, 12/10/1899.

Secondary Sources

Books

Akenson, Donald Harman, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer*, Toronto, Canada: P. D. Meany Company, Inc., Publishers, 1996.

Antze, Paul & Lambek, Michael (eds), *Tense Past: cultural essays in trauma and memory* New York: Routledge, 1996.

Arensberg, Conrad M. & Solon T. Kimball, *Family and Community in Ireland*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1968).

Barnard, Alan, *The Australian Wool Market 1840-1900,* Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 1958.

Bessant, B., *The Land Hunger: Commentary and Documents*, West Melbourne, Victoria: Thomas Nelson Australia Pry Ltd., 1980.

Blainey, Geoffrey, *The Tyranny of Distance: How Distance Shaped Australia's History* Melbourne, Victoria: Sun Books, 1970.

Blainey, Geoffrey, *Our Side of the Country: The Story of Victoria*, Sydney, New South Wales: Methuen Haynes, 1984.

Blake, L. J., *A Centenary History of State Education in Victoria*, Vol. 3, Victoria, Australia: Education Department, Victoria, 1973.

Boland, Eavan, *In a Time of Violence,* New York, USA: Norton 1994.

Boucher, Leigh & Russell, Lynette (eds), *Settler Colonial Governance in Nineteenth-Century Victoria*, Acton, ACT: ANU Press and Aboriginal History Inc., 2015.

Breathnach, Proinnsias, 'Agricultural change and the growth of the creamery system in Monaghan 1855-1920', *Monaghan: History and Society*, Dublin, Ireland: Geography Publications, 2017.

Broome, Richard, *Aboriginal Victorians: A history since 1800*, Crow's Nest, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 2005.

Buckley, Vincent, *Cutting Green Hay: Friendships, Movements and Cultural Conflicts in Australia's great decades*, Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1983.

Butlin, S. J., *Foundations of the Australian Monetary System 1788-1851*, Sydney, New South Wales: Sydney University Press, 2nd edition 1968.

Buxton, G. L., *The Riverina, 1861-91: An Australian Regional Study*, Melbourne, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1967.

Callaghan, A. R., & Millington, A. J., *The Wheat Industry in Australia*, Sydney, NSW: Angus and Robertson, 1956.

Campbell, Malcolm, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922*, Madison, Wisconsin, USA: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2008.

Campbell, Malcolm, *The Kingdom of the Ryans: The Irish in Southwest New South Wales, 1816-1890*, Sydney, NSW: University of New South Wales Press, 1997.

Cannon, Michael, *The Land Boomers*, Kingsgrove, New South Wales: Melbourne University Press, 1967.

Cannon, Michael, *Life in the Country. Australia in the Victorian Age:2*, West Melbourne, Victoria: Thomas Nelson, 1973.

Charlwood, Don, *The Long Farewell: Settlers Under Sail*, Ringwood, Victoria: Allen Lane Publishers, 1981.

Clark, Ian D., *Aboriginal Languages and Clans: An Historical Atlas of Western and Central Victoria, 1800-1900*, Melbourne, Victoria: Monash University, 1990.

Clear, Caitriona, *Social Change and Everyday Life in Ireland, 1850–1922*, Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2007.

Coohill, Joseph, *Ireland: A Short History*, Oxford, UK: Oneworld Publications, 2000.

Curtis, L. Perry, Jnr., *The depiction of eviction in Ireland, 1845-1910*, Dublin, Ireland: University of Dublin Press, 2011.

Davidoff, Leonore & Hall, Catherine, *Family fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, London, UK: Routledge 1987.

Dening, Greg*, Performances,* Melbourne, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1996.

Dingle, Tony, *The Victorians: Settling*, Sydney: Fairfax, Syme & Weldon, 1984.

Dodd, Stuart F., *Looking Back at Willowmavin*, Melbourne, Victoria: Impact Printing, 1984.

Donnelly, James S., *The Land and the People of Nineteenth-century Cork: The Rural Economy and the Land Question*, Cork, Ireland: 1975.

Donnelly, James S. Jnr, *The Great Irish Potato Famine*, UK, Gloucestershire: Sutton Publishing, 2002.

Dunsdorfs, Edgars, *The Australian Wheat-Growing Industry, 1788-1948*, Melbourne, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1956.

Elliott, Bruce S., *Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach*, Belfast, Northern Ireland: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988.

Fitzpatrick, Brian, *The British Empire in Australia 1834-1939*, Melbourne, Victoria: Macmillan, 1969.

Fitzpatrick, David, *Irish Emigration 1801-1921*, Ireland: The Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, 1984.

Fitzpatrick, David, *Oceans of Consolation: Personal Accounts of Irish Migration to Australia*, Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press, 1994.

Geertz, Clifford, *The Interpretation of Cultures*, New York, USA: Basic Books, Inc., 1973.

Grace, Kevin, *Irish Cincinnati,* Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publications, 2012.

Gray, Peter, *The Irish Famine*, London, UK: Thames & Hudson, 2010.

Grimshaw, Patricia, et al (eds), *Families in Colonial Australia,* Sydney, NSW: Allen & Unwin, 1985.

Haines, Robin, *Life and Death in the Age of Sail: The Passage to Australia*, Sydney, New South Wales: University of New South Wales Press, 2003.

Haines, Robin, *Doctors at Sea: Emigrant Voyages to Colonial Australia*, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK: 2005.

Hassam, Andrew, *No Privacy for Writing: Shipboard Diaries 1852-1879*, Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press 1995.

Halbwachs, Maurice, 'Space and the Collective Memory', in *The Collective Memory*, Chicago, USA: University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Haw, Paul & Munro, Margaret, *Footprints across the Loddon Plains: A shared history*, Boort, Victoria: Boort Development Inc., 2010.

History of the John Carroll family at Mudgegonga: The Carrolls of 'The Laurels, (n/d, author unknown).

Kiddle, Margaret, *Men of Yesterday: A Social History of the Western District of Victoria*, Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1963.

Kruithof, Mary, *Fever Beach: The Story of the Migrant Clipper Ticonderoga, its ill-fated Voyage, and its historic impact,* Mount Waverley, Victoria: Publicious Pty Ltd, 2nd Ed., 2005.

Lemon, Andrew & Morgan, Marjorie, *Buried by the Sea: A History of Williamstown Cemetery*, Balwyn, Victoria: Rivka Frank & Associates, 1990.

Lowden, Jim, *Rutledge's Special Survey*, Kilmore, Victoria: Lowden Publishing Co., 1985.

Lubbock, Basil, *The Colonial Clippers*, Glasgow, Scotland: James Brown & Son, 2nd edition, 1921.

Luddy, Maria & O'Dowd, Mary, *Marriage in Ireland 1660-1925*, Port Melbourne, Victoria: Cambridge University Press, 2020.

MacKellar, Dorothea, 'My Country', in *Core of my Heart*, Poemhunter.com-The World's Poetry Archive, Classic Poetry Series, 2012, ebooks/pdf/dorothea_mackellar_2012_7.pdf Accessed 25/04/2020.

McConville, Chris, *Croppies Celts & Catholics: The Irish in Australia*, Caulfield East, Victoria: Edward Arnold Ltd, 1987.

MacDonagh, Oliver, 'Emigration from Ireland to Australia: An Overview', in *Australia and Ireland 1788-1988: Bicentenary Essays* (ed. Colm Kiernan), Dublin, Ireland: Gill & MacMillan, 1986.

Macintyre, Stuart*, Colonial Liberalism: The Lost World of Three Victorian Visionaries*, Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1991.

McKenzie McHarg, Mary, *Eliza: The First Mrs Zoch in Australia,* Box Hill, Victoria: Printqwik, 2000.

McLeary, Ailsa & Dingle, Tony, *Catherine: On Catherine Currie's Diary, 1873-1908*, Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1998.

Maher, J. A., *The Tale of a Century: Kilmore 1837-1937*, Number Three—Historical Reprint Series, Kilmore, Victoria: Lowden Pub. Co., 1972.

Malcolm, Elizabeth & Hall, Dianne, *A New History of the Irish in Australia*, Sydney, New South Wales: NewSouth Publishing, 2018.

Massey, Doreen, *Space, Place, and Gender*, Minnesota, USA: University of Minnesota Press, 1994.

Meinig, D. W., *On the Margins of the Good Earth: The South Australian Wheat Frontier, 1869-1884*, Chicago: Rand McNally, 1962.

Miller, Kerby A., *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America*, New York, USA: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Mills, Sara*, Gender and Colonial Space*, UK: Manchester University Press, 2005.

Molony, John, *The Penguin Bicentennial History of Australia: The Story of Two Hundred Years*, Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books Australia, 1987.

Mundle, Rob, *Under Full Sail,* Sydney NSW, ABC Books, 2016.

Nolan, Janet A., *Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland, 1885-1920*, Kentucky, USA: The University Press of Kentucky, 2009.

Noone, Val (ed.), *Nicholas O'Donnell's Autobiography,* Ballarat Heritage Services, Bakery Hill, Victoria, 2017.

O'Farrell, Patrick, *The Irish in Australia*, Sydney, NSW: New South Wales University Press, 1986.

Ó Gráda, Cormac, *Ireland Before and After the Famine: Explorations in Economic History, 1800-1925*, New York, USA: St Martin's Press 1988.

O'Sullivan, Michael*, A History of Hospital and its Environs*, Hospital, Co. Limerick, Michael F. O'Sullivan Pub., 1995.

Palmer, Michael P., *Palmer List of Merchant Vessels*, Claremont, California, USA: Michael Palmer, 2000.

Peck, Harry H., *Memoirs of a Stockman*, Melbourne, Victoria: Stock and Land Pub. Co., Pty. Ltd., Reprint 1984.

Pyalong Historic Cemetery: Pyalong Restoration Group Management Plan, Pyalong Historic Cemetery, Council Submission, Pyalong Restoration Group Pub., August 2004.

Proudfoot, Lindsay & Hall, Dianne, *Imperial Spaces: Placing the Irish and Scots in Colonial Australia*, Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2011.

Powell, J. M., *The Public Lands of Australia Felix. Settlement and land Appraisal in Victoria 1834-91 with special reference to the Western Plains*, London, UK: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Quick, John, *History of Land Tenure in the Colony of Victoria* , Melbourne, Victoria: Samuel Mullen, 1883.

Randell, J. O., *Pastoral Settlement in Northern Victoria, Vol. 1 & 2: The Coliban District*, Carlton, Victoria: Queensbury Press, 1979.

Reid, Richard E., *Farewell My Children: Irish Assisted Emigration to Australia 1848-1870*, Sydney, New South Wales: Anchor Books, 2011.

Reynolds, Henry, *With the White People: The Crucial Role of Aborigines in the Exploration and Development of Australia,* Ringwood, Victoria: Penguin Books, 1990.

Roberts, S. H., *A History of Australian Land Settlement, 1788-1920*, Melbourne, Victoria: Macmillan, 1924.

Rolls, Eric, *A Million Wild Acres: 200 Years of Man and an Australian Forest*, McMahon's Point, New South Wales: Hale & Ironmonger, 30th Anniversary Edition, 2011.

Ryle, Gilbert *Collected Papers, Volume II: Collected Essays 1929–1968*, Bristol, UK: Thoemmes Antiquarian Books Ltd, 1990.

Russell, Penny, *Savage or Civilised? Manners in Colonial Australia*, Sydney, NSW: University of New South Wales Press Ltd., 2010.

Ryan, Mary*, Pyalong: A Brief History, 1838-1968*, Pyalong: Back-to-Pyalong Committee Pub., 1968.

Serle, Geoffrey, *The Rush to be Rich: A History of the Colony of Victoria, 1883-1889*, Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1971.

Serle, Geoffrey, *The Golden Age: A History of the Colony of Victoria 1851-1861*, Carlton, Victoria: Melbourne University Press, 1977.

Solow, Barbara Lewis, *The Land Question and the Irish Economy, 1870-1903*, Massachusetts, USA: Harvard University Press, 1971.

Spellissy, Sean, with Photographs by John O'Brien, *Limerick: The Rich Land*, Ennis, Co. Clare, Ireland: Spellissy-O'Brien Pub., 1989.

Stone, Walter & Hart, Pro, *Poems of Banjo Patterson/Poems of Henry Lawson,* New Holland Australia: New Holland Pub., Pty. Ltd, 2010.

Tosh, John, *The Pursuit of History*, Edinburgh, UK: Pearson Education Ltd., 2010.

Tucker, Maya V., *Kilmore on the Sydney Road*, Kilmore, Victoria: Shire of Kilmore, Civic Centre, 1988.

Turton, Keith W., *Farewell to the 'Timber Line': The History of the Heathcote Junction to Bendigo and Associated Railways*, Melbourne, Victoria: Australian Railway Historical Society, Victorian Division Pub., 1968.

Vaughan, W. E., *Landlords and Tenants in Ireland 1848-1904: Studies in Irish Economic and Social History,* Ireland: Dundalgan Press, Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, 1994.

Williams, Michael, *The Making of the South Australian Landscape: A Study in the Historical Geography of Australia*, London: Academic Press, 1974.

Wright, Clare, *The Forgotten Rebels of Eureka*, Melbourne, Australia: The Text Publishing Co., 2013.

Book Chapters

Dooley, Terence A., 'Estate Ownership and Management in nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Ireland', T. Dooley, *Sources for the History of Landed Estates in Ireland*, Dublin Irish Academic Press, 2000, 1-14.

Duffy, Patrick J., 'Colonial Spaces and Sites of Resistance: Landed Estates in 19th Century Ireland', in Proudfoot, L.J. and Roche, M.M. (eds), (*Dis)Placing Empire*, Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 2005, 15-37.

Fitzpatrick, David*, '*Irish Emigration 1801-1921'*,* in Roebuck, Peter and Dickson, David (eds), *Studies in Irish Economic and Social History,* Dundalgan Press, Ltd., The Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, 1985, 1-51.

Gothard, Janice, '"Pity the Poor Immigrant": Assisted Single Female Migration to Colonial Australia', in Richards, E, (ed.), *Poor Australian Migrants in the Nineteenth Century*, Canberra: Australian National University Pub., 1991, 97-116.

Jalland, Pat, 'The Transmission of the Culture of a Good Christian Death', in *Australian Ways of Death: A Social and Cultural History 1840-1918*, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002, 51-68.

McDowell, Linda, 'A Woman's Place?', in Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender*, Minnesota, USA: Minnesota University Press, 1994, 191-211.

Proudfoot, Lindsay, 'Landscape, Place and Memory: Towards a Geography of Irish Identities in Colonial Australia', in O. Walsh (ed.), *Ireland Abroad: Politics and Professions in the Nineteenth Century', Society for the Study of Nineteenth Century Ireland*, 6, Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003, 172-85.

Whelan, Kevin, 'The Catholic Church in County Tipperary 1700-1900', in Nolan, W. (ed.), *Tipperary: History and Society: Interdisciplinary Essays on the History of an Irish County*, Michigan, USA: Geography Pubs., 1985, 215-55.

Scholarly articles

Ansari, Humayun, 'Burying the dead': making Muslim space in Britain', *Historical Research*, Vol. 80, No, 210, 2007, 545-66.

Anant, S. S., 'The Need to Belong', *Canada's Mental Health*, 14, Issue 2, 1966, cited in Bonnie M. K. Hagerty, Judith Lynch Sauer, Kathleen L. Patusky, Maria Bouwsema & Paggy Collier, 'Sense of Belonging: A Vital Mental Health Concept', *Archives of Psychiatric Nursing*, Vol. VI, No. 3, 1992, 172-77.

Anon, 'Obituary: Death of Martin McKenna, JP, Founder of the Kyneton Brewery and Malting Company, Kyneton, Victoria', *The Australian Brewer's Journal*, 20 May 1907.

Armco, Frédéric, 'From Yeats to Friel: Irish Mythology through Arts and Science in the 20th century', *Études Irlandaises*, Vol. 41, Issue 1, 2016, 115-25.

Ballinger, Robyn, 'Frontierland and Homeland on the Northern Plains of Victoria, 1841-1869', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 13, 2011, 49-64.

Barclay, Katie, 'Place and Power in Irish Farms at the End of the Nineteenth Century', *Women's History Review*, Issue 21, No. 4, 2012, 571-88.

Barker, Donald, 'Funding Communal Culture: Opportunism and Standardisation of Funding for Mechanic's Institutes in Colonial Victoria', *The Australian Library Journal*, Issue 51, No. 3, August 2002, 247-57.

Barnwell, Ashley, 'Keeping the Nation's Secrets: "Colonial Storytelling" within Australian Families', *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 46, Issue 1, 2021, 46-61.

Burgan, Mary, 'Heroines at the Piano: Women and Music in Nineteenth-Century Fiction', *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 30, No. 1, Music in Victorian Society and Culture, 1986, 51-76.

Casey, E. and Clemente, D., 'Clothing the *Contadini*: Migration and Material Culture, 1890-1925', *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 36, No. 4, 2017, 5-24.

Clark, Samuel, 'The Importance of Agrarian Classes: Agrarian Class Structure and Collective Action in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', *British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 29, No. 1, March 1978, 22-40.

Connell, Kenneth H., 'Peasant Marriage in Ireland: Its Structure and Development since the Famine', *Economic History Review*, New series, Vol. 14, No. 3, 1962, 502-23.

Cooper, Sophie, 'Something Borrowed: Women, Limerick Lace and Community Heirlooms in the Australian Irish Diaspora', *Social History*, Vol. 45, Issue 3, 2020, 304-27.

Cosgrove, Betty, Review, *Fever Beach: The Story of the Migrant Clipper 'Ticonderoga', its Ill-fated Voyage, and its Historic Impact* by Mary Kruithof, *The Great Circle*, Vol. 26, No. 1, 2004, 68-70.

Coughlan, Neil, 'The Coming of the Irish to Victoria', *Historical Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 45, October 1965, 68-86.

Cousens, S. H.., 'Regional Death Rates in Ireland during the Great Famine, from 1846 to 1851', *Population Studies*, Vol. 14, No. 1, July 1960, 55-74.

Daley, Charles, 'Early Squatting Days, From the Papers of the Late Alexander Fullarton Mollison', *Victorian Historical Magazine*, Vol. IX, No. 1, July 1922, 1-24.

Darian-Smith, Kate, 'Up the Country: Histories and Communities', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 33, No. 118, 2002, 90-99.

Dening, Greg, 'Review Essay: Between Worlds', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 29, Issue 112, 1999, 172-77.

Dening, Greg, 'Performing Cross-Culturally', *Australasian Journal of American Studies*, Vol. 25, No. 2 (December 2006), 1-11.

Deodato Alexis, Itao S., 'Paul Ricoeur's Hermeneutics of Symbols: A Critical Dialectic of Suspicion and Faith', *Kritike*, Volume 4, No. 2, December 2010, 1-17.

Donnelly, J. S. Jnr., 'Cork Market: Its Role in the Nineteenth Century Irish Butter Trade', *Studia Hibernica*, Vol. 11, 1971, 130-63.

Donnelly, J. S. Jnr., 'The Irish Agricultural Depression of 1859-64', *Irish Economic and Social History*, Vol. 3, 1976, 33-54.

Donovan, Tom, 'The United Irishmen and Limerick', *The Old Limerick Journal*, 35 (Summer 1998).

Doust, Janet L., 'Two English Immigrant Families in Australia in the nineteenth century', *History of the Family*, 13, 2008, 2-25.

Dunaway, Wilma A., 'The Double Register of History: Situating the Forgotten Woman and Her Household in Capitalist Commodity Chains', *Journal of World-Systems Research*, Vol. 7, No. 1, Spring 2001, 2-29.

Erll, Astri, 'Locating Family in Cultural Memory Studies', *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 3, 2011, 303-18.

Evans, Tanya, 'How Do Family Historians Work with Memory", *Journal of Family History*, Vol. 46, Issue 1, 2020, 92-106.

Evans, Tanya, 'Secrets and Lies: The Radical Potential of Family History', *History Workshop Journal*, No. 71, 2011, 49-73.

Fahey, Charles, 'The Wealth of Farmers: A Victorian Regional Study, 1879-1901', *Historical Studies*, Vol. 21, Issue 82, 1984, 29-51.

Fahey, Charles, 'Two Model Farmers: Ann and Joseph Day of Murchison', *Victorian Historical Journal*, Vol. 71, No. 2, 2000, 102-40.

Fahey, Charles, 'A Fine Country for the Irish', *Australian Journal for Irish Studies: 4* (Special Issue), 2004, 190-201.

Fahey, Charles, 'The Free Selector's Landscape: Moulding the Victorian Farming Districts, 1870-1915', *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes*, Vol. 31, Issue 3, 2011, 97-108.

Fahey, Charles, 'John Sweeney and the Making of an Australian Farming Landscape: A Micro-level study of Baulkamaugh and Katunga 1877-1955', *Provenance: The Journal of Public Record Office Victoria*, Number 10, 2011, 1-15.

Fahey, Charles, 'Agricultural Settlement in Victoria's Last Frontier: The Mallee, 1890-1951', *The Agricultural History Society*, Vol. 91, No. 2, Spring, 2017, 187-214.

Fenton, Laurence, *After the Famine: The Economy of Limerick County and City in the 1850s*, History and Folklore Project, Limerick Civic Trust, Sept. 2005 – Feb. 2006 & Jan. 2007 – May 2007, 1-12.

Fenton, Laurence, 'The Economy of Limerick in the Aftermath of the Great Famine', *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, Vol. 51, 2011, 93-103.

Fitzpatrick, Brian, 'The Big Man's Frontier and Australian Farming', *Agricultural History*, Vol. 21, No. 1, 1947, 8-12.

Fitzpatrick, David, 'Irish Emigration in the Later Nineteenth Century', *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 22, No. 86, September 1980, 126-43.

Fitzpatrick, David, 'Divorce and Separation in Modern Irish History', *Past and Present*, Vol. 114, 1987, 172-96.

Frost, Lionel, 'Australian Agricultural Historiography: A Survey', *Agricultural History*, Vol. 71, No. 4, Autumn, 1997, 479-90.

Geary, Laurence, 'Charles Gavan Duffy, the Great Famine in Ireland, and Famine Memory in Colonial Australia', *Australasian Journal of Irish Studies* Vol. 7, 2007-2008, 50-66.

Grainger, Roger, 'Let Death be Death: Lessons from the Irish Wake', *Mortality*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1998, 129-41.

Guinnane, Timothy W., & Miller Ronald I., 'Bonds without Bondsmen: Tenant-Right in Nineteenth-Century Ireland', *Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 56, No. 1, March 1996, 113-42.

Haines, Robin & Shlomowicz, Ralph, 'Nineteenth Century Government-Assisted and Total Immigration from the United Kingdom to Australia: Quinquennial Estimates by Colony', *Journal of the Australian Population Association*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1991, 50-61.

Haines, Robin, 'Indigent Misfits or Shrewd Operators? Government-assisted Emigrants from the United Kingdom to Australia, 1831-1860', *Population Studies*, Vol. 48, No. 2, July 1994, 223-47.

Haines, Robin, '"The Idle and the Drunken won't do there": Poverty, the New Poor Law and Nineteenth-century Government-assisted Emigration to Australia from the United Kingdom', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 108, 1997, 1-21.

Haines, Robin, Kleinig, Margrette, Oxley, Deborah, & Richards, Eric, 'Migration and Opportunity: An Antipodean Perspective', *International Review of Social History*, Vol. 43, No. 2, August 1998, 235-63.

Hall, Dianne & Proudfoot, Lindsay, 'Memory and Identity among Irish Migrants in Nineteenth-Century Stawell', *Australasian Journal of Irish Studies*, Vol. 7, 2007/08, 67-83.

Hart, Caroline Sarojini 'How Do Aspirations Matter?', *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 2016, 324-41.

Howell, Samantha, 'From Oppression to Nationalism: The Irish Penal Laws of 1695', University of Hawai'i at Hilo, *HOHONU*, Vol. 14, 2016, 21-23.

Huntsman, Leone, 'Bounty Emigrants to Australia', *Clogher Record*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 2002, 801-12.

Jackson, Pauline, 'Women in 19th Century Irish Emigration', *International Migration Review*, Vol. 18, No. 4, Special Issue: *Women in Migration*, Winter 1984, 1004-20.

Jordan, Terry G. & Greiner, Alyson L., 'Irish Migration to Rural Eastern Australia: A Preliminary Investigation', *Irish Geography*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 1994, 135-42.

Kenny, Kevin, 'Diaspora and Irish Migration History'*, Irish Economic and Social History*, Vol. 3, 2006, 46-51.

Kinealy, Christine, 'The Irish Famine 1845-52', *North Irish Roots*, Vol. 2, No. 5, 1990, 158-61.

Kinealy, Christine, 'Food Exports from Ireland 1846-1847', *History Ireland Magazine, 18th-19th Century History, Features, The Famine*, Issue 1, Vol. 5, 1997.

Kirkby, Diane, '"Beer, Glorious Beer": Gender Politics and Australian Popular Culture', *Journal of Popular Culture*, Issue 37, No. 2, 2003, 244-56.

Lee, C., 'Certain Statistics from the United Parishes of Knockainy and Patrickswell (Diocese of Emly, Co. Limerick) for the Years 1819-1941', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, Vol. 47, No. 165, 1942, 1-3.

Lees, Lynn, 'Mid-Victorian Migration and the Irish Family Economy', *Victorian Studies 20*, Autumn 1976, 27.

Levinson, Henry Samuel, 'Meditation at the Margins: Santayana's "Scepticism and Animal Faith"', *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 67, No. 3, July 1987, 289-303.

MacCarthaigh, Domhnall, 'Marriage and Birth Rates for Knockainy Parish, 1882-1941', *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, Vol. 47, No. 165, 1942, 4-8.

McCarthy, Angela, 'Personal Letters and the Organisation of Irish Migration to and from New Zealand, 1848-1925', *Irish Historical Studies*, Vol. 33, No 131, 2003, 297-319.

McAdam, Gloria, 'Willing Women and the Rise of Convents in Nineteenth-Century England', *Women's History Review*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1999, 411-41.

MacDonagh, Oliver, 'The Irish in Victoria', *Historical Studies VIII*, Papers read before the Irish Conference of Historians, Dublin, 27-30 May 1969, Dublin, Ireland: Gill and Macmillan Ltd., 1971, 67-81.

McClaughlin, Trevor, James, Stephanie & O'Reilly, Simon, 'Migration to Australia Mid-Nineteenth Century: Emigration from the Shirley Estate at the Time of the Famine', *Clogher Record*, Vol. 20, No. 2, 2010, 287-334.

McConville, Chris, 'Cities of the Dead: The New Cemeteries of the Nineteenth Century', *Urban Futures Journal*, No. 22, June 1997, 1-5.

McDonald, John & Richards, Eric, 'The Great Emigration of 1841: Recruitment for New South Wales in British Emigration Fields', *Population Studies*, Vol. 51, No. 3, 1997, 337-55.

McGrath, Ann, 'Shamrock Aborigines: The Irish, the Aboriginal Australians and their Children', *Aboriginal History*, Vol. 34, 2010, 55-84.

Mageean, Deidre M., 'Emigration from Irish Ports', *Journal of American Ethnic History*, Vol. 13, No. 1, *European Ports of Emigration*, Fall 1993, 6-30.

Miller, Kerby, 'Emigration, Ideology, and Identity in Post-Famine Ireland', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, Vol. 75, No. 300, Winter, 1986, 515-27.

O'Callaghan, Thomas, 'Early Inns of Port Phillip and Victoria', *Victorian Historical Magazine*, Vol. IX, No. 1, July 1922, 26-32.

Ó Ciosáin, Niall, 'Approaching a Folklore Archive: The Irish Folklore Commission and the Memory of the Great Famine', *Folklore*, Vol. 115, No. 2, Aug., 2004, 222-32.

O'Dowd, Anne, 'Women in Rural Ireland in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries—How the Daughters, Wives and Sisters of Small Farmers and Landless Labourers Fared', *Rural History*, Issue 5, No. 2, 1994, 175-78.

Ó Gráda, Cormac, 'The Investment Behaviour of Irish Landlords 1850-75: Some Preliminary Findings', *Agricultural History Review*, Vol. 23, No. 2, 1975, 139-55.

Ó Gráda, Cormac, 'Primogeniture and Ultimogeniture in Rural Ireland', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 3, Winter 1980, 491-97.

O'Leary, Paul, 'Networking Respectability: Class, Gender and Ethnicity among the Irish in South Wales, 1845-1914', *Immigrants and Minorities*, Vol. 23, Issue 2-3, 2005, 255-75.

O'Mahoney, G. Barry, 'Uncontested Space: Case Studies of the Irish Involvement in the Hospitality Industry in Colonial Victoria', *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, Vol. 1. No. 3, 2007, 203-13.

O'Mahoney, G. Barry & Clark, Ian D., 'From Inns to Hotels: The Evolution of Public Houses in Colonial Victoria', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 25, No. 2, 2013, 172-86.

O'Neill, Timothy P., 'Clare and Irish Poverty, 1815-1851', *Studia Hibernica*, No. 14, 1974, 7-27.

O'Neill, Pamela, 'Michael Davitt and John Davitt Jageurs (1895-1916)', *Australian Journal of Irish History,* Vol. 6 (2006/07), 43-56.

O'Rourke, Kevin, 'Did the Great Irish Famine Matter?' *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 51, No. 1 March 1991, 1-22.

Ostapenko, Dmytro, 'Does Farming Pay in Victoria?: Profit Potential of the Farming Industry in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Victoria', *Australian Economic History Review*, Vol. 54, No. 1, 2014, 37-61.

Ostapenko, Dmytro, 'Generating New Production Knowledge: Competitive Agricultural Events in the British Australian Colony of Victoria, c. 1840-1890', *Agricultural History*, Vol. 92, No. 4, 2018, 491-511.

Ostapenko, Dmytro, 'Establishing Themselves on the New Land: Port Phillip Crop-Growers in the 1840s', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 16, 2014, 127-46.

Park, Charles E., 'The Development of the Clipper Ship', *American Antiquarian Society*, 1929, 49-76.

Pearn, John, '"Where there is No Doctor": Self-Help and Pre-Hospital Care in Colonial Australia', *Health and History*, Vol. 14, No. 2, 2012, 162-80.

Powell, John, 'Farming Conditions in Victoria, 1857-1865: a prelude to selection, *Australian Geographer*, Vol. 10, Issue, 5, 1968, 346-54.

Pryor, Robyn J., 'Morbidity and Minerals: Health and Mortality in Victoria in the 1850s', *Working Papers in Demography 5*, Department of Demography, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University, 1977, 1-26, https://www.worldcat.org/title/morbidity-and-minerals-health-and-mortality-in-victoria-in-the-1850s Accessed 10/11/ 2020.

Ralph, David, '"Home is where the Heart is"? Understandings of "Home" among Irish-born Return Migrants from the United States', *Irish Studies Review*, Vol. 17, Issue 2, 2009, 183-200.

Rankin, D. H., 'An Early Victorian Legislator—Sir John O'Shanassy', *Victorian Historical Magazine*, Vol. XXV, No. 3, December 1953, 96-104.

Richards, Nathan & May, Sally K., 'South Australia's "Floating Coffin": The Diseased, The Destitute, and the Derelict *Fitz-James* (1852-c.1900)', *The Great Circle*, Vol. 25, No. 1, 20-39.

Russell, Penny, '"Unhomely Moments": Civilising Domestic Worlds in Colonial Australia', *History of the Family*, 14, 2009, 327-39.

Ryan, Colin, Book Review, Wolf, Nicholas M. (2014), *An Irish-Speaking Island: State, Religion, Community, and the Linguistic Landscape in Ireland, 1770-1870*, *Tinteán* 6 May

2015, https://tinteanmagazine.files.wordpress.com/2015/04/images-41.jpg Accessed 27/10/2021.

Scally, Robert, 'Liverpool Ships and Irish Emigrants in the Age of Sail', *Journal of Social History*, Vol. 17, No. 1, Autumn 1993, 5-30.

Shortt, Harriet, 'Liminality, space and the importance of transitory *dwelling* places at work', *Human Relations,* Vol. 68, No. 4, 2015, 633-58.

Smith, Angèle, 'Mapped Landscapes: The Politics of Metaphor, Knowledge, and Representation on Nineteenth-Century Irish Ordnance Survey Maps', *Historical Archaeology*, Vol. 41, No. 1, *Between Art & Artifact*, 2007, 81-91.

Smith, Cynthia, 'The Land-tenure System in Ireland: A Fatal Regime', in *Marquette Law Review*, Vol. 6, Issue 2, Winter 1993, 469-84.

Smith, Joan, 'We Irish Women: Gender, History and the World Economy', *Review 16*, Issue 1, 1993, 1-15.

Smith, Len, et al., 'The Political Arithmetic of Aboriginal Victorians', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 38, No. 4, Spring 2008, 533-51.

Solar, Peter M., '*Why Ireland Starved* and the Big Issues in Pre-Famine Irish Economic History', *Irish Economic and Social History*, Vol. 42, Issue 1, 2015, 62-75.

Solar, Peter M., 'The Irish Butter Trade in the Nineteenth Century: New Estimates and their Implications, *Studia Hibernica*, No. 25, 1989-1990, 134-61.

Solar, Peter & Hens, Luc, 'Land under Pressure: The Value of Irish Land in a Period of Rapid Population Growth,1730–1844', *Agricultural History Review*, Vol. 61, No. 1, 2013, 40-62.

Solow, Barbara, S., 'A New Look at the Irish Land Question', *The Economic and Social Review*, Vol. 12, No. 4, 1981, 301-14.

Staehle, Hans, 'Statistical Notes on the Economic History of Irish Agriculture, 1847-1913', *Dublin: Journal of the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland*, Vol. XXVIII, Part IV, 1950/1951, 444-471, http://www.tara.tcd.ie/handle/2262/3692 Accessed 12/12/2019.

Stanley-Blackwell, Laurie & Linkletter, Michael, 'Inscribing Ethnicity: A Preliminary Analysis of Gaelic Headstone Inscriptions in Eastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton', *Genealogy*, Vol. 2, No. 29, 2018, 1-14.

ua Danachair, Caoimhghín, 'Traces of the Buaile in the Galtee Mountains', *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 75, No. 4, December 1945, 248-52.

Williams, Martin, 'Historical Notes: Charles Bonney and the Fertile Kilmore Plains', *Victorian Historical Journal*, Volume 90, No. 1, 2019, 105-20.

Wright, Clare, 'Of Public Houses and Private Lives: Female Hotelkeepers as Domestic Entrepreneurs', *Australian Historical Studies*, Vol. 32, Issue 116, 2001, 57-75.

Papers and websites

Review, 'Eavan Boland 1944-2020', Poetry Foundation website https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poets/eavan-boland Accessed 30/10/2021.

Baker, Robert A., *Kew Historical Society Newsletter*, No. 107, June 2014 https://kewhistoricalsociety.org.au/ Accessed 14/01/2021.

Connell, K. H., 'Marriage in Ireland after the Famine: The Diffusion of the Match' (Paper read before the Society in Dublin 16 December 1955; Belfast 20 January 1956), https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/ Accessed 01/12/2019.

Cowper, William, *Verses about Nature*, 'Stanzas Subjoined To The Yearly Bill Of Mortality Of The Parish Of All-Saints, Northampton. Anno Domini 1787', https://keytopoetry.com/william-cowper Accessed 26/08/2021.

Gabriel, Richard P., *Memory and Landscape in the work of James Wright*, 8, http://www.dreamsongs.com/Files/EssayBook.pdf cited in Oksana Kovsele, *Emotional Landscape and Memory in Skaidrite Andersone's Sketch Book Fragrant Traces*, 2013, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/ Accessed 24/03/2021.

Heaney, Seamus, 'Follower', from *Opened Ground: Selected Poems 1966-1996*, Farrar, Strauss & Giroux,1999, LLC, http://us.macmillan.com/fsg Accessed14/04/2020.

Hoddle, Robert, 'Grid Plan', *eMelbourne. The City Past and Present,* School of Historical & Philosophical Studies, University of Melbourne, 2008, http://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs Accessed 06/08/2020.

Johnson, Ben, 'Pub Signs of Britain', *Historic UK, the History and Heritage Accommodation Guide* https://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/Pub-Signs-of-Britain/ Accessed 09/04/2021.

More Catholic Prayers for the Dead and Dying https://www.artofdyingwell.org Accessed 13/02/ 2021.

Panza, Laura & Williamson, Jeffrey G., 'Australian Squatters, Convicts, and Capitalists: Dividing up a Fast-growing Frontier Pie 1821-1871', *Discussion Paper No. 2017-02*, April 2017, Centre for Economic History, the Australian National University Discussion Paper Series (ANU).

Rusch, Barbara, *The Secret Life of Victorian Cards*, The Ephemera Society of America (Presented at Ephemera Conference 25, 2005 [ENv24n1, 2005, 17-24]) http://ephemerasociety.org/the-secret-life-of-victorian-cards Accessed 16/08/2021.

Taylor, K., *'Landscape and Memory: Cultural landscapes, Intangible Values and Some Thoughts on Asia'*, paper to 16th general Assembly and Scientific Symposium, Quebec, Canada (2008) http://www.significanceinternational.com/Portals/0/Documents/ Accessed 24/03/2021.

Taungurung Land and Waters Council, Broadford, Victoria, 2020, https://taungurung.com.au/culture/ Accessed 27/08/ 2020.

Victorian Collections, Memorial Cards, https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/ Accessed 12/08/2021.

Wettenhall, Roland, 'Pursuit', *'Australia's Friendly History'*, University of Melbourne, 31 August 2018. https://pursuit.unimelb.edu.au/articlesl Accessed 25/08/2021.

Lady Wilde, 'The Famine Years', *Poems by Speranza* (Dublin, Ireland: James Duffy, 1864), https://us.archive.org/26/items Accessed 14/04/2020.

LIST OF FIGURES

APPENDICES
Appendix 1

Three Generations of Cooke Family

Nicholas Cooke (1772-1842)----------brothers---------- Richard Cooke (—)X
m. **m.**
Margaret Cleary (1772-1852) **Catherine Cleary (—)**

↓

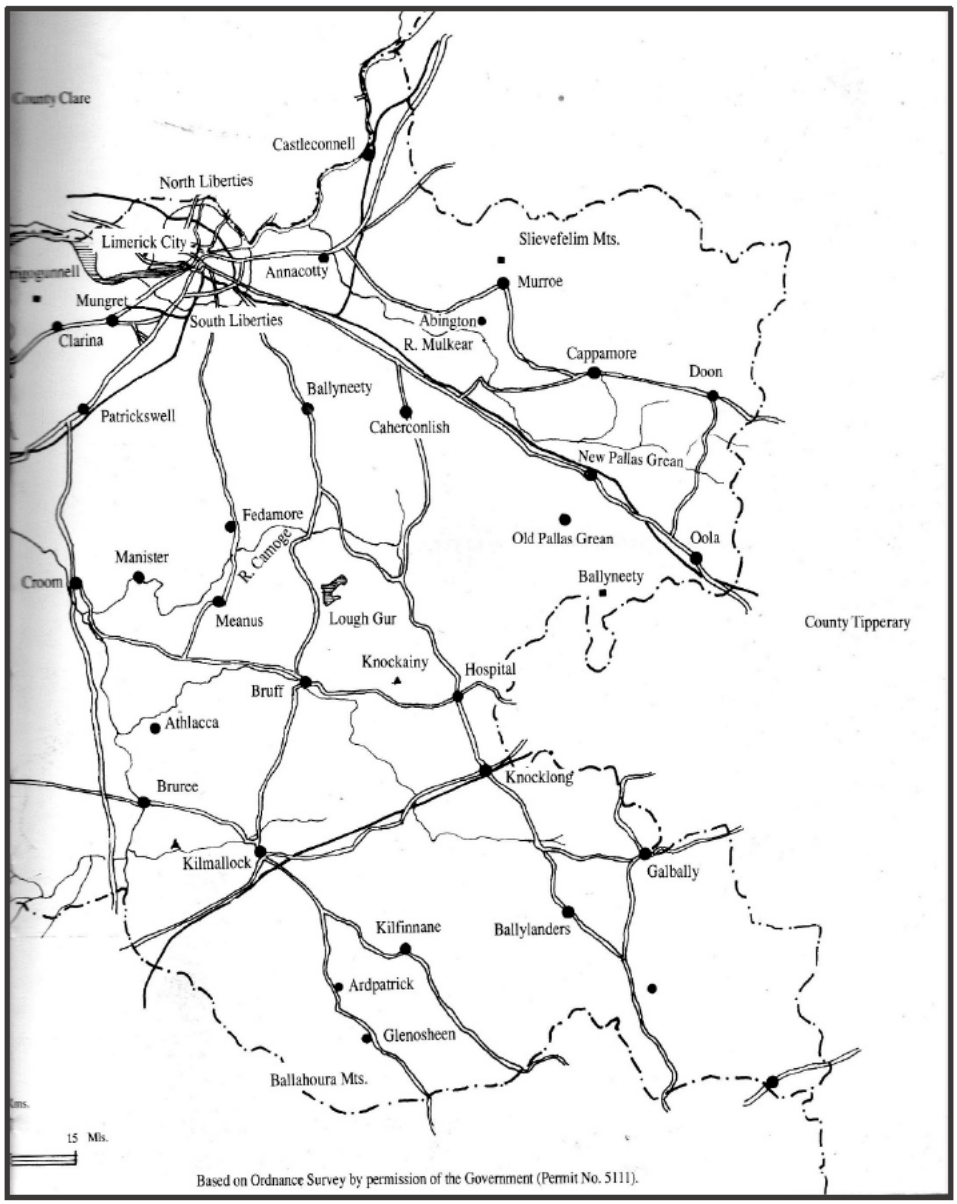
Nicholas (1796-1870) m. (Maria English)	Thomas (1802-1884) m. (Marg't Gleeson)	William (1805-1866) m. (Ellen English)	Catherine (1806-1878) m. (James Walsh)	Johanna (1808-1902) m. (? Riordan)	Deborah (1810-1901) m. (Michael Cain)	John (1813-1887) single	James (1) (1815-1815) dec. infancy	James (2) (1816-1866) single	Patrick (1819-1903) m. Mary Walsh
John (1)	Nicholas	Nicholas	Mary	Patrick	Maurice				Nicholas (1)
Margaret	Johanna	Thomas	Connor (1)		John				Margaret
Johanna	Margaret	Patrick	John		Edmond				Nicholas (2)
Catherine	John	John	Margaret		Mary				Bridget
John	Ellen	Deborah	David		Thaddeus				John (1
Deborah	Catherine	Helena	Hannah		Michael				Catherine
Nicholas	James	Catherine	James		Margaret				Thomas
Mary	Patrick	Johanna	Catherine (1)		Patrick				John (2
Thomas		Richard	Maurice (1)						James
		William	Maurice (2)						Richard
			Catherine (2)						
			Connor 'Cornelius' (2)						

Cooke clergy & emigrant members of the family with relationship to Nicholas Cooke & Margaret Cleary

Rev. Daniel C. Reardon, Iowa, USA . (ggrandson)
Margaret Riordan, Iowa, USA. (ggrandaughter)
Mons. Richard O'Regan, Sydney, NSW. (ggrandson)
John Joseph Cooke, Melb. Victoria. (ggrandson)
Nicholas George Cooke, Melb. Victoria. (ggrandson)

X Rev. Richard Cooke PP, Ire. (1812-1864) (nephew)
Archdeacon Nicholas Cooke, Tipperary, Ire. (ggrandson)
Rev. Thomas Cooke, PP., Bottomstown (nephew Arch. N. Cooke) (gggrandson)
John Cooke, Mitchell, Q'LD. (ggrandson)

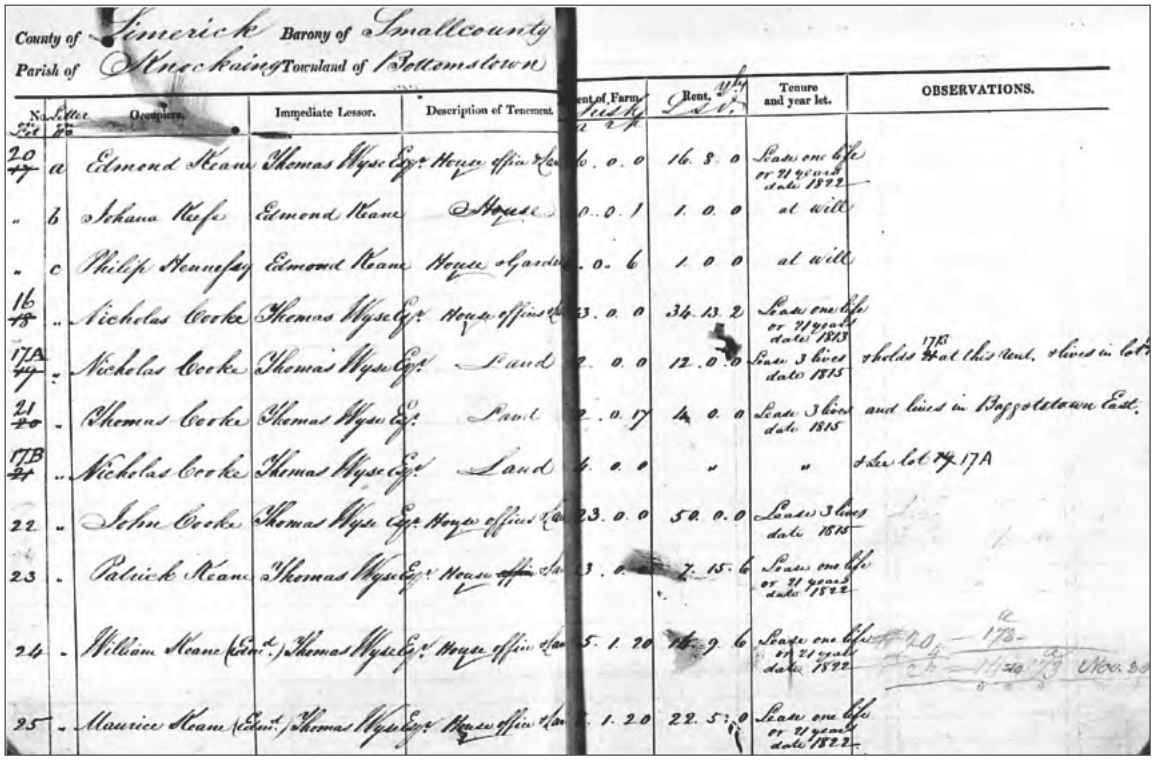
Appendix 2



East County Limerick

Sean Spellissy, with photographs by John O'Brien, *Limerick: The Rich Land* (Ennis, Co. Clare: Spellissy/O'Brien Publishers, 1989), 9.

Appendix 3



County of Limerick Barony of Small County
Parish of Knockainy Townland of Bottomstown

No.	Letter	Occupiers.	Immediate Lessor.	Description of Tenement.	Ent. of Farm	Rent.	Tenure and year let.	OBSERVATIONS.
20	a	Edmond Keane	Thomas Wyse Esq.	House offices & Land	6. 0. 0	16. 8. 0	Lease one life or 21 years date 1822	
"	b	Johana Keefe	Edmond Keane	House	0. 0. 1	1. 0. 0	at will	
"	c	Philip Hennessy	Edmond Keane	House & Garden	0. 0. 6	1. 0. 0	at will	
16	"	Nicholas Cooke	Thomas Wyse Esq.	House offices &	33. 0. 0	34. 13. 2	Lease one life or 21 years date 1813	
17A	"	Nicholas Cooke	Thomas Wyse Esq.	Land	2. 0. 0	12. 0. 0	Lease 3 lives date 1815	17B holds at this Rent, & lives in Lot
21	"	Thomas Cooke	Thomas Wyse Esq.	Land	2. 0. 17	4. 0. 0	Lease 3 lives date 1815	and lives in Boggstetown East.
17B	"	Nicholas Cooke	Thomas Wyse Esq.	Land	4. 0. 0	"	"	& he Lot 17A
22	"	John Cooke	Thomas Wyse Esq.	House offices &	23. 0. 0	50. 0. 0	Lease 3 lives date 1815	
23	"	Patrick Keane	Thomas Wyse Esq.	House offices &	3. 0.	7. 15. 6	Lease one life or 21 years date 1822	
24	"	William Keane (Edwd.)	Thomas Wyse Esq.	House offices &	5. 1. 20	14. 9. 6	Lease one life or 21 years date 1822	
25	"	Maurice Keane (Edwd.)	Thomas Wyse Esq.	House offices &	7. 1. 20	22. 5. 0	Lease one life or 21 years date 1822	

CENSUS, LAND AND SURVEYS, IRELAND,
Valuation Date 29 September 1848.
County Limerick, Barony of Small County, Parish of Knockainy, Townland Bottomstown
https://www.search.findmypast.com.au Accessed 01/02/2019

Appendix 4

Table 2
Receipts of butter at Cork exchange, 1841–51
(thousands of cwt)

Year	Cwt	Year	Cwt
1841/2	134	1846/7	148
1842/3	155	1847/8	162
1843/4	168	1848/9	192
1844/5	149	1849/50	201
1845/6	159	1850/1	180
Average, 1841–6	153	Average, 1846–51	177

James S. Donnelly, Jr, *The Great Irish Potato Famine* (Gloucestershire, UK: Sutton Publishing, 2002), 63.

Table 5
Changes in the distribution of holdings by size in Ireland, 1845–51

Year	1 acre or less		1–5 acres		5–15 acres		Over 15 acres	
	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)	(no.)	(%)
1845	135,314	14.9	181,950	20.1	311,133	34.4	276,618	30.6
1847	73,016	9.1	139,041	17.3	269,534	33.6	321,434	40.0
1851	37,728	6.2	88,083	14.5	191,854	31.5	290,404	47.8
% change, 1845–51		–72.1		–51.6		–38.3		+5.0

James S. Donnelly, Jr, *The Great Irish Potato Famine* (Gloucestershire, UK: Sutton Publishing, 2002), 161.

Appendix 5

Catholic priest, Rev. Richard Cooke, PP, (1812-1864), was the son of Richard Cooke and Catherine Cleary, and a first cousin of Patrick Cooke.

Rev. Cooke was a Catholic clergyman who trained for the priesthood at the Maynooth Catholic Seminary in Dublin. He entered Carlow College in 1831 as a nineteen-year-old lay-student where he excelled in the study of Logic, Physics and Metaphysics. As a student priest at the Catholic Seminary at Maynooth, west of Dublin, he again excelled in Theology and Scripture. Following ordination he took pastoral work and convent chaplaincies and was noted for his support of the national school system.

Cooke's clerical appointments included positions as parish priest at Stonehall, Leinster, and as chaplain to the Magdalen Asylum. As an outspoken supporter of religious freedom in schools he was appointed manager of the Pallaskenry National Schools program in County Limerick. The position was not without controversy. In 1861 he gained notoriety after penning a letter to the *Tipperary Vindicator* condemning the actions of a bigoted Protestant parson, and two Catholic apostates whose malicious behaviour towards Catholics at Pallaskenry triggered rioting over the issue of Souperism, and the harsh treatment of children at the Pallaskenry National school. When food was provided in schools by Protestant Bible Societies it was conditional on receiving Protestant instruction in return. On a visit to the school in 1861 the apostates disapproved of the children's mirth in the playground and attempted to ban them from going outside for recreation and from going home for lunch.

As resistance to the conditions at the school escalated, Cooke intervened with a letter to the press condemning the actions of the apostates. Violence erupted in the district and charges were then laid against a group of rioting Catholics who resisted demands to become protestants. Cooke was applauded in court for his 'zealous conduct' throughout and credited as the means to bringing about peace. He died of consumption at the age of 51 at Donoughmore, County Limerick, in 1864.

Tipperary Vindicator, 18 June 1861, 13 August 1861, 16 August 1861.

Appendix 6

LAND SALE AT PYALONG.—27TH MARCH, 1857.

PROCLAMATION

By His Excellency SIR HENRY BARKLY, Knight Commander of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of the Colony of Victoria, and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c., &c.

IN pursuance of the authority in me vested by a certain Act of the Imperial Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland, passed in the fifth and sixth years of Her Majesty's Reign, intituled, "*An Act for regulating the Sale of Waste Lands belonging to the Crown in the Australian Colonies,*" I do hereby notify and proclaim that at Eleven o'clock of Friday, the twenty-seventh day of March next, the following Suburban and Country Lots will be offered for sale by public auction, at Percival's Inn, Pyalong, at the upset price affixed to each lot respectively, on the terms and conditions and under the provisions of the above recited Act. Deposit— 10 per cent.

SUBURBAN LOTS.

PYALONG.

Adjoining the township.

1. Dalhousie, 3a. 3r. 7p., Three acres three roods seven perches, parish of Pyalong, allotment 32. Upset price 2*l.* 10*s.* per acre.

COUNTRY LOTS.

PYALONG.

On Mollison's Creek, adjoining the township of Pyalong.

1. Dalhousie, 22a. 0r. 8p., Twenty-two acres eight perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 9. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
2. Dalhousie, 18a. 0r. 32p., Eighteen acres thirty-two perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 10. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
3. Dalhousie, 32a. 3r. 10p., Thirty-two acres three roods ten perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 11. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
4. Dalhousie, 28a. 1r. 38p., Twenty-eight acres one rood thirty-eight perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 12. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
5. Dalhousie, 35a. 1r. 4p., Thirty-five acres one rood four perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 13. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
6. Dalhousie, 33a. 3r. 6p., Thirty-three acres three roods six perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 14. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
7. Dalhousie, 65a. 1r., Sixty-five acres one rood, parish of Pyalong, portion 15. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
8. Dalhousie, 98a. 0r. 28p., Ninety-eight acres twenty-eight perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 16. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
9. Dalhousie, 86a. 3r. 17p., Eighty-six acres three roods

10. Dalhousie, 74a. 3r. 10p., Seventy-four acres three roods ten perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 18. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
11. Dalhousie, 65a. 2r. 33p., Sixty five acres two roods thirty-three perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 19. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
12. Dalhousie, 69a. 3r. 5p., Sixty-nine acres three roods five perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 20. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
13. Dalhousie, 99a. 1r. 9p., Ninety-nine acres one rood nine perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 21. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
14. Dalhousie, 80a., Eighty acres, parish of Pyalong, portion 22. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
15. Dalhousie, 95a. 2r. 16p., Ninety-five acres two roods sixteen perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 23. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
16. Dalhousie, 47a. 2r. 12p., Forty-seven acres two roods twelve perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 24. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
17. Dalhousie, 80a. 1r. 25p., Eighty acres one rood twenty-five perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 25. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
18. Dalhousie, 86a. 3r. 13p., Eighty-six acres three roods thirteen perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 26. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
19. Dalhousie, 80a. 1r. 26p., Eighty acres one rood twenty-six perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 27. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
20. Dalhousie, 37a. 0r. 5p., Thirty-seven acres five perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 28. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
21. Dalhousie, 38a. 3r. 39p., Thirty-eight acres three roods thirty nine perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 29. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
22. Dalhousie, 38a. 2r., Thirty-eight acres two roods, parish of Pyalong, portion 30. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
23. Dalhousie, 49a. 2r., Forty-nine acres two roods, parish of Pyalong, portion 31. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
24. Dalhousie, 80a. 2r., Eighty acres two roods, parish of Pyalong, portion 32. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
25. Dalhousie, 88a., Eighty-eight acres, parish of Pyalong, portion 33. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.

26. Dalhousie, 59a. 2r., Fifty-nine acres two roods, parish of Pyalong, portion 34. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
27. Dalhousie, 40a. 2r. 27p., Forty acres two roods twenty-seven perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 35. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
28. Dalhousie, 74a. 0r. 29p., Seventy-four acres twenty-nine perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 36. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
29. Dalhousie, 86a. 0r. 23p., Eighty-six acres twenty-three perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 37. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
30. Dalhousie, 640a., Six hundred and forty acres, parish of Pyalong, section 38. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
31. Dalhousie, 127a. One hundred and twenty-seven acres, parish of Pyalong, portion 39. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
32. Dalhousie, 117a. 2r., One hundred and seventeen acres two roods, parish of Pyalong, portion 40. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
33. Dalhousie, 94a. 2r., Ninety-four acres two roods, parish of Pyalong, portion 41. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
34. Dalhousie, 105a., One hundred and five acres, parish of Pyalong, portion 42. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
35. Dalhousie, 99a., Ninety-nine acres, parish of Pyalong, portion 43. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
36. Dalhousie, 97a., Ninety-seven acres, parish of Pyalong, portion 44. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
37. Dalhousie, 124a., One hundred and twenty-four acres, parish of Pyalong, portion 45. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
38. Dalhousie, 66a. 2r., Sixty-six acres two roods, parish of Pyalong, portion 46. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
39. Dalhousie, 67a., Sixty-seven acres, parish of Pyalong, portion 47. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
40. Dalhousie, 80a., Eighty acres, parish of Pyalong, portion 48. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
41. Dalhousie, 41a. 1r. 13p., Forty-one acres one rood thirteen perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 49. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
42. Dalhousie, 47a. 2r. 3p., Forty-seven acres two roods three perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 50. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.
43. Dalhousie, 20a. 1r. 31p., Twenty acres one rood thirty-one perches, parish of Pyalong, portion 51. Upset price 1*l.* per acre.

Given under my Hand and the Seal of the Colony, at Melbourne, this twenty-first day of February, in the year of Our Lord One thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven, and in the twentieth year of Her Majesty's Reign.

(L.S.) HENRY BARKLY.

By His Excellency's Command,

AND. CLARKE,
Surveyor General.

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN!

Victorian Government Gazette Online Archive 1836-1997, Gazette 19, 1840-1859, p. 348, 24 February 1857. State Library Victoria. Accessed 23/07/2020.

Appendix 7

FOR MELBOURNE, PORT PHILIP,
TO SAIL 1ST OF JUNE, NEXT.

Landing Passengers and their Luggage at the Wharf FREE OF CHARGE, and forwarding Passengers and their luggage to Geelong, Sydney, and Adelaide, at ship's expense

THE FINE NEW A. 1. CLIPPER SHIP
"FITZJAMES,"
1307 Tons Register, 2500 Tons Burthen
CAPTAIN HOYT;
Who has had much experience in the Passenger Trade

This fine Ship, now on her third voyage, has gained the reputatian of being one of the most comfortable, as well as the fastest Passenger Ships out of the port of Liverpool, has made the Passage from Quebec to Liverpool, Land to Land, in 15 days.

She is now being fitted up for the Australian Trade and will be provided with every essential requisite to render her equal to the other Ships of this Line in her interna sanatory arrangements for the comfort of Passengers, as well as in her equipment throughout. The Owners feel confident they will be able to secure for her, as they have done for all their other Vessels of the Line, the character of a perfect and in every respect an eligible Passenger conveyance

The POOP and HOUSE on DECK accommodations are specially recommended to the notice of Passengers.

Carries an experienced Surgeon.

For further particulars apply to PILKINGTON & WILSON, Liverpool; or to

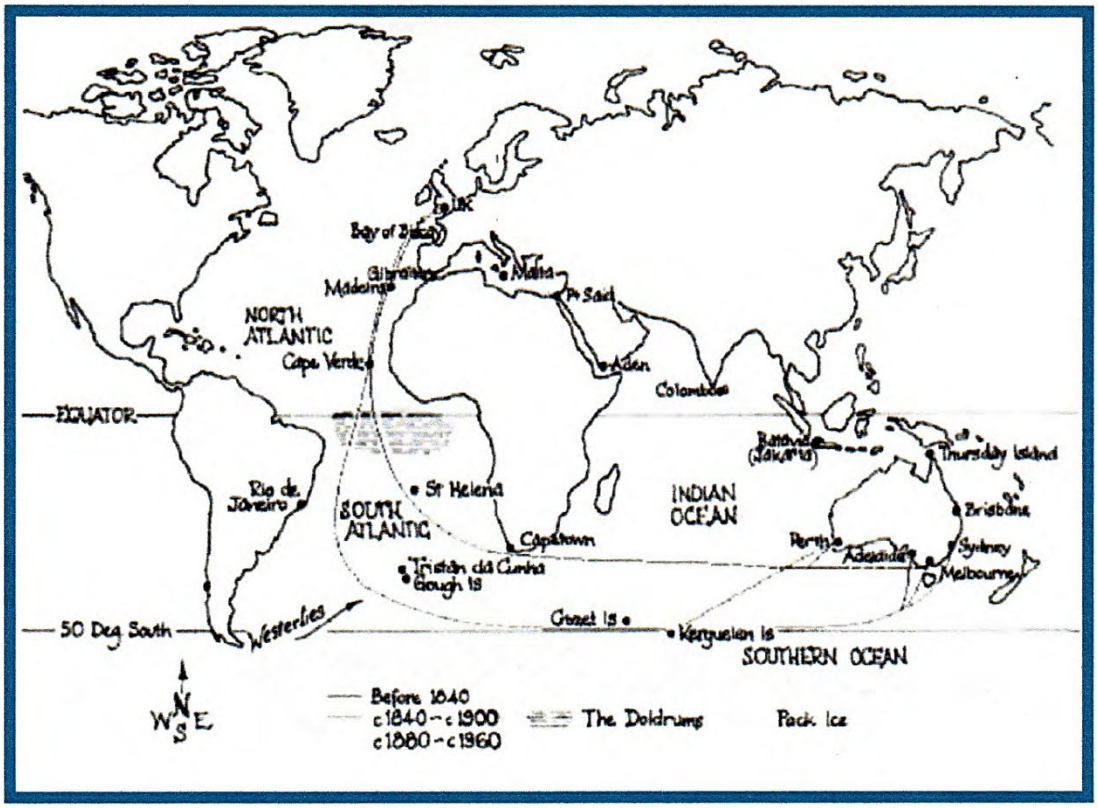
J. HINTON, Auctioneer & Emigration Agent, at his Guano Stores, Quay, Wexford.

NOTE—*The FITZJAMES will take steam as far as practicable, should weather prove unfavourable on her sailing day.*

WEXFORD INDEPENDENT, 27 May 1854

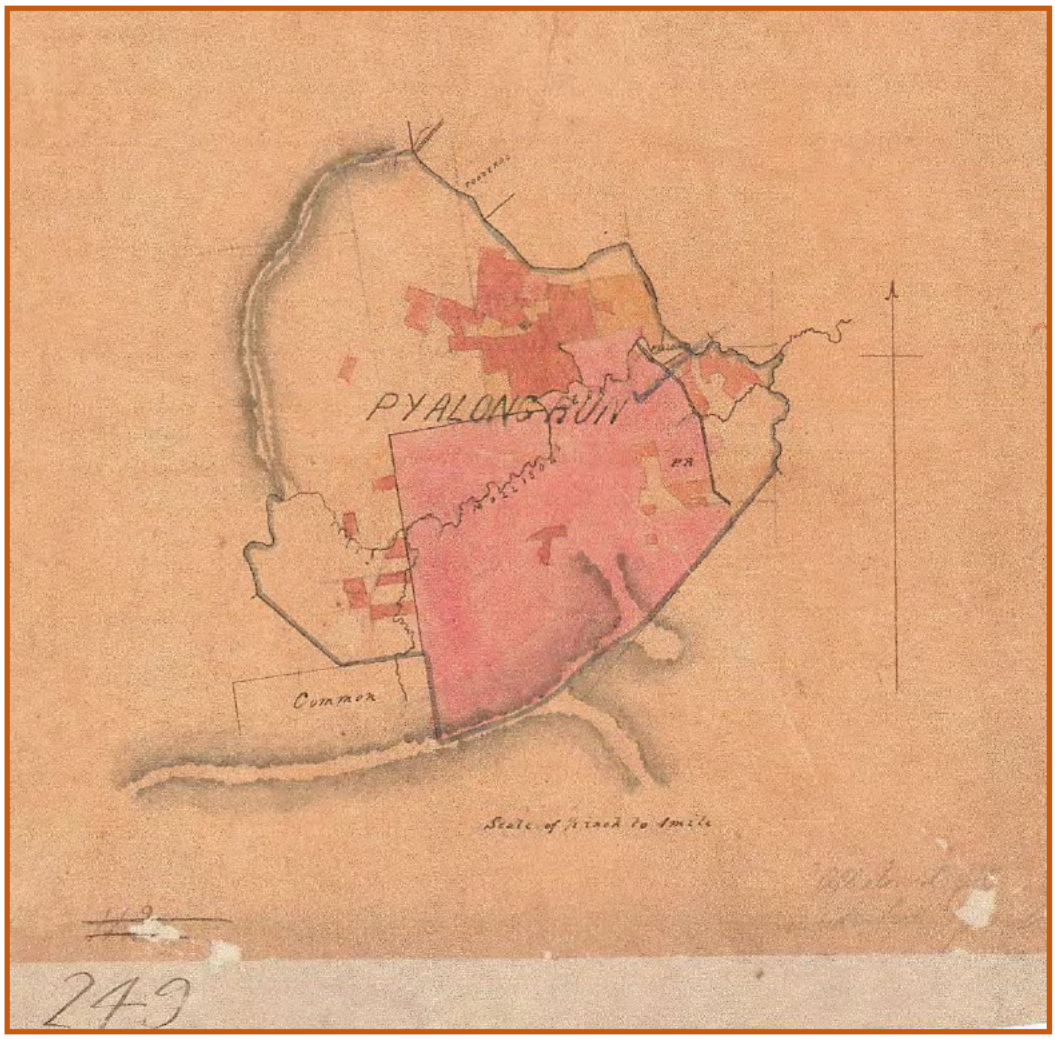
Appendix 8

GREAT CIRCLE CLIPPER ROUTE TO THE COLONIES



Robin Haines, ***Doctors at Sea: Emigrant Voyages to Colonial Australia***
(Hampshire, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2005)

Appendix 9



PYALONG RUN 249A
VPRS 8168. Consignment No. P0005. Daterange 1882
Historic Plan Collection (microfiche copy VPRS 15899)
Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) Accessed 12/12/2020

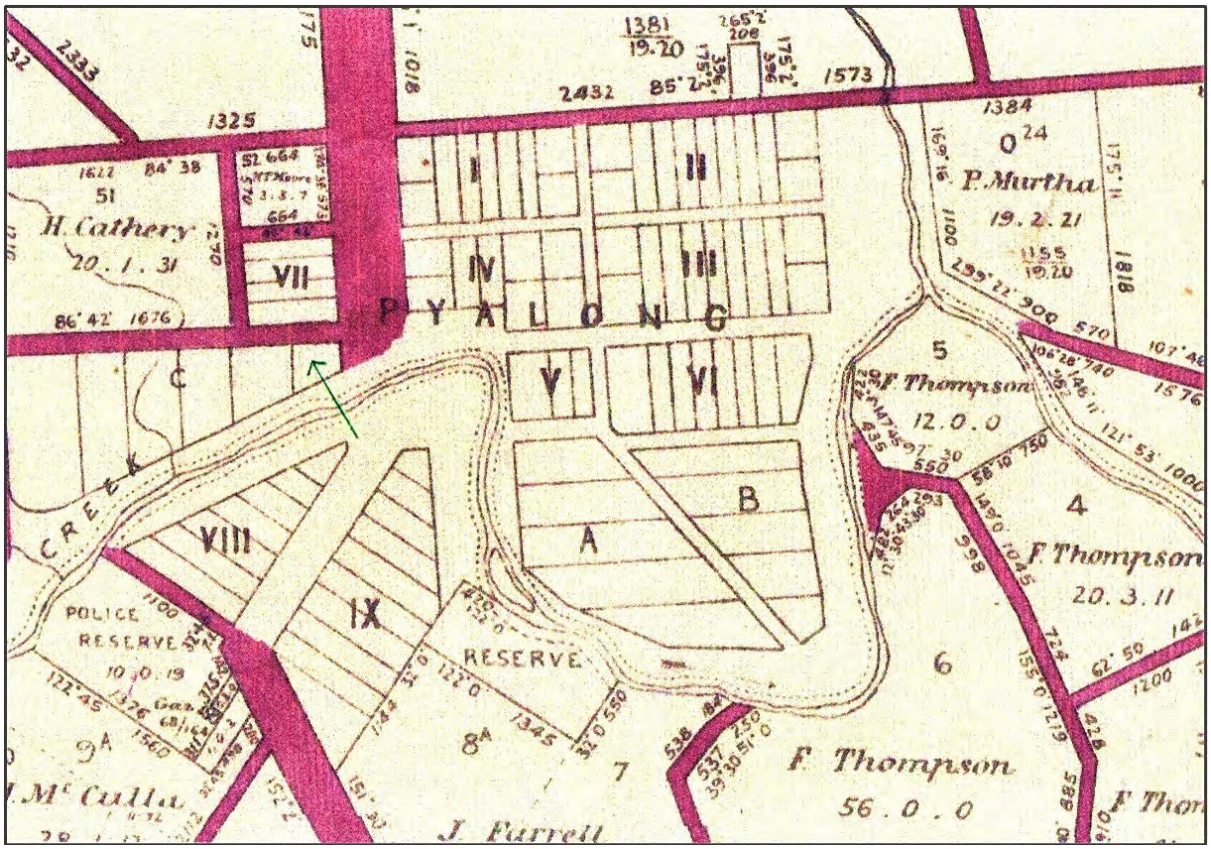
Appendix 10

No. 158
Alexander Fullerton Mollison
Name of run—Pyalong
Estimated area—60,000 acres
Estimated grazing capabilities — 20,000 sheep

Bounded on the E and NE by the run of Mr. W. Hamilton and the run of Mr. John H Patterson, the boundaries of which have been fixed by mutual consent, the length of the whole line is estimated to be 13 miles; on the N and NW by the run lately occupied by Mr. W. Patterson and the run of the Messrs. Pohlman, this line is estimated at 10 miles in length; on the W by the run of Dr. Baynton, the boundary line having been pointed out by the Commissioner, its length is estimated to be 7 miles; on the SW by the run of Mr. Simmons, length of line estimated to be 4 miles; on the S by the runs of Captain Cain and Mr. Sutherland, the boundary running along a high range, the length of this line is estimated to be 10 miles.

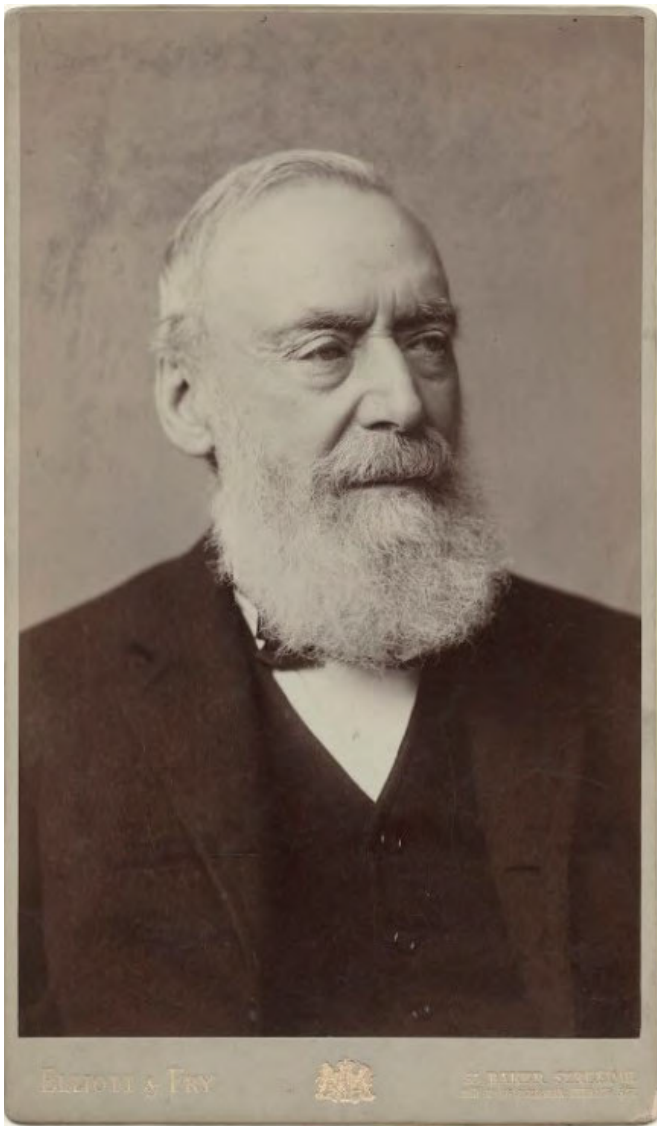
***ARGUS* 3 October 1848**
Claims to leases of Crown Land.
Beyond the settled districts. Western Port District.

Appendix 11



***WHITE HART HOTEL* on banks of Mollison Creek, Pyalong.**
PROC39: Pyalong. VPRS 8168/P000239; undated.
State Library Victoria (SLV)
(The hotel's location is indicated by the green arrow)

Appendix 12



Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, MLA., (1816-1903)
Land reformer and instigator of Duffy Land Act 1862.
https://www.bing.com/images/search/ Accessed 12/09/2020

Appendix 13

The Late Mr John Cooke.

A LARGE ESTATE.

The Perpetual Trustees Association and Mr Thomas M'Cormack, of Melbourne, through their solicitors, Messrs Boothby and Boothby, are making application for probate of the will of Mr John Cooke, late of Highbury-grove, Kew. Testator, who successfully carried on pastoral pursuits in Gippsland, and subsequently in Queensland, left an estate, the gross value of which is estimated to be L127,569. Of this sum L17,444 represents estate in Victoria, L8234 in New South Wales, L101,400 in Queensland, and L490 in Tasmania. The Queensland estate consists of the well-known "Daandine" Station, near Toowoomba, with the stock and plant thereon.

By his will testator appoints his wife guardian of the children, and leaves to her his home in Highbury-grove, Kew, together with his motor car, and the furniture and all other effects in the house. He also leaves to his wife a handsome annuity and considerable provision for maintenance of such of the children as may be under the age of 21 years. He gives the sum of L100 to the Reverend Father O'Donoghue, of Kew, and the proceeds of 50 shares of L10 each in the Buckingbong Estate Company are to be divided between the following charitable institutions:—The Little Sisters of the Poor, Northcote; the Sisters of St. Joseph, Surrey Hills; the Sisters of Mercy, South Melbourne Orphanage; St. Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne, and the Christian Bros'. Orphanage, South Melbourne.

The rest of his estate is, subject to the widow's annuity, to be divided equally between his children upon the youngest attaining the age of 21 years.

Testator gives to his trustees full power to manage "Daandine" and his other properties to the best advantage of his estate.—"Age," Friday.

KILMORE FREE PRESS, 28 April 1910

Appendix 14

53 White Hart Hotel — Coronation Hotel
Pyalong :- Dalhousie Co., 57½ Miles N., by Rail.
Mollison St.
MARCH, 1922

Sunday 5
Quadragesima—1st in Lent

William Percival to Michael Nugent — Hume Feb. 1856
Michael Nugent — March 1856
Hugh Dugan — June 1859 granted license — appointed Post Master at Pyalong; Oct. 1858

Patrick Cooke — 1866/1867 Doty p. 153
Patrick Cooke — 1880 Doty — 1895

Raced at Pyalong on Boxing Day 1876, wound up with a Ball & Supper at Patrick Cooke's White Hart Hotel.

Coronation Ht. Mrs. Cath. Jack 1904-1915.

Closed 1918

Bridge Inn
Pyalong

Mary McDonald or McDougall 1/1/1884

1865 Gazetteer 2 Hotels; Pyalong & The White Hart. — Jesse Vians, Pyalong died 26/5/1864
Hotelkeepers, 1880 Doty; Patrick Cook; Denis Griffin; George Price

ROBERT K. COLE INDEX OF VICTORIAN HOTELS, 1841-1849
Vol. 9, P. 53, MS 7592,
White Hart, Pyalong, Victoria.
State Library Victoria (SLV) Accessed 06/06/2018

Appendix 15

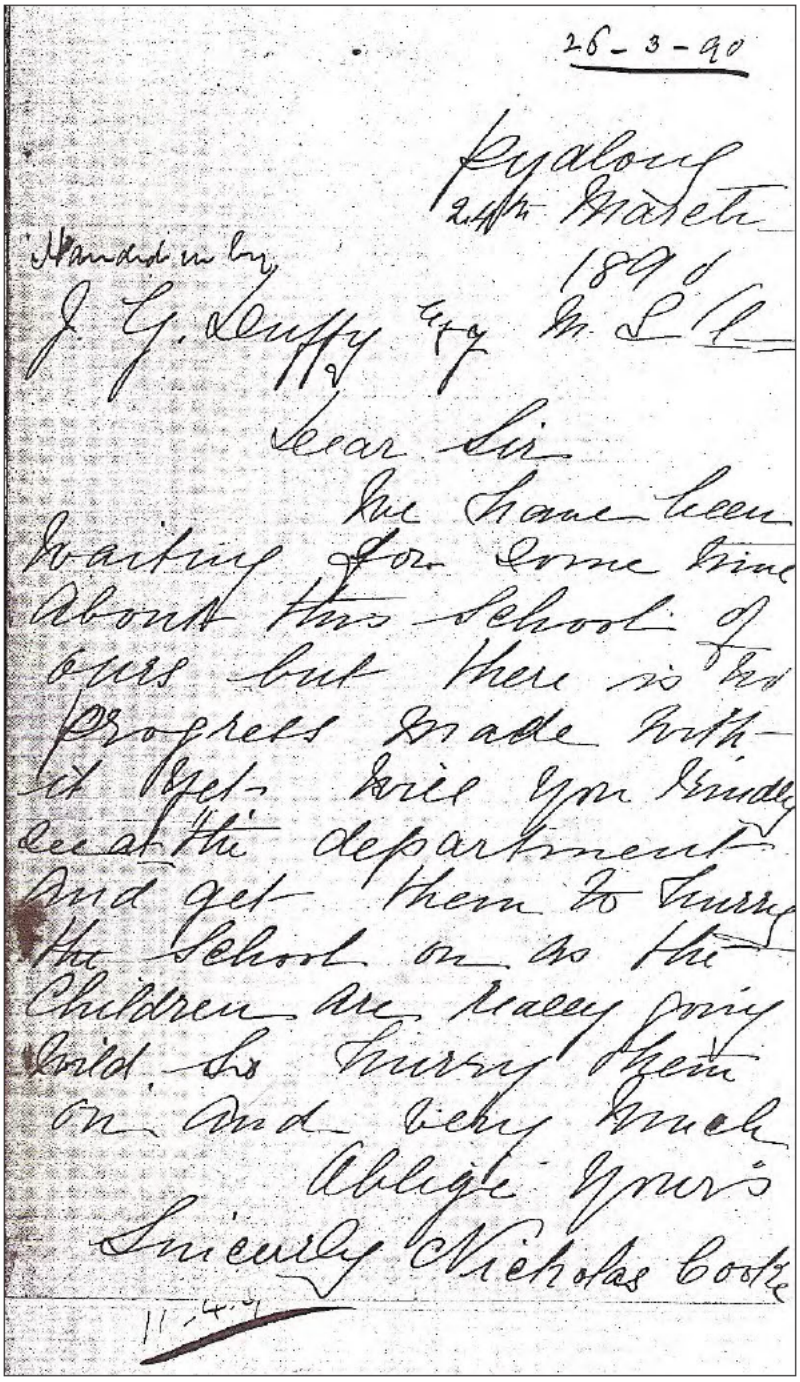
This study has established that the entire Cooke chain of closely related relatives and friends originated from Knockainy in County Limerick, and all except one immigrant settled in Victoria. John Cooke (nephew of Patrick Cooke) was a slaughterman who drowned in a flooded creek at Mitchell, Queensland, in 1894, leaving his wife and ten children destitute. Much was made of his death in the Queensland press when a melee at his funeral caused a public scandal that resulted in police charges. When the body was lowered into the grave a brawl erupted among mourners who claimed that the grave was filled in disrespectfully by the attendant. Further members of the Cooke chain included Patrick's nephews, brothers, John Joseph and Nicholas George Cooke who immigrated from Knockainy in 1884 and 1888 respectively; both were employed on Melbourne's railways. John Joseph died after being crushed between railway truck buffers at the Melbourne docks; Nicholas died of Carcenoma of the Oesophagus. Another member of the Cooke family to immigrate was Monsignor Richard O'Regan, grandson of Patrick's brother, Thomas, who arrived in New South Wales in 1907. Rev. O'Regan was a colourful figure, well-known in the Rose Bay (Sydney) parish for taking children to the opera and cricket matches in his Cadillac, and for wearing a neck-to-knee costume when swimming. On trips to the church to say Mass he rode on his Indian motor-bike sporting leather gauntlets to the elbows. He was described as 'dynamic, a trifle flamboyant, driving, colourful, difficult, authoritarian, even dogmatic'. He was parish priest at St Mary Magdalen's in Rose Bay until his death 48 years later in 1965 and is buried beneath a grand monument in Sydney's Waverley cemetery.

It is well-known within the family that Patrick's daughter, Margaret (Cooke) Carroll and Rev. O'Regan kept in close contact through personal visits, correspondence and the exchange of photographs until Margaret's death in 1935.

Another extensive group of immigrant relations from the Walsh and Fogarty families in Knockainy arrived in Victoria between the1850s and 1900. Many settled in Pyalong or nearby districts. It is not possible to include details of this group given the limits of this study.

Western Star & Roma Advertiser, Queensland, 17 March, 1874.
Register Births, Deaths, Marriages, Victoria https://bdm.vic.gov.au Accessed 06/03/2019.
John Cosgrove & Jean Finnane (eds), *Rose Bay Parish: The Story of Seventy-Five Years 1914-1990* (Waverley, NSW: Waverley Press, 1989).
P. W. Gledhill, *Church of St Mary Magdalene, St Marys (formerly South Creek): a souvenir book of the Church and parish* (Parramatta, NSW: Zenith Print, 1937).

Appendix 16



26-3-90

Eyalong
24th March
1890

Handed in by
J. G. Duffy Esq M.L.A.

Dear Sir

We have been
waiting for some time
about this school of
ours but there is no
progress made with-
it yet. Will you kindly
see at the department
and get them to hurry
the school on as the
Children are nearly
cold. So hurry them
on and very much
oblige yours
Sincerely Nicholas Cooke

11-4-90

Nicholas Cooke, Letter to Education Department, 24 March 1890.
Education Dept Files VPRS n/a. https://prov.vic.gov.au Accessed 20/05/2010.

Appendix 17

The O'Keanes were related to the Cookes through marriage. They had a more than five-hundred-year lineage in Co. Limerick and tenanted land adjoining the Cookes in Knockainy. Michael O'Keane married Patrick Cooke's sister, Deborah in 1834. The O'Keanes were reasonably well-off by Irish standards, tenanting around 120 acres of land at Bottomstown by 1868. It is said that the local landlord, Gubbins, straightened the boundaries of his estate by taking six acres of O'Keane land. As payment he erected a solid stone farmhouse for the family. In 1858 Deborah and Michael O'Keane's eldest son Maurice, who was studying for the priesthood at St Patrick's College, Thurles, suddenly left the seminary. Without returning to his family in Knockainy, he sailed for Australia. His father was a staunch Nationalist who took a deep interest in Irish politics, and it is suspected that his son's veil of secrecy may have been because of his own involvement with several student priests in a plot against the British government. Another reason for his sudden departure may have been because he suffered the shame of being considered a 'spoiled priest'. O'Keane arrived in Melbourne on the *Red Jacket* in 1864, sponsored by his uncle, Patrick Cooke. After teaching in schools at Moranding near Kilmore and Mosquito Creek near Axedale in north-central Victoria, he selected land at Pyalong and was the district's rate-collector before he moved to northern Victoria in his later years.

Sr Mary Camillus, *The O'Kane Family History as I know it* (undated transcript).
Frances O'Kane Hale, *A Family Background: The O'Keane (O'Kane) Family in Ireland* (1982, Revised 1996).
Val Noone, *Nicholas O'Donnell's Autobiography*, Edited and with an Introduction and an Epilogue by Val Noone (Bakery Hill, Victoria: Ballarat Heritage Services, 2017).

Appendix 18

Petty Sessions Order Books CSPS 1/1427

ORDER BOOK, as approved of by the Lord Lieutenant (with the advice and consent of the Privy Council),

County of Limerick

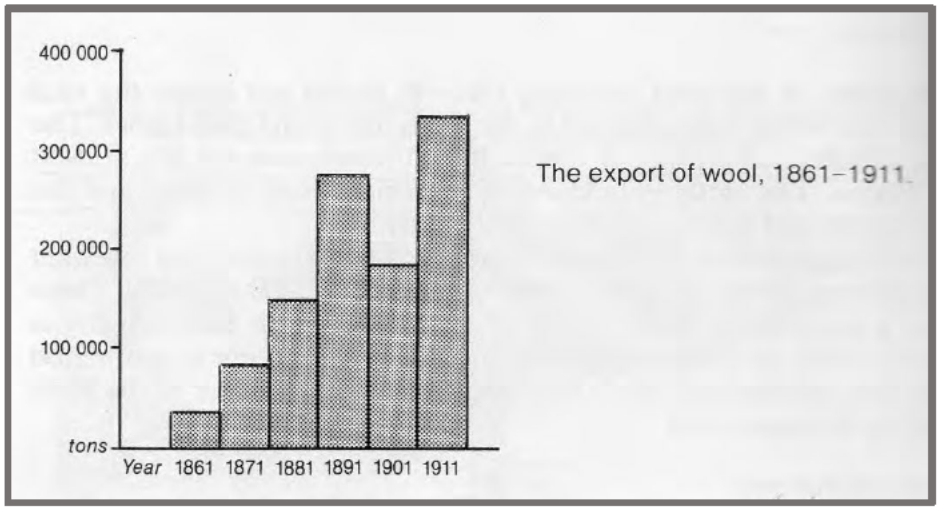
1 No.	2 Date of Order. 1889	3 Name or Names of Justice or Justices by whom Order made; and if made out of Petty Sessions, or if entry in this Book made from a Certificate, same to be here stated.	4 PARTIES—COMPLAINANT AND DEFENDANT. (The Christian and Surname, Rank, Occupation, or other addition, and Residence, stating Parish and Townland, to be given, and the parties to be distinguished by prefixing their appellation—Complainant or Defendant.) Complainant.	 Defendant.	5 Names of Witnesses examined, and whether for Complainant or Defendant.	6 CAUSE OF COMPLAINT, as set forth in Summons.	7 PARTICULARS OF ORDER OR DISMISSAL. If Dismiss, whether with or without prejudice, and whether with or without Costs, &c. In Ejectment, when to be evicted, and from what and whose Premises, &c. If to be Whipped, whether in or out of Prison, &c., &c. (Where Money ordered to be paid by or to any Person, the amount to be written in words at full length in this Column, as well as to be entered in Figures in the Money Columns.)
66	June 5th	Col W.T. Pearse RM Robert White Severs Esq The O'Grady JP	Thomas Cooke Bottomstown Compt	Michael Whelan Labourer Bottomstown Deft		That the defendant did on the 31st day of May 1889 unlawfully assault the Complainant at Bruff in the Co of Limerick	Same rule as No 62
67			Nicholas Cooke Farmer Bottomstown Compt	Edmond Whelan Labourer ~~Bottomstown~~ Ballyvalhane Deft		The defendant on the 31st day of May 1889 used threatening language towards Complainant at Bruff with intent to provoke a breach of the Peace	Same rule as No 62
68			Thomas Cooke Bottomstown Compt	Thomas Cooke Bottomstown Deft		That the defendant did on the 31st of May 1889 unlawfully aid and abet ~~[illegible]~~ one Michael Whelan to assault Complainant in the Town of Bruff	Same rule as No 62

IRISH PETTY SESSIONS ORDER BOOKS

CSPS 1/1427, 5 June 1889.

https://www.findmypast/ Accessed 24/06/2019

Appendix 19



AUSTRALIAN WOOL EXPORTS 1861-1911

B. Bessant, *The Land Hunger: Commentary and Documents* (West Melbourne, Vic: Thomas Nelson,1980), 68.

Appendix 20

TABLE IV

Average Quinquennial Production of Wool in the Australian Colonies, as Exported, 1840-99

('000 lb.)

Period	*N.S.W.*	*Vic.*	*S.A.*	*Qld.*	*W.A.*	*Tas.*	*Total*
1840-4	7,691	2,727	n.a.	n.a.	—	n.a.	n.a.
1845-9	11,801	9,710	n.a.	n.a.	—	n.a.	n.a.
1850-4	15,184	19,665	n.a.	n.a.	—	n.a.	n.a.
1855-9	16,892	20,977	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1860-4	18,728	27,730	13,956	8,948	772	4,704	74,838
1865-9	33,108	49,099	22,256	29,056	1,471	5,224	140,214
1870-4	62,764	60,263	31,886	35,029	1,986	4,939	196,867
1875-9	129,502	77,155	49,235	33,822	3,155	7,192	300,061
1880-4	186,406	75,477	49,944	40,411	4,281	8,303	364,822
1885-9	243,175	66,162	49,377	57,293	7,152	7,382	430,541
1895-9	302,724	81,060	46,221	106,272	11,052	8,122	555,451
1890-4	348,588	77,285	51,628	100,265	9,337	8,941	596,044

Sources: 1840-4 to 1855-9, *Statistical Registers* of the two colonies. Wool exports are assumed to equal wool production. 1860-4 to 1895-9, Commonwealth of Australia, Department of Commerce, Bureau of Agricultural Economics, *Statistical Handbook of the Sheep and Wool Industry* (Canberra, 1949), Table 26, p. 21.

Cited in Alan Barnard, *The Australian Wool Market 1840-1900*
(Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 1958).

Appendix 21

TABLE XIV

Quinquennial Production of Raw Wool in the New Countries, 1860-1900 (lb. m.)

Year	*Australia*	*S. America*	*S. Africa*	*New Zealand*
1860	59	43	26	6
1865	109	137	33	19
1870	173	197	43	37
1875	258	220	51	54
1880	354	256	60	67
1885	376	356	50	86
1890	462	260	93	103
1895	617	443	85	116
1900	445	222	31	141

Sources: Australia: Bureau of Agricultural Economics, op. cit., p. 21, Table 26; South America and South Africa, 1860-85: Helmuth Schwartze & Co., op. cit.; 1890-1900, R. J. Thompson, 'Wool Prices in Great Britain, 1883-1901' *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, vol. lxv (1902), p. 512; New Zealand: *New Zealand Year Book, 1903.*

Cited in Alan Barnard, *The Australian Wool Market 1840-1900*
(Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 1958).