Roots and Routes: Memory and Identity in the Irish Diaspora in Canada

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Abstract

Roots and Routes: Memory and Identity in the Irish Diaspora in Canada

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Historians of Irish emigration have referred to the 1950s as a "lost decade." During this ten-year window, half a million people (of a population of three million) left Ireland in search of new lives overseas. This dissertation focuses on Irish emigration to Canada in the decades after the Second World War and examines the complex social, cultural, political and economic forces that fueled the departure of so many young people from the new Republic of Ireland and its neighboring statelet, Northern Ireland. Whereas Irish emigration to Canada in the nineteenth century has been the subject of intensive scholarship, there is a serious lacuna in the written history of post-war immigration from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland to Canada. This interdisciplinary thesis seeks to redress this historiographical imbalance.

Roots and Routes: Memory and Identity in the Irish Diaspora in Canada is based on an extensive case study that investigates Irish cultural memory and diasporic space in the National Capital Region of Canada; in particular, its Irish Seniors Social Group Ottawa (ISSGO) that was created in 2005. This cohort is part of a network of grassroots community organizations spread throughout the Irish diaspora that receives fiscal support from the Irish government. Recognizing contributions made by its expatriate communities to their homeland, this funding supports programmes that promote, preserve and foster Irish culture among various constituent communities of Ireland's diaspora worldwide.

Despite the popularity and prevalence of "Irish culture and heritage" in virtually all corners of the globe, there is no agreement among scholars as to the precise characteristics of Irish culture and heritage—either in Ireland, or among Irish diasporic communities overseas. This lack of clarity and consensus begs critical questions such as: What is Irish cultural identity and cultural memory in Irish diasporic communities? Does such a phenomenon as a "sense of Irishness" exist? If so, how is it manifested and maintained, especially outside of Ireland? Identity is central to how people

find meaning in their lives. Hence, scholars need to ask precise and probing questions about how Irish people construct their identities—both at home and abroad. This interdisciplinary thesis explores these questions in a specific diasporic setting—the Irish Seniors Social Group in the National Capital Region of Canada.

The members of this community network have carved out an Irish diasporic space in Canada and have formed a vibrant element of the Canadian mosaic during the past six decades. In unveiling their sociocultural lifeworlds, other questions naturally arise: Who are these people? What region in Ireland did they come from? When did they come, and what motivated them to come to Canada? Where did they settle in Canada? Did they maintain links with family and friends in Ireland? Why did they join ISSGO? What role did geography, time, class, education, religion, gender, and age play in how this cohort became attached to—or detached from—a particular place?

Drawing on an interdisciplinary research model that incorporates diaspora studies, gender history, space-place studies, and oral history, this thesis highlights the significance of *roots* and *routes* as fundamental elements in the creation of Irish diasporic lifeworlds in Ottawa, and situates these lifeworlds within a broader metanarrative of Irish emigration to Canada. This dualism will be explored in respect to Canadian immigration policy; individual and collective memories of emigration; settlement patterns; social, cultural and economic mobility; homecoming, and gendered histories.

The dissertation argues that Irish cultural identity is a complex and layered phenomenon, shaped and reshaped by spatial and temporal forces that impact the macro and micro lifeworlds of Irish people worldwide. Highlighting the twin impact of *roots* and *routes* as formative elements in the creation of diasporic communities, the dissertation focuses on the spatial settings in which ethnic identities are nurtured and maintained, and on how networks such as the Irish Seniors Social Group in Ottawa maintained and replenished Irish diasporic identities for over half a century.

Acknowledgements

This thesis began—albeit subconsciously—in 1986, when I first left Ireland to live on Fogo Island, off the northeast coast of Newfoundland. So began my own diasporic journey. In the years that followed, I relocated to Corner Brook and, eventually, to the National Capital Region in Ottawa. Many people guided my path throughout the course of this journey, but few have inspired me as much as the Irish senior immigrant community in Ottawa, the subjects of this dissertation. During the past five years, they have been my hosts and informants, my inspiration and encouragement, and for this, I am sincerely grateful. A special thank you to Kay O'Hegarty for her constant support.

When I approached Dr. Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin at Concordia University about recording the life histories of Ottawa's Irish immigrants, he was very receptive and stressed the urgency of recording them without delay. His expertise and mentorship have played a formidable role in shaping the course of my research during the past five years. Likewise, Dr. Steven High taught me how to conduct oral history interviews and gave me a profound sense of ethical awareness and respect for the person as the primary source of oral history. Dr. Jane McGaughey was equally thorough and supportive in guiding me through the challenges of historiographical research.

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I thank my husband Ed, my children Sylvia and Eugene, and Sylvia's partner Patrick for being there every step of the way. This work would not have been possible without them.

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Abbreviations

CCC	Canadian Centennial Commission
CCÉ	Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann
CIÉ	Córas Iompair Éireann
GAA	Gaelic Athletic Association
ISNCR	Irish Society of the National Capital Region
ISO	Irish Society of Ottawa
ISP	Irish Society Players
ISSGO	Irish Seniors Social Group Ottawa
NCR	National Capital Region

Chapter 1. Voices, Stories, Perspectives: Literature Review & Methodology

> The Irish have an affinity to and with each other that is not bound nor defined by geography or time. This first ever comprehensive statement of Ireland's diaspora policy is firmly rooted in Article 2 of the Constitution of Ireland which states that "*the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage*"- Government of Ireland official policy on the Irish diaspora.[1]

In an effort to promote this diasporic policy, the Irish government provides fiscal support to projects that promote, preserve and foster a "more vibrant sense of community and Irish identity" among the Irish abroad.[2] This dissertation is a case study of one endeavor to put this policy into action. It focuses on the Irish Seniors Social Group Ottawa (ISSGO), which was founded in 2005 as a direct result of Government of Ireland funding. This is one of a number of Irish seniors' networks in the global Irish diaspora that receives ongoing fiscal support from the Government of Ireland.

A case study of identity formation among Irish emigrants/immigrants who came to the National Capital Region of Canada after 1945, this dissertation makes no claim to universal applicability in other Irish diasporic settings. Studies of post-war emigration to Canada from Ireland have tended to focus either on those who left the Republic of Ireland, or on those who left Northern Ireland. However, members of the ISSGO include people from all regions of the island of Ireland. They are Catholic and Protestant. They are from rural and urban areas. They come from Ulster, Leinster, Connaught, and Munster. Yet, they all self-identify as Canadian-Irish and are proud of their history and heritage. The members of this community network have carved out an Irish diasporic space in the National Capital Region of Canada (NCR) and form a vibrant element of the Ottawa mosaic.

It will be argued that there is no such thing as homogeneous Irish identity, either in Ireland or in Canada. Instead, Irish cultural identity is a composite of many layers of identity, shaped and reshaped in response to particular circumstances. Ethnic identity involves a complex and

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[1] *Global Irish: Ireland's Diaspora Policy,* Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, March 2015, accessed January 12, 2019, at https://www.dfa.ie/media/globalirish/global-irish-irelands-diaspora-policy.pdf

[2] Ibid.,10,; Article 2 of the Constitution of Ireland states: "It is the entitlement and birthright of every person born in the island of Ireland, which includes its islands and seas, to be part of the Irish Nation. That is also the entitlement of all persons otherwise qualified in accordance with law to be citizens of Ireland. Furthermore, the Irish nation cherishes its special affinity with people of Irish ancestry living abroad who share its cultural identity and heritage." Constitution of Ireland, 1 July 1937.

continuous process of formation. Employing an interdisciplinary research model that incorporates diaspora studies, gender history, space-place studies and oral history, this thesis highlights the significance of *roots* and *routes* as critical elements in the creation of Irish diasporic lifeworlds in Ottawa. This dualism will be explored in respect to Canadian immigration policy; individual and collective memories of emigration; settlement patterns; social, cultural, and economic mobility; homecoming; and gendered histories.

Several questions arise. What is cultural identity? What is Irishness? What role did geography, time, class, religion, gender, and age play in how this cohort became attached to (or detached from) a particular place? Identity is central to how individuals and groups create meaning in their lives and is shaped by past and present experiences or "*roots* and *routes*," respectively. How did the complex interaction of these variables impact the creation of Irish cultural memory and diasporic space in the NCR? In exploring these questions, this dissertation examines the role of cultural memory in an Irish diasporic setting and the palimpsest of family, community and social networks that sustain and replenish such remembering.

A survey of the extant literature on the Irish diaspora to Canada reveals serious lacunae in our long term understanding of this historical process. This is particularly evident in the dearth of scholarship on Irish immigration to Canada after the Second World War.[3] This dissertation will focus on post-war Irish immigrants to Canada and devote particular attention to the hitherto neglected process of identity formation within this diasporic cohort. Although this broad cohort left home during the same time period, they were not a homogeneous group of people forced by circumstances to leave Ireland. They were educated. They were skilled. Moreover, they made a conscious and strategic decision to leave. They were different in pattern and different in social composition from previous waves of immigrants to Canada.

Born and educated on the island of Ireland, immigrants—now senior citizens—who spent their lives living and working in the NCR were part of a "lost generation" who left Ireland in the post-war years. The 1950s in Ireland were referred to as a "lost decade" in which over half a million (of a population of three million people) left the country.[4] At that time, emigration was a "seemingly unstoppable flow," which by 1961 had created the peacetime equivalent of a "missing

[3] Messamore states Irish migration to Canada in the 1950s is a much neglected field. Barbara J. Messamore, ed., *Canadian Migration Patterns from Britain and North America* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 2004), 9.
[4] Dermot Keogh, Finbarr O'Shea and Carmel Quinlan, eds., *Ireland in the 1950s: The Lost Decade* (Cork: Mercier Press, 2004), 6.

generation".[5] Historian J. J. Lee writes that to capture their story, historians must turn to writers of fiction and poetry,

> who best to convey the fetid atmosphere of the forties and fifties, the sense of pervasive, brooding hopelessness at home, the emptiness, the uncomprehending remorse, the heartbreak and heroism of many caught in the web of 'experience of abandonment' as families were sundered and communities withered.[6]

In his description of the 1950s economic depression, historian Dermot Keogh observes that emigration was at its highest rate since "the exceptional period in the 1880s" and also quotes poetry which he contends captures the "pathos of the annual 'scattering' of the Irish."[7] Emigration is an emotive issue in Ireland. Irish poet Eavan Boland describes the tendency of those who stayed in Ireland to avoid any discussion or analysis of emigration. She writes of the emigrants: "Like oil lamps, we put them out the back of our houses, of our minds."[8] The goal of this present work is to encourage closer study of the layered identity of those "oil lamps."

As early as 1963, historian John Archer Jackson argued for an examination of the complex pattern of forces that culminated in such large numbers of emigrants leaving Ireland:

> The experience of Irish migration is rooted deeply in the soil of Ireland itself . . . . One must look for the causes as a complex pattern of influences at many levels which, in Ireland, arise from a particular set of circumstances which have a bearing on the individual's decision to emigrate. This pattern links economic, demographic, historical and social causes; factors of 'pull' and of 'push' resulting in a social fabric which produces, and is sustained by, emigration.[9]

In short, Jackson draws our attention to the important influence of roots in the Irish migration experience. Despite scholarship on Irish emigration in the ensuing decades, a seminal study notes that while economic aspects of emigration from Ireland have been explored in depth, social and cultural causes have been less systematically examined.[10] Calling for a conceptual framework that incorporates insights from demographic and ethnic studies, historian Alan O'Day points out that "the map still has many gaps and the basic 'spadework' to uncover the complexities of Irish

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[5] Matthew John O'Brien, "Irishness in Great Britain and the United States: Transatlantic and Cross-Channel Migration Networks and Irish Ethnicity, 1920-90" (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2001), 235.
[6] J. J. Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985: Politics and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 384.
[7] Dermot Keogh, *Twentieth-Century Ireland: Nation and State* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd., 1994), 214.
[8] Eavan Boland, *Eavan Boland: Collected Poems* (Manchester: Carcanet, 1995), 10.
[9] John Archer Jackson, *The Irish in Britain* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), 24.
[10] Bronwen Walter, Breda Gray, Linda Dowling and Sarah Morgan, "Irish Emigrants and Irish Communities Abroad: A Study of the Existing Sources of Information and Analysis for the Task Force on Policy Regarding Emigrants" (Dublin: Department of Foreign Affairs, 2002), 26.

migration remains undone."[11] O'Day argues that scholars in Ireland have "paid scant attention to the emigrants" and that there has never been an acknowledged standard interpretation or a consensus view of the global Irish diaspora.[12] Historian Andy Bielenberg remarks on the dearth of studies by Irish historians on Irish emigration to the British Empire and notes that Canadian historian Donald H. Akenson's book *The Irish Diaspora* is, to date, the most comprehensive study that offers a transnational comparison of the Irish diaspora.*[13]* This lack of academic scholarship underscores the contention of historians D. G. Boyce and O'Day that "the historiography of the Irish diaspora reveals the . . . development of non-Irish scholarship working outside a political and polemical environment."[14]

Two studies on the Irish Diaspora, Bielenberg's *The Irish Diaspora* and Keogh's *Ireland: The Lost Decade in the 1950s* attempt to redress this imbalance.[15] Both collections emerged from conferences on the Irish Diaspora held in University College Cork and reflect what sociologist Piaras Mac Éinrí describes as "an increasing, if initially, grudging acceptance that the Irish identity of those within the diaspora is not simply a pale shadow of 'authentic' Irish identity in Ireland, but has something distinctive to contribute."[16] Mac Éinrí states that when the word diaspora entered public discourse in the 1990s "it signified a new willingness to embrace a more inclusive and less territorially bounded notion of Irishness than heretofore."[17] Keogh describes Ireland in the 1950s as "a young state that appeared to be unable – unlike all other states in democratic western Europe at the time – to provide work, education and economic security for its citizens."[18] Keogh also inserts a personal comment: "Being of that generation, I can recall the enforced departures of aunts, uncles and cousins to Britain. They stayed for a few days in our family home in Dublin."[19] Perhaps this is an example of what French historian Fernand Braudel describes as historical events which are still "quivering . . . that history which still simmers with the passions of contemporaries who

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[11] Alan O'Day, "Revising the Diaspora," in *The Making of Modern Irish History: Revisionism and the Revisionist Controversy,* eds., D. George Boyce and Alan O'Day (New York: Routledge, 1996), 196.
[12] Ibid., 188.
[13] Andy Bielenberg, "Irish Emigration to the British Empire, 1700-1914," in *The Irish Diaspora*, ed., Andy Bielenberg, (Essex: Pearson Education Ltd., 2000), 215.
[14] D. George Boyce and Alan O'Day, eds., *The Making of Modern Irish History: Revisionism and the Revisionist Controversy* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 196.
[15] Andy Bielenberg, ed., *The Irish Diaspora* (Essex: Pearson Education Ltd., 2000); Dermot Keogh, *Twentieth-Century Ireland: Nation and State* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Ltd., 1994).
[16] Piaras Mac Éinrí, "Introduction," in Bielenberg, *The Irish Diaspora*, 4.
[17] Ibid., 4.
[18] Dermot Keogh, "Introduction: The Vanishing Irish," in Keogh, *Twentieth-Century Ireland,* 13.
[19] Ibid., 13.

felt it, described it, lived it"[20] Many contemporaries of those who emigrated tended not to discuss the details. Writer Dermot Bolger describes his memory of relatives who emigrated in the 1950s: "my family vanished into a glass wall of silence which is only now finally beginning to be broken."[21] Novelist James Ryan speculates on why the topic features so infrequently in mid-twentieth century fiction. Ryan refers to the silence that until recently surrounded the topic of emigration in Ireland and concludes that the writers' "silence is more eloquent, a more enduring testament to the 'lost decade' than anything they might have written."[22]

Nevertheless, the growing volume of studies on emigration from Ireland reflects the increased political and social significance of migration studies. Irish diasporic space is shaped by a complex interface of roots and routes, global cultural flows, gendered histories, and oral narratives that are seldom measured adequately by text-based history. Taking into account Braudel's argument that traditional historians should incorporate a multifaceted methodology (*histoire totale*) to capture the complexity of forces which shape historical events, this thesis takes just such an interdisciplinary approach. Braudel argues for a cultural history that is enriched by dialogue between historians, sociologists, anthropologists and other sectors of the human sciences.[23] He notes how dialogue with geographers and demographers could explain ruptures and changes caused by "insistent migrations which . . . flow endlessly beneath the skin of history."[24] This type of an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach can shed light on the multidimensional and diverse nature of the Irish migration experience and the significance of both roots and routes in the creation of an Irish diasporic space in Canada's capital region.

Studies of emigration from Ireland are complicated by lack of accurate statistics. Estimates based on Irish census data reveal that Ireland occupies an unusual place in the wider pattern of European emigration in the percentage who left relative to the total population of the country.[25] Approximately 8 million people left Ireland between 1801 and 1921 and outward migration

[20] Fernand Braudel, *On History,* trans. Sarah Matthews (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3-4.
[21] Dermot Bolger, ed., *Ireland in Exile: Irish Writers Abroad* (Dublin: New Island Books, 1993), 10.
[22] James Ryan, "Inadmissible Departures: Why Did the Emigrant Experience Feature So Infrequently in the Fiction of the Mid-Twentieth Century?" in Keogh, *Twentieth-Century,* 237.
[23] Braudel, *On History,* 206.
[24] Ibid., 206.
[25] Walter, et al., *Irish Emigrants*, 26.

continued, marked by two periods of very heavy out-migration, the 1950s and the 1980s.[26] Despite this massive outflow of emigrants from Ireland, other than a brief period during and after the Second World War, the Irish state did not regulate emigration from Ireland and no consistent record was kept on the numbers leaving.[27] Jackson observes that this lack of data "makes it impossible to make an accurate assessment of the numbers of Irish-born persons in Britain at any given date."[28] Many Irish-born migrants to Britain subsequently emigrated to other parts of the globe, but where and when they went was often unrecorded. Keogh posits that 400,000 left for Britain in the 1950s and, to a lesser extent, for Canada, the United States, Australia, and New Zealand.[29] According to historian Enda Delaney "at least four-fifths" of these 400,000 post-war Irish emigrants went to Britain.[30] However, no records were kept on the numbers of Irish who subsequently emigrated to Canada following a sojourn in Britain. Therefore, accurate statistics for Irish emigration to Canada in the post-war period are somewhat unreliable. This situation is further complicated by a lack of consistency on how the Irish were categorized upon entry into Canada. Depending on the time and place of entry, Irish emigrants, (from the Republic of Ireland, as well as Northern Ireland), were often listed as originating in the British Isles.

Demographic and quantitative studies of Irish emigration to Canada have established that specific migration patterns, (Protestant, as well as Catholic), gained currency well before the Great Irish Famine (1845-1852).[31] For example, historian Franca Iacovetta argues that:

> more Protestants than Catholics arrived in Ontario during the nineteenth century, both Protestants and Catholics were more likely to settle in rural rather than urban areas, and the famine stream represents an aberration with respect to the more typical pattern of volunteer, well-coordinated and largely self-financed migration that came before and after.[32]

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[26] Mary E. Daly, *Sixties Ireland: Reshaping the Economy, State and Society, 1957-1973* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016); Mary J. Hickman, "Migration and diaspora," in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture,* eds., Joe Cleary and Claire Connolly (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
[27] Enda Delaney, "Transnationalism, Networks and Emigration from Post-War Ireland," *Immigrants & Minorities*, 23, 2-3 (2005): 430.
[28] John Archer Jackson, *The Irish,* 5.
[29] Keogh, *Twentieth Century,* 19.
[30] Enda Delaney, "The Vanishing Irish? The Exodus from Ireland in the 1950s," in *Ireland in the 1950s:The Lost Decade,* eds., Dermot Keogh, Finbarr O'Shea and Carmel Quinlan (Cork: Mercier Press, 2004), 83.
[31] O'Day, "Revising," 196.
[32] Franca Iacovetta, *The Writing of English Canadian Immigrant History* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1997), 7.

However, data on the numbers of Irish born migrants in Canada is unreliable and many salient aspects of Irish emigration to Canada remain unexplored. Historian Mark McGowan avers that "the historiography of the Irish in Canada has demonstrated just how complicated the history of this people can be."[33] Akenson rightly observes that the only way to uncover the story of Irish migration is to "pass through historiography." He considers the lack of accurate statistical demographic data on the Irish in North America even more problematic because until the middle of the twentieth century, "the US-Canadian border was a very permeable membrane."[34] The complexity and diversity of Irish migration and settlement in Canada has been influenced by many interlocking variables: the emigrants' regional origin in Ireland; the timing of their departure; religious background; socio-economic status; motivation for leaving; and the region where they settled in Canada.

The regional and socio-economic status of the immigrants, before they left Ireland, influenced their subsequent pattern of settlement and adjustment to Canada. According to historical geographers C. J. Houston and W. J. Smyth, geography matters. Their study on Irish settlement patterns in Canada notes that the particular regional situation the emigrants left and the milieux they encountered when they arrived "combined to produce a complex and varied mixture in Canada, where no one Irish community developed just like the other."[35] Historian David Wilson notes the importance of "geographical origins, the economic position and the social status" of Irish migrants in determining their subsequent lifeworlds in Canada.[36] Houston and Smyth contend that Irish emigrants to Canada carefully considered the economic prospects and logistical possibilities of their chosen destination and "were not involved in a lemming-like abandonment of their native country."[37] Houston and Smyth's seminal study highlights the regional character of Irish emigration and settlement in Canada and emphasizes that the Canadian-Irish were predominantly Protestant and pre-famine in origin. Indeed, the complexity of the Irish migration process is at variance with simple stereotypes, which associate Irishness with urbanism and Catholicism. Historian Bruce Elliott refers to the lack of statistical material on the Irish in Canada and notes that

[33] Mark McGowan, *Imperial Irish: Canada's Irish Catholics Fight the Great War, 1914-1918* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press. 2017), 4.
[34] Donald Harman Akenson, "Irish Migration to North America, 1800-1920," in Bielenberg, *Diaspora,* 121
[35] Cecil J. Houston and William J. Smyth, *Irish Emigration and Canadian Settlement: Patterns, Links and Letters* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 340.
[36] David Wilson, *The Irish in Canada,* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1989), 4.
[37] Houston and Smyth, 337.

his study on Irish Protestant migration to Ontario avoids "the mythologies about the Irish that have grown up on both sides of the ocean [and] the biased and erroneous perceptions that prevail at home and abroad."[38]

As in the case of this study, Elliott's microstudy demonstrates how a detailed regional examination can shed light on misconceptions that portray Irish migrants in Canada "as ill-equipped for pioneer life – as a failure, a belligerent rebel, and a fundamentally emotional and irrational soul."[39] This study attempts to shed a similar light on the Irish in the National Capital Region of Ontario. Elliott's findings concur with studies by Akenson who argues that Irish Catholic and Protestant emigrants in Ontario were rural settlers and had similar economic profiles.[40] Sociologists Gordon Darroch and Michael Ornstein's extensive study of class structure in nineteenth-century Canada is based on a national sample of the 1871 Canadian census and their conclusion argues for "important modifications to prevailing views of the relation of ethnicity and occupation."[41] This empirical study of the proportional distribution of the national population reveals that Irish Catholics were "virtually identical for bourgeois occupations, merchants, manufacturers, dealers, shopkeepers, and for the proportion in professional occupations as well as in artisanal work."[42] They also note that "[c]ontrary to the impression of narrative accounts and to the quantitative findings of city studies in Canada West (Hamilton, London, Kingston), the Irish Catholics of this region were predominantly a farming population."[43] These studies underline the complexity and specificity of ethnic identities and communities in different geographic regions of Canada.

The complex nature of Irish diasporic space in Canada is also complicated by "floating terminology" which Akenson contends is "the greatest single source of error in Irish diaspora studies."[44] Akenson argues that any "discussion of so complex and world-circling a phenomenon

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[38] Bruce S. Elliott, *Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach.* Second Edition (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2004), 6.
[39] Elliott, *Irish Migrants,* 6.
[40] Donald Harman Akenson, *Being Had: Historians, Evidence, and the Irish in North America* (Toronto: P.D. Meany, 1985); Donald Harman Akenson, *Small Differences: Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants, 1815-1921, An International Perspective* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988).
[41] A. Gordon Darroch and Michael D. Ornstein, "Ethnicity and Occupational Structure in Canada in 1871: The Vertical Mosaic in Historical Perspective," *The Canadian Historical Review* 61, 3 (September 1980): 329.
[42] Ibid., 314.
[43] Ibid., 325. They note: "surprising numbers of Irish Catholics are merchants, and there are a great many English and Scottish labourers . . . there are strong empirical grounds for distinguishing between ethnic stratification and ethnic division of labour." 329.
[44] Donald Harman Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* (Streetsville, Ontario: P.D. Meany, 1993), 10.

as the Irish diaspora must have an agreed vocabulary and the hardest portion of that vocabulary to pin down is the term 'Irish.'"[45] Geographer William Jenkins suggests that "totalizing notions of a singular or unified 'global' or 'North American' Irish diaspora have become ripe for deconstruction."[46] In Canada, Irish emigrants were not one homogenous group who had been forced to leave Ireland. Irish identity varied depending on when and where the migrants settled and their Irish regions of origin. Bielenberg observes that except for a brief period before and after the famine, the bulk of emigration to Canada was from Ulster and 60 per cent of the Irish ethnic group in Canada in 1871 was Protestant.[47] Protestant migrants are "less frequently studied elements of the Irish Diaspora" according to historian Donald MacRaild.[48] McGowan takes issue with attempts to place any element of the Irish diaspora in Canada "into a neat pigeonhole of identity."[49] For example, although Irish Catholics were a religious minority amidst an anglophone Protestant majority in Canada, he refutes the assumption that a type of "Hiberno-Catholic homogeneity" existed among Irish Catholic migrants.[50] Numerous variables, including the particular area of origin in Ireland, are important to consider in any study of the Irish in Canada. Delaney's examination of post-war Irish emigration to Britain notes that the region, county, or parish where emigrants originated can give an insight into why they left and proffer insights on their migration process.[51] Similarly, McGowan argues that the Irish in Canada tended to be more attached to their county of origin than to any "abstract notion of Ireland."[52] In his study of the Irish diaspora, historian Alan O'Day stresses the heterogeneity of Irish emigrants. He cautions against the presumption of a single Catholic identity and argues that such an "assumption fits the assertions of contemporary nationalists and inflates Irish solidarity and notions of a corporate sense of

[45] Akenson, *Diaspora,* 6.
[46] William Jenkins, *Between Raid and Rebellion: The Irish in Buffalo and Toronto 1867-1916* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill Queen's University Press, 2013), 211
[47] Bielenberg, "Irish," 219.
[48] Donald M. MacRaild, "Wherever Orange is Worn: Orangeism and Irish Migration in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries," *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 28/29 (Fall, 2002 – Spring, 2003): 99; Linda Dowling Almeida notes that "recent studies indicate that a large segment of the American Irish population is Protestant,""Irish America: 1940-2000" in *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States,* eds. J. J. Lee and Marion R. Casey (New York: New York University Press. 2006), 548.
[49] McGowan, *Imperial,* 4.
[50] Mark G. McGowan, "The Tales and Trials of a 'Double Minority'" The Irish and French Catholic Engagement for the Soul of the Canadian Church, 1815-1947," in *Religion and Greater Ireland: Christianity and Irish Global Networks, 1750-1950,* eds. Colin Barr and Hilary M. Carey (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), 98
[51]Delaney, Enda. "Placing Postwar Irish Migration to Britain in a Comparative European Perspective, 1945-1981," in Bielenberg, *Diaspora*, 340.
[52] McGowan, *Imperial,* 4.

identity."[53] Both Delaney and MacRaild point out "the long-cherished myth of Irish migration as primarily a traumatic process that fractured existing social relations has now been replaced by a more nuanced understanding of Ireland's diasporic past."[54]

It is well established in the historiography of the Irish in Canada that Irish settlers, unlike Irish migrants in the United States, were pre-famine in origin. According to Bielenberg, one of the most important results of Akenson's statistical research on the Irish diaspora in a British colonial context is that "neither Irishness or Catholicity" were handicaps in their economic and social advancement.[55] This status generally contradicts accepted assumptions about Irish-American settlement patterns.[56] However, it is interesting to note that the pervasive image of Irish emigrants as exiles and as Catholics persists. This misperception often extends to post-war Irish emigrants to Canada. The notion of the Irish emigrant exile pining for home is a pervasive image. Akenson argues that this error is compounded by the popularity of "an emotionally rich literature, based largely upon anecdote, that sees the Irish diaspora as tragedy and as having been largely an involuntary movement."[57] In his introduction to *New Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora*, editor Charles Fanning describes scholarship on nineteenth-century Irish emigration as "an unwinnowed mix of 'history and pseudo-history.'" However, he lauds the flourishing of studies and argues that historian Kerby Miller's "much challenged thesis" is a "benchmark of controversy."[58] Miller's thesis that Irish Catholic migrants' progress in the New World was inhibited by a fatalistic, dependent, archaic worldview continues to provoke debate.[59] McGowan notes that Miller's depiction of the Irish emigrant as an exiled victim of the process of migration and settlement "has cast a long shadow over Irish historiography on both sides of the border."[60] The tendency to see Canadian-Irish migration through the lens of famine migration persists. Writing about Canadian-

[53] Alan O'Day, "Imagined Irish Communities: Networks of Social Communication of the Irish Diaspora in the United States and Britain in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," in *Irish Migration, Networks and Ethnic Identities Since 1750,* eds. Enda Delaney and Donald M. MacRaild (London: Routledge, 2007), 7.
[54] Enda Delaney and Donald M. MacRaild, "Irish Migration, Networks and Ethnic Identities Since 1750: An Introduction," *Immigrants & Minorities: Historical Studies in Ethnicity, Migration and Diaspora* 23, 2-3 (2005): 128.
[55] Bielenberg, "Irish," 227.
[56] Akenson, *Irish in Ontario*, 3-47.
[57] Donald Harman Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer* (Toronto: P.D. Meany, 1993), 10-11.
[58] Charles Fanning, ed., *New Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 2; Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).
[59] Bielenberg refers to Akenson's challenge to Miller's thesis and concludes that Akenson's evidence "has placed a significant dent" in Miller's argument Bielenberg, "Irish," 226.
[60] McGowan, *Imperial,* 6.

Irish historiography in 2015 McGowan argues that "efforts to restore greater relevance to the famine, to accent the prominence of Irish nationalism, and to restore a narrative of sectarian conflict predominating over denominational containment and peaceful coexistence is a source of heated academic discussion to this day."[61] This perspective dovetails with that of MacRaild who claims that the "powerful and important historiography that suggests the emigrants saw themselves as exiles" resulted in the historical memory for this period being conditioned by "perception rather than reality."[62]

Studies of Canadian-Irish migration based on qualitative and quantitative data have successfully challenged the American images of exile, alienation, and uprootedness.[63] As O'Day points out, the "line of argument . . . [that] emphasizes the internal psyche of the Irish with a concomitant tendency to stress the ethnic cohesion of the group before assimilation takes root . . . shares the presumption that the Irish [in Ireland] were politicized, Anglophobic and unreservedly supported the aspiration for national self-government."[64] The tendency to homogenize the immigrant experience, according to Iacovetta, ignores that "like human behaviour generally, [it] is really many diverse experiences and responses; it is a social phenomenon shot through with a multiplicity of meaning that cannot adequately be captured by the dichotomy: agent versus victim."[65] The Irish settlement experience in Canada for any period needs to be located in the context of social and economic realities both in Ireland and the particular circumstances they encountered in the country of reception. For example, considering whether religion played a role in inhibiting social and economic advancement for the Irish in Canada, Bielenberg notes that "the Quebec Act of 1774 (confirmed in 1791) gave Catholics full civil rights" in Canada, which suggests that anti-Catholic discrimination was much worse in other parts of the world.[66]

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[61] McGowan, *Imperial,* 6.
[62] MacRaild, "Wherever Orange is Worn," 100; Reginald Byron's sociographic study of Irish diaspora in Albany, New York, argues that the Irish "were never confined to ethnic backgrounds and had high rates of residential mobility." He challenges the idea of the clusters of Irish ghetto settlement as representative of the Irish immigrant experience and notes these "views are questionable and exaggerate or misrepresent their characteristics and thus have tended to reinforce the essentializing myths and stereotypical images of popular belief." Byron also notes that between 55% to 61% of those descended from Irish immigrant ancestors are not Roman Catholic. Reginald Byron, *Irish America* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 16.
[63] Franca Iacovetta, *The Writing of English Canadian Immigrant History* ((Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association), 2.
[64] O'Day, "Imagined," 258.
[65] Iacovetta, *Writing,* 14.
[66] Bielenberg, "Irish," 226.

The diasporic lifeworlds of Irish female emigrants need to be reappraised within the broad contours of this historiography. As Akenson argues, Irish emigrants "were not passive jetsam, but rather were individuals who collected information, weighed alternatives, and then took journeys to various New Worlds."[67] This is particularly evident in respect to Irish female emigrants, who were not just pale shadows silently following in the footsteps of their male compatriots. Sociologist Breda Gray observed that in studies of Irish emigration, women are often represented as "passive rather than active participants in the migration process."[68] This perception has long conditioned the historiography of Irish female emigration. The central issues as to why so many women left Ireland, who they were, and why they decided to emigrate were diverse. However, their motives and goals have yet to be thoroughly investigated. Despite the flourishing of Irish diaspora studies and the study of women in the Irish diaspora, there is a serious lacuna in the history of Irish women in Canada, particularly for the twentieth century.[69] Traditional depictions of female migrants in the 1950s as "slips of girls, slipping away" is an inappropriate image to describe "the mysterious 'great unknown' of Irish emigrant history."[70] That high numbers of Irish females travelled on their own in the nineteenth century is an accepted fact in mainstream Irish historiography. However, the focus in Canadian studies has been on Irish female immigrants as domestic servants.[71] Travers states that patterns of Irish women emigrating alone and in greater numbers than women from other European countries continued into the twentieth century.[72]

A number of the women interviewed for this dissertation had professional qualifications, travelled on their own and spent their lives working in Canada. The varied social, class, and cultural backgrounds of these women influenced their decisions to emigrate and their subsequent

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[67] Akenson, *Diaspora,* 273.
[68] Breda Gray, "Gendering the Irish Diaspora: Questions of Enrichment, Hybridization and Return," *Women's Studies International Forum* 23, 2 (2000):170.
[69] Ellen McWilliams and Bronwen Walter, "New Perspectives on Women and the Irish Diaspora," *Irish Studies Review* 21, 1 (2013): 1.
[70] Ibid., 1.
[71] Studies in the United States and Canada on Irish migrants in domestic servants include: Hasia Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press. 1983); Janet Nolan, *Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland, 1885-1920* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1989); Marilyn Barber, *Immigrant Domestic Servants in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association. 1991); Lorna R. McLean and Marilyn Barber "In Search of Comfort and Independence: Irish Immigrant Domestic Servants Encounter the Courts, Jails, and Asylums in Nineteenth-Century Ontario" in *Sisters or Strangers? Immigrant, Ethnic, and Racialized Women in Canadian History*, eds. Marlene Epp, Franca Iacovetta and Frances Swyripa (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).
[72] Pauric Travers, "'There was nothing for me there': Irish Female Emigration, 1922-71," in *The Irish World Wide: History, Heritage, Identity. Volume Four: Irish Women and Irish Migration,* ed. Patrick O'Sullivan (London: Leicester University Press, 1995), 164.

public and private lives in Canada. Travers finds a correlation between higher education and the decision to leave. His research indicates that a high percentage of post-war Irish female immigrants were well educated with professional qualifications.[73] How did this effect the public and private behavior of women and men in the migration process? How did their roles as professional women impact their experience of migration? Sociologist Silvia Pedraza focuses on how ethnicity, class, and gender interact in the migration and settlement process. She notes that "a truly gendered understanding of the causes, processes, and consequences" of female migration will help to transform the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of migration studies.[74] Iacovetta notes the efficacy of employing frameworks of analysis that integrate "class/gender/race-ethnicity."[75] A study of women's roles in the private and public spheres can illuminate the diversity of their experiences. Nancy Cott posits that "[f]ar from diminishing or marginalizing women's history, gender history encompasses and amplifies it."[76] Historian Janet Nolan's examination of the links between women's education and social mobility builds on studies of Irish women's influence in shaping modern America.[77] However, Iacovetta contends that female professional immigrants have largely been ignored in Canadian scholarship.[78] This study attempts to redress this imbalance in a specific spatial and temporal setting.

Anthropologist Angèle Smith presents a thought-provoking hypothesis on the lack of studies on Irish women in Western Canada. She notes the paucity of studies of both Irish men and women in the history of British Columbia. Smith challenges the existing historiographical depiction of the Irish and argues that "it is more a product of colonial ideas about gender, class, religion and Irish identity than a 'true' representation of those Irish migrants that came to Canada."[79] Her analysis of the historical narrative of the Irish in Canada calls for a historical archeology that explores the processes that shape the "complexities and intersections of colonial

[73] Travers, 164.
[74] Silvia Pedraza, "Women and Migration: The Social Consequences of Gender," *Annual Review of Sociology* 17, 12 (1991): 304.
[75] Iacovetta, *Writing,* 1.
[76] Nancy F. Cott and Drew Gilpen Faust, "Recent Directions in Gender and Women's History," *OAH Magazine of History* 19, 2 (March, 2005): 4.
[77] Janet Nolan, *Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland, 1885-1920* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press. 1989); Janet Nolan, "Women's Place in the History of the Irish Diaspora: A Snapshot," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 28, 4 (Summer, 2009).
[78] Iacovetta, 7.
[79] Angèle Smith, "Fitting into a New Place: Irish Immigrant Experiences in Shaping a Canadian Landscape," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 8, 3 (September, 2004): 221.

identities."[80] Her call to recognize that colonialism is "racialized" and "genderized" and thus influences thinking and writing of emigration history is echoed by Iacovetta who insists on the recognition of the complexity of the history of Canada's immigrants and the varied contexts in which immigration history has been written. Iacovetta reiterates the challenge to develop more efficient tools to uncover "the ways in which the processes of racialization and ethnicization have influenced historical phenomena."[81] She calls for a more integrative approach to the study of immigrants:

> one in which the interconnections of class, gender, and race-ethnicity are considered not as fixed and immutable entities but as processes – processes that in some contexts might act in concert, mutually reinforcing each other, but at other times impose contradictory influences on women's and men's and girls' and boys' lives.[82]

A sense of identity is subjective and is a composite of many different layers. This thesis is based on a case study of a cohort who formed part of a complex wave of emigration from Ireland in the 1950s. The timing of their migration process, their background in Ireland and the geographic region where they chose to settle in Canada influenced how they shaped and were in turn shaped by Canadian culture and society. These immigrants came from different regions of Ireland and were by no means homogeneous. Defining ethnicity as a process of construction which is "grounded in real life context and social experience," historians Conzen et al. contend that "[h]istoricizing ethnicity implies an understanding of the ethnic group not as a thing, complete in itself and unchanging, but as a process that is characterized by the constant interaction of centripal and centrifugal forces."[83] Their argument that "[e]thnic groups in modern settings are constantly recreating themselves and ethnicity is continuously being invented in response to changing realities both with the group and the host society" is important to consider in any study of the evolution of an ethnic identity.[84]

Irish migrants in this case study translated their life experiences between three worlds: Ireland, Canada and their micro diasporic milieux. Their integrational strategies and lived experiences are atypical of other earlier emigration experiences from point of departure, point of

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[80] Smith, "Fitting," 228.
[81] Franca Iacovetta, "Manly Militants, Cohesive Communities, and Defiant Domestics: Writing about Immigrants in Canadian Historical Scholarship," *Labour / Le Travail* 36 (Fall, 1995): 218.
[82] Iacovetta, 22.
[83] Kathleen Neils Conzen et al., "The Invention of Ethnicity: A Perspective from the U.S.A," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12, 1 (Fall, 1992):10.
[84] Ibid., 5.

entry into Canada, and their subsequent life experiences in Canada. A wider theoretical lens that incorporates categories of analysis such as diaspora studies and space-place studies provides an opportunity to investigate diverse elements of their private and public lives. Debates on how variables such as class, gender, religion, ethnicity, age influence the roots and evolution of ethnic consciousness have "produced more nuanced articulations of these categories."[85] For example, Irish historian Mary Cullen has discussed the merits of using gender as a category of analysis and comments that "gender does not stand on its own as the only important analysis. It interacts with other factors such as class, colour, nationality, ethnic origin, political affiliation, religion, age, marital and parental situation and many more, in locating individuals or groups in their historical contexts."[86] The lives and identities of these Irish immigrants were shaped by the intersection of a matrix of relational and contingent forces. Iacovetta calls for "greater experimentation with diverse and challenging approaches" in future historical writing about Canada's immigrants.[87] She advocates for "more exchange between various historical sub-fields and different disciplines relating to immigrants."[88] A fresh approach that employs a conceptual and theoretical framework incorporating diaspora studies, space-place studies, and oral history highlights the significance of *roots* and *routes* as critical elements to convey the richly textured quality of these lifeworlds.

An interdisciplinary research model that incorporates diaspora studies as an analytical category provides an opportunity to explore the interplay of gender, ethnicity, and class in the creation of a specific multifaceted Irish diasporic space in the National Capital Region of Canada. There has been much debate and interpretative disagreement about the use of term diaspora in studies of Irish migration. Lee refers to the term diaspora as a "slippery concept," but notes that it could be useful if it is "rigorously conceptualized."[89] This conceptualization could mean "almost all things to all people" writes cultural theorist Phil Cohen, who describes the term diaspora as "one of the buzzwords of the postmodern age."[90] Akenson also refers to diaspora as "a very prickly cactus" arguing that it is an active term that can force a fresh examination of concepts of ethnicity

[85] Franca Iacovetta, "Post-Modern Ethnography, Historical Materialism, and Decentring the (Male) Authorial: Voice: A Feminist Conversation," *Histoire Sociale / Social History* 32, 64 (1999): 278.
[86] Mary Cullen, "History Women and History Men: The Politics of Women's History," in *The Irish Women's History Reader,* eds. Alan Hayes and Diane Urquhart (London: Routledge, 2001), 17.
[87] Iacovetta, "Manly," 219.
[88] Iacovetta, "Writing," 22.
[89] J. J. Lee, "The Irish Diaspora in the Nineteenth Century," in *Nineteenth-Century Ireland: A Guide to Recent Research,* eds., Laurence M. Geary and Margaret Kelleher, (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2005), 186.
[90] Phil Cohen, "Rethinking the Diasporama," *Patterns of Prejudice* 33, 1 (1999): 4.

and multiple cultural identities.[91] Sociologists Rogers Brubaker and Clare Alexander chart the use and proliferation of the meanings and linguistic formations of the term *diaspora* and its use in diaspora studies. They refer to the "extraordinary career of the term both inside and outside the academy" and challenge claims that diasporas are "entities [which they argue] is ethnic essentialism in a new form." They argue for more nuanced accounts of continuity and change in the phenomenon of migration.[92] Alexander reflects on the "semantic stretch" in the many usages of the term and considers the possibilities of building into diaspora theory a recognition that places of origin and points of arrival and settlement are "an integral part of the ongoing process of transformation that diaspora entails."[93] Alexander criticizes the lack of attention to historical and cultural specificities of migration and argues that any study of diaspora identities necessitates a recognition of and engagement with "a multiplicity of layers and spatial entanglements,"[94] or as will be argued here, *roots* and *routes*.

The idea of a diasporic identity consisting of multiple layers accumulated over time and space is directly relevant to this case study which investigates Irish cultural memory in one particular diasporic space in Ottawa. Expanding the concept of diaspora to incorporate diasporic space allows for a useful conceptual framework that can excavate the multiplicity of layers and spatial entanglements that are an integral part of the migration process. According to sociologist Mary Hickman, the lens of diasporic space is a useful tool to explore the heterogeneities and hybridities of the migrant experience. She argues that "diaspora space grounds analysis in the specific encounters and power-geometries of particular places and times."[95] This case study uses the concept of diasporic space as a tool to investigate the active and dynamic processes of identity formation. Used in this way, diasporic space is a concept that has the potential to be a heuristic device to prise open rigid categories and examine the processes of identity formation of a particular place and specific time. In her study of the social processes of identity formation and patterns of cultural flow, cultural theorist Ian Ang argues:

A diasporic perspective cracks open the nationalist narrative of seamless national

[91] Donald Harman Akenson, "Ever More 'Diaspora': Advances and Alarums," *Journal of Irish and Scottish Studies* 4. 1 (2010):13.
[92] Rogers Brubaker, "Revisiting 'The 'diaspora' diaspora," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, 9 (2017): 3.
[93] Claire Alexander, "Beyond the "The 'Diaspora' Diaspora": A Response to Rogers Brubaker," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, 9 (2017): 1550.
[94] Alexander, "Beyond," 1549.
[95] Mary J. Hickman, "Diaspora Space and National (Re)Formations" *Éire-Ireland* 47, 1-2 (Spring/Summer, 2012): 23.

> unity, highlighting the fact that nations today inevitably harbour populations with multiple pasts, bringing memories and identities into circulation that often transcend or undercut the homogenising image of nationhood and national heritage.[96]

Each stage of the migration process shapes the lives and the identities of individual migrants and is influenced by numerous factors: events and discourses that precede and spur the decision to migrate; the timing of the departure; where they landed and where they eventually settled. This study examines one Irish diasporic space in Ottawa and attempts to enhance our understanding of how layers of identity are shaped in response to discourses of the Irish diasporic experience. It builds on the concept developed by cultural theorist Stuart Hall that cultural identities are always in process and in constant formation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, Hall contends that cultural identities are "subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power."[97] Hall defines the diasporic experience:

> not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite difference; by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference.[98]

Identities, Hall contends, "are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past."[99] Each decision made by the migrants was consciously or unconsciously shaped by a complex interaction of personal circumstances, experiences, and cultural discourses. Identities are complex and shifting and shaped by what Hall calls "the shifting divisions and vicissitudes of our actual history." According to Hall "all discourse is placed."[100]

Akenson argues that the concept of diaspora is nothing new to historians of English-speaking Canada: "Rather it is a fresh use of tools we have already to hand – concepts of ethnicity, population movement . . . migration, social mobility, multiple cultural identities . . . nothing new but applied in a broader context."[101] Gray notes Akenson's recommendation for a rethinking of Irish migration as offering "the possibility of re-imagining belonging as a webbing with no centre

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[96] Ien Ang, "Unsettling the National: Heritage and Diaspora." in *Heritage, Memory & Identity,* eds. Helmut Anheier and Yudhishthir Isar (London: Sage, 2011), 86.
[97] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," in *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference,* ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990), 225.
[98] Hall, "Cultural,"235.
[99] Ibid., 225.
[100] Ibid., 223.
[101] Donald Harman Akenson, "The Historiography of English-Speaking Canada and the Concept of Diaspora: A Sceptical Appreciation," *Canadian Historical Review* 76, 3 (September, 1995): 385.

and multiple perspectives."[102] However, Gray stresses that diaspora can never be fully known or represented from only one location, or perspective. The term diaspora "identifies the lack of a theoretical language to account for the shifts in the economic, social, political and cultural imaginaries and practices that are currently underway" in diaspora studies.[103] O'Day describes a disconnect in the literature on Irish identity in Britain and proposes the term "mutative ethnicity . . . meaning an adaptive ethnicity that encompasses a persistence, rediscovery or layered form of Irishness among the diaspora."[104] Sociologist James McAuley also discusses the benefits of rethinking discourses of the Irish diaspora and, although urging caution, he points out that "diaspora as a heuristic device opens up new spaces within which the often emotive politics of transnational and transgenerational affiliation and belonging can be addressed."[105]

This conflation of transnational and transgenerational affiliations reflects a problem in historical discussion of the Irish diaspora identified by Akenson:

> It is crucial that our agreed vocabulary asserts that the *migrant generation* and the *entire ethnic group* are two different things. The migrants often are referred to as the *Irish-born* or, within the context of their new homeland, as *first-generation.* In contrast the entire ethnic group is a *multigenerational* phenomenon.[106]

The differences between first generation immigrants and subsequent generations has been discussed by historian Khachig Tölölyan who posits that the discourse of diaspora is a useful way to describe a range of dispersions and to "illuminate the complexity of identity in diasporic texts and individuals." Tölölyan distinguishes the first generation from subsequent generations: "diasporic identity matters . . . they bear the homeland's and nation's marks in body and speech and soul."[107] This difference is important when examining the cultural identity of any diasporic group. Past experiences shaped these migrants and play an integral part of who they are, even if it is not part of their everyday conscious awareness. Sociologist Paul Gilroy comments on the ambivalent feeling that "might be termed the inner dialectics of diaspora identification." Gilroy

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[102]Breda Gray,"The Irish Diaspora: Globalised Belongings(s)," *Irish Journal of Sociology* 11. 2 (2002): 133.
[103] Ibid., 135.
[104] Alan O'Day, "A Conundrum of Irish Diasporic Identity: Mutative Ethnicity," *Immigrants and Minorities* 27, 2/3 (2009): 327.
[105] James W. McAuley, "Editor's Introduction: Sociological Perspectives of the Irish Diaspora," *Irish Journal of Sociology* 11, 2 (2002): 6.; Breda Gray, "The Irish Diaspora: Globalised Belongings(s)," *Irish Journal of Sociology* 11. 2 (2002): 133.
[106] Akenson, *Diaspora,* 9.
[107] Khachig Tölölyan, "Rethinking Diaspora(s): Stateless Power in the Transnational Moment," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 5, 1 (Spring, 1996): 29.

cites a report documenting a trip to the Niger Valley in 1859. An explorer conveys the ambivalence of his sense of excitement and discovery, but also reveals his emotional reaction when he thinks about how far he is from home. "A feeling of regret that you left your native country for a strange one; and almost frantic desire to see friends and nativity."[108]

A central theme of Gilroy's work is the theory of identity as "double consciousness." The idea of the intercultural and transnational formation of diasporic identity as subjective, hybrid, and always unfinished introduces a different paradigm for thinking about Irish migration and the evolution of an ethnic consciousness, or identity. Gilroy's concept of the "black Atlantic" is a webbed network of cultural flows, exchanges which deal equally with the significance of both roots and routes, and challenges narrow definitions "in the name of rhizomorphic, routed, diaspora cultures."[109] This idea of developing a theoretical construct to explore the dynamics of a powerful transatlantic web of networks is further developed by sociologist Avtar Brah. She stresses that "theoretical constructs [such as post-colonial theory or diaspora theory] are best understood as constituting a *point of confluence and intersectionality* where insights emerging from these fields inhere in the production of analytical frames capable of addressing multiple, intersecting, axis of differentiation."[110] Brah's conception of "diaspora space" as "similarities and differences across the different axes of differentiation – class, race, gender, sexuality, and so on – articulate and disarticulate in the diaspora space, marking as well as being marked by the complex web of power."[111] Brah illustrates this idea of "cultural ensembles as British Asian-ness, British Carribbean-ness . . . cross-cutting rather than mutually exclusive configurations."[112]

Brah's analysis of diasporic identity as a process in constant formation is directly relevant to the study of an Irish diasporic space in Ottawa. These members of ISSGO are firmly rooted in Canada as parents, grandparents and members of intersecting networks, including ISSGO. Brah's concept of diasporic space can be applied to the diasporic space that is the ISSGO and the Canadian Irish-ness of the members of this group. Space and place play an integral role in their everyday lives. Geographer Doreen Massey argues that recognition of the multiplicities and contemporaneous heterogeneities of space can expand the historical narrative:

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[108] Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. 1993), 19.
[109] Gilroy, 28.
[110] Avtar Brah, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (London: Routledge, 1996), 207.
[111] Brah, 205.
[112] Brah, 205-206.

> to uproot 'space' from that constellation of concepts in which it has so unquestioningly so often been embedded (stasis; closure; representation) and to settle it among another set of ideas (heterogeneity; relationality; coevalness . . . liveliness indeed) where it releases a more challenging political landscape.[113]

Canadian geographer Edward Relph grew up in Wales. His initial research on the relationship between Canadian national identity and the landscapes of the Canadian Shield spurred his interest in the complexity of place attachment and senses of place in ordinary human life. Relph's seminal study is a phenomenology of place.[114] According to geographers David Seamon and Jacob Sowers, Relph's *Place and Placelessness* is a hallmark of phenomenology and demonstrates "a major strength of phenomenological insights [which] is the provision of a conceptual language that allows one to separate from taken-for-granted everyday experience – the *lifeworld* as it is called phenomenologically."[115] They note Relph's identification of the variety of spatial modes in everyday experience and his emphasis "that in reality these modes are not mutually exclusive but are all part and parcel of human spatial experience as it is a lived indivisible whole" is now established geographical methodology. They contend that Relph's most original contributions to the understanding of place are the modes of place experience he calls *existential insideness* and *existential outsideness,* where people feel deep, unself-conscious sense of ease and safety (insideness) or homesickness and alienation (outsideness).[116]

Seamon notes that Relph's use of phenomenology to develop a theoretical language to describe how place is an integral part of the human lived experience has been "used as a major conceptual mooring point by other researchers" including his own work. Seamon extends Relph's notion of insideness to examine what he calls "everyday environmental experience" of place attachment for the individual.[117] Geographer Anne Buttimer argues that a phenomenological approach to research on place attachment provides a language to explore and describe everyday human experience of place and space: "the preconsciously given aspects of behavior and

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[113] Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: Sage, 2005), 13.
[114] Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion, 1976).
[115] David Seamon David and Jacob Sowers, "Place and Placelessness, Edward Relph,"in *Key Tests in Human Geography,* eds. P. Hubbard, R. Kitchen, & G. Vallentine (London: Sage, 2008), 43-51.
[116] Ibid., 43-51.
[117] David Seamon, "Place, Attachment and Phenomenology: The Synergistic Dynamism of Place," in *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Research,* eds. Manzo, Lynne and Patrick Devine-Wright (New York: Routledge, 2013), 12 – 14.

perception residing in the 'lifeworld'."[118] Philosopher Ingrid Leman Stefanovic applauds the work of Relph, Seamon and other writers who have "taken the *philosophical* dimensions of phenomenology and *enlarged* those concepts through interdisciplinary dialogue." Furthermore, new interpretations of phenomenology have potential to enhance our understanding of the human experience in other fields:

> As a method, it serves to remind us of the significance of the full range of meaning of human experience, including taken-for-granted assumptions, values, and perceptions often forgotten in analytic frameworks. In attending to pre-thematic ways of being-in-the-world, phenomenology helps to comprehend human behavior in its fullness.[119]

How and why do people become attached to (and detached from) particular places? How do particular places have meaning in people's lives? To answer such questions, historical geographer Felix Driver and historian Raphael Samuel argue for a historical perspective that encourages a dialogue between historians, geographers, anthropologists, and other disciplines. Stressing the long history between the local and the global in the formation of place and space, they urge a "[r]e-thinking of the idea of place":

> Can we write local histories which acknowledge that places are not so much singular points as constellations, the product of all sorts of social relations which cut across particular locations in a multiplicity of ways? What ways of telling the story of places might be appropriate to such a perspective? How are we to reconcile radically different senses of place? Such questions arise not simply within projects of local history, but within all those varieties of writing concerned with places and their pasts.[120]

Such an interdisciplinary perspective informs this study of a diasporic space in Ottawa. Is there something that draws these people together? A phenomenological approach can shine a spotlight on that invisible thread of shared identity that runs unnoticed beneath the fabric of everyday life. Buttimer views different disciplines as "searchlights whose beams interpenetrate at various angles, and phenomenology as a more general illumination which seeks to unmask [human] experience."[121] Relph writes that phenomenological method is a not a means of analysis,

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[118] Anne Buttimer, "Grasping the Dynamism of Lifeworld." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 66. 2 (June, 1976): 277.
[119] Ingrid Leman Stefanovic,"Phenomenology, Philosophy, and Praxis," *Environmental & Architectural Phenomenology* 25, 3 (Fall, 2014): 40.
[120] F. Driver and R. Samuel, "Rethinking the Idea of Place," *History Workshop Journal* 39 (Spring, 1995): v.
[121] Ted Relph, Yi-Fu Tuan and Anne Buttimer, "Humanism, Phenomenology, and Geography," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 67, 1 (March, 1977): 181.

rather it "is a procedure for describing the everyday world of man's immediate experience, including its actions, memories, fantasies, and perceptions . . . [and] to recognize and describe the 'essences' of the thematic structures of perception associated with the particular phenomena being studied."[122] In this case, the historical phenomena being studied is the creation of Irish diasporic lifeworlds in Ottawa. Although most members of this group have been in Canada since the 1950s and belong to other family and community networks, they seldom miss an ISSGO meeting. These meetings have become part of their regular weekly routine. Buttimer suggests that an analysis of how preconscious "residue of former rhythms and routines" shape how humans adjust to a foreign world could explain "[t]he sense of well-being, health, and creativity [which] are not entirely explainable in rational terms. These positive experiences are related to the quality and pace of time-space rhythms of different physical and social milieux."[123] She labels the lifeworld as "the latent substratum of experience [and] [b]ehavior in space and time as the surface movement of icebergs, whose depths we can sense only vaguely."[124]

An examination of these immigrants' everyday lifeworlds could plumb these depths to explore how they adjusted to life in a foreign country. Expanding the theoretical framework to incorporate a phenomenological approach provides a language to describe the invisible essence of life that runs beneath the surface of everyday life. It is a way of thinking, as Relph explains "that enables us to see clearly something that is, in effect, right before our eyes yet somehow obscured from us – something so taken for granted that it is ignored or allowed to be disguised by a cloak of abstractions."[125] Seamon argues that phenomenological method illuminates "the variety of ways which men and women behave in and experience their everyday world [and examines if] there are particular patterns which transcend specific empirical contexts and point to the essential human condition."[126]

Philosopher Edward S. Casey considers how people make sense of the world around them: "the perceiver finds herself in the midst of an entire teeming place world rather than in a confusing

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[122] Edward Relph, "To see with the Soul of the Eye," *Landscape* 1 (1979): 193-194.
[123] Buttimer, "Grasping," 289.
[124] Ibid., 287.
[125] Edward Relph, "Geographical experiences and being-in-the world: The phenomenological origins of geography," in *Dwelling, Place and Environment: Towards a Phenomenology of Person and World,* David Seamon and Robert Mugerauer (Dordrecht: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1985), 16.
[126] Seamon, David, "Body-Subject, Time-Space Routines, and Place-Ballets," in *The Human Experience of Space and Place.* eds. Anne Buttimer and David Seamon (London: Croom Helm, 1980), 149.

kaleidoscope of free-floating sensory data . . . . Knowledge of place . . . is an ingredient of perception itself. . . To live is to live locally, and to know is first of all to know the place one is in."[127] Therefore, it is important to consider how Irish immigrants in Canada make sense of the world around them. If, place attachment is taken for granted and rootedness is pre-reflexive, how do Irish immigrants make sense of their place in the world? Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan says, the "state of rootedness is essentially subconscious: it means that a people have come to identify themselves with a particular locality, to feel that it is their home."[128] Tuan also considers how people make sense of places with which they are not familiar. He describes being lost in a dark wood. The moment individuals perceive a point of light, they can re-orient themselves and regain a sense of direction. He notes that the "human being, by his mere presence, imposes a schema on space. Most of the time he is not aware of it. He notes its absence when he is lost. He marks its presence on those ritual occasions that lift life above the ordinary and so force him to an awareness of life's values, including those manifest in space."[129] Anthropologist James Clifford reflects on this human ability to adjust to displacement. He says "[a]ll communities, even the most locally rooted . . . . have always been rooted and routed in particular landscapes, regional and interregional networks."[130] Clifford explains "diasporic cultural forms . . . involves dwelling, maintaining communities, having collective homes away from home. . . . Diaspora discourse articulates, or blends together roots *and* routes to construct. . . forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identifications outside the nationalist time/space in order to live inside, with a difference."[131]

The central question of how cultural identities are constructed and reinforced has been explored by Hall who stresses the subjective and human element in the ongoing and never complete process of identity formation. He says "all discourse is 'placed' and the heart has its reasons."[132] How then to capture the stories that lie in the heart? Relph argues that the concepts and methods of phenomenology are a way of understanding man on the human level and "provide

[127] Edward S. Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time," in *Senses of Place,* eds. Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press. 1996),18.
[128] Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 194
[129] Tuan, *Space,* 36-37.
[130] James Clifford, "Diasporas," *Cultural Anthropology* 9, 3 (1994): 309-310.
[131] Clifford, "Diasporas," 308.
[132] Hall, "Cultural," 223.

a means of exploring these different world-views without destroying their meaning and unity."[133] Relph quotes philosopher Michael Polyani: "Take a watch to pieces and examine, carefully, its separate parts and you will never come across the principle by which a watch keeps time."[134] Similarly, a sense of identity is a constantly shifting process that is an integral part of human life; therefore, examining one element does not give a picture of the whole. Shaped by his own experience as a migrant, Hall writes that he "was aware of the fact that identity is an invention from the very beginning, long before [he] understood any of this theoretically."[135] He considers the various stories that he invented over the years in response to the question: why are you here?

> Thinking about my own sense of identity, I realise that it has always depended on the fact of being a *migrant,* on the *difference* from the rest of you. . . . Identity is formed at the unstable point where the 'unspeakable' stories of subjectivity meet the narratives of history, of a culture.[136]

As a migrant himself, Hall argues that migrants tailor particular versions of their life stories to suit particular audiences. This raises the question of how to capture personal stories of the migration process—beyond the personal filtering imposed by immigrants themselves. Equally important is how the complexity of these stories reflect the power of memory to shape that process. bell hooks outlines the power of the past to shape the present—as "living memory shaping and informing the present."[137] Migrants' lives intersect, shape and are continually shaped by currents in the societies they encounter. It is not merely a matter of adding migrants' stories to Canadian post-war history. Historian Clair Wills discusses her difficulties in trying to write the history of Irish immigrants in post-war Britain:

> I quickly realized that to try to map the stories of immigrants against the established background of British politics and society was to miss something fundamental about migrant experience. Immigrants . . . differed in all sorts of ways but what they shared was the experience of belonging securely neither to the places they had left nor to the place they had chosen to make their home. It was not simply that they lived between two cultures but that they lived in a third space – a limbo of migrant culture.[138]

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[133] Edward Relph, "An Inquiry into the Relations between Phenomenology and Geography," *Canadian Geographer* xiv, 3 (1970): 198.
[134] Ibid., 198.
[135] Stuart Hall, "Minimal Selves," in *Identity: The Real Me; Post-Modernism and the Question of Identity,* eds. Homi Bhabha and Luisa Appignanesi (London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1987), 44.
[136] Ibid., 44.
[137] bell hooks, *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist: Thinking Black* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1989), 158
[138] Clair Wills, *Lovers and Strangers: An Immigrant History of Post-War Britain* (London, U.K.: Penguin Random House, 2017), xi.

Migrant culture, according to Wills "grew at the meeting point between the hopes, desires and strategies for survival of the immigrants themselves, and the opportunities available to them."[139] The members of the ISSGO have negotiated multiple challenges in carving out their lives in Canada. Referring to the history of Irish America, J. J. Lee notes that Irish America is the result of "many routes, some more scenic than others . . . of what is now a highly variegated ethnic experience."[140] Lee's urgent call to preserve the records and the memories of as many as possible of the elders in Irish American communities applies equally to the Irish in Canada.[141] This case study of the ISSGO attempts to understand the layered nature of Irish diasporic identity formation and the role of cultural memory in the lived reality of these lifeworlds. A thick descriptive mapping of their stories can only be conducted via an interdisciplinary approach that will explore the material, commemorative and imagined Irishness of their lives.

Oral history forms the core of this dissertation. As Alessandro Portelli makes clear, oral historians have developed a heightened awareness of interdisciplinarity because their source material is derived from people and "[h]uman beings do not belong to any one field of scholarly enquiry."[142] Portelli notes the value of oral history as "a *social* methodology based on *personal* accounts" and the interview as both a tool for research and the opening of a narrative space. He stresses the "difference between *testimony* and *narrative*: the oral history interview is always, ultimately, about the life and subjectivity of the interviewee."[143] This difference speaks directly to the human tendency discussed by Hall to relate the same story in numerous different ways. Portelli stresses that rather than "dismissing errors, myths, inventions, lies, dreams, visions, we [must] investigate their meaning and what they tell us about the narrator's world and about ourselves."[144] The oral history interview is about the past, but takes place in the present and relates subjective experience. Portelli contends that these narratives are "complex stratifications of meanings in time [which] illuminates further the distinction between *testimony* and *narrative*, between a story about events seen and witnessed and a story about oneself in relationship to these events."[145]

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[139] Ibid., xi.
[140] J. J. Lee, "Millennial Reflections on Irish-American History," *Radharc* 1 (November, 2000): 61.
[141] Ibid., 61.
[142] Alesandro Portelli, *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany: SUNY, 1991), xi.
[143] Alessandro Portelli, "Living Voices: The Oral History Interview as Dialogue and Experience," *The Oral History Review* 44, 2 (2018): 244.
[144] Portelli, "Living," 247.
[145] Portelli, "Living," 246.

Oral history has the potential to open up a narrative space that allows individual stories to emerge. Oral historians record stories to document people's lives. Stories told by people talking in the present about their pasts have been shaped by myriad events that have happened over the course of their lives. Oral historian Alistair Thomson considers the contribution which oral history has made to migration studies and highlights the overlap between the study of migration and the study of migrant and ethnic communities. This study of the ISSGO echoes his focus on studies of "migrations which have taken place within living memory, and in which the experiences of migration and of ethnic communities are equally important parts of the story"[146] Thomson argues that oral testimonies and life stories demonstrate the complexity of the migration process and how official policies and statistical patterns actually played out in the lives of individual migrants.[147] As historian Steven High posits, oral history "is interested in the relationship between what was and what is: placing change over time and memory at its interpretative center."[148]

The manner in which experiences shape memory; the relationship of memory to historical generalization; and how culture and individuality interact over time, "are the sort of questions that oral history is peculiarly, perhaps uniquely, able to penetrate" according to historian Michael Frisch.[149] Thomson argues that oral history explores the complex weave of factors that influence the migratory experience: "Personal testimony offers unique 'glimpses into the lived interior of migration processes.'"[150] Frisch writes that people are bearers of their own history and that of their culture. He claims that "oral history opens up a power perspective" and "permits us to track the elusive beats of consciousness and culture."[151]

These beats are often elusive because they pulse beneath the consciousness of everyday lives. Portelli considers the value of such stories that "lie hidden in secluded places, [they] are not in the books, but in people."[152] These stories are not just voices from the past:

> The heart of the oral history interview . . . is the relationship. The interview is *about* the past . . . but is *of* the present. . . . These are *living voices*, voices that speak *with* us *now*. They tell us about events in the past, but the telling

[146] Alistair Thomson, "Oral History and Migration Studies," *Oral History Society* 27, 1 (Spring, 1999): 26.
[147] Ibid., 26.
[148] Steven High, "Forward," in *Oral History Off the Record: An Ethnography of Practice*, eds. Anna Sheftel and Stacey Zembrzcyki (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013), xviii.
[149] Michael Frisch, "Oral History and Hard Times: A Review Essay," in *The Oral History Reader,* Second Edition, eds. Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (New York: Routledge, 2006), 33.
[150] Thomson, "Oral," 26.
[151] Ibid., 36.
[152] Portelli, *Luigi,* 50.

> and its forms are also a historical fact *in themselves* that reveals not only what happened in the past but also what it means today, and includes not only memory but also the *history of memory*, the ways in which the meaning of the past has been constructed over time in the subjectivity of the speakers.[153]

The stories that members of the ISSGO tell about their experiences of emigration are unique, complex and infused with multiple layers of meaning. Anthropologist Julie Cruikshank emphasizes the power of stories to translate distinctive cultural meanings to diverse audiences. She uses the metaphor of a palimpsest to describe the art of storytelling "that slow piling one on top of the other of thin, transparent layers which constitutes the most appropriate picture of the way in which the perfect narrative is revealed through the layers of a variety of retellings."[154]

However, as Portelli has pointed out, there is no such thing as a perfect narrative. The stories that people tell are multifaceted and cannot be pinned down in any single retelling. This is one of the strengths of the genre of oral history. According to Portelli "what makes oral history different . . . is that it tells us less about *events* than about their *meaning*. . . . the unique and precious element which oral sources force upon the historian . . . [is] not just what people did, but what they wanted to do, what they believed they were doing, and what they now think they did."[155] Awareness and analysis on how and why these stories are told are often as valuable to the oral historian as is the story itself.[156] Historian Joan Sangster described recounting a life story as "an effective means of peeling back the many layers of memory that characterize women's [and men's] multiple lives."[157] Aware of the subtle layers within memory, sociologist Paul Thompson considers memory to be a central issue in oral history. He notes that personal consciousness can be reshaped through "the complex intertwining and interpretation of different layers of collective memory."[158] Memories shape and define how people make sense of the past and present. The past "resonates in our voices, hovers over our silences" writes social scientist Vijay Agnew. She notes the central importance of memory of the past to diasporic memory: "[m]emories are the glue that hold the

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[153] Portelli, "Living," 245.
[154] Julie Cruikshank, *The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), xi.
[155] Portelli, *Luigi,* 50.
[156] Paul Thompson, *The Voice of the Past Oral History.* Third Edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 269.
[157] Joan Sangster, "Politics and Praxis in Canadian Working-Class Oral History, in Sheftel, *Off the Record.*
[158] Paul Thompson, "Community and Individual Memory: An Introduction," *The Oral History Review* 36, 2 (Summer – Fall, 2009), iv.

past and present together. They give shape and texture . . . to identities that are fragmented by immigration, displacement, and diasporic living."[159]

While memories are the glue that link the past and the present, oral history is an analytical tool to explore these memories. It can be a portal to access the meaning of the past in people's present-day lives. A life story told in the present provides clues to the rich multilayered texture of people's lives. This dissertation draws upon a number of sources including archival material; however, oral history forms the core of this case study.

Methodology

The genesis of this project came through my initial interaction with members of the ISSGO. Their reminiscences of leaving home to come to Canada struck a personal chord with me.[160] Many oral historians take on work that is close to their own life experiences.[161] For example, Daniel James writes in his study of Doña María Roldán that he had been drawn to her initially by "her articulateness and . . . well-tuned memory."[162] However, the one planned interview turned into hours of interviews over the nine-month period and her account was central to his study of the social and labor history of Berisso, Argentina.[163] I was drawn initially to one particular member of the ISSGO and intrigued by his stories of his early years in Canada. Tom Daly was born in Gurtroe, Co. Cork. A graduate of Mount Melleray College, Co. Waterford, Tom trained as a radio officer in Ireland and emigrated to Canada in March 1954 to work as an Air Traffic Controller at Dorval Airport, Montreal. A few months later, he travelled north to the Canadian artic and spent two years employed by the Canadian Marconi Company before returning to Montreal to work for CPR Telegraph. He met and married his Canadian wife Joan in Montreal in 1961. When I met Tom in Ottawa in 2009, he was enjoying an active retirement, which revolved around his six children, twenty grandchildren, and various club memberships including the ISSGO. A popular, gregarious man, who still spoke with a strong Irish accent, he and Joan seldom missed an ISSGO meeting. I was intrigued by the stories he told me of his time working in the Canadian north as part of the

[159] Vijay Agnew, ed., *Diaspora, Memory, and Identity: A Search for Home* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 17.
[160] I relocated from Cork city to Fogo Island, Newfoundland (population 5,000) in 1986; to Corner Brook, Newfoundland in 1988; and to Ottawa, Ontario in 1999.
[161] High, "Foreword," in Sheftel, *Off the Record,* xvii.
[162] Daniel James, *Donna Maria's Story: Life History, Memory and Political Identity* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 121.
[163] Ibid., 121.

crew who developed the DEW (Distant Early Warning) Line along the Arctic coast of North America.[164] He fondly recalled those years. Describing the Pine Tree Line on the 49th parallel, the mid-Canada line on the 55th parallel, and the DEW line in the Arctic Circle, Tom noted that it was an extraordinary experience and a long way from the small farm outside Youghal where he had spent his youth.

The opportunity to share stories was a key catalyst that attracted Tom Daly and other Irish seniors to join the ISSGO. I pledged to record his story, but he became ill before I had the opportunity. I realized that unless an effort was made to record these stories, many of them would disappear from the record. Folklorist Henry Glassie described his work as gathering "the texts they would have gathered themselves had they gotten the chance that I did."[165] This project gave me the opportunity to gather some of these memories and explore if they were indeed the glue that held together the past and the present for Irish seniors who had emigrated to Canada. Veteran newsman Studs Terkel shares his enthusiasm for unobtrusive and respectful listening as a central element of oral history: "'Listen . . . listen . . . listen . . . listen . . . . This person you're talking to is entrusting you with their memories and their hopes, their realities and their dreams. So remember that, handle them carefully, they're holding out to you fragile things."[166]

I began my study by interviewing a personal friend, Luke O'Brien, in Toronto in October 2013. At that time, I had planned to interview Irish-born seniors who had emigrated to Canada in the post-war period. I interviewed some members of ISSGO in the summer of 2014. When the ISSGO meetings resumed following their summer break, I requested permission from the group to be a participant observer at their weekly meetings. The group welcomed me to become a member and I began to attend their weekly meetings. Since then, I have joined them on various planned outings and helped them to organize a concert in April 2016 as part of the international commemoration of the centenary of the 1916 Easter Rising. This ethnographic experience gave me invaluable insight into the processes and meanings that sustain and motivate this social group. Defining ethnography as "a methodology whereby the researcher spends considerable time observing and interacting with a social group," geographer Steve Herbert argued that "no other

[164] The Canadian and American governments had cooperated in the 1950s to build three warning defence lines in response to the development of long-range nuclear weapons by the Soviet Union

[165] Henry Glassie, *Passing the Time in Ballymenone: Culture and History of an Ulster Community* (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995), xiii.

[166] Studs Terkel, with Tony Parker, "Interviewing an Interviewer," in Perks, *Oral History Reader,* 124.

methodology enables a researcher to explore the complex connections that social groups establish with one another and with the places they inhabit, cultivate, promote, defend, dominate and love."[167]

From the beginning all the members were aware that I was a Concordia PhD student in Irish Studies and Oral history. I presented my project to the ISSGO, I explained my motivations and clarified that I was interested in exploring the concept of cultural memory and identity. I was particularly interested in the concept of "Irishness" and whether such a thing as an Irish cultural identity existed. I received unanimous approval for my project. Several members volunteered to be interviewed. I subsequently conducted these interviews in their own homes. The methodology I used was a life story approach. Participants told their life stories as post-war immigrants in a neutral uninterrupted fashion that allowed them to shape and highlight the events or emotions they remembered on their own terms.

This project was conducted in compliance with the ethics clearance granted by Concordia's Human Research Ethics Committee and in compliance with Concordia University Policy for the Ethical Review of Research Involving Humans and the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. My research procedure was grounded in the ethical principles of informed consent, mitigation of harm, and the right of withdrawal. Before any interviews were undertaken, the nature of the project was explained to each participant and confidentiality was offered to those who wished it. The consent form for this project clearly stated that participants were free to discontinue the interview at any time. Two copies of this consent form were read aloud and signed before the interview by the participant and the interviewer. One copy of this signed consent form was given to the participant. The setting was in their own home and/or in their nursing home. I used an Olympus mini Digital Voice Recorder – WS-802. I demonstrated to each interviewer how the machine worked and following the signing of the consent form and with their permission, turned on the recorder and placed it close-by. The blinking light signified the recording process and both the interviewer and the interviewee were aware of the recorder. When the interview was interrupted by a phone call, I immediately turned it off and with the interviewee's permission turned it back on when the interview resumed. I was aware that some people are not comfortable being recorded and made an effort to ensure that each interviewee was at ease with the process.

[167] Steve Herbert, "For Ethnography," *Progress in Human Geography* 24, 4 (2002): 564.

Anthropologist Dennis Tedlock notes the challenges of translating the sounds, silences, the echoes of the voice of the storyteller, pitch, timing, and tone of voice into text.[168] Glassie discusses his own strategies of capturing how some storytellers use particular phrases such as "'Do ye know' as a way of punctuating chat, but within tales the tongue forms lines by flicking momentarily into stillness." He describes how his transcriptions are designed to make them look like they sound and argues that "the most important devise is leaving white space on the page to signal silence."[169] A number of my interviewees still retain their strong Irish accents. I related to Glassie's appreciation of the poetry of the voices that he recorded in Ballymenone and in my early drafts of this dissertation, I attempted to leave white space on the page to capture the rhythm of their dulcet tones. However, more orthodox disciplinary feedback suggested that I forgo this ethnographic strategy. I included all their personal verbal tics such as "so", "it is in my mind," however, the experience has given me a deeper appreciation of how each individual narrative is unique in myriad ways. My efforts to transcribe these narratives heightened my awareness of how each person's story is unique.

Although patterns emerged as to how individuals framed their narratives, they were not so much gender specific as shaped by the individual's personal experiences. I related to some of these experiences on a personal level because although I emigrated to Canada in the 1980s, my own cohort is part of what is now referred to as the 1980s wave of emigration. Living in a different country heightens awareness of the existence of different cultural perspectives. Tedlock contends that the "past comes to us encumbered with feeling and perceptions that derive from an individual's cultural experiences as well as from his unique engagement. Sometimes consciousness of cultural experience is articulated more often it lies buried deep within a stream of words and their accompanying gestures."[170] Therefore, it was important for me to consider how my insider/outsider status had an impact on this case study. In her analysis of the evolution of Britishness, historian Linda Colley writes that her study was shaped by her "own displacement, as [her] sense of national identity and ingrained cultural habits came under pressure from new surroundings and encounters."[171]

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[168] Dennis Tedlock, *The Spoken Word and the Work of Interpretation* (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press. 1983), 6.
[169] Glassie, *Ballymenone,* 40.
[170] Dennis Tedlock, "Poetic Narratives," in *Envelopes of Sound: The Art of Oral History,* Second Edition, ed. R. J. Grele (New York: Praeger, 1991), 8.
[171] Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), xiv.

Oral historian Valerie Yow suggests that awareness of the interview as an interactive process between the interviewer and narrator is now on the main stage of oral history and oral historians are very aware of how their personal dynamics impact the interview process. She notes how difficulties such as liking or not liking, being repelled by difference, or attracted by shared identity, influence the interview dynamic and analysis. She makes the important point of how important it is to set clear boundaries and to explain the purpose of the research to the interviewee before the interview.[172] Portelli emphasizes the interpersonal element of the relationship forged between the interviewer and narrator:

> The way I went into those homes defined how I walked out of them. I feel that unless one comes out of an interview changed from the way he entered it, one has been wasting time. The changes may be imperceptible, but they add up over the years, and make us who we are as individuals, not just as scholars or activists. . . . I hope . . . that by listening I have done something for [his interviewees] too.[173]

Thus, the interview is a personal encounter described by Portelli as "a historical and social event that creates a bivocal dialogical linguistic construct and wreaks significant changes both in the interviewer and the interviewee . . . . This is what oral history is ultimately about – it is a document that we do not find but rather co-create inside the interview, and that we read and interpret on many levels."[174] Oral history interviews reveal patterns and choices that Frisch maintains when "taken together, begin to define the reinforcing and screening apparatus of the general culture, and the ways in which it encourages us to digest experience." [175]According to High "life story interviews are an especially rich source for understanding the multiple layers of significance in people's lives."[176] The narrator is always the protagonist and the expert in the story of their own lives.[177]

Historian Ronald Grele's argues for recognition of the centrality of conversational dialogue in the oral interview process and the complex hidden levels of discourse that are "organized and informed by the historical perspectives of both participants." He posits that ideology is a learned pattern of behavior and, therefore, examining the interplay of ideology and various conceptions of

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[172] Valerie Yow, "Ethics and Interpersonal Relationships in Oral History Research," *Oral History Review* 22, 1 (1995): 51-66.
[173] Portelli, "Afterword," in Sheftel, *Off the Record,* 284.
[174] Portelli, "Voices," 247-248.
[175] Michael Frisch, *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990), 11.
[176] Steven High, "Sharing Authority in the Writing of Canadian History: The Case of Oral History," in *Contesting Clio's Craft,* eds. Christopher Dummitt and Michael Dawson (London: Institute for the Americas, 2009), 40.
[177] Portelli, "Voices," 246.

history is crucial to an understanding of the dynamics of a culture.[178] Grele highlights the notion of ideology as a socially constructed system of meaning that influences "the political field . . . within which the interview is embedded."[179] The interview is a collaborative relationship between both parties. The concept of shared authority in the interview process was introduced by Frisch in 1990 and has since been replaced by the more dynamic and process-oriented concept of sharing authority. However, an examination of how interviews are shaped by invisible power structures furthers our understanding of how individuals live their lives.

Stacey Zembrzycki and Anna Sheftel advocate for a holistic approach to oral history that insists on self-reflexivity and recognition of the influence of the interviewers' background and subjective position in the interview process.[180] Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu notes that while each conversational narrative in the field might seem unique, "it is the uncovering of the structures immanent in the precise form of words constituting an individual interaction that alone allows one to grasp the essentials of what makes up the *idiosyncrasy* of each . . . [person] and all the singular complexity of their actions and interactions . . . in terms of the invisible structures that organize [their lives]."[181] As this case study illustrates, there are many routes that can lead to a fuller understanding of those emigrants who left Ireland in the post-war period. This thesis deploys several methodologies to illuminate the layered identities of a small fragment of that diasporic cohort: the Irish Seniors Social Group of Ottawa in the NCR.

[178] Ronald J. Grele, "Movement Without Aim: Methodological and Theoretical Problems in Oral History," in Grele, *Envelopes*, 138.
[179] Grele, Ronald J. "History and the Languages of History in the Oral History interview: Who Answers Whose Questions and Why?" in *Interactive Oral History Interviewing,* eds. Eva M. McMahan and Kim Lacey Rogers (New York: Routledge, 1994), 14.
[180] Sheftel, Anna and Stacey Zembrzcyki, eds. *Oral History Off the Record: An Ethnography of Practice* (New York: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2013),
[181] Pierre Bourdieu, "Understanding" *Theory, Culture & Society* 13, 2 (1996): 22.

Chapter 2. Canadianism: The Right Kind of Emigrants

In the decades following the Second World War, Canada underwent major socioeconomic change. Industrial growth and technological advances combined to create a rapidly expanding workplace where there were not enough Canadians with professional qualifications to fill the demand.[1] An examination of the archival evidence clearly demonstrates that the government of Canada was more than eager to attract Irish immigrants, of a particular type, to fulfill the pressing need for manpower in post-war Canada. The strong performance of the post-war economy put pressure on the government to open up Canadian immigration policy. Examining the ramification of this policy, legal analysts Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock refer to this post-war immigration boom and suggest that "[l]arge-scale private investments in natural-resources and manufacturing sectors, and government investments in physical infrastructure and educational facilities, combined with pent-up consumer demand from the Depression and war years, fueled the boom."[2] Successive Canadian governments were eager to attract the "right kind" of immigrants - skilled professional men and women to fill the demand of rapidly expanding medical, technological and educational sectors. Canadian House of Commons debates frequently addressed issues of immigration, and elected officials were acutely aware of the financial advantages of importing highly skilled professionals.[3]

Young educated immigrants from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland proved to be exactly the "right kind" of immigrants needed by the expanding Canadian nation. In a 1964 House of Commons debate on immigration, politicians insisted that "not only better but quicker services be given to all those persons who plan to come to this country." Central to this argument was the point:

> There were over 100,000 professional people who entered Canada since the war. Of these, 20,000 were engineers . . .[6,000 doctors/ 18,000 nurses] think of the great contribution these immigrants made in dollars and cents to say nothing of their brain power. The cost of educating these [would be millions of dollars] . . . This is a gift . . . Think of what it

[1] Robert Bothwell, Robert, Ian Drummond and John English, *Canada Since 1945,* Revised Edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press. 1989); Kenneth Norrie and Douglas Owram, *A History of the Canadian Economy* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1991).
[2] Ninette Kelley and Michael Trebilcock, *The Making of the Mosaic: A History of Canadian Immigration Policy,* Second Edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2010), 311.
[3] Ibid., 311.

> would have cost us to have raised these young people from birth and then trained them to take their place in the world.[4]

Subsequent statistical analysis has bolstered Ontario Member of Parliament Philip Rynard's prescient remarks. According to a 1980 study by Statistics Canada: "of a total population of 21.6 million in 1971, 3.3 million or 15% were born outside Canada; over 1 million had arrived during the preceding decade and 1.3 million had settled during the postwar years, 1946-61."[5] A number of these immigrants were young Irish men and women who found themselves perfectly suited to contribute to this burgeoning economy. As Rynard observed, securing skilled workers to fill the demand of a rapidly advancing society was "a gift," which also saved Canada the cost of training these workers. This point is underscored by political scientist and Canadian immigration policy specialist Freda Hawkins who reports "[t]he great influx of professional and skilled immigrants to Canada in the post-war period has not only met essential manpower needs, but has also constituted an immense saving in national outlay on education and professional and vocational training. The cost of training the highly skilled is substantial and the full implication of this in relation to domestic policy must be remembered."[6] By 1961, Canadian economist Louis Parai wrote: "post-war immigrants accounted for one of every three architects, draughtsmen, mechanical engineers, and physical and occupational therapists at work in Canada. Post-war immigrants also accounted for one of every four civil and electrical engineers and physical scientists, and approximately one of every five chemical engineers, physicians and surgeons, and economists."[7]

A number of the cohort under study for this dissertation were trained professionals, but more importantly, they were a perfect match for the type of workers successive Canadian governments were eager to attract. In her analysis of total immigration movement to Canada in the post-war period, Hawkins references "a strong bias" in the movement from Europe that "has been partly spontaneous and partly the result of deliberate efforts on Canada's part." She stresses Canada's traditional first preference for immigration from the United Kingdom as well as the availability of large number of British immigrants throughout the post-war period.[8] Emigrants

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[4] Canada, *House of Commons Debates,* 14 August 1964 (Hon. P. B. Rynard, MP).
[5] Anthony H. Richmond and Warren E. Kalbach, *Factors in the Adjustment of Immigrants and their Descendants* (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, January 1980), 27.
[6] Freda Hawkins, *Canada and Immigration: Public Policy and Public Concern,* Second Edition (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 46.
[7] Louis Parai, *Immigration and Emigration of Professional and Skilled Manpower During the Post-War Period* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1965), 2.
[8] Ibid., 54-60.

from the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland were similarly qualified and available. Statistics for the 1946-1967 period [before the introduction of the new non-discriminatory immigration regulations in 1967] include numbers of immigrants to Canada from the Republic of Ireland. Hawkins refers to statistics from *Immigration Statistics,* Department of Citizenship and Immigration: "Major source countries of Canadian Immigration,1946-1967: Britain 827,567; Republic of Ireland 27,482 ;[N.I. included in the Britain stats]."[9] Canadian House of Commons debates frequently referred to the subject of immigration and elected officials clearly stated "deliberate preference [towards] immigrants from countries with political and social institutions similar to our own."[10] According to statistician Anthony Richmond, this preferential policy was supported by both Liberal and Conservative parties in Canada:

> One of the cardinal assumptions underlying Canadian immigration policy in the post-war period was that British immigrants would be more readily absorbed than those from other countries. Extra efforts were made to encourage immigrants from the United Kingdom. There were fewer formalities, speedier procedures for obtaining visas, a larger number of immigration offices and officials in Britain, and a more active promotional campaign there than anywhere else in the world.[11]

Prior to 1947, individuals born in Canada and naturalized immigrants were classified as British subjects; Canadian immigration regulations also provided for the admission to Canada "of British subjects born or naturalized in the Irish Free State, entering Canada either directly or indirectly therefrom."[12]

Canadian immigration policy was administered and overseen by the Canadian civil service. External affairs officer John Holmes described the early post-war years in the Canadian civil service as "a cantankerous and frustrating period . . .[wherein] the spirit of wartime community was draining rapidly."[13] He observes that Canadian government immigration policy was forged in an atmosphere fraught with tension as bitter memories of the depression before the war shaped the attitudes of politicians: "conservatism of cabinet on population policies . . insensitivity to the plight

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[9] Ibid., 54. Table 6. 1970 Immigration Stats: Rep of Ireland 1946-1955 10,102 ; 1956-1967 17,380 ; 1968 1,545 ; 1969 1,235; Britain 1946-1955 358,681 ; 1956-1967 468,886 ; 1968 37,889 ; 1969 31,997.
[10] Ibid, 3.
[11] Richmond and Kalbach, 4.
[12] Letter to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, from A. L. Jolliffe, Dominion Immigration Agent, Ottawa, August 7, 1944, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.
[13] John W. Holmes, *The Shaping of Peace: Canada and the Search for World Order 1943-1957.* Vol. 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979), 89.

of refugees . . . archaic immigration regulations [and]. . . racism clearly evident in practice."[14] Canada was experiencing an influx of emigrants and debate raged as to who should qualify for entry. For example, Holmes describes the selection of refugees who were allowed to enter Canada in 1946: "it was assumed, [they] would be selected like good beef cattle with a preference for strong young men who could do manual labour and would not be encumbered by aging relatives."[15] Prime Minister MacKenzie King attempted to placate both supporters and opponents of immigration in his May 1, 1947 speech to the House of Commons pledging to only accept a certain type of immigrant. King explicitly stated: "The government will seek by legislation, regulation and vigorous administration, to ensure the careful selection [of immigrants]. . . It is not a 'fundamental human right' of any alien to enter Canada. It is a privilege."[16] Canadian officials expressed a preference for immigrants from the British Isles and Northern Europe and Irish men and women fitted into this category.

In her examination of the construction of Canadian national identity, anthropologist Eva Mackey argues that it is important to understand the process of identity formation in terms of culture, difference and power wherein 'whiteness' and other categories such as heterosexuality and masculinity are viewed as normative and therefore remain unmarked and excluded from analysis. She insists that it is "only through problematizing dominant categories [and discourses] – which are often invisible and yet powerfully normative – that we can begin to understand how they are invented and reproduced."[17] Highlighting how Irish migrants have often been rendered invisible because of the specific political context in which they have moved, historian Bronwen Walter insists that "[d]iasporas must be seen as a product and constituent of international capitalism, which has been the process underlying the large-scale demand for Irish women and men as labour migrants in North America and Britain for two centuries. Irish diaspora must be also be [sic] positioned within British imperialism, re-attaching it to the colonial enterprise from which it is often separated by the black/white binary."[18] Walters argues that "the absence of migrant Irish women [and men] from public discourse has been matched by a resounding silence in academic

[14] Ibid., 94.
[15] Ibid., 94.
[16] Canada, *House of Commons Debates* 1 May 1947.
[17] Eva Mackey, *House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* (London: Routledge, 1998), 17.
[18] Bronwen Walter, *Outsiders inside: Whiteness, Place and Irish Women* (London: Routledge, 2001), 8.

study."[19] Her argument that the white/black binary is a "product of modernist and colonialist discourse which focuses on the 'other' and categorises itself as a neutral; 'same'" is important to bear in mind in any examination of the impact of Canadian government immigration policy on migration from Ireland.[20]

Twentieth century emigration from Ireland to Canada was not a new phenomenon. The Canadian High Commission was established in Dublin on 28 December 1929 and sent regular detailed reports to Ottawa. The Canadian Department of External Affairs in Ottawa was particularly interested in any attempts by the Government of Éire to control emigration from Ireland.[21] In July 1944, the Canadian High Commission in Dublin reported that they had been receiving a higher than usual number of enquiries from "young Irishmen, as to how they might emigrate to Canada." They requested clarification of immigration regulations pertaining to Irish emigration from the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs in Ottawa.[22] At this point, Canadian immigration policy was tightly managed and strictly controlled by the Privy Council Office, the senior central agency in the Canadian government.

This office was an integral part of a highly influential civil service overseen by a small powerful group of civil servants in Ottawa. Historian J. L. Granatstein refers to these civil servants as the "Ottawa Men." He writes that these Canadian civil servants were known as "the mandarins. . . . From the 1930s to the 1950s . . . . [these mandarins] operated almost anonymously within a tight and private little world."[23] Granatstein states:

> [the] men who staffed the Department of External Affairs, Department of Finance, Bank of Canada, Privy Council Office/Prime Minister's Office, Department of Trade and Commerce had a tremendous influence on government policy. . . . In a momentous twenty-year period that encompassed the Depression, the Second World War, and the Cold War, the Ottawa Men had to face the challenge of creating a governmental structure, a foreign policy,

[19] Ibid., 1.
[20] Ibid., 5-6.
[21] For example: a flurry of detailed reports outlining the Irish "Government's scheme to control emigration from Ireland . . . announced on October 24th, 1941." Another attempt to regulate emigration warranted detailed reports to Ottawa: "Government of Eire . . . measures to ensure that there will be a sufficient number of workers in the country to meet the agricultural and turf industries' needs during the 'peak' employment periods . . . announced on the 3rd November, 1942." Report to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, from Office of the High Commissioner for Canada, Dublin, November 15, 1942, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.
[22] Letter to A.L. Joliffe, Ottawa, from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, July 26, 1944, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.
[23] J. L. Granatstein, *The Ottawa Men: The Civil Service Mandarins 1935-1957* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 2.

and an international monetary policy for a country that had never had them.[24]

In the post-war period, these civil servants developed and implemented an immigration policy that favoured and facilitated immigration from the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. Granatstein comments that they were a select group who worked and socialized in close proximity to each other. He notes: "most of the key officials had offices in the East block [of Parliament]. The Prime Minister, the Clerk of the Privy Council, and the Under-Secretary for External Affairs all had their offices there, and the Cabinet met there."[25] Political Scientist Reg Whitaker explores what he calls the secret history of Canadian immigration and describes the Security Panel that was created in Ottawa in 1946 as highly secretive and tightly managed. Canada had always carefully controlled immigration policy; however, Whitaker emphasizes that what was different about the post-war era was "the ideological criteria for admission of immigrants happened to exclude certain national groups, while allowing others to enter, creating a new inequality of selection: not overtly discriminatory, but objectively so." The most important point that Whitaker makes is "[a]ll this was effected by an administrative process carefully wrapped in an impenetrable fog of secrecy and assisted by procedures that were highly authoritarian and arbitrary."[26]

Iacovetta also emphasizes this "impenetrable fog of secrecy." She refers to these civil servants as gatekeepers. In her study of post-war immigration to Canada, she examines the complexities at play as Canada dealt with mass immigration and a shift from war to peacetime. She draws attention to the powerful role that these civil servants played in shaping Canada's post-war immigration policy and argues that neither Canadian immigration historians "nor many social and gender historians have fully appreciated, perhaps, the profound impact of Cold War anxieties and ideology on Canadian reception and citizenship efforts and, moreover, on how gatekeeper/newcomer relations and campaigns had an impact on the making of a decidedly more ethnic but Cold War nation."[27] Both Whitaker and Iacovetta argue, post-war immigration to Canada was carefully screened and regulated and preferential treatment was given to certain groups. Iacovetta calls for "more rigorous analyses of racialized discourses . . . to enlarge the parameters of what constitutes immigrant history . . .[and] that do not affirm immigrant status as

[24] Ibid., xi.
[25] Ibid., 11.
[26] Reg Whitaker, *Double Standard: The Secret History of Canadian Immigration* (Toronto: Lester & Orpen Dennys Limited, 1987), 22.
[27] Franca Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2006), 14-15.

othered."[28] Post-war Canadian immigration policy reflected the government's cautious tightly controlled approach. Whitaker emphasizes that following "extensive public hearings, a Senate committee on immigration and labour concluded on an optimistic note urging a 'sustained policy of immigration' based upon the 'absorptive capacity' of the Canadian economy and society."[29]

The post-war Irish immigrants interviewed for this dissertation were ideal candidates for this expanding Canadian economy. A series of Canadian government reports in July 1945 demonstrates how Canadian Department of External Affairs monitored any changes in citizenship legislation by the governments of Éire and the United Kingdom to ensure that Irish immigration to Canada would not be hindered by over-complicated regulations.[30] Prior to 1935, Irish nationals were admitted to Canada as British subjects. On 7 February 1934, the Irish government officially notified all Commonwealth countries, including Canada, of their intention to introduce a "Bill to regulate the acquisition and loss of Irish nationality and to make provision for the subject of Irish nationality generally." On 27 August 1934, the Irish government sent the Canadian government a copy of the Bill as introduced. Although this would have a direct impact on how Irish nationals were legally defined, the Canadian government did not implement any official changes to immigration policy. The Canadian government report states that "There was at no time any Commonwealth 'consultation' on the matter."[31] Despite this reference to no official Commonwealth 'consultation', the Canadian government did have details of some Irish government correspondence with United Kingdom officials.

For example, a Canadian government report outlines that the principles of common status had been discussed by both the United Kingdom government and the Irish government and quotes an Irish government letter sent to the UK government on 23 August 1934 regarding common status: "Suitable and adequate provision is made in the Bill for the granting of privileges in Saorstat Eireann [sic] to the nationals of other states on the basis of reciprocity."[32] However, the Canadian report clarifies that such provisions would be complicated in Canada by federal and provincial regulations. Therefore, when the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act was enacted in 1935, Canadian government officials did not take any legal stance on the issue and citizens of Saorstát

[28] Iacovetta, *Writing,* 22.
[29] Whitaker, *Double*, 14
[30] Canadian Government Reports, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, RG 76, Vol. 876, File 560-2-541.
[31] Ibid.
[32] Ibid.

Éireann continued to be admitted to Canada as "British subjects." Canadian officials had carefully negotiated difficulties presented by this new citizenship legislation, by simply refraining from introducing any "legal action to provide that Irish citizens are not British subjects."[33] As of July 1944, Canadian regulations provided for the admission to Canada "of British subjects born or naturalized in the Irish Free State, entering Canada either directly or indirectly therefrom."[34]

The question of the legal status of Irish nationals in Canada was discussed at a meeting on nationality held in the Department of External Affairs, Ottawa on 11 July 1945. Clarification of the status of Irish-born immigrants was discussed and an in-depth analysis of the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act, 1935 was ordered. The resulting detailed analytic report by Canadian Department of External Affairs on the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act, 1935 concluded:

> There would appear to have been two related purposes behind the Irish Nationality and Citizenship Act, 1935: (a) To define Irish citizens for purposes of immigration, national status, civil rights, etc; and (b) To remove from 'Irish citizens' the status of British subject. . . . So far as the effect of the Irish Act is concerned, it may be noted that we have not, in Canada, acquiesced in the view or taken the necessary legal action to provide that Irish citizens are not British subjects.[35]

This Canadian policy of not taking any legal action on the regulation or status of Irish citizens is important to note. Canadian immigration policy favoring immigrants from the British Isles was supported by both Liberal and Conservative parties in Canada. There were fewer formalities and a more active promotional campaign encouraging immigrants from Britain than from any other part of the world. Canadian officials considered immigrants born in the Irish Free State as desirable and were cautious to introduce any legal action to hamper Irish citizens emigrating to Canada. Although the Canadian government had been officially notified of changes to Irish citizenship in 1934, as of July 1945, no legal action had been taken to alter the status of Irish immigrants entering Canada. The July 1945 report, which was distributed by the Department of External Affairs, marked "Immediate – By Hand," underscored this legal point and drew particular attention to the fact that when the details of the Bill were received from the Irish government on 27 August 1934 "we made no comments on the Bill and received no further information."[36]

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[33] Canadian Government Reports, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, RG 76, Vol. 876, File 560-2-541.
[34] Letter to A.L. Joliffe, from Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, July 26, 1944, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.
[35] Canadian Government Reports, Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, RG 76, Vol. 876, File 560-2-541.
[36] Ibid.

The Canadian civil service decision to avoid taking any legal action on the exact status of Irish citizens under Canadian law ensured that Irish emigrants could continue, as of 1945, to enter Canada under current regulations. The pertinent point highlighted in this July 1945 report to the Canadian government was that no legal action had been taken on the matter of the status of Irish citizens under Canadian law. This ensured that Irish citizens would continue to have the same ease of access accorded to British subjects. The Canadian Department of External Affairs continued to balance the high demand for immigrants who fulfilled the criteria approved by the House of Commons with any new legislation in Britain and Ireland. The policy of avoiding taking any legal stance on the issue of the status of immigrants from Ireland continued. On 1 January 1947, the Canadian Citizenship Act established Canadian citizenship as a distinct category. Those eligible for Canadian citizenship included "British subjects by reason of birth or naturalization in Canada, Great Britain or Northern Ireland, the Irish Free State, Newfoundland, New Zealand, Australia, or the Union of South Africa."[37]

On 14 July 1948, W.F.A. Turgeon, Canadian High Commissioner in Dublin warned Ottawa of the potential impact new British legislation (being proposed following the London Conference of February 1947) could have on Irish emigration to Canada.[38] Turgeon's despatch notes that the British Nationality Bill presently under discussion by the British Parliament included information stating that "under the present state of British law all citizens of Eire [sic] are assumed to be British subjects." Turgeon stressed the importance of Ottawa being aware that "both the de Valera government and the present Costello government have protested against this assumption." Turgeon reported that he felt compelled to draw attention to these "facts because of the effect which the Irish attitude and the British legislation now under way and which will probably become law may have on our practice [of facilitating Irish emigration]." Turgeon also advised caution in drawing any untoward attention to Canadian efforts to encourage emigration from Ireland.[39]

A copy of this despatch was sent to the Canadian High Commissioner in London for examination and comment. Turgeon served as Canadian High Commissioner in Dublin from 1946 to 1949 and as Canadian Ambassador to Ireland from 1950 to 1955. Throughout this period, the

[37] Circular B.62, May 13, 1947, "enclosing P.C. 1734 of May 1, 1947 on immigration, proviso of Clause I," RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[38] W.F.A. Turgeon served as Canadian High Commissioner to the Irish Free State from October 24, 1946 to June 30, 1949 and as Canadian Ambassador to Ireland from January 23, 1950 to April 20, 1955.
[39] Report to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, from A.F.A. Turgeon, High Commissioner for Canada in Ireland, July 14, 1948, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.

Department of External Affairs in Ottawa relied on him for advice on how to encourage emigration from Ireland while remaining sensitive to the fact that the Irish government was "not enthusiastic about emigration schemes."[40] Officials in Ottawa pondered "the propriety and utility of increasing the small amount of advertising that is now being done in Eire [sic]. . . [noting] a very favourable response has been received to the small amount of advertising that has already been done."[41] Turgeon advised them to be wary of publicity which might adversely impact current emigration to Canada. Despatches from Turgeon to Ottawa recount statistics of high emigration from Ireland. For example, in "1946, fourteen thousand females under the age of 24 years left for employment outside Ireland." In Turgeon's opinion, the success of Irish government propaganda campaigns to discourage emigration were doubtful "to judge by the remarks of persons who visit this office, people here are inclined to put more reliance on what they read in letters from friends . . . than they are in the inspired warnings of the 'Irish Press' [sic]."[42]

Throughout the post-war period, Canadian government officials in Ireland continued to facilitate emigration to Canada, while remaining aware that these efforts should not attract public attention. Swift reaction to publicity highlighting Canadian efforts to encourage emigration from Ireland in the summer of 1948 shows the lengths they were willing to go to avoid drawing attention to the high numbers of Irish emigrating to Canada. The *Irish Independent* reported:

> [a Canadian] campaign to secure British and Irish emigrants has revealed a higher ratio of applications . . . from Irish men and their families than from British sources. . . . It is anticipated that a flow from two to three thousand emigrants a month could be carried to Canada towards the end of this year. Emigrants from Ireland will travel to Canada via Liverpool and provision will be made for a number to be flown direct from Shannon Airport.[43]

This newspaper report coincided with a series of advertisements in several Irish newspapers by Canadian government Air Charter Service declaring: "Air passage to Canada, at a specially reduced fare . . . . Information can also be obtained from The High Commissioner for Canada, 92, Merrion Square, Dublin."[44] By further coincidence, these advertisements were published at the same time as Irish newspapers were reporting that Dr. Hugh Keenleyside, Canada's Minister of

[40] Ibid.
[41] Letter from H. L. Keenleyside to W.F.A. Turgeon, July 15, 1948, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16
[42] Despatch No.140. W.F.A. Turgeon to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, October 13, 1947, RG 26, Vol.170, File 3-33-16.
[43] *Irish Independent,* July 16, 1948.
[44] *The Irish Times,* July 21, 1948; *Sunday Independent,* July 25, 1948.

Immigration, was planning a visit to Dublin as part of his present continental tour. One Irish newspaper quoted Keenleyside's comment on the "tremendous interest [in emigration to Canada and] the surprisingly large response to his Government's appeal for Irish emigrants."[45] Turgeon immediately reacted to this unwelcome publicity and sent a detailed "confidential" letter to be delivered [by hand] to Dr. Keenleyside immediately upon his return "to London from the Continent on July 28th." In this letter, Turgeon recommended that Keenleyside should not come to Dublin because the publicity also "happened to coincide with the setting up, by the Irish government, of a Commission on Emigration [sic]. . . the subject [of emigration] was in the public mind: [the advertisements] therefore attracted public attention and a number of protests."[46]

Turgeon insisted that it was vital that Keenleyside be made aware of the publicity surrounding his proposed visit to Dublin, and of the recent advertisements in the Dublin newspapers, immediately upon his return to London. He stressed that attracting public attention would be detrimental to their work to promote emigration from Ireland and explained that any publicity would put the Canadian Mission in Dublin in a delicate position with the Irish government. Turgeon complained that he had not been consulted about the advertisements. He elucidated that "the Government of Eire [sic] and, in fact, all the political parties in the country, are very earnestly opposed to emigration." Turgeon also quoted a recent statement by John A. Costello, Irish prime minister, wherein Costello compared the emigration which "has been steadily sapping the 'life-blood of the nation, [with] the insidious scourge of tuberculosis [and committed his government] . . . to the alleviation and to the ultimate eradication of these two evils." Turgeon explained: "Eire [sic] is one of the countries which least requires advertising to induce its citizens to go abroad . . . young Irishmen look upon emigration . . . as almost a natural thing." He added that judging from "the constant stream of enquiries made at this office . . . prospective emigrants have Canada well in mind." Turgeon informed Keenleyside that he had met privately with Mr. F. H. Boland, secretary (deputy minister) of the Irish Department of External Affairs and had assured him that Keenleyside's visit to Dublin "would be rather on a personal visit with the idea of seeking information, and not at all of launching a campaign for taking Irishmen out of the country."[47]

[45] *Irish Independent,* July 16, 1948.
[46] Confidential Memorandum, "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[47] Confidential letter, Turgeon to Keenleyside, July 26, 1948, RG 26, Vol 170, File 3-33-16.

The Department of Trade and Commerce in Ottawa reacted swiftly to curtail the series of Air Charter advertising in Ireland. In a "Personal and Confidential" letter to the head of Air Charter Service in London, Canadian official, H. L. E. Priestman complained of the adverse effects of this series of advertising. He stressed that their Dublin office should not be nominated: "as an Emigration [sic] channel. . . . this is adverse to our commercial interests at this time when we are fully engaged in endeavouring to have the Eire [sic] government purchase heavily from Canada its needs that may be financed under the Marshall Plan. . . . my Dublin office should not be used in connection with the Emigration scheme, nor should its address be mentioned in any literature or advertising connected therewith. [he also noted in this letter that] the whole subject is under discussion between Hon. Mr. Turgeon . . . and Mr. H. L. Keenleyside."[48] These warnings did not go unheeded. On 28 July 1948 Keenleyside issued a memo titled "Emigration from Ireland," in which he wrote:

> in view of the considerations outlined in Mr. Turgeon's letter . . . . I have decided not to visit Dublin at this time. I am afraid that if I were to appear in the Irish capital . . . my visit could not be kept out of the newspapers. I would immediately be asked questions about emigration which would be embarrassing to answer. . . I have decided to omit Dublin from my itinerary. . . Mr. Turgeon . . . may come to London to see me next week. This would be a much safer and less conspicuous arrangement.[49]

Although Keenleyside decided to avoid visiting Dublin, he continued to remain in close contact with Turgeon who insisted that "we should not appear to be prosecuting an immigration campaign in Eire [sic]. . . [Turgeon again noted that there was no shortage of Irish people willing to emigrate to Canada and gave the example of] last year [1947] more than three thousand people from Eire [sic] became Canadian immigrants." In this letter, Turgeon suggested that there was a possibility of finding another avenue to promote emigration from Ireland to Canada. Enclosing details on how the British Department of Labour were dealing with emigration from Ireland, he wrote that they have: "a man here who attends to the handling of the cases of Irish working people who wish to secure employment of different sorts in England. This official does no advertising, and his office is not in the same building as the British Representative. In fact, he carries on his work so quietly, that although I have been here well over a year, I never heard of him until I made

[48] 'Personal and Confidential' letter from Priestman to F.W. Taylor, Air Charter Service, London, July 26, 1948, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.
[49] Memorandum "Emigration from Ireland" H. L. Keenleyside, July 29, 1948, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.

inquiries a few days ago. I think you might consider the advisability of having a Canadian official here who would carry on his work in about this same quiet way."[50] Turgeon noted that this British emigration officer successfully recruited workers without drawing undue attention and it would be possible to set up a Canadian official in a similar manner.[51] He suggested that Keenleyside, on his return to Ottawa, "might have a discussion with Mr. Pearson about this whole question."[52]

Throughout this period, Keenleyside maintained a close personal correspondence with John J. Hearne, High Commissioner for Ireland in Ottawa. Keenleyside was part of the group Granatstein has referred to as the "Ottawa Men." Correspondence with Hearne suggests that the Irish High Commissioner in Ottawa was occasionally admitted into their social circle. On 28 July 1948 Hearne had formally announced that the Irish Taoiseach, Mr. Costello: "will pay a three week visit to Canada . . . while in Ottawa he will be the guest of the Federal government from September 4th to September 10th".[53] Hearne had discovered that Keenleyside proposed to include Ireland as part of his overseas tour and had written remind him of his promise to visit Dublin and assured him of his welcome there. In his letter, Hearne stressed the close personal connections and wrote: "I have informed Mr. Costello of your friendship for us since we came to Canada. I had already told him that the invitations which the Canadian Clubs have issued to him for September [1948] were arranged by you as Chairman of the Association of Canadian Clubs."[54]

This personal letter presumably added to the tensions surrounding Keenleyside's proposed visit to Dublin because, although couched in friendly and personal terms, meeting with Costello would add an official element to the trip. In fact, Keenleyside mentioned Hearne's involvement as one of the reasons for cancelling the trip. Citing his rationale, he noted that he had decided to cancel "in view also of the rather excessive steps taken by Mr. John Hearne . . . and if I were to call on the Foreign Minister and Prime Minister as Mr. Hearne suggested, the fact of my visit could not be kept out of the newspapers."[55] Maintaining cordial diplomatic relations with the Irish government did not interfere with Canadian plans to continue to recruit Irish immigrants. Keenleyside reported to Ottawa that although he had made plans to visit Éire and Northern Ireland

[50] Confidential letter, from Turgeon to Keenleyside, August 4, 1948, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.
[51] An article, "Labour Liaison Office to Close," *Irish Independent,* October 1, 1954, notes: "British liaison officers continued to operate in Ireland for almost a decade after the end of the war despite a stream of Irish protests. This appointment remained controversial in Ireland. . . . the liaison office finally closed in 1954.
[52] Confidential letter, from Turgeon to Keenleyside, August 4, 1948, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.
[53] *The Irish Times,* July 28, 1948.
[54] Letter from John J. Hearne to Dr. H. L. Keenleyside, July 24, 1948, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.
[55] Memorandum "Emigration from Ireland," H. L. Keenleyside, July 29, 1948, RG 26, Vol. 170. File 3-33-16.

to "look into certain problems affecting the movement of immigrants to Canada, I gave this up, because it became apparent that such a visit would attract attention in Dublin, and might lead to complications with the Government of Eire [sic] which is doing everything it can to discourage emigration from its territory."[56]

On 7 September 1948, during this official visit to Ottawa, Canada, Irish Taoiseach John A. Costello announced his intention to repeal Éire's External Relations Act.[57] The declaration of the Republic of Ireland in 1948 added another complication to Canadian government plans to secure Irish emigrants for Canada. Despite the declaration of the Republic of Ireland, Canadian government officials did not take legal action to change Canadian immigration policy. Yet again, Canadian officials worked diligently to find ways around the legalities imposed by this new legislation. A 'secret' memorandum from External Affairs legal division to "Mr. Turgeon on possible consular and administrative problems to be faced by this office following the enactment of the Republic of Ireland Statute" on 7 January 1949, illustrates that the Canadian policy of avoiding a legal or public stance on the issue of Irish nationals' status in Canada continued.[58] There was much discussion in Ottawa as to the possible ramifications of the enactment of the Republic of Ireland Statute and on what date the Republic of Ireland Act would come into force. Canadian officials were well aware of the current political climate in Ireland and the Irish government's attitude toward emigration. The office in Dublin reported: "In view of the delicate political situation [in Ireland] and the pressure from the Left to which Mr. Costello is constantly subjected, it would not seem unreasonable to assume that the Republic of Ireland Act might be put into effect <u>at any time</u> [sic] should internal political considerations so dictate."[59] The strategy of being able to "anticipate [thereby avoid] certain embarrassing questions being asked by the Irish Government should they initiate discussions with us on the subject of citizenship" continued. It was decided that "the best answer we might give in the circumstances is that we have, to date, received no administrative instructions on such questions [on the subject of citizenship] but that the whole matter was under consideration by our Department of Justice."[60] It was a delicate political position

[56] Memorandum "Immigration from Eire," [sic] H. L. Keenleyside, August 17, 1948, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-336.
[57] Lee, J. J. *Ireland, 1912-1985: Politics and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 66.
[58] [58] Memorandum, "Secret," to W.F.A. Turgeon from Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, January 7, 1949, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.

to negotiate in view of the importance of ensuring that the high level of recruitment of skilled and qualified workers from Ireland to Canada would continue.

The implications of the Republic of Ireland Act on the status of Irish immigrants in Canada was the subject of a meeting in the Canadian Prime Minister's office attended by Acting Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Secretary of State, and members of the Department of Justice. Escott Reid, Acting Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, insisted on the importance of clarifying the Irish Prime Minister's "desire that the 'special relationship' of Ireland with the countries of the Commonwealth should be continued and that, as part of this, there should be provision that citizens of Commonwealth countries should not be treated as 'foreigners' in Ireland, nor Irish citizens in the Commonwealth." It was decided to send the matter to the legal division to clarify "the exact status of Irish citizens, and as to what it might be possible for the government to do to meet the desire of the Government of Ireland."[61] Aware that the British government were in discussion with the Irish government on matters of reciprocity of citizenship rights, Canadian officials noted that they could not follow the British lead in this matter because the Canadian situation was complicated by federal and provincial legal technicalities.[62]

The legal division advised that amendments to the Canadian Citizenship Act would be necessary, but that the legal situation was too complicated to formulate a definitive opinion. Therefore, they advised that the current general policy of not giving specific detailed replies should be continued and, if pressed, officials should "indicate that the Canadian Government does not regard Irish persons as aliens and that the legislative arrangements under our complicated Canadian federal constitution are receiving active consideration."[63] As the High Commissioner for Canada in London opined, the "case of Ireland is 'sui generis'[sic] and . . . Canada and other Commonwealth countries should be quite willing to say frankly that they are doing something special for Ireland . . . the most important thing is the political gesture of <u>saying</u> [sic] that citizens of Ireland are not aliens notwithstanding that Ireland is giving up membership in the Commonwealth."[64] It is interesting that the situation concerning Irish immigration to Canada was discussed at the highest levels of Canadian government and that the strategy of remaining vague

[61] Letter from Escott Reid to F.P. Varcoe, Deputy Minister of Justice, November 29, 1948, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Memorandum from Legal Advisor to Consular Division, March 5, 1949, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[64]Letter from L. R. Wershof, High Commissioner for Canada, London to Escott Reid, External Affairs, February 1, 1949, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.

when asked specific questions remained official Canadian government policy at this time. The Department of External Affairs issued strict written instructions to the High Commissioner for Canada in Dublin: "you should refrain from making any public statement concerning the position of Irish citizens under Canadian Law . . . answer all inquiries of a general nature concerning the rights of Irish citizens . . . by making general statements that it is the policy of the Canadian Government not to regard Irish citizens as aliens."[65]

A review of the files on the subject of Irish emigration to Canada, ordered by the Canadian Embassy in Dublin in 1960, confirms the recommendation in 1948 "that there should be no advertising by Canadian Immigration authorities to recruit emigrants [became] established policy but does not seem to have hindered at all the flow of emigrants."[66] In 1949, following Turgeon's advice to avoid any unwanted publicity, and bearing in mind the sensibilities of the Irish government, it was arranged that the practical details of processing immigration from Ireland would be dealt with by a newly appointed immigration officer in Dublin. This position was modelled on the British Department of Labour official who Turgeon had described to Keenleyside in July 1948. As Turgeon explained, this British official helped Irish people to emigrate without attracting undue attention. The newly appointed Canadian immigration officer would have "no special designation and not [be] labelled as an Immigration Officer."[67] It was decided that this official would simply be known as an "attaché," whose role was to handle any enquiries regarding immigration to Canada and who would make no attempt to encourage emigration from Ireland. High Commission in Dublin noted that they did "not anticipate any objections from the Irish authorities, as long as the word 'immigration' is not included in the title of the officer or his office."[68] A delicately worded "Aide Memoire" outlining these details was sent to the Irish government on 14 October, 1948.[69] The "Aide Memoire" stated that:

> A number of enquiries in the matter of emigration to Canada are received at this Office, but to date no special facilities have been established to deal with them. It is felt that somewhat more adequate facilities should be provided, and the Canadian Government desire to send an Officer to Dublin to be attached to this Office and designated as an

[65] "Secret", Despatch No. 42. from Secretary of State for External Affairs to High Commissioner for Canada, Dublin, April 16, 1949, RG 76, Vol. 823, File 552-1-572.
[66] Confidential Memorandum, "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960. RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[67] Despatch No. 48, from Secretary of State for External Affairs to High Commissioner for Canada, Dublin, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[68] Letter from High Commissioner for Canada, Dublin, to Department of External Affairs, October 14, 1948, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[69] "Aide Memoire" October 14, 1948, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.

> Attaché, to handle enquiries of this type. . . . The Canadian Government wish to emphasize that they are not taking any initiative in developing migration from Ireland, but feel that it is necessary to have a more satisfactory method of dealing with spontaneous enquiries from Irish residents. The proposed official, mentioned above, would do no advertising of his duties, nor of Canadian Immigration Policy.[70]

This "Aide Memoire" was received by the Irish Department of External Affairs who "expressed appreciation of the delicacy shown by the Canadian Government."[71] Five days later, on 19 April 1949, the "attaché" was appointed in Dublin ostensibly to deal with any immigration questions from Ireland to Canada.[72]

Canadian officials had discovered a way to facilitate emigration from Ireland without attracting any untoward attention from the Irish public and, more importantly, from the Irish press. This allowed a silent haemorrhage of Irish citizens to Canada to continue throughout the 1950s. However, an exchange between Priestman, chargé d'affairs at the Canadian Embassy in Dublin, and the Secretary of State for External Affairs in Ottawa reveals that tensions were never far beneath the surface, as the Dublin office continued to enact Canadian government immigration policy without openly advertising for Irish emigrants. In December 1950, Priestman reported that he and his staff were frustrated by the Irish official attitude to emigration and they felt that "the time has arrived . . . to having our euphemistically termed Visa Officer in Dublin play an active part in recruiting migrants." He noted: "Emigration, like T.B., is endemic in Ireland. . . . Canadian firms interested in the Irish reservoir of manpower could probably tap it. . . . There would be great appeal to engineers, skilled tradesmen and labourers, in recent Canadian news - if it ever made the Irish papers - recounting that 6,000 men are needed by Canadian aircraft plants, and another 2,000 for hydro-electric projects." Priestman's frustration and enthusiasm to recruit is evident in this despatch: "Seized as we are with the importance of obtaining more immigrants, we would have no

[70] Confidential Memorandum, "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178. File 232-V-40.
[71] Letter from H.L.E. Priestman, High Commissioner, to Secretary of State for External Affairs, October 15, 1948, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40
[72] Memorandum, Department of Mines and Resources, Immigration Branch, Ottawa, May 21, 1949, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40, [The appointment of this officer was made without giving him an official title. This caused an administrative issue as to how much money should be allocated to his "office." Subsequent correspondence regarding housing allowance and other expenditures for this officer reveals that Department of Immigration had "little knowledge" of this officer's exact status in Dublin, Personal letter L. Chance, Dept. Mines & Resources to D. Johnson, acting High Commissioner, Dublin June 23,1949, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.

reluctance, if authorized by you to do so, in bringing our ideas to the notice of the Irish authorities."[73]

However, Department of External Affairs did not authorize Priestman to officially contact the Irish government. In fact, a handwritten note on this despatch, when it was perused in Ottawa, suggests that Priestman's passion and enthusiasm were not well received. The note is handwritten on the copy and therefore does not appear in the "official" document. The note comments that despatch "314 from Dublin appears rather rambling . . . think it would be better to make a précis."[74] This message was relayed to Dublin with another note informing the Dublin office that a personal visit by Mr. L. G. Cumming of the London office had been arranged. This personal visit to Dublin had the desired effect. Following Cumming's visit to the embassy in Dublin, Priestman submitted a written report to Ottawa, noting: "we feel that we could withdraw the suggestion made in the final paragraph of our letter of December 1, of raising questions with the Irish authorities regarding publicity for Canadian immigration policy."[75] Priestman's précis of his earlier report delicately rewrites the long-winded despatch and simply notes that the Embassy in Dublin would like to play a more active role in emigration matters. It also avoids semantics such as "euphemistic" and "Irish reservoirs of manpower" and states:

> The Visa Officer, who has been in Dublin since 1948, is limited to dealing with spontaneous enquiries. Official advertising is prohibited and any immigration publicity is discouraged. Nevertheless, Mr. L. G. Cumming, the Superintendent of Canadian Immigration in the United Kingdom and Ireland, is of the opinion that, in the circumstances, the number of immigrants coming to Canada from Ireland is satisfactory.[76]

As Cumming in his personal and hastily-arranged visit to Ireland had made clear to officials at the Canadian embassy in Dublin, the Canadian Department of External Affairs was satisfied with the steady stream of spontaneous emigration from Ireland to Canada and did not want to draw undue attention to this fact. Hence, the policy of continuing to recruit without drawing undue attention continued. It is noteworthy that frustrations expressed by the Dublin office were also experienced by staff in the Canadian offices in London. Historians M. Barber and M. Watson note that during

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[73] Despatch No. 314, from Charge d'Affairs a.i., Canadian Embassy, Dublin to Secretary of State for External Affairs, December 1, 1950, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[74] Memorandum, December 11, 1950, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[75] Despatch No. 320, from Charge d'Affairs a.i., Canadian Embassy, Dublin to Secretary of State for External Affairs, December 11, 1950, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[76] Precis of Dublin Despatches No. 314 of December 1, 1950 and No. 320 of December 11, 1950, "Concerning Canadian Immigration Policy in the Republic of Ireland," RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.

a 1964 tour of Canadian immigration offices staff "expressed bitter feelings about the information materials and films they were obliged to use [which said] nothing about jobs, housing, cities, education or government of Canada."[77] Perhaps, Canadian officials were as wary of attracting the attention of government officials in London as they were in Dublin. Winston Churchill had made it clear that he felt that emigration was threatening post-war recovery and appealed to the people not to "[d]esert the old land . . . . [Barber and Watson note] his feelings were made palpably clear when he described emigrants as 'rats leaving a sinking ship.'"[78]

The Canadian Embassy in Dublin continued to process applications from citizens of the Republic of Ireland and regulations ensured that they could enter Canada with the same ease as British subjects. Canadian officials also discovered a way to negotiate the difficulties of determining the status of Irish citizens entering Canada. In an amendment to the Canadian Citizenship Act, passed during the regular 1950 session of Parliament, citizens of Ireland were excluded from the definitions 'alien' and 'foreign.' In addition, under Section 23 of the Canadian Citizenship Act, citizens of Ireland were given status under Canadian law similar to that of a British subject or a Commonwealth citizen.[79] The Canadian government continued to eagerly recruit emigrants from Ireland. In February 1953, the attaché in Dublin reported "a record number of enquiries and of medical examinations during the months of December and January."[80] The emigration figures from Ireland for this period were alarming from a population of barely 3,000,000. Estimates of 28,000 in 1948, reached 34,000 in 1949 and 40,000 in 1950. A rate of emigration per 1,000 of the population in 1950 was more than 50% over what it was in the period between 1936 and 1946, which includes the war years.[81] Canadian government statistics show that 2,644 immigrants from Northern Ireland arrived in Canada in 1952-53, an increase of 73.8% over the 1,521 who arrived in 1951-52. Sixty-two Assisted Passage warrants were issued 1952-53. Statistics on emigration from the Republic of Ireland to Canada show that 906 immigrants arrived

[77] Marilyn Barber and Murray Watson, *Invisible Immigrants: The English in Canada since 1945* (Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press, 2015), 10.
[78] Ibid., 10.
[79] Deputy Minister's Office file, Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, September 7, 1950, RG 76, Vol. 876, File 560-2-541.
[80] Despatch No. 37. Canadian Ambassador, Dublin to Secretary of State for External Affairs, August 30, 1951, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.
[81] Ibid.

in 1952-53, an increase of 21.3% over the 747 who arrived in 1951-52. Fourteen Assisted Passage warrants were issued in 1952-53.[82]

Despite the fact that Canadian government appears to have kept detailed records of immigrants from Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, they remained reluctant to publicise these figures.[83] For example, when officials from the "Irish Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems" requested "particulars as to the numbers (distinguishing male and female if possible) of Irish people who have emigrated to Canada in any years or periods for which you have statistics," the Dublin office contacted the Secretary of State for External Affairs in Ottawa as to what statistical information they could share with the Irish government. The official reply was to continue to give general details and to inform the Commission that the Dublin office was awaiting more precise information from Ottawa.[84] Canadian officials in Dublin worked hard to navigate the fine line between their desire to encourage emigration from Ireland and the necessity of avoiding the ire of the Irish government. As Keenleyside summarized in 1948, the "Irish problem" of immigration from Eire [sic] [is that although] the "Government of Eire [sic] is strongly opposed . . . There is strong interest in emigration among the Irish and, in spite of the official attitude, many people continue to leave including a fair proportion who come to Canada. . .High Commissioner's Office in Dublin is constantly receiving enquiries from prospective immigrants."[85] The dilemma of finding a way to give prospective immigrants the relevant information on Canada and to process any subsequent applications was solved by the appointment the immigration officer - the Attaché. His role was not to encourage emigration, but to provide information if such information was directly requested. The Canadian Embassy in Dublin also followed Keenleyside's recommendation that the "Government of Eire [sic] be informed of our plans with emphasis being placed on the fact that we are not taking any initiative[sic] in developing Irish immigration, but that we have to have a more satisfactory way of dealing with spontaneous enquiries from Irish residents."[86]

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[82] Memorandum, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Canada, April 21, 1953, RG 76, Vol. 823, File 552-1-572.
[83] "In 1946 approximately 3200 of the 51,400 immigrants from Great Britain and Ireland were of Irish origin. Since that date immigration . . . has increased enormously." Confidential Letter from Turgeon, High Commissioner for Canada, Dublin, to Secretary of State for External Affairs, September 22, 1948, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Memorandum for the Minister, Department of Mines and Resources, from H. L. Keenleyside, August 17, 1948, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[86] Ibid.

The diplomatic delicacy of Keenleyside's solution to the problem of securing emigrants from Ireland without attracting publicity demonstrates his awareness of the difficulties the Irish government had in the face of huge numbers of Irish citizens leaving the country. Before the Canadian immigration officer/attaché was appointed in Dublin, it was agreed with Irish authorities that "no publicity would be given to the fact that an office was being established to handle immigration matters."[87] It was also agreed that "no advertising or solicitation in any manner or form would be subsequently entered into, nor was the immigration representative to be publicly designated as such."[88] The heightened sensitivity towards emigration was further exacerbated by publicity surrounding the establishment of the "Irish Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems". The Commission was set up 5 April 1948 and its report was released in March 1954. Historian Tracey Connolly argues that the Commission was "the first and (to date) the only conscious effort made by any Irish administration to study population trends with particular emphasis on emigration."[89] As Delaney asserts, the Commission was probably the most obvious response to "the haemorrhage of people during the 1950s." However, he raises the pertinent point that:

> For Irish politicians in the 1950s the issue was not so much why so many people were leaving . . . but rather a juvenile game of trying to embarrass political foes by highlighting an increase in emigration during the period of office of the other party in government. This was a somewhat tedious practice, although judging from the volume of parliamentary questions asked in the Dáil on this matter, a pastime that some politicians clearly enjoyed.[90]

Avoiding publicity from questions in the Dáil was a constant preoccupation for Canadian embassy officials in Dublin. They reported to Ottawa that:

> 'Emigration,' like 'Partition' is an emotive word in Ireland . . .[it] touches the national pride: they hurt because they are felt as derogations from economic and political nationhood in a Republic which is still justifying its existence to itself. 'Emigration' is therefore a word to conjure with: few Irishmen who wish to influence their fellows, to gain authority or to win supporters, to damn the Government, or what not, can refrain from using its magic.[91]

This report outlines a number of occasions since 1948 when publicity threatened to attract public attention to the high numbers of Irish citizens emigrating to Canada. The report stresses the

[87] Confidential Memorandum, November 2, 1950, RG 25, Vol. 6178. File 232-V-40.
[88] Confidential Memorandum, "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178. File 232-V-40.
[89] Tracey Connolly, "The Commission on Emigration, 1948-1954," in Keogh, *Lost Decade,* 89.
[90] Delaney, "Vanishing," 86.
[91] Confidential Memorandum, "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178. File 232-V-40.

scrupulous efforts of the Canadian mission in Dublin to distance themselves from any attempt to encourage Irish immigration to Canada and to avoid the question of Irish emigration to Canada being discussed in the Dáil. The report refers to a series of questions raised in the Dáil in late 1953 regarding the rumour of the existence of a Canadian immigration officer who was recruiting Irish immigrants to Canada and notes: "we had no difficulty in convincing the Irish Government that [the] information was incorrect." They also refer to a follow up question in the Dáil a few weeks later referring to the Canadian Immigration Commission in Belfast encouraging Irish people from the twenty-six counties to settle in Canada. The report states "Mr. de Valera, then Taoiseach, was able to deny the existence of a Commission." There was, he said, admittedly a Canadian immigration office there "which gave information of a factual nature to enquirers . . . but which did not operate outside the 6 counties."[92]

The confidential memorandum explains that these questions were probably the result of "the publicity following the appointment of the Emigration Commission by the Irish Government, [wherein] the evils of emigration were very much in the public mind."[93] As Connolly points out, this Commission was the first "effort by any Irish administration to study population trends with particular emphasis on emigration." More importantly, she raises a key point regarding the title of the Commission: "It should be noted here that the main emphasis in the terms of reference was on 'population' as opposed to 'migration,' although the commission primarily looked at emigration. The inclusion of 'other population problems' in the title of the commission reveals the negativity associated with the process of emigration from Ireland."[94] The government in Ottawa had been apprised of the purpose of the Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems when it was set up in April 1948 and it continued to receive regular and detailed reports on the Commission's mandate from the Dublin office. In September 1948, the Commission officially contacted Turgeon, enclosing a copy of their Terms of Reference, and requesting details:

> as to the regulations, past and present, governing the entry of Irish emigrants into Canada, together with quote regulations (if any) and variations as from date of introduction. In addition, the Commission would be glad to receive particulars as to the numbers (distinguishing male and female if possible) of Irish people who have emigrated to Canada in any years or periods for which you have statistics.[95]

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[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.
[94] Connolly, "Commission," 89.
[95] Letter from Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems, Dublin to W.F.A. Turgeon, H.C. Canada, September 21, 1948 notes: "Terms of Reference: To investigate the causes and consequences of the present level

The reply to the Commission was carefully considered in Ottawa and a number of officials and departments consulted as to how to provide statistical information which would satisfy the Commission without revealing the exact numbers of Irish emigrants to Canada. The objective was to continue the policy of appearing to co-operate with the Irish government, while at the same time avoiding the release of any specific numbers of emigrants to Canada from the Republic of Ireland. Canadian officials also discussed the importance to the Irish government of the status of Irish citizens being recognized and its insistence that Irish citizens not be described as British subjects. It was suggested that Canadian officials should follow the lead of the British government who, it noted, had successfully dealt with the sensitive matter of Irish citizens not being regarded as British subjects. Priestman informed Ottawa of his interactions with the Commission and concluded:

> In view of Irish sensitivities on this question, I did not think it wise to supply the Immigration Commission with the text of our P.C. 695 of March 21st 1931 (as amended), which provides for the admissibility to Canada of 'British subjects' born or naturalised in the Irish Free State. . . . The Commission was therefore merely advised that persons born or naturalized in this country were admissible to Canada as immigrants subject to the provisions of the Canadian Immigration Act and that their request was being referred to you in the event that you had available the desired statistics on Irish immigration. . . . I should be grateful if you would put me in a position to provide a full reply to the Commission on Emigration.[96]

The reply to the Commission was of crucial importance because the timing of this request for statistical information coincided with the decision to appoint the immigration officer - the Attaché in Dublin. As the Canadian High Commissioner pointed out in a telegram to Ottawa, they were hopeful that their proposal to appoint an attaché would be favourably considered, but that they were awaiting confirmation from the Irish Minister.[97] Therefore, it was decided that the details provided to the Commission should follow established Canadian policy of giving general details and not to provide any specific numbers of emigrants from the Republic of Ireland to Canada. Turgeon replied to the Commission that:

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and trend in population; to examine, in particular, the social and economic effects of birth, death, migration and marriage rates at present and their probable course in the near future; to consider what measures, if any, should be taking in the national interest to influence the future trends in population; generally, to consider the desirability of formulating a national population policy." RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.

[96] Confidential Letter from High Commissioner for Canada, Dublin, to Secretary of State for External Affairs Ottawa, September 30, 1948. RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.

[97] Telegram from High Commissioner, Dublin, to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, October 15, 1948, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.

> The statistics which are available at this office in respect of immigration into Canada from Great Britain, Ireland, and Commonwealth countries, give the racial origin of the immigrant only; i.e. English, Irish, Scottish, or Welsh. The numbers of 'Irish' given in these figures would thus include, as far as I am aware, persons of Irish origin living, say, in Scotland or England, and would for this reason, probably not be entirely adequate for the purposes of the Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems under the terms of reference forwarded with your letter.[98]

He assured the Commission that he would transmit the enquiry to Ottawa "in the event that more precise information is at hand as to the numbers actually emigrating from this country to Canada" and would communicate with them upon "receipt of advice on this matter from Canada."[99] The subsequent information provided by Ottawa was general statistical information showing "total immigration to Canada of persons of Irish racial origin from 1903-04 to 1947-48. . . [and] immigration to Canada by last permanent residence of persons admitted from Northern Ireland and Ireland for the period 1938-39 to 1947-48." This information was transmitted from the desk of Keenleyside, deputy minister, Department of Mines and Resources, and also included "two copies of P.C. 4849 which covers classes of persons admissible to Canada . . . [noting] among the admissible classes are British subjects entering Canada directly or indirectly from Northern Ireland or Ireland."[100]

In July 1949, the Commission made another attempt to acquire more exact information on the numbers of Irish immigration to Canada through the High Commission for Ireland in Ottawa. Hearne wrote to Keenleyside saying that he "appreciated that it may be difficult to obtain this information but the Commission would be grateful for such particulars as may be available."[101] Keenleyside assured Hearne that he would make every effort to contact the Census Division of the Dominion Bureau of Statistics for information and that he "presumed that the Commission in Dublin is interested not only in the numbers of Irish immigrants arriving in Canada but also in the number and distribution of persons of Irish birth who are also permanently residing in this Dominion."[102] It is interesting to note how Keenleyside dealt with these enquiries from Hearne

[98] Letter to Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems from H.L.Keenleyside, Department of Mines and Resources, October 26, 1948, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[99] Letter to Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems from High Commissioner for Canada, Dublin, September 28, 1948, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[100] Letter to Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems from H.L.Keenleyside, Department of Mines and Resources, October 26, 1948, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[101] Letter from J. J. Hearne, High Commissioner for Ireland, Ottawa to H. L. Keenleyside, Department of Mines and Resources, July 14, 1949, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.
[102] Letter from H. L. Keenleyside to J. J. Hearne, July 25, 1949, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.

and from the Commission, considering he had been receiving detailed reports of the activities of the Commission from Turgeon in Dublin since the formation of the Commission. The office was well aware that the Commission were requesting accurate figures should they be available.[103]

Keenleyside had provided an ostensibly detailed report from Immigration and Census records on Irish immigrant population in Canada. This was the same information that had already been provided by Turgeon in the High Commission in Dublin. Enclosures included statistical information of immigrant arrivals whose birthplace was Éire and Northern Ireland from 1926 to 1949; and census of Canada tables from 1931 and 1941 showing the number of immigrants of Irish racial origin. Keenleyside pointed out that while "the enclosures . . . do not completely cover the questions set forth . . . I trust they will be of assistance to the Commission in Dublin in connection with their survey of Irish emigrants."[104] Hearne thanked him for the information and assured him that it "will be of the greatest value to the Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems now sitting in Dublin."[105] Hence, Canadian government policy of facilitating the "best kind" of emigration from Ireland without drawing attention to the fact continued unabated.

[103] "Despatch no. 41. April 6, 1948 contained detailed "Terms of Reference of Commission on Emigration and other Population Problems," Despatch No.166, Canadian Ambassador, Dublin to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, July 15, 1954, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.
[104] Letter to J. J. Hearne from H.L. Keenleyside, August 11, 1949, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16. Another request to obtain statistical information was made by the Embassy of Ireland, Ottawa in 1953. In reply the Dominion Statistical report delivered the same statistical information as they had provided in 1949. Letter from External Affairs to Embassy of Ireland, Ottawa. January 24, 1953. RG 26, Vol 170, File 3-33-16.
[105] Letter to H.L. Keenleyside from J. J. Hearne, August 16, 1949, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.

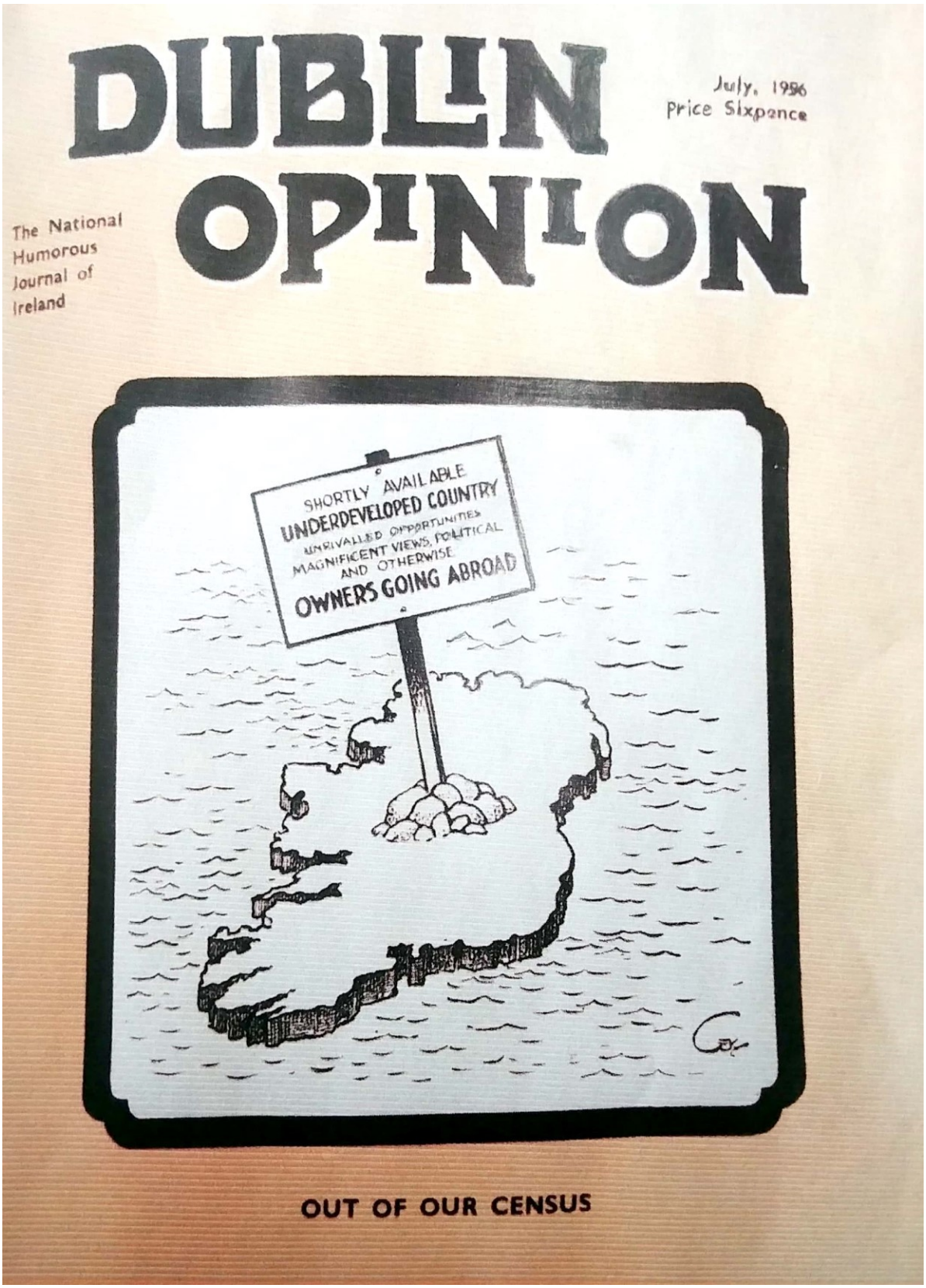

Figure 1: *Dublin Opinion,* July 1956

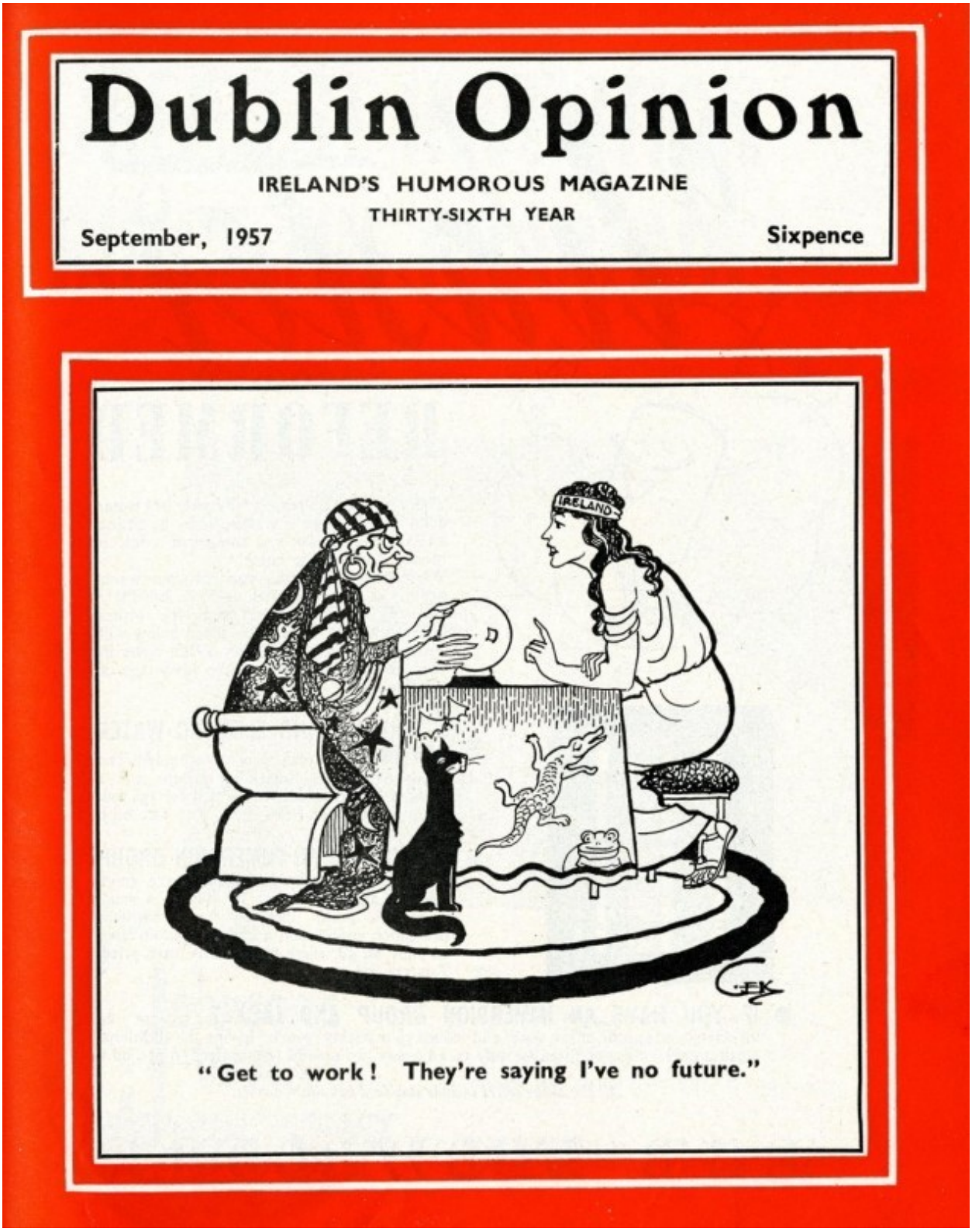

Figure 2: *Dublin Opinion,* September 1957

Chapter 3. Faraway Hills are Green: Roots and Wings

The cartoons featured on the cover of the *Dublin Opinion* illustrate the tragic population "push" that so preoccupied Irish politicians in the 1950s. Irish economic historian, Cormac Ó Gráda argues that these illustrations captured "the despondency that ruled the Irish Republic in the mid-1950s."[1] Those who fled the 'hungry' forties and fifties were young emigrants born in the fledgling Irish Free State as well as their cohorts in Northern Ireland. Gerry O'Hanlon's statistical analysis of the period notes that the rate of emigration in the 1950s was the highest recorded since the 1880s. He observes that this exodus was dominated by a younger age cohort: those aged 15 to 34 in 1961 . . . it represented a loss of close to 30% of the cohort in only 10 years.[2] Given this, certain questions naturally arise. Who were these people who were going abroad? Was there something in particular about them that encouraged them to leave their homeland? What matrix of motives triggered their decision to leave? The immigrants interviewed for this dissertation were young, educated and ambitious and were determined to forge a new life, a life that contemporary Ireland simply could not offer.

People who left Ireland in this period have been referred to as the "Vanishing Irish" when "[o]ne in three of those aged 30 years or under in 1946 had left the country by 1971."[3] A number of these individuals are now senior citizens in Canada. They are part of the generation who left in the 1950s and 1960s and have spent their entire adult lives living and working abroad. These post-war Irish emigrants were born and spent their formative years in different parts of Ireland. They are Catholic and Protestant; male and female; single, married, divorced, and widowed. They come from the Republic of Ireland as well as Northern Ireland. Their emigration narratives are complex and multifaceted. They came of age in turbulent times and their childhood experiences of war and depression shaped who they were and who they became. In 2012, Irish President Michael D. Higgins drew attention to John McGahern's remark: "Ireland is composed not of one but of thousands of tiny republics each with their own manners and rules." In an attempt to explain this diversity of Irish emigrant experience, Higgins cited the life and work of Irish American writer Thomas Flanagan as an example of someone who "defies all attempts at categorization" and quotes

[1] Cormac Ó Gráda, "The Irish Economy half a Century ago," Working Paper Series, WP08/18 (University College Dublin: School of Economics, August 2008), 1.
[2] Gerry O'Hanlon, "Population Change in the 1950s: A Statistical Review," in Keogh, *Lost Decade,* 74-78.
[3] Delaney, "Vanishing," 83.

Flanagan's warning against any simplification of Irishness. "My Irish American identity [Flanagan said] is typical only in the sense that there is no such typical experience [it] . . . is a personal matter, complex, slanted, convoluted."[4] As Flanagan points out, no single narrative can capture the complexity of the Irish emigrant experience.

Interviews reveal that these Irish emigrants carefully considered their options before leaving Ireland and made a strategic choice to emigrate to Canada. Each life story is a fluid and ever-changing kaleidoscope of life experiences. The stories of these senior citizens are deeply textured and multi-layered. A complex, multidimensional combination of economic, political, social, cultural and psychological factors prompted each of them to leave Ireland and settle in Canada. Arguing for the benefits of embracing "both cultural and spatial perspectives" in the historical study of community, historians John C. Walsh and Steven High note how anthropologist Clifford Geertz encourages scholars to seek out and explain the "multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed and knotted into one another." They argue:

> For historians, reading community through the lens of thick description means a commitment to investigating how demographics, politics, and economics, not to mention gender, ethnicity, race, class, and age, are reproduced in community through the symbolic nature of social space, and what impact this had upon community members. This idea is significant for it emphasizes the importance of context and the interconnection between grand, macrolevel influences . . . and smaller microlevel expressions.[5]

While Walsh and High use an example of the macro North Atlantic economy and the micro farmers' market, utilizing thick descriptive research as an analytical tool illuminates multiple layers within the Irish emigrant experience in Canada. It highlights the context and interconnection between the macro worlds of Ireland and Canada and the micro worlds of each emigrant's life experience. Economic, political, and religious factors and a rigid patriarchal system in Ireland combined with social and cultural factors to stifle and frustrate young emigrants who were unwilling to accept the traditional status quo in post-war Ireland. Gender and class also played a significant role in their decision to escape from a socioeconomic system that seemed impossible to change. One theme that emerges from the field interviews is that, whether from north or south

[4] Michael D. Higgins, "Remembering & Imagining Irishness", Third Thomas Flanagan Lecture, American Historical Society, New York, May 1, 2012. Accessed 20 February 2018, http://www.president.ie/en/media-library/speeches/remembering-imagining-irishness-third-thomas-flanagan-lecture-by-president

[5] John C. Walsh and Steven High, "Rethinking the Concept of Community," *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 32, 64 (1999): 268.

of the border, emigration offered a socially acceptable means of escape and provided opportunities for these emigrants to expand their horizons both physically and psychologically.

Emigration is woven into the fabric of Irish life. ISSGO member Tom Taylor was born in Belfast in 1941 and recalled that when he was young emigration was just an accepted fact of life. He explained that this was nothing new: "It was always like that, everybody had a relative going somewhere." He has clear childhood memories of his grandparents leaving Ireland to live with some of their children who had already emigrated to Australia. Both of Taylor's grandparents are buried in Adelaide. He said he will never forget standing at the quayside as a small child with his parents and recalled the sorrow and emotion as the ship pulled away. People were crying and singing hymns as the ship faded into the distance because they knew that it was unlikely that they would ever see these people again.[6] Margo Connolly, who also grew up in Belfast, recalled: "People were always leaving . . . at that time, when you were gone, you were gone."[7] Internal migration was also an accepted part of everyday life and it was common practice to move from rural to urban areas in search of work. Betty Finley was born in 1919 in Co. Laois, in the Irish Midlands. She explained that moving away, whether to a different county, or to a different country, was just a natural part of everyday life and that it had always been like that. Finley recounted how her mother had been visiting from Cork when she met her father who was home in Laois recovering from injuries sustained during the Boer War. She said: "that was it, my mother never went back to Cork again."[8]

For those born during the Great Depression, their childhood memories recall rationing during the Second World War and how they and their parents survived the strict regulations. Caroline Gowdy Williams vividly remembered food rationing: "I can remember my mother, you could trade, you got stamps, the coupons that you got for your rations and old ladies would like to have more tea. My mother might trade a few sugar coupons for tea coupons with an old lady, Mrs. Lawson next door, I can remember that." Gowdy Williams recollected her delight when her mother brought home a Mars bar. She had a clear picture of her mother cutting it up into four pieces and laughed as she recalled: "that must have been after the war, if she was cutting it in four, it means Andrew was born, so that must have been after the war." [Her brother Andrew was born in 1945].

[6] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[7] Margo Connolly, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 19, 2014.
[8] Betty (Elizabeth) Finley, Personal Interview, Ottawa, January 14, 2015.

She remembered this as one of the first signs that restrictions were beginning to ease. The clarity of her memory gives an insight as to how rationing was strictly controlled: "rationing was very strict. I don't know what it was like for people in the South, but it was strictly controlled in Belfast."[9] Stories of negotiating the rules of rationing were a common theme among Canadian-Irish seniors who recalled their own childhoods. Luke O'Brien, who grew up in Dublin, recalled his family's grocery shop and how his parents dealt with a summons to court to explain a discrepancy in supplies. He recounted how he was sent to court to explain that it was he, a small child, who was to blame. He said that because his parents blamed the child, they probably got off more lightly than they would have otherwise. O'Brien remarked that before this incident, they would take "a bit of butter or sugar" for themselves, but after this they were a lot more careful.[10] The incident demonstrates how strictly rationing was policed both north and south of the border.

Kathleen Marsh had clear memories of the hardships endured by those living in Belfast during the Second World War. Her vivid recollection of the circumstances following the destruction of her family home during the Blitz highlighted the co-operation between people north and south of the border, as they struggled to cope with turmoil caused by the war. Belfast was targeted and bombed during the Blitz and Marsh's family home was one of those partially destroyed. She remembered the sounds of the explosion and the ensuing chaos:

> I could hear a noise, I thought it was maybe sugar or something falling out of a packet, but you know, they [the bombs] would come down by parachute. It was the parachute and the bit of wind that was making the noise. So, eventually an ARP warden came into the house and said: 'Is there anybody in there?' because the windows were all out, the windows were all smashed in. 'Anybody there' and my mother said: 'Yes, I am here with six children.' He said: 'Well, you had better come.' So, he met a soldier at the gate and the soldier said: 'What are you taking them up there for, there is an incendiary bomb up there.' and he said: 'Well, I have to get them out of here, before that, if that goes off!' Then my mother saw the parachute in the garden right opposite and realized that was, you know. We didn't know where to go, you know, people didn't know what to do. We were not prepared. I was then eleven years old when that happened. All we children were all black and sooty, we were in our nightclothes, because it happened during the night. And I was in my bare feet and picked up glass on the way, but didn't even know that I had glass in my feet. I was the oldest one, so, I carried the second youngest in my arms, Seamus. So anyway, then eventually somebody said that we have to go to the boy's school at the top of the road, and then in the morning, soldiers came again with their big trucks and things, and they took us to. Do you remember Knock? A place called Knock, now this is not the one in Mayo, this was in Northern Ireland, it was a seaside place. It was a very grand place. People who lived

[9] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 5, 2015.
[10] Luke O'Brien, Personal Interview, Toronto, October 21, 2013.

> there had money and they had big houses and everything. So, we were taken there and put into a school there. Then these people started coming in and saying that they would take children. This woman came in with her little girl and said that she would take these two girls, my sister and I, home with her. You know, to look after us. So, we went off with her to her big house and then somebody else came in and took my brother to her house and my mother was crying each time. My mother just sat there letting everything happen. Then word came from the Red Cross from my father saying: 'Take the children to Mayo.'

Marsh remembered going to live with her father's family in Co. Mayo in the West of Ireland. Her memories of the trip to Dublin and then on to Ballina recall the support her family received from the Red Cross and from the general public: "The Red Cross got us all ready and we were put on a train. First of all to Dublin, then to Ballina, and people were all coming, giving, saying: 'oh the poor things, they are the ones from Belfast.' Then the Red Cross met us at Ballina and got us to Mayo." She had fond memories of staying with her father's family and going to school in Crossmolina, but recalled that her mother, a Belfast woman, could not settle and they soon returned to Belfast.[11] Her mother was used to living in a city and did not want to settle in rural Ireland.

Not being able to settle; wanting to get away; wanting to escape the strict rules of their childhood is a persistent theme among the interviewees. Their parents were born in a different time and this cohort had come of age when Ireland was still searching for an independent post-colonial identity. In post-war Ireland, social customs and mores were slow to change and a rigid class structure was still an evident part of everyday life. Betty Finley remembered working in "the big house just outside Tullamore" when she was a young girl in the 1930s. She described the house and how the "lady of the house liked to cycle around the big grounds." Finley often had to help out "serving the table" especially when there were visitors. This employment had repercussions on one particular occasion. She was serving food, while the lady of the house entertained local clergy, and recalled being questioned by the dinner guests and being asked if she would like to join the convent. Before she realized what was happening, she was driven home and it was quickly arranged with her parents that she would enter the local convent in Paddock. Finley hated the strict convent regime and remembered looking out the window at the beautiful scenery in the convent grounds and deciding to escape. She did not have any money, but persuaded a bus driver to give her a lift. He dropped her off a few miles from home and she walked the rest of the way carrying her suitcase. The following day the "lady and the priests" came to persuade her to go back. Finley

[11] Catherine (Kathleen) Marsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 30, 2016.

proudly recounted how her father told her to go into the back room while he went to tell them that she was not going to go back to the convent. Her story provides an insight into the rigid social structure of rural Ireland which could blatantly dispatch young country girls to a convent. It also unveils the cultural connections between the clergy and the local "big house." The story of her father's actions, and the fact that she succeeded in avoiding life in the cloister demonstrates that some measure of personal autonomy did exist for those who were willing and able to stand up for themselves.

Soon after, Finley decided to apply for nursing school in England. She was accepted and a neighbor helped her to buy and pack the clothes that were on the long list of supplies she needed to bring with her. Finley is a bright, lively 93 year-old who still delights in recounting her many adventures. She becomes annoyed, however, when she recalled her struggle to get her first passport. When everything was packed and ready to go, she travelled to Dublin to collect her passport. However, the Passport Office refused to release it because she was under nineteen and did not have the correct paperwork. She then had to go back to Mountrath to get her father's help and remembered having to cycle to the police station to complete her passport application. She said: "Look at the way I had to go around things, a country girl, you know, on my own, on my own."[12] Finley was just one of many single girls who left their homes in Ireland and emigrated on their own. Historian Caitríona Clear refers to this mass female exodos of the 1940s and 1950s as "almost an epidemic of emigration of Irish girls and women."[13] She argues that at this time "the idea of a teenaged girl, or young woman emigrating on her own, and making a life for herself in a foreign land was acceptable and familiar to Irish people."[14]

There is a tremendous determination and tenacity in these recollections of young single women leaving Ireland in the 1940s and 1950s. Cathy Dubé's particular circumstances demonstrate that although the Roman Catholic clergy attempted to prevent people leaving, they were unable to stop them, if they were determined to go. Dubé's plan to emigrate to Canada to work as a nanny for a Methodist minister and his family exacerbated her difficulties getting the paperwork she needed for a passport. However, she persevered and refused to be deterred from

[12] Betty (Elizabeth) Finley, Personal Interview, January 14, 2015.
[13] Catríona Clear, "'Too Fond of Going': Female Emigration and Change for Women in Ireland, 1946-1961," in Keogh, *Lost Decade,* 138.
[14] Ibid., 139.

leaving Ireland. She was born in Ballina, Co. Mayo in 1940. Before and after school, she worked for a Methodist minister and his wife looking after children and helping with housework. She explained:

> They decided to move to Canada, so they moved to British Columbia where he joined the United Church of Canada . . . I went to secondary school, took a commercial course and took shorthand and typing and book-keeping . . . I came up with this idea that I wanted to see what was over the mountain. The mountain was Nephin. It's a mountain in Mayo and is very visible from Ballina. I wanted to see what was over that mountain. I said there must be something exciting. So, I decided to write to Reverend Taylor and ask him if he would sponsor me to go to Canada, which he did.

Dubé was sixteen years old when she flew from Shannon to British Columbia, via New York. Before she left, she went to Belfast and stayed with Mrs. Taylor's family for a week while she completed the medical exam and paperwork. Everything went smoothly until she applied for her passport. She was still annoyed when she recounted this experience seventy-five years later: "All I had to wait for was my passport, but my passport became a big problem. I got a letter from the passport office in Dublin while I was in Ballina waiting for it. They said that I must get a letter for freedom from the parish priest in order to get my passport, even though I had a letter of freedom from my parents." She cycled to the local priest, who refused to give her permission. He recommended that she speak to the Canon. When Canon Maloney also refused permission, she says:

> I didn't know what to do, so I slept on it, and I didn't communicate any of this to my parents. So, I slept on it and I thought next day, I know what I am going to do. I am going to see the bishop. So, the bishop lived in a palace, we called it the palace. Nobody penetrated that place. I mean it had all iron barricades around it, fences. Anyway, I went on my bicycle, I left it outside and I walked up the driveway. I rang the doorbell of the palace and I was quite nervous because you are not supposed to go into that place. [Dubé managed to speak to the bishop who said] 'Well, you know, you have to understand, you are going to a non-Catholic environment and we just have to be very careful that you don't lose your religion.' So, I said: 'Yes, I don't think I would ever lose it.' But anyway, he said: 'I have to sleep on this. You will have to come back tomorrow.' So, he slept on it, and I want back the tomorrow. He gave me a lecture . . . [and] my letter of freedom.[15]

This story of a young girl on a bicycle breaching the walls of the bishop's palace is worth unraveling further. She did not tell her parents before going to the bishop's palace. They would not approve and might have tried to prevent her. Her mother had initially asked the local priest for

[15] Cathy Dubé, Personal Interview, Gatineau, August 21, 2014.

the letter of freedom and had been told that it would be impossible to get his permission. Her mother simply accepted this, but Dubé persisted until she got her paperwork. She subsequently recalled: "I was already climbing that mountain."[16]

Refusal to accept the status quo in Ireland in the 1950s is a theme that emerged from many of the interviews. Once these young people decided to leave Ireland, they could not be deterred. Unlike her mother, Dubé was not willing to defer to the will of the Catholic establishment. Reflecting on his childhood in 1950s Ireland, journalist Brian Fallon writes:

> [t]here was a collision between two generations, one of them aging and reactionary, the other essentially modernizing and libertarian . . . the Catholic church in Ireland (never a liberal institution) was ruled by a number of despotic bishops who were essentially relics of another age - notably Archbishop John Charles McQuaid of Dublin.[17]

Historian, Tracey Connolly observes that a number of Catholic bishops opposed emigration, and notes that, in 1942, Archbishop McQuaid established "the Emigrant Section of the Catholic Social Welfare Bureau (later called Emigrant Advice). Its main function was 'the care of emigrants, especially women and girls, who were more vulnerable as they tended to be young and often emigrated alone."[18] The personal narratives of female interviewees in ISSGO who chose to emigrate alone reveal that they did not view themselves as vulnerable. Priestly sermons and warnings could not compete with the lure of far-away hills. Both Dubé and Finley refused to accept the restrictions and persisted until they fulfilled the criteria needed to obtain passports. They were determined to escape the strict confines of life in rural Ireland.

Although Dubé's personal circumstances when she arrived in Canada as nanny to a Methodist minister were unusual, Finley was one of many Irish women who trained and qualified as a nurse in England before emigrating to Canada. She knew that Irish nurses were in high demand in England and a neighbor helped her to apply. Finley paid her own way, but when she was working as a nurse in England, she discovered that many Irish girls in the nursing school had been recruited and had had their fares paid before they left Ireland. She was told that Irish girls were sought out as perfect candidates for nursing and recalled that other Irish nurses were surprised that she was not aware of this.[19]

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[16] Ibid.
[17] Brian Fallon, "Reflecting on Ireland in the 1950s," in Keogh, *Lost Decade*, 34.
[18] Tracey Connolly, "Emigration from Ireland to Britain during the Second World War," in Bielenberg, *Diaspora,* 55.
[19] Betty (Elizabeth) Finley, Personal Interview, Ottawa, January 14, 2015.

Bridget Guglich was born in Ballycroy, Co. Mayo in 1935. She left Ireland to train in the Whittington Hospital in London when she was eighteen. She recalled her nursing residence and military-style training with affection: "the number of Irish nurses there was almost 100%." Guglich was joined the following year by her sister who had just turned eighteen. The following year, their younger sister joined them. "Of course, we made friends and I was friends with a girl from Sligo, . . . more young ladies from Galway, mostly from Galway and Mayo." When her training was complete, she worked for a few years as a district midwife in London before she and a friend decided to emigrate to Canada. Guglich enjoyed her work and mused that the BBC television series "Call the Midwife" reflected her life at that time. She did not want to stay in England and considered returning to Ireland, but said that it was impossible to get a job there. In contrast, it was easy for another Irish nurse and herself to get a job in Canada:

> So, we went . . . to Canada House in London. We got such a beautiful welcome. They were delighted to see two young healthy girls, nurses, and they paved the way. They told us what we had to do: 'Come back next week. You will have to have a medical' and then more data for you. We met this lovely lady. She was very Canadian, very sweet and she told us all about nursing in Canada. You choose where you are going . . . the General Hospital in Montreal and how to get registered to be able to work. It was all provided for us. We had hardly to do anything, but to sign the papers. We decided to come in April. We arrived on the 11th April 1961 by Trans Canada Airways.

Everything in the hospital in Canada was modern. The new immigrants were delighted with the highly advanced sterilization methods and the bright and efficient modern hospital: "I thought this was beautiful. It was like a palace. We had central supply, you didn't have to sterilize anything. In England, we were still sterilizing . . . boiling up needles. The Montreal General had a great system."[20] The modern infrastructure at Montreal General Hospital reflected the extensive advances in many medical fields in post-war Canada. Rapidly-expanding technological and educational fields meant that Canada needed qualified personnel quickly. According to O'Grada:

> The significant emigration of skilled, better educated emigrants in this period – doctors, engineers, architects, nurses – is a reminder that while high levels of education [in Ireland] may have been a necessary condition for economic growth, they were no guarantee of it. In the late 1950s Irish medical schools were producing 'about 360' new physicians, of whom only about one-third could be absorbed in Ireland. This may mean that Ireland was over-investing in third-level education in the 1950s, in the sense that the benefits were being reaped where people emigrated, not in Ireland.[21]

[20] Bridget Guglich, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 6, 2015.
[21] Ó Gráda, "Irish Economy," 6.

The Ottawa mandarins were well aware of the number of skilled, better educated potential immigrants in Ireland. Moreover, Canadian officials were more than happy to encourage these "right kind of immigrants" covertly, if need be. The Canadian Embassy in Dublin monitored Irish government efforts to curtail emigration from Ireland. On 12 July 1954, Canadian Ambassador Turgeon provided the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa with a detailed analysis of the Report of the Commission on Emigration and Other Population Problems.[22] He noted that the results were not surprising, but he warned that the alarming numbers of emigrants from Ireland was still a matter of grave concern for the Irish government. Promoting Irish emigration to Canada was problematic because they continued to be restrained by the terms of the agreement signed in October 1948. Much discussion ensued as officials tried to find ways to fill the demand for workers in Canada without violating this agreement. In October 1955, Canadian embassy officials reported to the Department of External Affairs that a recruiter for the Canadian National Railway should be able to: "get their quota of settlers from the Republic without employing high pressure methods which would stir up trouble in political circles. His policy of paying personal, modestly advertised visits to the provincial towns will be effective, even though not spectacular."[23] The embassy official reported his conversation with Seán Murphy, Secretary of the Irish Department of External Affairs, and concluded that he would probably have been wiser not to raise the subject of emigration publicity with Murphy, but he had hoped, nonetheless, "that the Aide-Memoire of 1948 might have been officially forgotten." The official noted that "there has been some flaring up of the emigration issue recently . . . under the circumstances, I cannot see that any other reply could have been expected."[24] The response from Murphy was that the Irish government did not sanction Canadian government advertising for "settlers." However, the Canadian official informed his superiors in Ottawa that he had: "been informed verbally that no objection will be taken to [limited] advertisements."[25]

Because the Canadian High Commission in Dublin could not openly distribute literature enticing Irish emigrants to Canada, the officials sought alternate venues where they could interact

[22] Despatch No.166, Canadian Ambassador, Dublin, to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, July 15, 1954, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.
[23] Report to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa from The Canadian Embassy, Dublin, October 24, 1955, RG25, Vol. 6178, File 232-v-40.
[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.

with the Irish public.[26] It was decided to attempt to exploit a loophole in the 1948 agreement, which allowed the Canadian government to provide information on Canada to any Irish citizen who actively sought it. Turgeon considered the possibility of utilizing Irish travel agents to distribute promotional literature. Officials decided to meet with a number of travel agents throughout the Republic of Ireland to determine their interest in disseminating information on emigration to Canada. Travel agents would not actively recruit, but would simply provide information on Canada to anyone who asked for it.[27] These agents proved to be willing conduits and benefited from the extra business. For example, when the Director of the Canadian Government Immigration Settlement Service addressed the SKAL Club – a Travel Agents' luncheon group – on the development of Canada's resources, embassy officials reported that he received an enthusiastic and positive response. The Canadian Embassy officials in Dublin reported to Ottawa that they had discovered a way to exploit the loophole which allowed dissemination of information on Canada to those who actively sought it. They noted that "although this talk, [on Canadian resources] which has been given to a number of other audiences in Ireland lays no direct emphasis on the prospects for emigrants, the implication is there."[28] The Travel Agents then simply distributed information on emigration to Canada to anyone who requested it.

In June 1955, Canadian officials went a step further and implemented a pilot project to recruit emigrants from Ireland by utilizing travel agents. The objective was to recruit without overtly drawing the attention of Irish government officials, or the Irish press. Accompanied by the Attaché and a Canadian Pacific Railroad representative, Canadian government officials travelled around the Republic of Ireland visiting travel agents and distributing information on Canada.[29] Between 1 June and 10 June 1955, Canadian government officials visited twenty-two travel agents. They reported to Ottawa that the project was a resounding success and that "about 100 heads of family and single persons were interviewed, of which number a large proportion intended to emigrate before September." They noted that the Attaché himself "who viewed the whole plan from the start with much misgiving, and was most pessimistic as to its success, is now most

[26] Despatch No.166, Canadian Ambassador, Dublin, to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, July 15, 1954, RG 26, Vol. 170, File 3-33-16.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Letter from High Commission Dublin to Secretary of State External Affairs, January 30, 1955, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[29] Information distributed to Travel Agents included a brochure titled "Canada: Do you plan to emigrate? Answers to Emigrants' Questions" published in Canada, June 1948, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.

enthusiastic at the results of the experiment." The report concluded: "The purpose of the trip was achieved, in that we can increase our activities in Southern Ireland within the existing terms of reference and in that a significant number of Travel Agents have demonstrated their willingness to co-operate with us."[30]

Albert Rive was appointed Canadian Ambassador to Éire on 16 August 1955. In a report to the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa, Rive explained that the "understanding which had been reached with the Irish authorities that a moderate amount of discreet advertising might be done by travel agents: that they would be allowed to advertise in daily papers, stating that a Canadian representative would be available at their offices on various dates to discuss opportunities in Canada" continued hold promise. He noted that this arrangement was "a mutually satisfactory means of meeting the legitimate demands of the visa office, travel agents and prospective emigrants to Canada, without attracting undue publicity, or adverse comment."[31] Utilizing the services of travel agents proved to be successful and the numbers of travel agencies visited continued to increase. The Dublin office reported to Ottawa: "in the first four months of 1956, 41 centers have been visited by our officers, compared to 54 in the whole year of 1955."[32]

Canadian Embassy officials in Dublin continued in their attempts to persuade the Irish government to relax their opposition to emigration from Ireland. Their argument was that people were leaving Ireland in any case and that they would find lucrative employment in Canada. The Canadian embassy continued to have informal discussions with Seán Murphy. Murphy had been the first Irish Ambassador to Canada from 1950 to 1955 and T. J. Major in the Canadian embassy reported that he hoped that discussions would be fruitful because Murphy was sympathetic to their problem. He "felt that immigration was inevitable, [and] that Canada was a desirable place for Irish emigrants to go." However, he stressed that Murphy urged caution because the Irish Minister was:

> none too happy about disturbing the status quo[sic] but would give the matter further consideration. Mr. Murphy and I agreed that the best approach would be to secure from the Minister a verbal release from the 1948 verbal agreement and to work out a modus operandi[sic] which would not embarrass the Government but would permit a limited

[30] "Report on Inspectional Trip to Dublin, Eire [sic]", Department of Citizenship and Immigration, June 28, 1955, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.
[31] Confidential Memorandum, "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178. File 232-V-40.
[32] "Report on Emigration from Eire. [sic] December 7, 1956. This report to Ottawa includes a copy of the *Ireland Census 1956* and detailed statistics from Dublin of sponsored and unsponsored immigrants and notes that interviews were conducted, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.

> degree of publicity regarding the whereabouts of our Visa Section and the classes of persons most likely to fit into the Canadian economy. Mr. Murphy is seized with the importance of this information coming from Canadian official sources."[33]

Murphy was anxious that his part in facilitating emigration to Canada would not be acknowledged. This pattern of utilizing personal conversations and contacts to continue to recruit without drawing negative attention continued. As Major pointed out: "Emigration is a politically hot potato in this state and expansion of our activities will have to be cautious and gradual so as not to embarrass the Government. Any advertising by the steamship companies and Canadian railways will have to be vetted by this Embassy in order to avoid irritating Irish tender spots."[34]

One of the most compelling reasons to avoid publicity regarding the recruitment of immigrants was the embarrassment that would be caused by publicly-aired queries and the necessity of avoiding discussion of Irish emigration to Canada in the Dáil. As the Canadian embassy reported in 1955 "emigration is still a very live issue and any increase in publicity to attract emigrants might well give rise to embarrassing Parliamentary Questions."[35] They advised caution and noted that conditions in Ireland "are quite distinct and call for a much different approach to the problem of securing settlers." Major warned that due to recent newspaper headlines such as "Emigration now nationally destructive," he had advised the Attaché to "use discretion in the publicity material being distributed by the travel agents" in case they provoked questions in the Dail."[sic][36]

The situation became volatile in the summer of 1955 when a series of articles in the *Irish Press* drew attention to the high level of emigration to Canada. A reporter had uncovered plans by "Belfast travel agents, transportation companies and shipping firms . . . for an extensive emigration movement from the Six Counties to Canada."[37] Rive attached a clipping of this newspaper article to his 22 November 1955 report to Ottawa. He noted that should his office receive any enquiries: "we intend to disclaim any knowledge of the scheme. As you know the question of emigration is a very delicate one in the Twenty Six Counties [sic] and we have been requested by the Irish

[33] Letter from T.G. Major, Canadian Embassy, Dublin to Secretary of State External Affairs, September 12, 1955, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Letter from Canadian Embassy, Dublin to Secretary of State External Affairs, October 20, 1955, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[36] Letter from Canadian Embassy, Dublin to Secretary of State for External Affairs, October 24, 1955, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[37] "Plan for Exodus to Canada – But Stormont Knew Nothing," *Irish Press,* November 22, 1955.

Government not to make any attempts to 'lure' Irishmen to Canada."[38] As Rive predicted, details of plans to encourage emigration to Canada were subsequently reported in other Irish newspapers. This "furor raised in the Irish Press . . . [resulted in] further reports, relating to planned emigration to Canada . . . in the Dublin Papers: Evening Herald, the Independent and the Irish Times [sic]."[39] Rive complained that this raised questions and that the immigration officer in Dublin had found it necessary to disclaim any knowledge of such activities.

Rive urged the Secretary of State for External Affairs to cancel a planned visit to Dublin by the Canadian Deputy Minister of Citizenship and Immigration as it would attract publicity and generate further unwanted questions. He reported that he had only been in Dublin for a short time but was already "well aware of the attitude of the Irish Government and Opposition to any proposals to encourage emigration from Ireland whatever their source." He suggested that any meetings regarding Irish emigration to Canada be scheduled in the London office and reiterated that there was already "a steady flow of emigrants to Canada from Ireland . . . This continues only because every effort is made to avoid publicity." His final comment in this "Confidential" report sums up his attitude. He said that the Deputy Minister would be informed of the work of the Visa Office in Ireland at the meeting in London: "The Deputy Minister can then decide for himself whether it is worth risking a visit to this country. I feel that the motto of our Visa Office must remain 'Do good by stealth and blush to find it known.'" A hand-written note on the report when it was received in Ottawa suggested that Rive's warning was heeded. The handwritten note stated "Mr. Fortier, in view of above, cancelled his plans to go to Dublin – Dec, 27/55."[40]

Avoiding publicity was especially important because Rive was negotiating how the Canadian government Department of Citizenship and Immigration's decision to widen the provisions of the Assisted Passage Loan Plan would be received by the Irish government. On 19 December 1955, the Department of Immigration issued a press release announcing the assisted passage plan for emigrants to Canada from European countries. These interest free loans, first initiated in February 1951, were provided to assist with the cost of transportation to Canada. Those

[38] Despatch: "Article in the Irish Press concerning Emigration to Canada." from A. Rive, Canadian Ambassador, Dublin to Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, November 22, 1955, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[39] Confidential Report: "Visit of Deputy Minister of Citizenship and Immigration," from A. Rive, Canadian Ambassador, Dublin to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, December 16, 1955, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[40] Confidential Report "Visit of Deputy Minister of Citizenship and Immigration," from A. Rive, Canadian Ambassador, Dublin to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, December 16, 1955, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.

eligible included farm labourers, domestic servants, and skilled workers such as nurses, teachers, stenographers and typists.[41] Irish citizens were also eligible under this plan. The Department of Immigration in Ottawa had been instructed not to issue this press release in Ireland; officials were confident that the information would percolate through to the Irish Republic without risking overt publicity. However, the plan and Irish citizens' eligibility was uncovered by Irish reporters and was immediately reported in the *Irish Press*. The Canadian embassy in Dublin was contacted by the Irish Minister of External Affairs, Liam Cosgrave, who informed them that he "was deeply concerned about the possibility of questions in the Dail[sic], which would again open up the subject of Irish emigration to Canada and elsewhere, a subject on which the Government was particularly sensitive."[42]

A flurry of telegrams between the Canadian embassy in Dublin and the Department of External Affairs in Ottawa reveal the efforts made to assure the Irish government that the Canadian government were not making any overt effort to recruit Irish citizens under this plan. Officials highlighted that the plan had not been advertised in Ireland and assured the Irish government that "it is not intentional in deference to the wish of Government of Ireland, to undertake recruiting of citizens of Ireland for migration to Canada and for this reason no press release about plan was made in Dublin."[43] Rive was relieved to report that: "despite the enquiries from the local press and references to the Assisted Passage Loan Plan in the Belfast press" it was fortunate that there was no mention of the statement in the Dublin press. Rive said that he had informed Cosgrave, in "a personal letter" of the position of the Canadian government.[44] He wrote: "While suitable emigrants from Ireland would, I believe, be eligible for assistance under the plan, may I assure Your Excellency it is not our intention to advertise the plan in Ireland with a view to inducing citizens of Ireland to migrate to Canada."[45] By early 1956, the matter appears to have been settled and the Canadian embassy in Dublin reported that it had not received any further queries from Irish government officials, or from the Irish press. Instructions from Ottawa were to continue to proceed

[41] Press Release, Department of Citizenship and Immigration, December 19, 1955. Release states: "since February 1951 a total of 31,817 immigrants have had their journey to Canada financed." RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[42] Confidential Memorandum, "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[43] Telegram from Rive to Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, December 21, 1955, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[44] Despatch No. 380, Canadian Embassy, Dublin, to Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, December 23, 1955, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[45] Confidential Memorandum, "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.

along the usual lines and to remain unspecific when answering questions "from the Irish press regarding the Assisted Passage Loan Scheme."[46]

Rive remained vigilant and continued his surveillance to ensure that emigration from Ireland to Canada was not reported in the Irish press. However, an article published in the Canadian *Windsor Daily Star* on 7 March 1956 caused consternation in the Dublin office. The article titled "Eire[sic] Relaxes Obstacles to Emigration" reported that "Canadian migration counsellors have been visiting Eire [sic] and quite formally and openly answering the questions of interested people, showing films illustrative of life in Canada, and arranging contacts with potential employers." The article concluded that "As the result of more intensive activity Canada expects to find more than 5,000 Irish migrants this year, including nurses, school teachers and doctors."[47] Rive was incensed. He made extensive enquiries to find out who this journalist was and reported that no one among the Dublin newspapermen and journalists seemed to know who this reporter was. He considered the possibility that "this story has been deliberately planted in order to embarass [sic] us." He requested that the Department of External Affairs in Canada "would make discreet enquiries" and let him know who this journalist was and whether the story had originated in Belfast.[48]

The resulting investigation by the Department of External Affairs discovered that the journalist was a free-lance writer who covered the United Kingdom, Northern Ireland, and Éire for several Canadian papers. This reporter had also written about Canadian National Film Board films, which were distributed by the Canadian Embassy.[49] The Canadian Embassy in Dublin had increased the circulation of these films to travel agents and other outlets throughout Ireland, so presumably this was where the journalist received some of his information.[50] In any case, Rive quickly contacted Seán Murphy assuring him that there was no change in Canadian government policy regarding emigration.[51] Rive was also quick to discourage any other Canadian journalists

[46] Letter Department of Citizenship and Immigration to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, January 20, 1956 and Memoramdum from Canadian Embassy, Dublin, February 6, 1956, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[47] Richard L. Thomas, "Eire Relaxes Obstacles to Emigration," *Windsor Daily Star,* March 7, 1956.
[48] Telegram from Rive to Department of External Affairs, March 28, 1956, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[49] Memorandum, Department of External Affairs, Ottawa. April 4, 1956, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[50] Canadian Embassy in Dublin reported in 1960 "With the arrival at this mission of a First Secretary with experience in the Information service and with a librarian-information assistant interested in making outside contacts, a stream of press publicity, photographs and feature articles is flowing into the pages of all, or almost all Irish papers. Also, about a year ago, we arranged with the Irish Film Institute for them to handle our film library. They now have two hundred Canadian films which are in constant circulation to all part of Ireland. We look forward to supplying them with another hundred films during the current year." Confidential Memorandum, "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40
[51] "Confidential" Letter, from Rive to Dept. of External Affairs, April 18, 1956, RG25 Vol 6178 File 232-V-40.

from following up on the subject of Irish emigration to Canada. In a personal reply to a request for information from a journalist from the *Canada Weekly Review*, Rive wrote that, although he would be delighted to meet with her, he begged her to "give up any idea of writing for publication anything whatever about Irish emigration to Canada." Rive explained that the Irish governments since 1922 had "set their faces sternly against emigration. . . . In deference to their wishes, this Embassy does not advertise for emigrants and conscientiously refrains from any attempt at recruiting them. . . . any publicity whatever would embarrass the Embassy." He appealed to her as a fellow Canadian and assured her that he would be delighted to assist her with any articles on any other subject. He wrote: "I am sorry to disappoint you but, believe me, this is once when doing nothing is the best way of doing good."[52]

Rive was passionate about continuing to recruit Irish emigrants to Canada, while at the same time not doing anything to draw attention to the fact. He stressed that it was vital not to put the Irish government in an uncomfortable position, which, in turn, could give rise to embarrassing questions.[53] The embassy in Dublin continued to monitor references to Canada or to Irish emigration in the Irish press. They also continued to distance themselves from any form of job advertising by Canadian organizations in Irish newspapers. It was not the advertising *per se* that bothered them, but the possibility of being asked specific questions about Canadian immigration policy and making sure that they could avoid questions being raised in the Dáil. In May 1958, Rive contacted the Department of External Affairs regarding a series of advertisements in Dublin newspapers on behalf of the Separate School Board of Sault Ste-Marie inviting applications to be made to the visa attaché in Dublin. In an urgent telegram to Ottawa, Rive reported that he had "informally told Irish authorities that Embassy was not, repeat, not responsible for this advertisement."[54] He reiterated how damaging such advertisements were for relations between the Canadian embassy and the Irish government. He wrote that the advertisement "makes it appear that we are violating our understanding with the Irish Govt [sic] that we will not solicit

[52] Letter Rive to Ms. M. Gayfer, 20 April 1956, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[53] A series of letters concerning security clearances for persons with I.R.A. membership suggests personal connections and off the record conversations were a matter of course. i.e. Rive writes: "it would be possible for me to have a private discussion with a member of the Government, himself a one-time member of the I.R.A., who has since been responsible for the suppression of the organisation." June 4, 1956, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[54] Telegram from Rive to Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, May 8, 1958, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.

immigrants." He stressed that the most important point was that they wanted to avoid any adverse publicity and above all, he complained "I fear a question in the Dail [sic]."[55]

Throughout the 1950s, the Canadian government's immigration policy continued to encourage emigration from the United Kingdom and Ireland, and Canadian officials strove to keep the processing procedure and formalities to the barest minimum. Although they did not mention the Republic of Ireland, in 1958 the Department of Immigration and Citizenship explained they "carried on a very active promotional campaign in the United Kingdom through the media of press, radio, film showings, lectures and, of late, television more so than in any other country."[56] By the 1960s, the Canadian government were still abiding by the 1948 agreement not to actively solicit Irish emigrants, but now felt comfortable in explaining that this "prohibition applies only to Canadian government offices and officers, not to Canadian shipping companies or airlines or, indeed, any other shipping companies or airlines."[57] In January 1960, they reported to Ottawa: "This mission has adhered strictly to its engagement that there should be no advertising for emigrants to Canada . . . This self-denying agreement has never been held by us to extend to advertising for help by Canadian schools, hospitals, and private companies in Canada."[58] However, the Canadian embassy in Dublin continued to warn Ottawa of the dangers of openly advertising for emigrants from Ireland. They warned that such advertising "is likely to raise a political row, the sort all Irish Governments are anxious to avoid." They also noted that the Irish government were treading a fine line, whereby it would be "political suicide to encourage emigration, or to allow it to be openly encouraged. On the other hand, to stop emigration would court extinction."[59]

As usual, Rive was well-informed on the political and economic situation in Ireland and reported that the Irish government presently benefitted from the income provided by emigrant remittances "which is currently estimated at around [pounds] 17,000,000 a year."[60] Connolly notes that these emigrant remittances were one of the few benefits for Ireland to be cited in the Commission on Emigration report in 1954: "Remittances increased the 'incomes' of 'many of the

[55] Telegram from Rive to Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, April 28, 1958, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[56] Letter to Goodwill Committee of Canada from Immigration Branch, Ottawa, August 1, 1958. RG 26. Vol 170, File 3-33-16.
[57] "Confidential" letter Canadian Embassy, Dublin, to Department of External Affairs, January 22, 1960. RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-546.
[58] Confidential Memorandum, "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[59] "Confidential" letter, from Canadian Embassy, Dublin to Department of External Affairs, January 22, 1960, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-546.
[60] Ibid.

families of those who emigrated.' [and] 'in some cases, this increase in income has made it unnecessary for other members of the family to emigrate, but, in other cases, it has been the means of enabling them to do so.'"[61] Rive reported that it was not difficult to understand the position of the Irish government regarding emigration. He did not want to upset the good relationship that they had with the Irish officials by openly recruiting emigrants and he was satisfied that current advertising in the English Sunday papers was percolating through to the Irish public. He suggested that another way of advertising Canada as a destination for emigration would be to relocate the Canadian embassy offices to a more central location in Dublin and wrote that this "would keep Canada in the public eye in a way to which the Irish Government could not possibly object." This was discussed by External Affairs officials in Ottawa who agreed with Rive's suggestion that "getting a Chancery building in a good location, with accommodation for Trade & Commerce and Immigration, a place where the name 'Canada' will be conspicuous, where the flag can be seen flying daily, we are bound to attract many potential immigrants."[62]

The Canadian embassy in Dublin continued to strictly adhere to the agreement that Canadian government officials would not advertise for immigrants in Ireland. However, the Irish government could not control other forms of recruitment by schools, hospitals, and private companies in Canada, or stop them from placing private advertisements in the Irish press. Recruitment was also carried out by religious groups. An in-depth confidential report in 1960 on "Irish Immigration to Canada" confirmed the successful recruitment of nurses and teachers carried out by priests for Roman Catholic hospitals and schools in Canada.[63] This report makes a critical point as to how these recruiters often failed to retain workers once they had spent time in Canada. It notes: "Recruiting of this group has to be continuous because of the high percentage of girls who leave their employment after two or three years to be married, or to take better paid employment. It is understood that an Irish priest who appears in Dublin every year or so, to recruit girls for a Saskatchewan hospital, seeks to enlist up to fifty or sixty girls a year to compensate for the numbers of girls leaving the hospital." This report also refers to the significant numbers of girls who are recruited by religious orders in Canada as novitiates through their sister houses in Ireland.[64]

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[61] Connolly, "Commission," 100.
[62] "Confidential" letter, from Canadian Embassy, Dublin to Department of External Affairs, January 22, 1960, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-546.
[63] Confidential Memorandum "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[64] Ibid.

Referring to a particularly successful recruitment drive for school teachers by Ontario and Saskatchewan in 1954, Rive remarks that he was relieved that "the arrival of these agents was not noticed by the press . . . and no questions were asked in the Dail."[sic] He points out that it was fortunate that "much of the recruiting for the professions, especially for university lecturers, scientists, doctors, surgeons and engineers, and for skilled artisans and tradesmen, is done through personal contact . . . . as the facts, if published would provide generous material for acrimonious debates in the Dail [sic] and public press."[65] Avoiding publicity continued to be critical. For example, in 1963, when Rive was advised that Canadian Forces Medical Services were attempting to recruit Irish doctors and were in direct contact with deans of Irish Medical Schools, he sent an urgent telegram to Ottawa reminding them that the Irish government "objects to overt recruiting of immigrants especially of member professions." He counselled that they might go ahead as long as they avoided any publicity and stressed that the recruiters should not draw untoward attention to their actions and advised: "do not rpt [sic][repeat] not plan a tour of colleges."[66]

The Department of External Affairs in Ottawa heeded Rive's counsel to avoid drawing attention to recruitment efforts. Rive also advised against openly encouraging Canadian airline and shipping companies to advertise in Ireland as he believed this would have repercussions and result in reduced numbers of Irish emigrants to Canada. The Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs in Ottawa wrote that the office agreed that "it is wise not to encourage unrestricted advertising," which might result in stemming the flow of Irish emigration. They were satisfied with the numbers of Irish emigrants arriving in Canada and noted: "Immigration records show that during the year 1957 (one of Canada's largest immigration years), 14,336 Irish citizens immigrated to this country; in 1958 the number dropped to 3,291 and in 1959 to 2,489."[67] The practice of quietly facilitating emigration from Ireland that had been established in 1948 continued. As Rive pointed out, there was sufficient interest in Canada as a destination and attempts to dissuade emigration often had the opposite effect. He noted "sermons, denunciations, appeals or warnings from the pulpit or in the Dail [sic]; editorials or letters-to-the-editor; wherever or whatever; all tended, we believe, to increase Irish interest in the possibility of migrating to Canada."[68] Canadian

[65] Confidential Memorandum "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[66] Telegram from Rive to Department of External Affairs, January 29, 1963, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[67] "Confidential" letter, from Department of External Affairs, Ottawa to Canadian Embassy, Dublin, April 21, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.
[68] Confidential Memorandum "Irish Immigration to Canada," January 22, 1960, RG 25, Vol. 6178, File 232-V-40.

government regulations in 1961 recognized these immigrants as citizens of Ireland with privileges equivalent to British subjects and this allowed their applications to be processed easily.[69] Under Section 23 (3) of the Canadian Citizenship Act "Citizens of Ireland are admissible to Canada under the same conditions as British subjects . . . [and] are accorded the same privileges under immigration regulations."[70]

Despite Irish government attempts to control emigration from Ireland, the reality was that it was impossible to prevent Irish individuals who wanted to leave. There were no restrictions of travel between Ireland and Britain. The Irish government's official position on the subject continued to be "a desire to minimise and eventually eliminate emigration, and the Government's economic development plans envisage this possibility." As Taoiseach, Seán Lemass stated in November 1961, the "difficulty of operating any control at the ports over Irish emigration to Britain is illustrated by the fact that the number of passenger movements by sea and air between the two countries (excluding the Six Counties) exceed two million every year. This movement is not completely unrestricted and is kept so by reason of arrangements between the two Governments regarding the admission of aliens. Any system which might require the production of passports or similar identity documents on entry into Britain would be, in the view of the Irish Government, a retrograde step which should be avoided."[71] This lack of restriction also applied to Irish emigrants to Canada and continued until new emigration regulations based on a points system were introduced by Ottawa in 1967. According to Hawkins: "movement from Europe (including the United Kingdom) has been partly spontaneous and partly the result of deliberate efforts on Canada's part. . . . [continued until immigration policies] began to be effectively universal in 1967."[72]

Although Canadian immigration offices in Liverpool, Leeds, and Bristol closed in 1968, the office established in Dublin 19 April 1949 remained open.[73] This Canadian immigration office continued to follow the Canadian government policy of conducting "immigration activities in

[69] Letter from Department of External Affairs to Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Ottawa, March 20, 1961, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.
[70] Letter from Department of External Affairs to Department of Citizenship and Immigration, Ottawa, March 30, 1961, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.
[71] "Report," Canadian Embassy, Dublin, to Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, November 21, 1961, RG 76, Vol. 821, File 552-1-541.
[72] Hawkins, 60.
[73] Ibid., 60.

Ireland [in a] responsive rather than of a promotional nature"[74] In November 1967, the embassy in Dublin was again concerned by a series of advertisements which deviated from established policy by specifically recruiting economists and statisticians for the Public Service Commission of Canada. The Canadian Ambassador sent a confidential letter to External Affairs in Ottawa titled: "Conduct of Canadian Immigration Policy in Ireland." The Ambassador reminded Ottawa of the 1948 Canadian "Aide Memoire," quoting the section: "the Canadian Government wish to emphasize that they are not taking any initiative in developing migration from Ireland . . . The proposed official . . . would do no advertising of his duties nor of Canadian Immigration Policy." The embassy noted that while they were not "unduly concerned that it will embarrass us with the Irish authorities . . . unless a question is asked in the Dail [sic]" they would appreciate clarification whether the advertisement "represents a change in attitude on the part of the Government of Canada in relation to the Gentlemen's Agreement [of 1948]."[75]

The official reply from Ottawa also referred to the 1948 "Aide Memoire" as a "Gentlemen's Agreement" and stressed: "the following relevant paragraph: 'The Canadian Government wish to emphasize that they are not taking any initiative in developing migration from Ireland." The Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs stressed that: "We have restrained our immigration activities at the federal level meticulously to this understanding. We realize that provincial and private interests in Canada have advertised for immigrants from Ireland but as we have no control over these groups, they cannot be considered as constituting a breach in this understanding." The complicated federal provincial arrangements in Canada allowed the federal government to disassociate itself from any provincial or private advertising for Irish immigration to Canada. However, the Under-Secretary repeated that although "it is unlikely that it will place us in an embarrassing position with the Irish authorities . . . If a question should be asked in the Dail [sic] regarding this advertisement, it would create a problem for the Irish authorities, and the Canadian Government, in turn, would have difficulty in justifying the recruiting of immigrants by a federal department."[76]

[74] Confidential Letter from Canadian Embassy, Dublin to Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, November 1, 1967, RG 76, Vol. 1240, File 5850-3-541.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Confidential Letter from Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, November 23, 1967, RG. 76, Vol. 1240, File 5850-3-541.

This confidential letter was addressed to the Public Service Commission in Ottawa, but "cc: Dublin; European Div.; Press Liaison; Commonwealth; Immigration departments ensured that all Canadian government divisions involved with recruiting emigrants to Canada were aware that "before any further advertisements of this type are placed in the Irish press, or publications they would first be cleared with the Canadian Ambassador in Dublin."[77] Advertisements recruiting university graduates continued to be placed in the Irish press, particularly seeking qualified persons with backgrounds in resource, energy and regional development.[78] A new Canadian "Professional and Advisory Service" section was established in 1968 and "personally interviewed 1,410 students at 35 universities and colleges in the UK and the Republic of Ireland." The officials noted that most of the "recruitment was for teachers, doctors, nurses, and engineers with specialised training and experience . . . a notable feature of the year has been a rise in the skill level of landed arrivals from the Republic, especially in the number of teachers."[79] As the Canadian embassy in Dublin informed External Affairs in Ottawa, the Irish government continued to emphasize its policy of attempting to stop emigration by increasing opportunities at home. They were not about to introduce "measures designed to make it difficult to leave the country." The embassy further informed Ottawa that a speech given by Irish Ambassador to Canada in Victoria, British Columbia in October 1968, in which he "referred to the fact that more than two thousand Irish immigrants arrived in Canada in 1967," had been reported in the Irish press and in radio broadcasts. The embassy noted the Irish Ambassador's comment that "'by 1970 we hope emigration will be reduced to a trickle'" and observed that this continues to be Irish policy: "Every Irish Government would like to stop the drain of both brains and vitality from this country which emigration represents."[80]

However, Irish people continued to emigrate and the Canadian government were more than willing to facilitate those emigrants whose skills were needed in a rapidly expanding Canada. Interviews with members of this cohort who came to Canada in the 1950s and 1960s confirm that they were aware that emigrating to Canada was an enticing possibility. Upon reflection, a number of interviewees commented that they could not remember exactly when they first heard about

[77] Ibid.
[78] "Employment – Offered and Wanted," *Irish Independent,* Tuesday, October 24, 1967, RG 76 Vol 1240, File 5850-3-541.
[79] Telex, Immigration London to External Affairs, Ottawa, June 7, 1968, RG 76, Vol. 1240, File 5850-3-541.
[80] Letter from Canadian Embassy, Dublin, to Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, October 17, 1968, RG 76, Vol.1240, File 5850-3-541.

Canada as a potential destination. A common admission was that they also considered other countries, such as Australia, or New Zealand, but ultimately chose to emigrate to Canada. There is no doubt that efforts to advertise Canada as a lucrative destination played a key role in their decision to emigrate to Canada. Liz Gilligan remembers going to see a film about Canada with a friend soon after she left school. She recalls that it seemed to be such an exciting and exotic location.[81] Luke O'Brien remembered seeing the Canadian flag flying above the Canadian Mission in Dublin. He and his friends gathered information on Canada, Australia, and New Zealand while they were working in the Shelbourne Hotel. O'Brien decided to go to Canada; however, his friends remained in Ireland. Newspaper advertising was also critical in encouraging emigration. Tom Murtagh recalled that when he was working as a teacher in Dublin, a colleague told him about an advertisement in the *Irish Independent* recruiting teachers to work in Ottawa. He successfully applied for the job and noted that up until that point, Canada was just one of a number of countries he was considering.[82]

Murtagh's narrative is similar to other young educated Irish emigrants at that time who were confident that there were many destinations open to them, and who travelled alone to Canada. When Carolyn Gowdy Williams qualified as a physiotherapist, she decided to emigrate and debated where she might go. It was an exciting time in her life. She recalled: "the world was my oyster."[83] Desmond Walsh from Co. Mayo explained that in the 1960s many Canadian universities were expanded. He recalled: "they were really desperately looking for graduate students." Walsh left Ireland for Canada in 1968 as a doctoral candidate in Applied Mathematics. He said:

> I didn't choose Canada, basically you write away, mainly to North America because that is where the money was and the opportunities. I got accepted in a school in California, and one in Michigan, and then Canada, but the Canadian offer was a little more generous. I never regretted it. I thought it was the best choice I ever made to come to Canada . . . I hadn't left Ireland with the intention of emigrating permanently, but again, it was just an open decision and I kind of drifted into staying here. Canada was easy to adapt to.[84]

Walsh accepted the most lucrative offer from Canada and has never regretted his decision. He fulfilled the Canadian government's recruiting criteria and the employment offer and promise of advancement confirmed his decision and enticed him to stay. He was typical of the cadre of

[81] Elizabeth L. Gilligan, Personal Interview, Ottawa, December 4, 2015.
[82] Thomas Murtagh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 27, 2016.
[83] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 5, 2015.
[84] Desmond Walsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 10, 2016.

individuals who are now members of the ISSGO. For them, personal and professional circumstances, combined with ease of access, formed a matrix of forces that lured them to Canada where they thrived.

Chapter 4. Routes: Voyage into the Unknown

Educated and ambitious, the Irish immigrants interviewed for this dissertation made a strategic decision to follow a particular migratory *route*, the route to lucrative employment in Canada. Given their education and drive, they were confident that they would succeed abroad and carefully considered their options as they explored career opportunities. They were determined to leave Ireland and travel to where they would have the scope and opportunities for personal and professional advancement. Canada interested them because it did not seem so far away as Australia or New Zealand, but as personal narratives reveal, until they landed they had no concept of what they were facing in a country of vast extremes of weather and landscape. Each interviewee recalled their exact date of arrival and described their astonishment at the sheer size of the country they encountered. How they travelled depended on a combination of personal circumstances; they crossed the Atlantic by ship or air and, upon arrival, dispersed by train across the country. Their first impressions as the unfamiliar landscape unfolded before them confirmed that crossing the Atlantic was just the first leg of a journey into the unknown. However, their spirit of adventure sustained them as they adjusted to the economic, political, social and cultural realities of Canada.

The reasons they left Ireland were not purely economic; they were frustrated and wanted to escape a milieu that was insular and restricted. Political, social and cultural traditions in Ireland were slow to change and limited their life and career choices. As Tracey Connolly has pointed out, one of the most significant conclusions of "The Commission on Emigration," [1948-1954] was that the report "baldly recognised the lack of social and economic development in much of Ireland, and the impact that this had on a large section of the population."[1] The Commission concluded that "the fundamental cause of emigration is economic but in most cases the decision to emigrate cannot be ascribed to any single motive but to the interplay of a number of motives. The motives, it suggested, were social, political, cultural and psychological."[2] Anxious for upward mobility, many young educated professionals felt stifled in an Ireland where opportunity was preassigned or limited by a rigid class system, entrenched sectarianism, and a variety of other considerations. This, after all, was the era of radio, cinema and the beginning of telecommunications. They knew there were better opportunities overseas and were willing to leave Ireland to explore them.

[1] Connolly, "Commission", 106.
[2] Ibid., 92.

A constant thread that emerged from the interviews was that Canada was just one of a number of destinations that they investigated and they could just as easily have emigrated to another country. Caroline Gowdy Williams explained: "I decided that I would like to see some more of the world. So, how do you choose? Right! how do you choose? Because the world was my oyster. I could have gone anywhere from Hong Kong to South Africa to New Zealand, Australia, Anywhere in fact." Gowdy Williams noted that several reasons, including childhood reading and career opportunities, contributed to her decision to emigrate to Canada. She declared that she was filled with a spirit of adventure and a desire to "see some more of the world" and Canada seemed to offer exciting opportunities.[3] Luke O'Brien also considered emigrating to Australia or New Zealand. In 1953, O'Brien had a full-time job in the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin, but explained that he wondered about his chances of advancement there. He remarked:

> I was getting, you know, a bit long in the tooth and I'm now nineteen, twenty, whatever and I was starting to think. What is my future here? So, at lunch hour I used to take a walk from the Shelbourne and I'd walk around where the embassies were. I began to go into the embassies. The three embassies I selected were Canada, Australia, and I think there was also New Zealand or maybe New Zealand and Australia were together. Something like that.
> So, I got material from the three countries and I started reading that . . . . two other guys who I was kind of close with in the hotel and we would walk together. They were around my age you know, guys starting off on their lives too. 'Maybe, we'll go with you and we'll look into it too.' I picked Canada. I figured Canada had the best opportunities.[4]

Felix and Margo Connolly came to Canada in June 1961. Once they had made the decision to go overseas, Felix applied for a number of jobs in Canada and Australia. He explained:

> We made applications to come to both. We did the medicals for both, in fact, and we were prepared to go to either country. But, by coincidence, Canadian Ship Building Company advertised in Belfast for Draftsmen. So, I applied immediately and they were very quick. They responded within a week saying: 'Yes, you are hired, we will pay your fare out.' That was it.[5]

Margo laughed as she remembered how close they came to moving to Australia: "Felix went to Liverpool to get the boat, so he sailed on a Monday from Liverpool. On Tuesday morning, a letter came from Australia saying: 'there is a house goes with the job.' [They both laughed at this fact

[3] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 5, 2015.
[4] Luke O'Brien, Personal Interview, Toronto, October 21, 2013.
[5] Felix Connolly, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 19, 2014

because Felix was already on the boat when this letter arrived.] So, that is how we came to Canada."[6]

Tom Murtagh from Co. Longford told a similar story. His decision to emigrate illustrated the point that it was not purely economic reasons that prompted young professionals to leave Ireland at this time. Historian Dermot Keogh observed that "Ireland was a very good place to live in the 1950s if one had a permanent and pensionable job. Being a teacher, a lower civil servant or a member of the other professions, provided quite a high standard of living."[7] Although he had a good job, Murtagh wanted to leave Ireland. He had been teaching in a primary school for six years and had just qualified as a secondary school teacher when he decided to get away for a while. He had planned to take a two-year contract to teach in Nigeria but, due to civil unrest at that time, he decided to try somewhere else. A friend suggested Canada and Murtagh explained that some of the Canadian school boards: "used to send hiring teams over to the British Isles every January because there was apparently a shortage of teachers there at the time. They would come and have an ad in the *Irish Independent* and *Irish Times* that [they] would be in Dublin on these dates in the Gresham Hotel. You had to contact them if you wanted to have an interview." He was offered a teaching position by the Saskatchewan school board in a town called Cudworth, but had no idea where this was:

> I couldn't find Cudworth on any map I was looking at. So, I finally phoned Saskatchewan [Canada] House in London. I spoke to a woman there and I said: 'could you tell me something about Cudworth?' So, there was a bit of a pause and then she said: 'well, there is an elevator in Cudworth.' Well, an elevator to me was a lift. I said: 'an elevator!' I didn't realize that that meant, that the train went through, and the elevator was very important for wheat and all that stuff. Farmers all brought their grain to the grain elevators. She said: 'there is a hospital and, of course, the school' and that was it.

Murtagh had decided to take the job in Cudworth when one of his fellow teachers remembered seeing an advertisement in the *Irish Independent* for a teaching job in Ottawa. Murtagh said: "Ottawa, well I had heard of Ottawa before. He said: 'I will phone home and ask my mother if the paper is still there.' She [his mother] went out, it was in the bin. She went out and retrieved the paper from the bin, [he] brought it in to me." Murtagh applied for the advertised position and came to take up employment as a high school teacher in Ottawa in August 1969. He recounts how years later, when he retired, he decided to drive to Cudworth: "Well, I drove and drove and drove. You

[6] Margo Connolly, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 19, 2014
[7] Keogh, *Lost Decade,* 18.

just drive for miles. You would see a car going and all this dust coming up behind it. I got to Cudworth and the school. I think I would have died if I had gone there."[8]

Murtagh's observation highlights the fact that no matter how much information the immigrants accumulated about life in Canada before they arrived, it was almost impossible for people who had grown up in Ireland to imagine the vast expanses of the Canadian landscape. Gowdy Williams remembered being astounded by how big the country was. She described her train journey across Canada to begin her work as a physiotherapist in Alberta:

> I had a sleeper berth on the train, you eat in the Dining Car and there was an Observation Car. One of the things I remember most acutely about that trip was going to bed that first night and it was in Ontario and going to bed the next night and waking up and I was still in Ontario . . . but what wakened me the next morning, or startled me anyway, was the train whistle, 'whoo whoo whoop' like this you see. So, I thought: 'there is something wrong, there is something wrong.' So, I ran up to the Observation Car and I looked out and there, we were in the woods of Northern Ontario, way up at about Kenora or somewhere up that way, North West Ontario.
>
> There in front of the train on the track was a great big Moose, standing looking at the train like that, and I thought wow! It was like the photographs.' And then you hit the prairies not too long after that, Saskatchewan. I remember stepping down at Swift Current, stepping down off the train . . . I just got out for air, you know, and looked around me and looking out over the town, because the platform was sort of high and it all looked like rows of garden sheds. All the houses looked like garden sheds and they all had this shallow pitch on the roof. I suppose they didn't need a steep pitch because there wasn't a whole lot of rain and there wasn't a whole lot of snow or whatever, and they were all made of wood and horizontal siding and things like that. I thought: 'do people live in those?' [laughter]
>
> And then in that same part of that train journey, seeing a thunder storm roll in from the West and you could see it for miles and miles away. You could see the clouds rolling in and the zots of lightening going down. It was like something someone had invented, you know. I had never seen anything like it before. So, that was very exciting too.[9]

Although Irish immigrants who came to Canada in the 1950s and 1960s found it difficult to conceive of the geographical expanse of the country, they were aware of the many possibilities for advancement that Canada offered. The country was undergoing rapid change and they were eager to contribute to this progress and were willing to learn and to play a role in Canada's burgeoning economy. Having excelled in Ireland, achieving high marks in graduate and post graduate education, they wanted to experience life and were open to new adventures. Gowdy William's excitement was enhanced by the fact that this was the first time that she had been abroad.

[8] Tom Murtagh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 27, 2016.
[9] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 5, 2015.

She grew up in the northern part of Co. Down and came to Canada in June 1959. She had qualified and started to work as a physiotherapist without ever having to leave her own home and she was eager to travel abroad:

> I just wanted to see something of the world. I looked at my mother. I looked at a lot of women, of the generation before me and they had never been anywhere. I thought that: 'well! Alright!' They were all married just pre-war and the war came and you could see how that happened. But, I didn't want that to happen to me. I wanted to get away for a couple of years first.[10]

Gowdy Williams travelled alone and her story contains elements reflected in other narratives by Irish women who emigrated to Canada as single young women in search of travel and adventure. Emigration was an accepted fact of life in Ireland in the 1950s and was a way for women to leave home with family approval: "Getting to why did I leave to come to Canada? I always say to people: 'you couldn't, in Northern Ireland, very respectably leave your father's roof unless you either a) got married, or b) emigrated.' It was so small you know."[11]

This comment confirms that emigration was an avenue of escape from the strict confines of life for women in Ireland. It was approved of by society at large and, more importantly, by one's family and friends. In her discussion of Irish women and the diaspora, historian Mary Daly notes: "nursing was seen as the most desirable occupation for emigrant daughters of respectable Irish farmers and other middle-class families. . . . In 1951 there were 21,672 Irish-born women working as trained nurses in Britain . . . [and] as Britain came to experience a shortage of trainee teachers, growing number of Irish women (and men) were taking these positions."[12] She observes that: "Although the career choices made by many Irish emigrant women reflected labour shortages and market demand in the country of immigration, the fact that they also conformed to the social and cultural preferences of respectable rural Irish families begs the question as to whether Irish women emigrants were making a dash for freedom and asserting their individual wishes, or were continuing to respect family goals and expectations."[13] Daly's conclusion: "The answer is probably elements of both" is reflected in many female emigration narratives.

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[10] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 5, 2015.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Mary E. Daly, "Irish Women and the Diaspora: Why They Matter," in *Women and Irish Diaspora Identities: Theories, Concepts and New Perspectives,* eds. D. A. J. MacPherson and Mary J. Hickman (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2014), 26.
[13] Ibid., 27.

Emigration allowed women to escape the confines of home in a way that did not involve resorting to an unwanted marriage. Kathleen Marsh remembered being surprised by the numbers of young women who were getting married in London in the early 1950s:

> What I did notice when I went to England was that girls married younger than in Ireland at the time. Irish girls weren't in a hurry, well, in Belfast anyway. There were loads of girls engaged to be married. But they were years engaged. We used to say to each other 'there is no hurry, because these ones have to go first.' I noticed that the English girls that I would meet, I thought: 'Gee, they all marry very young here.'[14]

Gowdy Williams and Marsh did not leave Ireland to enhance their marriage prospects. Their decision to leave was predicated on a number of factors including a desire to travel and experience life. Their narratives echo Clear's argument as to why so many women left Ireland at this time. Clear writes: "mass emigration of girls and women was one of a number of social changes in Ireland [between 1946-1961] . . . the decision to emigrate can only be understood in the context of coming of age of a generation of women who wanted to change their lives whether they emigrated or not."[15] Rather than assuming that women were helpless victims who left Ireland to enhance their marriage prospects, Clear argues that "low marriage rates and high rates of permanent celibacy were almost entirely because of women's choices. Women were rejecting men – not the other way round."[16] Furthermore, she notes that: "Emigration was one of a number of strategies employed by Irish girls and women to better their lives in Ireland and abroad . . . But whether they left or they stayed, from the mid-1940s Irish girls and women were intent upon 'going', one way or another."[17]

Emigration was an accepted way to break free and, because it was socially acceptable, it allowed emigrants to remain in contact with family in Ireland. An interesting point raised by many interviewees was that, although they wanted to get away from Ireland, they wanted to go somewhere where it would be relatively easy to go back home for a visit. Gowdy Williams said that: "I thought, if I wanted to get back to Ireland, it is a long, long way to come from Australia or South Africa. It is still far from Canada, but not so far."[18] She had not travelled abroad before she came to Canada in 1959, but two of the interviewees who came to Canada as single women in

[14] Catherine (Kathleen) Marsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 30, 2016.
[15] Catríona Clear, "'Too Fond," 139.
[16] Ibid., 144.
[17] Ibid., 149.
[18] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 5, 2015

1967 had travelled outside of Ireland frequently before they emigrated. Ireland was beginning to change and holidays abroad were now becoming more accessible to Irish citizens who had the financial means to travel. However, the social mores of Irish society were changing more slowly and, as Daly observes, Irish women [and men] were expected to conform to "respectable" social and cultural preferences.[19] In his statistical review of population change in Ireland in the 1950s, O'Hanlon highlights the sharp contrast between labour-force participation of Irish-born married women in Britain and married women in the Republic of Ireland. Using information from the 1971 census in Britain, O'Hanlon writes, "Forty-seven per cent of [Irish-born] married females were in the labour-force, compared with only 7% of married females in the Republic."[20]

In Ireland, it was generally accepted that women would resign from employment when they got married and remain in the home to look after their children. According to Connolly:

> . . . in spite of their recognised political equality in the form of the vote . . .the inferior status of women was evident [in areas] such as 'refusal to admit to the principle of equal pay for equal work; automatic dismissal of women from many positions on marriage; inheritance laws permitting the favouring of the sons to the detriment of the daughters.' In addition, the social standing of females in the 1937 Constitution annoyed most female associations. This was in direct contrast to the British government's stance on females, where women were seen as an essential part of the paid workforce rather than simply essential to the family and community units.[21]

Aileen Dolan was a full-time employee of the Bank of Nova Scotia in Dublin in 1965 when she met and subsequently married her Canadian husband. She described how restricted she felt when she was living and working in Dublin:

> You have no idea how different Ireland was then. Now, girls from the country would come up and go into an apartment. But, if a Dubliner went into an apartment! Well, it was really frowned on, especially by the family. Why? You were meant to contribute to the family, not to go out and be independent. They didn't like that.
> Life was a lot, lot different, growing up in the 1950s.You know, and the early 60s, it was a lot different. It is a different country now than it was when I was growing up.[22]

Contributing to the family was a woman's duty and, as Connolly notes, in "the ethos of the wider society . . . females were perceived as homemakers rather than for their contribution to the country

[19] Daly, "Irish Women," 26.
[20] O'Hanlon, "Population" 78.
[21] Connolly, "Commission", 96.
[22] Aileen Dolan, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 8, 2016.

in other ways."[23] The reluctance to recognize women's work as a valuable contribution to society was evident in how female occupations and areas of work were categorised in the censuses of 1926, 1936, 1946, and 1961. Reflecting on the lifeworlds of women working in agriculture, Clear says that: "The vast majority of women 'gainfully occupied' in agriculture were 'assisting relatives,' sisters, daughters or daughters-in-law of farmers. Farmers' wives were never counted as assisting relatives, and were included under the non-gainfully occupied category of 'engaged in home duties.'" According to Clear, many girls and women were unsatisfied with this and expected better, which was why they were leaving in large numbers in the 1940's and 1950's.[24]

The notion of wanting to break free for a short period-of-time, to go away, but not forever, is a common motif in many of the ISSGO immigrant narratives. Marie Bhaneja grew up in Dublin and felt that she needed to get away for a while. She had a permanent, pensionable job in the Public Relations and Information Bureau in Córas Iompair Éireann, Ireland's national public transport provider (CIÉ) and had taken advantage of free rail travel in Europe to travel extensively. In 1967, she was twenty-six years old, single, and decided to leave Ireland for a year or two. Like Gowdy Williams, Bhaneja thought that Australia and South Africa were too far away. Instead, she considered applying for jobs in the United States, or Canada:

> I thought I will apply to Canada too. I had no one in Canada. I never knew anyone who came to Canada. I had no relatives abroad, I had no reason, I had no friends abroad. So, I had absolutely no reason or no link anywhere, either in the States or in Canada. I was totally free. I had no ties anywhere. I really came to Canada by default. I was fully expecting to go to the States."

Reflecting on why she knew that there were job opportunities in Canada, she recalled: "There was a lot of promotion at that time for Canada. There was quite a bit. In the winter of 1966, there was a big travelling exhibition that came to the Shelbourne Hotel in Dublin promoting Expo 67. I got a very glowing, 'please come for your interview,' kind of thing from Canada. So, that is how I ended up in Canada."

When considering why she chose to come to Canada, Bhaneja says that she clearly recalled the moment when she first heard about and saw pictures of Canada. She was sixteen years old and had been invited to a Methodist church in Ranelagh to see a film of the Queen's visit to Ottawa. She had no interest in seeing the film and only went to please the lady who had invited her: "So, I

[23] Connolly, "Commission", 97.
[24] Clear, "Too Fond", 142

went to this thing on Sunday evening. You know, there were no young people there. I had never even been in a Protestant church before in my life." She wondered if this could have had some subliminal influence on her choice to apply for a job in Ottawa in 1969: "It just shows the randomness sometimes of life. The way that stuck in my mind and . . . [I had] no interest. Could I have thought, at sixteen, that Sunday in Ranelagh, that this, I am forty-seven years in Canada now."[25] Her recollections are consistent with other narratives as to why individuals chose to come to Canada instead of the United States, Australia, or any other destination around the world. Gowdy Williams also wondered if stories she had read before she decided to emigrate had a subliminal effect on why she chose to take the job in Canada:

> I had been excited about Canada because there had been a book by Hammond Innis in the middle 50s called *Cambell's Kingdom* and it was all about Alberta, and the foothills and oil exploration and things. I had read it and that got me excited. Another book that was published called *Canada: Tomorrow's Giant*. Sometimes these things were serialized. So, those were just two small influences, you know.[26]

These vignettes suggest that films and books distributed systematically by the Canadian embassy to various locations around Ireland could have had the desired effect of highlighting the wonders and attractions of Canada, and might have influenced subsequent decisions to emigrate there. When given the choice among seemingly equal opportunities, perhaps, it is just human nature to choose the one that seems to be familiar, or that is advertised as having similar customs and mores. Bhaneja was satisfied that she chose to go to Canada. She never felt any kind of culture shock living and working in the Dominion and found the office work and procedures remarkably similar to what she had been used to doing in Ireland. She liked Canadians and enjoyed living in Canada. Bhaneja had cashed in her superannuation benefits when she resigned from CIÉ to come to Canada in 1967. She was financially comfortable and able to take advantage of the delights that the country had to offer.[27]

Margaret (Maggie) O'Rourke also had fond memories of her early days in Canada. Born in Roscrea, Co.Tipperary, she worked as a physiotherapist in Tullamore, Co. Offaly when she went on holiday to Europe and met some Canadians in Venice. She remembered: "sitting around St

[25] Marie Bhaneja, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 16, 2015.
[26] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 5, 2015. *Cambell's Kingdom* published in 1952 and *Canada: Tomorrow's Giant*, written by Bruce Hutchinson in 1957. Both portray Canada as an exciting wilderness, full of promise and adventure.
[27] Marie Bhaneja, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 16, 2015.

Mark's Square and I thought they are really fun people, they are really not like Americans. They seemed really laid back." When she came home from her trip, she decided that she needed a change in her life and applied to Canada House in London. A few weeks later, she was invited to London for an interview, but by then had changed her mind and wrote saying that she had decided to stay in Tullamore.[28] O'Rourke is a good example of the targeted energy that Canadian officials put into recruiting the "right kind" of emigrants. O'Rourke was a fully qualified and experienced physiotherapist and, therefore, exactly the type of individual the Canadian government was actively recruiting at that time. O'Rourke recalled being surprised when she received a telephone call from London inviting her to come for the interview and offering to pay all her travel expenses. Although she had decided not to emigrate, she had no intention of refusing an offer of an all-expenses-paid weekend trip to London: "I said, 'When and Where?' And that was it! It was within the week that I went for the interview and, by November, I was sitting in London waiting to take an aircraft from London to Germany, where the Canadians were stationed at the time."

O'Rourke was surprised to find that she was being actively recruited as military personnel. She had thought the job was for a physiotherapist to work as a civilian in the military but, during the interview, she realized that they were recruiting her for a military position and that she was being given the option to join the army, navy, or air force. She quickly made the decision: "I am doing 180 degree think tank here, saying 'can I handle this?' You have to sign on for three years. 'Yes,' I thought, 'I can do that.'" She joined the Royal Canadian Air Force as a lieutenant. Her first posting was to the National Defence Medical Centre in Ottawa where she stayed for the next two and a half years. She embraced her life in the military from the first moment she stepped on the aircraft. She flew to Germany on a Hercules aircraft sitting on a metal bench [she remembers wondering if she would have to fly to Canada sitting on a metal bench] and then from Germany to Trenton, Ontario in a Viscount aircraft:

> That was an interesting trip too because, these four guys at the back of the plane, there was a little table and they were playing this card game just about the whole way through and I found out it was Bridge. I thought 'Oh my Goodness, I must learn that game.' I got on the plane as Margaret O'Rourke, by the time I got off, I was Maggie O'Rourke. So, I was kind of rechristened on the way. Everybody was calling me Maggie by the time we got off.[29]

[28] Margaret (Maggie) O'Rourke, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 12, 2015.
[29] Ibid.

O'Rourke had a successful career in the Canadian military. Recently retired, she is an active member of ISSGO. When she had graduated as a physiotherapist, she worked for a few years in London, England before she came back to Ireland to work in Tullamore. She enjoyed her time working in London, but decided that she would move back to Ireland when she was offered a job as a physiotherapist in Tullamore. Her professional qualifications ensured that O'Rourke had no shortage of employment offers. Her decision to apply to Canada House in London was a spur of the moment decision inspired by a chance meeting with Canadian tourists on a trip to Venice. As she points out, by the time the Canadian military had contacted her, she had already settled back into her work and life routine in Tullamore. She had informed the recruiters that she was not interested, but changed her mind when they offered to pay her expenses to simply attend the interview. Serendipity such as this echoed throughout the field interviews with the ISSGO cohort.

O'Rourke is one of a number of young professional Irish women who came to Canada having first worked for a period of time in England. This was common practice for young newly qualified Irish professionals to go to England in the 1950s. A study of Irish immigrants and Irish communities abroad commissioned by the Irish government in 2002, notes that one of the "most striking characteristics of migrants throughout the post-1945 period is their young age."[30] According to historian Enda Delaney: "between 1951 and 1961 over 400,000 people left independent Ireland – nearly a sixth of the total population recorded in 1951. . . . One in three of those aged 30 years or under in 1946 had left the country by 1971."[31] He observes that "four-fifths of those who left in the post-war period, until the early 1970s emigrated to Britain."[32] However, as O'Rourke explains, she decided to return to work as a physiotherapist in Ireland having gained work experience in London. Exact numbers of the Irish who emigrated to the UK and stayed there for a relatively short period of time before they chose to return to Ireland, or emigrate to Canada, or elsewhere, complicates any statistical estimate of Irish emigration to Britain or Canada. Although a number of Ottawa-Irish emigrated to Canada following a sojourn in Britain, exact numbers of Irish immigrants to Canada who emigrated via the United Kingdom are still not available. As Barber and Watson point out in their study of post-war emigration from the UK to

[30] Walter, et al., "Irish Emigrants," 4.
[31] Delaney, "Vanishing," 83.
[32] Ibid, 83.

Canada, caution needs to be taken when considering any statistical data that refers to British or UK immigrants:

> there are complications arising from the different ways the data were collected . . . . some official statistics refer to immigrants' country of birth, while others do not; statistics documenting arrivals from England would include immigrants born in Scotland, Ireland, and elsewhere, while still other data would report immigrants' ethnicity; which is not always the same as their country of birth.[33]

They also note that precise statistics are difficult to obtain because in "the UK there was no official method of recording emigration."[34]

Several interviewees who worked in the UK and subsequently chose to emigrate to Canada had professional and post-graduate training and were actively recruited by Canadian officials. Their experiences as Irish emigrants living and working in England were determined by their class and educational backgrounds. Desmond Walsh and Tom Murtagh recalled how working as students in London during the 1950s and 1960s, they were very aware that they were different from some of the other Irish emigrants they encountered. For Walsh, Murtagh, and countless other Irish university students, working as a labourer in England was an efficient way to earn money to pay their university expenses, but it was a temporary arrangement. Murtagh recalled a summer that he spent working for a building contractor from Co. Westmeath: "They were electrifying the railway lines. So, during the week we had to dig out all the old beds and then you had Saturday off. Then on Sunday you went in and worked all day [and] laid new tracks. I got a lot of money and on Sundays you got double time."[35] Walsh also worked as a casual labourer in London and spent two summers working on the construction of the underground:

> All the gangers were local Irish and they would only hire their own. I was just a summer worker. In London, there was a huge working-class population. All the building sites were run by the Irish, completely. So, you just walk up to any building site and the ganger you would speak to, generally, he would be half the time, from your own county, not to mind from Ireland. The money was good. You were paid a lot of money for just doing physical labour, just shoveling and stuff.

[33] Barber and Watson, *Invisible*, 12.
[34] Ibid., 17.
[35] Tom Murtagh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 27, 2016.

They were part of the labouring group, but as Walsh points out they were different. He explained that they quickly learned how to dress appropriately and not stand out as students: "if they thought you were a smart-assed student looking for work, they would probably turn you down."[36]

Historian Clair Wills draws on her own family background to explore the experiences of post-war Irish emigrants in Britain. She recalls the relationship between her middle-class Irish mother who had trained as a nurse in London before she settled down to marry her British father and her mother's brothers who were unmarried builder's labourers in Shepherds Bush. Will's analysis of the "stock-formations: the shaping typologies of emigrant and immigrant experience . . . track[s] a number of received discourses" of post-war Irish immigrants in Britain.[37] She examines the persistence of "formulaic patterns (types and stereotypes)" in an attempt to understand the lived experiences of these people.[38] Her exploration of the persistence of ideas, images and stereotypes of Irish ethnicity is interesting to consider in light of the formation of a Canadian-Irish cultural identity for those who lived in Britain for a short time before emigration and also for those who emigrated to Canada directly from Ireland. Cultural stereotypes have a powerful impact on shaping lived experience. Wills writes: "The cultural stereotype is not merely a screen behind which lies the real experience of the immigrant, in some kind of pure state. Rather, it helps form that experience and thus also what we can learn from it."[39]

Migrant lives are continually shaped by prevailing discourses. Bourdieu observes that social spaces are not just transactions but are organised by the invisible structures that organize the spaces "within which they have pursued their different trajectories."[40] Although serendipity and individual interactions played a role in how and why Irish men and women decided to emigrate to Canada in the post-war period, the interplay of class, gender and race-ethnicity had a direct impact on these decisions. Their experiences living and working in the UK formed one of the first layers in their Irish diasporic identity. While interviewees recalled their time in England with affection, they were aware of what Wills refers to as the "stock formations (including gendered stereotypes of the navvy and nurse)."[41] The stereotypical discourses of the Irish in Britain, as

[36] Desmond Walsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 10, 2016
[37] Clair Wills, *The Best Are Leaving: Emigration and Post-War Irish Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), xiv.
[38] Wills, *Best,* xv.
[39] Wills, *Best,* 20.
[40] Bourdieu, "Understanding'" 27.
[41] Wills, *Best,* 3.

'typification' and 'stereotypification' were part of the lived experience for immigrants who subsequently moved to Ottawa.[42]

Ironically, Betty Finley, who trained as a nurse and a midwife in London during the war, said that she loved living and working in London: "I loved London and I loved the English."[43] She spoke philosophically about the different emigrant experiences in the UK and recalled that much depended on your own life circumstances. She said she would probably have stayed in England, but she married a Canadian and they came to Canada so that he could pursue his dream of being a farmer. She recounted her experiences working as a nurse in London during the Blitz and recalled helping to carry the wounded from ambulances into the hospital. This was an "exciting time" when you did what was needed and she recalled it with affection.[44] Bridget Guglich also had positive memories of training and working as a nurse in London during the early 1950s:

> It ran like clockwork by the military-style nursing and medical culture that existed in those days. Which was good. It worked, you know. We had a very good system of training. We started at seven. We had to be in the dining room at seven. You had to be on the floor at seven-thirty. Matron, the head sister, we used to call them sisters, waiting to hand out the duties for the day, which were plenty and you worked.

Recalling her active social life, she mused: "I should mention the dances. It was very important going to the céilís. Our life depended on that. The style was lovely at the time, hair done. That was 1953 to 1956 for me."[45] Guglich enjoyed her work and social life in London, but when she qualified as a midwife and began to work in the community, she said, "I didn't care for it much." Her work required that she travel to various districts in London and she eventually decided that she did not want to continue working in England, which she said she found to be "still very class conscious."[46] She was subsequently interviewed for a study of Irish women in Canada conducted in the early 1990s. In that interview, she explained: "I went out to Luton, where I saw another part of English life. No Blacks or Irish need apply for the rooms, or the jobs. That would be 1956 [she says that she decided to leave London]. It took me two to three years to decide there was really

[42] Wills, *Best,* xv.
[43] Betty (Elizabeth) Finley, Personal Interview, Ottawa, January 14, 2015.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Bridget Guglich, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 6, 2015.
[46] Ibid.

nothing [for me] in London. You were always going to be living in this Irish ghetto. You were never going to be part of England."[47]

These two women were part of a cohort of Irish women who trained as nurses in London, before they emigrated to Canada. Their experiences living in post-war London shaped who they were. However, their early experiences growing up in Ireland also played a role in who they were to become. Wills has examined what she refers to as the "shared sensibility" of her parents who lived through the Second World War. She emphasizes the importance of remembering that this generation were shaped by wartime experience. Her father grew up in metropolitan London and her mother was raised on a small farm in Co. Cork. However, Wills pointed out that their shared experience of being one step removed from a global conflict drew them together and had a profound impact on their lives.[48] In her discussion of how Irish emigrants fared in post-war Britain, she writes that she was interested in exploring the apparent "discrepancy between the particular and varied experience of emigration and the way that it appears in the contemporary record [she notes that this] disjunction lies at the heart of [her] study."[49] There is no doubt that the Irish encountered a rigid class system in Britain. However, Wills makes the interesting point that they "had been primed for it by an equally pernicious, if less visible, rigid social stratification at home."[50] Her point underscores the complexity of reasons why they left Ireland in the first place. Whatever combination of factors that encouraged them to go, many were determined to succeed and willing to travel so that they could achieve their dreams.

Persistence, confidence and determination are dominant themes in Ottawa's ISSGO narratives. Elizabeth (Liz) Gilligan, who came to Canada in December 1960, remembered feeling that she had no prospects for career development had she continued to work as a teacher in England. She had graduated from University College Dublin with a baccalaureate in languages and a Higher Diploma in Education when she accepted a teaching job in Hounslow, in London. She recalled sitting in front of the interview panel: "A Trustee looks at her paper and she looks up at me and says 'you are Irish and you are Catholic?' I got the job because of my qualifications, but for her to say that at a professional interview, that was about 1955." Gilligan worked as a teacher

[47] Sheelagh Conway, *The Faraway Hills Are Green: Voices of Irish Women in Canada* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1992), 126.
[48] Clair Wills, *That Neutral Island: A Cultural History of Ireland During the Second World War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 4.
[49] Wills, *Best,* 3.
[50] Wills, *Best,* 6.

in Hounslow but recalled feeling stifled and bored by the rigid routine in the school. She was young and longed for adventure. She discovered that British Airways and Aer Lingus were hiring air hostesses and immediately applied. She was interviewed by British Airways in London and then flew to Dublin for an interview with Aer Lingus. She was hired by both airlines, but decided not to take the job in Ireland: "We had a union in England. We got really well treated with British Airways."[51] Her comment highlights the fact that she had the opportunity to return to Ireland but chose the more lucrative employment offer in London. She settled into her new job and took advantage of the opportunities to travel extensively over the next few years. Gilligan, like Guglich, was not interested in staying in England, and soon afterwards, she met and fell in love with a Canadian and emigrated to Canada.

Gilligan's fiancée was an airline pilot posted abroad and could not accompany her on her journey to Canada. She travelled to Canada alone in December 1960, staying with his mother in Ottawa until they were married in February 1961. Her memories of the journey shed light on the how the initial experience of emigrants to Canada varied depending on class, ethnicity and financial resources. Gilligan was used to travelling abroad as an air hostess and had lived in France and Spain for periods of time while completing her baccalaureate at University College Dublin. Describing her journey to Halifax from Southhampton on the passenger ship *Italia* and then on the train from Halifax to Ottawa, she recalled the crowds of other immigrants from Italy and Eastern Europe. Unlike many of these immigrants, Gilligan travelled first-class and thoroughly enjoyed meeting new friends and the "wining and dining" as they crossed the Atlantic. She was shocked when they boarded the train to Montreal and discovered that the train did not have a first-class carriage: "We were told not to smoke. We were used to the life of luxury. We said: 'Oh, we will go for dinner' and found out that there was no dining car!"[52] She recalled walking through the packed carriages and seeing other immigrants with their food, cheese and wine. She thought this was unusual, but once she realized that she could not find anywhere on board to buy food, she realised that these immigrants were probably more prepared for life in Canada than she was.[53]

Gilligan's memories of arriving in Canada in the company of large numbers of other immigrants echo other immigrant experiences. Her narrative also gives a glimpse into the culture

[51] Elizabeth (Liz) Gilligan, Personal Interview, Ottawa, December 4, 2015.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.

shock she experienced and how she made sense of being on a train in a strange and unfamiliar environment. She wondered about how prepared she was for Canadian life – a fact that hints at how much adjustment each new immigrant has to make. Analysis of immigrant narratives highlights issues of gender, culture and class in migration experiences that could otherwise be rendered invisible. Rhetoric scholar Jennifer Clary-Lemon argues that oral history narratives offer insight into the construction of national and immigrant identities. Discourse analysis of interviews she conducted with Irish immigrants in Winnipeg reveals that for specific subgroups such as immigrants "identity construction is context-dependent particularly for diasporic groups."[54] Each immigrant's personal experience is determined by the specific social and cultural worlds they inhabit. For Gilligan and other immigrants, it was natural to cling to "the common historical experiences and shared cultural codes" that Stuart Hall suggests reflect the fluid process of identity formation.[55] As Hall observes "[c]ultural identities come from somewhere, have histories . . . . identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past."[56] This supports Delaney's contention that "historians now recognize that migration is a dynamic process that involved two societies, two cultural systems and the worlds that traversed both societies, thereby generating more complex questions about adjustment, assimilation and the evolution of ethnic identities."[57]

Discourse analysis of immigrants' narratives reveal how personal identities are fluid and in constant production. First-person visceral memories are still clearly imprinted on the minds of many of the interviewees. Luke O'Brien travelled from Dublin to Cobh to catch the tender to the passenger ship *Olympia* in October 1953. He said: "I can remember that trip so vividly. It is in my mind. I shared a small cabin with one other man, one other young chap. He didn't speak a word of English and he was European. I remember that because the boat was full of Europeans."[58] O'Brien never managed to communicate with anyone on the journey because he was seasick most of the time, but he had clear memories of the ship being full of emigrants from Ireland and other European countries. He recalled how his fiancée had a different experience when she came to join him in Canada months later. Although she travelled alone, "Mary had a great time crossing the Atlantic

[54] Jennifer Clary-Lemon, "'We're not ethnic, we're Irish!': Oral histories and the Discursive Construction of Immigrant Identity," *Discourse & Society* 21. 1 (2010): 21.
[55] Hall, "Cultural," 223.
[56] Ibid., 225.
[57] Delaney, "Transnationalism," 430.
[58] Luke O'Brien, Personal Interview, Toronto, October 21, 2013.

when she came out to marry me."[59] Gowdy Williams sailed out of Liverpool on *The Empress of Britain* in June 1959. Although it was June, the weather was bad and the trip was rough: "As soon as we lost sight of the coast of Donegal, the seas came up and the winds started to blow and everybody was seasick for days. It was quite funny. I slept in the dog kennel area because where my cabin was on Deck. C10 was my cabin number. C10 was near the bow of the ship so every big wave, you went right up the ship and then you went . . . a big drop. I thought my brains were going to come out the top of my head." She got to know some the crew members quite well and was amazed by the variety of food available. She described the whole experience as "marvellous."[60]

Kathleen Marsh, who grew up in Belfast and worked for a few years in the English Civil Service in Whitehall, London, was also ill for much of the sea crossing from Southampton on the Cunard Liner *Scythia.* The ship departed on 19 January 1957. Marsh inferred that the Hollywood movie *Brooklyn* (2015) reminded her of her own journey across the Atlantic:

> That girl reminded me of me being sick. I was sick the whole time. I couldn't eat. John and I would go down to the dining room and we shared a table with a young married couple. She was English and he was Canadian. He was Air Force. I would look at this chap, Don, and I would see his face going pale and he would get up and leave, and the next thing is, I would get up and go. So, that happened every time. I couldn't eat a thing. It was awful.

Her memories of the voyage highlight the fact that these Irish immigrants were just a select cohort of a huge wave of European emigrants coming to Canada at this time. Her memories also shine a light on the class differences between the various groups of migrants aboard passenger vessels crossing the Atlantic. Marsh recalled that: "The interesting thing about the trip was, instead of coming straight to Canada, we went across to France because it was the year after the Hungarian uprising. That was in 1956, right, so we picked up all these refugees from France to bring them to Canada. We heard that there was one baby born aboard ship. God help them, because it was January. It was a really rough crossing."[61]

Unlike the Hungarian refugees, Marsh travelled first class, but her first impressions of Canada suggest there were surprises in store for adjusting to life in the New World. Civil society and the political structure were similar, but she was unprepared for the climate and the vastness of the Canadian landscape. Marsh explained that the weather was so rough that they were battened

[59] Luke O'Brien, Personal Interview, Toronto, October 21, 2013.
[60] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 5, 2015.
[61] Catherine (Kathleen) Marsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 30, 2016.

down for three days and she was relieved when they were finally allowed to go on deck, but this was when she had her first inkling of what Canadian winter weather was like:

> We were allowed up on deck and Lord, I thought, it was cold. You know, you are not used to that Artic cold in January. I remember what I was wearing. I bought ear muffs in London and I had the boots, the fur boots and I got fur gloves. But, I had a coat, an English coat, with only one button, up here [laugher]. A light, light, new coat. I was frozen. I couldn't stay up on deck. I thought that this is just too much. We arrived in Halifax at that famous Pier, is it Pier 21, or something?

Marsh shivered as she recalled her first impressions and said: "If somebody had said to me then, 'look, I will take you back home.' I would have left John standing there. I would have gone. It was so bleak looking and freezing cold."[62] This theme re-emerges time and time again from the interviews – accompanied by a visceral reaction to the memory and the initial moment of wondering if they had made the right decision to emigrate.

Although some immigrants had done research before leaving Ireland, they were still surprised by the extremes of Canadian weather. Acclimatising to weather was a challenge to most Irish immigrants. Tom Murtagh arrived in Montreal in August 1969:

> In those days when you got off the plane in Ottawa, you walked across the tarmac to the terminals. It was a small terminal. I will never forget the heat. It was August, it was hot and humid and there was just all this heat coming up. I had a duffle coat over my arm, my mother gave me, because I was going to this cold climate and I nearly died. I could hardly breathe with the heat.[63]

Mary Coffey remembered the cold and the confusion of arriving in Toronto in 1955. She travelled with her two young children to join her husband in Toronto. She clearly recalled her journey from Cobh to New York and the subsequent train journey to Toronto. While her husband was happy to have his family by his side, she had to draw on her own strength of character and willingness to support his longing for them to be as excited about Canada as he was: "On the boat, the weather wasn't too bad, but I was very seasick. Paul was two and Ann was one. When I arrived in Toronto, Ben met us and decided he was taking me down to the Santa Claus parade. That was the last thing I wanted to do. I was tired [laughter] it was snowing, very light snow, not much."

Mary Coffey went on to have two more children in Toronto and four more in Ottawa where they moved when her husband was hired by the Canadian federal government. Coffey is one of a

[62] Catherine (Kathleen) Marsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 30, 2016.
[63] Tom Murtagh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 27, 2016.

number of the interviewees who emigrated to join their partners in Canada and whose initial experiences suggest that although Canadian society was changing rapidly, some of the social mores were similar to those in Ireland and gender roles were still strictly enforced in Canadian society. She had been happy living in Ireland and admitted that it was her husband's decision to emigrate. However, once he made the decision, Coffey packed up their home and children and supported him. From the moment they arrived in Canada, she fulfilled her role as wife and stay-at-home mother to their eight children. They had a comfortable apartment in Toronto and during her time there: "I had several friends who had emigrated before me, mostly Dubliners. I just met them in Toronto. I didn't do anything really [socially] I was busy with the kids." They moved house a number of times in Toronto until they moved to Ottawa where they finally settled. With each relocation, she became more absorbed helping her children to acclimatize to new schools and new environments.[64]

Kathleen Marsh recently showed her daughter the dinner menus and other paraphernalia that she had saved from her voyage to Canada on board the Cunard Liner and pointed out that her daughter: "She was sort of annoyed when she looked at the passenger list because here they had my husband's full name and then underneath in small print 'and Mrs. Marsh.' [her daughter] said, 'didn't you have a name? Couldn't they have put your first name down?' I said, 'but you know how it was in those days.'" She explained to her daughter that although it seemed old fashioned now, it was an accepted part of life at that time. However, Marsh remembered being surprised by some of the social customs in Canada which were more formal and rigid than they were in Ireland. She recalled her initial experiences of living in Antigonish, a small rural town in northeastern Nova Scotia. Marsh had been working in metropolitan Whitehall, the political hub of the British Empire, when she left to get married and emigrate with her husband to rural Canada. She described her work in Whitehall as exciting and stimulating:

> I worked in Whitehall. That is where I was when I got married. I was looking after confidential [documents]. It was the time of the Suez Canal crises. I was looking after all these secret signals and books and things like that. So, then to go from that, being in London and at lunch time I used to go into, I was beside the National Art Gallery, you know, and then Oxford Street with all the big shops and to go from that to Antigonish. You can imagine.

[64] Mary Coffey, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 2, 2015.

It was difficult to acclimatize to life in a small-town conservative milieu. The local community were not particularly welcoming and she felt isolated when she first arrived. Her husband was on faculty at St. Francis Xavier University and they were welcomed by the staff and other people in the town, but settling in was a challenge:

> I thought it would be like at home, where you could just go and knock on the door and say, 'hello' and you would go in for a cup of tea or something. I had met this woman and she was very nice. One of the professor's wives, so I was passing her house and I went up to the door and she said, 'Oh', she said, 'it is not a good day, I have got the cleaners in today.' So, I was very careful after that, you know, to not just pop in. You know what I mean, yeah, that is the way it was so. A big change.[65]

As Marsh pointed out, it was "a big change" from the life she had lived in the centre of London to life in a small town in Nova Scotia. The difficulties she experienced were similar to those experienced by British and Irish war-brides.[66] In addition to adjusting to the physical surroundings, Marsh had to negotiate new unwritten social mores in this conservative Scottish milieu.

The psychological challenges of immigrant adjustment often lie beyond the remit of historiographical inquiry, yet they manifest themselves in inconsequential details remembered years after arriving in the New World. For example, Marsh had moved from the epicentre of London, where wearing white gloves was a normal part of middle-class life. When her young family moved to Ottawa in 1958, she found it difficult to abandon this practice:

> When we were [living] on Wilbrod Street, there was a wee shop opposite us. I think it was called 'Collins'. I used to run over there for things, but every time I went, I wore my little white nylon gloves, because, I guess, I was so used to wearing gloves. In those days, you know, you kind of dressed up more, you know. The shopkeeper, he used to laugh at me when I would come in with my little gloves on me, just across the street. He would have great fun out of that.[67]

Marsh's experiences are similar to those experienced other interviewees and demonstrate how class and cultural background shape the settling in process. When they first arrived, many of these immigrants encountered class identities that were less well defined than they were used to and they had to learn to negotiate the unwritten rules of behaviour. Canada was not a classless society, historian Veronica Strong-Boag argues. She takes issue with "the North American myth of a

[65] Catherine (Kathleen) Marsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 30, 2016
[66] Historian Melynda Jarrett has written extensively on war-brides experiences in rural New Brunswick and their difficulties adjusting to unpaved roads and extreme weather. *Captured Hearts: New Brunswick's War Brides* (Fredericton, New Brunswick: Goose Lane Editions, 2008).
[67] Catherine (Kathleen) Marsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 30, 2016

middle-class which was almost co-extensive with society itself." In the post-war period "a majority of Canadians remained unable to purchase the 'education, high standards of health services, family privacy, and leisure activities' which remained the prerogative of the 'real middle class.'"[68] A number of ISSGO interviewees recalled being surprised by wood framed buildings, unpaved streets, and what they considered to be underdeveloped infrastructure. The interplay of their own class backgrounds and their host milieu influenced the evolution of an ethnic consciousness and a particular cultural identity. As Hall contends cultural identities are "subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power."[69] Their early experiences in Canada added another layer of identity to the diasporic lifeworlds of the Ottawa ISSGO community.

Liz Gilligan recalled that her initial reaction when she moved to Ottawa in December 1960 was dismay at how different it was from the life she had left behind in the UK. She and her husband lived with her mother-in-law when they first moved to Ottawa and Gilligan remembered that she had expected Ottawa to be similar to London and was surprised that so many streets were unpaved and complained at the lack of cultural outlets: "It was very much the colonies here, there was no theatre." She was used to having an active social life in London. In Canada, her social life was limited: "That was another thing, the pubs were rough, there was a ladies' entrance and a lady and escort entrance and the main hall with tables. My husband finally took me to one to see what it was like. He said, 'It will get it out of your system.' It was rough and ready. It wasn't like that in Ireland or England."[70] Gilligan had come from a European tradition of dressing formally for day and evening occasions and expected Ottawa to be more like Dublin, or London in the 1950s. Other Irish immigrants arriving from cosmopolitan London, Belfast, and Dublin found Canada in the 1950s to be quaint and behind the times in terms of fashion and social entertainment.

Tom Taylor recalled the small rural town of Prince George, British Columbia when he first arrived in 1958. He was disappointed that he was not able to continue his "usual custom" of going to see recently-released movies as he had in Belfast. The two local theatres screened movies that Taylor had seen years before. He was accustomed to going to see the latest movie releases in Ireland on a weekly basis. Other social mores also intrigued him:

> I didn't drink at the time. I was a pioneer [total abstinence from alcohol]. I walked down the town, down the street in Prince George and I saw 'ladies' and 'gents.' I am going to

[68] Veronica Strong-Boag, "Canada's Wage-Earning Wives and the Construction of the Middle Class, 1945-60," *Journal of Canadian Studies,* 29, 3 (Fall 1994), 8.
[69] Hall, "Cultural," 225.
[70] Elizabeth (Liz) Gilligan, Personal Interview, Ottawa, December 4, 2015.

> date myself here [laughter]. I thought, 'Oh there's the toilets' very good, public toilet. And I walked around the next corner and there was 'ladies' and 'gents' again. I thought 'God, they are organized in this country,' you know, because sometime if you want to go to the loo and its full, there is one right next door. I went to the next corner and it was 'ladies' and 'gents' again. I thought: 'Holy Jeeze, people are really having troubles here.' What it was, was the hotels, and the bar was the 'men's,' the tavern! And then I saw 'ladies with escorts' and I said 'mother never told me about this. [Laughter][71]

Celebrating St Patrick's Day in Canada also presented challenges. Educated middle class Irish emigrants had to negotiate stereotypical depictions of Ireland and Irish culture, especially on St. Patrick's Day, that were prevalent in Canada in the 1950s and 1960s. Tom Murtagh said that when he first arrived in Ottawa in 1969, he was surprised when he was invited to go for a drink on St. Patrick's Day. He enquired why anywhere was open on what in Ireland was a "Holy Day of Obligation" and all premises selling alcohol were closed. To his dismay, he was invited to a tavern which had been decorated in shamrocks and other paraphernalia to celebrate St. Patrick's Day: "there were these taverns here then. There was nothing like the 'Heart and Crown' and all these English and Irish pubs that started up later. It was a pretty dire place." Tom was disheartened by this initial experience:

> There was a line up outside of people all dressed in green, green hats. So, we go in and we get a table. I couldn't believe, just a sea of green. We got a drink and a fella came along and wanted to know if I wanted a green beer! Well, I nearly threw up and everybody was drinking this horrible looking green beer. I remember coming home and thinking. I sort of got a bit upset about it all. I said, 'this is what people think about Ireland, all this old typical thing.' That was my first St. Patrick's Day here. That was my initiation into Ottawa.[72]

Murtagh was also surprised at how a physical attribute, such as having a beard, was not considered to be suitable for some professions in Canada. When he sought a teaching job in Canada, he did not expect that having a beard would have any impact on whether or not he was suitable for employment. A friend teaching in Thunder Bay:

> He put a word in for me at the school he was teaching at with his English Department Head and it was looking pretty good. I had to send off a resumé and photographs and all that kind of stuff. He finally wrote back to me and said, 'my Department Head is pretty upset and I am too, your application has been turned down.' There were two reasons that he gave me for it, one was that you had a beard. In those days, that was 1969, and fellas with beards were kind of looked upon as rebels, I guess, over here. The second one was your religion,

[71] Tom Taylor, Ottawa, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[72] Tom Murtagh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 27, 2016.

> you were Catholic. There was still a lot of left-over stuff in some parts of Ontario at that time.[73]

Murtagh had expected that his religion would be taken into account when applying for a job, but was surprised that having a beard would make any difference. He pointed out how he gradually realized that having a beard had an impact on whether or not he was hired by a Canadian school board. Recalling his interviews for Canadian teaching positions in Dublin prior to emigrating, he said:

> I had a few interviews over that period-of-time and my last one, I remember well, it was with the Saskatchewan school board, out in Western Canada. The fella was really nice and we were chatting away. I said: 'You don't mind if I ask you a question? I have gone to a few interviews and I haven't got anything back from them and I am just wondering if there would be a problem in Canada with teachers with beards?' He said 'It is funny that you would ask me that, because when I came here first,' he said: 'we went to London, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Belfast, and Dublin,' this was his last stop, 'at the beginning, I used to write down 'bearded' if a fella came in because I was so, we weren't used to the teachers with beards in Canada.'
> I said, 'OK, because I'm not that attached, I just grew the beard the summer I was working in England, and I have no problem shaving it off.' He said, 'if you were in a rural area in Canada it might be better if you didn't have a beard.' So, I said, 'fine, for the sake of a job, I have no problem taking the beard off.' Anyway, I ended up getting the job with the Saskatchewan School Board.[74]

While Canada was changing in the 1950s and 1960s, there were strict rules, regulations and social mores to be negotiated, some as rigid as those left behind in Ireland and some, as in having a beard, more difficult to understand. It is noteworthy that both Ireland and Canada shared similar mores on couples not living together before marriage. Felix Connolly emigrated to Canada in June 1961 and was joined by his fiancée, in October. She recalled: "We got married in Quebec City on the 16th December. You see, we had to wait six weeks. I came out in October and we had to wait six weeks. They wouldn't give you your 'Letter of Freedom' coming away. You had to send back for it and it came. So, we had to wait six weeks to be married because it was a Catholic Church kind of thing. So, you know, it happened to fall on the 16th December."[75] Although they were engaged, it was not morally acceptable for them to live together. Consequently, they stayed

[73] Tom Murtagh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 27, 2016.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Margo Connolly, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 19, 2014

in separate accommodations until they were married. Luke O'Brien remembered his fiancée coming from Dublin to join him in Toronto where they had arranged to be married:

> I remember, the laws in Ontario were that if you were marrying somebody, a new immigrant coming, they had to be resident three weeks before you could get married. So, now, I had a bit of a dilemma. We couldn't live together, at least not us, at that time. We couldn't live together for three weeks [in 1954]. So, now I have to figure out now what we are going to do with Mary when she lands. So, I had friends, I had met a family and they had a house and they had three kids, I think, and they said, 'look Luke, she can stay with us for three weeks.' She stayed the three weeks and then we got married in August and that was it.[76]

As products of a strict Catholic and conservative Protestant upbringing in Ireland, these interviewees took these social mores for granted. Maintaining a 'respectable' image was already part of everyday life for this cohort of upwardly mobile bourgeois immigrants. They were educated and ambitious and had emigrated to Canada to take advantage of the opportunities available in a booming post-war economy. However, the social mores and conservative moral climate in Canada were not particularly different than those that they had grown up with in Ireland.

In contrast, there was a major difference between the vast range of goods and services available for purchase in Canada than those available in Ireland. Post-war rationing was still a recent memory for this cohort and it was exciting to be part of a new age of consumerism in Canada. Shopping from catalogues was already a ubiquitous part of post-war Canadian life but was almost unheard of in Ireland. Even if the goods were unaffordable, these catalogues stirred the imagination. Ron Howard's experiences working in Eaton's in Toronto, gives an insight into how catalogue shopping allowed Canadians who could afford it access to a vast array of goods. Howard boarded the passenger ship *Columbia* in Belfast and landed in Quebec City on 5 May 1956. The ship originated in Liverpool and had ports of call in Belfast and Cork before it crossed the Atlantic to Quebec City. He continued by train to Toronto where he stopped for a brief visit with his uncle. Although he had intended to emigrate to Calgary and had no intention of staying in Toronto, his uncle suggested that he join him in the T. Eaton Company where he was a director. Within a few days, Howard was employed in a position he maintained until his retirement. His particular experience demonstrates both the flexibility of immigrants who were willing to take the best offer of employment, and the advantages of having relatives already established in Canada. Howard is

[76] Luke O'Brien, Personal Interview, Toronto, October 21, 2013.

one of the minority of interviewees who had relatives in Canada. His story also illuminates how companies such as Eaton's were eager to anticipate and cater to the needs of Canadian consumers:

> Eaton's was a very major retailer back then. It had 100,000 employees which back then was big. They manufactured much of the product they sold. They had stores all over the country. Stores in Winnipeg, Vancouver, Halifax and many smaller stores, but they had major stores as well. The stores were not small, they were major department stores. I ended up being Operations Manager for the catalogue. Because the catalogue was all across the country, in every small town. The range of products was quite extensive. You could buy couches, washing machines, refrigerators, no matter what it was, it was shipped. Everything from soup to nuts.[77]

Gowdy Williams remembered being impressed when she arrived in Edmonton in 1959 that so many people had cars. This anecdote about her boyfriend's car illustrates the differences between the life these immigrants had just left behind and the many possibilities on offer in Canada:

> I went out with him for a while and he had a car! He had a car! I remember, he drove me home and he said: 'You know,' he said, 'one thing I like about you very much, you are the first girl I ever drove home who didn't say to me, why do you not have a radio in your car?' For me, the very fact that he had a car was, cause in our district at home, when I was growing up, my father was the only person who had a car and it was always a company car. We had a telephone and we had a car, but we never thought of owning our own car. It was unheard of. I don't remember anybody having a car. So, it never occurred to me to think that it was a normal thing to just have a car. Anyway, he was very impressed that I didn't think of asking why there was no radio in his car. It was funny.[78]

Tom Murtagh recalled a similar amusing tale of his first car in Canada. He bought the old second hand car from his friend and fellow school teacher Tom Taylor in 1970, the year after he arrived in Canada.

> Tom said, you know, I am thinking of getting a new car and I can sell you that old Pontiac that I have, that will do you for a while. So, that was fine, it was very reasonable and it was a very old car. I will never forget when I sat into it in the back of his apartment building. I looked back to reverse out and it looked like it was the length of a bus. One of these old Pontiacs. It was huge, so I was really nervous driving it. The next morning, I drove to school and parked the Pontiac in the parking lot and I am up in my room, when one of the kids, it was a Grade 12 class, I think I had. One of the students came in and he was looking out the window and he said, 'Mr. Murtagh, did I see you comin' in in Mr. Taylor's car.' I said, I was all delighted, I said, 'yeah, that is my car. I bought it off him.' And he looked

[77] Ron Howard [fictional name], Personal Interview, Ottawa, October 29, 2015.
[78] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 5, 2015.

at the car and he looked at me and he said, 'I thought you and Mr. Taylor were friends!' So, we had a laugh at that.[79]

New cars, new homes, new careers. It was an exciting life for these new Irish immigrants in Canada. Although they left Ireland by choice, it is striking that each of the interviewees remembered the exact date of travel and some of the circumstances of their first few days in vivid detail. The clarity of these recollections speaks to the shock of coming to terms with the reality of a hitherto imagined new environment. Whether they came by sea or air, they have almost photographic memories of the voyage and their arrival in Canada. Their reasons for staying in Canada were as diverse as their reasons for coming in the first place, but they all shared a life-changing experience, sometimes exciting, sometimes wrenching, of being an Irish immigrant in Canada. As Bridget Guglich said: "I came to Canada on April 11th 1961. It is indelibly marked in my brain."[80] Hall refers to such memories as a "reservoir of our cinematic narratives."[81] These experiences were the first steps they took in the sometimes satisfying, sometimes challenging process of settling into place – a *longue durée* process that would occupy most of their new lives in Canada.

[79] Tom Murtagh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 27, 2016.
[80] Bridget Guglich, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 6, 2015.
[81] Hall, "Cultural," 236.

Chapter 5. Tiles in the Canadian Mosaic: New Roots

Unlike earlier waves of Irish emigration to North America, post-war Irish emigration to Canada was different in its social composition and lack of geographic concentration. Many post-war Irish emigrants travelled solo, did not have predetermined family networks waiting for them and did not settle in pre-assigned spaces, or ethnic ghettos. Most had jobs pre-arranged before they left Ireland; therefore, they dispersed when they arrived and settled in areas where they took up employment. Drawn initially by employment prospects and economic considerations, they were equally attracted by the lack of rigidity they discovered in Canadian society. They found the transition to life in Canada less jarring than their predecessors in the nineteenth century who felt the need to congregate in Irish ethnic areas. The timing of their arrival coincided with a post-war wave of emigration to Canada. They fitted into this cultural mosaic as individual tiles and found themselves well suited to Canadian life. Excited by the challenges and opportunities that Canada offered, they forged ahead eager to carve out a meaningful place to call home in their adopted country. In short, they began to put down roots.

Canada was undergoing rapid technological, economic and social changes in the 1950s. Richmond and Kalback point out in their statistical analysis of Canadian immigration: "Canada deliberately selected immigrants to meet the needs of those industries that were expanding most rapidly and to fill the vacancies in those occupations where the demand was greatest. As a consequence of this deliberate selectivity, recent immigrants were structurally distributed in 1971 in ways that were more typical of an advanced industrial society than were earlier settlers."[1] While most Irish immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s settled in expanding cosmopolitan centres, serendipity played a substantial role in where they eventually put down roots. They were ambitious, flexible, and eager to adapt to the fluid circumstances of an expanding industrial nation. Some of the interviewees still express wonder when they recall how open they were to new experiences as they travelled from Ireland by ship and air and then continued the trek across Canada by train.

A chance meeting on the streets of Montreal with an old acquaintance from his hometown in Ireland reset the trajectory for Luke O'Brien's subsequent career as a banker in Toronto. O'Brien had full-time job in the Shelbourne Hotel in Dublin when he decided to seek more

[1] Richmond and Kalback, 28.

lucrative employment opportunities abroad. He bought a one-way ticket to Canada and landed in Halifax, Nova Scotia on October 27 1953. Upon arrival, he boarded a train to Montreal. Within days, he was employed as a clerk at the Clarke Steamship Company in Montreal. O'Brien's train ticket to Montreal was included in his transatlantic fare. A month later, he made a spur-of-the-moment decision to relocate to Toronto, where, following a temporary job in Simpsons-Sears selling ice-skates, he found permanent employment in the Imperial Bank of Canada (CIBC). Recalling this period of his life, he shook his head in wonder and joked about how a young man from Dublin who had never even seen ice-skates ended up selling them in Canada:

> I worked for the Steamship Company for one month. So, I got my first paycheck and I am walking along Saint Catherine Street in Montreal. You won't believe this. I went into the bank and I cashed my cheque. I am walking along Saint Catherine, with my money in my pocket. I see this guy coming forward towards me and said: 'Oh my God!' Here was this guy, his name was Jock Dowd. Now I used to play football with Jock Dowd and I knew him well, but I never knew that he was going to Canada. He had just arrived about two months earlier than me. So, we got talking on Saint Catherine Street and the conversation went:'now where are you working, are you happy and all the rest.' [they agreed that they were] . . . not that happy about it.
> So, we decided, he said: 'why don't we go to Toronto?' So, within that twenty minutes, we decided. We both had our paychecks. We were out for lunch. We decided we will get a train to Toronto. We agreed that we would meet at the rail station. So, I went back [to his rented room] packed my bag. This was, like, maybe, one o'clock in the afternoon. I never went back to the office again.[2]

O'Brien and Dowd had no ties in Montreal or in Toronto, but they agreed that they did not want to stay in Montreal and were ready to chance their luck in Toronto. O'Brien never regretted this decision. Recalling his train trip from Halifax to Montreal, the sheer size of the country impressed him. When he purchased his ticket in Dublin, he knew he would be travelling by train, but had no sense of the diverse Canadian landscape he would encounter: "That train took me to Montreal and I can remember so distinctly the colours. As I said to you, the fall colours, as we'd flash by. I remember that and the rock, the Canadian shield. I thought: 'Oh my God. It's everything I read.' You know what I mean: 'It's everything I read.' But I still didn't know where I was going."[3]

As new immigrants, many ISSGO interviewees described feeling dislocated when they first arrived. Although professional men and women found their work environments similar to systems in Ireland and quickly settled into work routines, some female emigrants had a different set of

[2] Luke O'Brien, Personal Interview, Toronto, October 21, 2013.
[3] Ibid.

obstacles to negotiate. While their husbands were at work, these women interacted with the wider community on a daily basis. The tasks of setting up home, settling their children into new schools, adapting their recipes to unfamiliar ingredients, and other seemingly mundane but essential everyday activities fell to the women to accomplish. For example, Canadian consumer goods presented a formidable challenge. When Felix and Margo Connolly first arrived in Montreal, he settled in quickly and found work in the shipyards in Quebec remarkably similar to the one he left behind in Belfast. Margo Connolly's early experiences, however, were complicated by the fact that she did not speak French. Yet, she gradually figured out how to integrate:

> I thought, at first, I would never, never pick it up you know, and then I had a couple of incidents [shopping] where if they gave me money back, we weren't done with the decimal [imperial] system, by the way, when we came here. Back home it was twelve shillings and a pound, whatever, anyway, I would take whatever change they would give me and I would count it and think: 'This is wrong,' but I would never say. So, the first time that I said to her, in French: 'I think, I don't think the change is right,' you know, I was so proud of myself.
> Felix had more razor blades than he ever needed, because I would ask for what I wanted, if I was in a drug store or something, and if they didn't understand me the first couple of times, I would just point. [she gestures] The razor blades were [on display] behind the counter! Then it was one of the guys Felix worked with, because I used to get flustered, if I wanted Kleenex, He set me straight. I was going in asking for tissues. He said to me: 'Always ask for the brand name.'[4]

It was not just the French language that was a challenge because many items have different names in Canada than in Ireland. Felix Connolly explained that they had similar experiences when he and his family moved to Ontario: "In English Canada, if you asked for scallions [spring onions], most people wouldn't know what you meant." Margo Connolly agreed and added: "Yes, that's right, but the thing was, it was the difference, like between tomato and tomato. But you learn to change it and to say tomato. It was just the little things."[5] Narratives of these early days in Canada relate how difficult it was to become accustomed to living in a new and strange country, not least "the little things" that defied translation.

Mary Coffey arrived in Toronto with her two young children on 19 November 1959. Although she braved the extreme weather, she encountered real difficulties trying to find ingredients to cook her favorite recipes and explained that she had to search "far and wide" in

[4] Margo Connolly, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 19, 2014.
[5] Ibid.

Toronto before she found "proper" whole wheat flour to make brown soda bread.[6] Adapting traditional recipes to work with local ingredients was often one of the first obstacles to overcome for new immigrants, not least in creating a familiar home environment in a foreign country. Deirdre Scott emigrated to Ottawa from Gorey, Co. Wexford in 1957. In a Canadian newspaper article on Irish food, featuring a photograph of Scott holding a plate of fried ham and potato cakes, she explained: "I came to Canada 25 years ago from Gorey in Co. Wexford, where the main hot meal of the day was usually served at noon. So, when my family is home for lunch on the weekend, I often serve foods I grew up with."[7] Recipes for Irish soda bread, potato cakes, and shortbread in this article were also provided by Adele Trapnell who pointed out that making these dishes was part of everyday life: "I make a loaf (soda bread) a week from my mother's recipe, just as her mother did."[8] Making these traditional Irish recipes in their new homes in Canada was one way to recreate the tastes and smells they remembered from growing up in Ireland. Kitty Kincaid was twenty-three when she emigrated to Canada in 1925. Sixty years later, she described how her mother baked bread on an open hearth in a thatched cottage and recalled the taste of fresh bread and freshly churned farm butter: "the best scones in the world on a griddle hung over the fire. And her oaten bread, baked against the hearth turf, was so firm and crunchy."[9] Kincaid's observation chimes neatly with historians Barber and Watson's analysis of the role of sensory perception in immigrant adaptation broadly conceived. Indeed, they note that many of their colleagues are taking greater interest in the influence of the five senses in the formation of memory. They argue that "sensory perceptions are deeply embedded in an individual's response to the surrounding world" and play an important role in the process of "settling in."[10]

The importance of continuing to use traditional Irish family recipes is evident in a collection of stories published by the ISSGO in 2008. This collection illustrates the regional diversity of the group and how food memory remains an important part of their lifeworlds in Canada. Recipes for traditional Irish food varied, depending on the region of Ireland where they originated. There are eight recipes for soda bread featured and the preface states: "Each person has her (or his) favourite recipe. These are listed in alphabetical order. They are all good, so choose

[6] Mary Coffey, Personal Interview, Ottawa, October, 2 2015.
[7] *The Ottawa Citizen,* March 17, 1982.
[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Barber and Watson, 125.

the one that most appeals to you. Or try them all!"[11] Albeit similar, each recipe is unique and each one is included in the volume. Recalling her memories of growing up in rural Ireland and spending summer holidays in Tipperary where her "great-aunt did all the cooking over a huge open turf fire", chef Darina Allen notes that this way of life was taken for granted. In the 1970s, she began to collect traditional Irish recipes that had been handed down from generation to generation and argued that Irish "farming heritage has given rise to a wide variety of traditional methods for cooking . . . a huge range of dishes with infinite regional variations."[12] Members of ISSGO have similar memories of growing up in rural Ireland. In her contribution to the collection Kay O'Hegarty recalled:

> fond memories of visits to our grandparents' farm, where Grannie cooked everything in the bastible: bread, cakes, stews, roasts, apple cakes. Our favorite time to be there was when the threshing machine rolled into the farm and a large number of neighbouring men came to help. The fire was kept well stoked and the bastible, a heavy, iron pot with three legs and a flat base was hanging from a crook about 14 inches over it. Large amounts of food were cooked.

O'Hegarty emigrated to Hamilton, Ontario with her husband in 1967 and is now settled in Ottawa. Her collection of Irish cookbooks, including her first cookbook given to her by her mother in 1950, "has traveled with me over these many years and is one of my favourite treasures."[13] Maura (Haughey) Strevans from Lurgan, Co. Armagh, emigrated to Canada in 1955 and has similar memories of her aunt cooking over an open fire: "Aunt Hannah Jane made her own soda bread and often we would get potato farls as well when she had left over mashed potatoes. (In Northern Ireland we used the term 'farls' for triangular scones cooked on the griddle.) There was a large iron hook suspended over the fire and cooking utensils were lowered on it as close to the fire as needed." Strevans continued to make this traditional fare when she emigrated to Canada and adds: "[n]othing can duplicate the flavor of those farls cooked over the turf fire but I make them now on a griddle on the electric stove and they come close."[14] Although now rooted in Canada, recreating the tastes and smells of familiar food remains an important part of these seniors' everyday lives.

Adapting these recipes allowed immigrants to continue to serve familiar dishes to their families and was a fragmentary thread of connectivity that eased their transition into their new

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[11] Joan McKay, ed. *Memories of the Past: Stories & Recipes from Ottawa's Irish Drop-in Group* (Ottawa: McKay Publishing, 2008), 18.
[12] Darina Allen, *Irish Traditional Cooking,* (Great Britain: Kyle Cathie Limited, 1995), 6-9.
[13] Kathleen O'Hegarty, "Down Memory Lane with My Irish Cook Books," in McKay, 97.
[14] Maura (Haughey) Strevans, "Aunt Hannah Jane," in McKay, 116.

environments. It was natural that they would establish their households in Canada as they would have done in Ireland and food was a central part of this process. Barber and Watson suggest that "historians interested in the acculturation of immigrants have given increasing attention to the 'politics of food.' What immigrants ate could indicate their desire to maintain their traditional culture or their willingness to adopt Canadian ways."[15] Although the familiar taste of a particular food became a medium of cultural transference and identity maintenance in their new homes, it was not a particularly conscious effort on the part of Irish immigrants to maintain their culture. Baking soda bread was a daily domestic routine in Ireland and they continued this practice in Canada. It was taken for granted as being part of setting up a safe, nurturing, and comfortable home. Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan considers the "strong recuperative powers" of human beings and their emotional attachment to home: "Attachment of a deep though subconscious sort may come simply with familiarity and ease, with the assurance of nurture and security, with the memory of sounds and smells, of communal activities and homely pleasures accumulated over time. It is difficult to articulate quiet attachments of this type."[16]

Serving familiar food recreated a feeling of comfort and safety associated with being at home and helped the family settle into a new space. This was one of a myriad of activities performed by these women as they created a safe and comfortable home for their families, and in the process, imposed a new sense of order in an unfamiliar environment. Anthropologist Clifford Geertz discusses how he had "become more interested in how people see things and how they understand their life world" and observes that "to describe the life world in which people live . . . I have been developing a general phenomenological approach to culture."[17] Such an approach can bring to light aspects of settling into a new place that are often taken for granted and thus, rendered invisible. The homeplace is central to how individuals survive and thrive and develop their identity. Edward S. Casey observes: "To be cultural, to have a culture, is to inhabit a place sufficiently intensely to cultivate it – to be responsible for it, to respond to it, to attend to it caringly. Where else but in particular places can culture take root?"[18]

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[15] McKay, 121.
[16] Tuan, *Space*, 159.
[17] Arun Micheelsen and Clifford Geertz, "'I Don't Do Systems': An Interview with Clifford Geertz", *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion* 14, 1 (2002): 4.
[18] Edward S. Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time," in *Senses of Place,* eds. Steven Feld and Keith H. Basso (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1996), 34.

Anthropologists Steven Feld and Keith Basso discuss how "places anchor lives in social formations," and note the importance of exploring: "in close detail cultural processes and practices through which places are rendered meaningful – through which, one might say, places are actively sensed."[19] These Irish immigrants in Ottawa made their particular place meaningful by setting up comfortable homes and settling into their new spaces. Food and shelter are basic human needs and establishing a home is essential to create a solid base in a new country. Avtar Brah describes the "image of 'home' as the site of everyday lived experience. It is a discourse of locality, the place where feelings of rootedness ensue from the mundane and the unexpected of daily practice."[20] Mundane and unexpected, these daily practices are often taken for granted and, like sensory perceptions, stimulate and work on an unconscious or subconscious level. However, they are active triggers in how places are sensed. Noting "the simple ubiquity of place and the sense of place in human life," Geertz argues that "it is difficult to see what is always there."[21] He points out: "no one lives in the world in general. Everybody, even the exiled, the drifting, the diasporic, or the perpetually moving, lives in some confined and limited stretch of it – 'the world around here.'"[22]

Research on the importance of space and place in people's lives suggests that a large part of daily life occurs at a subconscious level. However, as Edward S. Casey contends "[w]e are never anywhere, anywhen, but in place"[23] Seamon considers the importance of place attachment for the individual as: "a phenomenological concept, place is powerful both theoretically and practically because it offers a way to articulate more precisely the experienced wholeness of people-in-the world, which phenomenologists call the *lifeworld* – the everyday world of taken-for-grantedness normally unnoticed and thus concealed as a phenomenon."[24] In advocating for the advantages of a phenomenological approach to research on place attachment, he posits that it: "is important because, in everyday life, the emotional ambience and resonance of places, routes, and routines typically run beneath the lived surface of the lifeworld and are thus pre-reflexive and unnoticed most of the time."[25] Although they run beneath the surface, these places, routes, and routines are central to everyday survival. For immigrants who are dislocated from familiar places, creating a

[19] Feld and Basso, 7.
[20] Brah, *Cartographies,* 4.
[21] Geertz, "Afterword," 259.
[22] Ibid., 262.
[23] Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place," 39.
[24] David Seamon, "Place, Attachment and Phenomenology: The Synergistic Dynamism of Place," in *Place Attachment: Advances in Theory, Methods and Research,* ed. Manzo, Lynne (New York: Routledge, 2013), 12.
[25] Seamon, "Place Attachment," 14.

new place where they feel secure and comfortable enough to put down roots is an essential ingredient for survival.

Owning their own place was a critical consideration for these interviewees. Anna May O'Carroll observed: "once we moved to the house we bought, I felt a lot better."[26] However, the process of making a physical place a home is often difficult to articulate externally. Tuan argues that: "Many places, profoundly significant to particular individuals . . . have little visual prominence. . . . A house is a relatively simple building. It is a place, however, for many reasons. It provides shelter; its hierarchy of spaces answers social needs; it is a field of care, a repository of memories and dreams."[27] Tuan observes that the "state of rootedness is essentially subconscious."[28] Establishing a home is essential to this process, but the effort of homemaking is often taken for granted. Perhaps, this is why, although they occupied a managerial role in the household, taking care of shopping, budgets, and rites of passage for the children, many female interviewees tended to diminish the important part they played in helping families settle in Canada. Historian Hasia Diner argues that Irish emigrant women played a vital role in helping their families to survive and prosper in nineteenth century America: "Irish women viewed themselves as self-sufficient beings, with economic roles to play in their families and communities. The ways they migrated clearly established their ability to make decisions for themselves."[29] She concludes that these women continued a distinctive cultural tradition that was well established in Ireland and argues that her study demonstrates this "cultural persistence over time."[30] These women in Ottawa were doing the same in terms of sustaining family life as their mothers would have done in Ireland. For women who emigrated with young children, it was a natural instinct to serve the same type of recipes as they had in Ireland. Several interviewees point out that once they sourced the "right ingredients" they continued to serve their families the foods they had grown up with in Ireland.

While male and female emigrants had different roles in the home and community, most interviewees' experiences in Canada demonstrate that they worked as a team to ensure their family's successful transition from Ireland. However, some women tended to downplay the important role they played in this process. Intelligent and educated, Mary Coffey played a key role

[26] Anna May O'Carroll, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 7, 2016.
[27] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 162-164.
[28] Ibid., 194.
[29] Hasia Diner, *Erin's Daughters in America: Irish Immigrant Women in the Nineteenth Century* (Maryland: John Hopkins University Press, 1983), xiv.
[30] Ibid., xvi.

in ensuring her family's success in Canada. She and her husband were a dynamic couple. Ben Coffey had a full-time pensionable job in the Post Office in Ireland. He and his wife Mary were married for a few years and had two children when he persuaded her to emigrate to Canada. He travelled to Canada first. She and the children came to join him in Toronto, when he found a job and a place to live: "He just decided he wanted to go [to Canada], I am not the adventurous type!"[31] An indomitable matriarch of eight children, who continues to play a matriarchal role in her family and in the Irish community in Ottawa, this reflection belies the factual details of Mary Coffey's life, both in Ireland and in Canada. It might not have been her idea to emigrate, but once the decision was made, she was determined that the move would be a success. Arriving in a foreign country with two young children, she quickly learned to adapt. From the beginning, she was actively involved in home and community. She taught Irish language classes in the local school, and her home became a social hub for many Irish immigrants in Ottawa where she was affectionately dubbed "Mother Coffey." However, she downplays her importance pointing out that she did not have time to ruminate because she was busy making sure her family survived and thrived in their new environment.

A fluent Irish speaker, Mary Coffey was born in Westport, Co. Mayo in 1925. Although her parents did not speak Irish, she explained that she loved the language, excelled at it in school and it continues to be part of her life in Ottawa. Holder of an Honours Leaving Certificate (High School Diploma) in Ireland, she won first place in the General Post Office entrance exams in 1943 and was employed in post offices in Mullingar, Roscommon, and Westport until 1952, when she met and married Ben Coffey She enjoyed her work and still delights in tapping out the Morse Code that was an integral part of her job during the Second World War. Her husband, from Ennis, Co. Clare, also worked in the post office before he emigrated to Canada in 1955. He secured a clerical job in Toronto City Hall and rented an apartment in Toronto where his wife and two children joined him in November 1955. Their reasons for leaving Toronto and settling in Ottawa sheds light on some of the bitter sectarian issues that Irish immigrants had to deal with in Canada as late as the 1950s. Coffey was unhappy with the attitude of some of the people he met in Toronto. His wife related a particular incident that spurred them to relocate: "He got a job in the city hall. A guy met him one day and said: 'Don't tell me they're taking Catholics now in the city hall,' Toronto was

[31] Mary Coffey, Personal Interview, Ottawa, October 2, 2015.

very Protestant then." Shortly afterwards, Coffey applied for a job in the Federal Government and they moved to Ottawa in 1958 where they settled and had six more children. Coffey related that it was different in Ottawa and easier for them to settle. They bought a newly built detached house, enrolled their children in new schools, and quickly established a circle of friends.[32] A number of interviewees mention that it was indeed different in Ottawa. Tom Taylor recounted his more positive experiences when he first arrived in Ottawa in the early 1960s and lived with a Protestant couple from Belfast. Introduced by a mutual friend, he describes the dynamics of the situation and how positive it was for a Catholic from the Falls Road to become close friends with a Protestant couple from the Shankill area of Belfast. Their families are still close friends today.[33]

While they came from different backgrounds and different regions in Ireland, this cohort were part of a generation where attending religious services was a regular part of their weekly routine. Although Canada was rapidly expanding in the 1950s, its customs and mores were still morally conservative. "Respectability" was still seen as a valued index of character both individual and collective. Ethnographic interviews reveal that the new Irish immigrants embraced these conservative moral values. For example, for Catholic and Protestant interviewees, attending weekly religious services was taken for granted. While employed as a bank manager Luke O'Brien, relocated to many parts of Ontario and recalled that when they were looking for a new house to buy, they usually chose a house near a Catholic church. This was for convenience because attending Mass was something that he had done in Ireland and continued to do in Canada. He never gave it much thought because it was part of his family's everyday life.[34]

In many cases, the host society paid little attention to the geographical backgrounds of Irish immigrants. Felix Connolly mentioned that when he worked in the federal government in Ottawa, his colleagues did not pay much attention to where people came from. When he first arrived, adapting to working life was made more accessible by the fact that the shipbuilding industry in Canada was almost identical to the Harland and Wolff shipyard in Belfast, where he had served his apprenticeship. A large percentage of shipyard workers in Belfast in the 1950s were from the UK. Connolly was hired as a draftsman by the Canadian Ship Building Company in June 1961. Shipyards in Canada were staffed mainly by workers from the U.K. because there were not enough

[32] Mary Coffey, Personal Interview, Ottawa, October 2, 2015.
[33] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[34] Luke O'Brien, Personal Interview, Toronto, October 22, 2013.

qualified Canadians to work in this expanding field. Connolly was employed initially in Quebec City and then relocated to a shipyard in Collingwood, Ontario. He explained:

> There were Scottish and English too and some Canadians, very few Canadians. Now one of the problems was that it was a self- inflicted wound. They didn't provide any education in naval architecture in Collingwood for people. Two of the staff members in the shipyard in Collingwood, they went to the board, you know, the education board, and they said they would run classes in the high school, either at night or during the day in naval architecture, so that local people could be hired. They [the board] weren't interested, you know. It was hard then for local people to get a job in the drawing office. Some did, but, not too many. Most of the people in the drawing office were from the United Kingdom, or Northern Ireland.[35]

According to Connolly, it was well known that Canadian shipyard managers tended to hire workers from their own particular localities:

> There was a tendency in Canada at that time, depending on which shipyard you went to. Some group from the United Kingdom, or Northern Ireland, sort of had taken over. Like at Davie Shipbuilding [Lauzon, Quebec]. It was the North East people. If you wanted to get on, you had to be from the North East coast of England, because the naval architect was from the North East coast, so, all his staff were from the North East coast of England, Newcastle, Sunderland, and it was so bad.
> I remember going to him once and asking him about the chances of promotion, and he said, it must have been a Friday, and he told me the story that all promotions were taken by staff already working in the drawing office. Now, while he was telling me this story, there must have been a guy on the boat coming to Quebec, because he started on Monday morning, straight from England [he laughs] and they put him in a higher position, you know.

Realizing that he had few prospects of being promoted in Lauzon, Connolly moved to Collingwood, Ontario, where discriminatory hiring practices worked in his favour: "Collingwood was the same. The chief engineer was from Harland and Wolff, the naval architect was from Harland and Wolff, the manager was from Harland and Wolff, the yard manager was from Harland and Wolff. I knew the yard manager in Belfast, because he was a manager in Harland and Wolff too."

Connolly does not remember feeling discriminated against in Canada because he was a Catholic, but remarked that it was just taken for granted in Belfast that Harland and Wolff shipyard was a Protestant company and that the majority of the workforce were Protestant. Recalling his career in Canada, Connolly said that he never paid much attention to discriminatory practices when

[35] Felix Connolly, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 19, 2014.

he worked in the shipbuilding industry because it was "just the way things had always been." Harland and Wolff was known as a Protestant company. The hiring procedures in the shipyard in Collingwood were the same:

> But, I can remember an incident that happened years later in New Brunswick [1970s]. My boss in New Brunswick, when I was working for the government, he said to me one day: 'How many Catholics?' This was during the Troubles, when there was a lot of problems, you know, It was on the news media here about how Catholics were being discriminated against. He said: 'how many Catholics worked in the [Belfast] drawing office?'
> I went: 'there was me, Joe Bateson, Gerry Wright' and I began to count them on my fingers. He never said anything, but years later he said to me, that amazed him. The fact that I was counting them on my fingers. He thought an answer was going to be: 'Oh 30% were Catholic,' or 'two or three hundred were Catholics.' But I was counting them on my fingers, the number of Catholics who were there, you know, and there were very, very few, in Harland and Wolff's, both in the drawing office and outside.
> It was mainly a Protestant sort of company. Not that, I don't think the top management cared where you came from, but at lower levels it was controlled by the Orange Order and that sort of thing. But they just tolerated it because it was easier for them, just to let it go that way, rather than say: 'you are not going to be able to do that,' you know.

These reminiscences prompted a discussion as to why Connolly had applied to work in Harland and Wolff in Belfast in the first place. He recalled that he had been encouraged by his mother to apply. Although he did not give it much thought at the time, he has since wondered if his mother's progressive attitude and insistence that Connolly and his siblings complete third level education had been influenced by her own experiences as an emigrant. She had emigrated to Montreal herself in 1919: "She was only about 18 or 19 years of age and went to Montreal. Then, later on, my aunt, her sister, followed her and then her brother, my uncle, he followed her. The two ladies, my mother and her sister went back to Ireland, because my grandmother, their mother, must have had a stroke or something. They went back to take care of her." His mother was very ambitious for her children. Connolly was a graduate of St. Malachy's College, Belfast. Founded in 1833, the college is one of the oldest Catholic diocesan colleges in Ireland and has a reputation for excellence in mathematics, sciences, arts, and music. He claimed he took this education for granted and it was only in later years that he realized how fortunate he was:

> I did Latin and French and all of that in High School, St. Malachy's. When I look back on it, in those days, I thought it was a pain in the ass. When I look back on it, it was progressive. . . . My mother, she found out that Harland and Wolff held examinations every year for people to go along and do an exam and go into the drawing office. So, I did the exam and I passed the exam So, I joined the drawing office.

His mother was convinced he would be offered the job, if he did well enough in the exam, and she was correct. He enjoyed his work and gave little thought to the internal dynamics of the company: "There was always high unemployment in Northern Ireland. So, to get a job, you took any job that came along really." However, he was well aware that Catholics were in the minority:

> To be honest in those days, there weren't too many openings for Catholics in any engineering companies in Belfast. It was sort of accepted that you weren't going to get in, you know. Catholics believed that, and I think Protestants believed that Catholics were inferior, so they didn't deserve to get in anyway. There were very few people in Harland and Wolff's, in the drawing office, who were Catholics.

Emigration was an accepted part of everyday life in Belfast in the 1950s and Connolly admitted that he was just one of many who took advantage of the lucrative employment opportunities Canada had to offer:

> There was a boom in shipbuilding in Canada at that time, because a couple of years before, I think in 1959, the St. Lawrence Seaway opened and when it opened it had enabled much larger ships to operate on the Great Lakes. So Canadian shipbuilders, or ship owners wanted larger ships built. So, they began to take plenty of orders with the shipbuilders in Canada, to build what they called 'Lakers.' There was a big demand for jobs in Canada at that time. So, this is why shipyards began to advertise. Cause even after I came, I came in June, other companies advertised in Belfast too, looking for draftsmen.
> In fact, the year before I came to Canada, I had gone to another interview, for a job in Canada, with Canadian Vickers in Montreal. But I hadn't finished my studies at college at that time, so I just went to the interview to find out all about it. I wanted to finish college first. That was the atmosphere in the shipyard in Belfast, you see, nearly everybody, as soon as they completed an apprenticeship, they sought a job elsewhere, and usually it was either Canada or the United States.

Connolly recalled that he and his wife did not speak French when they arrived: "We didn't really. I picked up French later on when I joined the Government, when I went on courses. Of course, I had high school French, but it was helpful to read or write French, but not to speak it, because we never did speak it in Ireland. In school, it was all written. Reading and writing, that is all we ever did in Ireland."[36] Their interaction with their landlady in Lauzon confirmed he was well able to navigate his way in this Francophone milieu. His wife averred that:

> Actually, we had a French landlady. Felix would write notes to her, if we were going out and there was something being delivered. He would write a note. She just couldn't understand why he didn't speak it. She said to a friend of ours, who was French: 'Is he too

[36] Felix Connolly, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 19, 2014.

> shy to speak it?' She said: 'he can't speak it!' She [the landlady] said: 'he writes beautifully, beautiful French.[37]

While language was an additional obstacle in Quebec, a common thread that runs through all "arrival" narratives was that although Canada and Ireland shared many common customs, it was still a foreign country. Some interviewees revealed that even inconsequential details were often frustrating. An amusing anecdote recounted by Seán and Anna May O'Carroll, about helping their son with school homework, illuminates some of these subtle differences. The O'Carrolls came to Canada in August 1976 with three young children; a five year old, four year old, and two year old. Anna May was pregnant with their fourth child who was born the following January, grew up in Killashandra, Co. Cavan and married Seán in 1970 when he was stationed as a Royal Ulster Constabulary officer in Newtownbutler, Co. Fermanagh:

> When our children started school in the very beginning. I remember Denis would come home from kindergarten and grade one as well. He would come home with his little phonics, his little page with pictures he had to circle. As an example, it was 'mat' or 'rug.' I remember him coming home and he was so annoyed. The boot of the car and the trunk of the car and the 'b' and the 't'. The trunk of the car would be 't' and we would circle the 'b' [boot] He was coming home with the stuff all wrong.[38]

Seán laughed and added: "the other one was 'pail' and 'bucket.' There was a little drawing with bucket on it and you had to fill in the missing letters and it would be "p - - l." We would say: 'how could you get that? It starts with 'b.'"[39] Barber and Watson observed that many English emigrants were surprised to discover that "they were separated from English-speaking Canadians by "a supposedly common language." The English immigrants they interviewed also commented "on often unanticipated differences in word usage between England and Canada. The English pavement was sidewalk in Canada, lorry was truck, the boot of a car was a trunk . . . the list could continue indefinitely." [40] This is similar to the experiences of the Irish-born cohort in Ottawa. Anna May O'Carroll recalled: "we began to understand the local terminology here. Just little things. So, I remember, until we got accustomed." [41]

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[37] Margo Connolly, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 19, 2014.
[38] Anna May O'Carroll, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 7, 2016.
[39] Séan O'Carroll, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 7, 2016.
[40] Barber and Watson, 103-104.
[41] Séan O'Carroll, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 7, 2016.

Such anecdotes illustrate how seemingly mundane sociographic minutiae were often difficult to translate. Tom Taylor recalled an incident that occurred when he first arrived in Toronto. Before he left the airport, he decided to buy a cup of tea:

> Now in Belfast we called doughnuts gravy rings, because the grease that they were made in was called gravy. So, doughnuts were called gravy rings. I went in to get a cup of tea and said to the wee girl behind the counter: 'could I have a cup of tea, please, and a couple of gravy rings.' She said: 'pardon?' I said: 'a cup of tea and two gravy rings' and I got that blank look, you know. I thought I am talking too fast. You know, Belfast people, so I said: 'A . . . cup . . . of . . .tea . . .please . . . and . . .two gravy rings,' and she still looked like this.
> Then I thought, the trouble is the tea, because there was a wall full of gravy rings behind her and in the movies nobody drinks tea, they all drink coffee! But in Belfast, nobody really drank coffee. I thought, she is having trouble with the tea. So, I said it very slowly, 'a cup . . . of . . . tea . . . please' and I pointed and said: 'two gravy rings.' She said: 'you mean doughnuts?' and I said: 'yes, gravy rings.' She said: 'Sally come here, say that for her' [laughter] That was my first morning in Canada, yeah. I tell this story sometimes when Irish people get together. To me it is a classic one. I have never forgotten.[42]

Most emigrants have similar stories to tell about how they overcame such early challenges of fitting into their newfound environments. While Taylor believes that it is vitally important to share such anecdotes with fellow travelers, he is keenly aware of the dangers inherent in this natural tendency to find a safe place with empathic others – namely, other emigrants like yourself: "You go through a golden age in your head, about what it was like at home. 'It was never like that when I was at home.' I remember being taken aside by another Irish, older fella, and he said: 'Tommy if you want home, go home. If you are not going to be here, it [home] won't be here.'" Up until that moment, he had not realized that he had been unconsciously comparing things to the way they had been at home: "You would find that some people would gravitate to an Irish group and it became for them like a mental ghetto. Because they were so comfortable, yes, you are among people who understand you. You don't have to explain and that can be a real comfort." This type of segregation, however, is both unrealistic and unhealthy for new immigrants. Taylor quickly recognized that it was important to go out into the community and to get to know one's fellow Canadians. He recalled a conversation with his mother on one of his trips back to Ireland. Explaining to her that Canada was now his home, he recalled:

[42] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.

> The effort always seemed to be [Taylor going to Belfast] I used to say to them, over there, you know the plane flies two ways, or, [they would say] 'you didn't phone, it's a long time since I heard from you,' and the thing about 'when are you coming home?' You had to say, and it is a hard thing to do: 'Yes Ma, don't worry, this is where I grew up and I wouldn't part with it for the world, but there are two wee girls in Ottawa now and that is my home.'[43]

As the elderly Irish emigrant inferred, settling into life in Canada entailed a psychological as well as a physical break from 'home.'

There is a tendency among Irish immigrants to refer to Ireland as 'home,' while at the same time being satisfied that their home is now permanently in Canada. Maura Stevens continued to refer to the North of Ireland as 'home,' especially in conversations with her sister who lives in Montreal: "We are Canadian now and have lived in this country for a lot more years than we spent in Ireland. Yet we still find ourselves referring to Ireland as 'home.' Although we were both married in Canada and our children and grandchildren were born here. As they say, 'you can take the girl out of the country, but you can't take the country out of the girl.'"[44] Tuan confirms this continued pull of home: "Attachment to the homeland can be intense . . . Human groups nearly everywhere tend to regard their own homeland as the center of the world. . . . Attachment to the homeland is a common human emotion."[45] In his exploration of "the processes by which the nation came to be imagined," historian Benedict Anderson notes that "*amor patriae* does not differ . . . from other affections, in which there is always an element of fond imagining." [46]

For the emigrant, psychological attachment to the place they were born is heightened by the fact that it is no longer part of their day-to-day lives and can only be recreated in memory. "Feelings and ideas concerning space and place are extremely complex in the adult human being. They grow out of life's unique and shared experiences."[47] As Tuan astutely observes:

> Places can acquire deep meaning for the adult through the steady accretion of sentiment over the years . . .[the child] is not suited to the reflective pause and backward glance that make places seem saturated with significance . . . Young children, so imaginative in their own spheres of action, may look matter-of-factly on places that to adults are haunted by memories.[48]

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[43] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[44] Strevens, "Aunt Hannah Jane," 114.
[45] Tuan, *Space and Place,* 158
[46] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* Revised Edition (London: Verso, 2006), 141
[47] Tuan, *Space and Place*, 19.
[48] Ibid., 33.

Anthropologist Miriam Kahn corroborates this perspective by suggesting that places "are complex constructions of social histories, personal and interpersonal experiences, and selective memory."[49] In considering how and why "places trigger strong emotions", she observes: "places were not preexisting empty stages to be filled with activity; they took on meaning . . . [and] blossomed into places of significance through actions and interactions with others. They reverberated with profoundly emotional shared experiences."[50] For Irish immigrants in Ottawa, memories of their Irish childhoods remain an inextricable part of who they are. Such memories run beneath the surface of their everyday lives. As Steven Feld observed, "living far away, one is deeply reminded of places as kin; path connections are like familiar places calling back to you."[51]

While initial physical journeys to Canada may have been brief and momentary, the journey of adjustment never ceased. In their ethnographic analysis of post-war English immigrants in Canada, Barber and Watson write "[t]he physical journey to their intended Canadian destination was a brief interlude, whether measured by days if by sea or, increasingly, in hours if by air. Their emotional journey, however, continued for the rest of their lives."[52] A recurrent theme among these Irish immigrants was the second-guessing and reappraising of reasons for leaving. Some even considered the possibility of moving back. Luke O'Brien recalled looking out the window of his rented room in Montreal shortly after arriving in Canada and seeing the red brick house next door and wondering why he had left his nice comfortable home in Dublin. He had saved for more than a year for his one-way fare. He would have to save again to pay for his trip back home. Then, he reminded himself of the reasons why he left home. He felt ambitious and was determined to succeed. He adapted, and within a year, embarked on what would be a successful career in banking. When his wife felt home-sick after their first child was born, she was advised to return home to Dublin for an extended visit:

> Mary became very homesick. There was a term for that out here, it was quite common, apparently, and it was called . . . something like the '$500 cure.' In other words, you'd send the wife home and it would cost you up to maybe $500, I don't know how much it cost, but I'm going to say $500, that is a guess, I forget, but she went home. It might have been in '56 that she went home. I said: 'you take as long as you like when you go home.'

[49] Miriam Kahn, "Your Place and Mine: Sharing Emotional Landscapes in Wamira, Papua New Guinea," in Feld, *Senses of Place*, 167.
[50] Ibid., 188.
[51] Steven Feld, "Waterfalls of Song: An Acoustemology of Place Resounding in Bosavi, Papua New Guinea," in Feld, *Senses of Place*, 132.
[52] Barber and Watson, 97.

> Her mother was still living in Dublin at the time and so, she went home, and the plan was that she was going to stay for three months. So, after about, I'd say, two months, and I'd send her money all the time, she decided that she'd had enough, and she wanted to come back. She came back and she never looked back. She just decided she had had enough, and this was the time to come back. Far away hills are green, yea, so she came back.[53]

Several interviewees mentioned this "$500 cure." The amount varied, but "cure" for homesickness remained the same. According to Barber and Watson, several of their interviewees "reported that the '$1,000-cure' – a return visit to England – was indeed the elixir that overcame homesickness and enabled them to feel settled in Canada."[54] Historian, A. J. Hammerton notes: "the '$1000', cure; the legendry prompt trip back to Canada after a disillusioning return to England, is a recurring term throughout the written and oral testimonies of postwar English emigrants to Canada."[55]

This cure is often associated with women and, in particular, British and Irish women who married Canadian servicemen stationed in the UK during the war. Interviews with these women reveal that many had unrealistic expectations of what to expect and found it hard to acclimatize when they tried to settle with their husbands' families often in remote parts in Canada.[56] Homesickness and alienation, however, were not gender specific. Male and female interviewees reported feeling unsettled when they first arrived. Their first trip back to Ireland reminded them of why they had left in the first place and made it easier to settle in Canada when they returned. The combination of economic, social, and cultural factors that prompted them to leave Ireland remained largely the same. As emigrants, they had been catapulted into a new environment, and although they resolved to find new moorings in Canada, emigration still had a powerful sundering impact on their lives. There is a tendency to downplay this emotional sundering. Although many framed their early experiences in positive terms, it required considerable persistence and stamina to set up new lives in a new country.

The physical moment of departure still remains a poignant memory for some of the Irish immigrants in Ottawa. Mary Coffey recalled her mixed emotions when sailing from Cobh with her children on 13 June 1955:

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[53] Luke O'Brien, Personal Interview, Toronto, October 21, 2013.
[54] Barber and Watson, 101.
[55] A. James Hammerton, "Migrants, Mobility and Modernity: Understanding the Life Stories of Postwar English Emigrants to Canada 1945-1971," *British Journal of Canadian Studies* 16, 1 (2003): 164.
[56] Corrine Kennedy, "They Brought us Eaton's Catalogues: Issues of Gender, Consumerism, and Citizenship in the Stories of Second World War British Brides," unpublished M.A. Thesis (Carleton University, 2002).

> I remember sitting in the tender crying bitterly while two frightened children clung desperately to me as the coast of Ireland and the beautiful view of Cobh receded into the ever-growing distance. As we entered the huge liner the band played 'McNamara's Band', which did nothing to assuage my wretchedness. The voyage was partly nightmare due to sea sickness, and partly fun, with bingo at night and new acquaintances to meet.[57]

Deirdre Scott had spent years planning to emigrate. Although she was filled with excitement, the process of leaving home in 1957 was harder than she anticipated. She and her friend travelled by train from Dublin to Cobh and then on the ocean liner *T.S.S. New York* to Halifax:

> After hugs and kisses, God bless, take care and write soon, the train slowly pulled out of the station. Betty and I looked at each other for the first time that morning and started to cry. Then we laughed at each other being so silly and then cried some more. We knew somehow when we met Roselle at Cobh where we would board the ship we would feel better . . . When we arrived at the port of Cobh after a five hour train trip from Dublin we were feeling much more confident.

Scott had another emotional moment when they arrived in Halifax on 4 June 1957.

> Now we had to go through customs and immigration, make sure our luggage got on the train and find a carriage with three seats together. Also, the realization of the enormity of my decision to come to Canada was hitting me for the first time since I left home. I remember the emigration officer trying to pronounce my name. I must have looked very serious because he said: 'come on, we always thought Irish eyes were smiling.' I felt like crying but he made me laugh. Thank goodness I had Betty and Roselle with me, we were a great support for each other.[58]

Interviewees who reminisced about their first weeks and months in Canada frequently added that they accepted that these momentary feelings of sadness and loss were now part of their everyday lives and they just carried on. Hammerton notes that the psychological impact of emigration on British migrants to Canada and Australia is rarely examined. He contends that reports of "cultural sameness" overshadows the significance of how the moment of migration had a dramatic impact on migrants' lives.[59] Perhaps the psychological impact is underestimated because emigrants tend to avoid discussion of the topic and, instead, frame the experience in positive terms, especially when writing to family at home in Ireland. When Deirdre Scott and her girlfriends arrived in Ottawa, they immediately looked for work. When she was hired by the Bank of Canada: "I was

[57] Mary Coffey, "My Life Before Canada," in McKay, 14.
[58] Deirdre Scott, "Personal Memoire," Scott Family Private Papers, Ottawa, Ontario. [Within a week of arrival these three women had secured full-time jobs in banking in Ottawa].
[59] A. James Hammerton, "Epic Stories and the Mobility of Modernity: Narratives of British Migration to Canada and Australia since 1945," *Australian-Canadian Studies* 19, 1 (2001): 48

walking on cloud nine leaving the building and delighted that I was starting a job and I was less than a week in Ottawa. Now I could write home and let my mother know how happy I was that I had come to Canada."[60] In fact, Scott waited until she had settled into a "nice comfortable apartment" and had secured permanent employment before she wrote to her mother.

While emigration was not easy, once emigrants left Ireland, most embraced the freedom, advantages, and opportunities that Canada offered. Aileen Dolan's first trip back to Dublin was extended when her Canadian husband was transferred back to Ireland. She had been homesick and thought that it would be easy to settle back in. However, she felt trapped in Ireland and was quickly reminded of why she had wanted to escape in the first place:

> I was homesick. I had a wonderful time, but I was homesick. I was always homesick. But I think the five years back there cured me. We lived first of all in Foxrock and then we bought a house in Killiney. But, there was too much family interference. I had gotten used to, four years of freedom, you know! Being obliged to do this and that and the other. It did change me. I never wanted to go back to Ireland after that five years back. I would go back for visits, but not to live. I never wanted to live there again.[61]

Most Irish immigrant's in Ottawa were confident they made the right decision to emigrate. As Dolan observed, emigration had changed who she was as an individual and she could never go back; being an emigrant had altered her perception of the world and she refused to accept the archaic status-quo in Ireland.

In his analysis of sociological perspectives on Irish emigration, James McAuley argues that "[s]ince ethnic diasporas are not homogeneous, the members of such a group can encounter different receptions in the host nation depending on class, gender, or educational attainment."[62] His argument refers to the class, gender, educational attainment of emigrants before they left Ireland. While these factors did indeed play a vital role, the dynamics of the particular area where they chose to settle also determined how immigrants settled in. In Canada, regional geography played a significant role in how Irish immigrants settled in their new environments. Post-war Irish emigrants who settled in Ottawa encountered a unique set of circumstances. Their personal and professional lives were shaped by the distinctive dynamics of Canada's national capital region. Mary Coffey claimed that the milieu in Ottawa was completely different from that which they had

[60] Deirdre Scott, "Personal Memoire,"
[61] Aileen Dolan, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 8, 2016.
[62] James McAuley, "Editor's Introduction: Sociological Perspectives of the Irish Diaspora," *Irish Journal of Sociology* 11, 2 (2002): 4.

encountered in Toronto.[63] This variation in Irish immigrant lifeworlds - even within the same province - highlights how experiential dynamics varied from one region to the next.

Ottawa was an exciting place to live in the 1960s and 1970s. The Canadian federal government expanded and recruited hundreds of technical, professional, and administrative staff to support this expansion. "Computing Devices" (Leigh Instruments) and "Bell Northern Research" (Nortel) opened in 1961 and set the seed of what was to become a burgeoning high tech private sector. Workers were hired from other provinces and territories of Canada and Irish emigrants joined this eclectic milieu. The new National Research Council included recently-arrived immigrants from Ireland among their staff. Desmond Walsh recalled that Ottawa was a vibrant place, and described the excitement and challenges of being hired to work for the Canadian Security Intelligence Service [CSIS]. A recent Ph.D. graduate in Applied Mathematics, he had excellent opportunities, a lucrative salary, a car, and he quickly bought a house and settled in.[64] Most interviewees focused on establishing themselves and getting to know their fellow Canadians. As Felix Connolly noted, his fellow workers in the Canadian federal government were not interested in regional nuances of where he had come from in Ireland.[65] Tom Taylor, who was also recruited by the Canadian federal government (when he retired from teaching) remarked: "I came to Canada to meet Canadians, not to live in a physical or mental Irish ghetto."[66]

This immigrant cohort became proactively involved in their wider communities and quickly integrated with other Canadians. They were ready to fit into a modern civic Canada. As historian José Igartua observed, the timing of their arrival coincided with "a civic definition of national identity, in which the ties that bound Canadians together were universalistic moral values of equality. . . . A flag without ethnic emblems symbolized a de-ethnicization of the concept of the Canadian nation."[67] The priority for these Irish immigrants was to establish their careers, set up homes, and move on to the next phase of their lives. The unique configuration of urban development in the National Capital Region proved particularly conducive to the fulfillment of these dreams.

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[63] Mary Coffey, Personal Interview, Ottawa, October 2, 2015.
[64] Desmond Walsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 10, 2016.
[65] Felix Connolly, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 19, 2014
[66] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[67] José E. Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945-71* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 226.

Figure 3 :The Aubusson tapestry of the 1950 National Capital Plan, designed by Jacques Gréber

Atlas-Annex du Rapport Général (Ottawa: Service D'aménagement de la Capitale Nationale),29.

Figure 4: Technicians working on the 1950 National Capital Model, 1949. Photograph in David Gordon, “Weaving a Modern Plan,” *Urban History Review* 29, 2 (March 2001): 49.

Chapter 6. Right Time, Right Place: New World Spaces & Old World Heritage

Historian J J Lee observes that: "[t]he past can be a deadweight, or a springboard, depending upon what we choose to make of it."[1] For Irish immigrants who settled in the National Capital Region (NCR), their past experiences and pride in their Irish heritage served as a springboard as they launched into the next phase of their lives. This leap was facilitated by Canada's new strategy of nurturing a multicultural national identity. This drive to redefine Canada's identity was manifested in manifold ways at national, provincial and municipal levels. This ethos informed deliberations on the National Centennial Act (1961), as well as the establishment of the Canadian Centennial Commission (1963), which set in motion a nationwide campaign to celebrate the Centenary of Canadian Confederation in 1967. The campaign motto "unity in diversity" promoted the idea of ethnic diversity and celebrated Canada as a multicultural civic nation.[2] The same spirit animated long dormant plans to develop the NCR and was embodied in the conscious planning of Ottawa and its environs. The emergent physical and psychological space of the NCR became a fertile place for Irish immigrants to put down roots - roots conducive to the evolution of an ethnic consciousness in which Irishness was just one layer of their multicultural lives. This young cohort navigated and negotiated this complex intersection of physical, psychological, social and cultural spaces most astutely. Now Canadian citizens and proud of their Irish identity, heritage, and culture, they never considered themselves a group of immigrants parachuted into a strange country. Instead, they embraced life as new Canadians. While their Irishness continued to underpin their identities, most did not actively seek out other Irish immigrants in Ottawa when they first arrived. However, being Irish was an integral part of who they were. Hence, Irish social and cultural networks, centered around music, drama, sport, and the Irish language gradually evolved around them. These networks were essential elements in their multilayered identities and allowed them to integrate their Irishness into a kaleidoscope of shifting life experiences in Canada.

On 5 December 1950, Canadian Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent and French Ambassador Hubert Guéron unveiled an Aubusson tapestry of the *Plan for the National Capital* in the lobby of the House of Commons in Ottawa. This tapestry depicts an aerial view of the regional plan

[1] J. J.Lee, "Millennial Reflections on Irish-American History," *Radharc* 1 (November, 2000): 63.
[2] "Canadian Centennial Commission," [hereafter CCC] RG 71, Vol. 403, File S35; RG 69, Vol. 553.

developed by Jacques Gréber, France's leading urban planner and consultant to Canada's National Capital Planning Service.[3] Gréber's 1950 plan incorporated elements of Chicago architect Edward Bennett's plan for Ottawa and Hull commissioned by Prime Minister Robert Borden in 1913. Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King recruited Gréber in 1936 to prepare a new plan for Canada's capital. Gréber visited Ottawa in 1937 to study the area. Following the Second World War, Mackenzie King established the National Capital Planning Committee and appointed Gréber as head of the National Capital Planning service. The National Capital Plan was published in 1950. MacKenzie King was determined that the National Capital Region (NCR) would be a space worthy of a growing Canadian nation. A combination of skilled planning staff and strong project management contributed to the success of the project. The National Capital Commission (NCC), as geographer and urban planner David Gordon asserts, "was virtually unstoppable as an implementation agency for twenty years after the war. . . . Ottawa and Hull were transformed from dreary industrial towns into a green, spacious capital."[4]

Gordon contends that "Mackenzie King gave the project enough political momentum to last almost two decades."[5] However, the vision of the NCR as a national capital of a modern civic nation was supported by subsequent political administrations. For example, on 1 August 1956 the decision to extend the NCR plan from 900 to 1,850 square miles was unanimously approved by Canadian parliament.[6] Two years later, Prime Minister John G. Diefenbaker referred to the "non-partisan spirit of support" for the NCR plan:

> I hope we shall be able more effectively to continue the concept of successive prime Ministers and parliaments since 1926, whose general desire was to assure that the capital city of our country shall be one that will be a pride to all Canadians and will become an ever-increasing mecca to Canadians. They will be able to see here a symbol of the nation's greatness, a capital so constituted and so planned as to quicken the pulses of Canadians in the pride of Canadian achievements . . . a city which will be a monument to the national unity of our country, to the greatness of our past and to the vast potentialities of our future.[7]

[3] David Gordon, "Weaving a Modern Plan for Canada's Capital: Jacques Gréber and the 1950 Plan for the National Capital Region," *Urban History Review* 29, 2 (March 2001): 43.
[4] David L. A. Gordon, *Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities* (London: Routledge, 2006), 154.
[5] Ibid., 160.
[6] Canada. *House of Commons Debates,* 1 August 1956.
[7] Canada *House of Commons Debates,* 11 August 1958.

Diefenbaker's emphasis on the NCR as "a symbol of the nation's greatness" is important to bear in mind when considering how the area where the Irish interviewees settled shaped how they adapted and adjusted to life in Canada. The region was undergoing an extensive metamorphosis at the same time as they were setting up home and settling in. Noting that the timing of the construction of Canada's capital and many other capital city spaces in the post-war era coincided with the end of empire and the emergence of new federal systems, geographer Lawrence Vale makes the important point that "[t]he planning and design of national capitals is inseparable from the political, economic, and social forces that sited them and moulded their development."[8] These powerful forces created a physical and social space that these young Irish immigrants found congenial for their aspirations. As Vale points out the Gréber plan included "the loop of Confederation Boulevard joining Ottawa and Hull in a wishful composition centered on the Ottawa River itself. Here, as in other multicultural nation-states, planners have used urban design to convey a microcosm of the intended society."[9]

By 1970, the NCC had spent $243 million implementing the Gréber plan and it continued to guide "the growth of the Ottawa-Hull region from 250,000 to 500,00 people from 1946 to 1966."[10] The emergence of a new federal system in Ottawa was supported by the tremendous growth of federal and provincial services and many of these new offices were located in the NCR. In fact, a number of the interviewees were specifically recruited to fill newly created positions in the federal government and were an integral part of this eclectic milieu. Stressing the importance of understanding how social classes are shaped by the particular characteristics of the region they inhabit, historian Chad Gaffield argues that the development of "governmental bodies (most notably the National Capital Commission) has defined the official boundaries of the Outaouais [region in Quebec] and in ways which have added considerably to the complexity of the region's history."[11] This development had a similar impact on the Ontario side of the Ottawa river. As Gaffield posits, it is important to identify:

> those aspects of a region which give it historical specificity . . . – in other words, to understand those features which make a given geographic space a 'region.' . . .a comparative framework . . . will emphasize constellations

[8] Lawrence J. Vale, "The Urban Design of Twentieth Century Capitals," in *Planning Twentieth Century Capital Cities*, ed. David L. A. Gordon (London: Routledge, 2006), 15.
[9] Ibid., 20.
[10] Gordon, "Ottawa-Hull," 161
[11] Chad Gaffield, "The New Regional History: Rethinking the History of the Outaouais," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 26, 1 (Spring 1991): 68.

> of characteristics. Just as human beings differ from each other not simply as a result of any one trait but rather as a function of the infinite possible configurations of such traits, regions also gain their identity from the unique conjuncture of singularly familiar features.[12]

The expansion of the federal and provincial civil service in the NCR provided employment for thousands of new recruits who settled on both sides of the Ottawa river among them some of the Irish immigrants who later formed the ISSGO. A unique element of the plan was a "greenbelt" of approximately four kilometres wide to surround the suburban areas. This included land on the Ontario side of the Ottawa River and expanded into the Gatineau Park and the northern hills of Quebec.[13] As the population expanded, urban infrastructure and suburban neighbourhoods were built largely in the locations suggested in the Gréber plan. Considering that these young Irish people had already moved away from ancestral roots and close family ties, it is important to consider how relocating to new houses in newly-built suburban areas shaped their emigrant lifeworlds. The social and spatial dynamics in the region were complex and still in formation. The newly built houses were detached and in well-located previously-undeveloped areas. Geographer Tim Cresswell refers to the "rich tapestry of place-making" and notes that "all over the world people are engaged in place-making activities . . . [these places] are all spaces which people have made meaningful."[14] For the Irish immigrants who settled in the NCR, the goals and ethos of the planners was a *tabula rasa* upon which their lifeworlds could unfold.

This population surge in the NCR reflected a similar trend across Canada. Historian Doug Owram avers that in the post-war period more than 70 per cent of all new dwellings built were single-family detached homes in suburbs, which became "the symbol of the young postwar family."[15] A number of the Irish interviewees continue to reside in the detached homes they bought in suburban areas within the NCR greenbelt in the 1960s. Suburbia, Owram argues, became a place where a family could "put down roots in a community of equally rootless people."[16] This is an interesting point to consider when exploring how young Irish immigrants settled into life in Canada. They were physically detached from their relatives in Ireland, but many of their

[12] Ibid., 78.
[13] Gordon, "Weaving," 48.
[14] Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 5-7.
[15] Doug Owram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 56.
[16] Ibid., 55.

neighbours in these newly established communities were in a similar position. As Owram writes: "The extended family in which grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins and others were part of daily life had been in decline in western industrial society for some time. The suburbs accentuated this situation. This was not the family neighbourhood, but a new community in which there were no ancestral roots or close relatives outside the immediate family."[17] Many interviewees refer to this period of their lives as passing by quickly. It is notable that some of them still live in the same, (now well-settled), communities and remain in touch with friends that they made at that time.

As the region developed, the possibilities for personal and professional advancement proved endless. Irish immigrants relished their newfound freedom and embraced the opportunities it brought. Canadian House of Commons and Senate debates regularly extolled the virtues of the expanding economy and lauded the advantages of living in Canada: "We in Canada today are a young nation almost bursting at the seams with energy to move forward to greater prosperity and development of our resources."[18] Although interviewees, who are now members of ISSGO, were living in the NCR at this time, some of them inhabited different spaces and had different lifeworlds in the same region. While some Irish female immigrants followed a more traditional domestic role, others were negotiating a professional milieu. Caroline Gowdy Williams and Maggie O'Rourke both worked as physiotherapists in 1960s Ottawa. For Gowdy Williams, a Protestant from Northern Ireland, and O'Rourke, a Catholic from the Republic of Ireland, their career trajectories in Canada followed a similar and satisfying path. Medical facilities in Ottawa were most impressive. Gowdy Williams, who trained as a physiotherapist in Belfast, was hired to set up a physiotherapy department in the newly built Riverside Hospital, Ottawa in 1966:

> I was offered the job of setting up this new physiotherapy department, from scratch. It was assigned a space and there was nothing in it. I ordered the equipment, hired an older lady to help set things up, inpatients and outpatients, brought in two more physios.
> [Gowdy Williams explained that she designed their uniforms]
> Miniskirts were in. It was exciting, 1967. The three of us, we were all fairly tall. We got blue two-piece tunics over a miniskirt, kind of thing, short, white tights, and white shoes. We were like something out of James Bond! Everybody knew who we were [physiotherapists]. I drew up a new comprehensive manual. It was very efficient.[19]

[17] Ibid., 82.
[18] Canada. *Senate Debates,* 21 January 1979 (Hon. Arthur M. Pearson, Sask).
[19] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 24, 2015.

She recalled how much she enjoyed her work and she received many awards over the years from the Canadian Physiotherapist Association. On her retirement, twenty-five years later, a ceremonial plaque on the wall referenced her dedication and vision that were much appreciated.

O'Rourke was also well-qualified to work in the Canadian system and found little difference between her work in Ireland and in Canada. Physiotherapists who trained in Dublin had to qualify through the British system, hence there was reciprocal registration between Ireland, Britain, and Canada. O'Rourke's career in the Ottawa hospital was challenging and stimulating.[20] Recruited by the Royal Canadian Air Force, she was offered full board and accommodation along with a lucrative salary:

> There was a big house, called the White House, where the female officers were housed. That first night I went into the mess for supper and all the tables were laid out with the white tablecloths and candelabras, wine glasses, the whole nine yards. I thought: 'Oh my God, what is going on here?' I thought: 'Am I going to be eating like this every night of the week?' But it wasn't, it was a special dining-in dinner that the officers were having. So that was my introduction to Canada. It was amazing.[21]

O'Rourke loved living in Ottawa where she found 'Trudeaumania' thrilling and exciting:

> My first posting was the National Defence Medical Centre in Ottawa. It was a really good experience because it was a three hundred bed hospital then, and there were a couple of Irish doctors there. It was really a fun place to be. There was always something going on. Of course, in the middle of it all there was 'Trudeaumania' because the elections were coming up. It was so much fun.[22]

A number of ISSGO interviewees referenced 'Trudeaumania' and how exciting it was to live in a region where, as O'Rourke notes "there was always something going on." Historian Paul Litt explains that the "media began using the term 'Trudeaumania,' adapted from 'Beatlemania,' to describe the enthusiasm Pierre Elliott Trudeau was generating." He describes Trudeau's election tour of 1968 as "attracting adoring crowds wherever he went. [Trudeau] came into town like a pop star on a concert tour, arriving from the airport in a motorcade, waving from a convertible en route to a rally where people jockeyed to get his autograph, take a snapshot, or just touch him."[23] The advantages of living in the NCR were not just economic. It was also a psychological and emotional space to which young Irish immigrants were proud to belong. Caught up in this excitement when

[20] The National Defence Medical Centre, built in 1961, was the largest Canadian Forces hospital in Canada.
[21] Margaret (Maggie) O'Rourke, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 12, 2015.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Paul Litt, *Trudeaumania* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2016), 11.

she first arrived, O'Rourke recalled this period as one of the most exciting times of her life. She drove a convertible and enjoyed an active social life.[24] The contrast with the social inertia of contemporary Ireland was stunning. Writing about growing up in Wexford in the 1950s, John Banville recalled how grimly accepting of the status quo he had been:

> it never occurred to me that I could change anything. . . . the society in which I grew up, and out of which I was striving to grow, seemed to me monolithic, impregnable, eternal. The structure of it appeared not man-made but the result of natural and inevitable forces before which the individual must bend, or break. This feeling of impotence was endemic, I think. It must have been for otherwise, surely, change would have come.[25]

Those who left Ireland and settled in Ottawa at this time voted with their feet to reject this status quo. Their early experiences in Canada confirmed for many that they had made the right decision to emigrate. Life in Canada was like a breath of fresh air. They were caught up in the spirit of the times and felt empowered by the freedom to choose how they wanted to live their lives. Many ISSGO interviewees recalled how they supported Trudeau's ideals of a just and multicultural society. They also referenced Montreal's Expo 1967 and how exciting it was to be part of this modern Canadian milieu.

Montreal Expo 1967 marked the apex of an intensive and coordinated national campaign to celebrate the Centennial of Canadian Confederation in 1967. A Canadian Centennial Commission (CCC) was created in 1963 and given the responsibility to act for the federal government in promoting and planning a year-long celebration of Confederation's hundredth anniversary.[26] The CCC was the culmination of decades of grassroots planning by individuals and politicians from across the country to celebrate Canadian achievements and to strengthen Canadian national unity. House of Commons debates continued to highlight the benefits of all Canadians working together to achieve the goal of a strong united Canadian nation: "We Canadians are proud to possess two of the greatest assets: one, our natural resources without which no country can contribute freely either to its citizens or to the world at large, and the other, our population which is the greatest asset any country can possess, a veritable mosaic indeed."[27]

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[24] Margaret (Maggie) O'Rourke, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 12, 2015.
[25] John Banville, "Memory and Forgetting: The Ireland of de Valera and Ó Faoláin," in Keogh, *Lost Decade,* 26.
[26] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 553
[27] Canada. *House of Commons Debates,* 29 May 1958 (W. V. Yacula, Manitoba).

Canadian efforts to strengthen national unity by celebrating the diversity of its citizens created an ideal climate for young Irish immigrants to feel welcome in their new homeland. The government set up grant programs worth over $40 million in federal funds to be matched by provincial governments to fund "centennial projects of lasting value and for the construction of a major structure in each provincial capital as a memorial to Confederation."[28] As Litt points out, the official plan was to promote "the idea of nation by reinforcing the national myth-symbol complex."[29] The man chosen to lead this effort was John W. Fisher, a New Brunswick lawyer and journalist, who was appointed Centennial Commissioner in 1963. As head of centennial planning, his task was to enlist the participation of as many Canadians as possible. For the next four years, Fisher travelled from coast to coast urging cities, towns, and small communities to think "about suitable ways to mark the nation's 100th birthday in 1967." He also travelled extensively in the United States and had speaking engagements in Florida, Baltimore, New York, Detroit and Chicago. "Well known in these areas as 'Mr. Canada,'" Fisher expounded his theme of "the Party Next Door" and praised Canadian achievements emphasizing "the entire country is organized and served by the finest highways, railways and airlines that science can provide."[30]

In Canada, Fisher stressed the role that each Canadian citizen had to play in the centennial celebrations and CCC public relations developed innovative ways to engage all Canadians. A "Youth Travel Program" wherein 4,000 young people across Canada took part in an interprovincial exchange administered by various departments of education.[31] Efforts to ensure that every child in Canada had a tangible symbol of this celebration of national unity included the development of Centennial Stickers. CCC ordered "1,000,000 packages of stickers at a cost of $13,320."[32] Spreading the word to as many Canadians as possible and building interest and excitement "in every city, town and hamlet in Canada" was enhanced by political and private donations. Funds were administered by federal, provincial and municipal levels to finance thousands of Centennial projects.[33] In speeches and articles, Fisher reiterated the strength of Canada as a "unified nation" and referred to the "millions of immigrants who left their homelands to resettle here . . . What other

[28] CCC, RG 71, Vol. 403, File S35.
[29] Litt, *Trudeaumania*, 104.
[30] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 564.
[31] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 565.
[32] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 567.
[33] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 562.

country can boast of . . . such a storehouse of culture and custom?"[34] Fisher referred to the strength of a unified nation augmented by the active participation of every citizen, and celebrated free enterprise and private initiative as "the warp and woof of the fabric of Canadian progress. These democratic doctrines and Canadian practices have permitted our industries to contribute so much to the prosperity, health, and happiness of everyone that Canadians are considered to have one of the highest standards of life in the world community."[35]

CCC portrayed the Canadian past as a heroic quest by brave Canadians who worked hard to fulfill the dreams of the Fathers of Confederation to build a nation. Fisher and his staff even brought their message to Canadians who were not able to personally attend the Centennial Celebrations in Ottawa and Montreal. A fifteen-car special confederation exhibition train took "a unique, imaginative representation of Canada's development from the dawn of history to the space age to 80 cities; a coast to coast travelling army staging an elaborate military tattoo and a canoe race from the Rocky Mountains to Montreal to replicate the 'Voyageurs' who opened Canada's inland waterways."[36] Ethnic diversity was celebrated in concerts, exhibitions, festivals, ceremonies, and community activities staged across Canada throughout the centennial year: "The best of the cultural heritage of Canada's many ethnic groups will be displayed in every province and Canadians of every background will have an opportunity to work in closer harmony with each other for the good of one Canada."[37]

Glossy brochures outlined the program for Centennial celebrations and information packages were sent to radio and television stations, news conferences, national magazines, business trade publications, information services, and wire services across the country. Fisher instructed his staff to "plan a bang-up display and presentation for the Canadian Daily and Weekly Newspaper associations 1966 conventions . . . If we tackle such a project with vigour, money and enthusiasm, we can make much good yardage."[38] The mandate of the CCC was to "strengthen the unity of the country [and] make the country more culturally sound." Information packages highlighted three themes: "recalling the past; assessing and celebrating the present; preparing for the future." CCC proclaimed that the "Centennial is a mixture of stocktaking and promise-making.

[34] CCC, R9115, Vol. 51, File 1967.51.22.
[35] Ibid.
[36] One six-paddle craft represented each of the ten provinces and the two territories. The Chief Voyageur of the North West Territories craft was 33 year old William Eades, born in Ireland, university student in Gjoa Haven.
[37] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 554.
[38] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 565.

It is, so to speak, a report card on the years gone and a blueprint for the years ahead."[39] Fisher's staff worked to promote the celebrations and reported that "with ever-increasing interest and excitement, Canadians are beginning to realize the importance of this memorable occasion – and are doing something about it."[40] The vast range of projects ensured that most Canadians were aware of the Canadian Centennial. Over 2,400 modern buildings were constructed, including "new theatres, new auditoriums, new libraries, new museums, sports centres and sports fields for hockey, skating, tennis, baseball, community centres, and swimming pools".[41] Wright observed that Canadians "by the summer of 1967 [were] intoxicated by the country's centennial celebrations. . . . Never before, in peacetime at least, had patriotism been so visible, so pervasive, and so thoroughly conjoined with the Canadian state . . . The crowning achievement of this outburst of national euphoria was Expo 67, the world's fair held in Montreal between April and October."[42]

Considering the energy and publicity surrounding the build-up to Expo 67, it is not surprising that so many interviewees referred to it when they described their early years in Canada.[43] The centennial was "one big national year-long event from the Atlantic to the Pacific."[44] When Fisher recalled organizing "Canada's biggest celebration in history", he recalled: "I ran into a number of pessimists, even a few cynics . . . I believe our kind of nationalism is more thoughtful than emotional and that is why I believe so fervently that our Centennial will be a successful and meaningful event in our history."[45] Pride in multiculturalism and celebrating the Canadian mosaic were central to CCC programs and Expo '67 was the highlight of these celebrations. Eva-Marie Kröller refers to Expo '67 as "Canada's Camelot" and notes that "it was also the effective symbol of an apparently vibrant nation perched on the brink of international recognition . . . Canada's self-confidence seemed so dazzling that it even eclipsed those nations from which it had traditionally taken its directives."[46]

For the Irish cohort who settled in Canada at this time, the psychological space of a newly-imagined Canada stepping out from its former colonial self was immediately appealing. In 1965,

[39] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 565.
[40] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 562.
[41] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 565.
[42] Robert Wright, *Trudeaumania: The Rise to Power of Pierre Elliott Trudeau* (Toronto: Harper Collins, 2016), 88.
[43] Marie Bhaneja referred to a promotion of Expo '67 in the Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin in 1966. Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 16, 2015.
[44] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 565.
[45] CCC, RG 71, Vol. 403, File S35.
[46] Eva-Marie Kröller, "Expo '67: Canada's Camelot?"*Canadian Literature* 152/153 (Spring/Summer, 1997): 36.

Canadian Governor General Georges Philéleas Vanier declared: "We are all strands of the Canadian fabric, and where by ourselves we might well be torn and broken, together we form whole cloth that can retain its strength despite the hardest wear . . . The great hope for Canada is unity through understanding."[47] The Centennial celebrations were designed to forge a national identity that recalled the past through historical pageants and re-enactments. All were framed in a positive fashion and designed to inspire Canadians to build on "the dreams of the Founders of Confederation." As Benedict Anderson argues:

> In an age when it is so common . . . to insist on the near-pathological character of nationalism, its roots in fear and hatred of the Other, and its affinities with racism, it is useful to remind ourselves that nations inspire love, and often profoundly self-sacrificing love. The cultural products of nationalism – poetry, prose fiction, music, plastic arts – show this love very clearly in thousands of different forms and styles.[48]

The CCC commissioned hundreds of new books and enlisted composers, choreographers and playwrights to produce material including "The Centennial Play" written by Robertson Davies, W. O. Mitchell, Yves Thérialt, and Arthur Murphy, as well as "The Centennial Song" [Ca-na-da] written by Bobby Gimby.[49] Litt declares that in the build-up to 1967, "Canada was in the throes of passion" and notes that CCC preparations primed Canadian people to listen to Trudeau's "message of national unity and destiny."[50] Wright concurs and notes that the powerful impact of the centennial celebrations set the stage for Pierre Elliott Trudeau who "rode the crest of Canadians' centennial-era euphoria into power."[51] The timing of Trudeau's appearance on the political scene allowed him to capitalize on the symbolism that was fresh in the minds of Canadians. The celebrations coincided with what Bliss refers to as "an exploding domestic market . . . as new immigrants poured into the country, there were more young people than ever before . . . all willing to work hard to achieve their goals."[52]

Irish emigrants were part of this massive influx. They were welcomed into a milieu that they found comfortable and familiar, and at a unique pivotal moment in Canadian nation building. Anderson defines a nation as "an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently

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[47] *Winnipeg Free Press,* February 1, 1965.
[48] Anderson, *Imagined,* 141.
[49] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 565. The working title of "The Centennial Play" was "Confederation Triumph."
[50] Litt, *Trudeaumania*, 9.
[51] Wright, *Trudeaumania*, xiii.
[52] Michael Bliss, *Years of Change: 1967-1985* (Toronto: Grolier Limited, 1986), 54.

limited and sovereign."[53] He notes: "it is imagined as a *community,* because, regardless of actual inequality and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship."[54] Anderson also points out that "the nation is imagined as *limited* because even the largest of them . . . has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations."[55] The efforts of the CCC to build momentum for Canadian national unity was the culmination of years of hard work. Politicians grappled with how to unify Canada under a national banner and supported the development of inclusive symbols that represented the entire country. In January 1959, Quebec, M.P. Louis Fortin remarked on the emergence of "a truly Canadian type. For instance, when a stranger sees the picture of a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, or a maple leaf, or a beaver, what else than Canada can he think of? He does not think of a certain part of Canada, of Canadians of certain origins, but of the whole country."[56]

Politicians lauded Canadian achievements and expressed confidence "that our future will be even brighter than we can possibly imagine."[57] Fortin stressed that newly-minted Canadian symbols did not refer to a certain ethnic background or region, but represented the entire country. He encouraged his fellow parliamentarians to "make this creed ours. It expresses the pride of our people and the ardent wish to see Canada take first place among free nations, where it is so good to live."[58] Many ISSGO interviewees refer to Canadian multiculturalism when they recall how they settled into Canadian life. Their arrival in the 1950s and 60s ensured that they were in place at an opportune time to be part of this social transformation. Fisher's concept of a thoughtful unemotional type of Canadian nationalism was epitomized by symbols of Canadian identity that were funded by the CCC. These symbols were designed to be non-controversial and emphasized pride in past achievements and confidence in the future. These came to a head when Prime Minister Lester Pearson lit the Centennial Flame on Parliament Hill at midnight on 31 December 1966.[59]

Politicians in the House of Commons unanimously declared their pride in the 1 July 1967 ceremonies on Parliament Hill:

> All of us in this house regardless of party affiliation were moved during the past four days by the stirring demonstration of Canadianism and pride in

[53] Anderson, *Imagined,* 6.
[54] Ibid., 7.
[55] Ibid., 7.
[56] Canada. *House of Commons Debates* 16 January 1959 (Louis Fortin).
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.
[59] CCC, RG 69, Vol. 564.

> our country on parliament hill and throughout the land . . . this demonstration of national fervour was so memorable that we should like to express our thanks to the Secretary of State and all associated with her in the magnificent organization which resulted in these unbelievably rich ceremonies and these outpourings of national fervour.[60]

National fervour was further stimulated by the symbolic celebration of a new Canadian mythology. For example, a canoe race depicted "voyageurs" bravely forging through the Canadian wilderness to expand Canadian territory. The celebrations emphasized that Canadian physical, economic, and psychological space was on the threshold of further expansion.

The Irish who emigrated to Canada at this time fitted smoothly into this mosaic. They never considered themselves exiles in the traditional sense. Neither were they ashamed of their Irish identity. Linda Dowling Almeida's findings, based on interviews with the Irish who emigrated to New York in the 1950s, echoes similar sentiments - they had chosen to leave, they were happy with their decision, and they embraced the opportunities that Canada offered. Almeida posits that:

> The young Irish were leaving a country suspended in time by economic stagnation and cultural paranoia, perpetuated by national leaders who were too indecisive and insecure about the new republic's national future and identity to bring the country into the twentieth century. . . . Many had jobs in Ireland, and while the Irish government claimed that the majority of emigrants through the fifties were unskilled, nearly a quarter identified themselves to the INS officials as professionals, clerical workers, or sales personnel. Interviews with emigrants of the time suggested that migrants were basically dissatisfied with the opportunities and lifestyles available to them in Ireland.[61]

Irish immigrants to Canada in the 1950s and 1960s came from similar socioeconomic backgrounds as their cohorts in New York. The majority had jobs in Ireland, yet they chose to leave because they were frustrated by a lack of personal and professional opportunities at home. They had freedom to choose where they wanted to go, they seized that opportunity and were satisfied with their decision.

While it is not surprising that many chose to leave Ireland to avail of lucrative opportunities overseas, for women in this cohort, there was the added incentive of being able to pursue careers free from the restrictions they faced in Ireland. Using statistics from the 1971 census of population in Britain, O'Hanlon compares labour-force data in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Focusing on

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[60] Canada. *House of Commons Debates,* 4 July 1967 (Hon. Paul Martin, Acting Prime Minister).
[61] Linda Dowling Almeida, *Irish Immigrants in New York City, 1945-1995* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2001), 44.

the contrast between the numbers of married women in the workforce in Britain compared with their peers in the Republic of Ireland, he notes:

> forty-seven per cent of married females were in the labour-force, compared with only 7% of married females in the Republic. Over 70% of working females were in the service sector, and professional services (e.g. nurses) accounted for 40% of these. . . . The relatively high labour-force participation of married women is noteworthy in that it contrasted so sharply with those who remained at home. Indeed, it is only in recent years [2004] that married female labour-force participation in the Republic has reached the levels recorded by their emigrant counterparts in 1971.[62]

This is a shocking revelation. Not only does it reflect how critical it was for this cohort of educated young women to break free of such constraints in the 1950s, it reaffirms why Irish women who settled in Ottawa constantly reiterated their satisfaction. Maggie O'Rourke observed that being Irish in Canada was a positive thing, and that she and her Irish cohorts were readily accepted into Canadian society:

> At that time the Canadian military was recruiting doctors, pharmacists, physios, and nurses. I became very friendly with a physio from Malta, she was recruited about the same time as I had been. There was always something going on. It was so, so friendly, everybody was really welcoming. The fact that you were Irish seemed to be a real positive thing[63]

Tom Taylor recalled that Irishness was an easily-accepted identity in Ottawa: "In the society here, in that way, culturally, it was easy for Irish people to be accepted here in Ottawa. For me anyway, it was an easy transition into Ottawa."[64] Taylor is one of a number of Irish professionals who had worked in other regions of Canada before settling in Ottawa. Comfortable with his identity, being Irish for Taylor is just one layer in a Canadian-Irish identity that was formed in Ireland and forged in Canada. This biculturalism was reinforced by the Canadian government policy of multiculturalism that encouraged immigrants to retain ties with their countries and cultures of origin. A Canadian cultural mosaic where each cultural group retains its own identity strengthens the country as a whole.[65] The ongoing subject of Canadian citizenship and immigration; however, was regularly debated in the House of Commons. Prime Minister Diefenbaker pointed out, the aim of Department of Citizenship and Immigration was "to promote an increase in the population of Canada of carefully selected, readibly[sic] assimilable immigrants

[62] O'Hanlon, "Population," 78.
[63] Margaret (Maggie) O'Rourke, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 12, 2015.
[64] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[65] John Murray Gibbon, *Canadian Mosaic: The Making of a Northern Nation* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1938).

within the absorbtive capacity of the country."[66] The challenge of how to achieve this, while ensuring that there would not be different categories, or types of Canadians, was still under discussion in 1965, when politicians demanded that the government deal with the issue:

> I think it is important that Canadians should be Canadians and not hyphenated Canadians, but in the past year or two more and more hyphenated Canadianism has come into being. There are English speaking Canadians and there are French speaking Canadians and there are other Canadians who do not want to be hyphenated but will now possibly have to be hyphenated.[67]

Intense discussions on whether to continue to provide funding for CCC programs designed to promote "Canadianism", confirms that the government had yet to decide on the characteristics of a typical Canadian, but promoting an inclusive Canadian citizenship remained a priority. However, a Privy Council office memo advised Prime Minister Lester Pearson that funding could not be justified at a time when "the government is pulling in its belt and cutting its expenses." The memo affirms that debates regarding "hyphenated" or "unhyphenated Canadianism" continued to preoccupy Canadian politicians:

> [these programs] can be justified as promotion of the federal government's responsibility for citizenship. Indeed, it is extremely desirable that the citizenship element of federal activities should be much strengthened . . . it would seem that the federal government has yet to decide between a citizenship policy that would favour 'hyphenated Canadianism' or one that would favour 'unhyphenated Canadianism' . . . To conclude, it is submitted that it would be unwise for the federal government to continue sponsoring programs which are only indirectly related to its constitutional responsibilities, which are costly at a time when every penny counts.[68]

However, the range of CCC programs would be too expensive to continue; therefore, it was decided to focus on the programs that promoted inter-group understanding, such as youth travel and exchange programs, which was to be expanded to include international exchanges and "Canadian Spectacles," such as the RCMP Musical Ride and the Centennial Flame in Ottawa.[69]

ISSGO interviews reveal that Irish emigrants who settled in the NCR were keenly aware that they had emigrated to a multicultural civic nation. They are comfortable living in a country where hyphenated, or dual-identity, was an accepted part of Canadian culture. For Desmond

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[66] Canada. *House of Commons Debates*, 21 April 1950.
[67] Canada. *House of Commons Debates,* 8 April 1965
[68] Confidential – Memorandum to the Prime Minister from O.G.Stoner, Privy Council Office, November 15, 1967, CCC, 2000-01376-7, Box 123, File. 1-1-1.8
[69] Ibid.

Walsh, emigration to Canada was a particularly positive experience: "I feel I can't deny my Irish heritage and I don't want to downgrade my Canadian involvement because I really feel that I have done very well here and I love Canada. I think it is safe to be hyphenated and it is not being a traitor to either group."[70] A Canadian identity does not necessarily negate an Irish identity. Most Canadians identify with the region in Canada where they were born, as well as with a broader sense of Canadian identity. It is not unusual for a Canadian living in Ontario, who is may be from Newfoundland, to keep in contact with relatives and friends there, and refer to it as "home," in the same way that Irish immigrants in Ottawa keep in contact with their relatives at "home" in Ireland. Keeping in contact with relatives 'back home'; however, was often a challenge in itself.

Travel was expensive in the 1950s and 1960s and most people in Ireland did not have telephones in their houses. Most early communication was by letter. Taylor recalled: "Communication was, it was all wee blue envelopes. Do you remember airmail? That was the only way of communicating."[71] In December, 1953, Luke O'Brien, who arrived in Canada in October 1953, wrote and proposed to his fiancée Mary in Dublin by letter. It was the only way to communicate in those days, and even something as important as a marriage proposal was frequently delivered by letter. Even though O'Brien had only been in Canada for two months, he was secure in his new banking job in Toronto and knew that he had a bright future ahead. He was delighted to inform his girlfriend who wrote back accepting his proposal.[72] Kathleen Marsh recalled that when she first lived in Canada, communication with Ireland was mostly by letter. The occasional phone calls had to be arranged by mail:

> We couldn't phone home. You didn't phone in those days and people didn't have phones back at home in those days either [1957]. If you did phone, you had to set the date. Say, I would be phoning at this time at this time, and then when you got on the phone, you didn't know what to say! I would say, how is your weather, or something like that.[73]

Telephoning home often meant using the telephone in the local shop or post office at a pre-arranged time to speak to a relative. Taylor explained:

> Communication at that time, our house had no phone in Belfast. That grocery store where I worked [before he emigrated], it had a phone. So, the routine was, you phoned and [they] would send a message-boy up, saying: 'Mrs. Taylor, there is a phone call for you.' She

[70] Desmond Walsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 10, 2016.
[71] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[72] Luke O'Brien, Personal Interview, Toronto, October 21, 2013.
[73] Catherine (Kathleen) Marsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 30, 2016.

> would come down and I would phone back five minutes later or whatever it was and she was in the wee back room: 'How are you son?' [laughter][74]

There is a certain poignancy in these narratives of early communications with home. Taylor recalled his mother would ask how he was and his instinct was to relate his positive experiences and not give his parents anything to worry about. Marsh's anecdote suggests that there were so many new experiences to relate that she did not know where to begin to explain how much her life had changed.

As the years passed, it was natural that immigrants were drawn to other immigrants who shared the same interests and experiences. In some cases, these interests centered around Irish culture and music. In Ottawa, a core group of Irish immigrants were gradually drawn together. This group formed the nucleus of various Irish social and cultural networks beginning with the Irish Society of Ottawa (ISO), which was formed in 1957. Patrick Scott, founder and first President of ISO graduated from University College Cork with a degree in Dairy Science in 1955. He had a full-time job as a creamery manager in Ennistymon, Co. Clare, but "wanted to see some more of the world" and decided to emigrate to Canada. Scott flew from Shannon to Toronto on 25 March 1957 and relocated to Ottawa on 1 October 1957.[75] The ISO was formally incorporated as a non-profit organization by the Province of Ontario on 6 April, 1959. Objectives included a commitment "to promote, foster and present Irish culture in all its forms". It was set up as a social and cultural organization. A key point outlined in Article 1 of the organization's Constitution notes: "This Society shall be known as The Irish Society of Ottawa and shall be a Non-Political and Non-Sectarian organization."[76] The early membership included young recently-arrived Irish men and women. Social gatherings were held in Mary and Ben Coffey's home in Ottawa. The house had a large room over the garage, which was perfect for hosting gatherings. Mary Coffey explained that she joined the ISO soon after they arrived in Ottawa, when her husband met Pat Scott and Don Kavanagh:

> It was four years old then. Pat used to come to our house visiting, and Don too. Ben loved a good argument and they used to have them [laughter]. We had a room upstairs, the coach house, and we had great parties. We had great times. We used to charge a dollar and we fed everyone. We had great parties.[77]

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[74] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[75] Scott Family Private Papers, Ottawa, Ontario.
[76] "Constitution of the Irish Society of Ottawa," Ibid.
[77] Mary Coffey, Personal Interview, Ottawa, October 2, 2015.

Ben Coffey played mandolin. His father who also played mandolin came from Ireland to live with them. In time, their coach house became a regular meeting place for parties that centered around music, food, and companionship.

Membership in ISO rapidly increased when the committee decided to take advantage of cheap charter flights to Ireland. In the 1960s, as air transportation expanded, it was possible for private groups to charter an airline for specific flights from Canada to Ireland. The seats were open to membership only and could not be sold publicly. On 13 February 1961, Patrick Scott, president of ISO, signed an "Aircraft Charter Agreement" with K L M Royal Dutch Airlines to charter the "entire capacity" of a DC-7C aircraft. The flight, from Ottawa to Dublin return, seated 79 passengers for the charter price of $14,797.00 Canadian dollars: "Duration of the journey: 2 days from March 30 to March 31 1961 and 2 days from April 19 to April 20 1961 . . . Eligibility to Charter [included the stipulation] no.4, (b): 'members of a group to be transported on the chartered aircraft has not been publicly solicited'".[78] This first flight was fully booked and proved to be a very successful endeavor. As noted in the agreement, seats were available to members only. As a result, a number of people in the NCR joined the ISO to take advantage of fares that were reasonable enough to bring their families on holiday to Ireland to meet grandparents and relatives. The ISO decided to charter these flights on a regular basis. Mary Coffey recalled: "We ran lots of flights home. I remember looking after the finances. I was the treasurer for years."[79] Flights were approved by the Air Transport Board of Canada and Scott obtained quotations for other routings such as Montreal to Shannon from KLM and from other commercial airlines. The flights were popular and Coffey recalled that people would sometimes pay their balance in cash just before they stepped onboard the plane.[80]

Charter flights to Ireland were also available in other parts of Canada. Desmond Walsh, who lived near Toronto in the 1970s recalled:

> I would go home, I went home the first Christmas, it was affordable to go home. There were charter flights then that were quite reasonable. Somebody would rent a plane and then fill it and then they would sell the seats very cheaply. Lots of organizations in Toronto and around would be offering these tickets back to Ireland. It was called a charter flight. I simply found out about this contact and bought a ticket through them. Maybe $80 or $90 return to Ireland, it was very affordable at the time.

[78] "Aircraft Charter Agreement, Charter No. 337, February 13, 1961," Scott Family Private Papers, Ottawa.
[79] Mary Coffey, Personal Interview, Ottawa, October 2, 2015.
[80] Ibid.

> Whereas the regular flights were very expensive. I think at that time there were regular Aer Lingus flights to Ireland, but they were way more expensive than these charter flights. They went to Dublin or Shannon. That was in the late 60s and early 70s. It was very common to find these groups that ran these things. Legally speaking you were supposed to be a member. Whatever loophole they had, that got closed eventually because those kind of seats disappeared, in the late 70s, I think.[81]

Eaton's Department Store in Toronto also chartered flights to Ireland for its employees. Caroline Gowdy Williams remembered charter flights to Ireland also departing from Edmonton:

> I went to Ireland from Grand Prairie, right after the second child was born, when she was five weeks old. I heard that the Irish Society was running a charter flight out of Edmonton into Shannon. So, I got myself in on that. Because my children were under two, I didn't have to pay for them. The elder one had to travel on my knee and the other one in a carrycot hanging from the luggage rack. My father met us off the plane in Shannon. Me with two babies and the suitcase. Of course, he had thought I would never come back again and he had never driven that far in his life, from Belfast all the way down to Shannon.[82]

When these immigrants arrived in Canada in the 1950s and 1960s most had travelled by sea. Air travel, however, quickly supplanted transatlantic passenger ships. As early members of ISO, Margo and Felix Connolly also took advantage of cheap flights to bring their children to Ireland. It was important for them to remain in contact with their parents and family in Ireland. Hence, the incentive to join the ISO.[83] Taylor explained:

> As the children grew older, what we realized is just how important grandparents are to the children and how important children are to their grandparents. We thought grandparents have a right to see their grandchildren, so we came back. They have memories of [their grandparents] now.
> We always made a point, you kept a special fund going. First of all it was an emergency fund in case anything would happen at home and then we made a point of bringing the children over, so they would meet their father's brothers and sisters and uncles and aunts and cousins.[84]

One had to be a member of the ISO to take advantage of the cheaper fares. However, Liz Gilligan recalled that a strong sense of community was also forged by these experiences. On one flight from Ottawa to Ireland, Don Kavanagh and his friends "played music the whole way over." Sadly, this trip proved a harrowing experience for Gilligan when her young son contracted viral pneumonia and spent weeks recovering in the Children's Hospital in Dublin:

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[81] Desmond Walsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 10, 2016.
[82] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 24, 2015.
[83] Felix and Margo Connolly, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 19, 2014.
[84] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.

> Don Kavanagh, he was so good to me. It was such a terrible experience. I had to let them know because we were expected to fly back. Of course, I couldn't. Don came to the hotel and took the stroller and all sorts of things home for me. Then Pat Scott wanted to reimburse my husband for the fare, because we had to pay for a fare for me to go home. They were very caring.[85]

Flights to Ireland established the ISO as a nodal point for the Irish community in Ottawa. Unlike commercial airlines, these flights also facilitated a sense of community caring and companionship. These transatlantic travelers shared a common understanding of what it was like to bring up children without close relatives nearby, and their society worked to provide the means for families to travel at a reasonable cost.

ISO also helped members of the Irish community in Ottawa, if they were in financial difficulties. As the society became more established, this philanthropic and benevolent remit was developed further. Taylor explained:

> There was also a social welfare thing. Very informal, [if] somebody got into trouble, somebody needed help, they would approach it that way. They had an informal linkage with the police and it was because sometimes a young lad would come out here, to make his fortune or whatever, and things wouldn't be going right and then they would get into trouble and the police would be involved.
> There was this liaison and I had heard that the Irish Society had actually paid the bill for somebody to go home. They would put it like: 'Son, there is no shame.'Because remember when you were leaving at that time, going home was the big 'couldn't make it sort of thing.' That was in Ottawa. Yes. It wasn't formal. It was done, and at that time, people were really emigrants. That is the way it was done. You would be surprised.[86]

Taylor's comment sheds light on the caring culture of the ISO at that time and the perception that those who returned from abroad without being successful were seen as not being able to "make it" in a foreign country. Patrick Scott recalled that, in his brief sojourn in Toronto, he had been impressed when a member of the Irish community asked him if he needed financial assistance. Although he did not need it, he wrote that this inspired him to start a similar type of organization when he arrived in Ottawa.[87] ISO retained its benevolent role throughout the 1970s and 1980s and was funded by comfortable middle-class Irish emigrants.

These Irish emigrants, therefore, were not cut off from their country of birth. They had the means and leisure time to travel 'home' to Ireland at regular intervals. Once they became

[85] Elizabeth L. Gilligan, Personal Interview, December 4, 2015.
[86] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[87] Scott Family Private Papers, Ottawa, Ontario.

established in Ottawa and their children were older, they began to travel to Ireland more frequently. Air travel was now popular and accessible. Patricia Willoughby from Rosslare, Co. Wexford, worked for Aer Lingus in New York for five years before she transferred to work in the Montreal office in 1973. She went back to Ireland frequently:

> because I worked for Aer Lingus, I could go for nothing, so it was nothing to go back, for a weekend even, as long as my parents were living. Of course, when I left Aer Lingus, I didn't go as often, but I did try to go at least one a year. Once they died, I haven't gone as often, but having said that, two years is probably the most time, the longest gap between visits. I have very close relationships with my sisters. Well, close, not geographically close, but emotionally close. We keep in touch.[88]

Traffic went both ways, however, and many Irish immigrants in Ottawa arranged for their parents to come to Canada to visit them. Sometimes, these visits were for extended periods of time. Some parents even came to live with their emigrant children on a permanent basis. Others came on a yearly basis. Desmond Walsh explained:

> In Irish families, so many people go overseas that it is not a big shock for somebody to go overseas. Both my parents were national school teachers. Because my mother never travelled, except for [her teacher training in Scotland], she loved the idea of travelling, so I think she was delighted that somebody might be going overseas, so that she could come and visit. In fact, that is what turned out, in later years they came over quite a bit. Especially my mother, she loved coming over here. She just couldn't wait to come over every year.[89]

Having their parents come to visit helped to maintain an even stronger connection with Ireland. Parents enjoyed coming to Ottawa and appreciated that their offspring had comfortable, middle-class lives in a safe and inclusive environment.

Irish cultural networks also flourished in Ottawa. An amateur theatrical group, the Irish Society Players [ISP], was set up by some members of ISO who were particularly interested in staging plays written by Irish playwrights. Their first play *The Righteous are Bold* by Frank Carney was staged in a local school hall. Although her initial involvement with the ISP was quite accidental, Kathleen Marsh recalled that it helped her settle in Ottawa. She had not actively sought out other Irish people, but became a member of ISO to be eligible for the charter flights to Ireland she had heard they were running from Ottawa:

> [a friend] told us about the Irish Society and he sent us the form to fill in to become members. So, I did, and I saw that they ran very good trips. So, I thought, well, I will join and maybe [we] will get a good deal on going across. So, I filled in the form and everything

[88] Patricia Willoughby, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 17, 2014.
[89] Desmond Walsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 10, 2016.

> and they had a little section where they said: 'Are you interested in Drama?' I thought: 'Yes, at school, I used to love that', so I put down: 'Yes.' Then eventually, I got a phone call saying: 'Would you like to come down and do a reading for 'Big Maggie'?[90]

That spontaneous response on the ISO membership form resulted in Marsh becoming an integral part in the Irish theatrical community. It was a turning point in her life. She enjoyed being on stage and quickly made new friends who shared her interests. Marsh became one of the most popular and successful actors in the group. Although she had never been on stage before, she quickly gained confidence and played many leading roles over the next few decades

What began as a small group of individuals interested in staging Irish plays evolved into a successful amateur theatrical company. In the beginning they staged plays in a local school hall. If a play was particularly successful, they would travel to stage the play in other communities outside of Ottawa. In 1976, the group rented St. Patrick's Hall in Ottawa, which eventually became its permanent home. Henceforth, the theatre group was known as the Tara Players. Betty Finley recalled getting involved with Tara Players, being introduced to everyone and quickly becoming part of an extended community.[91] Caroline Gowdy Williams recalled hearing about the theatrical society from one of her patients:

> I had no Irish connections in Ottawa at all. None at all. [her patient] said: 'I am sewing costumes for them. They are putting on a play called *Playboy of the Western World*. She said: 'Why don't you come down?' I wasn't doing anything really for fun at that time, so I went down, and next thing I know, I am a walk-on part in *Playboy of the Western World*.[92]

The theatre group staged Irish plays to showcase Irish culture. Its members enjoyed an active and vibrant social life as St Patrick's Hall became a hub for other Irish cultural activities. Although Tara Players focused on Irish theatre, the members shared an appreciation for the nuances of Irish theatrical dialogue and cultural semantics which was heightened by the excitement of being part of a dramatic production.

Tara Players comprised members from the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland and their Canadian spouses and friends. The Players brought together a diverse group of individuals with a shared interest in theatre and also helped to build connections between immigrants from the north and south of Ireland in Ottawa. Tom Taylor discussed what it was like to be part of Tara Players

[90] Catherine (Kathleen) Marsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 30, 2016.
[91] Betty (Elizabeth) Finley, Personal Interview, January 14, 2015.
[92] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 24, 2015.

and drew attention to the members' shared appreciation of Irish culture and literature. He also discussed the perception that people from the North of Ireland were not Irish:

> If you were from the North of Ireland. That it an interesting dynamic, most people's perception was the South, and a lot of it was Hollywood, [perception of Irishness] Barry Fitzgerald 'well, well, well, well' [laughter] You had these strange guys, the Northerners, and I often wonder, it happened on the radio one day. [CBC Interview] Enright was interviewing James Galway and he said to Galway: 'Sure, you are not really Irish are you?' And Galway tore a strip off him. Galway is from the Protestant area of Belfast and he said: 'What are you talking about?' [93]

Radio presenter Michael Enright had reacted to James Galway's request to play a particular Irish themed piece of music on March 17th by saying: "But, that is the Republic and you are from Ulster." Galway was quick to rebuke Enright saying: "Excuse me, there is only one Ireland and you can divide it up in your mind how you like, but the people in the North of Ireland are just as Irish as the people in the South." A chastened Enright replied: "Thank you for correcting me, Sir James."[94] This interview reflects how Taylor and other northern Irish emigrants in Ottawa felt about Ireland. Taylor stressed that the Irish from Northern Ireland and from the Republic share an all-encompassing Irish identity and an appreciation of the traditions and nuances of Irish culture and literature. The mandate of the Tara Players was to celebrate Irish plays and to promote an appreciation of Irish culture and heritage. One of their seminal influences was Irish playwright Brian Friel whose plays explore Irish culture, language and identity and the members of Tara Players enjoyed explaining these Frielian nuances to the audience. Despite the strong personalities involved, Catholic and Protestant, from Northern Ireland and the Republic, and the intense discussions at meetings throughout the decades, Tara Players endured and developed a formidable reputation in Ottawa.

Tom Taylor directed many plays for Tara Players and has an intriguing theory as to why this amateur theatrical company remained so successful: they deliberately chose plays that struck a chord with the director, the actors, and the audience. These plays were essentially Irish, but they also appealed to people on a number of levels. Taylor did not agree with the idea that:

> If it is only an Irish play, it should only be done in Ireland, [because] if it is an Irish play, that has a universal theme, then it speaks to the population as a whole. Nobody says: 'Well Shakespeare is an English play, so they should only do it in England'. If there is a universality to it, then the message just happens to be said or Irish people wouldn't do

[93] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[94] Michael Enright, "The Sunday Edition." CBC / Radio Canada, October 9, 2014

> American plays. We did one, years and years ago, called *Freedom of the City*. It started off in Tara Players and went on to win Theatre Canada Festival. It played here, and Toronto, then it went to Regina. A woman stood up [when the play finished] and said: 'That is not Londonderry that is Yugoslavia.'[95]

Taylor referenced this story to reinforce the fact this Irish play has a universal message that appeals on a human level to all members of the audience. This play, set in Northern Ireland, was written by Brian Friel. In his analysis of Friel's work, Francis Charles McGrath notes how people are shaped by the stories they tell about themselves and others: "These stories and narratives are driven by our most fundamental needs . . . which are products of conscious or unconscious narratives shaped by the many discourses in our society and culture that we have internalized and accepted as our own."[96] He argues that Brien Friel's writing is preoccupied with questions about what happens when individual and collective narratives conflict.

> Living in Northern Ireland as a member of the minority Catholic nationalist community provided Friel with the experience of trying to negotiate his daily existence between . . . two sets of equally antagonistic social and political discourses, these conflicting narratives constituted the history, geography, and polity these communities shared with each other . . . Like many Irish, Friel experienced what it meant to be construed by conflicting narratives and discourses from the day he was born; his identity, like that of his state, was inscribed with conflicting narratives.[97]

Citing Homi Bhabha's post-colonial perspective, McGrath describes Friel's "hybrid identity that is neither that of the colonizer nor that of the colonized, but an identity of an 'in-between' site that is historically contingent and specific."[98] Narratives of interviewees from Northern Ireland and the Republic who were members of Tara Players related how Friel's plays were always popular with both the actors and the audiences. Friel's plays appeal to people on a human level, but had an added significance for the Canadian-Irish who could relate to them on a number of levels. Some of these Canadian-Irish are cohorts of Irish poet Seamus Heaney and shared similar experiences growing up in Northern Ireland. Heaney refers to the "doubleness of our focus in Ireland, our capacity to live in two places at one time and two times at the one place." He adds that "[f]or as long as I can remember . . . I have been used to living in two places at the one time: and so have

[95] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[96] Francis Charles McGrath, *Brian Friel's (Post)Colonial Drama: Language, Illusion, and Politics* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1999), 13.
[97] Ibid., 14.
[98] Ibid., 15.

all the other people . . . from north of the border." Heaney quotes Irish philosopher Richard Kearney:

> [w]hat he is bold enough to call 'the Irish mind', this capacity, shared by all traditions on the island, to acknowledge the claim of two contradicting truths at the one time, without having to reach for the guillotine in order to decide *either/or*, preferring instead the more generous and realistic approach of *both/and.*[99]

Heaney notes that this "doubleness" is also shared by people in the Republic: "[it is] the locus of an imagined Ireland, a mythologically grounded and emotionally contoured island that belongs in art time, in story time, in the continuous present of a common, unthinking memory life."[100] Referring to this as "a way of being in the world that has been second nature to Irish people for centuries", he suggests: "the psychic phenomenon . . . which is the doubleness we are capable of as inhabitants of time and place . . . this two-tier world has a split-level language which is natural to it, and to us – a kind of unconscious bilingualism, an evolved verbal amphibiousness."[101]

Perhaps this is one of the reasons why members of Tara Players remained a popular social space for these Irish emigrants in Ottawa. Kearney refers to the Irish abroad and notes that it "takes the migrant mind to know that the island is without frontiers."[102] He cites the example of two Northern Irish poets, John Hewitt and Seamus Heaney:

> The fact that Hewitt hails from Protestant Planter stock and Heaney from Catholic Nationalist, is revealing to the extent that both find common ground in an Ulster regional identity (Hewitt's Antrim, Heaney's Derry) interconnected with the larger world. Both gravitate toward a 'bottomless centre' bespoken to a more global circumference.[103]

Kearney quotes from Hewitt's *The Bitter Gourd* (1947): "[on] the question of 'rootedness' . . . [a writer] must know where he comes from and where he is: otherwise how can he tell where he wishes to go?"[104] According to Kearney, both Hewitt and Heaney explore the idea of a regional identity and "have responded to the political and cultural traumas of their native province by devoting their imaginative energies to a sense of region that is at once specific and universal, lived

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[99] Seamus Heaney, "Correspondences: Emigrants & Inner Exiles," in *Migrations: The Irish at Home and Abroad,* ed. Richard Kearney (Manchester: Wolfhound Press, 1987), 22.
[100] Ibid., 23.
[101] Ibid., 25.
[102] Richard Kearney, ed. *Migrations: The Irish at Home and Abroad* (Manchester: Wolfhound Press, 1987), 111.
[103] Ibid., 121.
[104] Ibid., 119.

and aspired after."[105] Although they welcomed new members, the core group of Tara Players remained the same for nearly forty years. They enjoyed the social life and took pride in the quality of the plays they produced. As Caroline Gowdy Williams explained, she had not had any contact with other people from Ireland before she joined the group, but she enjoyed her first experience on stage and remained a key member of Tara Players from then on:

> So, that was how I joined the Tara Players. They had just got started about a year before that. That has to be about 38 years ago, 39 years ago. I stayed with Tara Players. All through those years. In those days it was very lively, it had its own social life attached to it. It won provincial and national awards. It was quite a considerable theatre group.[106]

Tom Taylor discussed what it was like to be part of Tara Players and drew attention to their shared appreciation of Irish culture and literature and also their shared discomfort with the popular perception that Irish culture was merely about drinking green beer. He recalls the period in the 1960s and 1970s when the Irish Society and the Irish Players were formed:

> There was within those people, and still in me, that is to say: There is more to us than standing on a table in a pub singing and drinking green beer. There is a culture, there is a tradition, the literature, and that is important, that is really who we are, not that other stuff. Of course, we enjoy a good sing-song. But that was very, very important. I have a theory that a lot of the groups were formed to show that Irish culture wasn't just standing on pub tables, singing and drinking green beer. It was: Here is another side of us and we are very proud of it.[107]

Taylor voiced his frustration with how Irishness is associated with St. Patrick's Day celebrations and claimed that for years he never went out in Ottawa on St. Patrick's Day to avoid the green beer and plastic shamrocks:

> Irish culture, that idea of Irishness. I think one of the disservices we do is to let ourselves be sucked into the green beer, where Guinness has monopolized who Irish people are supposed to be. People here in Ottawa who have done stuff to maintain that other gem. The green gem. Whether they were doing it with the football, or doing it with the Celtic Chair, with the Tara Players. Wherever they were doing their thing, and some of them were doing it just without any organization. Just promoting things, doing things, being themselves.
> I call it a green gem. It is like that inner germ of what we really value. Some of that was done through organizations. Others were through individuals who have made contributions. Some did it on their own and promoted things. But I think the basic thing was look: 'Here are the things that we value.'[108]

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[105] Ibid., 119.
[106] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, August 24, 2015.
[107] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[108] Ibid.

Taylor's description of Irishness being "a green gem" highlights his passion for Irish heritage, literature, and culture. An award-winning director, Taylor has consistently advocated for a shared understanding of what it means to be an Irish emigrant and the mutual support that comes from being part of a community network. This advocacy is heightened by being among fellow immigrants who have shared certain life experiences and life-long friendships in Ottawa.

Although they did not consciously set out to create Irish cultural networks, these networks evolved organically as immigrants who shared the same interests were drawn together. Exploring the diffuse concept of ethnicity, Conzen et al. argue that ethnicity is not: "primordial (ancient, unchanging, inherent in a group's blood, soul, or misty past) . . . . ethnicity is not a 'collective fiction,' but rather a process of construction or invention which incorporates, adapts and amplifies pre-existing communal solidarities, cultural attributes, and historical memories. That is, it is grounded in real life context and social experience."[109] In their analysis of interviews with post-war English emigrants in Canada, Barber and Watson reveal how "national identity was constructed, deconstructed, and reconstructed in the minds and lives of English-born emigrants who chose to settle in Canada in the years after World War II." Their interviewees were not focused on matters of national identity as such. They were more interested in unveiling the complex everyday realities of their lives as new emigrants in Canada.[110] The process of 'settling in' in Canada was a deeply personal and individual process. The role of sensory perception in the emigrant experience such as the emigrant's conscious or unconscious reactions to hearing a strange accent, experiencing extreme Canadian weather, or getting used to the sights, sounds, and smells of the Canadian landscape are all critical elements of this "settling-in" process. Barber and Watson argue: "sensory perceptions are deeply embedded in an individual's response to the surrounding world . . . . the number of observations made by our interviewees about the interrelationship between the experience of migration and sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch justifies [historians] interest."[111] The personal attitudes and emotions of individual emigrants play a significant role in how they adjust to life in a different country. Sensory perceptions are highly personal and difficult to articulate, but there is a sense of belonging that comes from meeting other immigrants who can relate to these invisible factors.

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[109] Kathleen Neils Conzen, et al., "The Invention of Ethnicity": A Perspective from the U.S.A.," *Journal of American Ethnic History* 12, 1 (Fall, 1992): 4-5.
[110] Barber and Watson, 219.
[111] Ibid., 125.

When discussing their involvement in Irish social and cultural networks in Ottawa, many Irish immigrants took a moment to consider why they became involved. Some enjoyed the shared understanding of what is was like to live in Ottawa and to get used to extreme climate and new landscapes. For many, however, it was being with people who shared their sense of humour and understood what it was like to grow up in post-war Ireland. Recalling his early years in Ottawa, Tom Murtagh said that for the first few years in Ottawa, he did not associate with anyone Irish. He began to attend Tara Players performances and was asked if he would help by taking tickets and helping in the bar. He recalls that it happened gradually:

> No. There wasn't any 'Road to Damascus' revelation that I need to pay attention to the Irish people here. I gravitated towards them then and I felt more at home with these people, and then [he became a member of] the little Irish folk group. I met a lot of other Irish people through that.[112]

Murtagh enjoyed spending time with other Irish people and appreciated that they shared his passion for linguistic nuances and good conversation. Noting with amusement that Irish people have "peculiar ways," Murtagh posited: "they can get right to the core with a few words. You miss that when you come away. When I started hanging around with these people and doing things with them. I just felt right at home." Murtagh eventually progressed from taking tickets and helping backstage to acting in plays. He enjoyed spending time with these people and appreciated the various accents and mannerisms that were familiar to him from growing up in Ireland. "The different layers of language, there is just poetry, like in the ordinary language of [Irish] people. It is so expressive. The lyrics of the language will carry the Irishness of it."[113] Kathleen Marsh had similar experiences during her early years as a member of the Tara Players: "I found that I felt like I was more at home now. I felt I was among my own. I felt more secure. Irish people [appreciated] the same sort of food, for instance."[114] For Marsh and others, the shared interest in literature and spoken word was a key part of the invisible thread, which connected this Irish-born cohort in Ottawa.

While some immigrants were directly involved in Tara Players performances, others just attended plays and stayed on to listen to music afterwards. Women were frequently involved in a particularly gendered role as the tradition of serving tea and home-made soda bread during the

[112] Tom Murtagh, Personal Interview, Ottawa April 27, 2016.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Catherine (Kathleen) Marsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 30, 2016.

intermission of the performances continued for decades. Like the charter flights to Ireland, the tradition of gathering together after the performances to play music allowed people to buttress their sense of community. Taylor recalled that:

> When the Tara Players first started. Whenever there was a play on, [in] Mary Coffey's time. After the play was over, there was a sing along. They brought out the instruments and it was a party and it was a sing along. They used to do this thing called 'noble call.' You got up and you sang your song or recited a poem.

St. Patrick's Hall became a regular gathering place for these musicians. Murtagh recalled getting involved with other Irish musicians and they formed an Irish folk group called "The Jug of Punch." Taylor did not join any formal group, but enjoyed playing the guitar and remembered:

> The Celtic thing just starting to bubble up. Then, somebody told me there is a guy called Kennedy and there's a bunch of people gather in a basement to sing songs and always doing wee shows for somebody. [he was asked:] Would you come out? So I sang. Then you just got to know people. Don Kavanagh, there was a group called 'The Celts.' They were making a lot of music here . . . It was no big thing, it just happened. These things just happen.[115]

Although Taylor inferred that: "these things just happen," the timing of these gatherings in Ottawa coincided with the rising popularity of Irish music in North America. In the 1970s when the Irish music association, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (CCÉ) began to develop their organization in North America, Ottawa was a prime location. Music, song, and dance intermingled and the same core group of Irish immigrants were again at the helm. CCÉ became another layer that added to the synesthesia of Irish diasporic lifeworlds. The Ottawa Branch of CCÉ was formed in 1975 and is part of the Canada East Region that also includes branches in Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Kingston, Sudbury and Saint John. Mary Coffey and Deirdre Scott (both fluent Irish speakers) became key members of CCÉ and set up Irish language classes in an Ottawa school. This formed another social network and students enjoyed participating in the classes. Patricia Willoughby became involved in Irish language classes when she moved to Ottawa, where the group dynamics brought back happy childhood memories of learning Irish in the Ring Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking district) in Co. Waterford.[116]

[115] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, February 25, 2016.
[116] Patricia Willoughby, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 17, 2014.

This cohort of Irish immigrants in Ottawa made a strategic decision to emigrate to Canada. Once they decided to stay, they focused on settling down, buying homes, and living their lives. A shared understanding and desire to keep their heritage and culture alive coalesced with a willingness to showcase this heritage and share it with fellow Canadians. They did this through various Irish social and cultural networks that they set up in Ottawa during the 1960s and 1970s. Although Irishness was a single thread in the rich tapestry of their everyday lives in Canada, it bound them together and provided the basis for vibrant lifeworlds and life-long friendships. This determined group of Irish men and women worked hard, often behind the scenes, to ensure that these networks survived and thrived and had a far-reaching and enduring impact on Canadian-Irish cultural life in the NCR.

Chapter 7. Sharing a Narrative: The Irish Seniors Social Group Ottawa

People everywhere self-identify by the narratives they share. Folklorist Henry Glassie notes the power of these stories to connect people through "invisible, inaudible . . . mental associations . . . [that] shape and complete them, to give them meaning."[1] Shared narratives and stories are often driven by the most basic human needs for connection and meaningfulness and can include discourses on society and culture internalized at a conscious and subconscious level.[2] The fundamental truth of basic human needs for connection, companionship, and shared meaning is readily apparent in the formation, growth and popularity of the ISSGO. The opportunity to forge a shared narrative was facilitated by decisions made in Dublin, Ottawa, and other centres of Irish emigration from Sydney to London.

A seminal transformative moment in the history of the Irish in Ottawa occurred in 2005 when the Irish Society of the National Capital Region [ISNCR] was informed that funding was available from the Irish Abroad Unit of the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs [IAU] to establish a community group for Irish seniors in the Ottawa-Gatineau region. Seizing the moment, seven Irish-born men and women took advantage of this opportunity and formed a group which grew organically into what is now an established, membership driven, ISSGO with over seventy members. ISSGO re-apply annually to the Irish Government for funding to maintain the services they provide. This funding is specifically aimed to support recreational, social, cultural, and educational activities for Irish-born seniors in the area. Key objectives of ISSGO include: addressing the needs of disadvantaged seniors; promoting and sharing information on Ireland; encouraging closer links between networks abroad and Irish networks in Ireland. The mandate is to provide programmes geared to the needs of seniors and to promote, preserve, and foster Irish culture and heritage. The genesis of the group is a direct result of the availability of Irish government funding. These Irish-born seniors utilized the funding to rent a space where ISSGO weekly meetings begin with morning tea and end with a communal pot-luck lunch. These meetings provided a comfortable, safe space where Irish-born seniors and their Canadian spouses and friends can reflect on and share their life experiences. They also organized occasional outings and events at which they shared and expanded their emigrant narratives. The majority are middle-class

[1] Glassie, *Ballmenone,* 33.
[2] McGrath, *(Post)Colonial,* 13.

Canadian-Irish seniors and ISSGO provides an opportunity to share anecdotes, memories, and cultural practices that defined their lives during the past half century.

In 2005, Irish Ambassador to Canada, Declan Kelly, formally contacted the ISNCR to inform them that funding was available from the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Emigrant Support Programme (ESP). Some of this money was specifically designated to help Irish seniors throughout the diaspora. The funds are administered by the Irish Abroad Unit (IAU) in partnership with Irish Embassies and Consulates abroad. In his previous posting as Irish Ambassador to Australia, Kelly had been involved in helping to set up a community forum to assist Irish-born seniors who needed support. Ambassador Kelly arranged to meet with ISNCR committee members and explained that this group in Australia worked very well and was similar to other groups in the UK that were established with the help of funding from the Irish Government. Kay O'Hegarty, who was on the ISNCR committee in 2005 explained: "It was pretty vague to help seniors start groups. With no definition . . . you know, it didn't matter what the socioeconomic group was, everybody was acceptable and there was a place where they could meet, have a cup of tea, whatever, and talk to each other about Ireland."[3] From the beginning, the seniors' group established was unique to the NCR. Ambassador Kelly had explained that other groups were designed to provide support for disadvantaged Irish-born seniors, but the ISNCR committee noted that the demographic in Ottawa and Gatineau was different. O'Hegarty worried that such an offer of funding might not apply since: "there were [not] many of the Irish senior diaspora in Ottawa who you would describe as impoverished."[4] Nonetheless, they discovered that there were a number of Irish-born seniors in the area who welcomed the opportunity to join a group geared to supporting their needs. Although these Irish were not economically disadvantaged, they embraced the opportunity to spend time with people who shared similar backgrounds.

The founding members decided to create a space where they could get together and share memories of Ireland in a convivial milieu. In reflecting on the differences between ISSGO and other groups funded by IAU, Desmond Walsh noted that most members of ISSGO were retired professionals:

> I imagine that there wasn't much room for working class people here in Ottawa. Not as much as I would say in Toronto, maybe. We had to go to the embassy last year, there was some kind of hook up. It was live, there was someone from London presenting and

[3] Kay O'Hegarty, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 19, 2016.
[4] Ibid.

> someone from the States as well, and the problems were totally different. As Kay was saying afterwards, we had nothing really in common. We are basically a comfortable middle-class group. But in London there was serious social problems. A lot of poor Irish were living there that needed assistance and needed help and stuff. Their set of problems were totally different from ours. There is very little of that here, at least in our group anyway.[5]

The Irish Society board members sanctioned the decision to apply for Irish government funding and gathered a small cohort who were willing to be involved. O'Hegarty recalled:

> We got together a definition of what we thought would work for us and we made it very simple: 'To create a group where Irish people, Irish seniors, could get together to get in touch with their cultural background in a pleasant atmosphere and to plan activities that would be enjoyable to all.' Basically, it was simple as that. So, we put in the initial application for $20,000, very optimistically, And, to our amazement, we got $20,000.[6]

When the application was submitted to IAU there was no guarantee that the grant money would be approved. However, the ISNCR board took the initiative and financed a pilot project, agreeing to pay three months of rental fees to secure a suitable venue for a group of Irish-born senior citizens to meet on a weekly basis. Kay O'Hegarty and Bill Tobin undertook the task of finding a suitable location and agreed to contact Irish-born seniors in the community to gauge interest in the newly-proposed endeavour. Mary Coffey was the first person they contacted and she subsequently contacted Madie Kelly, who was involved with St. Margaret Mary's Church in Old Ottawa South. Through Kelly's personal contacts, they received permission to rent the church hall for a few hours on Tuesday mornings. O'Hegarty and Tobin held the first meeting with Mary Coffey, Pat Scott, Madie Kelly, Pat Kelly and his wife Anne. The following week they were joined by Margo and Felix Connolly, Tom Daly and his Canadian wife Joan. According to O'Hegarty, it "mushroomed from there":

> There is kind of a running thread through this, where people have met either through the Irish theatre group, or through Comhaltas and, to bring it up to today [2016]. Actually, if you look at the people in our group, they have all come through various organizations, and some of them have known each other for a long time, and some of them knew each other very well, and some of them knew each other casually through meetings, through these organizations.[7]

[5] Desmond Walsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 10, 2016.
[6] Kay O'Hegarty, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 19, 2016.
[7] Ibid.

The core of this newly-established Irish seniors' group included some of the same individuals who were founding members of the Ottawa Irish Society, the Tara Players, the Ottawa chapter of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and the Ottawa branch of the Gaelic Athletic Association. Thus, the thread of shared interest in cultural and musical traditions became a key foundational element in ISSGO. This is not to say that this new organization subsumed all others or became the nodal point of Irish consciousness in Ottawa. However, now in their senior years, this cohort had the time, capacity, and enthusiasm to become involved in this new endeavour. The group was new, but much of the mentality was the same as that which had been cultivated and honed over fifty years of living and bringing up families in Canada. The thread of Irishness and interest in all things Irish remained and the group galvanized themselves and others to work as hard on getting their seniors' group established as they had in organizing communal charter flights to Ireland decades before. O'Hegarty comments that this core group "had a camaraderie like you wouldn't believe."[8]

By the time grant funding from the Irish Government was approved, the new seniors' group had twenty-five members and had organized a steering committee to oversee logistics. This committee decided to refer to ISSGO as the "drop-in" to highlight the main feature of the group, which is to provide a space where people could "drop-in" to share a conversation. Although the seed money from the Irish Government allowed them to become established, members of the group remained independent and insisted on supplementing this grant money with their own fundraising activities and a voluntary contribution of $2 per week for tea, coffee, and sundries. The group has to reapply to IAU for funding every year. However, the subject of accepting continued funding from Ireland generated heated discussions. Ethical debate about applying for and accepting Irish government funding reveals the collective mentality of a fiercely independent cohort who are not comfortable taking anything they feel they have not earned. A few older members felt that Irish Government money would be better spent elsewhere - where there was more need. O'Hegarty recalled discussions revolving around points such as: "What do we need it for? You know, we have our little fundraising and we're having a great time when we get together here. What do we need money from Ireland for? Wouldn't they be better to give that to somebody in the slums, or somewhere in Dublin?"[9] These independent attitudes were also reflected in ISSGO discussions

[8] Ibid.
[9] Ibid.

regarding the Irish Canadian Immigration Centre in Toronto.[10] O'Hegarty recalled a discussion in a forum called "Hot Topics," where members shared their opinions on various subjects by passing a microphone around so that everyone had an opportunity to contribute:

> We have had some interesting conversations in 'Hot Topics' about the younger generation in Ireland. The Irish coming over here and a lot of people have talked, myself included, how shall I put this? I think the discussion evolved out of how shall we support the immigration center? The new immigration center in Toronto. People of my age group and the older immigration age group, said: 'so why did they need an immigration center and how much is that costing? Why do they need it? We all just came, and we just got on with it.'[11]

This comment that "we all just came and we just got on with it" is just one of many memories and experiences that group members share when they gather on Tuesday mornings. The main focus of these meetings was to provide an opportunity for members to talk about what was unfolding as a shared narrative. O'Hegarty explained:

> That is where it went, basically. The people felt they would like to get together once a week. Chatting, storytelling, and life experiences, childhood experiences. That was something we would talk about and that would be best done in an atmosphere that was fairly relaxed and over a cup of tea. The cup of tea eventually evolved into a pot luck lunch. The decision was, the focus of the group was to keep Irish-born seniors and seniors of Irish descent in touch with their culture and heritage, through activities of mutual satisfaction.[12]

Creating this space for conversation was an important element. O'Hegarty declared that: "one thing that most members have in common is that they love to talk." One member took responsibility for reporting on the latest news from Ireland and this news often resulted in heated discussions:

> The 'Hot Topics' started, I guess, because of Rory. He loved to bring the news from Ireland. He got his from RTÉ news, or whatever, and he would report on something that was going on. On the various referenda going on in Ireland and that got people talking saying: 'isn't that interesting, now in Canada we do, blah blah blah, we don't do that, why don't we do that here?' People have a lot to say about those kinds of things. So, we thought: 'Gee this is a hot topic subject.' Now that has become a staple of our group. The group loves to talk. That is the one thing about the group, they are all fairly articulate.[13]

[10] The Irish Canadian Immigration Centre, Toronto. Funded by the Irish Government. Established December 2011.
[11] Kay O'Hegarty, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 19, 2016.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.

The 'Hot Topics' component is facilitated by using a single portable microphone, which is passed around the room and allows everyone to have an equal opportunity to speak. The sessions provoke a wide variety of free-flowing conversations. This cohort was shaped by the experiences of depression and war in the 1930s and 1940s and these experiences still shape their opinions as senior citizens in Canada. The age element is important to consider in any study of this cohort. As Betty Finley, who was born in Co. Laois in 1921, explained she had been cared for by her father who had taught her to read and write on a desk he had set up in the kitchen. She had a very special relationship with her father because he was her primary care giver when she was a child: "My mother had to work. My father couldn't work. He had a pension. My father was a captain in the British Army. He was injured in Africa when the Germans went over to bomb. He had to go down in the sand and he was injured when he was down in the sand." Finley said her father had a lot of friends.[14] Considering the large numbers of Irish who served in the British army, it is inevitable that a number of those who were injured would have returned home to Ireland. Captain Finley was representative of other demobbed soldiers who survived on their British pensions. O'Hegarty observed on how people of this generation accepted those who had been traumatised by war back into their communities with comments such as "Sure, he's just a bit odd." These shared experiences of war further illustrate the sense of shared resilience among members of this group.

Referring to the symbiosis between humour and memories within the ISSGO cohort, O'Hegarty remarked: "There is a very dry sense of humour, and in Ireland we see humour in sadness. I think the Irish are never funnier than when they are dealing with death."[15] This observation reflects a common motif that emerges from the sharing of memories within the group, whether those memories come from the Republic of Ireland or from Northern Ireland. Although these immigrants have lived in Canada for decades, they enjoy being with people who share their complex sense of humour. The appreciation of shared language and humour reinforces strong connections within the cohort. Explaining what is was like growing up in Ireland, Finley related a story that demonstrated how innocent she had been "going out with a boy, going down the road, going to the step by the field. That was the big romance. He would sit on one side [of the step] and I sat on the other. When you think of it." She remembers going to confession and telling the priest about it, "the priest said: 'Anything else?'" [laughter] There are a number of elements in this

[14] Betty (Elizabeth) Finley, Personal Interview, Ottawa, January 14, 2015.
[15] Kay O'Hegarty, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 19, 2016.

narrative that illuminate the mores of this particular place and time. Finley's laughter and comments about how she enjoyed sharing stories with people who understood what it was like to grow up in Ireland underscores this shared background. Finley summed up what it meant for her to spend time with other Irish people in Canada: "They think the same as I do. That's what I think about Irish people. I love Irish people."[16]

This cohort grew up in Ireland and can relate to the anecdotes of their peers because they shared similar experiences. This phenomenon is explored by Seamus Heaney who says of those old enough to remember the open hearths in country kitchens: "those who remember this have already inscribed in the memory-bank of their bodies a record of the almost physical consequences . . . [of] the process of modernization."[17] Heaney cites a personal example of the power of such memories and describes how he was transported back in time when he lifted the door latch in an old house:

> I lifted a latch for the first time in years; and there, in that instantly cold metal touch, in the pleasing slackness and scissor-and-slap of the latch mechanism, something unpredictably invigorating happened. My body awakened in its very capillaries to innumerable and unnameable rivulets of affection and energy. The moment that latch made its harsh old noise, a whole ancestral world came flooding up.[18]

Hall also references sensory perception that unleashes a stream of emotion and memory. He writes: "Who has not known, at this moment, the surge of an overwhelming nostalgia for lost origins, for 'times past'?" He describes this surge of feeling as completely imaginary and unrequited, but nonetheless as a "desire, memory, myth, search, discovery . . . the reservoir of our cinematic narratives."[19] Heaney describes lifting the old door latch as "the ghostlife of a lifting latch" and says that his reaction demonstrates:

> a connection is possible between . . . inchoate dailiness and . . . imagined identity. Your Irishness, to put it yet another way, constitutes a big unconscious voltage and all it needs is some transformer to make it current in a new significant and renovative way.[20]

[16] Betty (Elizabeth) Finley, Personal Interview, Ottawa, January 14, 2015
[17] Seamus Heaney, "Correspondences," 28
[18] Ibid., 29.
[19] Hall, "Cultural" 236.
[20] Ibid., 30.

For Canadian-Irish seniors, the sharing of memories and humorous tales with others who grew up in Ireland enriches the narratives of their lives. Glassie describes such tales as being "alive and throbbing with importance" and refers to shared stories and memories and the associations which are woven around them as a "philosophical bedrock."[21]

Glassie observes that "mental associations woven around texts during performance shape and complete them and give them meaning."[22] This meaning is central to his study and he cautions that any study of human beings has to remain sensitive to how stories unfold: "Society is not peaked like a pyramid or layered like a cake. It is composed of communities simultaneously occupying space and time at the same human level."[23] Hence, Glassie argues that meaning "carries us from sensate things - words, artifacts, behavior – into the invisible structure of values, into culture, into the human mind and heart."[24] Oral history is the study of people. Portelli notes that it "deals with stories and stories cannot be reduced to any single meaning."[25] When a person emigrates they do not suddenly become a different person, they are still the same person, but are now shaped by new experiences. Creating a new home and settling in are usually their first priorities. These mundane practices flow beneath everyday life, but are central to how individuals create meaning in their lives. Cultural historian Svetlana Boym explores the experiences of emigrants who build a home away from home and notes that their "intimate [daily] experiences occur against a foreign background, where they are aware of the unfamiliar stage set, whether they like it or not."[26]

Boym interviewed ex-Soviet exiles who settled in the United States in the late 1970s and early 1980s and began to notice what she calls "émigré memorabilia" in their homes. These items reflect the personalities of their owners but are also remnants of the places they left behind. She observes that each home "is a personal memory museum."[27] These items are reminders of where people came from. They also represent a communal and personal nostalgia. Boym says that nostalgia is not just a longing for home but a natural human yearning for a different time, or a

[21] Ibid., 33.
[22] Glassie, 33.
[23] Ibid., 86.
[24] Ibid., 153.
[25] Portelli, "Afterword," Sheftel, 284.
[26] Svetlana Boym, "On Diasporic Intimacy: Ilya Kabakov's Installations and Immigrant Homes.: *Critical Inquiry* 24. 2 (Winter, 1998), 499.
[27] Ibid., 516.

different rhythm of time, "the time of our childhood, the slower rhythms of our dreams."[28] She distinguishes between "reflective nostalgia" wherein an emigrant acknowledges that the past can never be recreated and "restorative nostalgia," which involves mythmaking that is often at the core of national and religious revivals.[29] "Reflective nostalgia . . . does not follow a single plot but explores ways of inhabiting many places at once and imagining different time zones."[30] According to Boym, objects that emigrants bring with them and keep with them for years are "memory grids" that "are not symbols but transitional objects that reflect multiple belonging."[31]

Although the lifeworlds of Irish immigrants interviewed for this dissertation differ from Soviet refugees, every person interviewed remembered the exact date they left Ireland. Mirroring the view of nineteenth-century Russian émigré, Alexander Herzen who inferred that "for those living abroad the clocks stop at the hour of exile"[32] The majority of ISSGO interviewees still have personal items they brought with them from Ireland and despite physical relocations they still have them today.

[28] Svetlana Boym, *The Future of Nostalgia* (New York: Perseus Books Group, 2001), xv.
[29] Ibid., xviii.
[30] Ibid., xviii.
[31] Ibid, 328, 336.
[32] Ibid., 327.

Figure 5: Suitcase (photograph by author)

Tom Taylor: "My old suitcase. This is the forerunner of Air Canada, Trans Canada Airlines. I have it all these years and it was a woman in our street who bought it for me. You see, when I came here, remember, I went to the Oblates, I was 17 or 18 and it held everything I owned. That was my flight. TCA. This was state of the art. There is an extension.

The wee woman who gave it to me, Tessie Ward, she had a great expression, she used to say: 'You don't need a big suitcase to carry your education, you carry that in your head.' I don't know why, she gave me the suitcase, you see, I was 17, I don't know why. She must have said I want to give him something, I don't know. It would have been an expensive suitcase, at that time. Anyway, there it is. When you were leaving, people would give you tea, quarter packs of tea and handkerchiefs, I landed in Montreal with the quarter pound packs of tea. You were allowed 44 pounds luggage."[33]

[33] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 4, 2019.

Figure 6: British Passport (photograph by author)

"There was that and my old passport. I was a British citizen, you see on the back of the passport, you had to declare the money that you had with you and it was £15. Go and make your way in the world, son. That is proof of my vaccinations. International Certificate of vaccination, against smallpox. There is a story about that passport too, the passport survived a housefire where everything was destroyed. I happened to have my passport in a tin box."[34]

[34] Tom and Dianne Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 4, 2019.

Figure 7: Band Photos (photographs by author)

Tom Taylor: "As time went on, people wanted you to remember things. My granny would send me stuff that would appear in the paper, magazines, she would send me songs. They would want you to remember things. If you think about the 1950s. not many people had a camera. I have pictures that my brothers don't have, cause those pictures were sent to me. My Ma saying: 'Don't forget.' Or, I would be home and take a picture. The late 50s early 60s, you couldn't make a copy at that time. The postcard is from the band I was in when I was a kid. Later on, when I joined the seminary, they sent me this. All the band members signed it. The band would play once a year in Cushendall, Co. Antrim and they were in the bus and thinking of me. My father sent it to me. He wrote they 'said to tell you they were pitching hard for you.' They were a brass band."[35]

[35] Tom Taylor, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 4, 2019.

Figure 8 Connections with Ireland (photographs by author)

Cathy Dubé: "The letters are from my father. He used to send the newspaper, see how he folded it and put on the stamp. My father was a Gillie (river guide) and used to teach people to fish and to tie flies. On the River Moy where the salmon used to nearly jump into the boat. He had the record for a 28 pound salmon." [36]

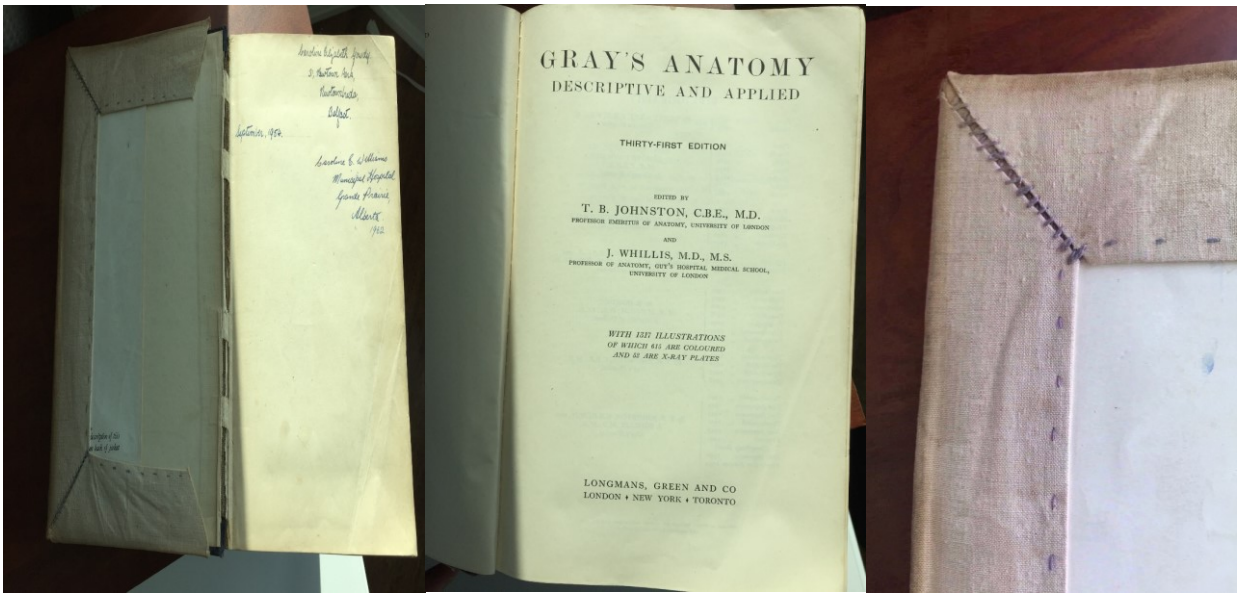

Figure 9: Gray's Anatomy (photograph by author)

Caroline Gowdy Williams. "All my physiotherapy textbooks were covered in linen – unbleached linen – All my books were covered in linen and I put them all in a trunk, a half-sized trunk, and I brought them all to Canada with me. The hand stitching. The textbook illustrations, in my day, I would have known every one of those muscles, the nerve supply, and function, and circulation.

[36] Cathy Dubé, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 5, 2019.

The book has been well handled. I have never taken that cover off to see what the paper cover was like inside. My great uncle William, my grandfather's brother from Ballylesson in Co. Down. There was a weaving factory close to them, there was Milltown, and Ballylesson townland, the linen industry stretched all the way through to Lisburn. My father even worked in that factory at one time. In fact, he lost the tip of his finger, I don't know what he was doing there. He wasn't a weaver or anything. I have had that book since 1954 went I went to physio. I didn't even ask for that. It was my father. I think he was quietly proud. Somehow, the word had got around that I had got into physiotherapy and he organized this with Great Uncle William."[37]

Figure 10: Piece of turf(left)wooden handmade clogs (center and right)(photographs by author)

Cathy Dubé: "These are my grandfather's wooden clogs. They're handmade. He was a farmer and he used to wear these shoes when he was in the bog cutting turf. I brought that sod of turf back from a trip home in 1962. They didn't have strict regulations in those days." (The peat bogs of Ireland yield black sods of turf, which are used as heating fuel in homes).[38]

[37] Caroline Gowdy Williams, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 5, 2019.
[38] Cathy Dubé, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 5, 2019.

Figure 11: Missal and Statue and Saint Patrick's Day Badge (photographs by author)

Cathy Dubé: "My mother and my aunt gave me that missal and statue when I was leaving for Canada. I have brought those with me, for sure. I wouldn't leave home without them, as the saying goes. I suppose they wanted to keep me safe. Years later, my father sent me the Saint Patrick's Day Badge and I glued it to the back of the statue for safekeeping." [Dubé left Ireland on 15 December 1956 when she was sixteen years old]

Figure 12 Margo Connolly (far left, back row) the Antrim Team in Croke Park. All-Ireland Senior Women's Camogie Champions (left) and her 1945-1947 Ulster Championship medals and All-Ireland Championship Medals (right), (photographs by author)

Figure 13 Felix Connolly's hurley (left) and St. Gall's Senior Men's Hurling Team, Milltown, Co. Antrim (right). Felix Connolly (back row, third from right), (photographs by author)

These are tangible symbols of collective memory of the place left behind. Yet, memory of this place remains an integral part of their lifeworlds in the NCR. Margo and Felix Connolly continued their involvement in the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA), when they settled in Canada. Their son played hurling (ancient Irish sport, and the fastest team sport on grass in the world). Their grandchildren play and continue to be involved.[39] The connection of shared memory is intensified by their collective experiences as Irish immigrants in Canada. The mandate of the ISSGO is to create an opportunity to share these narratives. The rich palimpsest of meaning, memories, and lifeworlds uncovered by this sharing of narratives reflects what political theorist Iris Young calls:

> mutual intersubjective transcendence . . . subjectivity is heterogeneous, decentered. Consciousness, meaning and intention are only possible because the subject-in-process slips and surpasses its intentions and meanings. Any utterance, for example, not only has a literal meaning, but is laden with ambiguities, embodied in gesture, tone of voice, rhythm, that all contribute to the heterogeneity of its meaning without being intended. So it is with actions and interactions with other persons.[40]

[39] Margo Connolly, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 6, 2019.
[40] Iris Young, "The Ideal of Community and the Politics of Difference," *Social Theory and Practice* 12, 1 (Spring, 1986), 11.

Akenson uses the term "semantic nests" to describe the "vexing semantic tangle" of how scholars refer to communities from the British Isles.[41] Although Akenson refers to the ambiguity of descriptors used to describe the complexity of Irish emigration to North America, the term "semantic nests" could equally describe the multiplicity of meanings encapsulated in their narratives. In his analysis of post-colonial Irish drama and, in particular, the work of Brian Friel, Francis Charles McGrath argues that the stories we tell about ourselves are shaped by the societal and cultural discourses we have internalised as our own. These "narratives and discourses are constituted by language." He maintains that "the dysfunctional family became a major trope in Friel's plays" because of his experiences growing up as a Catholic in Northern Ireland, where he "experienced what it meant to be construed by conflicting narratives and discourses from the day he was born; his identity, like that of his state, was inscribed with conflicting narratives."[42] Friel's work has been internationally acclaimed and his plays were often performed by the Tara Players in Ottawa. They were among the most popular among Tara Players' directors, actors, and audiences. Journalist Emer O'Kelly claims that Friel has ploughed the "furrow of Irishness for years" and that he has been hailed as "the universally accented voice of Ireland."[43] Arguing that Ireland possesses "a universal voice," she quotes artistic director of the Abbey Theatre, Garry Hynes' who commented that it was only when she worked outside of Ireland that she became aware "that Ireland and Irish thinking were not universal and central to the way the world saw drama."[44]

Members of ISSGO are from Northern Ireland and the Republic and were moulded by diverse childhood experiences growing up on the island of Ireland. A recent discussion at an ISSGO gathering centered around the concept of Irishness and how it permeates their everyday lives. As the microphone was passed around, seniors waved their hands and were excited to share individual memories with members of the group who had not grown up in Ireland. For Maggie O'Rourke, being Irish meant a love of education, literature, poetry, and an appreciation of the spoken word. Others agreed and stressed that their childhoods and education in Ireland had shaped who they were. Being Irish meant different things to different individuals. Their discussion of

[41] Donald Harman Akenson, *Irish in Ontario: A Study in Rural History,* Second Edition (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 6.
[42] McGrath, *(Post)Colonial,* 14.
[43] Emer O'Kelly, "Friel's Deep Furrow Cuts to Our Heart," *Irish Independent,* September 6, 2009.
[44] Ibid.

Irishness centered around poetry and literature and prompted a discussion of various memories of the Irish landscape. Margo Connolly regaled the group with hilarious stories of childhood trips to the country with her cousins helping them gather turf and getting stuck in the bogs. Mention of turf elicited reactions from others recalling the smell of a turf fire.[45]

Imparting memories and stories about growing up in Ireland, seniors take pleasure in hearing their own memories echoed in shared narratives. Mary Coffey liked to discuss "happy memories" of the thatch on the house she grew up in and the man who cut the sally rods for the thatch. When they shared memories of growing up in Ireland, many immigrants mentioned the houses they grew up in, and related sensory memories of the landscape of their childhood. The natural beauty of Irish countryside is frequently extolled. Born in Co. Mayo in 1935, Bridget Guglich recalled:

> I was born in an 'áit iargúlta,' as we say in the Irish language, an 'out of the way spot.' A place called Ballycroy, which is now a National Park. There wasn't much traffic going through there, so we were rather isolated. You have to go around the Nephin Mountains to get out of it one way, or another. We had a lot of fun growing up. I still remember very fondly all the days of my youth.[46]

Telling stories about the days of their youth is a critical element of ISSGO meetings. There is now an established tradition of listening respectfully to each person's recollections. There is an element of caring and understanding, especially when some senior's become emotional recollecting their past. Aileen Dolan suggested that one of the positive things about being involved with this group is that "we all have an understanding of how we grew up," and there is a certain pleasure and comfort spending time with people who share that understanding.

Respect and mutual understanding pervades the gathering, as others wait their turn, laugh, nod their heads, and prepare to relate their own anecdotes and memories. Tuan discusses the power of stories to evoke strong emotions, inferring that "[f]eelings and ideas concerning space and place are extremely complex in the adult human being. They grow out of life's unique and shared experiences."[47] Places and memory of places have the power to evoke deep-seated memories. Tuan posits that: "[i]ntimate experiences lie buried in our innermost being, so that not only do we lack the words to give them form but often we are not even aware of them. When, for some reason,

[45] ISSGO meeting, Ottawa, November 3, 2015.
[46] Bridget Guglich, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 6, 2015.
[47] Tuan, *Space and Place,* 19.

they flash to the surface of our consciousness they evince a poignancy that the more deliberate acts, the actively sought experiences, cannot match.[48] Hence, "the adult's perceptual categories are from time to time infused with emotions that surge out of early experiences. These highly charged moments from the past are sometimes captured by poets."[49] ISSGO members have a heightened appreciation of how memories of the past percolate beneath the surface of their daily lives. Telling their stories to people who can understand them is cathartic and fulfils a fundamental human need. Gilroy suggests that "the telling of stories – direct the consciousness of a group – plays a special role [in organizing] the different practices, cognitive, habitual, and performative, that are required to invent, maintain and renew identity."[50] Tuan corroborates this by suggesting that people use stories from the past to make sense of their lives in the present: "[p]eople look back for various reasons, but shared by all is the need to acquire a sense of self and of identity . . . To strengthen our sense of self, the past needs to be rescued and made accessible."[51] The ISSGO provides a safe and secure place for members to rescue their pasts. Place memory has the power to gather both material and non-material attachments, such as experiences, stories, and histories. Mirroring Edward Casey's theory that places are not just something physical: "a place is something for which we continually have to discover or invent new forms of understanding, new concepts . . . places not only *are*, they *happen*."[52]

Ensconced in an audience they can trust, members of ISSGO feel safe sharing their stories. They can relate to the depth of feeling generated by memories of long ago Although they have been in Canada for decades and are part of other family and community networks, they are seldom absent from ISSGO meetings. The camaraderie they encounter sustains them in other areas of their lives. This cohort has survived and thrived in Canada and feels secure enough to share their experiences with their compatriots. Tom McSwiggan who left Ireland in April, 1957, feels very comfortable sharing his life experiences:

> I still like to go back to the attitude of emigrating. Even though there were millions of Irish people over the last 150 years who emigrated all over the world, it is a tough thing when you are in a warm, loving, affectionate family and you have to leave and go out among strangers. There were all those little aggravations, but the biggest aggravation for me in

[48] Ibid., 136-137.
[49] Ibid., 20.
[50] Gilroy, *Black Atlantic,* 198.
[51] Tuan, *Space and Place,* 187.
[52] Edward S. Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time." in Feld, *Senses of Place,* 25-27.

> emigrating was the upset in my family and for all of my spare time, I think, I would think about that leaving and I wrote often to my mother and she wrote often to me. The hardest part was that first year of being away from your family and friends.[53]

Although fifty years have passed since McSwiggan left Ireland, there is a still a poignancy in how he describes his attachment to home and what he refers to as "my valley." A happily married father of a large family, he recalled that he settled into life in Canada when he met his Canadian wife soon after arriving in Ontario. He left behind a vibrant social life in Ireland which he missed greatly:

> It was 1950, I was 15 years old and then, those next years, until I emigrated, it was all dancing and fun. We did céilí dancing and modern dancing, and we used to ride bicycles six, seven, eight miles to dances. They were great fun and the bands were unbelievable. The bands were so good. It was just the best time in my life. I loved that fun. We used to have céilís [céilithe] in our own house in Ireland and it was always the funniest thing, people that were so shy and backward, that you could look at them and even work with them, and they would come to your house to a céilí and do a recitation, or something, and the hair would stand on your neck. They were so good. It was wonderful.[54]

McSwiggan's childhood memories resonated with others in ISSGO and such memories allowed them to confirm each other's remembering

Emigration jolted these individuals out of the everyday worlds of their childhood in Ireland. Their lifeworlds as immigrants in Canada are diverse, but they share an appreciation of how memories of place evoke powerful emotions. Maggie O'Rourke maintained her sense of place in Irish music, poetry, and literature, which remained a constant part of her lifeworld in Canada.

> I kept the connection with Irish music, any concerts that would come around. I have a collection of tapes, and with any theatre that would come around, or anything at all. I think it is not necessarily an Irish thing. I think wherever you are born, where you have been brought up in a culture, there is a deep-rooted connection. Whether it is imprinted, maybe 'imprinted' is the word, that you have that connection. I love Irish music. I love dancing and the poetry and all that.[55]

Now retired, she has more time to devote to pursuing these interests. Part of the attraction of ISSGO for her is that it gives her an opportunity to revisit elements of Irish culture that interested her years ago, but that were neglected during her working life. When he retired, Desmond Walsh rekindled his interest in the Irish language and enjoyed the opportunity to share this interest with

[53] Thomas J. McSwiggan, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 13, 2015.
[54] Ibid.
[55] Maggie O'Rourke, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 12, 2015

others who could speak the language: "It came back very quickly. I enjoyed it."[56] Reflecting on why this cohort formed such a strong connection, Kay O'Hegarty averred:

> I have given this a lot of thought. What makes the connection with this group? Because, there is no doubt about it, it is a strong friendship. I kind of compare it to a child. A child has its primary attachment, it moves on from there. I think for a lot of us, who were born in Ireland, that is our primary attachment to our country. That is our country, that was our primary attachment, and no matter where we went after that, it is funny, but as we get older and meet up with other Irish people, that is where our connection is. Irishness, that is what it is. I have been thinking about it [57]

O'Hegarty's view, (informed by her professional career as a social worker), is that every individual has a primary attachment to place and family and when that attachment is severed, it influences subsequent attachments. If the separation is non-traumatic, as seems to be the case for most members of ISSGO, the individual can go forward to make other healthy attachments to people and places. She maintained that there is a difference in attitudes between emigrants who were forced to leave Ireland and those, like herself, who had the option to stay in Ireland, but chose to emigrate to Canada. Referencing her own transition to Canada, where she has lived since 1966, O'Hegarty pointed out that despite being detached from Ireland, there will always be a certain magnetic force that draws her to reminisce about her primary attachments from long ago, especially in old age when it is natural to reflect on past experiences.[58]

ISSGO offers an opportunity to share these mental geographies. Now that this cohort are senior citizens, it is a natural to look back and reflect on how their lives unfolded. Place attachment has had a profound impact on their identity. Seamon argues that paying attention to the role of place: "is important because, in everyday life, the emotional ambience and resonance of places, routes, and routines typically run beneath the lived surface of the lifeworld."[59] Retirement has now given them time to re-engage with Irish culture. Describing her military career in Canada and her many relocations around the country, Maggie O'Rourke did not have time to join Irish organizations while she worked:

> That really renewed my Irish connection again. I have so appreciated the Drop-in here. It has been great for me to get back in connection with Irish people. I guess, I went back to

[56] Desmond Walsh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, March 10, 2016.
[57] Kay O'Hegarty, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 19, 2016.
[58] Kay O'Hegarty, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 19, 2016.
[59] Seamon, "Place Attachment," 14.

> Ireland every year. It is the basic connection. You are kind of on the same wavelength, in a way that sometimes you can't be with other people. I don't know what.[60]

Membership in ISSGO provides an opportunity for this cohort to spend a few hours a week with people who share common memories and who enjoy spending time together. However, as O'Rourke proclaims, she has no intention of spending all her time with Irish people. Sometimes discussions with other Irish people simply serve to remind her of why she left Ireland in the first place. ISSGO has been deemed a successful project by the ISNCR and continues to receive funding from the Irish government. Their mandate to provide programmes geared to the needs of Irish immigrant seniors and to promote, preserve, and foster Irish culture and heritage is thus ensured and remains an important thread in the rich tapestry of Canadian-Irish lifeworlds in the NCR.

[60] Maggie O'Rourke, Personal Interview, Ottawa, November 12, 2015.

Conclusion

The mass exodus of emigrants from Ireland during the post-war decades was a prescient reminder of the flight from famine a century earlier. This case study of identity formation among Irish emigrants/immigrants who settled in the National Capital Region of Canada after 1945 reveals that these two waves of emigration were quite different. Those who left Ireland in the period 1945-1960 were young emigrants born in the fledgling Irish Free State and their cohorts in Northern Ireland. They were not a homogeneous group of people forced by circumstances to leave Ireland.

These post-war emigrants were Catholic and Protestant from all regions of Ireland. Many were professional academics, teachers, nurses, social workers, physiotherapists, and civil servants. A combination of economic, political, cultural, social and psychological factors prompted them to leave Ireland. Post-war Canada experienced an economic boom. Educated and ambitious, Irish immigrants interviewed for this dissertation were confident that they would succeed abroad. They carefully considered their options and deliberately chose to emigrate to Canada. Irish immigration to Canada was also shaped by Canadian government policy that sought to recruit "the right kind of immigrants"—according to evidence gleaned from Canadian government archives. Statistics and government policy documents on Irish immigration to Canada helped to answer the question: Why choose Canada? The answer was (partly) because Canada also chose them. Throughout the post-war period, emigration from Ireland to Canada remained a thorny issue for the Government of Canada and the Irish Free State government (the Republic of Ireland after 1949). State documents dealing with Irish emigration to Canada, (housed in Library and Archives Canada), suggests that Canadian governments were more than eager to attract Irish immigrants, (of a particular type), to meet the pressing need for manpower in post-war Canada.

This dissertation has also argued that the specific timing of emigration and the place chosen to settle had a direct impact on how Irish emigrants continued to construct their identities in exile. Making sense of this new place and space was an important part of how they created meaningful lives. Where they settled in Canada, where they came from in Ireland, their personal circumstances, and the timing of their arrival all mattered in the overall process of identity formation. The emergent physical, psychological and social space of the National Capital Region became a fertile place for them to put down roots—roots conducive to the evolution of an ethnic consciousness in which Irishness was just one layer of their multicultural lives.

Focusing on Irish emigration to the National Capital Region of Canada in the decades after the Second World War, this interdisciplinary thesis unveiled a rich palimpsest of diasporic memory that mirrored older lifeworlds on both sides of the Irish border and that spanned the North Atlantic during a time of pivotal socioeconomic change. Oral history formed the core of this dissertation and provided tools to map life stories that reveal how Ottawa's Irish immigrants constructed meaningful lives in Canada. In oral history, the narrative is not just what is said, but how it is said. It is a personal biography that explains how we make sense of our lives. Each telling is always new—a snapshot of a unique moment in time—influenced by numerous variables. Memories can be poignant and charged with meaning. They are the glue that hold the past and the present together and shape how people make sense of their lives.

Analyses of the oral narratives of emigration illuminated the modalities and milestones that people remembered. For example, some people recalled events relative to the birth of their children, others remembered events in relation to their employment history. Although they left Ireland by choice, it is striking that each of the interviewees remembered the exact dates of their travels and vivid details of their first weeks in Canada. There is a tendency among Irish immigrants to refer to Ireland as 'home,' while at the same time being satisfied that their home is now permanently in Canada. Oral history captures these stories of the past told in the present, with memory at its nodal centre. For Irish immigrants interviewed, memories of their Irish childhoods remain an inextricable part of who they are. Such memories run beneath the surface of their everyday lives. Memory of place also remains an integral part of Irish immigrant lifeworlds in Canada, and the ISSGO provides a forum to share these mental geographies.

Shaped by past experiences, Irishness is a constant thread of shared identity. Although a single thread in the rich tapestry of their everyday lives in Canada, it bound them together and provided a framework for vibrant lifeworlds and life-long friendships. Hidden beneath the surface of everyday life, memories are moments of fleeting reflective nostalgia that seldom, if ever, feature in mainstream histories of diaspora. Yet their relevance in the phenomenology of the past is as real for Ottawa's Irish immigrants as the parliamentary decisions and emigration regulations that facilitated their entry into Canada.

This interdisciplinary dissertation argued that there is no such thing as a homogeneous Irish ethnic identity, either in Ireland, or in Canada. Irish ethnic identities are complex layered phenomena, shaped and reshaped by spatial and temporal forces that impact the macro and micro

lifeworlds of Irish people worldwide. Ethnic identities are in a constant state of formation. In tracking identity formation in Ottawa's Irish diaspora, anthropologist Clifford Geertz' concept of "thick description," (which considers details, structures, meanings, symbols, forms when talking about cultures), has informed this work throughout. His argument that to understand people, one has to look closely at their culture resonates throughout this thesis. Geertz posited that "man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun. I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be, therefore, not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning."[1] Identity formation is one such invisible web. Using different methodological threads to unravel a web of layered identities provided an opportunity to investigate the private and public lives of Irish immigrants to the National Capital Region during the post-war era. To understand how these people constructed meaningful lives was a critical element of this research. In exploring the specific Irishness of these people, a phenomenological approach provided a language to describe their lifeworlds and how they became attached to a particular place at a particular time. It explored routes and routines that are taken for granted and are often pre-reflexive and unnoticed.

Highlighting the twin impact of *roots* and *routes* as formative elements in the creation of diasporic communities, the dissertation drew on oral history, space-place theory, and migration studies as analytical tools with which to shape its methodologies and conduct its fieldwork. Its ethnographic locus was the Irish Seniors Social Group (ISSGO) that was created in Ottawa in 2005. This cohort is part of a network of grassroots community groups spread throughout the Irish diaspora that receives fiscal support from the Irish government. Recognizing the contributions made by its expatriate communities to their homeland, this support has led to the creation of programmes that promote, preserve and foster Irish culture among the constituent communities of Ireland's global diaspora. While the tangible results of this initiative are visible throughout the Irish diaspora (in the form of cultural centres, genealogy networks, etc.), intangible results (in the form of cultural archiving, Irish language preservation, etc.) have been equally significant. Irish emigrant Tom Murtagh from Longford, who has lived most of his life in Ottawa, reflects on the archival importance of unlocking memories and life experiences that might otherwise go unnoticed and unshared:

[1] Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays,* 5.

> I've been here in Canada for a long time. Lately, I don't know if it's because I'm coming towards the end of my life, or whatever. I've got this feeling, more and more, this attachment because of our roots, and our background, and our culture – which I never lost here.
>
> This is an interesting vignette, if you like. I grew up on the Main Street of Longford. My father was a butcher, we had a shop there at the front, and the family lived at the back and upstairs. Now, the shop is a little coffee shop. So, I go there every year and I sit in the coffee shop, and all these memories come flooding back. Looking out at that street, where I used to ride my little tricycle. I thought I might just share with you the whole idea. I feel drawn back - the whole idea of roots.[2]

Hidden beneath the surface of everyday life, memories like Murtagh's are fleeting reminiscences, moments of reflective nostalgia that seldom, if ever, feature in mainstream histories of the Irish diaspora. Yet, their relevance in the phenomenological tapestry of the past is as real to him as a parliamentary decision made by a major statesman.

One of the salient outcomes of Ottawa's ISSGO is the manner in which it successfully encouraged and facilitated the recording of the past among its cohort of Irish immigrants. An architect of Irish government outreach with its diaspora, Ambassador Dr. Ray Bassett was Irish Ambassador to Canada from 2010 until 2016. Recalling his affiliation with ISSGO during his time in Ottawa, he noted that most of its members:

> left Ireland at a time of economic difficulty in their homeland. They had come to a new society, worked hard, and made a big contribution to their adopted home. In addition, many had contributed through remittances to family members back in Ireland. As Ireland became a more prosperous country, it was an opportunity for the Irish State to repay something for their loyalty over the years. ISSGO members have projected a very positive image of Ireland in Canada. They provided a bridge for future generations to hear, at first hand, the cultural backgrounds from which they came to the National Capital Region.[3]

The *raison d'être* of this thesis was to explore this transatlantic bridge and the cultural traffic that passed over it during the past half century. Hopefully, this study will encourage future scholars to undertake similar voyages of discovery, so that new voices may tell new stories of the long Irish diaspora to Canada.

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[2] Tom Murtagh, Personal Interview, Ottawa, April 5, 2019.
[3] Dr. R. Bassett, E-mail message to author, April 8, 2019.

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THESES

O'Brien, Matthew John. "Irishness in Great Britain and the United States: Transatlantic and Cross-Channel Migration Networks and Irish Ethnicity, 1920-90," PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison. 2001.

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Appendix 1- Interview List

Name	Date of First Interview
Bhaneja, Marie	Nov 16, 2015
Coffey, Mary	Nov 2, 2015
Connolly, Felix	Aug 19, 2014
Connolly, Margaret	Aug 19, 2014
Dolan, Aileen	Feb 8, 2016
Finlay, Elizabeth	Aug 26, 2014
Gilligan, Elizabeth	Dec 4, 2015
Gowdy – Williams, Caroline	Aug 5, 2015
Greham-Dubé, Catherine	Aug 21, 2014
Guglich, Bridget	Nov 6, 2015
Howard Ron (fictional name)	Oct 29, 2015
Marsh, Catherine (Kathleen)	Mar 30, 2016
McSwiggan, Thomas	Nov 13, 2015
Murtagh, Thomas	Apr 28, 2016
O'Brien, Luke	Oct 22, 2013
O'Carroll, Anna Mary	Feb 7, 2014
O'Carroll, John (Seán)	Feb 7, 2016
O'Connor, Norma	Oct 4, 2016
O' Hegarty, Kay	Apr 19, 2016
O'Rourke, Margaret	Nov 12, 2015
Taylor, Tom	Feb 25, 2016
Vallely, Marie	Dec 20, 2018
Walsh, Desmond	Mar 10, 2016
Willoughby, Patricia	Mar 17, 2014

Patrick and Deirdre Scott Family Papers

Appendix 2- Consent Form

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN "HOME AWAY FROM HOME: MEMORY AND IDENTITY IN THE IRISH DIASPORA"

I understand that I have been asked to participate in an oral history research project being conducted by Linda Fitzgibbon, Individualized Program INDI, Concordia University. Contact information: e-mail lfitzgibbon@rogers.com Telephone number (613) 715 0869 under the supervision of Dr. Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin, School of Canadian Irish Studies. Contact information: e-mail gearoid.ohallmhurain@concordia.ca Telephone Number (514) 848 2424 ext. 5120 and Dr. Steven High, Centre for Oral History and Digital Storytelling. Contact information: e-mail steven.high@concordia.ca Telephone number (514) 848 2424 ext. 2413

A. Research Purpose: I have been informed that the purpose of the research is to collect and conserve life stories of members of the Irish Diaspora in Canada.

B. Procedures: I understand that the interview will be held at the interviewee's house, or at any other appropriate location. The interviewer will record the life stories either in video, audio or written form. The interviewee will be free to speak of any aspects of his or her life and can refuse to answer any question. If needed, subsequent interview sessions can be held.

C. Risks and Benefits: I understand that describing life experiences can be emotional. If at any time the person being interviewed feels it to be necessary, the interview will be terminated immediately. The interviewer will, at a later date, provide the interviewee with an audio and a transcribed copy of the interview.

D. CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION: Please review the following conditions and options. Do not hesitate to ask questions of your interviewer if need be.

○ I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and discontinue my participation at any time without negative consequences.

Read and
Check both cases

○ I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary.

PERSONAL IDENTITY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND REPRODUCTION OF THE INTERVIEW.
CHECK ONLY ONE OPTION: [OPEN PUBLIC ACCESS] **OR** [CONFIDENTIAL]

○ **OPEN PUBLIC ACCESS**

- I understand that data from this study may be published.
- I consent that my interview be available to researchers and the public for consultation at the Concordia Center for Oral History and Digital Storytelling, respecting the conditions cited in this form, and that these documents will be available to researchers and the public, and may eventually be referred to in future publications

○ **CONFIDENTIAL**

- I understand that the recording will not be transmitted or reproduced in any other way, neither in part or in its totality.
- I understand that my identity will only be known by the interviewer. No one else will be aware of my identity, unless given my permission.
- I understand that the transcript of the interview will be word-to-word. I will receive a copy of the transcript so I can revise it and scratch-out any parts I would wish to suppress (peoples names, places, dates, other, etc.) I will send back the revised transcript to the interviewer.

Other comments or specific conditions indicated by the interviewee:

_____

_____

_____

I HAVE CAREFULLY STUDIED THE ABOVE AND UNDERSTAND THIS AGREEMENT. I FREELY CONSENT AND VOLUNTARILY AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY.

INTERVIEWEE

NAME (in block letters)_____

SIGNATURE: _____DATE:_____

DATE OF BIRTH (Optional):_____

PLACE OF BIRTH(Optional):_____

POSTAL ADDRESS: _____

_____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

INTERVIEWER

NAME (in block letters)_____

SIGNATURE: _____DATE:_____

If at any time you have questions about the proposed research, please contact the Research Ethics and Compliance Advisor, Concordia University, 514.848.2424 ex. 7421 ethics@alcor.concordia.ca