Part and Parcel:
Irish Presbyterian Clerical Migration as the Key to Unlocking the Mystery of Nineteenth-Century Irish Presbyterian Migration to America

by

Rankin Sherling

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Abstract:

This thesis traces the migration of Irish Presbyterian clerics to the Thirteen Colonies and America over the course of the years 1683 to 1901. Further, it demonstrates that this clerical migration can be used in conjunction with what is already known about Irish Presbyterian migration to America in the eighteenth century to sketch the general shape and parameters of general Irish Presbyterian migration to the United States in the nineteenth century—something which seemed a near impossibility due to factors such as an absence of useable demographic data. In fact, it solves a problem that has bedeviled specialists in Irish-American immigration for thirty years: how to find and study Irish Protestant immigrants in the nineteenth century in a way which gives some idea of the overall shape and frequency of the phenomenon. The following thesis is interdisciplinary and broad in the techniques employed, questions asked, and the literature it has consulted, incorporating much developed by historians of religion, ethnicity, culture, the Atlantic world, Ireland, and Britain in this study of emigration from Ireland and immigration to America.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

(1) The Pursuit of Irish Protestants in America:

This study traces the migration of the most important subgroup of the Irish Presbyterian community, their ministers, from Ireland to America between 1683 to 1901. In so doing, it also uncovers the parameters of general Irish Presbyterian migration to America in the nineteenth century. I have not been able to uncover any study of the migration of any major Irish Protestant group to the United States in the nineteenth century. (I would be happy to be proved wrong as it would provide valuable opportunities for true comparative study.) So, in discovering the contours of Irish Presbyterian migration to America in the nineteenth century, this study sets itself alone, and in a real sense, there is no historiography to compare it to. On the other hand, there are many reasons that this is the first study. What follows is an introduction to those problems, my method of bypassing them, and finally an outline of how these chapters combine to provide the contours of Irish Presbyterian migration in the nineteenth century through the delineation of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration from 1683 to 1901.

(2) A Bipolar Historiography

Irish Presbyterian migration in the eighteenth century is, and has been for a long time, one of the most popular fields of study in American popular and scholarly history, and while the migration of Irish Presbyterians did not stop after 1800—in fact it almost certainly increased—almost no one has studied the phenomenon after 1800. Thus, the historiography of Irish Presbyterian migration to America is a bi-polar historiography. One pole is soaked with scholarship, the other is parched from the lack of it: the most-often studied American immigrant group of the eighteenth century, shunned to the point of historiographical nonexistence in the
nineteenth. This is not an exaggeration. Irene Whelan characterized the state of the study of Irish Protestant immigration to America in the nineteenth century well when she wrote, “[Irish] Protestant immigration [to the U.S.] did not cease in the eighteenth century, but we know little or nothing about those who left [Ireland] after 1800.”1 But how did this embarrassing state of historiography come to be?

The first reason is that historians of Irish Protestant migration—mostly historians of Irish Presbyterians—have tended until very recently to simply stop their studies at 1776. There seems to have been a long-held custom that encouraged not only the cessation of a study of Irish Presbyterian migration in 1776, but that eventually encouraged the false assumption that Irish Presbyterian migration—or at least the heaviest and most important flow of Irish Presbyterian migration—stopped then, too.

Almost all of the innumerable studies of Irish Presbyterians in America produced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries stop in or around that year. In the late nineteenth century, amateur descendants of Irish Presbyterians produced reams of studies on this group—whom they unswervingly called the Scotch-Irish—lavishing praise upon them and their bold and supposedly inherent traits. Significantly, a key aspect that early chroniclers emphasized about their forbears was their pre-Revolutionary arrival—a point which provided some contemporary social cachet as it allowed them to consider themselves as descended from the founders of the nation. The difference between colonist and immigrant was a very big deal at

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that time, and those Irish Presbyterians who arrived after the American Revolution were left out of the grander portions of the narrative.²

By the first decades of the twentieth century, a more professional style of history had begun to dominate the topic. Scholars such as Charles A. Hanna, Charles Knowles Bolton, and Henry Jones Ford, built upon earlier and well-stocked collections of material compiled by numerous amateurs, but were less hagiographic in their approach. They used “whiggish” techniques that were redolent of Macaulay, yet their works are still helpful because the material gathered and collected by both the early amateurs and early professionals is still highly valuable and explanatory, even if some or even most of their interpretations are dated. They, too, tended to stop their work at about 1776.

Another turning point in the study of eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterian migration came in the 1960s with the appearance of works by James G. Leyburn and R.J. Dickson. Their approaches were thoroughly modern by any measure of the term recognized today.³ Yet, despite their drastic improvements upon earlier methods, both of these important studies stopped at the American Revolution. In this respect, they were exactly like virtually every publication on the subject that came before them. So even these later works continued—and

³ As we shall see, both used an approach typical of that time, in which interpretations are based upon stripped down, materialistic assumptions, emphasizing economics as the pre-eminent driving factor in human action. Parts of this thesis are in disagreement with their conclusions. While their modern approach rightly deflated hagiography, both scholars, but especially Dickson, went too far in deemphasizing factors like religion in causing migration. Under their influence—as with just about every scholar in the field—David Noel Doyle strengthens such stripped down arguments by writing simply of the pre-1776 Irish Presbyterian migrations that “these movements were related to crises of living costs.” In reality, however, the causes of migration were much more complex, although the cost of living certainly was one of them. See chapter 5 for a discussion of reasons for the migration before 1776. R.J. Dickson, Ulster Emigration to Colonial America 1718-1776 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966), pp. 1, 5, 24-31, 36-39, 41-43, 48; David Noel Doyle, “Scots Irish or Scotch-Irish,” in Making The Irish American, J.J. Lee and Marion Casey, eds. (New York: NYU Press, 2006), p. 161; James G. Leyburn, “Presbyterian Immigrants and the American Revolution,” in Journal of Presbyterian History, 54 (Spring, 1976), pp. 14-15.
thereby emphasized—the sharp conclusion in our collective knowledge of Irish Presbyterian migration.4

The practice began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a time when political and constitutional interpretations of history were in the ascendant. Accordingly, 1776 had been an important breaking point for interpretations of anything related to the Thirteen

4 Leyburn and others have pointed out that the migration did not stop in 1775, but the study of this immigrant group has mostly done so. The situation is so bad that even the nomenclature describing the immigrants themselves is seemingly bound to the period before the Revolution. Because nearly all of the scholars who have published works on Irish Presbyterian migration in the eighteenth century have ended their studies of the migration before 1775 and because almost all of them have termed those migrants “Scotch-Irish,” there is sometimes a mistaken assumption that Scotch-Irish migration stopped in 1775 and therefore Irish Presbyterian migration stopped then as well, OR that while “Scotch-Irish” migration occurred before 1775, Irish Presbyterian migration continued after 1775 but that the really important migration occurred before 1775. The term “Scotch-Irish” conjures up an image of an eighteenth-century migrant, even though Irish Presbyterians who were virtually identical to them migrated after that time. The “Scotch-Irish” then seem to be perceptionally locked within the eighteenth century, migrating before 1775, fighting in the American Revolution and thereby becoming American. One of the most recent works on Irish Presbyterian immigrants before the Revolution is actually called The People With No Name, an indicator of the troublesome nature of the term. It was a term known in the eighteenth century but may or may not have been common. Current scholars are of differing opinions. If one reads through Sprague’s Annals of the American Pulpit, which incorporates letters and testimonials from numerous authors, one quickly sees that by the mid-nineteenth century the term Scotch-Irish was frequently used. However, there is clear evidence that authors in the nineteenth century had trouble naming Irish Presbyterians. At least one scholar insisted upon calling individual Irish Presbyterian ministers in America a “Scot of Ireland,” most probably deriving that term from a translation of the Latin phrase Scoto-Hibernus, the traditional designation of Irish Presbyterian students at the University of Glasgow (the most commonly attended university for Irish Presbyterians before they were allowed to have an institution of higher learning for themselves in Ireland). William B. Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit; or Commemorative Notices of Distinguished American Clergymen of Various Denominations From the Early Settlement of the Country to the Close of the Year Eighteen Hundred and Fifty-Five, 9 vols. (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1869), vols. 3, 4, and 9. For a consistent, but typical, early-twentieth-century misuse of the eighteenth-century University of Glasgow classification of Scoto-Hibernus, see the work of Henry Alexander White, who consistently referred to Presbyterian immigrant ministers in America as Scots of Ireland, the literal translation (plural) of Scoto-Hibernus. See Henry Alexander White, Southern Presbyterian Leaders 1683-1911 (New York: Neale Publishing, 1911).

While Scotch-Irish has been the most common term used by American scholars, “Scots Irish” and “Ulster Scot” were and are also sometimes used. Because of all of these problems with the term, this study uses the term Irish Presbyterian. Not only does our term emphasize the “Irishness” of the migrants at a time when scholars of Irish migration have routinely ignored Protestant Irish (and in fact treated them as if the term were an oxymoron), but it also connotes a people whose Irish-American migration was active and ongoing after the turn of the nineteenth century. For more discussion of these terms and the problems they present, see: Kerby Miller, et al. eds., Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 8; Kerby Miller, “‘Scotch-Irish’ Myths and ‘Irish’ Identities in Eighteenth and Nineteenth-Century America,” in New Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora, Charles Fanning, ed. (Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), pp. 75-92; David Noel Doyle, “Scots Irish or Scotch-Irish,” pp. 151-154; Donald Harman Akenson, The Irish Diaspora: A Primer (Toronto: P.D. Meany, 1996), pp. 252-256; Patrick Griffin, The People With No Name: Ireland’s Ulster Scots, America’s Scots Irish, and the Creation of a British Atlantic World, 1689-1764 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 175 n.5. Michael Montgomery, “Prefatory Note: The Term Scotch-Irish,” in From Ulster To America: The Scotch-Irish Heritage of American English (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2006); James G. Leyburn, The Scotch-Irish: A Social History (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), pp. 327-334.
Colonies or the U.S. Yet, by the 1960s political interpretations of history were no longer in the ascendant and thus there was no sense in stopping at 1776. For there was only a pause in migration during the American Revolution and not a significant break. There was therefore nothing that warranted a discontinuation of the study of this particular migration at the American Revolution. Closing the curtain on the story of Irish Presbyterian migration at 1776 seems to have been purely customary.

Another reason historians of Irish Presbyterian migration have stopped at 1776 is because the migration itself becomes increasingly complex, making a new study after that imaginary line far more daunting. Part of that complexity and the confusion it creates is caused by the fact that there is no satisfactory framework in place through which to find, analyze, or interpret, data on continuing migration, and I think the continuing influence of and reliance upon the pre-1776 data on Ulster migration to America compiled by R.J. Dickson is partially responsible for this problem. From 1718 through the end of 1775, Dickson’s methods generated plausible and consistent numbers—indeed possibly the most plausible and consistent numbers on Irish Presbyterian migration yet produced. His methods were labor intensive; he spent years compiling ships’ tonnage records for as many ships as he could find that left Ulster ports between 1718 and 1775. Then, by applying to those tonnages a slightly altered eighteenth-century rule of thumb for figuring out the number of passengers a vessel might be carrying,

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5 Jones, “Ulster Emigration, 1783-1815,” pp. 47-68. As we shall see, knowledge of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration strengthens Jones’s claims that the American Revolution only caused a pause in Ulster migration and that the migrants who left immediately before and immediately after the war were not significantly different. There was only a slight pause in the migration of Irish Presbyterian clerics during the American Revolution, and those migrants who crossed the Atlantic immediately after were not distinctly different from those who left immediately before.

Dickson gave us systematic numbers for the migration from Ulster to America.\(^7\) In this way he not only created a valuable and more objective method of studying Ulster emigration to America (which he was convinced was mostly made up of Presbyterians),\(^8\) but he showed for the first time a basic framework or shape of the emigration from Ulster to America from 1718 until the end of the year 1775. Thus, the general parameters of the early migration of Irish Presbyterians were put firmly in place.

Other scholars have either built upon or critiqued that outline of Ulster migration to America by adding more specified localized studies, new shipping information, or simply re-interpretations of Dickson’s data.\(^9\) Yet, the continuing influence of Dickson’s framework means that even the ongoing critiques of Dickson’s pre-1776 numbers providing new estimates of pre-1776 migration numbers actually reinforce the break at 1776. For even if one then goes on to assert migration numbers for later periods, there is always a pre-1776 number posited, signifying—intentionally or not—an important difference in the migration before and after 1776.

There are more reasons for Dickson’s continuing influence and for stopping the study of Irish Presbyterian migration at 1776. While Dickson created a useful frame or foundation upon which new scholarship could build, that blueprint works less well past the year 1775. The act of tracing migration by Dickson’s method becomes far more difficult after that point, because following a lull caused by the war, shipping from Ireland also began to diversify. Ports in southern Ireland and English ports such as Liverpool began to send larger and larger numbers of

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\(^7\) See Dickson, *Ulster Emigration*, pp. 62-64, et alibi; See also Bric, *Ireland, Philadelphia and the Re-Invention of America, 1760-1800*, pp. 27-31, 297-301.

\(^8\) Dickson, *Ulster Emigration*, pp. 3-4, 25.

\(^9\) For example, Dickson’s own estimate of 120,000 pre-1776 Ulster emigrants has been reduced by newer critiques in the lowest estimate to 35,000 and increased at the highest credible estimate at 250,000. For a good discussion of Dickson’s estimates, see Miller and Kennedy, Appendix 2 in *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, pp. 656-58; and Akenson, *Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration 1815-1914*, p. 120 and 134 nn.115-116.
migrants to America, making American data on Irish arriving immigrants harder to associate with Ulster (and Presbyterianism or Protestantism). And, through high taxation penalties, the British government also gave those ship captains carrying migrants to the New World good reason to disguise the numbers they were carrying, thus making partially reliable tonnage reports even less so. Therefore, a method of tracking migration largely based on published shipping tonnages becomes less dependable beginning in 1776.

The nature of the migrants, themselves, was also starting to change. By 1770 significant numbers of southern Irish—far more likely statistically to be Catholic or Anglican—were starting to emigrate. Emigration was no longer an exclusively Ulster phenomenon. With migration beginning to come from other parts of Ireland, a decreasing percentage of Presbyterians amongst the migrants (although still a strong majority), and with the same old problem of no reliable numbers, few scholars have attempted to continue the study of Irish Presbyterian migration after 1775. They are just harder to find within the larger emigrant flow than they had been using Dickson’s method. Maldwyn Jones found these problems out first-hand. He had promised in the 1960s to do for the period from 1783 to 1815 what Dickson had done for the period from 1718 through 1775, yet unforeseen complexities in the continuance of Dickson’s shipping-tonnage method in the years after 1775 forced him to limit himself to one, very helpful, chapter.10

The continuing existence of the artificial break at 1776 therefore lies in part with the fact that the old way brings some order to the chaos, and it seems that many historians are loathe to step from order to chaos. Pushing further would almost certainly require a new framework.

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10 Jones, “Ulster Emigration, 1783-1815,” pp. 46-68. See also, Akenson, Ireland, Sweden, and the Great European Migration, 1815-1914, pp. 120-21, 137 n117.
The old one will no longer work, and the nice clean analytical method and explanatory system created by Dickson and used by many others would be replaced, at least temporarily, by chaos.

A new framework is required, a new blueprint for the years from 1776 onward. For in actuality, there was no real break at 1776 in migration from Ulster to America at the American Revolution. It was only a pause, not an end point. Indeed, the years from 1738 to 1769 might have been a longer break or drop in migration than the years of the American Revolution. Scholars are perfectly aware of this fact, yet only a few have dared to posit numbers for migration after 1775 in a manner similar to Dickson’s (i.e. the estimation of the number of migrants based on a ratio between passengers and tonnage, the latter of which are haphazardly recorded).

The common practice of breaking off the study of Irish Presbyterian migration at 1776 has created an embarrassing lack of study on Irish Presbyterian, and indeed general Irish Protestant emigration from that point forward, allowing for speculation about but presenting little knowledge of the emigration that followed the American Revolution. Thankfully, several scholars have pushed past this boundary in a manner that attempts to gauge the overall size and shape of Presbyterian migration between the American Revolution and about the year 1815. A comparison of the pre-Revolutionary numbers with the numbers generated by those few who have studied the three decades following the end of the American Revolution indicates that scholars focused on pre-Revolutionary migration have missed, left out, or excised some of the

12 Dickson, Ulster Emigration, pp. 48-59. See also chapter 6, which demonstrated a sharp and long decrease in clerical migration in the period from 1739-69. The low levels of clerical migration in this period were similar to the levels of clerical migration during the years of the American Revolution and they lasted far longer than the years of the American Revolution. There was a bigger “pause,” in other words, in clerical migration during the years from 1739-69 than in the years from 1775-83, yet the latter has been made to be a significant break, the “great divide” in a sense, of Ulster migration.
13 One notable exception is Maurice Bric. See Bric, Ireland, Philadelphia and the Re-invention of America 1760-1800; See also Kennedy and Miller appendix, in Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan, pp. 656-58; Jones, “Ulster Emigration, 1783-1815,” pp. 46-68; Doyle, “Scots Irish or Scotch-Irish,” pp. 151-169
most important years of Ulster or Irish Presbyterian migration. The years from 1770 through 1774 were not the climax in eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterian migration to America and their emigration did not slowly ebb. Instead, there was a pause during the war years and in the years immediately following the war for American independence, emigration from Ulster to America exploded.

Fogelman estimated the number of Ulster migrants between 1783 and 1809 at 149,500. Doyle supports Fogelman and cites 150,000 for the same years. Maldwyn Jones estimated 100,000 from 1783-1815. Despite the differences in numeric range, one thing is clear. In the three decades following the American Revolution, Ulster migration (1) far surpassed the lowest pre-Revolutionary estimate of 35,000 emigrants; (2) surpasses or nearly surpasses Dickson’s estimate of 120,000 emigrants from 1718 to 1775; and (3) still represents a higher yearly migration rate than Kennedy and Miller’s 250,000 pre-1775 figure does. Surely, such high numbers and such a high rate of emigration in the years from 1783 to 1809 (or 1810 or 1815 depending on which scholar’s end point is used) constitutes an important phase, if not the most important phase, in the annals of eighteenth-century Irish migration in general and Irish Presbyterian migration in particular. About this unfortunate, and long-held historical practice of breaking after 1775, Donald Harman Akenson has written “the apparently natural break

14 For discussion of this situation, see Jones, “Ulster Emigration, 1783-1815,” pp. 47-68; Doyle, “Scots Irish or Scotch-Irish,” pp. 151-169; Akenson, Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration 1815-1914, pp. 120 and 134 nn.114-118; Miller and Kennedy, Appendix 2 in Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan, pp. 656-58.
15 Doyle 150,000; Fogelman 149,500; Jones 100,000. See Doyle’s discussion of these numbers, Doyle “Scots Irish or Scotch-Irish,” p. 162. See also, Aaron Spencer Fogelman, Hopeful Journeys: German Immigration, Settlement, and Political Culture in Colonial America, 1717-1775 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996).
16 Depending which post-Revolutionary estimate used: 150,000 or 100,000.
17 Jones estimated that 250,000 people left Ulster for America in the half-century before 1775, which would have given those years the highest density (or yearly migration rate) of Ulster migration to America. Jones’s estimate of 250,000 Ulster migrants in the years from 1750-1775 would make his 100,000 estimate and even Fogelman’s estimate of 149,500 for the years from 1783 to 1810 represent a decrease in Ulster migration. However, according to David Noel Doyle, Jones’s estimate for the years from 1750 to 1775 does not conform to newer estimates. Jones, “Ulster Emigration, 1783-1815,” pp. 47-68; Doyle, “Scots Irish or Scotch-Irish,” p. 162. See also Kennedy and Miller, Appendix 2, in Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan, pp. 656-678.
18 So, the first reason that the historiography of Irish Protestant migration is so bipolar in character is that most of the historians of Irish Protestant migration to America have simply stopped studying them after an artificial break in the migration. An artificial break was long reified.

Another reason is that the complete absence of useful, comprehensive data presents seemingly insurmountable problems to those interested in investigating Irish Protestants in the nineteenth century. Neither the British nor Irish administrations kept consistent, systematic, or comprehensive records of the steadily growing emigration from Ireland from 1800 to 1845, nor did the U.S. government systematically count their arrival during that time.\textsuperscript{19} Granted, this was generally the case in all of the years of the eighteenth century as well, but eighteenth-century scholars of migration are accustomed to working without detailed demographic data, while those who focus on the nineteenth century do so nearly exclusively by relying on census and census-like collections of data. These data simply are not available for Irish migration in the years from 1800 to 1845. The data on total numbers that are available for the period from 1800 to 1845 have been painstakingly pieced together from disparate sources by W.F. Adams, N.H. Carrier and J.R. Jeffrey, Donald Harman Akenson, and others.\textsuperscript{20}

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the governments of Great Britain and the United States began to keep systematic migration records. In 1850 the U.S. began to systematically count its immigrants, including the Irish, for in that year the U.S. census asked its first nativity question. Maddeningly, the question was dropped from the questions asked in the

\textsuperscript{18} Akenson, Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration 1815-1914, p. 120.
\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p. 93.
1860 and 1870 censuses, and another nativity question was not asked again until 1880. The 1850 and 1880 censuses, then, offer the first available demographic data on ethnicity applicable to the entire United States. So while some systematic data are available for the decades after the Great Famine, they are not complete.

Unfortunately for those attempting to study Irish Protestants within the migration, by 1850 the great majority of Irish immigrants in the U.S. were Catholic, so much so that nineteenth-century Irish immigrants have been largely and incorrectly assumed to have been synonymous with Irish Catholics. We do not know exactly when the change occurred from a Protestant majority or plurality to a Catholic majority, but it was probably sometime in the late 1830s or the early 1840s.\textsuperscript{21} So, by the time the U.S. census might offer any help, the vast majority of Irish immigrants were Catholic.

Even so, one cannot apply the information on Irish immigrants provided by the 1850 census indiscriminately to Catholics. For one thing, Protestants were still arriving. Moreover, there is no way of figuring out what percentage were Catholic and which were Protestant from the census data. This is because the U.S. Census has never asked a mandatory question about religious affiliation, and therefore no Irish immigrant can be identified as a Catholic or a Protestant by any of the U.S. censuses.\textsuperscript{22} Article XX of the U.S. Constitution precludes the collection of this material. Therefore, the one thing that is missing from ethnic history in the U.S. is the single most important cultural determinant of a group’s cultural apparatus—religion.\textsuperscript{23} Thus, the one single historical databank that could possibly reveal the parameters of

\textsuperscript{21} Akenson, \textit{The Irish Diaspora}, pp. 250, 260.
\textsuperscript{22} Although highly generalized and questionable data obtained directly from religious or denominational authorities is permitted. These, however, are just as useless as no data at all for our purposes. The total number of Presbyterians in the U.S. is of no help in finding the number of Irish Presbyterians in the U.S.
\textsuperscript{23} In the 1950s data on religion was collected for a short time, but some groups protested and the preliminary data that was collected was burned. See William Petersen, “Religious Statistics in the United States,” in \textit{Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion}, vol. 1, no. 2 (Spring, 1962), pp. 165-178; and Donald Harman Akenson, \textit{Being Had:}
Irish Protestant immigration in the nineteenth-century United States, in fact, cannot do so because the right questions were not asked. So, the numbers of Irish emigrants or immigrants in the nineteenth century, no matter how complete or incomplete, or where or how they were obtained, cannot and can never provide to us a picture of overall Irish Protestant migration to, nor their settlement in, the United States in the nineteenth century.

In order to get around this problem of data, some have tried to do for the nineteenth century what generations of early professional and amateur historians did for the eighteenth: amass tremendous amounts of individual records of Irish immigrants, Catholic and Protestant, which could eventually reveal the larger story—the parameters—of Irish migration to and Irish life in America. In some cases, this has been successful, especially in the case of Irish Catholics in the second half of the nineteenth century. Unfortunately, Irish Protestants have been left out. This is partially a consequence of confusion and contest over Irish identity, and especially where Protestants fit into it.

Irish Protestant migration has not been studied in some cases merely because they are Protestants, for to be Protestant was to be something other than Irish. For traditionalist historians, Irish immigrants in America meant Catholic. Therefore, it might never even occur to particular types of scholars of Irish immigration to consider the Protestant aspect of a larger Irish migration that increasingly became overwhelmingly Catholic as the nineteenth century progressed, because from that perspective it would have simply been off topic.24

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24 Irish Protestants are considered more often than they were before, but studies of them are still relatively rare. Exceptions are: Kevin Kenny, A Peaceable Kingdom Lost: The Paxton Boys and the Destruction of William Penn’s Holy Experiment (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Miller, Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan; and David A. Wilson, United Irishmen, United States: Immigrant Radicals in the Early Republic (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998); and David A. Wilson and Mark A. Spencer, eds., Ulster Presbyterians in the Atlantic World: Religion, Politics, and Identity (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006). Each of these works successfully addresses aspects of Irish Protestant immigrants and their immigration, but for reasons stemming from lack of demographic data, never in a comprehensive way.
Such assignations or identifications of who or what an Irish immigrant is—or often what an Irish immigrant should be like—are largely political. Here is a particularly revealing example of the type of attitude surrounding Irish identity seen in print as recently as 2000. Writing of Ronald Reagan—himself a Protestant, but the great-grandson of Irish Catholics from County Tipperary, and wearer of a cognomer as Irish and as Gaelic as Cu Chulainn—one historian contended that, “Only in an age of confused and diluted Irish-American ethnicity, perhaps, could so pro-British and anti-Irish a president have masqueraded as an Irishman.” The implication is clear: truly Irish people must be of a certain political type. Thus, politics becomes conflated or confused with ethnicity.  

Another respected scholar relayed the tale of an Irish Catholic immigrant named Andrew Leary O’Brien:

“For several years he taught school in Barnwell district, South Carolina, where he married into a Methodist family whose church he joined after attending a camp meeting. In 1848 he moved to Cuthbert, Georgia, where in 1854 he founded what was then Randolph—now Andrew—College. Today, very few of its faculty or graduates are aware that their college, still piously Methodist, was established by an Irish Catholic seminary student and canal worker who had concluded that acceptance and respectability in an overwhelmingly Protestant southern society were more important than the retention of his ethnic and religious heritage.”

**25** Kevin Kenny, *The American Irish: A History* (London: Pearson Educational Limited, 2000), pp. 221, 233-34, 254. Needless to say, the difficulty that the scholarly community has in identifying an “Irish” immigrant makes the seething mass of complexity surrounding the study of Irish Protestants even less inviting to those considering taking up the study.


**26** Kerby A. Miller, “‘Scotch-Irish’, ‘Black Irish’, and ‘Real Irish’: Emigrants and Identities in the Old South,” in *Ireland and Irish America: Culture, Class, and Transatlantic Migration* (Dublin: Field Day, 2008), p. 154. Granted, Miller found that the young, educated seminarian, O’Brien, expressed in a letter to his father that he “felt mean at the thought I was an Irishman,” as he was disgusted by those Irish people who worked alongside him. But this expression should not necessarily be read as an indictment of Irish people. It could just as easily and more
His religious heritage, yes. But, his ethnic heritage? By his conversion to Methodism, Andrew Leary O’Brien was somehow no longer ethnically Irish? Clearly, this issue of religion and “Irishness” is seen by some in terms as starkly black and white as is possible. Religious conversion—even in a different country—is viewed as ethnic defection, if not treason. So clearly, for many scholars, an Irish Protestant is not Irish and therefore Irish Protestant migration is not as often studied as part of the larger Irish migration to America.\textsuperscript{27}

But even if every scholar of the Irish in America suddenly decided to study individual Irish Protestants in America and mountains of such studies were produced, we could hardly expect that the parameters of nineteenth-century Irish Protestant migration would quickly come into focus. In fact that could be quite injurious, for without the context provided by the general parameters of Irish Protestant migration to and life in America, an anomaly or series of anomalies could easily become reified as the rule. Moreover, despite the fact that historians for the eighteenth century accomplished this feat (in 100 or so years), nineteenth-century migration was much larger than it was in the eighteenth century, which means it would take nineteenth-century historians—if there were any—far longer to do the equivalent. Plus, it was only after R.J. Dickson painstakingly compiled shipping tonnages and applied to them a passenger equation that the shape of the migration in the eighteenth century began to come into clear focus.

\textsuperscript{27}Ironically, the two historians used to demonstrate these assumptions of exclusion actually have studied Irish Protestant immigrants in the United States or the Thirteen Colonies. However, their assumptions are clear examples of the larger point. See footnote no. 24, above.
In response to this plethora of problems, Donald Harman Akenson has devised a brilliant strategy to find the parameters of the migration of both Irish Protestants and of Irish Catholics in America. His method used data gleaned from other countries within the Irish diaspora, and particularly those from Canada, which did collect immigration data that can be cross-tabulated with religious denomination because religious questions were asked of the individual immigrants. Canada provides the best data and is closest to home.

In fact, according to Akenson, the immigrant flows to Canada and to the U.S. should be considered as one single flow, since immigrants often first landed in New York before moving to Montreal or vice versa because of the fluctuations in travel fare. Helpfully for historians, in Canada, the British, provincial, and eventually Canadian federal censuses consistently asked questions about religious affiliation and questions about nativity and ethnicity. They also began gathering these data in the 1830s, thereby making it possible to study Irish Catholics and Protestants separately with some degree of accuracy over much of the nineteenth century. This “makes the Canadian data on matters of ethnicity, religion and occupation in the nineteenth century the most precise in the English-world.”

So, what can Canadian data tell us anything about nineteenth-century Irish immigrants, particularly Irish Protestant immigrants, in the United States?

Since these data are taken to represent a single immigrant flow to North America, through the study of these Canadian data one can accurately discern some general characteristics of Irish Protestant immigrants in North America—both Canada and the United States—in the second half of the nineteenth century. The reconfigured Canadian data tell us that in 1871 most of those identified as part of the multi-generational Irish Protestant ethno-

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religious group (keeping in mind that this includes the Irish-born plus their Canadian-born descendants) lived in rural areas and were, for the most part, farmers. Nearly all of those in Ontario, the most thoroughly Irish of all the Canadian provinces at that time, lived in rural areas (82 percent). In all provinces, the proportion of the multi-generational Irish Protestant ethno-religious group who were farmers ranged from 51.8 percent and 69.3 percent, depending on denomination. The average was 58.3 percent. Of the Irish Protestant immigrants in Canada in 1871, 57.8 percent were farmers in 1871 (just for comparison, nearly 34 percent of Irish-born Catholics were farmers in that same year). So, both the ethno-religious group as a whole and the Irish-born Protestant immigrant group were overwhelmingly rural and well over half were farmers. Very interestingly, Irish Catholics and Irish Protestants were almost identical in the proportions of their groups who were found in the bourgeois professions: 26 and 26.2 percent respectively.29 Importantly, nothing like this can be asserted with any authority using sources from the United States. Such information simply cannot be derived from any source using U.S. data. Anything approaching such a characterization using U.S. data would be a wild guess.

Akenson’s findings of Irish Protestants and Catholics in North America based on Canadian data are largely consistent with the findings of Malcolm Campbell. Campbell has also tried to use foreign data, in this case Australian, to help understand Irish settlement in the nineteenth-century United States. But within the profession there is a problem with all findings based upon data from outside of Ireland or the U.S. This is the idea of exceptionalism, and combined with an absence of U.S. data that might confirm or repudiate findings based on data derived from sources outside of the U.S. or Ireland, such findings can simply be ignored. So, due to an extreme sense of Irish-American exceptionalism amongst American scholars of the Irish in nineteenth-century America, conclusions drawn from studies using international data—

29 Ibid., pp. 90-107.
the only available data—such as Akenson’s or Campbell’s have been dismissed. Despite the fact that American scholars have no reliable demographic data to confirm their claims, they work from the assumption that Irish Americans held certain characteristics, and studies that call those assumptions into question using data derived from outside of the U.S or Ireland have been ignored.  

In some cases, the level of denial is, frankly, stunning, particularly over the almost primordial belief that Irish Catholics could not thrive in the rural areas of the United States. For example, in addition to Akenson’s Canadian data and Campbell’s Australian data which demonstrate that Irish Catholics thrived in rural areas, Akenson made a study of Irish immigrants in New Zealand, South Africa, and Australia. In each of these places, Irish Catholics were successful in rural areas with no inherent difficulties. Why then should American scholars, the one group whose demographic data cannot prove or disprove this belief, continue to insist that Irish Catholics did not or could not do well in the rural United States? Why should not those places of settlement which did keep adequate records help to inform our knowledge of settlement in the one nation that did not? It can only be a sense of (Irish-) American exceptionalism.

Lawrence McCaffrey, long a leading scholar of the Irish in America, demonstrates this exceptionalistic belief-ism quite well. In summing up the state of the study of Irish immigration in 2000, he wrote that despite demonstrations by Akenson and others that the Irish in Australia, Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand made “successful adjustments to agrarian economies

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and lifestyles...that was not the case in the United States.”³¹ Despite no U.S. evidence of the overall parameters of Irish immigrants in America to confirm their exceptionalist position, heels are down. Comparative studies using foreign data will not be accepted.

Clearly, then, there are several sets of problems that have come together to create an interlocking and seemingly impenetrable barrier to the study of Irish Protestant migration to the United States in the nineteenth century. A quick review of them helps to demonstrate just how effective their combined stopping power is. Recall that: (1) the historiography of the study of Irish Protestants in America is heavily weighted toward the eighteenth century, leaving the false and widely held impression that the heaviest and most important migration of Irish Protestants to America occurred in the eighteenth century. Such emphasis on the eighteenth century and consequent ignoring of the nineteenth has left the prospect of delving into the nineteenth century particularly daunting, for there are no existing methods, no rubrics, and no context with which to work; (2) even if one did wish to move into the study of Irish Protestant migration in the nineteenth century, one would quickly come to find that there are no American, Irish, or combined Irish and American data that can reveal the general characteristics of Irish Protestant migration to the U.S. in the nineteenth century nor the nature of Irish Protestant immigrant life in the U.S. as a group. The U.S. census simply did not ask the questions that would allow it to provide those answers; (3) the well entrenched idea of Irish-American exceptionalism effectively renders moot any helpful data derived from sources outside of Ireland and the U.S.;³²

³² The Canadian data are particularly pertinent, yet are ignored all the same. In response to the refusal to accept suggested conclusions drawn from these Canadian data, Akenson has written that “in historical studies of the Irish in the USA there is a great deal of resistance to paying attention to the Canadian data. This insularity has been
(4) studies of the lives of individual Irish Protestant migrants through letters and memoirs cannot quickly reveal to us the nature of general Irish Protestant migration in the nineteenth century (i.e., peak years of migration, Irish origins of most of the migrants, or general settlement patterns) because hundreds of thousands of such documents must be consulted and sorted in order to even possibly distinguish an example of “an exception” of a general trend from an example of “the rule;” and, finally (5) Irish Protestants, by the nature of their being Protestants, are often not considered to be Irish. 33

The strength of the gridlock created by the convergence of these problems is confirmed by its long persistence. With Akenson’s publications of The Irish in Ontario (1984), Being Had (1985), and The Irish Diaspora: A Primer (1996), the non-existence of scholarship on nineteenth-century Irish Protestant migration to the U.S. and the deficiencies of U.S. demographic data in studying Irish-American immigrants were made abundantly clear. Each of

particularly marked since, roughly, the end of World War II. (Previous writers ranging from Thomas D’Arcy Magee to William Forbes Adams felt more at home in the wider North American context.) Special pleading, and a bit of American cultural imperialism, stand behind this volitional ignorance. It rather shackles the study of the Irish in the USA, not least because nineteenth-century Canadian authorities collected data on religion and ethnicity which have no parallel in the US data, and which are useful for the testing of theories about the Irish migrants and their descendants.” Akenson, Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration, 1815-1914, p. 131 n.72.

33 A further complicating factor is the fact that many of the early historians of Irish Presbyterians in eighteenth-century America provided the means or excuse for later Irish American scholars of the Irish in America to exclude Irish Presbyterians from studies of the Irish in America. Even as the early scholars provided reams of useful microhistories of Irish Presbyterian (or Scotch-Irish) congregations, communities, and people, they also went out of their way to distinguish Irish Presbyterian migrants from Irish Catholic migrants. Often they did this by overemphasizing the “Britishness” of Irish Presbyterian migrants or even denying that Irish Presbyterians were actually “Irish.” For those Protestant Americans now claiming to be the descendants of Irish immigrants (and also an Irish ancestry) this creates a problem, and one that is completely not of their own making. The more exclusivist Irish American scholars have simply claimed (rightly in some ways) that in the late-19th century it was not a good thing to be Irish. So, the Irish Protestants created the “Scotch-Irish” identity. Now, it is “cool” to be Irish, and that is why recent polls have found that most of the people who claim to be of Irish descent in the United States are not Catholic and are not to be found in the large cities of the east coast and Midwest, but that they are Protestant and live in the U.S. South. Such an explanation assumes that the early scholars who created the “Scotch-Irish” myth knew anything about what the descendants of Irish Protestants in the U.S. South thought of their ethnicity. Seeing as most of the scholarship on the “Scotch-Irish” at that time was done in Philadelphia and the north east, and that northern scholars have very rarely understood the complexities of southern history and identity, that likelihood is quite slim (to put it mildly). Further, such dismissal is nothing more than the epitome of scholarly hubris, in that it displays that scholars will dismiss the opinions of literally thousands (if not hundreds of thousands) of people with as much flippance as it takes to turn on a light switch if those opinions do not mesh with certain dearly-held strains of received wisdom.
these publications not only offered its own conclusions but challenged the profession to work toward a solution. But even Akenson’s suggestions and conclusions about how to get around the data deficiency (whether they are correct or not) have in some ways fallen victim to the perfect-storm-induced gridlock outlined above, for his solutions rely on foreign data which, ex hypothesi, will have no effect on the opinions of those scholars wedded to the idea of Irish-American exceptionalism. This is serious gridlock, indeed, and the bipolarity of the historiography seems firmly entrenched.

(3) A Way Round

So, that way is blocked, but that need not stop us dead in our tracks. The immediate response to the historiographical barrier described above should not be to look for a new topic or to give up, but to ask if there is a way to bypass the barrier. In considering the latter, it might be helpful to consider a battle tactic as old as humanity. Any general worth his salt knows that when the terrain of battle is not in his favor his best course of action is to move his army until those features of the terrain that once put him at a disadvantage are irrelevant. By sidestepping the problems of terrain, he has effectively erased them.

Applying this same strategy to the problem of studying nineteenth-century Irish Protestant migration would mean the adoption of a method that provides some knowledge of the general nature of Irish Protestant migration to the U.S. in the nineteenth century but that is not inhibited by the “perfect storm” created by the convergence of the problems outlined above. Such a maneuver is entirely possible, because we are not limited to using the types of data described above. Why should we be? They have not revealed what we desire them to, namely,
the general parameters and characteristics of nineteenth-century Irish Protestant migration to America.\textsuperscript{34}

If we accept up front that no direct answer—at least the type of answer that good demographic data might have provided if they were available—can be obtained from Irish or U.S. demographic sources or from letters and biographies of as many Irish Protestants as can be found, then those problems created by data deficiency are more easily negated through a shift in approach. Once we acknowledge that a direct approach is not possible, we can focus on an approach from a different angle, and since it is not a direct approach it involves more steps and is thus more difficult than a direct approach would be. But since that option is not available, a shift in tactics must occur, and for that shift to be effective, we must develop a method that relies on data that: (1) relies on whatever data are available; (2) are derived from U.S. or Irish sources; and (3) tell us something about the overall features of Irish Protestant migration. That sounds simple, but it is not. There are multiple steps to teasing out what we want to know from the available U.S. and Irish data.

The first question one must ask is, “what data can be manipulated to tell us what we want to know?” There are two sources of data that make a round-about approach to the mystery of Irish Protestant migration to the U.S. in the nineteenth century possible. They, in turn, define our method of approach. The first source of data is obvious.

It is the massive amount of scholarship done on Irish Presbyterian migrants to the Thirteen Colonies and the U.S. in the eighteenth century. Eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterians are one of the most heavily documented American immigrant groups of all time.\textsuperscript{35} And while there are problems with the state of that historiography—difficulties with assessing

\textsuperscript{34} Except in the case of foreign data, especially those from Canada, which have told us a great deal. Unfortunately, those findings have been virtually ignored.

\textsuperscript{35} Jones, “Ulster Emigration, 1783-1815,” p. 47.
total numbers, figuring out just what percentage of Irish migrants in the eighteenth century were Presbyterian, or with the dated and often eulogistic interpretations provided by many of the early authors who helped to build that great corpus of material—much of it is quite valuable. Therefore, despite the fact that Irish Presbyterian immigration is not synonymous with Irish Protestant immigration, the fact that so much data exist on the migration of members of this Protestant denomination from Ireland to America in the eighteenth century means that our efforts to bypass the problems outlined above should make use of this data. Not to do so would be to make a foolish mistake. We must make use of what is available. So, in order to make full use of the vast store of scholarship on Irish Presbyterian migration in the eighteenth century, we will narrow our focus to the migration of Irish Presbyterians. Thus, the data have already begun to dictate the method of maneuvering around the great roadblock.

The second source of data that allows our bypass is less obvious. Having narrowed our focus down from Irish Protestants to Irish Presbyterians, we must ask ourselves what data are available on Irish Presbyterians that might be able to help provide answers to questions about characteristics of Irish Presbyterian migration in the nineteenth century as a whole? The eighteenth-century scholarship is obviously of little or no help, and as discussed earlier, while

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36 This limits any findings gleaned from this method in one way, in that they will be confined to Presbyterians and cannot represent Irish Protestant migration as a whole. But, there are at least two downsides to focusing on all Protestant migrants: (1) a study that focused on all Protestant immigrants in the nineteenth century would lessen the easy usefulness of being able to compare the existing historical knowledge of eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterian migration with any findings we might uncover about Irish Protestant migration in the nineteenth century, because while all Presbyterians are Protestant, obviously all Protestants are not Presbyterian. Our focusing on Presbyterians in this instance is nearly the equivalent of converting units in physics, which is done in order that one measurement will have a direct relationship with another. Continuing to focus on all Protestant denominations would not allow for that direct relationship. And, (2) while it would be nice to analyze Protestant immigrants from Ireland of all denominations immediately, it would be a massive undertaking. Both reasons for limiting this attempted bypass to Presbyterians are practical. This is a first step, and it is hoped that other scholars will take up the study of other denominations and add to its findings. But, first steps are just that and are necessarily limited by definition. Even so, the study of Irish Presbyterians in the nineteenth century is a great first step forward from knowing nothing, especially since Presbyterians were the most likely denomination of Irish to migrate in the eighteenth century (including Catholics) and any study following them from the eighteenth century into the nineteenth century would be singular and significant.
there is plenty of material on individual Irish Protestants (including Presbyterians) living in the nineteenth-century U.S., we cannot randomly select Irish Presbyterian migrants or even gather many examples of individual Irish Presbyterians in the U.S. and expect the narratives of their individual migrations to reveal the overall nature of the migration of hundreds of thousands of migrations, such as peak or low years in migration, where the migrants mostly came from in Ireland, and where most of them settled. There simply would be no way to distinguish “the exception” from “the rule.” We must then try to find a particular group of migrants that might shed light on the nature of the migration as a whole. But does something like this exist in the historical record—a migration of a certain group of Irish Presbyterians within the larger Irish Presbyterian migration as a whole whose migration could be traced?

The answer is yes. We can trace the migration of Irish Presbyterian clerics. The fact is that Irish Presbyterian clerics—ordained ministers, licensed ministers not yet ordained (called licentiates or probationers), and divinity students—were important enough in their own churches and communities to be entered into the historical record, and here, for the first time in what seems like a long time, investigators interested in Irish Protestant migration to America have caught a break. On both sides of the Atlantic, licensings, ordinations, migrations, arrivals, and settlements were noted. These data are available for clerical migrants from 1683 to 1900. Once these data are collected and analyzed, the fact that they are available throughout such a stretch of time means that for clerical migration there is no barrier at the nineteenth century to deal with. It also means that we have a subset of Irish Presbyterian migration throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Moreover, because the church kept decent records of them, we are dealing with something more like a complete universe rather than a data sample.37 In the

37 Until the very last chapter, the overwhelming majority of people this study traces migrated as adult clerics in some form or manifestation. In the chapter on the years between 1811 and 1901 there is a section that addresses
sense that we can recover all or close to all of the Irish Presbyterian clerics who migrated to America, these data represent a universe unto itself, a complete migration within a larger, related migration.\textsuperscript{38} We can therefore analyze a specific part of an unknown whole.

And this provides us with our method. William James described a similar method and demonstrated its investigative validity in the context of the social sciences. “It is only following the common-sense method of a Lyell, a Darwin, and a Whitney to interpret the unknown by the known, and reckon up cumulatively the only causes of social change we can directly observe.”\textsuperscript{39}

This is what we shall do, to use the “knowns” to “reckon up” the unknown, Irish Presbyterian migration in the nineteenth century. But it is slightly more complicated.

Of course anything we uncover about the migration of Irish Presbyterian clerics will tell us something about the larger migration of Irish Presbyterians by the very fact that clerical migration was a part of the larger migration. But we can also compare what we find out about clerical migration from 1683 to 1810 with what is already known about general Presbyterian migration over that course of time. Once this was done, we found that there is a direct relationship between clerical migration and general migration in at least three areas: (1) yearly migration frequency (peaks and valleys in migration); (2) Irish origins; and (3) American settlement patterns. By direct relationship, I mean a general mirroring. For example, clerical migrants were settling in areas in which general migrants were known to be settling in that same

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\textsuperscript{38} Actually, it can be mapped up to the present, but that would not serve the purposes of this study. Moreover, clerical migration to the U.S. tails off significantly the closer it gets to the year 1900, but there was also migration to Canada which this study does not consider.

period. The same is true for Irish places of emigration and frequency of yearly migration. The
two migrations mirrored each other. When yearly clerical migration was high, so was yearly
general migration, and when yearly clerical migration was low, so was yearly general migration.
Therefore, for the nineteenth century—a period in which we know nothing about general
migration—we can use data on nineteenth-century clerical migration (by default a part of the
larger migration which reveals something about the larger migration on its own) to tell us
something of the general nature of the larger migration due to the long-lasting direct
relationship between the two migrations in these three aspects of migration. In other words,
based on the fact that clerical migration is a part of the larger general migration and the fact that
we have demonstrated a historically long-lasting direct relationship between the two migrations
between 1683 and 1810, clerical migration can help us to sketch the outlines of general
Presbyterian migration from Ireland to America in the nineteenth century by providing a good
indication of the yearly frequency of migration, the origins of the emigration in Ireland, and
where Irish Presbyterians were most likely to settle in the United States.

This all works in theory, of course, but exactly how this was accomplished is more
complicated. To even get to a point where the two migrations can be compared in the
eighteenth century required the painstaking collection, analysis, and writing of a work on the
migration of Irish Presbyterian clerics from 1683 to 1901. Between the summer of 2008 and the
winter of 2009 I collected this material and created both an encyclopedia of immigrant Irish
Presbyterian ministers in the Thirteen Colonies and the United States (which will soon be
submitted for publication as a reference book) and a searchable database containing the material
in the encyclopedia. They contain the names and biographical information of all the known
Presbyterian ministers ordained or licensed in Ireland who immigrated even for a short time to the Thirteen Colonies or the United States between 1683 and 1901.\textsuperscript{40}

While there are other lists of a somewhat similar nature, this database is the closest thing to a complete register of Presbyterian ministers licensed or ordained in Ireland who migrated to America. Indeed, I am aware of no other complete register of professionals of any sort—religious or secular—who emigrated from Ireland to the United States (or anywhere else for that matter). While the possibility of missing an ordained or licensed Irish Presbyterian minister who immigrated to the United States is very real (even expected), it must be insisted that this list of immigrating ministers is not a sample, but very nearly, if not a complete, register. Thus, when discussing immigrant-ministers ordained or licensed in Ireland, we are dealing with something nearing a comprehensive statistical universe, a complete sub-migration (not a sample) within a larger migration.

But where did this material come from? How was it assembled? First, and most importantly, the Library of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland\textsuperscript{41} contains a file of index cards with at least some information on every Presbyterian minister in Ireland that there is a record of. The bulk of our list of immigrant-ministers and the information on their lives and writings was created by going through the thousands of cards in this file and recording the information on every minister that immigrated to the Thirteen Colonies or the United States.\textsuperscript{42}

The list of names gathered from the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland was then augmented by and run against various other lists of Irish Presbyterian ministers. What follows

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\textsuperscript{40} It also includes ministers who were born in Ireland who immigrated as children and then studied, trained for, and entered the ministry in the Thirteen Colonies or the United States. These, however, cannot be regarded as a complete group.

\textsuperscript{41} In 2008 the library was located at Church House, Belfast, but has now moved to Union Theological Seminary, also in Belfast.

\textsuperscript{42} Thanks are due to Professor Brian Walker of Queen’s University, Belfast for apprising me of the existence of this file, and special thanks to the librarian of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland, Jennifer Dickson, for allowing me exceptional access to this file, normally reserved for use by the librarian only.
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is a list of the sources that provided the information in the database: (1) the Library of the Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland; (2) the Gamble Library, Union Theological Seminary, Belfast; (3) the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography; (4) the Dictionary of Irish Biography; (5) the three relevant volumes of William B. Sprague’s nine-volume Annals of the American Pulpit;\(^43\) (6) A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 1610-1982;\(^44\) and (7) its sister work, A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 1610-1982: A Supplement of Additions, Emendations, and Corrections;\(^45\) (8) Fasti of Seceder Ministers Ordained or Installed in Ireland 1746-1948;\(^46\) (9) Fasti of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 1840-1870 (part 1); 1871-1890 (part 2);\(^47\) (10) McConnell’s Fasti of the Irish Presbyterian Church 1613-1840;\(^48\) (11) Killen’s A History of Congregations of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland;\(^49\) (12) Records of the General Synod of Ulster, 1691-1820;\(^50\) (13) Ulster Sails West;\(^51\) (14) Fasti of the American Presbyterian Church: Treating of the Ministers of Irish Origin who Laboured in America During the Eighteenth Century;\(^52\) (15) Fasti of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland;\(^53\) (16) Index of

\(^{46}\) W.D. Bailie and L.S. Kirkpatrick, Fasti of Seceder Ministers Ordained or Installed in Ireland, 1746-1848 (Belfast: Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland, 2005).
\(^{47}\) John M. Barkley, Fasti of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 1840-1870 (Belfast: Presbyterian Historical Society, 1986); John M. Barkley, Fasti of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 1871-1890 (Belfast: Presbyterian Historical Society, 1887).
\(^{49}\) W.D. Killen, A History of Congregations of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and Biographical Notices of Eminent Presbyterian Ministers and Laymen, with Introduction and Notes (Belfast: James Cleeeland, 1886).
\(^{50}\) Records of the General Synod of Ulster, 1691-1820 (Belfast: General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 1890).
\(^{52}\) David Stewart, ed., Fasti of the American Presbyterian Church: Treating of the Ministers of Irish Origin who Laboured in America During the Eighteenth Century (Belfast: Bell and Logan, 1943).
Presbyterian Ministers Containing the Names of All the Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, 1706-1881; 54 (17) Minutes of the Presbyterian Church in America, 1706-1788; 55 (18) Ministerial Directory of the Presbyterian Church, U.S. 1861-1967; 56 (19) Encyclopaedia of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America; 57 (20) Minutes of the Reformed Presbytery of America from 1798 to 1890 and Digest of the Acts of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in North America from 1809-1888; 58 (21) History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America, with Sketches of All of Her Ministry, Congregations, Missions, Institutions, Publications, etc.; 59 (22) Reformed Presbyterian Church in America: Sketches of Her History Organic History from 1774 to 1833; 60 (23) Biographical Catalogue of the Princeton Theological Seminary 1815-1932; 61 (24) The Bulletin of the Western Theological Seminary; 62 (25) Biographical and Historical Catalogue of Washington and Jefferson College, 63 and (26) The Ministerial Directory of the Presbyterian Churches in the U.S. I was also notified by the Rev. Dr. Peter Wallace of nearly 160 Irish-born Presbyterians,

54 Willis J. and Mary A. Beecher, eds., Index of Presbyterian Ministers: Containing the Names of all the Ministers of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America from A.D. 1706 to A.D. 1881 (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board for Publication, 1888).
59 William Melancthon Glasgow, History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America, with Sketches of All of Her Ministry, Congregations, Missions, Publications, etc. (Baltimore: Hill & Harvey, 1888).
60 Thomas Sproull, Reformed Presbyterian Church in America: Sketches of Her History Organic History from 1774 to 1833, ed. and republished by Reid Stewart, 2005.
63 Biographical and Historical Catalogue of Washington and Jefferson College (Cincinnati, OH, 1889).
64 Edgar Sutton Robinson, ed., The Ministerial Directory of the Ministers in “The Presbyterian Church in the United States” (Southern), and in “The Presbyterian Church in the United States of America” (Northern), Together with a Statement of the Work of the Executive Committees and Boards of the Two Churches, with the Names and Location of their Educational Institutions and Church Papers (Oxford, Ohio: The Ministerial Directory Company, 1898).
most but not all of whom migrated as children, who attended Princeton Theological Seminary and became Presbyterian ministers in the U.S. (They are treated separately in the final chapter). The result of this effort is the only complete or very near complete register of any one professional group to emigrate from Ireland to the United States.65

Never mind for the moment that the material in this database can be used to find out about Irish Presbyterian migration to America in the nineteenth century—an issue that the historiography of the Irish in America has sorely needed for years—the fact that this database is the only such register makes it significant in Irish, American, religious, and transatlantic history and therefore valuable in and of itself. As a piece of transatlantic history, this database stands on its own.

It is also unique. There are, of course, other lists which contain material on professionals who emigrated, but most do not deal exclusively with those who emigrated. Emigrants in such directories, being the small minority, must be plucked from the larger list. Crockford’s Clerical Directory, which began in 1858 and still chronicles Anglican clergymen to this day, is a good example of a list that includes clergymen who emigrated from Britain and Ireland to the United States, but its usefulness in a study similar to ours (except when dealing with the Anglican denomination) would be limited both by its relatively late starting date and the fact that the vast majority of the people it records did not emigrate.66 There is also a list of Anglican ministers and schoolmasters who migrated to America from Ireland and Britain from

65 Again, it is only complete or near complete when discussing ministers who were either licensed or ordained in Ireland and who then immigrated to the United States.
66 Crockford’s Clerical Directory chronicles the clergy of the Church of England, the Church in Wales, the Scottish Episcopal Church, and the Church of Ireland. It should be noted that Crockford’s absorbed a less complete but earlier register of clergy called the Clergy List, which began seventeen years before Crockford’s, in 1841. For more on the history and scope of Crockford’s Clerical Directory, see Joseph L. Altholz, “Mister Sergeant Cox, John Crockford, and the Origins of ‘Crockford’s Clerical Directory,’” in Victorian Periodicals Review, vol. 14, no. 4 (Winter, 1984), pp. 153-158.
1690 to 1811. The list is collected almost totally from one source and only compiles those Anglican schoolmasters and ministers who applied for and received a royal bounty to cover the costs of emigration. The information it imparts is sparse.

More topically, there are also various fasti (mentioned above) which contain the names and congregations of Irish Presbyterian ministers. These contain and make note of many ministers who emigrated to the Thirteen Colonies or the United States. There are also congregational histories which give details of ministers who emigrated, along with the details of thousands of other ministers who did not. The massive *A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 1610-1982*, along with its supplement of additions, emendations, and corrections, is the most complete. Contained within its histories of congregations is also the most complete fasti of ministers, one of its original goals being to record the full names of all ministers and “the exact dates of their ordinations, resignations, translations and deaths.”

All these fasti and congregational histories were helpful in compiling and checking our register of Irish Presbyterian, immigrant-clergy in the Thirteen Colonies and the U.S., but all of them contain fewer migrant ministers than our database, which was built with the help of all of them.

There are some lists made up of Irish Presbyterian ministers who emigrated. David Stewart’s *Fasti of the American Presbyterian Church*, produced in 1943, is a register of 136

68 McConnell and McConnell, *Fasti of the Irish Presbyterian Church 1613-1840*.
Presbyterian ministers of Irish origin who “laboured” in America during the eighteenth century. William F. Marshall’s, *Ulster Sails West*, contains an appendix listing 191 “ministers, licentiates, students, or emigrants who went from Ulster and served in the ministry of the Presbyterian churches in North America” from 1680-1820. Our database is far more complete than either of these. As opposed to Stewart’s 136 eighteenth-century ministers, ours contains 203 in that same century. As opposed to *Ulster Sails West*’s 229 migrants between 1683 and 1901, ours contains 534 during that same time. Moreover, our database covers a much longer period, 1683 to 1901, and contains 616 total clerical migrants.

There simply is no list or register, which I am aware of, dealing expressly with Irish or British professionals (obviously I include clergymen in this professional category, but I am aware of the possible objection) who emigrated to the American Colonies or the United States. Since ours seems to be the only register of Irish Presbyterian immigrant ministers covering the late seventeenth century and all of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it should be a starting point for any inquiry into those interested in the subject.

Only once all of this work was done, could I begin the next steps in the process of bypassing the historiographical roadblock, which was the work of sifting through the material in the database, looking for common trends within the clerical migration. After a few themes were identified, I turned to the mountain of historiography on Irish Presbyterian migration in the eighteenth century, comparing the perceived trends found within clerical migration to the many known trends in the larger general migration. The next step was to compare common trends between the two migrations to see if there was a relationship between those trends at all, and to figure out what that relationship was, if anything. After that relationship was identified, only

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71 David Stewart, *Fasti of the American Presbyterian Church.*
72 Marshall, *Ulster Sails West.*
then could I use that relationship, in combination with data uncovered on nineteenth-century Irish Presbyterian clerical migration, to suggest characteristics of the larger nineteenth-century Irish Presbyterian migration. Almost all of this work had to be done first in order to discover whether the story of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration held the key to suggesting characteristics of general, Irish Presbyterian migration over the course of the nineteenth century. But it did hold the key; there was a way round.

But, the way round the roadblock to the study of Irish Protestant migration in the nineteenth century was not easy and took several steps, but after a thorough study of this clerical migration within a migration, it is clear to me that an understanding of the migration of Presbyterian clerics can unlock the mystery of Irish Presbyterian migration in the nineteenth century, at least in the sense that it can provide us with a suggested shape of overall Presbyterian migration in the nineteenth century, i.e., the yearly frequency of migration, the Irish origins of the migrants, and where they settled in America. Let us recapitulate the steps: (1) migrant clerics were found in the historical record; (2) a database of all of the collected clerical migrants was created in order to search for general characteristics of their combined migrations; (3) from examination of that database certain trends in clerical migration were mapped out; (4) those clerical trends were compared with trends in the larger lay migration in the eighteenth century to see if there was any discernible relationship between the two; (5) if and only if certain aspects of eighteenth-century clerical migration could be demonstrated to be representative of what was already known about those same aspects of eighteenth-century lay Presbyterian migration could we then posit projected characteristics of general nineteenth-century Irish Presbyterian migration to America based upon our findings of nineteenth-century clerical migration. If clerical migration could not be demonstrated to be indicative of the larger
migration in the eighteenth century, then conclusions about the larger nineteenth-century
migration of Irish Presbyterians based upon nineteenth century clerical migration would be
much weaker. But the migrations did have a relationship in the eighteenth century, and we have
discovered the general parameters of nineteenth-century Presbyterian migration from Ireland to
America.

The chapters that follow will attempt to accomplish the above goals in three sections.
The first is concerned with the importance of the Presbyterian Church and its members in the
Presbyterian community in order to demonstrate that in the Irish Presbyterian community
ministers and people were so tightly and thoroughly interlaced with each other that each was
weaker without the other, that together they made up a fortified whole, and therefore that the
study of ministers reveals something of the larger community. The second is a lengthy account
of the migration of Irish Presbyterian clerics from 1683 to 1810 and a comparison of trends
found within that migration with what is known to historians about the larger general
Presbyterian migration at the same time. It uncovers a direct relationship between the two
migrations over the course of those 128 years in at least three key areas of migration. The third
section is a description of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration from 1811 to 1901 and a
postulation of some of the general parameters of general Irish Presbyterian migration during
that same time, based upon knowledge of clerical migration and of a historically long-lasting,
direct relationship between the two migrations in three key areas: an outline of Irish
Presbyterian migration in the nineteenth century that should provide some context for the much
needed research on individual Irish Protestants or local studies of Irish Protestant communities
in the U.S.
For, this study is a call for further scholarship. While it is both the first to suggest the outlines of Irish Presbyterian migration to America throughout the nineteenth century and provides context for future studies of individual Irish Presbyterian migrants in the nineteenth century, this study needs those future studies of individual nineteenth-century Irish Presbyterian immigrants. Future investigations will bolster or critique the context provided here, and can thus help to fill in the sketched shape Irish Presbyterian migration to the U.S. in the nineteenth century that this work has produced. They are tied together, and, like the relationship between ministers and people in Irish Presbyterian history, each is lessened without the other. Therefore, this work should be treated as a starting point, not as a culmination, and as a call for more studies of nineteenth-century Irish Presbyterian migration.
Chapter 2: Conflict, Theology, and the Centrality of the Church in Irish Presbyterian Society

When studying nearly any aspect of Irish Presbyterian society, at any point in their history, one must acknowledge either the centrality or the former centrality (depending on the time period) of the church in their community. For many years in Ireland and in the English colonies in America (and eventually in the United States), Irish Presbyterian life was largely structured, guided, and maintained by the Presbyterian Church. This was the case throughout the eighteenth century and generally so up until at least the mid-nineteenth century, although pockets existed in rural Ireland and the U.S. where this arrangement seems to have continued well into the twentieth century.¹ Suffice it to say that the Presbyterian Church, both in Ireland and in North America, played an essential role in the lives of Irish Presbyterians for a century and a half or more.

Indeed, scholars of Presbyterianism in Ireland almost uniformly agree (something of a rarity amongst scholars) that Presbyterian society, for much of its history in Ireland and specifically in Ulster, was fundamentally built or structured around the Presbyterian Church.²

There might be some disagreement on the degree of its centrality, but no one argues its

¹ After 1850, there is evidence that the authority of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland started to wane. This waning of church power began in the more urban areas of Ireland like Belfast and Dublin, but church power proved surprisingly intractable in rural areas of Ireland. Andrew R. Holmes has commented on the the power of the Presbyterian Church in Irish Presbyterian society, writing that “for a variety of reasons, discipline within the Church of Scotland had been almost abandoned by the end of the 1780s. However, new evidence from Scotland and England and the findings of the present study suggest a more complex profile of decline as discipline continued in some areas of Ulster into the twentieth century.” Andrew R. Holmes, The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, 1770-1840 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), p. 168. For the power of the Presbyterian ministry in the American church, see Elwyn Allen Smith, The Presbyterian Ministry in American Culture: A Study in Changing Concepts, 1700-1900 (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1962).

² I prefer the term Irish Presbyterian to Ulster Presbyterian. There were differences between Presbyterians in Ulster and Presbyterians in the other three provinces of Ireland. I do not wish to make light of those. However, the use of the term Ulster Presbyterian rather than Irish Presbyterian has tended to cloud the fact that Presbyterians in Ulster were Irish. For discussion of Presbyterians in the other 3 of provinces of Ireland, see Irwin, A History of Presbyterianism in Dublin and the South and West of Ireland; David J. Butler, “‘Survival of the Fittest’: Protestant Dissenting Congregations of South Munster, 1660-1810,” in Irish Protestant Identities, Mervyn Busteed, Frank Neal, and Jonathan Tongue, eds. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008).
centrality. Without its government, leadership, and theology, that society in Ireland made recognizable as Presbyterian by its distinctive traits would no longer be recognizable. The church’s role in orchestrating and managing its people was so effective and so complete that historian Peter Brooke claimed that from around the mid-seventeenth century to the mid-nineteenth century the Presbyterian Church in Ireland was “the organizing centre of a distinct, quasi-national society,” and that Irish Presbyterians “almost constituted a nation in their own right—when church courts (sessions, presbyteries and synods) were the real political centres of their lives, much more so than the shadowy governments in Dublin or in London.” David N. Doyle wrote that “Presbyterianism was unquestionably the strongest overt element in the Ulster Scottish identity in Ireland and America. It both defined and justified their sense of separation.”

James G. Leyburn claimed that

The Scotch-Irish immigrant to America was a Presbyterian. He may not have been always pious and zealous; but the Presbyterian Church had long been his peculiar institution, his mark of distinction from other people in Ulster, his proud heritage from the days when his ancestors had stood up to kings and oppressors. It had watched over his morals with meticulous care.

Ian Hazlett remarked upon the “inward looking, immobile and self-centred ghetto mentality” peculiar to Irish rather than Scottish Presbyterians. Donald Harman Akenson has written that for Presbyterians in Ireland

a sense of religious identity that provided the Ulster-Scots with a replacement for something they never could have, the myth that they were a nation. They needed

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7 Ian Hazlett, “Students at Glasgow University from 1747 to 1768 connected with Ireland: an analytical probe,” in Ebb and Flow: Essays in Church History in Honour of R. Finlay Holmes (Belfast: Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland, 2002), p. 21
something to underpin their polity. Their religious system, as it had evolved by the mid-nineteenth century, “had such remarkable staying-power in part because it helped meet the need for just such reassurance; it confirmed by modern ‘empirical’ standards that they were God’s chosen people.” Thus we can take as being reasonably probable the observation that … religiously framed self-perception was a central historical aspect of the Ulster-Scot world and that, whatever the real ‘causality’ of any major set of events, religion was a viewing-lens they held very close to the eye.8

R.J. Dickson remarked upon “the reality of the hold of the Presbyterian church over the daily lives of its members.”9

There seems to be little doubt about it. For the Irish Presbyterian community (in Ireland and America) the church was central to their lives. If this is the case, and it certainly seems to be so, a question that needs to be answered is, why was this the case? Why was the Presbyterian Church so central to the lives of Irish Presbyterians that it was seemingly more essential to them than the secular government? The answer is a combination of two things: conflict and theology.

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Life in conflict with antagonistic neighbors was absolutely essential in creating the distinctly separate, self-governing Presbyterian community in Ireland. Though it must be stated from the

8 Akenson, Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration, p. 120. Akenson is discussing and quoting from the work of David W. Miller, “Presbyterianism and Modernization,” in Ulster, Past and Present, no. 80 (Aug. 1978), pp. 60-90, quotation from p. 90. The belief that they were God’s church was central to their community. That they held this idea closely is evidenced by the fact that Presbyterians long called their church buildings “meeting houses” instead of churches. The church of God was not a building, but the people of God. J.M. Barkley, “The Presbyterian Minister in Eighteenth Century Ireland,” in Challenge and Conflict: Essays in Presbyterian History and Doctrine, J.L.M. Haire, ed. (Antrim, Northern Ireland: W & G Baird, Ltd, 1981), p. 51. Andrew Holmes has written that, “Ulster Presbyterians saw themselves as a separate community and as a covenanted people. During this period, the language and concept of covenant was a prominent theme in the administration of the rites of passage, the Lord’s Supper, psalm singing, and the attachment of sections of the laity to the Presbyterian ecclesiology. The important themes of God’s sovereignty and the pilgrimage of both the community and individuals towards eternity reinforced this sense of separateness, of divine favour, especially as expressed in personal covenants. Though these may have had political implications in certain circumstances and provided a language for political discourse, it is clear that the concept of covenant was normally seen by lay Presbyterians in religious terms as it laid the basis for the Presbyterian understanding of salvation.” A. Holmes, The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, 1770-1840, pp. 306-307. Emphasis is mine.

outset that when discussing such a long time period as this study is concerned with, the hostility and conflict that Presbyterians faced in Ireland varied in degree over the course of a little more than two centuries. It can safely be said, however, that the presence of at least some rancor was constant.\(^\text{10}\)

The extra-governmental, and “quasi-national” community that Brooke writes of would have been difficult to create and maintain in any circumstances, but it was especially so in Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Presbyterians in Ireland were surrounded by those who were hostile to them. Conceivably, this hostility could have prevented Presbyterianism from gaining a foothold in Ireland altogether, although with hindsight we can see that many circumstances combined to make favorable the gaining of a Presbyterian foothold in the northeastern province of Ireland. Nonetheless, it was uncertain throughout much of Presbyterian history in Ireland that the denomination would survive, much less flourish and prosper to the degree that it has. Brooke writes of their early experiences there:

> In the seventeenth century [Presbyterianism] stood in almost impossible circumstances for the ideal of the church as a kingdom or polity separate in matters of faith and morals.

It was a difficult task, and it took quite a determined and hardy lot to continue such organized existence outside of state control, for no doubt at times it must have seemed that the prospects of Presbyterianism in Ireland were balanced upon a knife’s edge.

Yet, as Nietzsche would later famously assert, strength is forged in the hot fires of conflict and competition, and whatever the inevitable stress, strain, and laboriousness that the hostility of their neighbors caused them, conflict helped Presbyterians in Ireland to create and maintain a strong, cohesive society centered around their church. Outside pressure created a

\(^{10}\) By the late nineteenth century a false story of almost constant affliction and persecution from all sides was common in Presbyterian historical accounts and, therefore, presumably part of the common Presbyterian mindset of the day. See Thomas Hamilton, *History of Presbyterianism in Ireland* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clarke, 1887).
compactness, a sort of social density, for adversity made it necessary for Presbyterians to rely on their own institutions, their own people, and their own initiative to maintain the ability to worship in the manner they thought best and to live with the consequences of the decision to do so. They looked inward. Consequently, unlike other groups in Ireland and Britain, they expected very little help from those outside their communion, including help from the government—although most of the several Irish Presbyterian sects that eventually emerged accepted government aid through the Regium Donum. Not only did the anxiety and trouble generated by their precarious position encourage Irish Presbyterians to retreat to the care and safety provided by their church and social institutions, these difficulties actually necessitated the building, strengthening, and maintenance of the borders of their community. The precariousness of their position helped to keep their people within the fortified walls of Irish Presbyterianism socially, theologically, and politically. Instead of extinguishing Presbyterianism in Ireland, conflict helped to create a Presbyterianism with a fortress mentality. A denomination that could function as a semi-autonomous power unto itself, almost a nation

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11 It should be noted that, unlike Scottish Presbyterianism, which exerted great influence on Presbyterians in Ireland, Irish Presbyterianism was not recognized as established, which among other things meant that Irish Presbyterians, at least theoretically, were Presbyterian by choice. Irish Presbyterianism was also distinctive from English Presbyterianism. Its closest counterpart was American Presbyterianism. See Peter Brooke, Ulster Presbyterianism, p. 103.

12 The Regium Donum was an annual payment granted by the government to Presbyterians and used to help pay ministers. It was first granted at 600 pounds a year by Charles II but later suspended by his brother, James II. For their help in securing Ireland for William of Orange in 1689-90, William III resumed this payment and doubled its size. William’s sister-in-law, Queen Anne, suspended the payment in 1714, but she died the same year and the Regium Donum was resumed and increased to 1600 pounds per year in 1715. It was continued until the Church of Ireland was disestablished in 1869. It is ironic that for much of Presbyterian history, the government helped to pay the salaries of Presbyterian ministers and at the same time the state church attempted to stamp out Presbyterianism or make Presbyterianism as inconvenient in Ireland as possible. This is simply part of the ambiguity of the persecution of Presbyterians in Ireland: attack from the state church, protection from the state. It was almost like a cat toying with its prey, or better yet like an abusive friend with a guilty conscience: a cruel persecutor, but who also periodically relishes playing the role of magnanimous protector—never constant in behavior, but always dangerous.

Some Irish Presbyterians refused the aid granted in the Regium Donum. Most Irish Presbyterians, though, did accept this “royal gift” and guarded it and whatever other little governmental aid provided to them with much vigor. See S. J. Connolly, ed., The Oxford Companion to Irish History (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), s.v. “Regium Donum.”
within a nation, would not have been possible without some sort of overriding conflict that the community as a whole was alert to, whether that conflict was physical, mental, real, or imagined. Such a church and such a society would have been unnecessary without it.13

But such a church and such a society were necessary. For much of its history, the position of Presbyterianism in Ireland brings to mind the state of being faced with or surrounded by foes superior in number and in might, and this position affected them. It is not a stretch to claim that at various points in their history Irish Presbyterians experienced many, if not all, of the effects one might expect from the experience of such a situation: defensiveness, aggressiveness, paranoia, et cetera. In a time when religious persuasion meant something much more akin to early twentieth-century nationalism, Presbyterians in Ireland found themselves surrounded by oft-pugnacious religious parties jealous of their own prerogatives (as, in turn, Presbyterians were themselves). The constant presence of jealous enemies took its toll on the Presbyterian mind. Under the pressure from the anvil and hammer of Irish circumstances, Presbyterianism in Ireland evolved in ways that made it distinct from Presbyterianism elsewhere.

Noticing a similar theme in the relationship between Irish Protestants and Irish Catholics, Donald Harman Akenson has written,

…neither Irish Catholics nor Irish Protestants can be discussed adequately without reference to each other. The two major religious groups were part of a dialectical system. It was the existence of the Irish Protestants that helped to

13 Military history gives us a clear analogy. No battlefield commander draws his troops into the phalanx—a tightly-massed, simultaneously defensive and bristlingly offensive formation—without some form of external threat, usually when threatened by forces greater than his own. For the phalanx to work, its members must pack as tightly together as possible. Remaining tightly-packed or compressed is the key in defense and in offense; otherwise its effectiveness is totally lost. When this compression is maintained, each member’s shield protects part of his own body and part of another’s. They are only safe from their opponents and only a threat to their opponents if they keep tightly together. A disciplined phalanx can drive itself like a wedge through much larger forces, while receiving comparatively few casualties. In this manner ancient generals defeated forces much greater than their own. In Ireland, Presbyterians were faced with conditions conducive to phalanx tactics and drew their members up, accordingly, into tight formation.
make the Irish Catholics so distinct a group within the Roman Catholic world; and it was the Irish Catholics who helped to form the mentalities of the Irish Anglicans and Irish Presbyterians, two very unusual groups within the worldwide Protestant communion.14

Taking this observation one step further, it was not just the existence of and the close, quotidian dealings with Irish Catholics that helped to form a distinct Irish Presbyterian mentality, but the presence of and regular interaction with both Irish Catholics and Irish Anglicans that helped to form the mental, social, and religious particularities of Irish Presbyterians. They were what S. J. Connolly has called the “middle rung of a tripartite hierarchy”15 for almost all of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a middle rung that was for over 200 years at best tolerated as second-class and at worst despised and persecuted by the “rungs” on either side of it.

Irish Catholics resented their presence, because most Presbyterians were either colonists or the descendants of colonists.16 The governments in London and Dublin had rearranged the social structure of Ireland, leaving Catholics in the worst position of any of the three “rungs.” This was done through and because of, the tumultuous events of the seventeenth century (the Plantation of Ulster, the rebellions of the 1640s and 1690s, and the succeeding penal codes). By 1703 only 14 percent of the land in Ireland was still owned by Catholics and by the penultimate

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14 Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, p. 27.
16 This being said, it should be noted that there are many suggestions that not insignificant numbers of native Irish converted to Presbyterianism in the 17th and early 18th centuries. Marrying or consortng with native Irish was more than just periodically condemned by presbyteries in the eighteenth century, which is an indication that the ‘problem’ was more persistent and widespread than later historians or propagandists with a tendency to laud Gaelic purity amongst Irish Catholics have admitted. Because the view that Presbyterians in Ireland are foreign colonists continues, periodically, to cause problems in Ireland, it might be good to remember here the thoughts of the late Queen’s University, Belfast, scholar, E. Estyn Evans: this is from Sophia Hillan—“Estyn Evans (1905-1989)…. maintained that we are all, all have been at some time or other, settlers, and that the land is far older than we. Because we all came from somewhere at some time, no one is, or has the right to claim to be pure anything — Irish, English, Scots, Welsh. We are all ‘invaders’ — all, at some point, a potential threat. It was Estyn Evans’s belief that it was ‘precisely this clash of native and newcomer that struck the sparks in Irish culture.’” See Roger Blaney, *Presbyterians and the Irish Language* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation and Uachtar Trust, 1996), pp. 12-19; Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*, pp. 133-39; S. J. Connolly, *Religion, Law, and Power: The Making of Protestant Ireland 1660-1760* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 126; E. Estyn Evans, “Ulster: The Common Ground,” in *Ireland and the Atlantic Heritage: Selected Writings* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1996), p. 167; Sophia Hillan, “Wintered into Wisdom: Michael McLaverty, Seamus Heaney, and the Northern Word-Hoard,” in *New Hibernia Review*, Fall 2005, p. 87.
decade of that same century, the Episcopalian Ascendancy owned 95 percent of all productive land in Ireland.\textsuperscript{17} Protestant landlords desired Protestant tenants, and Catholic tenants were often forced to move. During this process of disinheritance, it was often Presbyterian tenants who were moved onto those same lands.\textsuperscript{18} Presbyterians were, therefore, resented as usurpers, colonists, invaders, and foreigners. This resentment was certainly felt by Irish Presbyterians, for despite their comparatively better economic and social condition, they generally lived closely with the Catholic population, except in some places in Counties Antrim and Down where by the eighteenth century there was very little Catholic population.\textsuperscript{19}

Almost certainly, much of the defensiveness of the Presbyterian mentalité in Ireland was shaped by communal memory. Memories of Catholic massacres of Protestants, real or imagined, in the 1640s and 1690s were indelibly marked in the minds of many Presbyterians. It was during those times that:

\begin{itemize}
  \item the large scale settlement of Scots and English during the seventeenth century created predictable tensions. In Ulster these came bloodily into the open in the autumn of 1641, when the attempt by Catholic leaders to secure their position at a time of impending political crisis degenerated into apparently unplanned plunder and massacre. Later in the century, hostility to a Protestant population of relatively recent settlers remained evident as one of the motives behind the depredations, both in Ulster and elsewhere, of outlaw bands of tories.\textsuperscript{20}
\end{itemize}

Atrocities and resentments seethed in the minds of all involved, and later, sectarian violence—such as the burning of Freeduff Presbyterian Church in South Armagh in 1743 and the atrocities in County Wexford in May and June of 1798—was only seen as further justification of the common Protestant (and thus Presbyterian) belief that the general Catholic population, given the

\textsuperscript{17} J.G. Simms, The Williamite Confiscation in Ireland, 1690-1703 (London: Faber & Faber, 1956), pp. 159-160.
\textsuperscript{18} “In Ulster the Catholic population, initially fairly evenly distributed on land of all qualities, was by the later seventeenth century being relegated to the poorer and less advantageously situated areas. This was partly due to the greater economic dynamism of the English and Scots settlers, but also to some extent to direct discrimination.” S. J. Connolly, Religion, Law, and Power, p. 148.
\textsuperscript{19} For example, Islandmagee, in County Antrim. For more discussion of Islandmagee, see Donald Harman Akenson, Between Two Revolutions: Islandmagee, County Antrim 1798-1920 (Toronto: P.D. Meany Co., 1979).
\textsuperscript{20} S. J. Connolly, Religion, Law, and Power, p. 125.
chance, would rise up to massacre Protestants. If the opportunity to rise did not present itself, the larger Catholic population were viewed as supporters or facilitators of the actions of periodic rapparees violence toward Protestants. Sir John Temple’s gruesome accounts—and some scholars suggest that these were gross exaggerations—of Catholic violence in The Irish Rebellion, first published in 1646, was key in the formation of the Irish Protestant belief that the Catholic Irish were “irredeemably treacherous, vicious, and debauched.” Presbyterians clearly shared this fear, and as late as the early nineteenth century Sir John Temple’s book was still in print and was still found in Irish Presbyterian households. The fear of Catholic violence was so strongly entrenched within the Presbyterian mindset, in fact, that some scholars claim Presbyterian fear of the Catholic majority was a common cause of both Presbyterian transience within Ireland and of Presbyterian emigration from Ireland to America. Faced with a large and hostile population it is no wonder that Presbyterians in rural Ulster made use of the bawn,

21 On the burning of Freeduff Presbyterian Church, see Sean Farrell’s excellent and engaging article: “The Burning of Freeduff Presbyterian Church, 1743,” in New Hibernia Review / Iris Eireannach New, 9:3 (Fall / Fomhar, 2005), pp. 72-85; also S. J. Connolly, Religion, Law, and Power, p. 125. As an example of Protestant fear and the Wexford atrocities, see Charles Jackson, A Narrative of the Sufferings and Escape of Charles Jackson Late Resident of Wexford, in Ireland. Including an Account of Several Barbarous Atrocities committed in June, 1798, by the Irish Rebels in that Town while it was in their possession; to the Greater Part of which he was an Eye-Witness. The fourth edition, with additions. (Oxford: printed for the author, 1802). It is a strong demonstration of its popularity that by 1802 this small work of 89 pages was already in its 4th edition. On page 53 there is an example of the mindset above mentioned: “The intolerant prejudices of the Catholics, it was soon proved, had no bounds. The extinction of the Protestant religion was the favorite idea of the mass of the rebels, and their strongest motive to action.” Also see: Micheál Ó Siochrú, “Atrocity, Codes of Conduct, and the Irish in the British Civil Wars 1641-1653” in Past & Present, no. 195 (May, 2007), pp. 55-86, and T. C. Barnard, “Crisis of Identity among Irish Protestants 1641-1685,” in Past & Present, no. 127 (May, 1990), pp. 39-83.

22 Raparee, from the Irish Gaelic word Rapaire (a sort of pike), is a term used to describe an Irish outlaw or bandit in the 17th and 18th centuries. It was used interchangeably for a time with the term Tory, from the Irish Gaelic word Toraidhe (raider), use of which has been traced back to the year 1646. In both cases the term was used to describe outlaws who targeted homes, travelers and other unsuspecting victims and then retreated back into trackless bog-lands or dense hills. These Raparees or Tories were known to extort protection fees from families or businesses that lay near their wilderness strongholds. For more, see S. J. Connolly, ed., The Oxford Companion to Irish History, p. 574, s.v. “Tory.”


or defensive farmhouse or farm settlement, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—an appropriate analogy for their state of mind.  

With this fear of Catholic violence in mind, consider again S. J. Connolly’s analogy that Presbyterians represented the middle of a stratified, “tripartite” Irish social structure in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. If Irish Presbyterians were forced to fortify themselves from onslaught from below by periodic Catholic violence and the residual fear of that violence, they were also forced to fortify themselves from above by persecution and by the fear of persecution from the ascendant Church of Ireland.

Because Ireland’s history is very often viewed through the lens of sectarian violence between Irish Protestants and Irish Catholics, it is perhaps common to unconsciously embed in Irish history the idea that Protestants in Ireland were in some sense monolithic or at least on friendly terms with each other out of a common interest. Frank Wright has famously called this general Protestant anti-Catholicism “pan-Protestantism.” While there are, of course, well known historical instances of this kind of Protestant alliance, and while there is a historical pattern of Irish Protestants banding together in the face of Catholic violence which still occurs in Ireland today, this is not the whole historical tale, especially where Presbyterians in Ulster were concerned. For much of their history in Ireland, Protestants did not see themselves as

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25 “The bawn was entered by a gate surmounted by a baroque gable, if one can accept ancient drawings as witness. The bawns create the effect of being much older than they are, for outside Ulster such defence measures had long before become unnecessary.” Denis O’D. Hanna, The Face of Ulster (London: B. T. Batsford, 1952), p. 34, quoted in Donald Harman Akenson, God’s Peoples: Covenant and Land in South Africa, Israel and Ulster (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992), p. 120.

members of the same interest—except, that is, when dealing with a tangible Catholic threat. In actual fact, there was real Protestant disunity, and it was at times genuinely bitter.27

Members of the Protestant and Established Church of Ireland resented the intransigent refusal of Irish Presbyterians to worship in the Anglican manner and the resultant division of “the Protestant interest” that this intransigence caused. From the perspective of the Church of Ireland, an institution that was painfully aware that it served a minority of the Irish population, this division of Protestants not only weakened the tangible power of the Established Church by diminishing the number of Protestants under its aegis, but weakened it in the face of its own anxieties of Catholic violence. Therefore leaders of the Established Church desired that these “Dissenters of the North” would enter their communion.28 Some of the tactics adopted in order to accomplish this unification tended to make life miserable for those who stubbornly remained outside the Established Church. The basic strategy toward Dissenters was this: remain outside of the Established Church if you will, but it will be a miserable experience. Enter into communion with us and much of your misery (that caused by us) will cease.

Intensifying the pugnacious relationship between the Church of Ireland and Irish Presbyterians was the fact that Presbyterians were both numerous and consolidated in Ireland’s northeastern province, a combination that Anglicans perceived as a threat to the Established Church in the north. From the Church of Ireland’s point of view, a large, antagonistic, well-disciplined and well-organized community lived within their realm, and there were legitimate

27 The situation may, in fact, be more geographically complicated. S. J. Connolly writes: “Although the Catholic threat did not do anything to bring Anglicans and Presbyterians in Ulster together, the pressure of Protestant unity in the face of the common enemy may have been more effective in the overwhelmingly Catholic south.” S. J. Connolly, Religion, Law, and Power, p. 161.

28 See, for example, William King’s letter (still as Bishop of Derry), reproduced in James Seaton Reid, History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, comprising The Civil History of the Province of Ulster, from the Accession of James the First: with a Preliminary Sketch of the Progress of the Reformed Religion in Ireland During the Sixteenth Century, and an Appendix, consisting of Original Papers, ed. W. D. Killen, 3 vols. (Belfast: William Mullan, 1867), vol. 2, p. 489.
fears that Presbyterians in Ireland would attempt to follow the example of their mother kirk in Scotland, which had discarded episcopacy and installed a Presbyterian Church as its established church. That Anglicanism would remain the Established Church of Ireland over another type of Christianity was not beyond question, and many Presbyterians, no doubt, desired a Church of Ireland based on the Scottish Presbyterian model.

Indeed, the very fact of being a dissenter in Ireland carried with it suggestions of subversion. During the English Civil war in the seventeenth century, royalists had taken up the motto “No Bishops, No King,” a phrase attributed to James I, himself, in response to Scottish Presbyterians who wished to do away with bishoprics in the Church of England. And this attitude, that without the prelacy there could be no monarchy, survived in Ireland amongst the ascendancy long after it had died out in England. By definition, the Established Church of Ireland was part of the government, and its bishops, in fact, sat in the Irish House of Lords. But in Ireland, as with so many things, there was more to the story than just that. The Church of Ireland’s theology was meant, amongst other things, to bolster the claims of the government. It was intricately interwoven with and inseparable from Ascendancy apologetics. The ruling class in Ireland, unlike in Britain, was made up exclusively of members of an established Anglican Church. Irish bishops in the House of Lords had vested interests in conserving the state of things as they existed. The clergy were, after all, paid state functionaries, and the church’s position was the key to their political power. Churchmen made clear that alternate theologies, therefore, were not only potential threats to Anglican theology, but to the nature of social and political power and of the state itself. Alternate theologies were threats. To allow them to

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survive and prosper was a dangerous risk, and the clergy of the Established Church attempted eagerly to stamp them out.  

This view was clearly expressed by the leading pamphleteer of the Church of Ireland, the Dean of St. Patrick’s Cathedral, Dublin, Jonathan Swift. In reply to John Abernethy, a prominent Presbyterian minister who had published a pamphlet which pled for the removal of certain penal restrictions on Presbyterians (specifically, the Test Act) in return for past services rendered to the government in times of crisis and for common defense against the Catholic threat, Swift’s exemplified the Church of Ireland’s unwillingness to support and maintain a potential rival in its midst. Swift compared Irish Presbyterians to a potentially dangerous viper that would one day be the death of whoever was foolish enough to allow it to live alongside himself:

For he that has so little wit
To nourish venom, may be bit,  

Similar to the way in which it portrayed Irish Catholics, Anglican propaganda portrayed Presbyterians as fanatics who, due to the particular nature of their creeds, were bound to destroy

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31 At times, “the outlook for Presbyterianism in Ireland was bleak.” As “in the aftermath of Blood’s plot and its opponents, bishops like Jeremy Taylor and gentry like Lord Conway and Major, later Sir George, Rawdon were energetic in trying to complete its destruction. To them it was a destructive force, as Jeremy Taylor wrote to the lord lieutenant in 1663: ‘As long as those ministers are permitted amongst us there shall be a perpetual seminary of schism and discontent…they are looked on as earnest and zealous parties against the government.”” Presbyterian ministers in particular were seen as agents of chaos, schism, and rebellion. R.F.G. Holmes, Our Presbyterian Heritage (Belfast: Publications Committee, Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 1985). p. 43

32 J.C. Beckett, Protestant Dissent in Ireland (London: Faber & Faber, 1948), pp. 92-93; Jonathan Swift, The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift, Temple Scott, ed., 12 vols. (London, 1897-1908). Jonathan Swift’s views on Irish Presbyterians and especially his polemical writings against them were shocking and even puerile in some cases. Richard Holmes has written that “Swift’s antipathy to Presbyterians…was forcefully expressed in his first work, A Tale of a Tub, and it did not waver through his life. His writings in support of the Sacramental Test in 1708 differed little from those in 1732. It was in part a matter of ideology, and in part bigotry informed by paranoia. In [A] Tale of a Tub he satirized Jack [Jack Presbyter or Knocking Jack of the North] and his sect of ‘Aeolists’ who preserved wind in barrels: ‘whereof they fix one in each of their Temples, first beating out the Top. Into this Barrel, upon solemn Days the Priest enters, where…a secret Funnel is also conveyed from his Posteriors….in this Posture he disembogues whole Tempests upon his Auditory.’ Repeatedly he made this connection between Presbyterian worship, flatulence and excrement. In his late poem, “On the Words Brother Protestants…” he compared Presbyterians to ‘A Ball of new-dropt Horse’s Dung,’ ‘a Rat,’ and ‘a Swarm of Lice.’” See Richard Holmes, “James Arbuckle and Dean Swift: Cultural Politics in the Irish Confessional State,” in Irish Studies Review, vol. 16, no. 4, November 2008, p. 433.
competing creeds and force their own faith upon others.\textsuperscript{33} For Irish Anglicans, neither Catholics nor Presbyterians could be trusted.\textsuperscript{34}

The dissemination of this perspective toward Presbyterianism in Ireland was not limited to pamphlets; it was proclaimed from Church of Ireland pulpits. In 1726, in a sermon commemorating the 77\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of the execution of Charles I, Jonathan Swift told his St. Patrick’s, Dublin, congregation that actions such as regicide and the resultant chaos it produced were part of the future of any land in which Dissenters were allowed to continue to further their intrinsically anti-monarchical and anti-episcopal beliefs (i.e., No Bishops, No King).\textsuperscript{35}

Referring to Presbyterian Dissenters and their well known dislike of the Church of Ireland’s use of vestments from the Roman Catholic tradition, Edward Walkington, Archdeacon of Ossory and later Bishop of Down and Connor, stated in a sermon at the consecration of the Bishop of Ossory in 1693 that “I am tempted to believe that there is something more than religion and conscience at the bottom of these matters, that lawn-sleeves, and caps, and surplices, are too mean a quarry for these men to fly at, and that crowns and scepters, I mean monarchy in general, is the true and real grievance.”\textsuperscript{36}

\textsuperscript{33} McBride, \textit{Scripture Politics}, p.16.
\textsuperscript{34} For many officials of the Church of Ireland, especially in the first half of the eighteenth century, Presbyterians represented liberty to the point of anarchy. Jonathan Swift is a perfect example of someone who held such an attitude. Richard Holmes writes that “the dangers of liberty were demonstrated for Swift by the upheavals of the seventeenth century, which he blamed on the Dissenters, particularly the Scots Presbyterians…” The distrust of Dissenters by the Church of Ireland lessened during the nineteenth century, but the dislike between the two groups was still palpable at the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1871. See Richard Holmes, “James Arbuckle and Dean Swift: Cultural Politics in the Irish Confessional State,” p. 433; Akenson, \textit{Between Two Revolutions}, pp. 159-160 and Donald Harman Akenson, \textit{The Church of Ireland: Ecclesiastical Reform and Revolution, 1800-1885} (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1971), pp. 66-67, 254, 258-259, 267, 270, 273.
\textsuperscript{35} The word “dissenter” in Ireland for a long time was interchangeable with Presbyterian. A “dissenter” was assumed to be a Presbyterian, just as a “Protestant” was assumed to be a member of the Church of Ireland. For more on the history of dissenters in Ireland, see J.C. Beckett, \textit{Protestant Dissent in Ireland 1687-1780}; Kevin Herlihy, ed., \textit{The Irish Dissenting Tradition 1650-1750} (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1995), and Kevin Herlihy, ed., \textit{Propagating the Word of Irish Dissent 1650-1800} (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998).
Both sermons demonstrate two things: that the clergy of the Established Church considered Presbyterians a threat to the state and that they felt it their duty to pass this belief on to their parishioners. The latter is at the very least something to keep in mind when modern scholars suggest that landlords were only acting in economic interests when they raised the rents on Presbyterians after many of their leases expired in the early eighteenth century, and that Presbyterian complaints of religious persecution were preposterous. Swift’s sermon reminded members of the Church of Ireland that, with this danger to monarchy and the Irish state in mind, it was their duty as members of the Church of Ireland and loyal subjects of the King to hold in check the continuously increasing ambition and disloyalty of dissenters. What his landowning parishioners did, if anything, to hold Presbyterian ambition and disloyalty in check would be an interesting study, but traditional Presbyterian complaints about persecuting landlords (as a reason for their emigration) would not be in disharmony with the actions of someone who, along with economic incentive, was charged with the protection of his church and his government by impeding the growth of Presbyterianism in Ireland.

Dissenters, the dean continued, should be happy with what toleration they were so graciously given. Presbyterians should keep their “silence, without disturbing the community by a furious zeal for making proselytes.” Swift’s final words to his congregation on that day of remembrance were from Proverbs 24:21: “My son, feare thou the Lord, and the King: and meddle not with them that are given to change.” Clearly, to those who desired the

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37 For an example of the extreme economic interpretation, see Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America*.  
38 For the pro-Presbyterian narrative, see James Seaton Reid, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*; Thomas Hamilton, *History of Presbyterianism in Ireland*; and R.F.G. Holmes, *Our Presbyterian Heritage*. For probably the most extreme example of disregard (if not disdain) for religious arguments for Irish Presbyterian emigration before 1776, see R.J. Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America 1718-1776*.  
continuance of Anglicanism as the Established State Church of Ireland and the congruent and symbiotic Ascendancy government, Presbyterians were a threat that was not to be taken lightly. Those Presbyterians who were agitating for more rights were to be kept under vigilant watch, for such zealots would only be happy with the death of the Established Church and the current social order. Consciousness of this historical attitude of the ruling class toward Presbyterians is essential to understanding the historical position of Presbyterianism in Ireland (not to mention the attitude of eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterians toward Ireland).  

As potential threats, the Church of Ireland periodically persecuted Presbyterians, arresting or harassing ministers, breaking up meetings of presbyteries, tearing meetinghouses down. Active persecution of this type was mostly confined to the seventeenth century, before the Williamite victory over James II. There was some relief, although not complete during the reign of William and Mary (and then William alone until 1702), but Anne’s reign (1702-1714) proved to be a bitter time of legislated persecution and a High Church Tory administration that carried with it the views of Presbyterianism discussed above. With the death of Queen Anne, there began a long, slow and gradual easing of official persecution. Yet, even after this and despite the Irish Government’s general wish to seem tolerant toward dissenters, and thus ameliorate a strong dissenting faction at Westminster, antagonistic feelings continued to be the

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40 Again, the insistence of the emigrants themselves that they were leaving, at least partly, for religious reasons has been too readily dismissed by scholars following the lead of Dickson. However, there are signs that the strict economic interpretations are beginning to weaken and that religious causes are being considered again. See, for example, Patrick Griffin, The People With No Name: Ireland’s Ulster Scots, America’s Scots Irish, and the Creation of a British Atlantic World, 1689-1764 (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 65-98.

41 There was persecution during the reign of William III, but there was hope. Presbyterians believed they had a friend in William. Bishop William King of Derry (later Archbishop of Dublin), that “vigilant and jealous foe” of Presbyterianism, as Reid calls him, wrote to Sir Robert Southwell, Secretary for Ireland in late March, 1702: “As to the Dissenters of Ireland, they seem to be in great fear, and nothing could show more clearly the interest they thought themselves to have in his late majesty’s favour, than the dejection that appears amongst them at present.” James Seaton Reid, History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol. 2, pp. 488-489. Emphasis is mine.
norm between Presbyterians and the Church of Ireland until its disestablishment on the 1st of January 1871.

Persecutions more common than arrest or the pulling down of church buildings, were related to Presbyterian status within the Irish state. Because Presbyterians were not seen by the Established Church as following in the true apostolic succession, their ministers were not recognized as legitimate administrators of the sacraments. By contrast, Catholic priests, despite their legally proscribed status, were recognized as true successors in the apostolic tradition. Therefore, marriages performed by Catholic clergy in Ireland were considered irregular but valid. By contrast, the status accorded Presbyterian ministers by the Established Church had inconvenient and humiliating consequences for Presbyterians regarding marriage. Because Presbyterian ministers were not seen by the Established Church as having the right to officiate in the sacrament of marriage, those unions (at least in some manifestations or combinations) officiated by Presbyterian ministers were seen as invalid in the eyes of the government from 1697 until 1844.

Unlike some of the other discriminatory practices against Presbyterians, this marital impediment was defined and carried out by the officials and courts of the Established Church. The definition of legal marriage was defined by the Established Church, and those accused of performing or living in marriages that did not abide by that definition were tried and punished.

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42 Penal legislation introduced in 1697 specifically called for the expulsion of Catholic bishops and refused to allow anymore ordained Catholic priests into Ireland. This, obviously, was not rigorously enforced, as the Catholic clergy did not become extinct in Ireland. By the 1720s, the Catholic clergy were performing mass regularly and freely, although guardedly. See J.G. Simms, War and Politics in Ireland 1649-1730, D.W. Hayton and Gerard O’Brien, eds. (London: The Hambledon Press, 1986), pp. 225-250, 263-276.
44 It might be of interest to note that despite their high reverence for the institution of marriage, Presbyterians only recognized two sacraments: baptism and The Lord’s Supper (Holy Communion), although this was not why their marriages came to be considered invalid.
45 For example, at times it was illegal for Presbyterians to be married by Presbyterian ministers, and later it was illegal for a Presbyterian and an Anglican to be married by a Presbyterian ministers. For a good discussion of the problems surrounding Presbyterian marriages in Ireland, see J.C. Beckett, Protestant Dissent in Ireland, pp.116-123.
by the Established Church. This was *their* jurisdiction. Therefore, it was different from other penal legislation, because the civil arm of the government “could and did interfere to prevent penal laws which were still on the books from being enforced in the civil courts.” But, any attempt by the government to rein in actions of the church courts over what were considered Episcopal matters would have been interpreted as an “attack upon the rights and security of the church” which, as we have seen, would have also been interpreted by some as an attack on the Ascendancy or monarchical system of government. This, therefore, was a delicate situation for the Irish Parliament (minus the bishops), which was generally under some sort of pressure (even if it was lip service) to relieve the conditions of dissenters in Ireland. Because of the Established Church’s position within the Irish government and the Irish church’s jealous defense of its prerogatives, the government seemed hesitant to *force* its ecclesiastical wing to stop its campaign against Presbyterian marriages.

As a result, ministers could be arrested for performing marriages according to the Presbyterian custom, and lay Presbyterians were publicly charged and tried for fornication in the Ecclesiastical courts of the Church of Ireland. If those charged did not publicly confess and repent of these crimes, they “were pronounced to be living in fornication, their marriages declared void, and their children as illegitimate.” This was petty vindictiveness on the part of the churchmen, not an attempt to increase the Anglican population in Ireland. Ecclesiastical legal charges levied against Presbyterians were petty and “the persons involved were obscure. There was little here to arouse public opinion or affect political parties.”

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46 Ibid., p. 116.
47 Ibid.
49 Ibid., vol. 2, p. 480.
actions by the Church of Ireland caused considerable anguish to a portion of the Irish populations, they were obviously not vexing enough to the civil arm of the Irish government to risk alienating its ecclesiastical arm by interfering with its campaign against Presbyterian marriages. Therefore, everyday men and women of little consequence “continued to endure indignity, inconvenience and expense through having been married by their own ministers.”

To defend themselves, Presbyteries and Synods became very strict with their ministers about how the rituals around marriage were performed. A look through any Fasti of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland demonstrates that it was not uncommon for ministers to suffer suspension from duty for failure to publicly pronounce the “banns” of marriage for three consecutive Sundays (in order to defend against the charge that marriages were “clandestine”) or for engaging in some other “irregular” practice surrounding marriage, meaning something not in complete accordance with Presbyterian guidelines. Other forms of defense were also adopted. Records of the General Synod of Ulster demonstrate that Presbyterians sought legal advice and representation and that collections were taken up to help with the legal expenses of those Presbyterians who were prosecuted in the ecclesiastical courts of the Church of Ireland for fornication. After around 1723, the Established Church Party began to ease its attacks—at least on marriages between two Presbyterians.

In the manner in which relief was given, though, we see a perfect example of the half-measures that seem to have been typical of the Ascendancy government’s dealings with Presbyterians, which extended the precarious nature of their place under Irish law. In 1737 the

51 Ibid.
53 Beckett, Protestant Dissent in Ireland, p. 118.
Irish Parliament passed a bill that stopped prosecutions against Irish Presbyterians celebrating marriages in the Presbyterian rite, provided that the officiating minister had “qualified” by taking the oaths required by the Toleration Act (1719). James Seaton Reid makes it clear, however, that while this was a great “boon” to Presbyterians in Ireland, it was not a legalization of Presbyterian marriages. It was a promise not to prosecute those who were married in this manner. Reid also points out that the name of marriage “was studiously withheld” from these contracts. From 1737 on, Presbyterians were not prosecuted for these marriages, and in 1782 marriages between all dissenters officiated by their own ministers were made legal. But it was not until 1844 that Presbyterian ministers were recognized by law as having the right to marry any Irish man or woman who wished to be married in the Presbyterian custom. The history of Presbyterian marriage in Ireland thus clearly demonstrates the uncertainty under which Presbyterian life in Ireland proceeded.

Another Presbyterian grievance was “rack-renting.” Nineteenth-century Presbyterian historians stressed the point that Anglican landlords, possibly at the instigation of their priests, could and did make life uncomfortable, if not miserable, for Presbyterians by not renewing the leases with their tenants or raising the rents of those who continued in their Presbyterian dissent. Modern historians, particularly J.R. Dickson, have dismissed these claims as attempts at scoring political concessions, but Dickson seems to have based much of his counter-conclusions on the correspondence of Archbishop William King, an obvious adversary of Presbyterianism in

54 Reid, History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol. 3, p. 236.
55 Beckett, Protestant Dissent in Ireland, p. 122. The bills that finally made it legal for Presbyterian ministers to officiate in marriages and that validated marriages performed by them, even those which involved non-Presbyterians, were 7 & 8 Vic. c. 81.
56 Uncertainty under the law is no small torture. Indeed, as the age-old story of the Sword of Damocles keenly illustrates, “there can be nothing happy for the person over whom some fear always looms.” Cicero, Tusculan Disputations, 5.1.
Ireland. At the very least, the threat of these actions would have created stress and made for at least the perception of religious discrimination. James Seaton Reid writes of the shortcomings of the Act of Toleration (1719) in alleviating the pressures on the Presbyterian population of Ireland.

That tardy act of justice left unredressed a number of grievances which still pressed upon her ministers and people, while attempts were made in some parts of the province [Ulster] to deprive them even of this statute. Thus, Episcopalian landlords, possessing large estates, refused to permit Presbyterian churches to be built on their properties; and, following the example of some of the bishops, they inserted in their leases clauses to that effect. By others, higher rents were exacted from their Presbyterian than their Episcopalian tenants, and this difference was abated the moment the former class conformed.

In other words, economic deprivations were interpreted, when combined with political disabilities and social inconveniences allotted to them by the nature of their religious dissent, as being related to their religious persuasions. Here is an example of a pro-Presbyterian piece of writing from the late nineteenth century on the subject of the early-eighteenth-century rents (or rack rents) in relation to religion and migration to America:

Bishops, as we have already seen, in leasing their lands, bound up the leases under heavy penalties to permit the erection of no Presbyterian Church upon the property, and the residence of no Presbyterian tenant within its bounds.

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57 Later historians have disregarded sectarian interpretations of the “rack-renting” of Irish Presbyterians in the 18th century, insisting instead that it was economics and not religion that imposed higher rents upon Presbyterians. Thus, economics and not persecution was the culprit for the subsequent emigration of vast numbers of Presbyterians. Favorable and cheap leases which had drawn many Scottish Presbyterians to Ulster, they argue, were now up, and now that landlords had tenants on site (the goal in offering cheap leases), they wanted to make more money. While compelling in one way, the economic interpretation is exclusive of any religious considerations. In that way, the commonly accepted economic explanation (as that which trumps all others) is the equally-poor counterpart to the exclusively religious argument to which the economic interpreters took such exception in the first place. Most modern historians acknowledge that religious persecution (or at least past religious persecution), when combined with unfavorable economic conditions (including higher rents) led Irish Presbyterian tenants to see this as the final straw in a line of religiously motivated persecutions. See R. J. Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America*, pp. 26-31; James G. Leyburne, *The Scotch Irish*, pp. 160-168; J.C. Beckett, *Protestant Dissent in Ireland*, p. 90; Patrick Griffin, *The People With No Name*, pp. 65-97; Kerby A. Miller, et al., pp. 435-436; R.F.G. Holmes, *Our Presbyterian Heritage*, pp. 60-61.

58 James Seaton Reid, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. 2, pp., 511, 518-523; vol. 3, p. 221, et alibi; Thomas Hamilton, *History of Presbyterianism in Ireland*, pp. 105-108, 111-113, 133-135, et alibi. Except in cases in which the meaning of a quote was rendered less comprehensible, the spellings in quotations from the 18th and 19th centuries have not been modernized, nor, for the purposes of saving the integrity of the old prose, have I inserted the word “sic” when older spellings have been used by quoted authors.
Episcopalian landlords followed the unchristian and intolerant example set by their ‘right reverend fathers in God,’ refusing either to let land on any terms to a Presbyterian, or if given at all, charging him a higher rent than his neighbours. The falling in of leases was a favourable opportunity with them for thus venting their miserable spleen on their unfortunate tenants who had the boldness to keep consciences of their own.  

The continued existence of this assertion in Irish Presbyterian literature, 150-some-odd years after the supposed rack-renting and subsequent emigration to America occurred, lends one to draw the conclusion that Presbyterians of the early eighteenth century felt, and their descendants continued to feel, that the raising of their rents was influenced by religious bigotry. That, then, tells us something about the Irish Presbyterian frame of mind not only in the eighteenth century but the nineteenth century as well. This type of literature did not end in the nineteenth century, but continued to exist at the end of the twentieth. Consider this example from 1981 written by the late Reverend Principal John M. Barkley, an Irish Presbyterian minister, theologian, historian and principal of Union Theological College, Belfast:

Some episcopalian landlords refused to permit Presbyterian Churches to be built on their property, as in the case of my mother Church, Malin [Co. Donegal], which was built on the sands of the sea-shore in 1717. Others inserted clauses in leases to the same effect. Others exacted higher rents from Presbyterian rather than Episcopalian tenantry. Refusal to conform could mean refusal to renew the lease.  

All three excerpts from Presbyterian histories regarding “rack-renting” are very similar. None of them cite a source. We can take away from the similarity and the lack of source the possibility that such views were common from at least the mid-nineteenth century (Reid’s period of writing) to the mid-twentieth century (Barkley’s period of writing). Whether anti-Presbyterian rack-renting actually occurred or not, the belief itself was certainly real, and whether mostly encouraged by economics or not, rack-renting was a practice that was bitterly
complained of during the major waves of eighteenth-century Presbyterian emigration to America and generally seen by Irish Presbyterians (then and later) in terms of religious persecution. Whether perception or reality, the unofficial persecution of Presbyterians of rack-renting furthered Irish Presbyterian reliance upon their church when all else were perceived as hostile.

If rack-renting was unofficial persecution, and the litigation of those who engaged in marriage through the Presbyterian ritual was a persecution carried out by the ecclesiastical judiciary of the state church, then the Test Act or Sacramental Test was discrimination at the parliamentary official level. Despite their role as sometime protectors of Irish Presbyterians from the more rabid members of the High Church party, at other times the Ascendancy government was also an active persecutor of them. With the encouragement and participation of officials of the Church of Ireland, the Irish Parliament passed the Test Act or Sacramental Test, a bill that was particularly galling to Presbyterians. Part of the larger Act to Prevent the Further Growth of Popery of 1704, the Test Act was technically for keeping Catholics out of government but it was written for and directed at Presbyterians (Catholics having been well enough excluded from government by other legislation found within the larger act and elsewhere). The potential of Presbyterian power through numerical concentration of

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61 Irish Presbyterian minister and historian, James Seaton Reid, notes this anti-Catholic legislation and the Test Act with striking honesty and humility in his history of Irish Presbyterianism, written in the mid-nineteenth century. Referring to the Test Act, he writes: “This was one of the bitter fruits of that violent opposition to all Dissenters, whether Protestants or Romanists, which burst forth after the accession of Queen Anne. The Roman Catholics were the first to feel the effects of the prevalent spirit. They had already suffered much, in direct violation of the treaty of Limerick; but it is from the commencement of this reign that that iniquitous series of anti-papery laws began, which have been the source of so much misery in Ireland, and the mischievous effects of which, though now happily repealed, are still to be traced in many of the social evils of that ill-governed land. Although these most unjust and oppressive laws were passed for the sake of the Established Church, yet the Presbyterians were so blinded by the headstrong and unreasoning anti-papal spirit of those days, as to concur but too cordially in their enactment. And it was a singular occurrence, an instance perhaps, of righteous requital, that they themselves, after having given their aid in parliament to carry one of the most cruel statutes against the Romanists, should, by a clause added to that very statute, be deprived of their own civil rights, and subjected in their turn to serious
Presbyterians in Ulster scared the government.⁶² If Presbyterians became politically powerful in Ulster, they might infuse Irish politics with their anti-Episcopalian and therefore anti-monarchical ideologies, which, as we have seen, were believed to lead to political chaos and regicide. Therefore, the Protestant Ascendancy needed to exclude them from government service.

Knowing that neither Catholics nor Presbyterians would submit to the requirement that officials of the crown must receive communion in the manner prescribed by the Established Church of Ireland, this requirement became the legal method by which a man was tested for suitability to hold “offices of trust or profit under the crown.”⁶³ Some scholars have pointed to the fact that very few Presbyterians were ousted from crown positions when the Test Act came into effect to demonstrate that the Sacramental Test had very little actual impact on Irish Presbyterians.⁶⁴ More recent interpretations, however, have argued that the initial impact of the Test Act on Presbyterians was much greater than most historians have suggested. Ian McBride, for example, writes:

Their political representation, already negligible, was halved to a meager four MPs. In the important towns of Belfast and Derry, Dissenters were forced to resign their seats on the corporation. More importantly, the test almost certainly played a part in eroding the landed base of the Dissenting interest: by 1730 it was believed that no more than twenty of their number possessed sufficient land to qualify them for commissions of the peace.⁶⁵

⁶² It no doubt also scared officials of the Irish government that Presbyterians in Ireland were most numerous and consolidated in Ulster, the Irish province closest to Scotland, where most Irish Presbyterians had ethnic roots and even relatives and where, more importantly to the Irish government, Presbyterianism had ousted episcopacy as the established religion.


⁶⁵ Ian R. McBride, Scripture Politics, pp. 144-145.
McBride agrees with other historians that, after this initial impact, the Sacramental Test would have had little effect upon the Presbyterian population, that very few Presbyterians would have even qualified for posts in the government, but, by that point the damage was done.\textsuperscript{66} For much of the eighteenth century, the Sacramental Test was a glass ceiling or, as McBride calls it, a “hypothetical form of discrimination.” It is therefore difficult to gauge its impact on Presbyterians. In the sense that it defined a group of citizens as second-class or unfit for some professions or services, it is comparable to any set of discriminatory laws, even the more famous ones like the Jim Crow Laws of the American South or some of the Anti-Jewish legislation in Europe.\textsuperscript{67} The Sacramental Test was finally removed as a requirement in 1780, but it was a hated symbol of church-state oppression of Presbyterianism in Ireland, evoking strong emotion from those whom it restricted from reaching their full potential. Even if the Test Act may not have been the primary factor in keeping Presbyterians at a certain level of Irish society and government, it did symbolize their position outside the “ruling clique,” a legal manifestation of an attitude held by this “ruling clique” which demonstrated to them that the law in Ireland would be used to keep Irish people from reaching their full potential based solely on their religion.

\textsuperscript{66} Seen in this new light provided by McBride, the absurdity of the earlier logic is made clear. Arguing that the Test Act had very little consequence on whether or not Presbyterians held governmental posts and that Presbyterian complaints to the contrary are of little consequence because after the Test Act almost no Presbyterians met the financial requirements for government posts anyway, is like arguing that someone who has had his lunch money stolen from him should not complain that he does not have any lunch because he does not have enough money any way.

\textsuperscript{67} It would be interesting to see a comparison of the Test Act to the Law for the Restoration of the Professional Civil Service, the first anti-Jewish law implemented by the Nazi party in Germany. The Nazis claimed that Jews were politically unreliable, which sounds strikingly similar to language regarding Irish Presbyterians in the eighteenth century (and even into the nineteenth century). It would be equally interesting to see a comparison of the Test Act with some of the measures of Jim Crow which effectively disfranchised blacks and poor whites, thus ensuring that government would be run by a certain set of people (similar to the Ascendancy). It would also be interesting to see the reaction if historians adopted the stance that these measures had nothing to do with race, but instead were driven purely by economics.
It is revealing of the Irish Presbyterian position in relation to the Ascendancy to note that after the repeal of the Test Act in 1780 Presbyterians enjoyed some positions in government, but it was not until 1857 that a Presbyterian was elected to an Irish county seat. The Test Act and the social system it symbolized, in effect, limited the range of options available to Presbyterians within that system and for earning a living. This much-despised act put Irish Presbyterians on notice that the government would not allow them to engage in certain activities, and that landholding and entry into the level of the socially dominant was not for them. They would never set the agenda in Ireland.

The Test Act also demonstrates another aspect of the Presbyterian position in Ireland. Some scholars believe that the Test Act was enforced at alternate levels of leniency and spitefulness. The alternation in enforcement and non-enforcement illustrates the precariousness of Irish Presbyterianism within that realm. For much of the eighteenth century, it is reasonable to say that many Irish bishops were fairly “chomping at the bit” at the chance of eliminating the Presbyterian threat to their position. Moreover, the letter of the law was on their side. The Irish Parliament, however, rarely allowed outright persecution, partly, no doubt, because of the problems such a course of action would cause them with the Westminster government, full as it was with English, and after 1707 Scottish, Presbyterians. It was only the attitudes (towards dissenters) of the particular government in power at a given period in time that denied certain Church of Ireland bishops their wishes to have these statutes more thoroughly enforced, and therefore Irish Presbyterians lived under a threat of potential persecution that few other Protestants in Britain or Ireland can have experienced.

Some scholars have downplayed the persecution claimed by Irish Presbyterians as exaggerations created *post facto* and used for social or political ends.\(^70\) Certainly, there are instances of this. But just as certainly, persecutions and threats of persecution were very real. There was an ebb and flow to the levels of these threats, but even in times of relative calm Presbyterians were reminded often, if not constantly, of their second-class status and, more importantly, of their vulnerable position, a torment not to be taken as lightly as it has been by some scholars. Scholars have shrugged off parting attacks of Presbyterians like those of the Rev. James McGregor in 1718 as “broadsides at episcopacy rather than…reasoned evaluation[s] of the motives that had inspired his followers to emigrate to America,” but it is no wonder that Presbyterian ministers departing for America with what amounted to an entire congregation, articulated belligerent broadsides for anyone who would listen regarding their treatment in Ireland.\(^71\)

Yet, despite the stress, intimidation and precariousness that Presbyterians found in Ireland, they endured and were not dissuaded from continuing their dissent. In fact they flourished. As the great nineteenth-century historian of Irish Presbyterianism, James Seaton

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\(^71\) E.L. Parker preached a sermon in Londonderry, New Hampshire, on the 100\(^{th}\) year of its founding by McGregor and several hundred other Irish Presbyterian immigrants. He was in possession, in April of 1819, of McGregor’s sermon preached just before leaving Ireland. Parker writes “on embarking for this country, he preached to his people from those very appropriate words of Moses, when interceding with the Lord, in behalf of Israel, for his presence and protection in their march to the promised land, recorded in Exodus…. ‘And he said unto him, if thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence.’ Having illustrated the doctrinal sentiment suggested by the passage…he, in application of his subject, notices the reasons of their removal to America.—That it was to avoid oppression and cruel bondage; to shun persecution and designed ruin; to withdraw from the communion of idolaters, and to have an opportunity of worshipping God according to the dictates of conscience, and the rules of his inspired Word. E.L. Parker, *A Century Sermon, delivered in the East-Parrish Meeting House, Londonderry, New Hampshire, April 22, 1819, in Commemoration of the First Settlement of the Town. Containing a Sketch of the History of the Town from its Earliest Settlement* (Concord, New Hampshire: George Hough, 1819), pp. 9-10. See also E.L. Parker, *The History of Londonderry, Comprising the Towns of Derry and Londonderry, N.H.* (Boston: Perkins and Whipple, 1851), p. 34.
Reid, eloquently writes: “the storms of persecution had only caused [Presbyterianism] to strike its roots more deeply into the soil, and spread its boughs more widely over the land.” Indeed, outside pressure from some of the harsher policies adapted by the Ascendancy prelates, landlords, and governments and the threat of further persecution (just as violence and the fear of violence from Irish Catholics) only served to retrench Irish Presbyterian society around the Presbyterian Church.

Conflict, then, was an essential ingredient in the creation of Irish Presbyterianism. Moreover, it created an environment in which Presbyterians largely made their church the center not only of their religious lives, but of their societal and cultural lives as well. In the face of greater foes and insecurity under the law, Presbyterians came to rely even more upon the institutional support and stability provided by their church.

(2)

However, it was not conflict alone that was responsible for Irish Presbyterians relying so thoroughly on their church and its social structure. Presbyterians interpreted the events surrounding them through the lens of their own particular theological worldview, and the hostility and periodic conflict that they experienced in Ireland only reinforced and in fact verified a theological interpretation of a theological worldview preached to them from the pulpit, instilled into young and old through persistent study and memorization of catechisms, and demonstrated to them in the stories of the Bible, a book they were exhorted to read as a Christian duty. Strongly influenced by the Old Testament portion of the Bible, Presbyterians believed they were a covenant people, a people chosen by God himself. The fact that they were persecuted in part for what distinguished them from members of other Christian denominations in Ireland only helped to reinforce their identification with the stories of the Israelites, God’s
chosen people in the Old Testament. From the Old Testament, which is the part of the Bible inherited by Christianity from Judaism, Irish Presbyterians knew that the Israelites had been given the land of Canaan by God, but were required to fight for it and were constantly warring with those around them in order to keep it. So, when Presbyterians in Ireland found themselves in a very similar situation in which they or their recent ancestors had been given land when they had previously had none (or very little) and were also surrounded by those hostile to them, it only reaffirmed their strong belief in their significatio.\(^72\) In some ways this view is understandable. It seems less improbable that God had chosen this group to be his own people when one is also taught the Calvinistic doctrine that for any individual to be saved through the blood of Jesus Christ that person had to have been predestined by God before time began for the salvation offered through Christ’s blood. The fact that they believed in predestination, no doubt, made believing themselves to be a people chosen by God much more believable, especially when the description of the Israelites so closely matched the description of Presbyterians in Ireland.

Such a belief must have comforted and sustained a society experiencing the hostility and instability that Irish Presbyterians did through much of their history in Ireland. Consider the reassurance a Presbyterian, buffeted by attacks from either side in eighteenth- or early-nineteenth-century Ireland, might find from the following Old Testament text:

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\begin{align*}
(18) & \text{ For behold, I have made thee this day a fortified city, and an iron pillar, and } \\
& \text{ bronze walls against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, against the } \\
& \text{ princes thereof, against the Priests thereof, and against the people of the land.}
\end{align*}
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\(^{72}\) Donald Harman Akenson writes that “the Presbyterian culture of Ulster always has had strong rules, and that if one understands the rules, the society always has made sense. One can understand that society’s rules only if one recognizes that a major component (and in my view, the major component) of the Ulster-Scots mindset has been the conceptual grid that the Presbyterians of Ulster assimilated from the Hebrew scriptures.” Donald Harman Akenson, \textit{God’s Peoples}, p. 102.
(19) And they shall fight against thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee, sayeth the Lord, to deliver thee.\textsuperscript{73}

Their thorough immersion in ancient Israelite literature of the Old Testament, like the passage above, had already prepared Irish Presbyterians for situations very like the ones they were faced with in Ireland. The Old Testament, then, was not just a history of the Israelites and their dealings with God. The Old Testament was a guidebook for (1) the way a chosen people could expect the world to act towards them; (2) how they could expect God to act toward them and their enemies; and (3) how they, themselves, were supposed to act toward God and their enemies. Irish Presbyterians, therefore, expected persecution \textit{but} they also expected to prevail.

It is certainly easy to see how the passage quoted above from the prophet Jeremiah applied to their situation, as Presbyterians in Ireland at various times fought “the people of the land” who could easily be interpreted as the Catholic Irish majority who had been pushed off the lands occupied by Presbyterians. They fought the “priests” of both the Established Church of Ireland and the Roman Catholic Church; they fought Ascendancy “princes,” and even King James II, himself. Surely even as modern-day readers, personages so very alien to the religious thought-worlds of the not-too-distant past, we can follow the trail of logic used by Irish Presbyterians as they came to the conclusion that their past victories in times of fear and danger \textit{must} be a sign of God’s favor toward them. As such, they could no doubt rely in times of trouble on the promise in verse 19: “They shall fight thee, but they shall not prevail against thee: for I am with thee, sayeth the Lord, to deliver thee.”

Their theological worldview was also a key to their social cohesion in another way. Presbyterians, through the influence of the Old Testament, John Calvin, and Calvinist theologians, believed in the concept of a covenant with God. The Bible, the world, and the

\textsuperscript{73} Jeremiah 1: 18-19 (KJV)
history of the world are interpreted through successive covenants that God has made with man. In a covenant, as demonstrated in the Bible, God chooses a people to bless. He is their God, and they are his people. But, it is not that simple. Covenants involve promises and responsibilities from both parties. God promises to be that people’s God, and as his people he will bestow upon them the protection and blessings of a favored people. The chosen people must fulfill their end of the bargain as well, by promising to follow the commands and instruction of God as revealed in the Word of God, the Bible. As long as the chosen people live as their God has commanded, they will continue to reap the benefits of his blessing. This is clearly explained and demonstrated again and again in the story of God’s chosen people in the Old Testament. When things went well for the Israelites, it was because God had looked favorably upon them for following his commandments. When times were hard, through famine or war, it was because the people of Israel had not remembered the commandments of God and he had withdrawn his protecting hand from them. Consider this Old Testament text from Isaiah that warns Israel of the fate that awaits the people who break the covenant with Almighty God:

(7) Behold, their valiant ones shall cry without, the ambassadors of peace shall weep bitterly. (8) The highways lie waste; the traveling man ceases: he has broken the covenant, he hath despised the cities, he regardeth no man. (9) The earth mourneth and languisheth: Lebanon is shamed and shriveled; Sharon is like

74 This, it seems, would make one’s interpretation of the Bible especially important. Seemingly small differences in interpretation could lead to differences in behavior, which could mean the difference in keeping the covenant with God or breaking it. This is an important concept for modern day scholars to keep in mind as they study and interpret the vigorousness of intra-Presbyterian controversies such as those over the Westminster Confession of Faith, which occurred at several points in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries in Ireland and the U.S. For discussion of these controversies, see Charles Hodge, The Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1851); Charles Augustus Briggs, American Presbyterianism: Its Origin and Early History (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1885); A.W. Godfrey Brown, “Theological Interpretation of the First Subscription Controversy (1719-1728),” and R.G. Crawford, “The Second Subscription Controversy and the Personalities of the Non-Subscribers,” and R.F.G. Holmes, “Controversy and Schism in the Synod of Ulster in the 1820s,” in Challenge and Conflict: Essays in Presbyterian History and Doctrine, [J.L.M. Haire, ed.] (Antrim, Northern Ireland: W. & G. Baird, 1981); S. Donald Forston, III, ed., Colonial Presbyterianism: Old Faith in a New Land, Princeton Theological Monograph Series 71 (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2007); George M. Marsden, The Evangelical Mind and the New School Presbyterian Experience: A Case Study of Thought and Theology in Nineteenth-Century America (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).
a wilderness, and Bashan and Carmel shake off their fruits. … (11) Ye shall conceive chaff, ye shall bring forth stubble: your breath as fire shall devour you. (12) And the people shall be as the burnings of lime; as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire. (13) Hear ye that are far off what I have done; and ye that are near, acknowledge my might. (14) The sinners of Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites; who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who amongst us shall dwell with the everlasting burnings?  

Aside from being some of the most poetically fearsome lines of the Bible, they are also terrifying and would have been more terrifying for Irish Presbyterians, a majority of whom were orthodox and took the Bible, literally, as God’s words. Woe to them who broke the covenant. These were promises of the destruction and misery that would befall them if they forgot to honor God, if they broke covenant with him. But, immediately following this chilling threat and warning to those who break the covenant is this promise to those who honor God’s covenant:

(15) He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly, he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil: (16) He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the fortress of rocks; bread will be given him, his waters will be sure. (17) Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off.  

We see in this passage that walking righteously fulfills the covenant and destruction and affliction are avoided. If his people follow his ways and honor him, God promises to provide for his people and to protect them.

Both protection and destruction are promised. Much depends on how the chosen people act, which, in turn, invites communally sanctioned social discipline to ensure that actions that might incur divine disfavor are avoided or kept to a minimum. If one believes that his own actions and the actions of his fellow Presbyterians have a true bearing on whether divine favor

75 Isaiah 33:7-9, 11-14. (KJV). Emphasis in verse 8 is mine. Another ominous, but pithier, example of the same sentiment—i.e., the same warning against breaking the covenant—is found in the Psalms: “Have respect unto the covenant; for the darke places of the earth are full of the habitations of crueltie.” Psalm 74:20 (KJV).
76 Isaiah 33:15-17. (KJV).
and protection are to continue to be bestowed upon his community, especially when one is surrounded by enemies, it is certainly reasonable for that person to desire some sort of system to keep people in order. Moreover, their belief in the major Calvinistic tenet of the Total Depravity of Man—that mankind’s natural state was sinful—only intensified the desire that a system be put in place through which those in the Presbyterian community would be made sure to act in ways that did not jeopardize the continuance of God’s favor and protection over them. This attempt, as a community, of living up to their end of the covenant, and, therefore, in retaining divine protection and blessing, is a consequence of their theology, one that helped to make the church a central pillar in Presbyterian society. Church sessions kept, or attempted to keep, the people who were in their charge “walking in the paths of righteousness.” This was directly related to their theological worldview, but it also created a cohesive and disciplined social group that was able to withstand the difficult challenges presented by life in Ireland.

Before we leave the above passage, we must also note that it is striking that—amongst other blessings—God promises to give to his chosen people who live up to their end of the covenant, is a rock-built fortress. This is one of the conditions of a chosen people, to be safe within the bulwark provided by God. The need of a fortress is normal for a chosen people. So you see, Presbyterians were not only inclined to feel the need for a fortress and the need to enforce community discipline, they were almost hardwired for it by their theological worldview: conflict reinforced their theology; theology prepared them for conflict. This mindset thoroughly entrenched the church at the center of Presbyterian life in Ireland.

It should be no surprise then, that the church had some influence upon the emigration of Irish Presbyterians. Perhaps the most famous of all scholars of eighteenth-century Ulster emigration to America wrote:
The strength and the compactness of the Presbyterian bloc and the reality of the hold of the Presbyterian church over the daily lives of its members had an important effect on both the attitude of the established church to toleration and on the volume of Presbyterian emigration. ... Just as coals burn more brightly when in contact with one another, so did resentment rise among the closely-knit and numerically dominant Presbyterian congregations in north-eastern Ireland. If that resentment did not itself produce emigration, it helped the waverers to make their decision and lived in many minds long after temporal hardships were forgotten. Emigration in such a community was likely to be as contagious as a fever in an insanitary town; it was liable to become an epidemic if the minister sponsored it.77

This was power. Conflict from above and conflict from below had forced Irish Presbyterians together and to rely on their church in order to survive. It was a survival tactic. But, it was not simply that they were faced with conflict and persecution. Their theology interpreted that conflict and persecution, which had already forced them into a metaphorical phalanx for survival, as a sign that they were, indeed, a chosen people. This did several things. (1) It made Presbyterians more intransigent in their dissent. For the most part, they did not budge. Why should they leave the society of the chosen for the society of the damned because they were persecuted by the damned? Were they not promised divine deliverance and a “fortress of rocks” as a refuge? They viewed others in their community as chosen, too. Their community was special, and, therefore, they became centered around that community rather than the community governed by Ireland and Britain in general. (2) Because they were a chosen and covenant people, all of the people had a responsibility to the rest of the community to act and behave in a certain way in order to retain God’s favor. This required structure and discipline, both of which were at least partially administered by ministers—which will be addressed in the following chapter.

77 Dickson, Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, p. 5.
Chapter 3: Ministers as Foci in Irish Presbyterian Church and Society

We must now turn to the Presbyterian system of government and the role of its ministers in the church and society. Presbyterian church government was and is a democratic or “bottom-up” system. The officials of the church, ministers and elders, were elected by individual congregations and there was even a system in place in which congregations could apply to have unsatisfactory ministers or elders removed. Therefore, there was considerable power within the Presbyterian system of government exercised by individual members of the Presbyterian Church. In the context of the Irish religious landscape, these democratic aspects of the structure of Presbyterian government are often contrasted with the episcopalian, “top-down” system of church government employed by the other two major Irish denominations—the Church of Ireland and the Roman Catholic Church. In this way, the relative power of the everyday Irish Presbyterian layman within his church is often, for various reasons, contrasted with that of the everyday Irish Anglican or Catholic within theirs.¹

However, despite the power of the laity within the Presbyterian Church, ministers, especially within the church-centered society of Irish Presbyterianism, wielded considerable power within that democratic system. An appropriate analogy is the president of the United States. Within the democratic system of the U.S. government, the people elect the president and technically have recourse to remove him from office, yet no one would deny that the president also commands considerable influence and authority within that democratic system. Irish ministers within Irish Presbyterian society in both Ireland and America were similar in that way (at least up until about the year 1850). If they were able to gain the acceptance and trust of their congregation, Irish Presbyterian ministers, like an elected president, commanded power that

¹ See for example, Nigel Yates, The Religious Condition of Ireland 1770-1850 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
pervaded nearly every aspect of Irish Presbyterian life—this, in spite of the fact that power also emanated from below.

Church discipline, wherever the Presbyterian Church existed in Ulster, was not for an instant relaxed; if anything, its intensity increased during the seventeenth century. Such minute control of personal life could not have persisted without the general approval of the members of the Church.²

There is, therefore, a paradox of power within Presbyterianism, which must be understood in order to understand the importance of an Irish Presbyterian minister in his community and larger society.

Because Presbyterian ministers did not enjoy their power simply by the nature of divine right as in the episcopalian system (although divine ordination certainly figured into the equation), it is necessary to discuss the process by which a minister might obtain great power and influence in the Irish Presbyterian community. Each minister of a congregation had gone through a process of trial preaching. After licensing, a (usually) young minister would preach in various towns and villages where there was a need for a minister. The congregation would then decide whether his sermon (or sermons) were pleasing enough to invite him to be their minister. If his sermons proved acceptable, he was presented with a “call.” The minister then decided whether or not to accept the call from that particular congregation. If he did accept, he was then ordained as a minister of that particular congregation.³

Unlike the parish priest in Catholicism or Anglicanism, the Presbyterian minister’s path to social power did not end with his ordination as minister. As in the idea of a covenant, this was a two-way system in which both parties had responsibilities to fulfill in service of the other.

² Leyburn, The Scotch-Irish, p. 143.
³ Irish Presbyterian minister and historian, James Seaton Reid, asserted that a congregation’s call “obligeth them to subject themselves to the word in his mouth, and foundeth such a relation betwixt him and them as they may not cast him off at their pleasure, nor he remove from them.” This, of course, was the ideal, but not necessarily the practice. James Seaton Reid, The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol. 2, p. 569.
And even though the minister was to be a guide and a leader in that two-way system, he had to execute his duties in a way that the congregation approved. Otherwise, they could apply to the presbytery or synod to have him removed, something which did in fact happen.4

The Presbyterian Church, thus, offered some power to its lay members over their minister, whether or not to listen to the message he preached from the pulpit—even to challenge the minister over that message; as Andrew Holmes has written, “Presbyterianism upheld the fundamental right of the laity to question what their minister preached.”5 Rank-and-file Irish Presbyterians in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ireland and America were staunch defenders of orthodoxy. Any sniff of heterodoxy and trouble would ensue. Rural congregations, the vast majority of all Irish Presbyterian congregations, were especially vigilant. The laity were so well catechized that ministers had to beware that their sermons were doctrinally sound. From their places in the pews, Irish Presbyterians were known to interrupt ministers in the midst of their sermons to argue small points of theology or to denounce publicly what they might interpret as “false doctrine.”6 This, in spite of the fact that the preaching of the Word was considered to be the conduit of grace.

Less belligerently, “if the laity wished to express displeasure, they could do so in a number of ways, including conversing with each other or looking around them during the

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5 A. Holmes, The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, pp. 147-148. It seems as if the sessions of earlier times had been extremely effective in their instruction of the people. Holmes has found that “nineteenth-century writers claimed that lay attachment to the doctrines of the Shorter Catechism had saved Presbyterianism from ruin [through the unorthodox Enlightenment doctrines brought by the so-called New Light ministers in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries] and accounted for the popularity of the Seceders” [an orthodox subset of Irish and Scottish Presbyterians].
sermon. A more pronounced demonstration of disapproval was to sleep and snore….”7 Most importantly, if a minister “articulated a contradictory view to that of his congregation in an unacceptable style, they could report him to his presbytery or force him to leave.”8 Therefore, ministers who wished to remain as minister of a certain congregation were forced to tailor their sermons, at least to some degree, to the liking of their congregations. For example:

John Gamble noted in 1813 that the Presbyterian system of choosing ministers ensured a large element of crowd-pleasing. Gamble suggested that in ‘manners, modes of living, and doctrine, [the minister] must often follow, fully as much as he can lead.’ Often, this meant preaching sermons that the minister knew his congregation wanted to hear.9

Clearly, then, the Irish Presbyterian minister who was able to remain with a community long enough to become the respected, influential wielder of power within the community that history relates to us that Irish Presbyterian ministers often were, had gained that power, at least to some extent, by catering to the beliefs and desires of the laity or by aligning his own beliefs with theirs.10 For if a minister performed and behaved in a manner that the people expected, he remained. The congregation had allowed themselves to be shepherded by him. Thus, in a real sense, he had gained power through conforming to the views and beliefs of the society, and in a society so dominated by the institution of the church, this could make for far-reaching power within that society.

As the primary officers of that central institution, ministers were influential by the very nature of the fact that they carried out the day-to-day business of the church. Moreover,

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7 Ibid., p. 144. Presbyterian laymen also wrote poems that mocked ministers who addressed their congregations in condescending or supercilious tones. See A. Holmes, pp. 144-145; and Donald Harman Akenson and W.H. Crawford, Local Poets and Social History: James Orr, Bard of Ballycarry (Belfast: Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, 1977), pp. 23-24.
8 A. Holmes, The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, p. 162.
9 Ibid., p. 150.
10 Therefore, it seems to me that in the sermons of ministers who stayed with a congregation for any significant period of time, what we have is a record of the sociological, cultural, and religious attitudes of the congregation. Through the sermon, we see the intersection of the ideas and beliefs of the ministers and of his congregation. Through the minister and his writings, we see the everyday, unrecorded attitudes of the Irish Presbyterian laity.
according to Presbyterian (and all Lutheran and Calvinist) tradition, “the Word, church, and ministry are one; none is found apart from the other.” Ministers, then, were inextricably woven into the structure of the church and, thus, the society that was built around it. Hence, because Irish Presbyterian society tended to look to the church for leadership in both spiritual and temporal matters, ministers were thrust into the central leadership role for Irish Presbyterian society as a whole. So much was this the case that “although the clergyman probably would not have approved fully, it is clear that many of their constituents viewed them first as civic leaders and only secondarily as religious figures.”

Indeed, their position within the community meant that they were expected to “uphold law and justice, to arbitrate civil disputes and to reduce sectarian strain,” and in times of famine and scarcity to portion out charity.

Ministers probably assumed this role of secular leadership in addition to (or as part of) their religious and spiritual leadership, at least in some degree, because in most cases they were the most highly educated person in their congregations, most of which were rural and made up of people with little means and even less expectation to receive a university education. In fact, in the eighteenth century, the minister was often the only Presbyterian in the parish with a university education.

Their education, often of the very highest quality available, made them

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11 Akenson and Crawford, James Orr, Bard of Ballycarry, p. 24. Interestingly, Akenson and Crawford go on to say that the “tradition of civic leadership by the Presbyterian clergy is one which has continued in Ulster to the present day. Curiously, the adoption of religious professionals as civic leaders has been so instinctive as to almost go unnoticed and thus to allow members of the Scots Presbyterian community [in Ireland] to denounce the social leadership of the Roman Catholic clergy among the Catholic population even while accepting a similar situation in their own society. Crucially however, Orr makes clear that within the Presbyterian community the clergyman’s social leadership was not a by-product of his possession of supernatural gifts but was merely an ascription to him of secular function by the community. In this regard there probably was a critical difference between the Presbyterian and Roman Catholic communities, the rationalistic style of Presbyterian worship playing down the charismatic aspect of the minister, in contrast to the liturgical emphasis of the Catholic church which heightened the other-worldly associations of the priest. The result, however, was much the same, for in each case the people accepted religious professionals as social arbiters.” One such Presbyterian example in the present day is the Rev. Ian Paisley. See, Steve Bruce, Paisley: Religion and Politics in Northern Ireland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).


stand out. The educational requirements for ministerial candidates in the eighteenth century are awesome to this day, and can only have been staggering to conceive of for poor, uneducated, rural congregants. Andrew Holmes relates that

From 1690, the Presbyterian authorities in Scotland and Ireland made every effort to ensure that they had a graduate ministry with a liberal arts education and sufficient theological training. In 1770 a series of five regulations concerning the licensing and training of ministers was passed by the Synod of Ulster to make sure that candidates remained in university for at least four years. … In addition to a liberal arts degree, the Synod of Ulster decided in 1702 [sic 1792] that to enter upon the ministry candidates must have studied divinity at least four years after graduation… .

In a world in which education was both highly prized and difficult to obtain (Presbyterians were barred from Trinity College, Dublin, and no Presbyterian university was founded in Ireland until the early nineteenth century), those who had been educated were conspicuous. Even ministers below the educational standards set by the synod would have been natural leaders of their congregations in secular affairs. The most educated ministers, of course, educated as

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14 A. Holmes, The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, p. 136. Holmes reports that this last stipulation of 1792 was relaxed over the following century.

The educational backgrounds of ministers is overstated. Holmes is relying for his information on pre-1800 ministerial education on R. Allen, The Presbyterian College of Belfast 1853-1953 (Belfast: 1954), pp. 1-36. Allen probably had not read James Seaton Reid’s description of the overall state of Irish Presbyterian ministerial education by the 1790s. While some eighteenth-century ministers were supremely educated, sitting as they had at the feet of the likes of Francis Hutcheson, Adam Smith, and Thomas Reid at the University of Glasgow, others were not. Reid wrote, “Strange as it may now appear, not a few ministers of the Synod of Ulster, about the beginning of the present century (19th), had never attended a divinity class. The late Rev. W.D.H. McEwen, of Belfast, stated before the Commissioners of the Irish Education Enquiry in 1825, that such was his own case,” even though all ministerial candidates “were required to attend the literary and philosophical classes of the university.” Reid also reports that “not a few [ministers] felt themselves scarcely competent for the preparation of sermons, and one minister of better capacity not unfrequently [sic] supplied discourses to a number of the brethren in his neighborhood.” This was the Rev. John Cameron of Dunluce who ‘declared to his intimate friends that his discourses were, every Sabbath-day, preached to six congregations.’” Reid also asserts that the Rev. Andrew Alexander of Urney “is known to have assisted his brethren in the same way.” So, educational mandates did not necessarily mean 100 percent compliance. Nonetheless, even the lesser educated ministers would have been more educated than most rural parishioners, and the most educated of ministers, particularly those eighteenth-century students of Hutcheson, Smith, and Reid, could rival anyone in the English-speaking world, thus making ministers, no matter where on the spectrum of educational achievement they stood, a natural choice for secular leadership. See James Seaton Reid, The Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol. 3, p. 371 and 371nn.82-83. See also, A. Holmes, The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, p. 136n.41; Hazlett, “Students at Glasgow University from 1747 to 1768 connected with Ireland,” pp. 20-43; and Mark G. Spencer, “Stupid Irish Teagues’ and the Encouragement of Enlightenment: Ulster Presbyterian Students of Moral Philosophy in Glasgow University, 1730-1795,” in Ulster Presbyterians in the Atlantic World: Religion, Politics and Identity, David A. Wilson and Mark G. Spencer, eds. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006), pp. 50-61.
many of them were at the University of Glasgow under the tutelage of Adam Smith, Francis Hutcheson, and Thomas Reid, could rival anyone in the English-speaking world and were therefore obligated to lead and defend the entire community of Presbyterians in Ireland. Indeed, the evidence of their defense of Irish Presbyterianism remains in the copious pamphlets through which they waged intellectual warfare with their antagonists, and in which their polemical brilliance still shines for those with the good fortune to uncover them. Their education, then, was a factor in the power, influence, and responsibility that the minister enjoyed (or was burdened with) in the larger Irish Presbyterian community.

Moreover, up until about 1850 the Irish Presbyterian minister, despite the brash belligerence that unorthodox or any other manner of unacceptable ministers were sure to face from thoroughly catechized congregations, was often imbued with something like the status of a prophet, a view that had very little to do, if anything, with the fact that he was better educated than those around him. Instead, it was a view drawn from a knowledge of both the Old and New Testaments of the Bible and of the method by which a minister was made. Presbyterians believed that ministers were personally called by God to the ministry. In addition, when a congregation needed a minister they made what they called a “call” for a minister. A congregation’s minister, therefore, had answered two calls—the call of God to the ministry and of a particular congregation to be their shepherd. Not only was a congregation, many of which went without benefit of a permanent minister for years, appreciative of a minister for accepting their call, but because he had been called by God himself, and, importantly, because he had answered that call, the Presbyterian minister in Ireland was often invested with “something of

15 One fine example of a Presbyterian pamphlet collection resides in the Gamble Library at Union Theological College, Belfast, Northern Ireland.
the status in the community of an Old Testament prophet.”

Old Testament prophets, as Presbyterians would have well known, were very close to God. They heard his voice and were, thus, God’s own mouthpieces, used to by Him to relay his will to his chosen people. With such biblical images thoroughly ingrained in the minds of congregants, the Irish Presbyterian minister was often viewed in a lesser but still comparable light. The authority of such a man would not be taken lightly.

The minister also wielded another more tangible type of authority through the church session, which provided the necessary discipline that allowed Presbyterianism to survive as a semi-independent “state within a state” in the hostile environment of Ireland. In Presbyterianism, each congregation has a session, a governing committee directed by the minister. Barkley describes the minister’s leadership role in the session this way:

> Because the oversight and discipline of the congregation stands under the Word of God, the minister of the Word presides over all meetings in the congregation. He governs it with assistance and co-operation from the ruling elders. They, as a Court, meet in the Kirk-Session, with the minister of the Word as Moderator, and are responsible for the spiritual oversight of the congregation.

The session is made up of thirteen people: the minister (sometimes called the “teaching elder”) and twelve laymen called “ruling elders,” or simply “elders.”

Elders were laymen of the congregation who were nominated and elected by the session and then approved by the congregation. While elders were lay members of the community, and their election was based on the esteem in which they were held in the community, and on their leadership abilities, these “ruling elders” were essentially guided and governed by the minister as the moderator of the

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16 Barkley, “The Presbyterian Minister in Eighteenth Century Ireland,” p. 50
17 J.M. Barkley, A Short History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland (Belfast: Publications Board, Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 1959), p. 78.
18 In Ireland the words or phrases “session,” “kirk session,” and “church session” are generally interchangeable.
However, just as in his relationship with his congregation, in order for a minister to effectively wield the power of a session in the community, he had to win over the elders. One of the ways in which he did this was through the use of the Bible. It was the minister’s duty to align the actions of the session with the dictates of Holy Scripture and to teach the other members about the scriptures. He was the teacher and spiritual examiner of the other members of the session. If his interpretations and exhortations persuaded the rest of the session, the minister basically controlled the session, and through the kirk session an Irish Presbyterian minister controlled nearly every aspect of the lives of his congregation.

This last statement may seem exaggerated, but as head of the session, the minister was the head of the body that oversaw the governance of the community, and the evidence indicates a startling degree of local social control exerted by the session. Although it was answerable to presbyteries and synods above, an individual congregation’s session was a veritably self-contained government unto itself, with wide-ranging responsibility in policing and maintaining the Irish Presbyterian community. One Presbyterian historian claimed that, in the eighteenth century, the church session “supervised the whole life of the congregation.” Such a level of church power and church intrusion into every-day life is nearly unimaginable to us now, but session courts punished “hundreds of sabbath-breakers, adulterers, fornicators, bigamists, drunks, thieves, dishonest businessmen, and slanderers [who] were [then] forced to [publicly] repent their ways.” In fact, there was very little in the daily life of the community that the session did not oversee. John M. Barkley’s study of the minute books of eighteenth-century kirk sessions illustrates just how far into the lives of Presbyterians the power of the session went. Punishments were handed down by the session for the following:

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20 Barkley, *A Short History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, p. 78.
cursing and taking God’s name in vain; sabbath-breaking whether by thatching one’s house, pulling lint, or beating one’s wife [apparently permissible on other days]; lack of loyalty to Presbyterianism, disobedience of the Session or parents; adultery, fornication, bigamy, keeping a brothel; marriage in the Established or Roman Churches; stealing and dishonesty in business, robbing a neighbor’s potato pits, non-payment of debts, failing to provide for one’s family; slander, lying, mockery, withholding evidence in a case of justice, putting in with the landlord for another member’s land; and so on. An analysis of Session proceedings in the eighteenth century shows that they covered every one of the Ten Commandments except those forbidding the making of graven images and murder.23

Moreover, each session managed congregational finances, dispensed charity to the poor, and even maintained a school if that was at all feasible.24 These were not merely the powers of a spiritual institution, but those of a genuine, earthly government.

At the most local and atomized level, then, the Presbyterian system in Ireland was clearly inseparable from and indispensable to the everyday lives of Irish Presbyterians. “The Church represented the mortar holding individuals together…. Individuals cut off from the community lost all sense of direction.”25 Therefore, the power to exclude an individual from that community, or simply the fear of that exclusion, was another source of the power held by the kirk session. It was a weapon used or threatened in enforcement of religious and social norms and in the preservation of Presbyterian social unity in the face of greater foes.

There was no greater judgment than the excommunication of someone for consistent disregard for the rules of the church or the ostracism of a Presbyterian who conformed to the Established Church but who had the great misfortune of still living amongst his former brethren. Such power—and specifically the of excommunication and ostracism—did not go unnoticed by

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24 McBride, Scripture Politics, p. 29.
25 Griffin, The People with No Name, p. 47.
the authorities. On November 6, 1711, a committee consisting of thirteen Irish bishops, eleven Lords and headed by Archbishop King, himself, drew up a “representation and address to the Queen’s majesty, relating to the Dissenting ministers.” This document complained to Anne that Irish Presbyterians “exercised great severities towards their conforming neighbors, by denying them common offices of humanity, and by threatening and actually ruining many who, in compliance with their conscience, had left their sect.” Irish Presbyterians who conformed to the Church of Ireland were obviously not tolerated, and neither were conversions to Catholicism. Those married in ceremonies performed by “papist priests” were strongly censured, as it was likely that any progeny from such a marriage would be raised in the Catholic fashion. There was probably nothing so threatening to the survival of Irish Presbyterianism than a fever of conversions to either the Catholic or Anglican denominations, and the Presbyterian authorities, therefore, shored up the defenses against those threats by making examples of those who did conform or convert.

The behavior of Presbyterians in Ireland was monitored by the session, not just for religious reasons, but because Presbyterian leaders were very aware of the importance of how those outside their communion perceived their community as a whole. They therefore used their power to control the behavior of Irish Presbyterians. The minutes of the Presbytery of

26 Reid, *The Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. 3, p. 16.
27 In his *The Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, James Seaton Reid writes (vol. 2, p. 18) “This ‘representation’ is set forth at length in the Journals of the Irish Lords, vol. ii, pp. 410, 411.” I am not sure whether these records are still extant, as many of the official records of Ireland were destroyed on April 13, 1922 during the Irish Civil War. The “representation” of Archbishop King should be tempered, however, with the knowledge that King was one of the severest of Church of Ireland prelates toward the Irish Presbyterian Church. The document sent to Queen Anne was later described by Reid, himself an Irish Presbyterian minister and professor of history at Glasgow University, as “perhaps one of the most unjust and undignified papers which has ever emanated from a judicial body…. [containing] all the scandalous gossip which Archbishop King had been colleting for years against them.” (vol. 2, p. 17). This was a document drawn up by the enemies of Irish Presbyterians with the intention of removing from them their one gift from the government in London, the *Regium Donum*, an intention that was briefly fulfilled in 1714. King is not a disinterested party in his description of Presbyterian authority. Irish Presbyterian minister and historian James Seaton Reid, though, is similarly not merely a disinterested historian in his characterization of King.
Monaghan in 1708/09 demonstrate that its ministers believed that Irish Presbyterian society was “polluted” with “rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness, strife and envying.”

Patrick Griffin claims that Irish Presbyterian leaders felt that a decline in morality was one of the ill-effects of a boom in the linen industry and the resulting relative economic prosperity enjoyed by Irish Presbyterians in the first two decades of the eighteenth century. Church officials took this “declension” very seriously and believed that misdeeds such as these not only made for unpleasant social conditions and potential judgment from God, but that they gave ammunition to their enemies and compromised “the integrity of the Presbyterian system” and “its stand against the Established Church.” So, efforts were made to shore up that weakness by, among other methods, excluding the “ignorant and scandalous” from the Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion.

Exclusion from the sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism were not only used to keep the morals of the community in line, but its theology as well. When controversy arose in 1719 over an attempt at requiring universal subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith from ministerial candidates, sessions favoring subscription used their position as both

29 Griffin, The People with No Name, p. 46. Griffin is quoting from the Minutes of the Monaghan Presbytery, 14 February 1708/09, p. 51.
30 It is good to remember here that Irish Presbyterians were members of a church wedded to a theology and worldview very much influenced by the Old Testament and were, therefore, accustomed to viewing their world as being judged by a God with a vengeful and atrabilious nature who was not above sending his chosen people into Babylonian Captivity to teach them a lesson.
31 Griffin, The People With No Name, p. 51
32 A. Holmes, The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, p. 198. It is interesting that Irene Whelan has noted a very similar phenomenon amongst 19th-century Irish Catholics in the United States. She claims that largely because of outside perceptions that varying sorts of base behavior were typical of Irish Catholics, Irish Catholic clergy stressed rigid morality. This created a “mirror-image effect” and eventually allowed Irish Catholics, enabled by the Church, to enter mainstream society. See, Irene Whelan, “Religious Rivalry and the Making of Irish-American Identity,” pp. 271-285.
educators of their congregants and examiners of their worthiness to receive the Sacraments to their advantage. A minute book from Connor in County Antrim in 1716 records this charge to newcomers to the Sacrament of Holy Communion:

We whose names are underwritten do solemnly profess our hearty desire to believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost according to the several articles of the Christian faith as they are contained in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, summed up in our Confession of Faith and Shorter and Longer Catechisms, and earnestly desiring to repent of all our sins we give ourselves up to God the Father…and to Jesus Christ as our only Saviour and to the Holy Ghost as our Sanctifier…we promise through grace in all things to behave ourselves orderly and according to the principles we have now professed and that we will deny ourselves and take our cross and follow Christ as the captain of our salvation unto death in the earnest hope of living with Him in endless glory.  

The required pledge is more than simple adherence to the teachings of Christ and a hope for salvation, which of course it is in part. It is also a reaction to the beliefs of the New Light party which began to manifest itself in Ireland around the year 1705 and was prevalent amongst ministers of Presbyterian Churches in Belfast and the areas made prosperous by the recent linen boom. In the 1716 charge to new communicants in Connor, we see that those to be granted the lead token that signified full standing in an Irish Presbyterian congregation were required to believe in the Holy Trinity and subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith. Various New Light ministers publicly questioned these doctrines in several “Pamphlet Wars” beginning with the 1705 trial of Dublin minister Thomas Emlyn for the publication of anti-Trinitarian views. New Lights also opposed the idea that subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith

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34 R.F.G. Holmes, Our Irish Presbyterian Heritage, p. 73. Quoted from the minutes of Connor Presbyterian Church, 2 November 1716.
should be required of all new ministers, and believed strongly in the elevation of personal conscience.

In contrast, we see from the Connor communicants’ pledge that they “deny” themselves and take their cross, a signification of submission to the authority of the Holy Scriptures, the authority of Christ and the authority of his “bride,” the Church. They also “promise[d] through grace in all things to behave… [themselves] orderly and according to the principles… [they] professed.” If they broke these promises, they would be denied access to the Body and the Blood and suffer, religiously and socially, the ostracized fate of the outcast. So, a communal theology, communal behavior and the exclusivity of qualifying for inclusion were reinforced through this confession. It was a society bound up by, disciplined by, and intertwined with the church—a vice-like grip if there ever was one.

Such a high level of social cohesion was made possible by the vigilance and efforts of the session, for:

it was by resolution of the Session that children were baptised, and catechumens admitted to the Lord’s Table, or, as in Connor, approved for ‘confirmation.’ They reviewed the character and conduct of all members prior to each communion. Marriage, also, was subject to Session approval. It was conducted in accordance with ecclesiastical discipline. Permission of parents was necessary, though they were not permitted to be unreasonable.35

Even the wishes of parents for their children could be superseded by the session if it saw fit. Not attending public services could get a person censured by the session. To the modern reader the amount of control wielded by the session over Irish Presbyterians throughout the eighteenth century and up until about 1850 seems to have been overwhelming. Christopher Hitchens’s clever, if over-used, description of Christianity as “a kind of divine North Korea,” seems apt.

With such far-reaching and seemingly ubiquitous license and influence, it might be surmised that Presbyterians constantly chafed under the seemingly draconian oligarchy of the session. However, the authority of the session was less resented than it might have been for at least two reasons: the first was that Presbyterians were surrounded by those who were hostile to them and social cohesion was a necessary reality; the second was that the ministers and elders who made up each congregation’s session also submitted to regular examination and the same discipline. The former were inspected for heresy on a weekly basis as their sermons were parsed over and discussed amongst the community and, as we have seen, could be dispensed with if they proved unacceptable through a successful appeal to the presbytery. Ministers were also examined by other ministers at meetings of presbytery, and the spiritual and temporal lives of elders were formally examined by their ministers at least twice a year.\(^\text{36}\) It was a system of discipline that none were above, which helped in some ways to further the bond between minister and people.

Despite the fact that few Presbyterians seemed to resent the power of the minister and the session,\(^\text{37}\) the power of Irish Presbyterian ministers was tangible, and thus it was both noticed and resented by the denominations which surrounded the Irish Presbyterian community. Anglican clergymen often wrote on the topic of Irish Presbyterian discipline. William King, who as Bishop of Derry had a close, personal knowledge of Presbyterians and who later became Archbishop of Dublin, declared that Presbyterian ministers and elders in Ireland ruled their congregations “under an absolute slavery.”\(^\text{38}\) His was not atypical of the Church of Ireland’s opinions of the relationship between Irish Presbyterian ministers and their congregants.

\(^\text{36}\) Ibid., p. 53.
\(^\text{37}\) Ibid.
\(^\text{38}\) McBride, *Scripture Politics*, p. 29.
Catholics also noticed and resented the authority of Irish Presbyterian ministers. As an analysis of the testimony taken after the burning in 1743 of Freeduff Presbyterian Church in County Armagh makes clear, Catholic bitterness related to both the loss of land and the authority exerted locally by Presbyterian ministers could sometimes boil over into violence.

[Ellinor] Mulligan, who recently had traveled from Raffry townland near Strangford Lough to join [Rev. Alexander] McCombe’s [Presbyterian] congregation and reside in the area, stated that a man, she presumed a papist, had told her on the road that she had better not settle in the region, where discounted rents were being used to attract Presbyterian colonists. If she did so, it was intimated that her cattle would be houghed—that is have their hamstrings cut—and she would be burned off the land. According to Mulligan, the man also mentioned Rev. McCombe, who was said to be acting like a ‘little king’ in the area and would soon be getting his reward.39

So, the submission of Presbyterian authority to inspection by others may have assuaged lay Presbyterians, but Catholics and Anglicans resented the power of the minister.

So far, we have mostly focused upon the tangible power that was available to the Irish Presbyterian minister if he was successful in winning over the congregation and the elders of the session, but there was also a sizeable portion of his power that, to the historian, was intangible. Intangibles usually make historians uncomfortable. Nonetheless, there are types of power that are not easily reducible to the formulations of academic historians and yet that power is real and has real-life effects. Consider, for instance, what Robert L. Heilbroner has so eloquently written of the power of the world’s great economists:

By all the rules of schoolboy history books, they were nonentities: they commanded no armies, sent no men to their deaths, ruled no empires, took little

39 Sean Farrell, “The Burning of Freeduff Presbyterian Church, 1743,” pp. 72-85. Emphasis is mine. Evidence of Ellinor Mulligan, Groves Transcripts, PRONI, T.808/14925. S.J. Connolly relates this slightly differently, but relays the same feeling toward the Rev. McCombe: “In 1743, meeting-house founded near Crossmaglen by a newly established minister, Alexander McCoombe, was burnt down. A woman who had been on her way to join his congregation reported how she had been stopped on the road and told that ‘she had better stay at home on 8s. and acre than go there and pay 4s., for the meeting house was burned, and the people’s cattle houghed, and that they (the Papists) would burn herself; that McCoome thought to be a little king in that country, but he must be holden in.’” See S.J. Connolly, Religion, Law, and Power, p. 125. See also, “Examination of Elenor Mulligan,” 11 Oct. 1743 (PRONI T1392).
part in history-making decisions. A few of them achieved renown, but none was ever a national hero; a few were roundly abused, but none was ever quite a national villain. Yet what they did was more decisive for history than many acts of statesmen who basked in brighter glory, often more profoundly disturbing than the shuttling of armies back and forth across frontiers, more powerful for good and bad than edicts of kings and legislatures. It was this: they shaped men’s minds. And because he who enlists a man’s mind wields power even greater than the sword or the scepter, these men shaped and swayed the world.\textsuperscript{40}

Like the great economists, it was through the shaping of minds that ministers most probably exerted their greatest power and influence, no matter that such influence would be impossible to quantify. Ministers freely admitted that shaping the minds of their congregants was one of their goals. For example, the Rev. William Stavely, a Reformed Presbyterian who nearly single-handedly kept that Presbyterian sect from going extinct in Ireland in the late-eighteenth century, tellingly wrote: “I have not studied to humour men’s fancies, but to inform their understanding, and endeavor to reform their lives.”\textsuperscript{41}

Indeed, this aspect of the minister’s influence and power was inextricably wound into his position as the conduit through which the Sacrament of the Word was delivered. The public teaching that was provided through the minister’s sermons was thought to be “equally with the administration of the sacraments of [Baptism and Communion], exclusively the province of the ministry… “\textsuperscript{42} So, the life of the congregation not only revolved around the community discipline and structure provided by the session, but around its worship, and “without question the minister exercised his greatest influence in public worship. Here, through Word and Sacrament, was made known the Gospel of Christ and the response it demanded in daily life.

\textsuperscript{41} William Stavely, \textit{War Proclaimed and Victory Ensured; or, the LAMB’s Conquests Illustrated. A Sermon. Lately Delivered and now Published at the Earnest Request of the Auditors. By the Rev. William Stavely, Minister of the Gospel at Ann’s Borough, Near Belfast} (Belfast: Thomas Storey, 1795), p. vi.
Preaching was expository so the people were grounded in the teaching of Scripture.” It was the minister’s duty to teach the people, and he therefore endeavored, weekly if not daily, to shape and form the very thoughts of his congregation through his preaching and instruction, who in turn were bound to attempt to apply those teachings to their daily lives.

Moreover, “preaching was of central importance to the experience and identity of Presbyterian communities. At one level, preaching defined the group and expressed the differences between them and their neighbors.” It was generally from the pulpit, that the minister instructed the people of his congregation in how the Scriptures—believed by the orthodox to be the very words of God—were to be interpreted. From the pulpit, the minister interpreted everyday events through the use of the Scriptures. Here, life was made to fit with the Presbyterian interpretation of the Bible, and that interpretation was taken from the meeting house and into the world—employed by Irish Presbyterians in making sense of everyday life.

Preaching was central to Presbyterianism in Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, not only because it helped the community to solidify their theological ideas and to define itself through those ideas in contrast to others, but because the preaching of the Word was believed to be the “means of grace by which God called the elect to himself by the Holy Spirit.”

The proclamation of God’s word through preaching has always been of central importance in the Reformed tradition. For John Calvin and English Puritans who followed him, preaching was not merely the expounding of Scripture, but the declaration of God’s will and revelation to his people; a means of grace animated by the Holy Spirit and rooted in the sovereign purposes of God. This was the position of the Westminster divines who, in the Directory, declared that preaching was the ‘power of God unto salvation, and one of the greatest and

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44 A. Holmes, The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, p. 162.
most excellent marks belonging to the ministry of the gospel." The responsibility placed upon those called to be ministers of God’s word was consequently great.\footnote{Ibid., p. 126. A. Holmes is quoting from *The Directory for Public Worship*, pp. 379-81.}

Irish Presbyterians, accordingly, gave respect to those ministers who persuaded their congregations that they were fit bearers of this responsibility and communicators of this means of grace.

However, preaching, as a means of grace, was not a one-way phenomenon. Both preacher and listener had responsibilities. A member of the congregation had to prepare himself for the message of the preacher by studying his Bible and his catechism. “Those listening had to prepare themselves to receive God’s word through prayer, listen attentively for God’s voice in the sermon, and apply the lessons prescribed to their own lives.”\footnote{A. Holmes, *The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice*, p. 127.} Thus, the sacrament of the Word was not just the territory of the minister, but that of the layman as well. So, even in the minister’s most exalted role, the instrument through which God’s grace (and salvation) was made known to the people, he is bound intimately in this endeavor with the people of his congregation. “The reciprocal duties and responsibilities placed upon the minister and his hearers created a sense of community, formed as the people of God listened to the word of God proclaimed by the servant of God.”\footnote{Ibid.} This was truly a communal sacrament in the sense that all had a responsibility and a duty to approach the sacrament in a way in which grace could truly be delivered and received. So, not only did the minister shape the mind of the community through his preaching, but helped bind it more tightly together as well.

The same can be said for another important aspect of his work as minister: his duty to visit and instruct in the home. Home visitations were a vital part of ministerial duties, and it was here that the minister furthered the considerable impact on the mind of the community.
through his public preaching. On visitations, a minister was allowed into a family’s home, where he proceeded to catechize all the members of the household, making sure that each person was well instructed in the tenets of the church. It was important to ensure unity of thought. Each member, through visitations, through Sunday worship and through learning—literally memorizing—the catechism, was indoctrinated with the Presbyterian principles and ideals. So, from a tender age Presbyterians were imbued with the mindset of Presbyterianism and repeatedly fortified in it throughout their lives. The shaping of minds was simply part of the minister’s role. As historian and Irish Presbyterian minister, John M. Barkley, once wrote:

In this way, the minister, assisted by the elders, created and maintained a people who knew the love and mercy of God, who lived in awe of Him, and who knew that He required obedience and fidelity from His people in their daily lives. It was in this sphere that the influence of the minister is seen in its greatest depth for it was here that the characteristic integrity commonly ascribed to the Ulster Scot had its foundation.  

Ministers, in this way, were literally shaping a distinct people, a people that not only worshipped differently from those around them but that thought differently about their common world.

Another manner in which Presbyterian unity of mind was achieved was through establishing limited access to the communion table:

the distribution of lead tokens which gave admission to the sacrament was never a mere formality nor was the privilege of having one’s children baptized. Elders were expected to question all communicants and parents who had children to be baptised about what they believed and how they lived. Did they have family worship, did they and their families keep the sabbath, did they practise private prayer and teach their children to pray?  

49 Barkley, “The Presbyterian Minister in Eighteenth Century Ireland,” p. 52  
50 R.F.G. Holmes, Our Irish Presbyterian Heritage, p. 73.
If examinants were found worthy to approach the table, they were issued lead tokens which they presented as signs that they had been examined and found acceptable to receive the Body and the Blood. Historian Leigh Eric Schmidt has written that tokens were a symbol of the covenant between God and his people. They helped define who were among God’s covenanted people and who were not. They were visible emblems of membership in the invisible church, outward signs of those who had ‘inward tokens.’ Like the right language or the right clothes, the token was another way God’s people concretized an interior, inscrutable state. It was a public emblem of their commitment to Christ. Without a token, no approach to God’s table was possible. With one, access was gained. The token regulated membership in the community of saints. Those who had one…were knit ‘together in the bonds of love,’ but conversely those who did not have one were visibly excluded from the circle of faith. These leaden tokens were forceful symbols both of evangelical community and the boundaries that were drawn around it. They helped give hard specificity and careful definition to the membership of Presbyterian communities. Through them, the covenanted community was both knitted together and tightly bounded.\(^{51}\)

Even in the lead tokens, these important “concretized” symbols of an interior thought-world, it is possible see the centrality of the minister. Tokens were generally impressed with designs or letters and were different for each congregation, and so one physical manifestation, still visible to us today, of the minister’s predominance in congregational life in Irish and early American Presbyterianism is the fact that the initials of a congregation’s minister were a common stamp on communion tokens.\(^{52}\)

Ministers were also bound to the community in the fact that they worked so closely with their congregants in day to day life. Although the Presbyterian minister in Ireland was a man apart because of his lofty, God-given authority, the nature of his work in molding the mind of the community, and his university education, his life was often entwined with the everyday lives

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\(^{52}\) Ibid., p. 108.
of the people of his congregation. Hence, he was also a man of the people, and this is well
demonstrated by the way in which his congregation paid him.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the vast majority of Presbyterian
congregations in Ireland were found in rural areas, and throughout most of the nineteenth
century the “spiritual and numerical heartland…remained in the Ulster countryside.”53 Many of
these congregations were poor, and therefore, the ability to pay a minister was often a concern.54
Aside from the Regium Donum, which was paid by the monarch, ministers were paid by their
congregations in stipends and in kind.55 “Stipends were based upon a bond made by each head
of family for the minister’s maintenance.”56 However, many times these stipends simply could
not be paid, so in times of bad harvests, ministers felt the pangs of scarcity along with their
congregations. A look through any Irish Presbyterian fasti demonstrates that many ministers
forewent their stipends for years at a time because of the inability of their congregations to pay
them.57 For example, when the Rev. James McGregor of Aghadowey, County Derry, led many
of his congregation in emigrating to America in 1718, he had not been paid his stipend for three
consecutive years.58 Many Presbyterian churches during this period seem to have been

53 A. Holmes, The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, p. 27.
54 See chapter on clerical migration from 1683 to 1713, below, for further discussion of payment of ministers and
the problems that some congregations and ministers were faced with.
55 The Regium Donum was an annual payment granted by the government to Presbyterians and used to help pay
ministers. It was first granted at 600 pounds a year by Charles II but later suspended by his brother, James II. For
their help in securing Ireland for William of Orange in 1689-90, William III resumed this payment and doubled its
size. William’s sister-in-law, Queen Anne, suspended the payment in 1714, but she died the same year and the
Regium Donum was resumed and increased it to 1600 pounds per year in 1715. It was continued until the Church
of Ireland was disestablished 1 January 1871. S.J. Connolly, ed., The Oxford Companion to Irish History, s.v.
“Regium Donum.”
57 See Baillie, ed., A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 1610-1982; Knox, ed., A
History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 1610-1982: A Supplement of Additions,
Emendations and Corrections; McConnell and McConnell, eds., Fasti of the Irish Presbyterian Church 1613-1840;
Killen, History of Congregations of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and Biographical Notices of Eminent
Presbyterian Ministers and Laymen.
58 Sherling database.
desperately impecunious. Patrick Griffin writes of the poverty of eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterian congregations, even mentioning the future emigrant, Rev. MacGregor:

"For more than ten years after the siege of Derry ended [1689], Presbyterians could not even raise enough money to support their church. Church records from the period illustrate the problems presbyteries encountered pressuring congregants to pay ministerial stipends. In one such instance, a congregation could not even put a roof over a minister’s head. The Presbytery of Route chastised the people of Aghadowey because their minister, Mr. McGreggor, had ‘no certain lodging in the parish,’ asserting it was ‘not consistent with the credit of the Gospel, for a minister to go from house to house.’ His congregants found him a home, but could not come up with his stipend and the ‘ground rent for a meeting-house.’"

The Rev. Hugh Wallace was not paid his stipend by his Dawson’s Bridge (also known as Casteldawson), County Derry, congregation for nine years. Yet, despite such hardship and penury, it was only after sixteen years that Wallace finally resigned from the Dawson’s Bridge portion of his charge. That both men stayed on for those years of hardship, and the fact that so many of McGregor’s congregation followed him to America, is indicative of the bond between minister and congregation.

Such a bond was built over time and the last form of payment—payment in kind—helped to foster it more than the other two forms of payment (the Regium Donum and the

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60 Barkley, “The Presbyterian Minister in Eighteenth Century Ireland,” p. 49.
61 Baillie, ed., A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, p. 283. After Wallace’s resignation from duties as minister at Dawson’s Bridge (he still had other congregations under his charge), the Dawson’s Bridge congregation went 7 years without a minister (1736-43). Despite the poverty of the congregation, the Rev. Robert Henry remained there for the next 55 years, when he retired in 1798.
62 There are numerous examples of congregations either emigrating along with their minister or following closely behind him. In 1714 Thomas Craighead and his brother-in-law, William Holmes, emigrated to New England. Very soon afterwards, a large number of emigrants arrived in New England from the regions immediately surrounding their own congregational meeting-houses in Counties Donegal and Tyrone. In 1718, McGregor and James Woodside arrived with large portions of their congregations in tow. In 1763, Thomas Clark arrived with about 300 Presbyterians and in 1773 William Martin arrived with 5 shiploads of Presbyterians. These events demonstrate the very strong bond that could be forged between minister and people. For more see, Charles Knowles Bolton, Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America (Boston: Bacon and Brown, 1910); Henry Jones Ford, The Scotch-Irish in America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1915); Leyburn, The Scotch-Irish; Rory Fitzpatrick, God’s Frontiersmen: The Scots-Irish Epic (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989); and Griffin, The People With No Name.
stipend paid by the congregation). It involved the produce of a congregationally rented farm that was used for the maintenance of the minister. The minister generally lived on the farm and helped to work the land when he could. But, it was the duty of his congregation to work the farm so that it brought forth enough produce to sustain the minister and his family. It was the session who organized the people of a congregation to do this work. J.M. Barkley reports that “the Session in Kilwaughter ‘bought a horse in Glenarme for Mr. Ogalbie’ in 1700, and made arrangements for ‘ploughing, turf, shearing, winning hay, etc.’”63 Because a minister worked with his people on the manse-farm, because he felt economic hardship when they felt it, because the minister saw that the people of the congregation collectively undertook the strain and struggle to be able to afford his services, the minister and the people were drawn closely together. It is not surprising, then, that tales celebrating the loyalty between the two are not uncommon in Irish Presbyterian literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.64

With such emphasis on discussion of Presbyterian unity, it should also be noted that, while all kinds of external and internal factors intricately interlocked to create a tightly knit Presbyterian community and that Presbyterianism was remarkably successful in indoctrinating the minds of its people with its creeds and ideals and in including them in the life of the church, there was “a sizeable group, possibly comprising at least one-fifth of the Presbyterian population, who had no formal link with the church and whose religious identity was determined by ethnic, cultural, and political factors.”65 Through these latter factors, even the relatively unreligious were kept within the community, and thus the church was still central to their identity and culture. All Irish Presbyterians, even those who were not formally received as

63 Barkley, “The Presbyterian Minister in Eighteenth Century Ireland,” p. 49. See also Kilwaughter Minutes., 1699-1701.
communicants, were bound together in a community by the customs, beliefs, values and common enemies provided to them by the nature of being a Presbyterian in Ireland.

In conclusion, I think it is appropriate to repeat a line of Patrick Griffin’s which was used to introduce the theme of this chapter. He wrote that for Irish Presbyterians, “the Church represented the mortar holding individuals together,” and that without it, individuals “lost all sense of direction.”66 Without it they were no longer a part of what had made them greater than merely individuals.

Without a minister there was no church in the same sense that there had been in Ireland. Without a minister, groups of Irish Presbyterians, whether in Ireland or in America, lacked at least some of the mortar that had formerly held their communities in together and in order, and therefore seem to have lost some direction.67 It is no wonder, then, that we see people in Ulster making long journeys to Scotland to have their children baptized by Presbyterian ministers or people in America traveling for days on end through the Appalachian backcountry just to receive communion, for they defined themselves, at least partially, through these rituals. It also makes it heartbreakingly clear just how desperately fervent were the frequent calls from communities of Irish Presbyterians in America asking the Synod of Ulster to send them ministers.68 A petition for a minister from Irish Presbyterian settlers in Maryland in February of 1705/6 demonstrates the point quite plainly. Send us a minister, they asked, lest we “be cast desolate and to our great griefe we and our posterity left as a prey to superstition and

66 Griffin, The People With No Name, p. 47.
67 This is not to say that Irish Presbyterians in America could not adapt to Irish or American conditions in which they were left without a minister. Remember, that both the people and ministers controlled power within Presbyterianism, so the laity were perfectly capable of creating a system of worship and governance without a minister, but such instances, I would argue, are exceptions and are therefore not the typical of the Irish Presbyterianism we have documented. For examples of lay agency and power within Scottish and Irish Presbyterian immigrants in colonial America, see Marilyn J. Westerkamp, Triumph of the Laity: Scots-Irish Piety and the Great Awakening, 1625-1760 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); and David. W. Miller, “Presbyterianism and Modernization,” in Ulster, Past and Present, no. 80 (1978): 60-90.
68 See examples in Leyburn, The Scotch-Irish; and Griffin, The People With No Name.
heresies.”69 A Presbyterian community without a minister was without much of its leadership, identity, and solace. It was, in fact, “cast desolate.” The minister’s role in the Irish Presbyterian community was such that, although he “was a person apart, he was also the embodiment of the community values and identity.”70 Therefore, the transatlantic migration of these individuals was important to that community, and the investigation of that migration might yield rich rewards for those in search of characteristics of a migration that has been notoriously hard to fully explore.

70 A. Holmes, The Shaping of Ulster Presbyterian Belief and Practice, p. 162.
Chapter 4:  
It All Began Like Dripping Water:  
The Inception of Presbyterian Clerical Migration, 1683-1713

Numerically speaking, clerical migration was very slight during this period, but migration in some ways should be conceived of as a chain reaction, and in a chain reaction (or chain migration) the start is very important in explaining what comes later. This first period of migration is a prelude to later, more conspicuous periods of immigration that America had never seen before, and a prelude, by definition, introduces something larger or more important. It sets the tone for what comes later and, therefore, cannot be neglected. In attempting to explain this early period of migration without the help of a more significant data set, we will place the transatlantic movement of these men through the use of antiquary books and Presbyterian fasti.

The numbers tell us that nine Presbyterian ministers left Ireland for England’s and then Great Britain’s North American colonies between 1683 and 1713. They arrived in three distinct stages that had different causes and patterns. The first occurred in the last years of the reign of Charles II, and began when in 1683 William Trail, Francis Makemie, Thomas Wilson, and Samuel Davis left Ireland to attend to the spiritual needs of mostly Irish and some Scottish Presbyterians in America who had no minister of their own.¹ These ministers from Ireland were the first identifiable English-speaking Presbyterian ministers in North America. Josias Mackie followed shortly thereafter, but, like most of the others, neither his exact date of departure nor date of arrival is known. The earliest date given for his arrival in the New World is 1684, and

¹ Some sources suggest that Trail might have left Ireland for Maryland in 1682, the year he was released from his Lifford imprisonment (discussed later in the text), and there is some possibility that Thomas Wilson arrived in 1681. Because of lack of evidence, however, we cannot say for certain, and most historians agree that it was in 1683 that Trail, Makemie, Wilson, and Davis arrived in the New World. The dates of events such as departures, arrivals, or ordinations are all very difficult at this point to ascertain. It has been asserted by some that these men arrived together on the same ship, but there is no hard evidence of this. On whether or not these Presbyterians left Ireland together, see Clayton Torrence, Old Somerset on the Eastern Shore of Maryland: A Study in Foundations and Founders (Richmond, VA: Whittet & Shepperson, 1935), p. 214; Polk, “From Lifford to the Chesapeake.”
estimates range from that date through 1692. It seems likeliest, though, that Mackie arrived sometime before 1687.2 These five men represent the first stage of immigration in this period. John Hampton followed in 1705, constituting the second phase. In 1709 a last stage, with significantly altered emigration patterns, began with the migration of John Henry. Thomas Bratton and Henry Hook arrived from Ireland in 1711 and 1713, respectively, to end our first stage of clerical immigration into America from Ireland.

And, in a sense, that is that. That is the story of Irish Presbyterian clerical immigration into America from 1683 to 1713, and this superficial account tells us nothing of the larger immigration of either lay Presbyterians or Presbyterian ministers from Ireland. But, if we look closely, we will see, amongst other things, patterns that do in fact help us to explain clerical immigration to the New World from Ireland both in this thirty year period and in later periods. Moreover, placing this migration into its historical context also helps to demonstrates to us the location, needs, and character of lay Irish Presbyterians in America.3

In this earliest period of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration, data are scarce, but even with that scarcity two themes stand out: Irish origins and American settlement. These are prominent in each of the three sub-phases of migration during the period from 1683 to 1713. Regarding Irish origins, the first five clerical migrants left between 1683 and 1702, and all of them can be connected with County Donegal or the Laggan Presbytery.4 John Hampton, who arrived in 1705 and who represents a second stage of migration in this thirty-year period, was

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2 This is because he is thought to have taken over duties for Francis Makemie as minister of a congregation at Elizabeth River, Virginia. We do not know when this exchange took place, but Makemie was on a tithables list in Maryland by 1687, which means he was no longer living on the Elizabeth River in Virginia. See Boyd Stanley Schlenther, The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie, Father of American Presbyterianism (c. 1658-1708), Studies in American Religion, vol. 69, revised edition (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1999), pp. 4-10.
3 In later chapters more data are available, but much of the context provided in this chapter on a data-scarce period of clerical migration will hold in later periods. Where it does not, context will be provided.
4 For one minister, Samuel Davis, the connection with County Donegal and the Laggan Presbytery can only be surmised, but there is strong evidence for this deduction, which will be discussed below.
also from Donegal and closely connected with the Laggan Presbytery, although the presbytery had been dismantled at the time of his emigration. And, then there is a shift in Irish origins. The last three ministers who arrived in America from Ireland during this period were connected with the Dublin Presbytery. Regarding American settlement, a significant pattern held throughout the period from 1683 to 1713: every Irish minister who arrived during this period settled on or very near one relatively small peninsula on North America’s eastern seaboard, the Delmarva Peninsula.

(1) Propulsion

County Donegal is Ireland’s northwesternmost and in many ways its bleakest, most rugged, and yet most beautiful county. The Laggan Presbytery and the region that gave the presbytery its name will need some description, even for those who are well read on Irish topics. The Laggan Presbytery came into existence in 1657, when it was carved out of the territory overseen by the Route Presbytery, and ceased to exist in 1702, when both the Route and Laggan Presbyteries were divided into three different presbyteries. As one of only five Irish presbyteries for most of its existence, the Laggan “meeting,” as Irish presbyteries were often called in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, was influential in its day, and its area of influence revolved around the core of the Presbyterian population strength in County Donegal, in the eastern part of the county in an area called the Laggan. Do not confuse this region with its homophone, the River Lagan (often also referred to as just “the Lagan”), which is found on the opposite, eastern side of Ulster and which empties into Belfast Lough. The Laggan region of County Donegal is the fertile area in eastern County Donegal between the River Foyle and

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5 The Laggan Presbytery was sometimes referred to as the Presbytery of Laggan and the Laggan Meeting. On the Presbytery of Route, see Harry C. Waddell, *The Presbytery of Route: The Ter-Centenary Book* (Belfast: The Belfast News-Letter, Ltd, 1960).
Lough Swilly. These are the rough boundaries of the Laggan region. The reach of the Laggan Presbytery, however, was not limited to these boundaries. It oversaw congregations throughout Donegal and in counties surrounding Donegal. In some cases, the Laggan Presbytery even oversaw congregations found at disparate ends of Ireland.⁶

If all of the first Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants were connected with Donegal or the Laggan Presbytery, the first question to answer is “why?” Clues to the answer are contained in the history of the presbytery or Presbyterians in Donegal, and the answer, itself, has several interlocking components which combined to both push and pull ministers out of Donegal and toward the American colonies.⁷

Presbyterians in County Donegal, who were overseen by the Laggan Presbytery, were suffering persecution at the hands of the government and the Church of Ireland. The torments and agitation that came from this troublous relationship with the government seems to be the most fundamental factor in this earliest phase in the migration of Presbyterian clergy from Ireland to America.⁸ But why should Presbyterians in Donegal receive such pressure from the

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⁶ James Seaton Reid wrote, in the 1830s, of the Laggan Presbytery that “This Presbytery had under its care above twenty congregations. So early as November, 1673, I find them, by appointment of the general committee, ordaining the Rev. William Cock or Cox to the charge of Clonmel [south coast of Co. Tipperary], and the Rev. William Liston to that of Waterford [Co. Waterford], whence he afterward removed to Letterkenny, in Donegal.” See Reid, History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol.2, p. 336n.33. The Laggan Presbytery also oversaw, at various times, congregations in Counties Tyrone, Fermanagh, Sligo, Longford, and Derry. Most of their authority, however, was centered in County Donegal. See Alexander G. Lecky, In the Days of the Laggan Presbytery (Belfast: Davidson & McCormack, 1908). Littleton Purnell Bowen corresponded with Irish Presbyterian minister and historian, Thomas Withrow, about the boundaries of the defunct presbytery. Withrow replied in May 1880 with the following: “Dear Sir, in reply to your letter of the 11th… I beg to say… that the ‘meeting’ or Presbytery of Laggan in 1681 covered a district which, omitting the Presbytery of Limavady, was about co-extensive with all the Presbyteries comprised in the modern synod of Derry and Omagh: viz., Derry, Glendermot, Letterkenny, Strabane, Raphoe, Omagh, and Donegal.” No doubt the 1880 boundaries of those presbyteries have shifted by now, but the general area of the Laggan Presbytery can be inferred from Withrow’s late 19th-century rubric. See Littleton Purnell Bowen, The Days of Makemie; or, The Vine Planted, 1680-1708 (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1885), p. 514.

⁷ The use of “push-pull” here is NOT an indication that the author subscribes to the migration theories of Ravenstein, only that in this instance factors combined to force ministers from Donegal and simultaneously attract them to a specific part of North America.

⁸ Some historians, particularly those heavily influenced by the interpretations of R.J. Dickson, will immediately cry “foul!” at this and insist that economics was the real issue and that claims of religious intolerance were used as a
authorities? There are several identifiable reasons for the hostility between Presbyterians and the Church of Ireland, some of them pertaining to all Irish Presbyterians and some only to those under the Laggan Presbytery. The combination of all of them, however, produced a significant clerical emigration (five ministers) from Donegal in a short period of time (1683-1687). The loss of five ministers equaled the loss of nearly 30 percent of the ministers in the Laggan Presbytery and exactly 5 percent of the Presbyterian ministers in all of Ireland.\footnote{More precisely, this small number of ministers (5) who arrived between 1683 and 1687 equals 27.7\% of the ministers (including licentiates) associated with the Laggan Presbytery as listed in 1689, and 5\% of the Presbyterian ministers (including licentiates) in Ireland in that same year. So, despite the small number of migrants, this was a significant departure of Irish Presbyterian clerical manpower. For a list of Irish Presbyterian ministers and the Presbytery they were associated with in 1689, see Reid, \textit{History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland}, vol. 2, XII, pp. 589-591.}

Presbyterian persecution by the Irish authorities revolved around a particular mindset common amongst the Irish gentry in the 1670s and 1680s (and well into the next century), which held that Presbyterians were innately seditious. The basic logic of this belief was that those who did not support bishops or prelatic church government, by default, could not support

post-facto propaganda weapon by the Presbyterians against their enemies in Ireland and as a means to make their removal more significant in their own minds. I do not deny that economics played a role, but without the instability caused by the tortuous position of Presbyterians with the government, it does not seem likely that the strong desire to leave Ireland during the 1680s (economics included) would have existed. Persecution seems to have been the root cause. In response to scholars who argue against the idea that Presbyterians were persecuted in Ireland or that Irish Presbyterians emigrated to escape religiously motivated persecution, a few points should be made. First, by persecution, we do not mean the horrors that the 20\textsuperscript{th} century made familiar to us, such as summary executions or concentration camps, but harassment, fines, and imprisonment of ministers; instances of all of these are recorded relatively often in the Laggan minute book in the late 17\textsuperscript{th} century and in other records well into the 18\textsuperscript{th}. There can be no argument on whether this occurred, only whether it constitutes religious persecution. In my opinion, clearly, it does. Secondly, these harassments were motivated by conflicts of interests based on religion. And, thirdly, the fact that other considerations, such as economics, were involved in Presbyterians’ decision to leave, does not mean that this generally religiously-centered people did not emigrate for religious purposes. Professor of psychology, Michael D. Howe has written, “What really happens is not simply what happens to a person—as an observer might record it—but how the particular individual actually experiences life’s happenings.” There is no doubt that many, if not most, Presbyterians emigrated from Ireland (at least up until the early decades of the nineteenth century) because they felt persecuted for their faith. Their writings demonstrate that they did feel this way. For those who continue to disregard any motives for emigration other than economics, it should also be remembered that economic policies can, and sometimes still do, stem from policies that have religio-political motivations and which certainly have the potential to cause the economic conditions that are conducive to emigration. Michael D. Howe, \textit{Genius Explained} (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 19. For the \textit{ne plus ultra} of the argument for economic over religious causes of Irish Presbyterian emigration, see Dickson, \textit{Ulster Emigration to Colonial America}. See also the chapters on clerical migration from 1739-1769 and 1770-1810, below.
the monarch, who was the head of that prelatic structure; those who could not support the monarch (the head of state) were seditious by definition. The speciousness of this logic is apparent to us, but it was beyond dispute for many members of the Irish establishment and especially officials of the Church of Ireland. The famous slogan, “No Bishops, No King” was directed squarely at Presbyterians in Ireland. Such attitudes were widespread there in the 1680s, and would, only a short time later, reach their most embittered edge in the writings of Jonathan Swift. With the justification that such ideas provided members of the Ascendancy, Presbyterians of the Laggan Presbytery and its ministers were persecuted by various Church of Ireland courts and governmental officials under their sway. Importantly for us most of the persecution by the government or the Church of Ireland against the Laggan Presbytery (or any presbytery, generally) tended to focus upon their ministers, which makes persecution pivotal to the story of clerical emigration from Donegal at this time. Such persecutions provide a strong and visceral reason for leaving Ireland, and demonstrate the insecure position of Irish Presbyterians at this point in Ireland’s history.

The Laggan Presbytery’s troubles with the authorities followed almost immediately after its establishment in 1657. Examples of Presbyterian persecution in County Donegal survive in spite of the fact that the earliest extant minutes of the presbytery do not begin until August of

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10 This attitude was not limited to the 17th century, but was common throughout much of Presbyterianism’s history in Ireland. See chapter 1, above. Also see Richard Holmes, “James Arbuckle and Dean Swift: Cultural Politics in the Irish Confessional State,” pp. 431-444; Weinbrot, “The Thirtieth of January Sermon,” pp. 29-55; Jonathan Swift, Irish Tracts, 1720 – 1723, pp. 225, 231. That Presbyterians in Ireland had Jonathan Swift as one of their most consistent enemies almost invites tragicomic laughter. They were considered seditious by the authorities, yet proved their loyalty in dramatic fashion during the Jacobite rebellion and were rewarded in some degree by King William. Yet, persecution immediately resumed again during the reign of Queen Anne. Meanwhile, the most famous satirist in the English language was devoting his considerable energy and venomous invective toward them in print. A perfect storm if there ever was one.

11 Remember that officials in the established Church of Ireland held lawful positions in the secular government.
1672.\textsuperscript{12} Seven years after its founding, four ministers of the Laggan Presbytery, men well known to our later immigrant ministers, were arrested. They refused a summons from the Bishop of Raphoe on the grounds that he possessed no such authority to summon them, and for their impertinence they were imprisoned from 1664 to 1670. In 1676, the Laggan minute book makes a note that the Presbytery of Route, which had jurisdiction over parts of Counties Derry and Antrim, wrote to the Laggan Presbytery asking for advice on how to remedy “the oppressions and grievances of many people of the congregations of their bounds by the prelational party,” and reporting that

\begin{quote}
  eight score summoned in some single parishes to the official courts, and many other particulars of prelational persecutions are mentioned, as the summoning of many, and the excommunicating of many, and the taking of some with writs, and the people’s being exhausted with paying of sums of money, &tc.\textsuperscript{13}
\end{quote}

Presbyterians were simply distrusted by the government and especially by the “churchmen” or “High Church Party.”\textsuperscript{14}

The Church of Ireland and the authorities seem to have persecuted Presbyterians, and particularly the ministers of the Laggan Presbytery, because the Irish establishment was anxious to keep Presbyterianism from spreading from its already densely populated strongholds in mid- and eastern Ulster — and the Laggan Presbytery was brazenly expanding. A later description from 1700 of an ill-fated attempt to start a new presbytery whose territory would revolve around


\textsuperscript{13} Reid, History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol. 2, p. 337n.45.

\textsuperscript{14} The High Church Party is not to be confused with the later movement known as the High Church movement, and sometimes called the Oxford Movement or Puseyism. John Henry Newman, who later converted from Anglicanism to Catholicism, was the most famous High Churchman of the nineteenth century.
Enniskillen demonstrates quite well the attitudes of Presbyterians toward expansion. The new presbytery’s goal was:

[to plant the upper country about Inniskillen with the gospel, doing what in them lyes to spread & propogate the Gospel in Purity both as to Doctrine & Discipline according to the Principles and rules agreed upon by this Church.]

Their stated objective was in direct competition with the Church of Ireland (and also with the Roman Catholic Church but which was in no position to officially persecute their competitors—although unofficial persecution was common). Through its actions, the Laggan meeting had demonstrated this same attitude toward expansion at least as early as 1676. In that year they requested that the Rev. William Henry, pastor of the congregation at Ballyshannon at the mouth of the River Erne in southwesternmost County Donegal, to preach throughout nearby Connaught in what can only be described as an attempt at evangelism and Presbyterian extension. While in County Sligo, Henry’s evangelism offended the local authorities. He was called before the local authorities and released, but later had to return to County Sligo to face charges. Eventually, Mr. Henry was “arrested, removed to Dublin, kept in confinement there for more than a year, and not set at liberty until he gave bonds for his future good behaviour.”

In 1677, a young Thomas Craighead, minister at Donegaltown and eventually moderator of the Synod of Ulster and American immigrant, was directed by the Laggan Presbytery to go to the people of Connaught to preach the Gospel in the Presbyterian fashion. Like Rev. Henry, Craighead was arrested, this time at the behest of the Bishop of Killala. He spent the next

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15 Enniskillen is in the middle of County Fermanagh and is perfectly situated geographically to have been a staging point for Presbyterian expansion into Connaught as it borders Connaught on its south west border, and then Ulster Counties Donegal, Tyrone, Cavan and Monaghan. The territory and members of this new presbytery had, up until this point, been part of the Laggan Presbytery and would return to it after the failure of the Enniskillen Presbytery about a year later. See, Lecky, *In the Days of the Laggan Presbytery*, p. 9

16 Ibid.

eighteen months in a Dublin jail for his efforts to evangelize Connaught to the Presbyterian
good news.18

The Church of Ireland was interested in keeping Presbyterians from encouraging the
growth of Presbyterianism in places outside of the areas of Ireland to which it was already
confined. Donegal looks to have been an area that the authorities did not wish to become as rife
with dissenters as other parts of Ulster. Even more worrisome to the authorities than the
possibility of Presbyterianism spreading throughout Donegal as it had other Ulster counties was
the fact that if Presbyterianism were going to spread from Ulster into other parts of Ireland,
Donegal was the perfect staging point for expansion into Connaught. Presbyterians had already
tried to take advantage of this fact, as William Henry’s evangelical mission into Connaught
demonstrates. From the point of view of the Church of Ireland, a good way to stop the spread
of Presbyterianism outside of the areas in Donegal to which it was already confined was either
to keep ministers out or to make it difficult for Presbyterian clergymen to live and minister in
the areas of expansion or in the area that was directing the expansion—and that is exactly what
they did.

An incident that took place in Omagh, County Tyrone, is indicative of the government
response to Presbyterian expansion. Although it occurred in County Tyrone, it was a
congregation under the authority of the Laggan Presbytery and the ministers mentioned were
members of the Laggan meeting. At that time, Omagh was in an area of Presbyterian
expansion, and Presbyterians were still scarce there in the 1670s.19 There is no doubt that the
local authorities wanted to keep it that way. In 1678,

18 Sherling Database.
19 “From Omagh and the districts around it commissioners frequently appeared before the [Laggan] Presbytery
seeking for a supply of Gospel ordinances. There was a congregation at, or near Omagh, from an early period
called Keppy (Cappagh, the name of the Parish), but as that part of the country was not much resorted to by
during a temporary absence of Mr. Samuel Halliday, minister of Drumragh (Omagh), his place was supplied by Mr. John Rowat, of Cappagh.\textsuperscript{20} When Mr. Rowat was in the act of baptizing a child in the presence of the assembled congregation, a magistrate named Eakin rushed in furiously with his drawn sword, intending to arrest the officiating clergyman. But Mr. Rowat, comprehending his intention, ran out without finishing the baptism in which he was engaged, and succeeded in making his escape.\textsuperscript{21}

The Laggan minute book reveals that in the same year a Presbyterian from Dungannon, County Tyrone, had been excommunicated and was in jail for refusing to serve as a churchwarden for the Established Church. A year and three months after the minute book reported this incident in October 1678, the man was still in prison and there is no record of his release. In April 1679, the Rev. James Tailzior, minister of the congregation at Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, (which looked to the Laggan Presbytery for “the means of supplying their spiritual wants”)\textsuperscript{22} was imprisoned there and fined 5 pounds for not being able to produce a written certificate proving that he was an ordained minister of the gospel.\textsuperscript{23} These clashes can be attributed to the fact that the Laggan Presbytery was involved in expansion, and in areas of expansion harassment was common. Yet, things were about to get even worse for Presbyterians in Ireland, however.

Another contributing factor to the hostile relationship between Irish officials and Irish Presbyterians at this time was the fact that a faction of Presbyterians in Scotland, known as Covenanters, were openly rebelling against the government, and officials in Ireland feared that Scottish settlers till after the siege of Derry—there were only twelve householders in Omagh in 1666—the few Presbyterians there found it difficult to procure the services of a minister of their own faith, and so we find the people living in the Parishes of Drumraar, Longfield and Termon-MaGurk often seeking for a part of the labours of Mr. Rowatt, the minister of Keppy. At one period the arrangement was that Mr. Rowatt should be three Lord’s days at Keppy, a fourth at Termon-MaGurk, and a fifth at Longfield.” Lecky, \textit{In the Days of the Laggan Presbytery}, p. 61.

\textsuperscript{20} Cappagh is also in County Tyrone, but nearly twenty miles east of Omagh. The Rev. Rowat would eventually become minister for William Trail’s former congregation at Lifford, County Donegal. See James Seaton Reid, \textit{History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland}, vol. 2, appendix XII. This congregation is now called Ballindrait. For a short history of this congregation see, Baillie, ed., \textit{A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland}, pp. 49-50.

\textsuperscript{21} Latimer, “The Minutes of the Presbytery of Laggan,” p. 410.

\textsuperscript{22} Lecky, \textit{In the Days of the Laggan Presbytery}, p. 60.

\textsuperscript{23} Latimer, “The Minutes of the Presbytery of Laggan,” p. 409; see also Reid, \textit{History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland}, vol. 2, p. 586n.
their Presbyterian cousins in Ireland would soon follow suit. Logically, James Butler, 1st Duke of Ormond and in his third separate stint as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, was concerned that the Scottish rebellion would spill over into Ulster. With a mind to stopping this, he ordered transportation cut off between Scotland and Ulster and reinforced the garrison at Carrickfergus.\textsuperscript{24} It was a time of high anxiety on the part of the government and its attitude toward Presbyterians was none too gentle. Enemies of Presbyterianism in Ireland took this opportunity to pass to the government’s highest officials “exaggerated reports that the Presbyterians of Ulster were ready to join in a similar insurrection were studiously conveyed to the lord lieutenant, who, it was alleged, \textit{was preparing once more to apprehend and imprison their ministers.}”\textsuperscript{25}

In response to these attitudes, the Laggan Presbytery wrote to Arthur Forbes, Earl of Granard, in September of 1679, declaring that they were “but lately informed, and now persuaded of the hazard” they were in. They then asked him if he could “find opportunity [to] represent us to our dread sovereign as his loyal and obedient subjects.”\textsuperscript{26} Fortunately for the Presbyterians of Ireland, the lord lieutenant was, in fact, dissuaded from believing reports of their perfidy and no widespread arrest of Presbyterian ministers occurred. But, again, we see a general distrust of Presbyterians and a specific focus upon their ministers by the government.

Adding to the frustrations of the Irish authorities was the fact that Irish Presbyterians would not swear the Oath of Supremacy without qualification. In the eyes of the authorities this was not the time to quibble over wording. One was either loyal or treasonous. A significant number of Scottish Covenanter Presbyterians remained in revolt against the government of Charles II (and his brother James II until after the end of the Glorious Revolution), although the

\textsuperscript{24} Reid, \textit{History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland}, vol. 2, p. 337.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., vol. 2, p. 338. Emphasis is mine.
\textsuperscript{26} Ibid., vol. 2, appendix X, pp. 572-573.
main Covenanter army was defeated in 1679. Naturally, the authorities remained wary of
Presbyterians in neighboring Ulster. With Presbyterianism in such a state in nearby Scotland,
the lord lieutenant demanded in 1681 that dissenters prove their loyalty by taking the Oath of
Supremacy. Many Presbyterians, loyal to the king or not, could not in good conscience swear
to the oath without some explanations or caveats, for the oath stated, among other things, that
the monarch was the supreme head of ecclesiastical and spiritual affairs in the realm with the
right to declare how it should govern itself, something opposed to the presbyterial form of
church government.\(^27\) On April 7, 1681,

> there was a rendezvous made of some companies of soldiers that lay in that
country-side [in and around the Laggan region of County Donegal], and the oath
of supremacy was put both to officers and soldiers; and severals did refuse, and
particularly one Captain Barclay, who also kept it off all his company; and for
this, severals of them were put into prison.\(^28\)

The soldiers offered to swear to the oath if “certain explanations” were allowed, but the
authorities were not interested in explanations.\(^29\)

A last factor that helped to create the persecution of Donegal Presbyterians was the fact
that the Laggan Presbytery called for a day of public fasting for all Presbyterians under its
supervision. Such a little thing, really, but it seems to have been the proverbial straw that broke
the camel’s back in the relationship between the Laggan Presbytery and the Irish establishment.
This is how it transpired.

\(^{27}\) In the testimony of William Trail, discussed below, it becomes clear that an important aspect of Trail’s qualms
with the oath were with the idea that the monarch as supreme head of the church in his realms should therefore
have the right to set up the particular type of infrastructure by which that church would govern itself. With that
caveat declared, Trail asserted he had no qualms with the monarch’s jurisdiction over the church. Reid, *History of
the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. 2, appendix XI, pp. 574-589.

\(^{28}\) Ibid., vol. 2, p. 574.

\(^{29}\) Reid says this stringency was because the magistrates in that area [Donegal] were “intolerant Prelatists,” which is
a distinct possibility. He does not, however, seem to have considered the alternate possibility that so shortly after
an open rebellion by Presbyterians in Scotland, a place from which time and again in that very century rebellion
seemed to spill over into Ulster, the authorities had little leeway with which to afford Presbyterians. Reid, *History of
the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. 2, p. 339.
The presbytery drew up and made public a document that became known as “Reasons for the Fast.” It was to be “a day of humiliation, prayer and fasting” to be observed by all of the people “under their inspection” on February 17, 1681. This document then fell into the hands of authorities who already saw Presbyterians in Ireland as intrinsically seditious toward their government and as the close cousins of proven Presbyterian insurrectionaries in Scotland. Now the Presbytery of Laggan seemed to be flexing its own power and control over the Presbyterian population of western Ulster in the face of the crown—which considered calls of prayer and fasting within its own realms to be its prerogative alone. The Irish establishment was, once again, in a swither, and their anger was directed at the Laggan Presbytery.

It is here, in the midst of the escalating mistrust and antipathy between the government and Presbyterians in County Donegal, that we meet one of our immigrant ministers. William Trail, a Scot by birth, who had been living and ministering in County Donegal for ten years by 1681, had come to Ireland as a licentiate, and was ordained by the Laggan Presbytery at Lifford in 1672. Trail also served as clerk for the Laggan meeting. Unbeknownst to him, he was also on something of a watch list for the authorities in County Donegal. Even before the arrest of the Presbyterian soldiers who refused to take the Oath of Supremacy without “exceptions,” Trail was under scrutiny. This was not out of the ordinary, for in Ulster “spies were employed by [the] government among the ministers to betray their proceedings, and give notice of any communications which they might maintain with their brethren in Scotland.” Spies for the government succeeded in recovering some of William Trail’s correspondence, and at the assizes

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30 Ibid., vol. 2, appendix XI.
32 See Hew Scott, Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae: The Succession of Ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation, new edition (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1928), vol. vii, p. 666. Also see Baillie, ed., A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 1610-1982, pp. 49-50. The latter leaves out the fact that Mr. Trail emigrated to America. The Presbyterian congregation at Lifford is now known as Ballindrait, where the congregation meets, 4.1 km (2.5 mi) northwest of Lifford.
33 Reid, History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol. 2, p. 337.
at Lifford, County Donegal, the authorities considered arresting him for a letter he had written which they considered to contain subversive sentiments. The authorities clearly feared the possibility that Trail might spread seditious opinions amongst his flock through his influence over them. The proof must have been scantier than they would have liked, for they decided against arresting him.\(^{34}\)

However, when Mr. Trail was seen on April 12\(^{th}\) at the Lifford jail visiting the very soldiers who had been incarcerated for refusing to take the Oath of Supremacy on April 7\(^{th}\), a constable was sent to bring him before the justices of the peace. His arrest warrant was then read publicly and he was required to make bail and to appear before them at the next assizes. The local authorities were convinced that he had some hand in obliging some of the Presbyterian soldiers to refuse the Oath of Supremacy—in other words, that he was spreading sedition.\(^{35}\)

Before Trail would even have a chance to show himself at the next meeting of the assizes, however, the authorities would make a bigger move. It just so happened that in April of 1681, the same month that (1) Presbyterian soldiers in County Donegal were arrested for refusing the Oath of Supremacy; (2) that William Trail was placed under suspicion for a letter that he had written containing opinions considered seditious; and (3) that Trail was arrested for suspicion of inciting soldiers to refuse the oath, a copy of the published “Reasons for the Fast” fell into the hands of the “zealous magistrates” of County Donegal.\(^{36}\) In response, the Rev. John Hart, of Taughboyne, was called before the five justices of the peace on Saturday, April 31, at St. Johnston, County Donegal, where the Laggan Presbytery held its regular meetings. Hart,

\(^{34}\) James Seaton Reid writes that the letter was written “to one Mr. Robert Simpson, the contents of which letter I cannot learn any more of than what is afterward narrated by Mr. Trail himself in his account of his examination before the committee of the council.” Reid, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. 2, p. 574

\(^{35}\) Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 574-575.

\(^{36}\) Ibid., vol. 2, p. 339.
who was no stranger to conflict with the Church of Ireland, had been imprisoned in Lifford from 1664 to 1670.\(^\text{37}\) Now, eleven years after his release, he was brought in for questioning by the Donegal justices of the peace about the reasons that the presbytery had called its fast. Cannily, Hart requested time to consider his answers to their questions because his answers involved people other than himself. This request, surprisingly, was granted—he was, after all, suspected of treason—and immediately after he was released Hart quietly called a clandestine meeting of the Laggan Presbytery.\(^\text{38}\)

It met two days later, Monday, May 2. William Trail was at this meeting, and as clerk of the presbytery was in possession of the minute book, an item he now learned was eagerly sought by authorities who believed it contained material that would incriminate the leaders of the presbytery. Immediately after this emergency meeting, Trail rode to his house to hide the presbytery’s minutes.\(^\text{39}\)

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\(^{37}\) The Rev. John Hart had been imprisoned for his non-conformity and his refusal to acknowledge the Bishop of Raphoe’s authority from 1664-1670. He was imprisoned for some time in a house at Liffo rd, County Donegal, and later the Lif ford gaol with three other Presbyterian ministers from County Donegal and the Laggan Presbytery. All were released in 1670. See Baillie, ed., *A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 1610-1982*, p. 653; also see Reid, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. 2, p. 304. Thomas Drummond of Ramelton (this was Francis Makemie’s minister), William Semple of Letterkenny, and Adam White of Fannet were the ministers imprisoned along with Mr. Hart.

\(^{38}\) Reid claims that this meeting was called “by letters,” which is interesting because William Latimer, writing about 60 years after Reid, claims that the officers of the Laggan Presbytery were loath to use the post. Could this have been because they were afraid that their correspondence was being intercepted? (Trail’s letter somehow found its way into the hands of the authorities.) If the meeting was called by letters and the ministers of the Laggan Presbytery were not using the post at that time, then riders must have been dispatched in several directions at once to get the word out. See Reid, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. 2, p. 575; and Latimer, “The Minutes of the Presbytery of Laggan,” p. 411. Latimer writes that the minute book of the Laggan Presbytery “contains various allusions to the difficulty of sending letters,” and the “disinclination to use the public post for the transmission of letters must have arisen from other causes besides the mere expense.”

\(^{39}\) Presumably from St. Johnston to Lifford, where his congregation was. Lifford is about 13.2 km or 8.2 miles from and almost directly south of St. Johnston, and so well within riding distance. These minutes of the Laggan Presbytery were finally dusted off and written about by Alexander G. Lecky in the 1890s. Before then they had collected dust in obscure collections, a less dramatic tale than if they had been hidden from the time that Trail cached them in 1681.
A letter from the justices of the peace was waiting for him when he arrived, demanding
that he present himself before them on the very next day in Raphoe.\(^{40}\) There, on May 3, four
Donegal Presbyterian ministers appeared before the authorities: William Trail, minister at
Lifford, John Hart, the long-embattled minister at Taughboyne,\(^{41}\) James Alexander, minister of
Raphoe,\(^{42}\) and Robert Campbell, minister at Ray.\(^{43}\) These four men were asked if they had kept
the fast that had occurred in February of that year and if they agreed with the reasons given for
why it was held (the authorities having in possession a copy of the publicly stated reasons for
the fast). After the four ministers affirmed that they had both kept the fast and had given “their
accession to the drawing up of the causes the fast,” they were released.\(^{44}\) However, the
harassment had only begun. A little over a month later, on June 8\(^{th}\) and 9\(^{th}\), these same
clergymen received summons to submit themselves in Dublin before the lord lieutenant, the
Duke of Ormond, himself.

The transcript of the examination of William Trail is fascinating.\(^{45}\) A reader feels the
tautness of the nerves and the mutual distrust in the atmosphere of this hearing and glimpses the
personality of one of the first Irish Presbyterian ministers to leave Ireland for America.\(^{46}\) The
lord lieutenant opened the hearing by asking the simple question: “Are you Mr. Trail?” The
Rev. Mr. Trail answered in the affirmative; something (a tremor in Trail’s voice?) prompted an

\(^{40}\) Raphoe is 10.3 km or 6.4 miles to the northwest of Lifford.
\(^{41}\) Taughboyne, alternately spelled Taboyne or Taboin, is now called Monreag.
\(^{42}\) Campbell was called the minister of Raphoe, but in those days the meeting house was actually in Convoy, 5.2 km
or 3.2 miles southwest of Raphoe.
\(^{43}\) Also commonly spelled Reagh.
\(^{44}\) Reid, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. 2, pp. 340, 575.
\(^{45}\) Reid reproduced the transcript of William Trail’s examination at Dublin Castle before the lord lieutenant and the
privy council of Ireland on June 20 and 22, 1681. Reid’s work is absolutely essential to historians of Irish
Presbyterianism, and has become a primary source in and of itself as it contains information drawn from, references
to, and sometimes reproductions of sources that are no longer extant.
\(^{46}\) From his own testimony we find that he states “I am but a young man…,” when examined by the authorities in
June of 1681. However, it seems that he was baptized in September of 1640, which means that he was
approaching his 41\(^{st}\) birthday, certainly considered middle aged at that time of shorter life expectancies. Reid,
*History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. 2, p. 582.
unnamed lord to say “Be not afraid, be not surprised.” To this Trail responded defiantly “I am not, for why should I be,” displaying an attitude towards authority that seems to have been typical of Irish Presbyterians.47

Despite his early abrasiveness, it was eventually Trail’s personality, along with his quick, perceptive intelligence, that won the day. Even as he obstinately refused, over the course of two days of examination, to name others involved in calling for or drawing up the causes for the Laggan fast, the warmer side of his personality gradually began to shine through. The transcript reveals that the “churchmen” were distinctly pursuing a conviction of Trail, which was not necessarily the case with the secular members of the committee. While the lord lieutenant officiated (the first day), the Rev. Trail was said to look only at the lord lieutenant, even as he answered the questions of others. And, even while employing such a stiff tactic, Trail seems to have been genuinely funny. At one of his responses (which, sadly, has lost its hilarity with the passage of time), his inquisitors “fell a laughing.” Trail, several times in the questioning that first day asked pardon from the duke for his boldness of speaking, but the lord lieutenant warmed to Trail, and, smiling, said to him “I like you very well, Mr. Trail; you may

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47 Members of the Irish Ascendancy often referred to the insolence and rudeness of Presbyterians. Their abrasiveness, no doubt, stemmed from the combination of the facts that they felt themselves wrongly persecuted by members of the Church of Ireland and that Presbyterians did not consider themselves in any way inferior to members of the Ascendancy, who were accustomed to deference and dependency from their social “inferiors.” This would have almost certainly been the case with Presbyterian ministers, who were university educated and who took pride in the idea that all Presbyterian ministers were considered equal in the eyes of their church. They may, therefore, have considered it a duty to keep from in any way conveying an inferiority or subservience to the priests, bishops, or archbishops of the Church of Ireland. S.J. Connolly relates several instances of this Irish Presbyterian attitude: “In addition, and accounting for at least part of the hostility that Presbyterians awakened among the ruling elite, economic independence encouraged an aggressive rejection of that dependence which the age expected of social subordinates. Thus the rector of Dungiven, County Derry, writing in 1814, contrasted the ‘natural politeness and urbanity’ of the Catholic inhabitants with ‘the rough and ungracious salutation but too common among the descendants of the Scotch.’” And, “‘a stranger would term them [the Presbyterians] rude, but politeness they look on as servility.’” See S.J. Connolly, “Ulster Presbyterians: Religion, Culture, and Politics, 1660-1850,” pp. 30-31. Connolly cites these two examples, respectively, from William Shaw Mason, A Statistical Account or Parochial Survey of Ireland (Dublin: Gainsbury and Campbell, 1814-19), 1:314; and Angelique Day and Patrick McWilliams, eds., Ordinance Survey Memoirs of Ireland, vol. 2, Parishes of County Antrim (i) 1838-9 (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, 1990), pp. 2, 113, 11. There is also the possibility, of course, that this “kindly” lord may not have been kind at all, and Trail might have merely been making it clear that he was not prepared to fall for the interrogation technique that is today called “good cop, bad cop.”
speak what you please.” After the first day, the lord lieutenant no longer felt it necessary to officiate (or to attend) the continued examination.

Unlike the Duke of Ormond, the churchmen were neither amused nor assuaged. Dr. Michael Boyle, concurrently the archbishop of Armagh and lord chancellor of Ireland, pressed Trail to admit that the phrase “fear of massacre by the anti-Christian party,” found in the written causes of the fast, referred not only to the “papists” but to the Church of Ireland. Trail denied this accusation, even though the committee produced a letter of Mr. Trail’s (the very same letter mentioned earlier which was procured by government spies), which contained disparaging comments about the Church of Ireland and that at least insinuated that the Church of Ireland was “anti-Christian.” Trail replied that the letter was private, had been dashed off hurriedly one morning, and that the anti-establishment sentiments found within it were due to haste and were not sentiments that he was prepared to stand by. The privy council accepted his arguments.

He also denied knowledge of the whereabouts of the minute-book at the time of his questioning, although he admitted to being the sometime-clerk of the presbytery, that he was so at the time the fast was appointed, and that the minute book was formerly in his possession (although he asserted that he did not know where it was at that moment). Despite the archbishop’s attempts to demonstrate to the rest of the committee the danger Trail represented to the Irish establishment, Trail made quick work of Dr. Boyle’s charges. He was not cowed, and his intelligence was easily on par with those who wished to entrap him. He effortlessly demonstrated the points of the Oath of Supremacy which were troublesome for Presbyterians and explained that these qualms in no way undercut the authority of the king. While he would not affirm the Church of Ireland’s Thirty-Nine Articles, he offered to swear to the 104 articles
written by Archbishop James Ussher in 1615, known as the Irish articles, which resembled the Thirty-Nine Articles.\textsuperscript{48}

Trail’s offer to subscribe to the Irish Articles was something of a bombshell. It embarrassed the “churchmen” who (as the transcript makes clear) had been hoping to convince the secular authorities that the Presbyterians of the Laggan Presbytery required suppression.

After the first day of examination,

The rumour of Mr. Trail’s offering to subscribe the confession of Ireland flew through the town of Dublin before he was dismissed from the council, and raised such a curiosity in all that heard of it to know that confession better, that everybody ran to buy them so fast that against nine o’clock at night there was not a copy of them to be found in any stationer’s shop in Dublin; and the prelatical clergy in Ireland were much ashamed of it that a Dissenter should offer to subscribe their confession.\textsuperscript{49}

Trail’s testimony demonstrates his steadily growing confidence throughout the first and second meeting. The Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. John Parker, presided over the second day’s examination and had no better luck than the Archbishop of Armagh in catching Trail in a trap. In fact, Trail was at his best, as the transcript shows, when pressed, and by the second day, he was at ease. He joked, smiled, called himself a coward because he swooned at the sight of blood—this in spite of the fact that his stubborn intrepidity before the highest officials in Ireland had been on full display for two days running. By the end, Trail had answered all comers, and seems to have left Dublin making a good impression. No action was immediately taken against

\textsuperscript{48} By that time the Thirty-Nine Articles were the Church of Ireland’s main declaration of doctrine. However, the “Irish Articles” were the original confession of the Church of Ireland. The Irish Parliament accepted the 39 Articles in 1634 under pressure from King Charles II and Archbishop Laud. However, Ussher made sure that the 39 Articles were accepted in addition to and not in replacement of the Irish Articles. These latter are much more Calvinistic in tone and more specific on points that were troublesome ambiguously for Presbyterians in the Thirty-Nine Articles. See Richard Mant, \textit{History of the Church of Ireland, from the Reformation to the Revolution}, 2\textsuperscript{nd} ed. (London: John W. Parker, 1841), pp. 379-392, 482-506.

\textsuperscript{49} Reid, \textit{History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland}, vol. 2, appendix XI, p. 581.
the Donegal Presbyterians. The four ministers were told to go home and to show themselves at the next assizes in Lifford.⁵⁰

The court and officials back in County Donegal, however, were less impressed, and needed to administer some punishment, if only to retain some dignity. On August 10, 1681, each minister was fined 20 pounds sterling by the officials of the Lifford assizes as punishment for calling a fast without the proper authority to do so. To put that fine into context, in the year 1673, just eight years before, the congregation of Donoughmore, County Donegal, had paid its minister 30 pounds for the entire year. The stipends at the Donegal congregations of Raphoe and Letterkenny for the same year were 26 pounds and 30 pounds, respectively. These were severe, crippling, and vindictive fines. The enmity felt by the local authorities for these ministers is palpable. Trail in particular was a target of hatred, and the local gentry burned him in effigy alongside the effigy of the traitorous 1st Earl of Shaftesbury.

Trail, Campbell, Alexander, and the once again intransigent Hart, refused to pay the fines levied upon them and were imprisoned in Lifford for over eight months. Many Presbyterians of the region were undaunted. Each Sunday, the imprisoned ministers preached through barred windows to Presbyterians who travelled to hear them. The authorities did not look fondly upon this, and sometimes drove away the listeners. At least one man was put in the stocks for refusing to leave while the imprisoned ministers preached.⁵¹

Just one month after the ministers’ examinations in Dublin, the records of the Laggan Presbytery cease.⁵² The Donegal Presbyterians had been under a steady pressure from the government since at least 1664, when four ministers (including Francis Makemie’s boyhood

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⁵⁰ For the transcript of Trail’s examination and some of the events surrounding it, see Ibid., vol. 2, appendix XI, pp. 574-589.


⁵² They would begin again after a hiatus of about 10 years.
minister) were imprisoned for six years by the Bishop of Raphoe. In 1681 the Laggan
Presbytery was finally forced underground. “Year after year these troubles seemed to increase,
and after the arrest of the four ministers…there is a blank in the records from the 13th of July,
1681, till the 30th of December, 1690, from which it would seem that the Presbytery ceased to
hold regular meetings.”

It was a time of great uncertainty and caution on the part of Ireland’s Presbyterians, and
of increased confidence and openness on the part of their tormentors.

The condemnation of these ministers was a signal for the violent Prelatists
throughout Ulster to renew their persecuting measures against the
Nonconformists. The Presbyterian meeting-houses were closed, and the public
exercise of their worship was interdicted. The penalties of recusancy were, in
many districts, inflicted by an intolerant magistracy with unwonted severity on
both ministers and people; and presbyteries were once more reduced to the
necessity of meeting in private, and with exercising their jurisdiction with the
utmost caution and reserve.

Obviously, the factors mentioned above strained the already tenuous position of Presbyterians
in Ireland, and while harassment had been more or less constant for quite some time, things
were getting worse for Presbyterians in Donegal. With the government determined to keep
Presbyterians in a subordinate role and Presbyterians under the Laggan Presbytery seemingly
receiving the brunt of the government’s sanctions, at least some ministers of that beleaguered
presbytery began to consider their options, and emigration was certainly one of them.

During the year 1684, the state of Presbyterians in the counties of Derry and
Donegal was so deplorable, that the greater number of the ministers composing
the Presbytery of the Lagan intimated to the other presbyteries their intention of
removing to America, whither some of them had been already invited, "because

53 Latimer, “The Minutes of the Presbytery of Laggan,” p. 410. Boyd Stanley Schlenther, historian and editor of all
known sources related to the life of Francis Makemie, writes of the Laggan Presbytery after July 1681 that, “the
records of the Antrim Meeting (i.e. Presbytery) show that the Laggan Meeting still managed to transact some
business during the next ten years in spite of persecution though records are no longer extant.” See Schlenther, The
Life and Writings of Francis Makemie, p. 255.
54 Reid, History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol. 2, p. 341.
of persecutions and general poverty abounding in those parts, and on account of their straights and little or no access to their ministry.\(^55\)

On top of the troublous relationship with the government and the Church of Ireland, another worry was the threat of persecution from the Catholic population. It would undoubtedly have been considered by an Irish Presbyterian when weighing his or her future prospects in County Donegal. We saw in the two previous chapters the fear of a Catholic uprising was a very real aspect of the Irish Protestant mind and that Catholics were willing to target Presbyterian meetinghouses. More specifically for our analysis of clerical migration, we know from William Trail’s testimony that the fear of massacre at the hands of the Catholic population of Donegal was one of the reasons that the now infamous fast was called by the Laggan Presbytery. From that document it is clear that Presbyterian ministers (who drew up the reasons for the fast) from Donegal, where all of our earliest emigrating ministers came from, considered the threat of massacre at the hands of the Catholic population to be a danger real enough to present to their Lord through fasting and humiliation.

In addition to hostility from Irish Anglican authorities and a largely Irish Catholic population, economics were a third factor that seemed to “push” early ministerial migrants from Donegal to America. The minutes of the Laggan Presbytery relay to us the areas where there were opportunities for ministers under the supervision of the Laggan Presbytery both in and outside of Donegal. In Donegal, congregations in need of ministers at this time were generally “over the mountains” in west Donegal, places like Clondevaddogg, Killybegs, Inver, Ballyshannon, Drumhome, or smaller hamlets near Donegal town. These were places where there were far fewer Scottish settlers or descendants of Scottish settlers either to help absorb

\(^55\) Ibid., pp. 341-342. Reid goes on to say that “the death of King Charles II in the following year, and the subsequent appointment of Lord Granard as one of the lords-justices, mitigated, for a time, the more pressing evils of their condition.” Therefore, the entire ministry of the Laggan Presbytery did not, in fact, emigrate. Emphasis is mine.
some of the hostility of the local population or sufficiently support a minister.\textsuperscript{56} There were also frequent calls made to the presbytery to supply ministers to areas in Counties Sligo, Roscommon, Longford, and parts of Tyrone where at that time there were only very small populations of Presbyterians, populations too small to well support a minister.\textsuperscript{57} (The fact that these areas outside of Donegal were looking to the Laggan Presbytery for help is yet another indication that the Laggan Presbytery was involved in Presbyterian expansion, and thus drawing the ire of the Church of Ireland and the government.) The minute book of the Laggan Presbytery is full of instances in which the presbytery chastises congregations for failing to maintain their minister properly and to pay him what was promised in their call to him.\textsuperscript{58} In response to a rebuke received from the presbytery, the congregation at Cappagh, near Omagh, explained that they were unable to pay and that their promise of salary had been made on the condition that the area become “better planted by the British, which has not come to pass but contrariwise.”\textsuperscript{59} Simply put, ministers were struggling to earn a living in Donegal, and in the areas of extension under the care of the Laggan Presbytery. Some must have been in or near destitution.

The attempts by the congregation at Killybegs in southwest Donegal demonstrates well the economic position of Presbyterians and Presbyterian ministers in Donegal and under the Laggan Presbytery. The troubles of this congregation, situated in a stronghold of the Gaelic north, also gives us a glimpse into the economic position of one of our earliest emigrant ministers: Thomas Wilson. From the presbytery’s minutes, we find that the congregation at Killybegs had made several calls for a pastor and offered, in 1673, to pay 26 pounds a year to a

\textsuperscript{56} Lecky, \textit{In the Days of the Laggan Presbytery}, pp. 59-60.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., pp. 60-61.
\textsuperscript{58} Apparently every congregation under the authority of the Laggan Presbytery received a rebuke from the presbytery for failure to maintain their minister properly “not once, but many times.” Ibid., p. 48.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid., p. 49.
minister, promising to increase that amount when capable. The Rev. Duncan Campbell was urged by the presbytery to take this call until a better opportunity became available to him. (It seems that he desired to minister in Scotland.) He accepted the offer, but another opportunity came to him soon after, for he left before 1677, by which time Thomas Wilson was already there. The congregation was having more difficulty in supporting a minister than they had hoped. In 1673 Campbell had been promised 26 pounds a year and with the pledge of a later increase. Four years later, Campbell was gone, and Wilson had been minister there at Killybegs for at least two years. Wilson had been paid only 12 pounds in each of the last two years (in 1677 and 1678), less than half of the yearly stipend that was promised to his predecessor.

Thomas Wilson’s financial situation in Killybegs was described in the minutes as being “with many deficiencies,” but it was clearly worse than the minutes convey by this statement. The Presbyterian community was very poor and providing for a minister was too much of a burden for them to carry. Wilson must have been living in something near penury, a situation which was a likely reason for his departure. The congregation was just too poor to support a minister, and does not seem to have had another. After Wilson migrated to Maryland sometime in 1682 or 1683 “the congregation appears to have become extinct.”

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60 Ford, The Scotch-Irish in America, p. 173. Ford also speculates that Wilson was a member of the Laggan Presbytery. It may very well be, however, that he was under the supervision of the Route Presbytery. Also, see Lecky, In the Days of the Laggan Presbytery, p. 48.

61 However, there is a suggestion made by Torrence in his history of Somerset County, Maryland, that Wilson’s wife Margaret, who likely died in Killybegs, had some small wealth through a “marriage portion,” which may have helped them financially during the stay in Killybegs. See Torrence, Old Somerset, pp. 226-232.

62 Lecky, In the Days of the Laggan Presbytery, p. 60. Conversely, Wilson was able to purchase his own land in Maryland. Ford reports that a Thomas Wilson bought 350 acres in 1681. If the date is correct, which is not at all certain, then this might not be our Thomas Wilson (Remember we do not have exact records of when these earliest ministers arrived.) Schlenther cites a deed for land Wilson bought in 1686. See Ford, The Scotch-Irish in America, p. 173; and Schlenther, The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie, p. 21n.12. Despite these conditions, if emigration had not been an option, Wilson would most likely have stayed at least in Ireland if not in Killybegs. One can only wonder about how different Ireland would be today if so much of the Presbyterian population had not been siphoned off by the hundreds of thousands across the Atlantic. Would the expansion into Connaught have happened? An interesting thought, if somewhat terrifying, considering Ulster’s violent history.
Very interestingly, although our earliest migrants may not have known this for sure before they left, these early ministers from Ireland became quite wealthy in the New World. William Trail, not four years after his imprisonment in the Lifford jail, “acquired 133 acres on the Pocomoke River near Rehoboth [Maryland] on May 8, 1686.” 63 Thomas Wilson, who had been in such destitute straits in 1677 and 1678 when he was paid only 12 pounds per year by his Killybegs congregation, “appears in the Maryland land records as acquiring from Colonel William Stevens on May 20, 1681, a parcel of land called Darby, containing 350 acres.” 64 Samuel Davis, who left Donegal in 1683, was able to purchase a tract of land near his congregation at Snow Hill, Maryland, in September 11, 1684. 65 In that year, “he received from Colonel Stevens a warrant to have laid out a tract of 500 acres upon St. Martin’s Creek, southeast side of the Pocomoke River.” 66 Josias Mackie who most likely arrived sometime before 1687 owned at least 150 acres at the time of his death in 1716, but because of the language employed in his will “it is to be presumed that he had once owned a farm of much large dimensions, and which, perhaps, he had recently sold, that the proceeds might be sent to his relatives in Ireland.” 67 He also owned “a valuable stock of horses, which he kept at the seaside,” and was almost certainly a merchant judging by the amount of debts owed to him at the time of his death. All of the money owed him was to be sent “to the children of his sisters in Ireland.” 68

64 Ibid., p. 173. This is the earliest date I have seen for Thomas Wilson in the New World.
65 Schlenther, *The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie*, p. 2.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid. The Latin, Greek, and Hebrew books in Mackie’s library were divided equally and bequeathed to Irishmen, John Henry and John Hampton and to George McNish, the Scot whom Makemie had recruited to America in 1705.
Francis Makemie, who eventually would be called “the Father of American Presbyterianism” became far wealthier than any of these men. Sometime between 1687 and 1698 he married the daughter of William Anderson “a seriously wealthy Virginia merchant and landowner in Accomack County, who held land or plantations in seven locations and who engaged in trade with Barbados.” Makemie and his wife would receive the “lion’s share” of Anderson’s wealth when he died in 1698. Makemie, who has been described as a “commercial animal,” added to the wealth he inherited. He travelled up and down the coast from Barbados, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, Philadelphia, and New York, displaying a “dual concern with religious and commercial enterprise.” He had at least two homes in Virginia, both of which were licensed for preaching, and “by 1704 he had become the second largest landholder in Accomack County, Virginia, with over 5,000 acres.” It has been suggested by Boyd Stanley Schlenther, the collector and editor of the most comprehensive work on Francis Makemie, that Makemie’s “secure financial circumstances freed him to take an increasingly central role as spokesman and organiser of colonial Presbyterianism.”

Their can be little doubt—unless we like so many historians disregard the basic intellectual capabilities of historical subjects—that the earliest of our migrating Irish Presbyterian ministers were at the very least aware of the possibility of a positive change in their economic circumstances that transatlantic migration might bring. Such a drastic change in the fortunes of every single one of the ministers seems almost fantastical. The economic turn-around for these men is simply amazing. Trail’s 133 American acres seems meager compared

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69 Schlenther, *The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie*, p. 4.
70 Ibid., p. 7.
71 Ibid., pp. 4, 9.
72 Ibid., p. 8.
73 Ibid. Schlenther writes that by this time Makemie had become a slave holder, and that he argued in one of his surviving publications that “over dependence on tobacco cultivation and selling caused the two colonies ‘greedily’ to ‘encrease the number of our Servants and Slaves.’” Schlenther, p. 9.
with Makemie’s 5,000, but the purchase of 133 acres in Donegal would have been unthinkable for a Presbyterian minister. Economics must have played a major factor in this early migration and even more so in later migrations.

(2) Attraction

Early clerical migrants were not merely pushed from Ireland to America by Irish circumstances. Just as problems for Donegal Presbyterians seemed to be at their worst, ministers in particular were presented with what would have been, considering their predicaments, a tempting option to migrate to America. In a real sense, they were also being pulled.

In 1681, the Laggan Presbytery received a call from a Maryland landholder requesting a minister. The call was received just three months before the Laggan Presbytery called the fast which would so anger the establishment. So, the call for ministers from America was perfectly timed to be considered by those ministers who would, no doubt, ponder their future prospects during the tumultuous months of persecution that followed. Therefore, conditions for Presbyterian ministers in Donegal and under the Laggan Presbytery were well suited for this call to come to fruition.

It is not known for certain why Colonel Stevens, the Maryland landowner who sent the call, selected the Laggan Presbytery over others. Colonel Stevens was an Anglican, so why would he be soliciting any presbytery, much less the Laggan Presbytery, to send a minister to him? The answer to this is that the tenants on his considerable Maryland holdings were Presbyterians. And, interestingly for those of us concerned with the broader study of Irish Protestant immigration in America, there is some evidence that suggests that many of the Presbyterians on Colonel Stevens’s land for whom he was trying to secure a Presbyterian
minister were in fact from the Laggan Region of Donegal and had been raised under the care of
the Laggan Presbytery—which would explain the selection of the Laggan Presbytery as the
body from which to ask for ministers and the continued connection between this region in
America with the Laggan Presbytery. 74

Most probably because of the combination of difficulties listed above, the Laggan
Presbytery was more prepared to act upon Colonel Stevens’s call for ministers. At this point we
cannot say for certain that Colonel Stevens only sent his call to the Laggan Presbytery, but the
only known call that he made was to the Laggan Presbytery. However, other Irish presbyteries
were aware of the call, whether they received it directly from Stevens or not.

The ministers of the Laggan Presbytery communicated the call for clerical aid to the
other presbyteries. From the Laggan minutes of December 29, 1680:

Colonel Stevens from Maryland beside Virginia, his desire of a godly minister is
represented to us, the meeting will consider it seriously & do what they can in it, Mr. John Heart [Hart] is to write to Mr. Wm. Keys about this, & Mr. Rot
[Robert] Rule to the Mgs. [presbyteries] of Rout & Tyron [sic] & Mr. Wm. Trail
to the Meetings of Down & Antrim. 75

A little over a month later, the Laggan minutes from February 2, 1681 report that

The meetings of Tyrone and Downe [sic] answer that the matter is not yet ripe
and they desire further information about the case and encouragements, &c.
Meeting can do no more in it till we get further information about this matter. 76

Other Irish presbyteries were made aware of the call. 77 Like those other presbyteries, the
Laggan Presbytery required further information, but, unlike the others, the Presbyterians under

74 Polk, “From Lifford to the Chesapeake;” Torrence, Old Somerset, pp. 211-249; See also Ford, The Scotch-Irish in America.
75 Lecky, In the Days of the Laggan Presbytery, p. 63. Very interestingly, there is no indication that either of these
presbyteries sent ministers in response to this call. This, of course, strengthens the argument that the particular
combination of the call plus circumstances in the Laggan Presbytery created the impetus for the first two phases of
ministerial emigration from Ireland
76 Briggs, American Presbyterianism, p. 115n.
77 There were only five presbyteries under the General Synod at the time: Laggan, Route, Antrim, Down, Tyrone.
All four of the others were, as the above quote demonstrates, informed about the call by letter. There were also at
the oversight of the Laggan Presbytery were under direct pressure. Thus, the ministers of County Donegal and the Laggan Presbytery were forced by circumstances to consider more seriously the option that Colonel Stevens’ letter offered.78

One infers that the Laggan Presbytery was prepared to ordain ministers without specific title, e.g. as minister of Lifford, etc., so that they could leave and shepherd untended flocks of Presbyterians (possibly from Donegal) in the New World. To demonstrate this assertion, we must deduce some conclusions from what facts are available. Because the Laggan Presbytery was driven underground, we do not have all of the facts or dates surrounding ordinations. There is no surviving record of Makemie’s ordination, but he was almost certainly ordained by the Laggan Presbytery.79 Moreover, a precedent was begun that would later have significant consequences (as we will see in chapter 6). The Laggan ministers in direct response to the call from America had ordained Makemie sine titulo (without title), which meant that he was to function as a roving evangelist.80

least two “associations” of Irish Presbyterians in Dublin (and parts of Leinster) and in Cork at this time. As will be discussed later, Presbyterians in Dublin and outside of Ulster tended to be more “congregational” on ecclesiastical government, and preferred a looser association than would become the case in Ulster. (Presbyterianism there would eventually pattern itself after Scottish Presbyterianism, although this was opposed by some in Ulster.) It is not known whether the Laggan Presbytery contacted the Cork or Dublin associations at this time. The Dublin Presbyterians would later draw up a system of government which could be called a presbytery and that worked in conjunction with the Synod of Ulster but was independent of it. See Irwin, A History of Presbyterianism in Dublin and the South and West of Ireland, pp 3-13; and Reid, History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, vol. 3, pp. 1-2, 521-25

78 The consideration of just some of the factors which might have caused Presbyterian ministers in the Laggan region to be more receptive to emigration than Irish ministers from other regions suggests that these factors (1) persecution from Church of Ireland and government; (2) fear of persecution from Catholic population; (3) poverty of congregations; and (4) the fact that the call from Maryland came to them) combined to create a fifth factor: unlike other Irish presbyteries, the Laggan Presbytery was willing to take action in response to the call from Maryland.

79 See Lecky, In the Days of the Laggan Presbytery, appendix; Schlenther, The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie, pp. 1-27.

80 We know from the Laggan minutes that he was being put through his trials by the presbytery in April and May of 1681, just as the controversy over the fast was escalating. On July 13, 1681, at an “extraordinary” meeting of the presbytery and the last surviving entry recorded until 1690, the presbytery planned to hear Makemie’s assigned topics of exegesis if they had time—even in such a state of fear and persecution. Makemie wrote in one of his pamphlets “…I received the Imposition of Hands in that Scriptural and Orderly Separation unto my Holy and Ministerial calling.” Francis Makemie, An Answer to George Keith’s Libel Against a CATECHISM (Boston:
Trail and Wilson were already ordained ministers of Irish congregations before they left Ireland. It is possible that the Laggan Presbytery ordained Samuel Davis *sine titulo* as they did Makemie. The fact that there is no known record of Davis in Presbyterian records means that he very probably was not ordained to an Irish congregation before he left. But, as we have seen, the Laggan Presbytery stopped keeping records and regularly meeting in July of 1681, and that ordinations during that time were kept secret. So we cannot know the details of Davis’s ordination. In fact, there is not even a record of the actual ordination of Makemie, even though there are references to him. Because the Laggan Presbytery was conducting business in secret and no longer taking minutes—which could be used against them after July 1681—Davis could easily have been ordained by the Laggan Presbytery, and even then there would be very little to connect him to the presbytery. If they would ordain one man specifically for service in America, why would they not do it for another? Until further records are uncovered, the supposition must be left there.

Sometime shortly after these first four men emigrated from Ireland to the New World, Josias Mackie arrived.81 Again, because the Laggan Presbytery kept no more minutes after July of 1681, we do not have a record of his belonging to the Laggan Presbytery. But, we do know several things that suggest that he was. He was born and raised in St. Johnston, County Donegal, the meeting place of the Laggan Presbytery. So, he was raised in the heartland of the presbytery and if one were to become a Presbyterian minister there, the presbytery would have known of it and would have been the body or group for him to approach in order to attain that goal. And as we know, other ministers had recently left there for the New World, one of whom

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81 See Schlenther, *The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie*, pp. 3, 23 n41.
was Francis Makemie. When Mackie arrived in America, he took over for Makemie at a Presbyterian congregation on the Elizabeth River in Virginia, which suggests that Mackie knew specifically where to go in the New World and that he would have a congregation there. These facts, in turn, suggest that the two were in communication and that it was facilitated either by the now-underground presbytery or one of more of its members. And, as we will see, there are later documented cases of Makemie recruiting and facilitating the importation of Irish Presbyterian ministers. Josias Mackie’s migration to America could easily be an undocumented case of Makemie’s recruitment. It certainly fits the modus operandi that Makemie displayed in later documented cases. Of course, the presbytery that Makemie had most connections with and would have turned to would have been his own former presbytery, which makes it likelier that the Laggan meeting rather than another presbytery would have sent him a replacement for the congregation on the Elizabeth River in Virginia. Moreover, the Laggan Presbytery was the only presbytery that can be proved to have sent ministers to the New World at this point, and it had already demonstrated a willingness to ordain ministers for service there. Ministers from the Laggan Presbytery also had great cause to emigrate, given the persecutions and poverty they faced. For all of these reasons, Mackie, whose Irish presbyterial affiliation is not recorded, can be surmised to have been at least in some way connected with the Laggan Presbytery before he left Ireland. Lastly, there is an intriguing record of Mackie in the Laggan minutes from March 25, 1693:

The meeting being certainly informed that Mr. Josias M’Kee resolves speedily to return to Europe from Virginia, Mr. Craighead is appointed to write to him inviting him to this meeting in case he find that he cannot continue in America.  

Despite his desire to return, Mackie stayed in America.  

Importantly, this excerpt from the Laggan minutes is proof that Mackie was in contact with the Laggan Presbytery after his arrival

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in America. The fact that they invited him to join their meeting if he returned indicates that he was connected with them before he left Ireland. It is further proof of the continued interest that the Laggan Presbytery maintained with Irish Presbyterian ministers in America.

(3) The 1705 Intermezzo

In the years leading up to 1705, the first Irish Presbyterian immigrant ministers established themselves well in America—indeed, some became quite wealthy. But the need for more clergy was becoming plain. Some of the original clerical migrants were no longer available. William Trail had left America for Scotland after the Glorious Revolution came to an end in 1690 and was the first example of clerical return migration. Thomas Wilson, former minister at Killybegs, died in 1702 as pastor of the Presbyterian meetinghouse at Manokin, Maryland. There were fewer ministers and more Presbyterians, the latter of which were increasing both through procreation and further immigration. They had also begun settled further afield, and the consequent need arose for more pastoral care. Thus, Francis Makemie, who by this time was wealthy, well traveled, and the clear leader of Presbyterianism in America, journeyed in 1704 back across the Atlantic to recruit more ministerial manpower.84

83 It is not known what troubles he was faced with. There could have been any number of things, including Indian attack, problems with the established church, or illness. A letter dated September 1710 from the young American Presbytery to the Dublin Presbytery makes a note of the “melancholy circumstances” surrounding Mackie’s efforts on the Elizabeth River in Virginia. What circumstances these are we do not know, but he was in some sort of difficulty as early as 1693 and as late as 1710. Mackie died in Virginia in 1716. See Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, vol. 3, pp. 5-9.

84 Makemie seems to have been incredibly well connected for someone living in a more-or-less frontier environment in Maryland. His letters show that he was in contact with Presbyterians in Ireland and England, and with Puritan leaders like Increase and Cotton Mather in New England. They also demonstrate that he made relatively frequent trips up and down the American Atlantic seaboard, ministering to Presbyterian congregations and also continuing to trade. He spent several years in Barbados as a minister and merchant. His University of Glasgow education, wealth, connections, wide experience through travel, and his innate energy and zeal for spreading Presbyterianism (and he was particularly concerned to use ministers from Ireland) made him the obvious choice for the Presbyterian leadership in America. Makemie travelled across the Atlantic to recruit new ministers in 1704 because of the growing need for ministers, but he originally planned to go on this recruitment journey in 1703. He was forced to delay it until 1704 for a number of personal reasons. See Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, vol. 3, p. 6; and Schlenther, The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie, pp. 1-20.
By this time, the Laggan Presbytery had been dismantled. Along with the neighboring
Presbytery of Route, it was carved up to form three new presbyteries in 1702. However,
personal connections would have endured, and Makemie seems to have used them to find
ministers to bring back with him to America.

In 1705, Makemie returned to the New World with two newly-ordained ministers in
tow. The first of these was George McNish, a Scot who has no known connection with
Ireland. He is mentioned here because Makemie recruited him to come to America and
because several early writers mistakenly thought him Irish (a mistake which is sometimes
repeated by later historians). On arrival in America, McNish helped supply preaching to
Thomas Wilson’s now-vacant pulpit at Manokin and to other nearby Presbyterians in need. The
other minister brought by Makemie to America in 1705 was John Hampton. Hampton was
from County Donegal, and there is a good chance that Makemie might have even known this
man in his youth. When Makemie was newly licensed, he had been offered in 1682 the chance
to preach to the Presbyterian congregation at Burt, County Donegal—the congregation of John
Hampton’s father, William Hampton. It is very probable that Makemie had, at the very least,
laid eyes on Hampton back in 1682. John Hampton had grown up under the care of the Laggan
Presbytery, and while they may have know each other briefly as adult and child twenty years
earlier, Makemie would have been well-acquainted with Hampton’s broader circle of family and

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85 However, McNish has long been thought an Irishman by some historians. Most sources that I have consulted
have called him a Scot, others have just as confidently referred to him as Irish. Whatever the case, he arrived on
the Delmarva Peninsula with Irishmen Makemie and Hampton. The three of them, in conjunction with other Irish
ministers there, worked together to care for the Presbyterian population in the area for the remainder of their lives.
For an example of McNish characterized as Irish, see William Hill, A History of the Rise, Progress, Genius, and
86 See Briggs, American Presbyterianism, p. 130n. Hampton’s name is sometimes spelled Hempton in various
sources.
87 Baillie, ed., A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 1683-1982 reports that Hampton
was baptized by the Rev. John Hart (who was imprisoned by the Irish authorities on two separate occasions) at his
Monreagh (Taboyne) meeting house on July 10, 1769.
associates in the Laggan Presbytery. Both the elder and younger Hamptons remained connected with the Laggan Presbytery even after the father fled Ireland for Scotland during the Jacobite War of 1689-1691. The presbytery, itself, still felt some responsibility to the younger Hampton after he had left the country with his father, for the Laggan minutes reveal that on September 27, 1692 “each minister promises to give some help to keepe John Hampton at schoole,” and on October 30, 1693 that “as soon as he [John Hampton] shall go to college they will allow him 10 pounds per annum during the time of his stay there.”

The Hamptons also remained connected with the presbytery from Scotland. In 1700, John’s father wrote to the Laggan Presbytery about opportunities for employment for his son. So, the ministers of the Laggan Presbytery would have known John Hampton and known that he was looking for employment as a minister. The Laggan ministers also knew Makemie and that he was looking for ministers. The Laggan Presbytery, then, seems to have been the connecting piece in directing Makemie to Hampton in 1704 or 1705. The use of personal connections through the Laggan Presbytery, even after it was no longer technically an entity, was a strong source for facilitating the further growth of Presbyterianism in America from the beginning of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration in 1683 to 1705, three years after it was dismantled. However, this recruiting trip was Makemie’s last major reliance on the Laggan Presbytery. From then on, new sources of support would have to be found.

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88 Briggs, American Presbyterianism, pp. 130n.
89 Another personal connection between these two ministers and Makemie is that both McNish and Hampton were both graduates of Makemie’s alma mater, the University of Glasgow. Makemie, no doubt, would have still known at least a few people there whom he could ask about Hampton and McNish.
90 A year after their arrival in 1705, McNish and Hampton would, along with Makemie, become founding members of the first presbytery organized in America (1706).
A Shift to the Dublin Presbytery

During the last years of this earliest period of clerical migration (1706-1713), the source of emigration shifted its Irish hub from the Laggan Presbytery, which, as we have seen, no longer existed after 1702, to the Dublin Presbytery. Dublin stepped into the Laggan Presbytery’s former role for just a brief period of time, but they sent money and three ministers to America in 1709, 1711, 1713. They do not appear to have sent another minister to America until 1767. However short their involvement with clerical migration to the New World, the Dublin Presbytery filled a serious void in the support of Presbyterianism in America created by the dismantling of the Laggan Presbytery in 1702 and the death of Francis Makemie in 1708. This was a significant shift in the ministerial emigration pattern of the previous twenty or so years (although, as we shall see shortly, some existing migration patterns remained constant), and a discussion of the shift illuminates some of the variables involved in Presbyterian clerical emigration from Ireland.

While we have seen that the Laggan connection was still valuable in helping to send Irish ministers to Presbyterian congregations in 1705 (three years after it was disbanded), as time passed those connections became less and less effective in securing support for Presbyterianism in America. The carving up of the Laggan and the Route presbyteries into three new presbyteries was obviously a big factor in shifting clerical migration to another presbytery.

The personal connections of Francis Makemie and his consistent proactivity in recruiting Irish ministers to the New World again seems to have played a factor in bringing the

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91 This was William Knox, who was licensed by the Route Presbytery in Ulster, but was ordained minister at the Abbey Chruch in Dublin. He demitted his charge in Dublin in 1765 and was minister at Black Mingo, South Carolina from 1768 to 1800 where he died a “much respected minister.” Sherling Data Base.
Dublin Presbytery into this role. As leader of and recruiter for Presbyterians in America, he needed ties with a functioning presbytery. Therefore, he established new transatlantic relationships, and his dilligent efforts, force of personality, and skillful maintenance of personal connections enabled his influence on ministerial immigration into the colonies from Ireland to continue after his death in 1708.

By 1706, Makemie was both the organizer and first moderator of the earliest American presbytery; in these roles the connections Makemie maintained and created more ties with Irish Presbyterians—specifically the Dublin Presbytery.\footnote{This presbytery was usually referred to at the time as “the American Presbytery,” but it was also called the Presbytery of Philadelphia or the Presbytery of New Castle (Delaware) for the two cities in which it alternately met. However, it has come to be known as the Presbytery of Philadelphia after the city where the first meeting was held and where it was organized.} From Makemie’s letters it is plain that he was in frequent contact with Presbyterian leaders in Ireland, Scotland and London, and with his fellow Calvinists, the Puritans of New England. Makemie would use all of these connections to procure more Irish ministers for America and to forge a relationship with the Dublin Presbytery. Makemie’s farsightedness of action surrounding the founding of the first American presbytery in 1706 demonstrates both his genius and a major reason that the Dublin Presbytery became an active supporter of American Presbyterianism.

Makemie knew that in 1690, dissenters in London had created a General Fund to help support missions and ministers who were helping to spread the “Puritan faith.”\footnote{This is a broad and nebulous term. In London it would have included Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists, among others, but probably cannot have included all Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Baptists.} Partly because of this General Fund, a type of catholicity flourished in London amongst its various dissenting groups. When Makemie travelled across the Atlantic in 1704, it is highly likely that he met with the administrators of this fund, for McNish and Hampton, who returned with Makemie in 1705, were funded for two years by “the Dissenting Ministers of London.”\footnote{Schlenther, \textit{The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie}, p. 8.}
London obviously considered Makemie’s efforts in American Presbyterianism as mission work in line with the goals of the General Fund, to spread the “Puritan faith.” Here was a source of funding that Makemie, the pragmatic and successful merchant, would not have forgotten, committed as he was to the spreading of Presbyterianism in America.

Importantly, unlike in other parts of Ireland, Presbyterians in Dublin were a mixture of Scottish and English Presbyterianism and therefore had to compromise in some matters of form, a situation that the Scotch-descended Presbyterianism of Ulster had never been faced with. As a consequence, the congregations of the Dublin Presbytery retained more autonomy than their northern brethren, and the presbytery itself was much more influenced by and connected with dissenters in England (Presbyterians and non-Presbyterians, alike). Partially through the influence of English Presbyterianism, the ministers in Dublin established a General Fund modeled after the one in London. Yet, while admitting the considerable London influence, singularly Irish circumstances contributed to the creation of this fund as well.

In 1707, attacks upon Presbyterianism in Ireland by the High Church party rose sharply. As was the case in western Ulster and Connaught years before, Presbyterianism was expanding into areas where it had not previously been, this time into areas in Leinster, and the Church of Ireland was less than pleased about it. The most famous cases of persecution during this period were in Drogheda, County Louth, 35 miles (56 km) north of Dublin; in Summerhill, County Meath, about 26 miles (43 km) northwest of Dublin; in the parish overseen by Jonathan Swift in

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95 Makemie’s writings demonstrate that he was a firm supporter of the Westminster Confession of Faith, a document largely written by English Puritans. See Schlenther, The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie.
96 It has been written of Makemie that “It had been the great aim of this persevering and active servant of God to search out localities, to which he could invite ministers from his own country.” See Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, vol. 3, p. 6. Emphasis is mine.
97 Although the General Fund proper was not organized until 1710, two years after Makemie’s death, a “preliminary movement” had been made towards this end as early as 1696. Dublin had resources and seemed willing to provide them. Makemie just needed to convince them to send them to America. See Briggs, American Presbyterianism, p. 133.
his duties as Rector of Laracor, County Meath; and in Belturbet, County Monaghan. The first two cases were right in the backyard of the Dublin Presbytery. The Presbyterian expansion was taken by established church officials as something similar to an act of war, Jonathan Swift particularly so. A committee in the Irish House of Lords packed with churchmen sent a petition to Queen Anne begging that she discontinue the *Regium Donum* (see chapter 1), saying the Presbyterians were merely using it to further their area of influence. In response, the *Regium Donum* was discontinued and a period of persecutions followed. It was at this time that the Church of Ireland began (infamously) to prosecute as fornicators people married by Presbyterian ministers and to declare their progeny as bastards under the law.

In response, Dublin Presbyterians—generally wealthier than other Irish Presbyterians at the time—provided some aid to Presbyterians in south Ulster and Leinster under the strain of governmentally applied pressure by creating the Dublin General Fund. Importantly for Makemie and for continued Irish Presbyterian clerical migration to America, the fund was not limited to helping Presbyterians in Leinster and south Ulster who were suffering persecution,

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98 See James Armstrong, *Discourse on Presbyterian Ordination; Address of the Young Minister; Prayer on Ordaining; and Charge: Delivered by the Ministers of Dublin, at the ordinations of the Rev. James Martineau to the co-pastoral office over the Congregation of Eustace-Street, Dublin, with and Appendix Containing a Summary History of the Presbyterian Churches in the City of Dublin* (Dublin: Goodwin, Printer, 1829), p 58; and Irwin, *History of Presbyterianism in Dublin and the South and West of Ireland*, pp. 41-49. The entire membership of the Presbytery of Monaghan was arrested in 1712 at one of their meetings in Belturbet. See, Reid, *A History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland* vol.3, pp. 35-39.

99 The committee was composed of 9 lay lords and 15 Church of Ireland officials: 3 archbishops (including Irish Presbyterianism’s implacable foe, Archbishop of Dublin, William King), and 12 bishops. Charles Knowles Bolton records these charges drawn up against Presbyterians trying to set up a meeting house in Drogheda in 1711: “1) Dissenters have refused to take apprentices that will not covenant to go to their meetings. 2) When in a majority in Corporations they excluded all not of their persuasion. 3) They oblige those of their Communion married by our [Anglican] Liturgy to do publick Penance. 4) Episcopal order hath been stiled Anti Scriptural; our worship called superstitious & idolatrous. 5) Ministers [of the Church of Ireland] openly and violently assaulted. Although Episcopalians have endeavored, by gentle Usage to melt them down into a more soft and complying temper. 6) They seek to enlarge their borders by misapplying that Bounty [the Regium Donum] of 1200 pounds a year, extended to them for charitable purposes: to the propagation of schism, to maintain agents, to support lawsuits against the church, to form seminaries to the poisoning of the principles of our youth, and to set up synods and judicatories.” See Bolton, *Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America*, pp. 71-72.

100 Irwin, *History of Presbyterianism in Dublin and the South and West of Ireland*, pp. 43-53.
but was also, like the London General Fund, for helping missionaries.\textsuperscript{101} Now, not only was there a possible source of financial and ministerial support in London, as was demonstrated in 1705, but also through the Dublin General Fund and the Dublin Presbytery in Makemie’s native Ireland. Significantly, this source of aid to clerical migration was only created in response to governmental persecution of Presbyterians, so, once again—in Dublin as it had been in Donegal—persecution was a key in shaping the right conditions for clerical emigration.

The Dublin Presbytery was also a model for the first American presbytery, which Makemie founded. Makemie needed support from abroad in order for Presbyterianism to continue to flourish in America and in order for his new presbytery to facilitate that growth. He also wanted and needed cooperation and support from other dissenters in America, especially Presbyterianism’s cousins in Calvinism, the by then well-established Puritans of New England. Aid from the New England colonies and from abroad would allow for the continued development of Presbyterianism in America and for some degree of protection from the Anglican Church.\textsuperscript{102} The type of Presbyterianism planted by Irish clerics in America, had so far been on good terms with the New England Puritans—who even sent two of their own clergymen to aid in ministering to the Presbyterian population around the Chesapeake Bay.\textsuperscript{103} These new ministers were also among the original members of the American presbytery.

With New England Congregationalist ministers amongst the founders of the new presbytery, Makemie, like Presbyterians in Dublin, had to incorporate congregationally minded

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\textsuperscript{101} Briggs, \textit{American Presbyterianism}, p. 165.

\textsuperscript{102} He had already had run-ins with members of the Anglican Church and even been arrested along with fellow Irish Presbyterian minister, John Hampton, by the Governor of New York.

\textsuperscript{103} Makemie was a frequent correspondent of Increase and Cotton Mather, the latter of whom was very interested in the plight of dissenters in Ireland and Scotland, and what he called “Settlements of Good Scotch Colonies” in America. Mather “was in close touch with religious and political affairs in Scotland and Ireland. His father was a Master of Arts of Trinity College, Dublin, and his two uncles, Nathaniel and Samuel, were well known in Dublin as preachers.” See Bolton, \textit{Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America}, pp. 16-17. The pleasant relationship between these two groups would not last long into the 18th century.
English Calvinists with Irish and Scottish Presbyterians into one presbytery. The perfect model was the Dublin Presbytery, and Makemie made use of it. He also crafted the new presbytery after the loose associations of “meetings” that he would have been familiar with from his upbringing and training in Ireland. These loose, Irish Presbyterian structures did not offend the more congregationally minded ministers sent down to the middle colonies from New England. He was following an Irish model to make the best of conditions in America. Makemie, himself, described the presbytery as a “meeting of ministers,” which was Irish terminology, and which would have eased any Congregationalist worries that the forming of the presbytery would supersede the authority of the individual minister or congregation. By crafting the American Presbytery in this way, it allowed him to include the English-descended Puritans in his new presbytery. It also left the door open for more support from New England—where at least two of the ministers of the new presbytery had originally come from—and to funding and other support from the ministers of Dublin and from London who were interested in furthering the reformed faith, but not necessarily the more authoritarian forms of Presbyterianism which was prevalent in Scotland and would become so in Ulster. It was a brilliant maneuver, fortifying friendships with strong enough allies for the young presbytery to continue to grow and to put up a sustained fight against sometimes-hostile Anglican colonial governments and a newly

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104 Augustus Briggs writes that Irish presbyteries up until 1702 “were commissions of Presbytery rather than Presbyteries; and yet they were loosely called Presbyteries even in their official minutes. Their powers were limited, and their acts had only temporary validity until approved by the Presbytery, which was loosely called a Synod…. these meetings were compelled to act as Presbyteries defectively organized, to license, ordain, and install ministers….The first American classical Presbytery was such an Irish meeting of ministers, but without subordination to a higher body, resembling in this respect the Presbytery of Dublin. It was very different from a Westminster classical Presbytery, or a Presbytery like the Kirk of Scotland.” Makemie also introduced an Irish Presbyterian custom to the meetings of the young presbytery. He wrote that one of the reasons for the meetings was to “maintain such a correspondence as may conduce to the improvement of our ministerial abilities, by prescribing texts to be preached on by two of our number at ever meeting, which performance is subject to the censure of our brethren.” Briggs, American Presbyterianism, pp. 141-142.
invigorated and even militant Anglican missionary movement in America. The worry about religious intolerance was not an idle one. Following the example they had witnessed from their elder brethren in Donegal, Donegal-men Makemie and Hampton were imprisoned by the governor of New York for refusing to cease preaching in the Presbyterian fashion (without a license from the governor) only a matter of months after they helped found America’s first presbytery.

The American Presbytery has been called “essentially a missionary presbytery.” The Dublin Presbytery certainly considered it so and as part of its own missionary effort, if its actions can be taken as a gauge. Not only did they supply funds, but just as the Laggan Presbytery had done in 1682 for the support of American Presbyterians, the Dublin Presbytery began to ordain ministers specifically for service in America. They ordained John Henry in this way in 1709. He succeeded the now dead Makemie at Rehoboth, Maryland, where his fellow Irishmen Samuel Davis and John Hampton preached at his installation. He also brought with him the “sympathy of influential men in Ireland.” Evidence of this is seen in the fact that soon after he arrived in the New World, he received a letter from Rev. Alexander Sinclair of the Plunkett Street church in Dublin, who was involved with the Dublin General Fund. Sinclair’s letter asked Rev. Henry to keep him informed of the young presbytery’s affairs

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106 Makemie late wrote and published a pamphlet on his imprisonment called, “A Narrative of a New and Unusual American Imprisonment of Two Presbyterian Ministers: And Prosecution of Mr. Francis Makemie; One of them, for Preaching on SERMON at the City of NEW-YORK, by “A Learner of Law, and Lover of Liberty.” 1707. It is reproduced in full in Schlenther, *The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie*, pp. 187-240.
108 Because the Laggan Presbytery’s minutes were lost or unrecorded from 1681 to 1690, this is the first recorded instance of an Irish Presbytery ordaining a minister for America.
The Dublin Presbytery quickly sent two more ministers to the American Presbytery on the Chesapeake Bay. No doubt it was both because of its new responsibility as supporter of the missionary efforts of the presbytery (called at the time both the Presbytery of Philadelphia and the Presbytery of New Castle) and because of its close connection with John Henry, who has been called “the heir of Makemie’s influence in Ireland.” Thomas Bratton arrived in 1711. Like John Henry, he was ordained specifically for America. Henry Hook, former minister at Usher’s Quay, Dublin, landed in 1713. With these two immigrant ministers, our preliminary period of clerical migration ends. Soon after these two men arrived, a wave of immigration from Ireland began in America the likes of which had never been seen before.

(5)
American Settlement:
An Irish Presbyterian Ghetto on the Delmarva?

So far, we have seen which parts of Ireland Presbyterian ministers came from and through the investigation of their origins have uncovered some of the foremost reasons for their departure and some reasons for their Irish origins being clustered about Donegal and Dublin. But, their places of settlement are revealing as well and can help to shed light on the larger, later Presbyterian migration from Ireland to America.

The settlement pattern of Irish Presbyterian clerics in the New World during the period from 1683 to 1713 is fascinating, although that fact is not immediately apparent. They settled in the more religiously tolerant middle colonies, organizing congregations in Maryland, Virginia, Delaware and New Jersey—colonies that covered over 90,000 square miles (over 234,000 km²). The settlements of nine men would be but a drop in the bucket in a territory that large, yet,

111 Ibid.
when the settlement location of each minister is plotted, we find that their actual area of settlement was much tighter, for every single Irish Presbyterian cleric who arrived in North America between 1683 and 1713 settled on or very near one peninsula—the Delmarva Peninsula, familiar at least by sight to everyone who has seen a map of the eastern seaboard of North America: it is the peninsula jointly shared by Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia.\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{112} This footnote matches ministers to the places shown on the map (MAP 4.1) on the following page (moving from North to South): 1) New Castle, DE—Thomas Wilson; 2) Cohansy, NJ—Henry Hooke; 3) Middletown, DE (Old Drawyers Church, Appoquinimy)—Henry Hooke; 4) Smyrna, DE (Duck Creek Church)—Henry Hooke; 5) Lewes, DE—Francis Makemie and Samuel Davis; 6) Salisbury, MD (Wicomico Church)—Francis Makemie and George McNish; 7) Berlin, MD—Francis Makemie; 8) Snow Hill, MD—Samuel Davis and John Hampton; 9) Manokin, MD—Thomas Wilson, Thomas Bratton, and George McNish; 10) Pocomoke City, MD—William Trail, Francis Makemie, and John Henry; 11) Rehoboth, MD—William Trail and Francis Makemie (this church was on or near the land owned by Col. Stevens); 12) Accomac, VA—Francis Makemie; 13) Princess Anne County, VA—Francis Makemie and Josias Makie.
Settlement of Irish Presbyterian Ministers in North America, 1683-1713 (MAP 4.1)\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{113} Map by Rebekah Sherling Davis.
It was here that Colonel William Stevens’s Maryland holdings were and from where he made his original call for ministers to the Laggan Presbytery in December of 1680. Moreover, Irish Presbyterians were already settled here. As we have noted, Colonel Stevens was an Anglican and only made that initial call to the Laggan Presbytery for ministers because there were already Irish Presbyterians living on his land in Somerset County, Maryland. Just how many there were, we cannot know. The reference to this call made in the Laggan minutes makes it seem as if only one minister was needed. However, we know that upon arrival Makemie, Wilson, Trail, and Davis all set up congregations. So, more than one minister was needed. Whether the Presbyterians who filled these meeting houses came with these ministers (as would become a common trend in the eighteenth century) or whether they came soon after, we do not know. There is some evidence that at least some Presbyterians did travel with or follow their ministers from the Laggan region of Donegal. Many names commonly found in the Ballindrait and Lifford area of Donegal, the area ministered to by William Trail, can be found in the historic records of Somerset County, Maryland during our thirty-year period.\textsuperscript{114} Further, in a petition for a minister sent to the Church of Scotland from Presbyterians in New Castle, Delaware, in February of 1706, the signers of the document claimed that

\begin{quote}
We undersubscribers and the greatest number of us born and educated in Ireland under the ministry of Mr. William Traill presbyterian minister formerly at liford are by a Divine providence settled with our families at Newcastle and about it in the province of pensilvania.\textsuperscript{115}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{114} Torrence, \textit{Old Somerset}, pp. 169-173, 211-249; Schlenther, \textit{The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie}, pp. 1-20; Polk, “From Lifford to the Chesapeake.”
So, Presbyterians were already in the area when the first Irish Presbyterian ministers arrived, but more followed and at least some thought the connection between the first ministers and themselves was important enough to remark upon over 20 years later.

Whether from the Laggan region or not, Irish Presbyterians began pouring into the Delmarva Peninsula soon after the initial settlement of Irish Presbyterian ministers there. Francis Makemie himself is known to have procured fifty acres in Virginia in 1692 for the settlement of immigrants. Edward Randolph, a Virginia official and a member of one of Virginia’s most prominent families wrote in 1692 that Somerset County was a place “pestered with Scotch & Irish.” He claimed that in the two years previous to 1692 about 200 families had arrived from Ireland and settled in Somerset County and that there were about 100 families there before. Randolph goes on to complain that “Scotch-Irish” trading ships were illegally engaged in trade in the area and edging out English trading vessels which were permitted to trade there. The influx of Irish Presbyterians and their prosperity in trade would explain the migration of multiple ministers when only one was originally asked for. It also helps to explain the fact that the ministers who arrived during the first thirty years of the migration of Presbyterian ministers from Ireland to America settled on or very near the Delmarva Peninsula, and suggests that after the initial settlement of Irish Presbyterian ministers, the subsequent

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116 See Schlenther, *The Life and Writings of Francis Makemie*, pp. 24n.57. We do not know at this point where these immigrants came from, but it seems likely that they were Presbyterian, knowing Makemie’s penchant for encouraging Presbyterianism in America and specifically on the Delmarva Peninsula. If one were to speculate on the percentage of their origins, I would say that there is, at the very least, a 33% chance that these immigrants where from Ireland, based on three variables: (1) English-speakers = 3 countries of origin (Ireland, Scotland, and England); (2) Makemie’s history of Irish recruiting; (3) more Presbyterians in Ireland and Scotland than in England.

117 Randolph’s use of the word “Scotch-Irish” to describe these Irish Presbyterians is interesting because he was writing in 1692 and many historians have argued that this term was not generally used until much later. See, Bolton, *Scotch Irish Pioneers In Ulster and America*, p. 25.

118 Ibid.
immigrant clerics were directed through personal networks toward their eventual place of American ministry.\footnote{What we have found following ministers is indicative of what is known about general Irish Presbyterian migration at this time. “Poverty and the renewal of episcopal aggression following the Restoration rekindled the spirit of emigration and from about 1680 a trickle of north Irish emigrants arrived in the American colonies. The movement was both small in extent and narrow in origin, being apparently mainly confined to the Laggan (Co. Donegal) and Foyle valleys and directed to the lands bordering on Chesapeake bay.” Dickson, Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, p. 20.}

Not surprisingly, Irish Presbyterian ministers settled where there were Irish Presbyterians, and vice versa.\footnote{Our finding that Irish Presbyterian immigrants and their ministers settled the same areas of America is in line with much of the scholarship on religion and immigration in later periods of U.S. history. In a discussion of the historiography of religion and immigration and of his own findings in relation to that same subject, Robert P. Swierenga had this to say: “…religion largely determines the ‘how’ of immigration and its effects. Although most immigrants left their homelands in the hope of economic betterment, religious institutions facilitated the move, guided the newcomers to certain destinations, and shaped their adjustment to the new land. Religion was the very ‘bone and sinew’ of immigrant group consciousness and the ‘focal point’ of their life. One of the first scholars to recognize this was Oscar Handlin, who wrote in The Uprooted (1951) that ‘the very process of adjusting immigrant ideas to the conditions of the United States made religion paramount as a way of life.’ A few years later, Henry S. Lucas, in a masterful study of Dutch settlement in America, observed that ‘for years religion determined the pattern of Dutch settlement in America.’ The church was a ‘shelter in the time of storm,’ a provider of benevolent and charitable services, an employment agency, and the center of social and cultural life.” Later in the same piece Swierenga reinforces the larger immigration historiography’s unanimity over religion’s centrality in the nature of immigration: “The thrust of current immigration research is that religious affiliation significantly influenced the entire [transatlantic] resettlement process—the decision to emigrate, the direction of the emigrant stream, and the subsequent adjustment and adaptation in the new homeland.” See Robert P. Swierenga, “Religion and Immigration Behavior: the Dutch Experience,” in Belief and Behavior: Essays in the New Religious History (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1991), pp. 164, 183. In the first excerpt, Swierenga is quoting from Oscar Handlin, The Uprooted (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1951), p. 117; and Henry S. Lucas, Netherlanders in America: Dutch Immigration to the United States and Canada, 1789-1950 (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1955). Emphasis is mine.} Therefore, when the great wave of Irish Presbyterian immigration began in 1714 and 1715, it is no wonder that the major entry ports for Irish immigrants were New Castle, Delaware and Philadelphia (about 40 miles up the Delaware River from New Castle). The Delmarva Peninsula was the epicenter of Irish and Presbyterian America, profoundly effecting the next generation of Irish Presbyterian immigrants.\footnote{This is not to say that the Delmarva had a monopoly on Presbyterianism in America. There was already a substantial community of Dutch Presbyterians in New York, an area from which Irish Presbyterians had been effectively excluded up to this point, as the arrest of Hampton and Makemie in 1706 help to demonstrate. There is, however, some evidence that some Irish and Scottish Presbyterians were settled in New York and South Carolina. These were very small and in no way as important as the Delmarva. See Hodge, A Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, pp. 72-73.}
Chapter 5: The Flooding Begins: Clerical Migration 1714-1738

In the previous chapter we observed some important patterns. Each migrant minister came from, or had ties with, one of two different Irish presbyteries: Laggan and Dublin. Both presbyteries seem to have played a significant if not pivotal role in facilitating ministerial migration to America from 1683-1713. We also saw that Presbyterian clerics undertook American migration more frequently around times of persecution or some other trouble (religious, economic, social, political, or some combination of those). On the American side of their migration, all of the ministers in the previous period settled in areas where there were Irish Presbyterians already settled or were soon to settle.

When combined with other evidence also presented in the previous chapter, these findings strongly suggest tantalizing inferences important to the study of Irish migration to America. One of these is that immigrant Presbyterian ministers from Ireland in this early period were in contact with each other and with other Irish Presbyterians in Ireland and America throughout the process of immigration. Something like a network seemingly was in place. Its existence was facilitated by a pre-existing Presbyterian governmental structure, and enabled and smoothed the migration and the settlement of Irish ministers. Indeed, R.J. Dickson has asserted that early Irish immigrants helped to shape the further flow of immigration through their letters home—bolstering our observation. Second, because ministers left in times of crisis and from areas of crisis from the earliest period of Presbyterian clerical emigration, there seems a very strong possibility that crises in Ireland created something of a push effect in clerical migration between 1683 and 1713. Crucially, the push of Irish crises was coupled with urgent calls for ministers from Presbyterians in America—a corresponding pull effect. Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants were pushed by crises at home and pulled by calls to America. Third, because
there seems to be a direct correlation between ministerial settlement and lay settlement in America, ministerial settlement in that period can be cautiously used to give us a good idea of where immigrant-Irish Presbyterian communities were to be found in America and a possible predictor of lay settlement in future periods. Following ministerial settlement has revealed that the Delmarva region was the epicenter of Irish Presbyterianism in America from the years 1683 to 1713.

The years from 1714 to 1738 saw unprecedented emigration from Ireland—mostly Presbyterians—and clerical migration increased correspondingly, from nine in the years from 1683 to 1713 to 77 in the years from 1714 to 1738. The investigation of that Irish Presbyterian clerical migration during this surge of general Presbyterian migration from Ireland between 1714 to 1738 will continue to focus on themes which showed themselves in the earliest period of clerical migration. Particularly, it will focus on three aspects of clerical migration: (1) Irish origins of the migrants; (2) American settlement patterns; and (3) examination and comparison of the peak years of clerical migration with known peak years in general Irish Presbyterian migration. Comparison of clerical and general migration becomes possible after 1714 because traditional study of Irish Presbyterian migration to America usually begins at that date and several scholars have attempted to identify the peak years in Irish Presbyterian migration to America between the years 1714 and 1775. All three of these themes, however, will be used to compare Irish Presbyterian clerical migration with what is known about general Irish Presbyterian migration. Because the historiographical information on Irish Presbyterian migration is centered upon the years from 1714 to 1775 (but sometimes weakly extended to about 1810), this is the first of three chapters that will illuminate for the first time the Irish

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1 On the Presbyterian makeup of Ulster Emigration between 1715 and 1776, see Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America*, pp. 3-5, 19-22, 25-31, 35-41, 46, 48, 78, 183-184, 188-189.
origins of clerical migrants, American settlement patterns, and peak years in clerical migration and then compare those aspects of clerical migration with the same aspects of the general migration for the same years. What will start to become clear in this chapter and more so in the two succeeding it, is that these three aspects of clerical migration are in direct relation to the larger general migration—perhaps giving us a vehicle by which to suggest patterns in general Presbyterian migration in the nineteenth century, based on clerical migration in the nineteenth century.

(I)

Irish Origins

The abandonment of one’s homeland is a drastic measure, made even more so when there is no local tradition of doing so. Where there is some precedent for emigration, at the very least it exists as a possibility or an option in the mental framework of the community. Therefore the possibility of emigration becomes more likely, if not any easier. Such observations have been made by numerous historians of migration, and a study of clerical migration seems to confirm them.²

As time passes from the original period of clerical migration, one can see that the Irish origins of clerical migration began to spread from the original source in much the same fashion as the concentric rings which form around a splash on the surface of a lake. If we consider the “splash” to represent a significant “push” factor in emigration, we can see that out-migration continues to spread from that center until another, spatially separate splash occurs. Only then do we see a shift away from that gradual spreading of out-migration. As we shall see over the next three chapters, the majority of clerical emigration continued to emanate in something like concentric circles from a center in the original area of clerical emigration in eastern County

² See for example, Akenson, *Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration, 1815-1914*, p. 71.
Donegal. A majority of clerical migrants came from the original area of emigration or an area expanding from that original area. What little is known of lay emigration indicates that it, also, followed this pattern. The sources of out-migration continued to expand in this way until another serious crisis occurred in the 1770s causing the source of most of the clerical and lay emigration to shift to Counties Antrim and Down in the 1770s.

Let us begin, though, with the pattern of out-migration discovered in the last chapter. In the thirty-odd years from 1683 to 1713, the Irish origins of immigrant Presbyterian ministers could be neatly and nicely defined. All of them had been associated with either the Laggan or the Dublin Presbyteries. Those associations constituted something of their last Presbyterian affiliation in Ireland before emigration. Knowledge of these affiliations provided a very good idea of Irish exit points, the general area from which Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants were leaving in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. This general knowledge, in turn, provided a key to describing and explaining clerical migration in that earliest period of Presbyterian clerical migration.

In searching for the geographic origin of clerical migration in the period from 1714-38, one encounters several new problems. The number of clerical migrants increased from a total number of nine in the previous period to 78 in the present period. For many of them, affiliations with Irish presbyteries are unknown or never even existed for some of the migrants. None of the available information on the Irish origin of these men can be applied to each migrant except that they came to America from Ireland. In other words, some migrants can be identified with an Irish place of birth, and others with a presbytery, while still others through their place of ordination, but none of this information can be applied to all of them. So, with more migrants and little information on where most of these men were from in Ireland, the question becomes
“how to find a method of examining the points of Irish origin for early- and mid-eighteenth-century clerical migration?”

The answer is that there is no one method, but several methods, each based upon data available for varying portions of the total number of migrants. Together they can be used to create some sort of picture of the Irish origins of the clerical migrants from 1714 to 1738. Granted, it is a picture limited in its scope and effectiveness because it is derived only from those clerical migrants for which data are available, at times less than 30 percent of the total migrants of the period. However, unless swallowed whole and mistaken as the last word, the combined analyses provide telling information on the origins of clerical migration at this time.

Irish birthplace is one way to figure the origins of the migrants, yet precise birthplaces are hard to come by. Almost all of the clerical migrants of this period are reported to have been born in Ireland (74 of 78). 3 However, at present only 25 can be identified with a birthplace more specific than just “Ireland,” and two of these were born in Scotland, leaving 23 of our 77 or nearly a third (29.8 percent) of the clerical migrants in this period who can be identified by Irish county of birth. 4 They are grouped by their Irish county of birth below.

**Clerical Migrants Organized by Known Place of Birth, 1714-38 (Table 5.1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County of Birth</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3 All 77 emigrated *from* Ireland despite birthplace.
4 The two Scottish-born ministers are James Woodside and William Tennent, sr. Both became affiliated with Presbyterianism in Ireland before leaving for America, and are definitely part of the Presbyterian clerical migration from Ireland not Scotland, despite their Scottish birth. Some sources report William Tennent, sr., as having been born in Ireland. See Richard Webster, *A History of the Presbyterian Church in America, From its Origin Until the Year 1760* (Philadelphia: Joseph M. Wilson, 1857), p. 364.
The birthplaces of these 23 place-specified ministers are limited to Ulster and, indeed, to six of the nine Ulster counties. Intriguingly, they are not the six counties of present-day Northern Ireland, for County Donegal once again features as a source of Presbyterian clerical migrants, while County Fermanagh of present-day Northern Ireland provided none. Also notable is the fact that Antrim is highly represented as a birthplace. For the sake of comparison, let us compare the known birthplaces from this period with those of the previous one.

### Clerical Migrants Organized by Known Place of Birth, 1683-1713 (Table 5.2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Places of Birth</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland (unspecified)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td><strong>9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Antrim was not identified as a source of clerical emigrants in the original period of clerical emigration, yet 10 of 23 migrants of this later period were born there. Ten migrants born in Antrim means that about an eighth of the total migrants (77) of the period from 1714 to 1738 were known to have been born in County Antrim. As the Irish county situated closest to County Donegal was an area of clerical departure in the last period, something which does not necessitate a County Donegal birthplace. However, at least three of the clerical migrants from 1683 to 1713 were born in County Donegal: Francis Makemie, Josias Mackie, and John Hampton.
Scotland and one with a dense Presbyterian population, the high rate of County Antrim births is not surprising, although it represents a change from the last period.

What about presbyteries? As mentioned earlier, knowledge of which Irish presbytery clerical migrants were associated with before leaving provided invaluable leads in the investigation of the clerical migration between 1683 and 1713. Additionally, it is a better way of finding out which part of Ireland clerical migrants were leaving instead of where the migrants, themselves, originated—an important difference. At least 34 clerical migrants in this period can be identified as having been licensed by an Irish presbytery. Because those presbyteries oversaw congregations and ministers within a geographic area of Ireland, each presbytery can be loosely identified with a certain Irish county or counties, thus providing a partial view of the area from which clerical migration emanated.

**Clerical Migrants Organized by County of Licensing Presbytery, 1714-38 (Table 5.3)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Irish County</th>
<th>Total Ministers Licensed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antrim/Derry (the Route)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monaghan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 Of the 77 total migrants, 14 left Ireland too young to be affiliated formally with an Irish presbytery. Therefore 64 men emigrated at an age at which they might have been a member of a presbytery. Yet, not all of these 64 are known to have been affiliated formally with an Irish presbytery by the time of their departure. Only 44 of these 64 were known to have been affiliated with an Irish presbytery, and all 44 were licensed in Ireland. Of these 44 who were licensed in Ireland, 11 can only be narrowed down to Ireland, in general, leaving only 34 of the 62 men who were both old enough at date of emigration to have been licensed by a presbytery in Ireland who can be identified more precisely by their licensing presbytery.

7 At least 22 of the clerical migrants of this period were licensed by American presbyteries. Interestingly, most of these by the Donegal (PA), Lewes (DE), New Castle (DE), and Philadelphia Presbyteries, all of which were situated within the geographic regions this chapter refers to as the “Delmarva Region.” Sherling Database.

8 These presbytery-county links must be taken as cursory. Boundaries of presbyteries shifted often, and I have found no map demonstrating them in the late seventeenth or early eighteenth centuries. Not only were the boundaries of presbyteries seemingly in constant flux, but presbyteries themselves were created, disbanded, or carved up to create new ones with surprising regularity. James Seaton Reid gives notice of the changing presbyteries almost in passing.
These data reveal that 17 of the 33 migrants were licensed in Counties Derry, Antrim, and Down, possibly suggesting that migrants in this period tended to come from counties with the highest Scottish or Presbyterian populations. Taken together with the high number of births in Antrim in the previous breakdown that suggested the same thing, these data might persuade some to conclude that while from 1683 to 1713 Presbyterian migration seems to have come from the Ulster periphery or areas less often associated with highest rates of Presbyterianism (Donegal and the region around Dublin), Presbyterian migration righted itself in this period and shifted from the periphery to the strongholds of the Scottish settlement and of Presbyterianism in Ulster, counties most densely populated with Scottish Presbyterians like Antrim, Derry, and Down. However, paying closer attention to the licensing presbyteries themselves, rather than just the county in which they were situated, reveals a more complex and convincing tale.

In his latest work, Donald Harman Akenson considers European emigration. Specifically, he compares and contrasts migrations from Sweden and Ireland to America, finding a striking similarity in some cases. One of these is the fact that leaving is hard. Even when extreme conditions made it clear that people should leave Ireland and Sweden, often for the sake of their lives, most were reluctant to do so, especially early on. Those who left in the pioneer stage were distinctively counter-cultural individuals whose acts of departure created a

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9 This would also allow some historians to continue the false characterization of Irish Presbyterians as essentially Scots living in Ireland. By extension this attitude removes Irish Presbyterian migrants from the “Irish” diaspora, except in a conditional sense. For an excellent, if damning, analysis of Irish-American historiography and its failure to properly consider Protestants, see Akenson, *Being Had*, pp. 37-75; and Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A Primer*, pp. 217-69.
series of “cultural punctures,” and it is through those “punctures” that the idea of migration as a possibility enters into the cultural mind of the society.\(^\text{10}\) Once these punctures are made, it becomes easier for others to leave. Early emigrants were actually path breakers in this sense. After their departure there was a path where once there had been none.

Now, remember that clerical migration had first come, in the years from 1683 to 1713, from an area largely overseen by the Laggan Presbytery, which was mostly spread over Counties Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone. A closer look suggests that there was not a drastic shift in the origin of clerical migration from western Ulster to the more densely Presbyterian areas of eastern Ulster, but a continuation and a creeping geographic expansion of clerical migration from the original areas of eastern Donegal, western Derry, and north Tyrone.

**Clerical Migrants Organized by Licensing Presbytery, 1714-38 (Table 5.4)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presbytery</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coleraine</td>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Route</td>
<td>Antrim/Derry</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monaghan</td>
<td>Monaghan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Templepatrick</td>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangor</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Convoy</td>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killyleagh</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laggan</td>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letterkenny</td>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strabane</td>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-total by Presbytery</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>34</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unaffiliated or unknown</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>43</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Presbyteries</th>
<th>No. of Counties</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{10}\) Akenson, *Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration*, p. 71.
Something is revealed in this analysis that is disguised in the previous breakdown by county. The eight presbyteries of Coleraine (7), Route (5), Derry (4), Tyrone (2), Strabane (1), Convoy (1), Laggan (1), Letterkenny (1) provided 22 of the 34 ministers that could be identified as licensed by a specific Irish presbytery.\textsuperscript{11} These presbyteries represent an expansion of the territory overseen by the now defunct Laggan Presbytery that had suffered so many persecutions and hardships and corresponding clerical migrations in the years between 1683 and 1713. Including the Route Presbytery in the calculations, a presbytery that oversaw parts of eastern County Derry and western County Antrim, suggests that clerical migration during this period was following geographically a logical pattern of outgrowth from the earlier region of emigration.\textsuperscript{12}

However, breaking down migrants by their licensing presbytery does not always give us points of departure. Some of these men were licensed many years before leaving Ireland for America. On the other hand, some of the migrants left very soon after licensing, and therefore for them it is the closest thing to an exit point.

Place or presbytery of ordination provides a better snapshot of the exited area. Since ordinations were recorded in the Records of the General Synod of Ulster, we can be relatively sure that the number of those identified here as ordained is close to the actual number of ordained Irish Presbyterians who emigrated between 1714 and 1738. Only 20 of the 63 clerical migrants not grouped with youth migrants, or about one third of the adult migrants, were ordained as ministers before leaving Ireland. But the data gleaned from them supports the idea

\textsuperscript{11} Nearly 65% of those who can be identified by licensing presbytery (22 of 34) and over 28% of the total migrants of the period (22 of 77).

\textsuperscript{12} Recall that the Laggan Presbytery in the late-17th century was responsible, at various times, for regions of Ireland well outside the Laggan region of Donegal. See the previous chapter for further discussion.
that most of the clerical emigration was from the original area of clerical emigration or areas congruent with or adjacent to it.

**Points of Departure by County for Ordained Migrants, 1714-38 (Table 5.5)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laois</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subtotal of ordained migrants 20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Migrant</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All other adult migrants</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth migrants</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Counties 8 Total Migrants 77

Once again, it seems that the ripples of clerical migration were spreading out from the area formerly overseen by the Laggan Presbytery. This last table demonstrates that 11 of the 20 ordained ministers left congregations in or were ordained by presbyteries in Counties Derry, Donegal, and Tyrone. This means that over half of those who can be identified as having been ordained in Ireland departed from in-and-around the area identified in the last chapter as producing the most clerical migrants. Yet, there is more.

There are two types of ordained migrants in the present period. Type I is made up of those migrants who were ordained as ministers to a specific Irish congregation and then left for America at a later date. Type II is made up of men who were ordained by Irish presbyteries specifically for service in America. This latter type is less tied to a specific place, but still

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13 And there were several other types of clerical migrants during this period. See introduction/methods chapter and appendix on types of clerical migrants and their migration during this period.
provides us with the presbytery that sent them out, basically, as missionaries to America.

Breaking down these two types of ordained migrants reveals a difference in the Irish origins of their migrations and may demonstrate a pattern in clerical emigration during the period from 1714 to 1738.

**Points of Departure by County and Type (Table 5.6)**

Those Leaving a Congregation (ordained type I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Congregation</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Date of Migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Archibald Boyd</td>
<td>Maghera</td>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>1716</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Boyd&lt;sup&gt;14&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Macosquin</td>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>1718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James McGregor</td>
<td>Aghadowey</td>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>1718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Woodside</td>
<td>Garvagh/Dunboe</td>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>1718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Tennent, sr.&lt;sup&gt;15&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Coleraine (?)</td>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>1718 (1716?)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Clerk</td>
<td>Kilrea</td>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>1728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Craighead</td>
<td>Donegal Town</td>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>1714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Young</td>
<td>Magherally</td>
<td>Down</td>
<td>1718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Rutherford</td>
<td>Aughmcart</td>
<td>Laois&lt;sup&gt;16&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>1729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Wilson</td>
<td>Carlingford/Dundalk</td>
<td>Louth</td>
<td>1729</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Holmes</td>
<td>Strabane</td>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>1714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Cornwall</td>
<td>Clogher</td>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>1718</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Those Leaving After Ordination by a Presbytery (ordained type II)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Ordaining Presbyt.</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Date of Migration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hugh Fisher</td>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>1715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Elliot</td>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>1718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Jarvie</td>
<td>Belfast</td>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>1715</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Martin</td>
<td>Templepatrick</td>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>1734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Jameson</td>
<td>Templepatrick</td>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>1734</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>14</sup> William Boyd did not remain in America. While he did migrate in 1718, it is most probable that he did not intend to stay, at least on the trip he took in 1718, which was basically a mission to scout out the likelihood and desirability of a very large migration of Presbyterians under the charge of several Irish Presbyterian ministers, including Boyd. See Bolton, *Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America*, pp. 18, 91, 105, 132-33, 144, 197, 239, 324.

<sup>15</sup> Tennent was ordained by the Bishop of Down in 1704. He was, therefore, a member of the Church of Ireland and he is known to have served in Down, Antrim, and Armagh. At some point, he began to believe that the Presbyterian system was better and was “deprived of his living.” He settled in America in 1718, but Webster reports that he left Ireland in 1716. His movements in Ireland can be tentatively followed through the birthplaces of his children: Gilbert, 1703 in Armagh; William, jr., 1705 in Armagh; John, 1707, in Antrim; Eleanor, 1708, in Coleraine, Co. Derry; Charles, 1711, in Coleraine, Co. Derry. These last two births give us the best known information (at least to me) on which Irish locale that Tennent abandoned for America. Sherling Database.

<sup>16</sup> Then known as Queen’s County.
James Hillhouse  Derry  Derry  1718
William Bertram  Bangor  Down  1732
Samuel Hemphill  Strabane  Tyrone  1734

**Totals of each type by County**

**Ordained type I**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Type I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laois</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total type I</strong></td>
<td><strong>12</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Ordained Type II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Type II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total type II</strong></td>
<td><strong>8</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These breakdowns suggest some important conclusions and inferences. Those ordained migrants who had been ordained to an Irish congregation (type I) were more likely to have begun their migrations from the same general area, extended, that had been producing clerical migrants since the year 1683. Nine of the 12 ordained to a specific congregation came from Counties Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone. As was discussed in a previous chapter, a minister ordained to a congregation was a fairly well established man in the Irish Presbyterian

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17 There was at least one minister, Nathaniel Glasgow, who was ordained for America but then refused to go, which stood him in poor stead with the Synod of Ulster for some time. The records of the General Synod of Ulster state in 1715 and 1716 that the Monaghan Presbytery put him on “first” trials for the ministry in 1715 and in 1716. The records for 1718 report that the Belfast Presbytery had entered him on “second” trials and that he was “design’d for America.” In 1719 he is listed as a minister in the Presbytery of Augher (in County Monaghan), but at least as late as June 1719, the synod still expected him to go to America. Eventually, he was accepted as a minister in good standing with the synod and remained a pastor in Ireland for many years to come. He is not included in the numbers above because he never migrated, but his ordination for America and his subsequent refusal to leave Ireland are notable (especially in light of the fact that Presbyterians are sometimes characterized by historians as much less attached to Ireland than are Catholics). Records of the General Synod of Ulster from 1691-1820 (Belfast: Archer and Sons, 1890), vol.1, pp. 350, 390, 456, 482, 486.
community, for if he was able to keep his pulpit, he was well respected in the community—which makes the fact that all of the clerical migrants of this first type had all served their congregations for over 10 years highly significant. The most respected men of the community in the extended original area of out-migration were leaving.

The breakdown of type I migrants, taken together with the discussion of the previous chapter on the types of causes that came together to push a minister to emigrate, suggests that at least some of the pressures centered in this mid- and western Ulster area in the last chapter remained in the present period. There is certainly no record of an ease in relations between the Anglican government officials there and the local dissenters, and the fact that all of these ministers ordained to specific congregations emigrated after a minimum of 10 years of service lends weight to the idea that local circumstances helped to push them out. Most of them left from the periphery of Presbyterianism in Ulster or at least from areas where there were also high populations of Catholics, which probably also contributed to their departure. Archbishop Hugh Boulter commented on the Presbyterian migration of the period, saying that Presbyterians “go from hence [making] great complaints of the oppression they suffer here, not from the government, but from their fellow-subjects of one kind or another.” Whether pressure from the Church of Ireland, Catholic neighbors, or poor economic conditions, the continuity of the Irish origins of ordained migrants suggest a continuation of the trend in which clerical migrants tended to come from pressure or frontier areas for Irish Presbyterianism, and so far, the largest

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18 For a discussion of Presbyterian grievances at this time, see Reid, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. 3, pp. 223-236; Griffin, *The People With No Name*, pp. 82-89.

19 Reid, *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. 3, p. 225. Reid is quoting Boulter from Boulter’s “Letters,” Oxford edition, vol. 1, pp. 260-261. Also notice that two ordained ministers, Robert Rutherford of County Laois and John Wilson of County Louth, came from the southern border regions of Ulster and Munster. This also suggests that at this period ministers ordained to certain congregations were leaving from areas that were somewhat like frontier areas for Presbyterians in Ireland in the sense that their population was not overly strong in these areas and that the population surrounding them could have exerted considerable negative consequences upon them.
producer of clerical migrants has been the Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone area (a “greater Laggan” region, if you will).

However, while the traditional area of clerical emigration remains the area from which the majority of those identified as ordained ministers of both types came from (11 of 20) and also overwhelmingly so for those identified as ordained to a congregation (9 of 12), the points of departure for those ordained by an Irish presbytery specifically for service in America (type II) are quite different. Just two of the eight men ordained specifically for service in America came from the extended traditional area: one from County Derry and one from County Tyrone. The other six came from Armagh (2), Antrim (3), and Down (1), the eastern side of Ulster. These men were essentially missionaries, young men on a mission to aid Irish Presbyterians in America. They were not necessarily being pushed out of their settled lives in Ireland—although this does not mean they were not in some senses pushed out by conditions unfavorable for their future prosperity, for one must consider the fact that they seem to have consciously chosen a new land, often a wilderness, which offered better opportunities for their own future than the life of a dissenter in Ireland.

Still, in spite of the fact that six of the eight ministers ordained specifically for service in America did not come from the original or extended area of clerical out-migration, the best information available on actual exit points (presbytery of licensing and place of ordination/presbytery of ordination) suggests that overall clerical emigration from 1714 to 1738

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20 Several of the ministers in the previous period were ordained for service in America. This includes two of the last three clerical migrants in the previous period. John Henry and Thomas Bratton had been sent out by the Dublin Presbytery to America. All three of the ministers who migrated between 1709 and 1713 came from the Dublin Presbytery, but the last, Henry Hook, had been ordained to the Dublin congregation of Usher’s Quay. Makemie, himself, had been ordained by the Laggan Presbytery for service in America, and John Hampton had probably been ordained in the same way by dissenters in London, at least partially on Makemie’s request, as Hampton is recorded as being “sent out by London Ministers.” Sherling Database.

21 There are at least two other ways to analyze clerical “exit points” with the available data. The first is to consider licentiates (those who left as licentiates); the second is to combine those licensed by a presbytery with those ordained. Discarding those duplicates might give best “exit points” for the largest portion of the total migrants.
continued mostly to come from an area expanding outwards from the area identified in the last chapter as providing most of the Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants in the years from 1683 to 1713.

General emigration from Ulster in this period also seems to have been focused upon an area gradually expanding outwards from the Laggan Valley in east Donegal. “[B]y at least the 1720s the fertile parishes of east Donegal, on the west bank of the Foyle River, were a major source of Presbyterian emigration…” Moreover, many Irish who found themselves in dire conditions in the 1730s went to America, “especially from County Donegal and adjacent districts of west Ulster.” These statements are based upon the latest and best assessments of changes in population density in the eighteenth century, a study conducted by Kerby Miller and Liam Kennedy. Their findings demonstrate that up to about 1740, the heaviest outflows of Protestant migrants (of which Presbyterians would have been the heavy majority) came from Counties Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone.

The majority of both clerical and general Presbyterian emigration continued to come from the area expanding outwards from the area which produced the original out-migration in the period from 1683 to 1713. This is a significant finding. The origins of the smaller clerical emigration matches the origins of the larger general emigration, suggesting a direct relationship.

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23 Ibid., p. 27.
24 See Kerby Miller and Liam Kennedy, “Irish Migration and Demography, 1659-1831,” in Miller, et al, eds., *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, Appendix 2, pp. 659-673. This is a significant finding on the part of Miller and Kennedy, for scholars such as Graeme Kirkham have asserted that during the period from approximately 1714 to 1738 emigration from Ulster became generally widespread. While emigration did begin to come from other areas of Ulster during this period, what Miller and Kennedy’s data demonstrate is that the great majority probably continued to come from Counties Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone. For an opposing assertion, see also, Graeme Kirkham, “Ulster Emigration to North America, 1680-1720,” in *Ulster and North America: Transatlantic Perspectives on the Scotch-Irish*, H. Tyler Blethen and Curtis W. Wood, eds. (Tuscaloosa and London: University of Alabama Press, 1997), pp. 84, 97. Charles Knowles Bolton asserted as early as 1910 that Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone were centers of Irish Presbyterian emigration during this time. See Bolton, *Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America*, pp. 79-90.
between the two—knowledge that will become useful in suggesting the as of yet unknown origins of nineteenth-century Presbyterian emigration.

Further, this relationship helps to bring to mind the nature of population movements. If clerical emigration remained most probable on the periphery of Ulster and on the frontier of Irish Presbyterianism, this seeming continuation brings to mind the idea of inertia, that a great amount of stasis must be overcome to get something, anything, moving. However, once something is moving, it is much easier to continue its motion. In this case, that “something” is emigration. Clerical emigration from the east Donegal area started in 1683. If emigration, a type of motion, can be substituted for motion in general, we can postulate that once emigration has started in an area, it is much easier to keep it going in that area than start it in another. As Akenson’s work on Irish and Swedish emigration suggests, leaving is hard, but once leaving becomes part of the cultural thought process as an option it is likely to remain a center of emigration. The Laggan region, extended, had seen clerical emigration since 1683, and this may be why clerical emigration seems to have been strongest in the original area of emigration and the areas directly adjacent to it.

So, applying the idea of inertial momentum to clerical emigration from Ireland between 1714 and 1738 seems apropos, for the idea of emigration inertia seems to be confirmed by general conditions for Presbyterians in Ireland. Emigration came from areas adjacent to or congruent with those seen in the last period, despite the fact that Presbyterians from throughout Ireland complained of their second class citizenship, all while Anglican landlords blamed tithes and prosecutions in ecclesiastical courts for the mass Presbyterian emigrations and Anglican clergy blamed greedy, rack-renting landlords.\(^{25}\) Despite the fact that generations of scholars have downplayed Presbyterian grievances, Presbyterians themselves clearly felt hard done by.

\(^{25}\) For examples, see Griffin, *The People With No Name*, pp. 21-35.
Presbyterian ministers, as the literary mouthpieces of their community, led the cries of their mistreatment at the hands of a hostile Protestant government. Yet, while these charges of mistreatment were made by clerics all over Ulster, persecution does not seem to have been significant enough to shift the pattern of the majority of clerical out-migration, for emigration remained highest in the area from which it originally started in 1683, plus areas expanding from it.

(2) **American Settlement Patterns**

Just as the majority of clerical-out migration in Ireland tended to remain in or around the original areas of emigration, established trends of settlement in America tended to remain in place for the majority of Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants. They continued to settle in and around the same region settled by immigrant ministers in the last period, and settlements outside of that region fared less well. In other words, once settlement in an area has been established it seems easier for future settlers to come and settle in surrounding areas, rather than totally disconnected areas.

More information on place of settlement is available than place of Irish origin. Place of settlement can be demonstrated for all but one of the clerical migrants for this period; therefore, place of settlement can be asserted with complete confidence. Evidence clearly demonstrates

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26 There are countless examples of ministers assuming this role. See chapter 2, above. See also Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America*, pp. 36-37.

27 Presbyterians were galled at their second-class citizenship. That they were viewed as second-class citizens can even be demonstrated by the writings of a respected, 20th-century scholar. R.J. Dickson, surprisingly persuaded by the writings of the 18th-century enemies of Presbyterianism in Ireland (Church of Ireland clerics), wrote the following astonishing line describing 18th-century Presbyterians in Ireland: “They were of the ‘middle and meaner sort of people,’” untroubled by hopes of preferment.” I do not know of a more patronizing passage in professional scholarship. See Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America*, p. 37. Many Presbyterians in and around Derry City were particularly vexed by this second-class treatment. They felt that their suffering in the defense of Derry had saved the Kingdom from “Popery,” and that in reward for their courage and “love of country” they had been spurned. See Ian McBride, *The Siege of Derry in Ulster Protestant Mythology* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1997), pp. 20-21.
that Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants overwhelmingly settled in, or in areas directly adjacent
to, areas settled in the last period (1683-1713), demonstrating a logical expansion from a core
area centered around the Delmarva peninsula—an area designated for the purposes of this study
as the “Delmarva Region.”

This term requires some explanation, for the same area has been referred to differently
by other scholars. R.J. Dickson referred to the area that saw very early Irish Presbyterian
immigration as “the lands bordering on the Chesapeake Bay,” and to the area that eventually
saw the highest numbers of Scotch-Irish immigration in the eighteenth century as “the middle
colonies.” Both of these statements are correct. Graeme Kirkham has called the early area of
Scotch Irish settlement “the Chesapeake region.”28 This is also correct.

So why should we call it the Delmarva Region? The answer is that the Delmarva
Region helps to illustrate a systematic continuance of cultural expansion and population
movement. The Delmarva Region is larger than just areas that directly border the Delmarva
Peninsula or the Chesapeake Bay.29 It is also more precise than saying just “the middle
colonies,” because the Delmarva Region is not necessarily as large as the square mileage of the
middle colonies. Further, the population and settlement of the Delmarva Region is connected
with the Delmarva Peninsula. The region is extended from the Delmarva Peninsula and crosses
the borders of colonies and just about every other governmentally imposed border. It also shifts

28 Dickson, Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, p. 20. Kirkham, “Ulster Emigration to North America, 1680-
1720,” pp. 78-81.
29 Charles Knowles Bolton, whose own work focuses mostly on Irish Presbyterian immigrants in New England,
noted the strength of Irish Presbyterianism in this area and his description is a demonstration of the difficulty of
explaining just where this area was: “A southern stronghold of Presbyterianism was in the neighborhood of
Newcastle, Delaware. The narrow tongue of land between the upper shore of Chesapeake Bay and the Delaware
River is shared by Maryland and Delaware. Maryland’s portion includes the Elk River and is known as Cecil
County. Delaware’s portion is called Newcastle County, with Wilmington, its chief city, at the mouth of Christina
creek. North of these two counties and across the Pennsylvania line are Lancaster and Chester counties (also
known as Chester County from 1682 to 1729), extending from the Delaware River to the Susquehanna River. This
territory, south a few miles from Philadelphia, became the mecca for Scotch emigrants from Ireland. These
emigrants pushed up through Newcastle County to cross the Pennsylvania line, hoping to escape from Maryland
and moves, seemingly without rhyme or reason when seen on a map (just like Irish Presbyterian settlers themselves). Despite its twinge of intangibility, mapping this Delmarva Region through the growth of Irish Presbyterian pastorates spreading outwards from the original areas of settlement clustered around the Delmarva Peninsula helps to demonstrate a continuing trend in Irish Presbyterian clerical settlement. It is not just settlement in the middle colonies; it is population movement from in and around the Delmarva Peninsula. Viewing Irish Presbyterian clerical settlement in this way helps to link clerical settlement in this period to an earlier period. From 1683 to 1738, over half a century, Irish Presbyterian ministers consistently settled in this region.

However, some Presbyterian clerical migrants also settled in areas unconnected with the original region of settlement, but these settlements were far less successful in the years between 1714 and 1738, in large part because Irish Presbyterians in New England found themselves unwelcome, and totally disconnected from the support of a strong Presbyterian system they had experienced in Ireland. For a time, large numbers of people and ministers settled in New England, where the religious leaders of that heavily Puritan community (foremost amongst them was Cotton Mather) hoped that the Presbyterians would easily blend with the theologically similar Congregationalist New Englanders. Mather, son of the famous Increase Mather and himself one of the most famous preachers (if not one of the most famous men) in the north Atlantic World, had family connections with Dissenting ministers in Ireland, specifically in the Dublin area, something that must have encouraged his idea that the two communities would easily blend. He came to see the error of that thought, and lamented the treatment endured by some Irish Presbyterian ministers in New England, specifically the experience of Rev. James
Woodside, who had brought 160 Irish Presbyterians along with him to Maine.\textsuperscript{30} After dealing with hostile Puritans, hostile Indians, harsh winters, and near-famine, Woodside eventually left Maine and re-crossed the Atlantic. Some Irish Presbyterian settlements in New England survived for many years, but Irish Presbyterians in New England were a minority population. Had these early settlers received more support from the surrounding Congregationalist population or continued to receive large numbers of yearly immigrants they would have fared better than they did.\textsuperscript{31}

For a brief time, Irish Presbyterians seemed to have held out hopes that New England would become their own “land of milk and honey,” and ministers like James Woodside, William Cornwall, and Thomas Craighead, all of whom eventually left New England, were influential in persuading them to go there. But if there was ever milk in New England for Irish Presbyterians, like the initial welcome, it quickly turned sour. Meeting houses were torn down by the townspeople, and ministers, initially welcomed into the pulpits of Congregationalist churches, were acrimoniously turned out.\textsuperscript{32} Some immigrants in New England stayed and endured these conditions, but some, both ministers and lay people, left for more welcome ground. Some ministers returned to Ireland, but most of the ministers who left New England moved south and into the Delmarva region.\textsuperscript{33} For Irish Presbyterian immigrants, the Delmarva region, an area expanding outwards from the early Irish Presbyterian settlements on the

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., pp. 109-110, 225.
\textsuperscript{31} For tales of how badly things went for Irish Presbyterians in New England, see Ford, \textit{The Scotch Irish in America}, pp. 221-248, 338-359.
\textsuperscript{32} Ford, \textit{The Scotch-Irish in America}, p. 344; Bolton, \textit{Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America}, p. 111. See also, William A. Benedict and Hiram A. Tracy, \textit{History of the Town of Sutton, Massachusetts, From 1704 to 1876; including Grafton until 1735; Millbury until 1813; and parts of Northbridge, Upton and Auburn} (Worcester: Sanford & Co., 1878), p. 692, et alibi.
\textsuperscript{33} Craighead’s Irish-born son, Alexander, journeyed with his father and would become a famous, if not infamous, Presbyterian minister in Pennsylvania and Virginia. Ministers Samuel Gelston, Adam Boyd, Joseph Houston, and William McClanachan (who eventually conformed to the Established Church), also started out in New England but migrated to the Delmarva Region. Sherling Database. On Alexander Craighead’s Irish origins, see Glasgow, \textit{History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America}, pp. 464-468.
Delmarva Peninsula was the only place that they could find a religious and cultural framework in the New World that was similar to the one they had left in Ireland. Apparently, Irish Presbyterians were drawn to it from Ireland, New England, and possibly South Carolina.

Thomas Craighead, a former moderator of the Synod of Ulster, was the most notable of the ministers who left New England for the Delmarva region. He was a man who commanded respect in Ireland, and was accustomed to getting his way. For example, when he expressed his desire to be relieved of his charge in Ireland in order to leave for New England, the Synod of Ulster denied his request. At the next year’s synod meeting, there was some consternation expressed by the fact that Craighead had left despite the synod’s denial of his request. The former moderator of the Synod of Ulster was not above simply disregarding the command of the most powerful Presbyterian body in Ireland.

In New England, this powerful personality clashed with his equally intransigent congregation. They were Congregationalists and were not accustomed to bowing to earthly power outside of that derived from the congregation itself. Apparently they were not accustomed to treating ministers with as much respect as Craighead was accustomed to receiving, for there was friction between Craighead and his congregants almost from the beginning. This was partly due to the fact that Craighead was not paid as well as he thought he should have been. Amidst acrimony he left New England in 1723 or 1724, and was once again a man on the move. By the end of 1724, Craighead had travelled from New England down to the Delmarva Peninsula. There he joined the New Castle Presbytery who then assigned him the charge of a congregation of Irish Presbyterians on the Pennsylvania frontier. There, amongst his Irish Presbyterian immigrants, he received the respect to which he was accustomed, eventually becoming known as “Father Craighead” as a sign of love and respect. By contrast,
what little writing there is of his time in New England seems to remark upon the contentiousness of his personality.\textsuperscript{34}

Another area of ministerial settlement outside of the Delmarva Regions was South Carolina, but even more quickly than New England, South Carolina proved itself inhospitable to Irish Presbyterian settlement. When the Yamasee Indians were defeated and forced off of their land, the government of South Carolina advertised free land for settlers.

Five hundred men from Ireland transported themselves to Carolina to take benefit of the acts of the legislature. But the proprietors afterwards ordered the Indian lands to be surveyed and partitioned off into large baronies. The Irish emigrants having spent what little money they had, were reduced to great straits, and either came to beggary and an untimely end, or made their way to the northern colonies… .\textsuperscript{35}

Where exactly they went in the north is unknown, but the most likely place of support for Irish Presbyterians, to the north or in any direction, would have been the Delmarva region. Just two Irish Presbyterian ministers settled in South Carolina. They arrived early, in 1714 and 1715,

\textsuperscript{34}Scholars such as Charles Knowles Bolton who have spent considerable space on the Irish Presbyterian immigrant experience in New England have probably spent too much time emphasizing Craighead’s contentiousness. Bolton emphasizes Craighead’s contentiousness over much of his accomplishments, saying “The Rev. Thomas Craighead had the unhappy gift of discord and he led a somewhat stormy life, although he was fearless and useful as a minister,” and of his brother-in-law and fellow clerical immigrant “he had a happy combination of gentleness and ability which made his career in the ministry less eventful than that of … the Rev. Thomas Craighead.” Bolton, \textit{Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America}, pp.79, 87-90. This overreliance on the correspondence of his New England enemies is an example of sloppy scholarship and a disservice to Craighead. He was, after all, the moderator of the Synod of Ulster, the founder of the Presbyterian church at White Clay in the frontier of Pennsylvania—and enormously respected in Ulster and Pennsylvania, if not in New England. Consider what Cotton Mather, himself, wrote about Craighead to those in conflict with Craighead in Freetown, Massachusetts: “You can’t be insensible that the minister among you, is a man of an excellent spirit, and a great blessing to your plantation. Mister Creaghead is a man of singular piety and meekness, humility, and industry in the work of God. All that are acquainted with him have a precious esteem of him, and if he should be driven from among you, it would be such a damage, yea, such a ruin as is not without horror to be thought of.” Webster, \textit{A History of the Presbyterian Church in America}, p. 381. Obviously, this latter account by Mather is an entirely different view of Craighead. Henry Jones Ford also noticed this discrepancy. See Ford, \textit{The Scotch-Irish In America}, pp. 339-343; \textsuperscript{35}George Howe, \textit{History of the Presbyterian Church in South Carolina} (Columbia, SC: Duffie & Chapman, 1870) vol. 1, p. 177. There is also information on this settlement of Irish immigrants in Alexander Hewatt, \textit{An historical account of the rise and progress of the colonies of South Carolina and Georgia} (London: Alexander Donaldson, 1779), vol. I, pp. 229-30; and E. Sanford, \textit{A history of the United States before the Revolution} (Philadelphia, 1819), p. 111. R.J. Dickson reports the same as Howe, that “The proprietors reclaimed the grants [of land] and many of the Irish are stated to have perished and the remainder moved northward out of the colony.” See R.J. Dickson, \textit{Ulster Emigration to Colonial America}, pp. 24-25, 25n.1.
respectively, just about the time that the Yamasee Indians were defeated. One of these Irish ministers, Hugh Fisher, was a licentiate of the Convoy Presbytery in County Donegal, which administered to Presbyterians in an area once overseen by the Laggan Presbytery. He had been ordained by the Armagh Presbytery for service in America. He was, therefore, a missionary, and he stayed in South Carolina, pastoring a flock for the rest of his life in Dorchester, S.C. The other, John Jarvie of the Down and Belfast Presbyteries, was also ordained specifically for America. What happened to him after his departure from Belfast harbor in 1714 is currently lost to history. South Carolina would eventually become a favored transatlantic destination for Irish Presbyterian migrants and would one day be heavily populated with Irish Presbyterians and their descendents, but in this period it quickly proved itself a forbidding transatlantic destination.

The colony of New York also saw some clerical settlement. In total, seven Irish Presbyterian ministers spent time in New York during this period, but New York was not an area that received clerical migrants directly. Most of the seven Irish Presbyterian ministers who settled there between 1714 and 1738 had originally settled in New England and were fleeing intolerance. Although a few ministers who had originally settled in the Delmarva Region held pastorates in the colony, most returned south after a time. New York simply was not a “destination” during the period of time from 1714 to 1738. It was a frontier area far afield, like North Carolina, that ministers began moving into after having already been settled in another colony. The closest example of a minister moving to America to settle in the Colony of New York is Samuel Dunlop. He arrived late in this period, in 1737. Before helping to found the town of Cherry Valley, New York, he had toured the southern colonies and had been most

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36 Some older sources say that William Tennent, sr. landed in New York City in 1718 with his family, but he was settled in the frontier town of Neshaminy, Pennsylvania shortly after arrival. See Webster, A History of the Presbyterian Church in America, p. 365.
recently to Londonderry, New Hampshire, where he recruited Irish Presbyterian settlers to follow him from New Hampshire to New York. The success of Irish Presbyterians in Cherry Valley is reminiscent of the settlement of Londonderry, New Hampshire, which was probably the most successful area of settlement in New England by Irish Presbyterians in the first half of the eighteenth century. Instead of looking to settle in or near pre-existing towns, the Rev. James McGregor, a Gaelic-preaching, former defender at the Siege of Derry, acquired the right to settle in the New Hampshire wilderness. There, almost from scratch, he and his Presbyterian brethren created a life for themselves, one that was far more impervious to Congregationalist intolerance. Like Londonderry, New Hampshire, Cherry Valley was then on the frontier, and Rev. Dunlop and his fellow Irish Presbyterians from New Hampshire helped to settle this frontier region of New York.\(^{37}\)

Despite this late settlement in New York of Irish Presbyterians formerly settled in Londondery, New Hampshire, there were really three main “destinations” during this period for transatlantic migration for Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants. Of these three, evidence makes clear that the Delmarva Region was the predominant destination for ministers. As new ministers arrived in the Delmarva area extended, they established meeting houses for native-born, but largely—in fact almost totally—for immigrant Irish Presbyterians.\(^{38}\) They were serving a sort of overflow population of the Delmarva Peninsula, which was at first spilling into Pennsylvania from the Delmarva (particularly from the peninsular port of New Castle, Delaware, and then later arriving directly into Pennsylvania. Through the creation of new Presbyterian “meetings” for frontier settlers and the prerequisite oversight of the new meetings into presbyteries, this new influx of ministers helped to widen a pre-existing interconnecting

\(^{37}\) Sherling Database.
system of presbyteries, and renewed ties with church session, presbyteries, and the synod back in Ireland, all of which helped the Delmarva Region to remain the epicenter of Irish Presbyterian power and settlement through 1738.

The importance of the Delmarva Region was discovered in the last chapter when we noticed that although Irish Presbyterian ministerial settlement was spread out over at least four colonies, “the Middle Colonies,” it was also clustered around the Delmarva Peninsula. The Presbyterian population of the peninsula and the area directly adjacent to it began to grow both through immigration and procreation, and by 1714 and especially by 1738, the Presbyterian population (as mapped by the congregations headed by Presbyterian ministers) extended further outward from the Delmarva Peninsula but still largely remained in an area within the colonies of Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and South New Jersey. It is still connected with the Delmarva and is still something less than just the Middle Colonies. This area extended from and connected to the Delmarva Peninsula is the Delmarva Region. The fact that Irish Presbyterian ministers do not seem to have settled in places that were not in need of them, that Irish Presbyterians are known to have long been in the region, and that they were steadily migrating from Ireland and settling in this region only strengthens the idea that by following immigrant Irish Presbyterian ministers we can find the immigrant Irish Presbyterian population. For now this method clearly suggests that the Delmarva Region was the stronghold of Irish Presbyterianism in America.

While scholars have long debated whether the earliest site of major settlement of “Scotch-Irish” in America was in New England or in the Chesapeake region, the dominance of

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39 During this time period, Pennsylvania became a much more desirable area for settlement than Maryland, the original area of settlement. Maryland was originally a colony that provided religious toleration, but that changed in the early 18th century. Pennsylvania, on the other hand, offered it. New settlers more and more ended up in Pennsylvania, whether they disembarked on the Delmarva Peninsula or not.
the Delmarva region as a place of Irish Presbyterian clerical settlement cannot be doubted.\textsuperscript{40} A chart of the number of the Irish Presbyterian ministers who spent time in the main regions of settlement during this period clearly demonstrates the preference for the Delmarva region.\textsuperscript{41}

**Irish Presbyterian Clerical Settlement in America, 1714-38 (Table 5.7)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delmarva Region</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total known places of settlement</strong></td>
<td><strong>85</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If we combine the above numbers from 1714-1738 with the settlement numbers by region from the period 1683-1713, the Delmarva Region’s predominance as a destination for Irish Presbyterian ministers from the earliest arrivals in 1683 up to 1738 is further reinforced.

**Irish Presbyterian Clerical Settlement in America, 1683-1738 (Table 5.8)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delmarva</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New England</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Known Places of Settlement</strong></td>
<td><strong>95</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The numbers state a case which cannot be denied. Clerical Presbyterian migrants from Ireland settled in the Delmarva Region far more often than anywhere else in America from the very commencement of their migration in 1683 up through the year 1738. There are several obvious

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\textsuperscript{40} Where there are ministers, there are congregants, most of whom at this time are assumed to have been Presbyterians from Ireland or their descendants. There were surely Presbyterians from Scotland in the congregations of these Irish ministers, but Scottish immigration was dwarfed by immigration from Ireland during the eighteenth century, being probably one-fourth or one-fifth the size of Ulster immigration during the same century. See Hodge, *The Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, part I, p. 74; Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*, pp. 235-236.

\textsuperscript{41} A note on numbers and settlement patterns: While there were only 77 clerical migrants during this period, there are 86 places of settlement. This is because some of these men were on the move, some of them spending time with congregation in New England, New York, and the Delmarva region. There is only one man who is reported as having been in America but is not narrowed down more specifically. This is William Elliot, ordained for America by the Presbytery of Armagh in January 1718. Nathaniel Glasgow, a native of Keady, Co. Donegal, was ordained to go to America in 1719 but refused to leave. Despite stern reprimands from the Synod of Ulster, he was finally ordained in Ireland and held pastorates in Counties Cavan and Tyrone.
suggestions for why this was the case. Many of these Irish clerics had been called to America, or at least were aware that Presbyterian ministers were in need there, suggesting that the region was settled with Presbyterians. It is likely that these Presbyterians were Irish Presbyterian immigrants and their descendants. Historian and theologian, Charles Hodge, found evidence that the Presbyterian churches in the middle colonies except for two or three exceptions were peopled by Irish immigrants and their descendants. After listing three exceptions, he wrote that all of the remainder, which includes all of the original churches [of the first American presbytery], except that of Philadelphia, were...composed principally of Irish Presbyterians.42

Hodge’s conclusion was based on two primary documents written in 1730 and 1744. The latter of these accounts was written by an immigrant Irish Presbyterian minister, Samuel Blair, who had arrived in America in 1730. Fourteen years after landfall in America he wrote: “all our congregations in Pennsylvania except two or three are from that kingdom,” i.e. Ireland.43

Clearly, Irish Presbyterians, clerical and lay, were most heavily settled in this region extending outwards from the Delmarva Peninsula. It has long been known that this area was heavily settled by Irish Presbyterians. Importantly, clerical migration matches this aspect (American settlement patterns) of the general Presbyterian migration from Ireland.44

Moreover, patterns of clerical movement within the American colonies also help to demonstrate that Irish Presbyterians in America were strongest in the Delmarva region rather than in New England. The best demonstration of this fact is the movement of ministers when

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43 Ibid.
44 For discussion of general Irish Presbyterian settlement in the Delmarva Region in the eighteenth century, see Bolton, *Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America*, pp. 21-30, 266-284; Ford, *The Scotch-Irish in America*, pp. 209-220, 260-290, 379-400; Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*, pp. 186-199, 242-249; Griffin, *The People With No Name*, chapters 3, 4, and 6. Again, though, what is particularly important for our purposes is the demonstration of the connection between lay Irish Presbyterian immigrant settlement in American and clerical Irish Presbyterian immigrant settlement in America—a connection which will be important for our investigation of lay Irish Presbyterian settlement in the 19th century.
the situation in New England turned sour for Irish Presbyterian immigrants. One of the best
documented cases of the abuse of Presbyterians in New England involves, ironically, one of the
least documented Irish Presbyterian ministers in America during the period from 1713 to 1738:
the Rev. Edward Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald arrived in Worcester, Massachusetts, between 1718 and 1724 along with an
entire congregation of Irish Presbyterians. Soon after, they procured supplies to build their own
meeting house. However, the addition of a second congregation and meeting house was
considered a great inconvenience to the townspeople who had a tradition of paying for the
upkeep of ministers and meeting houses through public funds. No matter that this new
congregation and minister were of another denomination, in their minds the new minister and
the meeting house meant higher fees, which they did not want. So, one night, while the
Presbyterian meeting house was under construction, a mob of townspeople led by some of the
town’s most eminent citizens (including a deacon of the town’s Congregationalist church) tore
down the partially completed Presbyterian meeting house.

Demoralized by the hostility and the destruction of their meeting house, most of
Fitzgerald’s Irish congregation trickled out of Worcester and into nearby Sutton, Massachusetts,
where there was another fledgling congregation of Irish Presbyterians under another Irish
minister named John McKinstry, who had been in Sutton since about 1719. Others of
Fitzgerald’s Worcester congregation left Worcester for Londonderry, New Hampshire. These
included the Rev. James McGregor, who with the help of John McMurphy (McGregor’s “aide-
de-camp” and eventually a member of the New Hampshire colonial legislature) had carved from
the wilderness the strongest of the New England Irish Presbyterian communities.45 As for
Fitzgerald, himself, after the forcible dismantling of his congregation at the hands of

Worcester’s “best,” he nearly drops from the record. He remained in New England at least until 1729, for he occasionally shows up in the records as sporadically arriving in Worcester to preach to the small remnant of his Irish congregation that decided to stay there. Nothing is known of him after 1729.\textsuperscript{46}

The case of the Worcester Presbyterians is telling for several reasons, but the main two are that (1) Irish Presbyterians were not welcome in New England, and (2) many of those who faced hostility sought to move to places where there was an Irish Presbyterian community strong enough to withstand hostility. In the face of the hostility and hardship they found in New England, many Irish Presbyterian ministers (and presumably lay Presbyterians, too) did not simply move to friendlier towns in New England, but left New England altogether. At least two ministers, James Woodside and William Cornwall, re-crossed the Atlantic. These two men had each immigrated along with their own Irish congregations and then settled with those same congregants on the Maine frontier. There, they suffered great hardships at the hands of hostile tribes and also at the hands of hostile English-descended New Englanders.\textsuperscript{47} Faced with the threat of Indian attack and with famine, many of the Irish settlers are reported to have been left to die of cold, hunger, and illness by New Englanders who are described as not wishing to expend the effort to help them.\textsuperscript{48} The hostile reception, particularly of Woodside, is interesting. It was at the encouragement of the powerful Cotton Mather, himself, that Woodside had decided


\textsuperscript{47} William Boyd also spent time in New England. He was in Massachusetts for about 6 months, but then left. It seems most likely that he was on a scouting mission for the Synod of Ulster who wished him to report on the suitability of New England as a place of settlement for Ireland’s Presbyterians. Boyd, therefore, should not be counted along with Cornwall and Woodside as having “quit” New England for the Old World.

to come to New England. Not surprisingly, the widely renowned Mather was persuasive enough that Woodside brought with him over 160 Irish Presbyterian settlers to New England. Yet, just a few years later, when Woodside re-crossed the Atlantic, Mather lamented the fate of “poor Mr. Woodside.”

Importantly, other Irish ministers who found New England hostile did not re-cross the Atlantic. They left New England, to be sure, but they were headed south to the Delmarva region, where there was already a system of Presbyterian government put into place by Irish ministers in the earliest period of Irish Presbyterian clerical immigration (1683-1713) and still largely run by Irish Presbyterians and their descendants. At least six Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants made the journey from New England to settle in the Delmarva region, a demonstration of the pull toward the Delmarva. Conversely, no minister who settled in the Delmarva Region left to settle in New England, and only one left the Delmarva Region to re-cross the Atlantic. Once again, signs indicate that from the very beginning of Irish Presbyterian clerical immigration up until 1738 (and beyond), the pre-eminent place of Irish Presbyterian settlement, in general, was the Delmarva Peninsula. Tracking the settlement of ministers and relating that settlement to what is known about general Irish Presbyterian settlement at the time renders this conclusion to be relatively obvious.

Yet, this is not the traditional interpretation, and by suggesting this pattern (the preference of Irish Presbyterian migrants for the Delmarva Region from 1683 to 1738 without a break), we have unintentionally embroiled ourselves in a historiographical debate. There can

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49 Ibid., pp. 109-110, 131, 225.
50 Hodge, A Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, chapter 2.
51 This was Robert Heron, who left Williamsburg, Virginia, to return to Ireland.
52 Many earlier scholars of Irish Presbyterian, “Scotch-Irish” or Ulster migration gave much attention to early New England immigration. Dated but still very useful works from the heyday of the enthusiasm for everything “Scotch Irish” in America, such as Charles Knowles Bolton’s Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America (1910) and Henry Jones Ford’s The Scotch-Irish in America (1915), give considerable space to the early experience of Irish
be no debate about the accuracy of our assertions regarding *clerical* migration, for clearly, clerical settlement was highest in the area in and around the Delmarva Peninsula. But our supplementary suggestion that the Delmarva Region was the predominant region of Irish Presbyterian settlement from 1683 to 1738 contradicts the work of R. J. Dickson, a well-respected scholar whose work has largely stood the passage of time, but here seems to be clearly and uncharacteristically in the wrong.

Presbyterians in New England, and these two books, along with countless inferior works, gave the impression that the earliest or earliest significant Irish Presbyterian migration to America began between 1714 and 1718 and it was to New England. Even later works, such as the widely-respected *Ulster Emigration to the Colonies* by R.J. Dickson (1966) insists upon New England’s early predominance, i.e., Dickson insists that the earliest significant Ulster migration to America was to New England. In the traditional interpretation of Irish Presbyterian migration to America, only after migration to New England turned sour did those Irish Presbyterian immigrants begin to concentrate their settlement in middle colonies such as Pennsylvania. What is not disputed are the facts that (1) there was early immigration into the Chesapeake Region, (2) that there was later immigration into New England and (3) that eventually the epicenter of Irish Presbyterian immigration in America was Pennsylvania. But, why should this suggest to us minor immigration in the Chesapeake and then a break for major immigration into New England which then a shift to Pennsylvania? Pennsylvania is connected to the Chesapeake region on its southern border and the Delaware River flows from Pennsylvania (near Philadelphia) into the Chesapeake ending at the Delmarva Peninsula. If the groundwork was already laid for immigrants in the Delmarva/Chesapeake Region, is it not more probable that immigrants continued to arrive (and in greater and greater numbers) in the area that they had already been settling and areas adjacent to it rather than immigration occurring in one place, stopping, occurring in another, stopping, and then returning to an area very near the original one? Could not the eventual Pennsylvania “epicenter” have been spillover from the long Irish-Presbyterian-settled Delmarva Peninsula? Because of the acceptance of New England as the prime entrepot for so long, contemporary scholars have only recently started to realize that fairly significant Irish Presbyterian immigration began much earlier than the second decade of the 18th century and that it was largely centered around the Chesapeake Bay—which is bounded on the east by the Delmarva Peninsula. Graeme Kirkham, for instance, does well to demonstrate that immigration began earlier than previously thought, that it was indeed significant in terms of numbers, and that it was centered on the Chesapeake Bay region. Further, as recently as 2001, Patrick Griffin could write that “a small number of Ulster Presbyterians, no more than a few hundred, left for the American colonies in the years during and just after the Williamite war. From 1688 to 1703, at least twelve ships left Belfast for the Chesapeake colonies, carrying small numbers of indentured servants.” So Griffin, too, places initial immigration much earlier and to the Chesapeake. I think he is probably wrong in his estimate that no more than a few hundred Irish Presbyterians made their way to the Chesapeake colonies during that time. Why would only a few hundred immigrants excite such a backlash from government officials and other settlers that we discussed in the previous chapter? New Castle on the Delmarva Peninsula was the entrepot for thousands of immigrants after 1714, and not just because it was convenient for shipping. Irish Presbyterians had been settling in and around this area since before 1683, when they made desperate calls for Irish ministers to come to them. It was very natural for Irish Presbyterians to immigrate here; this is the place in America where they had the longest known connections. See Kirkham, “*Ulster Emigration to North America, 1680-1720,*” pp. 77-117, and Griffin, *The People with No Name,* p. 89. Following the settlement patterns of immigrant Irish Presbyterian ministers provides some insight into the question of New England as the earliest significant destination for Ulster migration.
Dickson is practically wedded to the idea that the first significant Ulster migration was to New England and that it then abruptly shifted to Pennsylvania.\textsuperscript{53} He clings to this argument despite the fact that he also wrote that “ever since the early days of Scotch-Irish settlement in America, letters from north Irish emigrants influenced the direction and volume of succeeding emigrations.”\textsuperscript{54} This earliest immigration, of course, was to the Chesapeake regions, so why should anyone be surprised that the earliest immigrants helped to direct the flow of later immigrants?

More recent scholarship has incorporated the earliest phase of Irish Presbyterians migration to the Delmarva Region, but it still suggests that New England was the primary site of Irish Presbyterian immigration in the 1720s. For example, “Prior to the 1710s the Scots-Irish went primarily to the Chesapeake, next to New England, and from the late 1720s overwhelmingly to Philadelphia and the Delaware valley…”\textsuperscript{55}

\textsuperscript{53} Dickson does not bother to define “significant” migration. However, he was aware of the earlier migration of Irish Presbyterian ministers to the Chesapeake/Delmarva area. Importantly for our study, and indicative of Dickson’s approach toward early immigration, Dickson dismissed the idea that Presbyterian ministerial migration from Ulster to America before 1718 was “comparable” to general Ulster immigration. Dickson writes: “Though specific reference was made during this period [pre 1718] to Scotch-Irish settlements in Maryland, \textit{it is certain} that the extent of the emigration from Ulster was not comparable with the proportion of Presbyterian ministers who emigrated…” He seems to have derived this false certitude based on the two non sequiturs that immediately follow the excerpt provided above, presumably as evidence of his conclusion. Therefore his dismissal is based upon a logical fallacy. Let me explain further. Dickson dismisses outright the possibility of clerical migration to the Chesapeake region between about 1683 and 1713 for two reasons. The first is that many ministers emigrated without companions, and the second is that early ministerial immigration was in response to calls from settlers, “whether Scotch or Scotch-Irish,” who were already there. Clearly, neither of Dickson’s reasons for dismissal have any bearing whatsoever on whether clerical migration was comparable to lay migration from Ulster to the Chesapeake between 1683 and 1713. Dickson’s reasons for his certainty, in fact, provide zero certainty and are illogical. The fact that early ministers seem to have travelled without companions means virtually nothing and provides no evidence whatsoever on whether or not ministerial emigration was or was not comparable to the larger lay migration from Ulster. His second non sequitur is that ministers came in response to calls, a fact which, once again, provides zero argument for the case that lay and clerical migration from Ulster were unrelated or not comparable. He admits that Irish Presbyterians were in the area that ministers settled, and that this was an area from which they had received calls for ministers. We know from the last chapter that there was notable Irish Presbyterian settlement in and around the Delmarva Peninsula and that some of these had even been trained in Ireland in the catechisms of the church by immigrant minister William Trail. Do these facts not suggest that ministerial and lay migration have some connection, indeed, quite a tight one? See R.J. Dickson, \textit{Ulster Emigration to Colonial America}, pp. 20-24. Emphasis is mine.\textsuperscript{54} Same, p. 53.\textsuperscript{55} Miller, et al, \textit{Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan}, p. 24.
However, if Irish Presbyterian ministers actually do indicate where lay Irish Presbyterian immigrants and their descendants were settling in America, then Dickson’s assertion that immigration started in New England is wrong. To be sure, there was a spike in ministerial immigration to New England in 1718. However, there is no question (even to Dickson) that ministerial migration to the Delmarva Region began in the 1680s. Further, ministerial migration to the Delmarva region from 1714 to 1738 increased dramatically from the previous period and remained relatively high through 1738. Therefore, there was already a stream of ministerial immigration flowing to the Delmarva Region before 1718 and it increased. Yet, Dickson insists upon one stream of immigration, to New England, and that it ended rather suddenly. Only then did another one begin that headed to the Delmarva Region. However, because of what we know about ministerial immigration into the Delmarva Region and because we know ministerial immigration spiked in New England in 1718, it seems that Ulster migration would have been high to both New England and to the Delmarva simultaneously, that for a time there were two immigration streams running in parallel, one to New England and one to the Delmarva Region, until the New England flow dried up. In other words, for a time there was a dual stream of migration from Ulster to New England and to the Delmarva.

Other scholarship supports this “dual-stream” conception of Irish immigrant settlement, gleaned from charting ministerial settlement. Graeme Kirkham uncovered evidence, in contradiction to Dickson’s thesis, that indicates a much earlier higher level of shipping from Ulster and other parts of Ireland into the Delaware River region (river ports like New Castle, Delaware and Philadelphia) than previously thought. “The emergence of the Delaware [River] as a major gateway for Ulster migrants, usually dated to the late 1720s, in fact took place a decade earlier.” He therefore suggests that Ulster immigration to the Chesapeake “developed in
parallel with the flow to New England rather than in succession to it.” Patrick Griffin relates that 5,000 and 7,000 people left Ulster during the period Dickson designates as the initial period of Ulster immigration (to New England), and at least half of those have been identified as heading to ports along the Delaware River. So, the “dual stream” conclusion suggested by following ministerial settlement is supported by findings in other scholarly work focused on general Irish Presbyterian migration that also challenges older assumptions about Irish Presbyterian immigration. But, following the ministers suggests something more than just a dual stream. It suggests an original stream to the Delmarva which branched and ran somewhat evenly for a time to both New England and to the Delmarva, and eventually the New England stream turned back southward and rejoined the original.

(3) The Shape of Clerical Migration, 1714-1738

We have been discussing where in Ireland Presbyterian clerical migrants came from and where in America they settled. Both of these aspects of clerical migration during the period from 1714 to 1738 were then compared to the same aspects of clerical migration in the period from 1683-1723, which demonstrated a general continuity between the origins and settlement patterns over the entirety of the years from 1683-1738. Perhaps more significantly, the patterns witnessed in the Irish origins and American settlement patterns of clerical migration seem to match quite closely with what is known about the Irish origins and American settlement patterns of general Irish Presbyterian migration during those years.

This next section shifts perspective slightly in addressing our third aspect of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration to America from 1714 to 1738. It considers the overall “shape” of clerical migration during the period and compares that shape with what scholars have pieced

56 Kirkham, “Ulster Emigration to North America, 1680-1720,” pp. 81, 84.
57 Griffin, The People With No Name, pp. 91, 92, 200n.134.
together about general Irish Presbyterian migration during the same period. What do we mean by shape?

What we really mean is the yearly numerical frequency of clerical migration for every year over the course of the entire period. “Shape” is the mot juste, not only because of its comparative ease but because the yearly numerical frequency of clerical immigration plotted on a graph creates an actual shape—and the shape itself is telling. Not only do the shapes on the graph suggest the three periods of investigation for eighteenth-century clerical migration (1714-38, 1739-69, and 1770-1810) but they are useful in comparing clerical migration with what is known about peak years in general Irish Presbyterian migration.

Importantly for the investigation of clerical migration in this particular period, the graph below demonstrates three distinct phases of clerical migration between the years 1714 and 1738: 1714-1718, 1725-1730, and 1734-1737.

Graph 5.1

The knowledge that more Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants arrived in one set of years rather than another is not only rather insignificant but exceptionally dull. However, when combined with what is known about peak years in general Irish Presbyterian migration during the
eighteenth century, an intriguing “mirroring effect” between clerical and lay migration becomes apparent.

At least four scholars have posited peak years in Irish Presbyterian migration to America in the years before 1776. Each of the four scholars have identified two peaks in general Irish Presbyterian migration in the years from 1714 to 1738. The peaks identified are largely identical.

Leyburn’s earliest peak: 1717-1718
Doyle’s earliest peak: 1717/18-1720
Dickson’s earliest peak: 1718-1720
Bric’s earliest peak: 1717-1720

The first of the distinct phases of clerical migration between 1714 and 1738 was 1714-1718 and corresponds nearly perfectly with the earliest peak years of general Irish Presbyterian migration in the eighteenth century.

Scholars are in complete agreement about the second peak in general Irish Presbyterian migration to America in the eighteenth century.

Leyburn’s second peak: 1725-1729
Doyle’s second peak: 1725-1729
Dickson’s second peak: 1725-1729
Bric’s second peak: 1725-1729

58 These four scholars can be divided into minimalists and maximalists. The two maximalists are James G. Leyburn who identified 5 pre-1776 peaks (1717-1718, 1725-1729, 1740-1741,1754-1755, and 1771-1775), and David N. Doyle who identified 6 pre-1776 peaks (1717/18-1720, 1725-1729, 1740-1741, 1754-1755, 1766-1767, and 1770-1775). The minimalists, whose estimations of total migrant numbers seem to have been more widely accepted by the most credible scholars, are R.J. Dickson (1718-1720, 1725-1729, 1770-1775) and Maurice Bric (1717-1720, 1725-29, and 1767-75). Leyburn, *The Scotch-Irish*, p. 169; David Noel Doyle, “Scots Irish or Scotch-Irish,” p. 161; Maurice Bric, “Patterns of Irish Emigration to America, 1783-1800,” in *New Directions in Irish-American History*, Kevin Kenny, ed. (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003), pp. 17-35; Dickson, *Ulster Migration to Colonial America*, chapters 2-4. Dickson’s peaks, particularly his second, are not stated outright, but can be clearly taken from his text. In choosing 1725-1730 for Dickson’s second peak in Ulster migration to America, I have drawn from nearly the entirety of his 3rd chapter, but pp. 32-33, 47 are most explicit in selecting peak years for Dickson. E. Estyn Evans agrees with Dickson’s minimal peak years of migration. See E. Estyn Evans, “The Scotch-Irish: Their Cultural Adaptation and Heritage in the American Old West,” in *Essays in Scotch-Irish History* (New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1969), p. 75. For one of the best and most concise discussions of the total numbers of Ulster migrants in the eighteenth century, see Kerby A. Miller and Liam Kennedy, “Irish Migration and Demography, 1659-1831,” in *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, pp. 656-658.

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Once again, the graph demonstrates a near perfect correspondence between peaks in general migration and phases of clerical migration, as the second phase of clerical migration is identified on the graph as between 1726 and 1730.

This leaves only the third phase of clerical migration between 1714 and 1738 that does not match almost perfectly with an identified peak in general eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterian migration to America. Yet, our third phase of clerical migration (1734-1737) so closely follows the second general peak (1725-1729) that the third phase could easily have been in response to a need for ministers in America created by the large general migration between 1725 and 1729—a situation similar to the clerical migration from Ireland to America in the late seventeenth century and first decade of the eighteenth century when Irish ministers left Ireland in response to calls from Presbyterians in America.59

The important point is that a comparison of the phases of clerical migration between 1714 and 1738 with known peaks in general Irish Presbyterian migration to America reveals that the highest periods of clerical migration were at or very near times when lay migration is said to have been high. This may be assumed to be an obvious assumption, but for this knowledge to be useful it must be demonstrated. This mirroring effect or direct relationship is important because it clearly demonstrates that between 1714 and 1738, the peak years in the

59 Of course this staggered clerical/lay phase of immigration also suggests the possibility that clerical migrants were in the lead. After all, another major phase of general Scotch-Irish immigration began in 1740, just two years after a major phase of clerical migration ended. And, there is precedence for ministers leading and encouraging lay immigration. Irish Presbyterian immigrant ministers such as William Holmes and Thomas Craighead migrated, settled, and then actively encouraged emigration of Presbyterian congregants from areas surrounding their congregations in Donegal city and Strabane, Co. Donegal, respectively. Others, like Woodside, McGregor, and Cornwall brought entire congregations with them, which no doubt encouraged further migration through letters home, family ties, etc. So, while in my opinion less likely, there is a possibility that this stage of clerical migration from 1734 to 1738 might also represent a vanguard for another surge of lay Presbyterian migration which quickly followed in 1740. Keep in mind, though, that neither of these possibilities (following calls and leading congregational migrants) are mutually exclusive for a stage of clerical migration. For instance, some ministers who arrived between 1734 and 1738 could have been responding to calls or opportunities created by earlier lay migration and still other ministers who arrived in the exact same period might have seen themselves as leading a new wave of migration. See Bolton, *Scotch Irish Pioneers in Ulster and America*, pp. 79-90, 130-153.
smaller clerical migration are directly comparable with the peak years in general migration. As with Irish origins and American settlement patterns, comparison in peak years of migration has demonstrated that the smaller sub-migration (clerical) is representative of the larger general migration.

In conclusion, our investigation of three aspects of clerical migration (Irish origins, American settlement patterns, and the frequency of yearly migration) during the period from 1714 to 1738 has demonstrated or strongly suggested (in the case of origins) that each of those three aspects was very similar if not almost identical to what is known about those same aspects of general Irish Presbyterian migration at the same time. Between 1714 and 1738 the two migrations exhibit a direct relationship on these three important aspects of migration. If this seeming direct relationship continues throughout the period in which something is known about general Irish Presbyterian migration, then the assumption of a continued direct relationship between clerical migration and general migration during the nineteenth century might be of help in suggesting the Irish origins, the American settlement patterns, and the peak years of general Presbyterian migration in the nineteenth century.
Chapter 6:  
Cast Into Internecine Doldrums: Clerical Migration 1739-1769

The last two chapters have started with a demonstration of Irish origins, American settlement patterns, and years of peak clerical migration. These aspects remain important and will be discussed later in this chapter, for we begin our discussion of clerical migration in the years between 1739 and 1769 with an investigation of a different feature of the migration.

The most immediately notable aspect of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration during the period from 1739-69 is that there was a marked decline in clerical migration. Only 27 Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants crossed the Atlantic for America in those years. When compared with the 77 who migrated between 1724 and 1738, the total of 27 migrants is a decrease of about 66 percent. Such a decrease is even more noticeable when it is compared with the drastic increase in clerical migration in the period that began in 1770. This chapter attempts to ascertain why there was such a drop in clerical migration between 1739 and 1769. It will then analyze the Irish origins, the American settlement patterns, and the shape of clerical migration in relation to general migration for the period from 1739-1769.

(1)  
Decline in Irish Presbyterian Clerical Migration to America

The drop in clerical migration during the years from 1739 to 1769 is not surprising. There were bloody wars raging in North America between the British and the French and their Native American allies from 1744 to 1748 and again from 1756 to 1763; there was also the related War of Austrian Succession (1740-48). So, for at least 17 of the 31 years covered by the period, the British were at war and much of the fighting occurred in the colonies. Such a situation could only have slowed aspirations to leave the relative safety of Ireland, risking the danger of enemy ships on the Atlantic and then settlement on a mind-bogglingly vast and alien,
war-torn American frontier. In addition to those considerably sufficient, negative deterents, there were also stretches of economic prosperity in Ireland toward the end of this period which, for positive reasons, may have helped lead to the decreased attraction for Presbyterian clerics to leave Ireland for America.

Another possible reason for the decline in clerical migration during this period is the easing of religious persecution. The assertion that a decline in religious persecution during this period may have resulted in a decrease in Irish Presbyterian clerical migration, of course, means that religious persecution was a reason for emigration, and this, historiographically, is a touchy subject. Nineteenth and early twentieth-century scholars of Irish Presbyterians in America were inclined to extol the virtues of Presbyterians forced from Ireland to America at the hands of intolerant prelates and a tyrannical government. In other words, these early scholars took the interpretation of religious causes of the migration of Irish Presbyterians to America too far, making it the centerpiece of their grand narratives. However, the faults of early interpretations do not justify the extraordinary shift of scholarly opinion to the opposite extreme: the denial that religious persecution was a cause for Irish Presbyterian migration.

Since the mid-twentieth century, scholars have largely denied religious persecution as a cause of Irish Presbyterian migration. The influential histories of Irish Presbyterian migration written by James G. Leyburn and R.J. Dickson are both indicative of the mid-twentieth century’s interpretive mindset (and two of the best examples of the continued influence of such interpretations). In a decisive break with earlier historians, Leyburn maintained that religious motivations were only a factor in the earliest years of Irish Presbyterian migration in the eighteenth century. He takes to task earlier historians such as J.A. Froude for overemphasizing
religious bigotry as a reason for Presbyterian emigration.¹ Dickson went even further than Leyburn, and seems to have gone out of his way in attempting to discredit claims that religious considerations or persecution were reasons for Presbyterian emigration from Ireland.² Like Leyburn, Dickson reacts to and takes to task earlier historians, such as J.A. Froude, C.A. Hanna, J.P. MacLean, and F.J. Bigger, who placed bigotry and religious persecution as the central causes for Irish Presbyterian emigration.³ Dickson is rather more strident than Leyburn. In a pretense of balance on this issue, he gives lip service to the possibility that Presbyterians might have held religious motivations for migration, writing that it would be unwise to dismiss lightly religious considerations for emigration—yet he was simultaneously asserting that those who did leave for religious reasons were irrational.⁴ (Dickson informs us—parenthetically and with all the gravitas of the worst of clerical moralists—that a combination of irrationality and religion are, and have long been, typical of Northern Ireland—as if that settled the question, entirely).⁵

Moreover, in investigating the validity of Presbyterian claims that they were leaving for religious reasons, scholars who have dismissed those claims seem to have been looking for examples of outright religious persecution and to have found very little. Dickson is right to say that by 1718 the days in which meeting-house doors were nailed shut and ministers were imprisoned were over.⁶ Yet, this gives the wrong impression. Those days of outright persecution were not long over. The entire Presbytery of Monaghan, for instance, had been

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⁴ Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America*, p. 31.
⁵ Ibid.
arrested in 1712. The emigrants of 1718 (unlike Dickson writing in the twentieth century) had no clue as to whether those days were gone for good or not, and therefore, his argument is anachronistic.

Instead of looking for outright persecution (which, as Dickson points out, does seem to have become rare by 1718), it might be best to look for the religio-political disability that fell upon Presbyterians. The penal code was still in the statute books, and there can be no doubt that Presbyterians in Ireland were disadvantaged at times and in some situations specifically because of their Presbyterianism. Despite his evident disgust with the religious arguments for emigration, Dickson himself admits that “even in 1718, the year in which large scale north Irish emigration to the American colonies began, the Irish Presbyterians worshipped on sufferance and were excluded from all posts in the government they had helped to preserve.” He freely admits, then, the presence of governmentally imposed disabilities suffered by Presbyterians in Ireland. Yet even as he admits that there was a good deal of resentment amongst Presbyterians in Ireland and that they suffered from prohibitions imposed on Presbyterians by the government because of their adherence to Presbyterianism, he only considers these prohibitions to be a possible cause for emigration as a tipping point made possible by other more tangible factors.

But, why should any disability imposed on a group of people by a government solely for the reason of their religion not be considered as reasons for the emigration of large numbers of that group? Of course it should be considered and considered seriously. One can sympathize with Dickson’s desire to demonstrate that there were other, pressing reasons separate from religion that motivated Irish Presbyterians to emigrate, but he simply goes too far in his attempt to eradicate religion as a real and rational motivation for emigration. Surely, there was a

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8 Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America*, p. 5
healthy mixture of economic, social, and religio-political reasons for emigration, none of which was exclusive of the other.⁹ Yet, the strict economic interpretation of the mid-twentieth century has had long and lasting influence, and the more recent scholars who have dared to suggest some religious or any other motivation besides economics for Irish Presbyterian emigration have done so in a careful or apologetic tone.¹⁰

In spite of historiographical squabbling, one thing is certain. In the great waves of migration in 1717-1720 and 1725-29 there was clearly a perception amongst Presbyterians that they were leaving partly, or even mainly, because of political and social disabilities in Ireland—disabilities that were imposed upon them by the Anglican government solely because of their religious persuasion. Presbyterian ministers took parting pot-shots at the Irish administration, publicly asserting that Presbyterians were leaving, weakening the Protestant interest in Ireland (a cause that Irish Presbyterians had formerly fought, died, and starved for, they pointed out) because of intolerance and religious persecution.¹¹ The following passage from a letter of 1729 demonstrates the common perception that religion and ministers were directly involved in the migrations.

The Presbyteirien Ministers have taken their shear of pains to seduce their poor ignorant hearers by bellowing from their pulpits against ye landlords and ye [Episcopal] clargey, calling them rackers of rents and screwers of tythes, with other reflections of this nature which they know is pleasing to their people; at ye


¹⁰ Jones, “Ulster Emigration, 1783-1815,” pp. 49, 55-56; Griffin, The People With No Name, pp. 23-28; See also a later article by James G. Leyburn in which he boils down discussion of the causes of Ulster emigration to a few paragraphs. “Finally, and to a minor degree” religion “played its part in the migration,” he wrote. Until very recently, and possibly until now, those (post Dickson) who have even suggested religion as a cause for Presbyterian emigration from Ireland have done so very cautiously. Leyburn, “Presbyterian Immigrants and the American Revolution,” in Journal of Presbyterian History, 54 (Spring, 1976), pp. 14-15.

¹¹ Griffin, The People With No Name, pp. 16-19, 22-25, 60-64, 80-84; Dickson, Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, pp.35-41; R.F.G. Holmes, Our Presbyterian Heritage, pp. 55-94.
same time telling them that God had appointed a country for them to dwell in (nameing New England) and desires them to depart thence, where they will be freed from the bondage of Egipt and to ye land of Canaan etc.  

The Rev. James McGregor, the Gaelic-speaking and -preaching survivor of the Siege of Derry who migrated from County Derry to New Hampshire where he established the town of Londonderry, was even more explicit in his parting renunciation of the Irish government and their policies toward Presbyterians. From a sermon preached on the hundredth anniversary of the founding of Londonderry, New Hampshire, and delivered by a man in possession of McGregor’s manuscripts, we find McGregor’s own stated reasons for leaving: “to avoid oppression and cruel bondage; to shun persecution and designed ruin; to withdraw from the communion of idolaters, and to have an opportunity of worshipping God according to the dictates of conscience, and the rules of his inspired Word.”

These words from a man who, as we have seen, helped to shape the mind of his community. There can be no doubt that those who travelled with McGregor in 1718, and most likely many more in the period from 1714 to 1738 who travelled with ministers like him, left Ireland in part for religious reasons.

Importantly, however, the reasons posited for emigration during the period from 1738 to 1769 were not characterized by loud assertions of religious persecution. Dickson points out that “in the middle of the [eighteenth] century… the Presbyterian church desisted from its

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13 Apparently, the author of the sermon, Rev. Edward I. Parker, was in possession of a manuscript of McGregor’s which spelled out his reasons for leaving Ireland. See Edward L. Parker, “A Century Sermon, Delivered in the East-Parish Meeting House, Londonderry, New Hampshire, April 22, 1819, in Commemoration of the First Settlement of the Town, Containing a Sketch of the History of the Town from its Earliest Settlement,” pp. 9-10.

14 And, of course, in Ireland it would really only be Presbyterians who would assert that possibility. Members of the Church of Ireland or of the Irish government had been at pains for years to demonstrate to the parliament in London that Presbyterians were not leaving Ireland because of any disabilities imposed upon them because of their Presbyterianism. Whether this is true or not is an entirely different story.
fruitless efforts to link emigration and religious disabilities."\textsuperscript{15} Leyburn also saw no sign of religious conflict between 1739 and 1769, writing, "through the fifty-eight years [1717-1775] of the Great Migration, religious liberty had been a motive only at the beginning."\textsuperscript{16}

In the period from 1714 to 1738, when claims of religio-political disability were prominent, 66 percent more Presbyterian clerical migrants made their way from Ireland to America than in a period (1739-69) in which those claims were hardly asserted at all. Religio-political disabilities, or at least protestations over those disabilities, therefore, seem to have been important in clerical migration.\textsuperscript{17} There can be no argument that the numbers of clerical migrants decreased when Presbyterians made little or no report of religious persecution.

If Presbyterians were quiet in the realm of Irish religio-politics during this period, what could have so dampened the vigorous and vibrant tendency in Irish Presbyterians to clamor loudly against any religiously based disability imposed upon them by that very kingdom they had defended? And, why should this have any relation to a sharp clerical emigration? Let us take those questions in order.

\textsuperscript{15} Dickson, \textit{Ulster Emigration to Colonial America}, p. 48. (Although in the next chapter we shall see that religio-political concerns will again become prominent and seem to have helped to create an increase in general and clerical emigration between 1770 and 1810).
\textsuperscript{16} Leyburn, \textit{The Scotch-Irish}, p. 175. In chapter 7, we shall see that religio-political concerns will again become prominent and have an impact upon migration between 1770 and 1810.
\textsuperscript{17} Discounting claims of emigration because of religio-political disabilities in favor of economic ones has been \textit{en vogue} since at least Dickson’s day (despite the fact that neither religion nor economics is exclusive of the other as a cause for migration). Conflict between Irish Presbyterians and the government in Dublin (and sometimes with the government at Westminster) generally revolved around the political rights or privileges denied or the penalties applied to Presbyterians in Ireland because of their religious dissent, i.e., solely because they were not Anglicans. So while this conflict, played out in the political arena, could involve seemingly purely economic, social, or political elements, its core was the fight over disabilities due to religion, and therefore the name “religio-political” conflict. Dickson asserts that Presbyterian claims of religious persecution as a reason for emigration were purely for political gain, that their assertions were specious and calculated for political reasons, but the fact that Presbyterian clerics were emigrating at a much higher rate when those assertions were made than when they were not tends to lend some credibility to Presbyterian claims of religious motivations for emigration. This, of course, does not mean that some of their claims were meant for political gain, but it does suggest that their was some validity and honesty. Emigration is not usually the resort of those looking to make political points in the land being left.
One major reason that Presbyterians stopped publicly attacking government policy was because there was a theological civil war raging within its own fortress-like community. In a theological dispute that began in the early eighteenth century but continued for at least several decades, Irish Presbyterianism turned their bellicosity inward, a change which was probably exacerbated in a community with an adamantine personality. Presbyterians had in some ways consciously identified themselves with the Old Testament people of Israel.18 The people of Israel had been promised a “fortress of rocks” to defend them from their enemies.19 Surrounded by hostile populations of Anglicans and Catholics, Presbyterians had relied on their own fortress of rocks as their God-given protection. Now, within the confines of that bulwark, Irish Presbyterians bared the metaphorical sword against their own.

Metaphorical though it was, it was battle nonetheless, conducted in print and in private meetings of sessions, in presbyteries, and in synod. It was nasty, internecine, and it had major consequences for Presbyterianism in Ireland and America.20 One of them, as we shall see, was a marked decrease in clerical migration from Ireland to America, and particularly a drastic decrease in ordained clerical migrants from Ireland.

The conflict which I have referred to as a theological civil war has come to be known as the New Light-Old Light controversy. Discussion of its causes and of the factions involved can become overly complex, and one could easily get bogged down discussing such an issue. It must be broached, however, in order to fully understand why clerical migration from Ireland to

18 See chapter 2 (above) and Akenson, God’s Peoples, pp. 111-150.
19 Isaiah 33:16. (KJV).
America slowed so significantly. A brief summary of this controversy is therefore required, although some of the complexities will be side-stepped.

In 1689 the Synod of Ulster, the largest Presbyterian governing body in Ireland up until the 1840s, required that all of those wishing to become licensed as ministers within the synod’s bounds must subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith. This action seems to have been more or less perfunctory and for reasons of standardization rather than as a tool to keep out heresy, as Ian McBride makes clear:

At the close of the seventeenth century, with the machinery of Presbyterian government firmly in place, the Ulster Synod decided to regularize its proceedings, adopting many of the rules enacted by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. One result was the introduction of subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith as a requirement for all students entering the ministry.  

The initial adoption of the requirement of subscription, then, was something of your everyday, bureaucratic restructuring. Yet despite the seeming mundanity with which this act was adopted in 1689, the requirement that ministers subscribe to the Westminster Confession would later have tremendous effects on the Presbyterianism of Ireland and America. For some time, though, this requirement raised few hackles. In fact, “at first few attached much importance to the 1689 overture calling for ministerial subscription.”

This changed in 1705 when controversy arose after Thomas Emlyn, a Presbyterian minister in Dublin, publicly denied the doctrine of the Trinity, thereby bringing the by-then ancient battle over the Arian heresy to eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterianism. Although not having direct oversight over many southern or Dublin congregations, the Synod of Ulster

21 McBride, Scripture Politics, p. 29
22 In fact, for the next 150 years, or so, Presbyterianism would experience conflict and schism over this requirement. McBride, Scripture Politics, p. 29.
23 Griffin, The People With No Name, p. 47.
responded by condemning Emlyn and tightening its subscription policy by requiring a stricter adherence to the Westminster Confession.

The back and forth that then occurred between the warring parties is redolent of Newton’s maxim that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction—for the synod’s hardening of its subscription requirements, in turn, created a backlash from its more liberal ministers who had been influenced by the Enlightenment thought emerging from the Continent and from Britain (where most were exposed to it from their university educations in Scotland). Many of these “enlightened” ministers tended to be, in varying degrees, less than orthodox, and they were willing to question the basic tenets or assumptions of Christianity in a very public manner. This faction became known as “New Lights.” Their stronghold was in Belfast and was centered around a club of Presbyterian ministers and thinkers called the Belfast Society.

For at least two decades a pamphlet war raged in Ireland between New Lights and the orthodox Old Lights. The turmoil and general disturbance created when these factions of ordained Presbyterian ministers publicly clashed over the basic tenets of Presbyterian orthodoxy created a strong desire amongst many Old Lights to require unconditional subscription to the Westminster Confession, i.e., there would be no qualifications—subscribe to the whole, or not at all. This requirement and heavy-handed enforcement of it, they hoped, would keep out of the Presbyterian ministry the type of men who publicly espoused and taught principles that contradicted traditional Presbyterianism.

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25 Presbyterians would not be able to legally attend university in Ireland until well into the nineteenth century. Hence Scotland became the seminary for Ireland’s Presbyterian ministry, for it was the birthplace of Presbyterianism, the ancestral home of many Irish Presbyterians, near to Ulster, and a place where Presbyterianism was the established church. For percentages of eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterian ministers trained at the different Scottish universities, see Barry Aron Vann, *In Search of Ulster-Scots Land: The Birth and Geothological Imagings of a Transatlantic People, 1603-1703* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2008), p. 85.
Such strong-armed tactics indicate something of the importance of this fight for the Old Lights. It was not only Presbyterianism as it had been heretofore understood that was threatened, Trinitarian Christianity itself was seemingly at risk. Yet, as absolutely vital as those considerations were to most of Ireland’s Presbyterians, there was more at stake here than theology.

Remember, Ireland’s Presbyterians found themselves hard-pressed between two hostile groups—on the one hand a Catholic population with numerical superiority and on the other hand an Anglican population which controlled the government. In such a situation, a bitter theological civil war might mean that survival as a group distinct from the communities that surrounded them was at risk. Why? Because the Presbyterian church in Ireland was unique in that it was a government that stood outside of the government. It was a system unto itself. Yet, “the church’s presumption to stand outside the purview of established civil and ecclesiastical structures of the kingdom rested on its ability to muster support from all within the Ulster Presbyterian community.”

Unity was key, and these public disputes were actively eating away at the unity that Presbyterians had once enjoyed.

Moreover, “a large number of Ulster dissenters increasingly came to conceive subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith as the cornerstone of Presbyterian community in Ulster.” Discarding that foundation could be far more devastating than an internal theological split between New Lights and Old Lights, even though this was no ordinary theological squabble—to many, the very essence of Christianity seemed at stake. In addition

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26 Griffin, The People With No Name, p. 45.
27 Ibid., p. 47.
28 This theological split was a wide one. “In 1722, Alexander McCracken, a minister from Lisburn, warned ‘we are in the sieve and Satan is helping to sift us out.’ The devil, it turned out, wore a familiar face; McCracken believed Ulster Presbyterian society was ‘like to be run down, not by persecutors, or open enemies or strangers, but by our bosom friends.’” Quoted in Griffin, The People With No Name, p. 39. See also, John Stevenson, ed., Two Centuries of Life in Down, 1600-1800 (Belfast, 1920), p. 167.
to the fact that Presbyterian ministers were openly espousing views that seemed heretical to many orthodox Presbyterians, the viability of their independent system seemed shaken. Old Lights also knew that their enemies in the Church of Ireland were well aware of Presbyterianism’s internal divisions and would use every weakness they could to encourage conformity from the Presbyterian laity. Hence, strong-armed measures seemed needed.

However, the requirement of strict and absolute subscription to the Westminster Confession for all ministerial candidates created an unanticipated reaction amongst a group of conservative Presbyterian ministers and elders. These men were largely, if not wholly, against New Light doctrines but were also opposed to any requirement to subscribe to any document outside the Holy Scriptures themselves. So, there was a third party.

With the New Lights and those conservatives who were against strict subscription calling for an end to the strict, subscription-\textit{in-toto} policy, the Old Lights in the Synod of Ulster had to compromise, and in 1720 they created the Pacific Act. It still demanded that all ministerial candidates subscribe to the Westminster Confession of Faith, but in order to appease those conservatives who opposed unqualified subscription they added an important clause, which allowed for anyone to “scruple” with any article in the Westminster Confession. If one did scruple over something in the Westminster Confession, it did not disqualify a candidate for the ministry. The presbytery would judge whether or not the passage scrupled over was one essential to Christianity. If the candidate had objected to a passage in the Westminster Confession that was deemed essential to the Christian religion, then the candidate was not permitted to join the ministry. If the passage scrupled over was deemed minor or inessential,

\footnote{Griffin, \textit{The People With No Name}, pp. 45-46.}
\footnote{Fortson, III, “The Adopting Act Compromise,” pp. 64-65.}
the ministerial candidate was accepted as subscribing, but it was recorded that he had scrupled over some minor point.\footnote{It became common practice to “scruple” over the passage in the Westminster Confession that forbade the marrying of a dead brother’s wife.}

By leaving some room for “scruplers,” the Old Lights appeased the conservative group opposed to unconditional subscription, and for a time even the New Light faction remained within the Synod of Ulster. However, many of the New Lights eventually left the synod (or were forced out), forming for themselves the Presbytery of Antrim in 1725.\footnote{However, later in the eighteenth century the Synod of Ulster itself became thoroughly permeated by ministers of New Light sentiment, so much so that the period from about the mid-eighteenth century until Henry Cooke effected their ouster in the 1820s has been called “The Reign of the New Light.” Those who left the Synod of Ulster in 1725 eventually became The Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, which still exists today. As the name suggests, the “subscription controversy” between the Old Lights and the New Lights was and is pivotal for them. Today they maintain close ties with the Unitarian church in Ireland, which is interesting because the controversy was aroused by Emlyn’s profession of anti-Trinitarian views.} And here ended the first of several rows within Irish Presbyterianism over the requirement of subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith.\footnote{For more on the Irish New Light Controversy, see Reid, History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, pp. 110-214; J.L.M. Haire, ed., Challenge and Conflict, pp. 28-45, 96-148; A.T.Q. Stewart, A Deeper Silence, pp. 67-125; Griffin, The People With No Name, pp. 47-64; McBride, Scripture Politics, ch. 2.}

Back to clerical migration: why is this battle between Irish New Lights and Old Lights an important factor in the decrease in clerical migration from Ireland to America between 1739 and 1769? First, it seems that the internal fighting might have been a reason that Irish Presbyterians stopped crying out so loudly that they were suffering persecution at the hands of the Anglican government, something that seems to have been required for creating the ideal conditions for large-scale migration of Irish Presbyterian ministers, licentiates, and divinity students. Secondly, very much in the manner of the spreading of a virulent epidemic, Irish ministers carried the New Light/Old Light controversy with them across the Atlantic to the New World. There, a similar battle raged, and because of it American Presbyterians and particularly Irish-American Presbyterian ministers were forced to stand up to their mother church in Ireland.
This Old Light/New Light affair was an Irish Presbyterian war waged on both sides of the Atlantic, and Irish Presbyterian clerical migration to America seems partly to have declined as a direct result.

Importantly for the study of Irish Presbyterian immigration, even as the American church displayed its own maturation in standing up to their institutional progenitor, the players involved and the tactics employed in this fight clearly demonstrate a high level of indebtedness to and entanglement with the Presbyterianism of Ireland. For instance, the methods used to combat the New Light menace to orthodox Christian and Presbyterian principles in America were the same used in Ireland, and the ministers who called the loudest and hardest for those Irish techniques to be put into place were, in fact, Irish ministers serving in America. Their theological opponents, the New Lights in America, also seemed to have mostly come from Ireland, and certainly the most infamous ones did. There was, therefore, an American front to this Irish Presbyterian theological war, a war which could not help but have an effect on Irish Presbyterian clerical migration to America.

Some of the earliest evidence indicating that the Irish subscription controversy had spread to the New World appeared in 1728. At that time the Delmarva Peninsula and much of Pennsylvania was still overseen by the New Castle Presbytery, a presbytery and a land still heavily populated with Irish Presbyterians. As early as 1724, the New Castle Presbytery was requiring from all of its ministers subscription to the Westminster Confession. Soon, however, a new presbytery would be carved out of the bounds of the New Castle Presbytery, and this new presbytery seems to have surpassed its parent presbytery in “Irishness,” and its name alone suggests that fact. This was the Donegal Presbytery, not to be confused with the Donegal Presbytery of Ireland. This American Donegal Presbytery oversaw the area just north

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of the Delmarva Peninsula and much of the Pennsylvania frontier area and was created to care for the Irish Presbyterian immigrants settled so densely in the region. It was from this heavily Irish-Presbyterian-settled region, originally overseen by the New Castle Presbytery and eventually overseen by the Donegal Presbytery (after 1732), that we find the first recorded efforts at requiring strict subscription to the Westminster Confession from all ministerial candidates in America.

Just as in Ireland, this tactic was introduced in America by immigrant Irish Presbyterian ministers in order to combat the New Light “menace.” Like lay Presbyterians from Ireland, Irish ministers were thick on the ground in this area, where, understandably, there was a preference for Irish-born ministers. At least as early as 1728, however, this preference for Irish ministers had begun to cause a problem (often in the eyes of immigrant Irish Presbyterian ministers and laymen alike). Orthodox ministers in the region feared that the church in America was in danger of being saddled with a ministry, ordained in Ireland, that harbored heterodox principles. Those calling for subscription were led by John Thompson, an Irish-born minister who had immigrated to America after being licensed by the Coleraine Presbytery in County Derry in 1717.

Thompson’s own description of the heterodox ministers within American Presbyterianism is an example of the fact that those pushing for subscription connected the American New Lights with Ireland. In fact, he argues that the two groups were identical.

All our Brethrens’ Arguments…are borrowed from the new-light Men, or Non-subscribers, in the North of Ireland; they are as like them as one Crow’s Egg is like another, or rather as an Horse-shoe is like a Mare’s, remove the shoe and it changeth its name.

35 Griffin, *The People With No Name*, p. 120.
36 Sherling Database.
37 Griffin, *The People With No Name*, p. 120.
But if the heterodox were Irish or identical in their views to the Irish New Lights, those whom Thompson led in calling for strict subscription—a tactic employed by the Irish Old Lights as we have just seen—were typically Irish as well. In a 1729 letter, Jedidiah Andrews complained that the Irish ministers in the synod were forcing strict subscription down the throat of American Presbyterianism by the strength of their numbers.38

We are now like to fall into a great difference about subscribing the Westminster Confession of Faith. An overture for it, drawn up by Mr. Thompson of Lewistown was offered to our Synod. Means were then used to stave it off, and I was in hopes we should have heard no more of it. But last Synod it was brought again, recommended by all the Scotch and Irish members present... The Proposal is, that all ministers and intrants shall sign it or else be disowned as members. Now what shall we do? They will certainly carry it by number. Our countrymen say, they are willing to joyn in vote to make it the Confession of our church, but to agree to the making it the test of orthodoxy and term of ministerial communion, they say they will not. I think all the Scots [and Irish] are on one side, and all the English and Welsh on the other to a man.39

Andrews was wrong in asserting that the Scotch and Irish were for strict subscription “to a man.” The famous Tennent family of ministers, founders of the “Log College” which eventually became Princeton University, were all immigrants from Ireland and did not support strict subscription. But Andrews’s point is clear: most of the Irish were calling for strict subscription and the leader of the Irish, John Thompson, claimed to be using this tactic in response to people identical to Irish New Lights. An Irish conflict on American soil, indeed.

This was 1728 and 1729. By this point Thompson and the others were well aware that the New Light controversy and the tactics employed in it had led to schism in the Synod of Ulster in 1726, resulting in the departure of the New Lights and the creation of the Presbytery of Antrim. S. Donald Fortson, III asserts that “The Irish rupture was prominent in the minds of

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38 Andrews also demonstrates that there seems to have been, even then, a conflation of the identity of Irish Presbyterian immigrants with Scottish Presbyterian immigrants. Notice how he is careful to differentiate the two groups early on, but then uses the term “Scots” to describe the whole group calling for strict subscription later on. 39 Fortson, III, Colonial Presbyterianism, pp. 70-71.
American Presbyterians as they approached their own struggle over subscription just two years after the Irish schism.  Why then would the Irishman, Thompson, and his followers push for strict subscription when the Synod of Ulster’s Pacific Act of 1720 had caused schism but at least kept most orthodox Presbyterians within the fold?

The schism in Ireland indicates that the Pacific Act was not a satisfactory option if schism was to be averted. However, from Thompson’s probable point of view, at least it was the New Lights who left, but, then, they left after allowing for a limited subscription policy. So why push for absolute subscription? Obviously, Thompson and the others who were pushing for strict subscription did not think that the Pacific Act went far enough in protecting the Synod of Ulster from a heterodox infestation within its ministry. Two facts point to Thompson and his faction being correct on that point. First, ministers ordained by presbyteries belonging to the Synod of Ulster were arriving in America and preaching heterodox views, and these ministers had often “subscribed” in Ireland. Therefore, the type of subscription prescribed in the Irish Pacific Act did not seem to be working.  Second, there remained a New Light presence in the Synod of Ulster. So much so that, even though Thompson could not have known this, eventually the New Lights would come into the ascendant within the Synod of Ulster by the middle of the eighteenth century and remain so until they were kicked out by a coalition put together by Henry Cooke in 1820. Obviously, the methods used by the Irish synod had not worked. Yet, even in Thompson’s day the signs of its failure must have been evident. By these accounts, the Pacific Act had not succeeded in protecting the Synod of Ulster from New Light

40 Ibid., p. 66.
41 The most famous instance of this was Samuel Hemphill, an infamous New Light in America who had subscribed in Ireland. His trial rocked American Presbyterianism to its core. More on that later in this chapter.
heterodoxy, and thus Thompson and his Irish and Scottish compatriots had reason to resort to the original Irish Old Light policy of strict subscription.

However, just as in Ireland, advocating a strict subscription policy for the ministry created a backlash from a group that was generally opposed to New Light heterodoxy. As Jedediah Andrews’s letter demonstrates, there were American ministers willing to adopt the Confession of Faith as the church’s “confession” but neither as a test for entry into the ministry nor as a test for ministers who wished to remain in the American Presbyterian ministry. As in Ireland, a compromise was needed.

And, compromise came in the form of the Adopting Act. Although some essentials would have to be ironed out in the coming years, the synod passed the Adopting Act in 1729. Like the Synod of Ulster’s Pacific Act of 1720, it too allowed for “scrupling” over certain clauses. Once again, the American church followed the Irish pattern. Moreover, C. A. Briggs and Leonard Trinterud, the two great historians of American Presbyterianism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, respectively, have both asserted that the American Adopting Act of 1729 was patterned directly after the Irish Pacific Act of 1720.43

Clearly, this was an Irish controversy, spread and fought by Irish ministers, waged on American soil, with consequences for American people and American Christianity. Common sense dictates that this battle did have some effect on clerical migration, but how, specifically, can any of this be translated into a decrease in Presbyterian clerical migration from Ireland to America? In answering that question, we must look to another related episode in American Presbyterian history, one which includes the same cast of characters laid out in Andrews’s letter—the Irish and Scottish ministers on the one hand and all the rest on the other. It is the story of the first heresy trial in American Presbyterian history. During its aftermath the

43 Fortson, III, Colonial Presbyterianism, p. 65n.6.
American synod directed three of its Irish ministers, John Thompson, Joseph Houston, and Hugh Conn, to draft a letter to the Synod of Ulster that changed the parent-child relationship between the American synod and the Irish synod and simultaneously the shape of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration from Ireland to America for years to come.

While subscription, allowing for “scrupling,” became policy in 1729, it did not keep heterodoxy from the Presbyterian pulpit in America, just as it had not in Ireland. The most famous New Light, Irish or not, who came to America during this period was Samuel Hemphill. He had been licensed by the Strabane Presbytery in County Tyrone in 1730 and was reported to have subscribed to the Westminster Confession.44 After about four years of supply preaching in Ireland, Hemphill emigrated for American shores.

In America, he was taken on as an assistant minister by Jedidiah Andrews, minister of Philadelphia and the man cited above as laying out the factions over subscription in terms of English and Welsh versus Scotch and Irish. Under the watchful eye of Andrews, the young Irish minister began preaching regularly in Philadelphia, where he picked up an avid supporter of his sermons in Benjamin Franklin. Years later, Franklin wrote that Hemphill had preached his sermons “with a good Voice, and apparently extempore” and that they were “most excellent Discourses, which drew together considerable Numbers of different Persuasions, who join’d in admiring them.” Despite the fact that Franklin is famous to history as a Deist, he confessed that he himself “became one of [Hemphill’s] constant Hearers, his Sermons pleasing me as they had little of the dogmatical kind, but inculcated strongly the Practice of Virtue, or what in the religious Style are called Good Works.”45

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44 Sherling Database. It is not known whether or not he scrupled over any passages.
Hemphill’s message, then, was generally moral in nature rather than what was considered more specifically Christian. This was a common characteristic of the New Lights, and despite the fact that Hemphill had subscribed to the Westminster Confession while still in Ireland and once again when he was received into the American synod, he was a typical Irish New Light (he later publicly professed his Deism). Patrick Griffin reports that Franklin, who eventually mounted a defense of Hemphill when he was put on trial by the American synod, further described Hemphill in a passage that mirrors John Thompson’s own identification of heterodox Presbyterian ministers in America with Irish New Lights.

By Irish standards, Hemphill’s sermons contained little new material. Indeed, they differed little if at all from, in Franklin’s words, those of an Irish ‘New-Light Man.’ Franklin, who published a number of pamphlets in support of Hemphill, went so far as to show how Hemphill’s ideas met with the approval of the leading Irish dissenting minister of the age, Joseph Boyse, a Dublin Presbyterian and ally of Abernethy and nonsubscribers from Ulster.

While they both reached the same conclusion—that Hemphill was just another of a group of Irish New Light ministers newly immigrated to America—Thompson and Franklin had vastly divergent reactions to it.

Franklin had obviously meant to say that Hemphill was no different from so many Irish ministers, and therefore nothing to be too concerned over. On the other hand, the Presbyterian

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46 See William S. Barker, “The Heresy Trial of Samuel Hemphill (1735),” in Fortson, ed., Colonial Presbyterianism, p. 95n.18. In America, Hemphill subscribed to more than just the Westminster Confession. He “declared for, and adopted, the Westminster Confession, Catechisms, and Directory commonly annexed, the former as the confession of …[his] faith, and the latter as the guide of their practice in matters of discipline, as far as may be agreeable to the rules of prudence, &c., as in the adopting acts of this Synod is directed.” Guy S. Klett, Minutes of the Presbyterian Church in America 1706-1788 (Philadelphia: Presbyterian Historical Society, 1976) p. 107.

47 Griffin, The People With No Name, p. 121.

48 Because Benjamin Franklin has been so celebrated as a writer, scientist, politician, and general wit, one might be forgiven for assuming that he could make quick work of an Irish minister like John Thompson, especially when one considers that Thompson spent much of his career as a frontier minister. But Franklin, even while denouncing Thompson, affirmed that the Irish minister was a worthy adversary, writing that Thompson was “able to outdo the Jesuits themselves, in Subterfuge, Distinction and Evasion.” See Griffin, The People With No Name, p. 121; Benjamin Franklin, A Defence of the Rev. Mr. Hemphill’s Observations (Philadelphia, 1735), p. 11, and Franklin, A Letter to a Friend in the Country, Containing the Substance of a Sermon…[by] the Rev. Mr. Hemphill (Philadelphia, 1735), p. 6.
ministers in the American synod, and particularly the Irish faction of those ministers, saw him as just another “Missionary sent from Ireland to corrupt the Faith once delivered to the Saints.”

Hemphill was simply proof to the Irish faction that they were right. Hemphill was exactly the type of minister that Thompson and his followers had been exasperated and frightened by in 1728 and 1729 when they fought for strict subscription as a policy for all ministers and candidates for the ministry. Hemphill was proof that the Pacific Act was not a strong enough tactic. Unlike so many Irish New Lights, Hemphill had subscribed in Ireland.

Irish and Irish-American Old Lights knew the Pacific Act had not protected Irish or American Presbyterians from heterodox ministers, and despite the requirement of the 1729 Adopting Act requiring subscription in America, immigrant New Lights were still coming to America and most, if not all, were perceived to have come from Ireland. Something else had to be done. An example, therefore, was made of Samuel Hemphill. In a very public trial—publicity that was due in large part to Benjamin Franklin’s efforts to defend Hemphill through the press—Hemphill was excommunicated for publicly teaching doctrines that were contradictory to the Westminster Confession and for plagiarizing sermons.

While little or nothing further is known of Samuel Hemphill, his trial had a lasting effect on American Presbyterianism. The American leadership of the church was clearly shaken by the affair—but equally resolved to fight the intrusion of New Light doctrines through immigrant

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49 Griffin, _The People With No Name_, p. 121.
50 In an example of just how transatlanticly connected Irish ministers in Ireland and America were, Presbyterian ministers in America were aware of Hemphill’s heterodox tendencies as he arrived. William S. Barker reports that “an Irish minister, Patrick Vance…sent word to his brother-in-law in America, a Mr. J. Kilpatrick, that Hemphill’s doctrine was not sound.” Barker also found that the Irish church brought charges against Vance for writing to Kilpatrick about Hemphill and thereby creating a prejudice against him in America. Vance successfully defended himself against these charges, however. See William S. Barker, “The Heresy Trial of Samuel Hemphill (1735),” in Fortson, ed., _Colonial Presbyterianism_, pp. 94 and 94n.20. See also, _Records of the General Synod of Ulster from 1691 to 1820_, vol. 2, pp. 208-209, 215-223.
ministers. The minutes from the meeting of the American synod in 1736 make their state of mind very clear.

…when so many Wolves in Sheeps Cloathing are invading the Flocks of [Christ] every where in the world, we who are Pastors by office and Station should exert ourselves in an active and vigilant Manner for the Safety & Preservation of our flocks committed to our Care from the Assaults of these devouring Monsters [that] are numerous abroad in the world. Surely the late bold Assault [that] hath been made upon us, tho’, blessed be God, without the desired & expected Success as yet, should put us to our Arms and excite us with Care and Diligence to put our selves in a Posture of Defense [against] all future attempts. 51

Beyond a shadow of a doubt, the American synod regarded Ireland as the seedbed of the current troubles. It was New Light ministers from Ireland who were the wolves in sheep’s clothing among them. 52

…seeing we are likely to have the most of our Supply [ministers] to fill our vacancies from the north of Ireland, and seeing it is too evident to be denied and called in Question, [that] we are in great Danger of being imposed upon by [ministers] and Preachers from thence, tho’ sufficiently furnished with all Formalities of Presbyterian Credentials, as in the Case of Mr. Hemphill; and seeing also what was done last year may be done this year and the year following, viz. we are still liable to be imposed upon by such Credentials [from Ireland]: upon these and the like Considerations, we humbly overture this [Reverend] Synod to make an order [to halt such impositions]. 53

The American synod did not only make one order to stop from being “imposed upon” by Irish New Lights. There were five orders, and all of them affected the ease with which Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants—Old Light or New Light—could come to America and begin preaching.

51 Klett, ed., Minutes of the Presbyterian Church in America, 1706-1788, pp. 131-32. In these quotes from the minutes of the early American synod, I have not inserted sic in the text everywhere there is a modern misspelling, for it would be too intrusive. However, I have used the word sic in cases where the older spelling could appear as if it may have been a typographical error. I have also inserted the full words that are abbreviated in the original. For example, “lttrs” is represented at [letters] y’ as [that] and H—ll as [Hemphill], etc., etc.


53 Klett, ed., Minutes of the Presbyterian Church in America 1706-1788, p. 132.
The first stated that no congregation should allow any minister from Europe to preach to them until he had first been examined by the local presbytery and had subscribed to the Westminster Confession of Faith. Second, no preacher or licentiate could be called by a congregation to be their pastor until he had preached for at least six months within the bounds of the synod. Third, a minister could not receive a call from a congregation nor could a call from a congregation be made to a minister unless that call was moderated and relayed through one of the presbyteries or the synod. Fourth, no student for the ministry could be entered into his “tryals” to become a licentiate until his behavior had been thoroughly observed by ministers of the presbytery of which he was attempting to become a licentiate.\(^{54}\)

The fifth and final order mentions Ireland explicitly, names Irish ministers in America, and, tellingly, refers to Ireland as “home.” In this one order—given in full, below—we see just how closely American Presbyterianism was still tied to Irish Presbyterianism, even in the assertions of independence of the former from the latter.

…the Synod [will] bear Testimony [against] the late too common, and now altogether unnecessary Practice of some [Presbyteries] in the north of Ireland viz. Their ordaining men to the Ministry sine Titulo [to serve in America], immediately before they come over hither; thereby depriving us of our just Right viz. that we unto whom they are designed to be Copresbyters, and among whom they design to bestowed their Labours, should have just and fair Inspecting into their Qualifications; we say [that] it seems necessary [that] the Synod bear Testimony [against] such Practice, by writing home to the general Synod [in Ireland]; thereby signifying our [Dissatisfaction] with the same. And further, [that] in [said] Letter or writing to the general synod of Ireland, [that] we earnestly desire [that] when [Ministers] or Probationers [i.e., licentiates] are about to come from thence [Ireland] to us, they would besides their [Presbyterial] credentials, procure also private [Letters] of [Recommendation] from some Brethren there who are well known to some of our Brethren here to be firmly attached to our good old Principles and Schemes, in asmuch [sic] as the Instance of Mr. [Hemphill] and some other Considerations to the same Purpose make us afraid lest we may again be imposed upon by men of his stamp, tho’ furnished with all the Formalities of Presbyterial Credentials.

\(^{54}\) Ibid., p. 132.
The synod do agree [that] no [Minister] ordained in Ireland sine Titulo be for the future received to the Exercise of his Ministry among us until he submit to such Tryals as the Presbytery among whom he resides shall think proper to order and appoint. And [that] the [American] Synod also advertise the general Synod in Ireland, [that] their ordaining any such to the Ministry sine Titulo before their sending them hither for the future will be very disagreeable [sic] and disobliging to us. And the Synod appoint [Irish ministers] Mr. Robert Cross, Mr. [John] Thompson, and Mr. [Joseph] Houston to send the above overture & Appointment to the general Synod in Ireland inclosed [sic] in a proper [Letter] unto them.55

Clearly, these two groups of Presbyterians were tightly linked, yet, even as we see the evidence of the links between Irish and American Presbyterianism, we also see that that relationship is drastically changing.

Since the 1680s, Irish presbyteries had ordained ministers specifically for service in America. These men were missionaries in all but name. Francis Makemie, father of American Presbyterianism, had been ordained sine titulo by the Laggan Presbytery in 1682. The practice was commonly continued up until the year that Hemphill immigrated in 1734, and Hemphill, himself, had been ordained for service in America. In 1736, the American synod told the Irish synod to cease and desist with this practice. To their credit, Irish presbyteries seemed to have stopped ordaining ministers specifically for service in America, immediately. And, Irish ministers, themselves, got the message, too. As far as can be ascertained, no active ordained minister migrated from Ireland to America from 1734 to 1763.56

There can be no wonder at all that clerical migration decreased at this time. Ministers ordained in Ireland were viewed with tremendous suspicion in America and the American synod made this very clear. And, this attitude toward Irish ministers cannot have helped but to

55 Ibid., pp. 132-133.
56 Robert Millar was an ordained minister who immigrated in 1755, but he had been deposed in Ireland for misconduct. Therefore, he did not migrate as an ordained minister, but as a “defrocked” minister. Regardless, he was ordained again in Charleston, S.C., but was deposed for misconduct again. John Haslett immigrated in 1757. He, too, had been an ordained minister, preaching in Ballykelly, Co. Derry. Yet, at the time of his immigration in 1757, he was a medical doctor, not a practicing minister. Sherling Database.
account for such a low total of clerical migration from 1739-69, and it certainly seems to have been no coincidence that ordained migrants simply stopped coming for nearly thirty years.

From about the time of the subscription controversy in 1728 and 1729 up to 1763, most of the clerical migrants to America were students and licentiates—a phenomenon that conforms perfectly with the request of the American synod that the Irish stop sending men who could not be inspected for heretical doctrines before ordination. Licentiate and students, in other words, could be inspected by American presbyteries and then ordained by them if they were deemed acceptable.

**Graph 6.1**

As the graph above makes absolutely clear, the migration of ordained ministers looks to have been stopped cold by the scandal surrounding the Hemphill trial and the formal request written by Thompson, Conn, and Houston requesting that no more Irish ministers be ordained in Ireland specifically for service in America. But, other types of clerical migrants slowed, too.
This graph clearly demonstrates an increase in the number of Irish licentiates and divinity students immigrating in the years of the Hemphill trial and directly following the American synod’s request for a halt in ministers ordained in Ireland, but soon after, migration of Irish licentiates and students also slowed to a near halt (just four known licentiates or divinity students arrived from Ireland in the 30 years from 1739-69). The rest who came during this time were either licensed and ordained in America, or information on their licensing and ordination is not available.

The Hemphill trial, the New Light controversy, and battles over subscription had taken their effect—and not only upon Irish clerical migration. The factions that formed in the American church during the subscription controversy had only served to weaken the synod, and when controversy hit them again in the 1740s over styles of worship and revivalism during the first Great Awakening, the church formally split along the fault lines created by new factions:
New Side and Old Side.\(^{57}\) This split, too, could only have hindered clerical migration from Ireland to America.

However, the 1760s saw both a reunion of the American synod and a revival of ordained clerical migration after a hiatus of some thirty-odd years. In 1760, we see that some of the distrust had eased as Presbyterians in America began to reach out formally to their Irish brethren once again. In that year, the American synod requested aid from Irish Presbyterians.\(^{58}\) A collection was taken up, and four years later, Irish ordained ministers began to migrate to America again. After 1764, ordained ministers started to arrive regularly again, but in 1769 the Bangor Presbytery in County Down ordained David McKee specifically for service in America. McKee had been called to a congregation in Williamsburg, South Carolina, and relations between Irish and American presbyteries seemed to have been repaired enough in the 33 years following the Hemphill trial that the Bangor Presbytery ordained McKee rather than sending

\(^{57}\) The formal split occurred in 1745, but in reality it probably existed from 1741. The reunion of the two sides occurred in 1758. The New Side and Old Side are different from New Lights and Old Lights. Most of the members of the American synod were Old Lights. So, the American New Side and Old Side factions were necessarily drawn from the orthodox Old Lights. The difference between the two orthodox groups was that the New Side supported the new revivalist measures and practices first seen during the Great Awakening and the Old Side supported a more staid and traditional form of Presbyterianism.

\(^{58}\) As they had done when they demanded that the Irish presbyteries no longer send ministers ordained in Ireland for service in America, the American synod chose to communicate with the Irish synod and presbyteries through its own Irish ministers. In 1736 it was John Thompson, Hugh Conn, and Joseph Houston. When asking for Irish help in 1760, they sent the Irishman, Charles Beatty. The Records of the General Synod of Ulster describe Beatty’s visit thusly: “The Rev’d Char’ Beatty from the Pby of Philadelphia produced Ample Credentials from his Pby and was Rec’ a member of this Synod. He also produced a very Large Recommendation from the honourable Ja’ Hamilton, Governor & Commander in Chief of Pensylvania [sic]; he Likewise exhibited Letters recommending him to this Synod, signed by several ministers of the Church of Scotland, & Doc’ns of Divinity in the Universities of Edinburgh [sic] & Glasgow. An address of the Corporation of Philadelphia & New York was presented to this Synod by the Rev’d Char’ Beatty, Wherein They set forth the Distressed Condition of Ministers and their families in the Bounds of that Country, & pray for such relief as this Synod shall think most proper. The Synod unanimously agreed that a publick Collection shall be made in all the Cong’ within the Bounds of the Gen’ Synod the second Sabbath in April next, for the above purpos, that the Collections made in the bounds of Each Pby shall be Deposited in the hands of some member in every Pby, by him to be Transmitted to Col: Dunn in the City of Dublin. The members to who the Collection are to be given are These following, viz., in Killyleagh Pby M’ Dunn; in Armagh M’ Moodie; in Dromore M’ Sims; in Templepatrick M’ White; in Ballymena M’ Brown; in Strabane M’ Ferguson; in Rout M’ Simson; in Dublin M’ McCollum; in Monaghan M’ Hamilton; in Coothill M’ Smyth; in Tyrone M’ Duffin; in Letterkenny M’ Boyd; in Derry M’ Hood; in Bangor M’ Laird.” See Records of the General Synod of Ulster from 1691 to 1820, vol. 2, p. 436.
him as a licentiate for a South Carolina presbytery to put through trials. A relationship seemed to have been healed.

So, why such a slowing of all Irish Presbyterian clerical migration—including divinity students and licentiates who were less inhibited by the attitude of the American synod—in the years from 1739-69? The best answer seems to have been that there was a slowing of Irish Presbyterian migration during this time generally, and that clerical Presbyterian migration, as a sub-migration within that larger migration, reacted naturally to the decrease in general migration. In discussion of this phenomenon, though, we will shift to a focus on the shape of clerical migration and its relationship to what is known to scholars about general Irish Presbyterian migration to America during this thirty-one year period.

(2) The Shape of Clerical Migration 1739-1769

The graph of yearly Irish Presbyterian clerical migration for this period demonstrates neither peaks nor valleys in clerical migration from 1739 to 1769. In thirty-one years, there were about thirty clerical migrants. In no single year did more than three clerical migrants arrive in America. The graph of clerical migration is nothing, then, if not, well, boring. Not many migrants came and they came in a fairly even temporal distribution. This is not to say that nothing exciting happened in clerical migration during this period. Ministers settled far in the American hinterland. One, Charles Cummings, was in the habit of carrying his loaded rifle with him to his Virginia pulpit, and was said to have once been involved in a deadly encounter with the Indians. He later became a military chaplain and the first minister to preach in what would become the State of Tennessee. Others, like Thomas Clark, left with literally hundreds of congregants and other fellow-Irish Presbyterians in tow.59 Yet, still, clerical migration

59 Sherling Database.
decreased significantly during this period and there were no clustered migrations of Irish Presbyterian clerics that would have suggested a sudden set of circumstances causing clerical migration.

Graph 6.3

Clerical Migration, 1739-69

But, can this decrease be explained by a simultaneous decrease in the general migration of Presbyterians from Ireland to America at this time?

If the direct relationship between phases of high clerical migration and phases of high general migration that we have observed in previous periods remains true for the period from 1739 to 1769, then there will have been no large observable peaks in general Irish Presbyterian migration to America between 1739 and 1769. In other words, if clerical migration is any indicator, there will have been no peak in general Irish Presbyterian migration from Ireland to America between 1739 and 1769, which would, in turn, help to explain the decrease in overall clerical migration in the same period.

Here, once again, we have stumbled into an historiographical debate, for there is a minimalist interpretation of the number of peaks in pre-1775 Irish Presbyterian migration to America and a maximalist interpretation (for lack of better terms). The minimalists are made up
of Mauric Bric and R.J. Dickson. Bric identified the years 1717-1720, 1725-29, and 1767-75 as peaks in Ulster migration to America, and although Dickson did not specify his peak years, per se, his work clearly posits the years 1718-1720, 1725-29, and 1770-1775 as the peak years of pre-1776 Ulster migration to America. The peaks in migration identified by Bric and Dickson indicate that there was no major peak in general Irish Presbyterian migration during our period. Not only does this interpretation help to explain low overall clerical migration during this time, but the minimalist interpretations of Dickson and Bric are also supported by our findings in clerical migration which indicate that there was no major increase in clerical migration during this period, and increases in yearly clerical migration up to this point have been indicative of increases in general migration. The clerical study, on the one hand, and the interpretations of Dickson and Bric, make each other stronger.

The maximalists on the other hand, have identified peaks in general migration from Ulster to America during the years from 1739 to 1769. James G. Leyburn identified five peaks in Irish Presbyterian migration to America before 1775: 1717-1718, 1725-1729, 1740-1741, 1754-1755, and 1771-1775, and David N. Doyle has identified six: 1717/18-1720, 1725-1729, 1740-1741, 1754-1755, 1766-1767, and 1770-1775). The maximalist interpretations, therefore, posit that either two (Leyburn) or three (Doyle) peaks occurred in the general

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60 While Dickson does not equate Ulster emigration to America with Presbyterian emigration to America, he makes it clear that Presbyterians made up the vast majority of the emigrants. As do the most respected scholars in this area. Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America*, pp. 3-5, 19-22, 25-31, 35-41, 46, 48, 78, 183-184, 188-189. The demographic work of Liam Kennedy and Kerby Miller demonstrates an even higher percentage of Presbyterian emigrants within the total of Ulster outmigration before 1776. Donald Harman Akenson, previously skeptical of the highest estimated percentages of Presbyterian migrants within that total flow, has recently written that the work of Kennedy and Miller “clearly implies both a heavy dominance of Presbyterians in the American colonial migration,” endorsing their findings. See Kerby A. Miller and Liam Kennedy, “Irish Migration and Demography, 1659-1831,” in *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, pp. 656-658; and Akenson, *The Irish Diaspora*, pp. 27-35, 224; and Akenson, *Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration 1815-1914*, pp. 134-135. In the 114, 116.

61 Bric’s last peak, of course, began in 1767, but this is within a reasonable margin of error.

62 Dickson, *Ulster Emigration to Colonial America*, chapters 2-4; Bric, “Patterns of Irish Emigration to America, 1783-1800,” pp. 17-35.

migration of Irish Presbyterians to America between the years from 1739 to 1769. While minimalist interpretation indicates a continued direct relationship in the timing of the peaks in clerical and general Irish Presbyterian migration, the maximalist interpretation would mean that while there were significant waves of lay migration between 1739 and 1769, clerical migration did not keep pace.

The two sets of scholars probably differ in their findings because of their different methodologies. While Bric and Dickson (the minimalists) count numbers of ships crossing and convert shipping tonnage to possible numbers of migrants, Leyburn and Doyle seem to have relied on anecdotal evidence from the period in claiming the peaks that fall between the years from 1739-1769. For example, Leyburn’s reason for claiming that there was a peak in migration of Irish Presbyterians in 1754-55 seems to have been based upon a statement by the Ulster-born Governor Dobbs of North Carolina, who reported that “as many as ten thousand immigrants had landed in Philadelphia in a single season, so that many were ‘obliged to remove to the southward for want of lands to take up’ in Pennsylvania.”

There was a drought in Ulster in these years—which all four scholars were aware of—but neither Dickson nor Bric note a major increase in emigrant traffic in their studies of the shipping records. Shipping records, if they are available, should contain a record of peak years. Bric and Dickson, therefore, seem to have the more reliable method. Moreover, the most recent and respected scholarly estimates of total numbers of migrants from Ulster to America from 1717 to 1775 are based on the shipping records and estimates of Dickson.

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Several factors seem to indicate that the minimalist camp got it right. First, the weight of scholarly opinion rests firmly with the methods of the Dickson camp. Second, trends in clerical migration for the period suggest that there were no great peaks in general migration and that general migration may have been slow generally. Third, the fact that one of Leyburn’s peaks seems to have been based on one contemporary anecdote, in addition to the fact that there was a drought in Ulster that year, suggests a poorer method of judgment than that used by Dickson and Bric. All of these factors combine to suggest that clerical migration and general migration seemed to have continued their direct relationship during this period in the sense that peaks, or the lack of them, in clerical and general migration continued to mirror each other. They also answer a significant question: why was there such a decrease in clerical migration of all types? The answer seems to have been that clerical migration, continuing in its direct relationship with general migration, decreased when the large migration decreased.

In summary, there were several factors that combined to create a decrease in Irish Presbyterian clerical migration to America between 1739 and 1769. First, there were several wars during this period. Second, they were times of economic prosperity in Ireland, which generally helped keep people in Ireland. Third, up to this point, periods which had a religio-politically charged atmosphere have produced the most clerical migration. Between 1739 and 1769, conditions in Ireland were not religio-politically charged enough to create an atmosphere conducive to high levels of clerical migration. Fourth, Irish ministers were increasingly suspected in America (often by Irish immigrant ministers in America) of harboring heterodox or heretical doctrines, and after the Hemphill trial, American Presbyterians, led by Irish immigrant ministers, called for an end to the Irish Presbyterian practice of ordaining Irish ministers for the service of Presbyterians in America. Fifth, the American church, itself, suffered from schism
from 1745 to 1758. And, lastly, general migration from Ireland to America seems to have been lower during these years than it had been in the past and would be again in the future, which indicates a continued direct relationship in this aspect between general and clerical migration. Seen in the light of these factors, it is not a wonder that only 27 Irish clerical migrants made it to America during the period from 1739 to 1769, but that 27 clerical migrants came at all.

(3)

Irish Origins

Although there were far fewer clerical migrants during the period from 1739 to 1769 than in the periods preceding it or succeeding it, the geographical sources of clerical outmigration in Ireland remained the same. Once again, most Irish clerical migration continued to come from the northwest of Ulster—a methodical expansion from the place it originated from in 1683.

As with the data on all of the earlier migrants, the Irish origins for some of the clerical migrants in this period cannot be narrowed down further than the fact that they came to America from Ireland or were born in Ireland. However, for 18 of the 27 total clerical migrants of the period, there is more specific information available. Ideally, the best information to ascertain the geographical sources of clerical emigration would relate to where in Ireland these men left from. This information is not always available and so information on birth place, presbyterial affiliation, place of licensing, place of ordination, or place of installation as minister must be used. This information must then be fitted as best as possible into the confines of an Irish county (the boundaries of presbyteries for instance often crossed county borders), which provides somewhat of a picture—although imperfect—of which part of Ireland clerical migration was originating from.
### Irish Origins of Clerical Migrants, 1739-69 by County (Table 6.1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Derry:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal:</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antrim:</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfast (Antrim/Down):</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louth/Down:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mongaghan:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total migrants by county: | 18 |
| Total counties:           | 9  |

Counties Derry and Donegal contributed the most in this breakdown, followed by Counties Antrim and Down. However, the breakdown is slightly misleading. For four of the 18 clerical migrants, information on Irish origins more specific than just born in Ireland is their town or county of birth.

This piece of data—place of birth—is problematic when attempting to find the specific geographical sources of Irish clerical emigration. Two of these four, James Waddell and Hunter Humphrey, were child migrants, and their places of birth tell us nothing of where clerical out-migration was coming from. They will be disregarded for the moment. Another, John Murray, was an adult who had already graduated from the University of Glasgow at the time of his migration. He seems to have been affiliated with an Irish presbytery, as he is noted in the minutes of the American synod as having been received by the Presbytery of New York as a “candidate” from Ireland.66 This almost certainly means he was under the care or tutelage of a presbytery in Ireland, but more information on which Irish presbytery he was affiliated with is not available. His emigration, unlike those of child migrants, could tell us something about the

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patterns of clerical emigration in the period. However, his birthplace cannot be used to tell us this. His birthplace, after all, might tell us nothing about the place he was actually leaving, and may, in fact, disguise the place that he was actually leaving. He, too, must be disregarded for the moment.

The last of the four clerical migrants whose Irish origins are only known by their birth places is Charles Cummings. Unlike the others, his place of birth is helpful in determining the geographical sources of Irish emigration. He left Ireland at 18. Unlike Murray, he had not been to university, for he immediately began studies at Carlisle, Pennsylvania on arrival. He was also convinced to go to America by his brother. Both brothers were born of County Donegal natives. In other words, he seems to have simply grown up in County Donegal, and left there at 18. His birthplace, then, can be used to help find the origins of clerical migration from 1739-1769. Otherwise, we will limit ourselves in this next breakdown to places of ordination, presbyteries of ordination, presbyteries of licensing, or the town from which an adult migrant left for America. This leaves us with 15 clerical migrants out of a total of 27.

**Revised Origins of Clerical Emigration by County, 1739-69 (Table 6.2)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>Donegal:</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Derry:</td>
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<td>Monaghan:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total by county:</strong></td>
<td><strong>15</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This breakdown demonstrates a phenomenon that has been the case from the very beginning: Counties Donegal and Derry continued to produce the highest numbers of clerical migrants. Moreover, the areas with the highest concentrations of Presbyterians, Counties Antrim and
Down, continue to lag behind Donegal and Derry as sources of clerical migration. Another continuation in patterns of out-migration can be seen if the material available on sources of clerical out-migration is arranged more geographically.

**Geographic Organization of Clerical Emigration (with date of migration) (Table 6.3)**

- **Northwest Ulster:**
  - Derry Presbytery (1744)
  - Donegal Presbytery (1748)
  - Ardstraw, Co. Tyrone (1753)
  - Ray, Co. Donegal (1755)
  - Ballykelly, Co. Derry (1757)
  - County Donegal (1764)
  - Fahan, Co. Donegal (1765)
  - Derry Presbytery (1766)

- **Northeast Ulster:**
  - Belfast Presbytery (1740)
  - Dundonald, Co. Down (1765)
  - Ballymena, Laymore, and Cullybackey, Co. Antrim (1769)
  - Bangor Presbytery (1769)

- **South Ulster/North Leinster:**
  - Cahans, Co. Monaghan (1764)
  - Carlingford, Co. Louth/Warrenpoint, Co. Down (1764)
  - Abbey, Dublin, Co. Dublin (1767)

Clearly, the northwest of Ulster, the original and most consistent area of clerical out-migration remained the most common and consistent area that provided clerical migrants up to 1769.

Here again, patterns in clerical migration match what is generally known about the larger Irish Presbyterian migration at the time. Kerby Miller has written that many Irish Presbyterians “went to America at this time [between 1736 and 1744], especially from County Donegal and adjacent districts of west Ulster.”

Moreover, Miller and Liam Kennedy have been sifting through a mass of eighteenth-century Irish demographic data which basically

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67 Ardstraw, Co. Tyrone is right on the border with County Donegal and is situated squarely within the bounds of the Laggan Presbytery.

68 Kerby Miller, et al., eds., *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, p. 27.
amounts to a religious census. It is as yet unfinished, but so far their work indicates that Presbyterians do seem to have been leaving rapidly and steadily from northwestern Ulster during this period, areas in, near, or adjacent to the area formerly supervised by the old Laggan Presbytery. ⁶⁹

(4)
American Settlement Patterns

On the American side of the Atlantic, more and better data are available on clerical settlement than on Irish origins, and therefore trends of settlement can be more readily observed than those trends gleaned from data on Irish origins. Moreover, there have been more studies of where in America Irish Presbyterian immigrants settled than there have been studies of which parts of Ireland Presbyterians were leaving. These two facts help to provide for an altogether firmer conclusion about American settlement patterns.

Of the 27 clerical migrants of this period, we have information of the settlement of 24 of them. Almost all of them moved at least once during their time in America. Nine of them moved from at least one colony to another. These 21 men represent 14 colonies/states of settlement. Below is a breakdown of how many clerical migrants spent time as a pastor in each of the colonies or states listed.

American Settlement of Clerical Migrants by Colony 1739–69 (Table 6.4)

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>New Hampshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<td>South Carolina:</td>
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<td>Tennessee:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Colonies/States: 14  
Total clerical residences by colony/state: 37

Clearly the area of original Irish Presbyterian clerical settlement—colonies that were in what we have termed the Delmarva Region—continued to receive the bulk of the clerical settlement for the period from 1739 to 1769.

Further, clerical settlement patterns are still holding with the received wisdom on general Irish Presbyterian (or Scotch-Irish) settlement in America during this time, for it was during this period that Irish Presbyterians and their descendants began to push through the natural “funnel” formed by the Shenendoah Gap and then press southwards and westwards. The following map gives a general idea of the traditional idea of where Irish Presbyterian immigrants and their descendants tended to settle in North America during the eighteenth century. The arrows indicate their general movement over the course of the century.

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Traditional Area of Irish Presbyterian Settlement in the Eighteenth Century (MAP 5.1)\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{71} Map by Rebekah Sherling Davis.
Indeed, it was not only the ministers who arrived after 1739 who moved along with the general migration, but ministers who arrived earlier. Take for example John Thompson, the man who fought so hard for strict subscription. At the time of the subscription crisis he was minister at Lewis (or Lewes or Lewistown) in Delaware, a congregation which was founded by an Irish minister as early as the 1690s and its pulpit had been filled by an Irish minister almost continually since. He was also in the heart of old Irish Presbyterian country, the Delmarva Peninsula. Yet, soon after the subscription controversy, he headed north and then west into frontier Pennsylvania, ministering to small congregations there. Before long, he was in Virginia and finally ended his days ministering to Presbyterians in North Carolina.

Thompson’s rambles and the settlement patterns of all of the clerical migrants for this period are matching perfectly with the known settlements of Irish Presbyterians at this period of time. There were conclaves of Irish Presbyterian settlers in New England and New York. New Jersey had been settled with an Irish Presbyterian minister from the earliest days of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration. There was still a need and a desire for Presbyterian ministers in those places, and Irish ministers continued to settle there throughout the period. Obviously, though, the strength of the population was in Pennsylvania and southward. No scholar of Irish Presbyterians in eighteenth-century America would expect anything different, and we see that ministerial settlement strengthens those expectations. Irish Presbyterian immigrant ministers settled where Irish Presbyterians were settled in America. Once again, clerical settlement patterns for this period were indicative of known general Irish settlement patterns in the same period.

In conclusion, although clerical migration declined in this period, it mirrored a decline in general migration. Moreover, the shape of clerical migration for this period was indicative of
the shape of general Irish Presbyterian migration—at least in the sense that there was an absence of dramatic spikes in clerical and general migration during this period. Irish origins and American settlement patterns of the clerical migrations, too, were indicative of what is generally known by scholars about those same trends in the general migration from 1739 to 1769. This is the third straight period in which this seems to have been the case (1683-1713, 1714-1738, and now 1739-1769). Up to 1769, then, we can say that these trends in clerical migration are highly representative of the same trends in the general migration.
Chapter 7:  
Braving the Waves in an Age of Rebellion: Clerical Migration, 1770-1810

The previous chapter was largely dedicated to answering one question: why was there such a dramatic decrease in Presbyterian clerical migration from Ireland to America between 1739 and 1769? In answering that question, it focused on two major factors. The first was that, due to an intra-Presbyterian theological controversy which had been spread from Ireland to America, the American Presbyterian church government (at the insistence of orthodox Irish ministers in the American church) actively discouraged Irish Presbyterian clerical migration to America, required much more inspection of ministers and licentiates arriving from Ireland, and demanded that Irish presbyteries cease their long practice of ordaining Irish ministers for service in America. The second was that religio-political conflict between Presbyterians in Ireland and the governments in Dublin and Westminster seemed to be a necessary ingredient in the production of high clerical migration, and this ingredient was largely missing in the years from 1739 to 1769. Its absence was therefore likely a factor in the low numbers of clerical migrants in those years. The last, and most determining factor, was probably the fact that general Irish Presbyterian migration to America is thought to have declined in these years, and clerical migration seems to have reacted accordingly.

In direct contrast to the years from 1739 to 1769, the years covered by this chapter (1770-1810) saw high numbers of clerical migration. In the 41 years, inclusive, from 1770 to 1810, 98 Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants arrived in the Thirteen Colonies or the United States. That total nearly equals the sum of all Irish Presbyterian clerical migration to America from 1683 to 1769 (115 in 87 years). So, the period from 1770 to 1810 represents the highest levels of clerical migration yet seen.
Coming directly, as it does, on the heels of a period of decreased clerical immigration, this period of tremendous clerical migration provides an opportunity to investigate whether the conditions in the last period that we posited as deterrents to high clerical migration had changed. In other words, in the same period that there was a drastic increase in clerical migration, this chapter will investigate if there was an improvement in the relationship between the American and Irish synods, if there was an atmosphere of religio-political strife, and if there was an increase in general Irish Presbyterian migration.

Secondly, in this last of the periods of clerical migration in which there is secondary literature on general Irish Presbyterian migration, this chapter will investigate the Irish origins, the American settlement patterns, and the peak years of clerical migration and compare them with what is already known about general Irish Presbyterian migration to America from 1770 to 1810. Will the relationship between these aspects of clerical and general migration remain a direct one? The increased reliability and quality of the data for this period will allow for the best comparative case so far.

Moreover, the increased total of clerical migration for this period allows us to investigate the possibility that the cohort of clerical migrants for this period can be seen as a cross section of Irish Presbyterian society in any way. More specifically, were Irish clerical migrants representative of the theological spectrum within Irish Presbyterianism or was a single group more represented than others amongst the migrants? What about politics? Can political trends that are known to have emerged in Ireland during this period be seen within the migrants?

This chapter is the last of the comparative chapters, and, thus, is the lodestone for the comparative hermeneutic we have developed from 1683 onwards. In this chapter, more so than others, the direct relationship between clerical and general migration becomes clearest.
In the period from 1770 to 1810, more Irish Presbyterian ministers arrived in the Thirteen Colonies or the United States than in any single previous period that we have covered and almost as many as the total of all the previous periods combined. There are several reasons for such an increase in clerical migration. One of them was the healed relationship between Irish and American Presbyterians which had been damaged in the 1720s and 1730s in the New Light controversy.

Without passing any judgment on the merits or demerits of the New Light phenomenon, its spread from Ireland to Colonial America is highly reminiscent of the spread of highly contagious epidemics. The great plagues of medieval Europe, for example, are said to have been carried there aboard ships from the Mediterranean. Their very movement tracked meticulously month-by-month, year-by-year, and sometimes even ship-by-port.

Very much like those highly contagious diseases, the socially-disruptive Irish Presbyterian theological dispute between the Old Lights and the New Lights very quickly spread to Presbyterians in America by way of immigrant Irish Presbyterian ministers. In America, the Old Lights eventually “decontaminated” their ministry, but not before considerable controversy—controversy which caused disruption and which virtually mirrored that in the Synod of Ulster. By 1736, the American Synod had had enough. They made clear their suspicions of ministers arriving from Ireland, decreeing that no minister ordained or licensed in Ireland would be received into the American ministry until he had subscribed to the Westminster Confession of Faith and undergone considerable inspection concerning the soundness of his theology. They also declared to the Irish synod that future ordinations made by Irish presbyteries
of Irish ministers specifically for service in America (*sine titulo*) would be considered uncivil conduct.¹ This declaration was nothing less than a cease and desist order.

Presbyterians in Ireland got the message. Irish presbyteries stopped ordaining ministers *sine titulo* for service in America, but things did not stop there. Irish ministers in general, those who had not been ordained *sine titulo* for America, who were ordained to Irish congregations, seem to have received the message that they were not wanted (or that they did not want to enter into an environment where they would be viewed with suspicion). Whatever their exact thinking was, no active and ordained Irish ministers of Irish congregations left Ireland and arrived in America between 1734 (the year that Samuel Hemphill arrived in America and created such controversy) and 1764. Even then, it was not an ordained member of the Synod of Ulster who arrived, but Thomas Clark, a minister of the conservative and orthodox Associate Presbyterians, or Seceders, who arrived with approximately 300 other Irish Seceders.²

It was not until the next year, 1765, thirty-one years after Samuel Hemphill arrived in America, that an active and ordained minister of the Synod of Ulster migrated to America. Despite a general preference by much of the laity for their services, especially in the Presbytery of Donegal in Pennsylvania,³ Irish ministers began to be viewed with suspicion by American Presbyterians—and particularly by Irish Presbyterian immigrants in America. The laity in the same Irish-immigrant-laden Presbytery of Donegal brought charges against the Irish minister William Orr for preaching unorthodox theology and had him removed from his charge at Nottingham, Pennsylvania.⁴ And, it was Irish ministers of the New Castle Presbytery (and who

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¹ Klett, ed. *Minutes of the Presbyterian Church in America 1706-1788*, pp. 132-133.
² The Seceders were a group of conservative and orthodox Presbyterians who had broken away from the Synod of Ulster in 1746 over problems that had grown from the controversy between New Lights and Old Lights. See David Stewart, *The Seceders in Ireland with Annals of their Congregations* (Belfast: Presbyterian Historical Society, 1950), pp. 54-66.
³ Griffin, *The People With No Name*, p. 120.
⁴ Marilyn J. Westerkamp, “Enthusiastic Piety,” p. 78.
would eventually become part of the then yet-to-be-formed Presbytery of Donegal) who led the movement to require strict subscription and who were most disturbed by the New Light incursions from Ireland.

The fallout over the Hemphill trial, the suspicion of the orthodoxy of Irish immigrant ministers, and the deterioration of the relationship between the American synod and the General Synod of Ulster were major reasons for the dramatic decrease in clerical migration in the years from 1739 to 1769. In that time, there was something of a drought in clerical migration. By the 1760s, however, there were indications that the relationship between Presbyterians in Ireland and Presbyterians in America was beginning to improve.

One key to the improvement was that after a period of schism and general harshness between factions of Presbyterians in America in the 1730s, 40s and 50s, there was a prevailing mood of reconciliation within American Presbyterianism by the 1760s. Yet, it seems to have taken a long period of strife for that reconciliation amongst American Presbyterians to occur. Interestingly, the American schism was redolent of the earlier schism within Irish Presbyterianism.

The Irish synod had suffered schism in 1726 when most of the New Lights were forced into the Presbytery of Antrim and again in 1746 when the Seceders, the most orthodox members of the synod, left over heterodox (New Light) doctrines openly held by ministers in the Synod of Ulster. Internal strife also characterized American Presbyterianism in the years after the American New Light/Subscription controversy of the 1720s and 1730s. In the years after 1736, when the American synod demanded that the Irish synod cease and desist ordaining ministers for service in America, American Presbyterians went through their own great rupture. Just as it had in Ireland, schism had found its way into the Presbyterian midst in the New World, and while the
New Light controversy did influence some aspects of the divide, ironically, the catalyst for the schism came by way of the Great Awakening, that great surge in popular American Christianity in the 1730s and 1740s.

Faced with a drastic increase in the number of people calling for their services, ministers—and the presbyteries and synod which they comprised—often disagreed upon how to respond. Two factions quickly emerged. The Old Side were interested in maintaining the power of the presbytery to oversee and endorse all Presbyterian preaching and preachers within its bounds. Their position was adopted in no small part because of the New Light and Hemphill controversies. To keep heterodox preaching out of Presbyterian pulpits, the Old Side insisted that the members of the presbytery should control the message delivered. They were therefore suspicious or even hostile toward the new revivalistic methods that were sweeping through the American frontier, especially the reports of peculiarities such as speaking in tongues, flailing seizures, and humans barking like dogs. The New Side, on the other hand, enthusiastically embraced the revival (although they, too, were suspicious of the most outlandish excesses) and saw the Old Side’s methods of enforcing ministerial conformity and compliance as arbitrary, authoritarian, and deficient in the general spirit of Christ, which in their minds was indisputably on display in the great revivals. They wished to let him who would preach Christ, preach Christ. For the New Side, the boundary of a presbytery made no difference whatsoever, and the approval of a presbytery was of lesser importance than following in and encouraging the growth of the spirit of Christ.

Despite their similar sounding names and the fact that the Old Side position of strict ministerial regulation was in some ways derived from the Old Light reaction to the trauma of the New Light controversy and the Hemphill trial, the New Side and Old Side should not be
correlated as extensions of the earlier factions called the New Lights and the Old Lights. The New Lights had been theologically liberal and heterodox, and sometimes even heretical in relation to general Christian doctrine. Both the New Side and Old Side, on the other hand, were firmly situated within the Old Light camp, i.e., they were theologically orthodox Presbyterians. The New Side, too, despised the New Light heresy, which often amounted to nothing more nor less than Deism (as was the case with Hemphill). The New Side was, however, persuaded that itinerant preaching and unsupervised revivals were the work of God and should be supported. Deism or those parishioners attracted to the preaching of the New Lights were generally found in well-to-do congregations of sizeable cities. From a possible New Side point of view, the New Light heresy was much less suspect in a situation in which thousands of frontier people were massing to hear the word of God preached.

After years of fighting in private and then very publicly, the two groups could no longer stand to remain united in the same organization. Their views on the current religious scene were just too different. By 1746 the two groups had organized themselves into different synods. The New Side formed the Synod of New York, while the Old Side remained within the Synod of Philadelphia. The breach was less than amicable, and once again Irish ministers played the leading roles in the arguments and fighting that led to the schism.

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5 This, in spite of the fact that many of the leading Old Lights who had so vigorously opposed Hemphill could be found within the Old Side camp. Irishmen Robert Cross and John Thompson, for example, were both leaders of the Old Lights and were then later leaders of the Old Side.

6 For more on the schism in American Presbyterianism, see Hodge, The Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, chs. IV-VII; D.G. Hart, “Old Side/New Side Schism and Reunion,” in Colonial Presbyterianism: Old Faith in a New Land, Princeton Theological Monograph Series 71, (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2007), pp. 157-179; Briggs, American Presbyterianism, pp. 222-272; Balmer and Fitzmeier, The Presbyterians, pp. 30-34. Because of their names, the major factions within American Presbyterian history are easy to confuse. Not only were there the New Lights and the Old Lights in the 1720s and 1730s and the New Side and the Old Side in the 1730s, 40s, and 50s, but from 1837 to 1870 there were the New School and the Old School. The fact that there were often similarities within the debates along with great dissimilarities makes them all the more easily confused.
The Rev. Gilbert Tennent, the chief apologist and author for the New Side and a native of County Armagh, later expressed regret for his public harshness, indeed his vitriol, toward the Old Side supporters in various speeches, sermons, and published tracts. The Old Side was also led by an Irish Presbyterian immigrant, the Rev. John Thompson. As the most vocal advocate of adopting the Irish policy of strict subscription to the Westminster Confession of Faith during the Old Light/New Light controversy in the 1720s and 1730, Thompson had been the de facto leader of the Old Lights and Benjamin Franklin’s worthy (if despised) opponent in the pamphlet war over the Hemphill affair.7

By 1758, however, the Americans were reunited, and the mood of their writings from that time suggests that they were chastened by their bellicose behavior towards each other. That mood was not limited by the Atlantic. Just two years later (if not before), American Presbyterians attempted to renew the frayed bonds that linked them with their mother church in Ireland. Aside from renewing an old and important relationship, American Presbyterians were attempting to restore a historical source support, and financial aid for Presbyterianism in America.

The Great Awakening had demonstrated that the Presbyterian synod in America did not have the manpower it needed to support the great mass of people who clearly expressed to them their need for the spiritual guidance provided by a minister and a church,8 and the American synod knew now that it needed more help in creating an infrastructure that could handle such a demand. To secure Irish assistance, the American synod sent Irish immigrant minister, Charles Beatty, to Ireland in 1760 to seek aid from their estranged mother church. The Records of the General Synod of Ulster noted Beatty’s arrival, his mission, and their generous response.

The [Reverend] Charles Beatty from the Presbytery of Philadelphia produced Ample Credentials from his Presbytery and was Received a member of this Synod. He also produced a very Large Recommendation from the honourable James Hamilton, Governor & Commander in Chief of Pennsylvania [sic]; he Likewise exhibited Letters recommending him to this Synod, signed by several ministers of the Church of Scotland, & Doctors of Divinity in the Universities of Edenburgh [sic] & Glasgow. An address of the Corporation of Philadelphia & New York was presented to this Synod by the Reverend Charles Beatty, Wherein They set forth the Distressed Condition of Ministers and their families in the Bounds of that Country, & pray for such relief as this Synod shall think most proper. The Synod unanimously agreed that a publick Collection shall be made in all the Congregations within the Bounds of the General Synod the second Sabbath in April next, for the above purpose.9

The Irish synod had welcomed Beatty and his mission warmly. They made the Irish American minister a member of the General Synod of Ulster, and a collection was taken up in every congregation within the bounds of the entire Synod of Ulster in order to aid American Presbyterianism. It was a remarkable show of magnanimity and generosity from a synod that had more or less been told to keep its ministers away from America unless those ministers—ministers already approved in Irish examinations—were prepared for a thorough re-examination of their orthodoxy upon their arrival in America.

There are further signs that point to a healing of the rift. Just nine years after Beatty’s trip to Ireland, an Irish presbytery once again ordained a minister for service in America.10 Granted, this was not an ordination sine titulo. The minister, David McKee, was ordained by the Bangor Presbytery in County Down for a specific congregation in Williamsburg, South Carolina, but that in and of itself is remarkable after what happened in the 1730s. An Irish presbytery ordained a minister for an American congregation—not only a sign of an improved relationship

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10 There is a brief suggestion that Solomon Moor was ordained sine titulo for America in 1766. He is said to have been ordained in Ireland as a “minister at large” and left Ireland for America. It is not known which presbytery ordained him. He is also said to have at least landed in Halifax, Nova Scotia before proceeding to America. If Halifax was indeed his original final destination, this could have affected his method of ordination. For now, there is not enough information to tell. See, John Farmer and J.B. Moore, eds., Collections, Historical and Miscellaneous and Monthly Literary Journal (Concord: J.B. Moore, 1823), vol. 2, p. 168; and Sprague, Annals of the American Pulpit, vol. 4, p. 374.
but of a remarkable relationship between two groups of Presbyterians separated by the Atlantic Ocean.

There were still scars and suspicions, however. Just five years before McKee was ordained by the Presbytery of Bangor and sent to South Carolina, the American synod recorded this sentiment in their 1764 minutes:

> If any Society or body of Men are known to be of erroneous Principles, or to be lax or negligent as to the Orthodoxy or piety of those they admit into the Ministry as we apprehend to be the Case of the New Light in Ireland & of some other particular Judicatures & individual Ministers who may & in some places on this Continent do convene together as a temporary Judicature for the Single purpose of Licensing, or ordaining a Candidate. In such cases none of our Presbyteries are obliged to receive & employ in their bounds as Gospel Ministers or Probationers [licentiates] such Persons, tho producing fair Certificates & professing to adopt our Confession.\(^1\)

Clearly, Ireland was still the most noted source of this problem in the mind of the American Synod—which was still largely staffed with Irish-born ministers.

Yet, clearly, something had changed. Beatty’s trip to and success in Ireland suggests either a reparation, but the ordaining of Irish ministers for service in America could either mean reparation or a disregard for the wishes of the American Synod on the part of Irish presbyteries. Either way, the hindrance to clerical migration that was once there, was no longer present.

Indeed, by 1775 three more Irish ministers (John Renwick in 1770, Thomas Kennedy in 1771, and Robert McClintock in 1775) had been ordained by Irish presbyteries, all for service in South Carolina. In the years from 1769 to 1792, at least twelve ministers were ordained in Ireland by Irish presbyteries for service in America.\(^2\) So, by 1770 the wounded relationship between

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\(^1\) Klett, ed., *Minutes of the Presbyterian Church in America 1706-1788*, p. 398. Emphasis is mine.

\(^2\) These were: David McKee (1769); John Renwick (1770); Thomas Kennedy (1771); Alexander Dobbin (1773); Robert McClintock (1781); William McWhirr (1783); John Hidelston (1784); William McKee (1784); Adam Hill (1784); James McGaragh (1791); Robert Warwick (1792); William King (1792). It is important to note, however, that Adam Hill was ordained for service in America but did not go, and William King was Irish but ordained by the Reformed Presbytery of Scotland, for it was not until 1792 that an Irish Reformed Presbytery (King was a
American and Irish Presbyterian governments had been healed (or scarred over) enough for clerical migration to resume in full force and for Irish presbyteries to actively and effectively create it in some instances. Not only do we know that many Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants were landing in America, but the American synod was receiving financial aid from the Synod of Ulster and Irish presbyteries were once again ordaining ministers in Ireland for service in America. There is little doubt, then, that the impediment that Irish ministers were viewed with great suspicion was either no longer in place or much less of a problem by the time that the great increase in clerical migration from Ireland to America occurred in the years from 1770 to 1810.

(2) “A Lawless, Turbulent, and Dangerous Spirit of Insurgency”

A second major reason we posited for the slow-down in clerical migration from 1739 to 1769 was that it was a period decidedly lacking in religio-political strife between the Presbyterians in Ireland and the governments in Dublin or Westminster. Such conflict (at least from the Presbyterian perspective) almost always centered upon the political rights or privileges denied or the penalties applied to Presbyterians in Ireland solely because of their Presbyterianism, and can be deemed a type of religious conflict. In direct contrast to the

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Covenanter), was reconstituted after its decimation due the American emigration of its minister in the 1770s. Sherling Database.

13 Because there was now a significant split in Irish Presbyterianism, some of the nine men ordained for service in America were not members of the Synod of Ulster. Significantly, three of the four earliest Irish ministers ordained for service in America in 1769 or later were members of the Synod of Ulster. These were David McKee (1769), Thomas Kennedy (1771), and Robert McClintock (1772).

14 For the sake of review: the theory that posits religio-political strife as a necessary ingredient in creating a situation favorable for high levels of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration is as follows: the idea was developed in order to explain an apparent inconsistency. In two adjacent periods of clerical migration the first saw high numbers of clerical migration and the latter saw low clerical migration, this in spite of the fact that each period contained nearly identical causes for general Presbyterian emigration, of which Presbyterian clerical migration was obviously a part and which seems to have been relatively high in both periods. Each period saw successive bad harvests, high taxes, high rents, high prices, resented tithes, and British interference with Irish trade. These factors each contributed to the fact that both the years from 1714-1738 and those from 1739-1769 saw two of the five generally recognized peaks in pre-Revolutionary Ulster immigration in America, respectively. The question then became: if factors pushing general emigration were so similar, why was there high clerical migration in the former period and very low clerical migration in the latter? Was there anything affecting emigration in one period but not the other?
previous period, the period from 1770 to 1810 saw both a major increase in clerical migration and in Presbyterian religio-political conflict with the British government.

During a period that saw more clerical migration than any previous period—98 clerical migrants in 41 years—the level of religio-political conflict between Irish Presbyterians and the Irish or British governments was also unprecedented. If considered transatlantically, for by 1770 the Irish Presbyterian community was well situated on both sides of the Atlantic, the years from 1770 to 1810 seem to have been completely dominated by conflict with the British government. These may well have been the most warlike decades in Irish Presbyterian history.  

The War for Independence in America and the 1798 Rebellion in Ireland act as bookends of a bellicose period, and they are the most immediately noticeable of the clashes. Their historical prominence, however, tends to disguise the fact that they are only the most intense points in a larger constellation of conflicts. But, first consider nearly 40 years of Irish Presbyterian conflict with the British government. Ironically, that conflict might relate to the easing of internal Presbyterian conflict—freeing Presbyterians to focus their bellicosity on those who sanctioned their continued second-class citizenship in Ireland.

By 1770 there was relative peace within Ireland’s largest Presbyterian body, the Synod of Ulster. The internecine conflicts that had turned Presbyterian ferocity inward in the earlier years of the century had resulted in the formation in Ireland of a number of splinter groups, and the

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In fact, there was one major reason asserted for emigration found in the earlier period but not in the latter. While other factors pushing emigration seemed to be constant, in the earlier period (in which there was high clerical migration) Presbyterians were loudly calling for their rights or publicly bemoaning their lack of them. They explicitly claimed to be emigrating because of the disabilities placed upon them because of their religion. By contrast, in the period which saw low clerical migration, we saw very little sign of Presbyterian conflict with the government (possibly because they were too busy fighting amongst themselves).

15 Sometime during or shortly after the first decade of the 19th century, Presbyterians in Ireland completed a 180-degree turn. From natural rebels they became allied with the conservative ruling class, and by the Irish Revolutionary War of the 1920s Presbyterians overwhelmingly supported the Unionist position. For more on this incredible transition from rebels to loyalists, see Akenson, Between Two Revolutions: Islandmagee, County Antrim 1798-1920.
exodus of those groups may have been the major reason for the Synod’s relative internal tranquility. In addition to the Synod of Ulster, the de facto mainstream body because of its size and age, there was the more theologically liberal New Light (or Non-Subscribing) Presbytery of Antrim. On the other end of the theological spectrum from the Presbytery of Antrim were the Seceders, a group who seceded from the Synod of Ulster over their belief that the synod had allowed too much of the New Light doctrine to seep into its midst. However, soon after their secession from the Synod, the Seceders themselves suffered schism, splitting into sects called Burghers and Anti-Burghers by choosing to mirror the factions of a dispute amongst Scottish Presbyterians that really had no relevance to Ireland except that Irish Seceders decided to join in. There were also the Covenanters. Just as orthodox and even more conservative than the Seceders, they were sometimes called the Cameronians or “the mountain men” by other Presbyterian groups. While these Presbyterians groups attacked each other in the press and in public debate, they seemed somewhat content amongst their own sects. With each group governing itself, “maintaining its own territory” so to speak, something like a truce fell upon Presbyterian Ireland. At the very least there was nothing so internally distressing as the New

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16 The argument made by the Seceders that the Synod of Ulster had allowed too much of the New Light theology to remain within the synod after the creation of the Presbytery of Antrim (which was founded to be the home of the Non-Subscribers) still rings true. For example, Presbyterian historian, William T. Latimer, has characterized the years from 1775 to 1800 as “the reign of the New Light.” In the middle decades of the eighteenth century a growing number of ministers within the Synod of Ulster began to sympathize with the Presbytery of Antrim’s New Light theology. These men eventually grew into a New Light party within the synod, which eventually came into the ascendant. Ian R. McBride reports that by the middle decades of the century “ministers were able to preach heterodox doctrines before [the Synod of Ulster’s] annual assemblies with impunity.” The Seceders, therefore, were not simply over-reacting. There really was a strong New Light presence in the synod, despite the fact that many New Lights had been essentially kicked out in the 1720s. See McBride, Scripture Politics, p. 41.

17 For more on Seceder or Associate Presbyterians in Ireland, See David Stewart, The Seceders in Ireland; McBride, Scripture Politics, ch. 3.

18 Covenanters believed that the Scottish Covenants of 1638 and 1642 were binding upon all Presbyterians and therefore that no Presbyterian could accept rule by the British monarch until, amongst other requirements, that monarch acknowledged that Christ was the true monarch. For more on the Covenanters in Ireland, see Adam Loughridge, The Covenanters in Ireland: A History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland (Belfast: Cameron Press, 1984). On Covenanters in the early American Colonies, see Emily Moberg Robinson, “Scottish Covenanters and the Creation of an American Identity,” Journal of Presbyterian History, Spring/Summer, 2005, pp. 54-70.
Light conflict had been.\(^{19}\) Amidst this relative internal peace, Presbyterians returned to publicly pressing the government for their rights.

While there was relative intra-Presbyterian peace, there was a general air of indignation amongst Presbyterian farmers in Ireland toward the government and its Anglican ruling class in the years immediately preceding the American Revolution. Rents, it seemed, had been high for years on end, yet they only got higher. Some Presbyterian tenant farmers were able to supplement their incomes by incorporating aspects of the linen making process into their farm labor (if not wholly relying on the linen industry), but many could not and often lived in general scarcity. In times when the linen market was down, scarcity and the specter of starvation hovered over the homes of many more. Much of the community was financially stretched to the breaking point, making tithes, high taxes, and inflated prices an even more rancorous constant. It was in this atmosphere of worry, stress, dissatisfaction, and frustration that landlords—particularly in the heavily Presbyterian populated areas of Antrim, Down, and eastern Derry—began raising rents and evicting those who could not pay. The landlords’ efforts were met with marked resistance from the Presbyterian community.\(^{20}\)

What was once a muted bitterness toward the ascendancy became an epidemic of violence, vandalism, and outright insurrection in 1770 when Arthur Chichester, 5\(^{th}\) Earl of Donegall, one of east Ulster’s biggest landowners (and an absentee landlord), substantially raised his rents on his County Antrim estates. The alleged worth of this increase in rents was 100,000 pounds.\(^{21}\) In the same year and in the same county, Arthur Hill-Trevor, Viscount of Dungannon, caused panic among his leaseholders by opening up much of his holdings, specifically on

\(^{19}\) Ian McBride reports that the first New Light conflict in the 1720s had paralyzed the machinery of the Synod of Ulster (then the only Presbyterian body of government in Ireland) for 7 years. McBride, *Scripture Politics*, p. 41.

\(^{20}\) Presbyterians were not the only group to revolt at the time, but they were heavily involved.

\(^{21}\) Kerby Miller, et al., eds., *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, p. 31.
Islandmagee, to secret bidding. Not only would the Viscount’s action raise the rent, but local residents were forced into potential bidding wars against their neighbors and outsiders for the right to keep their farms. The Lords Donegall and Dungannon were not alone in their actions; throughout Ulster, but especially in those eastern counties, landlords large and small raised their rents enough to cause panic amongst their lease holders. For those who survived only on what they could earn from the land, the loss or possible loss of that land pushed them toward desperation.

Those already financially stretched could not pay the increases, and the outraged tenants, largely Presbyterians, protested the actions of the landlords. Frustration at the political position of Presbyterians in Ireland boiled over in this time of insurrection. They decried the requirement of paying tithes to the Established Church, constantly high taxes, and their exclusion from political life. Disaffected men banded together into conspiratorial, vengeance-seeking throngs which would eventually organize themselves (however loosely) into the “Hearts of Steel.”

Almost exclusively Presbyterian, the Hearts of Steel began to hough the cattle of landlords, a practice which permanently maimed the animal by cutting the tendons of its legs. It also represented a serious financial loss for the landlord, for the unfortunate beasts were almost worthless afterwards. The practice of houghing livestock became so widespread in Counties Antrim and Down at the time that it was done “even at noonday undisguised.” The Hearts of Steel also burned houses and practiced extortion upon those whom they deemed their enemies. At one point they were strong enough in County Antrim to muster several thousand men, march

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22 Akenson, Between Two Revolutions, p. 12.
23 The Hearts of Steel were also called the Hearts of Oak, the Steelboys, and sometimes just “the Boys.” The latter is ironically redolent of the nickname for the largely Irish- and Catholic-supported Celtic Football Club of Glasgow (“the Bhoys”), whose memorabilia is often seen and used as a marker for sectarian Irish Catholic gangs.
24 Dickson, Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, pp. 74-75. Quoted in Dickson from a letter addressed to “the inhabitants of a certain part of co. Antrim” in the Belfast News-Letter, 30 Oct. 1770.
to Belfast, and force the release of one of their members from a jail there.\textsuperscript{25} In the Carrickfergus district of the same county, the courts found they could not get convictions against suspected members of the Hearts of Steel from juries selected from the local population.\textsuperscript{26}

The outrages soon spread from County Antrim to the counties of Down, Derry, Tyrone, and Armagh, and for the next three years the Presbyterian population in the north was described as having “a lawless, turbulent, and dangerous Spirit of Insurgency.”\textsuperscript{27} Emboldened, the Hearts of Steel moved from houghing cattle to mounting full scale attacks upon the fortified houses of magistrates.\textsuperscript{28} They occasionally fought pitched battles against government troops.\textsuperscript{29} The British Army, if it were so directed, could have put a violent and terrible end to the insurrection of the Hearts of Steel by putting them to the sword and burning out the population that supported them. Luckily for Presbyterians, especially in Antrim and Down, the Lord Lieutenant at the time was sympathetic to their plight, appalled by the behavior of the landlords, and refused to allow a large body of troops from Dublin to continue its march northward to crush the rebellion. Yet, despite the best efforts of the Hearts of Steel (and the good fortune of a sympathetic Lord Lieutenant), very little change was effected. After 1773, violence in Ulster subsided, but resentment remained amongst Presbyterians toward landlords and the government. The “only practical result of rioting and insurrection was an increase in emigration.”\textsuperscript{30}

But increased emigration itself created another practical result, for the transatlantic migration of Irish Presbyterians, at least at this period in time, ensured that on both sides of the

\textsuperscript{25} Note that County Antrim was where Lord Donegall and Viscount Dungannon had so unsettled the population through their increases in rent and subsequent evictions. There would have been many bitter, landless men on the roads happy for a chance at revenge, and much of the larger population of the county would have been sympathetic.

\textsuperscript{26} Akenson, \textit{Between Two Revolutions}, p. 13.

\textsuperscript{27} Dickson, \textit{Ulster Emigration to Colonial America}, p. 75.

\textsuperscript{28} Miller, \textit{Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan}, p. 33n.27

\textsuperscript{29} Dickson, \textit{Ulster Emigration to Colonial America}, p. 75.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid., p. 76. Antrim and the north were not isolated in their agrarian discord, it was widespread throughout all of Ireland. In the south, groups of men banded together to form the “Whiteboys,” whose aims were similar to those of the Hearts of Steel.
Atlantic resentment seethed toward the British government and the landlord system which it supported. Considering the events in Ulster between 1770 and 1773 and the increased migration that it caused, it is no wonder that Irish Presbyterian migrants contributed so substantially to all aspects of the American Revolution. Many Irish Presbyterian immigrants, and especially the most recent arrivals, were merely engaged in a continuation of the old fight. Consider that in migrating to America Irish Presbyterians were exchanging a situation in which their ambitions were cramped for one in which opportunities appeared to be boundless. They had been virtually excluded from politics, they were living under and required to support an alien church establishment, and in many cases, especially in the period immediately preceding the American Revolution, they had been engaged in intense agrarian warfare to establish rights as tenants in opposition to their landlords.  

And, if insurrection had caused no practical change in Ireland for Irish Presbyterians except increased emigration, that migration strengthened the tie that linked the two regions and communities together. Through migration, the two communities remained in contact, expressing to each other their common indignation, blowing hot the smoldering rage of their kin across the ocean.

Just one example of these family connections can be seen in the Johnstons, a family of Irish Presbyterians situated on both sides of the Atlantic. Moses Johnston left Ireland for America in 1772, but this did not isolate him from the frustrations of Presbyterian life in Ireland. The year after his migration, Moses Johnston’s brother, Henry, wrote to him from County Down, telling him that all of his relations and everyone that he knew in Ireland were happy to hear of his safe passage “out of a Land of Slavery into a Land of Liberty and freedom, and the more so as this kingdom is much worse than it was even when you left it.” The letter goes on to complain about a number of things, including high rents, the Earl of Donegall’s exploitation of

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Ulster, and the poor state of trade and industry.\textsuperscript{32} Through letters, the frustrations of those in Ireland could still twinge the passions of Irish Presbyterians in America (and vice versa).

For many years historians and eulogists of eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterian immigrants (commonly known as the “Scotch-Irish”) have touted the near total support given by these people to the American Revolution (1775-1781). Their willingness to fight for the American cause was directly related, in many cases, to their treatment in Ireland. The most militant agitators of the violence in Ulster between 1770 to 1774, along with many others, emigrated to America. There, these Ulster agitators had a much greater effect upon the British than many Irish landlords would have thought possible, for the ousted former tenants of Lord Donegall are said to have made up a significant portion of the American revolutionary army.\textsuperscript{33} Contemporary Americans noted the resentment felt by many Ulster migrants and commented that they had been driven to America from “the rich pasturelands of Ireland [where] many hungry parricides are fed, and grown strong to labour in its destruction.”\textsuperscript{34} Granted, there were some areas where the American Revolution was not popular amongst Irish Presbyterian immigrants and their close descendants, but for the most part, they were in favor of the Revolution. Where they were not, their lack of support had much more to do with local grievances than with any support for the British government.\textsuperscript{35} So heavily were Irish

\textsuperscript{32} Letter from Henry Johnston, Loughbrickland, County Down, Ireland to his brother, Moses Johnston, Leacock Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, 28 April 1773, in Miller, \textit{Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan}, pp. 32-34.


\textsuperscript{34} Quoted in Dickson, \textit{Ulster Emigration}, p. 75, from “Address to the People of Ireland, 28 July 1775” in \textit{Continental Congress Journals}, ii, pp. 212-218.

\textsuperscript{35} Leyburn, \textit{The Scotch-Irish}, pp. 304-309. Irish Presbyterians did not necessarily fight the British for revenge for their treatment in Ireland. These people were perfectly capable of interpreting the political situation and made decisions based on what would help create a better future for themselves, their families, and their communities. One recent study has demonstrated that dissenters in Virginia, many of whom were Irish Presbyterians, actively negotiated with the local Anglican elite for political entrée in exchange for their military support in the war for American independence. See John A. Ragosta, \textit{Wellspring of Liberty: How Virginia’s Religious Dissenters Helped Win the American Revolution and Secured Religious Liberty} (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).
Presbyterian immigrants involved in the conflict that one British general testified that half of the rebel Army was from Ireland, and another officer declared “Call this war by whatever name you may, only call it not an American rebellion; it is nothing more or less than a Scotch Irish Presbyterian rebellion.”

The American Revolution presented opportunities for Presbyterians in Ireland as well. Presbyterians in Ulster were fascinated by events in America, and frequently corresponded with their overseas kin. Through letters from family and friends, the Irish Presbyterian population in America helped keep radical ideas of democracy alive in their families in Ireland, who in turn “continued to inject radical ideas into the north of Ireland.” Moreover, during the American Revolution the Presbyterian community in Ulster, “which had long organized itself as a distinct political society and been engaged in an intense debate on the nature of the state, was transformed, in an extraordinary set of circumstances, into a citizen army.” This transformation occurred when France declared war on the British in support of the Americans. Because the government in Westminster was concerned about the defense of Ireland and especially with the potentially hostile Catholic population there, the government had the local aristocracy arm the Protestant population, including Presbyterians, despite the fact that Irish Presbyterians had good reason to support the Americans.

In spite of the risk, the government sanctioned the arming of the entire male Protestant population, creating local militias known as “Volunteers.” In heavily Presbyterian Ulster, the Volunteers were consequently heavily Presbyterian. Presbyterians here were accustomed to

35 Akenson, *Between Two Revolutions*, p. 15.
38 Kerby Miller provides excellent examples of such correspondence in *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*.
39 Akenson, *Between Two Revolutions*, p. 15.
41 Ibid.
governing themselves, and by arming them, the government had created an army that was independently commanded, with distinct grievances, and potentially hostile. Long made second-class citizens, Presbyterians would try to use the threat of force to remove their political shackles.

The mood of the time made their attempts at political reform more favorable, because in the 1780s much of the Irish ascendancy was calling for reform, albeit in the form of giving the Anglican Irish parliament more power to govern Ireland outside of the say of Westminster. Presbyterian demands were clear. They wanted inclusion in Irish political life and a guarantee of it in a written constitution. In 1783 and again in 1790, the Irish Volunteers would attempt to use their newfound military strength to intimidate the Irish parliament into agreeing to reform the Irish parliament so that dissenters would be included. The Irish Parliament refused. Despite intimidation tactics, Presbyterian concerns would not be considered. Parliament called the Volunteers’ bluff, and the Presbyterians backed down. No rebellion occurred in the 1780s.

But while the volatility of 1770s and 1780s never fully erupted in Ireland, Ulster, and particularly its Presbyterian population, had been suffused with the ideals of democracy and energized by their own recognition of their civic and martial power. Not surprisingly, Ulster was an environment receptive to the ideas emanating from France in the 1790s, which further radicalized much of Ulster. The example of the French Revolution tended to galvanize the already rebellious spirit of Ulster, particularly taking root amongst the Presbyterian weavers,

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42 In 1785, William Drennan, the son of a Presbyterian minister, wrote the “Letters of an Irish Helot,” which sum up Presbyterian grievances. William Drennan, “Letters of an Irish Helot, signed Orellana” (Dublin: the Order of the Constitutions Society of the City of Dublin, 1785). Interestingly, Drennan connects emigration with the grievances Presbyterians suffered in Ireland, writing of the emigrants as “those miserable emigrants who are now plowing a bleak and boisterous sea.” p. 11.

43 Akenson, Between Two Revolutions, p. 16.
farmers, and merchants of eastern of Ulster, where in 1791 the Society of United Irishmen was created to prepare for revolution and the creation of a nonsectarian, democratic Irish Republic. From the start, the society was dominated by Presbyterians, and by 1797 the Presbyterian-heavy County Down contained around 28,000 United Irishmen, equaling a full quarter of Ulster’s total United Irish.

In 1798, after nearly 30 years of build up, a significant portion of Ireland’s Presbyterians finally came out in open rebellion. The rising was doomed from the start. For a number of reasons, there was not a concentrated uprising of the United Irishmen and their Catholic allies, known as the Defenders; three separate risings occurred in 1798. Each of them failed miserably.

The one in Counties Down and Antrim was “very much a Presbyterian affair,” while the one in County Wexford descended into little more than the massacre of local Protestants by local Catholics. The culmination of 30 years of political agitation, the 1798 rebellion resulted in a sectarian nightmare rather than the non-sectarian utopia that so many had dreamed of. It was the most concentrated period of bloodshed in Irish history. An estimated 30,000 people, the majority rebels, were killed in one year.

In spite of the devastation and the political union between Great Britain and Ireland that resulted from the 1798 rebellion, the next decade remained characterized by political conflict. In America, many recent Irish Presbyterian immigrants became involved in America politics, largely on the side of the Republicans led by Jefferson, so many in fact that their opponents, the

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44 Kerby Miller, *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, p. 37. See also Akenson and Crawford, *Local Poets and Social History: James Orr, Bard of Ballycarry*.
45 Miller, *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, pp. 36-37.
Federalists, passed the Alien and Sedition Acts in order to keep them from swinging the balance of American politics toward radical democratic or republican ideals.\textsuperscript{49} Just five years after the 1798 rebellion, Robert Emmet and his allies launched an attempt at another revolution in 1803. It was a short lived affair, and was also doomed. Even this gasp was not the end. “Old 1798 men turn up as late as the underground activities of the 1820s.”\textsuperscript{50} There simply is no way around this fact: the years from 1770 to 1810 were filled with a spirit of protest, rebelliousness, and revolution, and clerical migration seems to have increased in such times. It certainly did in the late 1710s and 1720, and now again between 1770 and 1810.

Throughout this period of conflict, Irish Presbyterians looked to their ministers for guidance and leadership. The line between religious and social leader was often blurred in the case of Irish Presbyterians ministers. Indeed, “although the clergyman probably would not have approved fully, it is clear that many of their constituents viewed them first as civic leaders and only secondarily as religious figures.”\textsuperscript{51} As the uncrowned, yet de facto leaders of the Irish Presbyterian community, Presbyterian ministers often led their congregants into conflicts with other denominations, landlords, or the government itself, using the meetinghouse pulpit to encourage unity and resistance in the face of their enemies. Ministers constantly fought the enemies of their community in the pamphlet wars with their educated pens, but sometimes even took to the literal field of battle, trading pen for sword.

At other times, they abandoned Ireland altogether for the opportunities promised by America, encouraging their congregants to follow them. In early 1772, Covenanter Presbyterian minister, William Martin, emigrated for America, taking with him five shiploads of Irish

\textsuperscript{50} R. F. Foster, \textit{Modern Ireland}, p. 285.
\textsuperscript{51} Akenson, \textit{Between Two Revolutions}, p. 24.
Presbyterians. But, his emigration from Ireland—in some senses the ultimate protest—did not stop him from continuing to assert his rights. In America, he continued to use his influence over his fellow Presbyterians against the British interest. So much so that his South Carolina church was eventually burned by British troops in retaliation for his continued refusal to stop preaching resistance to his congregants from the pulpit.  

Other ministers continued to fight, by various means, in Ireland. In 1783 and 1790, Presbyterian ministers campaigned vigorously for the reformist Stewart family in the County Down elections. Other ministers supported the Volunteer movement. Some even went so far as to claim in their sermons that military training provided by the movement was a useful tool in teaching the youth of the community “the virtues of moral discipline, self-reliance and resistance to the will of despots.” Other ministers went so far as to preach to bands of Volunteers, using passages from the Bible to convince their hearers that that the Volunteer cause was divinely ordained. “No Bishops, No King,” indeed.

In the 1790s Presbyterian ministers were prominent supporters of similar reform causes as the United Irishmen, even if, as many often claimed, they were never technically members of the society. The Revs. David Bailie Warden (a licentiate), Sinclair Kelburne, Thomas Ledlie Birch, William Steele Dickson, William Sinclair, and James Porter were among the most notable supporters, although there are many others. Porter was hanged in front of his own meetinghouse

53 Brooke, Ulster Presbyterianism, p. 117.
54 Ibid., p. 119.
in Greyabbey, County Down, after a quick, military show trial in 1798.\textsuperscript{56} Example after example could be given of ministerial involvement.\textsuperscript{57}

Suffice it to say that in the years between 1770 and 1810, Ireland writhed with religio-political turmoil—turmoil which was inextricably infused with the struggle of Presbyterians to cast off the artificial encumbrances placed upon them by the government for the sole reason of their Presbyterianism. As the leaders of their communities, Irish Presbyterian ministers found themselves in the thick of it. And, as in the only other period of extremely high Irish Presbyterian agitation in the eighteenth century, the late 1710s and early 1720s, clerical migration was high.

\section*{(3) A Cross Section of Theology and Politics in Presbyterian Ireland, 1770-1810}

The most striking initial characteristic of clerical migration in the late eighteenth century is its dramatic increase. At least 98 clerical migrants arrived in the thirteen American colonies and the United States between 1770 and 1810. It was the largest single phase of clerical migration examined so far, providing a large enough total for the investigation of some characteristics of the migrants themselves, and just as importantly, to explore the possibility that clerical migration was broadly representative—like a cross-section—of Presbyterian Ireland and general Presbyterian emigration from Ireland at that time. This section will discuss two characteristics of the clerical migration, theology and politics, and suggests that the theological make-up of clerical migration was representative of the general theological spectrum of the Irish

\textsuperscript{56} W.T. Latimer, \textit{Ulster Biographies Relating to the Rebellion of 1798} (Belfast: William Mullan and Son, 1897), p. 72. Also see David A. Wilson, \textit{United Irishmen, United States}, pp. 1-35.

Presbyterian landscape and migration and that the politics of the clerical migrants was representative of the political tendencies within general Presbyterian emigration from Ireland at the time.

With regard to the spectrum of Presbyterian theology in Ireland, unlike during the last phase of high clerical migration (1714-1738), the clerical migrants from 1770 to 1810 represented a number of different sects of Irish Presbyterianism. Nearly all of the sub-divisions that had developed within Irish Presbyterianism by 1770 were well represented. As from the time of its founding in 1690, there were emigrant licentiates and ministers from the Synod of Ulster, and they continued to make up the largest contingent within the clerical migration cohort.

The New Light, or Non-Subscriber, Presbytery of Antrim is not known to have sent any migrants during the period, but there was a well-entrenched New Light Party within the Synod of Ulster by this point, and some of the synod’s emigrants were definitely of this party. The Presbytery of Bangor, for example, was part of the Synod of Ulster but known for its New Light tendencies. The Presbytery of Bangor even went so far as to ordain at least three men—David McKee, Thomas Kennedy, and Robert McClintock—specifically for service in America. They were the first, in fact, to do so after Irish Presbyterian ministers, at the direction of the American synod, had written to the Synod of Ulster to request that they cease and desist with this practice. However, despite the audacity of the Presbytery of Bangor, the New Lights were not dominant among the clerical emigrants from the Synod of Ulster—and certainly not when considering the whole of the clerical migrant cohort between 1770 and 1810, nearly fifty percent of which was made up of theologically orthodox Covenanters and Seceders. Instead, the

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58 Sherling Database.
59 Ibid.
emigrants associated with the Synod of Ulster were an assortment of moderates, orthodox, and New Lights, just like the synod, itself, during this time.\textsuperscript{60}

The smaller, more theologically orthodox sub-groups which had begun to spring up in response to the synod’s growing laxity toward Presbyterian orthodoxy in the 1740s, 50s, and 60s, were also represented in the clerical migration. Indeed, they were well-represented. The first of these groups was known as the Covenanters. Though relatively small in number in Ireland, at least twenty-four of 98 clerical migrants of the period (just under one quarter of the total) were or would become ministers of the ultra-orthodox and politically radical Reformed Presbyterians, more commonly known as Covenanters.\textsuperscript{61} As perpetual enemies of the British government, it should be no surprise that the majority of these ministers arrived in America just before or in the wake of the chaos and the bloodletting of the 1798 rebellion.

At least twenty-five of the clerical migrants, like the Covenanters about a quarter of the total, were licentiates or ordained ministers affiliated with the theologically orthodox Associate Presbyterians.\textsuperscript{62} These Presbyterians were theologically similar to the Covenanters in that they adhered strictly to Presbyterian orthodoxy but were more politically moderate in the sense that they did not think that the Irish or British governments were abominations (as the Covenanters did). Associate Presbyterians in Ireland had begun to secede from the Synod of Ulster in 1746 in protest of the growing tolerance of the increasingly dominant New Light party within the Synod.

\textsuperscript{60} These divisions within the Synod of Ulster should not necessarily be seen as a loss of the solidarity discussed in chapter one. As Peter Brooke has said “Ulster Presbyterians had, throughout the eighteenth century, been a distinct people who were excluded from participation in the politics of the state in which they lived but who had developed a social structure of their own in many ways more vigorous and cohesive than that of the state and its Established Church. The appearance of a whole political society distinct from the political society governed by Westminster and Dublin was if anything reinforced by their divisions. The Synod of Ulster, incorporating within itself a wide variety of theological and political views, had the appearance of a national church surrounded, like the Church of England, by a dissenting fringe—the Presbytery of Antrim, the Seceders and the Covenanters.” Brooke, Ulster Presbyterianism, p. 112.

\textsuperscript{61} Sherling Database.

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.
of Ulster. They were commonly called “Seceders.” The number of their congregations grew steadily in Ireland despite the fact that very soon after their secession from the Synod of Ulster, the Seceders suffered their own schism when their congregants and ministers took sides in a politico-theological argument amongst the Associate Presbyterians of Scotland that had little to no bearing on Irish Associate Presbyterians other than that they involved themselves in the debate and replicated the Scottish divisions in Ireland. Even these intra-Secession divisions, known as Burghers and Anti-Burghers, are found amongst the clerical migrants of the period. Indeed, within the clerical migration, we generally find the whole spectrum of Presbyterianism that had developed over the eighteenth century. Such representativeness within the clerical migration strengthens the finding of Peter Gilmore who has recently pointed out that in the decades on either side of the turn of the nineteenth century areas of America with high concentrations of Irish Presbyterian immigrants were rife with all of the sects and divisions between Presbyterians in Ireland, often causing strife and controversy—Irish Presbyterian society remade in America.63

The lives of just a few immigrant Irish Presbyterian ministers indicate that this time period was, indeed, a time of rebuilding, remaking, and adapting Irish religious life in America. Members of the smaller sects, particularly, would have been faced with the prospect of starting all over again in America—from scratch. Denominations and sects of denominations had to be totally rebuilt, and a number of these Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants were involved.

In the years between 1770 and 1810, both the Covenants and the Seceders founded their denominations in America. William Martin, the Father of Covenanting in Ireland, left Ireland in 1772 and helped to found the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America a year later with the help of two other newly arrived Irish ministers, Matthew Lind and Alexander Dobbin, and one Scottish minister who had labored for years as the sole Covenanter minister in America. It was this influx of Irish clerical immigration that made the creation of a functioning church government possible.⁶⁴

When later in the decade Seceders (Associate Presbyterians) and Covenanters (Reformed Presbyterians) decided to unite and form the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in America, all of the founding Covenanting ministers went along with the union except for Martin, making him the only Covenanter minister in America. But Irish clerical immigration provided necessary aid once again, and thanks largely to immigrants forced to flee Ireland because of their radical political inclinations (support of the ideals of the United Irishmen), a second Covenanter church was founded in America in 1799. Once again the founders were nearly all from Ireland. Indeed, Reformed Presbyterianism in America owes much, perhaps more than any other American Protestant denomination, to its existence to immigrants from Ireland.⁶⁵

Another set of American religious founders were also Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants of this period. In 1807, Irish Presbyterian minister, Thomas Campbell arrived in America, and his son Alexander, a divinity student, arrived in 1809. They settled together in an area of

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⁶⁵ Yet, the great irony is that American Covenanters have generally forgotten their Irish roots and history through a near constant homage to their ties to Scotland and their Scottish forbears who suffered for the cause of Covenanting during the “Killing Times.” For more discussion of the Irish character of the Covenanting clergy in America in the 18th and 19th centuries, see Sherling, “Selective Remembrance: Scottish Sensibilities and Forgotten Irish Contributions to Reformed Presbyterianism in America;” Adam Loughridge, *The Covenanters in Ireland*; Robinson, “Scottish Covenanters and the Creation of an American Identity,” pp. 54-70; Glasgow, *History of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America*. 249
Pennsylvania heavily populated with Irish Presbyterian immigrants and the descendants of Irish Presbyterian immigrants. Thomas Campbell had been somewhat traumatized by the internecine conflict between Presbyterians in Ireland, but that did not stop him from publishing a theologically controversial tract immediately upon his arrival in America. Convinced that the strife within Presbyterianism was the inherent result of some of the beliefs of Presbyterians and determined not to replicate the Irish religious scene in America, Thomas and Alexander Campbell eventually founded what would become the first indigenously American Christian denomination: The Disciples of Christ.\textsuperscript{66}

So the wide spectrum of Irish Presbyterian theological belief was replicated in America. Additionally, just as the clerical migrants of the period have proven to be representative of the religious character of Irish Presbyterianism, they were also characteristic of Irish Presbyterian political beliefs. We have already seen that Irish Presbyterian society in Ireland and America were characterized by a “lawless, turbulent, and dangerous spirit of insurgency,” and that Irish Presbyterian ministers were heavily involved. Clerical migrants were typical of this spirit of insurgency amongst Presbyterian society, and the migrants of the 1790s demonstrate well the level of that typicality.

Maurice Bric, Kerby Miller and many others say that Irish migration changed during the 1790s, and that the immigrants themselves changed. They were now political exiles, radicals

\textsuperscript{66} Quite extraordinarily, not to say remarkably, two Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants founded the first indigenously American Christian denomination partly as a reaction to their experiences with Irish Presbyterian theological strife in Ireland and in America. The cohort of clerical migrants for this period seems to have been a microcosm of the spectrum of Irish Presbyterian religious and political belief. Moreover, the whole spectrum of Presbyterian theologies are present. Some immigrant Irish clerics replicated their Irish Presbyterian sects in America. Some even built entirely new denominations in America based on their negative experiences with Irish Presbyterianism. For more on Irish Presbyterian sects in the America at this time see: Gilmore, “Rebels and Revivals;” and Sherling, “Selective Remembrance;” for more on Thomas and Alexander Campbell and their founding of the Disciples of Christ, see Lester G. McAllister, ed., \textit{An Alexander Campbell Reader} (St. Louis, MO: CBP Press, 1988); Eva Jean Wrather, \textit{Alexander Campbell: Adventurer in Freedom}, 3 vols., Duane D. Cummins, ed. (Fort Worth, TX: TCU Press, 2005).
and activists. Certainly, the political activism of the 1790s is represented amongst the clerical migrants of the 1790s and the early years of the succeeding decade. Of the 63 Presbyterian ministers and licentiates identified by Ian R. McBride as being implicated or suspected of involvement in the 1798 Rebellion, 15 (nearly 15 percent (15/98)) are found within the migrant cohort of the period. There were also politically radical clerical migrants who made the journey to America before the 1798 Rebellion, and obviously who would not have been implicated in the Rebellion. Covenanter minister, James McKinney, was actually forced to flee Ireland as early as 1793, charged with treason for influencing and encouraging Irish Presbyterians to “throw off the British yoke.” Others, like John Reilly, were suspected of involvement with the United Irishmen or left Ireland with suspected United Irishmen in 1797 and became Presbyterian ministers in America. Therefore, more than just the 15 clerical migrants who were implicated in the 1798 rebellion were politically active in the era of the United Irishmen. There was McKinney in 1793; and of the nine clerical migrants in 1797 who were of

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67 Bric, Ireland, Philadelphia and the Re-invention of America 1760-1800, pp. 199-291; Miller, Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan, pp. 36-37, 39-40. David N. Doyle seems to disagree with this interpretation—although his position in different writings seems contradictory—in a later one he states “There was some political excitement in Philadelphia and New York among newcomers and poorer Urban Scots Irish in the 1790s. … Most immigrants of the 1780s-1790s, however, were apolitical, politics having failed them in Ireland.” David Noel Doyle, “Scots Irish or Scotch-Irish,” p. 161. Doyle provides no evidence in this work for his claim. In an earlier work, Doyle seems to have emphasized a new politicized Irish emigrant pool. See Doyle, Ireland, Irishmen, and Revolutionary America 1760-1800, pp. 152-232, et alibi.

68 McBride, Scripture Politics, pp. 232-34. McBride also helpfully identified or guessed at the Old Light/New Light affiliation of these ministers and licentiates (or probationers as McBride calls them). Those that McBride identified who are known to have migrated to America were: William Sinclair (New Light); James Hull (New Light); John Miles (New Light?); David Bailie Warden (New Light); Thomas Ledlie Birch (Old Light); James Simpson (Old Light); Robert Steel (Old Light); John Glendy (Old Light); James Harper (Old Light); Thomas Smith (Old Light); Josias Wilson (Old Light); William Gibson (Old Light); John Black (Old Light); Samuel Brown Wylie (Old Light); George Potts (?). The Old Lights are nearly double the proportion of New Lights of the 1798’ers amongst emigrant ministers (5 New Lights; 9 Old Lights; 1 unknown). This will surprise some, as indeed McBride’s appendix did, which demonstrated that around 22 Old Light and around 22 New Light ministers or licentiates were implicated or suspected of involvement in the 1798 Rebellion. The traditional narrative has held that the New Lights were the driving force behind the United Irishmen and the Rebellion of 1798, but paying attention to the ministers, the spiritual and, indeed, political leaders of the Irish Presbyterian community at this time, produces findings that must force a more complex understanding of late eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterianism—an indicator of the utility of the study of ministers in a somewhat murky historical situation.

69 Glasgow, History or the Reformed Presbyterian Church in America, p. 601.

70 Ibid., pp. 653-54.
an age that they could have been considered a threat by the British, at least five were or were rumored to be United Irishmen or sympathetic enough to their cause to lead them into trouble with the British Government.71 Five of the six migrants of 1798, five of the seven in 1799, one in 1801 and one in 1802 were well associated with the rebellion, meaning that at least 18 of 98 total migrants in the period (nearly 18 percent) were clearly representative of this newly political type of immigrant. We can conclude, then, that just as Irish immigrants in general are said to have become “politicized” by the events of the Irish 1790s, so were Irish Presbyterian clerical immigrants. In this sense, Irish clerical migrants are representative of the new type of immigrants.

Clerical migration, then, seems to have been representative of the broad theological spectrum of Irish Presbyterianism—including nearly every sect. It also seems to have represented quite clearly the spirit of insurgency noted by scholars amongst Irish Presbyterians and Irish Presbyterian immigrants at the time. The case is growing. Clerical migration, a smaller sub-set of the larger general migration, seems to have been highly representative of that larger migration.

(4) General and Clerical Irish Presbyterian Migration, 1770-1810

This section compares clerical migration with what is known about general migration from Ireland for the years from 1770. Because our time period straddles the traditional breaking point of 1775, we will rely on Dickson’s analysis of Ulster migration and his numerical estimates up to 1775 and from then on we will have to rely for that information on a number of others,

71 There were 11 clerical migrants in total during 1797. Two were youths, and both were the sons of Covenantant minister, William Gibson, who was forced to flee Ireland for encouraging resistance to British rule. Both sons eventually became Covenantant ministers in America. Sherling Database.
including Maldwyn Jones, Aaron Fogleman, Maurice Bric, and David N. Doyle. Before diving in, though, a few points—largely historiographical—should be remembered.

First, the years from 1770-1774 and 1783-1801 may have seen the highest yearly rates of emigration from Ireland to America up to that point. Dickson and many others have claimed that the years from 1770 to 1774/5 saw the highest volume of emigration from Ireland to America in the colonial era, and Maldwyn Jones and Fogleman have asserted that in the years from 1783 to 1815 Ireland experienced a tremendous amount of emigration: 100,000 to 150,000 thousand emigrants, most of whom probably left in the 1780s and 1790s. Our period of investigation includes both of these stages of immigration. The emigration of these years was unprecedented, and, surely clerical migration, as a sub-set of that larger migration could not have failed to react.

Second, the year 1775 holds no great significance in the history of clerical migration. There is no great break in clerical Irish Presbyterian migration there. As we will see, only one clerical migrant arrived America in that year and another one would not arrive until 1779—a three-year hiatus, but we have seen longer droughts in clerical migration in the past. Unlike those attempting to follow general migration after 1775, clerical migration can be tracked in the same ways it has been. So any changes in the migration during the years immediately after 1775, the years of and after the American Revolution, create no need for us to change tactics, as becomes the case with those following Dickson’s (now) more traditional method. Just as there was no drastic stoppage in general Irish migration, this pause in clerical migration does not constitute any real break in clerical migration, and following ministers allows us to slip past the 1775 mark as if there were no historic or customary boundary there at all.

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Third, the years from 1770 to 1810 constitute the last of the periods of clerical migration in which we can say with some degree of certainty that Irish migration was largely Presbyterian. That is important for our investigation, because the denominational make-up of the larger, general outmigration dictates how we compare it to the migration of our ministers (which was entirely Presbyterian). Between 1770 and 1810, Catholics (and presumably Anglicans) began to migrate in larger numbers. For now, though, we do not have to deal with that problem, because—despite the increasing religious diversity of post-1770 emigrants—the migration during these years continued to be very heavily Presbyterian.

David N. Doyle asserts that the preponderance of the available evidence (literary, Irish reports on areas of emigrant recruitment, emigrant letters, church records, genealogical records, etc., etc.) points to the fact that the majority of emigrants from Ulster continued to be Presbyterian at least up to 1790. (Even as late as 1835, Presbyterians seem to have made up the majority of the migrants from Ulster, although less so.) Further, despite the fact that more and more emigration began to come from southern Irish ports after 1770, Maldwyn Jones uncovered evidence that, while large numbers of immigrants from Germany and other parts of Ireland were

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73 While Dickson does not equate Ulster emigration to America with Presbyterian emigration to America, he makes it clear that Presbyterians made up the vast majority of the emigrants. As do the most respected scholars in this area. See Dickson, Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, pp. 3-5, 19-22, 25-31, 35-41, 46, 48, 78, 183-184, 188-189. The demographic work of Liam Kennedy and Kerby Miller demonstrates an even higher percentage of Presbyterian emigrants within the total of Ulster outmigration before 1776. Donald Harman Akenson, previously skeptical of the highest estimated percentages of Presbyterian migrants within that total flow, has recently written that the work of Kennedy and Miller “clearly implies both a heavy dominance of Presbyterians in the American colonial migration,” and endorses their findings. See Miller and Kennedy, “Irish Migration and Demography, 1659-1831,” in Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan, pp. 656-658; and Akenson, The Irish Diaspora, pp. 27-35, 222-224; and Akenson, Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration 1815-1914, pp. 134-135nn.114, 116.

74 Because of the lack of study on general Presbyterian or Protestant migration in the 19th century, in which scholars have admitted that we know little or nothing about Protestant Irish migration, the next and final period of our investigation stretches from 1811 to 1900. During that long period, Presbyterians and Protestants probably still made up the majority of migrants or at least a plurality until well into the nineteenth century, possibly as late as the 1830s or early 1840s. See Akenson, Irish Diaspora: A Primer, p. 260; Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine, p. 397.

75 Doyle, “Scots Irish or Scotch-Irish,” p.162.

76 Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine, pp. 190-92, 397; Akenson, The Irish Diaspora, p. 260; David N. Doyle, “The Irish in North America, 1776-1845,” in Making the Irish American, J.J. Lee and Marion Casey, eds., p. 172.
entering the ports of the Delaware Valley in the Delmarva Region in the years from 1783 to 1789, the overwhelming majority of them were Irish from Ulster ports.\textsuperscript{77} This, in turn, suggests that these were mostly Presbyterian migrants, for Jones also argued (1) that those Ulster migrants who migrated immediately before and after the American Revolution were generally the same and (2) that those who left immediately after the American Revolution saw themselves no differently from those who left before.\textsuperscript{78} For Jones’s arguments that the migrants were virtually identical to have been accurate, the migrants therefore (before and after) would generally have been Presbyterian. Jones also argued that the same general conditions that caused Ulster emigration before 1775 were the same general conditions that caused Ulster emigration from 1783 to 1815. Do those reasons indicate a continued Presbyterian nature of the migration? Yes.

Reasons for emigration immediately prior to the American Revolution have already been discussed, but Arthur Young summed up the Presbyterian character of the emigration well, at least rhetorically, when he wrote, “The spirit of emigrating in Ireland appeared to be confined to two circumstances, the Presbyterian religion and the linen manufacture.”\textsuperscript{79} Further, the recent study by Liam Kennedy and Kerby Miller of the changes in demographics in certain regions of Ireland during the eighteenth-century migration provisionally indicates that the Irish migration throughout the whole of the eighteenth century might have even been far more Presbyterian than many scholars have hitherto thought.\textsuperscript{80} Thus, we can still assume that general Ulster migration from throughout our investigation of the clerical migration from Ireland from 1770 to 1810 remained largely Presbyterian, even if it was becoming less so. We can still, therefore, for our

\textsuperscript{77} Jones, “Ulster Emigration, 1783-1815,” pp. 51-52.
\textsuperscript{78} Ibid., p. 49.
\textsuperscript{79} Dickson, \textit{Ulster Emigration to Colonial America}, p. 78.
purposes compare the numbers of general Ulster migration with clerical migration as if the former were simply Presbyterian migration (while recognizing that this was not entirely the case).

With those important aspects of migration set firmly in the forefront of our minds, let us now take a look at the graph of clerical migration from 1770 to 1810 and then compare phases of high or low clerical emigration (as identified by the graph) with periods known to have been high or low in general migration from Ireland. In other words, let us discover whether the trends in the shape of clerical migration match the known trends in the shape of general migration.

**Graph 7.1**

Observe closely the graph above.\(^81\) There are generally three general phases of clerical migration: 1770-1775, 1783-1799, and 1801-10. Moving chronologically from left to right, the

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\(^81\) Clerical migration during this period was comparatively massive. So far in our examination we have seen nothing like it. If the graph of clerical migration for the period from 1739-69 seemed sluggishly indifferent, the one for the period from 1770-1810 seems provoked—as when a caged bear, once sleepy from boredom, has finally had enough prods, whistles, and claps from cretinous spectators to let loose the type of roar that scatters all bystanders. The change in the graphs of clerical migration from one period to the other is of this type. For those academic readers, who from prolonged exposure to the cold (or to academia), are exasperated by metaphor, suffice it to say that this
years from 1770 to 1775 represent the first phase or peak in clerical migration in the years between 1770 and 1810. This 1770-75 peak in clerical migration matches perfectly with what is known about trends in general Irish migration (Ulster still being the heaviest province of emigration) in these years. In fact, Dickson designated these years as “the climax” of colonial emigration from Ireland to America. A compilation of yearly totals from the years 1771-1774 reveals that a total of 37,600 emigrants left Ulster, indicating a great increase in general Ulster emigration. So, in the years from 1770 to 1775, peak in clerical migration matches peak in general migration.

Immediately after this climax of colonial emigration, there was a lull in the years from 1776 to 1782 in general emigration from Ulster and from all of Ireland. Once again the clerical

graph demonstrates a level of animation so far unseen and that even the graph of clerical migration in the period from 1714 to 1738 is tame by comparison.

82 Adams estimated that 6,000 emigrants were leaving annually and that 30,000 total left in the years from 1771-1775. The British House of Commons estimated that 30,000 left from 1771 to 1774. In 1788, Faulkner’s Dublin Journal reported that 28,650 emigrated from 1771 to 1773. O’Brien estimated that 34,700 emigrated from just four northern ports of Belfast, Derry, Newry, and Larne in just the two years of 1771 and 1772. See, Dickson, Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, pp. 61, 64.

83 While there was increasing emigration from parts of Ireland outside of Ulster, Dickson makes a good argument against those who may have conflated the notion that southern Irish migration began to increase with the notion that Ulster no longer dominated Irish emigration. He writes, “evidence of the dominantly southern nature of emigration is singularly lacking. The total number of emigrants from Ireland was stated [in the British House of Commons Reports] to have been not less than 30,000 in 1772 and 1773, and, of these, the north Irish ports accounted for over 22,000. [Arthur] Young saw no evidence of emigration worthy of note till he arrived in the north of Ireland. An exhaustive search has not been made of all south Irish newspapers of the period but a cross-section of newspapers covering the entire period has been studied and reveals two significant features. First, with few exceptions, comments on emigration originated in one of the northern ports. Second, comparatively few transatlantic shipping advertisements were printed in southern newspapers and none of these was backed by any but the most elementary organization [i.e., northern agents or northern ports were often named in the southern advertisements]. Vessels advertised in the northern newspapers carried about two-thirds of the 6,222 passengers noted as landing in the six North American ports [New York, Philadelphia, Charleston, Halifax, Newport, and New Jersey] in the period August – November, 1773. ” See Dickson, Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, pp. 66-67. The evidence still indicates, therefore, that while southern emigration was on the increase, it was still dominantly from Ulster, which (along with other evidence cited above) then probably means that it was dominated by Presbyterians.

84 Dickson’s yearly estimates were: 1771-7,700; 1772-9,300; 1773-12,300; 1774-8,300. Dickson, Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, p. 64.

85 This total for the years from 1771-74 is derived Dickson’s annual estimates for those years, which are: 7,700 in 1771; 9300 in 1772; 12,300 in 1773; and 8,300 in 1774. These estimates are based upon reported shipping tonnage. Shipping tonnage remained high in 1775, enough to estimate that about 5,000 emigrants could have been carried to America. However, Dickson claims that emigrants seldom boarded the vessels in that year because of the clear signs of coming war in America. Dickson, pp. 64, 68.
graph matches the movements of general migration, as the clerical graph clearly shows a corresponding lull in Presbyterian clerical emigration from Ireland during the same years. Here again, the shape of clerical migration has matched up with our knowledge of the shape of general migration.

At 1783 the clerical graph demonstrates the end of the war lull and the beginning of a long phase of high clerical emigration. During the war, clerical migration was at zero in 1776, '78, '79, '80, and '82. It would not be so again until 1800, and although just one minister emigrated in 1795 and just two in 1796 there is a clear period of migration from 1783 to 1799. This larger phase of clerical migration seems to be divided into two sub-phases, however: 1783-1796 and 1797-1799. The two sub-phases are nearly separated from each other by the sharp drop in clerical migration in 1794 and 1795 and the sharp increase between 1796 and 1797. Together the two sub-phases constitute a single massive phase in clerical migration, accounting for sixty-nine clerical migrants in those seventeen years (inclusive). However, the tall, broad peak of clerical emigration from 1783 to 1796 is easily distinguished from the dramatic pinnacle created by the clerical migrations of 1797, '98, and '99 and the sharp drop back to zero in 1800.

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86 At least one minister, Robert McClintock, was able to make his way across the Atlantic to America during these years. He was born near Ballymena in County Antrim around 1746 and was educated at the University of Glasgow, like so many other Irish Presbyterians in the eighteenth century. In 1772 McClintock migrated from Ireland to Williamsburg, South Carolina. Three years later, he returned to Ireland on business, but was stuck there by the outbreak of the war. During this time he decided to become a minister, and became a member of the Bangor Presbytery, which—unlike the New Light Presbytery of Antrim—enjoyed full membership in the Synod of Ulster while also being known by the synod to have also been packed with New Light men. Knowing what we know about the American objection to immigrant New Light ministers from Ireland and of the practice of ordaining Irish ministers specifically for service in America, it is interesting to note that the Bangor Presbytery ordained McClintock in November of 1775 specifically for service in Concord, South Carolina. In fact, the liberal Bangor Presbytery seems to have been in the habit of ordaining Irish ministers for South Carolina. Between 1769 and 1775, they are known to have ordained 4 ministers for service in South Carolina: David McKee, 1769; John Renwick, 1770; Thomas Kennedy, 1771; Robert McClintock, 1775. All of them were rumored to harbor New Light “persuasions.” Because of the war he had to wait until 1781 to return. Objectionable behavior by the Bangor Presbytery in the eyes of American Presbyterian leaders or not, McClintock is the only known documented case of a minister migrating in these “dead years” of Irish migration. Sherling Database.
In the first sub-phase (1783 to 1796), forty-five Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants left Ireland for America. The reasons for clerical emigration in these years might have been different from the reasons for emigration during the insurrectionary years of 1797, '98, and '99 (i.e., very few were exiled to America in the years from 1783 to 1796, as would happen after 1798). Despite differences in the reasons for clerical migration, the graph shows that clerical migration was consistent throughout the period from 1783 to 1799, and we have already seen that the entire time from 1770 to 1810 was thoroughly rebellious in nature. Both of these factors point to more of a consistency in clerical migration than in a sharp contrast between the migration of 1783-1796 and of 1797-1799, although admittedly there are contrasts. During the latter sub-phase (1797-1799), twenty-four clerical migrants emigrated in just the three years from 1797 to 1799, a clerical emigration rate of 8 per year. Again, taken together, the years from 1783 to 1799 produced a total of sixty-nine clerical migrants who left Ireland for America.

The vast increase in clerical migration indicated by our graph matches perfectly with what we know about general migration from Ireland from 1783 to 1800, because general migration was also massive—surpassing in thirty years after 1783 the very lowest estimates of Ulster emigration from 1700 to 1776. Maldwyn Jones estimated that the 1780s and 1790s averaged about 5,000 emigrants from Ulster per year. If that average held throughout those decades, it would mean that about 100,000 emigrants left Ulster in the twenty years following the cessation of the American War of Independence. Fogleman places the number even higher than Jones, estimating 150,000 from Ireland and 100,000 from Ulster during the same period.

87 Only once during that whole time period did a single year see only one migrant. The average yearly clerical migration rate for the previous period from 1739 to 1769, and most years were well over that. 88 The lowest estimated total of Ulster migration for the years 1700 to 1776 is 35,000. There are major problems with this minimalist interpretation, and the most respected scholars in the field have rejected it. Instead they have adopted R.J. Dickson’s estimate of 120,000 pre-1776 Ulster emigrants as a minimum and suggest that the total for those years might even be as high as 250,000. See Miller and Kennedy, “Irish Migration and Demography, 1659-1831,” pp. 656-658; and Akenson, Ireland, Sweden and the Great European Migration 1815-1914, pp. 120, 134-135n.114, 116.
Disputes about emigration numbers abound, but all agree that these were years of tremendous emigration from Ireland.\footnote{Doyle, “Scots Irish or Scotch-Irish,” p. 162; Miller, \textit{Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan}, p. 7.}

Moreover, comparison of those numbers with our clerical graph demonstrates that our graph of clerical migration can react even more sensitively in reaction to trends in general migration. In 1798, there was a bloody rebellion. In fact, scholars assert that the 1798 “was probably the most concentrated episode of violence in Irish history” (which is saying something). The death-toll for that summer, alone, stands at 30,000 lives lost.\footnote{R.F. Foster, \textit{Modern Ireland}, p. 280.} Not surprisingly, a corresponding rise in general Irish emigration occurred, with at least 3,000 emigrating in 1798, alone.\footnote{The emigrants of the 1790s tended to be political exiles, especially after the government crackdown on political radicals at mid-decade. As Miller writes, “emigration was often stimulated or at least politicized by the United Irishmen’s Rebellion of 1798, the failure of which forced at least 3,000 to take immediate flight to America and encouraged thousands more to follow in succeeding years.” Miller, \textit{Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan}, p. 39.} As Presbyterian ministers tended to be overrepresented amongst the leadership of the United Irishmen—the initial instigators and leaders of this rebellion—many were forced to flee for their lives or imprisoned shortly and then exiled, clerical migration rose as well. The graph of clerical migration, then, reacts very neatly to the 1798 rebellion in a spike.

So, from 1783 to 1799 clerical migration matched the trends in general migration, our graph showing a broad peak stretching from 1783 to 1796 and a sharp rise in 1797 through 1799. At the risk of sounding like a broken record, trends in clerical migration have again proven to be a good indicator in the trends of the general migration.

Emigration continued in Ireland in the aftermath of the 1798 rebellion. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, violence once again splintered the rickety peace scabbled together by the British Army and political union as Robert Emmet led an ill-fated and impractical attempt at throwing off that recent union. Both general and clerical emigration responded by rising, but
emigration was kept in check by a series of governmental measures that were meant to limit migration. The government had been concerned that too many middle class Protestants were emigrating for years, but especially so in the 1780s and 1790s. Since then they had been trying through a series of unsuccessful methods to slow it. Their lack of success changed in 1802 and 1803, when the government enacted measures that made it completely unprofitable for a vessel to (legally) carry emigrants from Ireland to North America. The new method worked so well that emigration was kept in check up until the War of 1812 rendered those measures unnecessary for the duration of the war. 92 This suppression of emigration by the government can be seen in the graph of clerical migration, as it dips to its lowest levels since the American Revolution in the years from 1803 to 1810. Again, what is known about trends in general migration at this time matches with the trends we have mapped in clerical migration.

(5) Irish Origins

In all of our previous periods, from 1683 through 1769, nearly all Irish clerical migrants have come from Ulster, although there were from very early on ministers whose last known Irish affiliation was with Dublin. The origins of clerical migrants in the period from 1770 to 1810 continue to come almost exclusively from Ulster, extending a trend which began in 1683.

The origins of clerical migration in the period from 1770 to 1810 continue another trend while simultaneously breaking with one. While the epicenter of clerical migration shifted away from the Donegal/Derry/Tyrone area in 1770, breaking a trend which had been in place since 1683, it shifted in a way that was consistent with a pattern viewed since 1683, namely that clerical emigration came from places known or thought to be the centers of general Irish Presbyterian emigration at that time. Up to 1770, the majority of those ministers whose Irish

92 Ibid., p. 45.
origins can be narrowed down to an Irish county have demonstrated that the origins of most clerical migration has tended to creep outwards, as time passed, from an epicenter in eastern Donegal, west Derry and north and west Tyrone (i.e., an area very similar to and extended from the area formerly overseen by the Laggan Presbytery).

So far, the patterns of clerical emigration have generally matched what is known about general Irish emigration during these periods. Between 1683 and 1713 most clerical migrants had some connection to the Laggan Presbytery. Correspondingly, there is evidence that a good portion of the Irish Presbyterian migrants in the English (and after 1707, the British) Colonies in North America at this time were from the Laggan region of County Donegal and nearby County Derry. During the two periods from 1714 to 1769, clerical emigration seemed to spread outwards, mostly to the east, from the Laggan Valley of eastern Donegal through Co. Derry and into western Co. Antrim, with the majority coming from counties Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone. This, too, corresponds with what is known about Irish and Ulster emigration during that time, for this same area is reported to have been the main source of Irish emigration during these periods.

In the 1770s, however, due to a series of economic, political, and military disturbances, the center of general Irish Presbyterian emigration shifted from eastern County Donegal and

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93 See chapter on years from 1683-1714, above.
94 Miller, *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, pp. 27, 108; and Miller and Kennedy, “Irish Migration and Demography, 1659-1831,” pp. 659-673. This is a significant finding on the part of Miller and Kennedy, for scholars such as Graeme Kirkham have asserted that during the period from approximately 1714 to 1750 emigration from Ulster became generally widespread. While emigration did begin to come from other areas of Ulster during this period, what Miller and Kennedy’s data demonstrate is that the great majority may have continued to come from Counties Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone. For an opposing assertion, see also, Graeme Kirkham, “Ulster Emigration to North America, 1680-1720,” pp. 84, 97. Charles Knowles Bolton asserted as early as 1910 that Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone were centers of Irish Presbyterian emigration during this time.
County Derry to the far eastern counties of Ulster, to the stronghold of the Presbyterian population in Ireland: counties Antrim and Down.\(^9\)

Here again, general and clerical migration patterns are nearly identical. At no point have the available data on the Irish origins of clerical migrants indicated that counties Antrim or Down were the counties of highest clerical emigration. Yet just at the time that scholarship tells us that general Irish Presbyterian emigration began in earnest in Counties Down and Antrim, clerical emigration did the same.

The following table displays the county breakdown of the 92 clerical migrants whose Irish origins could be ascertained at the county level.

**Irish Origins by County, 1770-1810 (Table 7.1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Number of Clerical Emigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monaghan</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antrim/Derry</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Counties</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total known origins</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least 50 of the 92 migrants came from Counties Antrim and Down as opposed to just 23 from Counties Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone. Very much unlike the data for the origins of clerical emigration in earlier periods, these data demonstrate a direct relationship between the origins of clerical and general Irish Presbyterian emigration. In this case it establishes a clear shift in the origins of clerical migration from counties Donegal and Derry to counties Down and Antrim, at

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exactly the same time that the exact same pattern emerged in general Irish Presbyterian emigration.  

(6) 

American Settlement Patterns, 1770-1810

With settlement patterns on the far side of the Atlantic, here too, we see a decided shift in clerical settlement, which in turn responds to shifts in general Irish immigrant settlement patterns during the period from 1770 to 1810. For the first time since the late 1710s and early 1720s, a significant segment of the total clerical migrants of the period settled outside of the extended Delmarva Region. Recall that in the late 1710s and early 1720s, there was a briefly lived but strong divergent stream of clerical and general Irish Presbyterian emigration to New England. From that time on, the extended Delmarva Region was the dominant place of clerical settlement. That is, at least, until the 1770s, when another epicenter of Irish Presbyterian clerical settlement developed in South Carolina.

As was the case at the time of the New England flow in the late 1710s and early 1720s, clerical migrants continued to go to the extended Delmarva Region in the 1770s and 1780s, but the most frequent colony/state of settlement was South Carolina. Of the 16 Irish clerical immigrants who made their way to America in the 1770s (a decade of clerical migration which is really limited by the American Revolution to the years from 1770 to 1775 since no other clerical migrant arrived until 1781), there were only four colonies of settlement.

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These do not include Robert Cathcart who was a licentiate and supply preacher of the Route Presbytery, whose bounds included parts of eastern Co. Derry and western Co. Antrim. Another interesting, but unrelated, pattern is that of the emigrant Seceder (Associate Presbyterian) ministers from mid-Ulster. Of the 20 ministers whose last known Irish affiliations were in Counties Armagh, Cavan, Monaghan, and Tyrone, 13 of these were Seceders, reflective of the nature of Presbyterianism in that area of Ireland where the Seceders were particularly strong. Sherling Database.
The same South Carolina-dominant trend can be witnessed in the 1780s:

While Pennsylvania and the rest of the area extending outwards from the Delmarva region continued to receive clerical migrants, South Carolina received more over a period of two decades, and this represents a significant shift in clerical settlement patterns, one unlike any previous patterns of settlement. Importantly, South Carolina is known to have had a well-established Irish Presbyterian community there in those decades, and received steady

97 The minister who settled in Ohio did so much later in his life, although he did migrate to the young United States in the 1780s. Sherling Database.
immigration from Ireland at least up until the American Revolution. The government of the colony is known to have continued to give free land away to Irish Protestant immigrants well after the statute which provided for this action was done away with in 1768, and this seems to have continued to attract Irish Presbyterians. One minister, William Martin, arrived with five shiploads of Irish Presbyterian settlers (many of them Covenanters like himself) in 1772.98

In the 1790s, however, Pennsylvania again resumed its predominance in clerical settlement, indeed, so much so that Pennsylvania saw far more clerical settlement throughout the entire period from 1770 to 1810 than South Carolina because of the preference for Pennsylvania by Irish Presbyterian clerical immigrants in that tumultuous decade. New York also, surpassed South Carolina in clerical settlement due to the increase in numbers it received in the 1790s. In these changes, too, clerical migration is in line with known trends in general Irish migration, Catholic and Protestant. By the 1790s Pennsylvania and New York were increasingly becoming centers for all types of Irish immigrants in those years.99

Clerical Settlement by State, 1790-99 (Table 7.4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of Clerical Settlers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


99 Doyle, Ireland, Irishmen and Revolutionary America 1760-1800, 181-230; Bric, Ireland, Philadelphia and the Re-invention of America 1760-1800.
Clearly, by the end of the 1790s, Pennsylvania had reasserted its dominance as the preferred place of settlement for immigrant Irish Presbyterian ministers, and the trend continued into the first decade of the nineteenth century.

**Clerical Settlement by State, 1800-1810 (Table 7.5)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of Clerical Settlers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total States</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total clerical settlements (by State)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of migrants</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The totals for the entire period from 1770 to 1810 are represented below:

**Totals by State, 1770-1810 (Table 7.6)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Number of Clerical Settlers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A comparison of these clerical settlement patterns with general eighteenth-century “Scotch-Irish” settlement patterns confirms that clerical and general settlement patterns of Irish Presbyterians in America match very neatly.\textsuperscript{100} Evans’s map demonstrates clearly what the historiography tells us of Irish Presbyterian settlement in America during this time: that Irish Presbyterians in the eighteenth century settled in all of the colonies/states and that while they were strongest in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, they were moving into places like Tennessee, Kentucky, and after 1800 into Alabama and Mississippi.\textsuperscript{101} Clerical settlement largely matches with the historiography.

Significantly, though, New York did not receive any clerical migrants until the 1790s, a trend which might be more in line with later settlement patterns rather than those of the rest of the eighteenth century, and might indicate that just about the time that our knowledge of Irish Protestant immigration ends, settlement patterns of immigrant Irish Presbyterians were shifting away from its eighteenth-century epicenter towards the more nineteenth-century, immigrant-friendly centers of Philadelphia and New York City.

\textsuperscript{100} Evans, “The Scotch-Irish: Their Cultural Adaptation and Heritage in the American Old West,” in \textit{Essays in Scotch-Irish History}, pp. 70-71, Figures 1 & 2. See also MAP 5.1 (p. 219), above.
Conclusion

Clerical migration increased to unprecedented levels during the period from 1770 to 1810. Two factors played a large role in that increase. The first was a healing of the relationship between Irish and American presbyteries over the problem of New Light heterodoxy coming to America by way of Irish ministers. The second was a drastic increase in religo-political conflict, and indeed conflict in general, in Ireland.

Moreover, in this last period for which there is good data on general Irish Presbyterian migration (in fact the data on general Irish Presbyterian migration during this period is the best for any period), Irish clerical and Irish general migration seem to have had a direct relationship in not only the three aspects of migration that we have investigated throughout—Irish origins, American settlement patterns, and years of peak migration—but also in the fact that the theological and political world of Irish Presbyterians seems to have been represented in the clerical migrants. The case, then, that clerical Irish Presbyterian migration and general Irish Presbyterian migration are directly related is only strengthened.
Chapter 8:  
Patterns in the Tea Leaves:  
Irish Presbyterian Clerical Migration to the United States, 1811-1901, and What it Suggests 

(1)

The final chapter introduces data on nineteenth-century clerical migration from Ireland to the United States, and thereby provides the only set of data that reveals the shape or character of any part of Irish Presbyterian migration to the U.S. from 1811 to 1901. Its value can rest upon that fact alone; these data provide a significant contribution to the history of Ireland and the United States, as well as a tight transatlantic data set. However, in conjunction with the relationship between clerical and general Irish Presbyterian migration between 1683 and 1810 that we uncovered in the previous chapters, clerical migration in the nineteenth century is a key to unlocking the mysteries surrounding the parameters of general Irish Presbyterian migration throughout the nineteenth century. For the very first time, we can sketch those parameters.

Without the context of the relationship between clerical and general migration from Ireland to America between 1683 to 1810, the significance of the nineteenth-century clerical data presented in this chapter would ring hollow. Therefore, as we leave the eighteenth and enter the nineteenth century, this chapter begins with a recapitulation of the most important aspects we learned about Irish Presbyterian clerical migration from 1683 to 1810 and the relationship between clerical migration and the larger migration during the same period, for without knowledge of those phenomena, data on nineteenth-century clerical migration will not achieve full effect. Next, it discusses a necessary change in method. It then presents the collected data on nineteenth-century clerical migration, and concludes with suggestions of what
the larger general migration looked like, based upon the clerical data and the historic relationship we uncovered between clerical and general migration.

(2)
Recapitulation: 1683-1810

First, remember the general outlines of clerical migration between 1683 and 1901: (1) while a few clerical migrants came from outside of Ulster, the overwhelming majority came from Ulster. Those few who did not usually came either from Dublin or from Leinster counties on the border with Ulster, such as Louth; (2) there were distinctive patterns of emigration within Ulster over the course of more than a century. Between 1683 and 1770, most of the clerical migrants came from northwestern or middle Ulster. Clerical out-migration had begun there partly because of the religio-political conflict in which Presbyterians were engaged in that area in the 1680s. Only after the events of 1770 did the Irish origins of the majority of clerical migrants shift to what William Forbes Adams once called “the Presbyterian counties of Antrim and Down.”¹ Just as in Donegal in the 1680s, it seems that religio-political strife was what occasioned the increase in clerical emigrations from eastern Ulster; (3) there were also distinctive patterns of settlement in America. Even though by 1810 clerical migrants were settling in vastly separate areas of the United States, the most popular area for settlement, throughout the period from 1683 to 1810, remained the states around the Delmarva Peninsula, particularly Pennsylvania. As the eighteenth century progressed, those clerical migrants who settled outside of the region surrounding the Delmarva Peninsula often did so in areas along internal American migration routes known to have been heavily settled by Irish Presbyterians immigrants and their descendants; (4) There were four stages of clerical migration between 1683 and 1810, and the intensity of migration varied between each of them. The initial stage

¹ Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine, p. 64.
was between 1683 and 1713. Only a few clerical migrants arrived in America during that time, but those migrants were highly influential, recruiting fellow Irish ministers to come over and organizing the first American presbytery in 1706. The next period was from 1714 to 1738 and was marked by a high frequency of migration, with 77 clerical migrants arriving in 25 years. Much of the work and character and internal squabbles of these migrants would shape the course of American Presbyterianism for the next 200 years. The following period stretched from 1739 to 1769, and—from a migration standpoint—its most distinguishing characteristic was the low number of clerical migrants who arrived during that time, a characteristic made even more distinctive on a graph because the period from 1739 to 1769 is situated between the two highest phases of eighteenth-century clerical migration. The next period of eighteenth-century clerical migration, 1770 to 1810, saw the highest frequency of yearly migration so far, with 98 clerical migrants arriving during that period.

Secondly, it must be re-iterated that in several important aspects Irish Presbyterian clerical migration to the Thirteen British Colonies and the United States between 1683 and 1810 was indicative of the same aspects of general Irish Presbyterian migration to the Thirteen Colonies and the U.S. during the same period. How exactly? (1) As with clerical emigration, general Irish Presbyterian emigration mostly came from Ulster; (2) similarly, as with clerical emigration, general Presbyterian emigration seems to have tended to come from western and mid Ulster (east Co. Donegal, Co. Derry, and north west Co. Tyrone) until 1770, when the largest portion of Presbyterian emigrants began to come from Counties Down and Antrim; (3) clerical settlement in America and general Irish Presbyterian settlement were highest in the region surrounding the Delmarva Peninsula from the period from 1683 to 1810. Moreover, even in places far removed from the Delmarva Peninsula, clerical and general Irish Presbyterian
settlement in America matched each other very closely. Irish Presbyterian clerical immigrants, in other words, settled in areas where general Irish Presbyterian immigrants are known to have settled, or vice versa; (4) as with Irish Presbyterian clerical migration, the yearly frequency of general Presbyterian migration from Ireland to America had its highs and lows, its peaks and valleys. A comparison of clerical migration with the information available on general Presbyterian migration over that course of time reveals that those peaks and valleys in migration numbers match up almost perfectly. When we discovered a peak in clerical migration, there was a near synonymous peak in general Irish Presbyterian migration to America; when there was a lull in the one, there was a lull in the other.

In these three important areas of migration—Irish geographic origins, American settlement patterns, and yearly frequency—clerical and general Irish Presbyterian migration were almost perfectly congruent and synchronized. The smaller part behaved just as the whole and the larger whole acted just as the part. We are left to conclude then that there is a direct and clearly demonstrable relationship between the larger general migration and the smaller sub-migration with regard to these three important aspects of migration.

Knowledge of clerical migration and the subsequent discovery of a direct relationship between clerical and general Irish Presbyterian migration—at least in the three aspects listed above—can have an immediate and lasting impact upon the larger historiography of Irish

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2 We also uncovered more evidence that suggests that clerical migration is indicative of the larger general migration. It is admittedly more circumstantial or indirect evidence, not proof. But in conjunction with the evidence presented above, the case for parameters of clerical migration as indicators of the parameters of general migration becomes just that much stronger. In the last period of clerical migration that we observed, that from 1770 to 1810, which by the way also has the best available information on both clerical and general migration up to 1810, there are enough migrants in the period (98) to see if the migrants themselves are indicative of Irish Presbyterian society in some ways. There are enough migrants to ask whether or not they represent any kind of cross-section of Irish Presbyterian society. We tested two: theology and politics. Our tentative findings indicated that all of the major sects of Irish Presbyterianism were represented, and migrants seemed to have well represented the political fervor that was boiling up within Irish Presbyterian society during the period. These findings are not conclusive, but do strengthen the suggestion that clerical migration was indicative of the larger general migration and of Irish Presbyterian society at large.
migration to America. Remember that nothing is known about the general nature of Irish Protestant migration of any denomination to America in the nineteenth century. There are, of course, studies of individual Irish Protestants, but they are simply that, studies of individuals with little to no context of the larger Irish Protestant migration. As Irene Whelan so pithily put it, “Protestant immigration did not cease in the eighteenth century, but we know little or nothing about those who left after 1800.”

In an historiographical environment—one parched of any knowledge of the migration of any Irish Protestant group in the nineteenth century—the discovery of a direct relationship between clerical and general Irish Presbyterian migration for the years from 1683 to 1810 is extremely valuable, for it can be used to project some of the as of yet unknown parameters of general Irish Presbyterian migration in the nineteenth century. With clerical migration in the nineteenth century delineated and the application of a continued direct relationship between the two migrations (although the latter must be presumed for the nineteenth century), we can predict several aspects—Irish origins, American settlement patterns, and peak years of migration—of the larger nineteenth-century general Presbyterian migration.

The rest of this chapter will attempt just that. It will delineate clerical migration to the U.S. between 1811 and 1901, with a focus on Irish origins, American settlement patterns, and the peak years of migration. After these characteristics of clerical migration are presented, the chapter will then suggest what they indicate about the nature of the larger, completely unknown, general Irish Presbyterian migration to the U.S. in the nineteenth century.

Before we turn to data presentation—a necessary but tedious and laborious task—we should try to remember the human element in this migration.

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Finding Humanity in a Migration Rubric

Each of the hundreds of Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants who immigrated to the United States between 1811 and 1901 had their own individual stories, and each of these stories—especially when considered in the context provided later in this chapter—contributes further to our knowledge of the Irish experience in America in the nineteenth century. Yet, considering the scope and goals of this study, we cannot consider them all, nor even more than a tiny fraction of them, but it is these individual micro-narratives which combine together to create a macro-narrative, which in turn provides the general parameters of clerical migration and thus the larger parameters of nineteenth-century Irish Presbyterian migration to the U.S. Each micro-narrative is thus important in its own right and in its function as a brick in a larger wall. This section takes a look at a few of the hundreds of micro-narratives which where amalgamated to form this study’s contextual macro-narrative.

Rev. Bankhead Boyd was born in Ballydaly parish, County Derry, on the day before St. Patrick’s Day, 1808. He was well educated in the classics at a nearby school in the city of Derry before emigrating with his parents to the United States at the age of 16, settling with them in western Pennsylvania.4 There, he continued his education, first at Jefferson College, and then in the Associate Theological Seminary (Seceder) at Allegheny. Immediately after graduating, he was licensed and then ordained to the Seceder congregation at Strabane, Pennsylvania—the name alone an indicator of the Irish origins of its early inhabitants. There Boyd remained as minister until his death in 1860.5

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4 At that time western Pennsylvania was a place teeming with both Irish Presbyterian immigrants and the competing tenants of every conceivable sect of Irish Presbyterianism. Gilmore, “Rebels and Revivals”; and Gilmore, “Minister of the Devil.”
5 Sherling Database; See also Joseph M. Wilson, ed., The Presbyterian Historical Almanac and Annual Remembrancer of the Church for 1861 (Philadelphia: Joseph M. Wilson, 1861), vol. 3, p. 208.
Robert Adair was six years older than Rev. Boyd, but he too was born on the day before St. Patrick’s Day. Adair was born in Belfast and, like Boyd, emigrated from Ireland to America as a young man and settled with his family in Pennsylvania. Unlike Boyd, Adair settled in Philadelphia, where he was educated by the Rev. Samuel Wylie, an Irish-Presbyterian refugee of the 1798 Rebellion—he was literally forced to flee for his life—and an influential minister and educator in the young United States. Adair graduated from Princeton Theological Seminary in 1828 and became a member of the New Castle Presbytery and pastor of the church at Wilmington, Delaware, right in the heart of the original Irish Presbyterian settlements in America on the Delmarva Peninsula. He labored there until 1834, when he returned to Philadelphia, where he remained until his death in 1890.

From the lives of Boyd and Adair, we see more intimately than a dictation of the numbers can describe the tendency of Irish Presbyterian ministers to settle amongst Irish Presbyterian immigrants. Their settlement patterns and life stories could not have been more typical of the most common trends in Irish Presbyterian clerical settlement and could not have matched more closely with what is known about Irish Presbyterian settlement patterns in the eighteenth century. Moreover, their settlements were representative of Irish Presbyterian immigrants throughout the entire period from 1683 to 1901, and they were clearly plugged into that larger Irish Presbyterian network.

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6 The Rev. Wylie was such a prominent educator that some journalists in America complained loudly that Wylie was indoctrinating the country’s youth with the ideals of Irish radicalism. Wylie was a favorite target of Anglo-American journalist and Federalist sympathizer, William Cobbett, who, speaking of Irish political immigrants forced to America in the 1790s, wrote: “These miscreants, not by their superior knowledge but by their superior impudence, get admission into almost every country school that they fix their eyes upon… . Thus, one way or the other, almost every part of Pennsylvania is more or less stocked with their lousy-looking breed and their infamous principles.” See David A. Wilson, United Irishmen, United States, p. 99. For more discussion of Wylie and his influence on Irish Presbyterians in the United States, see Sherling, “Selective Remembrance.”

7 Sherling Database; also see Necrological Report Presented to the Alumni Association of Princeton Theological Seminary at its Annual Meeting, May 5, 1891, by a Committee of the Association (Princeton: C.S. Robinson, 1891), vol. 2, part 2, pp. 74-75.
The Rev. John Allen was also an early nineteenth-century migrant from Ireland. In fact, he migrated twice. Born in Newtownhamilton, County Armagh, he received his university education at Glasgow as did so many of his Irish Presbyterian predecessors. On his return from Scotland, he was licensed by the Monaghan Presbytery, which ordained him for service at Caledon, in County Tyrone in 1814. Seven years later, he requested leave from the presbytery to “remove to America,” but he left without gaining the proper permission. In his absence, members of his congregation who apparently felt jilted by Allen’s departure made a claim against Allen, presumably for desertion of duty, and he was suspended by the Synod of Ulster in 1824. News of his suspension reached Allen in the U.S., and soon thereafter he returned to Ireland to exonerate himself. There, he was eventually restored to the ministry in Ireland and was installed in 1827 as minister at Kilkeel, County Down. But the pull of America was still strong, and in 1831, Allen once again left Ireland for the U.S. ⁸

From Allen’s story we see that the Atlantic could be far less of a barrier than has often been described for Irish immigrants, for in America Allen was made aware that he had been suspended from the ministry in Ireland. He then returned to Ireland to defend his good name, and not long after that good name was restored, he left Ireland again for the U.S. Allen’s story also reinforces the idea that Irish Presbyterians, and particularly Irish Presbyterian ministers, were plugged into a large transatlantic Irish-American Presbyterian network. How else could he have heard the news of his suspension?

Some micro-narratives provide much needed correctives to reified assumptions that historians fashion over time about certain groups—slight reminders that life, neither in the past nor in the present, ever fits into neatly defined boxes. For example, often, if Irish Presbyterian

⁸ Sherling Database; Bailie and Kirkpatrick, *Festi of Seceder Ministers Ordained or Installed in Ireland, 1746-1848*, p. 47; Bailie, ed. *A History of Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 1610-1982*, pp. 262-263, 546.
immigrants are ever considered to have been radical or patriotically Irish, those aspects of their culture are usually thought to have been confined to the 1798 generation or earlier. However, many Presbyterians in Ireland did not become associated with British conservatism until late in the nineteenth century, and it is well known amongst scholars of Presbyterian Ireland that many Irish Presbyterians despised the conservative politics of that great Presbyterian religious hero, Rev. Henry Cooke, loved by many Irish Presbyterians for his expulsion of the New Lights from the Synod of Ulster, which allowed for an eventual reunion with the more orthodox Seceders. For this he was and continues to be venerated by many Irish Presbyterians, but his Tory politics were often reviled in his day.

The story of the Rev. David Bell is a demonstration of the continued existence of such Presbyterian liberalism and Irish patriotism well into the nineteenth century. Bell was a member of one of the first generations of Irish Presbyterian ministers to receive a university degree from Ireland rather than Scotland, and after an education in Belfast, he was ordained at Derryvalley, County Monaghan in 1839. He stayed there—through the worst of the Great Famine—in a rural area of a county that lost 29.2 percent of its rural population between 1841 and 1851. Just two Irish counties, Roscommon and Mayo, lost a larger percentage of their rural populations during those years. To stay during such devastation and loss of the population which provided the livelihood of rural ministers required a level of devotion that can hardly be fathomed. Yet, he resigned in 1853, at the tail end of the Great Famine, not because of the destruction of An Gorta Mor (the great hunger) but because he was forced out of his position by

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10 R.F.G. Holmes, Our Presbyterian Heritage, pp. 100-111.
a strong “Tory element” in the area that disapproved of his “advanced liberal political views and advocacy of Tenant Rights.”

The life of Rev. John Hall also bucks the anachronistic association of mid-century Presbyterians with pro-British, Irish conservatism. Hall was born in the summer of 1829 at Ballygorman House, Markethill, County Armagh, and was classically educated at a nearby academy. He received his university and seminary training in Belfast and amidst the ravages of the Great Famine was ordained as a missionary to County Mayo in 1850. For two years, he labored in Famine-era Mayo—one of the hardest hit counties of the Famine-shattered province of Connaught. Protestant missionaries to areas of Ireland hit hard by the Famine are now often viewed as unscrupulous, anti-Catholic proselytizers, infamously offering soup to dying Catholics in exchange for a promise to convert to Protestantism. Whether this simplistic, “blanket” view is correct or not, Hall cannot be lumped into that category, as the following makes clear:

After his ordination [in 1850] as a minister in Ballina, Co. Mayo, he preached fortnightly at the Wesleyan church at Boyle, Co. Roscommon. Many of his congregation were Catholic and the majority did not speak English as their first language; Hall therefore developed a practice, which he said stood him in great stead throughout his life, of preparing strong, simple sermons with homely references, which were still of interest to educated listeners. … Though theologically opposed to Roman Catholicism, Hall was against enforcing Protestantism. This sprang from his conviction that the truth of evangelicalism was innate, self-evident, and would prevail regardless. He attacked the Orange

12 Sherling Database; Bailie and Kirkpatrick, Fasti of Seceder Ministers Ordained or Installed in Ireland, 1746-1848, p. 67.
13 Such tales have become part of the larger Irish story, too much so, according to Miriam Moffit, who calls them “mis-memories.” She writes: “the Catholic Campaign to defeat the [Protestant] mission ensured that the efforts of proselytizing missions were publicized nationwide. Over the decades, through literature, drama and public sermons, the ‘localized’ events in Connemara and Dublin came to be perceived as a nationwide ‘hurt,’ a misconception astutely exploited by segments of the Irish nation. When the Irish Folklore Commission collected famine memories in 1937, proselytization was ‘remembered’ in areas where there is no history that it ever occurred. These ‘mis-memories’ of proselytism persisted, as in Kilrush where the parish priest erected a monument in 1967 to the ‘numerous heroes of west Clare, who died of hunger rather than pervert during the Great Famine.’ This, in spite of their being no evidence of Protestant efforts to convert Catholics in this parish during the Famine.” Miriam Moffett, Soupers & Jumpers: The Protestant Missions in Connemara 1848-1937 (Dublin: Nonsuch Publishing, 2008), pp. 181-182.
lodges and aligned himself with the cause of non-sectarian education, a stance that alienated many more senior ministers in his church but led to his being appointed one of three commissioners of education in 1860. Hall...was politically a liberal and a strong advocate of disestablishment.\footnote{Dictionary of Irish Biography: From the Earliest Times to the Year 2002, 9 vols., James McGuire and James Quinn, eds. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), s.v. “John Hall.”}

Other trends in clerical migration continued as well, for just as some Irish Presbyterian clerical emigrants were radicals well into the nineteenth century, many of them were also prominent at the time of their migration or became so in the United States. The late seventeenth century and the eighteenth century saw the migration of Francis Makemie, who migrated in 1683, became a wealthy merchant, and founded the first American presbytery; Thomas Craighead, a former moderator of the Synod of Ulster who left in 1714; Francis Allison, a former student of the Irish philosopher, Francis Hutcheson, at the University of Glasgow, arrived in 1735, founded the school that eventually became the University of Delaware, and was rector of the school that eventually became the University of Pennsylvania; John Glendy, who was forced out of Ireland by the 1798 Rebellion and later became chaplain to the House of Representatives and personal friend of fellow “republicans” Presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison. Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants in the period from 1811 to 1901 could be just as prominent, as the rest of the life story of Rev. John Hall makes clear.

After two years in Famine-era Mayo, Hall was called to the pastorship of the 1st Presbyterian Church in Armagh, which he accepted. In 1858, he accepted the pastorship at St. Mary’s Abbey, Dublin, and two years later was created by Queen Victoria one of the three commissioners of education for Ireland. It was here, too, that he became the owner and editor of the newspaper, The Evangelical Witness. In 1867, he was sent by the Irish General Assembly as a delegate to the United States, and while there, he made such an impression that
he was offered the pulpit at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City. He accepted this call and held the charge for 31 years.

During those years, he was a director of Princeton Theological Seminary (1868 to 1898); a trustee of Princeton University, of Wells College in New York, and of Wellesley and Vassar Colleges in Massachusetts. He was also chancellor of New York University from 1881 to 1891, and he received honorary degrees from Washington and Jefferson College, Pennsylvania, Princeton, Columbia, Washington and Lee, and Trinity College, Dublin. He died in Bangor, County Down, on a trip home to Ireland in 1898. In the life of John Hall, we see the continued existence of radicalism within Irish Presbyterian immigrants and the continued eminence of Irish Presbyterian ministers in nineteenth-century Irish and U.S. society.

There was also an increase in the migration of Irish Presbyterian divinity students to the U.S. in the nineteenth century, especially in the second half of the century. Droves of young divinity students came from Ireland to study at Princeton Theological Seminary, particularly, and most of them stayed in the United States after graduation. For many of these men, the option to return to Ireland was open, yet they stayed anyway. Why? One young minister, James Stephenson Mayne, wrote to his parents in Ireland:

“It is not that I do not want to see you and my sisters, but under the present circumstances it would be thought strange, and might be injurious to the prospects of other young men coming from Ireland, if just upon the completion

15 Most of the Irish Presbyterian students made their way across the Atlantic to study at Princeton Theological Seminary during the time that the Rev. Dr. Hall was a director there. One study has examined this Irish Presbyterian/Princeton connection through the life of James McCosh, the Scottish-born, former professor of theology at Queen’s University, Belfast, who became a professor at Princeton. The life of Rev. John Hall may shed more light upon that connection, but that question is for another study. See David N. Livingstone and Ronald A. Wells, Ulster-American Religion: Episodes of a Cultural Connection (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1999), pp. 7-30; See also the Appendix of this work, “Irish Students at Princeton Seminary: An Example of the Ulster-American Connection,” by Peter Wallace, pp. 145-154. Sherling Database; see also “Rev. Dr. John Hall Dead,” New York Times, September 18, 1898; Barkley, Fasti of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland 1840-1870, part 1, p. 41; Thomas J. Frusciano and Marilyn H. Pettit, New York University and the City (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1997), p. 122.
of my studies, I should leave the Church and country from which I have received my ministerial education.\textsuperscript{16}

Others may have felt the same, for far more of them stayed rather than return to Ireland.\textsuperscript{17}

They stayed and expended themselves in America. James Stephenson Mayne, who wrote to his parents that he could not return just yet, never got the chance to go back. His fellow alumni of Princeton Seminary wrote this of his efforts:

Coming to this country because he loved the United States, he felt anxious to live and labor among us. … His vacations were spent as a colporteur in Iowa, New York, and New Jersey, and as a missionary among the Pennsylvania canal boat-men. Probably in these journeys he contracted the pulmonary disease which has proved fatal as he entered upon his thirty-fifth year.\textsuperscript{18}

Mayne expended himself through labor, and he was not alone in this. Many of the Irish ministers died young or worn out from their labours. The following obituary of the Rev. John McNulty is not atypical of the obituaries of Irish-born, Princeton-educated ministers in the nineteenth century:

The son of Michael and Ellen McNulty was born at Killala, Co. Mayo, Ireland in June 1829. He received a good education, graduating in Belfast, Ireland. On reaching the United States, he attended the Associate Reformed Seminary at Newburgh, NY, and also the Union Seminary in New York City, and in 1851 he entered the Theological Seminary at Princeton, NJ. He graduated in 1853, having been licensed by New York Presbytery. On leaving the seminary he went out West, and taking charge of the church at Richland City, Wisconsin, was ordained and installed as pastor in 1854, by Milwaukee Presbytery. He labored in this field until 1856, when he accepted a call from the church of Caledonia and De Korra, in De Korra, Wisconsin, within the bounds of Winnegago Presbytery. This was a hard and laborious field, but he entered upon his duties cheerfully and zealously. His health was not robust, and the exposure which his calling demanded, undermined his constitution, and whilst yet young his constitution broke down. He was unable to preach during the winter of 1860 and 61, and that fact weighed heavily upon him. As soon as Spring returned he resumed his labors, and taking cold whilst preaching in a school-house one Sabbath it brought

\textsuperscript{17} Wallace, “Irish Students at Princeton Seminary,” p. 154; Sherling Database. I would like, once again, to thank the Rev. Dr. Peter Wallace for sharing with me nearly 160 names of Irish-born students (his own personal database) who attended Princeton Theological Seminary during the nineteenth century.
\textsuperscript{18} J.M. Wilson, ed., \textit{Presbyterian Almanac and Remembrancer 1862}, vol. 4, p. 103.
on inflammation of the lungs, of which he died the following Wednesday, May 15th 1861. Thus he died a faithful soldier of the cross, devoted and zealous in the cause of Christ, laboring under defeat and discouragement, feeling that his life was the sacrifice necessary for him to make in the fulfillment of his duty, and he fell at his post.19

Or this obituary of the Rev. James Gubby found in the volumes of the “necrological reports” published in the 1890s by Princeton Theological Seminary:

born May 14, 1820, in the county of Armagh, in Ireland. In his 19th year he united, on profession of his faith, with the Second Presbyterian church in the city of Armagh. In 1842, when he was about twenty-two years of age he came to this country. His course of study, preparatory for college, was pursued in the city of New York, under the direction of Rev. J.J. Owen, D.D. He was graduated from the College of New Jersey at Princeton in 1850 and in the same year entered the Seminary, where he took a full course of study and was regularly graduated in 1853. He was licensed by the Presbytery of New Brunswick, April 28, 1852. On leaving Princeton, he went to Missouri, where he was ordained by St. Louis Presbytery, Dec. 4, 1853, and on the same day installed as pastor of Maline Creek church, which relation was dissolved Oct. 9, 1857. He next labored about one year as a colporteur in the service of the Presbyterian Board of Publication. He was then called to be pastor of the Presbyterian church at Providence, RI. He declined the call, but served the church as stated supply for 18 months, until some time in 1859. He was next installed as pastor of the Third Church in Jersey City, NJ, Oct 10, 1859, and labored there until the pastoral relation was dissolved, June 1, 1861, when he became a Chaplain in the United States Army, serving from Oct 10, 1861 until July 20, 1865, at which time he was mustered out of the service. As a chaplain, he had charge for a time of the United States General Hospital at Hilton Head, S.C., and was afterwards stationed at Alton Ill. About April 1 1866, he took charge, as city missionary under the Brooklyn (NY) City Mission and Tract Society, of a district in that city, and there labored in the most assiduous and self-denying manner until about March 1, 1877. He then continued his labors as a missionary in New York, preaching in the West Side Chapel in 23rd St. until his health failed and he was obliged to desist, being utterly worn out. He lingered about 3 months growing more and more feeble and at length died at his home in Brooklyn, NY, Oct 18, 1878, from an attack of pleura-pneumonia, in the 58th year of his age.20

20 Sherling Database; Necrological Report Presented to the Alumni Association of the Princeton Theological Seminary, April 29th, 1879, by a Committee of the Association (Philadelphia: Grant, Faires, & Rodgers, Printers, 1879), pp. 53-55.
There has been some suggestion in the past that nineteenth-century Irish Protestant immigrants lived far more stable and more economically fortunate lives than their Catholic compatriots. This may have been true, but such accounts leave the impression of ease and comfort in America for Irish Protestant immigrants, which was certainly not the case for many immigrant Irish Presbyterian ministers in the nineteenth-century United States, who—like the “white martyrs” of medieval Irish lore—literally expended themselves as Christian missionaries on a continent far from Ireland’s shores.

Other trends from the eighteenth century, and even from the seventeenth century, continued in the clerical migration of the nineteenth century, for while many nineteenth-century migrants left Ireland for America as idealistic divinity students, some nineteenth-century clerical migrants continued to leave Ireland for reasons much like those of some of the first clerical migrants from the Laggan Presbytery back in the 1680s—it was hard to make a living in some parts of the country. The Rev. Samuel Andrews, for example, was a pastor at Portadown, County Armagh for eighteen years. He had a secure living, with a church of about sixty families, but in 1886 he resigned to take a call from a congregation in Westport, County Mayo, a congregation that seems to have had trouble keeping a minister. The minister preceding Andrews, the Rev. Samuel Glasgow Crawford had left to be a missionary to New South Wales, Australia, and after two years in 1880s-Mayo, Andrews called it quits himself, leaving for the United States in 1888. Mayo was apparently hard on Presbyterian ministers. Andrews died in Minnesota after an accident at a railway crossing in 1901.

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21 See, for example, Oscar Handlin, Boston’s Immigrants (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979), pp. 178-206. Note specifically that the so called “Scotch-Irish” were “brickmakers” in Boston while the Catholic Irish were common laborers, p. 188; and Kerby Miller, Emigrants and Exiles, pp. 166-168.
Literally hundreds of such stories make up the macro-narrative from which the following parameters of clerical, and thus general, Irish Presbyterian migration to the U.S. in the nineteenth century can be drawn. Those individual stories presented here can only scratch the surface, yet they are a reminder of the sacrifice, the uncertainty, and sometimes the glory of transatlantic migration from Ireland to America in the nineteenth century. But in order that future studies of such individuals can be placed into the context of a wider understanding of the shape of Presbyterian migration from Ireland to the United States, we must now turn to the more exacting and wearisome—but vital—task of creating a rubric through which that context might be comprehended.

(4) Methods

The methods of presentation from this point forward are significantly different from those of the previous chapters because this chapter essentially covers the course of an entire century and therefore must present larger amounts of data, and because a huge increase in the number of Irish-born divinity students dictates a different system of classification and analysis. Most of what follows is essentially data presentation, a dry, but necessary evil. Afterwards, an interpretation of those data will be offered, but first a brief discussion of the adapted tactics of this chapter and why they were adopted is required.

In the eighteenth century, migration dates were available for almost all of the migrants. That is not the case in the nineteenth century—at least when including Irish-born students in American seminaries. If we leave the Irish-born divinity students in American seminaries out, methods are quite similar for the dates for those migrants who had been ministers or licentiates in Ireland and then migrated or those who clearly migrated as divinity students and then became
ministers in America are almost all available. Such was the case in the eighteenth century. There is no need for a change in methodology when considering this type of migrant.

The problem is how to fit into an analysis of yearly migration frequency the hundreds of Irish-born, nineteenth-century divinity students in America, whose dates of migration are almost never recorded. Counting the divinity students, we only have the migration dates for 261 of the 368 clerical migrants from 1811 to 1901. However, nearly all of the divinity students seem to have migrated as children or adolescents. On the other hand, almost all of those for whom we do have dates of migration were adults and migrated as ordained ministers, licentiates, or divinity students (as opposed to youthful immigrants who would later become ministers). Therefore, we get a better picture of the actual yearly clerical migration from looking only at the 261 migrants with dates than if we had the dates for all 368, which would include over 100 child migrants who later became ministers in America.

So why include childhood migrants who later became divinity students or ministers in the U.S. at all? Because they are a part of the cohort of Presbyterian ministers in the nineteenth-century U.S. who were born in Ireland, i.e., they were Irish immigrant Presbyterian ministers. As such, their lives provide us with information about Irish-Presbyterian America. Even though we do not have their dates of migration (which might actually throw off the graph of the yearly frequency of clerical migration), the lives of those Irish-born ministers who migrated during childhood provide information on where Irish-born clerics in America came from in Ireland and where they settled in the U.S. (and indeed, what their lives where like in the U.S.). So, they are helpful and should be included in our analysis, but they cannot be included in the discussions of the shape or character of yearly migration.

22 Most of the information on these Irish-born divinity students who later became ministers in the U.S. was recorded in the annual, nineteenth-century publications of theological seminaries such as Princeton, Danville, Centre, Union, Pittsburgh, Allegheny, Lafayette, and Washington.
Our analysis is structured by a graph of clerical migration drawn from the 261 migrants with known dates of migration. The graph indicates four distinct phases of clerical migration between 1811 and 1901, with six distinct peaks in that migration scattered over the four different periods. (See graph below). Therefore, the method adopted by this chapter will be to discuss each phase of clerical migration over the course of the century in terms of the number of migrants, average number of migrants per year, peak years in migration, Irish origins of the migrants, and American settlement patterns. Only after each phase has been treated separately will we then turn to overall numbers for the century—which in terms of Irish origins and U.S. settlement patterns will include those for whom we have no migration date—and discuss what these data suggest about the possible parameters of general Irish Presbyterian migration from 1811 to 1901.
Graph 8.1

Irish Presbyterian Clerical Migration, 1811-1901
Before The Famine:
Irish Presbyterian Clerical Migration, 1811-1845

In the 35 years between 1811 and 1845, the last year before the Great Famine hit Ireland, 100 Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants arrived in the United States—two more migrants in six fewer years than in the period from 1770 to 1810, which saw the highest levels of Irish Presbyterian clerical migration up to that point. Therefore, despite the fact that some scholars have assumed that the climax in Irish Presbyterian migration was either just before the Revolutionary War or in the 1790s, clerical migration suggests that it increased over the period from 1770 to 1810 and then again in the period from 1811 to 1845.  

Graph 8.2

---

From 1811 to 1845 an average of nearly three Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants arrived in America per year, and there were three main peaks in that migration: (1) 1818, which saw six clerical migrants arrive; (2) 1820, with ten; and (3) 1832, with nine. The rest of the years of the period largely saw fluctuations between four and one per year.

Of the 100 migrants of the period, the Irish origins of 90 can be taken as far as the county level, one to Ulster, and nine to Ireland in general. The breakdown is as follows:

**Irish Origins by County, 1811-45 (Table 8.1)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antrim:</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armagh:</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry:</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monaghan:</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down:</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal:</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone:</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavan:</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlow:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galway:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louth:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulster:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland:</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subtotal by county: 90
Total migrants: 100

Unsurprisingly, the majority of Presbyterian clerical emigration continued to come from Ulster. As in the previous period (1770-1810), County Antrim continued to produce more clerical migrants than any other county. However Counties Antrim and Down were not the overwhelmingly dominant producer of clerical migrants that they had been between the years from 1770 to 1810. Counties Armagh, Derry, Monaghan, Tyrone, and Donegal produced comparable numbers to Antrim and Down, so there was not a return to dominance of the
original Donegal-Derry-Tyrone area\textsuperscript{24} (although those three counties did actually produce more than Antrim and Down).

Unlike all of the past periods, there was no section of Ulster that was clearly generating more clerical emigration than others. It was spread throughout most of Ulster. The two easternmost counties, Antrim and Down, produced 27 migrants; Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone produced 30; and southern Ulster—Armagh, Monaghan, and Cavan—produced 28. So, for Ulster the distribution of clerical emigration was almost perfectly apportioned. On the other hand, the five clerical migrants known to have left from outside of Ulster were spread widely through the rest of the island, with one each coming from counties Louth, Dublin, Carlow, Galway, and Cork (counties which represent all of the other three provinces of Ireland).

Just as there was a wider range of Irish counties generating emigrants, in the U.S. there was a wider range of states settled by Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants. The clerical migrants who arrived between 1811 and 1845 would eventually settle or minister in 31 different states.

\textbf{U.S. Settlement by State of Migrants Arriving 1811-45 (Table 8.2)}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{24} Much of which had been overseen by the Laggan Presbytery in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.
Maryland 3
Kansas 3
Texas 2
North Carolina 2
California 2
Georgia 2
Florida 2
Delaware 2
Minnesota 2
Vermont 2
Alabama 1
Rhode Island 1
Oregon 1
Louisiana 1
Wisconsin 1

Unknown 12

Total States 30
Migrants w/ known State settlement 88
Total Migrants 100
Total Settlement by State 225

These numbers reveal several interesting points about Irish Presbyterian clerics who arrived during these years. The first is that, as with colonial Irish Presbyterian immigrants and their descendants, they moved. Of the 88 migrants whose states of settlement are known, there were 225 instances of different states being settled in, numbers which do not include the frequent occurrence of settling in a particular state more than once. If that were accounted for, the movement numbers would be even higher.

Secondly, the dominance of Pennsylvania as a place of settlement and ministry for Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants is clearly evident. Of the 100 migrants in the period, 63 spent time in Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania has had the largest amount of clerical settlement almost from the very beginning, but up to this point it never enjoyed the toweringly predominant position that it had enjoyed for the migrants who arrived between 1811 and 1845. Nearly 72 per cent of those clerical migrants with known state settlement (63 of 88), spent time in
Pennsylvania. New York came in a distant second, with nearly 33 percent of those with known state settlement settling there (29 of 88). Together, the states of Pennsylvania and New York accounted for 92 of the 225 total settlements by state. And, because of the overwhelming popularity of Pennsylvania as a place of settlement and ministry, the Delmarva states still led all other regions in clerical settlement, with 89. However, the other Delmarva states (New Jersey, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware) only received 27 collectively.

The region emerging in this period as a place of heavy settlement and ministry was the mid-west. Ohio shares a border with western Pennsylvania, which during the period from 1811 to 1845 was densely Irish Presbyterian, and was settled by Irish Presbyterians from very early on in U.S. history. Hence it is not surprising that 22 clerical migrants spent time there. What is slightly surprising is that, as a region, the mid-west was the second most-popular area of U.S. settlement. Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin were the states of settlement or ministry for at least 60 of the migrants who arrived between 1811 and 1845.

If the emergence of the mid-west as the second-most settled area for Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants who arrived between 1811 and 1845 is surprising, it is probably because most would assume the South to have occupied that spot. We know that a large number of the descendants of earlier Irish Presbyterian immigrants moved from Pennsylvania and the Delmarva states to the South by funneling through the Shenandoah Gap in Virginia.\textsuperscript{25} We also know that most of the American Protestants who identify today as descended from Irish immigrants live in the South.\textsuperscript{26} Therefore, it is surprising that the mid-west saw more clerical

\textsuperscript{25} See Evans, “The Scotch-Irish: Their Cultural Adaptation and Heritage in the American Old West,” pp. 70-71, Figures 1 & 2. See also MAP 5.1 (p. 219), above.
settlement than the South (although Ohio is not a surprise). If Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants continued to settle mostly where their contemporary Irish Presbyterian immigrants settled, then Pennsylvania and the Delmarva states, and the mid-western states were more popular as places for Irish Presbyterian settlement during this period than the South, which had been a destination for so many earlier Irish Presbyterians and their descendants. Counting Southern states as the ten Confederate states plus Missouri and Kentucky, the South hosted 43 of the clerical migrants who arrived between 1811 and 1845.\textsuperscript{27} This is still a strong showing, but a surprise nonetheless. Historians have associated Irish Presbyterian settlement with the South for years—partly because of a reliance on information on eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterian migrants and their descendants. Through this new nineteenth-century data on Irish Presbyterian clerical migration, we may be witnessing evidence that there was a sea change in Irish Presbyterian settlement in the U.S. during the nineteenth century.

(6)

The Great Famine: Irish Presbyterian Clerical Migration during \textit{An Gorta Mor}

From the already high levels between 1811 and 1845, Irish Presbyterian clerical migration increased once again between 1846 and 1854, rising to its ultimate heights during these years of the Great Famine.\textsuperscript{28} A total of 68 clerical migrants arrived during the Famine years, an average of over seven per year. The levels were so high that clerical migration during the Famine can be considered one great peak, but within that great peak the highest years were: 1847 (12); 1848 (8); 1849 (13); 1850 (11); and 1853 (8). In these five years alone, 52 clerical

\textsuperscript{27} By defining the Southern states as Confederate, Virginia would then be used to calculate the number of settlements in both the Delmarva region and the Southern region. I see this as a non-issue as Virginia was a Confederate state, is largely Southern culturally, and also one of the three states that can claim part of the Delmarva Peninsula.

\textsuperscript{28} Known also as The Great Hunger \textit{(An Gorta Mor)}, the Great Famine is dated differently, but a common, long dating is from 1846 to 1854. This coincides perfectly with the second phase of clerical migration after 1811, and therefore we will use those years to denote the Great Famine.
migrants left Ireland for the United States. Throughout the entire period from 1683 to 1901, nothing like these levels of yearly clerical migration had ever occurred or would ever occur again. This is the climax in Irish Presbyterian clerical migration. In order to fully demonstrate the contrast in levels of clerical migration in the years from 1846 to 1854 from those of the years surrounding them, the graph below covers the years from 1835 to 1863.

Graph 8.3

Of the 68 clerical migrants of this period, the origins of 15 can be narrowed down only as far as Ireland, but for the other 49 (nearly 77 percent), their origins can be traced to the county level.

Irish Origins by County, 1846-54 (Table 8.3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monaghan</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterford</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
At least 13 Irish counties were represented in the clerical migration of the Famine years. Once again, Antrim and Down contributed the most migrants, and Ulster continued to be the main producer of clerical migrants; but once again all four Irish provinces were represented. Eight counties from Ulster, three from Leinster, one from Connaught, and one from Munster were represented. However, the breakdown by number of migrants was more lopsided: 43 migrants were from Ulster and only six were from the other three provinces combined (four from Leinster and one each from Munster and Connaught). As it had been since 1683, this was still largely an Ulster phenomenon.

Some trends in U.S. settlement patterns also remained similar. There is settlement information for 57 of the 68 migrants, and clear patterns are easily discernible.

**U.S. Settlement by State of Migrants Arriving 1846-54 (Table 8.4)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Arkansas 2
Kentucky 2
Michigan 2
Minnesota 2
South Carolina 2
Massachusetts 2
Alabama 1
Tennessee 1
Unknown 11

Total States 20
Migrants w/ known State settlement 57
Total Migrants 1846-54 68
Total Settlement by State 113

Even during the Great Famine, while harbors in states like Massachusetts and New York were choked with Irish immigrants, the clear dominance of Pennsylvania as a U.S. destination for Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants is evident. Once again, New York was distantly second, although less so than in the years between 1811 and 1845. Pennsylvania as the number one destination with New York as the number two destination is a trend that began to manifest itself, starting in the 1780s. By the time of the Famine it had been the norm for over six decades. (Pennsylvania, of course, had been a primary destination from almost the very beginning.) Of the 57 migrants with known settlement information during the period, 53 spent time in either Pennsylvania or New York, and together the two states accounted for 53 of the 113 settlements by state between 1846 and 1854.29

The original Delmarva states continued to receive more clerical migrants in the period of the Great Irish Famine than any other region of the U.S., and again this is mainly due to the high number received by Pennsylvania. Combined, the region received 50 of the 57 migrants with

29 Again, states that were settled in on multiple occasions were only counted once. The actual number of settlement in Pennsylvania and New York is higher, as once again Irish Presbyterian clerical immigrants tended to move from state to state quite often.
available settlement information who arrived between 1846 and 1854 (Pennsylvania with 32; New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware and Virginia combining for 18).

Another pattern continued, too. For just as in the years from 1811 to 1845, the mid-west was the second most popular region of settlement for migrants who arrived between 1846 and 1854, with 25 total. The South was once again behind the mid-west, with 13. As has been the case since the end of the boom of settlement in New England in the 1720s, settlement in the northeast was once again very slight.

In contrast with previous clerical behavior in America, the Famine migrants demonstrated a stronger tendency for return migration than in other periods. In the 35 years between 1811 and 1845, 100 clerical migrants crossed the Atlantic from Ireland to the U.S. Only three of them returned to Ireland. Of the 68 clerical migrants who left Ireland for the U.S. in the nine years between 1846 and 1854, ten returned to Ireland. The increased return rate may well be related to the fact that these men left Ireland during one of the most harrowing disasters in modern Irish history. The ones who re-migrated may have gone to America to escape that horror and returned when the situation improved.

Another interesting trend that developed during this period is the increased tendency to move between the United States and Canada, or vice versa. Seven of the 68 clerical migrants who arrived during the Famine spent time in Canada. Again, a comparison with the period from 1811 to 1845 is helpful. Of the 100 migrants who migrated in the 35 years from 1811 to 1845 only three spent time in Canada. Three in 35 years versus seven in nine years. Clerical migration patterns seem to have been changing, following general Irish immigration patterns into North America pointed out by Donald Harman Akenson.30

Presbyterian clerical immigrants experienced other aspects of migration that other Irish immigrants faced as well. One Famine-immigrant minister, the Rev. John Hawthorne, died on a quarantine ship off Montreal on his way to Ohio—a familiar tale for historians of the Famine-Irish in North America but one not usually associated with Irish Presbyterian ministers. Such fates are often associated with the poorest of the poor arriving from Ireland, but here we see that death in quarantine was not always reserved for the ragged and the wretched, as is the implication from the oft-told tale of the Irish in North America.32

(7)
After the Famine

In the period that followed the years of the Great Famine, clerical migration decreased for the first time since it did so between 1739 to 1769. From 1770 onwards, it had steadily increased, period by period, from 1770 to 1854. But the period directly following the Great Famine (1855 to 1877), saw 49 migrants in 23 years, for an average of a little over two migrants per year. This is still a higher rate of migration than the period from 1739 to 1769, but following as it did the climax of clerical migration during the Great Famine, it does look rather anemic—despite that not being the case. It includes one of the six major peaks in clerical migration between 1811 and 1901 (counting the Famine migration as one massive peak), when eight clerical migrants left in 1873. The years from 1867 to 1870 also saw relatively high migration, producing 16 clerical migrants in those four years. All five of those years (1867-70, and 1873) combined to produce 24 clerical migrants.

31 Sherling Database.
32 For an example of one of the most popular depictions of the Famine, see Cecil Woodham Smith, The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-49 (New York: Harper and Row, 1962). For one of the rare views of Ulster during the Famine, see Christine Kinealy and Trevor Parkhill, eds., The Famine in Ulster (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1997).
The high clerical migration in these years (1867-70 and 1873) coincide with a high level of agitation and change in Irish society, some or all of which may have been a factor in the increased migration of Presbyterian ministers, licentiates, and divinity students. That cannot be covered here, but the clerical migration provides a clue of where to start investigating. One hopes that others will pick up the trail.

Graph 8.4

We have good data on the origins of the migrants in these years. Of the 49 clerical migrants who left Ireland during this period, all but two can be traced to the county level.

**Irish Origins by County, 1855-77 (Table 8.5)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

300
The vast majority continue to come from Ulster: of the 47 whose Irish origins could be traced to the county level, 39 came from Ulster (83 percent). The other three provinces provided eight migrants: five from Leinster, two from Connaught, and one from Munster. Within Ulster, Antrim and Down continued as the dominant producer of clerical migrants with 20, but Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone combined to generate 15. At the south end of Ulster (and north Leinster), Monaghan, Armagh, Cavan, and Louth combined for five.

One the American side, the data are less complete. Only 39 of the 49 total clerical migrants of the period can be traced to the state level.

**U.S. Settlement by State of Migrants Arriving 1855-77 (Table 8.6)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this period, New York slightly edged Pennsylvania as the state with the highest number of clerical settlers, and even though New York only had one more settler than Pennsylvania, it represents a significant change, since Pennsylvania had no near competitors for the most clerical settlers for about eighty years. Together, the two states combined for 29 clerical settlements during the period, while the Delmarva states combined for 23, the mid-west for 17, and the South for two—the destruction and notoriety of the American Civil War having rendered this latter region, formerly a stronghold of Irish Presbyterian immigrants and their descendants, unattractive to immigrants of all kinds.

Four clerical immigrants took their chances in the far west, settling in California. Interestingly, this period also saw high return migration, with 10 migrants returning to Ireland. Also, as during the Famine, this period also contains seven Irish Presbyterian clerics who spent time in both Canada and the U.S.

(8)
The Last Years: 1878-1901

Clerical migration decreased very slightly in the period from 1878 to 1901 from the levels between 1855 and 1878, but still remained relatively high: 44 migrants in 24 years, for an average of just under two per year. There was one peak in this migration period in 1888, with six migrants leaving in that year.
Irish origins continued in a pattern familiar since the 1770s, with Antrim and Down generating the most migrants, followed by the Donegal, Derry and Tyrone area.

**Irish Origins by County, 1878-1901 (Table 8.7)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monaghan</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total migrants</strong></td>
<td><strong>44</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total counties</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ulster continued to produce the vast majority of clerical emigrants, accounting for 39 of the 43 migrants whose origins can be traced to the county level. The rest of the provinces combined for four: two from Connaught, and one each from Leinster and Munster. Within Ulster, Antrim and Down combined for 21, Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone for 14, and Monaghan and Cavan for four.

The data on American settlement are not as revealing as the data for some earlier periods in the century, because settlement information is only available for 29 of the 44 migrants. However, familiar patterns are still observable from the data presented below:

**U.S. Settlement by State of Migrants Arriving 1878-1901 (Table 8.8)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total States: 15
Migrants w/ known State settlement: 29
Total Migrants 1846-54: 44
Total Settlement by State: 39

Pennsylvania once again received the most migrants, followed by New York and California, with four apiece. Again thanks to Pennsylvania’s dominance, the Delmarva states received
more than any other region, with 20. The mid-west followed with nine, and the South with just two.

(9) Nineteenth Century Totals (1811-1901)

This section presents: (1) the Irish origins and American settlement patterns of the combined four phases of clerical migration from 1811 to 1901; (2) the Irish origins and U.S. settlement for those migrants without a migration date (mostly Irish-born divinity students); and (3) the combined totals.

Irish Origins, 1811-1901 (Table 8.9)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monaghan</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavan</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louth</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterford</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galway</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlow</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilkenny</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sligo</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulster</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total migrants | 257 |
| Total counties | 17  |
### Irish Origins by County for Those without Migration Dates, 1811-1901

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galway</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laois</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louth</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monaghan</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offaly</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ire 52

Total migrants 107
Total counties 11

### Combined Irish Origins by County, 1811-1901

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monaghan</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armagh</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavan</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louth</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterford</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galway</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlow</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilkenny</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sligo</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laois (Queen’s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offaly (King’s)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ulster 1
Ireland 79

Total migrants 368
Total counties 19
These numbers demonstrate several useful points. The addition of the Irish origins of the divinity students does not change the general idea of where Irish clerical migration was coming from in Ireland, a further indication that Irish Presbyterian clerical emigrants and lay Irish Presbyterian emigrants tended to come from the same areas of Ireland. From the combined numbers we find that Ulster generated more clerical emigrants than any other province, with 257. Interestingly, every Ulster county produced an Irish Presbyterian clerical emigrant between 1811 and 1901 except Fermanagh. By comparison, 11 counties from the other three provinces combined to produce 28 migrants over the same time period: Leinster 13, Munster 8, Connaught 7. Clearly, Irish Presbyterian clerical migration came overwhelmingly from Ulster, but it was not and was never an exclusively Ulster phenomenon (remember that several of the earliest Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants to America were sent by the Dublin Presbytery). Within Ulster, most of the migrants between 1811 and 1901 came from Counties Antrim and Down (122), followed by Donegal, Derry, and Tyrone (89). The southeastern counties of Armagh, Monaghan and Cavan, in combination with the northern Leinster county of Louth, combined for 48.

American Settlement, 1811-1901 (Table 8.10):

U.S. Settlement by State of Migrants Arriving 1811-1901

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**U.S. Settlement by State of Migrants without Migration Date (1811-1901)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total States: 36
Migrants w/ known State settlement: 213
Total Migrants 1811-1901: 261
Total Settlement by State: 445
Indiana 6
Michigan 6
Texas 5
Iowa 4
Nebraska 4
South Carolina 4
West Virginia 4
Colorado 3
Wisconsin 3
Florida 3
Connecticut 3
Georgia 3
Delaware 3
California 2
North Dakota 2
Arizona 2
North Carolina 2
Maryland 2
Tennessee 2
Louisiana 2
Vermont 2
South Dakota 1
Kansas 1
Maine 1
Alabama 1
Washington 1
Hawaii 1
New Mexico 1
Unknown 2

Total States 39
Total State migrants w/o mig. date 105
Total w/o migration date 1811-1901 107
Total Settlement by State 255

Combined American Settlement by State, 1811-1901

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>187</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ohio</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Jersey</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michigan</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kentucky</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delaware</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wisconsin</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texas</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Virginia</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
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<td>Florida</td>
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<td>Georgia</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nebraska</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vermont</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louisiana</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alabama</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Dakota</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Dakota</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oregon</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hawaii</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maine</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Mexico</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total States: 42
Total migrants w/ known State settlement: 316
Total migrants: 368
Total Settlement by State: 700

Again, the addition of over 100 Irish-born, American seminary students (with no known date of migration) and their eventual American settlements did not change the distribution or breakdown of the overall American settlement patterns. It tells us that adult Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants and childhood migrants who later became clerics in America tended to settle in
the same states. That this addition of the settlement patterns of Irish-born seminarians did not change the general distribution of clerical settlement in America is just another very strong suggestion that Irish Presbyterian clerics were plugged into a larger Irish Presbyterian community network (as many scholars have long asserted)\(^{33}\) and that our theory that Irish Presbyterian clerical immigrants mostly settled in areas inhabited by lay Irish Presbyterian immigrants continued up until 1901. These conclusions, aside from the numbers, simply make sense. Irish-born seminarians were, after all, part of the larger lay migration at the time of their migrations. Why should we expect them to be anywhere else? Now we have some proof.

In this last, combined format, these data best demonstrate the complete dominance of Pennsylvania as a place of settlement and ministry for Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants. As the home of at least 187 of the 368 clerical migrants who arrived in the U.S. between 1811 and 1901, it received nearly double the migrants than the state with the second most, which was New York, with 95. Pennsylvania received over 50 percent of all clerical migrants arriving between 1811 and 1901—a staggering statistic. Together, the two states combined for 282 clerical settlements, which means that nearly 77 percent (282 of 368) of all Irish Presbyterian clerical immigrants who arrived between 1811 and 1901 spent some time in either Pennsylvania or New York—even more stunning.

The Delmarva states (Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, New Jersey) continued to receive more clerical migrants than any other region in the country with 309, mostly due to Pennsylvania’s large proportion. However, the other four states received 122 migrants collectively (more than New York). The mid-western states (Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin) received 172, and the South (Virginia, Missouri,

Kentucky, South Carolina, Mississippi, Tennessee, Texas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, Alabama, Arkansas, West Virginia) received 120.

Moreover, as with colonial Irish Presbyterians and their descendants who have long been celebrated as pioneers perpetually on the move, their nineteenth-century cousins were itinerants as well. Of the 368 migrants whose states of settlement are known, there were 700 instances of different states being settled in, numbers which do not include the frequent occurrence of settling in a particular state more than once. If that were accounted for, the movement numbers would be even higher.

(10)
“Reading the Tea Leaves”: What These Data Mean for the Study of Irish Presbyterian Migration in the Nineteenth Century

This entire work has gone to great lengths to demonstrate the connections between Irish Presbyterian ministers and people within the dynamics of their community, the seeming direct relationship between clerical and lay migration in the eighteenth century, and the fact that the two migrations are inextricably bound in the sense that clerical migration is merely a portion of the larger lay migration. That done, if we assume that the direct relationship between clerical and general migration that lasted for the 128 years from 1683 to 1810 continued to exist throughout the nineteenth century, we can project some of the overall shape, frequency, and character of general Irish Presbyterian migration to the United States between 1811 and 1901, based upon the clerical migration delineated in this chapter.

And, thus, we can engage in a thought experiment: If there were comprehensive and trustworthy data on the general migration of Irish Presbyterians into the United States in the period between 1811 and 1901, they would demonstrate a pattern of migration, which we can
predict based on our knowledge of clerical migration from 1683 to 1901 and of the direct relationship between clerical and general migration from 1683 to 1810. Each segment of this predicted pattern is framed as a testable hypothesis.

Therefore, *should there ever be* a verifiable, whole-community database on Irish Presbyterian migration to the United States in the nineteenth century, it would either prove or disprove each of the following hypotheses: (1) that in the period from 1811 to 1845 there was an increase in general Presbyterian migration from Ireland to America, with peak years of migration in or near 1818, 1820 and 1832, and that this period produced more migrants than the period from 1770 to 1810, which is often thought to have been the climax of Irish Presbyterian migration to the Thirteen Colonies and the United States; (2) that the Great Irish Famine of 1846-1854 saw the most intense emigration of Irish Presbyterians in the entire history of the phenomenon of Irish Presbyterian migration; that these years were the climax of Irish Presbyterian migration to the Thirteen Colonies or the United States;³⁴ (3) that while migration to the U.S. most likely decreased in the years following the Famine, levels of migration remained relatively high and were probably higher, on average, in the last half of the nineteenth century than they were over the course of the eighteenth; (4) that the 1870s and 1880s were likely to have seen significant Presbyterian migration to the United States, and that the years around 1873 and 1888 saw large increases in general Presbyterian migration; (5) that there were six peaks in nineteenth-century Irish Presbyterian migration to the U.S. and that they were in or near the years 1818, 1820, 1832, 1846-54, 1873, and 1888; (6) that nineteenth-century Irish Presbyterian emigration was overwhelmingly from Ulster, but not exclusively so; and that

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³⁴ This in spite of the fact that Presbyterian migration during the Great Famine has gone nearly unmentioned by historians in the 160-plus years since that bloody, red mitt—*phytophthora infestans*—was first tossed upon Ireland’s shores. In no other period did so many Irish Presbyterian clerical migrants leave per year (66 in 9 years) and general migration likely mirrored clerical migration in yearly frequency.
within Ulster, Counties Antrim, Derry, and Down generated the most emigration, in that order; that regionally within Ulster, Antrim and Down in the east produced the most emigrants, followed by the original Donegal/Derry/Tyrone region in the northwest and middle-west and then the south with Monaghan/Armagh/Cavan (and Louth on the Leinster/Ulster border); and that Donegal, Tyrone, Monaghan, and Armagh produced most of their migrants before or during the Famine, while Antrim and Down were steady throughout; (7) that in the United States, despite the fact that the descendants of eighteenth-Irish Presbyterian immigrants largely migrated south, filtering through the natural funnel of the Shenandoah Valley and finally settling throughout the upper and deep South, including eventually Texas and Oklahoma, nineteenth-century, Irish Presbyterian immigrants were most likely to be found in the states of Pennsylvania and New York; that by region, they could be found most often in the Delmarva states or the old middle colonies (including Virginia) by virtue of the high numbers in Pennsylvania; and that the next most common places of settlement were the mid-west and then the South; and (8) therefore that future studies of nineteenth-century Irish Presbyterian immigrant settlers should uncover that Irish Presbyterian immigrants were to be found most often in states such as Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Ohio, and Illinois rather than southern Appalachian States, which are heavily associated with the descendants of eighteenth-century Irish Presbyterian immigrants such as Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee.

But, even if one is not interested in the wider ethno-religious or cultural issues that these hypotheses address, the migration of the Presbyterian clerics we have traced over the years from 1683 to 1901 is itself a significant episode in religious, Irish, American, and Atlantic history.

Nevertheless, one must grant that the wider significance of our findings are controversial. As discussed earlier, several of the hypotheses framed above fly in the face of the
received wisdom of U.S. historiography concerning the immigration of the Irish in America. In fact, much of the historiography—specifically on Presbyterians but also on Protestants in general—will have to be rewritten, either to include Irish Protestants or to correct mistaken assumptions about their immigration.35

My approach here is admittedly unorthodox, and that fact alone may make some readers uneasy, but with such imposing impediments to the study of nineteenth-century Irish Protestant migration in place, what are the alternatives to an unorthodox approach? A method had to be devised that could get around roadblocks. If nothing else, this study is an encouragement to get around those impediments and it shows one way to do it.

Moreover, with so little known about Irish Protestant migration to the United States in the nineteenth century, one hopes that this study is useful—if only for the fact that it is one of the very few players on the field. It also makes other studies that have dared to look into this blankest of history-book pages, more meaningful. Not only does it strengthen some of the hypotheses of Maldwyn Jones, David N. Doyle, and Donald Harman Akenson,36 it will help to frame the future localized or individual studies of Irish Protestant migrants in the U.S. that must be undertaken to catch the nineteenth-century study of Irish Protestant migration up to its eighteenth-century counterpart.

35 On the other hand, the idea that the relationship between aspects of religion might be used to find patterns of immigration amongst a particular denomination is very much in line with the larger historiography of religion and immigration. As Robert P. Swierenga writes: “The thrust of current immigration research is that religious affiliation significantly influenced the entire [transatlantic] resettlement process—the decision to emigrate, the direction of the emigrant stream, and the subsequent adjustment and adaptation in the new homeland.” See Robert P. Swierenga, “Religion and Immigration Behavior: the Dutch Experience,” in Belief and Behavior: Essays in the New Religious History (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1991), pp. 183. See chapter 4, p. 141n.120, above.

For this is undoubtedly an area of historiography that will have to be built slowly, brick by brick. Without some idea of the general outlines of Presbyterian migration in the nineteenth century, each of those bricks can only be considered on its own and each is therefore poorer for it. Too often, micro-studies are taken to be indicative of the nature of the migration as a whole. In other words, those brick-like studies—biographies, studies of local communities, or studies of migrant families and their transatlantic connections—cannot tell us as much as they might without the proper perspective of the whole migration, which broad context provides.

As one venerable academic once said to a novice, a work of history without context “is apt to become like a young child who holds a piece of colored glass to his eye and declares that all the world is blue, red, green, or orange. Context is crucial.”37 What this study provides is a context, and when situated within this context each and every study or story of individual nineteenth-century Irish Presbyterian immigrants in the U.S. becomes more meaningful, telling, and revelatory.

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Synopsis:

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I. Fasti of Presbyterian Ministers

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