

THE IRISH IN HALIFAX,
1836-1871: A STUDY IN
ETHNIC ASSIMILATION

by

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A B S T R A C T

The mass emigration of rural peasants to the urban communities of America and Britain is a central episode in the history of nineteenth-century Ireland. The development of an Irish community in Halifax, Nova Scotia, is one incident in the process. The story of the Halifax Irish has many unique aspects, particularly regarding the speed and extent of their economic and social integration into the host environment. This thesis seeks to explain why the Halifax Irish enjoyed more success in this respect than did their fellows elsewhere.

The situation of the Halifax Irish in the 1830's did not promise triumph; rather the contrary. Out of an overcrowded and impoverished Ireland came a flow of immigrants in search of economic and social improvement. These people lacked occupational skills and their monetary resources were a pittance. The social and political institutions of the host environment were oligarchic, enshrining the privileges of an anglophile Protestant ruling clique. The Irish arrival challenged and eventually altered the character of the Nova Scotian capital. What had been a small and innocuous Irish Catholic population grew enormously and became self-assertive. By the late 1860's, the situation of the Irish in Halifax had been transformed.

Having acquired political equality, occupational opportunity, and a growing identification with the general interests of Halifax, the Irish could no longer be considered deprived and alienated. They formed a growing share of the homeowners of Halifax, and had transcended any semblance of ghetto confinement. They also enjoyed de facto advantages within the educational system in virtue of their Catholicism. Some immigrants had even managed to grow wealthy.

Several factors explain this Irish success story in Halifax. There was a small pre-existing Irish community in Halifax, which permitted the operation of some chain movement migration. Moreover, many immigrants were literate and most were politically moderate. These factors favoured relatively rapid assimilation. In addition, the pre-industrial economic organization of Halifax meant that the Irish did not become imprisoned in the ranks of an industrial proletariat. The Irish quickly gained control of the local Catholic Church structure, thereby ensuring its sympathy with their aspirations. A fragmented political power structure also favoured Irish advancement. By alternately throwing their support behind different political factions within the majority population, they acquired and retained a voice in the government. Thus, inside of two generations, the Irish had become part of an ethnically and denominationally redefined Halifax establishment.

ABBREVIATIONS

- C.H.R. - Canadian Historical Review. Quarterly.
- Dal. Rev. - Dalhousie Review. Tri-annual.
- I.H.S. - Irish Historical Studies. Semi-annual.
- N.S.H.S. - Collections of the Nova Scotia Historical Society. Irregular.
- P.A.C. - Public Archives of Canada.
- P.A.N.S. - Public Archives of Nova Scotia.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

One of the dramatic demographic episodes in the modern history of the western world was the flight of millions of Europeans from their homelands to North America during the middle years of the nineteenth century. A leading exporter of human beings in that era was Ireland. Although the depths of tragedy and human dislocation focus on the Great Famine period in Ireland, there were tens of thousands of Irishmen who had crossed the Atlantic long before the 1840's. One destination of the earlier Irish emigrant flow was Nova Scotia.

This study investigates the transition of the Irish Catholic community in Halifax, Nova Scotia, during the middle years of the nineteenth century. In the 1830's the Irish in Halifax were mainly immigrants, most of whom had not yet decided whether to remain there. Forty years later the Irish Catholics formed an integral component of the Irish urban community in economic, political and social terms. The transformation of the Irish in Halifax from immigrant to citizen was not accomplished without conflict and contradiction. Nevertheless, the history of the Irish Catholics in Halifax during the nineteenth century is essentially a story of successful adaptation to and rapid integration into the new host environment.

Students of immigration into various British and American cities in the nineteenth century have given

considerable attention to the Irish Catholics in those centres.¹ Usually, they have concluded that the Irish arrived after the Great Famine of the 1840's, bringing with them destitution, disease, bitter anglophobia, and a cast of mind that virtually doomed the Irish immigrants to poverty, social deprivation and stagnation. Much of the appeal of Fenianism was the adventurous release it offered to such Irish expatriates in America. The Irishman seemed to be a drunkard and a drifter, only partly redeemed by his sentimental attachment to Roman Catholicism, which many of his Protestant hosts regarded as scarcely short of idolatry. The composite picture was one of the Irishman as a source of trouble. The general pattern of impoverishment, militancy and prejudice was not fully reproduced in Halifax, however.

There are some interesting reasons why this was so. In part, the explanation is to be found in the uniqueness of the immigrant flow into Halifax, particularly in

¹Cf., for example, Robert Ernst, Immigrant Life in New York City 1825-1863 (New York: King's Crown Press, 1949); Oscar Handlin, Boston's Immigrants 1790-1880 (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1959); John J. Mannion, Irish Settlement in Eastern Canada: A Study of Cultural Transfer and Adaptation (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974); Earl F. Niehaus, The Irish in New Orleans 1800-1860 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965); and John M. Werly, "The Irish in Manchester, 1832-1849," I.H.S., XVIII, 71 (Mar 1973), 345-358.

their time of arrival and the pattern of their origin in Ireland.² More of the answer must be sought in the character of the host community. Halifax had distinctive combinations of social, economic and political forces at work within it. The interaction between these two factors produced an untypical chapter in the history of Irish urban settlement abroad. This study seeks to explore the dimensions of the Irish experience in Halifax by identifying and analyzing the factors which gave that experience its uniqueness.

The secondary literature devoted to the Irish in Halifax is both slender and unsatisfactory. Some of the material is either unavailable to the general reader or has deficiencies which detract from its reliability and value. The present study is undertaken in some measure as an attempt to remedy that lack, particularly for the mid-nineteenth century when the most significant social developments affecting the Irish took place.

²Their dates of arrival and the means of travel are explored in several books and pamphlets. Those found most useful in making the present study were William Forbes Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine (New York: Russell & Russell, 1932); Terry Coleman, Passage to America (London: Hutchinson of London, 1972); Stanley C. Johnson, A History of Emigration from the United Kingdom to North America 1763-1912 (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd., 1966); Oliver MacDonagh, A Pattern of Government Growth 1800-1860 (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1961); J.S. Martell, Immigration to and Emigration from Nova Scotia 1815-1838 (Halifax: P.A.N.S., 1942); Arnold Schrier, Ireland and the American Emigration 1850-1900 (New York: Russell & Russell, 1958); and R.G. Flewelling, "Immigration to and Emigration from Nova Scotia, 1839-1851," N.S.H.S. XXVIII (1949), 75-105.

John F. Maguire's book, The Irish in America,³ devotes its first chapter to a study of the Irish in Halifax, and was considered by a contemporary reviewer to have made most of his major points on the basis of what he saw in Halifax.⁴ Certainly, Maguire was an optimist bent on proving his nineteenth-century liberal ideals (hard work = success; human perfectability) were assisting the Irish to a success in America, and Halifax provided the best example of an integrating Irish community that he saw during his tour in 1867. Nonetheless, Maguire still offers the student a good starting-place for an overview of the situation of the Irish in Halifax at the end of their period of coming to terms with the city. The fact must remain though, that Maguire's is a traveller's perspective of the city and it is not an exercise in academic analysis.

Herbert Leslie Stewart's book, The Irish in Nova Scotia,⁵ was a labour of love, created by a native of Ireland who was a dedicated Irish nationalist, as well as a former president of the Charitable Irish Society. These facts--Stewart's nationalism, and his association with the

³John F. Maguire, The Irish in America (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1868).

⁴Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, CIII, 632 (Feb 1868), offers a review article entitled "The Irish Abroad".

⁵Herbert Leslie Stewart, The Irish in Nova Scotia (Kentville: Kentville Publishing Co. Ltd., 1949).

Irish Society--had their determining effect upon what he wrote. He offers an excellent account of the founding of the Charitable Irish Society in 1786, and follows the Society through its first half-century of existence. He also discusses events in Ireland at the time, mainly from a political point of view. There is some useful material in this work, but the book is decidedly not a history of the Irish in Nova Scotia, nor even in Halifax, except from the rather limited perspective provided by its author.

Sister Mary Liguori's dissertation, "The Impact of a Century of Irish Catholic Immigration in Nova Scotia 1750-1850," written in 1961, fails to live up to its title or its promise.⁶ Chronologically, the substantive account of the Irish in Halifax thins out conspicuously after 1815, while the period after 1830 is scarcely noticed. The emphasis is placed on the themes of immigration and of the Irish as Catholics. There are a number of geographical errors in the work, but the author's main handicap was her unfamiliarity with the **identity** of the Irish in Halifax. Numbers of people who were not remotely Irish appear as if they were, while others who were Hibernians are not noticed at all. The title is belied in that the use of the word 'impact' leads the reader to expect an account of cause,

⁶Sister Mary Liguori [Edna Wilson], "The Impact of a Century of Irish Catholic Immigration in Nova Scotia 1750-1850" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Ottawa, 1961).

process and effect, and what we get is rather less, especially where the effects are concerned.

The three major secondary works on the Irish in Halifax, therefore, do not take in hand the actual period of accommodation, and they provide a static rather than a dynamic picture of the Irish Catholics in Halifax. Maguire writes after the process of adaptation is nearly finished, while Stewart and Sister Liguori treat the period before it began. The fact that Stewart includes a chapter on events of the 1850's, or that Sister Liguori's title suggests that the work comes down to 1850, alters nothing. There has existed no detailed historical account of the Irish Catholic community in Halifax for the period of its transformation from a straggling collection of immigrants to an integral component of Halifax society.

This study proposes to focus on that gap in the literature. It is not a history of the Irish in Nova Scotia, but concentrates rather on the situation centred in Halifax. It deals with the four decades from the 1830's to the 1860's, on the assumption, defended in the following chapters, that those were the critical years of transition for the Irish in Halifax. That was the period when they were transformed from immigrants to residents. The years, 1836-1871, which constitute the specific opening and closing points of this study, were chosen because a substantial primary source of quantitative data exists at each date. There exists no civic assessment for all of Halifax after 1836 until 1862.

Likewise, the 1871 census is the most complete population survey available to the student for the nineteenth century. Therefore, the study is dated 1836-1871, but its antecedents go deep into the eighteenth century and its trends often continue into the early twentieth.

The approach taken has been one of combining literary sources with the compilation of statistical data in order to provide an in-depth portrait of the Irish community in transition. A brief survey of what some of these primary materials supply will be found at the beginning of the bibliography to this work.

There remain two questions which may occur to the reader at this point. One is the query of why this study concentrates on the Irish Catholics and not on all the Irish. The explanation is that the Irish Protestants did not undergo the same process in Halifax at the time, firstly because they were not subject to religious discrimination, and secondly because they were neither new immigrants (with a few exceptions) nor an identifiable minority group. They formed part of the general majority for all practical purposes. The other matter that the reader might want to be informed about is the means by which Catholic Irish statistics were obtained for the various tables. The basic means of doing this was to compile lists of Irish people from the 1871 census and from Catholic marriage and burial records. In each of these sources the Irish Catholics are plainly identifiable. Occasionally the author was able to make

some of the individual distinctions and identifications as a result of his genealogical experience of sixteen years with Irish Catholic families in Halifax.

I - IRELAND AND THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY EMIGRATION TO HALIFAX

Ireland in the first half of the nineteenth century was reaching the culmination of its long deterioration. The population, mostly tenants on tiny farming plots, was rapidly approaching the limit the country could provide for, without basic changes in the existing political and economic systems. The want of numerous urban communities capable of absorbing and employing the surplus peasantry threw the situation into further difficulties and hastened the moment of crisis. The Irishman tried to survive while he suspected, perhaps even knew, that the likeliest course for his kind was to emigrate to America. For a time other options (peaceful constitutional change or blind violence) offered some plausible excuse for putting off the decision to leave, but the rise in the population and the mounting pressure of crop failures impelled tens of thousands to leave Ireland even prior to the calamity of the late 1840's. The Great Famine forced emigration on a horde of others. The mass exodus from Ireland, which ran from about 1815 until the middle years of the century, had a profound impact on all the North American communities which received the flow of emigrants. One of these host communities was Halifax, Nova Scotia. Our assessment of the impact on Halifax must begin with a study of crisis conditions in Ireland and the nature of the exodus produced by those circumstances.

Irish and English attitudes in the nineteenth

century differed fundamentally. The English regarded their 1801 union with Ireland as affirming a political unity in which the distinction of English and Irish would disappear. The Irish, on the contrary, felt they were not part of a great mother country. Furthermore, and to complicate the matter, the English, who insisted Ireland was not a colony, acted very much as if it were; simultaneously the Irish, who felt their country was treated as a colony, insisted it was really a nation, which it never had been.

The Irish had a good case for saying Ireland was an English colony. By English law Ireland was erected as a kingdom by Henry VIII only in 1538; until then Ireland had been a feudal lordship of the English Crown. Under the Tudors the process of 'plantation' was begun, as numbers of English went to settle in Ireland.⁷ Large numbers of Scots did the same in the seventeenth century. Ulster was never again truly Irish, while all the country received further settlement under Cromwell and the Williamites.⁸ The institutions and leadership of the Irish were destroyed or submerged beneath instruments of anglicization. The political and economic systems of the English were imposed on the Irish. By the eighteenth century it was mythology to call Ireland anything except an English colony.

⁷R. Dudley Edwards, A New History of Ireland (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 78.

⁸Charles-M. Garnier, A Popular History of Ireland (Cork: The Mercier Press, 1961), 143.

Eighteenth-century Ireland was a poor and generally backward country torn by religious, ethnic, political and social enmities. The penal period, which followed the Orange victory in the 1690's, brought with it the peace of exhaustion. One and a half centuries of violence had been Ireland's lot from the time of Henry VIII to that of William III. During that bloodletting there had been virtually no progress made in the arts of peace in Ireland, such as education, commerce and agriculture. Deprived of normal evolution and growth, Ireland reached the eighteenth century while still nursing the grievances of the sixteenth and seventeenth.

Prudent statesmanship on the part of its English masters might have brought unity, loyalty and prosperity to Ireland. Given enough time, wise policy and a genuine understanding, this might have happened. The weary country was quiet for nearly two generations after 1700, but the rulers of Ireland seemed bent upon keeping open the wounds of the inhabitants by a selfish and venal attitude that advanced the few at the cost of the many. Kept in the dark by its agents on the spot and by the landlord class, the British government acted customarily in complete ignorance of the real Irish situation. When nearly three quarters of the century had come and gone, Henry Grattan perceptively epitomised the Irish dilemma in two remarks: "The Irish Protestant can never be free until the Irish Catholic has ceased to be a slave", and "The question is whether we

shall remain a Protestant settlement or become an Irish nation."⁹

Ireland did not receive the benefit of prudent statesmanship; she got repression. In four important respects Ireland was aggrieved by the actions of an executive power that was both English and Protestant. In the first place, the actual machinery of government was organized to keep an unhappy people in subjugation. The highest posts were filled by men of the alien race and creed, and the majority of the citizens--Roman Catholics--had not the franchise. The House of Commons for Ireland had to submit its acts to the scrutiny of the English privy council. This was not new, but dated from 1494, when Sir Edward Poyning's ruled Ireland for Henry VII. A British statute in 1719 added to this the right of the British Parliament to legislate for Ireland over the head of its own Parliament.¹⁰ By use of these devices and by maintaining an alliance between 'The Castle' and 'The Undertakers'--between Dublin Castle, seat of the viceroy, and the landed proprietors--there was no Irish government, but rather a government of Ireland.

⁹Quoted in Charles Grant Robertson, England under the Hanoverians (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1911), 197. Not the least perceptive feature of Grattan's remarks was the implied understanding that Ireland was not a nation, and really never had been. Pre-conquest Ireland had not been either a federal or a unitary state, but an island upon which various factions contended not for unity but for supremacy.

¹⁰6 Geo. 1. c. 5.

A second source of grievance was the Anglican Church of Ireland, which in the main was supported financially by tithes levied on all inhabitants, whether Catholic or Protestant, Anglican or Nonconformist. Its clergy was subject to the same frailties as were the ministers of its English counterpart. Absentee rectors, plurality of benefices, and favouritism were evident. These defects were all the more provoking in Ireland because they were "the characteristics of the chapel in the conqueror's citadel."¹¹

Thirdly, the Irish people laboured under a penal code which sought to eradicate the influence of Catholicism and of national feeling from among them. The intention was to make life so miserable for the Irish Catholic that he would convert to the state church which was an instrument of state policy. A Catholic who resisted would supposedly be overwhelmed by the sheer weight of restriction against him. He could remain Catholic but the decision might mean sinking to the level of a landless and illiterate peasant. The penal laws forbade Catholics to own, inherit, sell, give or be given, bequeath, or take a long lease on real estate; nor could they possess arms, riding horses, or a fortified house. The professions were closed to Catholics, who might not have schools, churches, or masshouses. They could not hold a commission in the armed forces of the United Kingdom,

¹¹

Robertson, England under the Hanoverians, 199.

nor could they vote or sit in any legislative body. A sympathizer described these laws as "a machine of subtle invention, the best adapted to the oppression, impoverishment and degradation of a people, the debasement of human nature itself, which has ever been conceived by the perverted ingenuity of men."¹² Fortunately, these laws were not often rigorously enforced, although they remained a threat and a token of Ireland's subservience to England.

The commercial regulation of Ireland in England's interests was the fourth of the long-term troubles of Ireland. English legislation treated Ireland as if it were a colony rather than as Britain's sister island. Irish harbours and traders were denied access to the imperial trade, and her farmers might not export wool, nor her manufacturers make textiles. The produce of the soil, whether butter and cheese or livestock, might not be imported into England, even when it could be transported cheaply enough to compete in price.¹³ English commercial principles simply did not acknowledge the legitimate existence of Irish industry or Irish commerce.

Through fear that Ireland might follow America's rebellious example, England's rulers yielded partial sovereignty to an Irish Parliament in 1782. Many of Ireland's

¹²Garnier, A Popular History of Ireland, 85-86. The sympathetic statesman was Edmund Burke, who came of Anglo-Irish origins, but whose attitudes generally were typical of the British ruling classes of his day, although notably more liberal regarding Ireland and America.

¹³Robertson, 200.

cares seemed about to find solution.¹⁴ Several of the religious disabilities were withdrawn. The ports of Ireland were opened to the commerce of all nations not at war with England.¹⁵ Nevertheless the Parliament of Ireland was a Protestant body, and the Church of Ireland continued to collect the hated tithes. Irish commerce grew rapidly after 1782, but the estates that raised the produce and the ships that carried it were owned by the old ascendancy class. Some of the restored self-respect and prosperity filtered through to the Catholic majority, but the Union of 1801 abolished the Irish Parliament and quickly obliterated widespread hopes for better times.

Ireland's legacy from the eighteenth century was a tragic one for the people. Rendered lawless by unjust laws, thriftless for lack of incentives for saving, and ignorant through penal restrictions on the professions, the Irish Catholics showed the symptoms of a broken people. Poverty, improvidence, violence, and evasiveness spoke of a people subjugated at last to the rule of the alien conqueror. And yet, somehow, the Irish retained their identity and their will to survive.

¹⁴
Ibid., 263.

¹⁵
Garnier, A Popular History of Ireland, 92.

The Agricultural Crisis

Throughout the time between the Union and the Famine, 1801-1846, the greater number of Irish people depended in one way or another on agriculture. W.F. Adams estimated the proportion of such Irish as being as high as ninety percent, and described the agricultural organization as static. The social arrangements among the rural Irish were likewise unchanging, except that the growing overpopulation was pushing increasingly more people into the lowest classes.¹⁶

What passed for agriculture among the Irish was both remarkably simple and terribly complex. Holdings were small and evictions were frequent. The Irish farmer employed totally unscientific methods. His tools were few and primitive, his knowledge of his business rudimentary, and any thought of improvement was stillborn, thanks to the peasant's conservatism and the habit of land agents of raising the rents of those who made improvements. The latter became at once the landlord's property. There were numerous and complicated landholding systems, while further bewilderment was caused by the duties grinding upon the rural tenantry, and by the conflicts within the power structure above them. Unaware that he was exhausting the productivity of the soil by his poor methods, ignorant of alternatives, and

16

William Forbes Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine (New York: Russell & Russell, 1932), 65, 223.

discouraged from initiative to better the situation (when he knew enough to make the effort), the peasant lived in great poverty. For example, housing conditions were 'wretched beyond words'.¹⁷ When the Census Commissioners in 1841 graded Irish houses they set up four categories. The lowest of these was a windowless cabin of mud, containing one room. Nearly half of the rural population lived in such hovels.¹⁸

The staple food of the growing numbers of people who lived in those dreary habitations was the potato--cheap, abundant, and easy to care for, Its culture demanded slight attention except at planting and at harvest. This left much of the peasants' time free for their favourite activities, such as "fiddling, talking and tellingsstories . . . traveling. . . to attend fairs and . . . races" while "wakes,¹⁹ with liberal portions of poteen, were social occasions." Unfortunately, the Irish had become dependent upon this one crop during the early part of the eighteenth century, and any serious failure in the potato harvest could only cause widespread misery. The entire crop did not fail all over Ireland for any extended period prior to the 1840's, but the danger was there. The mainstay of millions of peasant lives was a precarious tuber, subject to disease and weather

¹⁷Cecil Woodham-Smith, The Great Hunger (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 21.

¹⁸Ibid., 20.

¹⁹Ibid., 25.

conditions. As the peasant population swelled during the early nineteenth century, the reliance on the potato for food and the concomitant risk of a major calamity steadily increased.²⁰

Ireland's rate of population growth in the early nineteenth century rose alarmingly. Early statistics are not as reliable as those kept more recently, and the figures are open to interpretation, but beyond dispute Ireland experienced a rapid rise in population between 1780 and 1840. In that period, the increase reached "the almost incredible figure of 172 per cent."²¹

Demographers are still not agreed on the primum mobile of this rapid acceleration in growth. A falling death-rate (resulting from improvements in the quantity, quality, and distribution of food supplies from the 1740's); a rising birth-rate (caused by earlier and more frequent marriages, and by higher fertility resulting from diet improvements); the gradual exhaustion of some of the killer diseases--each of these explanations (or ²² various combinations of them) has found supporters.

In England a contemporary increase was accompanied by industrialization and urbanization, and the means of production and distribution eventually adjusted to the change. Not so in Ireland, which had been too depressed and disturbed even to support adequately 4,700,000 about 1780. Its productivity

²⁰ Ibid., 35.

²¹ Ibid., 29.

²² Gearoid O Tuathaigh, Ireland before the Famine 1798-1848 (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1972), 5-6.

in proportion to population was no better by 1841, when its population had reached 8,200,000. Indeed, the capacity of the land to sustain human population had approached its limits well before 1841.

Industry as an employer did not exist in most of Ireland, and the poor were obliged to seek work on the land. In 1837 Nassau Senior, the economist, claimed that 2,385,000 Irish were unemployed most of the time, there being no work for them except for the few weeks when they were hired to dig potatoes, mostly in Ireland, but with a few going to England to work.²³ Nor did the under-tenants excite much envy. The traditional rundale system encouraged further fragmentation even of small holdings. By this system lands were held in common by the tenants, and the lands were subdivided among them to give each some good, some bad, and some medium land.²⁴ It was common for one family to have three plots totalling less than an acre, and at least one of the three to be useless for growing food. Increasing population merely meant more people trying to subsist on the some acreage. It could not be done.

23

Woodham-Smith, The Great Famine, 32. Irish workers would accept such low wages for the sake of having work that they would cheerfully 'undersell the natives' to get it. Cf., Barbara M. Kerr, "Irish Seasonal Migration to Great Britain, 1800-38," I.H.S., III, 12 (September 1943), 377.

24

Woodham-Smith, 33.

The small tillage farm was a development of the late eighteenth century in Ireland. When the laws against Catholics holding land were repealed in 1785, it became possible for the ordinary peasant to take a lease on some land.

The new farmers had too little capital to pay wages and gave land to their laborers, who became property holders for the first time. Periodic higher wages, increased employment, possession of land, and the absence of education to increase their wants encouraged the cotters to marry earlier; while war prices, army employment, and the recklessness common in war periods aided in the spread of improvidence. These conditions ceased in 1815, but peasant habits were already well established.²⁵

The repeal of the land restrictions against Catholics was also followed by the introduction of a 'middleman system' which resulted in the subdivision of land into tiny patches. The leasing agent, whether middleman, landlord or estate manager, set hard terms of occupation for the peasant. Improvements became the landowners' property without compensation. Since most tenants occupied 'at will' of the landlord, the latter might turn them off the land whenever he chose and rent the plot again at a higher rate because the place had been 'improved'. The Devon Commission reported in 1845 that the main cause of Irish misery was the "bad relations between landlord and tenant."²⁶ There were, naturally, some good landowners with a sense of social

²⁵ Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration, 4.

²⁶ Woodham-Smith, 21-22.

responsibility to their tenants, whose tenants lived securely in clean cottages and contentment, but a traveller could cross Ireland without encountering such landlords.

Although the rapid growth of population was the major factor in bringing about emigration, other contributory influences operated in Ireland during the years 1815-1840. Improved transportation between Ireland and England resulting from the introduction of steamships gave Irish agricultural produce access to the large English domestic market. In response to these developments, great landowners tried to consolidate their Irish farmland in an effort to increase productivity. The trend toward estate enclosure was further encouraged by the depressed post-war market for grain. Landlords sought to replace inefficient small holdings geared to cereal production with large pastures suitable for the raising of livestock. This shift of emphasis in Irish agriculture meant increased hardships for the mass of tenants who were evicted from their holdings in ever increasing numbers. By the 1820's an attitude had grown up among Irish landlords that eviction could work properly only if it was done in conjunction with emigration.²⁷ Throughout the post-Waterloo generation private emigration societies and government estate clearance schemes were organized to facilitate

²⁷ Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration, 165-166. Government officers had a hard job to persuade Irishmen to emigrate, even where conditions were hopeless. Cf., Eilish Ellis, "State-Aided Emigration Schemes from Crown Estates in Ireland c. 1850," Analecta Hibernica, 22 (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1960), 336.

the emigration to America of the evicted tenantry. Landowners found an unwitting ally in Father Theobald Mathew, whose temperance campaign made rapid headway among the Irish. Some people found that the money saved from drink could pay their way to America. Moreover, their new sober habits should make them better able to deal with the dislocation of emigration. Then in 1838 the Irish Poor Law levied a tax on landlords and farmers for poor relief. These gentlemen preferred to encourage emigration as a means of reducing their poor rates.

Danger of eviction and fear of hunger were not the only cares weighing upon the rural people. Eviction and the mounting pressure of population bred violence. There were too many people for too little land, and land agents could find new tenants to replace the evicted ones, but the latter rarely accepted their lot without attempting revenge. The penal code had brutalized the peasantry and, aware that the law did not give them justice, they set up their own law. The secret societies which were 'the curse of Ireland' grew out of the penal period.²⁸ An evicted tenant might appeal to the unseen law of the district--a band of agrarian terrorists having sometimes a picturesque name (e.g., white-boys, caravats)--and anyone who took the vacant land or

²⁸ Adams, 215.

²⁹ Woodham-Smith, The Great Famine, 28.

cabin ran the very real risk of violence to person or property. Such occurrences were a source of anxiety to new leasees of farms, and may have helped influence some towards emigration.³⁰ The peasants feared the unseen law but their increasing numbers obliged many of them to take the chance of occupying vacated premises. Even if such new tenants were left unmolested, they tended to go in fear for quite a long time.

Irish peasants were not, therefore, strangers to violence and coercion. Much of Ireland between 1813 and 1823 was subject to a condition approaching civil war because of the organized resistance of the peasantry to high rents, to tithes, and to evictions for unjust causes.³¹ The recipients of the violence were rarely the actual gentry, clergy, and landowners, but their agents. It was the tithe and rent collectors, and the tenants brought in to supplant others, that bore the brunt of the outrages. The situation continued because "a considerable portion of the community, by choice or by coercion, either belonged to secret societies or were neutralized by the oath to prevent their assisting the authorities in any way. An oath, even one extorted by fear, was not taken lightly by the Irish peasant."³²

³⁰Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration, 26.

³¹Ibid., 27.

³²Galen Broeker, Rural Disorder and Police Reform in Ireland 1812-36 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), 9.

The Irishman of the early 1800's was a farm-worker and usually a Catholic. The one opened him to the pressures of his landlord, the other to clerical manipulation. The priesthood and landlords were the two most influential bodies in Ireland. The critics of the landowners accused them of using force to make their tenants vote as they were told, or face eviction. Priests were said to threaten spiritual punishments from the altar. Without the secret ballot, a peasant had better do as he was told, or abstain altogether. Whether the intimidation took place, the opportunity was there, and many believed that it happened. It is quite a coincidence that landlord and priest excused themselves with the same explanation, that their influence lay in the natural deference poor men gave the opinions of men of greater education and experience.

"Urban Ireland"

Emphasis has been given to the agricultural and rural part of Irish society because people from that milieu were the most numerous group. The last pre-famine census, in 1841, reported that twenty per cent of Irishmen lived in towns, but this statistic is misleading. The 'town-dweller' category included anyone living in a settlement exceeding twenty houses. Ireland, at its highest census population ever, had exactly fifty towns of over 5,000 people.

³³ J.H. Whyte, The Tenant League and Irish Politics in the eighteen-fifties (Dundalk: Dublin Historical Association, 1963), 5.

³⁴ O. Tuathaigh, Ireland before the Famine, 151.

Nineteenth-century Irish towns served a different economic function than do urban areas in modern industrial societies. They were market towns and administrative seats whose economics were those of distribution, not production.³⁵ These towns were emphatically not industrial complexes, although some of the larger cities had local enterprises that gave work to a body of employees. More often, though, the artisans were a group of men who worked at trades simply because there were enough people within a concentrated area who needed a service. Before modern modes of transportation and distribution developed, any sufficiently large community required men to make shoes, sweep chimneys, shoe horses, and make barrels. The artisans of pre-famine Ireland fell almost entirely into this classification. Only in Dublin were the artisans both numerous and sophisticated enough to pre-duce a labour organization.³⁶

If the Union of 1801 offered any prospects of economic betterment the promise was not realized, largely because Britain was becoming industrialized and Ireland was not. Once the last of the old tariffs between them fell in 1824, Irish industry had to face the direct competition of its English counterpart. With a few exceptions (e.g., Belfast), the pre-famine period was one of the gradual decay

³⁵Conrad M. Arensberg, The Irish Countryman ("American Museum Science Books"; Garden City, New York: The Natural History Press, 1968), 136.

³⁶F.A. D'Arcy, "The Artisans of Dublin and Daniel O'Connell, 1830-47: an unquiet liaison," I.H.S., XVII, 66 (September, 1970), 221-243.

of Irish industry.³⁷ One by one the local industries based on small-scale handicraft gave way before the cheaper mass-produced articles imported from England. The collapse of Ireland's weak industrial efforts left many artisans unemployed. Emigration removed some of them.

The lack of plentiful supplies of the necessary natural resources for heavy industry and expansion prevented Irish industrialization. Industries demanding steam-power had to be located close to a source of cheap iron and coal when the factories first appeared.³⁸ Belfast and one or two other places were exceptional because they faced English or Welsh ports that were near to coal and/or iron production sites.

Under these conditions, the main raison d'être of most of the small nineteenth-century Irish towns was their function as market centres. In 1841 Ireland had 700 of these larger-villages-called-towns, each having less than 500 inhabitants. A church or mill or brewery, and a cluster of shops and taverns, with a few related houses formed the nucleus about which grouped a blacksmith, a cooper, a shoemaker, a tailor, and perhaps two or three dozen farmers whose small plots fringed the town-village. Rural Ireland liked to call this a town. Often the entire

³⁷ O Tuathaigh, Ireland before the Famine, 119.

³⁸ Ibid., 119-120.

place was on the property of one or two landowners. Paradoxically Ireland was the only part of the British Isles in the 1820's where none of the small towns were bursting with new-found inhabitants, drawn by the employment of a new industry. Once Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Limerick and Waterford are named the list of true cities in Ireland is complete.³⁹

Those few cities and the possibly fifteen other places worthy of being called urban centres were the homes of no more people than were the 700 'towns' previously mentioned. Those artisans who appeared among the Halifax Irish in the early 1800's were, with few exceptions, the sons of Ireland's village-towns. Consequently their attitudes were not conspicuously unlike those of the emigrants who came from the countryside itself.

The Emigration Idea: A Solution to Overpopulation?

The peasants and artisans of Ireland, when confronted with the deplorable state of their homeland, had at first inclined to opt between the policies of leaders such as Daniel O'Connell, and the resort to raw violence. Peaceful pressure for constitutional change was slow, too slow to keep up with the rising crisis in Irish affairs. The other choice meant terrorism, but senseless acts of savagery did not feed any more people or remove repressive measures.

³⁹Ibid., 151.

If anything, they had the contrary effect of bringing down further restrictions. There was another choice, namely emigration, but it is surprising that it took the ordinary Irish people a long time to embrace the idea of emigration.

This predominantly peasant society clung tenaciously to its old ways and its traditional beliefs. Among the mass of Ireland's impoverished population the idea of emigration was not accepted as normal until near the mid-century.⁴⁰ Oliver MacDonagh notes that "As late as 1843 and 1844 . . . witnesses before the Devon commission testified to the stubbornness of the resistance to emigration."⁴¹ Until the 1830's, the clergy reinforced this peasant mentality by preaching against emigration.⁴² Nevertheless, a certain amount of emigration did take place before the crisis decade of the 1840's. The pre-famine generation anticipated to some extent the pattern of mass exodus that would occur at mid-century.

As economic and social difficulties became ever more accentuated after the close of the Napoleonic Wars, certain segments of the Irish population began to leave the island. Those who departed were usually small farmers and artisans with at least a small amount of property which

⁴⁰ Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration, 392.

⁴¹ Oliver MacDonagh, A Pattern of Government Growth 1800-60 (London: MacGibbon & Kee, 1961), 25.

⁴² Adams, 65, 223.

they believed might be preserved through successful emigration.⁴³ Many of those who left went to England or Scotland, following the example of those who for decades had engaged in seasonal migration to Britain to work as agricultural labourers.

The idea of labour mobility entered the Irish consciousness at the turn of the century when a limited form of temporary emigration allowed many of the poorer classes to gain a personal experience of travel and of other places. The regular operation of a steam service with England after 1816 made the voyage cheap and safe, and Irish farm labourers went to England for seasonal work at harvest time, then returned home with their modest cash profits.⁴⁴ While the number making the annual round trip to the fields of Britain was relatively few, over a period of time most parts of western and southwestern Ireland came to have some people to whom the idea of mobility was both acceptable and even moderately profitable. It was possible to earn sufficient money to pay the rent of a small holding by this means.⁴⁵ This temporary seasonal migration involved a short journey and a few months' absence. Once this became acceptable, it was a quantitative step to cross the ocean permanently to America for work. If the number of Irish who came to America from

⁴³MacDonagh, 27.

⁴⁴Kerr, "Irish Seasonal Migration," 370, 374. The fare from Cork to western England, deck class, was sometimes as low as 6 d. per person.

⁴⁵Ibid., 369.

Liverpool is any indication, we may say that for some Irish that short trip to England itself became the first step in a series of movements which concluded only with a final migration to America.

Others also embarked in the larger gamble of direct emigration to North America. They went in the belief that in the new world they would be most assured of finding refuge from economic deprivation and social oppression. Those who went first liked to bring out their relations and neighbours, and sent money to help pay passages. This was known as chain-migration. Many of the Irish emigrants to America were so eager to see some of the familiar faces from home that they wildly exaggerated their own and others' good fortune in America. Much of the more optimistic 'emigration literature' stems from this source, and is not reliable as objective evidence, although generally the writers were truthful, albeit rather naive.⁴⁶

Those who proposed venturing to America were offered a variety of advice, much of it useless propaganda designed either to lure the unwary upon a fool's errand, or to get people out of their homes in the interests of the landlords. One of the early commentators was William Cobbett, the English radical politician and agriculturist, who lived in America for a year about 1817. In Cobbett's Weekly

⁴⁶For a discussion of 'the image of America' in such letters, cf., Arnold Schrier, Ireland and the American Emigration 1850-1900 (New York: Russell & Russell, 1958), 20-21.

Political Register for 8 May 1817 he wrote that he had never advised anyone to emigrate. America was no place for the unemployed and the unemployable. It was "no place, in short, for any one, who is not able and willing to work at the ordinary sorts of work." At the same time, Cobbett optimistically asserted that for such as were industrious and willing he saw "a plentiful, happy, and easy life." Cobbett advised those who preferred idleness to stay home. All who thought themselves good workers, however, he now urged to emigrate.⁴⁷

What America needed, according to contemporaries, was people of intelligence, energy, self-denial and industry, as well as the 'possession of capital'. Thomas F. Knight, a mid-Victorian Nova Scotian, emphasized the possession of a sum of money, a stake to enable the newcomer to buy his earliest needs in a hard environment.⁴⁸ While the pre-famine Irish were not actually indigent, neither did they have excess cash. Most were willing to work and had the brawn to do so, but they were sadly short either of funds or marketable skills.

According to the accepted values of the 1800's, labour was regarded in America as an honourable estate, and not as a sign of inferiority. Another believer in Irish

⁴⁷Terry Coleman, Passage to America (London: Hutchinson of London, 1972), 28.

⁴⁸Thomas F. Knight, Nova Scotia and Her Resources (Halifax: A. & W. MacKinlay, 1862), 83-84.

emigration, John F. Maguire, M.P., observed that the usual lot of a man born into poverty in Ireland was to die in the same condition, leaving to his offspring a legacy of hard toil and scanty remuneration. In America, Maguire claimed, steady labour offered an avenue to advancement and distinction, if not to the labourers themselves, then to "those who spring from their loins. Labour, rightly understood, being the great miracle-worker, the mighty civiliser, is regarded with respect, not looked down upon, or loftily patronized."⁴⁹ The more versatile and adaptable an immigrant was, the more practical, the greater his advantage on the labour market where "people did not ask of a stranger what he was, but what he did."⁵⁰ Despite this and other cautions from those in a position to know, thousands of Irish were lured to America even before the Great Famine of the 1840's. Almost too late to make much difference came the warning of the Irish Emigrant Society of New York in its address to the people of Ireland:

We . . . caution you against entertaining any fantastic idea, such as that magnificence, ease, and health, are universally enjoyed in this country. . . . It is natural for persons who have adventured to leave home and to seek their fortunes in a foreign and distant country, to give highly coloured accounts of a success, which in reality, has been but the obtaining a laborious employment . . .⁵¹

⁴⁹John Francis Maguire, The Irish in America (London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1868), 2-3.

⁵⁰Coleman, 28.

⁵¹Sidney's Emigrant's Journal, London, 5 July 1849, quoted by Coleman, 41.

The Ocean Crossing

Neither domestic disturbance nor an increasingly widespread idealized view of America would have been sufficient, of themselves, to bring about mass migration from Ireland to the new world. The large-scale exodus which took place in the years following 1815 was made possible largely by the availability of cheap transportation across the Atlantic. Until the end of the eighteenth century the chief means of obtaining inexpensive passage to North America had been the vessels engaged in the Newfoundland fishery.

Many Irish followed the long-established route from Waterford to Newfoundland, which was an old route for the English migratory fishing fleets. "The connection between Waterford and Newfoundland was already well established at the beginning of the seventeenth century, for Irish woolens and provisions were plentiful, cheap, and of good quality."⁵² By the late eighteenth century the association between the two was so close that "Waterford papers even carried advertisements of houses to be let in St. John's."⁵³ Westcountrymen who fished each summer for cod on the Grand Banks called at Waterford on their voyage out to purchase provisions and engage seasonal employees. Although permanent settlement was officially discouraged until the opening of

⁵²Nicholas R. Burke, "Some Observations on the Migration of Labourers from the South of Ireland to Newfoundland in Pre-Famine Times," Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, LXXVI, 224 (1971), 98.

⁵³Ibid., 104.

the nineteenth century, a Newfoundland population was building up that was half Irish. "The greatest single contribution to the growth of St. John's (and the Colony) in those first years after the relaxation of the anti-settlement laws was an influx of Irish emigrants."⁵⁴ Not surprisingly, the early Irish settlers of Newfoundland included many of the same men who had visited the island previously when they had worked on the fishing fleet.

Scarcely were the Irish settled in Newfoundland when numbers of them began to show up in Halifax. No records exist to report the exact flow of Newfoundland Irish into Nova Scotia, but two pieces of evidence suggest that a respectable traffic in Irish existed between Newfoundland and Halifax. James Martell felt that the Newfoundlanders who came to Nova Scotia, 1815-1838, could be counted as Irish, and he reported 1,769 arrivals in that period.⁵⁵ Of these, 1,560 landed at Halifax. The other indication of Newfoundland immigration is the fact that fifty-three marriages were held in Halifax, 1801-1819, involving Newfoundland Irish people.⁵⁶ The settlers to come to Halifax

⁵⁴R.G. Moyles, "Complaints is many and various, but the odd Divil likes it" (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Limited, 1975), 3.

⁵⁵J.S. Martell, Immigration to and Emigration from Nova Scotia 1815-1838 (Halifax: P.A.N.S., 1942), 93-95, 111-112.

⁵⁶From St. Mary's parish records, Halifax. Of nine specific settlements named as places of origin, Placentia (14), and St. John's (14), lead the field.

via Newfoundland had been predominantly men in the fishery, and cannot be considered as part of the great rural population movement of the nineteenth-century Irish. The Irish movement from Newfoundland, however, ended with a great flourish. On 2 January 1817, Lord Dalhousie wrote to Lord Bathurst mentioning nearly 500 young men, mostly Irish, who had lately arrived in Halifax from Newfoundland. He wrote that they were part of "an immense Emigration to Newfoundland last summer."⁵⁷ A migration of Irish to Nova Scotia from Newfoundland was an established fact until about 1816, but after that the migrant fishery collapsed and the flow began to subside. The Newfoundland Irish continued to come to Halifax, but not in the same multitudes. As a major source of Halifax Irish, Newfoundland had become secondary by the 1820's.

In addition to the Newfoundland fisheries, other Irish were reaching Halifax before 1815. Previous to that year, in fact, only Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, and Prince Edward Island, of all the colonies under British rule, had drawn a regular flow of emigrants from the British Isles.⁵⁸ In Boston, these early Irish arrivals were regarded as mere strays, who had come for personal considerations rather than

⁵⁷Quoted by Martell, Immigration to Nova Scotia, 40.

⁵⁸H.J.M. Johnston, British Emigration Policy 1815-1830 (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), 7.

as part of a migration. Seafarers and merchants—Irish and others—formed additions to that city's population before 1815.⁵⁹

As the fisheries began their decline as a means of transoceanic movement of poor emigrants, another business was arising to take its place in this function. During the long Napoleonic Wars the British had been obliged to turn from the Baltic to North America for their timber supply. The profits of the trade were sufficient to bring a number of firms into the business of transporting timber from British North America to Great Britain. After 1815,

timber from the Miramichi had become an important British import and while Irish immigrants were still trickling into Avalon, an increasing number, crossing the Atlantic in the holds of timber ships, made their way to the mainland. Along the banks of the Miramichi and its tributaries was one of the finest timber stands in the Maritimes. Timber ships docking at the ports of Chatham and Newcastle on the Miramichi after 1815 brought with them hundreds of poor Irish who often found initial employment loading lumber for the European voyage. Many of these immigrants eventually left . . .⁶⁰

When they left the Miramichi, where did they go? Without claiming that it populated Halifax, the timber trade on the Miramichi and the Saint John, as well as along the north coast of Nova Scotia itself did bring some Irish into the area who otherwise would not have come here.

⁵⁹Oscar Handlin, Boston's Immigrants 1790-1820 (Cambridge, Mass.: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1959), 26.

⁶⁰John J. Mannion, Irish Settlement in Eastern Canada: A Study of Cultural Transfer and Adaptation (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 20.

The lowness of the fares to New Brunswick and Nova Scotia had much to do with their selection by emigrants as their destination, perhaps permanently or perhaps as a stage on their way elsewhere. The fact that so many ship owners were in the timber trade assisted the emigrants by driving the prices down for a passage as the ship owners vied with one another to have a paying cargo--any cargo--in their large empty holds for the return trip to North America. Quite poor Irish people could afford to travel steerage--below decks on the timber vessels, for example. The timber ships "frequently made a second journey to New Brunswick for timber . . . In such years, even the autumn sailings. . .carried large numbers of emigrants, while at other times the same ships made the voyage in ballast without passengers."⁶¹

The study by Dr. Martell, mentioned previously in connection with Newfoundland, contains figures suggestive of a Miramichi to Halifax movement of Irish. Starting in 1822, and continuing on and off to 1834, groups of passengers reached Halifax from Miramichi. Altogether 192 were recorded in partial records, and while their origin is not stated as Irish, there is good reason for believing that they were. Had they been Scots they might have been expected to put in at Pictou or Sydney; the Irish were the

⁶¹Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration, 75.

only other ethnic group that was out in force in the area at the time. Martell suggests that the Miramichi people were "immigrants whose original destination may have been Halifax, who may have heard of work in Halifax, or who may have been on their way to the United States."⁶² A further 109 from New Brunswick ports are included in Martell's statistics down to 1838.

Regardless of whether the Irish came directly to Halifax, or made the voyage by stages, stopping perhaps at Placentia or Chatham, St. John's or Newcastle en route, they did not all remain in Halifax. The Select Committee on Colonization from Ireland was told in 1847 that even the emigration to Canada was not truly colonization because a large proportion of those who were landed in the Canadas crossed straight away into the United States. Robert B. Minturn, the American ship-owner, estimated that sixty per cent of all arrivals in Canadian ports went eventually to the United States.⁶³ One would expect that in the lower provinces with their easy access to the seacoast and shipping routes, the emigrants were just as likely to migrate again once the fare had been earned. Halifax therefore played host to a certain transient Irish element throughout most of the 1820's through 1840's, as newcomers worked

⁶²Martell, Immigration to Nova Scotia, 51. The 1815-38 figures are: Miramichi 192, Quebec 143, Saint John 89, Richibucto 10, Paspébiac 10. Excluding Quebec, the New Brunswick total is 301. In view of the partial nature of these figures, the total might have been quite significantly higher.

⁶³Coleman, Passage to America, 192n.

as labourers or at trades to earn passage to Boston or
elsewhere.⁶⁴

Mannion's findings as to counties of origin in Ireland of the emigrants into Newfoundland parallel those found in Halifax. His rural Irish immigrants came from "the far south and south-east of Ireland, mainly from the counties of Cork, Tipperary, Kilkenny, Waterford, and Wexford."⁶⁵ The same five counties supplied the largest numbers of Irish settlers in the urban environment of Halifax down to 1845.⁶⁶

Interestingly, however, the parallel does not hold up in another respect, namely, that of migration patterns. There were basically three methods of migration from Ireland to America. One came as an isolated individual seeking one's way, one came with one's family, or one came ahead or behind other relations to the same destination. Some people combined two of these three. For example, an uncle might cross to North America as an isolated individual, then be joined by a married nephew with a family, and thus the pattern becomes the third type. This is termed 'chain movement' or 'chain migration' because family members form

⁶⁴Judith Fingard, "Attitudes towards the Education of the Poor in Colonial Halifax," Acadiensis, II, 2 (Spring, 1973), 25n.60: "Statistics for the years 1833-7 show that one-half of the town's transient paupers were Irish."

⁶⁵Mannion, Irish Settlement in Eastern Canada, 13.

⁶⁶Cf., infra, Table III for detailed figures.

links in a chain of emigration that might span three generations. Certainly the presence of a friend or relative at a known location in America could be expected to influence an emigrant in his choice of destination. Mannion considered this point.

Some students of European migrations overseas have postulated a pattern of chain movement whereby one or two persons from a European village or parish settle abroad and then attract members of their family or neighbourhood to the new location . . . Extensive enquiry failed to uncover any such pattern of migration in the Irish parts of rural eastern Canada.⁶⁷

It needs to be emphasized that Dr. Mannion was speaking of rural rather than urban areas of settlement, and a genealogical study of the Halifax Irish soon leads to the conclusion that Halifax to a considerable extent fits the chain movement pattern, and not that which Mannion found in Avalon or at Miramichi. A sampling of 67 marriages in Halifax, 1826-1845, reveals that in 26 cases one or both of the married parties had siblings, cousins or uncles/aunts in Halifax. Only persons born in Ireland were counted.⁶⁸

One reason for this pattern developing might be that emigrants remained rather longer in Halifax than they

⁶⁷Mannion, 13n.

⁶⁸Registers of marriage, St. Mary's Cathedral, Halifax, 1826-45, sample based on 67 marriages of couples in which the groom's surname began with the letter 'D'. Another sampling at random, 1835-41, turned up 12 cases of relationship among 36 married couples. Quite likely about one-third of the Halifax Irish before 1845 were chain-migrants by relationship. Some remarks about neighbourhood are offered infra.

did in the other locations, and thus relatives and former neighbours had more chance to overtake the earlier emigrants. Another explanation might be that the Halifax Irish families have been studied in greater genealogical detail, and that similar relationship patterns would emerge elsewhere if equally good records were as intensively studied in detail.

Number of Immigrants

Any consideration of how the Irish immigrants came to America, and to Halifax in particular, is intimately bound up with the problem of the quantity of newcomers. No one knows the number of Irish who emigrated during the nineteenth century, either exactly or very closely. Such records as were kept were sporadic, unevenly tallied, sometimes lost, frequently altered for special pleading, and based on variable criteria. Passenger lists for ships entering Nova Scotian ports from Ireland in the early nineteenth century are just about non-existent. Available statistics are based on sources that are neither accurate samplings nor complete counts. The figures that follow are founded upon the work of Adams and Coleman, both of whom used the best available statistics, which came from official sources.⁶⁹ Both offer suggestions regarding the accuracy of the official figures. They are too low, but nobody can say by how much. Nevertheless, in relation to one another the returns have some

⁶⁹Coleman, Passage to America, 295; Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration, 413, 415.

value in verifying trends. This partly mitigates their lack of usefulness in absolute terms.

Table I-EMIGRATION FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1835-1860
(figures in '000's)⁷⁰

<u>Year</u>	<u>To BNA</u>	<u>To USA</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>To BNA</u>	<u>To USA</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>To BNA</u>	<u>To USA</u>
1835	16	27	1844	23	44	1853	35	231
1836	34	38	1845	32	59	1854	44	193
1837	30	37	1846	43	82	1855	18	103
1838	5	14	1847	110	142	1856	16	112
1839	13	34	1848	31	188	1857	21	127
1840	32	41	1849	41	219	1858	10	60
1841	38	45	1850	33	233	1859	7	70
1842	54	64	1851	43	267	1860	10	87
1843	24	28	1852	33	244	Total	796	2789

These figures include all British (English, Scots, Welsh, Irish) emigrants, and are most assuredly not complete returns. They tend to underestimation, particularly in 1846-50, when the Famine swamped attempts at keeping records. Nevertheless, they do suggest trends in the pattern of migration to North America. The pre-famine years 1835-46 brought 344,000 to British North America, and 513,000 to the United States. During the Famine, 1847-49, British North America got 182,000, and the United States 549,000 souls. From 1850-60, British North America received 270,000, and the United States 1,727,000 immigrants from the British Isles. It appears, then, that British North America received more British Isles emigrants in the pre-famine decade than it did

⁷⁰ Based on Appendix I of the Thirty-Third General Report of the Emigration Commissioners, H.C., 1873, Vol. 18, and quoted by Coleman, 295.

during or after that disaster. On the other hand, the United States received more settlers during and after the Great Famine than previously. The proportions going to British North America as a ratio of those going to the United States may be shown as follows:-

	<u>BNA:USA</u>
1835-1846	2:3
1847-1849	1:3
1850-1860	1:6

It is also worth noticing that by the later 1850's the immigration to British North America had fallen below that of the 1830's, while in the United States it remained two or three times what it had been in the pre-Famine years.

Clearly, as the mid-century passed the United States had become the favoured destination for British emigrants to America. Since the United States was much further advanced in industrial development, and had a better climate and transportation, the trend of emigration suggests growing selectivity on the part of the intending emigrant. Table I provided some useful information about the general emigration pattern to this continent. Table II will help to establish more closely the trend among Irish emigrants entering the Canadas and the Maritimes. Unfortunately for present purposes, the available data concludes with the year 1845.

Table II - IRISH EMIGRATION TO THE CANADAS AND THE MARITIMES,
1831-1845⁷¹

<u>Year</u>	<u>Canadas</u>	<u>Maritimes</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Canadas</u>	<u>Maritimes</u>
1831	39,053	15,461	1839	6,437	4,506
1832	32,502	17,803	1840	20,125	8,631
1833	13,581	9,558	1841	22,145	8,778
1834	21,836	10,479	1842	31,867	10,917
1835	8,078	2,686	1843	11,094	3,574
1836	16,335	.....	1844	16,293	1,432
1837	17,490	8,612	1845	21,138	5,570
1838	1,847	1,061			
		Totals, 1831-1845...	279,821		109,068

The figures for Irish emigration to the two areas of British North America--the Canadas (Upper and Lower) and the Maritimes (N.S., N.B., and P.E.I.)--may be used to draw some tentative conclusions. They indicate that movement into the two Canadas was considerably higher than it was into the Maritimes, but the proportions varied, and the trend became more rather than less pronounced. Allowing that Maritime immigration in 1836 at least equalled that of 1835, the total for the Maritimes in 1831-37 stands at 67,285, that for the Canadas at 148,875, a proportion of nearly 1:2. From 1838-45 the Maritimes received 44,469, and the Canadas 130,946, a ratio approaching 1:3. At the same time, the yearly average of arrivals was down from nearly 31,000 (1831-37) to 22,000 (1838-45), almost 30% lower. Combining both concepts it will be seen that the Maritimes were getting a

⁷¹ Figures based upon Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration, 415.

smaller share of a diminishing immigration from Ireland. Instead of 32% of 31,000, the Maritimes had an inflow of 26% of 22,000 by the early 1840's. By taking the years 1835-45 in both tables, it appears that the Irish-born or people originating from Irish ports of departure accounted for 75% of the entire British emigration to British North America at the time. Now, if the decline found in Table II continued (with perhaps an aberration due to the Famine 1847-49) at the same rate, the Maritimes were getting only a slight share of the British flow into B.N.A. by the later 1850's. Instead of the 15,000 and 17,000 figures of 1831-32, the Maritimes were gaining only about 14% of 75% of 7,000 to 10,000 -- a net figure of only 735 to 1050 per year for the entire region. Irish immigration to the area required six to eight years to add one per cent to the population, which was not enough to hold the proportion the Irish already had. Halifax proved typical in this, and from some point between 1858 and 1865 the share of the Irish as a proportion of the Halifax population began to decline.

Table II is more directly useful in assessing Irish settlement in Halifax inasmuch as it gives a figure for the Maritimes each year. Nova Scotia obtained a modest share of the Irish inflow. Thanks to the work of the late Dr. Martell, a comparison can be made between the Nova Scotian and the regional figures:

⁷²Martell, Immigration to Nova Scotia, 111-112.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Maritimes</u>	<u>Nova Scotia</u>
1831	15,461	1,538
1832	17,803	899
1833	9,558	447
1834	10,479	549
1835	2,686	94
1836	.....	433
1837	8,612	727
1838	1,061	87
TOTAL	65,660	4,774 (a proportion of ca. 7½%)

Martell further broke down his data by port of entry. While this is not firm proof of settlement, there was a tendency, especially among poorer arrivals, to remain at or near the place of landing in America for a time. It can be determined that 3,778 of the 4,774 Irish immigrants counted for 1831-38 landed at Halifax. For 1831-38 Martell recorded an outflow from Halifax of 2,097 persons, nationality not stated. Three quarters of the Halifax arrivals were Irish. If they formed a like part of net departures, then about 2,200 Irish remained at Halifax, 1831-38. The greater part of these were Catholics, only two of the emigrant vessels having sailed from Protestant Ulster. R.G. Flewelling [nee Susan Morse] reports 2,405 Irish arrivals at Halifax, 1839-51. At the same rate of departure, the net Irish immigration at Halifax, 1839-51, was nearly 1,100 souls.⁷³ Again, most had sailed from ports in Catholic southern Ireland. In

⁷³R.G. Flewelling, "Immigration to and Emigration from Nova Scotia, 1839-1851," N.S.H.S. XXVIII (1949), 75, n.2.

the two decades, 1831-1851, Halifax had gained possibly 3,300 Irish immigrants. Some few were not Catholic, some moved but remained inside the province, and others died (notably in the cholera outbreak of 1834, when 77 natives of Ireland were buried between 6 August and 5 October).⁷⁴

In the major burial place for Halifax Catholics, 5,514 people born in Ireland were interred during the years 1829-1903. There is a 19-month gap in the records between the closing of old Saint Peter's graveyard near the cathedral and the opening of Holy Cross Cemetery late in 1843. A second Catholic cemetery -- Mount Olivet -- opened in 1896. Together, the total number of Irish-born Roman Catholics who died in Halifax must be reckoned about 6,000 souls during the period 1829-1903. From an examination of the ages of the people buried after 1850, it can be demonstrated that only a very tiny percentage of them arrived from Ireland after 1847. There was no particular appearance of new names in the baptism or marriage registers at this period, nor any dramatic increase in the number of either. The number of paupers from Ireland buried in Holy Cross Cemetery, 1844-46, averaged 16 per year; 1847-49 averaged 23 per year; 1850-55 averaged 18 per year; not exactly evidence of wholesale

⁷⁴ Register of burials, St. Mary's Cathedral, Halifax, 1834.

famine immigration. ⁷⁵ Halifax took but a tiny number of Irish in relation to the great influx into this continent. A number of others probably passed through Halifax at one time or another, but those who remained were, with but few exceptions, pre-famine emigrants from Ireland.

Previously, a figure of about 3,300 was calculated as being the number of Irish who remained in Halifax from the total new arrivals between 1831 and 1851. In terms of average life expectancy, almost all the adults and the greater part of the children in the immigration of those two decades had died by 1903. Of the 6,000 burials about half would be represented in the 3,300 figure. The implication here is that one-half the Catholic Irish arrivals in Halifax landed between 1831 and 1851. The rest had to arrive either before 1831 or after 1851. To try to determine how many, the 1871 census was examined in detail. The birthplace of each person was noted. When a family group occurred, the place of birth for the youngest born in Ireland or Newfoundland was taken as indicating that immigration to Nova Scotia occurred after that birth. Three categories were established:

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Register of burials, Holy Cross Cemetery, Halifax, 1844-1855. The annual burials of Irish-born paupers were: 18 (1844), 12 (1845), 18 (1846), 28 (1847), 24 (1848), 18 (1849), 25 (1850), 12 (1851), 17 (1852), 13 (1853), 18 (1854), and 25 (1855). Marriages of Irish-born showed little change in St. Mary's Cathedral registers. In 1846 marriages of such people numbered 32, in 1847 there were 26, and in 1848 there were 27.

- (a) Those born 1847ff in Ireland, and who came to Nova Scotia more or less directly, with no evidence of lengthy breaks in their journey;
- (b) Those born in Newfoundland in 1847 or later, but who were of Irish ethnic origin;
- (c) Those born in Ireland, but who reached Nova Scotia via Newfoundland after 1847.

The year 1847 recurs in these categories due to taking those reporting their age as 24 in 1871 as having been born in 1847, and other ages accordingly, up or down. The actual 1871 enumeration took place between March and May of that year, so that any slight error on dates of birth will be towards the pre-famine period rather than the opposite.

The number of Irish Catholic individuals in each of the three groups in 1871 in Halifax is as follows:-

- (a) Direct immigrants from Ireland after 1847.....451
- (b) Direct immigrants from Newfoundland after 1847.....386
- (c) Irish immigrants after 1847 via Newfoundland..... 55

By combining (a) and (c) the actual number of Catholics living in Halifax in 1871 and born in Ireland in 1847 or later is obtained, and that number is only 506 persons. Of the total of 892 people in the three categories, about half travelled to Halifax via Newfoundland: (b) + (c) : $386 + 55 = 441$ persons. From these figures two conclusions may be drawn. First, immigration from Ireland to Halifax, 1847-71, was slight. As the 1871 census figures show the small number of such people then in the city, the assumption

must be that most of the arrivals of the late 1840's passed through Halifax and did not form any substantial part of its Irish Catholic population. Moreover, it appears that the Newfoundland-Halifax route was equally important as a source of late Irish Catholic immigration as was any communications link directly between Ireland and Halifax.⁷⁶

Returning to the earlier statistical point about whether or not the bulk of the Halifax Irish arrived before 1831 or after 1851, it is possible to state with strong evidence that the greater part of them arrived before 1831. Allowing that as many more Irish Catholics randomly ended up in Halifax 1871-1903 as had done so in 1847-1871, the following approximate arrival pattern appears to be valid:⁷⁷

⁷⁶The 1871 census showed only 70 Irish Catholic in Halifax who had been born in New Brunswick (whether at Miramichi, Saint John, or elsewhere is not stated), and about 15 natives of Ireland in the same households who evidently reached Halifax by way of New Brunswick. All but four of the 70 born in New Brunswick were less than 41 years old--i.e., born after 1830--in 1871.

⁷⁷These are rounded figures. The figure (1) is arrived at by taking the 6,000 Roman Catholic Irish deaths for the period as being approximately the total number. In fact, for the period after 1903, deaths of Irish-born Catholics were quite few in number--less than 20 per year. The important thing is that by even the most liberal reckoning, the Halifax Irish Catholic community was a pre-famine growth. The famine aspect can be further minimized by breaking down the probable dates of arrival of the post-1847 group in the 1871 census. By taking those born in Ireland and aged, respectively, 19, 14, 9, and 4, the 451 people subdivide: 1847-51 (165), 1852-56 (99), 1857-61 (83), 1862-66 (30), 1867-71 (54). Those coming after 1852 can hardly be viewed as people fleeing from the famine occurring in 1846-50. Starving people cannot wait two to six years to seek food!

- (1) Irish-born persons in Halifax 1829-1903, who
had arrived in or before 18312,000
- (2) Ditto, who had come here between 1831 and 1851...3,000
- (3) Ditto, who had come here in or after 1852.....1,000.

Figure 1 and Table III, following, show the county of origin within Ireland of the Irish who remained in Halifax, 1829-1903. The Table total of 7,442 and the total of 6,000 used in reckoning the dates of arrival in Halifax may be reconciled easily. Of the 2,516 people listed in Table III under the dates 1825-45, 1,928 were listed in marriage registers. Most of those married 1825-45 would have died during the years 1829-1903. It is reasonable to consider that much of the 1,442 in the difference would be accounted for from the 1,928 people whose marriages and burials are included in the greater total.

Since the 1843-1903 figures are based entirely on burials, we may take them as nearly conclusive evidence that the deceased ended their mortal careers in Halifax. A sampling of ten years of burials reveals less than 1% of the interments were those of remains sent here from outside the area for burial.

A most striking fact about Halifax Irish Catholics for the nineteenth century is that three Irish counties--Kilkenny, Cork, and Waterford--contributed above half of total. Tipperary, Kerry, and Wexford supplied a further one quarter of all. The typical Halifax Irishman was therefore from the southernmost parts of the provinces of

Table III - ORIGINS OF IRISH CATHOLICS IN HALIFAX, 1825-1903

	1825/45 (%)	1843/72 (%)	1873/1903 (%)	TOTAL (%)
MUNSTER	1268 (50.4%)	1678 (55.78%)	1102 (57.48%)	4048 (54.39%)
Cork	397 (15.8%)	536 (17.8%)	294 (15.3%)	1227 (16.4%)
Waterford	379 (15.1%)	457 (15.2%)	295 (15.4%)	1131 (15.2%)
Tipperary	351 (13.9%)	358 (11.9%)	247 (12.9%)	956 (12.8%)
Kerry	84 (3.3%)	259 (8.6%)	203 (10.6%)	546 (7.3%)
Limerick	50 (2.0%)	53 (1.8%)	48 (2.5%)	151 (2.0%)
Clare	7 (.3%)	15 (.5%)	15 (.8%)	37 (.5%)
LEINSTER	1037 (41.22%)	1049 (34.86%)	602 (31.38%)	2688 (36.12%)
Kilkenny	551 (21.9%)	553 (17.7%)	294 (15.3%)	1378 (18.5%)
Wexford	147 (5.8%)	156 (5.2%)	85 (4.4%)	388 (5.0%)
Carlow	123 (4.9%)	132 (4.4%)	75 (3.9%)	330 (4.4%)
Longford	53 (2.1%)	36 (1.2%)	16 (.8%)	105 (1.4%)
Dublin	23 (.9%)	49 (1.6%)	54 (2.8%)	126 (1.6%)
Leix/Queens	40 (1.6%)	52 (1.7%)	10 (.5%)	102 (1.3%)
Kildare	32 (1.3%)	21 (.7%)	23 (1.2%)	76 (1.0%)
Meath	22 (.9%)	27 (.9%)	10 (.5%)	59 (.8%)
Westmeath	16 (.6%)	20 (.7%)	17 (1.0%)	53 (.7%)
Wicklow	17 (.7%)	12 (.4%)	8 (.4%)	37 (.5%)
Offaly/Kings	9 (.4%)	10 (.3%)	6 (.3%)	25 (.3%)
Louth	4 (.2%)	1 (.1%)	4 (.2%)	9 (.1%)
ULSTER	132 (5.24%)	163 (5.42%)	117 (6.11%)	412 (5.53%)
Armagh	11 (.4%)	18 (.6%)	38 (2.0%)	67 (.9%)
Donegal	20 (.8%)	24 (.8%)	12 (.6%)	56 (.8%)
Tyrone	26 (1.0%)	25 (.8%)	12 (.6%)	63 (.9%)
Cavan	18 (.7%)	18 (.6%)	8 (.4%)	44 (.6%)
Monaghan	15 (.6%)	18 (.6%)	8 (.4%)	41 (.6%)
Londonderry	15 (.6%)	12 (.4%)	11 (.6%)	38 (.5%)
Antrim	11 (.4%)	18 (.6%)	9 (.5%)	38 (.5%)
Down	8 (.3%)	15 (.5%)	13 (.7%)	36 (.5%)
Fermanagh	8 (.3%)	15 (.5%)	6 (.3%)	29 (.4%)
CONNACHT	79 (3.14%)	119 (3.94%)	96 (5.03%)	294 (3.95%)
Galway	12 (.5%)	55 (1.8%)	48 (2.5%)	113 (1.5%)
Mayo	18 (.7%)	24 (.8%)	25 (1.3%)	67 (.9%)
Sligo	20 (.8%)	15 (.5%)	11 (.6%)	46 (.6%)
Leitrim	16 (.6%)	15 (.5%)	6 (.3%)	37 (.5%)
Roscommon	13 (.5%)	10 (.3%)	6 (.3%)	29 (.4%)

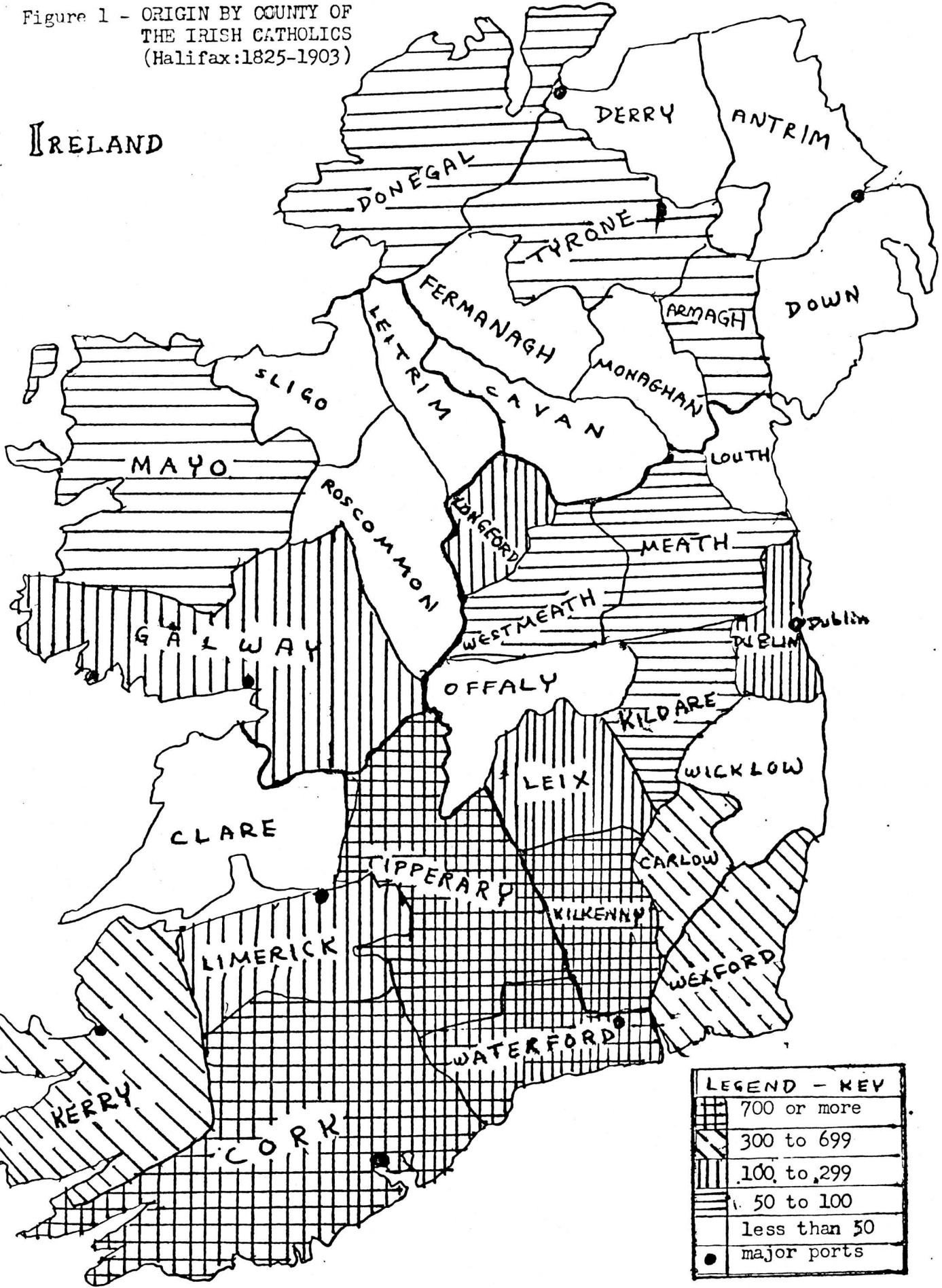
⁷⁸Compiled from the records of the Catholic Parish of St. Mary's, and Holy Cross Cemetery, Halifax. The figures are not samplings, but actual complete tallies. St. Mary's burial records for 1829-42, and those of marriages for 1825-45 make up the number listed under the years 1825/45. In all three groups of years a number of people with their origin given merely as 'Ireland' occurred in the registers. In each case this number was shared out proportionately to the several counties. The total number in each group of years above was the basis of the percentages given in the respective columns. These totals were:

1825/45 - 2516
 1843/72 - 3009
 1873/1903-1917

Grand Total - 7,442 individuals (Catholic, Irish)

Figure 1 - ORIGIN BY COUNTY OF THE IRISH CATHOLICS (Halifax:1825-1903)

IRELAND



LEGEND - KEY	
	700 or more
	300 to 699
	100 to 299
	50 to 100
	less than 50
	major ports

Munster and Leinster. Exact parishes or origin are not known in enough instances to allow secure generalizations, but the specific origins that are known suggest that south Kilkenny, east Cork, Waterford, and south Tipperary--adjacent areas in a band about 75 miles east to west and 30 miles north to south--together form the major source of the Halifax Irish Catholics. It cannot be without significance in assessing the internal structures of the Halifax Irish that so many of them came from Middleton or Fermoy (Co. Cork), Kilmacthomas or Dungarvan (Co. Waterford), Thomastown or Callen (Co. Kilkenny), or Carrick-on-Suir (Co. Tipperary). It also lends support to the idea that the Halifax Irish arrived partly in response to a chain movement pattern, as mentioned earlier.

Irish Identities: Some Group Attitudes

The Irish came, but what were they like? The people of a country share more than a slice of the earth's surface and a set of historical circumstances, important as these are. Their 'inlook', their way of seeing themselves involves having attitudes and patterns of thought which are common and general. If an entire people does not share such opinions, it only confirms that not everyone thinks alike, even when put in the same situation, because individuals have different needs and fears. Likewise, the groups within a country that are based on religion or politics, economic status or educational level, will share the accumulated heritage of their people, but react differently

to situations. While all of a people have more in common than otherwise, it is not reasonable to expect unanimity from them.

To define as 'Irish' anyone who was born in Ireland would be partly true, but it would be a case of lumping together as homogeneous a group who were divided in almost every sense: language, religion, politics, living standards, folk culture, and in other characteristics of a civilized community. One cannot fairly exclude Protestants from the name of 'Irish' although for the purposes of this study the Irishman shall be considered as being a Roman Catholic. Irishmen were not all Catholics nor were they all countrymen, but for the present we shall be treating of people who happened to be both Catholic and countrymen, the former in all instances, the latter in almost all. The reason for the distinction may be explained by considering why the Irish were so generally Catholics.

The Hibernian was probably no more conventionally pious than any other sort of European, but his church assumed a function it had not to fulfill in countries such as Spain or Italy. The Irish, under the thumb of Protestant England, had a common bond in their religion, much as had the Greeks under the Turks, and the Poles under the Russians. Irishman, Pole, Greek -- each was a national minority that had been deprived of nationality by the political domination of a conqueror whose religious system was alien to that of the conquered people. The vanquished tended to organize

themselves as a people around their church. The Irish
Catholics had a national church.⁷⁹

The Irish considered their Church the true keeper of the faith and of the path to salvation, both here and hereafter. Two hundred years of fierce attack had confirmed and strengthened its position. Religious and national issues, as well as economics, were interlinked in the opposition to landlords who were at once masters, foreigners, and members of a hostile church system. One who made great personal sacrifices for his beliefs did not esteem lightly his ideals. When the Irish came to America the Church gained in prestige for it was one of the few familiar institutions to cross the Atlantic with them.⁸⁰

The nineteenth-century Bostonian, Edward E. Hale, wrote perceptively that the Irish were religious as a matter of politics. He could see that religion was to them "a matter of national pride, and of the gallantry of those who lived where it had been persecuted. A Catholic congregation . . . wants an Irish priest, for their interest in their faith is, that it was their faith in their oppressed home."⁸¹ Hale observed the restlessness of Irishmen when

⁷⁹W. Lloyd Warner and Leo Srole, The Social Systems of American Ethnic Groups (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1945), 159.

⁸⁰Handlin, Boston's Immigrants, 128.

⁸¹Edward E. Hale, Letters on Irish Emigration first published in the Boston Daily Advertiser (Boston, 1852), quoted by Coleman, 166.

their pastor was not an Irishman, a phenomenon that would not be unknown in Halifax after 1836.

The Catholic clergyman performed the rituals of his Church; he had this in common with ministers of other faiths. However, the Irish concept of priesthood extended to much more which they felt that only an Irish priest could be expected to manage with the necessary sensitivity and understanding. Firstly, he was to supervise the family structures through the confessional and by regular household visits. Then, he was left to handle parochial property and finances. Thirdly, he had to supervise the children's moral training in a Sunday school. Finally, he was supposed to foster actively church societies designed to occupy the leisure time of his flock.⁸² There would never be an Irish "Father Brown"; Irish priests were kept far too busy with the obligations their flock had burdened them with.

As keeper of both the religious and national values and attitudes of the parent society — assertive aspects of ethnicity — the Church was naturally the first formally organized structure within the transplanted ethnic community. "The associations and schools which later

⁸²Warner and Srole, 173: "Through the confessional the priest is aware of the most detailed and intimate facts concerning every parishioner. With no area of the community system closed to him, the priest is in a position of extraordinary power in that system."

emerged in the ethnic community were structural fences newly contrived to keep the ethnic individual articulated to the church and the community while keeping him from straying far out into the [general] . . . social system."⁸³ These societies and the priesthood were thought by many at the time to be "the only effectual barrier against a total disruption of Society."⁸⁴

The Anglo-Irish historian Lecky paid the pervasive influence of the Church the tribute of criticism. In his remarks, Lecky was admitting the truth of the claim that the Catholic Church possessed the hearts of the Irish people.

Catholicism . . . is peculiarly unsuited to a nation struggling with great difficulties. It is exceedingly unfavourable to independence of intellect and to independence of character, which are the first conditions of national progress . . . and it produces habits of thought and life not favourable to industrial⁸⁵ activity and extremely opposed to political freedom.

Formed in Ireland of the Penal Code, the Irish character retained a tenderness for the Church which had shared its history. Under English rule the Irish had not

⁸³Ibid., 161-162.

⁸⁴The Cross, 19 February 1848.

⁸⁵Anne Wyatt, "Froude, Lecky and 'the Humblest Irishman'," Irish Historical Studies, XIX, 75 (March 1975), 279.

broken, but had tried stubbornly to cling to what was their own: the land, family identity, memories, a way of speech, and an outlook on life.⁸⁶ What Lecky considered progress and industrial activity, the mass of Irish Catholics -- and their priests -- utterly scorned, probably as artifices of the English and Protestantism. Within his own frame of reference the Irishman was a Catholic and to be Catholic was to be Irish. To be among their own kind was important to them.⁸⁷

Apart from their country characteristics and their religious identity, the Irish of the period 1801-1840 had certain general attitudes towards political and economic advancement. The Union had provoked serious dissatisfaction among the majority of Irish citizens, and organized protest against the Union picked up increasing support among Irishmen. The rebellions of the United Irishmen had failed signally, and the leaders were either captured or fled the country. There was a void in Irish secular leadership until the 1820's when Daniel O'Connell emerged as the popular leader. Violence had been rewarded by the hated Union, so

⁸⁶William V. Shannon, The American Irish (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), 7,9.

⁸⁷For instance, Archbishop Connolly wrote Bishop Rogers of Chatham, N.B.: "Our Irish farmers in America will never hold on to country life. Old Mackey and Tobin of River John have sold off their farms and are now in Halifax thinking of opening a Public House! They felt lonesome and have come back to the Irish." (Halifax Archdiocese Chancery Office: Connolly Papers, 24 May 1867).

the methods of peaceful pressure and specific confrontation had their turn in Ireland before the Famine. The round of agrarian unrest and outrage did not cease, but these affairs had a randomness and lack of articulation about them. The truth was that both constitutional and radical Irish protest was wanting for capable leadership.⁸⁸

O'Connell came into widespread notice in the 1820's for his essential role in the struggle for Catholic emancipation (i.e., the seating of Roman Catholics in Parliament, and later, in municipal corporations). He was in the strong, if unspectacular Irish tradition of constitutional agitation for reform, as opposed to the other old course of violent protest and rebellion. Those Irish who left their country between 1815 and 1840 generally believed that peaceful methods were carrying some Irish grievances towards solution. The decade before the famine witnessed the culmination of O'Connell's struggle to achieve Repeal of the Union. To that end the Catholic peasantry was organized, the commercial classes drawn in, and a substantial sum of money was raised. O'Connell's revival of the Repeal movement after 1839 drew more ordinary people into a political agitation than had any previous circumstance.⁸⁹ O'Connell's later activities

⁸⁸Broeker, Rural Disorder in Ireland, 13.

⁸⁹Woodham-Smith, The Great Hunger, 16.

did not so much influence Irish emigrants to Nova Scotia before emigration as follow them and involve their sympathies through Repeal Associations. 'The Liberator' "never forgot the excesses of the French Revolution . . . and remained loyally attached to the Crown and his ideals of peace . . . In the end, however, he found that he could preserve it [the peace]⁹⁰ only at the price of his own popularity."

O'Connell retained the regard of the masses and the clergy, but some others defected to the ranks of Young Ireland. What is significant is that O'Connell's methods and attitudes had such a hold on his followers that most of the clergy and people remained deaf to the call of Young Ireland.⁹¹ The emigrant Irish, not exposed personally to the provocations of the period after 1840 in Ireland, came to Nova Scotia solidly convinced that O'Connell's was the preferable attitude towards the problem of political reform. Adams observed that

the emigrants of 1815-45 and their children,

⁹⁰Garnier, 127. O'Connell showed the inarticulate Irish that the law was not only an instrument of repression but that abstract principles of justice existed behind it, principles that could be used to serve Irish purposes. Cf., R. Dudley Edwards, A New History of Ireland (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 162.

⁹¹Garnier, 135.

trained in the spirit and methods of O'Connell, were anti-Fenian . . . This division of Irish America into moderate hostility and rabid Anglophobia . . . had probably produced a more effective propaganda against England than either group alone could have done. The moderates have given the Irish cause some standing with thinking people, while the fire-eaters have roused the unthinking and driven a spur into the sides of the pacific.⁹²

Whatever their reasons for coming across the Atlantic, and wherever they went to settle, certain characteristics of Ireland's demographic profile were reproduced among the emigrants. Adams found that the populous farming class, somewhat higher than the meanest peasantry, but lower than the gentry, contributed the bulk of emigrants before 1815, and probably down to 1830.⁹³ This was hardly surprising, seeing that the Irish census of 1831 showed that 90% of the people were primarily engaged in agriculture and related work.⁹⁴ Until 1830 or even 1835 the typical emigrant was a small farmer, generally poor and not skilled even as a farmer, yet proud of his independence. In America his only recourse was to take work as an unskilled labourer. His knowledge of the English language and the presence of friends in the country facilitated his transition to a better job after a time. "The new emigrant was . . . hampered by . . . a character in which excess of joy and

⁹²Adams, 386-387.

⁹³Ibid., 34.

⁹⁴Ibid., 39.

gloom seemed equally unfortunate to the slower tempered Anglo-Saxon." ⁹⁵ We may suppose that there were many slightly enigmatic Hibernians among the pre-1838 Irish Haligonians.

Conclusion

Ireland of 1815-45 was a land in crisis. The country had too many people and was producing too many more. The English part of the 'United' Kingdom was ruining its Irish partner by its superior mechanization and its better methods of distribution. The haplessness, if not the hopelessness, of the Irish dilemma can be felt after a century and a half. Granted such a context we can admit the fortitude of the Irish people. The closet of their past, old and recent, was full of reasons to encourage emigration. Ireland was troubled, and the tensions increased after 1815. Either those in authority must make major social, political and economic changes, or the superfluous population must perish, emigrate, or remain to further lower the living standards of all Irish farm people in general.

Emigration became a widely popular choice among the alternatives. Government could avoid reform by encouraging and even assisting emigration of surplus rural labour. Landowners could enclose their lands more efficiently and reduce their poor rates by aiding their evicted

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Ibid., 238-239.

tenantry to leave home. The people themselves, frightened, too numerous, overcrowded on tiny holdings, grew into acceptance of the idea of leaving home. The pangs of leaving the old familiar surroundings were eased, first by seasonal migration to England followed by a return home, then by chain movement patterns of emigration to places where friends and relations already had gone before, and finally by the sustaining spiritual presence of the Roman Catholic priesthood. The Maritimes were available to Irish emigrants because of fishing vessels going to Newfoundland, and because of the increasing availability of transportation on timber ships going to the Miramichi. Halifax was one of the ports to which ships regularly went. Halifax got its Irish, not in a sudden rush for sensational reasons, but as an accretion of stragglers who happened to get there.

Most of the Irish coming to Halifax arrived before the Great Famine of 1846-49. These emigrants were country people, usually of very modest means; Catholics who trusted the authority of the priest and the eloquence of O'Connell, but no one else. It would require a great adjustment for the Irish and for their hosts if these people were to become anything more than a transplanted Irish problem on a new shore. Could Halifax and the Irish Catholics come to terms with one another?

II - THE DEVELOPING IRISH COMMUNITY IN HALIFAX TO 1838

Numbers of Irish were making their several ways towards Halifax during the quarter century following the end of the Napoleonic Wars. They would diversify and challenge the host community, while at the same time be obliged to adapt themselves to the circumstances in which they found themselves. To understand these aspects of the Irish settlement, we must scrutinize the reasons the Irish people had for gathering in communities such as Halifax. It also mattered greatly whether or not the Irish were a new ingredient in the community. What was the Nova Scotia to which the Irish came? What was its style of government, what was its economic situation, and what developments had its people already undergone? This chapter will examine the Irish presence in Halifax through the years prior to the mounting of the campaign for responsible government.

The Urban Concentration

A remarkable fact about the Irish immigration is that these predominantly farming people did not continue their traditional occupation in America. Only about ten per cent of them went on the land. Any study of the Irish in North America has sooner or later to attempt an explanation of this strange phenomenon. The matter resolves itself into several elements, each of which is to be considered in turn: experiences, poverty, personal qualities, and the situation in the host environment into which the settler first arrived from Ireland.

The experiences through which an emigrant group had passed made the most profound impression on them. Each new batch of arrivals in an eastern port of North America carried in its collective and individual consciousness memories of what they had come from and of what they themselves were. Even before the Great Famine, many of the Irish were "more interested in escaping from Europe than in what faced them in America."⁹⁶ What terrors could a crowded city slum offer an Irish immigrant family that had scraped its last few shillings together to get away from an exhausted patchwork quilt of tiny fields and grinding poverty? The Irish had reached that crucial point where they preferred the devil they did not know to him they knew. Some had come from districts where farming had been accompanied by unrest, uncertainty and violence. They turned their backs on the soil to live in lively cities. Their ignorance of improved or large scale farming soon defeated many of those who did start by taking up a piece of land. In the Nova Scotian situation an experienced witness, Titus Smith, observed that "most of those who were farmers had been accustomed to land which required a different mode of cultivation so that they are often necessarily somewhat awkward at their business."⁹⁷

⁹⁶Handlin, Boston's Immigrants . . . , 37.

⁹⁷P.A.N.S., R.G. 1, Vol. 380, 110 (Report to Sir John Wentworth, 1801).

When one considers the list of attainments that Thomas Haliburton, the author of 'Sam Slick', held to be necessary for a successful farming settler, Titus Smith's remarks look charitable. "In a new country," wrote Judge Haliburton, "the wants of the inhabitants are both numerous and indispensable, and . . . promote extraordinary ingenuity and industry. A Nova-Scotia farmer . . . can often construct the frame of his house, erect the chimney, make his imple-⁹⁸ments of husbandry, or if occasion require, shoe his horse." Where this left the ordinary Irishman can well be imagined. His usual house had been turf and thatch and in Nova Scotia where was he to find either, afford their cartage, or hire the help? The typical Irish immigrant had never shod a horse, let alone owned one. Unskilled in the ways of life in a new countryside, whose climate was much harder than that of Ireland, can anyone be surprised that the Irish immigrants had few among them "willing to adopt the . . . difficult expedient of attempting to farm wilderness land without capital"?⁹⁹

Their experiences both at home and in the new environment played a large part in convincing the Irish to avoid the risks and hazards of breaking new soil as farmers.

⁹⁸Thomas C. Haliburton, An Historical and Statistical Account of Nova Scotia (Halifax: Joseph Howe, 1829), II, 294.

⁹⁹W.S. MacNutt, The Atlantic Provinces (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1965), 157.

Part of the story is that their own poverty confined most Irish to the cities where they had landed. As Handlin expressed it in regard to Boston, there were essential conditions required before any large immigrant group would remain there. Among them, he felt, was poverty. The immigrants "must have so little mobility that . . . they could not go elsewhere because poverty deprived them of the means, and despondence of the desire."¹⁰⁰ Halifax was no closer to other destinations than was Boston; rather the contrary.

Yet there were some stages or degrees of life between pioneering in the wilderness and huddling almost at wharveside in urban concentration. One remove from sullen dejection and destitution would be an apparent move from one urban cluster to another, with only the name of the community being changed. "From Halifax and St. John's 'these debilitated, half-starved human-beings' wandered down the coast . . . until they reached a large city — usually Boston — where charitable institutions would shelter them."¹⁰¹ Halifax was an exporter in the sense Handlin describes in this remark, and it appears that this traffic had the effect of raising the average level of those who remained in Halifax, by removing the less skilled types of people.

¹⁰⁰Handlin, Boston's Immigrants, 37.

¹⁰¹Ibid., 50.

The most noteworthy features of this onward migration are its scope and its occupational distribution. By taking family groups from baptism records of Halifax Catholic churches for 1827-1847 a sampling of 240 families was obtained. Records of marriage and burial, and census returns of later in the century were then checked against these family groups. Allowance was made that some names were too common to permit their later identification. It was found that of all the Irish Catholic civilian family groups once present in Halifax, nearly half subsequently departed. A few left the city but remained within the province, and one returned to Ireland. The proportions work out to the following percentages with respect of families arriving in Halifax after 1815, and represented in the baptism registers between 1827 and 1847:

- (a) remained in Halifax at least until death of parent generation...116 (48.3%)
- (b) left Halifax, but remained within Nova Scotia.12 (5.0%)
- (c) left Halifax, apparently for destinations outside Nova Scotia...112 (46.7%)

As to the occupational groups who left, there are two slender sources of data, which probably indicate the general trend. First, an effort was made to determine the ultimate fate of Irish heads of family in the 1838 census of Halifax. Those who evidently left this area included 41 names beginning with letters A through E, people who lived here in 1838 but were gone by 1850. Second, the records of the Charitable Irish Society carry notations

behind the names of those who left the Society. If they went to the United States an entry was made to that effect. There were 27 such departures between 1838 and 1850. It may be added that in none of these cases (the register sample of 240, the census sample of 41, and the Society total departure of 27 members), are names repeated. By occupation, the 68 census and Society departures break down as follows:

Unknown occupation...	18	occupation known...	50	(on which percentages are based)
Small business.....	7			(14%)
storekeepers.....	2			
tavernkeepers....	4			
trader.....	1			
Artisan and Farming.....	11			(22%)
carpenters.....	2			
farmer.....	1			
fisherman.....	1			
gunsmith.....	1			
painter.....	1			
rigger.....	1			
rope maker.....	1			
tailors.....	3			
Unskilled.....	32			(64%)
labourers.....	31			
truckman.....	1			

Two other very small indications of trends can be cited from the evidence examined. In the case of 11 men of the 68, destinations are known. Of these, five went to New York, three each to Chicago and Boston. Of the 68 departures, two -- one trader and one shopkeeper -- returned and stayed in Halifax. It is apparent from the evidence that significant numbers of Irish were passing through Halifax, 1815-1850. Those who were leaving were most often labourers, although a substantially smaller number of artisans and shopkeepers also left. The better qualified

arrivals in Halifax tended to find attractive opportunities there, and the lure of larger cities in the United States was not yet strong enough to attract men with trades.¹⁰² environment. For pecuniary reasons the Irish were obliged to seek homes and work in urban environments, often enough in a series of cities. In addition, urban society offered more opportunity for social contact. "The gregariousness, which is so noticeable a feature of Irish character, accords ill with pioneer life" ¹⁰² The pattern of small-holding in Ireland had left countrymen within sight and sound of neighbours' cottages and society. North American land systems, with few exceptions, did not allow the settlers' homes to be drawn into cosy proximity as a friendly hamlet or village. Often enough they deposited the settler behind a hill, or dense woodland separated him from his fellows. ¹⁰³ Many Irishmen could not live in such isolation. By staying in towns they avoided at least this particular problem. of Halifax had the further inducement for the Irish of a pre-existing Irish community that had roots as old as the town itself. ¹⁰³ This encouraged the chain movement pattern of growth noted in the previous chapter. Nephews crossed to join uncles, and younger brothers to 'help out' older brothers. ¹⁰³ with a few shillings to his name, had already

¹⁰² Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration . . . , 341.

¹⁰³ Infra.

The fourth factor that inclined the Irish to cling so generally to urban areas varied from place to place. This was the set of circumstances obtaining in the host environment. Haliburton emphasized of Halifax that the "English statute, requiring a service of seven years as a qualification to exercise a trade, is not in force here, and every person is at liberty to apply his talents as he may find most agreeable or lucrative." The new arrival must have imagined an alluring prospect once he had discovered this fact! A man who had probably farmed without the least knowledge of science, and had raised nothing but potatoes and an annual pig, came into Nova Scotia and found that he could practice whatever craft he chose to put his hand to. The temptation to branch out into one or other of the trades that required skill, tools and experience would have been a great lure, to which almost inevitably some would be drawn. And where better to practice the skills of the carpenter or painter, tinsmith or glazier, than in a town where, at least in theory, the custom could be found and the money minted by each new day's labour? Of course this euphoric vision quickly faded in the face of reality, but often enough the Irish rustic who had got his passage and arrived with a few shillings to his name, had already

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Haliburton, History of Nova Scotia, II, 294.

108 Ibid., 341.

laid out the money in purchasing the tools of his newly-chosen craft. More important for our purpose, the Irishman had opted himself into an urban context.

In 1830 Nova Scotia changed its land policy. Previously, lands had been granted gratis, but as of 1830, except for military pensioners, settlers were expected to buy their land.¹⁰⁵ The price could be small and still discourage most of the Irish arrivals, who, thanks to one or other of the previous reasons, were already beginning to feel apprehensive about taking up land.

Next to farmers the most numerous group in Ireland and among the emigrants was that composed of the artisans.¹⁰⁶ Once in America both classes ended up in much the same situation: unskilled labour in construction camps, in building of factories, on the streets and the docks, or in the mills¹⁰⁷ --wherever brawn was the primary need." In time, some few of these wage-earners amassed the means to open small shops which catered, more often, to their fellow Irishmen in the character of grocers, tailors, and shoemakers.¹⁰⁸ Both in the United States and British North

¹⁰⁵P.A.N.S., R.G. 1, Vol. 68, doc. 27, Goderich to Maitland, 7 Mar 1831. This policy was originated in Britain and was designed to deter the settlement of immigrants as freeholders.

¹⁰⁶Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration. . . , 59.

¹⁰⁷Ibid., 340. *History of Nova Scotia*, II, 298.

¹⁰⁸Ibid., 341.

America the mass of immigrant Irish became part of the urban working class.¹⁰⁹

The concentration of Irish within the capital city of Halifax and its small hinterland (e.g., Dartmouth, Bedford Basin, the western shore of the Harbour as far as Sambro, and along the adjacent coast to Prospect) was impressive. As many as 80% of all Irish Catholics in Nova Scotia lived in the town and county of Halifax in 1827. The census that year reported 20,400 Catholics. If most of those in Pictou and Sydney were Scots (ca.8500) and most of those in Annapolis, Shelburne and Cumberland were Acadians (ca.4700), we are left with 7200 Catholics, of which 5785 were in Halifax county and town. Except for Chezzetcook, the majority of these were Irish. This leaves only about 1500 Irish Catholics for the rest of the province. These were mainly farming in Cape Breton and Antigonish, or fishing along the Atlantic coast of the colony.¹¹⁰

The Catholics had Irish priests regularly in only three places before 1830, and of these only Manchester (Guysborough Co.) was outside of Halifax County. After 1840, three other locations had Irish Catholic priests: Windsor, Mainadieu, and Liverpool. While not conclusive,

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., 342.

¹¹⁰ Haliburton, History of Nova Scotia, II, 298.

this evidence further indicates the degree of urban concentration of Nova Scotia's Irish Catholic population. This situation did not change significantly until the 1850's when the coming of the railway spread a thin band of Irish into new parts of the province.

The Irish in Halifax before 1830

Halifax could always claim to be an urban community, although its population at times consisted in little more than the employees and the hangers-on of the civil and military authorities, with a sprinkling of merchants. It had always had an Irish presence. Any notion that Irish immigration after 1815 was a novelty in Halifax must collapse in the face of the evidence. It took a while for the Irish to grow to the status of a community, but Irishmen were a feature of Halifax from its foundation.

The passenger lists of Cornwallis' ships and the early victualling lists for Halifax contain names that are Irish. In 1752, fifty-three heads of family with 253 persons in their families were at or near Halifax. Though 253 persons among 4248 was a mere six per cent, the Irish element was obviously larger, since many were servants within households whose heads were not Irish. Some of these early Irish Haligonians were "indentured servants from Newfoundland

¹¹¹ Belcher's Farmer's Almanac...1831-1843, passim.

¹¹² Thomas B. Akins, "History of Halifax City," Collections of the N.S.H.S., VIII (1895), 246-261.

or Virginia seeking to escape the hard obligations to which they were contracted."¹¹³ Another suggestion of a larger Irish group in Halifax is the remark by 'J.B.' in his 'Letter to a Noble Lord' in 1756. 'J.B.' claimed that the "common dialect spoke at Halifax is wild Irish."¹¹⁴ Another early observer, the Rev. Dr. Stiles of Boston, stated in 1760 that Halifax had nearly 3,000 people, "one third of which are Irish, and many of them Roman Catholics."¹¹⁵ Some corroboration of his estimate comes from statistics collected in 1767. Halifax and its environs then contained 3,022 people of whom 667 were willing to admit to being Roman Catholics, and 853 had been born in Ireland.¹¹⁶ By discounting 200 Acadians from the Catholic total, it appears there were about 467 Catholic Irish officially in Halifax. Because the law had anti-Catholic provisions, there would be likely some concealed Catholics. An estimated Irish and Catholic population of 500 to 600 (15-20%) seems credible.

¹¹³ MacNutt, The Atlantic Provinces, 54.

¹¹⁴ Quoted in ibid.

¹¹⁵ Haliburton, II, 12-13.

¹¹⁶ D. Allison, "A General Return of Townships . . . 1767," N.S.H.S., VII (1888), chart facing 56.

Evident In 1776, a valuation of real estate in Halifax showed there were 360 property owners in town. Of these about 30 were certainly Irish and Catholic, and others may have been. In a period when they were supposedly oppressed by penal restrictions on land ownership, the Catholics comprised as much as eight or ten per cent of the landed proprietors in the capital of the colony! The proportions did not change much after the penal acts were relaxed, since a poll tax in 1792-93 showed 1051 names, of which 99 were those of Irish Catholics--about nine per cent of the total.

This latter document gives us some idea of the social standing of the Catholic Irish community because it has eight 'classes' of people, with the capitation levied in accordance with one's 'class'. All the Catholic Irish fell within four 'classes', and we can group by those rather than list all eight 'classes'. The four were:

- (a) tax 10s. on owners of £500 real property, wages above £60 (1) professionals (0), merchants (3), shopkeepers (4)high.....8
- (b) tax 5s. on large farmers (1), masters or mates (1), master workmen or artisans (12)..middle...14
- (c) tax 2s.6d. on fishermen (0) and small farmers (1)
- (d) tax 1s. on all other males above the age of 21 (76).....low.....77

117 P.A.N.S., R.G.1, Vol. 411, doc.7.

118 Ibid., Vol. 444, 445.

120 Terrence M. Punch, "Vills of Irish Interest in the Probate Registry at Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada, The Irish Ancestor, 1, 2 (Dublin, 1969), 89-95.

Evidently the Irish Catholics occupied a modest place in the community. A few were master tradesmen, and even fewer were businessmen. The bulk were unpropertied and unskilled workers.

The penal laws mentioned earlier dated from 1758 when, in the wake of the Acadian deportation and during the Seven Years' War, the Council framed severe enactments against Roman Catholicism. "Other measures were passed in 1759, so that members of this unfortunate denomination might have no priests, might not hold land, teach school, or even act as guardians of a minor who had a Protestant relation."¹¹⁹ Yet the government assisted Abbé Maillard, a French-speaking priest, and his successors financially and in making facilities available to them. Toleration was justified by the argument that the missionaries kept the Indians quiet and away from French influences.

Another indication both of the presence of Irish Catholics in Halifax, and that the penal laws were largely paper regulations in Nova Scotia, may be seen in the Halifax probate records. The first two will books are for the years 1749-1784, and contain the wills of least fifty Irishmen, of whom about thirty were Roman Catholic.¹²⁰ Among the

¹¹⁹Norah Story, "The Church and State 'Party' in Nova Scotia, 1749-1851," N.S.H.S., XXVII (1947), 36.

¹²⁰Terrence M. Punch, "Wills of Irish Interest in the Probate Registry at Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada," The Irish Ancestor, I, 2 (Dublin, 1969), 89-95.

civilians these Irish Catholics were mainly labourers, artisans, traders, and fishermen-mariners. This accords with the traditional belief that Halifax's early Irish were fishermen and servants, ex-servicemen, mariners and some Loyalists. There are several wills of retired and active members of the military, while Catholic Irish found in will book three (1785-1816) include a scattering whose survivors or affiliations mentioned in their wills are clearly eighteenth century New Englanders, New Yorkers, and Philadelphians. The volume of real property bequeathed indicates that the penal laws could be ignored with impunity.

By the 1780's the Roman Catholics of Halifax—all Irish names appear on their petitions—sought official relaxation of some of the penal restrictions. Relief in 1783 was followed at once by construction of a Catholic church in Halifax. "Although Roman Catholics were numerous in the Maritimes and a few priests were scattered throughout the area, the . . . Church remained highly disorganized until the Bishop of Quebec appointed the energetic Irishman, Edmund Burke, as his vicar general for the region in 1801."

¹²¹ P.A.N.S., R.G. 1, Vol. 222, doc. 91, 92, 93.

¹²² John Bartlet Brebner, The Neutral Yankees of Nova Scotia ("Carleton Library"; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1969), 169-170.

¹²³ John S. Moir, Church and State in Canada 1627-1867 ("Carleton Library"; Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1967), 46.

Burke was instrumental, for instance, in setting up Catholic educational facilities in Halifax. One of his foundations, after a precarious and sporadic career, formed the basis of Saint Mary's University, Halifax.

An Irish population which had a sense of community and identity existed at Halifax by the mid-1780's. On 17 January 1786 they founded the Charitable Irish Society, supported by a good contingent of army and navy officers of Irish background. Of the 136 men who signed the original articles, 53 were Roman Catholics, 43 were Protestant, and 40 cannot be classified on the basis of present information, though the larger part were likely to have been Protestants. This Society was the focus of Irish consciousness in the town for many years, and still exists as a society.

One final indication of early Irish strength in Halifax is found in the records of St. Peter's Catholic Church, 1801-1830. From 1801-to 1817 there were 192 marriages involving 245 natives of Ireland. Better than half of those not born in Ireland had Irish names but had been born in Nova Scotia, most of them presumably between 1775 and 1795. The number of Irish increased rapidly so that between and 1825, 341 natives of Ireland were married in 248 weddings.

¹²⁴Herbert Leslie Stewart, The Irish in Nova Scotia (Kentville: Kentville Publishing Co., Limited, 1949), 30-31.

¹²⁵Terrence M. Punch, "Some Irish Immigrant Weddings in Nova Scotia 1801-1817," The Irish Ancestor, VI, 2 (Dublin, 1974), 101-112.

¹²⁶Ibid., VII, 1 (1975), 39-54.

Clearly the post-war boom in immigration had begun, and at the end of the decade was greater. There were 473 Irish-born people married in 283 services between 1826 and 1830 at St. Peter's.¹²⁷ The Irish were decidedly concentrating in Halifax, but they were not a new element in its population. They were an augmentation to a group that was already in place.

The Host Environment to 1838

So much of the economic, intellectual and political life of Nova Scotia was centred upon Halifax that a brief overview of these aspects of Nova Scotian society in the early nineteenth century is offered. This will enable us to examine the Irish community as it was at the end of the 1830's, and to do so within a setting both of the Irish background and of the host environment, Halifax town. By showing what the town had to offer, we may see some of the reasons why the Irish emigrants came here.

The old town of Halifax was built on the east side of a peninsula, on the slope of a hill rising from the west side of the harbour. It was about two miles long and nearly half a mile in breadth. The Scots visitor, John M'Gregor, in 1832, thought

¹²⁷ Ibid., VII, 2 (1975), 104-120. (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood,

¹²⁹ William Scarth Moorson, Letters from Nova Scotia (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830), 12.

The appearance of Halifax from the water . . . is prepossessing and peculiar. The front of the town is lined with wharfs, alongside of which vessels of all sizes . . . are incessantly discharging or loading their cargoes. Warehouses rise over the wharfs, as well as in different parts of the town; and dwelling-houses and public buildings rear their heads over each other as they stretch along, and up the sides of the hill. The spires of different churches; . . . the signal-posts on Citadel Hill; the different batteries; the variety of style in which the houses are built, some . . . of brick and stone, intermixed with those built of wood; rows of trees showing themselves in different parts of the town; . . . the merchant ships . . . the wooded and rocky scenery of the background . . . strike . . . the view of a stranger when sailing up the harbour.¹²⁸

The English visitor, William Moorsom, about three years earlier was struck by these things, and also noted that the "presence of a garrison . . . and the residence of those attached to the seat of the provincial government, give to Halifax an animation . . ." ¹²⁹ This animation was partly the bustle of business, as between 1825 and 1832 Halifax was enjoying a period of all-out progress.

Halifax was becoming a fair-sized community, not large in numbers, but clearly something beyond the civilian catering staff of the military garrison and naval establishment. The census of 1827 reported a population of 14,439 people, 493 swine, 458 horned cattle, 399 horses, and 39 sheep. There were three major religious denominations, and

¹²⁸ John M'Gregor, British America (Edinburgh: W. Blackwood, 1832), II, 73-74.

¹²⁹ William Scarth Moorsom, Letters from Nova Scotia (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1830), 12.

a scattering of others. Leading the way were the Anglicans with 6,021 adherents (41.7%), followed by the Roman Catholics with 3,627 (25.1%), then by the Church of Scotland with 2,900 of the elect (20.1%). This group was the largest sect in the province at large; its relative weakness in Halifax was due to the fact the Scots were less numerous than the English or Irish there. The town had 1,164 Methodists (8.1%), 680 Baptists (4.7%), and 47 others (0.3%). There had been a population increase in Halifax district of 50.8% since the census of 1817. Evidently, immigration was running high at this period. Since there was no religious or ethnic return for the town again for a generation, comparisons are not possible.

Haliburton's History of Nova Scotia provides some idea of the size of the trade carried on at the port of Halifax in the late 1820's. A breakdown of the value of trade at Halifax for the year 1828 by imports and exports is the following:

Destination/ Source	Imports (% of whole) (£)	Exports (% of whole) (£)	Surplus (Deficit)
British Isles	297,010	7,640	(289,370)
United States	217,933	5,790	(212,143)
Br. West Indies	81,439	126,431	44,992
Br. North America	111,705	80,371	(31,334)
All Others	25,305	29,820	4,515
Total Traffic	733,392	246,852	(486,540)

¹³⁰The 1827 census data is from Haliburton, History of Nova Scotia, II, 33, 298. The Halifax district included modern Halifax, Colchester and Pictou counties.

¹³¹Haliburton, diagram between 388-389.

¹³³Peter Burroughs, British Attitudes towards Canada 1822-1849 (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall of Canada, Ltd., 1971, 23).

Clearly if that was the entire story, the mercantile community of Halifax would have ceased business in self-preservation. Halifax, however, had other credits to her account. Halifax businesses had clients in the outports who provided timber and new vessels to the British Isles, and was earning profits from high-seas freight and marine insurance. The imperial government was still spending large amounts of money in Halifax, both in the civilian and military sectors. British agencies, such as the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, were spending an average of £11,482 per annum in Nova Scotia, much of it in Halifax. It needs also to be recalled that what Halifax imported was not entirely consumed there, but was carried to other places in the province, so that the cost of the goods plus a profit returned to Halifax merchants who imported commodities into Nova Scotia. This was the situation in the late 1820's, but it had come about over many years and through many vicissitudes. During the Napoleonic War, Halifax advanced in wealth as a supplier of raw materials to the British war effort and industry. Forest production was especially essential to the Royal Navy when France curtailed access to the Baltic as a

¹³²David Alexander Sutherland, "The Merchants of Halifax, 1815-1850: A Commercial Class in pursuit of Metropolitan Status" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1975), 160.

¹³³Peter Burroughs, British Attitudes towards Canada 1822-1849 (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall of Canada, Ltd., 1971), 23.

source of supply. The war ended in 1815, leaving the 'lower provinces' faced with a period of economic adjustment. After 1815 a depression set in which involved "a decline in trade and industry caused by transition from war to peace, stressed in Nova Scotia by crop failures, by an agriculture devoted to stock raising rather than grain and staple food production, and by the weakness of a commerce heavily based on the production of primary commodities."¹³⁴ Beamish Murdoch described the 'progress of the country' as being 'thoroughly paralyzed'.¹³⁵ For the next few years there was a spell of pessimism in Halifax business circles. It was not only the loss of the wartime military establishment that Murdoch described; it was also a loss of the buoyant sense of getting somewhere that had grown up during the war years. The period after 1815 was one of doubt in Halifax. T.C. Haliburton was a contemporary witness to the state of affairs in Halifax. As a satirical writer, the creator of 'Sam Slick' sought to stir Nova Scotians out of their complacency. We may accept his testimony as being that of a realist. Haliburton believed that Halifax had shared in a common shock of transition from war to peace, but that the

¹³⁴ Alton A. Lomas, "The Industrial Development of Nova Scotia, 1830-1854" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Dalhousie University, 1950), 3.

¹³⁵ Beamish Murdoch, A History of Nova Scotia, or Acadie (Halifax: James Barnes, 1867), III, 489.

period of embarrassment and difficulty was not such "as to induce either ruin or distress."¹³⁶ As one writer has noted, the "persistence of a large and influential merchant community in postwar Halifax confirmed the fact that, despite the dislocation wrought by demobilization, Halifax did not decline into a stagnant garrison outpost after 1815."¹³⁷ Haliburton claimed that most of the province's manufactures had been commenced after 1816, and provided a list of goods being produced in Nova Scotia in 1829: ale, porter, cabinet work, soap and candles, combs and brushes, chocolate, glue, leather,¹³⁸ linseed oil, flour, paper, cordage, snuff, and refined sugar. This flattering portrait need not conceal the fact that these were new industries, many of them run on a small scale and with precariously slender capital. The backbone of the economy was not manufacturing, but production of primary staples and maritime trade.

A mid-Victorian analysis of the Nova Scotia economy concludes by saying:

The products which have hitherto formed the largest portion of the exports of Nova Scotia have been drawn from its forests and fisheries.

136 Haliburton, History of Nova Scotia, II, 19.

137 Sutherland, "The Merchants of Halifax," 82.

138 Haliburton, II, 19.

Mineral substances,—particularly coal and gypsum,—live stock, and agricultural products are also exported largely . . . The principal export to Great Britain consists of timber . . . and of ships built in the province. In return for these, there are imported from the United Kingdom manufactures of every description . . . The West Indies have long been the principal market for the fish of Nova Scotia, which receives in return produce the growth of those countries. To the United States are exported coal, gypsum, wood, fish . . . The imports from that country consist principally of breadstuffs and of American manufactures, especially of a cheap description of furniture and cabinetwork, carriages, and agricultural implements.¹³⁹

Halifax was the entrepôt, the great port of entry for Nova Scotia, even for the 'lower Provinces'. It was "the centre of the commercial, financial, and trading activity of the whole province. It faced the Atlantic seaboard and its economic life was bound up intimately with the commerce of the Atlantic world."¹⁴⁰ People who knew Halifax were agreed that, by the early 1800's,

army and navy contractors had been overshadowed as a source of merchant profits by the income derived from the complex network of commercial operations which linked sources of supply with markets from the St. Lawrence to the Caribbean and from New England to Britain and foreign Europe. In short, the Nova Scotian capital was acknowledged to be as much a commercial entrepôt as a military base.¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ J. Willoughby, The Land of the Mayflower; or, the Past and Present of Nova Scotia (Halifax: James Barnes, 1860), 35-36.

¹⁴⁰ W. Ross Livingston, Responsible Government in Nova Scotia (Iowa City: University of Iowa, 1930), 30.

¹⁴¹ Sutherland, "The Merchants of Halifax," 2.

Nor was the business of Halifax devoted simply to the transshipment of goods. Halifax had a meat, a vegetable, and a fish market, which were well supplied. The fish market was especially renowned "on account of the quality and variety of fish; the low prices at which it is sold, and the importance of the establishment to the poorer class . . ."¹⁴² There was a rising production of some consumer needs. Most of the snuff and chocolate, and the like, mentioned by Haliburton was intended for domestic consumption. These productions indicate that at least part of the Halifax economy was engaged in pre-industrial manufacturing. There was no industrialization as such during the 1830's and 1840's in Halifax.

From 1825 until about 1832, Halifax enjoyed an exciting economic growth.¹⁴³ Then, in 1833-34, disaster struck. "Crops failed two years in succession; supposedly-sound Halifax firms collapsed; property values fell by as much as fifty per cent; and paper money flooded the countryside. The final blow came with a massive epidemic of cholera . . ."

¹⁴⁴ This period of crisis in the 1830's, though temporary, did coincide with and reinforce a movement for political reform in Nova Scotia. Nonetheless, the overall trend

¹⁴² Haliburton, History of Nova Scotia, II, 15.

¹⁴³ Sutherland, "The Merchants of Halifax," 158.

¹⁴⁴ David Alexander Sutherland, "J.W. Johnston and the Metamorphosis of Nova Scotian Conservatism" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Dalhousie University, 1967), 10.

at Halifax remained essentially expansionist into the 1840's. While economic trends in Ireland played a major part in influencing emigration, economic conditions in Halifax largely determined the volume of emigrants that the community retained. Without industrialization, Halifax could not offer as much employment as it might otherwise.

Urban economic expansion offered some attractions to Irish immigrants in the two decades after 1815. Halifax was accessible and routes to Newfoundland and Miramichi brought immigrants into the general vicinity. The fact of a pre-existing Irish community gave an added incentive to those Irish emigrants who had relatives living in Halifax. The town had a number of new manufactures, and these, as well as trade and commerce and the presence of the military and civil government at Halifax, offered at least potential employment opportunities to newcomers. Three important sources of work for immigrants at or near Halifax were in operation after the mid-1820's. We know that there was extensive building and extension of the wharves on the waterfront, as well as the erection of warehouses and related construction, at least from 1828 to 1831.¹⁴⁵ From 1826 until the collapse of the project in 1831, the Shubenacadie Canal works required labourers, teamsters, stonemasons and carpenters.¹⁴⁶ The construction of a new fort commenced at

¹⁴⁵Sutherland, "The Merchants of Halifax," 182.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., 228.

Citadel Hill in 1828, and in 1829 civilian contracts placed £11,453 in the hands of those engaged in the work.¹⁴⁷ The work went on until 1857 or 1858, and thus was available for a generation. The quarrying, conveying, placing of stone; the levelling and cartage; the erection of the buildings; all these were labour-intensive, and absorbed a great many workers in ongoing work that needed workmen over and above the normal labour needs of the town. None of this was factory labour.

Demographic and economic factors would be of prime significance in deciding an immigrant would stay in Halifax or not. Other factors also played a part, however. The structure of government, especially the legal standing of those who were neither Anglo-Saxon nor Protestant, had some weight in the decision. This would be particularly true for those having enough skill or property to seek upward social mobility.

Nova Scotia was a British colony and it enjoyed certain of the institutions of a British country: courts of law, an elective body empowered to levy taxation, and a custom whereby the constitution existed mainly in the method of government rather than in rigidly defined compartments and institutions. In the American style of government a

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Harry Piers, The Evolution of the Halifax Fortress 1749-1928 (Halifax: P.A.N.S., 1947), 38.

J. Murray Beck, The Government of Nova Scotia (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), 101-102.

written document of constitution actually set out the doctrine of the division of powers, and detailed how the legislative, judicial, and executive functions were to be kept separate. Under a British system there was what the British liked to consider 'a gentlemen's agreement' about the allocation of powers. Britain in 1815 was really an oligarchy in which a small number of families controlled the government. It was personal and cumbersome, but it had worked fairly well for over a century.

The British notion of government enshrined an aristocratic tradition that was echoed to some extent in colonies such as Nova Scotia. The curiosity of Nova Scotia as a British political unit was that until the year 1838, there was only a single council, consisting of twelve members, which possessed both legislative and executive competence, and met behind closed doors. The same body had also some judicial functions. In 1838 this Council was dissolved and two were created in its place: a legislative council of 19 members, whose deliberations were to be open to the public; and an executive council of twelve members.

The divided councils were not answerable to the general population for what they did. Public opinion and public representatives in the lower house of the legislature could criticize, but could not overturn, the acts of the

appointed councillors. The style of government in the colony was 'representative' — that is, the adult males, or some of them, could select representatives for the district in which they lived. Members of the Assembly were there as spokesmen for a piece of geography (a county or a township) and were spoken of as 'the member for ____'. Assemblymen did not have the right to call the councillors to account for their actions. This was a departure from the British practice where, at least from Walpole's day, a council or cabinet was obliged to have the approval of the country's elected spokesmen in Parliament for its measures. With its inbuilt favouritism towards the established Church of England, and its anti-Catholic legislation, the government of colonial Nova Scotia in the eighteenth century had an inherent attitude of discrimination against the Catholic Irish. The Assembly had been elected by "any freeholder, twenty-one years of age, and not a 'Popish recusant' . . ." Catholics had to take an objectionable oath which effectively barred them from the political process. Catholics could vote after 1783, but none sat in the House for another forty years. This is not to say that all Roman Catholics could vote, since voting depended on ownership of some property, or at least renting real property to

a specified annual value. Because Catholics could do neither of those things officially until 1783 there was a lapse of time before they were able to exercise their rightful share at election time. Catholics had no right to sit in the Assembly until 1829.

Before 1830 there was little significant widespread agitation for fundamental political change in Nova Scotia. Dissentions were usually specific or personal. The reasons for this quiescence are not far to seek. It was not a case of wholesale contentment or prosperity under the old regime, so much as that the idea of popular power and rule had not penetrated to the mass of the people. Also a factor was the unfavourable attitude toward reform in England until the second quarter of the century. Tiny colonies tended to follow, not to lead, the motherland. Nova Scotia was under the rule of a colonial oligarchy and did not begin to stir against this narrow control until the fourth decade of the nineteenth century. A connection centred in Halifax, consisting of mercantile, official, military, and legal interests, favoured its own supporters and the quasi-official Church of England. It was loyal to itself and to the British connection, the

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W. Spavold, "Nova Scotia under the Administration of S. Terrence M. Punch, "The Halifax Connection: A Century of Oligarchy in Nova Scotia, 1749-1848" (unpublished M.A. thesis, St. Mary's University, 1972), 130.

John Garner, *The Franchise and Politics in British North America 1755-1867* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 142.

latter because the imperial government was the source of much of the means whereby appointed councillors kept their independence of the Assembly. Until the 1830's no Irish Catholic was part of the Council of Twelve, and very few were made justices of the peace, and thereby local magistrates.

Catholic During the 1820's two major developments took place with respect of the legal status of the Irish Catholics in Nova Scotia. In 1823, with significant and necessary Protestant support, Lawrence Kavanagh, an Irish Catholic, was allowed to take a seat in the Assembly by a special exercise of the prerogative. The official recognition of a Catholic's right to sit in a legislative body was delayed until it was granted by the British Parliament in the case of Daniel O'Connell in 1829.¹⁵¹ In 1827, R.J. Uniacke, Jr., M.L.A. for Cape Breton, and a man of Irish Protestant stock, presented the Assembly with a petition from the Catholics of Halifax, asking the House to request the Crown to remove the offensive declaration against transubstantiation (i.e., denial of the True Presence in the Eucharist). "This petition was the first overt political act of the Irish population of Halifax whose numbers were rapidly being augmented by immigration."¹⁵² Despite the reservations of a number of members,

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S.W. Spavold, "Nova Scotia under the Administration of Sir Colin Campbell" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Dalhousie University, 1953), 65.

152 John Garner, The Franchise and Politics in British North America 1755-1867 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 142.

the plea of the petition was eventually granted. The petition of 13 February 1827 sheds some light on what sort of Catholic Irish were to be found in Halifax during the period under consideration. There were 688 names on the petition which must have included almost every adult Catholic male in town.¹⁵³ This indicates nearly unanimous support for constitutional reform on behalf of their co-religionists. Another feature of the petition is the high level of literacy which it reveals. Only 96 of the 688 made their marks, and another 91 may have done so. The 91 dubious signatures are so awkwardly done that it would be making too much of the evidence to argue that those men could have done more than sign their names, which is not true literacy. Still, this means that at least 501 could sign their names well enough to be classified as literate. A literacy rate of between 73 and 86% was higher than in Ireland as of 1841.¹⁵⁴ It indicates both that the Halifax Irish had access to schooling, and that most of them had achieved some upward social mobility beyond the rank of peasant labourer. The major drawback to a new arrival might have been the oligarchy that controlled the city and the province. In that clique of men and among their hirelings

¹⁵³P.A.N.S., R.G. 1, Vol. 308, doc. 64. The 1827 census reported 3627 Catholics in town. If one in five was a male head of family, the 688 figure gives 3440, which is nearly all.

¹⁵⁴Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration, 218, reports that in 1841 the level of illiteracy in the four provinces of Ireland was 42% in Ulster, 48% in Leinster, 65% in Munster, 73% in Connacht. Halifax was at most 27% in 1827.

and dependents in minor posts, the Irish Catholic element was inconsiderable either absolutely or proportionately. Some of the Irishmen who came to Halifax between 1815 and 1835 would one day occupy some of those places; men such as John Tobin of Kilkenny, who would be a successful merchant and a Member of the Assembly; James Cochran from Longford, who succeeded in business and became a justice of the peace, an Assemblyman, and who would die a member of both the executive and legislative councils; Thomas Ring, who would be an alderman; the Kenny brothers, Thomas and Edward, the latter to end a lengthy career as a knight of the realm; Patrick Power of Waterford, who would be a member of Canada's Parliament, and long before that an active citizen of Halifax in a number of capacities. These men had three things in common: they were Irish Catholics, and they arrived in Halifax just after the end of the Napoleonic Wars, and they all succeeded in Nova Scotia. In the Halifax of the 1830's the opportunity was there and, after a lengthy struggle, some Irishmen scrambled or climbed to a position of importance in their adopted community.

Reaching across the war years and spanning the time from the Loyalist influx to the accession of Queen Victoria there was an unmistakable change in the character of Nova Scotia. A straggling garrison outpost at the end of the American Revolution, Nova Scotia was a maturing civilization five decades later.

J.B. Strong, 1867, 67.

B.C. Harvey, "The Intellectual Awakening of Nova Scotia," Dal. Rev., III (April 1933), 21.

The fivefold increase in population from 1784 to 1837 was accompanied by an accumulation of capital derived from a widening range of sources that included the increasingly effective utilization of natural products, skilled craftsmanship in the minor arts and in shipbuilding and privateering and commerce on the high seas. The navigators returned enriched in experience from abroad, and the merchants . . . were forced . . . to raise demands for economic and political reform. Correlated with this was the impulse to enlarge the means of intelligence through the establishment of schools, colleges, libraries, museums, newspapers, and magazines, and through public debate in the assembly.¹⁵⁵

D.C. Harvey narrowed the period of awakening from over fifty years to the years between 1812 and 1835. This was a time when "Nova Scotians as such were emerging, rubbing the sleep out of their eyes and facing their own problems, in various ways, but with discernment and energy. They were conscious that they were Nova Scotians: but they would have found it as difficult to conventionalize a type as we today find it difficult to define a Canadian."¹⁵⁶

The Irish inflow to Halifax largely coincided with this period of social adjustment, 1784-1837. Just as Nova Scotia was undergoing its most intensive growth, 1812-1835, so was that approximately the period of the greatest Irish immigration into Nova Scotia. Speaking of the general community, one author has chosen 1828 as the date by which settlement had been rounded out and "the period of social

¹⁵⁵ Alfred G. Bailey, "Creative Moments in the Culture of the Maritime Provinces," Dal. Rev., XXIX (Oct. 1949), 238. Calculations made in 1862 revealed that the province's population grew by 156.41% in 1784-1818, and 87.49% from 1818 to 1828, and again 29.93% from 1828 to 1837. Cf., R.G. Haliburton, The Past and the Future of Nova Scotia (Halifax: J.B. Strong, 1862), 67.

¹⁵⁶ D.C. Harvey, "The Intellectual Awakening of Nova Scotia," Dal Rev., XIII (April 1933), 21.

adjustment in a new environment was over." ¹⁵⁷ For the general population that was true, but what of the Irish? Had they much further to go than the rest? Let us try to portray the Irish Catholic community in Halifax at the time Queen Victoria took the throne.

The Halifax Irish Community 1836-41: A Profile

Three useful documents concerning the town of Halifax came into existence between 1836 and 1841. These provide considerable information about the community at the time. These items are the 1836 assessment, the 1838 census, and an 1841 census of Catholics. All three require interpretation if they are to tell their story in a fashion that will allow comparison with other data about Halifax then and later. In order to get the best out of these documents they are treated separately. When explanations and interpretations have been made for each as a separate entity, a few general conclusions can be offered to draw the three items together.

The 1827 petition by the Catholics of Halifax, previously mentioned, and the contemporary Roman Catholic church records both make it plain that nearly every member of that faith in Halifax at the time was either born in Ireland, or the descendent of such a person. The 1841

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Bailey, "Creative Moments," 238.

"Minute Book of the Gardens of St. Peter's Parish, 1801-1858", under date March 1841, n.p.

'census' figures are therefore virtually returns of the Irish Catholic population of the town.

An enumeration of the Catholic population of Halifax town and peninsula was made in March 1841 'by order of Government'.¹⁵⁸ This account did not give the names of those enumerated, but only reported the numbers of Catholics by age and sex in each of the sixteen 'wards' into which the clerks had divided the town. Numerically these districts ran from the south to the north of Halifax. In the downtown area, where the majority of the population was concentrated, the arrangement of 'wards' provides a pattern of ranges of blocks from the harbour to the Commons. This lets us form an impression of where the Catholic Irish were living in Halifax in the year of its incorporation. Taken in conjunction with the assessment data of 1836, an accurate idea may be gained of the geographical concentration of the Catholic Irish in Halifax town.

The findings of the 1841 enumeration are presented in Table IV. In this table the age and sex breakdown of the return has been omitted, as being unnecessary to the point being made, that about 1838-41, the Irish were living in areas of the town that can be pinpointed with considerable accuracy.

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Archdiocese of Halifax, Chancery Office:
"Minute Book of the Wardens of St. Peter's Parish, 1801-1858", under date March 1841, n.p.

Table IV - CENSUS OF CATHOLICS IN HALIFAX MARCH 1841

There were certain evident areas of high concentration of Irish Catholics. Apart from Gray's Lane and Maynard's Lots, these were all within the limits of eighteenth-century Halifax. Figure 2 shows these areas: Albemarle, Grafton, Upper and Lower Water, Salter streets, and Marchington's Lane. The waterfront area was the scene of commercial activity, and the stand of most of the town's several dozen truckmen, most of whom were Irish. Albemarle and Grafton streets afforded a large number of older cheap residential accommodations. This is indicated by the description of lots on those streets in deeds of the period: they were narrow and not very deep. On some lots 40' x 60' there were two houses, one in front of the other. There is little evidence that tenements of more than three floors were common in colonial Halifax. Even three-story structures were exceptional; two floors and an attic was the rule. Albemarle and Grafton streets were also handy Citadel Hill, where so much construction work was being undertaken, and many Irish among the workmen had need of housing within a short distance of their place of employment.

The population was still concentrated within the down-town, bounded by Jacob, Barrack and Bishop streets. Of 2327 occupied premises, only 786 were outside that district, and 417 of those were in the adjacent old north suburb, running up the harbourside within the rough rectangle of Jacob, Gottingen, North, and Upper Water streets. If the Irish were concentrated so was the general population.

Table IV - CENSUS OF CATHOLICS IN HALIFAX, MARCH 1841

'Ward'	Description	Catholic Population
1 & 2	All Halifax Peninsula south of modern Bishop & Spring Garden Rd.	568
3	Area bounded by Bishop, Barrington & Salter St. and the Harbour	317
4	Area bounded by Sackville & Salter St. and the Harbour	733
5	Area bounded by Prince & Sackville St. and the Harbour	675
6	Area bounded by George & Prince St. and the Harbour	369
7	Area bounded by Duke & George St. and the Harbour	482
8	Area bounded by Buckingham & Duke St. and the Harbour	468
9	Area bounded by Jacob & Buckingham St. and the Harbour	827
10	Area bounded by Cornwallis, Brunswick & Jacob St. and the Harbour	509
11	Area bounded by Gerrish, Brunswick & Cornwallis St. and the Harbour	487
12	Area bounded by North, Gottingen & Gerrish St. and the Harbour	197
13	Area bounded by North St., Kempt Rd., Basin and the Harbour	158
14	Area bounded by modern Robie, North, Gottingen & Cogswell St.	302
15	Spring Gardens, Fort Massey, Tower Rd. to the Arm	381
16	All Halifax Peninsula to west and north of these districts	209
	Sub-total	6682
	At North West Arm Quarries	95
	Persons giving their names	86
	in to the parish	69
	Total	6932
	In the Garrison	751
	Grand Total	7683

Notes:

- a) The average figures used in Figure 2 were obtained by taking the 'ward' figure above and dividing it by the number of blocks or areas within the 'ward'. Thus, 'ward' three had 317 people living in three such blocks or areas for an average block figure of 106, approximately.
- b) The sixteen 'wards' of the 1841 return can be grouped according to civic ward boundaries after incorporation.
- | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|--------|
| Civic ward.. | included Catholic 'census ward'.. | for a total of.. | people |
| 1 | 1,2,15 | | 949 |
| 2 | 3,4 | | 1050 |
| 3 | 5,6,7 | | 1526 |
| 4 | 8,9 | | 1295 |
| 5 | 10,11,14,16 | | 1507 |
| 6 | 12,13 | | 355 |
| | others | | 250 |

Relatively few Irish occurred in some streets and areas. Figure 2 shows some of these streets (Hollis, Granville, Barrington, Argyle, George and Prince). Outside the downtown, Irish were scarce in Hurd's Lane, Pedley's Fields, Lockman, Cornwallis, Gottingen and North streets, as well as on the north and south peninsula. By circumstances rather than by design, the Irish Catholics were spread unevenly in the community, but they were not segregated into Irish ghettos. They lived in much the same places as their socio-economic peers of other ethnic origins.

Figure 2 is a composite of information from the 1841 Catholic 'census' and of data contained in the 1836 assessment. The former arranges the city by 'wards', as indicated on the map by numbers and dashed lines. The latter lists by streets. The 1836 assessment was not unique (they were an annual affair), but no other exists of all of Halifax within two or three years of the 1838 census.¹⁵⁹ The Assessors' returns are presented in Table V under six headings:

(A) Street or Area; (B) Catholic Irish Occupants; (C) Irish Catholic Owners; (D) Total Number of Occupants; (E) Average Value of Premises; and (F) Wards in which located under the 1841 division of the city at incorporation. Those persons listed in (B) and (C) were Irish people found in Catholic records of baptism, marriage, or burial. The town assessment by street or area is presented in Table V for the entire town. The major part of the assessed area fell within the boundaries

¹⁵⁹P.A.N.S., R.G. 35, Series "A", Vol. 3, No. 12.

of the old town, and Figure 2 shows that part of Halifax, and illustrates that there were concentrations of Irish in certain parts of the community, though the pattern was not hard and fast.

The total assessment was £845,672, which averages out at £363.8.0 for each of the 2327 occupied premises. Those occupied by Irish Catholics were valued at £99,560, an average of £276.11.0 for each of the 360 premises. The total taxes came to £2960, an average of £1.5.5 per property. Total taxes levied on properties occupied by Irish were £348.9.2, an average of £0.19.4. It can be seen that Irish Catholics occupied 15.5% of the assessed real estate in Halifax in 1836, but paid only 11.8% of the taxes. This and the valuations indicate plainly that the Irish Catholics tended in general to live in premises that were less valuable than those of the general population, and that they possessed less wealth than their numbers justified. It is a picture of relative collective poverty.

By taking the average valuation of Irish-occupied property (£276.11.0), we may break down the premises to show those that were above and below the average for their own group, and the average for the general community.

Premises assessed above £1000...	8(
£750 - £999..	10(	above the average of Irish..108
£500 - £749..	23(	(of these 68 were also above the
£277 - £499..	67(	average for the town generally.
		Irish Average - £276.11.0
£101 - £276..	135(	below the average of Irish..252
under £100..	117(	(of these 292 were below the
		general average for the town.)

FIGURE 2 - LOCATION OF IRISH CATHOLICS IN HALIFAX, 1836-1841.

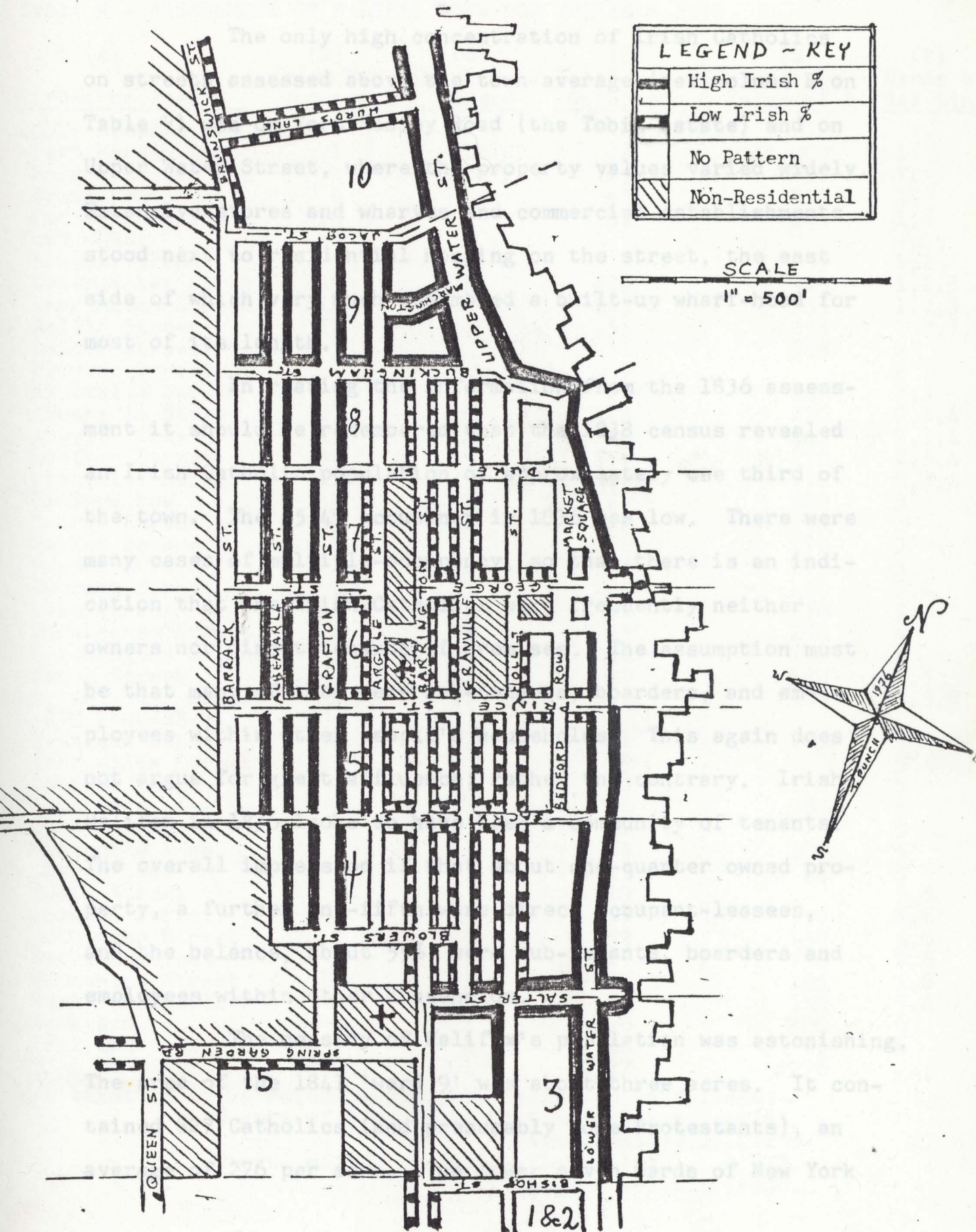


Table V - ASSESSMENT OF HALIFAX TOWN FOR THE YEAR 1836

The only high concentration of Irish Catholics on streets assessed above the town average (see column E on Table V) was on Fort Massey Road (the Tobin estate) and on Upper Water Street, where the property values varied widely. Extensive stores and wharves and commercial establishments stood next to residential housing on the street, the east side of which very much resembled a built-up wharf-head for most of its length.

In reading the information from the 1836 assessment it should be remembered that the 1838 census revealed an Irish Catholic population of approximately one third of the town. The 15.4% occupancy in 1836 was low. There were many cases of multiple-occupancy, so that there is an indication that the Irish Catholics were frequently neither owners nor direct tenants of premises. The assumption must be that many of them were sub-tenants, boarders, and employees within other people's households. This again does not argue for great affluence; rather the contrary. Irish Halifax in 1836 looks to have been a community of tenants. The overall impression is that about one-quarter owned property, a further one-fifth were direct occupant-leasees, and the balance, about 55%, were sub-tenants, boarders and employees within other households.

The density of Halifax's population was astonishing. The area of the 1841 'ward 9' was about three acres. It contained 827 Catholics (and presumably some Protestants), an average of 276 per acre. The lower seven wards of New York

Table V - ASSESSMENT OF HALIFAX TOWN FOR THE YEAR 1836

(A) Street or Area	(B) Irish R.C. Occupants	(C) Irish R.C. Owners	(D) Total No. of Occupants	(E) Average Value of B	(F) Wards by 1841 Line
SOUTH SUBURBS:					
Fort Massey Road	1	1	2	£4,000	1
Morris Street	2		15	250	1
South Peninsula	4	4	63	250	1
Pedley's Fields	10	9	61	160	1,2
TOWN CORE:					
Bishop Street	1	18	9	250	1,2
Lower Water Street	49	8	228	345	1,2,3
Barrington Street	12	8	145	365	1,2,3,4
Hollis Street	18	3	155	255	1,2,3,4
Salter Street	3		11	285	2
Blowers Street			9		2
Sackville Street	5	2	27	240	2,3
Albemarle Street	27	19	118	220	2,3,4
Argyle Street	13	1	114	245	2,3,4
Grafton Street	34	19	150	170	2,3,4
Granville Street	11	5	113	330	2,3,4
Bedford Row	8	3	44	300	3
George Street	1	1	16	50	3
Market Square	3		16	170	3
Prince Street	2	2	17	275	3
Barrack Street	4	3	54	190	3,4
Duke Street	5	3	22	330	3,4
Buckingham Street	4	2	15	250	4
Marchington's Lane	3	3	11	150	4
Jacob Street	1	1	20	180	4,5
Upper Water Street	81	41	317	385	4,5,6
NORTH SUBURBS:					
Maitland Street	7	7	41	100	5
Cornwallis Street			5		5
Commons Lots			22		5
Maynard's Lots	7	7	28	95	5
Hurd's Lane			2		5
Proctor's Lane	1	1	8	100	5
Gray's Lane	5	3	15	80	5
North Street			10		5,6
Lockman Street	4	3	79	150	5,6
Gottingen Street	7	6	82	150	5,6
Gerrish Street	4	3	27	170	5,6
Brunswick Street	12	7	122	185	5,6
North Peninsula	8	8	98	155	5,6
Dockyard	1	1	16	300	6
Dockyard Lane	2	2	10	65	6
TOTAL NUMBERS	360	204	2327	£276	...

The taxation to be raised was £2960, broken up as follows:-
 @ rate of 3/4 per £100..County rates...£1183.
 New cemetery....£200.
 @ rate of 3/7 per £100..Poor rates.....£1277.
 Pumps & wells....£300.

as late as 1850 had a density of 163.5 per acre, which is well below the Halifax figure,¹⁶⁰ although other Halifax 'wards' were close to the American figure--e.g., 'ward 5' averaged 169 persons per acre, and 'ward 3' came to about 160 persons per acre. But these figures are for Catholics alone.

The census of 1838 is the third useful document for describing the Irish in Halifax. Its usefulness consists in the fact that it lists heads of families (and these may be identified as Irish or not), and gives the occupation of each. Its major pitfall is numerical: it may have underestimated the town's population. Alternatively, the 1841 Catholic 'census' figure is too high. I believe the former proposition to be correct, and present my thinking on both counts. For the 1841 census of Halifax I will use the figure 6837 for the town's population. This is obtained by taking the civilian total of 6932 (see Table IV) less the 95 at the North West Arm quarries.

The Catholic population of Halifax before 1900 was preponderantly Irish. The latter accounted for 85% of all Catholic burials, 1829-1896. It may be inferred that their share of the population in 1836-41 was at least that. A fair estimate of the Irish Catholics in Halifax in 1841 might be $.85 \times 6837 = 5811$ people.

¹⁶⁰Robert Ernst, Immigrant Life in New York City 1825-1863 (New York: King's Crown Press of Columbia University, 1949), 49.

The census of 1838 reported 14,318 Haligonians, of whom 4128 lived in households whose head was an identifiable Irish Catholic. If one third of the inmates of the gaol, work house and poor house were Irish Catholics, we may add 84 to the 4128, for a total of 4212. By assuming that half of the non-Irish Catholic households had a resident Irish Catholic servant, about 834 further can be added to the 4212. The 1838 total of Irish Catholics in Halifax would be 5046.

If they had a birthrate of 35 per 1000 for the $2\frac{1}{2}$ years between August 1838 and March 1841, they would have had 440 children. The work of Martell and Mrs. Flewwelling supports an estimated immigration of 220 people at Halifax. The total is $5046 + 440 + 220 = 5706$. We must subtract 218 Catholic Irish deaths, reducing that total to 5488. If as few as one per cent of them moved away during 1838-41, we are left with a figure of 5433 as the number of Irish Catholics in Halifax in 1841. This is 378 lower than were returned. The question is whether the 1838 figure was low, or the 1841 return high?

By examining names and addresses of the parents of children baptised 1837-39, we obtain a list of Halifax residents during the census months August-December 1838. Twenty-four such families in Presbyterian records do not appear in the 1838 census, while thirty-one Catholics with surnames beginning A, B, C, are unaccounted for therein. It is unlikely all these people died or left town on the

eve of the 1838 census. Consider that Catholics D-Z, and Anglicans, Baptists and Methodists have not been checked on this point. One expects that errors and omissions were general rather than confined to two creeds. If the sampling from church registers is correct, as it seems to be, then one can compile a list of 175-200 families that were missed in 1838. At the rate of 5.63 persons per household, the 'missing' number is 985 to 1126 people. Taking an average, we can add 1055 to the 14,318 previously calculated as the 1838 total, and place Halifax's population that year at or about 15,373 souls.

after 1838 There were 5046 Irish Catholics in Halifax in 1838, which seems too low in light of the 1841 figures and the possible growth rate. Let us add one third of the 1055 'missed' people and calculate the growth rate again, to see what happens. One third of 1055 is 352, so we have $5046 + 352 = 5398$ Irish Catholics in Halifax in 1838. At a birth-rate of 35 per 1000, they had 473 children born 1838-41. By adding the immigration figure of 220 we arrive at a figure of 6091, from which we must take away the 218 recorded burials and obtain 5873. If, as before, we assume a removal rate of one per cent, we get $5873 - 59 = 5814$. This is just three more than the 1841 estimate we reached above. This seems to verify the basic assumptions used in making these calculations.

Another indication of the accuracy of the claim that there were 15,373 people in Halifax in 1838 comes from

comparing that figure with those reported in the 1827 and 1851 census returns. In 1827, there were 14,439 people in Halifax, while in 1851 there were 20,749. Several factors explain the slow growth rate between 1827 and 1838, of which the most important were the smallpox epidemic of 1827-28, and the cholera outbreak of 1834, while in poor years emigration accelerated. The growth rate for the town 1827-38 averages only 85 per year, which is better than the stagnation or slight decline suggested by the 1838 census figure of 14,318.

We can get some idea of the rapidity of growth after 1838 by going again to those Irish Catholic figures. These people were 35.1% of 15,373 (5398) in 1838. If they held that proportion their 5814 in 1841 indicates a town population in incorporation year of 16,564, a growth rate 1838-41 of 397 per annum. At that rate, the ten years 1841-51 would see 3970 added to the 16,564, for a total of 20,534. The 1851 census returned 20,749, which is remarkably close to our calculation.

The summary of these Halifax population figures may be arranged thus:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Official Figures</u>	<u>Calculated Figures</u>	<u>Catholic Irish (as %)</u>
1827	14,439	.....	3,440 (23.8%)
1838	14,318	15,373	5,398 (35.1%)
1841	.....	16,564	5,811 (35.1%)
1851	20,749	20,534	.....

Comparative Analysis of Structure and Process (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1957), 174.

The 1838 census named only the heads of families, so that the selection of Irish Catholics has had to depend upon counting all members of each household as if they shared the ethnic and religious identity of the head of the household. The most valuable feature of the 1838 census for present purposes is that it provides us with the occupation of each head of household. We can thus learn what sort of jobs the Irish Catholics held in Halifax at the time. Tables VI and VII present the findings in this respect. Table VII groups the occupations under several general headings. These are based on a combination of subjective and objective factors, but essentially the classifications are a modification of those established by Richard Center. Center offers nine categories. These have been modified as follows:

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- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Large business (e.g., bank, factory, merchant) | (|
| 2. Professional (e.g., doctor, lawyer, clergyman, teacher) | (These together form our category 1. |
| 3. Small business (e.g., grocer, builder) | (|
| 4. White-collar worker (e.g., clerk, government) | (These together form our category 2. |
| 5. Farm owner or manager | (|
| 6. Skilled workers & foremen (e.g., carpenter, mason, tailor) | (These together form our category 3. |
| 7. Farm tenants | (|
| 8. Semi-skilled (e.g., truckmen, servants) | (These together form our category 4. |
| 9. Unskilled (e.g., labourer) | (|

Bernard Barber, Social Stratification: A Comparative Analysis of Structure and Process (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1957), 174.

ble VI - CENSUS OF HALIFAX, 1838: Selected Occupations, Heads of Family

With the exception of gun and locksmith, all the occupational groups in which the Irish Catholics dominated were jobs requiring small capital, if any, and not particular skills. The Irish accounted for about 85% of the town's truckmen. Of the balance, six per cent were blacks, leaving only nine per cent of truckmen to belong to any other European racial background. Truckmen required possibly the cost of a cart or 'truck', no skill to speak of, and almost any beast capable of hauling a cart full of goods -- an old horse, a mule, even a donkey. The servant category was obviously under-represented, but the explanation would be that domestic help lived almost invariably on the employer's premises, so that only a fractional few showed up as heads of families. It looked as if there was an Irish predominance in menial jobs. 'Paddy' unloaded the coal from the ship and 'Mickey' carted it up to the yard of the house, and then 'Bridey' put it in the grate and fired it. She took the cinders out, and 'Murphy' carted them off to the dump. Yet, the story of Irish Halifax in 1838 was not that simple or that depressing.

Occupational Group	Total	Total of General Category	Percentage
Irish Catholics formed	35.16		of the town population
Architects	100	3	3.0%
Binmen	22	1	4.6%
Bricklayers	29	1	3.5%
Health Related	18	0	
Printing, etc.	15	0	
Writers	12	0	
Watchmakers	12	0	
Banks, Brokers, etc.	10	0	
Woodworking, Lumbering	7	0	
Artisans	5	0	
Barbers and Hairdressers	5	0	
Irish copper-smiths, founders, stowers, packers, pawnbrokers, glaziers, etc., chimney sweeps or gravediggers--only one or two of each in town.			
There were 94 Irish Catholics among the 409 widows (22.9%) and four among the 25 spinsters (16%).			

Table VI - CENSUS OF HALIFAX, 1838: Selected Occupations, Heads of Families

Occupational Group	General Total	Irish Total	Irish % of General	Category
Truckmen	53	45	84.9%	4
Servants	13	10	76.9%	4
Tavernkeepers	72	42	58.3%	2
Gun and Locksmiths	3	2	66.7%	3
Labourers	511	282	55.2%	4
Huxters and Pedlars	7	3	42.9%	3
Butchers and Victuallers	38	16	42.1%	3
Shopkeepers	98	40	40.8%	2
Gardeners	5	2	40.0%	3
Coopers	41	15	36.6%	3
-----Irish Catholics formed 35.1% of the town population-----				
Tailors	70	24	34.3%	3
Farmers	48	16	33.3%	3
Hatters and Collarers	3	1	33.3%	3
Shoemakers	105	35	33.3%	3
Masons and Stonecutters	48	16	33.3%	3
Blacksmiths, Farriers, Saddlers	39	12	30.8%	3
Seafaring Trades	87	25	28.7%	3
Tobacconists	7	2	28.6%	3
Carpenters and Joiners	119	31	26.1%	3
Confectioners	4	1	25.0%	3
Traders	13	3	23.1%	2
Teachers	9	2	22.2%	1
Bakers	23	5	21.8%	3
Brewers	11	2	18.2%	3
Painters	17	3	17.7%	3
Shipbuilding Trades	48	7	14.6%	3
Chandlers	7	1	14.3%	2
Grocers	29	4	13.8%	2
Clerks	31	4	12.9%	2
Music and the Arts	8	1	12.5%	2
Tinsmiths and Plumbers	9	1	11.1%	3
Government	129	9	7.0%	2
Clergymen	15	1	6.7%	1
Merchants	100	5	5.0%	1
Cabinet and Chairmakers	22	1	4.6%	3
Barristers	29	1	3.5%	1
Health Related	18	0		1
Printing, etc.	15	0		3
Tanners	12	0		3
Watchmakers	12	0		3
Banks, Brokers, etc.	10	0		1
Woodworking, Lumbering	7	0		3
Auctioneers	5	0		2
Barbers and Hairdressers	5	0		3

No Irish coopersmiths, founders, stowers, packers, pawnbrokers, glaziers, sextons, chimney sweeps or gravediggers--only one or two of each in town. There were 94 Irish Catholics among the 409 widows (22.9%) and four among the 25 spinsters (16%).

Table VII - CENSUS OF HALIFAX, 1838: Irish Catholics by Occupational Categories

The corrected number of households in 1838 was 2496, of which 773 were headed by an identifiable Irish Catholic--i.e., 30.9%. These 773 included 94 widows, four spinsters and five of unstated occupation. The net figure is therefore 670. The percentages below are based on the figure of 670 heads of families.

1 -	<u>PROFESSIONAL AND MAJOR BUSINESS</u>	9 (1.3% of Irish)
	Barristers.....	1
	Clergyman.....	1
	Merchants.....	5
	Teachers.....	2
2 -	<u>SMALL BUSINESS AND WHITE-COLLAR</u>	104 (15.5% of Irish)
	Chandler.....	1
	Clerks.....	4
	Government.....	9
	Grocers.....	4
	Music Hall.....	1
	Shopkeepers.....	40
	Tavernkeepers.....	42
	Traders.....	3
3 -	<u>ARTISANS AND FARMERS</u>	220 (32.8% of Irish)
	Bakers.....	5
	Blacksmiths.....	12
	Brewers.....	2
	Butchers.....	16
	Cabinetmaker.....	1
	Carpenters.....	31
	Confectioner.....	1
	Coopers.....	15
	Farmers.....	16
	Gardeners.....	2
	Gunsmiths.....	2
	Hatters.....	1
	Huxters.....	3
	Masons.....	16
	Painters.....	3
	Seafaring.....	25
	Shipbuilding.....	7
	Shoemakers.....	35
	Tailors.....	24
	Tinsmith.....	1
	Tobacconists.....	2
4 -	<u>SEMI-SKILLED AND UNSKILLED</u>	337 (50.4% of Irish)
	Labourers.....	282
	Servants.....	10
	Truckman.....	45

Conclusions

The Halifax Irish Catholic community was as old as the town of Halifax itself. Early penal enactments which directed harsh penalties at Catholics were, in fact, much less draconian than they sounded on paper. As long as the early Irish Catholic element behaved itself and provided useful brawn and sometimes service to the general community, that wider group was prepared to wink at petty violations of the penal code. The very qualities that drew the Irish into an urban environment such as Halifax worked to support the situation at the time. Poverty among the Irish kept them at levels where they posed no economic threat to others, while their need for human society of a town inclined the Irishmen to act in ways that allowed them to stay in town and enjoy human companionship. From as few as six or eight per cent at the beginning, the Irish Catholic community slowly increased its share of the total population as the eighteenth century completed its course. By the period 1815-1837 this element was clearly growing in relation to the general population and in absolute terms. By 1838 the number of Irish Catholics in Halifax stood at about 5,000 souls, give or take a few hundreds. That meant they were about one third of the total Halifax population. They had acted so far constitutionally in regard to the changes they had sought in the system, from the 1780's down to 1827. They seemed to be gradually improving their situation in the community, but they evidently were still below the average of Halifax.

There probably was no such thing then (nor is there now) as a statistically average person, but as a means of positing an aggregate personality having typical qualities it is useful to try to delineate the usual or average type that was a Halifax Irish Catholic towards the latter 1830's. He was not a professional or an agricultural worker; the former required greater education than the average Irishman had, while the latter was a minor quantity in a town. What do we know about him, then, besides the fact he was a Catholic and an Irishman?

He was probably living in premises that were slightly less valuable than his non-Irish neighbour. Although Table V presents figures that mathematically give an average value to such a house of about £276, the Irishman was likelier to be living slightly below that average again. The median value of Irish-occupied premises was about £252. This could be a case of a smaller house, an older house, or an inferior house, but without actual descriptions this cannot fairly be said.

The Irish Catholic was most likely to live on Water, Albemarle or Grafton streets, or possibly on one of the three or four streets running up the hill from the Harbour, especially in the neighbourhood centred about Buckingham Street. Figure 2 reveals an interesting pattern of concentration. There was a frame-like effect, with the high-density Irish streets forming a periphery around a 'core area' wherein they became fewer until a central cluster of Barrington and George streets was reached. Put another way, the

further one got from the Grand Parade and the Legislature towards the bounds of the original town of Halifax the greater the proportion of Irish Catholic residents one found. Beyond that Irish ring the situation reversed itself and the Irish became fewer as one moved out of the old downtown area.

Occupationally the Irish Catholic was most likely to work as a domestic or day labourer for someone else. Approximately half the adult Irish males in Halifax were labourers, servants or truckmen. Another third were artisans or farmers, what we consider 'blue-collar' workers. The Irish Catholic seems to have had a reasonable opportunity in many of the construction and mechanical jobs, and in some small business. The restrictions on their occupational choices were as much intrinsic as extrinsic. There was some trade jealousy and ethnic discrimination in the overall situation, but the Irish were seriously limited by their own rural background. Their lack of skills was a drawback in vocational selection, while many lacked premises on which to set up some lines of work. A man needed space to be a baker or a cooper, a blacksmith or a confectioner. Unless a man had the money to buy or rent the space, he could not carry on that trade, and thereby his options were that much more restricted than they might otherwise have been.

Yet the Halifax Irish Catholics were ahead of their fellows who lived in New England. If we apply the four major occupational groupings from Table VII to the 1850 census data of Boston, and compare it to that of

Halifax in 1838, the contrast is considerable.

<u>Occupational Grouping</u>	<u>Percentage of Irish Catholics in...</u>	
	<u>Halifax 1838</u>	<u>Boston 1850</u>
Professional, major business	1.3%	0.6%
Small business, white-collar	15.5%	5.0%
Artisans and farmers	32.8%	24.7%
Semi- and unskilled	50.4%	69.7%

In Halifax nearly half (49.6%) of the work force had risen above the semi-skilled state, while in Boston twelve years later, only 30.3% had achieved the same level.

In the average 'Yankee City' of 1850, the Irish rated 1.62 on the occupational scale -- that is, for each 100 employed, a total of 62 steps above the lowest level had been taken.¹⁶³ In Halifax in 1838, the Irish rated 1.66, or 66 steps up the ladder of occupational hierarchy. A dozen years sooner than their New England counterparts the Halifax Irish were already further ahead. The concentration of Irish into occupational groups in nineteenth-century Halifax was not as intense as that found in Boston. The 1850 census revealed that "the three most popular occupations among the Irish [labourer, servant and tailor]¹⁶⁴ included more than 70 per cent of the whole In Halifax in 1838, by contrast, the three largest occupations among the Irish — labourer, truckman and tavernkeeper — included 55 per cent

¹⁶²Handlin, Boston's Immigrants, 250-251, is the source of the Boston figures. His separate occupations were grouped into the categories established in this study for Table VII.

¹⁶³W. Lloyd Warner et al., Yankee City (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1963), 385, 387.

¹⁶⁴Handlin, Boston's Immigrants, 59.

of the male work force.

It is likely that the situation in an English city, described by John Werly, comes rather closer to that in Halifax than does the Boston experience. Yet, even in Werly's remarks one feels the status of the Irish is somehow less than it was in Halifax. Of Manchester, Werly wrote that the Irish

were seldom self-employed and there was little employment of Irish workers in the skilled trades. Rather, they worked at unskilled jobs, often those that were disliked by the English. The Irish commonly worked as construction labourers, petty traders, old clothes dealers, lodge-house and beer-house keepers and unskilled factory labourers.¹⁶⁵

In Halifax the Irish community of the late 1830's was neither a budding ghetto nor a potential cradle of the great and famous of the earth. Negatively, the Irish were seen as different and generally unskilled, and many people resented their Catholicism. Yet, they appear to have been remarkably literate, generally peaceful, and willing to settle for less while waiting for more. They cared little that in Halifax there was "more refinement, more elegance and fashion than is to be met with probably in any town in America."¹⁶⁶ They needed the means to advance in the world, and the politics of Nova Scotia were about to offer them the way.

¹⁶⁵ John M. Werly, "The Irish in Manchester, 1832-1849," Irish Historical Studies, XVIII, 71 (March, 1973), 351-352.

¹⁶⁶ M'Gregor, British America, 80-81.

III - THE IRISHMAN AS JANUS: FINDING AN IDENTITY, 1838-1848

In Roman mythology, Janus Bifrons was the deity with two faces, one of which looked backward, and the other looked ahead. The Irish in the new world had much that attitude. Unlike the ancient god, the Irish could not wear two faces indefinitely, but instead had to decide which they would retain. In practical terms the Irish in nineteenth-century America could continue to act and feel as Irishmen, or they could begin the process of becoming North Americans. The emigrants themselves would always be (at most) Irishmen in America, but the attitudes adopted by the emigrant generation would make a difference in whether their children would be primarily of Ireland or of America.

Having stationed himself in Halifax, the Irishman had to determine whether he (and his children) would seek security in the past and try to remain as Irish as possible, or whether he would hazard the venture of becoming a Nova Scotian. During this last critical decade of major Irish emigration to Halifax, Irish Haligonians manifested their dilemma in a fragmenting identity crisis. Torn between their present needs in a colony that was struggling for political reform, and the emotional ties of their past (evoked first by the Repeal Movement, and then by the famine in Ireland), the Catholic Irishmen of Halifax were uncertain. External forces would help them to decide. Meanwhile, they did make progress in improving their economic and social bases in Halifax.

Roman Catholic If it was a period of identity crisis, it was also a decade of leadership crisis. The national faith, represented by the Catholic Church organization in Halifax, required a drastic shaking-up before it fulfilled the wishes and requirements of the Irish in Halifax. The national association, the Charitable Irish Society of Halifax, underwent a considerable change in its character between 1838 and 1848. The political activities of the Irish were divided between the affairs of Ireland and those of Nova Scotia. In Nova Scotia the Irish Catholics sought for political allies among the majority population with whom to make common cause in the struggle for better conditions for all.

The decade 1838-1848, then, was one of tension, as a growing body of Irish Catholics manoeuvred within three overlapping frameworks in their quest for an identity, for leadership, and for recognition within the community. Just where were the Catholic Irish to fit into the social structures of Halifax? We shall look at them in these years, first as Roman Catholics who were Irishmen, then as Irishmen in Nova Scotia and finally as Haligonians from Ireland. Each of these identities and each of these issues had to be dealt with in a context of a decade of political agitation among the general population of Nova Scotia.

The Letters of Hibernicus was published in 1842 at Pictou, by the Observer. These were widely disseminated through the 'lower provinces'. 'Hibernicus' has been identified as Rev. Hugh O'Reilly, by the Very Rev. John McCarthy, P.P., St. Mary's Basilica, who was working on a history of the Catholic Church in Halifax, at the time of his death, 19 Nov. 1963.

Roman Catholics Who Were Irish

The usually simultaneous involvement of the Irish Catholic community of Halifax on three fronts diverted some of the enthusiasm and passion that otherwise might have been devoted to any one issue. The internal quarrels within the Catholic congregation in Halifax created considerable differences of opinion, even as it was. Occasionally these disputes caught the eye of a wider audience. The matters at issue were, superficially, petty and personal, but beneath the nasty innuendoes and ludicrous squabbles was a real and important issue that was full of meaning for the future of Nova Scotia's Irish community. It was nothing less than whether the local Catholic Church organization would reflect the characteristics of its Irish membership or not. Since the Church was so important in an institutional sense to the maintenance of the Irish sense of community, the outcome of the quarrel would help to determine whether the Catholic Church of Halifax would be essentially Irish and therefore

¹⁶⁶The Register, 22 Aug 1843, discussing why some Irish Haligonians were rejecting the Repeal Movement, asked: "Can it be private dissentions, the bane of a nation's welfare; the fateful cause that made Ireland what she was and is . . .?" Novascotian, 16 Oct 1843, carried the letter of "A Catholic Teetotaller", in which the dispute 'on points of religious discipline in the Parish' is mentioned. A collection of The Letters of Hibernicus was published in 1842 at Pictou, by the Observer. These were widely disseminated through the 'lower provinces'. 'Hibernicus' has been identified as Rev. Hugh O'Reilly, by the Very Rev. John McCarthy, PP., St. Mary's Basilica, who was working on a history of the Catholic Church in Halifax, at the time of his death, 19 Nov. 1963.

Angus McEachern in 1823, and was made parish priest at

at the centre of things, or be heterogeneous and thus a purely ecclesiastical structure with no emotional involvement in the life of the lay majority. That is, would the Church be merely a religious institution, or would it be both the moral and emotional core of the Irish community in Halifax?

The main protagonists in the struggle were the official head of the Catholic Church in Nova Scotia, William Fraser, titular bishop of Tanen, and his vicar-general at Halifax, Very Rev. John Loughnan, on the one hand; and, on the other, the newcomer in episcopal orders, William Walsh, and his following of younger priests from Ireland.

It will help to define some characteristics of each faction at the outset. Fraser's party were generally priests trained in the eighteenth-century schools of continental Europe, and they took a more conservative view of society and of politics (probably due to their experience of the French Revolution as an anti-clerical phenomenon). This 'Fraser Party' included a few Irishmen, generally from Ulster, but its spiritual home was decidedly not Irish. Walsh and his supporters were men of a younger generation, most of them trained in Ireland, and very much imbued with the progressive political attitudes of O'Connell's Ireland. This constituted the 'Irish Party'.

William Fraser had arrived in Nova Scotia in 1822 at the age of 44. He had been born in Scotland and educated in Spain. He travelled around Cape Breton Island with Bishop Angus McEachern in 1823, and was made parish priest at

Antigonish at the opening of 1824. The incumbent, an Irishman with the Scottish-sounding name of James Grant, was sent off to Manchester (Guysborough) to minister as a missionary to a recently settled (1812-18) group of Newfoundland Irish. Fraser ingratiated himself with his patron, McEachern, who urged Rome to create a diocese in Nova Scotia for Fraser. Rome refused, and instead offered to make the appointment for each of three Irish priests. When all had refused to take the post, it was again suggested that Fraser be appointed. This was done, but he was not named bishop of Nova Scotia, but given a titular see, Tanen.¹⁶⁷ Fraser was consecrated in June 1827. Within months he appointed a new vicar-general to live at Halifax, since Fraser himself let it be known that he disliked the capital and wished to remain in or near Antigonish. There he would be among the Scots Catholics, with whom he felt at home. "Despite being united by a common faith Maritime Catholics largely persisted in keeping themselves in separate regional linguistic and ethnic compartments, and thus contributed a complicated subdivision to the overall denominational separatism . . ."¹⁶⁸

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Such an arrangement would leave the path clear for Rome should the Holy See find a suitable appointee for the see of Nova Scotia. Fraser, in episcopal orders, could confirm, and institute parishes and induct priests to these. At the same time, the successful precedent of Burke at Halifax could be followed should the opportunity arise.

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Mason Wade, "Relations between the French, Irish and Scottish Clergy in the Maritime Provinces, 1774-1836," The Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 39 (1972), 33. Most of the material in the preceding paragraph is based on Wade, 29.

Fraser's appointment of a new vicar-general was in many ways ill-advised, since it flew in the face of this ethnic particularism. The Church in Halifax had enjoyed the ministrations of Edmund Burke, a bilingual and urbane priest of Irish origins and cosmopolitan outlook. After his death the actual leadership of the Halifax Roman Catholics had fallen to another Irishman, the Rev. John Carroll, who served as a parish priest of Halifax, and as vicar-general. Carroll and his parish wardens--of whom 27 of 29 were Irish in 1823-- had maintained friendly relations. Fraser disrupted this situation by removing Carroll without consultation and sending him back to Ireland. The replacement was another Irishman, but one of the 'Fraser Party', the Rev. John Loughnan, who was inducted on 8 December 1827. Some grumbling ensued, but after a year or so matters appeared to calm down. As Fraser refused to travel up to Halifax with any frequency or regularity at all, the Church at Halifax fell completely into the hands of Loughnan, who seems to have been a hard-working priest and one who avoided collision with other denominations. Loughnan was at this time a man of accommodation. Confrontation was not then his way, except with his fellow-Catholics.

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Halifax Archdiocese, Chancery Office, "Minutes of the Wardens of St. Peter's Parish, 1801-1858," under date 1 January 1823.

170

Halifax Archdiocese, Chancery Office, John M. McCarthy Papers, Wade, "Relations between Clergy," 29.

173
ibid.

Tension began to build in the early 1830's, however, after several Halifax Catholics, generally of middle-class families, were refused dispensations to let them marry non-Catholics. Three members of the Tobin family had been allowed to contract mixed marriages (i.e., one party Catholic, one party Protestant) under Bishop Burke's regime. Now, Loughnan refused requests from William Young and Anne Tobin, and from James Gray and Catherine Tobin. Both couples were married at the Anglican church, St. Paul's, though the Tobins were Catholics and the Youngs and Grays Presbyterian.¹⁷¹ This personal affront probably explains why the Tobins made common cause with others, such as Lawrence Doyle, against the 'Fraser Party' later on. Fraser upheld Loughnan, but Very Rev. John McCarthy felt it was this issue that started the later troubles. "The Irish thought their Bishop too strict and uninterested in them . . ."¹⁷² The Halifax Irish discovered that Fraser and Loughnan (who had replaced Carroll 'over the strong protests of the Halifax people') "had no use for fine dress, the arts, and such . . ." and that Fraser intended to avoid coming to Halifax.¹⁷³

Further trouble developed in 1838 when, after considerable pressure from Halifax Catholics, Fraser wrote the

¹⁷¹Young-Tobin wedding, 10 Aug 1830 (Anne's father was later Hon. Michael Tobin), and Gray-Tobin wedding, 29 Dec 1835 (Catherine's father was Hon. James Tobin).

¹⁷²Halifax Archdiocese, Chancery Office, "John M. McCarthy Papers," II, 'O', 1.

¹⁷³Ibid.

archbishop of Dublin, Dr. D. Marray, requesting him to send two young Irish priests to work in Halifax, where Loughnan laboured without help. In due course the new priests--¹⁷⁸ Fathers Lawrence Joseph Dease and Richard Baptist O'Brien--¹⁷⁴ arrived in Halifax, where they proved popular with the people, "but did not get on satisfactorily with the vicar general."

Fraser was "unfavourably impressed both by their dress and their too ready request for money He returned to Antigonish without giving them faculties or making any settlement."¹⁷⁵ Dease and Loughnan got on so badly that by 1841 Dease was obliged to quit the city and return to Ireland.

He took with him a petition that was signed by many Halifax Catholics requesting Rome to appoint a new bishop to replace Fraser.¹⁷⁶ Loughnan duly noted this petition's existence and waited an opportunity to strike back.

Loughnan had not long to wait. In 1841 the Catholic residents of the north end of Halifax got up a petition asking leave to buy or erect a convenient Catholic chapel in their neighbourhood. Meetings were held to further the object.¹⁷⁷ At that of 22 August 1841, Loughnan took the

¹⁷⁴A.A. Johnston, "The Right Reverend William Fraser, first Bishop of Halifax and of Arichat," The Canadian Catholic Historical Association Report 1935-1936, 27.

¹⁷⁵"McCarthy Papers", II, 2.

¹⁷⁶Ibid. Letters of Loughnan (Pictou, 1842), 2.

¹⁷⁷"Bishop Fraser Papers", item #1. The petition had 80 signatures (not marks), of which 78 belonged to Irishmen or the sons of Irishmen.

chair. When a subscription list was opened for the new chapel, Loughnan left the meeting and refused to return. He departed "without any explanation to the meeting. . . ." Subsequent events indicate that Loughnan felt the laity were going further than the bishop had approved. Loughnan reported the meeting to the bishop and endorsed the note: "Refuse to give absolution or receive any of those persons implicated in drawing up memorials against the Bishop." The vicar-general also seems to have felt that his status in Halifax would be undermined if the popular young Father Dease was allowed to operate a north end parish. 'Hibernicus' spoke of "the fashionably upstart aristocracy of the day" at Halifax, who had supported a priest in the capital who had hoped "to be the first Parish Priest of the new Parish formed by himself. . . ." 'Hibernicus' termed Dease "the venerable Monk of the Order of St. Francis, who . . . has now become a willing aggressor on the episcopal right of the Prelate under whose sole episcopal jurisdiction he was placed." Evidently, 'Hibernicus' regarded Dease as the catspaw of some laymen, as that author feared an end to the Catholic religion in Nova Scotia "if laymen are allowed to exercise episcopal jurisdiction in this County." Just how

¹⁷⁸Ibid., item # 2.

¹⁷⁹The Letters of Hibernicus (Pictou, 1842), 2.

¹⁸⁰Ibid., 31.

¹⁸¹Ibid., 6.

far Loughnan subscribed to 'Hibernicus' ideas and how far he was worried about his own standing in Halifax we cannot now know, but the views of 'Hibernicus' were generally those of the 'Fraser Party'.

Relations between Fraser and the Halifax Irish deteriorated quickly. Fraser wrote to Michael Tobin, Jr., on 20 November 1841, to express his resentment of lay interference in the matter of Rev. Dease. He told Tobin that he had burned the pro-Dease petition sent up from Halifax. "Any future application to me on the subject of the selection and appointment of clergymen . . . will meet with the unqualified and well merited contempt of your very obt. servant. . . . Dease's arrival in Dublin produced consternation. Archbishop Murray felt obliged to write to Loughnan on 18 June 1842, denying he had intended any insult to Fraser by sending priests to Halifax. Murray was annoyed enough to let Loughnan know that Dublin was aware that Dease's departure had been forced and that the Haligonians regretted it.

By early 1842 a 'Fraser Party' and an 'Irish Party' had taken shape, and other matters were drawn into the original controversy. In the interval since Fraser wrote to Tobin, Dease's departure had taken place. But first there had been

182 "Bishop Fraser Papers," item # 4.

183 Ibid., item # 14.

a meeting in November 1841, at which the Hon. Michael Tobin, Sr., took the chair. The Reformer, Lawrence O'Connor Doyle, supported by Thomas Kenny, Roger Cunningham, Michael Maloney, and Thomas Ring, had agreed to put their arguments in writing and send them to Rome in the care of Dease.¹⁸⁴ At the annual parish meeting, 31 December 1841, the parish wardens were selected. Twenty-six of the twenty-nine men were Irish, and all but one or two were opponents of Fraser and Loughnan.¹⁸⁵ Of the twenty-six Irishmen in the 'Irish Party', no less than sixteen were active in the Repeal organization in Halifax, and eight were members of the committee of the Reform party in the town. Table IX, below will indicate the coincidence of names among the organizations of the early 1840's inside which a more aggressive Irish Catholic leadership was emerging.

Hugh O'Reilly's 'Hibernicus' letters were preparing the ground and presenting the case for the 'Fraser Party'. These appeared at intervals in the Pictou Observer (from 19 December 1841 to 15 April 1842 according to their author) and then were printed separately in booklet form. O'Reilly tells us that pro-Fraser meetings of all Catholics in Pictou and Merigomish were held on 23 and 28 December 1841, respectively.¹⁸⁶

184
Hibernicus, 65.

185
Ibid., 119.

186
Ibid., iv-vi.

The preface to the collected letters of 'Hibernicus' placed the quarrel in an ethnic context. 'Hibernicus' wrote:

On the news of the conduct of the Irish Catholic Schismatics of the Capital . . . reaching the writer of the following Letters, he caused Meetings to be held in the County of Pictou, at which the following Resolutions were passed . . . which plainly shew that if the Irish Schismatics of Halifax are averse to Dr. FRASER because a Scotchman, they can find no Irishmen, or very few, in this part of the country to share their unhallowed antipathies against the best of men, or to be partakers with them in their low, vulgar, and detestable . . . prejudices.¹⁸⁷

Closing his collection with an appeal to the Irish Catholics of Nova Scotia, 'Hibernicus' quoted the catechism lesson that stated it was sinful to resist or combine against the established authorities, or disrespect those who rule over us.¹⁸⁸

With 'Hibernicus' giving publicity to his cause, Fraser was evidently making his counter-attack. He sent Rev. John Quinan, parish priest of Tracadie, to Halifax as assistant to Loughnan in lieu of Dease.¹⁸⁹ This was an astute move as Quinan was a Haligonian of Irish parentage, and his arrival brought a few Haligonians, mainly Quinan's own relations, to the 'Fraser Party'. A handful of men, such as Michael Tobin, Sr., attempted to prevent the division, but

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., iii.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 108-109. This referred to lesson 17 in the then standard Roman Catholic catechism in use in Nova Scotia.

¹⁸⁹ Johnston, "The Right Reverend William Fraser," 28.

the issue was beyond moderation. Fraser's party dominated the executive of St. Mary's Total Abstinence Society for 1842-43. These include Rev. Loughnan (president), Rev. John Quinan (vice-president), Joseph W. Quinan (secretary) and William Condon (assistant vice-president), and Patrick Mahony (second assistant vice-president).¹⁹⁰ When one considers that the Quinans were brothers, and that Joseph Quinan was brother-in-law to William Condon and to James Fitzgerald, the value of sending Rev. John Quinan to Halifax can be seen. It gave some semblance of Halifax support to Fraser. James Fitzgerald just mentioned was the editor of The Register, who lost control of that organ briefly late in 1841, when he inserted a notice in the Novascotian to inform the public that he, Fitzgerald, had Dr. Fraser's support against the "agents of falsehood and calumny."¹⁹¹ Thus matters stood in the winter of 1841-42. Most of the Halifax Irish Catholics stood behind leaders such as Doyle and Kenny, Ring and Skerry (see Table VIII for their particulars), who formed the nucleus of a more aggressive party emerging into public prominence.

On 15 February 1842 Rome promoted Halifax from a vicarate to a diocese, but to Fraser's discomfiture he received an Irish coadjutor bishop in the see of Halifax. William Walsh would become coadjutor with the right of succession, and Fraser had not been consulted. Fraser objected to the procedure.¹⁹²

¹⁹⁰ The Register, 31 Jan 1843.

¹⁹¹ Novascotian, 21 Oct 1841. A further notice appeared on 4 Nov 1841.

¹⁹² Johnston, "The Right Reverend William Fraser," 28.

The Halifax Irish showed their independence of Fraser by arranging to receive Walsh and to hire a house for him. At a meeting of the parish wardens on 7 September 1842, they voted 17-4 in favour of providing for Walsh. The four dissenting wardens included both the non-Irish wardens (John Brown and John Stewart, both Scots), the Newfoundlander, Patrick Mahony, and Samuel Carten, an Ulsterman of fiery temperament.

The new coadjutor bishop, William Walsh, was a native of Waterford, Ireland, and he was a few weeks short of his thirty-eighth birthday when first he reached Halifax, in October 1842. He had been a priest for fourteen years near Dublin before he came to Nova Scotia. He was energetic and Irish; he was something of a scholar but if the aggressive Catholic politicians of Halifax desired a radical they were to be rather disappointed. Walsh was an O'Connellite Repealer and a priest. This, in Dublin of the 1830's, meant backing O'Connell to get what the Church wanted and then abandoning the Repeal Movement. Walsh might be accused of being too zealous on behalf of the Catholic Church and its interests, as he would be during the election in Nova Scotia in 1847, but he was not called a Repealer or a radical. Walsh acted in the manner of Lord Sydenham--energetic, brilliant, a bit of an innovator, but beneath it all a conservative. Walsh's Irish

ty," *I.H.S.*, XIX, 75 (March 1975), 240.

193 John E. Burns, "Archbishop William Walsh," *N.S.H.S.*, XIX, 75 (March 1975), 240.

"Minutes of the Wardens", 7 Sep 1842.

nationalism resembled that of his contemporary, the future cardinal Paul Cullen. Cullen was so cautious about his Irish national sympathies that it is only now that Irish historians are realizing that Cullen "exemplified the O'Connellite tradition in Irish politics."¹⁹⁴ Such moderates, lacking the demagogic side of a Daniel O'Connell, tended to be misunderstood when contrasted with the histrionics and resort to violence of the Young Irelanders and the Fenians. Walsh was too conservative for the radicals, and too liberal for the reactionaries.

Walsh had delicate health, but he began his career in Halifax with a burst of activity which made a welcome contrast to the lethargic administration of the absentee Fraser. Within thirteen months of his arrival, Walsh had ordained three new (Irish) priests, opened a new cemetery (Holy Cross), and had a Catholic newspaper (The Cross) started.¹⁹⁵ This dynamism contributed to the cool reception given Walsh by the 'Fraser Party', but there were other factors as well. When Archbishop Murray of Dublin consecrated Walsh, he gave Walsh some of his extra vestments, which carried the double-barred cross of the metropolitan prelate. It annoyed Fraser when he learned of Walsh displaying such insignia. Fraser told Father Quinan that the appointment of Walsh's secretary,

¹⁹⁴E.D. Steele, "Cardinal Cullen and Irish Nationality," I.H.S., XIX, 75 (March 1975), 240.

¹⁹⁵John E. Burns, "Archbishop William Walsh," N.S.H.S., XXV (1942), 133-139, passim.

Thomas Connolly, as pastor of the new north-end parish of St. Patrick's was one of the "unintentional blunders of some Esqrs and Honorables of the Metropolis of Nova Scotia." Fraser promised to tell Quinan his opinion of Walsh when they were os ad os.¹⁹⁶ When Walsh went to Rome early in 1844, Fraser sent a note that conveyed the virulent animosity with which Fraser regarded his Irish rival. Fraser told Quinan:

Dr. Walsh may, for a wander, visit Rome, but if justice is to prevail, he will never be permitted to land a second time on the shores of Nova Scotia. If it be true that Madam Boyle, or Mistress Doctor Walsh . . . is to leave Halifax, and return to the Emerald Isle, you may call it a bad omen, but I would call it a good one.¹⁹⁷

Before Walsh left Rome he had gained support from the people of Prospect, Ketch Harbour and Herring Cove who published a card in The Register.¹⁹⁸ A meeting in Halifax, on 26 October with Hon. Michael Tobin, Jr., in the chair, and L. O'C. Doyle as secretary, adopted an address to Walsh, expressing how as Irish people, they had silently borne "a series of insults and suffering such as few other communities have endured . . ." In his reply, Walsh said that after a year

¹⁹⁶ "Bishop Fraser Papers," Item # 31 (13 Jan. 1843).

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., item # 39 (25 March 1844).

¹⁹⁸ The Register, 7 Nov. 1843.

"of unexampled suffering, and as you are aware, of no ordinary patience, I am forced to break that silence which I have hitherto maintained . . . Do not, however, suppose for a moment that I was insensitive to the sufferings of my native land . . . No one but the Irish priest can adequately conceive the multitudinous forms of Irish misery."¹⁹⁹ Walsh spoke also of the factionalism in Halifax, where he saw "thousands of well-disposed Catholics in this city distressed and excited by the machinations of less than half a dozen unhappy men." Following a year of anxiety, word arrived that the see had been divided with Walsh in charge of Halifax, and Fraser in charge at Arichat. Disaffected clergymen such as Loughnan and Quinan were allowed to remove to the diocese of Arichat. The division, Rome said, was done with a view to preventing trouble; thus, "one part should include the Irish and the other part the Scots."²⁰⁰ Rome seems to have accepted that Irish and Scots could not live in harmony within one diocese in Nova Scotia, although Fraser's age and the difficulty of travel may have been considerations. The Register reported enthusiastically Walsh's return from Rome.

ARRIVAL OF THE BISHOP

Arrived on the 'Britannia', 17 July. Bishop Walsh was conveyed from the ship to the church in Hon. E. Kenny's carriage . . . His Lordship

¹⁹⁹Ibid., 31 Oct 1843.

²⁰⁰Johnston, "The Right Reverend William Fraser", 29.

ascended the altar wearing his Stole; and having called upon the Rev. Mr. Connolly to read the Papal Bull committing to His Lordship the Ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Halifax, & he sat down.²⁰¹

The Irish of Halifax had their own Irish bishop, and they rejoiced in their victory. The Catholic Church in Halifax was theirs, and it would be Irish! The press carried triumphant stories with headings such as 'Tremendous Meeting of Catholics'. The losing faction licked its wounds and took its hard knocks. Some, such as Joseph Quinan, left the purely Catholic societies. Quinan addressed the non-sectarian body, the Halifax Temperance Society, in February 1846 and was criticised for doing so, by Rev. John Nugent of the Catholic temperance group, who felt it was incongruous for a Catholic to address a predominantly Protestant organization on a topic which a society within his own faith professed to deal with.²⁰² The Cross expressed a wish that Saint Patrick's Day, 1846, would "shine upon an united Body of Irishmen in Halifax, that all past misunderstandings will be consigned to a generous oblivion . . ."²⁰³ Except for the Carten suit against Walsh in 1849, the issue seems to have been settled.²⁰⁴ The Catholic

²⁰¹The Register, 22 July 1845.

²⁰²The Cross, 28 Feb. 1846.

²⁰³Ibid.

²⁰⁴George Patterson, Studies in Nova Scotian History (Halifax: The Imperial Publishing Co., Limited, 1940), 70-77, reports the details of this case, in which Carten sued the archbishop for trespass against Carten's person, by having him thrown bodily out of St. Mary's Cathedral during a service. Carten had been one of Fraser's strongest partisans against Walsh in 1842. Samuel Carten was said by 'Hibernicus' to be "like Milton's Ariel, 'Among the faithless, faithful only found'." (The Letters of Hibernicus, 160).

Church of Halifax would be Irish, and the Irish would expect their clergy to stand by them in their struggle for recognition in Halifax. The papal order of 1859 merely made official what had already been settled by 1845.

When Walsh, by then an archbishop, died on 10 August 1858, the authorities in Rome recalled the difficulties of Walsh and Fraser. In March 1859 the Holy See made a ruling on Halifax archdiocese then and for the future. Because of its significance, I present both the Italian original and its English transition, side by side.

Italian Text

English Translation

E all'Irlanda si diressero i Vescovi a preferenza di ogni altro paese non solo perche di la si ottiene il maggior numero dei sacerdoti per le Colonie Inglesi, ma principalmente per essere Halifax un paese quasi Irlandese, o dove non potrebbe stabilirsi un Arcivescovo scozzese o di altra nazione senza pericolo di eccitare un gran malcontento, e di veder rinnovate le discordie che sotto il predecessore scozzese di Monsig. Walsh, si ebbero a deplorare.

The archbishops look towards Ireland as the place to find the greatest number of priests for the English colonies, in preference to any other place. But mainly because Halifax is virtually an Irish settlement, no Scottish or other foreign archbishop could be established without creating a great discontent and danger and the renewal of the dissentions that had existed during the term of Bishop Walsh's Scottish predecessor.

Therefore, Halifax must have an Irishman as its archbishop. Halifax would be Irish as far as Rome was concerned. This meant that the clergy of the Catholic Church in Halifax would be, in a very real sense, part of the Irish community in Halifax. The

²⁰⁵ Halifax Archdiocese, Chancery Office, "Connolly Papers", Vol. 984, 316ff.

great majority of the Irish-born priests avoided political controversy except where the interests of the Church were at stake, but the fact that they were Irish led them to take an interest in Repeal and Famine Relief. Such priests were a link with Ireland, and as such played a significant part in the quest for identity engaged in by the Halifax Irish.

The Irishman in Nova Scotia

The second theme is that of the Irish emigrant as a person who continued as an Irish person within a Nova Scotian setting. This falls logically into two parts. There is the formal, collective organization within which the Irishman functioned as an Irishman among his peers. The other aspect is the involvement of the Irish in Nova Scotia in the politics of the homeland, particularly through participation in the Repeal Movement during the early 1840's.

In the formal sense, the Charitable Irish Society of Halifax was a social and philanthropic organization of Halifax Irish, both Catholic and Protestant. To a considerable extent the Society mirrored the Irish community that it served. At its foundation in 1786 the Society contained a high proportion of government officials and military officers, as well as mercantile gentlemen. Consequently it was not very remarkable that the Society, at least in its public attitudes, had a tradition of loyalty to the Crown and to its Nova Scotian representative.

²⁰⁶ Stewart, The Irish in Nova Scotia, 30-31. The original constitution terms the founders: "Gentlemen, Merchants, and others, inhabitants of this His Majesty's Province. . ."

In 1835 the Society, at its annual dinner, toasted "our worthy Governor Sir Colin Campbell" and praised his "frank and liberal Administration" as one which "entitled him to the Confidence of the people."²⁰⁷ The Society celebrated the Queen's marriage in 1840 with a parade and a High Mass. They also held a large supper and provided refreshments to the poor. A subscription raised £42/12/6 for loyal purposes.²⁰⁸ They congratulated the Queen on her escape from an attempted assassination later in 1840,²⁰⁹ and held a procession and dinner when the future King Edward VII was born, late in 1841.²¹⁰ Five years later, with the province deeply divided over the issue of responsible government, the Society adopted a resolution of loyalty and support to the new lieutenant-governor, Sir John Harvey.²¹¹ That gentleman, as well as the mayor of Halifax, Joseph Jennings, and the Speaker of the Assembly, William Young, attended the annual dinner of the Irish Society on St. Patrick's Day, 1847.²¹² In June of that year, the Society arranged to attend Mass for Daniel O'Connell at the time of his death.²¹³ Two months later, at its annual

²⁰⁷P.A.N.S., M.G. 20, No. 68: "Minutes of the Charitable Irish Society 1834-1850," 17 Mar. 1835.

²⁰⁸Ibid., 9 Apr. 1840.

²⁰⁹Ibid., 17 Aug. 1840.

²¹⁰Ibid., 15 Dec. 1841.

²¹¹Ibid., 2 Sep. 1846.

²¹²Ibid., 17 Mar. 1847.

²¹³Ibid., 21 June 1847.

picnic, the Society drank only one toast, and that was to the Queen, and it was "enthusiastically responded to."²¹⁴ The public posture of loyalty was traditional in the Society, and this stance probably served to disarm some potential criticism both of the Society and of the Irish generally.

During the first half century of existence the Charitable Irish Society of Halifax retained much of its gentlemanly, perhaps rather select, atmosphere and attitudes. Despite the polite facade and loyal toasts, however, the character of the Society's membership was undergoing a considerable change during the 1840's. From being a group of mixed religion and ethnic background,²¹⁵ the Society became increasingly Irish and Catholic. It was changing from a body of well-established citizens to a Society in which artisans and workers predominated numerically. The socio-economic status of the membership changed greatly between 1838 and 1848.

By birthplace, more members were Irish-born than in the past:-

²¹⁴Ibid., 31 Aug. 1847.

²¹⁵Until the 1850's, the Charitable Irish Society permitted membership of all gentlemen who were not members of other national associations. In the early years, before 1800 that excluded men already members of the German, Scottish or English societies. The first of these soon lapsed, and as late as 1845 a 'German' — Thomas A. Bauer — was on the executive of the Charitable Irish Society.

²¹⁷Those Protestants born in Ireland were John S. Thompson, the editor, and father of Sir John S.D. Thompson; and David Hare, Esq., a merchant.

<u>1838</u>	<u>Place of Birth</u>	<u>1848</u>
126 (67%)	Ireland	183 (80%)
42 (22%)	Nova Scotia	36 (15%)
10 (5½%)	Elsewhere	5 (2%)
10 (5½%)	Not known	4 (2%)

In religion in 1838, there were 147 (78.2%) Roman Catholics, and 41 (21.8%) Protestants among the members. By 1848, 211 (92.5%) of the 228 members were Catholics, and only 17 (7.5%) were non-Catholics. ²¹⁶ Of the 17 Protestants, at least ten

were not of Irish origin, and of the remainder only two had been born in Ireland. Moreover, three of the Protestant members were off the rolls by the end of 1848, one by death (John Slayter, Esq.), one by virtue of leaving Halifax (Sir Rupert George), and one at his own request (C.W. Dixon, Esq.). ²¹⁷

Such a rapid tendency towards becoming an exclusively Roman Catholic group can be partially explained by recalling that Irish immigration to Nova Scotia during the eighteenth century had included an abundance of Protestants, while the nineteenth-century movement had brought a great majority of Catholic Irish. It also suggests that Irish Protestants were becoming assimilated and integrated into the general Nova Scotian community, and thus had less need of an organization

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Membership lists, 1838-1848; "Minutes of the Charitable Irish Society, 1834-1850."

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Those Protestants born in Ireland were John S. Thompson, the editor, and father of Sir John S.D. Thompson; and David Hare, Esq., a merchant.

such as the Irish Society. Of the 74 identifiable Irish Protestant households in Halifax in 1838, most had a socio-economic status higher than that of their Catholic compatriots. The general breakdown of the Halifax Protestant Irish in 1838, by occupation, was:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 1) Professional, large mercantile.. | 24 (32.4%) | (Catholics 1.3%) |
| 2) White-collar, small businesses.. | 17 (23.0%) | (Catholics 15.5%) |
| 3) Artisans and farmers..... | 24 (32.4%) | (Catholics 32.8%) |
| 4) Semi-skilled and labouring..... | 9 (12.2%) | (Catholics 50.4%) |

The upper socio-economic groups were well represented among the Protestants, while the labouring class was the largest among the Catholics. The distribution of occupations among Catholic and Protestant Irish may also help to explain the changing socio-economic character of the membership in the Charitable Irish Society between 1838 and 1848. More Catholic members and Catholics holding less prestigious jobs meant a general change in the quality of the membership.

The four major occupational groupings as a number and as a percentage of the Society's membership in 1838 and 1848 were as follows. A more detailed breakdown of the membership at those two dates appears in Table IX, following.

<u>Members in 1838(%)</u>	<u>Occupational Grouping</u>	<u>Members in 1848(%)</u>
29 (16.1%)	Professional, large mercantile	30 (13.5%)
74 (39.3%)	White-collar, small businesses	63 (27.5%)
67 (35.7%)	Artisans and farmers(blue-collar)	72 (31.5%)
18 (8.9%)	Semi-skilled and labouring	63 (27.5%)
188	Total Membership, 1 August of Year	228

²¹⁸Based on information contained in the 1838 census of Halifax town, as recorded in P.A.N.S., R.G. 1, Vol. 449.

(Faint handwritten notes at the bottom of the page, partially obscured and illegible)

Table VIII - OCCUPATIONAL ANALYSIS OF CHARITABLE IRISH SOCIETY, 1838 and 1848

These occupational statistics suggest that the Charitable Irish Society was becoming representative of a much broader cross-section of the community than it had been earlier in the century. In 1838 well above half of the members belonged to the professional and white-collar groups, just over a third were artisans and only a few were drawn from the labouring classes. The three largest occupational groups in 1838 were shopkeepers (25), merchants (17), and tavernkeepers (14), all enterpreneurial occupations, and in the top half of the occupational index. By 1848, the membership was nearly 60% composed of men of the working and artisan classes, while professional and white-collar groups had fallen from 103 (55%) to 93 (41%) of membership. In this decade the Society grew by forty members, net. The major occupations in 1848 were labourers (46), shopkeepers (28), and truckmen (15), two of which groups came from the lowest occupational rating. The mercantile interests were less fully represented among the membership, than previously. In 1838 the census reported 94 Irish Catholics as merchants, grocers, shopkeepers, traders, and tavernkeepers, and 52 belonged to the Society -- i.e., 55%. In 1848 there were about 106 men in these businesses, but only 49 in the Society -- i.e., 46%.

²¹⁹This 1848 total is obtained by taking the 1842 figures in Cunnabell's City Almanac and General Business Directory (Halifax: William Cunnabell, 1842)--60--and adding 40 tavernkeepers which Cunnabell omitted. If 1838 had 94 men, and 1842 had 100, then by 1848 there should have been about 105-110. And my estimate, 106, is on the lower end.

Table VIII - OCCUPATIONAL ANALYSIS OF CHARITABLE IRISH SOCIETY, 1838 and 1848

1838 Membership	Occupation or line of work	1848 Membership
6	Barrister, notary	8
2	Gentleman of income	2
17	Merchant	10
1	Physician	1
2	Priest	6
0	Professor of Music	1
1	Others	2
(29)	(Total professional, large mercantile)	(30)
1	Armed forces	1
1	Auctioneer	0
4	Clerk	3
3	Editor	5
7	Government	5
3	Grocer	5
2	Hotelkeeper, Music Hall	2
25	Shopkeeper	28
1	Stationer	1
14	Tavernkeeper	3
3	Teacher	0
5	Trader	3
5	Others	7
(74)	(Total white-collar, small business)	(63)
1	Baker	1
6	Blacksmith, farrier	5
1	Blockmaker	0
1	Brewer, distiller	2
2	Builder, contractor	1
6	Butcher	12
3	Carpenter, joiner	5
1	Coachmaker	0
1	Confectioner	1
3	Cooper	6
3	Farmers, Gardener	4
1	Fisherman	0
0	Gunsmith, locksmith	2
9	Mason, stonecutter	10
1	Painter	1
0	Policeman	1
4	Saddler, furrier, tanner	1
4	Seafaring trades	3
6	Shoemaker	3
6	Tailor	5
1	Tinsmith, plumber	0
0	Tobacconist	1
7	Others	9
(67)	(Total artisans and farmers)	(72)
12	Labourers	46
0	Servant, Sexton	2
6	Truckman	15
(18)	(Total semi-skilled, labouring)	(63)

Despite their relative decline as a proportion of membership, the Catholic business and professional men tended to dominate, if not to monopolize, the executive posts in the Society. There were seven posts on the executive -- president, vice president, two assistant vice presidents, treasurer, secretary and assistant secretary--and in the eleven annual executives from 1838 to 1848, that meant there were 77 places to be filled. Only 14 of the 77 executive posts were filled by Protestants. Two of these--Joseph Howe and James Boyle Uniacke--occupied the president's chair for five of the eleven terms. Their value as political allies of the upwardly mobile Catholic Irish outweighed any reluctance about electing Protestants to office in the Society.

Of the 77 executive positions, 1838-1848, all but five were taken by business or professional men, the classes that contained most of the leadership of the Irish community at the time. Of these, Lawrence O'C. Doyle was a barrister, while Thomas Ring, Daniel Creamer, Edward Kenny, William Skerry, James Wallace, Michael Tobin, and Bernard O'Neill were all merchants, or major storekeepers who were expanding in the direction of becoming merchants. All these men were contained in the executive of the Society once or more (Doyle six times, Ring four, for example). It bore out the comment of 'Hibernicus' in 1841-42. He noticed that the poorer classes of Irish Catholics at Halifax were being led by their attitudes towards bishop Fraser and in politics by "their more wealthy leaders."

²²⁰The Letters of Hibernicus, 68.

Other references to "the fashionable upstart aristocracy" leave no doubt the business and professional men among the Catholics of Halifax were intended in the remarks of 'Hibernicus'.

Most of the leaders were born in Ireland, and very few among them had reached fifty years of age. After 1843, when Repeal became established in Halifax, 35 of the 42 executives of the Society over the next six years were Repealers. Occasionally, a tradesman got on the executive, as in 1839 and 1840 when William Chapplain, a farrier, and Peter Morrissey, a brewer, were the assistant vice presidents. In 1843, William Dillon, a mason, held the same position. These were scarcely typical tradesmen, since Morrissey was well-to-do, and became a city alderman later on, while Dillon was active in all parts of the Irish Catholic push for participation in Halifax (Repealer, Reform committee, anti-Fraser parish warden). Dillon was well enough off that he made a will, the money being sufficient to educate one of his sons to the priesthood, and to oblige the widow to make a will before her death sixteen years later.

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The emergence of a group of leaders within the Irish Catholic community at Halifax was reflection of a need for such leadership. There was a growing sense of belonging to a group, and that collective body of Irish people wished to

²²¹Halifax County Probate Court, Will Book V, 384 (William Dillon), and VI, 520 (Hannah Dillon). William Dillon's sister, Mary, was one of those denied a dispensation by Rev. Loughnan, and had been married in St. George's Church of England. She was allowed to remarry in the Catholic Church the following year, a month after the birth of her child. She died the same summer aged 27 years. This incident may have helped to determine Dillon's attitude towards the Fraser-Irish confrontation.

go after advantages that it felt it wanted. Table IX provides a checklist of those who were most conspicuous in the new wave of Irish leadership between 1838 and 1844. Of the twenty-five outstanding Irish Catholic leaders in this group, there were 19 natives of Ireland, three of Newfoundland, two of Halifax, one of Quebec (but raised since childhood in Halifax). Twelve were merchants, three shopkeepers, two grocers, and one each of barrister, brewer, carpenter, cooper, editor, gauger, mason, and teacher. This means that all of the leaders except for four artisans were men of education or in business.

All were Charitable Irishmen, sixteen of them being on the executive, 1838-1848; twenty-three of them were Repealers; seventeen were adherents of the 'Irish Party' that had stood up to Bishop Fraser. Five had stood clear of the religious factionalism, and only three had supported Fraser. Of these, Fitzgerald held a teaching job in the Catholic school, which presumably the bishop or Loughnan could have taken from him. Quinan was the brother of a priest whose patron had been Fraser, while Mahony came from Newfoundland to Halifax via Pictou, and perhaps had been acquainted with Fraser in that earlier time.

As with many types of leadership, there was a core which, either by dint of personality or through the strongest convictions, was active in every facet of the ongoing campaign for Irish Catholic advancement in Halifax. These seven men, marked on Table IX by an asterisk(*), were all

NAME	Occupation	Born-Died	Birthplace	Charitable Irish Society 1840--1846	Activity in Reform Party 1840-1841	Member of anti-Fraser Irish Party 1840-1843	Active in Repeal Movement 1842-1845
Barron, William	Grocer	1798-1844	Ireland	member	no	yes	yes
Bennett, Michael	Grocer	1763-1847	Ireland	member	no	yes	yes
Cochran, James	Merchant	1801-1877	Ireland	executive	no	yes	yes
*Conway, Jeremiah	Merchant	1803-1868	Ireland	member	yes	yes	yes
Creamer, Daniel	Merchant	1794-1862	Ireland	executive	no	no	no
Cunningham, Roger	Merchant	1798-1886	Ireland	member	no	yes	yes
*Dillon, William	Mason	1791-1845	Ireland	executive	yes	yes	yes
*Doyle, Lawrence	Barrister	1804-1864	Nova Scotia	executive	yes	yes	yes
English, John	Editor	1807-1857	Nova Scotia	executive	yes	no	no
Fitzgerald, James	Teacher	1799-1877	Ireland	executive	yes	+no	yes
Furlong, Peter	Merchant	1796-1856	Ireland	member	no	yes	yes
*Kenny, Edward	Merchant	1800-1891	Ireland	executive	yes	yes	yes
Mahony, Patrick	Carpenter	1796-1877	Nfld.	member	yes	+no	yes
*Maloney, Michael	Shopkeeper	1804-1849	Ireland	executive	yes	yes	yes
Morrissey, Peter	Brewer	1788-1868	Ireland	executive	no	yes	yes
O'Connor, Timothy	Cooper	1791-1853	Nfld.	member	yes	no	yes
O'Neill, Bernard	Merchant	1815-1877	Ireland	executive	no	no	yes
Power, Patrick	Merchant	1815-1881	Ireland	executive	no	no	yes
Quinan, Joseph	Gauger	1809-1861	Quebec	executive	yes	+no	yes
*Ring, Thomas	Merchant	1806-1862	Ireland	executive	yes	yes	yes
Roche, John	Shopkeeper	(?) - (?)	Ireland	member	yes	yes	yes
*Skerry, William	Merchant	1790-1853	Ireland	executive	yes	yes	yes
Tobin, James C.	Merchant	1800-1850	Ireland	member	no	yes	yes
Wallace, James	Merchant	1805-1885	Ireland	executive	no	yes	yes
Walsh, Patrick	Shopkeeper	1817-1869	Nfld.	executive	no	yes	yes

*The principal leaders in all the phases of Irish group activity.

+The three men so indicated were active supporters of the 'Fraser Party'. The teacher, Fitzgerald, had a brief career in journalism in the early 1840's, when he edited The Register. He and Quinan were married to two of the sisters of William Condon, a man who became prominent in the Irish leadership in the 1850's. Quinan's brother, John, was the priestly confidant of Bishop Fraser.

Irish-born except for Doyle. Five were businessmen, one a barrister, and one a craftsman. All seven were in the Charitable Irish Society, the Reform and Repeal movements, and had been at the centre of the 'Irish Party' that defied Bishop Fraser. They would form the nucleus of the emerging leadership of the Irish Catholics in Halifax around 1840.

The Charitable Irish Society was one of the areas to feel the winds of change at once, because it was a pre-existent body.

The changing composition of the Charitable Irish Society indicated two important trends among the Halifax Irish. First, their national association was becoming more broadly based; that is, it was no longer an elitist body of gentry and leading merchants who foregathered in sentimental euphoria to toast an Ireland that may not have existed except in their imaginations. The Society was fast becoming the meeting grounds of all classes of Irish Haligonians.

Secondly, the labouring Irish of Halifax were taking an interest in the Society, but what was their reason? The analysis previously given of members' birthplaces reveals that there were more immigrants among the membership, who were using the Society as a means of getting to know and become known by their new fellow-citizens. This could help their careers and assist their quest for general acceptance in the community. This explains why more natives of Ireland were joining the Society: it aided their upward mobility. It also means that more Irish could afford the

quarterly dues of the Society, and considered the three shillings well invested. The Society was consequently becoming more and more Catholic in composition and more broadly based socially.

The 1840's were years of rising Irish national sentiment. Irishmen abroad drew into Hibernian societies as part of their growing sense of self-awareness. Also, the 1840's were years of reviving hostility towards the Irish among older ethnic groups in host cities such as Halifax. The Irish Catholics banded together within safe and friendly associations as a means of self-defence, mutual support, and encouragement. The Society afforded a platform to the ambitious middle class as it sought after influence and status. The Charitable Irish Society did not become a vehicle for attacking the old regime in Halifax, however. Its long tradition of loyalty to the powers that be (Crown, provincial executive), and cautious support for Irish aspirations in the homeland, held up. The emerging Irish leadership in Halifax had other outlets--Reform Party, Repeal Movement--which offered them instruments of political action. The Charitable Irish Society offered national identification, economic advancement, and personal security, either directly or as a fringe benefit of belonging to the group. The new Irish leadership could also utilize the Society in other ways. They could and did honour prominent Reform politicians, such as Joseph Howe and James B. Uniacke, by electing them president of the

Society. It offered a counterpoise to Repeal, which was regarded by many non-Irish Haligonians as a radical and even disloyal undertaking; if the criticism of the Irish over Repeal became too sustained, the Irish leaders could always appear in the guise of loyal citizens in the official activities of the Charitable Irish Society. The Society also allowed the leadership to keep in touch with those Irish who were not keen about Repeal or the anti-Fraser stance these leaders had taken.

The Repeal Movement

The Charitable Irish Society gave the expatriate Irishman a sense of security while he sought to improve his lot as an Irishman living in Nova Scotia. The Repeal Movement of the 1840's served to channel considerable Irish energy towards Ireland. At the same time it should be noted that Repeal did nothing to diminish the interest of Irish Nova Scotians in the affairs of this province. Daniel O'Connell's alliance with the Whigs in the 1830's anticipated a similar alliance of the Halifax Irish with the Nova Scotian Reformers, while Repeal agitation in Halifax gave the Irish an ostensible reason to meet and to raise money for a cause. Repeal activity would also produce and reinforce the new leadership within the Irish community at Halifax.

²²³ Stewart, The Irish in Nova Scotia, 105.

²²⁴
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²²⁴ Ibid., 111.
Edwards, A New History of Ireland, 161.

O'Connell The Union of the Parliaments of Ireland and Great Britain in 1801 had been accomplished only after considerable effort by its proponents. In Ireland, the Catholic hierarchy and many of the laity supported a Union at the time, in the belief that the Union would be followed shortly by the emancipation of the Catholics from such legal disabilities as exclusion from a Parliamentary seat and from a civic corporation. This pledge was not redeemed, and the Irish people once again had to come to terms with a disappointment at the hands of London.

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O'Connell As the Union and the promised concessions to Catholics had appeared to the general public as two parts of a single proposition, and as the rights of Catholics had not been restored, there was a feeling among the Irish that the Union lacked a moral basis. The letter of the law said Union, but the spirit of the people said Repeal. In early nineteenth-century Ireland the word 'Repeal' meant just one thing: an end to the hated Union between Ireland and Great Britain.

The Repeal cry was first raised publicly in 1810 at Dublin by a young lawyer named Daniel O'Connell. He was aided by the fact that the decade after the Union was no means prosperous in the economic life of Ireland.

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²²³ Stewart, The Irish in Nova Scotia, 105.

²²⁴ Ibid., 111.

O'Connell's movement had two goals--Catholic Emancipation, and Repeal of the Union. During the 1820's the first of these two aims was realized. All the considerable capacity of the Irish for resistance became available for direction against the Union. After Emancipation was achieved, a period of manoeuvre followed while O'Connell tried to come to terms with the Whigs for concessions to Irish interests. When this period of cooperation came to an end, the Irish and O'Connell gave their undivided attention to Repeal. O'Connell At first the Catholic hierarchy had dropped O'Connell and Repeal in 1829 because the clergy generally believed that passage of Catholic Emancipation had liberated Ireland from the control of the Protestant ascendancy. Events proving otherwise, some prelates resumed their support of Repeal. Through most of the 1830's O'Connell had been willing to sustain the reform measures of the several British ministries. Typical of this policy was the backing lent the Melbourne ministry following the Lichfield House meetings early in 1835. O'Connell's group agreed to help the Whigs "who might be influenced to more liberal policies in matters other than repeal [e.g., Irish municipal reforms and tithe reform] . . ." The Irish alliance

²²⁵A.H. Graham, "The Lichfield House Compact, 1835," I.H.S., XII, 47 (March, 1961), 221.

with the Whigs and radicals was not mere expediency. "None of them abandoned principle; each of them saw political advantage in the alliance. O'Connell laid aside Repeal in favour of more immediate gains. . . ." ²²⁶

It was only after Robert Peel and the British Tories returned to office in September 1841 that O'Connell again took up Repeal in earnest, and the support of much of the Catholic hierarchy permitted the rapid growth of Repeal during the next few years. ²²⁷ It was not long before O'Connell's Repeal Movement began to interest Irish emigrants in North America.

Repeal Associations sprang up in North American cities during the 1840's. ²²⁸ The Halifax lawyer, Lawrence O'Connor Doyle, was 'a very warm admirer' of Daniel O'Connell. ²²⁹ This respect intensified as Doyle became "a most outspoken believer in repeal of the Union. He was a member of the branch association in Nova Scotia, and through his efforts large sums of money were remitted to aid the liberator in . . . Ireland." ²³⁰ Doyle was chairman of the

²²⁶ Ibid., 225.

²²⁷ Edwards, A New History of Ireland, 169.

²²⁸ Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration, 385.

²²⁹ George Mullane, "A Sketch of Lawrence O'Connor Doyle," N.S.H.S., XVII (1913), 158.

²³⁰ Ibid., 189.

Repeal meeting in January 1843 at which such rising men ^{the}
as Thomas Ring, Edward Kenny and James Cochran were active. ²³¹

How large was the Repeal Association in Halifax,
and what sort of people was it recruiting? It had the sup-
port of large numbers of Irish Haligonians. Bishop Walsh
and his parochial clergy left Repeal alone, but the Catholic
press and Father R.B. O'Brien of the Catholic 'college' were
actively supporting Repeal in Halifax. Its popular appeal
was assisted by the very simplicity of the issue. Anyone
could understand: two countries were joined together and
one of them wished to terminate the connection. Many ordi-
nary people were in the dark as to how this would be achieved,
but they were quite convinced that Repeal of the Union was
a good thing for Ireland. A major factor that let Repeal
recruit so many members was the unwillingness or the inability
of its opponents among the Irish to mount any effective
counterattack. The best the Tobins could do was to ignore
Repeal. Since to join the movement would be both easy and
popular with the Irish, the failure of most of the Tobin
group to join Repeal was a sign that they did not agree
with it. At the crucial moment, the Hon. Michael Tobin,
Sr., patriarch of the Tobins, died. The Catholic paper sig-
nificantly included the following short passage in its

²³² Ibid., 11 Apr. 1843.
²³¹ Ibid., 23 May 1843.
²³⁴ Ibid., 15 Aug., 10 Oct., 12 Dec., all 1843.

231 The Register, 31 Jan. 1843.

three-paragraph obituary of Tobin: "In the decease of the Honorable M. Tobin, we witness the disruption of the last tie which was left to connect the original generation of Catholics in this community with our contemporaries... ." ²³²

The Repeal Association of Halifax grew quickly at the beginning of 1843 to include 380 members. ²³³ A further 61 members had joined by August, and other lists of new members appeared before the end of the year. ²³⁴ The first list has been analysed, and as the earliest roster it includes the leaders and originators of Repeal in this city. Peer pressures, as much as conviction, may have brought in some of the later enrollments. The 380 originals had four women and three teenaged boys among them, as well as eight unemployed men, and 110 whose occupation has not been found, largely because many of them left Halifax and thus missed inclusion in church records, or the census. This leaves 255 members to analyze. By birthplace, 213 (83.5%) were born in Ireland, 33 (13%) were Nova Scotians, three were from elsewhere in British America (1.3%). A little strange perhaps was the adherence of four Scottish and two English people. Two had Irish parents, however, but the membership of Alexander McKay, David Rugg (brewer), William Mills

²³²Ibid., 11 Apr. 1843.

²³³Ibid., 23 May 1843.

²³⁴Ibid., 15 Aug., 10 Oct., 12 Dec., all 1843.

Ibid., 18 July 1843.

(policeman) and Richard Clay (tavernkeeper) proved there were English and Scots Repealers, even in Halifax. By occupational groups, the 255 included eleven merchants and professional men (4.3%); 68 (26.7%) small business and white-collar; 87 (34.1%) artisans; and 89 (34.9%) labouring.

During 1843 the Halifax Repeal Committee (Doyle, Cochran, Kenny, Ring, Francis Whelan, Robert Hobin and Joseph W. Quinan) fed the Catholic press with news of the progress of the Movement, locally and in Ireland. They convinced The Register, and possibly also themselves, that "there will be some issue, and that at no remote period. There are too many interests jeopardized -- too much exciting throbbing pervading all classes -- too much to be apprehended from continued agitation to permit things to remain as they are."²³⁵ Their enthusiasm led them to make unfavourable comparisons of other places with Halifax. In a piece entitle 'Irishmen in the Colonies', The Register proclaimed:

With the exception of Montreal, Halifax, and a few other places, we believe there has been no movement --no organization--nothing to indicate that the agitation which has been convulsing the empire for the last few months concerned Irishmen . . . We repent that an apathy has been exhibited unworthy of the patriotism for which the Irish are distinguished. . . Have Irishmen in these colonies . . .²³⁶ already forgotten the home of their childhood. . .?

²³⁵ Reported in various issues of The Register, 12 Sep. to Ibid., 4 July 1843.

²³⁶ Ibid., 18 July 1843.

The Register need not have worried or else its scornful hint had its effect. By the end of 1843, Repeal Associations had begun at Bathurst, Sydney, Saint John, St. John's, Charlottetown, and Arichat. Members were enrolled at Prospect and Ketch Harbour.

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Some felt the Halifax Repealers had no room for complacency. In a letter to The Register, 'A Repealer' explicitly raised the identity question when he accused some Irish Haligonians of having ceased to be Irish. 'A Repealer' wrote:

Repeal in Halifax

Repealers of this Province are Irishmen worthy of Ireland; Irishmen willing to assist her; and, in the comparative happiness of their own condition, not forgetting to commiserate hers . . . The Repeal Meetings held in the City are, unquestionably, respectable and numerous attended; but . . . do these Meetings represent the Irishmen of Halifax? This question . . . can be answered only in the negative. Any person who has ever been present at one of our Repeal Meetings and who is aware of the amount of Irish Population in the City, must allow that six such Assemblies, would not represent the Irishmen of Halifax . . . Irishmen of Halifax who have not yet enlisted in the cause of Repeal, you know the condition of Ireland; you say that she is your native land . . . at your firesides you boast that you are Irishmen; will you boast that you are not Repealers? . . . if you refuse to rally around the Standard of Repeal . . . you ceased to love Ireland . . . Claim some other Nation. IRELAND is not your Country; you are not IRISHMEN.

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237
Reported in various issues of The Register,
12 Sep. to 19 Dec. 1843.

238

Ibid., 8 Aug. 1843.

If we allow for the rhetoric meant to shame people into joining the Repeal Association, there remains the significant point that many of them were not in the cause. The reason might be that they felt, as did Joseph Howe, that the Movement was somewhat disloyal. Much more likely many of the Irish in Halifax had resolved the identity issue by deciding to be Nova Scotians first, and then Irishmen. They had become caught up with earning their way in Halifax, and in advancing themselves here. It was not that they loved Ireland less, but that they loved Halifax more.

This upset 'A Repealer'. Although his second attack was ambiguous, he obviously hoped to embarrass the Irish who had opted for Nova Scotia. 'A Repealer' took up his pen again to speak of the rapid growth of Repeal, but he wondered why some Irish in Halifax continued to hold aloof. "He would not insult them by supposing that they are retarded by pecuniary considerations. Then by what are they retarded? Is it by a want of love of their country?"

'A Repealer' should have taken comfort from the fact that if the movement did not embrace every Irishman in Halifax, it did contain almost all of the leading Catholic Irishmen in the community, except the Tobin family. Having so many prominent members, the Repeal Movement was a force to be reckoned with in Halifax, and a very active body indeed. Doyle

²³⁹ Ibid., 22 Aug. 1843. The same issue fervently proclaimed: "Even Orangemen are Irishmen & should join to support Repeal!" Strange advice for a Catholic newspaper!

led the Halifax chapter in resolving that "the only measure by which the wrongs of . . . Ireland can be redressed" was the termination of the Union with Great Britain.

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At about this time, the Halifax Repealers sent £600 to Ireland. This prompted the Boston Pilot to acknowledge that Halifax had done more for Repeal than had New York or Boston, which had much larger Catholic populations.

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Chapters existed at Newcastle and Miramichi, N.B., and at the Gut of Canso, Guysborough, and Dartmouth, N.S., but the Repeal Movement in the 'lower provinces' was centred in Halifax.

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In August 1845 a Great Repeal Meeting at Halifax heard Doyle speak of "the spirit of misrule which had been so ruinous to the happiness and prosperity of Ireland--which had bowed down Irishmen at home, seemed to follow them in their exile, to Nova Scotia."

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Doyle also blasted Elkanah Young, M.L.A. for Falmouth Township, who had condemned Repeal in a letter to his constituents. Doyle termed it "an insult . . . to the Irishmen and Catholics of this city . . . which could not, and ought not to be allowed to pass unnoticed. . . ."

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240 Mullane, "Lawrence O'Connor Doyle," 189.

241 Ibid., 183.

242 The Register, 27 May, 14 Oct., 23 Dec., all 1845.

243 The Sun, 11 Aug. 1845.

244 The Register, 12 Aug. 1845.

247 Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1832, c. 6.

Catholic The significance of the Repeal Movement in Halifax was twofold. Firstly, it gave Lawrence O'Connor Doyle a platform upon which to present himself to the Irish electorate of Halifax without overtly upstaging any of the sitting Reform members from the Halifax seats. Secondly, it both fed upon and renewed the sense of involvement in Irish affairs that still was cherished by many Halifax Irishmen, especially the more recently arrived. *Doyle's life was not happy, however.* The Repealers in Halifax were led by Lawrence O'Connor Doyle. He was born in Halifax, 27 February 1804, the son of Lawrence Doyle, a merchant from Ross, County Wexford, and his wife, Bridget O'Connor of County Waterford. He was educated in England at Stonyhurst College, a Catholic school, then returned to Halifax where he articulated for five years with the Attorney-General, Richard J. Uniacke, Sr. ²⁴⁵ When he was admitted attorney on 22 January 1828, he was the first Catholic to join the Nova Scotian bar. He became a full member as a barrister on 29 January 1829, by which time he was vice president of the Charitable Irish Society. ²⁴⁶ In November 1832 Doyle was elected as representative of the largely Catholic (and Acadian) township of Arichat, one of three new seats created that year for Cape Breton Island. ²⁴⁷ Doyle took his seat on 8 February 1833, becoming the second

²⁴⁵Mullane, "Lawrence O'Connor Doyle," 158.

²⁴⁶Stewart, The Irish in Nova Scotia, 91. Doyle was president of the Society for 1832, 1833, 1834, 1843, and 1844.

²⁴⁷Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1832, c. 6.

Catholic to sit in the Nova Scotia Assembly. During the 1830's Doyle took part in Reform politics, a matter to which we shall return. As a legal and political figure, Doyle had made his mark by 1840.

If Doyle's biography reads like a success story that is because very largely it was just that, the upward movement of a gifted and well-trained man in his personal and professional careers. Doyle's life was not happy, however. In 1833 he had married at Arichat, Sarah Ann, daughter of Lt. James Driscoll, R.N. The birth of a short-lived daughter, their only child, left Mrs. Doyle unwell. She died in February 1842, aged only 27 years. This personal tragedy occurred at a time when Doyle was not in the Assembly. In November 1840, Doyle had lost Arichat to his Tory opponent, Henry Martell. Although undocumented, it appears Doyle suffered from too much drinking at social events, and from rheumatism. Those who believe in the notion of sublimation can perceive in the manner in which Doyle threw himself into Repeal the action of a man who is seeking to lose his sorrows by immersion in a cause. Temporarily lacking an elected post, Doyle could give himself to the cause of Ireland, thereby establishing a public position among the electorate of Halifax. Since his greatest activity preceded the 1843 provincial general election, we may suppose Doyle was seeking to gain a nomination.

If Doyle wanted an issue to bring him again before the public, and this time in Halifax, which he had not represented in the past, he was most fortunate in having both

an electorate with a high component of Irish Catholics, and an issue such as Repeal with which to appeal to them. As all of the sitting members for Halifax--William Annand, Joseph Howe, James McNab, William Stairs--were Reformers, it may have caused some of them concern that Doyle was operating on a popular theme in their bailiwick. Howe, for one, openly refused to support Repeal, when he was invited to do so.²⁴⁸ Several years later, Howe explained that he had been asked to join the Repealers, but that he had refused to do so because Repeal did not accord with Howe's loyalty to the British Crown.²⁴⁹ This would not be the only time that the Reformer, Joseph Howe, found himself taking a different line from that of his Irish Catholic colleagues.

The Repeal Movement continued to stir up sound and fury for a little longer, but by the end of 1846 the Great Famine had come upon Ireland and the cry changed from Repeal to Relief. As early as March 1846 The Cross felt forced to deny that Repeal was on the wane locally. The young cleric, Thomas Connolly, future bishop of Saint John and archbishop of Halifax, wrote to say that the cause of Repeal was as strong as ever. He signed himself a priest, an Irishman and a Repealer, in that order.²⁵⁰ With a change in the

ally: they did not want to overturn the social or economic systems.

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Stewart, The Irish in Nova Scotia, 143.

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Novascotian, 19 Jan. 1857.

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The Cross, 7 Mar. 1846.

name of the occupation, such a self-description would have suited quite a few Irish Haligonians at that time. The awful fascination of the Great Famine drew the minds and emotions of the Irish abroad back to their homeland. Repeal had been related to the emigrant Irishman's sense of being Irish, but some Irishmen could turn their backs on Repeal. The Famine was a common tragedy that united all Irishmen at home and abroad. For a few years, the Halifax Irish acted in the underlying consciousness that the people at home were sick and starving. It delayed their integration into society in Nova Scotia, and it bred resentments that would not be unleashed until the 1850's.

Haligonians and Irishmen

Successful in asserting control of his Church, deeply immersed in Repeal, the Catholic Irishman had yet a third front on which he operated, namely, the politics of Halifax City and of Nova Scotia. Since the Irish were not alone in wishing changes in the structures of local and provincial government, the political side of their struggle for reform formed part of a wider effort in that general direction. Most of the Irish wanted the system opened up to permit them to advance socially and economically; they did not want to overturn the social or economic systems. Lacking the social prestige and the economic clout to attain their goals, the Irish resorted to political manoeuvre as their best hope of knocking down the barriers to their upward mobility.

Municipal government in Nova Scotia was based on the eighteenth-century concept of authority. A few magistrates were appointed for each **municipal** unit. They and a handful of officials dominated the meagre activities allowed to a local government under the Nova Scotian system. These few individuals controlled the poor house, the streets, the town cemetery, fire fighting companies, and the markets. Halifax was legally a township, and was not a body corporate until 1841. The status of a township did not admit of strong local self-government.

A township contains no certain definite quantity of lands, nor assumes any prescribed shape . . . nor is it endowed with all those curious corporate powers, which the townships of New-England possess, beyond the election of a representative; which privilege is not enjoyed by all. The inhabitants have no other power than that of holding an annual meeting, for the purpose of voting money for the support of their poor.²⁵¹

In theory a Grand Jury of 24 members supervised the affairs of the township of Halifax on behalf of the public. In practice, that body had little real power, and even less interest in changing a system in which they and their kind were secure. Comparison of Grand Jury lists and early census records make it plain that in Halifax the Grand Jury represented a very narrow interest group of merchants and professional men, with the occasional inclusion of one

²⁵¹ Haliburton, History of Nova Scotia, II, 9. Such people would resent the prospect of laying out their money for the support of numbers of destitute immigrant Irishmen.

²⁵⁵ ibid., 1841.

or two affluent shopkeepers or a master tradesman. Catholics were extremely rare in the ranks of the magistracy, and the ordinary shopkeepers among the Protestants of Halifax were nearly as rare.

The Irish Catholics were under-represented in local public office in Halifax in the 1830's. For example, in 1835 they occupied 32 posts of 125 in the minor local offices, being best represented as constables (11 of 14), wood measurers (8 of 17), and cullers of fish (3 of 4), but having no places as clerks of market or assessors. Their situation had not altered appreciably in 1839, when they held 32 of 132 places. In 1838 there was no Irish Catholics listed among the justices of the peace, or fire wardens. Irish Catholics held few local posts down to incorporation in 1841. The almanac of that year shows only 15 Catholics holding positions, and of these the Kenny and Tobin families accounted for eight. Catholics not only had few places, but those that they received were devoid of prestige or the opportunity for profit. This might not worry an Irish day-labourer, but an ambitious Irish storekeeper might resent a system that relegated his race and creed to process-servers and cullers of fish.

²⁵²P.A.N.S., R.G. 34, series 312, Vol. P 14, "Grand Jury Book, 1835-1843".

²⁵³Ibid.

²⁵⁴Belcher's Farmer's Almanac . . . 1838.

²⁵⁵Ibid., 1841.

Halifax in the 1830's was still controlled by an oligarchy made up of a few score of lawyers, merchants, and government officials who monopolized the better local positions. The influx of so many Irish immigrants had dramatically changed the religious and ethnic composition of Halifax. A new barrier of race and creed divided the oligarchs and the ordinary citizens of Irish origin. A division along occupational lines also existed, as the oligarchs kept nearly every place in the magistracy for themselves. The Grand Jury which had charge of appointments was widely rumoured to be rigged.

Moreover, the provincial and Halifax local government circles overlapped; one oligarchy was effectively the other. For example, the Halifax magistracy in 1833 included a coroner and a sheriff who were sons-in-law of a Councillor. The Custos Rotulorum was the business partner of a former Member. The justices of the peace included the coroner's uncle, the solicitor-general's father, a cousin of the Speaker, the son of a former Councillor, a Councillor's brother, the business associates and relatives and in-laws of other members of the Legislature.

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Novascotian, 3 May 1838.

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Belcher's Farmer's Almanac, 1833, 57-59. Cf., Punch, "The Halifax Connection," 17-18, for details of these and other cases.

This snug coterie met with serious censure in the 1830's, probably reaching the depth of public embarrassment at the time of Joseph Howe's trial in 1835.²⁵⁸ Exclusiveness in membership in municipal government was not an endearing quality, but it was not criminal. The fault was not even general dishonesty, although Howe had cited cases of this. The fatal flaw was incompetence. When improvements were made to streets, and the sewers were constructed, the magistrates acted both arbitrarily and ineffectively.²⁵⁹ People can tolerate a degree of bumptiousness in their public figures, but when this officiousness gives personal offence and increases the burden of taxation, people lose their patience.

This state of affairs provoked various reactions. The rising shopkeepers and tradesmen, as also the working class and the new immigrants (including many Irish Catholic), wished to share in the magistracy and local officialdom of Halifax. The governing clique, the 'Halifax Connection', wished to keep control. Some moderates, such as Joseph Howe in 1834, did not like the oligarchy, but felt that British experience proved that urban magistracies were likely to become strongholds of oligarchy in the normal course of events.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁸ James Murray Beck, "'A fool for a client': the trial of Joseph Howe," Acadiensis, III (1973/74), 27-44.

²⁵⁹ Sutherland, "The Merchants of Halifax," 244-246.

²⁶⁰ Novascotian, 9 Oct. 1834.

The movement for incorporation became fully mobilized in the mid-1830's when allegations of fraud and incompetence coincided with the onset of an economic recession that burdened middle class ratepayers. Many opponents of incorporation felt that 'some slight modifications' in the existing local government would be sufficient, and that it was unnecessary to introduce 'so levelling, so democratic

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a measure'. The presence of Irish Catholics among those wishing changes added determination to the opposition of vested interests to incorporation. Yet, these foes of civic reorganization must have seen that passage of Municipal Reform in England in 1835 was 'the handwriting on the wall'.

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If they clung to any doubts, they must have been undeceived in 1840 when the newly-arrived lieutenant-governor, Lord Falkland, stated his desire to extend the municipal rights and privileges of Britain to fellow subjects in Nova Scotia. It was part of Lord Sydenham's careful plan to undermine the Reformers by conceding them an apparent participation in power. Incorporation of Halifax and formation of a coalition were window-dressing intended to lead the

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261 Novascotian, 8 March 1838. The newspaper was reporting the speech of James Boyle Uniacke, an opponent of incorporation, in the Legislative Assembly.

262 F.W. Maitland, The Constitutional History of England (Cambridge: University Press, 1965), 359.

263 Nova Scotia Royal Gazette, 28 Oct. 1840.

public into the belief that reform had been satisfied. In Halifax's municipal government it enabled the old oligarchy of merchants and lawyers to retain power but within a 'liberalized' framework.

Following civic incorporation in 1841, the Irish continued to be under-represented, surprisingly so in view of their numbers in some parts of the city. There were 33 key civic offices in Halifax each year between 1842 and 1849: mayor, recorder, marshal, six aldermen, 12 common councilmen, 12 city assessors. All but the recorder and marshal were elected. There were never more than three Irish Catholics among the 33 through the 1840's. The following list, compiled from various almanacs of the period, indicates the position year by year:

1842 - Edward Kenny, ward 2 alderman; finished out the mayor's term

1843, 1844 - nil

1845 - Gregory Dwyer, ward 1 assessor; Patrick Mahoney, ward 2 assessor

1846 - Daniel Creamer, ward 5 common councilman

1847 - Thomas Ring, ward 4 councilman; Creamer (as 1846); T.S. Tobin, ward 4 assessor

1848-1849 - Thomas Ring, ward 4 common councilman.

There were 264 positions (@ 33 per annum for eight years) to be filled, and the Irish Catholics filled only nine of them, with six men accomplishing even that limited representation. The Irish Catholics proportionately should have held ten times as many positions for their population.

There is no mystery why the Irish did not take a larger share of the offices following incorporation of Halifax City. They were generally not well enough off to qualify as voters, aldermen or councilmen. The 'Act to Incorporate the Town of Halifax' provided that, apart from the first civic election, the only voters in civic contests would have to own or occupy in their own right a house, warehouse, field, wharf or shop valued at £20 per year, while common councilmen must have similar property valued at £30, and a real or personal estate of £500. The mayor and aldermen were restricted to those worth £50 a year, and a real or personal estate of £1000.

The nearest existing complete valuation of Halifax to 1841 is that of 1836. With the warning that they were five years out of date by the city's incorporation, and can only give general and very tentative impressions of what the situation was by 1842, when the first civic election took place under the full regulations, what do they tell us? In 1836 only 360 Irish Catholics were owners or occupants in their own right of any property at all, out of 2329 such persons (15.5%).²⁶⁵ Of the 360 only about 100 were eligible to vote in a civic election. Of these voters only 41 could have stood for office, and of the 41 only eight were eligible

²⁶⁴Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1841, c.55, sections 8, 20 and 19, respectively.

²⁶⁵P.A.N.S., R.G. 35, Series 'A', Vol. 3, No. 12.

to be aldermen or mayor. As one of the eight was an alderman, and five of the 41 were common councilmen or assessors, the Irish Catholics (if under-represented) were at least participating. The grave injustice here was not ethnic or religious; it was the undemocratic nature of the civic franchise. This reflected the fact that the bill was a compromise between the supporters of the old and the agitators for the new. Joseph Howe, for example, felt it was essential to give the 'middle orders' their say in civic government,²⁶⁶ and that too much extremism in seeking reform could result in no reform at all. It was the old tale of half a loaf being preferable to none.

There was a general disappointment in Halifax when the reformed city government did not result in all that the ordinary citizens had hoped for. The compromise would have to be destroyed, and a much fuller measure of public enfranchisement sought. The Irish Catholics were part of that campaign. At a Repeal meeting in 1845, William Skerry and Patrick Walsh won unanimous acceptance of a resolution demanding that Irish Catholics were "fully entitled to participate . . . in the enjoyment of all Civil Rights and . . . that our enjoyment of the Elective Franchise is as dear to us as . . . any other class of our fellow-Religionists."²⁶⁷

²⁶⁶Novascotian, 11 Mar. 1841. This is a good example of Howe's underlying Whiggery.

²⁶⁷The Sun, 11 Aug. 1845.

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for so long. The interesting aspect of this situation is that the Irish Catholics of Halifax, as some others in the city, found themselves very little further ahead following the act of incorporation. They were then obliged to help to overturn the provincial administration if they were to gain the advantages in local government which they wished to acquire: broader franchise to enable them to vote and to serve as elected members. The focus of Irish Catholic political action thus tended to become provincial rather than civic.

Nova Scotians and Irishmen

Attention has been directed to the existence of a Nova Scotian oligarchy in the 1830's. It will be recalled that this clique was made up of Anglican officials, lawyers, and merchants concentrated in Halifax, the seat of political power in Nova Scotia under the colonial regime. The personnel of the oligarchy were of two calibres: the 'small fry' of local officialdom as previously noticed when we looked at Halifax civic government prior to 1841 (or even 1848); and the 'big fish' -- Councillors and the major provincial government appointees, such as sheriffs, and collectors of excise or customs. Most of Nova Scotia's political history between 1835 and 1848 is related to the efforts of the Reformers to oust the local and provincial oligarchies, and to the counter-moves of the privileged classes to retain their nearly monopolistic grip on what they had controlled

These events are treated by W. Ross Livingston, Responsible Government in Nova Scotia (Iowa City: University of Iowa, 1930), 47-236. The oligarchy is fully described by Punch, "The Halifax Connection", 60-147.

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for so long.

The Reformers were drawn from various parts of the province and from several religious and ethnic backgrounds. In a rather general sort of way there were parts of the province which gave majority support to Reform, namely, Cape Breton Island, the three easternmost (Guysborough, Sydney and Pictou) and three westernmost (Digby, Yarmouth, and Shelburne) counties, and Halifax. Cape Breton and much of the neighbouring mainland was Scottish, while the western end of the province was peopled mainly by people originally from the area of the United States, with some Acadian settlement as well. These areas had in common a majority of Dissenters -- members of the Protestant denominations other than the established Church of England. Halifax was the exception in that its people included the Irish Catholics in large numbers. The political balance of the province between Reformers and Tories was so finely drawn at times as to make the retention of the Halifax seats the key to a majority in the Assembly. Halifax, it should also be noted, was the place of birth or residence of six of the seven Reform leaders in the Assembly of 1840: William Annand, Lawrence O'Connor Doyle, Joseph Howe, James McNab, James B. Uniacke, and Willaim Young. Only Herbert Huntington of Yarmouth

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These events are treated by W. Ross Livingston, Responsible Government in Nova Scotia (Iowa City: University of Iowa, 1930), 47-236. The oligarchy is fully described by Punch, "The Halifax Connection", 60-147.

was not a Haligonian in any sense whatever. Doyle, Uniacke and Young represented Cape Breton constituencies, but remained in every other sense Haligonians. They were lawyers, while Joseph Howe and William Annand were journalists. McNab and many of the supporting members were merchants having interests outside the Halifax area, while Huntington was a combination of farmer, teacher, and shipowner.

When the Novascotian printed a letter to the editor, signed 'The People', early in 1835, it proved to be the first volley in a long running battle for control of the government of Nova Scotia. The article expressed very well the sense of frustration then felt by many Nova Scotians about the provincial administration.

In a young and poor country, where the sons of rich and favoured families alone receive education at the public expense--where the many must toil to support the extortions and exactions of a few; where the hard earnings of the people are lavished on an aristocracy, who repay their ill-timed generosity with contempt and insult; it requires no ordinary nerve in men of moderate circumstances and humble pretensions, to stand forward and boldly protest against measures which are fast working the ruin of this Province.

This letter led to an action being taken against the editor of the newspaper, Joseph Howe, for publishing a libel. The public notice that Howe's trial, speech, and acquittal won for him was reflected by Howe's election to the Legislature

²⁶⁹Based on information in Nova Scotia's M.L.A.'s 1758-1958 (Halifax: P.A.N.S., 1958).

²⁷⁰Novascotian, 1 Jan. 1835. 'The People' was George Thompson.

in November 1836. His presence gave an animation and a focus to the party seeking changes in the system. ²⁷¹ The election of 1836 was important in giving Howe and several other self-proclaimed Reformers some control of the provincial Assembly.

The party that grew up around Howe sought a change in the structure and methods of government. These Reformers aspired to take the administration from the hands of the few and make room for new men with new ideas. "The fundamental question . . . was whether the government could be made to harmonize with the growing democratic life of the province without . . . disrupting the Empire." ²⁷² The first step in carrying out this ambitious overhaul was for the Reformers to reproduce in Nova Scotia sufficient of the mechanisms of the British home government to enable the Reformers to put the oligarchy out of its overweening power. The outcome of this 'evolution to popular control' would be a system of government, as that of Britain herself, in which the executive authority was subject to the approbation of a legislative body which had the right to force the executive to resign if the legislative body did not approve of its actions. In other words, there was to be 'responsible' government. Changes along these lines would advance the interests of all the groups

²⁷¹ Livingston, Responsible Government in Nova Scotia, 43.

²⁷² Ibid.

in society who could not participate within the old system of oligarchy. The Irish Catholics fell almost completely into the category of the constant 'outs'.

The Irish Catholics were growing in numbers and they were moving gradually towards a better economic position in the community. Those who had been born here, or who had lived in Halifax for many years, felt they had a stake in the town and its government and development. The ideas of the Reformers seemed eminently suited to the needs and desires of the Irish Catholics, who could see that — **unaided** — they could not wrest control from the oligarchy. Here were the Reformers offering a platform with which the Irish could make common cause. Howe's Twelve Resolutions of the session of 1837 give a good idea of what the Reformers wanted, in general terms. ²⁷³ Those attacking the exclusive power of the oligarchy would appeal to the Irish as the removal of this power would open the way to Irish advancement. Those resolutions (4, 5 and 6) which assailed Anglican privilege would flatter the religious sentiments of the Catholics, while the resolution (3) calling for a 'just and liberal' system of education would have accorded well with Irish Catholics' interests. What the expression 'just and liberal' meant in practical terms was another matter for future resolution. For the time

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Joseph Andrew Chisholm, ed., The Speeches and Public Letters of Joseph Howe (Halifax: The Chronicle Publishing Company, Limited, 1909), 112-115.

being, the Irish could ally with the Reformers against the vested interests of the colonial oligarchy of predominantly Anglo-Saxon merchants and lawyers. What emerged in Nova Scotia in 1837 was not a merger of Liberal Reformers and Irish Catholics. Instead these groups formed a coalition within which the Irish retained a separate identity.

Irish support for the Reformers quickly became a significant factor in provincial politics. There were 14 or 15 Irish Catholics among the 63 members of the Reform committee in Halifax in 1840. Only one was included among the 50 members of the Tory committee. The Reform Party at Halifax enjoyed large Irish Catholic support in the election campaign of 1840, a contrast to the situation in 1836, when the highly-respected Michael Tokin, Sr., had been nominated in the Tory interest, and another Irish Catholic, John Skerry, had nominated the Tory squire from Middle Musquodoboit, Henry A. Gladwin. The partisan lines were still being drawn in 1836. Four years later matters were much clearer.

In 1840, the Tory newspaper, The Times, carried a letter signed 'Sat', which mentioned that a Reform parade

²⁷⁴Sutherland, "J.W. Johnston," 165-166.

²⁷⁵Novascotian, 29 Oct. 1840. Cf., Table IX, supra, for their names.

²⁷⁶Acadian Recorder, 31 Oct. 1840. The one Irish Catholic was James Mahony, shoemaker.

²⁷⁷Novascotian, 17 Nov. 1836.

through town had been led by three candidates who were believed to be Presbyterians [Annand, McNab and Howe were the three]. Instead of stopping and giving three cheers in front of their own church they went around the corner and gave the ovation to the Catholic chapel. 'Sat' felt that was a good indication of who controlled the Reform Party in Halifax.²⁷⁸ 'Sat' was granting too much to the Catholics. They did not control the Reform movement, but they were necessary for its success. The Reformers could not afford to let the Catholics support the Tory candidates, and therefore had to conciliate the Irish Catholic electorate sufficiently to keep its good will. It was a question of weight. The Reform candidates were all four of them Protestants; the giving of three cheers to a Catholic masshouse merely constituted part of an exchange for perhaps 20-25% of the township vote.

The 1840 election result, based on the 40 shilling freeholders' franchise (which was wider than that first used in the city in the 1840's), showed the necessity of holding Irish Catholic support. The published returns were as follows:

²⁷⁹
Township (2 members): James McNab, Reformer, 716 (elected)
Thomas Forrester, Reformer, 542 (elected)
Alexander Keith, Tory, 355
County (2 members): Joseph Howe, Reformer, 1085 (elected)
William Annand, Reformer, 923 (elected)
Beamish Murdoch, Tory, 506.

²⁷⁸The Times, 10 Nov. 1840.

²⁷⁹Acadian Recorder, 14 Nov. 1840.

In the township 1613 votes were taken. While two members were chosen and each voter could declare himself for two candidates, there were many plumpers (i.e., votes for one candidate only). Allowing for that, if even 1000 individuals voted and the Irish Catholics were as few as 20%, the latter controlled 200 voters who cast as many as 320 votes. If as few as 100 of these were taken from Forrester and given to Keith, the latter would have won. And that takes everything at a minimum; an Irish Catholic landslide to Keith could have left Keith's and Forrester's vote tallies reversed. In the county results the same alteration of support would have elected Murdoch. The Reformers needed Irish Catholic votes to win two of the four seats in question. Yet, it is plain that an Irish Catholic candidate relying solely on his own ethnic and denominational constituency would have had no chance to win election. The Irish, then, were not so much working for the Reformers or the Church as for their political advantage as a body of voters. 'A Catholic' dealt with part of this matter in a letter to the press just after the elections, when he asked whether it followed "that because the Irish population are almost to a man Reformers, that necessarily they are so from a desire to elevate and strengthen their Church?"

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²⁸⁰ Ibid., 5 Dec. 1840.

stand. In the mind of 'A Catholic' the answer was negative or else he would never have raised the question in those terms at all. The explanation is that the Irish were growing more assertive, and they knew very well that their concentration in Halifax conferred on them a strategic advantage in the political system. Having supported the Reformers in 1840 and having shown that the Irish vote en bloc was significant, the Irish would wish to have one of their own people stand as a candidate before long. The fact that Lawrence Doyle lost his Arichat seat in 1840 meant that, come the next election, an Irish Catholic candidate of good qualifications would be available to run for a Halifax seat.

Catholic Irish expectations may have risen when a bye-election was held in Halifax to fill the seat left vacant by the death of the Reformer, Thomas Forrester, on 15 November 1841. Instead of offering the seat to the Irish Catholics, however, the Reformers nominated William Stairs, a merchant of Protestant and remotely-Irish ancestry. Stairs was elected without opposition. The logical Reform candidate was probably Lawrence O'Connor Doyle, but he was not nominated. Since Mrs. Doyle was then mortally ill, it is conceivable that Doyle for personal reasons had declined to

²⁸¹ Nova Scotia's M.L.A.'s 1758-1958, 124-125. A native Haligonian of fairly obscure origins, he had fought for the incorporation of Halifax City, and had opposed the policy of the banks concerning specie payments. He was described as being a "Whig Radical".

²⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 16 Nov. 1843.

stand. Whatever Doyle's situation and feelings about the matter, subsequent events reveal that some Irish Catholics resented the failure to nominate Doyle.

As the election of 1843 drew near there were signs that the alliance between the Protestant Reformers and the Catholic Irish was breaking down. In September 1843, the Novascotian took issue with remarks in The Register which had spoken of the Irish having to bare their shoulders while they were lashed into quiet subjection. The Novascotian, a Reform newspaper, reassured the Irishman that he had the same rights as other citizens, that "no line divides him, either in municipal or general franchise, from the rest of the population, and every distinction is open to him as to us all."²⁸² Rumours flew that the Tories were attempting to gain support among the Irish Catholics. The press reported that two prominent Conservatives (Henry Pryor and J.W. Ritchie) had visited 'a distinguished Catholic Repealer', whom they proposed to support in the ensuing election if he would stand as a Tory. Both Pryor and Ritchie published denials at the end of October 1843, but a suspicion lingered²⁸³ that the Catholics and the Conservatives could come to terms. Speaking at least unofficially for the Tories, The Times stated that there would be nothing to prevent the Catholics²⁸⁴ from supporting the Tories, except for Repeal.

²⁸²Novascotian, 11 Sep. 1843.

²⁸³The Times, 31 Oct. 1843.

²⁸⁴Ibid., 14 Nov. 1843.

Reformers. The Reformers met at Mason Hall on 6 November to nominate their candidates for the Halifax seats in the upcoming general election. Very few Catholics attended. The meeting chose the four sitting Reformers (Annand, Howe, McNab and Stairs) as their standard bearers.²⁸⁵ Some Reformers at the thinly-attended gathering criticized their own members as "too favourable to R. Catholics, and were said to be under their influence." William Young was taxed with marrying a Catholic.²⁸⁶ George R. Young defended the Catholics, saying that "from their weight, respectability, and numbers" they deserved to have a member. He suggested that if the Catholics would support the sitting Reformers, the Liberals would undertake to uphold a Catholic candidate in the future.²⁸⁷

The next night, 7 November, the Catholic freeholders met at the Exchange Coffee House. The contrast between the two meetings was apparent. The Reformers had mustered about 300 men, but the Catholics had nearly 750 at their meeting, all but a fraction being Catholic and Irish. Thomas Kenny took the chair, supported by John Martin, J.P., Ketch Harbour. The meeting heard views that the Catholics had been treated disrespectfully and discourteously by the

²⁸⁵Ibid., 7 Nov. 1843.

²⁸⁶Novascotian, 13 Nov. 1843.

²⁸⁷The Halifax Morning Post, 7 Nov. 1843.

Reformers. Hon. Michael Tobin, Jr., spoke, alleging that as lately as 2 November Howe had offered a nomination to a Catholic, and retracted it the next day. Other speakers, including Edward Kenny, Thomas Ring and James C. Tobin, echoed anti-Reform sentiments. On the motion of Michael Moloney, seconded by William Skerry, the meeting unanimously resolved "That we, the Catholics of Halifax . . . will take no part in the approaching township and county Election."²⁸⁸

This was a serious development from the Liberals' point of view. In a letter to the press, 'A Reformer' attacked Michael Tobin as one setting himself up as leader of the Catholics "to foment divisions among the Reformers, and estrange their fellow countrymen from their old friends." He went on to speak of the Reformers' "claims upon their Irish friends--not as Catholics, but as liberals . . ."²⁸⁹ 'A Reformer' did not consider Tobin a Reformer. He was quite correct in this, but the fact was that Tobin was the most logical avenue of communication between the Tories and the Catholic Irish. Tobin, moreover, could afford a slightly radical stance at the moment as one who had defied a bishop and got away with it. The 'Fraser Party' in the Church dispute was then going into eclipse and Tobin had joined with Reformers to assert Irish control of the local

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 10 Nov. 1843.

²⁸⁹ Novascotian, 13 Nov. 1843.

Church organization. Joseph Howe also sniped at the Tobins, particularly at the late Hon. James Tobin, father of Michael Tobin. Howe received a stern reply through the columns of The Register on 14 November 1843. Howe also wrote a public letter to Thomas Kenny. In it he declared that "Northup and Wier assured me that Mr. Thomas Ring had stated to them that if we would take one of their people with us, the Irish would be satisfied . . ." Howe complained of the conduct of the Irish voters whom he felt acted from religious rather than political motives. Some non-Irish people, he warned, would leave the Reformers if they ran so notorious a Repealer as Doyle. Howe was surprised at the falling off of 'the Doyles, Kennies, Rings and Maloneys' from the Reform movement. The Times, for its part, claimed that the Reformers had thrown over the Catholics and that Howe recognized "the weakness of the 'great Liberal party' depending upon its own resources . . ." Neither the Reformers nor the Catholics alone could stand up to the Tories, The Times declared, and insisted that apart from Repeal there was no issue dividing Catholics and Conservatives. Three candidates appeared for the two township seats: McNab and Stairs (the two sitting Reformers), and

²⁹⁰The Register, 14 Nov. 1843.

²⁹¹The Times, 14 Nov. 1843.

²⁹⁶Acadian Recorder, 10 July 1847.

Andrew M. Uniacke, a Conservative. The Catholic abstention from supporting the Reformers had its effect. McNab was returned at the head of the poll with 786 votes, while Uniacke squeezed in ahead of Stairs, 636 to 619.²⁹² An analysis of the poll revealed that 1236 had cast votes, and that Uniacke had received 436 plumpers, as against 14 for Stairs and only eight for McNab. There were 581 who voted the Reform ticket (McNab & Stairs), but, interestingly, 197 split their vote between Uniacke and one of the Reformers. The revised returns gave the poll as: McNab 775, Uniacke 633, Stairs 606.²⁹³ Nearly everyone at the time agreed that the Catholics, one way or another, had cost Stairs the seat.²⁹⁴

The Catholics may not have abstained as generally as might appear at first glance. The Times of 28 November 1843 carried a card from A.M. Uniacke in which he returned his thanks and appreciation to "his Roman Catholic friends for the assistance afforded to him."²⁹⁵ Now, unless Uniacke was an abnormally sarcastic fellow, this card meant that he had received the votes of some Catholic electors. Four years later, the Acadian Recorder said that the Catholic Irish had voted for Uniacke at the close of the 1843 election, bringing him in ahead of Stairs.²⁹⁶ There may have been a residue of

²⁹² Ibid., 28 Nov. 1843.

²⁹³ Ibid., 5 Dec. 1843.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 14 Nov. 1843; The Halifax Morning Post, 18 Nov. 1843.

²⁹⁵ The Times, 28 Nov. 1843

²⁹⁶ Acadian Recorder, 10 July 1847.

resentment against Stairs for taking the nomination in 1841 bye-election when Doyle might have had it. Then too, Uniacke, although Protestant, came from a southern Irish family, and his father, Hon. R.J. Uniacke, Sr., had supported Catholic emancipation in Nova Scotia. Obviously a group disliked Stairs, but supported Reform generally. The analysis of the 1843 result mentions that 186 people voted for Uniacke and McNab, but only 11 for Uniacke and Stairs. The inference is that more than 170 people had voted to defeat Stairs. I believe these people were mostly Irish Catholic voters.

The Reformers also had some Catholic support, which under the circumstances, may have been the 'kiss of death'. In the Catholics' internecine feud, a minority in Halifax stood by bishop Fraser and Rev. Loughnan. They also stood by the Reformers, in the 1843 election. The banker, Mather B. Almon, wrote to Simon B. Robie, president of the Legislative Council, on 30 November 1843. In this letter Almon said that the election had given him the "satisfaction of knowing that in Halifax we thrashed the Howellites, father Loughnan's party many Catholic votes, and McNab's out port fishermen influence."²⁹⁷

The Liberals had good reason to be alarmed when a second Catholic freeholders' meeting was convened on 23

²⁹⁷ P.A.N.S., M.G. 1, No. 793 ("Robie Papers"), item 187.

³⁰⁰ *The Register*, 28 Nov. 1843.

³⁰¹ P.A.N.S., M.G. 1, No. 793 ("Robie Papers"), item 187.

November 1843. Several Catholics asked Doyle to stand for the Halifax County election which was scheduled to follow the township contest. Several Reformers told the Catholics that they might do as they wished if they would support Howe in the county contest. Edward Kenny, seconded by Michael Maloney, nominated Doyle "who is take Mr. Howe on his shoulders . . ." ²⁹⁸ William Annand withdrew from the election in favour of Doyle, alleging it was his own idea. Annand replaced the Irish Catholic, Richard Nugent, in the editorial chair of the Novascotian. ²⁹⁹

The county poll was held on 27 November 1843, and Doyle and Howe were returned unopposed. The Conservatives did not contest the seat because, according to the Catholic press, they thought the Catholics "had a fair title to a share in the representation." ³⁰⁰ George Young had foreseen as much three weeks earlier, while there were rumours that some Conservatives held those views as far back as October 1843. Mather Almon, who may have known more about it than the press, told Robie the Conservatives had let Doyle and Howe in by coming to an understanding that Stairs not ask for a recount in the township seat which he had lost so narrowly to Uniacke. ³⁰¹ Lord Falkland, the lieutenant-governor, who had a reputation of being aloof from ordinary

²⁹⁸ The Times, 28 Nov. 1843.

²⁹⁹ Ibid. (Nugent went to debtor's prison.)

³⁰⁰ The Register, 28 Nov. 1843.

³⁰¹ P.A.N.S., M.G. 1, No. 793 ("Robie Papers"), item 187.

matters, observed to Lord Stanley in the Colonial Office, on 1 February 1844, that "some of the Liberals were of Irish descent, and had joined a society for the purpose of aiding their countrymen at home in the attempt to repeal the Act of Union."³⁰² Taken together, these suggest that there was in fact Irish activity in the 1843 Halifax election, and also that it was divided between the parties.

As has been mentioned, the balance between Reformers and Conservatives in the Assembly was rather evenly divided. The Reformers' alienation of at least some of the Irish Catholic vote in 1843 had cost them the Halifax township seat of Stairs. The strategic advantage of the Halifax Irish stood clearly revealed when the House met in February 1844—the Tories had a majority of one!

By the 1847 election circumstances had changed from four years earlier. The Conservatives began with the hope that the Catholics and Liberals might again have a rupture in relations at an opportune moment. The Catholic press had been complaining that the Halifax Liberal press was not devoting proper space to 'Irish or Catholic subjects' such as Repeal.³⁰³ Tories could interpret as pro-British loyalism the attack made in The Cross on Boston's 'Irish Volunteers' and that type of activist Irish organization.

³⁰² Quoted in Livingston, Responsible Government in Nova Scotia, 173.

³⁰³ The Cross, 14 Mar. 1846.

The Cross, probably reflecting the hierarchy's concern over the rise of Irish radicalism in the midst of the Great Famine, felt that Irish Catholics owed little enough to the Americans, who had not treated them nearly as well as they were being treated in British North America.³⁰⁴ A man of Howe's ostentatious British loyalty could only be heartened by this attitude on the part of an Irish Catholic organ such as The Cross.

The Tory press, rather inopportunistically for its political allies, offended The Cross with stupid blather about a vast increase in Roman Catholicism in, of all places, Lunenburg County, thereby threatening Protestantism in the province.³⁰⁵

The Post had asserted 'The Editors of all the Great Liberal Organs are Roman Catholics, with an exception, and that one is an anythingarian.' To this assertion the Novascotian replied, "That of the eight Liberal newspapers published in this Province, but three of them are in any way connected with Catholic interests, the Acadian Recorder, Sun, and Volunteer . . ." ³⁰⁶

Against this background of editorial sectarianism, The Times managed to arouse the ire of many Catholics, who retaliated through The Cross. In the latter, Patrick Power lashed the editor of The Times as a "dirty slave who could not eat

³⁰⁴Ibid., 13 Feb. 1847.

³⁰⁵Ibid., 2 Jan. 1847, versus The Times article.

³⁰⁶D.C. Harvey, "Newspapers of Nova Scotia, 1840-1867," C.H.R., XXVI, 3 (September, 1945), 281.

his pudding and hold his tongue . . . /but preferred⁷ bladdering away . . . against the Irish Catholics of Nova Scotia." As for The Guardian, Power dismissed it as "that Presbyterian blue-rag . . ." ³⁰⁷ Not to be outdone, The Times said The Cross was written by people whose "flightiness of imagination . . . induces us to believe that they have been penned under the influence stronger than holy water . . ." ³⁰⁸

By April 1847, The Times felt that " 'political considerations' undoubtedly had been responsible for Howe's election to the presidency of the Charitable Irish Society, referring to his attendance in this capacity at mass in St. Mary's Church on St. Patrick's day . . ." ³⁰⁹ This was not the way to woo the Catholic Irish vote, and The Cross may have expressed the truth when it charged The Times had ³¹⁰ "succeeded in uniting the Liberal party . . ." It would have been more convincing had The Cross not contributed to the religious feud with such items as the following:

One of the lads who is foremost in getting up this laughable anti-Irish cry in Nova Scotia is a grateful Protestant sinner . . . who owes nearly all his business to the patronage of an Irish Catholic Priest!³¹¹

³⁰⁷The Cross, 13 Feb. 1847.

³⁰⁸The Times, 2 Mar. 1847.

³⁰⁹Ibid., 6 Apr. 1847.

³¹⁰The Cross, 17 Apr. 1847.

³¹¹Ibid., 10 Apr. 1847.

The upshot of this press campaign of juvenile journalism was to leave Catholics under the impression that by supporting the Liberals they would be helping to remove the Anglicans from power. Most Catholic Irish voted Liberal in 1847 because they felt they had little to gain by voting Tory. "The religious controversy had its roots in politics but most of the attacks made were on a purely religious and doctrinal basis."³¹²

There were several issues in the 1847 election—the status of the Church of England, the civil list, and road money, to mention just three³¹³—but the major bone of contention was the attainment of responsible government. The upholders of the old system knew that if they lost this election, changes would be made that could not be undone. The diehards among the Tories were prepared to use all means, fair and unfair, in order to retain the system and their privileged position within it. The editorial policy of The Times reflected one of these means, an unfair one, the deliberate attempt to stir sectarian prejudice for political advantage. The idea seems to have been to scare Protestant voters into supporting the Tories as a means of keeping the Catholics out. This policy had some success, as some of the

³¹²Donald F. Maclean, "The Administration of Sir John Harvey in Nova Scotia 1846-1852," (unpublished M.A. thesis, Dalhousie University, 1947), 89.

³¹³Ibid., 62-70.

Protestant electors were so upset by religious prejudice that "they neglected a consideration of the main issue, responsible government, and supported the Conservative party when otherwise, they might have supported its opponents."³¹⁴

Part of the Tory group appealed to ethnic prejudice as well as to sectarian rivalry. The Great Famine was then scourging Ireland, 1847 being the first full year of harvest failure there. There was a flight of Irish people—many hungry, some diseased or carrying contagion with them, and all of them subject to fear and suspicion wherever they went. "The lower economic and social status of the famine immigrants created a dichotomy even within the ranks of the Irish. The destitute, illiterate, pro-Republican, liberal, Catholic and anti-British characteristics that marked the newcomers also set them apart from their countrymen who had arrived in earlier years."³¹⁵ It was not so important to the Tory extremists that actual hordes of starving Irish did not settle at Halifax; the important thing was that people feared that they might. Enough Irish refugees—possibly 1200 passed through Halifax—were landed or shipwrecked in Nova Scotia to lend some colour of truth to the anti-immigrant mania.³¹⁶ Certain leading Tories decided

³¹⁴Ibid., 89.

³¹⁵D.S. Shea, "The Irish Immigrant Adjustment to Toronto, 1840-1860," The Canadian Catholic Historical Association, 39 (1972), 55.

³¹⁶R.G. Flewelling, "Immigration and Emigration 1838-51," 87.

to take advantage of the mounting anti-Irish sentiment in the province, and the Party generally abandoned its attempts at gaining Irish Catholic allies; there were more votes to be gained by opposing the Irish immigration during the Famine.

Nomination day was 29 July 1847 and each party held a large rally, the Liberals at the Court House, the Tories at Masonic Hall. "In order to offset the Irish element in the city, government supporters brought in contingents of freeholders from county areas." A battle broke out in the early afternoon, following lunch (probably with a strong liquid component to it!), and for some time rival gangs chased each other about the streets, throwing stones and so forth.³¹⁷

On 5 August 1847 there was a large poll, and the Reformers won the two county seats: Howe, 1470, and Mott, 1453, the two Liberals, were elected, defeating the Conservatives, Gray and Lawson, who received 1000 votes apiece.

We can establish exactly how the Irish Catholics voted in the township contest, because a list of the voters and their preferences has been preserved.³¹⁸ The city vote gave Doyle and McNab, the Reform candidates, 446, and the Conservatives 395, a majority of 51. The 508 Protestant votes polled favoured the Conservatives by a margin of 378 to 130. The 333 Catholic voters overturned this Tory lead by giving

³¹⁷ Sutherland, "J.W. Johnston," 171-172.

³¹⁸ P.A.N.S., "City of Halifax Voters' List, 1847".

316 Reform votes to a mere 17 for the Tories. It cannot be said how many Protestants voted Conservative out of religious or ethnic bigotry, nor again how many Catholics voted Liberal through self-defence. It can be seen that if the Catholics had supported the Tory candidates, the latter would have been elected. The election results drew a glowing notice in the Boston Pilot, which reported the election of 29 Liberals and 22 Conservatives.

An analysis of the religious affiliation of the elected members in 1847 shows that there was a strong religious division between the parties. Allowing for the odd exception, Anglicans, Baptists and certain Presbyterians were Conservatives, while the six Catholics and most of the Presbyterians were Liberals. Only the Methodists were divided evenly between the party groupings.

When the House met in February 1848, the old executive council was obliged to resign and responsible government was inaugurated in fact in Nova Scotia. The new Liberal administration included Lawrence Doyle, thereby acknowledging the value of the Irish Catholic vote in Halifax to the Reformers. A number of overdue reforms took place in consequence of the Liberal victory. One of the first fruits of the triumph was amendment of the franchise and qualifications for the

³¹⁹Boston Pilot, 11 Sep. 1847.

³²⁰Maclean, "Administration of Sir John Harvey," 193-194.

³²¹Ibid., 148-164.

civic corporation of Halifax. A Statute passed on 11 April 1848 provided that males aged 21 and over, resident in their ward one month prior to an election might vote provided those householders had "an outer door by which a separate communication with the street may be afforded." Persons who paid rates on a sum greater than £50 could vote even if they had not an independent access to the thoroughfare.³²² During the process of shaking up Nova Scotia's municipal administrations, the new government removed over half of the 737 justices of the peace (magistrates) that had been in office when the government was changed.³²³ Yet, as late as 1854 the mayor and aldermen of Halifax were fighting against further democratization of the civic franchise and qualifications as being "wholly uncalled for and inexpedient, . . . an interference with the rights conferred upon them by the Act of Incorporation."³²⁴

The last political campaign of the decade in Halifax provincially was that of March 1848. James McNab's seat became vacant with his appointment to the Legislative Council, while Howe's seat was open to a contest by virtue of his accepting the post of provincial secretary, thereby making a bye-election necessary.

Howe was nominated on 26 February by Adam Hemmeon,

³²²Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1848, c. 39, sections 24, 25.

³²³Maclean, "Administration of Sir John Harvey," 152.

³²⁴P.A.N.S., R.G. 5, Misc. "A" Series "P", Vol. 14 (Assembly petitions, 1854).

seconded by Thomas Ring, an Irish Catholic, while James B. Uniacke, the other Reform candidate, was placed in nomination by the former member, James McNab, seconded by Thomas Tobin, another Irish Catholic. Both Ring and Tobin had been active among the Catholics who showed signs of leaving the Reformers in 1843. The Conservative candidates were Robert A. Logan and William Sutherland.³²⁵ Of 98 voters signing the public requisition asking the latter to run, only two were Irish Catholics: John Carroll and David Kirby. In 1848, at the inauguration of responsible government, the Liberals had solid Irish Catholic support in Halifax.

The part played by the Irish Catholics on nomination and election days was not to their credit; rather the contrary. At the nomination they formed "a large and well organized liberal mob in front of the hustings, with banners and flags, by whom the opposition [Conservative] candidates were treated with marked disrespect, and were not permitted to be heard when they ventured to address the people . . ."³²⁶ Their conduct on election day, 4 March 1848, was not remotely respectable. The Times claimed their behaviour was "to be regretted upon religious grounds, for evident advantage was taken of the religious hatred and bigotry, in instigating the deeds of violence—the violators were all of one nation and one creed, and could hardly refrain

³²⁵The Times, 29 Feb. 1848.

³²⁶Ibid.

from making a mistake now and then and whacking a Protestant Great Liberal (as for instance the Mayor) to show their zeal for the cause."³²⁷ If the Halifax Catholics of Irish origin had a political identity in the spring of 1848 it was linked to the Reform Liberals, but portents of the future might have been read in the events of 1843 and 1848.

Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to demonstrate the quest of the Irish Catholics of Halifax for a comfortable identity which would allow them to be themselves within the triple context of an Irish origin, a Catholic religious organization, and the Nova Scotian environment. In each of these respects there were setbacks and false directions taken, but the decade was, on balance, one of progress for the Halifax Irish. Within the deceptive appearance of progress were contained the seeds of future trouble, but for the moment the prospects seemed bright.

Capable leadership was needed to engineer progress on many fronts with a minimum of friction. This leadership had to be found among the Catholic Irishmen of the city. The first issue of this decade to produce a group of men who clearly had some leadership potential was the religious struggle. This pitted the Irish Catholics of Halifax and the younger Irish-trained clergy against the Scottish and Ulster Catholics led by Bishop Fraser and his vicar-general, John

³²⁷ Ibid., 7 March 1848.

Loughnan. The quarrel was about the structure of the Catholic Church in Halifax. The party that wished the Church to have an Irish identity was successful, and Walsh's appointment symbolized this.

The Charitable Irish Society and the Repeal Movement served to unify much Irish sentiment in Halifax, while Lawrence O'Connor Doyle emerged as the spokesman for the Irish community. Repeal provided an apparatus in Halifax for Irish political action in a way the Charitable Irish Society could not. The 1843 election revealed the vitality and the power of the Irish should they choose to use it. The Irish found that their Irishness could be used to get what they wanted, if the non-Irish majority was divided, as it was between Reformers and Conservatives. The remarks of opposition newspapers about the conduct in the 1848 bye-election showed, however, that this weapon could be used against the Irish. If much of the community became disgusted with them the Irish would be in trouble; they had to be careful without being passive, and aggressive without being abrasive.

In political terms the Irish Catholics were not strong enough either as voters or as candidates to present a challenge during the 1840's. Incorporation of Halifax City was not accompanied by the expected democratization of the franchise. It seemed that responsible government would be needed to make these changes, and the Reformers wished to have such a system of government in Nova Scotia.

The Irish threw in with the Reformers in the hopes of using them. Perhaps most Irish would have supported Reformers anyway, but events and leaders such as Doyle and Ring served to strengthen such an inclination. As Nova Scotian voters, most of the Halifax Irish were Liberals. But it was an alliance of convenience and the Irish had no distinct ideological identity at the mid-century in Nova Scotia. Through the 1840's the Liberals and Irish had generally been able to cooperate to their mutual advantage. The Irish leadership—Doyle, Kenny, Dillon, Maloney, Ring, Conway and Skerry—could bring the Irish from a patronized ethnic group in 1838 to participation within the first responsible government in Nova Scotian history in 1848. They had generally been allies of the Liberal Reformers, Howe and Annand, McNab and Forrester. With the attainment of self-government and the improvement of the civic charter the Irish and the Protestant Liberals had realized their common goals. Could a Reform Liberal government in office continue to please a jealous Protestant majority in the province and a volatile Irish or Catholic pressure group in Halifax? Irish, yet the very Irish were no longer. At the crucial mid-century three of the Irish leaders in Halifax—Dillon, Skerry and Maloney—were dead, while in 1855 the keystone in the bridge linking the Liberals and the Irish was removed. Doyle retired to New York City to live. His health had begun to break up seriously in the early 1850's. The next wave of leaders would be found, and among them would be some of the defeated 'Fraser Party', men

such as Joseph W. Quinan and William Condon, and some new men, such as John Tobin. But when the Irish of Halifax and the general population of Nova Scotia first met the challenge of the Crimean War, there were surprisingly few of the leaders of the 1840's on hand to deal with events from the Irish side.

During the 1840's the Irish Catholics at Halifax had met and overcome a number of challenges in their quest for an identity. Some of their problems were imposed by their own limitations, and some were due to the entrenched system of oligarchy in the city, the province, and the local Church. Sometimes their enemies had attacked the Irish unfairly, as in the 1847 election campaign; and sometimes the Irish Catholics had acted irresponsibly, as they had during the 1848 bye-election. Each time a balance had been restored once the immediate pretext for trouble had been removed. But they were not, by 1848, fully Nova Scotians nor yet any longer Irishmen; they were in a state of evolution between the two. This created its own problems. Their local Church organization, for example, had become Irish, yet the very Irish were no longer purely Irish. Their real self-identification remained elusive for a little while yet.

'xenophobe' for themselves. Some were called 'know-nothings', and their creed was 'nativism'. Just when the cement of the old Irish alliance with the Reformers in Nova Scotia was falling away, a wave of anti-Irish sentiment was sweeping across North America from the southern United States to

IV - THE IRISH EMBROILED, 1849-1859

During the period between Catholic representation in the Assembly and the attainment of responsible government, 1823-1848, the Irish Catholics of Halifax had worked with the Reformers for their common political goals. Each group—Irish and Reformers—had separate ambitions as well. Once the main object, responsible government, had been realized, the partnership, began to lose its vitality. At the same time, various socio-economic factors were undermining much of the previous tolerance of the Irish Catholics in Halifax. Events of the decade after 1849 exposed both the fragility of the political consensus and the basic dualism of the Irish-Reform axis.

Xenophobia is a classical word for an ugly idea: the fear or hatred of foreigners or strangers. During its long history it has been a favourite war cry for many a demagogue. It permits people to fasten their guilt on others. North America's mass consciousness had a bout of this societal disease during the mid-nineteenth century. Its object was the immigrant who was, as often as not, an Irish Catholic. His antagonists did not use the term 'xenophobe' for themselves. Some were called 'know-nothings', and their creed was 'nativism'. Just when the cement of the old Irish alliance with the Reformers in Nova Scotia was falling away, a wave of anti-Irish sentiment was sweeping across North America from the southern United States to

Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. Robert Ernst summarized the factors which led a large number of supposedly sensible people to indulge in an outburst of hatred for foreigners.

Ernst was convinced that

the chief popular strength of nativism lay in such social factors as dislike of foreigners in general, the obvious growth of pauperism and crime, the occasional political influence wielded by the church in civic elections, and above all, the workingmen's fear of immigrant competition.³²⁸

This movement originated in the United States, but found its way into Nova Scotia by the mid-century. In the 1830's the immigrants met opposition simply because they were coming to America in such numbers. A Native American party developed in 1835 as part of a reaction to the flood of Irish labourers "with their somewhat barbaric customs of drinking and fighting."³²⁹ Inasmuch as the Irish influx was the first American experience of large numbers of 'papists', it was predictable they would be portrayed as "poverty-stricken foreigners . . . an uncouth, ignorant, and clannish lot."³³⁰ At first the authorities enacted strict regulation of immigration.³³¹ In the 1830's when the Irish were relatively healthy and not paupers this

³²⁸Robert Ernst, Immigrant Life in New York City 1825-1863 (New York: King's Crown Press, 1949), 71, n. 2.

³²⁹Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration, 180. Of course, one appreciates the temperate and peaceloving character of the people of the United States before the arrival of the Irish Catholics!

³³⁰Ernst, 134.

³³¹Adams, 304.

seemed severity enough, but it was essentially a political move. In the 1840's nativism assumed a more virulent character with an economic motivation.³³²

As early as 1832 some labour spokesmen accused the manufacturers of bringing European workers to the United States with the intention of employing them below the wages paid American workers. The manufacturers complained that immigrant workers caused labour disturbances and agitation for higher wages.³³³ The newcomers were 'hanged if they took jobs and hanged if they did not'. The truth was that mechanization was destroying the traditional apprenticeship system, and that trend happened to coincide with the arrival of Irish immigrant labour.³³⁴

A key point in the anti-Irish sentiment stemmed from the fact the Irish were Catholic. In fact, many Protestant Irish—especially Orangemen—were anxious to insure that they themselves were not associated in the popular mind with the arriving southern Irishmen.³³⁵ The rapid growth

³³²Ernst, Immigrant Life, 102.

³³³Ibid., 101.

³³⁴Ibid., 103.

³³⁵Ibid., 168; Adams, 374-375.

³³⁸Adams, 305.

³³⁹John D. Blaine et al., A History of American Democracy (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), 290-291.

of the hierarchical Catholic Church in the United States after 1840 was felt by some to be "repugnant to our republican institutions", and the nativists "wished to preserve the free and Protestant character of the United States."³³⁶ Thus, when John Hughes, the Catholic archbishop of New York, proclaimed in 1850 that the object of his Church was, in time, to convert all Protestant nations, he gave a genuine scare to many ardent American nationalists.³³⁷

The forces urging electoral reform in the United States feared that wholesale immigration would alter the balance of voting strength against themselves, either in partisan terms or in respect of policies they might wish to carry out. Rather than run that risk, many states postponed reforms during the period.³³⁸ In the northern states the fear of labour competition had a wide mass appeal, and in the southern states immigration was assailed as adding greatly to northern strength, while the agricultural south languished.³³⁹ The Native American, 29 November 1844, complained that immigrant labour in the

³³⁶Hans Kohn, American Nationalism (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1957), 143.

³³⁷Ray Allen Billington, The Protestant Crusade: 1800-1860: A Study of the Origins of American Nativism (New York: Rinehart, 1952), 291.

³³⁸Adams, 305.

³³⁹John D. Hicks et al., A History of American Democracy (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1966), 290-291.

large cities was reducing the wages of labour and increasing the hardships of the old settlers.³⁴⁰ The United States, with its long tradition of isolationism, or of non-involvement in European affairs, regarded the immigrants askance for yet another reason. Many emigrants, "especially the Irish, showed an active interest in the struggles of the mother country. Their activities aroused apprehension of interference with American isolationism and involvement of the United States in Europe."³⁴¹

Contemporary opinion in England agreed substantially with that of Americans. Victorian England regarded Catholic countries as being socially and morally backward, and viewed the conversion of Anglican intellectuals such as John Henry Newman and Henry Edward Manning as desertion of 'the national cause'.³⁴² When the Catholic territorial hierarchy was restored in England in 1850, Protestants were alarmed by the imprudent pastoral letter, 'From out of the Flaminian Gate', by Nicholas, Cardinal Wiseman, the Irishman designated to head the re-established English hierarchy as Archbishop of Westminster.³⁴³

³⁴⁰Quoted by Kohn, 143.

³⁴¹Ibid.

³⁴²L.C.B. Seaman, Victorian England (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1973), 7, 125.

³⁴³Ibid., 124.

A number of outstanding Englishmen in public life threw themselves into the anti-Catholic oratory of the early 1850's. Among them was Lord John Russell, who was Prime Minister of Britain between 1846 and 1852. He had been Colonial Secretary from 1839 to 1841, and at the beginning of each of these terms in office had been the recipient of a series of public letters from his Nova Scotian admirer, Joseph Howe. The ultra-Protestant John Russell was among the 'most openly bellicose' of British politicians at the time of the Crimean War.³⁴⁴

Without stretching the point, it may be said that the two pervasive influences on Nova Scotian opinion and public life in the mid-nineteenth century were the English and the American. Both entered the second half of that century in the throes of an anti-Catholic, anti-Irish sentiment. Basically this emotion had three causes: religion, competition for employment, and fear of foreign involvement. All three were present in the American situation, while only the first was a serious factor in contemporary England. Nova Scotia, perhaps as could be expected, fell between the two. The element of religious hostility was present, and there was certainly some jealousy respecting occupational opportunities, but the fear of foreign

³⁴⁴Ibid., 124, 128.

involvement was not felt by the majority. Interestingly and distinctively, it was the ethnic minority group that felt that particular apprehension. In Nova Scotia, American nativist notions and English anti-Roman Catholicism came together as a strong influence at a time of Irish Catholic upward social mobility. The result was nearly a decade of confrontation.

The Nova Scotian Situation

Nova Scotia was not the United States, but there were common currents at work where public opinion was concerned. Anti-Irish sentiment appeared during the late 1840's. This was not the naked hatred manifested in such American publications as Champion of American Labour, in 1847.³⁴⁵ Nevertheless, the cool welcome and the negative attitude gained force as the decade ran to its end in the mid-century.

Before the Famine Irish emigrants had been poor but not indigent. With the coming of the Famine, 1846-49, it took only one season of tales of fever and epidemic disease to permeate the consciousness of the lower colonies. Sir John Harvey advised Lord Grey on 1 April 1847 that Nova Scotia had just experienced two crop failures, and that a third would make the destitution in Nova Scotia "as general and appalling as that which now prevails in Ireland . . ." Harvey besought Grey to instruct the emigration agents "to

³⁴⁵Ernst, Immigrant Life, 102.

discourage in the present year all Pauper Emigration to Nova Scotia . . . There is no demand for unskilled labor . . . & the means of remunerating Agricultural labor of any kind are greatly diminished."³⁴⁶

The lieutenant-governor was not alone. The Halifax Morning Post, 22 July 1847, expressed a common fear in the province of pauper emigration from Catholic Ireland.³⁴⁷ The Poor House trustees had strongly favoured a policy of preventing further landings of penniless and fever-stricken famine refugees. An attitude of barring the door to the Irish was set forth frankly by the prominent Nova Scotian author and geologist, Abraham Gesner. His remarks contained two sentiments, one plausibly humanitarian, the other less charitable. Nova Scotia had no public works to transport or employ a horde of unskilled workers. Gesner felt that "to pour into the country a great number of such families before certain employment is provided, would be but to increase that misery and burden the established population."³⁴⁸ Then Gesner stated that "there is a decided spirit of opposition on the part of the native born inhabitants to the further introduction of the poor and labouring classes of Irish into the country." If this were

³⁴⁶P.A.N.S., R.G. 1, Vol. 119, No. 22, 86.

³⁴⁷Sutherland, "J.W. Johnston," 167.

³⁴⁸Abraham Gesner, The Industrial Resources of Nova Scotia (Halifax: A. & W. MacKinley, 1849), 332-333.

allowed, Gesner foresaw "unhappy consequences" but that "landing of English, Lowland Scotch, or German emigrants would be cheered by the inhabitants of Nova Scotia . . ." ³⁴⁹ There it was in 1849: 'No Irish need apply!' The main reason for this select exclusion is suggested by Gesner's remark that it was "not the absolute poverty of the emigrant that unfits him for an inhabitant of these Provinces; it is too often the lack of sobriety, industry, and a resolute spirit of enterprise . . ." ³⁵⁰

The label 'drunk and disorderly' was associated in the popular mind with the stage Irishman: an improvident scalawag, with an endearing curl of the tongue which made him a rascal, harmless but useless, witty but witless. Many were poor, and some were drunken, and a few "must have seemed dirty savages. A Yankee go-aheadism was not part of their nature. They brought disease with them, and they filled the poor houses . . ." ³⁵¹ By the beginning of 1847, the Halifax press had begun to make unfavourable comments on the Irish Catholics. One such series of attacks was allowed to run on until The Times (Halifax) called its Catholic counterpart's editorial staff drunkards—"under the influence of

³⁴⁹ Ibid., 334.

³⁵⁰ Ibid., 338. One wonders about the national origin of the 'native born Nova Scotians' described by Thomas McCulloch in his 'Stepsure Letters', or by T. C. Haliburton in his 'Sam Slick' yarns. Irish they were not!

³⁵¹ Coleman, Passage to America, 231.

potations stronger than holy water . . ." ³⁵² The Cross, the Catholic organ, spoke of one Protestant editor as the operator of the "guts and garbage vehicle of falsehood." ³⁵³ Under the circumstances it was as well for the immigrants that the Famine passed away and the Nova Scotian economy recovered at mid-century. For two or three years there was an apparent breathing space, but behind the facade of socio-economic progress a rupture between the Irish and the Reform party was brewing.

By 1852 the socio-economic progress of the Irish Catholics in Halifax was apparent to a careful observer. They were served by a second parish (St. Patrick's) which opened in the 1840's. They had instituted a number of societies whose goals went beyond the ethnic relief of the Charitable Irish Society. The Association for the Propagation of the Faith had been established in 1843 to further religious and moral instruction among Roman Catholics. ³⁵⁴ Three months later a Juvenile Irish Society was active. ³⁵⁵ There was a Catholic-based group known as the Irish Educational Society in 1845, which had the twin purposes of getting Catholic schools organized and getting government grants

³⁵² The Times, 2 March 1847.

³⁵³ The Cross, 12 June 1847.

³⁵⁴ The Register, 28 Feb 1843.

³⁵⁵ Ibid., 21 April 1843.

to assist that project.³⁵⁶ The cause of temperance was encouraged by St. Mary's and Patrick's Temperance Society.³⁵⁷ A Catholic Literary Institute was holding monthly lectures by 1848,³⁵⁸ by which time St. Mary's Catechistical Society had 660 pupils in its Sunday schools.³⁵⁹

By 1852 there were five Catholic Irish barristers on the rolls, four of them in Halifax, while another young man was then reading law. In that same year four of the city's eighteen aldermen were Irish Catholics. Where only 15 to 16% of the household occupants in the 1836 assessment were Irishmen, by 1845 they accounted for 23 to 24% of those eligible for the Grand Jury panel, a 50% increase in a decade. Since a grand juror had to be a resident of the city for a year, and to hold either personal estate valued at £500. or a freehold of £30. yearly value in Halifax, this represents a significant advance.³⁶⁰ In 1849 both the Religious of the Sacred Heart and the Sisters of Charity came to Halifax, and within a few years the general charitable society, that well as tools or equipment of some kind. In short, these

³⁵⁶ Ibid., 23 Sep. 1845.

³⁵⁷ The Cross, 27 Dec. 1844.

³⁵⁸ Ibid., 19 Feb. 1848.

³⁵⁹ Ibid., 8 July 1848.

³⁶⁰ Jurors were males between 21 and 60 years of age. Those exempted were, in general, members of the professions and holders of positions under provincial or civic governments. Cf., Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1851, 388-389.

of St. Vincent de Paul, opened a chapter in Halifax. The Irish Catholics were gaining in organization and sense of responsibility and respectability, but these advances had attendant dangers because they seemed to threaten other groups in the community.

Tables IX and X, following, reveal the progress that the Irish Catholics had made in terms of occupational mobility in Halifax. Thirty-five occupations for which a reliable account exists for dates within the 1840's and 50's are given. The Irish had begun to turn up as bookbinders and sellers, as druggists, and as lumber dealers; they were increasingly appreciably in fields such as boardinghouse-keeping, livery stablekeeping, painting, saddlery, and tailoring; and holding their own in half a dozen fields. Only in brewing and printing were the Irish slipping at all, and the numbers of these were so small that the setbacks may not mean very much. The directories reported trades requiring the ownership or rental of premises, as well as tools or equipment of some kind. In short, these people required capital or the credit necessary to conduct a business. The Irish Catholics went from 148 to 234 in the fifteen year interval, an increase of 58% in absolute numbers. Non-Irish went down very slightly from 535 to 531 in the same period.

Table X, which groups the occupations within general classifications, affords further evidence of just how great an advance the Irish Catholics had taken in Halifax during the sixteen years. Half of the new professional

men in the city were Irish Catholics (five out of ten).

In the sector of small businesses and as office workers the Irish were breaking through in the direction of dominance; they account for 52 of the 57 growth in numbers in that category. Moreover, more of the Irish who had risen above the level of labourers were now white-collar rather than blue-collar workers. Yet, as artisans also the Irish Catholics had taken great strides. They increased by 29, while non-Irish declined by 14, in the artisan group. Irish in small businesses have increased 80% between 1842 and 1858, and that group formed the largest body of Irish Catholics above the semi-skilled group by 1858. By the mid-nineteenth century, then, the trend had set in for the Irish Catholics to go into white-collar rather than blue-collar jobs. Yet, in the blue-collar sector, the Irish increase was accompanied by a non-Irish decrease from 270 to 256. On all three levels above labourers the Irish might have been perceived as a threat to the non-Irish who had dominated those professions and trades.

The upward thrust of the Irish Catholics in Halifax was more apparent in some occupations than in others, but the overall impression on contemporaries must have been plain enough. The Irish could only have felt buoyed up with optimism and pride at their general progress into better types of work and social acceptability. Those who found themselves on a level of competition with the Irish must have felt keenly the economic and social pressures of that competition. If

Table IX - IRISH CATHOLICS BY OCCUPATION AT HALIFAX, 1842 and 1858*

As of 1842 Irish/Total	Irish as %	Occupational Descriptions	As of 1858 Irish/Total	Irish as %	Change 1842-58
1/30	3	Attorneys, barristers	3/37	8	+5%
0/14		Auctioneers	0/ 6		
1/17	6	Bakers	2/18	11	+5%
8/22	36	Blacksmith, Farrier, Saddler	11/25	44	+8%
5/28	18	Boardinghousekeepers	19/41	46	+26%
0/ 7		Bookbinders and sellers	2/15	13	+13%
14/43	33	Boot and Shoemakers	18/47	38	+5%
3/15	20	Brewers and distillers	1/13	8	-12%
0/15		Cabinet and chairmakers	1/11	9	+9%
5/30	16	Carpenters, Builders	5/35	14	-2%
0/ 8		Confectioners	0/ 6		
13/23	57	Coopers	19/27	70	+13%
0/13		Dentists, Druggists	2/18	11	+11%
9/40	23	Dry Goods Dealers	16/50	32	+9%
47/114	41	Grocers	65/125	52	+11%
2/ 2	100	Gun and Locksmiths	4/ 6	67	-33%
0/ 3		Hairdressers and Barbers	1/ 5	20	+20%
2/12	16	Hardware Dealers	1/12	9	-7%
0/ 5		Hatters	0/ 8		
0/ 8		Insurance Agents	0/13		
0/ 7		Leather and Tanning	0/ 9		
1/ 6	16	Liquor at Wholesale	7/21	33	+17%
1/ 4	25	Liverystablekeepers	5/10	50	+25%
0/ 5		Lumber Dealers	4/ 8	50	+50%
2/15	13	Masons, Stonecutters	3/ 8	37	+24%
1/47	2	Merchants	3/43	7	+5%
3/32	9	Milliners	1/13	7	-2%
2/12	17	Painters	5/14	36	+19%
1/12	9	Physicians	0/14		-9%
3/12	25	Printers	0/12		-25%
5/28	18	Tailors, Clothiers	11/29	37	+19%
1/10	10	Tinsmiths, Plumbers	5/24	20	+10%
0/ 4		Tobacconists	0/ 3		
18/31	58	Victuallers, Butchers	20/35	57	-1%
0/ 9		Watchmakers, Jewellers	0/ 4		
148/683	21.6%	TOTAL NEEDING PREMISES	234/765	30.5%	+8.9%

*Based on Cunnabell's City Almanac and General Business Directory . . . 1842 (Halifax: William Cunnabell, 1842), and Nugent's Business Directory, City of Halifax, for 1858-9 (Halifax: Richard P. Nugent, 1858). The 1842 directory also lists 134 truckmen in Halifax with the locations of their stands. The Irish Catholics account for 108 (80.6%) of that number. Of fifteen locations, all but three were on wharves or Water Street. The Irish controlled 77 of the 85 places on the waterfront, held 20 of 26 at the fuel yard, and were slightly behind in the two up-town locations, having 11 of 23 there. On some waterfront stands (e.g., Ordnance Wharf, Commercial Wharf, Fairbanks Wharf, Black's Wharf, Pryor's Wharf and Walsh's Wharf), the Irish were in complete charge.

Table X - IRISH CATHOLICS BY OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES, 1842 and 1858

<u>1842 Figures</u>	<u>Occupations</u>	<u>1858 Figures</u>
2% of Irish*	<u>PROFESSIONAL & MAJOR BUSINESS</u>	3½% of Irish*
1	Barristers	3
0	Druggists	2
1	Merchants	3
1	Physician	0
<u>3/102 (3%)</u>		<u>8/112 (7%)</u>
44% of Irish*	<u>SMALL BUSINESS & WHITE-COLLAR</u>	50% of Irish*
5	Boardinghouse	19
9	Dry Goods	16
47	Grocers	65
2	Hardware	1
1	Liquor (Wh)	7
1	Liverystable	5
1	Lumber	4
<u>65/231 (28%)</u>		<u>117/288 (40%)</u>
54% of Irish*	<u>ARTISANS & FARMERS</u>	46½% of Irish*
1	Bakers	2
8	Blacksmiths	11
0	Bookdealers	2
14	Bootmakers	18
3	Brewers	1
0	Cabinetmaker	1
5	Carpenters	5
13	Coopers	19
2	Gunsmiths	4
0	Hairdressers	1
2	Masons	3
3	Milliners	1
2	Painters	5
3	Printers	0
5	Tailors	11
1	Tinsmiths	5
18	Victuallers	20
<u>80/350 (23%)</u>		<u>109/365 (30%)</u>
148.....	<u>GRAND TOTAL</u>	234

*The percentages of Irish are not of all Irish, but of those in the three general occupational groups listed in the directories. The semi-skilled and unskilled did not appear in those early directories except the truckmen discussed under Table IX.

some of those non-Irish Haligonians had the attitude the Irish were a shiftless lot of drunken peasants wedded to a superstitious religion, the situation of being overtaken by them must have been not merely an economic disaster but a loss of face on ethnic and moral grounds as well. Such embarrassed Anglo-Saxon Protestants would respond to the warnings of Lord John Russell or the American nativists.

The socio-economic progress of the Irish Catholic was a perceived threat by many in the community. Two new factors entered the situation in the early 1850's which transformed the resentment against the Irish from latent hostility to active political action and public antagonism. The tension created by the new developments was dramatically increased by the outbreak of war in 1854. One set of events was enacted in Ireland and cast its shadow over Irish communities everywhere. This was the twin tragedy of famine and rebellion. The famine experience left many Irish convinced that the British government had not done all it could have done about the famine. Many felt in some way that the English may even have enjoyed seeing the Irish suffer. In the middle of the famine years there was the fiasco of attempted revolution in Ireland. The Young Ireland movement failed miserably through its weakness as a military operation, its lack of organization, and the strong opposition of the Catholic hierarchy. A direct outcome of this failure was flight of many rebels from the authorities, in particular to America. They brought their ideas and ideals with them,

and for a while fomented considerable Anglophobia among the expatriate Irish. Some of this sentiment reached Halifax after 1850. O'Connell's death had removed the moderate idol from the Irish scene. In the atmosphere of the 1850's many more Irish resented England than ever had during the preceding generation.³⁶¹

The other development was local and relatively petty, but it created its own problems. The Nova Scotia Railway Company was incorporated in March 1853 as a government-operated enterprise, and work actually started in mid-June. This meant the creation of new jobs, most of them the type that asked no special skills, but muscle-power. In pre-industrial Halifax it was a new experience for the working people to feel the stimulus brought by the first intrusion of the industrial revolution into their community. The desire to work on the line out of Halifax inspired competition for places on the work crews. Individuals sought places and those who were not successful were all too ready to save face by claiming their rejection stemmed from race or religion. Yet, an examination of available information concerning construction and operation of the railway does not support an argument that racial tension on the railway arose from job competition.

³⁶¹R. Dudley Edwards, A New History of Ireland (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 174-5.

The available evidence consists of the pay list of one contractor in 1854 and that of the entire government railway for 1858. In 1854 Donald Cameron's crews contained 52 men, 40 non-Irish and twelve Irish Catholics. The three overseers (Hugh McDonald, Daniel Cameron and John McDonald) were all Scots, while half of the 40 non-Irish workmen were either Acadians from Chezzetcook or others from the eastern shore. Irish and non-Irish averaged about the same in wages, between 4/6 and 6/- per day. As to where the men worked, they were intermixed without discrimination of ethnic origin. Each gang had some Irish, some Acadians, some others. Only six labourers were Scots, and five of them had just been hired.³⁶² Job competition there may have been, but on the slender evidence there are insufficient grounds to suggest either that Irish were denied jobs on ethnic grounds or that they were taking them away from others; nor were the various ethno-religious groups working in segregated gangs.

In 1858 the railway had 236 employees, 80 of whom were Catholic Irishmen. In Halifax, where 67 of 203 workers were Irish, they had their fair share, which was about 35%. However, up-country the Irish had 13 of 33 positions which was above their proportion of the population generally. Among those actually employed then in building

³⁶²P.A.N.S., R.G. 28, No. 18, item 6 (annual report for 1854); also P.A.N.S., Vertical File: Railways, Nova Scotia (Donald Cameron's Paylists for week ending Saturday, 9 Dec. 1854).

the railroad, six of the 26 overseers were Irish and 30 of 74 labourers were also Irish. Outside Halifax, a gang that was 36% Irish Catholic must have been viewed as disproportionate. The significant fact that most of these men had been in railway employ for two or three years before December 1858 would indicate that any resentment of the Irish presence could go back to 1855 or 56. The contractors in 1858 were all either Scottish or non-Irish Nova Scotians (Cameron, Fraser, Blackie, McDonald, Sutherland, Creelman & Tupper).³⁶³

Granted that the 1854 payroll of one contractor and the 1858 government payroll in themselves do not constitute absolute proof, nevertheless, they tell against the argument that the railway was built by two gangs of men of divergent ethnic origins, or that there was discrimination in hiring or in rates of pay. The imponderables remain, such as what may have been the hiring and pay rates of contractors other than Cameron, and what became of the several score of Irish sent here from the United States in 1855 and given railway jobs. The truth is that we just do not know. The story seems to have been that heady Irish notions got about in town at this period, and probably went back out to the railway workings when the men returned from town. Given the encouragement of even a few of the imported Irish, some

³⁶³P.A.N.S., R.G. 28, No. 18, unnumbered folder in box: 'Correspondence Lists of Officers Railway Traffic return 30 June to 31 Dec. 1858'. Interestingly, in view of what we shall see, the Conservative railway administration retained the services, at Brooklyn, of Thomas Gourley.

of the rougher element would be carried into violence of some sort, not coherent or reasonable, but typical of the reactions of their type of personality.

Nova Scotia in the early 1850's had the combination of influences that made for confrontation sooner or later. In Halifax where Irish and Catholic were considered as meaning the same thing (except by Irish Protestants), hard things were written. In 1854 the Methodist city missionary, Gordon, described most of the young people who broke the Sabbath with "hellish oaths and blasphemous talk, to the great annoyance of Protestant families" as being of Roman Catholic parentage.³⁶⁴ The 1855 Report of the City Missionary generalized with gratuitous insult: "The immense amount of stupid idolatry, superstition and sin, in which the Catholic is steeped."³⁶⁵ These tokens of coolness towards the Irish Catholics did not issue only from the eloquent pen of an ultra-Protestant missionary. The Charitable Irish Society asked that the band of the 72nd. Regiment head their parade on Saint Patrick's Day, 17 March 1854. Colonel Murray, the officer responsible, refused that 'purely charitable body'. The Halifax Catholic commented that 'no Irish need apply' was the order of the day at the regimental headquarters of the Seventy-second.³⁶⁶

³⁶⁴ Halifax: "Its Sins and Sorrows" (Halifax: Conference Job Printing Office, 1862), 8.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 33.

³⁶⁶ Halifax Catholic, 29 Apr. 1854.

Also in 1854 the Legislature debated a new franchise law. This provided another chance for the opponents of the Irish to articulate unflattering comments. Martin Wilkins, M.L.A. for Pictou Township, opposed the universal franchise. One of his points was that labouring voters would be at the beck and call of their employers. "Pass this Bill and the agent of the Mining Association will appear at the hustings with hundreds of day labourers."³⁶⁷ Wilkins' remarks have been taken to mean that transient (i.e., Irish immigrant) labourers should not vote.

The new franchise gave the vote to all British male subjects who had resided five years in Nova Scotia and one year in the county and township in which they would vote. The residence clause had been opposed but it was ultimately retained because of the expected influx of Irish labourers with the commencement of railway construction.³⁶⁸

It appears this influx did not materialize. Although there was a pretence of reducing multiple voting by the imposition of residence requirements, the general fear was that expressed by Wilkins. Men imbued with the traditional notion that property was represented in elective bodies objected to the idea of masses of people--Irish labourers at that!--controlling

³⁶⁷ British Colonist, 18 Feb. 1854.

³⁶⁸ John Garner, The Franchise and Politics in British North America 1755-1867 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), 32.

the outcome of an election.

Partly due to these various pressures--the American and British outbreaks of anti-Catholicism, fear of famine immigration, the socio-economic rivalry of Irish and non-Irish in the town and to some extent on the railroad, and the franchise dispute--the situation was tense by spring, 1854. Moreover, the alliance of Reformers with the Irish Haligonians was wearing thin. As early as 1851, John English, editor of the Acadian Recorder, and son of an Irish emigrant, began the road that would bring him into the Conservative camp by 1855. Lawrence O'Connor Doyle, running as a Liberal, was not opposed by a Conservative candidate in the 1851 general election. Instead he was supported by a number of Conservatives and independent voters as well as by most Liberals. English remarked both on the magnanimity of the Conservatives towards Doyle and the poor treatment he had received from the Liberals once they had entered upon office. Specifically, he had not been retained in the executive council.³⁶⁹ In 1851 and more strongly in 1855 the blame was laid upon the animus of William Annand against Doyle. 'An Irishman' wrote the Acadian Recorder in 1855 and sounded a warning to the Liberals. Annand and his friends "think that no matter what they do they may always count with certainty upon the votes of the Irishmen of Halifax . . . What have they ever done for us, that we must vote for

³⁶⁹ Acadian Recorder, 30 Aug. 1851.

them forever? We have never received anything, that I know of, except insults, and fine promises that never were kept."³⁷⁰

Faced with such growing restiveness and strained by events the Liberal-Irish alliance was about to rupture. A foreign war would provide the catalyst.

The Crimean War

After months of deteriorating diplomatic relations, war erupted between Britain and Russia late in March 1854. Britain felt that Russia was seeking territorial aggrandizement in the Balkans with an eye to gaining control of Constantinople, and possibly a good deal more. Since Britain and her ally, France, struck at Russia through the Crimean Peninsula, the conflict was known as the Crimean War.

The outbreak of war aroused a very different response among the Irish Catholics than among the general population. Most Nova Scotians, as most British North Americans, "entered heartily into the spirit of the contest . . ."³⁷¹ As part of the Empire, Nova Scotia was at war, and the popular sentiments about the war were very patriotic and pro-war. A noisy super-nationalism was born of this conflict, so it was rather risky for anyone in a 'British' country to take any other view of the Crimean War than that of blind support. And yet it was difficult to see that any vital British interests were

³⁷⁰Ibid., 28 Apr. 1855.

³⁷¹Joseph Plimsoll Edwards, "The Militia of Nova Scotia, 1749-1867," N.S.H.S., XVII (1913), 92.

threatened by Russia. When the initial rush of flag-waving had passed, the news from the front told a story not of victory or even of defeat--the honours were rather divided--but of incompetence. When the first blush of enthusiasm for this uninspired war had worn off, people noticed that most Irish Catholics were indifferent; some of them were actually condemning the war effort.

Decimated by famine, their rebellion broken by force, and full of a hundred resentments of English mismanagement of Ireland's affairs past and present, the Irish tended to an uncharitable view of the British war in the Crimea. Wherever the Irish controlled local Catholic organs, these issued a stream of opinion that was anti-war and often anti-British. The Catholic hierarchy of the Maritimes was entirely Irish with the single exception of the bishop of Arichat (later Antigonish), and the archdiocese of Halifax contained all Irish clergy except for a handful of French-speaking priests in Acadian parishes. When these Irish ecclesiastics gathered in their third Theological Conference on 4 May 1854 they issued a declaration that deplored the manifold evils of war.³⁷² By the next month, the Halifax Catholic had abandoned generalizations and set out its views unequivocally:

³⁷²Halifax Catholic, 6 May 1854.

England, and not Russia is the cause of this war. Impetuous, headlong and rash as the Emperor Nicholas is — eagerly though he may covet Constantinople, he would never have dared what he has done, but for his knowledge of the feelings entertained for England by the Continental Powers.³⁷³

The Halifax Catholic seized on every scrap of support for its anti-war views. Most numbers offered a few words opposed to British involvement in the Crimea. The readers heard that John Bright, the English politician, was against the war.³⁷⁴ Lest Bright's name appear in splendid isolation, an editorial added the news that Drs. Brownson and Newman "look upon the triumph of the Allies as injurious to the interests of the Catholic Church."³⁷⁵ Russian victories were reported without lament, and British reverses seemed to evoke a gloating tendency among the editors of the Halifax Catholic. If we allow for a certain exaggeration on the author's part, there was still a shade of truth in

³⁷³Ibid., 3 June 1854. The Halifax Catholic supposedly had priestly editors. There were only six priests in Halifax in 1854. Archbishop Walsh was unwell, Rev. M. Hannen and Rev. P. Power were moderates, and Rev. J.B.Woods seems to have been a non-political sort of man. A Father Madden who was here in 1854 left before the controversy was ended, so he could not have written much, if any, of it. That leaves only Rev. Wm. Hannigan (1828-1859) from Waterford, Ireland. It requires more than the process of elimination to affix responsibility to him. The obvious is that a layman wrote the editorials, but guessing who he (or they) may have been seems pointless.

³⁷⁴Ibid., 27 Jan. 1855.

³⁷⁵Ibid., John Henry, Cardinal Newman, and Dr. Orestes Augustus Brownson, American editor of Brownson's Review, were celebrated nineteenth century conversions to Roman Catholicism.

Patterson's comment that many of the Irish in Halifax "were so hostile to Britain because of Irish grievances that they were in sympathy with Russia, and meetings were held in secret, at which the conduct of Great Britain . . . was denounced."³⁷⁶ Carrying the cudgels for the opposing view, Nicholas Meagher held it was unjust to accuse the Irish of disloyalty, when their fault was lack of sympathy for the war. "If a subject is persuaded his country is waging an unwise, or unjust, war, he may withhold his sympathy, and even bestow criticism."³⁷⁷ On balance Meagher was correct, but in 'bestowing criticism' the Irish went to the dangerous lengths suggested by Patterson. It is a case where we may sympathize with the end, but not with the means.

On to this troubled stage stepped Joseph Howe. He was the best-known politician in Nova Scotia at mid-century. Howe had been instrumental in vindicating the rights of the press in Nova Scotia, had been deeply involved in winning responsible government in the colony (with much Irish and Catholic support), and had played a major role in incorporating Halifax as a city. By 1855, he had been a member of the House for almost twenty years, and had been provincial

³⁷⁶George Patterson, Studies in Nova Scotia History (Halifax: The Imperial Publishing Co., Limited, 1940), 85.

³⁷⁷Nicholas Meagher, The Religious Warfare in Nova Scotia 1855-1860 (Halifax: privately printed, 1927), 99.

secretary from 1848 until April 1854, when he became chairman of the railway commission, which post he kept until April 1857. He was not on the executive council or a member of the Assembly for the session 1856.³⁷⁸

Always voluble, often volatile, and never negligible in Nova Scotian affairs, Howe became in the mid 1850's the central figure in an international cause célèbre. It came about through his role in recruiting men on American soil for service in the British army in the Crimea. We must go into the matter sufficiently to see that the Howe recruiting mission--if that was what it was--served to entangle the Irish Catholics of Halifax in several years of conflict, the bitter legacy of the causes already generally at work.³⁷⁹

In December 1854 Britain passed an Enlistment Act to permit recruitment of foreigners for service in the Crimea. Sir John Crampton, British minister at Washington, received offers of assistance and inquiries about the Act. British officials in Halifax and Washington got word to collect recruits, but were warned to respect American neutrality. Sir Gaspard LeMarchant, lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia, consulted Howe. They decided to send a 'responsible person'

³⁷⁸A Directory of the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia 1758-1958 (Halifax: P.A.N.S., 1958), 164-165.

³⁷⁹J. Bartlet Brebner, "Joseph Howe and the Crimean War Enlistment Controversy between Great Britain and the United States," C.H.R., XI, 4 (December 1930), 300-327.

to the United States to consult Crampton, and arrange for conveying the recruits to Halifax, the nearest British port. In March 1855 Howe himself set out on this mission.³⁸⁰ If Howe was to have any reasonable chance of success on his mission it must remain a secret, at least from the general public. A cover story was circulated that Howe was in the United States on railway business. A further guarantee of his success or at least of his freedom of movement was for Howe to remain strictly within his instructions and avoid giving grounds for offence. In the event, both of these conditions were negated. Howe's mission received unfavourable publicity and Howe himself went too far in his zeal for the British war effort.

The Halifax Catholic, we have already seen, opposed the Crimean War, and by the end of March it revealed Howe's hand:

We understand that the Hon. Joseph Howe, who is now in the United States on a very important mission in connection with the English Government, has succeeded past expectation. The packet Brig America which arrived here yesterday from Boston, brought some 70 or 80 men, principally Germans, the first of a large number intended for the formation of a Foreign Legion . . . Considerable excitement exists in New York in consequence of the enlistment of men in the 'foreign legion' for the British army . . . The New York Times says that during the last four days, depots have been opened in that city, Philadelphia and Baltimore, where 'emigrants for Halifax',³⁸¹ are being enrolled in considerable numbers . . .

³⁸⁰C. Bruce Fergusson, "Adams George Archibald," N.S.H.S., XXXVI (1968), 27-28.

³⁸¹Morning Chronicle, 31 March 1855.

The next week, the Halifax Catholic went further and charged that false pretences may have been used to lure Irishmen to Nova Scotia. Under the heading, 'Who Are the Guilty Parties?', that paper claimed sixty Irishmen had been brought here for the foreign legion. Several members of the Charitable Irish Society, Halifax, exerted themselves on behalf of the arrivals.³⁸² This was reported on 7 April, the date that a telegram fraught with unpleasant consequences arrived in New York. It had been sent by William Condon.

Condon, like Howe, had been born in Halifax; had long been a Reformer, as had Howe; and had been active in the Charitable Irish Society, also like Howe. Both men were sociable persons, capable of friendships, convivial, quick-witted, and determined to be noticed. William Condon was born 18 February 1818 and died on the eastern shore of Nova Scotia in January 1899. His parents had come from County Tipperary to Halifax in 1812, and the senior Condon worked as a truckman until his death in 1828 aged 36 years. The mother, Anne Ryan, survived until 1885, when she died in her 93rd. year.³⁸³ Condon was married and the father of a family, and kept a store until he went into government employment, with a three-year break during which he was in the United States. The striking thing about this background

³⁸²Halifax Catholic, 7 April 1855.

³⁸³Anne Ryan's second husband (1829), by coincidence, had the same name as her first. This second William Condon, Sr., 1799-1839, was a storekeeper from County Cork.

is that it is so ordinary; it could be the biographical sketch of forty of his contemporaries. And yet, this man seems to have had within him some spark of leadership or ambition, that made him capable of holding the respect of many of his fellows.

His brother-in-law, Joseph W. Quinan, introduced him to membership in the Charitable Irish Society in 1839. In 1848 Condon went to California, but returned in 1852. The Society re-admitted him to membership that August, and in 1854 Condon was elected its vice president. On 17 February 1855 he became the Society's president. As an indication of his activity in the Society, between 1854 and 1858 Condon introduced twenty-five new members, not all of them Catholics.³⁸⁴

Condon wired a New York paper giving basically the information contained in the Halifax Catholic of 7 April 1855. The American government, which had been observing strict neutrality, could not overlook the affront offered by Howe's recruiting, now that it was public knowledge. Howe eluded the authorities and got home on 4 May, "in no very pleasant humour towards the Irish" in Halifax.³⁸⁵

In the interval, another 50 men, mostly Irish, had arrived from Boston on 14 April, allegedly under the impression

³⁸⁴P.A.N.S., M.G. 20, Nos. 67, 68, passim. (Minutes of the Charitable Irish Society).

³⁸⁵Patterson, Studies in Nova Scotian History, 86.

that they had signed up for railroad construction work. The vice president of the Charitable Irish, Benjamin Wier, made representations to the authorities and the men were given railway jobs.³⁸⁶ This would not have pleased non-Irish interested in those jobs. But, as Brebner has pointed out, "LeMarchant could do nothing but engage them for that."³⁸⁷

Lest it seem that a circumspect Howe had been betrayed by perfidious Irish Haligonians, another aspect of the affair must be considered. J.B. Brebner has noted that "Howe left Halifax empowered only to investigate the the situation and to report, and even for these purposes it was judged wise that he should appear to act as commissioner of railways interested in the labour market."³⁸⁸ The ebullient Howe proceeded to the United States where he and his agents, without authority, handed out cards marked 'N.S.R.' It might have meant 'Nova Scotia Railway' or it might have meant 'Nova Scotia Regiment'.³⁸⁹ It was an ambiguous abbreviation. If Howe was doing railway business why resort to using cards that could so easily be misunderstood? If Howe was up to something furtive, why hand out documentary evidence? Howe's people were either very careless or deliberately

³⁸⁶ Halifax Catholic, 21 Apr. 1855. Benjamin Wier (c1805-1868) was the Reform M.L.A. for Halifax Township from 1851 to 1859. He was an Anglican of Irish ancestry.

³⁸⁷ Brebner, "Joseph Howe and the Crimean War," 313, n.1.

³⁸⁸ Ibid., 306.

³⁸⁹ Ibid., 310-311.

ambiguous.

The actual manpower realized through Howe's recruiting was relatively small. The American consul at Halifax, Robert W. Fraser, reported on 3 September 1855 that 708 men had reached Halifax for the 'foreign legion', of whom 100 were rejected and sent home. Of the balance, 528 had been sent to Portsmouth, England, and another 80 were waiting to sail. Of the 608 enlistments, 358 were brought from British North America, and 250 from the United States. Of the additional 110 Irish from the U.S., they had, with one exception, refused to enlist, claiming a Mr. Grant had hired them at Boston to do railway work in Nova Scotia.³⁹⁰

Howe got back to Halifax just as campaigning was beginning for a provincial general election. He stood for election in Cumberland County. The Liberals won, but not in Cumberland. The political novice, Dr. Charles Tupper of Amherst, soon to be the strongest voice in the Conservative caucus, defeated Howe. According to some authorities Tupper owed his victory to support received from the Irish of Cumberland County.³⁹¹ The combination of an ignominious retreat from New York with his rejection at the hustings must have galled the self-esteem of a man such as Joseph Howe. In both cases there seemed a common factor in Howe's

³⁹⁰Robert W. Fraser to Marcy, Secretary of State, 3 Sep. 1855 (U.S. Consulate, Halifax, Despatches, Reel 7, Microfilm 46, Killam Library).

³⁹¹James A. Roy, Joseph Howe (Toronto: The Macmillan Co. of Canada Ltd., 1935), 193, states that Howe lost Cumberland to the 'Tupper-Irish combination'.

discomfiture: the Irish. Condon's telegram, Wier's intervention, and now the sense of losing the formerly dependable Irish Catholic vote, seemed evidence that the Irish had abandoned him.³⁹² A disappointed Howe had to await a bye-election in Windsor Township in September 1856 before he sat again in the Assembly.³⁹³ In the meantime, Howe had to find another platform from which to express his views.

A stirring speaker, Howe was also a gifted wielder of the journalistic pen. Late in August he wrote a letter to the Globe of London, under the heading 'Recruiting in America'. The Novascotian of 10 September 1855, carried it. Howe upheld the right of immigrants to leave the United States to join the British army. He spoke of Scots and English skilled tradesmen and upheld their right to serve their native land. Howe spoke of the Irish in demeaning terms: "Suppose that an Irishman sees a vacant saddle in the Enniskillens, and thinks that he might as well fill it . . . as to be sweeping the streets of New York--shall he not go?"³⁹⁴

This should have warned Howe's longtime political allies among the Catholic Irish that he was no longer their champion. Howe seems at the least to have been very insensitive to the precarious place the Irish Catholics held in the

³⁹²Harvey W. MacPhee, "The Administration of the Earl of Mulgrave in Nova Scotia 1858-1863" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Dalhousie University, 1949), 72.

³⁹³Phyllis Blakeley, "William Alexander Henry," N.S.H.S., XXXVI (1968), 109.

³⁹⁴P.A.C., M.G. 24, B 29, Vol. 19, 89-92 (italics mine).

reformed responsible government of Nova Scotia. They were a minority with a long experience of discrimination against them and here was Howe implying they were no more than street sweepers, in comparison with other people! The Irish still felt far too vulnerable over a number of things to allow Howe the luxury of rhetorical thrusts at them, however slight in themselves such jibes might be. The Irish in Halifax had come far, coming some of that distance with Howe's help, but they were not yet part of the established community. On matters such as state support for denominational schools they stood apart from Reformers such as Howe, but so far the Conservatives had not taken up the cause of separate schools for them, so that Howe's remarks against them filled them with dismay. Where could they turn?

Howe had an answer for that question. He felt the Irish Catholics had turned already to a dangerous clique among themselves, to men such as William Condon. Howe wrote that as bad as this clique had been he "scarcely thought that any of them were bad enough directly to betray the interests of the Empire . . . and certainly did not believe that any person, holding an office of emolument under the Provincial Government, would so far forget himself as to enter into correspondence with convicted and banished traitors, in a foreign country . . ." ³⁹⁵ In the meantime, the situation on

³⁹⁵ Novascotian, 19 Jan. 1857. The 'person' was Condon. The 'convicted traitor' was the Young Irelander, John Mitchel, who was once connected with the New York Citizen, to which Condon's telegram had been sent in April 1855.

the railway was causing rising alarm in the province. Perhaps because Howe was involved both in the Crimean recruitment and the railroad construction he tended to see events relating to one as being somehow connected to the other. He created that impression and managed to muddle the two inextricably in the contemporary Nova Scotian mind.

The Gourley Shanty Affair

The Irish and Howe had been drifting apart every month. By spring 1856 the situation needed only an excuse to transform the annoyance and dismay into naked confrontation. Late in May 1856 a riot took place on the railway workings outside of Halifax. The riot occurred in a local and a more general context. So frequent and common were riots among railway construction gangs that the historian of those workers devotes an entire chapter to this subject.³⁹⁶ It is interesting that most of his British instances took place between 1845 and 1855.

In the British situation rioting was most frequent between gangs of Scots and groups of Irish Catholics. Occasionally one group work accept lower wages than the other, causing the other to riot against having their jobs taken away and given to their rival nationality who would work more cheaply.³⁹⁷ Sometimes the contractors operated the

³⁹⁶Terry Coleman, The Railway Navvies (London: Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1965), 83-101.

³⁹⁷Ibid., 84.

only 'tommy shops'--where provisions and liquor were sold-- on an isolated section. The poor quality of food and the lengthy interval between paydays left gangs in debt to the 'tommy shop' for inferior provisions. When the men were paid most of their wages went for this debt, and the workers decided to have a good 'randy', or drunken debauch, for as long as the money lasted. The system bred improvidence among careless men.³⁹⁸ In Nova Scotia, a system of weekly rather than monthly paydays eliminated some of the worst excesses of the British system. However, no pay system could eliminate the tendency of the men to get drunk for days on end after payday. It was while under the influence of liquor that religious and ethnic differences loomed large in the sodden minds of the sons of Calvin (Scots Presbyterians) and those of the Pope (Irish Catholics). It took "only an odd quart of whisky and a small prayer" to inflame religious and national fervour among such men.³⁹⁹

The Morning Chronicle in June 1856 carried a letter from Joseph Howe, in which he itemized the history of unrest on the railway before the Gourley riot. A man named Whalen had been discharged for drunkenness from a girder shop at Sackville and had roamed the line with a brace of pistols spreading terror until he was arrested. A man had been stabbed at Schultz's, on the line. A party of Irish had

³⁹⁸ Ibid., 87, 93.

³⁹⁹ Ibid., 84.

assaulted a Mr. Brown in his house and pulled his beard off, thoughtfully leaving some flesh attached to it! There had been a strike for 6/3 a day near Windsor. When they did not get it, the Irish tried scaring the men from Pictou and Cape Breton off the line, so that in a monopolized situation they would get the extra three pence. There had been a drunken brawl at Elmsdale on 21 June 1855. The idea had gone abroad that there was no law on the railroad, and that disorderly men could suit themselves.⁴⁰⁰

The Gourley shanty riot took place within that wider context, and might have been dismissed as just another unfortunate incident among the rough and tumble of life among railway construction gangs. Circumstances, however, decreed otherwise, as first the press and then Joseph Howe gave it publicity. One of the earliest accounts appeared in The Church Times, an Anglican publication, on 31 May, and was quite detailed.

It appears that from 80 to 100 men, drawn from Contracts 1 and 2 of the Windsor Branch, suddenly appeared, by evident preconcert, about one o'clock in the day, and surrounded two or three shanties in which were about 30 men and seven or eight women and children. They smashed the windows with stones, drove out the inmates, and stuck them down . . . as they attempted to escape . . . The women and children were not beaten, but of course were dreadfully terrified . . . The Magistrates were, we understand, unable to discover any motive, religious or mercenary, for this outrage. It was no strike for wages, but a . . . brutal assault of a body of lawless men without even the excuse of a love of fighting.⁴⁰¹

⁴⁰⁰Morning Chronicle, 17 June 1856

⁴⁰¹The Church Times, 31 May 1856.

Later commentators agree that there was a 'religious' motive, or at least a sectarian pretext, for the incident.

"For some time workers from the eastern counties, Presbyterian in religion, had been taunting Irish navvies for their belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the . . . Eucharist; in return the Irish inflicted a merciless beating upon the Protestant workers on the Windsor Railway who lived in Gourley's Shanty."⁴⁰² The attack on Thomas Gourley's place occurred on 26 May, and the militia was sent to restore order. "Howe, as chairman of the railway board, was active in prosecuting the principal disturbers of the peace . . ."⁴⁰³

Halifax had hardly learned of the Gourley riots, and probably in a number of versions, when it was announced that Crampton, the dismissed British minister at Washington, would be given a public reception in Halifax on 6 June. A preliminary meeting the day before would draw up a suitable address in his honour. Furthermore, on 9 June, Halifax would pay tribute to the gallantry of returning Crimean War veterans. During the first meeting, on Thursday afternoon at Temperance Hall, there was a large attendance despite the fact the meeting was hastily called. The presence of what was conventionally known as 'a large and respectable' group of citizens, assured that the railway riot and the recruiting affair would get an

⁴⁰² J. Murray Beck, Joseph Howe: Voice of Nova Scotia (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1964; "The Carleton Library No. 20," 142.

⁴⁰³ Blakeley, "William Alexander Henry," 109.

airing before responsible elements in society. After that, events such as the Gourley shanty riot could not be shrugged off as minor news items from out of town.

The 'Crampton meeting' heard several speakers including Joseph Howe. The latter used the opportunity to mention the recent Gourley riot. When Howe moved adoption of a congratulatory address to Crampton drawn up by Howe's committee, Thomas Cunningham⁴⁰⁴ objected to the address, pointing out that Crampton had broken American laws, violated American neutrality, and that the United States was quite within its rights to dismiss him. Howe then lost his temper with the hecklers and his pent-up resentment overcame his judgment, and he let fly at targets far broader than he had reason to assail. "Without any justification, he linked together as parts of one plot the disloyal attitude of many of the Irish Catholics in the city with the riots at the Gourlay Shanty, and the efforts being made to stifle the prosecution of the rioters and prevent them being brought to justice But he went further and arraigned the Catholic Church" ⁴⁰⁵ Several Irish and one or two others as well were on their feet to reply to the attack and the meeting ended in confusion. ⁴⁰⁶ Without any justification Howe may have been; intemperate and ill-judged his

⁴⁰⁴The British Colonist, 7 June 1856, makes the identification. Thomas Cunningham was a clerk whose family had come here from Ulster in the 1820's. He died in 1858, aged 35 years. Patterson, 88, erroneously says Cunningham was not Irish.

⁴⁰⁵Patterson, Studies in Nova Scotian History, 88.

⁴⁰⁶Composite account of meeting gathered from The Church Times, The British Colonist, and the Acadian Recorder, all of 7 June 1856.

remarks assuredly were; yet, his suspicions were not altogether unfounded. The New York Citizen of 19 July 1856 carried an item headed 'BRAVO HALIFAX!' Heavily italicized in the original and highly suggestive, the item read:

It is with no ordinary feeling of pleasure we refer to . . . a report of proceedings which took place in Halifax, N.S., on the occasion of presenting Mr. Crampton with an address. Such open disaffection and liberty of speech in a British province, and such evident sympathy with America and her institutions, are truly refreshing. We cannot too much admire the spirit and pluck of one of the speakers and writers -- Mr. William Condon, who although holding a government situation, beards the old toothless British lion, in the person of one of his cubs, Sir /sic/ Joseph Howe, who confesses he came on a skulking, kidnaping, dirty mission to the United States, in the year 1855. The exposure of his plans by a telegraphic dispatch sent to the Citizen by Mr. Condon, was mainly instrumental in defeating the schemer.

Condon to some extent spoke for the Irish in Halifax, and to a degree he symbolized their opposition to being pushed around. When Howe inveighed against Irish terrorism in the area, Condon published a letter entitled 'The Railway Riots and the "Catholics' Calumniator" '. He asserted that Howe had brought the riots to public notice "in a manner the most offensive and repugnant to every man who had the least spark of right manly Irish feeling . . . it then became the duty of Irishmen . . . to see that justice was done. . ."408

⁴⁰⁷ Novascotian, 19 Jan. 1857. The italic emphasis was apparently Annand's work.

⁴⁰⁸ Ibid., 5 Jan. 1857.

That was seven months after Howe's letter to the Morning Chronicle about the railway outrages. Condon had then taken up his pen and written the Novascotian on 17 June 1856, when he had said it was not the Halifax Irish but the people of Cumberland that first gave an unfavourable opinion of Howe. "Let no man say the Irishmen of this City or County would uphold any man or set of men in violating the laws of the land."⁴⁰⁹

The American traveller, F.S. Cozzens, offered a witty version of the Gourley affair, gathered during an extended visit to Nova Scotia. He suggested that Howe's downfall was due to "the very legion he had been so zealous to create. The Hon. Joseph Howe, M.P., by the support of the Irish population, could always command a popular majority and keep his seat in the house, so long as he maintained his loyalty to this votive class of citizens . . . Howe took the Scotch side . . . was a defeated candidate . . ." ⁴¹⁰ It is now impossible to determine whether the Gouley rioters were all, or mainly, recruited from among the 110 Irishmen brought here due to Howe in 1855, although it is a tantalizing idea. What is more important is that the Irish community in Halifax generally rallied to their countrymen in the face of Howe's attacks and that many non-Irish did not join in the attack.

⁴⁰⁹ Ibid., 23 June 1856.

⁴¹⁰ Frederic S. Cozzens, Acadia; or, a Month with the Blue Noses (New York: Derby & Jackson, 1859), 231.

There were three political bodies in Nova Scotia at that time: the Liberal-Reformers, the Conservatives, and the Catholics. The combination of the Catholic minority with either of the other two would be likely to prove decisive. Until the 1850's the Liberals had usually had that support.

Two factors had come into play in Halifax in the mid-1850's. The resentment of Irish immigration that had been expressed in the Famine years, and the anti-Catholicism which surfaced during the 1847 and 1848 elections in Halifax City, were fanned by the breezes of know-nothingism in the eastern United States and those of anti-Romanism in England. The anti-Catholic outbursts of missionary Gordon in 1854 and 1855 were reflections of an undercurrent that was building up against the Catholic Irish, who aggravated the resentment by deprecation of the British efforts in the Crimean War. Howe "was aware of the prejudice against Catholics"; he sought to make use of the "existing prejudices"; but, he did not create the sentiments upon which he sought to build his anti-Irish Catholic campaign.⁴¹¹

The other factor was the attitude of the Irish ever since the Famine. It was true that scarcely any of the

⁴¹¹Meagher, The Religious Warfare, 106, 107. Since Meagher follows the recorded views of the contemporary, Jonathan McCully, on this, he is likely reliable on the point. At the street level, incidents were occurring. For example, on 11 Jan. 1856, Jeremiah Sullivan (from Co. Cork) was charged with assaulting Elizabeth Boyd. He claimed she had called him "a Paddy", whereupon he chased her upstairs. She said he held a broom over her head, threatening to knock her brains out. (P.A.N.S., Records of Halifax Magistrate's Court; unclassified).

Catholic Irish of Halifax in the 1850's were actual fugitives from the Famine. But it was also true that a great number of them were people who still had close relatives in Ireland during the Famine. In all Irish people the Famine had made a profound and unhappy impression. In some of the Irish it bred a spirit of anglophobia. The historian of the Charitable Irish, H.L. Stewart, asked:

Did Howe realize with any vividness what had been the provocation of the Young Ireland Movement? There is nothing in his series of scornful letters to show the least appreciation of what the Great Famine had meant, or of how it was connected with . . . /a British-imposed system/. This was no mere memory of a remote past. Howe was writing his satiric phrases about Irish peevishness a very few years after the Famine was at its worst, and while its terrible effects were still manifest. Yet he could describe those in Halifax who dwelt upon it, as 'a few fools in this city . . . who think that the natives of this country should be eternally in a fever about something that happened in Ireland half a century ago!'⁴¹²

The Irish were understandably afflicted about the Famine and its effects. At the same time, many of the non-Irish, non-Catholic people of Nova Scotia were feeling a sense of anti-Irish, anti-Catholic sentiment. These two forces--a heightened sense of Irish awareness, and an aroused sense of Protestant nativism--coincided and provided the background against which Howe and the leading Irish Catholics fought their political campaigns between 1855 and 1859.

⁴¹² Stewart, The Irish in Nova Scotia, 170-171. Howe's remarks which Stewart quotes originally appeared in the Morning Chronicle, 10 Oct. 1856.

The bitterness between the Irish on one hand, and Howe and some Protestants on the other, did not diminish, as both sides awaited the trial of the Gourley rioters in December 1856. Acquittal could provoke Howe into further action, while conviction might evoke further unrest among the Irish navvies and possibly others. It was imperative that everything should be done both to assure that every semblance of legality would be preserved, and also to try and defuse the political consequences of the entire affair. Such at least was the attitude of the premier, William Young, an able barrister with hopes of advancing shortly to the seat of the Chief Justice. The last thing Young wanted was a religious upheaval in the province. He was already embarrassed by the resignation of the president of the Legislative Council, Michael Tobin, in April 1856. One of Tobin's professed motives in offering his resignation was "the increasing hostility of the government towards Catholics . . ."413

When the trial of the railway rioters opened on 8 December 1856, William Young in his role of attorney-general, was the prosecuting attorney.⁴¹⁴ Evidently Young--a Liberal,

⁴¹³Meagher, The Religious Warfare, 86. Tobin's other motive was financial. He wished to have a higher salary, and had been refused. This factor probably decided when he would resign. The other factor had probably been weighing on his mind, but it needed an additional personal motive to move him to take action and resign.

⁴¹⁴By coincidence, 8 December 1856 was a new Catholic holy day--the Immaculate Conception had been proclaimed at Rome on that date, 1854.

a Scot, and a Protestant--felt he could entrust the case to no better counsel. Possibly also, he was the only barrister he knew that would not be unduly influenced by Howe's powerful personality. Young wished to save his government. If Howe wished to play the ultra-Protestant, Young was not going to stand by and see his administration discredited thereby. Young's wife was a Catholic, and he had not been a party to the Crimean recruiting fiasco. He was a sensible choice for the position of Crown Counsel in the case.

For the defence appeared a former attorney-general, Hon. James W. Johnston. He was a Conservative, born in Jamaica, a Baptist, and would be, within months, premier of Nova Scotia. This was the same man who had endured so much heckling and annoyance at the hands of an Irish crowd in Halifax nearly ten years before. The issue had become partisan, and the Conservative leader was hoping to embarrass the Liberal government. One of Johnston's strongest supporters among the Conservatives was Charles Tupper who, prior to the session of 1856, had addressed the party caucus urging them to discontinue their hostility towards the Catholics.

Tupper's advice of January 1856 was about to have its vindication.⁴¹⁵

The verdict of the jury--eight Protestants and four Catholics⁴¹⁶--would be certain to affect the careers of those

⁴¹⁵Meagher, The Religious Warfare, 105.

⁴¹⁶Fergusson, "Adams George Archibald," 28.

involved as principals in court. In the wings hovered the form of Howe, bent on the satisfaction of avenging himself on the Irish. Symbolically Howe was in the dock, for a verdict in favour of the prisoners must be one against Howe. But even if they were convicted, Howe would look to some as a villain who, from high office, had hounded a few petty men for an offence for which they would have been tried in the normal course of events anyway.

The first man tried was the key case, as much of the evidence weighed against several of the accused collectively.⁴¹⁷ The prisoner, James O'Brien, was provided with an alibi by two other Irishmen. After presentation of evidence, Judge William B. Bliss charged the jury, which retired at 3 P.M. on Tuesday (9 December) and deliberated for two hours. They filed back and announced that, after several ballots, they remained stalemated 6-6 on the verdict.⁴¹⁸ Bliss discharged the jury as being unlikely to agree. Four acquittals followed, two of them because Young said he could not seek their conviction on such evidence. The others were discharged

⁴¹⁷ Sources disagree both as to the number of men charged and on other details. The Morning Journal and Commercial Advertiser, 10 Dec. 1856, named 11 defendants: Thomas McCartney, Alexander Whelan, John and Patrick O'Brien, Patrick Sullivan, Patrick Jones, Fitzpatrick, William Scannell, the three brothers named McVicar. Another man--Michael Lawless--did not appear, the Grand Jury not having found against him. The Church Times, 13 Dec. 1856, corrected the other paper; John O'Brien was actually James O'Brien. (McVicar is not an Irish name, but Scots--the trial of some must have been for rioting.)

⁴¹⁸ The Church Times, 13 Dec. 1856.

when their jury also split 6-6 on a verdict.⁴¹⁹ Young apparently felt that he had satisfied the law and that the more prudent course was not to seek a re-trial with a new jury, and thereby only keep open an issue that was potentially dangerous to his government. When the court rose many people felt that whoever had been vindicated during the trials-- possibly the Irish--it was Howe who had lost. "Howe's part in this matter served to widen the breach between him and the Catholics."⁴²⁰

Young had been hoping to bury the sectarian conflict, and his conduct of the prosecution had been politically successful. The advocates of bringing the rioters to trial had to admit that a trial had taken place according to the proper formula. The sympathizers with the Irish had to concede that Young had prosecuted justly, and had not persecuted unduly. Young had avoided antagonizing the Halifax Irish and his administration still held office. Yet, if Young was aware of the depth of anti-Irish, anti-Catholic sentiment, and the extent to which it was surfacing and crystallizing about the

⁴¹⁹Morning Journal and Commercial Advertiser, 17 Dec. 1856.

⁴²⁰Joseph A. Chisholm, ed., The Speeches and Public Letters of Joseph Howe (Halifax: The Chronicle Publishing Company, Limited, 1909), II, 328. I have not relied on either Meagher or Patterson for an account of the trial itself because of their inaccuracy or bias. Meagher's premise that Howe was at fault and his opponents mere victims of his malice, colours and over-personalizes the account. Patterson made factual slips: p. 87--claimed a woman died due to the riot, a charge that was not substantiated by the records of the trial, the coroner's office, or any contemporary evidence. On p. 91, he claimed a witness speaking Erse lacked a translator, yet the Morning Journal and Commercial Advertiser, 10 Dec. 1856, says a Mr. Connors came forward in court to interpret Patrick Kady's testimony.

figure of Joseph Howe, he would have savoured his success in court for but a short while. The Catholics were already offended, and it seems clear from Tupper's attitude at the opening of 1856 that the Conservatives were going to leave the door open to the Catholics to join them.

If Johnston and Tupper had been seeking a means to discredit the Liberals, the trial had also brought success to them. There was now a bridge established by which the Catholic Irish could cross to Johnston, their defender in court, and the Tories. But Howe was not the premier, nor was he even a member of the council. Moderate leaders, such as Young and Archibald, were not compromised. Howe had won a bye-election on 9 September 1856, but he could not take his seat until the House convened on 5 February 1857. Howe's activities between the trial and his taking his place in the House were to arouse Nova Scotians to a pitch of wrath. Johnston and the Conservatives, as well as the Catholic Irish, sensed that their opportunity was close at hand, just after Christmas 1856.

Howe versus the Halifax Irish

The uncertainty among all, Liberal and Conservative, about what Howe might be up to, allowed speculation as well as apprehension. Later on, John Tobin, an Irish Catholic who became a Conservative in 1857, offered his interpretation of Howe's motivation. He said that Howe had returned from recruiting in the United States and had attended a Charitable Irish meeting where he sat beside Condon and explained himself.

Tobin claimed that Howe was frustrated because Young had refused him a seat on the executive council, that Howe had assailed the government in private, and had then sought the fight with the Catholics so he would be able to join Johnston and the Conservatives, whom Howe thought were anti-Catholic. Tupper had reversed that stance, and their refusal to accept Howe drove him back to his old Liberal colleagues.⁴²¹ This interpretation depicted Howe as a man caught between party lines, and who seized upon the anti-Catholic theme because it was already current but leaderless. Howe allegedly saw and seized the opportunity to lead a loyal Protestant party of his own.

Amidst wild speculation as to his motives, Howe resumed his anti-Irish campaign by firing off letters to the public press,⁴²² in which he demanded a retrial along lines more to his satisfaction. There was an 'Alice in Wonderland' quality in this campaign with its determination to put verdict first and evidence afterwards. Howe struck out heedlessly at all Catholics and at all Irish. He singled out William Condon for his particular victim. If Howe could not convict a gang of rioters upcountry, he would settled accounts by destroying the career of the nearest thing Halifax had just then by way of an indigenous natural leader, William Condon.

⁴²¹The British Colonist, 8 Apr. 1858.

⁴²²Novascotian, 19 Jan. 1857.

Their former spokesman, and Howe's longtime friend and colleague, Lawrence O'Connor Doyle, had retired to New York.⁴²³ Without 'Larry' Doyle there was no one to explain the Irish and Joseph Howe to one another. His departure from the Halifax scene was never more greatly felt than it would be during the first two months of 1857.

In January 1857, William Condon came under the fire of the solicitor-general in the Liberal government, Hon. A.G. Archibald of Truro. This gentleman was astute enough to complain of Condon's very real offense: as a provincial customs officer he had exceeded his rights by taking part with the anti-war elements in the United States. Condon should be suspended during an investigation, and if he could not explain himself, he would be dismissed.⁴²⁴ Archibald weighed the matter for two weeks, and on 5 February advised William Young, the premier, to dismiss Condon out of hand.⁴²⁵ Archibald thought that most Protestants disapproved of Condon's actions and that most Catholics could not approve. If Catholics insisted on Condon's retention in office "they do so on other than political grounds--To them religious considerations may be sufficient ground for overlooking Mr. Condon's offence but that is no justification for such of their associates as view the matter only politically--& feel that they cannot retain Mr. Condon in office without defending

⁴²³Mullane, "Lawrence O'Connor Doyle," 195.

⁴²⁴P.A.N.S., M.G. 2, Box 736, #1253, Archibald to Young, 16 Jan. 1857.

⁴²⁵Ibid., #1270, same to same, 5 Feb. 1857.

his conduct and identifying themselves with his principles."⁴²⁶
This was calm and fair; outside that emotionally-charged situation it would have told to good effect. Archibald may have read the significance of the silence of the Conservatives on the issue. Evidently, the latter were ready to receive the Catholic Irish if they deserted the Liberal government.

Possibly what made up Archibald's and Young's minds about Condon was the appearance of his further letter in the Novascotian of 26 January. Condon said that Howe had duped the Irish-Americans to come to Nova Scotia in 1855. He took some pains to point out that the Irish radical, John Mitchel, had not been connected with the New York Citizen for two years, and that he, Condon, had never been in touch with Mitchel.⁴²⁷ Taking Condon at his word, it is still very unlikely that his further letter to the press absolved him in the eyes of the Nova Scotian 'Know-nothings'. Indeed, by writing anew, Condon was likely to inflame public opinion, rather than allay it. Furthermore, Young was well aware that the powerful figure of Howe would be present in the House when it met, and that Howe could lead a revolt of Protestant members if some sop was not given him. Condon's renewed appearance as a correspondent in the public press made Howe's demands for his dismissal more acceptable than before.

⁴²⁶Fergusson, "Adams George Archibald," 29.

⁴²⁷Novascotian, 26 Jan. 1857.

Young and Archibald proposed to remove Condon from his post in the customary way. Civil servants could not espouse opposition politics and expect to retain their government emoluments. When the espousal skirted upon disloyalty action was clearly demanded. The trouble was that the Irish Catholic community was sensitive to affront, both because they feared loss of their recently gained advantages, and because recent events in Ireland (e.g., the Famine, Young Ireland movement) left them dubious of the good intentions of the authorities. Furthermore, Howe seemed bent on destroying William Condon, and through him, doing the same, at least symbolically, to the Irish Catholic community in Halifax. An Irish population, resentful of the ineffectual measures taken by the British government during the Famine, and perhaps regarding Young Ireland as having been more of a popular movement than it had actually been, was not going to sit back and watch Joseph Howe sacrifice Condon to Protestant public opinion. Unfortunately, Howe continued, oblivious to the danger signs.

In his December correspondence to the press, Howe offered three thoughts to the public. He portrayed the Irish as a rabble; he upheld the right of adherents of one faith to mock offensively the beliefs of another; and he hinted darkly that the Irish had better behave, since they were outnumbered.

So then, a mob of Irishmen, armed with sticks, march simultaneously, from different points of a public work, break into a Nova Scotian's house

--sack and attempt to burn it-- . . . and the reason given is, because some Protestants laughed at the Real Presence, which no Protestant believes; and which every Protestant in every free country has a right to laugh at . . .⁴²⁸

And, again,

It now more fully appears than heretofore, that the attack upon Gourley's shanty, was a kind of crusade against the heretics . . . 'Mercurial Irishmen' would do well to remember that, outside of the City of Halifax, they are but a handful of the population in any county, east or west . . . In the County of Halifax, out of a population of 39,112, the Catholics of all origins number but 13,317. The right to discuss theology, and to laugh at what they cannot believe, will not be very tamely surrendered by the other 25,795, or I am much mistaken.⁴²⁹

In a letter to the Novascotian, published in its issue of 19 January 1857, Howe offered a lengthy review of his relations with the Irish of Halifax. Although it was partially self-justification, it is interesting for the perspective it gives to Howe's attitudes, and for what it tells about the political attitudes of the Irish Catholics in Halifax over many years. Under the heading, 'Old and Young Ireland', Howe wrote:

Sir.

Nova Scotians can scarcely understand what is passing in their own capital, without reverting to some things which have occurred in Ireland . . . Yet there are certain persons, calling themselves Irishmen, in this community, who think that they have the right to do this towards our Mother Country . . . They may band

⁴²⁸ Novascotian, 29 Dec. 1856.

⁴²⁹ The Church Times, 3 Jan. 1857.

together . . . and scowl at those they dislike, but, to all intents and purposes, they are and will be regarded as a foreign element in the midst of a British community.

After a passage directed against James II, Howe spoke of his sympathy for the Irish about 1829. Moving on to 1841, he explained his rejection of Irish Repeal, when he

was told, in very significant terms, that if I did not embark in the Repeal movement, Responsible Government . . . might go to the winds. At that moment my personal interests and political success might be fairly assumed to hang upon my answer. I gave it in the negative, and would no more permit Irishmen to coerce me into doing what I did not approve in 1841, than they can, in 1857, coerce me into an approval of breaking poor men's heads in the wilderness or of writing sedition in the capital.

Young Ireland

had their admirers here, Messrs. Condon, Compton & Co., sang their songs, and repeated their speeches . . .

The Crimean War

found the American Irish bucking for war against Britain. This excited no surprise, but what did surprise us was to find that the disciples of that Sword here, had learnt no wisdom; and that . . . they only looked gloomy when the Allied armies were successful . . .⁴³⁰

The Novascotian described the Irish Catholics of Halifax as "the grand army of Guagers, Haberdashers, Grocers, Attornies and Persons who have attacked a Shanty."⁴³¹ Moderate

⁴³⁰Novascotian, 19 Jan. 1857. 'Compton & Co.' were the brothers, John T. (1823-1871) and William (1826-1899) Compton, publishers. They had an English father and an Irish mother and were Catholics. They moved from the Reformers to the Conservatives.

⁴³¹Ibid. The editor of the Novascotian, Annand, was closer to Howe than to Young.

⁴³²The Church Times, 10 Jan. 1857.

voices were being ignored as even respectable people took sides. The Halifax Morning Journal came out against sectarian strife, while the Pictou Eastern Chronicle regretted the matter of last May (i.e., the Gourley incident) was being resurrected, and further felt that intelligent Catholics could not sympathize with their more rabid brethren.⁴³²

Some further violence occurred at this point, although fortunately for Halifax it was up-country and did not develop further. The occasion was another Catholic festival, Epiphany, 6 January 1857. Near St. Croix on the Windsor line, work was suspended by a brawl between about half a dozen each of Scots and Irish navvies. The Irish got the worse of it and withdrew to raise a gang of fifty men. Someone in authority at the scene pacified this mob by telling them that the Scots would be discharged,⁴³³ although this threat apparently was not carried into effect.

John English and Hugh W. Blackadar, the former an Irish Catholic, the latter a Nova Scotian Protestant, operated the Acadian Recorder. On 31 January 1857 these old Liberals and Reformers published an article, 'The Catholic Question'. It was a balanced warning to the public against the extremists on both sides of the issue: the Irish factionists and Howe, whose antics made him an extremist at the time.

⁴³²Morning Journal, 31 Dec. 1856. Independent in politics, this paper was edited 1854-65 by William A. Penny. Eastern Chronicle, 1 Jan. 1857. Generally Reform/Liberal in political views, it was edited at this time by Edward M. MacDonald, Pictou.

⁴³³The Church Times, 10 Jan. 1857.

We allude to those individuals who, in their hopelessness of attaining any distinction in any more honorable way, seek to elevate themselves as Mitchell, Meagher, & Co., and many others have done in Ireland, and as Mr. Howe himself could once do in Nova Scotia, by appealing to the spirit of clanship, fomenting the prejudices, and provoking the passions of Irishmen, only to make tools of them for their own selfish ends.

Going on, they discussed Howe's use of violence in the election of 4 March 1848, and his appeals to the mob. Howe was compared to his Conservative opponent:

But we never heard that because many of the demonstrative part of them--were Irish Catholics, Mr. Johnston denounced the whole Catholic body . . .⁴³⁴

Young should have perceived that Howe was turning moderate opinion against his political colleagues. At Antigonish, the editor of The Casket, John Boyd, who was politically independent, tried to distinguish between Howe and the Liberal government by offering the latter the advice that Howe had been immoderate, but that the government need not fall, since Howe was not a government spokesman, but a private member.⁴³⁵ This advice came from a Scottish Catholic, a man who wound up as a Conservative. Stories in the Nova-scotian claimed the trouble was between Scottish and Irish Catholics,⁴³⁶ but Howe's careless attacks on all Catholics

⁴³⁴Acadian Recorder, 31 Jan. 1857. In 1855 English was already distinguishing between what he considered true Liberals and the so-called Liberals, such as Annand. Cf., ibid., 28 Apr. 1855.

⁴³⁵The Casket, 5 Feb. 1857.

⁴³⁶Novascotian, 9 Feb. 1857.

were driving them together in their common defence.

Meanwhile Howe was demanding Condon's instant dismissal from his government appointment as gauger and proof officer for the port of Halifax. On 5 February (the day Howe was sworn in as a member of the House) the Liberal caucus considered Condon's case, and "efforts were made to persuade the Roman Catholics to agree to Condon's being fired."⁴³⁷ The Provincial Secretary addressed a curt notice of dismissal to Condon the next morning:

February 6; 1857

Sir

I have it in Command from the Lieutenant Governor to inform you that his Excellency has no further occasion for your services, and that you have been accordingly removed from your office as one of the Gaugers and Proof officers for the Port of Halifax.

Mr. Wm. Condon
Halifax.

I have &

/sd/ W.A. Henry 438

Henry carried out this—for him—disagreeable duty, and three days later he resigned as Provincial-Secretary. His disgust over the religious issue and the hounding of Condon from his job caused him to cross the floor to join the Conservatives, but Henry's change of party seems not to have lost him the regard of his constituents. "Most . . . were Scots Catholics and held aloof from what they at first considered a local quarrel in Halifax with the Irish Roman Catholics. This opinion changed after the dismissal of

⁴³⁷Blakeley, 110.

⁴³⁸P.A.N.S., R.G. 1, Vol. 159, 98 (Lieutenant-Governor's Correspondence).

Condon."⁴³⁹ The Acadian Recorder claimed Condon had been used as a whipping-boy for Howe's bigotry,⁴⁴⁰ while John Tobin complained on Condon's behalf that the latter had been given no chance to explain his conduct. Tobin added that "he had never heard an Irishman in this city attack Mr. Howe for the part he had taken in that business [Crimean recruiting] until he had made the speech at the Crampton meeting."⁴⁴¹

The Casket announced with regret that "the Government which we have hitherto honored with the name of Liberal, has, after many equivocal acts, . . . sealed its fate by dismissing Mr. William Condon merely to satisfy Mr. Howe's vengeance and insure his support."⁴⁴² Boyd was quite correct in predicting the early demise of the administration. Ten Liberals (eight Catholics and two Protestants from mainly Catholic constituencies) crossed the floor of the House, obliging the Young government to resign on 20 February. The religious issue and Condon's dismissal had convinced them to leave the Liberal party, partly on principle and partly in political self-preservation. Four days later, a Conservative government took office, under the nominal leadership

⁴³⁹Blakeley, "William Alexander Henry," 111.

⁴⁴⁰Acadian Recorder, 7 Feb. 1857.

⁴⁴¹The Church Times, 14 Feb. 1857.

⁴⁴²The Casket, 12 Feb. 1857.

of J.W. Johnston, but with Charles Tupper as the driving force.⁴⁴³ Alpin G. Grant, proprietor of The British Colonist, had informed Tupper as early as 13 January of the names of ten Liberals who were ready to bolt, and gave him the additional information that Rt. Rev. Thomas L. Connolly, Catholic bishop of Saint John, knew and fully approved of their defection to the Conservatives.⁴⁴⁴ Until then, by his own admission, Connolly had been pro-Liberal.⁴⁴⁵

The Liberal government had already fallen when The Casket said that Condon was either innocent or guilty; if the former, he should be left in his job; if the latter, the guilt was apparent months ago and nothing was done.⁴⁴⁶ Either way, the government stood indicted: as mean persecutors or as fumlbers. The question was academic when The Casket asked it, since Condon had been dismissed by then, and the offending government was about to follow Condon out of office.

⁴⁴³P.A.N.S., R.G. 3, Vol. 200, 262.

⁴⁴⁴P.A.C., M.G. 26 "F", Tupper Papers, I, 172-174. Alpin Grant (1818-1900) from Pictou, became Queen's Printer in April 1857 in lieu of Annand. A strong Conservative, he was assaulted on Hollis Street by Benjamin Wier, former vice-president of the Charitable Irish Society, who had broken with that body in order to remain a Liberal. Wier had assaulted the master of a vessel in October 1858 and was fined for it in Boston. Grant's paper carried the news, and Wier, a large man, took a cudgel and beat the much smaller Grant to the pavement. Cf., Acadian Recorder, 23 and 30 Oct. 1858.

⁴⁴⁵British Colonist, 31 Aug. 1872. Letter to the editor from Archbishop Connolly.

⁴⁴⁶The Casket, 19 Feb. 1857.

The new Conservative administration, with strong Catholic support, appointed Condon to the post of Superintendent of Lighthouses in Nova Scotia. The fallen Liberals were outraged. William Young declared Condon had refused to display the Queen's likeness at a large social gathering and had declared that loyalty was 'bunkum'.⁴⁴⁷ Johnston told the Assembly on 19 March 1858 regarding Condon that

if the charge against him is that he aroused religious animosities, let Mr. Young think of the religious feelings aroused by others on his side, under the guise of politics. Condon had held office under the Young Government and had not been dismissed until the leader had been forced to make a choice between Howe and Condon.⁴⁴⁸

Charles Tupper added that he had delayed Condon's appointment until "all charges of disloyalty against him had been investigated and disproved . . ."⁴⁴⁹

As usual, Joseph Howe turned to the newspaper columns to express his dissatisfaction with developments. Addressing himself to 'the People of Nova Scotia' on 2 March 1857, Howe reviewed what he called 'the crimes of the Irish Catholics'.⁴⁵⁰ The Scottish Catholic organ, The Casket, described Howe's appeal to Nova Scotians as 'The Know Nothing Manifesto', and added that its endorsement by William Young and William Annand made it no more impressive.⁴⁵¹

⁴⁴⁷MacPhee, "The Earl of Mulgrave," 57.

⁴⁴⁸Ibid., 59.

⁴⁴⁹Ibid., 60.

⁴⁵⁰Ibid., 73.

⁴⁵¹The Casket, 19 Mar. 1857. Annand (1808-1887) was the editor of the Novascotian, Queen's Printer, a Reformer close to Howe, and a Member of the Assembly.

Howe claimed that the only sound basis left for a Nova Scotian party was through "a Protestant organization, as will render the Government independent of Roman Catholic support."⁴⁵² A committee was formed, called the Protestant Alliance. The Conservative paper, The British Colonist, described the Alliance as "a self-constituted secret society, parading under a religious name, but actually a means employed to promote Mr. Howe."⁴⁵³ The object seemed to be to defeat the government by an appeal to religious strife and bigotry.

A few remarks on the Protestant Alliance will give some indication of how extensive this phenomenon was in Nova Scotia. As early as 7 March 1857 The Presbyterian Witness spoke of a meeting of Protestant clergy of all stripes to discuss means of combatting the Romish party, who were "the common foe of liberty."⁴⁵⁴ Through the Morning Chronicle, another leading Liberal, William Annand, seconded Howe's efforts. On 17 December 1857 Annand claimed the Young government was destroyed "for attempting to bring Irish Catholics to justice, and those in power now dare not interfere, being in dread of a similar fate."⁴⁵⁵ Alpin Grant

⁴⁵²MacPhee, 74.

⁴⁵³British Colonist, 18 Mar. 1858.

⁴⁵⁴The Presbyterian Witness, 7 Mar. 1857.

⁴⁵⁵Morning Chronicle, 17 Dec. 1857.

indicated that the Alliance was conducting a pamphlet campaign.⁴⁵⁶ He identified their writers as Hunter, Robson, and Whidden, 'hot-headed political partizans'.⁴⁵⁷ A letter from 'A Protestant Conservative' warned that the Alliance was formed "by a few designing politicians to defeat the present Government, by exciting the prejudices of Protestants against Catholics, who merely, after repeated insults, transferred their support to the Conservatives at the last session . . .".⁴⁵⁸ A series of six Protestant Alliance Lectures was held in Halifax between 29 Nov. 1858 and 11 March 1859. Speakers included Rev. William Ferrie, Rev. Andrew King, Rev. Robert Sedgewick, W.C. McKinnon, and Rev. J.L. Murdoch. The first three lectures held in 1859, were published as pamphlets by the Wesleyan Conference printing office.⁴⁵⁹

⁴⁵⁶The British Colonist, 18 Mar. 1858.

⁴⁵⁷Charles D. Hunter (1795-1875), Halifax tea merchant from Ardoise, Hants County, an active member of Poplar Grove Presbyterian Church; George C. Whidden (1803-1872), Halifax insurance agent from Kings County; and Charles Robson (1814-1885), a Halifax merchant, and son of a Presbyterian minister at Pictou.

⁴⁵⁸The British Colonist, 18 Mar. 1858.

⁴⁵⁹Copies of these pamphlets are in P.A.N.S., "Akins Collection".

⁴⁶⁰The British Colonist, 25 Mar. 1858.

⁴⁶¹McNutt, The Atlantic Provinces, 265-267.

The Protestant Alliance was impressive and it capitalized on the anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant sentiments of the Protestant public. And yet, it failed to exclude Catholics from government. The reasons for this failure were several. First, of course, was the failure of the Alliance or Howe to gather up the support of all Protestants, or even most of it for very long. Several Protestant clergymen withdrew from the Alliance when they discovered it was political. The British Colonist had learned that a Liberal cabinet minister, Benjamin Wier, was in the Alliance, while 'A Protestant' claimed that the "Catholics have waked up to see that the Liberals were making tools of them, and now they—the Liberals—want to make tools of you Protestants." ⁴⁶⁰ By April 1858, when Johnston attacked the Alliance the whole concept had been rendered more than a little ridiculous.

Another reason why the anti-Catholic campaign and the Protestant Alliance did not endure was that the economic motivation was weakening. The Reciprocity Treaty was having its beneficial effects of creating wealth and work in Nova Scotia, while the credit recession at the time of the Crimean War did not last. ⁴⁶¹ In 1857 the long monopoly of the General Mining Association on the mining rights

⁴⁶⁰The British Colonist, 25 Mar. 1858.

⁴⁶¹McNutt, The Atlantic Provinces, 266-267.

of Nova Scotian coalfields was ended.⁴⁶² This also contributed to a feeling that times were improving. Without a religious basis, and quickly losing its economic pretext, the Alliance was evaporating as a formal force, although a sense of anti-Catholicism and anti-Irish prejudice did not disappear so quickly in a less organized context. Bigotry poisoned the atmosphere of the 1859, but its political nature was obvious. The American Know-Nothings were motivated by religious bigotry, economic competition and fear of foreign involvements. For Howe in Nova Scotia it had been politics, and making use of an existing anti-Catholic, anti-Irish resentment. Neither movement survived for long because they were both essentially negative. Their proponents had less in common than they had to dispute among themselves; remove the target of their hatred and alliances of prejudice and hatred soon disintegrate into their factious components.

As a result of Howe's crusade the Irish Catholics had left the Liberal party, which never regained the same support. Another legacy of the affair was the sullen and suspicious atmosphere between the Irish and some other Nova Scotians. Bitter invective and sporadic violence were also part of this heritage. Liberals in the 1859 labelled (if not libelled) Conservative Catholic supporters as "cabmen, coachmen, shoe blacks, and chimney-sweeps . . ."⁴⁶³

⁴⁶²Ibid., 266.

⁴⁶³Novascotian, 18 Apr. 1859.

(Evidently the Novascotian kept its files from 1857!) During the 1859 election campaign that newspaper supported Howe and the Liberals, and in doing so, it kept up a barrage of anti-Catholic and anti-Irish propoganda. It published ranting letters from 'An Orangeman', which in another phase of its existence that paper would have rejected,⁴⁶⁴ and descended to some irrelevant personal attacks, such as its jibe against Samuel Shannon, the Conservative candidate in Halifax County (western division), that he who was not the Irishmen's friend had once been unable to endure "a servant girl in his house having the name of Bridget, it was so Catholic Irish,--and insisted that she should allow herself to be called Mary . . ."⁴⁶⁵

A nomination meeting at Hammonds Plains was reported to have passed peacefully. "The only persons present giving any trouble was [sic] Mr. W. Evans of the City, and an Irishman a little the worse for drink."⁴⁶⁶ There was a certain ethnic slur in this, but it has a perfunctory, almost a ritualistic ring about it, as if the Novascotian's editor felt his readers expected such a remark to be made. Ethno-religious confrontation was winding down. Those who had assailed the Irish Catholics had discovered themselves to be greater victims than their quarry. The game was no

⁴⁶⁴Ibid., 28 Mar. 1859.

⁴⁶⁵Ibid., 18 Apr. 1859.

⁴⁶⁶Ibid., 2 May 1859.

longer worth the candle, and all but a handful of near-fanatics knew it.

The decade was closing in less than harmony and there continued to be murmurs and tiny incidents to disturb people. Alexander J. Ritchie, who had published the Halifax Sun, produced a short-lived Protestant rag, the Halifax Day Star, which may have continued irregularly from 1859 to 1861. The only issue which has been found was full of a piece entitled 'Religious Awakening in Ireland', a chronicle of how Methodists and other non-Catholics were fast hewing down the Catholic forests of idolatry in Ireland.⁴⁶⁷ Despite these outbursts the atmosphere was clearing up, if only because public paroxysms of hatred cannot continue with nothing to feed upon. The Crimean War had ended in 1856, and the issues connected with it had no more relevance for Nova Scotians by 1859 and 1860.

The very moderation of reprisals taken by the Liberals when they resumed office in February 1860 indicated that passions had cooled. Condon was fired at once,⁴⁶⁸ but that was to be expected. It was partisan politics in an age of party patronage. The Conservatives would fire the Liberal appointee in 1863, and the post remained political until Confederation, which solved the problem by putting

⁴⁶⁷Day Star, 1, 2 (October, 1859).

⁴⁶⁸P.A.N.S., R.G. 1, Vol. 214 H (Executive Council Minutes), 3.

lighthouses under federal jurisdiction. Condon, whom Patterson described as a 'greatly mellowed' old man, ended his days as lightkeeper at Egg Island, just off Ship Harbour.⁴⁶⁹ If he had once been a 'disloyal firebrand' he had long ago learned his lesson.

The election of 1859 marked the conclusion of the anti-Irish course of Nova Scotian public life, a course that grew out of a general North American nativism, and which had been fed in Nova Scotia first by the Crimean War, then by the riot and trial, and finally by Howe's ill-considered remarks. Before the events of the decade the Irish had made considerable political and economic progress. The best, or the worst, of Howe's efforts did not alter that fact. Indeed, Howe hurt himself.

Conclusion.

The decade had been one of decision. The Irish Catholics of Halifax in 1849 stood almost solidly with the Liberals. Their economic and social status was improving at mid-century, and despite some resentment against them, the Irish could generally feel they were doing well. Then the beginning of the Crimean War and of the Nova Scotia Railway created further tensions. The War was accompanied by Anglo-Saxon super-nationalism. The majority had trouble

⁴⁶⁹Patterson, Studies in Nova Scotian History, 85, n.2.

in accepting others as loyal citizens unless they too evinced a noisy patriotism. Unluckily for themselves, the Irish could not stir with national pride at the prospect of keeping the Russian Czar from taking the Straits from the Ottoman Sultan. Howe, always the loyal Briton, was incredulous at his Irish contemporaries and their lukewarm attitude to what Howe regarded as a great imperial crusade. He underestimated the impact the Famine had had on the Irish people everywhere. He took existing antipathy towards Catholics and foreigners (e.g., Irishmen) and tried to forge a political weapon from it. Instead it destroyed the Young government, blackened Howe's reputation, and drove the Irish Catholics into an alliance with the Conservatives. One by one, the responsible Protestants repudiated Howe's Protestant Alliance, once they saw its political motivation.

Incidents that in normal times might have been ignored took place during a time of stress. The Gourley riot was a dastardly affair and the law should have punished the guilty through due process. Instead, Howe was suffered to lead a hue and cry, and then to show public contempt for the courts by continuing his feud after acquittals had been given. By singling out Condon for his special wrath Howe helped bring down Young's government, which had hoped to smother the entire affair.

would assert clerical influence to an extent not approached before or since in the diocese of Halifax. Connolly and the Tobins preached loyalty, voted Tory, and made Irish Catholics acceptable, if not lovable, in the eyes of the community.

Howe and the Irish had done their utmost against one another, to Howe's loss. The Liberals had again learned how much the Irish and Catholic vote meant in Nova Scotia. Irish Catholics could decide who would win elections, if they voted en bloc. Howe's attacks gave the Irish a sense of solidarity they had lacked since Fraser fell out with them twenty years earlier. Emotionally, Howe had made the Irish defensive, but in economic and social status the Irish held and advanced their position. Nativism, or its Nova Scotian equivalent, had failed against the Irish, who thereafter began to become more a part of the established Nova Scotian community. This, as well as the alliance with Tupper and the Conservatives, would encourage the Irish to a less radical stand than previously.

The changing character of the Halifax Irish community was both reflected and hastened by the emergence of new leadership, or the older leadership transformed to meet a changed situation. Doyle had left Halifax, while Kenny, Ring and Quinan had become Conservatives. The men who were emerging—John Tobin and Stephen Tobin—were not interested in regression to the old alliance with Liberals, but looked forward. In the ecclesiastical department, archbishop Walsh died in 1858, and was replaced by Thomas L. Connolly, a prelate who would assert clerical influence to an extent not approached before or since in the diocese of Halifax. Connolly and the Tobins preached loyalty, voted Tory, and made Irish Catholicism acceptable, if not lovable, in the eyes of the community.

V. - EQUILIBRIUM AND CONSOLIDATION, 1860-1871

The 1850's, with their ethnic and religious controversy, proved that the Irish Catholics were still not accepted as part of the Halifax community on equal terms with Anglo-Saxon Protestants. The Irish in Halifax had come a long way since the 1820's, politically and economically, yet in the eyes of many Haligonians the Irish remained a distinctive group. The future status of the Irish in Halifax turned on a matter of choice. The Irish had to decide (and that quickly and irrevocably) whether their first allegiance was to Ireland or to Nova Scotia. They could opt for Ireland, and thereby expect to engage in further religious and ethnic feuds with the non-Irish majority whenever circumstances provided an opportunity. They could opt for Nova Scotia and seek accommodation with their fellow-citizens.

There were factors at work which predisposed the Irish to the latter alternative. The flow of immigration from Ireland to Halifax had fallen off during the Famine and did not recover. This meant a rising proportion of Nova Scotian born people within the Irish community here. These younger people had little practical reason to support Irish interests ahead of those of Nova Scotia. Another factor in favour of choosing Nova Scotia was the example of those who had already done so, such as the Tobins and a score of less prominent families. During the troubled 1850's the Irish had banded together in self-defence

against indiscriminate attacks from outside their group. That did not mean, however, that all, or even most, Irish Catholics in Halifax supported the clique among them who had made heavy weather about the Crimean War and Howe's recruiting campaign. Many Irish had the attitude of disapproving of what William Condon said, but of defending his right to say it. In making the choice between Ireland and Nova Scotia, their present home had an edge over their former home.

There remained the problem, however, of working out the terms of the accommodation between Irish and non-Irish in Halifax. The 1860's found the Irish still in the process of becoming, but not yet being, stabilized and consolidated in a firm pattern within Halifax society. Ultimately it became apparent that the Irish Catholics were succeeding in rising above being merely Irish Catholics. They would lay the foundations of a fairly stable position in the community, which adjusted to accommodate the Irish Catholics as an accepted portion of society. The Irish would find consolidation while the community as a whole achieved equilibrium. One observer of the pattern of ethnic relations during the 1860's was John F. Maguire, who devoted the first chapter of a book to the Irish in Halifax.

Irish Halifax, a Profile in the 1860's

John Francis Maguire, M.P., leader of the caucus

of the Irish Nationalists in the House of Commons, visited Halifax in 1867, at the opening of his tour of Irish communities in North America. He felt moved on the occasion to make some remarks which, while unduly optimistic, nevertheless possessed insight. In Maguire's opinion the Irish in Halifax had become a fully integrated part of the larger community.

There is no cause, no **legalized cause**, of hostility and ill blood, no provocation to **anger--no grievance**. The Catholic feels himself to be on an equality with the Protestant, towards whom he does not and cannot entertain a sentiment of hostility; and the Protestant is pleased to know that his Catholic fellow-citizen regards him with a kindly and fraternal feeling...

It would be foreign to the truth to assert that Catholics in Nova Scotia have not their difficulties to contend with. They have difficulties and troubles, but they are in a position in which they can endure if they cannot overcome them. For instance, unscrupulous politicians [Joseph Howe?] will occasionally raise an anti-Catholic cry, that for the time inflames the passions of the unreflecting, and disturbs the good understanding which, as a rule, pervades the colony. [Politicians generally find it to their advantage]...to stand well with the Catholics.⁴⁷⁰

Maguire felt that the Irish in Halifax had a well-deserved influence and a better position than most of their fellows in America. He went so far as to claim what some would have questioned, that the Irish "constitute an essential

⁴⁷⁰Maguire, The Irish in America, 18-19. Although Maguire's book appeared in 1868, the tour was undertaken in 1867 to ascertain by personal observation what the Irish were doing in America, and to assess the strength of anti-British sentiment among the Irish expatriates. Cf., Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, CIII, 632 (Feb. 1868),

element of its stability and progress."⁴⁷¹ He held that "Halifax may be described as a city of solid prosperity and steady progress; and the Irish not only share in its prosperity, but assist in its progress."⁴⁷² Maguire observed that the Irish element was

everywhere discernable, in every description of business and in all branches of industry, in every class and in every condition of life, from the highest to the lowest. There are in other cities larger masses of Irish... but it may be doubted if there are many cities...in which they afford themselves fuller play for the exercises of their higher qualities than in the capital of Nova Scotia ...⁴⁷³

The visitor's descriptions of the Irish in Halifax in 1867 contain one passage that rings so true to the ingrained attitudes with which many Irish Catholics were raised, even in the first decades of the present century, that it will be quoted at length. To anyone with the experience of being an Irish Haligonian the following will be very familiar. Maguire noted that for an Irishman,

the best proof of their good conduct is the possession by a considerable number of them of that which...is the first step in advance --'a lot'--meaning thereby a piece of ground on which a house is or is to be erected. There is a kind of magic...in the possession of this first bit of 'real estate'. An evidence of frugality and self-denial, it is an incentive to the continued practice of the same virtues...

The house may be rude in construction,

⁴⁷¹Maguire, 3.

⁴⁷²Ibid., 5.

⁴⁷³Ibid., 3.

mean in appearance, miserable in accommodation, but it is a house...their property--;their own.'...Once possess the 'lot' in the town, and the rest is comparatively easy...The Irish, even of the very humblest class, possess lots on which they have erected dwelling-houses which they themselves occupy; and...one may daily behold a happy transformation in the character of the dwelling, wherever industry is combined with thrift and frugality. The ...family...move up in the social scale; and the superior education which their children receive enables them to improve the position their father had acquired by his good conduct and good sense. That 'lot' is a wonderful friend to the Irish in America, and this the wise of them know full well.⁴⁷⁴

Maguire's book provided his contemporaries with evidence that the Irish in America could attain a comfortable situation there if they were not afraid of 'a little privation and hard work at the outset', and provided they kept sober habits of work.⁴⁷⁵ Maguire was told by "a gentleman of long and varied experience...when in Halifax ...that 'All the Irish who come here can do well...if they abstain from drink..."⁴⁷⁶ Both Maguire and the reviewer in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine seemed to feel that Halifax was an excellent exemplar of all that Maguire was trying to say about the image of the Irish in America: remove external restrictions to success and the Irish would move ahead.

So far Mr. Maguire. As the various features of Irish Halifax in the 1860's are enumerated and described,

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid., 5-6

⁴⁷⁵ Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, 229.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid., 227.

it will be instructive to compare the facts and figures we find with those reported by the Irish visitor. We shall examine the population, the occupation, the property distribution, the residential patterns, and the participation in institutional activity of the Irish Catholic Halifaxians.

In 1851 there had been 20,749 people in Halifax City, of whom 8,807 (42.4%) were Roman Catholics. Assuming as elsewhere that 85% of the Catholics were Irish, that meant a Catholic Irish population in 1851 of approximately 7,500 (36.1%), of whom about half were immigrants, although not particularly recent arrivals. In 1861, there were 25,026 people in Halifax City, of whom 11,649 (46.5%) were Roman Catholics. This meant an Irish Catholic population in Halifax City in 1861 approaching 9,900 (39.5%). Only about one-third of them were natives of Ireland, however. In 1871, Halifax had 29,852 people, of whom 12,431 (42%) were Catholics, and 11,665 (39.4%) were of Irish origin. Analysis of the census returns indicates an Irish Catholic population in Halifax City in 1871 of very nearly 10,500 (35.5%). If most of the 2,956 Irish-born were Catholics, the ratio of Nova Scotia-born had risen again. From this welter of figures, three demographic trends may be noted. Firstly, the Irish proportion of Halifax had peaked some time just after 1861. Thereafter the Irish share of the population began a moderate decline, but that was not likely realized in Halifax until 1873, when the 1871 census was

published. Secondly, the proportion of natives of Ireland among the Irish Haligonians was declining rapidly, from 1:1 (1851) to 1:2 (1861), and to 1:3 (1871). Thirdly, the general Halifax rate of growth was slowing down slightly, from 20.6% (1851-61) to 18.2% (1861-71).⁴⁷⁷

The demographic facts carried their own invincible logic. The Irish Catholic share of the population had stabilized at about 35- 36% of the total populace. A group that has surpassed one-third of the total, and which has roots in the community reaching back to the founding of Halifax could not be regarded as likely to vanish, at least this could not be expected in any short period of time. The sheer volume of the Irish Catholics and their staying power obliged the community to accommodate them. Because the Irish immigration almost totally ceased after 1846 or 1847, the Irish community became increasingly indigenous to Nova Scotia by the last third of the nineteenth century. Numerical growth was due almost entirely to natural increase. Since the Irish had a growth rate roughly equivalent to that of the other ethnic components of Halifax during the 1860's and 1870's, it appears that the Irish in Halifax had been 'contained' as a proportion of one-third of the population. Once the Irish and others came to see that the former were likely to remain a sizeable minority, but yet a

⁴⁷⁷ Census of Nova Scotia, taken March 30, 1861
(Halifax: E.M. McDonald, 1862), and Canada, Dept. of
Agriculture, Census of Canada, 1870-71 (Ottawa, 1873), II.

minority, it effected their perspective. Irish Catholics could not expect to dominate Halifax, but neither could the majority expect to mistreat an ethnic minority that could, by voting en bloc, control half of the city council. Stabilization and demography imposed the need to find a modus vivendi. The muted tones of the conflicts of the 1860's reflected that the more intelligent community leaders --Irish and others--were becoming aware that only by accepting Halifax's duality could they carry on without senseless conflict and controntation.

The tendency towards stabilization of the Irish Catholic community at Halifax is well supported by an analysis of the occupational statistics of the period. The modest affluence of a few Irish and the competence of most is reflected here, also. Table XI, below, affords some idea of the occupational mobility of the Irish and their sons during the mid-nineteenth century. The figures are derived from a mass of genealogical information compiled about a group of Catholic Irish families in Halifax between 1835 and 1875.⁴⁷⁸ Bernard Barber offers a means of illustrating occupational movement within and between segments of an urban community.⁴⁷⁹ He offers ten categories which

⁴⁷⁸ A sampling of these has been published. Cf., Terrence M. Punch, "Eight Emigrant Irishmen, "The Irish Ancestor, III, 2 (1971), 107-120.

⁴⁷⁹ Bernard Barber, Social Stratification: A Comparative Analysis of Structure and Process (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1957), 434-435.

are here simplified to four, in order to coincide with the four categories used elsewhere in this thesis, and also with an eye to gaining large enough numbers in the classifications to support a few tentative generalizations. Barber's ten classifications have been grouped, in Table XI, as follows:

Professional	(Professional,	Category "A"
Semiprofessional	(major business	
Proprietors and	(
managers	(Small business,	Category "B"
Clerical and	(white-collar	
sales	(
Farming	(Artisan,	Category "C"
Skilled trades	(blue-collar	
Unskilled trades	(
Semiskilled trades	(Labouring and	Category "D"
Protective services	(servants	
Personal services	(

Table XI may be used by finding the father's occupational group in the left hand column, then by reading horizontally across the page opposite one learns how many sons of fathers in that category were employed in each of the four groupings. For example, seven men in Category "C" had sons who were in Category "A".

Table XI - OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY BY GENERATIONS, IRISH IN HALIFAX, 1835 - 1875

Sons'										
Occupations	.....	"A"	.....	"B"	.....	"C"	.....	"D"	.....	Total
Fathers'										
Occupations										
Category "A"	.....	4	.....	0	.....	0	.....	0	.....	4
Category "B"	.....	20	.....	71	.....	16	.....	18	.....	125
Category "C"	.....	7	.....	24	.....	52	.....	34	.....	117
Category "D"	.....	4	.....	21	.....	34	.....	48	.....	107
Total	.....	35	.....	116	.....	102	.....	100	.....	353

Table XI reveals a generally upward trend among the Irish Catholics in Halifax, 1835-1875. In the sample, 175 of 353 remained within the same grouping as their fathers; this is effectively half of the total. However, 110 of the 353 sons (31%) moved to a higher category, and 68 of the 353 (20%) moved to a lower category. If we weight the steps up and down the occupational scale, the following is the pattern:

<u>Upwardly mobile</u>			<u>Downwardly mobile</u>			
78	+1	78	50	-1	-50	
28	+2	56	18	-2	-36	
4	+3	12				
	Total	146			-86	Net increase
						60

Thus, we find that on balance, 42 sons collectively took 60 steps upwards on the occupational scale between 1835 and 1875, based on a sampling of 353 individuals.

Using Warner's 'Yankee City' occupational scale for Halifax, we obtain a rating of 2.41.⁴⁸⁰ This means that for every 100 employed Irishmen a total of 141 steps above the lowest level had been taken. Admittedly, the sampling started with a higher than average group, since the fathers of the group had an occupational rating of 2.01. It means that the sons of these particular men took 40 steps upward, and that their fathers or grandfathers had taken the earlier steps to reach 2.01. The reason for using a relatively high sampling was the fact that such

⁴⁸⁰W. Lloyd Warner et al., Yankee City (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), 383, 387.

people tended to stay in Halifax and leave sufficient record to enable ready genealogical investigation. It is probably also true to say that families which felt they were getting ahead were less apt to leave than were people who were chronically discontented in Halifax.

1858 In an attempt to determine when the levelling out process overcame the process of upward mobility, the directories between 1858 and 1871 were examined for a select number of occupations within each of the three highest groupings. Earlier directories provide no listings by occupation for labouring groups. Comparisons in Table XII, below, are necessarily based on professions, various types of business, and master tradesmen, usually those having a shop or 'stand' where they conducted a continuing business.

Several facts become apparent from this Table. The grand total of individuals, Irish and non-Irish, is growing continually, from 765 (1858) to 1335 (1870-71). The explanation, of course, is that the directories grew steadily more comprehensive and sophisticated during the period, and that the city was gaining in population and more diversified in its needs, and that therefore more jobs were being created. The Irish Catholics were growing numerically and fairly evenly. In each classification the Irish gained three per cent, despite fluctuations. A high point was attained about 1864.

Table XII - IRISH CATHOLICS BY OCCUPATIONAL GROUPS,
HALIFAX, 1858-1871⁴⁸¹

Year(s)	Profes- sional Major Business Irish/ Total (%)	White- Collar Small Business Irish/ Total (%)	Artisans Blue- Collar Irish/ Total (%)	Irish/ Total (%)
1858	8/112 (7)	117/288 (40)	109/365 (30)	234/ 765 (30)
1862/63	17/172 (10)	182/423 (43)	138/436 (32)	337/1031 (33)
1864/65	14/188 (8)	215/472 (45)	181/520 (35)	410/1180 (35)
1869/70	20/175 (11)	231/549 (42)	176/523 (34)	427/1247 (34)
1870/71	24/249 (10)	235/543 (43)	185/542 (33)	444/1335 (33)

Thereafter the levelling process had greater operation than had upward mobility. The Irish in the 1860's occupied one-tenth of the highest category, about two-fifths of the white-collar bracket, and one-third of the blue-collar jobs. The progress of the Irish stands out clearly when the 1842 figures are recalled: professional 3%, white-collar 28%, blue-collar 23%. The major gains were made between 1842 and 1863. Thereafter, the Irish Catholics were stabilized.⁴⁸²

It should be noted that the occupational distribution within the Irish community owed much to the continuing pre-industrial character of Halifax. The railway had not brought about any dramatic restructuring of the

⁴⁸¹Based on figures found in directories for 1858 (Nugent), 1862/63 and 1864/65 (Hutchinson), 1869/70 and 1870/71 (McAlpine).

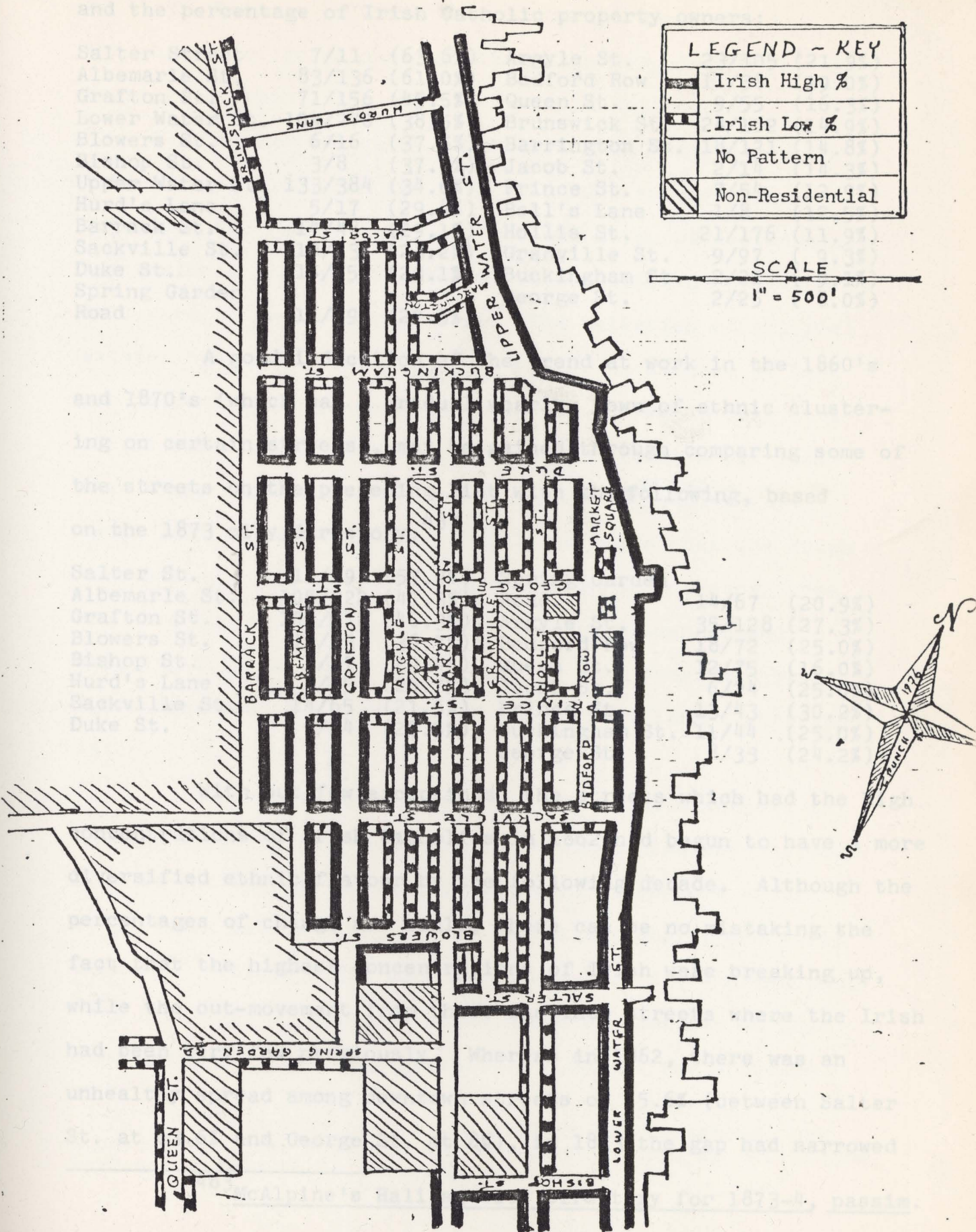
⁴⁸²The tenacity of this stabilization is indicated by the fact that the Irish Catholic part of the professional and major business community, near 10% in the 1860's, was 12% in 1887, and 11.6% in 1909 (Cf., city directories of those years).

urban economy. The absence of any large-scale demand for unskilled labour acted as a deterrent to further immigration. Thus the existing Irish population could stabilize in terms of size, and consolidate its presence within the artisan and shopkeeper strata of Halifax society.

The Irish in Halifax did not remain stagnant, however. A trend began among them in the 1860's to leave neighbourhoods of high Irish concentration in favour of more heterogeneous areas. For lack of reliable assessment records for a run of years during the 1860's, and because directories prior to 1870 offer no up-to-date and accurate street listings, there is a certain lack of dimension in the available evidence. However, by taking the 1862/63 assessment and a city directory list of street residents for a random date a decade later, some trends have been discovered.

The 1862/63 assessment provides the basic data for Figure 3, following, which shows the concentration of the Irish Catholic population then. Outside of downtown there were several Irish clusters. In the south end: Gas Lane, Birmingham, and Rottenburg [Clyde] streets, and Dresden Row; in the north end: Creighton, Falkland, Moran and Park streets; in the west end: Northwest Arm and Blue Bell roads [Chebucto Road and Windsor St.] ; had more than 40% of Irish Catholics among their assessed property owners in 1862. For the downtown area, the following is a consolidated list by street, showing the Irish, the total,

FIGURE 3 - DISTRIBUTION OF IRISH PROPERTY OWNERS, HALIFAX, 1862-63.



and the percentage of Irish Catholic property owners:

Salter Street	7/11	(63.6%)	Argyle St.	23/105	(21.9%)
Albemarle St.	83/136	(61.0%)	Bedford Row	11/58	(19.0%)
Grafton St.	71/156	(45.5%)	Queen St.	9/55	(16.3%)
Lower Water St.	104/270	(38.5%)	Brunswick St.	24/162	(14.9%)
Blowers St.	6/16	(37.5%)	Barrington St.	18/121	(14.8%)
Bishop St.	3/8	(37.5%)	Jacob St.	2/14	(14.3%)
Upper Water St.	133/384	(34.6%)	Prince St.	7/54	(12.9%)
Hurd's Lane	5/17	(29.4%)	Bell's Lane	1/8	(12.5%)
Barrack St.	14/48	(29.1%)	Hollis St.	21/176	(11.9%)
Sackville St.	10/43	(23.2%)	Granville St.	9/97	(9.3%)
Duke St.	15/65	(23.1%)	Buckingham St.	2/22	(9.1%)
Spring Garden Road	11/49	(22.5%)	George St.	2/25	(8.0%)

A good indication of the trend at work in the 1860's and 1870's (which was a gradual wearing down of ethnic clustering on certain streets), may be gained through comparing some of the streets on the preceding list with the following, based on the 1873 city directory:⁴⁸³

Salter St.	11/19	(57.9%)	Spring Garden Road	14/67	(20.9%)
Albemarle St.	105/222	(47.3%)	Argyle St.	35/128	(27.3%)
Grafton St.	101/218	(46.3%)	Bedford Row	18/72	(25.0%)
Blowers St.	12/33	(36.7%)	Queen St.	12/75	(16.0%)
Bishop St.	5/17	(29.4%)	Jacob St.	6/24	(25.0%)
Hurd's Lane	4/15	(26.7%)	Prince St.	13/43	(30.2%)
Sackville St.	14/65	(21.5%)	Buckingham St.	11/44	(25.0%)
Duke St.	9/44	(20.5%)	George St.	8/33	(24.2%)

With but few exceptions, the streets which had the high concentrations of Irish Catholics in 1862 had begun to have a more diversified ethnic flavour by the following decade. Although the percentages of change are small, there can be no mistaking the fact that the highest concentrations of Irish were breaking up, while the out-movement from these was into streets where the Irish had been very few previously. Whereas in 1862, there was an unhealthy spread among downtown streets of 55.6% (between Salter St. at 63.6% and George St. at 8%), in 1873 the gap had narrowed

⁴⁸³ McAlpine's Halifax City Directory for 1873-4, passim.

to 41.9% (between Salter St. at 57.9% and Queen St. at 16%). The change reflected and **symbolized** the dropping of the old barriers between Irish and non-Irish in Halifax.

The average value of the assessed real estate in 1862-63 was calculated for ward one, as a sampling to represent the entire city. As a combination of residential and business realty, it gives a cross-section of premises in a ward of about average size. The valuation of all real estate in ward one in 1862 was £56,925, an average of £335 per property. Irish-owned real estate was worth only 8.8% of the ward total. Not only did Irish Catholics own less than their share of property as late as 1862, but they owned less valuable premises. This suggests that the Irish were buying older run-down properties in the downtown area, and were buying less convenient property elsewhere and erecting inferior housing thereupon. Yet, they were owning these premises, and that was of great significance then and later.

There were approximately 9,900 Irish Catholics in Halifax in 1861. There were 1,109 of them assessed in 1862-63. If the average household was four, there were about 2,475 Irish Catholic households in Halifax during the early 1860's.⁴⁸⁴ Since 1,109 were assessed, the fact emerges that $\frac{1109}{2475}$ (ca. 45%) of Irish Catholic heads of families at that time owned premises. Comparatively 2,657 of the approxi-

⁴⁸⁴Four may seem a low average per household, but I have discounted servants and boarders. They, **by** definition, were not likely to be property owners.

mately 3,783 non-Irish Catholic heads of households (ca. 70%) owned a home in the early 1860's. The Irish Catholics were, therefore, still well below the community average in terms of home ownership on the eve of Confederation.

Maguire was struck by the number of Irish property-owners in Halifax in 1867. He felt that "A striking proof of the position of Irish Catholics in Nova Scotia—to which the vast majority emigrated under the most unfavourable circumstances—may be mentioned; namely, that of the 2,000 Catholic voters in the city and county of Halifax, all, or nearly all, own over 50 \underline{l} . of real estate, and but very few of them claim the franchise through the annual payment of a rent of 50 \underline{l} . and upwards."⁴⁸⁵ The 1,109 Irish Catholics qualified as owners of real estate in 1862-63 were all assessed above £50. Maguire's figure of 2,000 embraced Dartmouth and the county as well as Halifax, and came from five years later, but he was not overstating the case as far as this point is concerned.

What Maguire did not mention, perhaps because he did not know it, was the fact that the Irish Catholics in 1861 formed the majority of the population (and the electorate) in three of the city's six wards:

Ward Two	-	1928	out of	3656	(52.7%)
Ward Three	-	1944	out of	3590	(54.2%)
Ward Four	-	1484	out of	2546	(58.3%)

Ten years later, in 1871, the Irish Catholic population still held its predominance in the same three, essentially

⁴⁸⁵Maguire, The Irish in America, 20.

downtown, wards:

Ward Two	-	1707	out of 3320	(51.4%)
Ward Three	-	1750	out of 3277	(53.4%)
Ward Four	-	1406	out of 2331	(60.3%)

All of these factors were highly relevant to the Irish Catholic acceptability in Halifax in the late 1860's. Back in 1836 the assessment had shown only 204 Irish Catholic proprietors of property, and the 1838 census counted nearly 800 households headed by Irish Catholics. That suggests that about 25% of the Irish owned property at that time. The fact that in the 1860's nearly half the Irish family heads owned their premises is an excellent indicator that the Irish were choosing Nova Scotia rather than Ireland as their primary loyalty. The addition of over 900 men (representing about 3,600 people) to the roll of property owners in Halifax City was an impressive demonstration that the Irish Catholics were putting down their roots in Halifax. In the late 1830's, only 300-900 Irish gave the impression of permanence, while about 4,500 were either transient or living at a level which allowed easy departure, there being no real estate to dispose of before leaving the area. A quarter century later, the permanent and landed Irish Catholics had risen to about 4,500-4,800 out of a total of 10,500. A rather negligible 20% had become a not-so-negligible 45% among the Irish community of Halifax.

This achievement of the mid-century years transformed the Irish from a semi-transient group looking back to

Ireland or planning to move on to the United States, to an increasingly permanent Nova Scotian community. To the extent that ownership of land reinforced the native conservatism of the Irish Catholics, this phenomenon of growing realty ownership in Halifax had its significance in the politics of the period. The municipal level of politics was the most open to the Irish Catholics of the city since that level offered more positions to be filled, and because there was no 'county vote' to swamp the city vote at election time.

Their representation on City Council is a useful yardstick to measure Irish Catholic participation in elective local politics. Table XIII, which follows, presents the Irish Catholic share of City Council between 1850 and 1871, inclusive. From 1850 until 1856 there were 33 positions involved: mayor, recorder, marshal, 18 aldermen (three per ward) and 12 assessors (two per ward). From 1857 to 1871 there were 21 positions: mayor, recorder, marshal, and 18 aldermen (three per ward). Table XIII offers this information in tabular form.

The Recorder and Marshal were not, strictly speaking, members of the Council, but as they were required to attend its meetings and gave considerable advice and guidance, they enjoyed a status equal to that of an assessor or alderman. The only Irish Catholic in the Marshal's column is Garrett Cotter of Cork, appointed in 1862, while the only Irish Catholic mayor was Stephen M. Tobin, who

served a three-year term.

Table XIII - IRISH CATHOLICS IN CIVIC OFFICE AT HALIFAX, 1850-1871.⁴⁸⁶

Year	Mayor	Record-er	Marshal	Aldermen/ Assessors	Total Irish	Positions	Wards with Irish Rep.
1850	.	.	.	3	3	33	1-3-4
1851	.	.	.	2	2	33	3-4
1852	.	.	.	7	7	33	1-3-4-5-6
1853	.	.	.	5	5	33	1-3-4-5
1854	.	.	.	5	5	33	1-3-4-5
1855	.	.	.	2	2	33	3
1856	.	.	.	3	3	33	3-5
1857	.	.	.	6	6	21	1-3-4-5
1858	.	.	.	7	7	21	1-3-4-5
1859	.	.	.	4	4	21	3-4-5
1860	.	.	.	4	4	21	1-3-5
1861	.	.	.	5	5	21	1-3-5
1862	.	.	1	5	6	21	1-3-5
1863	.	.	1	4	5	21	2-3-5
1864	.	.	1	5	6	21	1-2-3-4-5
1865	.	.	1	5	6	21	1-2-4-5
1866	.	.	1	5	6	21	1-4-5
1867	.	.	1	5	6	21	1-4-5
1868	1	.	1	8	10	21	2-3-4-5-6
1869	1	.	1	8	10	21	2-3-4-5-6
1870	1	.	1	8	10	21	2-3-4-5-6
1871	.	.	1	6	7	21	2-3-4-5

It will also be noted that the Irish Catholic participation varied from ward to ward. The number of years in which each ward elected at least one Irish Catholic is shown below, together with the Irish Catholic property owners in each ward according to the civic assessment of 1862-63.⁴⁸⁷ The former ward one alderman became mayor for

⁴⁸⁶Compiled from Blecher's Farmer's Almanac, 1850-58, 1860-71, passim; and from Cunnabell's Nova Scotia Almanac and Farmer's Manual for ... 1859, 91.

⁴⁸⁷P.A.N.S., M.G. 35 'A', Vol. 4 (City of Halifax, 1862/63 Assessment).

1868-70, but he is included in representation for ward one in those years.

Ward	No. of Years	Irish R.C./Total Owners	R.C.Irish as %
3	19	212/689	30.7%
5	19	387/1277	30.3%
1	16	170/603	28.2%
4	16	100/367	27.2%
6	4	118/454	26.0%
2	7	122/476	25.6%
City	22	1109/3866	28.7%

As mentioned previously, the Irish Catholics formed the majority of the population in wards two, three and four in 1861 and 1871. Yet, these comprised both the lower and higher ends of the scale of annual representation, above. It suggests that the Irish Catholics were not necessarily interested in having an Irish Catholic member of Council from their wards, while the high representation given Irish Catholics in wards one and five, where they were a minority of population, suggests that the non-Irish were not averse to being represented by a suitable Irish Catholic.⁴⁸⁸ Such a mixed pattern of representation would help to break down barriers among the various ethnic and religious groups in the community. It also would not have been possible in wards one and five had the non-Catholic population voted solidly for Protestant candidates. The pattern of representation suggests acceptance and containment of Irish and Catholic elements within the civic government.

⁴⁸⁸ For example, ward five with a population 60% non-Irish Catholic elected Catholic Irishmen to all three of its aldermanic seats in 1868 and 1869. On the other side, ward four with a population 58% Catholic elected three non-Catholics in 1860-1863.

Another example of how the Irish Catholics were adapting themselves to the style of the community was the embodiment of a militia formation late in 1859. On 23 December 1859, Irishmen and descendants of Irishmen were invited to meet for that purpose, and "accordingly there assembled ...quite a gathering at the Express (newspaper) office..." Thomas E. Kenny was chairman, with Michael Dwyer as secretary. Kenny explained the reason for the meeting, "adverting to the fact that 'Irishmen and their descendants never were behind when their native or adopted country required their services in time of danger.'" Sixty-two men enrolled on the first day, all but eight of them Irish.⁴⁸⁹ The appearance of ethnic segregation is deceiving. Company "E" was actually one of several companies formed at the time and which were amalgamated in 1860 into one unit, the Halifax Rifles (Battalion), so that all officers above captains were common to all companies. Other companies within the battalion had large Irish components among their original membership, most notably company "B" (35%).⁴⁹⁰ Despite the evident unevenness of Irish Catholic participation among the various companies the more salient point is that they were taking part in a loyal militia with others who were not Irish or Catholic. In this, it was the Irish who were adapting to Nova Scotia.

⁴⁸⁹ John Gordon Quigley, A Century of Rifles 1860-1960 (Halifax: Wm. Macnab & Son Ltd., 1960), 36.

⁴⁹⁰ Ibid., 32.

Again, with respect to the profession of the law, the Irish Catholics were fitting themselves for participation in an institution that was not their own. Prior to 1850 only three Irish Catholics had been admitted to the bar of Nova Scotia, and two of those were admitted only in 1846 and 1850. Within the next fifteen years, six Irish Catholic Haligonians became lawyers—Richard O'Flaherty, John Skerry, James G. Tobin, George B. Kenny, Malachy B. Daly, and William Walsh.⁴⁹¹

In the more rarified atmosphere of boardroom and private club, the Catholic Irish were seldom to be met with in numbers. Two of them were included in the executive of the Halifax Club by 1869-70, although none yet appeared among the leaders of the Chamber of Commerce or as directors of the local insurance companies. Three were bank directors in the two new banks founded in 1864: Hon. James Cochran (Peoples Bank of Halifax) and Thomas E. Kenny and Michael Dwyer (Merchants Bank of Halifax).⁴⁹²

The Irish were active, but there were limitations. For example, in 1863 there were 92 justices of the peace for Halifax city and county. Of these, 25 lived in the city, and three of them (12%) were Irish Catholics—James Cochran and Patrick Power, merchants, and Edward Leahy, horticult-

⁴⁹¹Belcher's Farmer's Almanac, 1841-71, passim.
With the exception of Malachy Daly (born Marchmont, Quebec, 1834), they were all natives of Nova Scotia.

⁴⁹²McAlpine's Maritime Provinces Directory, 1870-71, 663-667.

turist.⁴⁹³ There were three other Catholic J.P.'s in Halifax at the time, but their appointments were ex officio and, therefore, pro tem. By 1870, apart from city aldermen, there were 21 Catholic Irish J.P.'s among the 141 members of the commission of the peace for Halifax city and county (15%).⁴⁹⁴

Apart from public life and the professions there was another area of activity in which the Irish Catholics began to play a considerable part during the 1860's. The first hesitant steps in labour organization were taken in the carpentry trades. Early in the century, when combinations by workmen were illegal,⁴⁹⁵ there was a friendly society, known as The Carpenters' Society of Halifax, which paid benefits to sick members, assisted with their funeral costs, and paid widows £3 per annum. In 1850 the province incorporated this group, which included carpenters, joiners, shipwrights, boatbuilders, and cabinetmakers.⁴⁹⁶ When proper unions were introduced in the 1860's the Irish and Catholics played a substantial role. The petition seeking permission to form a Joiners' Union in 1864 had 12 signatures, five of them Catholics. Another petition seeking formation of a Shipwrights' Union

⁴⁹³Belcher's Farmer's Almanac, 1863.

⁴⁹⁴McAlpine's Maritime Provinces Directory, 1870-71, 654.

⁴⁹⁵Statutes of Nova Scotia, 1816, c.xxvii.

⁴⁹⁶Charles Bruce Fergusson, The Labour Movement in Nova Scotia before Confederation (Halifax: P.A.N.S., 1964), 11.

bore eight names, of which seven were those of Irish Catholics.⁴⁹⁷

Maguire had spoken of several aspects of what he observed in Halifax and, as we have seen, there was more truth than wishful thinking in some of his remarks. The religious discrimination was falling away, although the field of education had the potential to rekindle a sectarian feud. The Irish Catholics were appearing, if not 'in every class and in every condition of life', then at least in nearly every field: civic government, law, magistracy, early unionism, and a few bank directorates. Maguire's observations about the importance of owning a lot of land are borne out by the evidence. At the same time the Irish in the 1860's were showing signs of breaking new ground, or reinforcing beachheads won earlier. There had been upward occupational mobility in the 1840's and 1850's. The gains made then were retained throughout the 1860's. In regard to residence, there were straws in the wind that the trend that might have led to ghettoization had been reversed; the Irish were dispersing rather than concentrating within neighbourhoods.

The Irish Catholics of Halifax in the 1860's were in an increasingly strong position to expect acceptance.

⁴⁹⁷P.A.N.S., R.G. 5 'P', Vol. 126 (Trade Petitions 1858-1887). The joiners' petition is dated 13 Feb. 1864, and that of the shipwrights two days later. No list of executive members from that period has been found in standard references.

With the discontinuance of large immigration, the Irish had clearly reached their demographic plateau. It fell well short of being a majority, yet well above being an insignificant minority. The Irish element came to contain an increasing proportion of property owners and Nova Scotian-born. These qualities—'respectability' and being 'native'—made their acceptance easier. If one were choosing between integration and segregation to describe the status of the Irish in Halifax by the 1860's, integration was beginning to have the edge.

These demographic trends were slow and subtle, and were often not noticed until after they had begun to have their effects. In order to assess what was happening in the 1860's to the Irish Catholics of Halifax a sampling of the major topics of the decade is offered: educational arrangements (to represent the religious sphere), Fenianism (as a measure of Irish national sentiment here), and Confederation (as a theme devoid of ethnic or religious pre-eminence).

Public School Education

Maguire spoke of education as the path by which the children of immigrants might advance in life. Better training would afford better jobs for the younger generation. This idea was expressed plainly, if inelegantly, by John Skerry of Halifax in writing home to County Kilkenny. He warned his nephew to educate his son for "if your son may

arrive in America without learning or trade he is no use."⁴⁹⁸

The erratic course of educational development in early nineteenth-century Halifax reflected the fact that many people were expecting diverse advantages from public education, and that the ideas of Maguire or Skerry were not universally shared.

Although there had been abortive attempts to found Catholic schools in Halifax previously, the first permanent school was Saint Mary's which opened with the approval of Edmund Burke, vicar-general of Nova Scotia. It opened its doors in 1820,⁴⁹⁹ and within a year received a provincial subsidy of £100 per annum.⁵⁰⁰ If the Irish as a group were to move up in the world, they would require the benefits of schooling: at least literacy, the use of arithmetic, and a sense of values that would elevate their character.⁵⁰¹ Most Irish believed that the production of their own leaders through education was their only salvation from being held back 'for ever and ever' as one editorial expressed it.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁸Quoted in Terrence Punch, "A Note on John Skerry, a Kilkenney Emigrant to Canada, "The Irish Ancestor, IV, 2 (1972), 88.

⁴⁹⁹Judith Fingard, "Attitudes towards the Education of the Poor in Colonial Halifax," Acadiensis, II, 2 (Spring 1973), 18.

⁵⁰⁰Ibid., 27, n. 70.

⁵⁰¹P.A.N.S., R.G. 1, Vol. 439, No. 41 (Report of Joint Committee on Education, 7 Mar. 1825).

⁵⁰²The Register, 17 June 1845.

The school petition of the Catholics in 1827 shows that between 73 and 86% of the adult male Catholics in Halifax were literate.⁵⁰³ It was also true that at that period, the occupational and social standing of the Roman Catholics was not generally very high. It was therefore possible that education was but one factor, and not the decisive one, in upward mobility and integration into the community. Nevertheless, there was a widespread faith in the efficacy of universal education as a means of improving one's children and their hopes of advancement in life.

The production of Catholic Irish Haligonians with schooling was the raison d'être of the Irish Educational Society, formed in the mid 1840's. Its executive reflected its ethnic and religious character. President Edward Daly, secretary Thomas P. Ryan, and treasurer, Keyran Skerry, were supported by a committee of three--Robert Dillon, Lawrence Gorman, and Patrick Magee.⁵⁰⁴ They were young men (Daly was 20, Ryan 22, Skerry 19), well-connected with the new local Irish leaders of the 1840's (Ryan was a nephew of Peter Morrisey and Patrick Power; Keyran was William Skerry's son; Robert was William Dillon's son), and, except for Magee, natives of Halifax. These young men supported a petition to the Assembly early in 1846, asking for aid for the proposed Catholic school in Saint

⁵⁰³P.A.N.S., R.G. 1, Vol 308, doc. 64 (petition dated 13 Feb. 1827).

⁵⁰⁴The Register, 23 Sep. 1845.

Patrick's parish.⁵⁰⁵ A more strongly supported petition was presented in 1848, in which the Catholics of north end Halifax sought aid for their new school. They claimed that "there are 1,275 Catholic children between the ages of 2 and 14 in wards four and five -- in one yard alone, there were 90."⁵⁰⁶ The House turned them down; the new Liberal government was as reluctant as the old regime to undertake new educational obligations.⁵⁰⁷

As it seemed that Catholics might miss a sound education during youth, they were offered the chance to learn or to better such rudiments as they possessed by the formation, 6 January 1859, of the Halifax Catholic Institute. It had a spiritual director and a committee of educated Catholics.⁵⁰⁸ For monthly dues of 1/3 (then the equivalent of about 30¢) a reading room was offered from 7 to 10 each evening, Sundays and Thursdays excepted. Thursdays were given over to debating, and on one Sunday evening a month essays were read. Chess and draughts were also available, but with strict rules against wagers and a limit of three games daily.⁵⁰⁹ The Institute drew

⁵⁰⁵P.A.N.S., R.G. 5, Series 'P', Vol. 74 (presented 2 Feb. 1846).

(Halifax: ⁵⁰⁶Ibid. (presented 7 Feb. 1848).

⁵⁰⁷Fingard, "Education of the Poor," 42.

(Halifax: ⁵⁰⁸Constitution and By-Laws of the Halifax Catholic Institute (Halifax: Compton and Bowden, 1859), 4-5.

⁵⁰⁹Ibid., 8-11.

influential support. Its annual excursion in the late summer of 1862 had a large attendance. Archbishop Thomas Connolly and the prominent Catholic laymen, Edward Kenny and John Tobin, might have been expected to attend such an event. However, the Tory politicians J.W. Johnston, Charles Tupper, and William B. Fairbanks, spent the afternoon with the group, as did two Protestant aldermen, William Ackhurst and W.T. Roome.⁵¹⁰ By 1868 the Institute had seventy members,⁵¹¹ and under other names continued into the 1870's.⁵¹² This organization, reminiscent of the Mechanics' Institute, was at best a substitute to compensate for a lack of schooling. It and other agencies served, however, to encourage a sectarian attitude concerning educational activity.

Most people in the community believed in the positive effects of a public educational system, but not so many accepted the Roman Catholic viewpoint. "Early in the nineteenth century the Legislature recognized the necessity for general education and approved the principle of free schools."⁵¹³ Legislation enacted in 1808 was

⁵¹⁰Halifax Evening Express, 19 Sep. 1862.

⁵¹¹Hutchinson's Business Directory for 1868
(Halifax: E.M. MacDonald, 1868).

⁵¹²McAlpine's Halifax City Directory for 1873-4
(Halifax: David McAlpine, 1873), 548

⁵¹³Charles Bruce Fergusson, "Inauguration of the Free School System in Nova Scotia," Journal of Education, XIV, 1 (Oct. 1964), 5

H.C. Halliburton, A General Description of Nova Scotia (Halifax: Royal Acadian School, 1823), 162.

permissive rather than obligatory; the citizens of each area were encouraged to open schools, but it was their option whether or not they did so. The Assembly was no quicker to advance from this stance than were the citizens. The House rejected a report in 1825 which recommended "compulsory, free, universal education based, if necessary, on assessment."⁵¹⁴ The main hindrance to inauguration of widespread public education at that time was the reluctance of ratepayers to tax themselves directly for the purpose of providing trained teachers in well-appointed schools. The problem of financing public education was one of the main objections to progress in education in Nova Scotia for several decades.

The propertied classes, however, were gradually beginning to support public education, as they came to perceive that schools could fulfill much the same role as an established church. Schools could teach people their place in the social order, and motivate them to accept that place. Thomas C. Haliburton expressed this view clearly:

An instructed and intelligent people are more decent and orderly than an ignorant one. They feel and know the respect due to themselves, and are more willing to pay a proper regard to their superiors, in the different stations of life. It is this which gives a security above the law, and confirms to Nova Scotians the blessings of undisturbed repose.....⁵¹⁵

⁵¹⁴ Ibid., 8.

⁵¹⁵ [T.C. Haliburton], A General Description of Nova Scotia (Halifax: Royal Acadian School, 1823), 162.

Haliburton does not speak of the poor and humble becoming rich and influential. He wanted a disciplined and 'enlightened' electorate. Schools were to be entrusted with performing this useful creative service for the community.

By the mid-nineteenth century a consensus among the gentry and middle class in favour of universal schooling had developed. The politicians of the 1850's had the task of translating that ideal into a practical school policy. The job was rendered difficult both by a general public aversion to direct taxation and by Roman Catholic determination to obtain separate schools.

In a denominationally mixed community such as Halifax, with its large Catholic minority, the question of separate schools was bound to be encountered. Those who opposed confessional schools on principle claimed that such schools were narrowminded and would tend to show dissention and destroy any good fellowship that might exist among various faiths.⁵¹⁶ Those who favoured separate schools countered by saying that secular schools would be 'godless'.⁵¹⁷ The general atmosphere of religious controversy during the 1850's heightened prospects that denominationalism in education would become an issue or at least a taunt with which to bait opponents. In actual fact, however, the issue

⁵¹⁶Fergusson, "Inauguration of Free Schools," 18-19.

⁵¹⁷Ibid., 19.

of separate schools was kept largely beneath the surface during the decade of 'nativist' agitation.

There might have been trouble when William Young's Liberal government brought in legislation to improve the general educational condition of the province. Based on compulsory taxation for schools, the bill proposed by William Young on 1 March 1856 did not provide for sectarian schools as public schools. Catholic members were expected to oppose the bill unless a clause was incorporated into it to provide for separate schools. Young amended the draft bill to do this, and then saw his bill defeated over the provisions it made to impose taxation for support of public schools.⁵¹⁸

In 1856 Young had accepted the principle of sectarian schools, so that the Reformers who had assailed the favoured status of the Church of England were now being told by their leaders to re-adopt it for the Catholics. It should be noted that among the Catholics themselves there were opponents of denominational schools. George Grant of Spring Gardens, Halifax, who described himself in a letter to Young as a Nova Scotia Catholic, a mechanic with a large family, in March 1860 wrote in his own style of grammar and syntax:

Let me tell you sir I as one Catholic am rejoiced that you and your friends have the management of the affairs of this Province once more. Sir I never had any confidence in Johnston and his party and

⁵¹⁸Ibid., 20.

never voted for a conservative in my life. I am in favour of rail roads, but give the mass of the people a cheap Education with the rail roads and we will have a country worth seven in the course of a little time. Sir I am not the only Catholic in the city that holds these views. I know several who concur in my opinions. It has been said by some catholics that the Government Schools would tend to the corruption of the Catholic youth by the reading of the Bible.⁵¹⁹

Despite his claims, George Grant appears to have been in a minority among the Roman Catholics of Halifax.

By 1861 the census revealed, alarmingly, that about one-third of Nova Scotians aged five and older could not write (114,877), and about 25% could not read (81,469). The future was no better assured, as 62% of the children were not attending school in 1863.⁵²⁰ This was potentially dangerous, whether one wished education to produce docility, patriotism, progressiveness, or temperance.⁵²¹ Clearly, something had to be done to improve Nova Scotia's educational system.

Unfortunately, the pursuit of reform was bound to generate controversy. The majority of Halifax Catholics rejected the arguments of George Grant and others that integrated schools would assist with the integration of the Irish into the general community. They were determined to preserve the large vested interest that they had built

⁵¹⁹P.A.N.S., M.G. 2, Box 738 #52 (William Young Papers), letter dated 12 March 1860.

⁵²⁰Fergusson, "Inauguration of Free Schools," 21.

⁵²¹Fingard, "Education of the Poor," 29 (docility), 36 (patriotism and progressiveness), and 40 (temperance).

up in terms of denominational schools. Furthermore, their position was sustained by religious tenets. Thus in 1864-65, when Charles Tupper's new Conservative government moved to reorganize provincial education, it immediately encountered vigorous opposition led by the Irish Roman Catholics of Halifax City. The conflicting attitudes had either to be reconciled or be allowed to cause trouble.

As originally phrased, Bill 39 ('An Act for the better encouragement of Education') attempted to avoid the sectarian issue by leaving it unmentioned. A loophole was left in clause VI, section 13. The Council of Public Instruction was permitted "to make any provisions, not inconsistent with this Act, that may be necessary to meet exigencies occurring under its operation."⁵²² Much could depend on the composition of the Council of Public Instruction, and on the interpretation placed on the word 'exigencies'. Superficially, the bill presented in the House on 3 March 1865 would not ruffle anyone, unless the reader was looking for provision for separate schools.

Tupper, the realist and politician, could appreciate this point. He discussed his school bill with Connolly before introducing it. Archbishop Connolly feared that as it stood the bill would not give the Catholics justice since it apparently denied them financial support for separate schools. Tupper replied that he had antici-

⁵²²P.A.N.S., R.G. 5, Series 'B', Vol. 37 (Bills 1863-1865), Bill 39.

pated that objection and had provided for it.⁵²³ In effect, Tupper gave special status to schools that already existed, such as St. Mary's and St. Patrick's in Halifax. When the organization of local school boards was being arranged, Tupper added a clause in the bill to allow the Halifax City board "to cooperate with the governing body of any city school on such terms as to the Board shall seem right and proper..."⁵²⁴ As the city had Catholic schools with Catholic staffs, and since the province named part of the city school board, the clause effectively allowed the Catholic schools to continue within a secular school system. It was a tidy compromise: certain public schools had Catholic staffs, offered instruction in the precepts of Catholicism, but otherwise followed the texts and curriculum of the public school system, and were inspected as part of it.

Tupper further told Connolly that the Catholics "will ever have a good representation in the Provincial Cabinet. I have therefore made the Cabinet the Council of Public Instruction. This gives you a permanent guarantee of justice to your people. Necessarily the Roman Catholics will always have a representation in the Executive Government."⁵²⁵

⁵²³P.A.N.S., MS File, "Tupper, Sir Charles (1821-1915)," item #13, Charles Tupper to J. Hayes, 16 Apr. 1912. Hayes is otherwise unidentified.

⁵²⁴Statutes of Nova Scotia 1865, c. 29.

⁵²⁵P.A.N.S., MS File, "Tupper," item #13.

The Liberal member from Colchester, Adams G. Archibald, opposed the step of creating the Cabinet as a Council of Instruction, while the Tory member for Richmond, Isaac LeViscounte, assailed the guarantee of Catholic interests as being inadequate protection. Tupper assured Hayes in 1912 that he had not deceived Connolly, whom Tupper regarded as "a warm political friend of mine up to the time of his death."⁵²⁶

The first school board for Halifax City under the new free system was established in September 1865. Seven of the twelve members were Irish; of the seven, four were Roman Catholics.⁵²⁷ The four were Rev. Michael Hannan, vicar-general of Halifax; Patrick Power; Stephen Tobin; and James Flinn, a merchant. The Protestant Irish members were Andrew M. Uniacke, former M.L.A. and banker; Matthew H. Richey, sometime Mayor of the city; and W.H. Keating, barrister and registrar of deeds. This pattern of appointments would continue, allowing the Catholics always a powerful enough group to protect themselves.

The first year of operation under the new system, 1,050 pupils attended 'Catholic' public schools, and 910 students went to 'non-Catholic' schools.⁵²⁸ Catholic children were not 53.6% of the school population. The explana-

⁵²⁶ Ibid., item #12, Tupper to J. Hayes, 13 Apr. 1912.

⁵²⁷ Terrence Burns, "Public School Education of Catholics in the City of Halifax, 1819-1900" (unpublished M.A. thesis, St. Mary's University, 1962), 42.

⁵²⁸ Ibid. 35.

tion includes several factors. More non-Catholics could afford to send their children to private schools. Many Catholics felt more strongly the need to educate their children for a few years, to give them a better chance in life. Some 'Catholic' schools--e.g., Sacred Heart Convent School--accepted non-Catholic pupils in large numbers. The earliest existing Convent register reveals there were about 40% of Protestants in its student body.⁵²⁹ The conclusion is that 1,050 pupils attended 'Catholic' schools, but that as many as 200, especially among female students, were Protestants. Halifax City in 1865 began the new system with about 1,100 Protestant and 850 Catholic pupils in attendance in its schools.

Halifax and the Irish Catholics had been singularly fortunate in regard to the settlement of the potentially explosive education issue. There were several reasons for the peaceful handling of this touchy matter. The religious acrimony of the late 1850's had proved more harmful to its perpetrators than to the intended victims. There was a disinclination among politicians to repeat the blunder of antagonizing an increasingly influential minority such as the Irish Catholics. Tupper and Connolly, as well as the Liberal leader, Archibald, had more finesse and less bluster than were necessary to start trouble. It was more politically divisive to bring in taxation for schools than it was to let Catholics in Halifax keep a few public schools to themselves. Liberals and Conservatives were

⁵²⁹"Register of the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Halifax, 1857-1877."

not interested in resurrecting religious controversy over the schools. Just as the Catholics of Irish origin remained what they were, but became Haligonians and part of the whole community, so did the school compromise leave Catholic teachers to teach Catholic children, but within a broader framework of a public educational system. Differences of religious and ethnic kinds were accepted, but the road of compromise led towards common ground wherever it could be found.

Fenianism and the Halifax Irish

During the period that the Irish Catholics were struggling to achieve integration into the general community of cities such as Halifax, a divisive force arose among the Irish people around the world. Previous to the Famine, the Irish leaving home had been imbued with the reform tradition of Daniel O'Connell, and sought their goals through use of constitutional and non-violent means. O'Connell's death and the desperation born of the Great Famine were contemporaneous with the revival of the Irish tradition of militant activism and rebelliousness. As we have seen, Young Ireland failed dismally in 1848. Many of those attracted to Young Ireland were men of the type that one of them, Thomas D'Arcy McGee, later described as "Idealists yearning to be Irish patriots [e.g., McGee], schemers, adventurers and wastrels..."⁵³⁰

⁵³⁰ Josephine Phelan, The Ardent Exile (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1951), 237.

In Ireland, violence

did not become pure terrorism until it was systematically expounded towards 1858 by a secret society, the 'Irish Republican Brotherhood', whose members were known under the anglicised Gaelic name of Fenians... They rejected with scorn and disdain the constitutional procedure, and by raising the standard of complete independence, they rekindled in the people the old national pride... through their newspaper, 'The Irish People'. This was directed less towards the humbler agricultural folk than towards the working-class city dwellers and artisans.⁵³¹

For yet a few years, though, this sinister society of secret growth insinuated itself among the poorer Irish people, and the more ignorant. "November 1861 is generally held to be the earliest public manifestation of Fenian sympathies."⁵³²

The occasion was the funeral of Terence Bellew MacManus, a survivor of the 1848 Young Ireland revolt. "Even if the people were too fickle to risk destruction in rebellion they were sufficiently romantic to attend in vast numbers the funerals of deceased patriots like... MacManus..."⁵³³

A number of these funeral demonstrations were held in Ireland in the 1860's.

In the years following 1848, some of the Young Irelanders had grouped around James Stephens in an 'Irish Republican Brotherhood'. The brotherhood was carried early to the United States, where the flow of Irish immigration continued in strength in the 1850's. By 1857

⁵³¹Garnier, A Popular History of Ireland, 136.

⁵³²Breandan MacGiolla Choille, "Fenian Documents in the State Paper Office," Irish Historical Studies, XVI, 63 (March 1969), 262.

⁵³³R Dudley Edwards, A New History of Ireland, 179.

a North American branch was definitely established, with John O'Mahony as its outstanding figure.⁵³⁴ This group soon acquired the nickname by which it is generally known-- that of Fenian, a name derived from the ancient mythological Irish warrior band known as the fianna.

The Fenians appealed more to Irish emigrants in North America than to all the North American Irish, and most of all to the "Irish in the American slums".⁵³⁵ At the time some wildly exaggerated estimates of the size of the Fenian movement went forth, some from wishful thinkers among the Fenians, and some from ordinary people who feared hordes of armed Irishmen were on the verge of attacking them. The modern Irish historian, Breandan O'Cathaoir [O'Cahir], estimates that at its peak the North American Fenian movement had no more than 45,000 members.⁵³⁶ These were widely scattered geographically, and the movement itself was split into two mutually hostile wings by 1865.⁵³⁷ Its internal organization was weak, and it was riddled with spies of the British authorities. Nevertheless, it appeared a very formidable threat to Britain and her colonies at the time.

⁵³⁴Phelan, 237.

⁵³⁵Breandan O'Cathaoir, "American Fenianism and Canada," The Irish Sword, viii, 31 (Winter 1967), 78.

⁵³⁶Ibid., 77.

⁵³⁷Ibid., 79.

⁵³⁹Morning Chronicle, 19 Apr. 1866. Letter of Joseph Howe to People of Nova Scotia.

In the United States, the Catholic hierarchy "failed to curb the Fenian Brotherhood."⁵³⁸ The hierarchy was Irish and the Fenians posed no threat to the Church on theological grounds, nor to the United States or local authorities. Therefore, throughout the Civil War period in American history (1861-1865), the Fenians encountered little clerical opposition in their recruitment of members, many of whom learned the arts of war by service in the American Civil War. At the end of that conflict, a very large number of Irish veterans, including many Fenians, was discharged from American military service.

In North America the Fenians remained bound up with the affairs of their British-ruled homeland. Their goal remained the liberation of Ireland from that control. By 1866 the larger part of the movement in the United States contemplated seizure of all or part of British North America, presumably with a view to trading it back to the British in exchange for Irish independence. The idea of detaching British North America from Britain was not inconsistent with American continental ambitions.⁵³⁹ The Fenians quarrelled among themselves even more than most secret organizations, about personalities, methods, and conflicting idealisms. They were often dismissed as a gang of wild-eyed Irishmen with naive ideas and without

⁵³⁸ Ibid., 78.

⁵³⁹ Morning Chronicle, 10 Apr. 1866. Letter of Joseph Howe to People of Nova Scotia.

any effective plan of action. They were ridiculous, but they were also dangerous. The Fenians had quite a few of the assets that could bring them success in some military adventure along the American border with B.N.A., namely, a large sum of money, numbers of seasoned veterans who had served in the American Civil War, and a fund of American sympathy. That they did not succeed was largely due to the fact that the United States eventually recalled that it was a neutral country and took the steps necessary to put a stop to the use of its territory by the Fenians for hostile demonstrations against Canada and the Maritimes.⁵⁴⁰

Another reason for the failure of Fenianism to establish a beach-head in B.N.A. was because the Irish of Canada were not those of the United States.

The general attitude of the Irish Catholic population of Canada towards Fenianism was...one of indifference or hostility. Irish emigrants to Canada and to the United States provide an interesting contrast. There was a considerable amount of voluntary emigration to Canada before and after the Famine; while the Famine had driven hundreds of thousands to the United States. Emigrants from Ireland to the Canadian provinces tended to spread out; they did not possess the same religious and racial homogeneity as did the Irish clustered in the eastern American cities. Irish-Canadians remained under the wing of their ultramontaine hierarchy--who set a tradition of loyalty...McGee--who combined a love of his adopted land with a hatred of Fenianism--did much to keep his fellow Irish-Canadians loyal...Then it must be remembered, that to a large

⁵⁴⁰ P.B. Waite, The Life and Times of Confederation 1864-1867 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962), 264.

proportion of Irish people in the nineteenth century, there was no conflict between Irish nationality and allegiance to British institutions. Irish-Canadians were, by and large, content...Irish nationalism in Canada was never directed against the Provinces. Irishmen in Canada inimical to Britain could move over the border.⁵⁴¹

These differences were not apparent at the time either to Irish or others. The important consideration for the Irish Catholic leadership of British North America, and especially in places such as Halifax, was to assure that Fenianism gained no hold on local Irish people, and furthermore to insure that the general community knew that the local Irish would not lend countenance to Fenianism in their area. This was a necessity if the Irish in Halifax were to reassure Halifaxians generally that the charges levelled against them in the mid-1850's were untrue. The Irish must not only be loyal, but must be seen to be loyal.

The forces of anti-Fenianism among the Irish had a rich tradition harking back to Henry Grattan and Daniel O'Connell. Between the anglophobia of William Condon and his clique, on the one hand, and unconditional anglophilia, on the other, was a broad middle ground. Here were camped the inheritors of the mantle of Daniel O'Connell. The driving force of this middle group was an ecclesiastic, a fact that was not without significance. As Paul, Cardinal Cullen, was for the Irish at home, so would Thomas Louis Halifaxiensis [Connolly] be for the Irish of Nova Scotia.

⁵⁴¹O'Cathair, "American Fenianism and Canada," 78.

After the collapse of the tenant right movement in the late 1850's, Cullen lent his support to a Catholic organization, the National Association, which was set up in 1864. Superficially, his act ran counter to his earlier antipathy to the involvement of priests in politics. But Cullen had been disillusioned by British government partiality towards the Piedmontese attack on the Papal States and by the government's refusal to recognise the Catholic University. It was for these reasons that he revised his views on keeping the clergy out of politics. Cullen lent his support discreetly to the National Association to divert popular interest in Fenianism... When the Fenians began to organize...and prepare the country for revolt...the clergy supported the government, and... even helped prosecutions of those suspected of preaching Fenianism.⁵⁴²

Cullen was opposed to revolution since he felt it would fail and bring ruin on Ireland. He further felt that Fenianism did not offer justice in terms of race, religion, land, trade, or history as he understood those things. A moderate policy he believed, would get better results, especially as Cullen perceived that English opinion was coming around to an appreciation of Irish complaints.⁵⁴³

The equivalent of Cullen in Halifax was the Catholic archbishop, Connolly, who urged the loyal side of any confrontation between the Fenians and the British provinces in North America. He worked to convince the

⁵⁴²R. Dudley Edwards, A New History of Ireland, 178-9. The National Association did not get a Halifax branch.

⁵⁴³E.D. Steele, "Cardinal Cullen and Irish Nationality," I.H.S., XIX, 75 (Mar. 1975), 257-8.

Irish Catholics that they stood to lose rather than to gain through Fenianism, and also he wished to convince the general community of Irish loyalism. Connolly (1815-1876) was from Cork, and had come to Halifax following his ordination. In 1842 he had been secretary and confidante of his predecessor at Halifax, William Walsh. In 1844, when Walsh was in Rome, Loughnan of the 'Fraser Party' had actually turned Connolly out of his quarters into the street. At that time Connolly's 'council of war' had consisted of men who remained his close friends--Lawrence O'C. Doyle, Michael Tobin, Jr., Edward Kenny, and Rev. R.B. O'Brien.⁵⁴⁴ It needs to be remembered when assessing Connolly's strong hold on the loyalties of the Halifax people that when he was just a young priest they had seen him and his belongings placed on the streets when he defended the Irish Haligonians against the vicar-general. Connolly left Halifax in 1849, and spent the next ten years as bishop in Saint John, N.B., but when Walsh died in 1858, the Roman decree had required the selection of an Irish-born archbishop for Halifax, and Connolly was appointed. A man of outstanding qualities, Connolly was a natural

leader, with warm sympathies and open, independent views. His work among the poor and his interests in education led him into public affairs. With tact and common sense, he was able to create a new feeling of friendliness between the

⁵⁴⁴ Halifax Archdiocese, Chancery Office (Connolly Papers), Connolly to Walsh, 25 Mar. 1844.

Protestants and the Catholics of Halifax, which was unusual for those sectarian days. The Archbishop was one of that fervent, patriotic class of prelates, impetuous and perservering, who extended his directions openly into the political field. Here the quality that served him best was his capacity to make lasting friendships, as he did with the Duke of Newcastle as Colonial Secretary, John A. MacDonald [sic] and D'Arcy McGee.⁵⁴⁵

Connolly became archbishop in the period just at the end of the feud between Howe and the Catholics of Halifax. He worked extremely long and hard to dampen all traces of religious animosity in Halifax.⁵⁴⁶ His conciliatory spirit and dedication to the reduction of frictions within the community were appreciated by many people, both among the Irish Catholics and the Protestant majority.

The old, compromised, Catholic press was superseded by the Evening Express, a tri-weekly which was both Catholic and Conservative. Connolly perceived that the Irish Catholics were thoroughly tired of ethnic and religious warfare and that the laymen who had steered them into the confrontation with Howe and the Protestants were men such as William Condon and Joseph Quinan, supporters of the 'Fraser Party' of so long before. Connolly was far more attracted to men such as Stephen Tobin, John Tobin, and his old friends, Michael Tobin and Edward Kenny. These were the emerging lay leadership of the Halifax Irish in the 1860's, and they were, as was Connolly himself, Conservatives.

⁵⁴⁵T.P. Slattery, The Assassination of D'Arcy McGee (Toronto: Doubleday Canada Limited, 1968), 315.

⁵⁴⁶Meagher, The Religious Warfare, 192-3.

The bishops of Boston or Chatham, Arichat or Saint John, might express themselves on matters of secular concern and receive their due weight. Connolly of Halifax was a leader of a community by virtue of his intellect and moderation, his old friendships and his defence of the Halifax Irish years before. Moreover, in respect of the Fenians, Connolly was speaking his sincere feelings, and those of men such as Cardinal Cullen, and Thomas D'Arcy McGee, the one the highest ranking Catholic prelate of the day, the other a most influential Irish-Canadian politician.

Connolly found an important ally in Thomas D'Arcy McGee, Irish-born journalist, poet, former Young Irelander, and (by the 1860's) Canadian politician. The Halifax archbishop would write that McGee "has done more for the real honor and advantage of Catholics and Irishmen, here and elsewhere, than any other I know of since the days of the immortal O'Connell."⁵⁴⁷ McGee's political beliefs had cooled considerably from what they had been when, as a very young man, he had participated in the stirring rebellion of 1848. McGee was a sincere convert to the idea of constitutional monarchy. Writing in the American Celt to an American Irish audience, McGee expressed this belief:

We dearly desire the restoration of the Irish nation, as a politically independent State. We would hopefully accept

⁵⁴⁷The British Colonist, 3 Aug. 1867. Connolly to Henry J. Clarke, Montreal.

that independence, under the form either of Monarchy, or under a Federal Union with England and Scotland. As a separate republic, we do not think Ireland could exist for one year, but we are quite willing to leave that... to the free suffrage of the adult male population.⁵⁴⁸

As McGee was not making such remarks in the belief they would prove popular in the United States among the Irish community, his comments probably were sincere. McGee had a way, though, of winning audiences over to him. In 1863 he visited the Maritime Provinces where "he advanced his views...on the need of the Intercolonial Railway and the advantages of a union of Canada with the Maritimes. Large audiences in Halifax and Saint John received him with an enthusiasm that ranked his eloquence above that of their own Joseph Howe."⁵⁴⁹

McGee hated and feared Fenianism. "He knew only too well the fascination that schemes and fantasies had for the Irish temperament and he knew how grievously Fenianism could prejudice the position of the Irish in Canada."⁵⁵⁰ When a dinner of the Hibernian Society of Montreal, 17 March 1864, became the scene of an outbreak of Fenian sympathy among part of those in attendance, it was McGee who led the condemnation of the pro-Fenian faction.⁵⁵¹ The stance of

⁵⁴⁸Quoted in Halifax Catholic, 9 Sep. 1854.

⁵⁴⁹Slattery, The Assassination, 191.

⁵⁵⁰Phelan, Ardent Exile, 238.

⁵⁵¹Ibid., 236.

McGee and Connolly against the Fenians was considerably strengthened in 1864. The first Roman decision about Fenianism was decreed by the Holy Office, and it was not a policy of approbation.⁵⁵² In December 1864, Cardinal Cullen founded the National Association of Ireland to secure by peaceful means its goals for Ireland.⁵⁵³

On 11 January 1865 the event occurred that had been more feared by Connolly and the moderate Irish than even a Fenian outburst might have been. A Halifax newspaper, the Morning Chronicle, carried an editorial claiming that Catholic churches in B.N.A. were being used for Fenian activities. On 13 January that paper carried Connolly's strong denial of this charge and his assertion of Irish Catholic loyalty in British America. The Irish here, Connolly said, would gain nothing from the Fenians but 'bloodshed, rapine and anarchy'.

Late in 1865, Connolly wrote an important letter to Arthur Gordon, lieutenant-governor of New Brunswick. The text appeared in the Saint John Evening Express on 10 January 1866:

It was not simply an expression of loyalty on behalf of the Catholics. What made it unusual was his statement based on his experience of a quarter of a century, that Irish Catholics were better off

⁵⁵²Patrick J. Corish, "Cardinal Cullen and the National Association of Ireland," Reportorium Novum, III, 1 (1961-2), 19.

⁵⁵³Ibid., 26.

and better represented in British North America than in the United States...And what have we to expect from the so-called Fenians? That pitiable knot of knaves and fools, unable to degrade themselves, are doing all in their power to...make the condition of our poor country more deplorable than before.⁵⁵⁴

Connolly realized that he alone could not defeat the Fenians among their own people. He wrote to other bishops, such as Rogers of Chatham, N.B., and Lynch, bishop of Toronto, asking their help. To Lynch he explained that the Irish must attack Fenianism, because mere passivity would be mistaken for convert sympathy with the Fenians.⁵⁵⁵

Connolly wrote a public letter to the Saint John Globe, "urging upon Catholic faithful to give no encouragement to Fenian attempts at violence."⁵⁵⁶ The occasion was St. Patrick's Day 1866. From Dublin, Cardinal Cullen "rebuked his expatriate countrymen in the Brotherhood, advising them they were doing a disservice to Erin by joining secret societies."⁵⁵⁷ Although the Church did not officially condemn Fenianism until January 1870, the preliminary steps were being undertaken, and the Fenians were already receiving the hostility of much of the leading

⁵⁵⁴Slattery, The Assassination, 315-316.

⁵⁵⁵Connolly to Lynch, 12 Mar. 1866, "Lynch Papers" Box I, Folder H, doc. 4 (copy among "Connolly Papers", Chancery Office, Halifax Archdiocese).

⁵⁵⁶James M. Cameron, "Fenian Times in Nova Scotia, N.S.H.S., XXXVII (1970), 109.

⁵⁵⁷Ibid.

Irish Catholic hierarchy both in America and in Ireland.

Connolly proclaimed that he, an Irish-Canadian archbishop, yielded to no man in my love to my fellow-countrymen and my co-religionists at home and abroad, I distinctly state my conviction, as far as Irishmen and Catholics in this country are concerned, it [Fenianism] would have ended in nothing short of a disastrous conflagration.⁵⁵⁸

Spoken afterwards, it nonetheless reflects accurately the attitude that Connolly of Halifax had taken towards the Fenians throughout the 1860's. Connolly had written that a "cavalry raid or a visit from our Fenian friends on horseback, through the plains of Canada or the fertile fields of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, may cost more in a single week than Confederation would for the next fifty years."⁵⁵⁹

The Fenians made a few blundering attempts at attacking British America between March and June 1866. During March, J.M. Vernon of Montreal wrote to Lord Monck, the Irish-born governor of Canada. Vernon claimed that Fenians were joining with the New England fishermen, so that they could invade the Maritimes in the guise of fishermen, "capture the shipping and land at St. Johns [sic] , Halifax, &c. They intend to do this at once." Failing this they would "levy tribute or destroy them with Greek fire."⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵⁸ Isabel Skelton, The Life of Thomas D'Arcy McGee (Gardenville: Garden City Press, 1925), 459.

⁵⁵⁹ Slattery, The Assassination, 271.

⁵⁶⁰ P.A.N.S., R.G. 2, Vol. 5, No. 779 (forwarded by Monck to Williams, 12 Mar. 1866).

March and April were the crucial months in Nova Scotia. The lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia, Fenwick Williams, reported to Edward Cardwell, the Colonial Secretary, on 27 March 1866 that the Irish in Nova Scotia exerted

great influence on all its affairs, material as well as political, and as the plots of the Fenians were recorded in the public papers and their expected attacks foreshadowed for St. Patrick's day, there were timid and misinformed people who feared that the Irish... might exhibit sympathy towards their lawless and thoughtless countrymen who were plotting against Great Britain.⁵⁶¹

Instead of rebellion on the seventeenth of March, Irishmen 'of every creed' walked under the Union Jack in the Charitable Irish parade and presented a loyal address.

Archbishop Connolly was there and he pronounced a speech.

Williams considered him "a Prelate who wields so powerful an influence over Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, and which is invariably exerted in the cause of loyalty and devotion to the Queen and Her Government."⁵⁶²

The Charitable Irish Society drank seventeen toasts at their banquet, nine of clearly loyal to the Crown. The others were devoid of political significance. The lieutenant-governor was present and made a reply to a toast and was well applauded.⁵⁶³

Events at Halifax rendered rather anticlimatic the strong

⁵⁶¹P.A.N.S., R.G. 1, Vol. 128, item #26.

⁵⁶²Ibid.

⁵⁶³Halifax Morning Chronicle, 19 Mar. 1866.

pronouncement of the bishop of Arichat against the Fenians.⁵⁶⁴

When McGee arrived in Halifax in January 1867, the people presented him with an address thanking him for his "manly and spirited condemnation of the... Fenian organization, which, under the pretence of remedying grievances in Ireland, aimed at the destruction of British rule in these Provinces..."The signatories included many Haligonians, including several who were active politically then or later, namely, John Tobin, M.L.A.; alderman Stephen Tobin; future legislators Malachy Daly, John Pugh, Thomas E. Kenny, John Flinn; and former councillor Michael Tobin, Jr. McGee replied by calling Fenianism 'that gigantic swindle' and cautioned his countrymen to have nothing to do with it.⁵⁶⁵ The Irish Catholics, led by their archbishop, Connolly, and supported by Thomas D. McGee, had managed the feat of remaining Irishmen in good standing both with other Irishmen and the general community, while at the same time making a convincing display of loyalty. On 4 November 1867 at Montreal, Joseph Howe paid the Halifax Irish the tribute of saying that in Nova Scotia among the Irish "I do not know a single disloyal man among them— not one."⁵⁶⁶

When McGee was assassinated on 1 April 1868, the

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid., 20 Apr. 1866.

⁵⁶⁵ Evening Express, 1 Feb. 1867.

⁵⁶⁶ Chisholm, Speeches of Joseph Howe, II, 526.

Halifax Irish community was particularly affected at the loss. A commemorative funeral service was held by the archbishop in St. Mary's Cathedral. The Church was filled by persons 'of all classes and creeds'.⁵⁶⁷ Connolly's funeral oration was lengthy, and in it Connolly expressed McGee's and his own attitudes about many things, including Fenianism. Several excerpts are quoted, both for the light they throw on the majority attitude among the Halifax Irish of the 1860's, and the intensity with which a man such as Connolly detested Fenian extremism. 'Ireland's and Irishmen's best friend and ablest advocate', McGee was like

O'Connell and every great and good man of our race and creed, and had enemies of his own fellow-countrymen...Yet if history tell truth and passing events have any significance, a want of cohesion among Irishmen, especially where politics are concerned--a tendency to schism on all things but religion--and the unfortunate failing of not sympathising and co-operating heart and soul with each other--were always...our distinctive national weakness...prone [sic] to party feud and to jealousy of each other is historically and pre-eminently our... [downfall].⁵⁶⁸

Connolly praised legal means for gaining Irish advantages, and called Fenianism "an insane movement" incapable even of rebellion. Confronted with Fenianism, the Irish are...brave, and in a certain

⁵⁶⁷Novascotian, 27 Apr. 1868.

⁵⁶⁸Funeral Oration on the Late Hon. Thomas D'Arcy McGee, delivered...by his Grace the Archbishop on Friday, 24th April, A.D. 1868 (Halifax: Compton & Co., 1868), 5-6.

sense patriotic as ever, but the wiser and more numerous of them, who had something to lose, ever looked on the physical force scheme as utter madness, and, ...most correctly decided on the better expedient of endeavouring to right their country's wrongs by other and more feasible means.⁵⁶⁹

As an Irishman and an archbishop Connolly felt a duty "to disenchant a deluded...remnant, of our people with that pet scheme of physical force and war to the knife on England, to which they so madly adhere."⁵⁷⁰ He said that he was "consoled with the thought, far as I could ever learn, that not a single Fenian (properly so called) is to be found in any of these Lower Provinces."⁵⁷¹ He closed with a remark that symbolized, even if it exaggerated, the progress of the Catholic Irish of Halifax: "I found my people nine years ago in the turmoil of religious strife; and, if I die to-day...I leave them...in peace, happiness, and union with their fellow citizens of every creed and class."⁵⁷²

It will have been apparent that, both in the matter of reconciling Catholic and secular ideas about public schools, and in the matter of bringing the Irish in Halifax safely through the Fenian scare, Archbishop Connolly was the most fluent and outstanding Irish Catholic

⁵⁶⁹Ibid., 9.

⁵⁷⁰Ibid., 12.

⁵⁷¹Ibid., 22.

⁵⁷²Ibid., 23.

leader in Halifax. Through him, McGee and Cullen played an important role in procuring and maintaining Irish loyalism and moderation. Another force that reduced the Irish boiling point in Halifax was the simple fact that by 1864-66 it was more than twenty years since most of the Irish had left Ireland. Having in the main, steady work and reasonably just treatment, the Irish in Halifax by the 1860's were middle-aged and older, and were not particularly discontented with the situation. Their sons may have been 'Irish', but they were also Nova Scotians, with no personal experience of Ireland's woes. What could the Irish of Halifax have gained from sharing in Fenianism? Their lives, their work, their property (in nearly half the cases) were here. They did not want to return to live in Ireland, but if they helped the Fenians and remained here, they would almost certainly pay for it in court and prison. If they rejected Fenianism, they might well profit from it. Therefore they and their leaders made a display of their anti-Fenianism, especially when it became likely that the Fenians would not get within reach of Halifax.

The important thing about the Fenian raids is that the movement was as great a threat to law-abiding Irish Catholics as to the Protestant Anglo-Saxon. Indeed, if the peaceful Irish Haligonian was considered in any sense a vendu (and quite likely all the Tobins, Connollys, Kennys and Flinns would have been such in Fenian eyes),

he might expect worse from Fenians than did an English Protestant, whom the Fenians could accept as being only that. The position of the Irish in Halifax was not altered by the Fenian movement, except to the extent that there was an initial tinge of suspicion directed against them, but which was quickly and fully dispelled. The change from disloyalty in the 1850's to loyalty in the 1860's was due to nothing more than enlightened self-interest and an instinct for self-preservation. The influence of the leaders, important as it was, had been thrown in the direction which the rank and file would have taken anyway. By the middle of the 1860's the majority had opted for Halifax and Nova Scotia. The majority attitude towards Fenianism would have been powerful peer pressure on the remainder to make that decision fairly quickly. The day was dawning when the son of an Irish immigrant would say to another that so-and-so was an Irishman, and both of them understood the word to connote a man somewhat distinct from what they were. By the 1860's many Irish Catholic families were integrated into Halifax sufficiently to have begun to think that way. It was a significant point in the life of their community when they started to do so.

Connolly, the Irish and Confederation

The movement that resulted in the federation of the Canadas, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia as the Dominion of Canada in 1867 had become practical politics

in Nova Scotia only after the Charlottetown Conference of autumn 1864. Until then, the only concept of colonial unification discussed locally was that among three or four of the lower provinces. Nova Scotia was at the height of its commercial prosperity, and did not look towards federation as a means of rescuing her from debt or decline. One modern historian has expressed it almost tangibly:

The decades immediately following the mid-century provided a prosperity that Nova Scotia had not seen before or would again. The iron hull--the real nemesis of Nova Scotian shipbuilding--had not yet appeared; the steam engine and the screw propeller had not affected the basis of her carrying trade. The inshore and offshore banks provided the fisheries; larch, spruce, pine, and white oak, the wood; fifty or sixty snug harbours, the opportunity. The rest was up to human hands. These were not idle. 573

This must have seemed a lot to chance on forming a connection with the unstable Canadas. The pride of having over a century of representative institutions, and in having achieved responsible government responsibly also made being a Nova Scotian grounds for self-respect.

The Halifax merchants and those of the south shore of Nova Scotia whose best interests were bound up in the

573 Waite, The Life and Times of Confederation, 193-194.

574 Delphin A. Nuisse, "The Federal Election of 1867 in Nova Scotia: An Economic Interpretation". N.S.H.S., XXXVI (1968), 333.

Atlantic trade and with American goods were inclined to oppose federation schemes as dangerous to their interests, ruinous to their profits and likely to undermine their trade. Some of the most influential voices of the day expressed vehement opposition to federation. Thousands of people across Nova Scotia were convinced that Confederation was to be the undoing of the colony.

The termination of the reciprocal trade arrangements with the United States took full effect in 1866, and provoked two various reactions within the business community in Nova Scotia. These responses to the situation were the underlying economic arguments used on either side of the debate over Confederation. The interests that wished free trade and were most oriented towards traditional trade links with the West Indies and the United States - whether merchants or fishing interests - reacted to abrogation of Reciprocity by wishing to continue a policy of "free trade in opposition to the protective system the Americans favour", apparently in the belief the Americans needed our business.⁵⁷⁴

On the other side were the people who were committed to railway building and mineral development - interests that tended towards British North America - and who wished the

⁵⁷⁴Delphin A. Muise, "The Federal Election of 1867 in Nova Scotia: An Economic Interpretation". N.S.H.S., XXXVI (1968), 333.

British colonies to draw together commercially and politically.⁵⁷⁵ Federation could offer newer and larger markets for Nova Scotian products, and expedite completion of an intercolonial railway. "By the early sixties, the older wood, wind and sail economy had been joined by the more continental realities of coal, steam and steel". This new interest was challenging the old.⁵⁷⁶ These were the 'new money' and they were strongest in those counties least committed to the sea and the older economy - Annapolis, Kings, Hants, Cumberland, Colchester, Pictou, and central Halifax.⁵⁷⁷

Against these divided attitudes in Nova Scotia, the Tupper government hesitated to ask the Legislature to approve the Quebec agreements of 1864. Early in 1865, New Brunswick elected an anti-Confederation government. At a time when the Quebec federation scheme seemed a dying issue, the Nova Scotian Assembly received yet one more anti-federation petition. It was from Lower Prospect, Halifax County, and carried only 37 names, but 25 of them were Irish Catholics.⁵⁷⁸

⁵⁷⁵ Delphin A. Muise, "The Federal Election of 1867 in Nova Scotia: An Economic Interpretation". N.S.H.S., XXXVI (1968), 333.

⁵⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid., 342.

⁵⁷⁸ P.A.N.S., R.G. 5, Series 'P', Vol. 19 (1865).

It looked as if they, together with the rest of Nova Scotia's fishermen, were harkening to the dire predictions of Joseph Howe.

Tupper of Cumberland was an early advocate of progress and change in Nova Scotia. Confederation for him offered an effective means of hastening these processes along. By keeping the initiative throughout 1864 and 1865, and through control of patronage, Tupper was weathering the storm of protest quite effectively until Joseph Howe took his public stand against Confederation. Howe, the old rival of the Irish Catholics, was pitted against the obliging Dr. Tupper, Connolly's ally. "J.W. Johnston, the erst-while Premier, Tupper, the new one, and the Conservative party as a whole, had successfully cultivated the Catholic vote, and it did not appear to weaken the party with Protestant voters. Roman Catholics amounted to 25 per cent of the population...⁵⁷⁹

Although both parties were divided on the issue of Confederation, the Conservatives were slightly more in favour, and the Liberals rather more noticeably against, the proposed union. Whichever side of the issue could persuade the support en bloc of a substantial body of voters (such as the Roman Catholics), could carry the day. Charles Tupper's cultivation of the Roman Catholic archbishop paid off handsomely in the support Connolly gave the Confederate cause. Connolly disliked Howe, and felt that the union promised better protection

⁵⁷⁹Waite, Life and Times of Confederation, 195.

against Fenianism. The archbishop had the card to play of keeping the Catholics quiet over some lingering resentment they had about Tupper's educational policy, so both men had something to offer and something to gain by a co-operative policy with one another. Connolly may have hoped to extract a concession from Tupper as his price, but his support for Confederation seems to have been genuine anyway.

As this study is one of the Irish Catholics of Halifax and not primarily concerned with the achievement of Confederation, we shall return to the general progress of the federation movement only when events in Halifax require the background. Our story must be one of seeing how much influence Connolly and his clergy could bring to bear on the Catholics - and largely Irish - faithful of his diocese.

Connolly was early into the fray, being probably the first Catholic prelate to openly support Confederation. "Archbishop Connolly was most active in supporting Confederation and would, in fact, travel twice to England about it in 1866. Guarantees to all minorities should be a basic principle of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, he maintained in a letter to Tupper in October of that year."⁵⁸⁰ If some bishops had been lukewarm to Confederation, the Fenian scare and Connolly's example were persuasive. By May 1866, the Catholic Irish opponent of Confederation in New Brunswick,

⁵⁸⁰ Slattery, The Assassination, 348.

Timothy Anglin, wrote to his newspaper, the Morning Freeman (Saint John), complaining of the tactics used by Connolly, bishop James Rogers of Chatham, and bishop Mackinnon of Arichat.⁵⁸¹

Apart from Catholic signatures on anti-Confederation petitions and the wrath of Timothy Anglin, the hierarchy had to accept that numbers of wealthy and influential Catholics were committed financially, morally, and in personal interest to the cause of the Anti's. There was an Anti-Confederation League in Halifax, which collected \$6710.94 for the cause. Five wealthy Irish Catholics had contributed personally \$850.00 of it. All five were merchants - James Butler, James Cochran, Patrick Power, Daniel and John Cronan - and the first three were active politicians.⁵⁸² It is worth noting that most of the opponents of Confederation among the Irish were an average of 15 years older than the pro-Confederates. James Butler (40) and Patrick Power (50) were the younger Anti's in 1865. Among the Confederates, Stephen Tobin was then 31, Edward J. Kenny, Jr., was 30, and Michael Dwyer was 33. Even John Pugh was only 44. Tobin, Kenny and Dwyer were born in North America, while Power, Butler and Cochran were born in Ireland. The Confederates tended to be both the

⁵⁸¹ Waite, 274.

⁵⁸² Patterson, Studies in Nova Scotian History, 116.

younger and the native-born, although numerous exceptions can be found.

Connolly did not feel that economic arguments were enough to counter the cries of the Anti's, some of whom were complaining that there should be a plebiscite before Nova Scotia joined any federation.⁵⁸³ Connolly still hoped to extract a better deal from Tupper for Catholic schools. Early in 1867 Connolly, who knew very well that his voice was decisive with many Catholic Irish voters, informed Tupper that "the Catholics were a 'a half-lifeless corpse', beyond the control" of priest or bishop. But "introduce separate schools, however, and 'both Bishops and Clergy will solemnly pledge to take up your cause as their own and to procure...nearly every Catholic vote..."⁵⁸⁴ Connolly, of course, knew he could not deliver that sort of solid Catholic support though he knew his clergy could sway many Catholic voters. It was a case of trying once more to further Catholic educational ideas.

The prominent Halifax Unionist, P. Carteret Hill (a Liberal who broke with his wealthy father-in-law, Enos Collins, over Confederation; Collins was financing the Anti's), pinned his hopes of electing the Unionist candi-

⁵⁸³ Muise, "The Federal Election of 1867", 338.

⁵⁸⁴ Kenneth George Pryke, "Nova Scotia and Confederation 1864-1870" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1962), 132, quoting P.A.C., 'Tupper Papers', 45, Connolly to Tupper, 4 p.m., Wednesday, 1867 (date not given).

dates in Halifax on "the votes of the office-holders and of Irish. The anti-unionists had managed to split the Irish vote, bringing out the popular Patrick Power. The confederates tried to minimize the split in the Irish vote, and they were aided by Archbishop Connolly . . ."585

The Unionists held a huge nomination meeting in Halifax, with above 2,000 in attendance.⁵⁸⁶ Irish Catholics of considerable ability and prominence appeared at the meeting, including Jeremiah Conway, John Pugh, the Kenny family, John and Stephen Tobin, and Malachy B. Daly.⁵⁸⁷ When the slates of candidates appeared in the press with the names of their movers and seconders, it appeared that the Irish Catholics were divided into what looked like equal parties of Unionists and Anti's. The Unionist side included John Tobin (candidate for M.P.), Stephen Tobin (candidate for M.L.A.), while Jeremiah Conway, alderman, seconded the nomination of P.C. Hill as candidate for M.P.⁵⁸⁸ For the Anti's, the provincial ticket included James Cochran, Irish-born merchant, while both his running mates were seconded by Irish Catholics, namely, Jeremiah Northrup by James Duggan (merchant), and Henry Balcom by John Meagher. As mentioned earlier, Patrick Power was the Anti candidate for M.P. When Hill stepped aside as Unionist candidate for M.L.A., he and an Irish Catholic,

⁵⁸⁵ Ibid., 137

⁵⁸⁶ Evening Express, 1 May 1867

⁵⁸⁷ British Colonist, 4 May 1867

⁵⁸⁸ Evening Express, 1 May 1867

alderman James Cullen, put forward J.S. McLean.⁵⁸⁹

The meeting held on the nomination day for federal candidates revealed that the past had not been totally forgotten. John Tobin (Unionist) said he had heard the proposed union was being compared to that between Ireland and England. He took pains to deny that there was an analogy between the hated Union of Great Britain and Ireland, with that proposed between Nova Scotia and Canada.⁵⁹⁰ The next speaker, Patrick Power (Anti), also harkened back, alluding to the Catholic question of 1858. He felt he had to justify his position as a follower of Joseph Howe, and 'tried to foist the odium of the Catholic proscription cry on someone else." Power repudiated "Mr. Howe as leader of the anti-Union party, and claimed that distinction for himself." Thomas E. Kenny announced that he had heard "on pretty good authority that in the Eastern section of the County . . . the Catholic proscription cry was still heard. He regretted that the subject had been introduced on the present occasion by Mr. Power." S.L. Shannon (Unionist) joined in these regrets and stated that "Mr. Howe had adopted it to carry himself and friends into power, and now . . . Mr. Howe, on bended knees before the Catholics of Halifax, confessed that he had adopted that cry to secure the election of his party." Alfred Jones (Anti) had the good sense not to pursue these issues which could

⁵⁸⁹British Colonist, 12 Sep 1867

⁵⁹⁰Ibid.

only harm those dealing in them.⁵⁹¹

Archbishop Connolly issued a pastoral letter the next morning from his country seat, 'Bishopville', Dutch Village. After upholding the right of clergymen to participate in political matters, Connolly appealed to the Catholic voters to support the Confederation and Unionist candidates:

As the only Catholic community in Nova Scotia of Irish extraction, with the Archbishop at your head, you are, and always must be something—and mark you only something, only one in nineteen . . . John Tobin still remains the nominee of the Catholic people of Halifax.⁵⁹²

Connolly concluded with a very strong pitch for Catholic support of Confederation. "I feel it a sacred duty of conscience to vote on next Wednesday for THE WHOLE UNION TICKET—the WHOLE FIVE AND NOTHING BUT THE FIVE . . . I ask my whole Catholic people to follow my example."⁵⁹³ This had its effect, as the Unionist candidates carried all six wards in Halifax city on election day. The confederate majority in Halifax was 400 votes, a lead that was swamped by an even more pronounced Anti vote in the county areas of the constituency.⁵⁹⁴ Connolly told John A. Macdonald, late in September 1867, that the Halifax Catholics had voted 800 for Union,

⁵⁹¹Ibid.

⁵⁹²Halifax Archdiocese, Chancery Office, "Connolly Papers," file 8, item 3. The pastoral letter was dated 13 Sep 1867.

⁵⁹³Ibid.

⁵⁹⁴Pryke, "Nova Scotia and Confederation." 138.

and 250 against. A further 800 had abstained from voting.⁵⁹⁵ The abstention was significant, and for it Connolly was probably justified in taking much of the credit. Yet another factor contributed to the result. "Many Catholics undoubtedly opposed Tupper's school law, but, they may not have become anticonfederate supporters any more than the Archbishop, although some may have abstained from the election campaign rather than aid Tupper."⁵⁹⁶ Connolly, however, believed that the 800 abstainers had been "pledged to and in many instances bribed by the antis and would have certainly voted the anti Ticket but (probably) for your humble servant."⁵⁹⁷ It appears a case where nobody could say what were the real motives of the people who had abstained. One viewpoint suggests that, had it not been for Tupper's unpopular school law the Unionists would have had nearly 1600 votes against 250 Anti's from the Halifax Catholics. Connolly's version suggests that without his intervention the Catholic poll would have been just over 1000 votes for the Anti's, and about 800 for the Unionists. Connolly, of course, had offered his quid, and sought his quo.

⁵⁹⁵P.A.C., 'Macdonald Papers', CXV, 31-34, Connolly to Macdonald, 23 Sep 1868 [recte 1867], quoted in Pryke, 138, n.3. Cf., also, Evening Express, 30 Oct 1867

⁵⁹⁶Pryke, 132

⁵⁹⁷P.A.C., 'Macdonald Papers', ibid.

Connolly and the Unionists could take comfort from the fact that they had won in the city and their cause had triumphed nationally. They were also able to compensate by electing Stephen Tobin as mayor of Halifax in the autumn of 1867, the first Irish Catholic person elected mayor of the city. The requisition asking him to run carried 187 signatures, including those of 77 Irish Catholics.⁵⁹⁸ In terms of Irish acceptability it says much that 110 public signatories were Protestants of various ethnic backgrounds.

There was some trouble when Joseph Howe accepted 'better terms' for Nova Scotia and offered in 1869 as a candidate in a bye-election in Hants County. Howe's reputation among Irish Catholics had not been good for some years. At Windsor "the Irish population, particularly the Roman Catholics, refused to forget its war with Howe . . ." ⁵⁹⁹ Connolly had to intervene to quell the opposition to Howe, which was led by the two priests responsible for Hants County. These were Rev. Peter Danaher, P.P. of Shubenacadie and Bedford (died 1889, native of Co. Limerick), and Rev. Philip Walsh, P.P. Windsor (died 1909, native of Ireland).⁶⁰⁰ This seems to have been the last public occasion on which the old feud between Howe and the Irish threatened to revive sectarian bickering along the old lines of the 1850's.

⁵⁹⁸British Colonist, 28 Sep 1867

⁵⁹⁹Pryke, "Nova Scotia and Confederation," 204. Note the inference that Protestant Irish had also been angry at Howe.

⁶⁰⁰McAlpine's Maritime Provinces Directory for 1870-71, 660.

The confederation debates in Nova Scotia overrode sectarian and ethnic arguments. There were Catholics and Protestants, Liberals and Conservatives, Irish and English, Scots and Nova Scotians, on both sides of the central issue: to join or not? Apart from one or two ill-timed and ill-judged remarks, there was no anti-Irish or anti-Catholic cry got up during the campaigning. Partly this was due to the presence of Irish Catholics on both sides. Partly too, the issue of Confederation did not lend itself to ethnic or religious analysis. Moreover, and of crucial importance was the fact that the Catholic Irish were not so isolated from the general community either in interests or outlook as they had once been. They had far more in common with their fellow citizens than they had had even ten years before. The main arguments that once might have been used against the Irish Catholics were no longer viable tools of torment. That they were Irish and Catholic had been used against them in the 1850's, and had recoiled on the persons using the taunt of race or creed. To claim they were immigrants taking away jobs would be equally foolish, since most of the Irish had been in Halifax for twenty-five or forty years by 1865. The other taunt, that of disloyalty, had been effectively disproved during the Fenian period, when the Irish had not been merely passive, but had played their part in the anti-Fenian measures of time.⁶⁰¹

⁶⁰¹Apart from Connolly's propagandizing, the Irish company in the militia turned out in 1866 on guard duty in connection with the Fenian raid (Cf., Quigley, The Halifax Rifles, 6,37). John Murphy, an Irishman, transported armaments for the military to Prospect, while Captain Kenny of the militia mounted the guard at strategic points, including the Dockyard, Grand Battery and the general's residence (Cf., Cameron, "Fenian Times," 122, 131).

Conclusion

In finding an equilibrium, the Halifax Irish continued to make gains, but by the late 1860's their share in the overall arrangements had pretty well taken the shape it would retain until the turn of the century. The Irish were upwardly mobile occupationally until about 1863-4, and had assumed active roles in early trade unionism and at the bar. Until 1858 the Irish had lacked fair representation on city council, and not until 1868 did they attain and retain this advantage. At the same time they shared in the general population growth out of the old downtown area. Within the urban core they moved slightly towards the southern edge. They tended to own property more often than previously, but it was usually not as valuable as that of the non-Irish.

The old identity problem had been very generally resolved. In religious organization the Irish had control of the local Catholic Church, and the political situation permitted them to have denominational schools accepted within the public school system, even if they could not keep them entirely under separate control. In respect of affairs in a wider Irish world, the Irish of Halifax rejected Fenianism as having no application to their aspirations. Once the local Irish had made up their minds to remain here, the Fenians could offer them no inducements to take up the sword. Politically, economically, materially, the Halifax Irish were now Haligonians. Only sentimentally were they Irishmen, and that emotional sense of ethnicity was largely fulfilled by

VI - COMPARISONS AND CONCLUSIONS, 1836-1871

the meetings, dinners and picnics of the Charitable Irish Society. They had not ceased to be Irishmen, but the factors than made them susceptible to involvement in adventurous schemes of Hibernian derring-do (hunger, abject poverty, boredom, drunkenness, ignorant illiteracy, discrimination) did not operate in the Halifax of the 1860's. Maguire had perceived this. The assassination of **D'Arcy McGee** further strengthened moderate Irish opinion against the Fenians, since it was widely accepted at the time that McGee was felled by a Fenian bullet.

An indication of the increasingly stable outlook both of Irish and non-Irish Nova Scotians in this period was the fact that Confederation was debated, criticized, accepted or rejected, without it assuming a sectarian or an ethnic character. To the extent there was a bloc of votes among the Catholic Irish, it was a Catholic rather than an Irish grouping; dozens of perfectly identifiable Irishmen worked for both sides of the issue, and while the archbishop accepted and supported Confederation, there was no implication that those Catholics who were Anti's would be subject to discipline or disgrace. All in all, by 1871 the Irish Catholics in Halifax had adjusted to the community, and had found their place within it. They had won the status of junior partners in Halifax.

VI - COMPARISONS AND CONCLUSIONS, 1836-1871

This chapter has three duties to perform for the reader. Firstly, it will offer the final pieces of evidence about the nature of the Irish community in Halifax from 1836 to 1871. Secondly, it will assess the situation of the Irish of Halifax in comparison with those in other places, especially in Boston. Finally, it will look back across the entire 35 or 40 years and draw out summations for the reader to consider.

Aspects of Irish Halifax

The preceding chapter offered considerable evidence of the extent of Irish integration into Halifax society. Several aspects of the Irish community in Halifax are traced in the following pages. Family and marriage patterns, occupations, place of residence, and of the Irish in relation to law enforcement, will all offer useful insights into the place of the Irish Catholics in nineteenth-century Halifax.

"The Catholics, especially the Irish, regarded the family as of divine origin and closely tied to the sacramental system. 'If this world is worth living for it is because we enjoy the relations of the family,' the Irish American philosophized ... " in 1855.⁶⁰² For most Irish immigrants the institution of the family was at the heart of

⁶⁰²Ernst, Immigrant Life in New York, 179.

society, exemplifying within itself the basic human social organization. Most of the Irish Catholics who came to Halifax were of rural, agricultural origin. Conrad Arensberg has described the strong sense of belonging to a family group that persisted among the Irish country people into the twentieth century:

The controls in farm work, then, are those of a social group--the family. The countryman at work is little concerned with the usual economic categories. He is a family man. He may be the shrewdest of traders and the best of farmers, but what gives him his occupational status, determines his pattern of work, provides his incentive, is a set of dispositions arising in the balanced interests and reciprocal obligations of the social group to which he belongs.⁶⁰³

When he emigrated, the Irish countryman continued to put a premium on a family structure, either a natural or synthetic grouping inside which he had a place which placed a relationship between himself and each of the other members of his group. Although "English preindustrial society was organized around the nuclear family, a patriarchal organization with strong ties to the extended family (on the father's side) dominated Irish peasant society. A clear structure of obligation and kinship linked relatives beyond the immediate family."⁶⁰⁴ The extended family might be

⁶⁰³Arensberg, The Irish Countryman, 69.

⁶⁰⁴Lynn H. Lees, "Patterns of Lower-Class Life: Irish Slum Communities in Nineteenth-Century London," in Stephan Thernstrom and Richard Sennett, eds., Nineteenth-Century Cities (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969), 375. The point regarding pre-industrial social organization in England is made in Peter Laslett's book, The World We Have Lost. (New York, 1965)

vertical or horizontal in its extension. That is, a nuclear family (parents and children) could be joined by linear relations such as grandparents or grandchildren, or the addition could be in the form of an aunt or cousin, a sibling or a nephew. Sometimes the addition was a 'cousin', who was no known blood relation, but rather a native of the same community in Ireland who was intimately acquainted with the family for so long that all parties within the family group accepted such a person into the group as a full member.

Table XIV, below, gives an analysis of the composition of the Irish Catholic households of two of the six wards in Halifax City in 1871. Wards two and six were used as the basis of the sampling in order to provide a cross-section of the whole urban area, and with a view to having one north-end and one south-end ward. The patterns established thereby should be valid for the entire city. The two wards are shown separately in order to indicate the difference in household composition between them. Ward six, a north-end ward, was the home of most if not all the employees of the railway, the naval dockyard, and of the shipbuilders. This and the fact that the west end of that ward was still semi-rural (with a number of farms and dairies), imparted a rather more working-class tinge to the district than was enjoyed by ward two, which was the area of residence of many white-collar workers, many shopkeepers, and which had a number of large estates in its western reaches.

Another interesting observation based on Table XIV is the paucity of deserted wives, only one appearing in two

Table XIV - Household Composition, 1871: Irish Catholics
Halifax

Household comprising...	<u>Ward 2</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>Ward 6</u>	<u>(%)</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>(%)</u>
a single person	51	14.7	8	4.0	59	10.8
married couple only	36	10.3	21	10.5	57	10.4
*couple with children	165	47.5	134	67.0	299	54.7
*widowed parent with issue	60	17.3	22	11.0	82	15.0
*deserted parent with issue	1	.3	0	....	1	.2
siblings only	7	2.0	2	1.0	9	1.6
three generations	9	2.6	9	4.5	18	3.2
other relations in house	18	5.2	4	2.0	22	4.0
Total Households	347	99.9	200	100.0	547	99.9
<hr/>						
*basic parent and child	226	65.1	156	78.0	382	70.0

The most striking difference between the two wards in household composition is that in ward six the proportion of nuclear families was 20% greater than in ward two, although when widowed parents with children are taken into consideration, the difference is reduced somewhat to 13%. Another big difference is in the number and proportions of single individuals appearing. This is largely explained by considering that in ward two, there were 34 servants, while in ward six, there were only six domestics. Ward two had two hotels in which a few Irish Catholics had rooms, thus reducing the single number in that ward finally to about half a dozen. Evidently, living alone did not appeal to the Irish Catholics of Halifax.

Another interesting observation based on Table XIV is the paucity of deserted wives, only one appearing in two

wards. It is possible that some of the alleged widows were, in fact, abandoned wives. To ascertain this matter, the 82 widowed parties were broken into two groups: widows and widowers. There were 66 widows. The husbands' death records have been found for 52 or 55 (three identifications cannot be made with certainty) of the widows appearing in the 1871 census return. There were 11 to 14 women whose husband did not die in Halifax, but half of these had become widowed before they reached Halifax. At most, then, there were only about seven or eight possible deserted wives in two wards. This means the Halifax deserted wives were only two per cent among the Irish Catholics. This contrasts strongly with what Lees found in London, England. Lees mentions that "in 1851 and 1861, over one-fifth of the London Irish families sampled were broken, most having female heads."⁶⁰⁵ He felt this was beyond doubt a characteristic of the culture of poverty in London. It meant many children grew up largely unsupervised, on the streets. In Halifax, that contributory aspect of slum creation was not a key factor, at least not until 1871.

In London, Lees found that less than three per cent of the Irish households included a three generation grouping. In Halifax, the figures were 2.6% and 4.5%, for an average 3.2% overall. As in London, the Halifax households of this sort most commonly comprised a nuclear family and the widowed mother of one spouse. The next most common was the presence of a widowed daughter with child(ren) living in her parents'

⁶⁰⁵Ibid., 363.

household.⁶⁰⁶ The immigrant Irish characteristic of moving in with families of their acquaintance was still pronounced in London in 1861, but the more long-established Halifax Irish community of 1871 provided only 22 examples of this in two wards (only 4% of the households).⁶⁰⁷ Dispersion of immigrants into their own natural family groups seems a good indication of duration of stay in a host community.

Table XV, which follows, offers another way of looking at the households of wards two and six in Halifax City, 1871. In the Table, 443 households or families of children are cited, although the foregoing table mentioned only 382 parent and child households. The difference is accounted for by the fact that the sibling, three generation, and households with other relations in them (a few of the latter with more than one family of children in them) are included in the 443 households. Again, Lees found that in London, statistical comparisons revealed little or no difference in the average number of children among Irish and English populations, the size of nuclear families being roughly equal.⁶⁰⁸ The tales about huge Irish families were more fiction than fact. Lees found the apparently larger families of the Irish were in fact due to the residence of

⁶⁰⁶ Ibid., 380

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid., 377

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid., 381

other relatives within the household and not to greater fecundity. In Halifax in 1871, the same situation obtained: Irish families were not appreciably larger than those of non-Irish in the same neighbourhoods.

Table XV - Family Size, Irish Catholics, Halifax 1871

Parents having at home...	<u>Irish Catholic</u>	<u>General Sampling</u>
one child	101	97
two children	93	90
three children	78	72
four children	66	65
five children	45	40
six children	25	18
seven children	14	12
eight children	16	11
nine or more children	5	10
Total number of households	443	415

The 443 Irish Catholic households contained 1,435 children, an average of 3.24 children per family group. The non-Irish Catholic households had 1,325 offspring, an average of 3.19 children each. The difference is scarcely significant. On the same topic, mention is made of the further fact that where there were 57 Irish Catholic households of a couple without children, there were 61 such groups among non-Irish Catholics. Taking both details together—the average family size and the number of childless couples—the Irish Catholics were only more prolific than the general population by a fraction of one per cent, not enough to matter. As far as large families goes, there were two non-Irish families having ten or more children, and three such families among the Irish Catholics.

Another interesting aspect of the Irish in Halifax is the marriage pattern. Table XVI, following, presents an analysis, ward by ward, of the entire 1,646 couples in Halifax City in 1871 in which at least one party was an Irish Catholic. From the religious viewpoint, we see that 92.5% were married within their own denomination, a ratio of about 12:1 for purely Catholic as opposed to mixed (Catholic and Protestant) marriages. Of the mixed marriages, two-thirds were those of an Irish Catholic female to a Protestant man. In ethnic terms, Catholic Irish people made 80.6% of their marriages with other Irish people. In descending order, marriages outside the Irish ethnic group ranged from those with people of English origin (10.2%), through Scots (5%), German (2.1%) and French (1.1%).

The Irish Catholics, despite their gains in social acceptance and economic strength between the 1830's and the 1870's, still by a good majority preferred to marry within their own ethnic group. Some 1326 (80.6%) of the 1646 couples of the 1871 census group were between Irish Catholics. In the period 1833-1843, of 683 marriages involving at least one Irish Catholic, 552 (80.9%) were endogenous. That indicates that the Irish Catholics of 1871 vintage were no more prone than the Irish of the preceding generation to marry an outsider to the group. Inasmuch as the Roman Catholic Church encouraged Catholics to marry Catholics, and the vast majority of Catholics in Halifax were Irish, the pattern of marrying within the group cannot be attributed to ethnic prejudice by the Irish or non-Irish, except as one among several factors.

Table XVI - MARRIAGE PATTERNS OF IRISH CATHOLICS, HALIFAX CITY (1871 Census)

Husband/Wife	Ward One	Ward Two	Ward Three	Ward Four	Ward Five	Ward Six	Total	(%)
Irish/Irish (Catholic)	244 236	192 189	179 175	151 149	423 415	137 131	1326 1295	(80.6%)
(Mixed: RC/Prot. Prot./RC.)	8 2 6	3 0 3	4 3 1	2 1 1	8 6 2	6 4 2	31 16 15	
Irish/English (Catholic)	12 7	5 4	3 2	10 7	18 12	12 9	60 41	(3.7%)
(Mixed)	5	1	1	3	6	3	19	
English/Irish (Catholic)	25 15	7 5	7 6	21 11	33 23	14 8	107 68	(6.5%)
(Mixed)	10	2	1	10	10	6	39	
Irish/Scots (Catholic)	10 9	4 4	3 2	5 5	13 12	3 3	38 35	(2.3%)
(Mixed)	1	0	1	0	1	0	3	
Scots/Irish (Catholic)	8 2	7 4	4 2	4 2	18 12	4 3	45 25	(2.7%)
(Mixed)	6	3	2	2	6	1	20	
Irish/German (Catholic)	1 0	1 1	1 1	1 1	2 2	5 3	11 8	(0.7%)
(Mixed)	1	0	0	0	0	2	3	
German/Irish (Catholic)	1 0	1 1	0 0	1 1	12 10	8 8	23 20	(1.4%)
(Mixed)	1	0	0	0	2	0	3	
Irish/French	2	0	0	0	3	2	7	(0.4%)
French/Irish (Catholic)	2 2	4 4	2 2	0 0	2 2	2 2	12 10	(0.7%)
(Mixed)	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	
Irish/Misc.	1	1	1	0	0	0	3	(0.2%)
Misc./Irish (Catholic)	4 4	2 2	2 2	4 4	2 2	0 0	14 11	(0.8%)
(Mixed)	0	1	0	1	1	0	3	
Totals (Catholic)	310 278	224 214	202 192	197 179	526 491	187 169	1646 1523	(92.5%)
(Mixed)	32	10	10	18	35	18	123	(7.5%)

Another part of the explanation was that many of the couples in 1871 had been married before they left Ireland, and in nineteenth-century Ireland virtually everyone outside the aristocracy and military was apt to be married to another Irish person.

Another angle from which to consider the marriage patterns of the Halifax group is by examining birthplace of the parties married. This has the further advantages, first of allowing comparison to figures available for the Boston Irish, and second, of establishing by yet another means, the drastic decline of immigrant arrival in Halifax after the mid-century had been passed.

Oscar Handlin studied the pattern of marriage in Boston by nativity for the years 1863-1865. This allows a direct comparison for Halifax in almost the same period, as civil registration of marriages was conducted in Nova Scotia from 1864 to 1875. In order to make the comparison as much as possible within the thesis period, and yet to provide sufficient examples to allow statistical validity, the Halifax City marriage registration from 1864 to 1871 has been used in the present instance. The figures for Boston and Halifax are presented in Table XVII below, side by side to facilitate comparison. Comparison reveals the astonishing difference between Halifax and Boston of nearly 60% where nativity of parties married is concerned. Of the 2,977 marriages in Handlin's Boston statistics, 2,298 (77.2%) were between people who had emigrated from Britain (or Europe in a few cases),

while in Halifax, only 47 of the 231 marriages (20.3%) were between immigrants.

Table XVII - Marriages of Irish by Nativity of Spouse, Halifax and Boston⁶⁰⁹

(a) Groom from Ireland to wife from	Boston	Halifax
	<u>1863/65</u>	<u>1864/71</u>
Ireland	1997	40
United States	254	0
B.N.A.	78	116
Britain	42	3
Others	7	0
Total	2378	159
(b) Bride from Ireland to husband from...		
Ireland	1997	40
United States	233	0
B.N.A.	114	68
Britain	126	4
Others	126	0
Total	2596	112

A glance at the number of Irish-born in Halifax and Boston, and the proportion they formed among the population at selected intervals indicates that the marriages reflect both the higher number and percentage the Irish-born formed in Boston as compared to Halifax. In Boston in 1850, there were 35,287 natives of Ireland, forming 26 to 27% of the population. By 1855 the number had risen to 46,225, but the proportion had declined to 23%. All of these figures are higher than those of Halifax, both absolutely and proportionately. In 1861, the Irish-born in Halifax

⁶⁰⁹The Boston figures come from Handlin, Boston's Immigrants, 259, and table xxvii. The Halifax data are gathered from P.A.N.S., R.G. 32, Vols. 105-107.

numbered 3,843, accounting for 15% of the total population. Ten years later, in 1871, the Irish-born had declined to 2,956, only 10% of the population. Halifax's immigration was earlier and smaller in scale.

Next to the family and marriage patterns, a third aspect of the Halifax Irish community to be considered for the period about 1871 is that of occupations. Table XVIII, following, analyses the Irish Catholics of Halifax by their types of work as recorded in the 1871 census. By using Handlin's work on the Boston Irish, some comparison is possible between Halifax and Boston. The figures for Halifax are from the years 1838 and 1871, while those from Boston are for the year 1850. The groups of occupations are, as previously, within four general headings:⁶¹⁰

- 1 - professional and major business;
- 2 - small business and white-collar;
- 3 - artisans and farmers; blue-collar;
- 4 - semi-skilled and unskilled workers.

The proportion of the Irish found within each of these groups is as follows:

<u>Occupation Group</u>	<u>Boston 1850</u>	<u>Halifax 1838</u>	<u>Halifax 1871</u>
1	0.6%	1.3%	3.5%
2	5.0%	15.5%	12.9%
3	24.7%	32.8%	41.0%
4	69.7%	50.4%	42.6%

The following were the percentages of each group that were Irish Catholic:

1	3.5%	5.3%	14.9%
2	8.4%	25.8%	23.7%
3	22.2%	27.1%	32.9%
4	72.1%	58.0%	41.9%

⁶¹⁰Handlin, Boston's Immigrants, 250-251

Two trends are apparent from these statistics.

Firstly, the Irish in Halifax were higher on the occupational ladder both in 1838 and 1871 than were the the Boston Irish of 1850. Secondly, the Halifax Irish had made significant advances between 1838 and 1871. Only for category 4 of the occupations does a later Boston figure come to hand.⁶¹¹ In 1880, 52.5% of the labourers and servants of Boston were Irish, which is to say that 49.6% of the Irish work force in Boston in 1880 worked as labourers or domestics. It looks as though both Irish groups, in Halifax and Boston, were getting ahead, but that the Halifax group was maintaining its lead.

In both Boston and Halifax the same three occupations were the most common among the Irish--labourer, servant, and tailor/dressmaker, in that order. The distinction was that in Halifax there accounted for 42% of the Irish work force, while in Boston they comprised nearly 71% of the Irish employees. By 1880, they still amounted to almost 60% of the Boston work force of Irish. The Irish worker in Halifax in the 1870's was therefore not as liable to conform to the stereotype of an Irishman as was his fellow-countryman living in Boston.

⁶¹¹Ibid., 262.

Table XVIII - CENSUS OF HALIFAX, 1871: Irish Catholics by Occupational Categories

The order of information is from left to right: occupation, total number of Irish Catholics, (number of Irish total that were heads of households), total in that occupation in Halifax among all ethnic groups, (percentage total number of Irish in the occupational group on relation to all persons in that occupation).

1 - PROFESSIONAL AND MAJOR BUSINESS	.....	117	(64)	786	(14.9%)
Barristers, judges	....	9	(6)	87	(10.3%)
Chemists	.....	5	(2)	36	(13.9%)
Clergymen and religious	.....	38	(5)	96	(39.6%)
Engineers and surveyors	.....	10	(6)	69	(14.5%)
Merchants	.....	50	(42)	396	(12.6%)
Others	.....	5	(3)	102	(4.9%)
2 - SMALL BUSINESS AND WHITE-COLAR	....	436	(241)	1641	(26.5%)
Accountant, bookkeepers,	.....	13	(6)	121	(10.7%)
Agents, Travellers	...	9	(7)	36	(25.0%)
Barkeeper, Tavernkeepers	.....	9	(9)	41	(22.0%)
Clerks (males only)	.....	164	(31)	598	(27.4%)
Government	.....	25	(23)	160	(15.6%)
Grocers	.....	108	(96)	219	(49.3%)
Hotelkeepers	.....	9	(9)	71	(12.7%)
Music Hall, Arts	.....	1	(0)	23	(4.3%)
Shopkeepers	.....	43	(35)	124	(34.7%)
Traders, Dealers	.....	19	(16)	61	(31.1%)
Others	.....	34	(9)	187	(18.2%)
3 - ARTISANS AND FARMERS: BLUE-COLLAR	.....	1436	(675)	4363	(32.9%)
Bakers, Confectioners	.....	40	(21)	116	(34.5%)
Blacksmiths, Saddlers	.....	56	(30)	177	(31.6%)
Brewers, Distillers	.....	5	(4)	18	(27.8%)
Butchers, Victuallers	.....	40	(30)	81	(49.4%)
Cabinet and Chairmakers	.....	23	(5)	113	(20.4%)
Carpenters, Builders	.....	152	(90)	572	(25.9%)

Table XVIII(concluded)

Carriagemakers	22(12)	40	(55.0%)
Coopers	73(39)	143	(51.1%)
Farmers	25(16)	85	(29.4%)
Foundrymen	18 (7)	76	(23.7%)
Gardeners	29(20)	67	(43.3%)
Gun and Locksmiths	4 (3)	15	(26.7%)
Machinists, Mechanics	23 (5)	75	(30.7%)
Masons, Plasterers	123(61)	257	(47.8%)
Painters, Gilders	69(19)	181	(38.1%)
Printers, Binders	28 (8)	145	(19.3%)
Seafaring	127(89)	382	(33.2%)
Shipbuilding Trades	19 (7)	112	(17.0%)
Shoemakers	135(82)	332	(40.7%)
Tailors, Dressmakers	268(56)	619	(43.3%)
Tinsmiths, Plumbers	27 (7)	53	(50.9%)
Watchmaker, Jewellers	1 (0)	59	(1.7%)
Others	129(64)	636	(20.3%)
4 - SEMI-SKILLED AND UNSKILLED		1383 (594)	3296 (41.9%)
Labourer	597(430)	1123	(53.2%)
Laundresses	25 (17)	57	(43.9%)
Messengers, Porters	15 (9)	83	(18.1%)
Policemen, Guards	33 (24)	56	(58.9%)
Servants (male)	69 (20)	244	(28.3%)
(female)	498 (0)	1507	(33.0%)
Truckmen, Cabmen	146 (94)	226	(64.6%)

The next aspect of Irish Halifax in 1871 is that of residence. Table XIX, which follows, is based on the 1871 census of Halifax, except for the right-hand column which was obtained by going through the entire return name by name and counting those persons who were listed both as Irish and as Catholics, some 9,716 people (32.84% of all the people in

Halifax). In the case of ward five, which is reported in two sub-sections in the census, the figures of the two portions were combined in the following table.

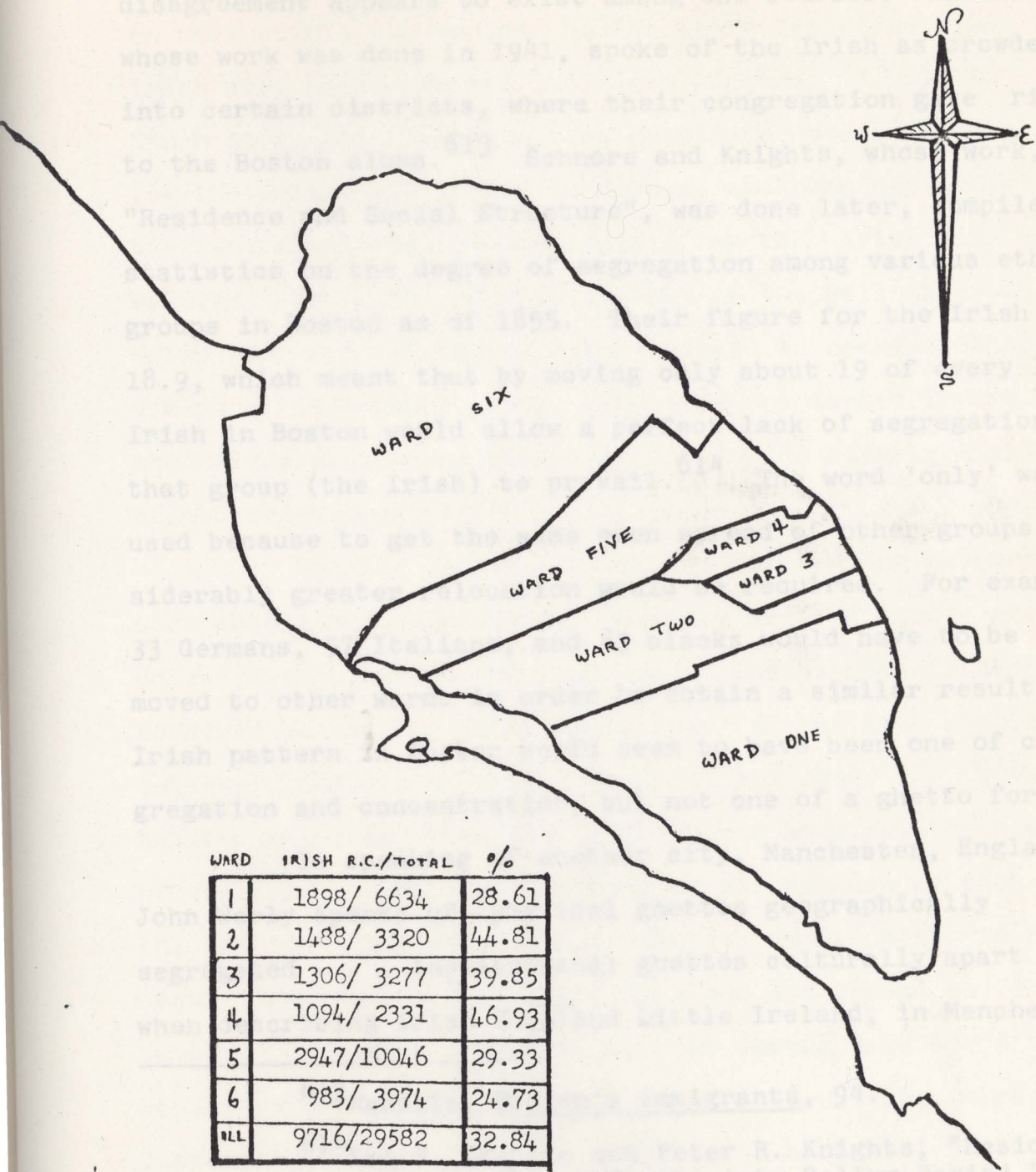
Table XIX - 1871 Census: Ethnic and Religious Summary by Wards.⁶¹²

Ward	Acres	Population	Catholics	Irish	Irish born	N.S.-born	Irish & Catholic
1	1078	6,634	2,629	2,537	733	4,819	1,898
2	619	3,320	1,707	1,631	456	2,297	1,488
3	77	3,277	1,750	*1,304	385	2,377	1,306
4	86	2,331	1,406	1,197	297	1,643	1,094
5	437	10,046	3,695	3,684	782	7,770	2,947
6	2485	3,974	1,244	1,312	303	3,080	983
City	4782	29,582	12,431	11,665	2956	21,986	9,716

Figure 4 which follows, applies the information from the foregoing Table XIX to the map of the wards of the city at the time of the census. By percentages, the Irish Catholics were most strongly concentrated in three wards, two, three, and four, which formed a band across the peninsula of Halifax, somewhat south of centre. In area the three wards formed only about one-sixth of the city's area. Yet there was no ghetto effect, partly because ward two extended well beyond the more built-up downtown area, and partly because about sixty percent of all the Irish Catholics in Halifax lived outside the area of the greatest concentration. In two other

⁶¹²Census of Canada, 1871, I, 76-77. As by actual count, there were 1,306 people who were Irish and Catholic in ward 3, the figure marked by the asterisk must be low. I think the "3" and the "4" in the census report were transposed. The correct figure is probably 1,403.

Figure 4 - DISTRIBUTION OF IRISH CATHOLICS, HALIFAX, 1871



SCALE 1:50,000.



cities with which this point was compared, a measure of disagreement appears to exist among the sources. Handlin, whose work was done in 1941, spoke of the Irish as crowded into certain districts, where their congregation gave rise to the Boston slums.⁶¹³ Schnore and Knights, whose work, "Residence and Social Structure", was done later, compiled statistics on the degree of segregation among various ethnic groups in Boston as of 1855. Their figure for the Irish was 18.9, which meant that by moving only about 19 of every 100 Irish in Boston would allow a perfect lack of segregation of that group (the Irish) to prevail.⁶¹⁴ The word 'only' was used because to get the same even spread of other groups considerably greater relocation would be required. For example, 33 Germans, 57 Italians, and 63 blacks would have to be moved to other wards in order to obtain a similar result. The Irish pattern in Boston would seem to have been one of congregation and concentration, but not one of a ghetto forming.

In speaking of another city, Manchester, England, John Werly speaks of "physical ghettos geographically segregated . . . institutional ghettos culturally apart . . ." when describing Irish Town and Little Ireland, in Manchester.⁶¹⁵

⁶¹³Handlin, Boston's Immigrants, 94.

⁶¹⁴Leo F. Schnore and Peter R. Knights, "Residence and Social Structure: Boston in the Ante-Bellum Period," Nineteenth-Century Cities, ed. Stephan Thernstrom and Richard Sennett, 252-253.

⁶¹⁵John M. Werly, "The Irish in Manchester, 1832-1849," Irish Historical Studies, xviii, 71 (March, 1973), 347.

Werly does acknowledge his disagreement with E.P. Thompson on this point, and quotes the latter to the effect that the Irish were never pressed back into Ghettos.⁶¹⁶ In Manchester, the situation does appear to have been more grim for the Irish than it was in Boston, and both appear to have had less attraction as a residence for the Irish than had Halifax. The point of this is that if the Halifax Irish were often poor and relatively disadvantaged in comparison to the dominant Anglo-Saxon group, they were not turned inward on themselves by intense concentration inside clearly distinguished neighbourhoods.

Halifax lacked some of the forces that favoured such intensive concentration of newly arrived ethnic groups. Unlike Boston, where the Anglo-Saxon Protestants "attempted to avoid contact by withdrawing ever farther into a solid, coherent, and circumscribed group of its own . . . ,⁶¹⁷ Halifax had a majority that felt secure as a rule with respect of the Irish, except for periods of stress such as that of the 1850's. In such a time of strain the majority did not seek withdrawal, but prepared to stand its ground and do battle. Some were militant, such as Joseph Howe for a time; others were diplomatic, such as J.W. Johnston and Charles Tupper, and sought to contain the Irish by a policy of collaboration. Another factor in Halifax was the lack of

⁶¹⁶ Ibid. quoting E.P. Thompson, The Making of the English Working Class (New York, 1963), 439

⁶¹⁷ Handlin, 177

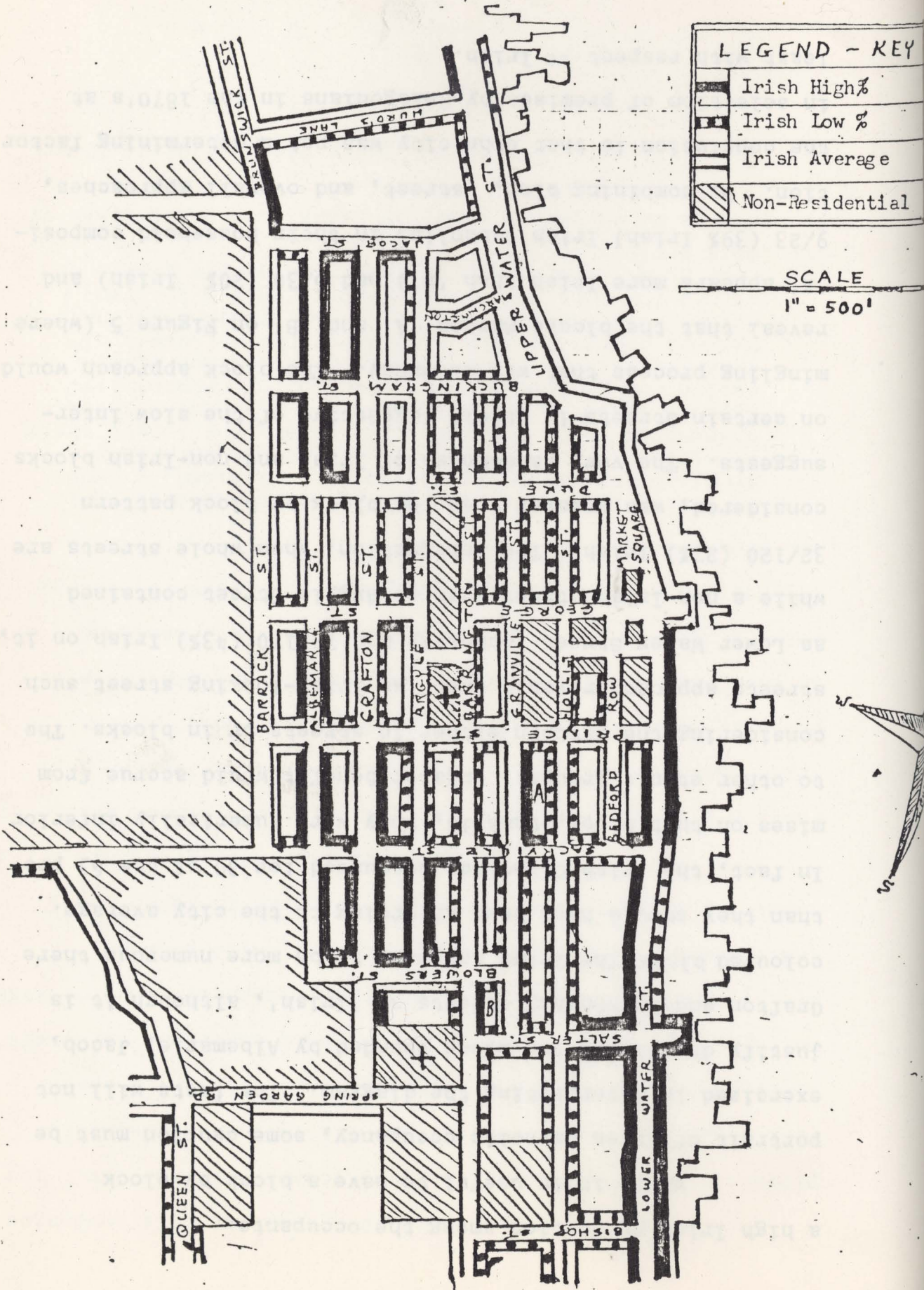
any number of large-scale employers of factory labour.

Thanks to the reasonably comprehensive city directories which were being made for Halifax in the early 1870's, it is possible to establish a complete picture of occupancy distribution. In the 1860's the older pattern of ethnic clustering had begun to break down. A block by block, street analysis has been made to determine the extent of ethnic intermingling that was taking place by the 1870's. The directory of 1873 has been used for the raw data, as that directory was prepared in 1872, the first year after the thesis period.⁶¹⁸

Figure 5, on the following page, depicts graphically the manner in which ethnic clustering had begun to break down. With the possible exceptions of Hollis and Albemarle streets, the degree to which Irish and non-Irish lived next to each other, on the same streets or the same blocks stands in some contrast to earlier decades when some neighbourhoods could be indicated as being 'Irish' or not. The Irish Catholics were about 33-35% of the population of Halifax in 1872-73, and those areas coloured white on Figure 5 had an Irish Catholic population that approximated that average within five or eight percent. The small numbers of households on some blocks cannot be strictly interpreted, which explains the margin considered in the average category. The checkered areas were those in which the Irish Catholics were not yet one-quarter of the occupants, while those blocks coloured black had

⁶¹⁸ McAlpine's Halifax Directory, 1873-4.

FIGURE 5 - IRISH CATHOLIC RESIDENTS, HALIFAX, 1873.



a high Irish proportion among the occupants.

While it is useful to have a block by block portrait of Irish Catholic occupancy, some caution must be exercised in interpreting the diagram. The facts will not justify describing the block bounded by Albemarle, Jacob, Grafton and Buckingham streets as 'Irish', although it is coloured black. The Irish happened to be more numerous there than they should have been according to the city average. In fact, the Irish Catholics accounted for 30 of the 63 premises on that block, that is, they were numerically inferior to other ethnic groups. Greater benefit would accrue from considering the pattern either in streets or in blocks. The streets approach reveals that an Irish-looking street such as Lower Water Street actually had 74/170 (43%) Irish on it, while a non-Irish street such as Argyle Street contained 32/120 (27%) Irish. The integration, when whole streets are considered, was greater than the block by block pattern suggests. The very randomness of Irish and non-Irish blocks on certain streets is itself suggestive of the slow intermingling process that was underway. The block approach would reveal that the blocks marked 'A' and 'B' on Figure 5 (where 'A' appears more Irish than 'B') had 6/30 (20% Irish) and 9/23 (39% Irish) Irish Catholics in their household composition. By combining bloc, street, and overall approaches, the conclusion is that ethnicity was not a determining factor in selection of premises by Haligonians in the 1870's at least with respect to Irish.

Let us look at a final component in this composite picture of the Halifax Irish--involvement with the law. The following Tables will provide the statistical evidence for these comments. People got into trouble with the police mainly as a result of drinking and need, according to Robert Ernst. "Under the influence of drink, desperate and reckless individuals forgot their sufferings and their sorrows, committed assault or robbery, and wound up in jail."⁶¹⁹

The Irish had a reputation for hard drinking. Judging from Oscar Handlin's findings, this common belief in Irish intemperance was borne out in Boston during the last century. Handlin speaks of the circumstances of Irish life in that city as breaking down the traditional restraints of peasant mores. "In this society want became a malignant . . . adversary . . . and . . . encouraged intemperance, crime, and prostitution."⁶²⁰

Nothing the Irish found in Boston altered their tradition of alcoholic indulgence. Instead, crowded conditions drove men out of their homes into bars where they could meet friends, relax, and forget their anguish in the promised land . . . Frequent intoxication led to the Irish reputation for criminality. This impression actually derived from minor misdemeanors generally committed under the influence of drink, --misdemeanors which in many cases might have earned for more affluent offenders only a tolerant reprimand. Comparatively few Irishmen were guilty of more serious felonies.⁶²¹

It comes as no surprise, then, to learn that 9,791 (76%) of

⁶¹⁹Ernst, Immigrant Life in New York City, 57

⁶²⁰Handlin, Boston's Immigrants, 120

⁶²¹Ibid., 121.

the 12,914 arrests made by the Boston Police in 1864 were arrests of Irishmen. The proportion of Irish may have been higher than that, since the 9,791 includes only those who had been born in Ireland. How many sons of Irishmen are among the 2,143 natives of the United States who were also arrested that year? Handlin does not say, but we can assume there have been some.⁶²²

Halifax was close to Boston. Moreover, the Irish had emigrated to Halifax mainly before the commencement in 1838 of the extremely influential temperance work of Rev. Theobald Mathew, who persuaded millions of Irishmen voluntarily to pledge themselves to abandon alcoholic liquors, and which pledge most of them did not violate.⁶²³ The Halifax Irish were described by their fellow-countryman, John F. Maguire, M.P. He attributed the poverty of the Irish paupers in Halifax to "the one fruitful cause of evil to the Irish race-- . . . drink."⁶²⁴ Given the Irish tradition of drinking not wisely but well, the attitude of Maguire, and the statistics from Boston, one anticipates that the Halifax Irish would have been in the same traditional mould.

It is one of the more surprising discoveries of the research on Irish Halifax that the Irish here did not fit the model. In terms of arrests and being charged in the Halifax City Magistrates Court, the Irish Catholics appeared somewhat less than their share of the population would lead

⁶²²Ibid., 257, Table XXIV

⁶²³Garnier, Popular History of Ireland, 126

⁶²⁴Maguire, The Irish in America, 9.

one to expect, while their proportion among those arrested for drunkenness was also slightly less than their share of the population. By calculation the Irish Catholic population of Halifax in 1838 was 5,398/15,373 (35.1%), and in 1861, it was 9,266/25,026 (37.0%). Assuming that the Irish Catholic population as a percentage was sliding upwards at an annual rate of .1% between 1838 and 1861, the average Irish Catholic population between 1846 and 1861 was about 36.3% for Halifax City. Their share of arrests should have been at the same average, therefore. In fact, detailed study and analysis of 8,158 arrests, 1846-1861 in Halifax, reveals the following:

Of 8,158 arrests, 2,757 were those of Irish Catholics, a percentage of 33.7%, or 2.6% lower than their share of the population. Of 2,987 arrests for drunkenness, 1,034 (34.6%) were those of Irish Catholics; 1.9% below their proportion of the populace. There were 532 Irish among the 1,400 assault charges, and 109 among the 276 arrests for vagrancy. If all the Irish vagrants and all the Irish assaults were committed while the accused had been absolutely drunk, there would have been 1,675 alcohol-related offences committed by Irish Catholics out of a city total of 4,663. Even then, 35.9% of the arrests were of Irish, compared to 36.3% they formed in the city population. Table XX, below, presents these figures on an annual basis.

These figures, which are the result of individual examination of each case and recording of ethnic origin (of Irish), and of the charge actually laid, cover a fifteen year

period in the middle of the span with which this study has been concerned. They prove as conclusively as anything else is likely ever to do that the Irish Catholics of mid-nineteenth century Halifax were not the drunken paddies of the caricatures. There were a number of men who repeatedly came before the court on drunk charges, and these would probably fall into the group which people sometimes term 'winos' or 'rummies'. If those repetitious offenders had been counted as one individual rather than as 'x' number of arrests, the Irish Catholic share would have been diminished even lower.

Table XX - Halifax City Magistrate's Court, 1846 - 1861. ⁶²⁵

Year (dates within the year)	Irish R.C.	Total	%	No. of Irish charged for Drunk	Vagrancy	Assault
1846 (1 Jan-19 Aug)	90	306	29.4	28	4	15
1848 (11 July-31 Dec)	93	304	30.5	18	5	27
1849 (3 July-25 Dec)	123	326	37.7	54	6	23
1851 (21 Jan-31 Dec)	190	498	38.2	93	11	46
1852 (1 Jan-25 May)	92	254	36.2	37	8	23
1853 (24 May-5 Nov)	214	621	34.4	82	4	29
1854 (21 June-31 Dec)	231	728	31.7	88	5	46
1855 (1 Jan-31 Dec)	347	1142	30.3	125	7	72
1856 (1 Jan-29 May)	122	364	33.5	30	6	23
1858 (3 June-31 Dec)	195	657	29.6	84	13	34
1859 (1 Jan-22 July); (13 Sept-31 Dec)	275	852	32.2	83	17	61
1860 (1 Jan-16 Aug; (25 Oct-31 Dec)	408	1041	39.1	158	13	73
1861 (1 Jan-13 July)	377	1065	35.4	154	10	60
Totals.....	2757	8158	33.7%	1034	109	532

⁶²⁵ P.A.N.S., newspaper room, unclassified MS, "Magistrate's Court Papers, Halifax City," Boxes I and II.

In the higher courts, the proportion of Irish Catholics was lower even than it had been in the Magistrates' court. The court of sessions for Halifax County tried 52 cases between 1851 and 1866 (years 1862, 1863 and 1865 missing), of which 11 (21%) involved Irish Catholics. Nine of the eleven cases were assaults which came from magistrates' court as court of first instance. The other two cases were one each of larceny and window breaking.⁶²⁶ Evidently, the Irish Catholics were not major criminals. Supreme Court criminal convictions for Halifax between 1852 and 1861 numbered 60, of which 19 (31.6%) were cases involving an Irish Catholic.⁶²⁷ Here the range of more serious offences included such diverse charges as burglary, forgery, stabbing, attempted rape, arson (a female), procuring a soldier to desert, unnatural crime (euphemism for buggery), concealing birth of a child, shooting, stabbing, and receipt of stolen goods. In Halifax, 1847 to 1849, there were 154 imprisonments for debt. Of these 56 (36.3%) were Irish Catholics, and their percentage is exactly the same for debt imprisonment and share of the population.⁶²⁸ The overall impression one gets is that the Irish Catholics got into their share of trouble; no more.

⁶²⁶P.A.N.S., R.G.34-312, J.3.

⁶²⁷Ibid.

⁶²⁸Ibid., J.4.

In the family patterns, then, the Irish Catholics were true to their tradition. In Halifax at least, there were very few deserted wives. The predominant pattern was the nuclear family (70% of households), although sometimes the family head was widowed. In the vicinity of one-tenth were each of three other household patterns: married couple with no children, single individuals (often servants), and groups of various relationship living together. Each of these three tended towards the majority pattern, as most childless couples were young and would have children; many servants would eventually marry and become part of nuclear families; while the groups living together tended to include younger siblings of household heads and nephews and nieces of older members, that is, they contained marriageable members. The general trend among the Irish Catholics was to live in familial situations, and produce an average of 3.24 living children per marriage, scarcely higher than the community average.

In maintaining these familial patterns, the Irish Catholics were encouraged and tended naturally into intermarriage within their group. Throughout the period from 1833 to 1871 the Irish Catholics intermarried in about 80% of all cases. The major change between the earlier and later period was that by the 1860's the great majority of Irish married were born in Nova Scotia. From 1864 to 1871 only 20% of Irish Catholics marriages in Halifax involved even one party from overseas. This reflected the cessation of wholesale immigration in Halifax by the 1860's, a sharp contrast

to Boston where, from 1863 to 1865, 77% of marriages involved at least one party from overseas.

Occupationally, the Irish Catholics made considerable gains after the 1830's, and by the 1860's had reached the level which they retained in most essentials for half a century. Compared to cities such as Boston, the Halifax Catholic Irish did well for themselves by obtaining more and better jobs than their American Irish compatriots. This partly reflected the earlier arrival of the Irish in Halifax. This was also a factor in the residential pattern established by the Halifax Irish, who congregated upon arrival, but who tended to spread out into the city by the 1860's and 1870's. There had been no particular ghettoization, nor did a trend begin.

Finally, and importantly, the Irish Catholics were greatly assisted in their acceptance by Haligonians of other backgrounds by the realization that the Irish were not generally lawbreakers. Indeed, in Halifax at mid-century the Irish Catholics were not demonstrably more prone to over-indulgence in liquor than other groups. They had a stereotype to live down about drunkenness, and they lived it down. As a result of being a tolerably temperate group taken in toto, they gained quicker acceptance than probably they otherwise would have achieved.

Conclusion

The Irish Catholic emigrants of the nineteenth century were the victims of a system they had not created, and the guests of a people who would have been pleased had the Irish not come. Most of these emigrants were members of a rural peasantry which had been ground down by more than a century of concerted penal repression. They had their Irishness, their Catholicism, and not much else, as a result of their experiences. Intolerance was a part of the Irish experience.

In an overpopulated country which moved ever closer to the demographic saturation point, the Irish subsisted on a potato diet. Any major damage to that precious crop and the peasantry went hungry and sometimes starved. Famine and poverty were also part of the Irish heritage.

When the older methods of control over Ireland were proving ineffectual, the British government instituted a Union of Parliaments with Ireland, in 1801. It was a Union in which any benefits to Ireland were swamped by depression, repression, and Irish resentment of the British refusal to honour a pledge to relieve the Catholics in law. The fact that the British government was aristocratic, oligarchic, and unrepresentative of the ordinary English people was lost on the Irish peasantry. An English government that was in league with Protestant landowners in Ireland sought to protect vested interests, but the English people also got the blame. Thus, another Irish attitude was anglophobia. Some

Irish expressed this through terrorism and violence. That was the legitimate tradition of Emmett, Young Ireland and Fenianism. Others sought to use the law to win gradually what Ireland wanted. That was the equally valid tradition of Grattan, O'Connell and Cullen.

As the hopelessness of their position gradually seeped into the people's consciousness, the idea of emigration began to take hold of some minds as one possible solution to their problems. When the most influential people, priests and landlords alike, began to agree to the emigration of surplus humanity, an important change in the attitude of the Irish masses began to transform many of them from a pattern of remaining rooted to the land to one of mobility. The Protestant Irish of Ulster left their homes for America in the eighteenth century rather than face stagnation and ruin at home. Various southern Irish made annual trips to Newfoundland with the fisheries. Others made seasonal visits to Great Britain to work as farm labourers on the harvest. These experiences began collectively to enter the Irish consciousness at the end of the Napoleonic Wars. The idea of emigration as an escape from hunger, unemployment and poverty became another part of the Irish heritage.

America became the most favoured destination of the emigrants, despite the conflicting reports that reached Ireland. It was the nearest English-speaking area that needed population, and the means were at hand. The Newfoundland fishing fleet crossed regularly from western England each spring, stopping at Waterford, Wexford, Youghal and Cobh to

buy supplies and engage hands. Some of the Irish crewmen did not return home. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the Newfoundland fishery became a year-round operation based on a resident fishing fleet, this traffic fell off. Simultaneously, however, came the rise of the timber trade. The vessels employed in this trade often made the westward crossing without cargo, and the owners and masters were able to convey, at a few shillings a head, hundreds of poor Irish each season. Both the migratory fishery and later the traffic in timber brought potential Irish settlers into the area throughout the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The culmination came, in volume, in the period between 1815 and 1845. Once in the general area, the Irish found dozens of small coastal vessels to convey them readily to points within the Atlantic colonies.

In the case of Halifax, virtually all of the Irish immigration had ended by the time of the Great Famine.

Probably ninety per cent of all Irish Catholic arrivals in Halifax took place before 1848. Those who came after that date fell into three categories--those who came to work at a specific trade (e.g., railway engineers) or with the military; those who arrived 'by chance' (i.e., passengers on ships cast up on the coast of Nova Scotia); and those who were the concluding part of a chain movement pattern. Unlike Newfoundland, Miramichi or Boston, Halifax received a substantial portion of its Irish thanks to the operation of the chain movement pattern. In this pattern, the firstcomers

were followed to their destination by relations and neighbours from the old country. This partly explains why the Irish of Halifax included a majority of about two thirds who originated in a relatively small part of Ireland extending from Cork across Tipperary and Waterford into Kilkenny and Wexford.

Whatever the pattern of movement or the routes taken, the arrival of quantities of rural Irishmen of no particular trade or means of self-support posed a problem to the host environment. These Irish farmers did not settle on pioneer farms when they reached Nova Scotia. Instead they concentrated in the urban area of Halifax. This reflected their unhappy experiences on the land at home and their complete lack of preparation for undertaking to farm in the new environment. Halifax, the capital of what the Loyalists of the preceding generation had nicknamed 'Nova Scarcity', had both advantages and drawbacks to offer potential settlers from overseas. On the credit side was the fact that Halifax was an expanding commercial entrepôt and the seat of a government and the base of the armed forces. These commercial undertakings and the construction of government works such as fortifications gave some work to the skilled and the unskilled among the immigrants. Furthermore, the Irish who came to Halifax would be entering a community with an existing Irish presence. This would tend both to assure some sympathizers among the host population, and to make their mere arrival less likely to occasion ethnic antagonism. On the

debit side, Halifax lacked industrialization. There were no factories to hire massive numbers of Irish immigrants to the labour force, such as happened in Boston. Moreover, the dominant element in the local society was composed of Anglo-Saxon Protestants. This was the host environment with which the Irish would have to cope.

The Irish Catholics of Halifax in the later 1830's were largely new arrivals. They lived in inferior rented housing, concentrated in certain downtown streets and neighbourhoods. As often as not, these Irish arrivals would leave again in a few years for the eastern seaboard of the United States. Most of them were engaged in routine work, either as labourers or truckmen, or as servants. The Irish often lacked the necessary skills that would have enabled them to perform more prestigious jobs. The picture was not entirely negative, however. Halifax provided a better home to the Irish than did many other cities, such as Boston. There was no budding ghetto awaiting the Irish of Halifax. The Irish in Halifax were literate, peaceful, and generally willing to work.

The Irish began to assert themselves collectively in respect of local Church government, and won. The immigrants joined the Charitable Irish Society, and in time transformed it from a gentlemen's club to a meeting place for emigrants, many of whom were artisans. In politics, the Halifax Irish attempted a twofold involvement: Repeal for Ireland, Reform for Nova Scotia. The ambivalence of this became apparent about 1841-43 when the Irish found that their support of

Repeal was making it difficult for them to gain acceptance from the main body of Reformers. The Irish found themselves with an identity crisis; they had to decide which took priority, their involvement with Irish or Nova Scotian politics. The decline of the Repeal movement in Ireland, O'Connell's death, and the termination of Irish immigration into Nova Scotia in the mid-1840's, combined to decide the issue. The Irish in Halifax gradually became primarily committed to the cause of Nova Scotian Reform. Ireland receded into the background as a central political concern of the Halifax Irish. These people had begun to discover their identity as Nova Scotians.

The most significant development with respect to Irish assimilation into the general community was the alliance formed between the Irish Catholics and the Reformers in the early 1840's. The Repeal movement and the difficulties experienced by Lawrence Doyle in gaining a nomination in Halifax served warning, however, that in large measure the alliance was a 'marriage of convenience'. The Reformers and the Irish could collaborate in an effort to gain their common goals, such as responsible government, but there were underlying differences between the partners. The Irish Catholic desire to preserve a cultural uniqueness and the Reformers' desire for democratic assimilation offered a ready basis for conflict. As the 1840's ended in the shadow of the Great Famine in Ireland, the Reform-Irish coalition achieved its goal of responsible government. The major reason for the existence of an alliance, the securing of power, had been attained.

That very victory, unfortunately, ushered in a new episode of turmoil for the Halifax Irish.

Across British America the mid-century was the testing time for the new-found middle-class democracy of responsible government. One thing that remained to be seen was whether the new governments would continue or abandon the old Anglo-Saxon Protestant ascendancy. The old tradition of enthroned Protestantism was strengthened by the rise of American nativism against foreign immigrants, particularly the Irish and the Catholic. In Britain the re-establishment of a Catholic territorial hierarchy provoked resentment among Protestants, many of whom regarded the step as 'the Roman aggression'. Against this rising suspicion of their kind, and bitter with memories of the Famine, the Irish Catholics found themselves at odds with the majority over the Crimean War. The War erupted just as railway building was beginning in Nova Scotia, and this development served to provoke the crisis that was building in the various developments of the time. When Joseph Howe went to the United States to recruit men for the British military in Crimea, he pretended to be hiring railway gangmen. He was foiled by a small Irish group in Halifax. This and an unfavourable verdict on some Irish railway rioters provoked Howe into making an indiscriminate **attack** on all Irish and all Catholics. Howe's Protestant Alliance failed, however. The Liberal government of William Young collapsed only to be replaced by an alliance of Catholic Reformers and Conservatives. By the end of the 1850's

it was plain that the Catholics would stand their ground under fire, both because they had allied with the Conservatives, and because of their improved economic situation. Between 1842 and 1858 the Irish had made great occupational advances in Halifax. Moreover, a lack of major industrialization in Halifax prevented the formation of an industrial proletariat in Halifax. There was little class prejudice to increase ethnic tension and sustain Nativist sentiment.

Early in the 1860's the Irish in Halifax reached their peak in terms of proportion of the population. Immigration had ceased and natural increase was giving no numerical advantage to the Irish. The visiting Irish Parliamentarian, John F. Maguire, was impressed by the relatively settled and satisfactory situation of the Irish in Halifax. The facts of life at the time in Halifax suggest that Maguire was correct, if optimistic, in his observations about Halifax. The Irish about 1865 had attained a plateau which they would retain for the next half century with little change. They gained better representation on City Council by the late 1860's, and they had made their way into many occupations by that time. The old pattern of Irish neighbourhoods was rapidly breaking up by the late 1860's. Possibly the greatest achievement of the Irish in Halifax after 1865, and continuing until World War One in 1914, was the gradual dispersal of the Irish throughout the city.

Their stabilized position in Halifax was attested by three major developments of the 1860's. The inauguration

of public schools open to all by 1865 was accompanied by some restrained denominational quarrelling, but in general there was much more resistance to the imposition of taxation to support the schools than there was to the retention of a relatively few schools in Halifax City for Catholic pupils. The Fenian Brotherhood might have stirred up trouble in a city with one-third of its people Irish Catholics, and yet nothing happened by way of public disloyalty. Some of the evidence suggests that the Irish played their share in the preparations being made to resist any Fenian attacks on the province. Archbishop Connolly and the Irish poet-turned-politician, D'Arcy McGee, kept up an anti-Fenian barrage throughout the period of greatest danger of attack. This Irish loyalty seems to have impressed many Halifaxians. The third issue, that of Confederation, divided the province deeply along various lines of battle, but none of the divisions were along the ethnic line between the Irish and some other group. The consequence of developments of the 1860's was to bring greater trust and acceptance to the Irish in Halifax.

The pattern established in the 1860's and 1870's endured for several decades. The Irish ideal of a strong nuclear family predominated in Halifax, and was encouraged both by **all** the teachings of the Catholic Church and by the Irish tendency to marry within their own ethnic and religious group. Except for individual gains, the Irish Catholics did not move much on the occupational scale between 1865 and 1914. Old Irish neighbourhoods continued to break up, dispersing

their people over the city. The family's strength and the influence of the Temperance Movement in the Church were reflected in the low crime rate of the Irish and the relatively low amount of drunkenness in which the Irish were involved.

In the 1830's the Irish Catholics had their work cut out for them if they were to make much of their lives in Halifax. Thirty-five years later they had enough progress behind them that no serious observer would have regarded the Irish as transient immigrants. In the interval the Irish had resolved the question of their future identity, and had turned their eyes to Halifax. The progress of the interval was not smooth or unbroken, but it occurred. If the Irish were nowhere in the 1830's, and questing in the 1840's, they were challenged in the 1850's, and accepted by the 1860's. In the 1870's they formed part of the community that was Halifax.

The transition was real, and its effects were becoming apparent by the opening of the 1870's. The Irish in Halifax seem to have done better than their counterparts in Boston or Manchester. They were well advanced on the occupational scale, they were acquiring property, they had political influence, they had control over their religious structure, they were becoming evenly distributed residentially, and they had social acceptance as a rule.

There were a number of contributory factors to the Irish success story in Halifax. The Irish had an earlier

start in Halifax than had their countrymen elsewhere. There was an identifiable Irish element in Halifax throughout its existence, and this Irish strain had increased in size and proportion over the years. The Irish immigration to Halifax attained its greatest flow between 1815 and 1845. There was no influx of distressed famine refugees into Halifax. The chain movement pattern of immigration was of value to the Irish as it frequently meant **that** new arrivals could live with kinsmen or friends until they had made an initial adjustment to Halifax. A few had brought a small sum of money with them. These factors both minimized dangerous frictions in the town and prevented the sorry spectacle of large numbers of Irish paupers strolling the streets begging or drunk, idle or orphaned. Moreover, many were literate, and most (unlike the Connacht **folk** who fled the Famine) evidently were English-speaking. One part of the explanation, then, was the relatively early arrival of the Irish in Halifax, and the **fairly** good quality of those who did remain in Halifax.

Another part of the story was economic. The lack of widespread industrialization in Halifax throughout the period before Confederation prevented the inundation of the city with throngs of unskilled labourers seeking low paying jobs in workshops and factories. An industrial proletariat, largely immigrant in composition, did not develop in nineteenth-century Halifax because there was no demand for unskilled factory labour. Thus, the comparatively high ratio of artisans and other skilled workers in Halifax reflected not only successful job advancement for the Irish Catholics, but also the fact

that the city possessed a commercial rather than an industrial economy during the middle decades of the nineteenth century.

Finally, there were the political factors in the Irish success at Halifax. The Irish Catholics in Halifax reached the point of self-assertion towards 1840. This coincided with the rise of Repeal in Ireland and Reform in Nova Scotia. The balance between the Reformers and Tories in Nova Scotia was rather a fine one, especially after 1843 when a quarrel with the Baptists put most of that denomination on the side of the Conservatives. The Irish Catholics of Halifax discovered that they were in the position of controlling a balance of power. The lesson was not lost on the Irish leadership then or later. Lawrence O'Connor Doyle, Archbishop Connolly, John Tobin, and others among the Irish remained alert to the bargaining power their position bestowed on them. Compromise with the Irish Catholics became at least part of the art of successful politics in Nova Scotia after the 1840's. Howe (and to some extent Young) departed from that principle in the late 1850's and found that religious and ethnic baiting particularly of the Irish Catholics in Halifax, was self-destructive.

The transatlantic transplantation had been the first break from the old ways. Adaptation to and assimilation by the host community in the new world formed the second break. In many ways, it proved the more difficult to make. Daily reality helped greatly in Halifax. Much of the old Irish

sense of self had depended upon a rural countryside of tiny farms, and places hallowed in legend. In an urban and commercial setting the sense of being Irish, of national integrity, was weakened far more than the emigrant generation could know. There was an element of self-deception in their tenacious clinging to what they knew and remembered from the old country. They had known what they remembered, but they had forgotten more.

Their children had no personal memory of the cottage where grandfather had lived. The younger generation knew the sight of Halifax Harbour at the foot of every east-west street, the mewing of gulls as they coursed out over George's Island, and the uneven rasping of ropes and rigging as they chafed on dockside ships that seemed anxious to fly away upon their proper element. These young people felt the cold drizzle of an April day, coasted in the snows of a chilly winter, and played with children whose parents were not of Ireland. The new children of the new world were the future of the Irish in Halifax. It was their fortune that their fathers could make the transition from rural Ireland to urban Halifax, first in physical movement and then in psychological adaptation, and finally in coming to terms realistically with all phases of fitting into a new community. Not every city was as fortunate in its Irish as Halifax, but then not all Irishmen were as fortunate in finding such a city as a new home. Perhaps the Irish only succeeded in being swallowed up: they had been accepted and they were content.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC COMMENTARY, IRISH HALIFAX, 1836-1871

The researcher into Irish history in nineteenth-century must seek his data in a wide variety of literary and statistical sources. Among literary sources there is the serious deficiency that the personal papers of the leading Catholic laymen in Halifax in the nineteenth-century are completely unavailable, if they exist at all. Fortunately, the student can find much of value in the various collections of the papers of several archbishops of Halifax, in the Chancery Office of the Halifax Archdiocese. The papers of William Fraser, William Walsh, and Thomas Connolly throw considerable light upon the division of Nova Scotia into two dioceses in the 1840's, while the Connolly papers are also of use in studying the situation in Halifax at the time of the Fenian scare and Confederation. The twentieth-century collection of material by Very Rev. John McCarthy in preparation for a history of Halifax archdiocese contains several valuable commentaries upon events of the previous century and a half. Some material may also be collected from the papers of Sir William Young at the Public Archives of Nova Scotia, while the Howe, Tupper, Macdonald and Robie papers all provide the views of those men and their correspondents on current events of the mid-century period. The various record and manuscript groups in the Public Archives of Nova Scotia offer the patient searcher miscellaneous references to the Irish of Halifax in sources as diversified as the corres-

pondence of the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, that of the Secretary of State (British), and petitions to the Assembly, or the papers of the Halifax Grand Jury.

The most valuable printed primary sources are the newspapers, almanacs and directories. Those of particular usefulness in the study of the Irish in Halifax were Belcher's Farmer's Almanack, Nugent's Business Directory for 1858-59, and Cunnabell's City Almanac and General Business Directory (1842). Among the newspapers, the Roman Catholic viewpoint was represented by The Cross and The Register in the 1840's, by The Halifax Catholic in the 1850's, and in the 1860's by the Evening Express and Commercial Record, all of Halifax. The Acadian Recorder was frequently sympathetic to the Irish and Catholics, while the attitude of the British Colonist, The Times, and Novascotian, all of Halifax, reflected the exigencies of the local political situation. The editorials and letters to the editor were most informative and useful as a means of assessing public opinion over various issues of the day.

Among the quantitative or statistical sources of information, the records of Catholic cemeteries, and the church burial and marriage registers of St. Mary's Basilica (and under its former name, St. Peter's Church), provide a mine of raw material upon which to base assessment of the place of the Irish in Halifax. The Holy Cross Cemetery registers give

name, age, occupation, birthplace, and whether one was a pauper. Until 1844, the marriage registers gave parentage and place of origin of the married parties, which assists greatly in determining where in Ireland the immigrants originated. Another Catholic record - the Warden's Book for St. Peter's 1801-1858 - provides a valuable (and neglected) 1841 religious census of Catholic Halifax by area. Information contained therein suggests that the 1838 civil census is defective and underestimates the population of Halifax. Possibly the opponents of civic incorporation wished 'evidence' to support rejection of city status on the grounds that the community was not growing.

The 1871 census is a fruitful source of statistical material, as it identifies every person by name, age, sex, ethnic origin, birthplace, religious affiliation, employment, marital status, and indicates literacy and a number of physical and mental handicaps. The 1851 and 1861 census returns were less useful, since the information on religion and occupation is reported for a district rather than for each individual householder. The 1838 census, apart from its numerical anomalies, provides excellent general information about occupations in Halifax at that date.

The Minute Books of the Charitable Irish Society repay careful search by the glimpses they offer of the inside workings of an Irish society. The membership rolls with comments at the back of the Minute Books are valuable.

Unfortunately, the records of other Catholic or Irish societies of the period have not survived. The printed constitutions of a few of these bodies do provide at least an outline of their objects and occasionally a list of the early executive members.

A useful source of evidence concerning the economic standing of the Irish is the 1836 assessment. This gives names of both owners and occupants of the premises, street by street, as well as the value of the premises themselves. The next complete Halifax assessment is that of 1862-63, but it does not give the names of the occupants. The 1836 assessment was used in conjunction with the 1838 and 1841 census records, while the 1862-63 assessment was correlated with the civic directories of the mid-1860's.

Finally, mention should be made of a few miscellaneous sources, each of which contributes its mite to the construction of the overall picture. The Nova Scotia Archives has a list of voters and how they voted in the 1847 election, with some indication of religions of the voters. Another good list of Irish Catholics (and evidence of literacy among them) is to be found in P.A.N.S., R.G.I., Vol. 308, a petition concerned with schools in 1827. The Archives newspaper room houses an uncatalogued collection of papers from the Halifax City Magistrates' Court, another source of useful statistical

matter. Attention is also directed to The Letters of Hibernicus, in the Archives' Akins Library, as providing rare insights into Catholic factionalism in Nova Scotia during the early 1840's.

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