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The world of Kavanagh and Cottril: A portrait of Irish emigration, entrepreneurship, and ethnic diversity in mid-Maine, 1760-1820

Edward Thomas McCarron

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Abstract
This dissertation examines a remarkable and little known episode in the peopling of early New England: The founding of an Irish-Catholic community in Lincoln County, Maine, 1760-1820. It details the experience of over three hundred Irish families, tracing them to their Old World origins, following their progress across the Atlantic, and documenting their efforts to establish an ethnic and religious identity on the Maine frontier.

Their story parallels the lives of two immigrants, James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril, who made a fortune in the Maine timber trade and encouraged kin and countrymen to settle in the new land. Their career serves as a springboard to discuss the dynamics of Irish migration into northern New England, the Hibernian networks of the Maine timber trade, and the nature of provincial merchant communities in early America--many of which attracted members from the margins of the Anglo-Celtic world.

Kavanagh, Cottril and their Irish companions found a favorable environment in mid-Maine. They established themselves as traders, artisans, and farmers--settling in the timber outports of Lincoln County and the farming community of North Whitefield. While they largely assimilated the lifestyles and material culture of their new neighbors, the Irish were nonetheless able to transplant their religious traditions to northern New England, most visibly in the establishment of St. Patrick's church in Damariscotta Mills. Founded in 1798 it is today the oldest standing Catholic church in New England.

The experience of these Maine Irish challenge the traditional image of Catholic relations in early New England--one that is often understood within the setting of nativism and discrimination. Indeed, in Lincoln County one finds a surprising spirit of toleration for the Irish, as exemplified by inter-ethnic marriages between Yankee and Hibernian, the conversion of native New Englanders to the Roman faith, and the movement of prominent Irish into the public sphere. In large part this cultural acceptance was molded by the positive example of Irish elite such as James Kavanagh, and encouraged by novel conditions on the eastern frontier which placed a premium on energy and enterprise, rather than ethnic or religious affiliation.

Keywords
History, United States, Biography
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The world of Kavanagh and Cottril: A portrait of Irish emigration, entrepreneurship, and ethnic diversity in mid-Maine, 1760–1820

McCarron, Edward Thomas, Ph.D.
University of New Hampshire, 1992

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THE WORLD OF KAVANAGH AND COTTRIL:
A PORTRAIT OF IRISH EMIGRATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP,
AND ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN MID-MAINE, 1760-1820

BY

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DISSERTATION

Submitted to the University of New Hampshire
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the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
History

May, 1992
This dissertation has been examined and approved.

Dissertation director, Laurel T. Ulrich
Professor of History

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Date
FOR PIDELMA
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION ............................................. iv  
LIST OF TABLES ......................................... vi  
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS ................................ viii  
ABSTRACT ................................................ x  
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS ................................ xii

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. SOCIAL ORIGINS</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. THE IRISH MERCHANT TRADE</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. DAMARISCOTTA MILLS</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. THE CATHOLIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN COUNTY</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. THE FARMING COMMUNITY OF WHITEFIELD</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII. EPILOGUE</td>
<td>358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDICES</td>
<td>384</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

1.1 Occupational Structure, Inistioge, Ireland, 1831 29
2.1 Ship and Passenger Arrivals, Boston, 1763-1769 75
2.2 Surname Origins: Newfoundland Passengers to Boston, 1763-1769 76
2.3 Irish Ship Arrivals, Port of Boston, 1763-1769 86
2.4 Occupations: Irish Passengers to Boston, 1763-1769 89
2.5 Port of Arrival, Maine Irish, 1788-1830 94
3.1 Irish Imports of Timber, 1800-1813 (tons) 136
3.2 Irish Imports of Staves, 1800-1813 (hundreds) 137
3.3 New England Timber Ships Entering Cork Harbor June 1810 - September 1811 140
3.4 Percentage of New England Timber into Irish Ports, 1810-1812 141
3.5 Irish Merchants and Mariners: Lincoln County Maine, 1785-1815 146
3.6 Irish Passengers, 1803-1805: Occupational Background 150
3.7 Occupations of Irish Settlers in Mid-Maine: 1780-1835 182
4.1 County Origins: Lincoln County Irish, 1770-1830 213
**LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1.1</th>
<th>The Townlands of Inistioge</th>
<th>17</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Woodstock House, Inistioge</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>The Square, Inistioge, 1765</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Cottril House, Inistioge</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Headstone of Patrick Cottril, (1725-1777)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Family Networks: Cottril and Madigan</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>Bernard Scale Map: Upper Cluen, 1771</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>Bernard Scale Map: Lower Cluen, 1771</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>Kavanagh House, Oldcourt</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>Kavanagh House, Lower Cluen</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>Farm Holding, Kavanaghs of Cluen, 1911</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Pew Plan, Walpole Meeting House, 1771</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>The Marine School, Dublin</td>
<td>142</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>James Malton (c. 1760-1803)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Damariscotta River Country, 1800</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Matthew Cottril House, Damariscotta, Me.</td>
<td>159</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Migration Corridor: The Barrow and the Nore, 1780-1840</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>James Kavanagh House, Damariscotta Mills, Me.</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Family Networks: Kavanagh and Smithwick</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Damariscotta Mills, c. 1812-1815</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Mercantile Networks along the Damariscotta Mills, Maine</td>
<td>242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>St. Patrick's Church, Damariscotta Mills, Maine</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>Distribution of Irish Families. St. Patrick's Parish, 1821</td>
<td>303</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Irish and New England Households, North Whitefield, Me., c. 1830</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>Chain Migration: Lacy, Shea, and Gaffney Families, 1800-1827</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>John Field House, North Whitefield, Me.</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>Residences of Irish Farmers. North Whitefield, c. 1830</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>Homeland Origins of Whitefield Irish</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>Headstone: Anastasia Shea</td>
<td>356</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

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Edward Thomas McCarron
University of New Hampshire, May, 1992

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The experience of these Maine Irish challenge the traditional image of Catholic relations in early New England - one that is often understood within the setting of nativism and discrimination. Indeed, in Lincoln County one finds a surprising spirit of toleration for the Irish, as exemplified by inter-ethnic marriages between Yankee and Hibernian, the conversion of native New Englanders to the Roman faith, and the movement of prominent Irish into the public sphere. In large part this cultural acceptance was molded by the positive example of Irish elite such as James Kavanagh, and encouraged by novel conditions on the eastern frontier which placed a premium on energy and enterprise, rather than ethnic or religious affiliation.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AAB</th>
<th>Archives, Archdiocese of Boston, Brighton, Massachusetts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FSA</td>
<td>Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KCRD</td>
<td>Kennebec County Registry of Deeds, Kennebec County Courthouse, Augusta, Maine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCCCP</td>
<td>Lincoln County Court of Common Pleas, Records and Files, Lincoln County Courthouse, Wiscasset, Maine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCCGSP</td>
<td>Lincoln County Court of General Sessions of the Peace, Records and Files, Lincoln County Courthouse, Wiscasset, Maine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCP</td>
<td>Lincoln County Probate, Lincoln County Courthouse, Wiscasset, Maine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCRD</td>
<td>Lincoln County Registry of Deeds, Lincoln County Courthouse, Wiscasset, Maine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCSJC</td>
<td>Lincoln County Supreme Judicial Court, Records and Files, Massachusetts State Archives, Boston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>Massachusetts State Archives, Boston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MeHS</td>
<td>Maine Historical Society, Portland, Maine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MeSA</td>
<td>Maine State Archives, Augusta, Maine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAW</td>
<td>National Archives, Northeastern Records Center, Waltham, Massachusetts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NLI</td>
<td>National Library of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDA</td>
<td>Portland Diocesan Archives, Portland, Maine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROI</td>
<td>Public Records Office of Ireland, Dublin, Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RD</td>
<td>Registry of Deeds, Dublin, Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEP</td>
<td>Woodstock Estate Papers, Inistioge, Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPL</td>
<td>Wiscasset Public Library, Wiscasset, Maine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IN T R O D U C T IO N

High on a hill overlooking Damariscotta Bay in Maine stands an elegant Federal period mansion. In 1810, looking out from its octagonal cupola, one would have surveyed a complex of wooden mills, a general merchandise store, and a score of framed houses nestled about the mills. To the east lay a busy shipyard, and looking south one could just make out a stately church spire rising through the trees. The image that registers in our imagination is certainly that of a "typical" community in coastal Maine during the early Republic. If we look beneath the surface, however, a very different picture unfolds: The mansion belonged to James Kavanagh, an Irish merchant from County Kilkenny; the mills and shipyard were operated by a partnership of Irish entrepreneurs; and the church was St. Patrick's, the focal point of a growing Irish community in Lincoln county, Maine. Founded in 1798, it is today the oldest standing Catholic church in New England.

It should come as no surprise that this ethnic community on the Maine frontier has gone unnoticed. As Bernard Bailyn notes concerning emigrants travelling to the New World, "We know only in the vaguest way who the hundreds of thousands of individuals who settled in North America were, why they came,
and how they lived out their lives.\textsuperscript{1} This observation is particularly true of those emigrants coming from Catholic Ireland during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. While specialists now estimate that over 150,000 Celtic Irish crossed the Atlantic before 1800, little has been written on their backgrounds and experiences.\textsuperscript{2} Among the most neglected episodes in this early migration were the clusters of Irish who settled in rural New England, many of whom came by way of Newfoundland or the port of Boston. One such community took root in Lincoln county, Maine, a newly opened frontier area bordering on the Atlantic. Between 1760 and 1820 over three hundred Irish immigrants settled there - merchants, mariners and farmers who carved out new lives along the northeastern frontier. Their experiences provide the groundwork for this dissertation, a study that explores the dynamics of early migration from Ireland, and the opportunities and adaptations that confronted these voyagers upon their arrival.

One individual perhaps best encompasses this movement of early Irish into mid-Maine: timber merchant and entrepreneur James Kavanagh (1756-1828). Born the son of a Catholic farmer outside Inistioge, county Kilkenny, Kavanagh sought his


\textsuperscript{2} Estimated figures for early Irish emigration can be located in David N. Doyle, Ireland, Irishmen and Revolutionary America,1760-1820 (Dublin: The Mercier Press, 1980), pp. 59-61; and Kerby Miller, Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), pg. 137.
fortune in New England during the years following the American Revolution. From modest beginnings he entered into business with countryman Matthew Cottril, a partnership that grew into one of the largest timber firms in Maine. At its peak their company operated a lucrative complex that included over two thousand acres of timberland, seven mills, eight ocean-going vessels and a prosperous trade with the West Indies and Ireland. Over the course of several decades Kavanagh and Cottril were responsible for the settlement of scores of Irish immigrants on the Maine frontier, and the patronage of the Catholic church, an institution that acted to preserve Irish traditions and identity. By using their career as a springboard we can open up for discussion neglected aspects of Irish migration to New England and the pivotal role that Irish-born merchants played in its settlement.

On one level, therefore, my dissertation is a study of a single merchant house and its contributions to the building of an ethnic community in early New England. It explores the Irish background of this community in greater detail than has been previously attempted: tracing immigrants to their Old World origins, following their progress across the Atlantic, and documenting their efforts to establish an ethnic and religious identity on the Maine frontier.

On a broader canvas, however, the experiences of Kavanagh, Cottril, and the Maine Irish touch upon several central issues in early American history. For one, these
Irish emigrants suggest a surprising diversity of peoples in New England as early as the mid-eighteenth century. The frontier regions of northern New England, in particular, were quite fluid, supporting a variety of immigrant folk and cultural traditions. In Lincoln county, Maine, for example, one finds a mosaic of ethnic groups. Besides the Irish at Damariscotta Mills one finds Ulster-Scots settlements at Pemaquid and St. Georges, a German Palatine community at Bremen, and families of Scottish Highlanders squatting on the property of Robert Hallowell Gardiner, families he described as speaking only in Scots-Gaelic. Gardiner remarked that "They were told that Maine was as advantageous a place of settlement for emigrants as North Carolina, that the climate more nearly resembled the one to which they were accustomed."\(^3\)

How does one explain this cultural diversity, particularly in New England, an area traditionally characterized by homogeneity and common beginnings? And what factors encouraged Irish emigrants such as James Kavanagh to settle in mid-Maine? The answers in large part can be found in the nature of the frontier itself and the opportunities it held for development. Beginning in the mid-eighteenth century, newly opened land in Lincoln county prompted a rash of speculative ventures by proprietors such as Samuel Waldo and the Kennebec company. In order to settle and secure this

\(^3\) Concerning these Scottish Highlanders see Robert Hallowell Gardiner, "Early Recollections", pg 153, Hallowell Papers, Box 8, Oaklands, Gardiner Maine.
frontier they turned initially to the recruitment of emigrants from Europe.\footnote{This pattern echoes a major point explored by Bernard Bailyn in recent years, namely, that land speculation and the need for labor provided one of the primary motivations behind immigrant recruitment and the settling of peoples on the American frontier during the eighteenth century. See Bailyn, The Peopling of British North America, pp. 60-86; and Voyagers to the West: A Passage in the Peopling of America on the Eve of the Revolution (New York: Alfred E. Knopf, 1985).}

Robert Temple, for example, a native of Tipperary working for the Pejepscot Proprietors, recruited four shiploads of Irish who settled along the Kennebec at "Cork". Similarly, Samuel Waldo concentrated his efforts in Europe, bringing scores of German families from along the Rhine into frontier "Bremen" where they carved out farmsteads and erected a Lutheran church.\footnote{On the settlement of "Cork" see Michael J. O"Brien, "The Lost Town of Cork, Maine," Journal of the American Irish historical Society, 12 (1913), pp. 175-184; and R. Stuart Wallace, "The Scotch Irish of Provincial New Hampshire (Ph.D. dissertation, University of New Hampshire, 1984), chapter IV. Wallace maintains that Cork was settled primarily by Ulster Scots, brought from Ireland in 1718. While several shiploads undoubtedly came from Ulster, Temple's activities in Ireland are not well known, as Wallace admits. That fact remains that Temple most likely recruited in his native Munster as well, which helps to explain the name "Cork". On the Germans of Bremen and Waldoborough see Jasper Stahl, History of Old Broad Bay and Waldoboro Vol. I (Portland, 1956). German Palatine families also settled on the Kennebec at Frankfurt along with French and Irish (described by missionary Jacob Bailey as "Catholic"). See Gordon E. Kershaw, Kennebec Proprietors (Somersworth, N.H., 1975), pp. 237-239.} These immigrant groups acted as "shock troops" on the borderlands of Maine and in the process created a culturally mixed environment that was very different from that of the insulated communities of southern New England. While these immigrants eventually intermingled...
with native New Englanders who flowed into the backcounty, the fluid social environment they helped create continued to draw "strangers within the realm" such as James Kavanagh and the Catholic Irish.  

The lure of material gain also played a significant role in attracting outsiders to the Maine frontier. Here in the newly opened lands east of the Kennebec the Irish had a better chance of opportunity and upward mobility than in settled communities to the south. This is nowhere better illustrated than in the large ethnic component of the mercantile elite of Lincoln county. In the seaport towns of Wiscasset and Newcastle, for example, one finds a surprising number of timber traders and shipcaptains drawn from the distant corners of the Anglo-Celtic world. Ulster Presbyterians from Antrim, Lowland Scots from Glasgow, and Irish Catholics from Kilkenny

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all found a common ground to pursue the main chance.Indeed, as scholars are beginning to realize, colonial elites in early America were drawn disproportionately from the ranks of provincials. Narrowing economic opportunities at home for the younger sons of gentry, shopkeepers, and large farmers forced an outward looking perspective on the Atlantic world, and a positive inclination toward colonial careers both in the military and in trade. These emigrant elites, as in

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7 This movement of Celtic elites to early America is a needed corrective to David Hackett Fisher's rather stunted and static portrait of Britain's border cultures in Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), pp. 605-782. Fisher for the most part describes the outlying societies of Scotland and Ireland as backward-organized along clan and personal affiliation and prone to endemic violence. His insistence upon seeing cultural continuities between this culture and that of the American backcountry results in his overlooking the important commercial ascendency of Scottish and Irish traders, and the lively world of letters and scholarship that developed in provincial cities such as Edinburgh and Dublin (influences that also found their way to America).

the case of the Ulster Scots of Philadelphia or the Irish merchant community of Lincoln county, often concentrated their efforts in particular commodities such as flaxseed or timber from which they forged lucrative trade networks with the Old World. As Eric Richards suggests "They were link-men, commercial go-betweens, of the economy from the wilds of America to the domestic sources of industry and people in Scotland, London, and Europe." The backgrounds and careers of James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril illustrate this phenomenon in wonderful detail. Coming from the ranks of the up and coming middle-class in Catholic Ireland they were nonetheless closed off to advancement in the larger seaports of the realm. In response they sought their opportunity on the periphery of New England where risk-taking and entreprenuerial ambitions could find free rein.

One result of this ethnic ascendancy among the merchant elite of Lincoln county was that it eased the way, in terms of tolerance and interaction, for the rank and file of ordinary immigrant folk, particularly the Irish Catholics. Indeed, as we will explore within this dissertation, those such as James

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Eric Richards, "Scotland and the Atlantic Empire," pg. 96.

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Kavanagh acted as cultural brokers, patrons who bridged the gap between frontier society and a developing Irish community of which they were a part. Nowhere is this better illustrated than in the establishment of the Catholic church in mid-Maine. Armed with respectability and social standing, Kavanagh and his partner Matthew Cottril were able to recruit Roman missionaries into the Lincoln frontier and sponsor the establishment of St. Patrick's church, founded in 1798. In the years that followed it attracted a large congregation, drawn from the growing numbers of Irish immigrants in the region and also fueled by a striking number of conversions among the native New England population. By 1820 the Catholic congregation of Lincoln County stood close to 500 souls, representing 14% of the Catholic population of New England.

That this ethnic and religious minority was able to thrive in northern New England is one of the important issues raised in this dissertation. Indeed, one finds a surprising spirit of toleration for the Irish in Maine, as exemplified by inter-ethnic marriages between Yankee and Hibernian, the conversion of native New Englanders to the Roman faith, and the movement of prominent Irish-Catholics into the public sphere, such as Richard Meagher who served as justice of the peace in frontier Ballstown. In large part this cultural acceptance was molded by the positive example of Irish elites such as James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril and encouraged by frontier conditions which
placed a premium on energy and enterprise, rather than ethnic affiliation. It was only with the increasing numbers of Irish Catholic immigrants after 1830 — many of whom crowded into the cities, competed for jobs, and lived impoverished lives — that widespread discrimination accelerated in New England.

This is not to say, however, that the Irish Catholic in early Maine flaunted their identity, or persisted in reproducing Old World traditions. Rather, one detects a marked degree of acculturation as emigrants adjusted to novel patterns of life on the New England frontier and adjusted their ambitions to the pulse of the timber trade. Indeed, throughout much of the eighteenth century a certain "invisibility" cloaked the Irish immigrant in New England, a factor that has led many scholars to overlook their existence. This anonymity was largely the result of demographic patterns in Irish migration, which sent young, single males (many of them servants) to the colonies. Given the lack of a Catholic presence in New England, and the scarcity of Irish women, most of these newcomers married into native families and were rapidly assimilated into colonial society.

Gradually this cloak of anonymity was lifted, in large part due to the aggressive persona of newly arrived trading firms such as Kavanagh and Cottil, and the efforts of the Catholic church, which emerged during the Federal period and encouraged the return of lapsed members. In Lincoln county, for example, one witnesses the return of once invisible Irish farmers and
their families (some of their children ranging up to 20 years of age) who were baptized and brought into the church. They joined the growing numbers of newly arrived immigrants and Irish families who peopled the Maine frontier. It was this emergence of Irish visibility and Catholic identity - as expressed in the congregation at St. Patricks, the merchant firms of Newcastle, and the farming community of North Whitefield - that comprises one of the underlying features of this dissertation.

That the Maine frontier should have attracted these hundreds of Irish is a compelling story that has, until now, been largely untold. To fully understand who they were, and why they came to New England we must explore their lives on both sides of the Atlantic: tracing them to their Old World origins; investigating their social and economic backgrounds; and probing the complex circumstances that surrounded their decision to emigrate. We must also follow the trade routes that brought them to America and the role played by transatlantic timber merchants such as Kavanagh and Cottril in their recruitment. Finally, we must reconstruct the new structures of their lives - their family farms, kinship networks, commercial endeavors, and Catholic church - the cornerstones of their new world. At the center of this world stood James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril. Their experiences and Irish origins are a good place to begin our journey.
CHAPTER I

SOCIAL ORIGINS

Winding gracefully through Kilkenny's rich farmland and prosperous estates, the river Nore reaches its tidal limits at Inistioge, a small town founded at the site of a medieval priory. There, in 1764, Matthew Cottril was born in an attractive townhouse on the village square, property that had been occupied by his family for several generations. Three miles downriver, in the rural townland of Cluern, eight year old James Kavanagh was helping with farm chores, or exploring the ruins of Cluern castle nestled along a bend in the river. In years to come their lives and careers would become intertwined: played out on a stage that shifted between the Atlantic ports of Dublin and Boston, the timber frontier of northern Maine, and the river valleys of their native Kilkenny.

Unlike many Irish estate villages of the eighteenth century, Inistioge has left behind a rich legacy of documentation, which allows us to explore the social landscape in which Kavanagh and Cottril grew.¹ By getting to know

¹ These sources are equally divided between those in public archives and those in private collections. These collections include the Fownes papers at the National Library of Ireland (MS. 7332, 8470, 8801); the Tighe Family papers at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (D. 2685); Estate rentals, account books, and deed maps held by Edward Cody of Inistioge; and documents in the possession of Fidelma Maddock, Inistioge.
their family and neighbors, their economic activities, and the interrelationship between village, church and estate, we can better understand the conditions which led the two partners into the merchant trade. This is not intended as a representative case study of Irish merchants. Much work has yet to be done before the typicality of their careers can be assessed.¹ Yet by reconstructing their social origins we are better prepared to understand what motivated them in search of opportunities abroad, and the degree to which they reproduced traditional values and institutions in the New World.

Inistioge is located several miles upriver from the port of New Ross, an important entrepot engaged in oceangoing trade with Europe and America. During Cottril's day river traffic was still the most efficient means of transportation in the southeast. It provided an avenue for shipping local produce to market and was an important link connecting Kilkenny with the greater Atlantic world. It is appropriate, therefore, that we begin our study of merchant origins on the river.

Approaching Inistioge by water in 1765 one would have been

drawn to several sights along the journey: the falls at Clodiagh; the medieval castle and church at Cluen; and the scores of fishing crews working the river below Inistioge. Indeed, salmon fishing was an important occupation for those living in the village and surrounding townlands. A substantial "community" of independent fishermen had quietly worked the river for generations and applied much the same technology as had their medieval forefathers. William Tighe described these cotmen in his *Statistical Observations relative to the County of Kilkenny*, published in 1802:

> The Country people catch salmon with a snap net suspended between two cots, which are small boats, flat bottomed, narrow, equal at both ends, and governed with paddles; two men are in each boat one of whom conducts it; when the fishers feel the net drawn, the boats are closed immediately.  

Salmon snared in the cotmen's net were sold at Kilkenny and New Ross where they commanded a price of 3 pence per pound. It was money in the pocket for many families in the parish and helped to supplement farming and estate work.  

The river was an age-old source of income for those in the village. During the medieval period, when Inistioge was an important religious center and market town, scores of

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3 William Tighe, *Statistical Observations relative to the County of Kilkenny made in 1800 and 1801* (Dublin, 1802), pg. 150.

resident boatmen worked the river. In 1765 a solid fraternity of bargemen still plied their trade between New Ross and Thomastown, shipping produce and manufactures in flat bottomed boats. These boatmen were particularly adept at negotiating the reaches north of Inistioge, a stretch of water punctuated by numerous obstructions and shallows. Such traffic was slow moving, however, and it was inevitable that plans for canal construction would be proposed for the upper river between Inistioge and Kilkenny. One of the leading proponents for this project was Christopher Colles, who later emigrated to New York. While in America, Colles continued his interest in canals, proposing a system of waterways linking Albany on the Hudson with Lake Ontario. In a letter to George Washington he maintained that this system would transform New York City into a major market for produce coming from the Great Lakes. His suggestions, however, went unheeded during his lifetime - in much the same way as his work on canal construction along the Nore went unfinished. Despite considerable monies and dredging south of Kilkenny city the project never reached completion. In the meantime, boat crews from Inistioge continued to work the river, unload passengers and freight on the strand, and drink in establishments such as Pat Cottril's.

In Cottril's day, the "Hundred Court" which overlooks the river and strand was still a visible reminder of Inistioge's medieval character. But as one walked into town there were signs that the village was changing under the auspices of the local landlord, Sir William Fownes. Fownes, one of the Anglo-Irish ascendancy, owned the town, the demesne at Woodstock, and adjacent rural townlands on both sides of the Nore (Figure 1.1). During the 1740's he initiated the capital improvement of his estate. He commissioned an elegant mansion to be built at Woodstock according to the latest Georgian style (Figure 1.2). Designed by the gentleman-architect Francis Bindon, Woodstock house and its surrounding gardens were a tangible statement of the landlord's stature and influence. The great house was built high atop Woodstock with a commanding view of the Nore valley. Surrounded by offices and "dependencies" leading down to the river, it helped to reinforce the hierarchical authority of the landlord and communicate the sense of social distance he maintained over tenant, town and countryside.6

Over several decades Fownes also refashioned the lower town - putting a new face on an older, yet still vital

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1.2 Woodstock House, Inistioge
(Lawrence Collection, National Library of Ireland)
community. Its medieval lanes and dwelling houses gradually gave way to more uniform two and three story dwellings situated around a central square (Figure 1.3). These houses were slated and of a vernacular Georgian style, presenting a new and "improved" front for visitors travelling through the village to Woodstock. The square became the focal point of the village and as such represented new directions in eighteenth century town planning in Ireland. It denoted an emphasis upon Georgian symmetry and order and presented an attractive complement to the new commercial structures, such as shops and warehouses, that sprang up along its border.7

Market activities also centered on the square where local women gathered weekly to buy agricultural produce, dairy products and basketry. Twice each year a livestock fair also spilled out onto the common, bringing with it a bustle of people and activity into the village. The Inistioge fair was particularly well known for its hogs, and nearby placenames such as Coolnamuck (the pig's slope) and Ballygub (town of the pig's snout) attest to the importance of this commerce. In 1802, William Tighe wrote that "at the last December fair of Inistioge were exhibited about 500 pigs, worth one with another 5 guineas..." This economy was directly tied to the

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7 On estate villages and town development see Kevin Whelan, "Town and Village in Ireland: A Socio-cultural Perspective." Whelan maintains that the evolution of estate villages was often a lengthy, painstaking process form improving landlords. Also see L.M. Cullen, The Emergence of Modern Ireland (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1981), pp. 61-82; and Irish Towns and Villages (Irish Heritage Series: 25).
1.3 The Square, Inistioge, 1765
(Courtesy of Professor John Mannion, Memorial University, Newfoundland)
overseas pork trade out of the southeast. Hogs purchased on fair day were driven to the abattoirs and cellars of Waterford, where they were packaged as salt provisions and shipped to Newfoundland and the West Indies.\(^8\)

With overseas merchants, farmers, pig dealers, and curious people crowding into Inistioge the fair made for a colorful day. Amhlaibh O'Suilleabhain, a Kilkenny schoolmaster, poet and diarist, captured the energy of these lively happenings in 1829 when he visited the fair of Glynn in county Waterford on Ascension Thursday. He wrote that farmers attended from all over the country: "The sport and business of the day opened at daybreak and continued till late in the evening. Besides dancing and singing there were athletic contests of various kinds...[and a] great encounter between the rival factions in the evening...." These faction fights - contests between different towns or families - were a prominent feature of agricultural fairs during the eighteenth and nineteenth century.\(^9\) Coupled with livestock sales they helped to attract a stream of people into towns

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\(^9\) Michael McGrath, ed., *The Diary of Humphrey O'Sullivan* (London: Published for the Irish Texts Society, 1936) Vol. IV, March 28, 1829. The type of free-for-all that one associates with faction fights and fairs became known as a "Donnybrook" in America. This most likely traces its origin to the Donnybrook fair, held outside Dublin.
like Inistioge and, more importantly, a flow of money into local shops and public houses like Cottril's.

Being the focus of market activity and village expansion during the eighteenth century, the square attracted a host of outsiders into Inistioge. Some, like Edward Archdeacon, a merchant from Graigue, were drawn by commercial opportunities and growth potential (particularly with the promise of canal transport). Others, like Patrick Dyer of County Wexford, married into property on the square and subsequently expanded into a variety of business ventures. In 1765 Dyer occupied a significant holding on the square, one that included a large slated dwelling house, malt house and brewery. He also secured the post of estate agent for Woodstock, a position that underlined the privileged status of middle class Protestant families in estate villages like Inistioge. Yet by the beginning of the nineteenth century the Dyer family fortunes were in decline, forcing several younger sons to emigrate to Newfoundland. They relocated as small shopkeepers, farmers, and fishermen - an emigrant experience that presents an interesting comparison with their neighbors on the square, the Cottrils.

Because Inistioge was an active market town with a large

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agricultural hinterland it played host to several pubs, groceries, and shops that served the local population. This shopkeeper class included families like the Cottrils; Catholics who managed to preserve an important slice of trade despite the social upheavals of the seventeenth century. Their influence continued to grow into the nineteenth century, indicative of the rise in opportunities for a Catholic middle class.11 By reconstucting the Cottril holding in close detail we will be able to illuminate both the social origins of Matthew Cottril and investigate some of the options open to Catholics in the southeast on the eve of his departure for America.

The Cottrils, descended from an old Anglo-Norman family, held an important place in the town during the eighteenth century. Matthew's father, Patrick Cottril (1725-1777) was a tavern keeper who held extensive property along the square in 1765. He was elected a freeman for Inistioge, an unusual attainment for a Catholic, and in subsequent years extended business networks into Waterford city where his estate was probated in 1778.12 Matthew's mother, Anastasia Joyce, was

11 Cullen, Emergence of Modern Ireland, chapter 11.
12 Several sources were consulted in reconstructing the career of Patrick Cottril. These include the Richard Steile map of Inistioge, 1765, which depicts the Cottril property on the square; Estate Rental for Inistioge, 1774; and Account books for Woodstock Estate, 1778, WEP. Also see the headstone of Patrick and Anastasia [Joyce] Cottril in the Inistioge churchyard, which was commissioned by their son "Matthew Cottril, America."
a member of one of the leading families in the town during the early eighteenth century. During this time the Joyces were head tenants in Inistioge and held extensive farmland nearby. Their wealth and reputation qualified them as a suitable target for the famed highwayman James Freney, who raided their house in the village looking for a bottle of gold - the profits from malting and brewing concerns. The Joyces were also involved in trade during the eighteenth century. Peter Joyce, most likely an uncle of Matthew Cottril, was identified as a ship captain and merchant during the 1750's. His residence at Tidenton house along the river, and his commercial interests along the quays of New Ross, served notice of the benefits to be gained from overseas trade.\footnote{On the Joyces see the following leases: Stephen Sweet to William Joyce, 1715 WEP; William Fownes to Captain Peter Joyce, October 30, 1750, RD 159-398-107438; and Peter Joyce to Honora Joyce, Jan. 22, 1752, RD 162-131-108857. Concerning connections in New Ross, one finds the reference "A lot on the quays set to Mr. Peter Joyce of Tidenton." See minutes, New Ross Corporation, March 25, 1752, Tholsel, New Ross. On Freney and the Joyces, see Frank McEvoy, ed., \textit{The Life and Adventures of James Freney} (Kilkenny: Hebron Books, 1988), pg. 5.}

During the late eighteenth century the Cottrils held a pivotal corner of the square - bordered on the one side by Pat Dyer and on the other by the river gate, the lower entrance to Woodstock demesne (Figure 1.4). It was a prime location for retail and trade. In 1765 the Cottrils occupied two dwelling houses on the square and leased several other buildings that most likely functioned as an inn and public
1.4 Cottril House, The Square, Inistioge
The 1839 Ordnance survey and housebooks provide an invaluable portrait of the Cottril tavern in Inistioge, an establishment that had changed very little from the late eighteenth century. It was divided into several sections during that time, indicative of its varied functions. Facing the square was the public house and grocery, described in the housebooks as "rather old but in good repair." Over the shop was living space occupied by the family and resident servants. Along the river gate stretched a house return, or annex, which boasted a stylish Georgian doorway and reception area. During the nineteenth century this would function as a hotel for travellers and tourists drawn to the picturesque

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14 My belief that the Cottril premises was an inn or tavern is based on several pieces of evidence:

a) Architectural details: In the description of properties on the Steile map (1765) Pat Cottril holds four buildings including "house and yard" (the only reference to a "yard" in Inistioge). In 18th century vernacular usage a yard refers to a cobbled space surrounded by outbuildings, stables and dwelling house. In the context of a town or village, this is precisely the type of arrangement needed for an inn: stabling for customer's horses, and outbuildings for storage and bottling. House books from the 1837 Ordnance Survey corroborate this point. They identity the Cottril holding as an inn with "a fine cobbled yard." See House books, PROI.

b) Family continuity: James Cotterel was the principal innkeeper in town during the early nineteenth century and occupied the corner property on the square. He most likely inherited both property and profession from earlier generations. See Estate Rentals, Inistioge, 1817-1833; and Estate Census of 1831, WEP.

15 First Ordinance Survey, 1837, Kilkenny, Sheet no. 28 NLI; and House books, County Kilkenny, PROI. These house books contain the surveyor's descriptions of town houses and structures in 1837.
Nore valley. Behind the inn was a large complex of outbuildings that was entered through a gateway off the avenue. A fine cobbled yard was surrounded by stables, storage barns, and a bake house which catered to the inn.\textsuperscript{16}

The holding was completed with a garden plot in the rear and three fields outside the old town wall.

In 1774 Pat Cottril paid a yearly rent of £5.12.2, the eighth largest in the town of Inistioge. While the means of payment could vary from tenant to tenant, Cottril satisfied his rent through work on the estate, most likely performed by his sons. Below him on the rent roll were a wide range of artisans, tradesmen, and laborers, suggesting a relatively self-sufficient community ready to meet needs of the estate as well as private individuals. Among the artisans resident in the village were the Kellys, an extended clan who present a good cross-section of the artisan community. The rent collector, Henry Hayden, distinguished them by trade. He noted Patrick Kelly, cooper; John Kelly, maltster; Patrick Kelly, smith; Michael Kelly, sawyer; and Michael Kelly the miller, who operated a corn mill on the outskirts of town.\textsuperscript{17}

The building trades were also well represented in

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{16} The bake house, now in ruins, is the oldest structure on the Cottril holding. It is mentioned in an early description of Inistioge (1609): "1 messuage [dwelling] in the west part of the bak howse in the occupation of John Cottrell." William Healey, History and Antiquities of Kilkenny (Kilkenny: P>M> Egan, 1893), pp. 73-77.

\textsuperscript{17} Rent Roll, Village of Inistioge, 1774, WEP.
\end{flushright}
Inistioge, indicative of a growing estate village. Between 1765 and 1801 the number of dwellings increased from 28 to 101, a building boom that reflected both an increasing population and the stream of newcomers attracted to the village.\textsuperscript{18} This mobility is revealed by comparing estate rentals and tenant lists between 1774 and 1817. Inistioge experienced a striking increase in surnames during this time; 45 new names in all. Some of these newcomers, like Alexander Wills, were recruited by Landlord Tighe to work on the estate at Woodstock. In time, Wills settled into a new house along the top of the square where he worked as a shoemaker. His will, probated in 1827, stipulated that "my two youngest sons James and Edward shall be apprenticed to a trade, and clothed during their apprenticeship." One became a carpenter, a wise choice considering the boom in housing taking place in the village.\textsuperscript{15} Other newcomers, like the Phelans of nearby Kilmacshane, moved closer to town to take advantage of opportunities in shopkeeping and retail trade. They opened a shop next to the Cottrils and joined the diverse population that comprised Inistioge during the early nineteenth century (Table 1.1)

\textsuperscript{18} Figures on housing were arrived at by comparing dwellings identified on the Steile map with figures presented in Tighe, \textit{Statistical Observations...}, pg. 465.

\textsuperscript{15} Will, Alexander Wills of Inistioge, May 12, 1827, in the possession of George Wills, Inistioge.
Table 1.1
Inistioge: Occupational Structure, 1831

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoemaker</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Infirm&quot;</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policeman</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisherman</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mason</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slater</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roadman</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Process Server</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawyer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currier</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaver</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cripple</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corn Buyer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexton</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nailer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innkeeper</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunatic</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


While Phelan and Wills were indicative of the population movement into the village during Cottril’s day, there was also a significant degree of outmigration from Inistioge. Of those surnames present in 1774 (34), only 19, or 56 percent, were still visible in 1817. This low persistence rate is not surprising given what we know of Irish towns and villages. Kevin Whelan has argued that an incessant ebb and flow characterized town populations during the nineteenth century, with a persistence rate of only 2-3 generations per family. Surplus sons and daughters of rural folk moved into village shops, trades, and pubs; and within several generations their town children moved back into the countryside or migrated.²⁰

²⁰ Figures on outmigration were gathered from comparing names on the 1774 estate rental with those of 1817, WEP. On persistence rates see Whelan, "Town and Village in
If we transpose this model onto Inistioge during Matthew Cottrial’s day we see a very fluid environment - one that helps to explain in part the migration of town people in search of opportunities in Dublin, Liverpool, and America.

As Bernard Bailyn reminds us, a large proportion of those who moved to the New World in the eighteenth century were already on the move in their native localities. Some had left the farms and villages of their youth to live and work in one of the larger towns or seaports. Others wandered as journeymen, tradesmen, and apprentices, or joined the ranks of petty criminals or adventurers. Lawrence Joyce, born in Inistioge in 1786, sought his fortune in the busy city of Dublin where he learned the tailor’s trade. Still single, and in his late twenties, Joyce sailed to the Maritimes in 1815 and plied his trade up and down the New England coast before settling in Brunswick, Maine. Emigrants such as Joyce knew what it was like to leave the villages of their youth, to settle in new environments, and make adaptations along the way. His experience was perhaps not unlike many of those who came to America during the late eighteenth century.

For those artisans who stayed behind, village and estate

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22 Concerning Lawrence Joyce see Lincoln County, Court of Common Pleas (LCCCP), Vol. 36, pg 138. Here in his naturalization petition he states that he was "born in the town of Innistioge, County Kilkenny...."
improvements were a steady source of employment. Work books for Woodstock estate reveal several major projects at this time which employed an assortment of masons, housewrights, and carpenters. These included the completion of Woodstock house, the renovation of the village school, and the building of an almshouse in 1788.\textsuperscript{23} Artisans in the village were also tied to mercantile networks downriver at New Ross and Waterford, and especially the Newfoundland trade. A large number of coopers, for example, were employed in the packaging of provisions such as butter for export to the seasonal cod fisheries. One of these was Michael Joyce from Upper Cluen, a journeyman who, like many artisans, plied his trade wherever opportunity arose. In 1798, drawn by local connections and perhaps a promise of work, Joyce sailed for New England—travelling first to Boston and then to Jefferson, Maine. He found employment in the timbercamps of Kavanagh and Cottril, making staves for their export trade to Europe.\textsuperscript{24}

While shops and trades provided employment for some of the population, many families from Inistioge and surrounding townlands worked on the estate—some as wage earners, others to help meet the rent. Much of this estate labor was

\textsuperscript{23} Work Book, Woodstock Estate, 1788, WEP.

\textsuperscript{24} On Michael Joyce see his naturalization petition, May 1806, Record Group 85, Box 480 (Lincoln County), NAW. Coopers figure prominently in account books and estate records. The 1831 census for Inistioge, for example identified 9 coopers in the village. For a full breakdown on occupational structure in Inistioge, 1831, see Table 1.
seasonal or temporary in nature. Laborers, artisans, and farmers would work on the estate for several months and then move on to work in the village or return to the home farm. Account books kept at Woodstock help to illustrate this pattern of estate work. During the months of June and July, 1788, for example, an average of 78 men and 42 boys worked on the estate, many of them employed as laborers and farm servants. Craftsmen and artisans also found employment on various projects during these months: thatchers and slaters worked on rooftops; two masons repaired the brewhouse; four men sawed scaffolding; glaziers worked on the hothouse; and six masons constructed the red house quay.

Women were also employed on the estate, working in the dairy, tending the garden, or serving as domestic help. During the week of July 5, 1788, 17 women were employed in the kitchen, indicative of the domestic labor needed during the summer season at Woodstock. Women's work, of course, was not confined to Woodstock estate. Many who walked up the long hill each day also worked at home farms and village shops. Rural women, for example, took charge of activities in and around the farmhouse. This included tending garden plots, feeding chickens, churning butter, and an endless cycle of

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26 Work Book, Woodstock Estate, June and July, 1788, WEP.
cleaning, washing and childrearing. Irish farm-women also acted, to borrow a traditional English and American term, as "deputy husbands", acting in their partners place when he was away on estate work or personal business. This was particularly true of the households of fishermen-farmers. During the summer months, when men were engaged full time at salmon fishing, women tended the crops and managed the farm.27

Women living in the village also kept a steady round of work activities: minding small shops, selling goods at market, and occasionally operating businesses in their own right, such as private unlicensed drinking houses called sheebeens. James Freney, the highwayman, frequented many sheebeens during his travels, most of which were run by married women or widows. They operated out of their kitchens - serving ale and spirits to local neighbors and the occasional traveler. It was a good way to supplement one's income, particularly since there were no licenses or taxes to pay. Their popularity can be gauged by William Tighe's reference to "28 sheebeen houses in the town of Inistioge" in

1775, a fact that undoubtedly cut into Cottril's drink trade on the square.\textsuperscript{28}

Rental books surviving for Woodstock reveal a significant number of widows living in Inistioge and environs. While the most needy were provided for in the almshouse on the square (built in 1788), many others did community laundry and took in boarders in order to make ends meet.\textsuperscript{29} Village women also engaged in the home manufacture of textiles, including linen, and had a ready clientele among the gentry and middle class of the parish. In 1771, for example, Mrs. Rachel Armstrong of High Street wanted "a girl as apprentice to the business of making bone lace." Mrs. Armstrong specified that the girl must be between the ages of 10 and 13, and willing to apprentice herself for a term of 7 years. By the turn of the century lace manufacture had expanded in the village under the sponsorship of Lady Louisa Tighe, the wife of the current landlord. It provided employment for local women and imported lacemakers alike - some of whom were brought in from Belgium.\textsuperscript{30}

\textsuperscript{28} See The Life and Adventures of James Freney, pp. 17, 22; and William Tighe, Statistical Observations..., pg. 505. Little has been written in scholarly literature on sheabens yet they are an important and well remembered aspect of vernacular culture in rural Ireland.

\textsuperscript{29} In the 1831 census of Inistioge, there were 26 widows identified, including those living at the almshouse. Several of these widow were householders with two or more families in residence - most likely boarders.

\textsuperscript{30} Finns Leinster Journal, February 2, 1771, NLI; and Ada Longfield, Irish Lace (The Irish Heritage Series: Number 21).
Women also worked in the timber industry around Inistioge, stripping and collecting oak bark to be used in local tanneries. Timber production, in fact, was an integral part of the estate economy at Woodstock during the eighteenth century. In Cottril's day, the estate employed close to 100 men, women and children during the summer to plant and harvest trees for local construction and export. In 1772, for example, 90 tenants worked in the oak wood overlooking the Nore, including 36 women.\textsuperscript{11} This workforce was largely drawn from marginal families in the parish and employment on the timber gangs often meant the difference between making the rent and emigration. Those who did emigrate to the New World, such as the Cullens of Kilcross, would have carried with them a knowledge of timber culture that was sought after in the forests of New England and Maritime Canada.

Timber was a rare commodity on Irish estates during the eighteenth century. For this reason one of the important drawing points of this estate was its large stands of red oak, a point not lost on early surveys taken for Sir William Fownes or in the name, "Woodstock".\textsuperscript{12} Over the course of several years.


\textsuperscript{12} The 1709 rental for Woodstock estate contains the following note: "The woods of Innisteag valued last year by Mr. Gallway to near...L 4000." This was a significant sum of money for the period and underlines the importance of timber production.
generations Ireland had suffered severe shortages of timber; much of it had been cleared to make way for agricultural production and to fuel iron furnaces at home and in England. Arthur Young, travelling through Ireland during the 1770's, was shocked at the nakedness of the landscape. "In a word the greatest part of the kingdom exhibits a bleak, dreary view for want of wood, which has been destroyed for a century past, with the most thoughtless prodigality." Thus the door was open for enterprising landlords such as Fownes to make lucrative profits from timber production on their estates. It also encouraged aspiring merchants such as Kavanagh and Cottril to capitalize on the trans-atlantic timber trade. Clearly the two Irishmen were in the right place at the right time. Looking across the Atlantic from the forests of Maine they would have been particularly sensitive to timber shortages and market opportunities in the homeland; and as natives of Inistioge they would have been familiar with the management of the timber economy, and profits to be gained from such endeavors.

Matthew Cottril, indeed, made great profits from the timber trade - enough to send money home for a large tombstone to be erected in memory of his parents (Figure 1.5).
Erected by Matthew Cottrell in memory of his father Belch Cottrell who died this life July the 29 1777 aged 67 yrs and his mother Annis Cottrell Joye who died this life Dec the 31 1777 aged 59 yrs also his brother James Cottrell who died Nov the 14 1708 aged 35 yrs also Anne Cottrell and the body of John Cottrell died this life Deco

1.5 Cottril Headstone, Inistioge Churchyard
Both Patrick Cottril and his wife Anastasia had died in 1777, leaving behind several young children including Matthew, age 13. Their death had a centrifugal effect on the family — dispersing them throughout the Nore valley and across the Atlantic to New England (Figure 1.6). Family and property were divided in the years that followed. The corner premises — comprising the inn, yard and outbuildings — passed first to older brother John, and in the next generation to innkeeper and surveyor James Cotterel, most likely Matthew's nephew. The remaining Cottril holdings on the square which bordered on Dyer reverted back to Landlord William Tighe, who levelled the older structures and built an almshouse on the site in 1788.34

During the 1780's much of the family gravitated upriver to Thomastown and the nearby townland of Kilcullen. Brother William worked as a brewer in the town and later acquired a farm in Dobbins mill along the river. Sister Mary married

34 John Cottril (1750-1804) was identified as a shopkeeper in Inistioge in 1790, RD 424-520-276787. He left a will in 1804, of which only a charitable codicil survives. It named Richard Cullen and Mary Cullen "alias Cotril" as executors, and left the following stipulation: "L 113 to clothe six poor men, namely if they accept of it, with an outside coat, one shirt, one pair of shoes, and one pair of stockings each of Richard Cottril and his son William worksmiths, Patrick Naddy, Thomas Hyland, Philip Keefe, and Richard Wade of Inistioge," See Charitable Donations, Diocese of Ossory, Vol. 1, pg. 150, PROI. John Cottril is buried in the family plot in Inistioge and is memorialized, along with brother James Cottril (1769-1798), on the gravestone commissioned by Matthew Cottril. James was most likely married in Ross to Joanna Joyce, February 15, 1790, with a son James born on September 17, 1791 (New Ross Parish Registers, Waterford Heritage Center, Waterford). This son could be James Cotculeral, described as "innkeeper" in 1831, although no direct evidence has surfaced.
Center and Midland Families

Trans-Antarctic Networks
Richard Cullen, a shopkeeper in Thomastown. Catharine, the youngest, married Walter Madigan of Thomastown in 1793. In time the Madigans emigrated to Newcastle, Maine where their sons worked as ship captains and mariners in the employ of Matthew Cottril.\(^{35}\)

With little to keep him in Inistioge, Matthew himself journeyed to Thomastown during the 1780's. While family networks undoubtedly influenced his move upriver, he also may have been drawn by local mercantile connections. The Cottrils were associated with several mercantile houses in Thomastown, particularly the Nugents and the Davis's who managed brewing and milling concerns. William Cottril worked as a brewer for the Nugents during the 1780's, and both he and brother John appeared as witnesses on business transactions involving the Davis family at Grenan mills.\(^{35}\) It is possible that Matthew worked in some capacity for these merchant houses during his early career. Certainly in years to come, after Cottril's success in New World trade, the two families

\(^{35}\) Information on the Cottrils can be found in a variety of sources. On William Cottril: RD 425-452-277761; 432-568-281613; and 682-264-216435. On Mary Cottril: marriage to Richard Cullen, Feb. 4, 1793, Thomaston parish records (microfilm # p 5024), NLI. Witnesses at the marriage included "Jn. and William Coteral her brothers." Concerning Catherine Cottril see her marriage in Thomastown to Walter Madigan, August 4, 1793 (microfilm # p 5024), NLI. Four children were born in Thomastown before the Madigans emigrated in 1804, and baptismal entries specify "Low Street". Also see the will of Matthew Cottril in Nobleborough which bequeaths property to "my sister Catherine Madigan...." LCP Vol. 30, pg. 159.

\(^{35}\) RD 425-452-277761; 424-520-2767887.
extended their networks across the Atlantic. This is best portrayed in the career of Sydenham Davis, heir to the family interests in Thomastown. In 1804, at age 20, Sydenham journeyed to New England aboard the brig Atlantic, one of the Cottril timber fleet. Described in shipping records as a "farmer" from Summerhill (the landed seat of the Davises) he subsequently established a mill and brewery in Hallowell Maine under the auspices of Matthew Cottril. Although he eventually fell into debt and returned to Ireland, Davis' example serves to underline the close relationship between merchant networks in the New World and their Old World antecedents.37

Cottril forged other alliances during his early years, none more important than his friendship with James Kavanagh, with whom he would later form a business partnership in Maine. Kavanagh's social origins and his route into mercantile trade

37 On Sydenham Davis see passenger list in New England Historical and Genealogical Register (1908) LXII, pg. 172; KCRD 14:291, 15:55, 15:57, 20:508, 21:402; and his naturalization petition, August 3, 1810, Kennebec County Court of Common Pleas, Vol. 12, pg. 189. Liam Hoyne, a researcher in Thomastown who has studied the Davis family in some detail, believes that Sydenham returned home to Ireland. This is possible considering that Davis ran into debt in Hallowell and left town sometime after 1811. Indeed, beginning in 1815 a Sydenham Davis took command of family interests in Thomastown and acted as an inland broker for the passenger trade with America and Newfoundland. To what extent this trade was influenced by or allied with the trans-Atlantic trade of Kavanagh and Cottril is unknown. For more on Davis see Mannion and Maddock, "Old World Antecedents...," pp 351-352.
were quite different from Cottril's. He was born in 1756 in the rural townland of Cluen, two miles below Inistioge. Nestled along a sweeping bend of the Nore, Cluen had witnessed a long continuity of settlement due to its rich farmland and fishing grounds. It was the site of an early eremitic monastery, and the remains of its 13th century church still shelter the Kavanagh family burial plot. Cluen was also home base of the Fitzgeraids, an Anglo-Norman family who counted amongst its members the Barons of Brownsford and Cluen. Their castle dominated the landscape during the seventeenth century, an imposing keep that overlooked a busy quay, water mill and church grounds. Early maps indicate that the castle was surrounded by a cluster of thatch houses, most likely the dwelling place of Fitzgerald's farm laborers and tenants. They lived in kin-group clusters and worked the land in common, a pattern that persisted into the eighteenth century.

The Kavanaghs first appeared in Cluen during the seventeenth century, possibly drawn by marriage alliances between the Fitzgeraids of Cluen and the Kavanaghs of Poulmonty, a powerful clan along the Barrow in county Carlow. During the Williamite wars, when Edward Fitzgerald raised a regiment in support of James II, a Kavanagh from

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39 Paris Anderson, Nooks and Corners of the County Kilkenny (Kilkenny: Kilkenny People Printing, 1940), pg. 99.
Cluen served as one of his retainers and fought alongside him at the battle of the Boyne and at Augrim. When Cluen was subsequently declared forfeit in 1691 and sold at public auction, former retainers such as Kavanagh were relegated to the status of tenants and suffered a decline in stature. By law they were prohibited from buying land, and leases were doled out on a restricted, short-term basis. This decline was reversed in the 1770's when Edward Kavanagh, James' father, acquired a large farm in lower Cluen and expanded into dairying. His sons in turn branched into landholding and trade and engraved a durable imprint on later generations, both at home and abroad.\(^{40}\) In order to understand this upward ascent - particularly James Kavanagh's path into transatlantic trade - we must first explore the social and economic climate that existed in the rural southeast,

\(^{40}\) Edward Kavanagh is almost certainly James Kavanagh's father, but there is no direct record of the relationship. Several clues, however, help to clarify the connection:

a) A ledger book, which belonged to James Kavanagh in Ireland, and which survived in the Kavanagh family of Maine, contains many references to Cluen and Edward Kavanagh. Throughout the 1770's fragments of receipts and leases relating to Edward in Cluen were copied in James Kavanagh's hand, suggesting that he was practicing handwriting and forms from examples he found at home. See ledger, Kavanagh/Mulligan collection, in the possession of Molly Baldwin, Damariscotta Mills, Maine.

b) Early Maine sources suggest that Kavanagh came from the vicinity of New Ross, County Wexford. Cluen, a small country townland in County Kilkenny, is five miles upriver from New Ross, and has traditionally maintained close ties with the town.

c) James Kavanagh named his first son Edward (bn. 1794). Naming patterns in Ireland overwhelmingly have the first son being named after the paternal grandfather. See "Irish Naming Patterns" *Irish Ancestor* (1986).
specifically on the townland level.

In 1770, the old parish of Clonamery, which included Cluen and the surrounding townlands of Oldcourt, Ballygub, and Coolnamuck, was in the hands of Sir William Fownes. Cluen contained probably the most productive land in the parish, recommended in lease maps for its arable meadows and dairy pasture, and commanding the highest rent per acre of any townland on the estate. At 355 Irish acres (603 statute acres) Cluen was divided into several quarters: upper Cluen, an area of upland pasture that paralleled the main road to New Ross; lower Cluen, a fertile stretch along the river; the castle quarter; and the plantation quarter, a stand of oak timber reserved for the landlord. The landlord stood at the pinnacle of this agrarian world, and farm rents from townlands such as Cluen represented a major share of his net income. Most landlords, however, seldom attempted to manage and cultivate each townland themselves. Instead, this was accomplished by a head tenant, who leased the holding from the landlord, and in turn sublet units of property to undertenants - usually at a significant profit. This was the case in Cluen when Henry Hayden, an absentee living in the village of Inistioge, acquired the lease for Cluen in 1772. In preparation for this transaction, Fownes commissioned a survey of Cluen in 1771, a remarkable portrait

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41 "Reference to a Survey of the Lands of Cloan," by James Cotterel, 1811; and estate rentals, 1817-1831, WEP.
of the landscape which outlines the traditional patterns of farm village and communal holdings that were extant during James Kavanagh's boyhood.\textsuperscript{42} Along with vernacular architecture and material culture, such "documents" are frequently our only means to reconstruct the lifeways and behavior of everyday people in rural Ireland during the eighteenth century.

The 1771 survey of Cluen was designed to accomplish two major objectives. The first was to obtain an accurate description of the land in preparation for a new lease to Henry Hayden. Fownes would want to identify specific acreage and townland boundaries, assess land use and condition, and most importantly, take account of any improvements made by the past tenant. Fertilization, construction of lime kilns, and land reclamation could all be used to justify an increase in rent for the new head tenant.\textsuperscript{43} A second objective was to locate and identify individual tenants on the land. The frequent movements of farm laborers during the eighteenth century, and a recent surge in population due to better diet, had multiplied the numbers of people on the land. A new survey - one that mapped each cluster and subdivision - would bring to light these newcomers (some living as squatters) and

\textsuperscript{42} The Scale map is part of the Woodstock Estate Papers, private collection, Inistioge (WEP).


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bring in rents where none had been paid before.44

To conduct this survey of land and population, Fownes acquired the services of Bernard Scale, perhaps the most renowned and innovative cartographer of his day. Scale was at the forefront of the "topographical" school of Irish mapmaking, and his style paid infinite detail to all aspects of the Irish landscape, including the human element. Because each map was intended to be a realistic portrait of a townland rather than simply a survey of its boundaries, they can be relied upon as primary evidence of land use, settlement patterns, and population at a specific place and time. For example, Scale provides very specific reference to land utilization, even to the extent of indicating such features as furrows and cultivation ridges. Thus we are witness to an invaluable "snapshot" of Cluen in 1771, one that James Kavanagh would certainly have recognized. It is important to realize that these surveys capture a townland in transition: a stopframe in the process of change from a communal farming village based on personal obligations and services, to a landscape of individual farmsteads increasingly based on money obligations and leases. As we will see, this transformation of traditional settlement patterns and the move toward agrarian individualism was the motive force that gave rise to the Kavanaghs of Cluen and thrust James Kavanagh toward the New World.

44 Ibid., pp. 162-170.
Looking downriver from Woodstock - with its great house, ordered farmbuildings, and symmetrical fields - one could see the scattered clusters of Cluen in the distance. Its close arrangement of farm buildings and irregular field patterns suggested a different spatial arrangement, as well as a culture distinct from that of the landlord's demesne. Here was an eighteenth century survival of the manorial farmvillage: a traditional pattern that had been stamped upon the land for generations. Farmers still worked the land on a communal basis, living in close-knit clusters of kin and neighbors, and holding the land in joint tenancy. At Upper Cluen, for example, a distinctive field system - known as infield and outfield - was still visible to Bernard Scale (Figure 1.7). By communal agreement each household was allotted several shares of tillage and pastureland, often divided into small and scattered plots of varying soil quality. The infield, or tillage land, was located immediately adjacent to the farm cluster (fields numbered 5 through 28). Wheat, oats and barley were the staple crops grown here, with potatoes added during the eighteenth century. Outside this intensely worked infield were large areas of pasture called the outfield, grazing land held in common by the farming cluster. Here the farmers of Cluen raised dairy cattle and developed large herds of livestock that would be
1.7 Upper Cluen (detail), by Bernard Scale, 1771
sold annually at the Graigue and New Ross fair. By 1771, however, one finds evidence that these communal patterns were beginning to change in upper Cluen. Scale noted in his survey, for example, that several farmers, acting as partners and individuals, had begun consolidating and enclosing their portions, perhaps under the direction of head tenant Henry Hayden. This improvement, coupled with the linear dispersal of farmhouses along the upper road, was an important process in the breakdown of communal traditions and the establishment of individual farms after 1780.

Change came more slowly to Lower Cluen, at least on paper. This cluster was the older of the two, and had maintained its traditions through family continuity. The Kavanaghs and Synnots, for example, had occupied land along the river since the seventeenth century, and shares of communal property were divided equally among their sons. In 1771 these families still worked the fields collectively and

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resided in a compact cluster of seven farms (Figure 1.8). They held the land through joint tenancy - subleasing large holdings from the head tenant. This allowed them to pool their resources, stock their holdings, and consolidate their labor. Unlike the villages of New England, or even Inistioge, these kingroup clusters lacked a central geographical focus such as a tavern or church. While emigrants such as Michael Joyce might state they came from the "town" of Cluen, local identity was still oriented to family and farming.46

The traditions of communal networks and family ties engraved a particular pattern on Lower Cluen, one that was evident in its farmhouses, social life, and domestic space. Their farm dwellings - described as "cabins" by Bernard Scale - were modest houses of up to three rooms.47 While none of this type has survived in Cluen, an eighteenth century farmhouse occupied by the Kavanaghs of Oldcourt (an adjacent townland) exhibits architectural features common to vernacular houses in the Nore valley (Figure 1.9). House construction followed a two room, kitchen-parlor plan with a large central chimney, stone walls and thatched roof. One entered directly

46 The gravestone inscription of Michael Joyce in St. Dennis churchyard, North Whitefield, Maine, reads: "A native of Ireland, County of Kilkenny, Parish of Innisteage, Town of Cloun."

47 "Cabins", as described by Scale, were not necessarily small or impoverished. The dwelling house of Richard Flood of Sallygub, the largest farmer in the parish of Clonamery, was described as a cabin. Here Scale appears to use "cabin" as a generic term to describe any thatch house.
1.8 Lower Cluen (detail), by Bernard Scale, 1771
KAVANAGH HOUSE
OLDCOURT, COUNTY KILDARE

Figure 1.9
into the kitchen, or main room, which served much the same
function as the "hall" in seventeenth century New England
houses. Here, space was flexible according to need: food
was prepared and eaten; visitors were entertained; and domestic
chores such as churning butter were carried out. In addition,
family and servants slept in the kitchen or above in the loft
- within range of the ever-present fire. The large kitchen
hearth was the communal focus of domestic activity in the
Irish household. Available furniture was arranged around it,
and its deep recess even allowed benches to be drawn inside
next to the fire.

In such as setting as this young James Kavanagh might
have learned news of the outside world from travellers and
tinkers, and heard tales told by local storytellers. One such
tale concerned the battle of Aughrim, where Edward Fitzgerald,
the last Baron of Cluen, fell mortally wounded. Fitzgerald
was known as a talented harpist and local memory still tells
of his musical abilities. According to local tradition, two
of his soldiers came upon his body at Aughrim, and after their
initial grief one exclaimed poetically to the other in Irish:
"feach mear bin a clarseach" or "look at the sweet finger of

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the harp." These two retainers were a Kavanagh and a Synnot of Cluen, and they returned the Baron's effects, including a battle sword, to their final resting place along the Nore. This tale might have been recounted during the boyhood of James Kavanagh, and helped to preserve the important tradition of the family in the local community.⁴³

While storytellers and communal traditions were part of the lifeways of Cluen during the eighteenth century, the late 1770's brought dramatic changes to the landscape and the social character of the rural townland. Farmers such as Edward Kavanagh began acquiring large farmholdings, motivated by individual opportunities rather than communal agreement. Three factors can be identified as contributing to the emergence of this agrarian individualism. The first involved the dissolution of the head tenant system on the Fownes estate. Increasingly, head tenants such as Henry Hayden could not satisfy conditions of their lease such as building lime kilns to fertilize the land. Hayden's problems were compounded by a belligerent tenantry who were slow to pay their rent. In a letter to Sir William Fownes in 1776, Hayden wrote that "the tenants of Cloan say if they are abated the 18 acres of river surveyd on them that they would be enabled to pay the rent." Here the Cluen farmers were most likely

This collective bargaining was part of a continuing pattern that led Hayden to resign his head tenancy in 1776. It opened the door to changes in lease holding in Cluen and the emergence of an improving, opportunistic tenantry.

Hayden's relinquishment of his lease also played directly into the Landlord's hand - one that was eager to assume direct control over the estate and reallocate land into consolidated individual farms and enclosed holdings. Improving landlords like Sir William Fownes and his grandson William Tighe were drawn to the new tenets of the agricultural revolution which swept over the island during the eighteenth century. They became convinced that proper exploitation of the land could only be achieved if tenants resided on single unified holdings rather than the traditional kin-group cluster. A solvent, improving tenantry, therefore, became an attractive alternative to the head tenant system; and new leases along with new incentives were extended directly to those on the land such as Edward Kavanagh.

With this recipe for greater efficiency came a closer, more binding relationship between landlord and tenant, symbolized by the written lease. Previously, many subtenants had held their land at will: negotiating their tenure through

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50 Henry Hayden to Sir William Fownes, July 10, 1776, WEP.

51 John Mannion, Irish Settlements in Eastern Canada, pg. 35.
oral agreement and somewhat arbitrary arrangements with the head tenant. With the improving landlord, however, came a shift to a highly organized relationship in which each tenant's position on the estate was first negotiated through written proposals submitted by the tenant (often acting in concert with several partners), and afterwards referred to through a written lease. A man's position and tenure, therefore, was measured by his ability to make the rent and perform necessary improvements on the land.\textsuperscript{51}

In this changing world of account books, formal leases, and efficiency, literacy took on new importance. It became a symbol of authority and power wielded by the landlord, and a means toward social advancement for the tenant. Those tenants who were literate, and therefore able to write proposals and negotiate leases on behalf of themselves and their illiterate kinsmen, were in a position to acquire the best holdings and an important place in local affairs.\textsuperscript{51} This factor may help to explain how the Kavanaghs regained their footing during the final decades of the eighteenth century. Evidence clearly points to the high level of education attained by James Kavanagh and his brothers in Cluen. A practice ledger survives today which James used to learn double entry

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{52}\ Cullen, \textit{The Emergence of Modern Ireland}, pg. 50. On the terms of indentures see Tighe, \textit{Statistical Observations...}, pp. 416-427.

\textsuperscript{53}\ This world of literate versus oral culture is brilliantly described in Rhys Isaac, \textit{The Transformation of Virginia}, pp. 91-93, 121-124.
\end{footnotesize}
bookeeping. In its margins he kept a running commentary on local happenings, along with fragments of indentures and receipts belonging to his father. We learn, for example, of "an acct. of the work that [was] given by the tents. of Cloane makeing the stake hedge in Coolnamuck ...", and are witness to numerous promissory notes such as "Mr. Hayden pleased to give the Bearor of this 3 d worth of paper and charge Edmd. Kavana."^5 One document, copied in part by James was addressed to the elder Kavanagh from the Justice of the Peace, It read:

You are hereby required personally to appear before me at my house at Innistiogue in said County on Monday 15 Int. at ten of ye clock in foor noone to answer all such matters of complaints as shall be objected against you by Thomas Audley of the Rour [Rower] for you inlawfully detaining from him seventeen shillings and seven pence of his waje....

Unfortunately, we know little more about the case, for only the opening portions were copied out. It appears that young Kavanagh had not intended on recording the document for posterity. Instead, he was practicing forms - copying out leases, documents, and newspaper articles in order to master

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^5 This ledger book has on its flyleaf, "James Kavanagh Ross 1771-1772." It was also used by other members of the family for tracing lessons in bookeeping - as evidenced by "Thomas Kavanagh his book." Kavanagh/Mulligan collection, in the possession of Mrs. Molly Baldwin. Damariscotta Mills, Maine.
legal jargon, style, and penmanship. It remains, however, a valuable indication of the level of education attained by Kavanagh at an early age, and the cultural literacy he carried with him to the New World.

The third and deciding factor which enabled the rise of strong Catholic farmers such as the Kavanaghs was the Tenantry Act of 1778. This involved repeal of the penal law which prohibited "papists" from taking out long leases and holding sizeable farms. By the end of the 18th century it had unleashed a small flood of Catholic investment by tenants both willing and able to gain an individual stake in the land. One of those farmers who came to prominence after the Tenantry Act was Edward Kavanagh. In 1777 he acquired the largest leasehold in lower Cluen, 76 Irish acres. This farm contained the most productive land in the townland and was largely undivided when it was inherited by Thomas Kavanagh, older brother of James, at the turn of the nineteenth century.

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55 During the eighteenth century students and apprentice clerks alike learned by constant repetition; copying writing samples, emulating styles, etc. That James Kavanagh chose to copy leases and business transactions suggests that he was intending toward a career in trade. On education in Ireland see Cullen, The Emergence of Modern Ireland, chapter 11.

56 On the Tenantry Act see Miller, Emigrants and Exiles, pg. 46.

57 The original lease between Fownes and Edward Kavanagh does not survive. Fragments of it, however, were copied into James Kavanagh's ledger book, and place the date of lease at 18 May, 1777, Kavanagh/Mulligan collection. The size of the Kavanagh farm in Lower Cluen is estimated from Thomas Kavanagh's holding in 1811. See "Reference to a survey of the lands of Cloan" by James Cotteral, 1811; WEP.
Written documents, surviving architecture, and oral tradition make it possible to reconstruct the Kavanagh farm during the early nineteenth century. Had James returned in 1812, he would have recognized many continuities from his boyhood, but he also would have been surprised by changes that had taken place in the cultural landscape. During the early 19th century, for example, the traditional farmstead was abandoned and a new farmhouse and outbuildings were erected within the cluster. In keeping with the spirit of improvement, the new house was well built with two stories and a slate roof rather than the traditional thatch (Figure 1.10). A sense of privacy was also suggested in its floor plan. While hearth and kitchen were still the focal point, the introduction of a jamb wall just inside the front door created a lobby or reception area that had to be crossed by the visitor before being admitted into the living space within. This sense of privacy was also continued upstairs, where sleeping space was segregated from the more functional space of kitchen and parlor. Just as the landscape was changing during this time moving from an emphasis on communal farm clusters to one of dispersed farms, so was there a change in architectural space and family behavior. The open sociability so common during James Kavanagh's boyhood had evolved into an increased emphasis on personal privacy and personal space.  

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58 Gaily, Rural Houses of the North of Ireland, pp. 216-219, 226.
1.10 Kavanagh House, Lower Cluen
During the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century the Kavanagh farm was separated into three divisions: The "house quarter" (59 acres), an area of tillage and pasture that encompassed much of the farming cluster of lower Cluen; the Coolnemuck quarter (15 acres), a stretch of good pasture on the far side of Cluen castle; and 2 acres of oziery, or willows, along the river - oziers being much sought after for woven baskets and containers (Figure 1.11). The farm was largely devoted to dairying at this time, and field names such as "the milking field" still recall this dominant pattern of land use. The Kavanaghs were part of a wide network of dairy farms throughout south Kilkenny; farms that took advantage of the profitable butter trade then flourishing in the ports of New Ross and Waterford. Butter was one of the mainstays of the southeastern economy and was shipped as salt provisions to Newfoundland, Iberia, and the Caribbean. As such it provided a tantalizing example to ambitious youths like James Kavanagh of the profits to be made from trans-Atlantic trade. As Louis Cullen and others suggest, even in quiet inward looking farm villages such as Cluen one was never far removed from the larger Atlantic world of

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A variety of sources were utilized in the reconstruction of the Kavanagh farm in lower Cluen: The Scale Survey, 1771; Cotterel's "Reference...to the lands of Cloan," 1811; Estate Rentals, 1816-1831; and the 1831 census of the Tighe Estate, WEP. Also, the Tithe Applotment books, PROI; the Ordnance Survey of 1837 and Griffith's Valuation (1850) in the Kilkenny Public Library; and Records at the Land Valuation Office, Ely Place, Dublin. Also, interview, Edward McCarron and Dick Power, Lower Cluen, August 2 and 3, 1989.
commerce and opportunity.

The merchant trade, in fact, was an important outlet for the younger sons of prosperous southeast farmers. "Strong farmers" such as Edward Kavanagh were often reluctant to divide their substantial holdings among several sons and risk diluting productivity. Instead, the farm was usually passed on intact to one or two successors as in the case of Lower Cluen where Thomas Kavanagh, the eldest son, inherited the farm. Surplus sons faced several alternatives: some found their way into comparable farms nearby; others, like James Kavanagh, were placed in the mercantile profession. This strategy of farm preservation through dispersal of surplus sons was a common pattern in the southeast at this time.

John Mannion, who has studied regional merchant origins in

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60 Louis Cullen, "The Social and Economic Evolution of South Kilkenny in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," Decies XIII (Jan. 1980), pp. 45-50. On the butter trade see John Mannion, "The Waterford Merchants and the Irish-Newfoundland Provisions trade," pp. 30-31; and Truxes, Irish-American Trade, pp. 157-162. Tighe's Statistical Survey confirms that Cluen was overwhelmingly devoted to pasture and dairying. His figures on land use for the parish of Clonamery in 1800 are as follows:

<table>
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<th>Crop</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barley</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potatoes</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turnips</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meadow</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1617</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plantation</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bog</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See Tighe, Statistical Observations relative to the County of Kilkenny, Tables after pg. 256.

61 Another son who left Cluen was John Kavanagh (1758-1805) who established himself in trade in Thomastown. His gravestone in Cluen graveyard, erected by his brother Thomas Kavanagh, identifies John as a "Merchant of Thomastown."
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64

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great detail, even suggests that big farms such as Cluen were the "nurseries" of those entering trade during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁶² James Kavanagh is a case in point.

At an early age James Kavanagh was apprenticed in the merchant trade in New Ross, a thriving port located several miles downstream from Cluen. Throughout the eighteenth century New Ross served as a base for County Wexford's trade with Newfoundland, carrying laborers and salt provisions to the Atlantic fishing banks and returning with cod for distribution in continental Europe. Along with the larger port of Waterford, Ross also carried on a lively wine trade with Spain, one that ensured a profitable livelihood for Irish Catholic merchants at home and abroad.⁶³ These mercantile networks point to the importance of international trade as an outlet for an upwardly mobile segment of the Catholic population. While class and religious distinctions of the Protestant elite still shaped upward mobility on country estates, the same was not true in the towns and cities. Here the pragmatic world of business enterprise and profitability


created merchant communities open to all - Quakers, Presbyterians, and Catholics. It is not surprising, therefore, that ambitious youngsters such as James Kavanagh looked to trade as a means to social advancement and opportunity.

This was particularly true in the southeast with its far ranging trade networks and open window on the Atlantic. As Cullen suggests, "the upward mobility of families was more marked in this region than elsewhere; the number of families entering trade, for instance, continued to grow and even widen in the eighteenth century, and included members of comparatively modest families ...."\(^4\) These families, including the Kavanaghs, exhibited a remarkable mobility between rural farm and merchant trade - a movement often facilitated through family and marriage connections. Wills, business partnerships, and marriage settlements all bear witness to the important role played by country nephews and affinal kin in maintaining family business and ensuring mercantile continuity. Written between the lines in these documents is the ability of successful families already established in trade to look after the sons of more modest relations.\(^5\)

\(^4\) Cullen, The Emergence of Modern Ireland, pg. 118.

\(^5\) Ibid., pg. 116. An overlooked source in studying mercantile networks and family business are the records in the registry of deeds, Henrietta Street, Dublin. Besides leases and deeds they also contain marriage settlements involving property, and wills which often indicate transatlantic
This scenario may help to explain James Kavanagh's early experiences in the New Ross trade. We know that in 1771, at age 14, he was learning double-entry bookkeeping in Ross, a fact that undoubtedly reflected his position as an apprentice clerk or assistant shopkeeper. While only speculation, it is possible that this career was initiated through family connections and his apprenticeship spent in the employ of a close relation. Several Kavanaghs from New Ross were engaged in mercantile trade during this time, notably Morgan Kavanagh - a wine merchant, shopkeeper, and occasional participant in the Newfoundland cod trade. It is from such a setting that James Kavanagh's career could have been launched, and apprenticeships spent in comparable beginnings were characteristic of those who moved from modest backgrounds into mercantile trade during the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{66}

Little is known of Kavanagh's career during the ensuing ten years. While several sources point to possible connections in Newfoundland, the record remains unclear. We

connections. For example, Benjamin Fuller, a Quaker merchant in Philadelphia, gave a business associate in Dublin power of attorney to "take possession of all messuages, lands, tenements and estate to which I am entitled under the will of Abraham Fuller of Lahinch, Kings County, Farmer, Oct. 2, 1717." RD 496-537-320468.

\textsuperscript{66} Morgan Kavanagh, who lived on North Street, was admitted a freeman for Ross "in the usual manner of papists." See minutes, New Ross Corporation, July 2, 1754, Tholsel, New Ross; also RD 192-496-128470. In 1772 Kavanagh advertised "a choice parcel of Newfoundland Cod fish...on reasonable terms and good encouragement to those who buy to sell again," Finns Leinster Journal, January 18, 1772. NLI.
do know that Kavanagh sailed out of New Ross for Boston in 1784, where he linked up with Matthew Cottril. Several factors undoubtedly influenced their decision to emigrate to the New World. The first was the narrowing of opportunities in merchant trade out of the southeast. Despite an unusual degree of social mobility in ports such as Waterford, there were simply too few career opportunities for all the younger sons of socially ambitious families in the southeast.\(^67\)

While ship captains and shopkeepers occasionally participated in commercial ventures, evidence reveals that most transatlantic trade was dominated by a select group of merchants. Between 1773 and 1776, for example, 70% of Waterford’s trade with Newfoundland was controlled by five merchant houses.\(^68\) Increasingly thereafter, New World settings and opportunities became an important outlet for those of mercantile talent who could not break into merchant communities in the homeland. As David Doyle suggests, this siphoning of merchant class and merchant skills out of Ireland was the eighteenth century counterpart of today’s "brain drain" of professional people.\(^69\)

Family connections also played an important role in the establishment of Irish mercantile settlement overseas.

\(^67\) Cullen, *The Emergence of Modern Ireland*, pp. 116-117.


\(^69\) Doyle, *Ireland, Irishmen and Revolutionary America*, pp. 46-47.
Aspiring merchants often followed established networks of kin or community, and may have been "recruited" by those already established in New World trade. There is a distinct possibility that when Kavanagh and Cottril established themselves in trade along Boston's waterfront they were tapping into existing family connections and commercial networks in the city. We know, for example, that several of Kavanagh's early associates in Boston were from New Ross. In particular, he was allied with James Smithwick who owned warehouses and property on Fish street in Boston's north end. Smithwick had emigrated from New Ross in 1763 and was active in trade between New England and Ireland. His son later joined Kavanagh and Cottril as a partner in their shipping trade. Their common origins and commercial partnership suggest networks and recruitment that extend back to Ireland.70

A third factor helps to explain the movement of Kavanagh and Cottril to America, and their subsequent success: a bull market. The years following the American Revolution were a boom period in transatlantic trade. Custom house records, shopkeeper's advertisements, and design books all point to the fact that Americans were hungry for British goods and material

70 Information on the Smithwicks can be located in Suffolk County Courthouse, Boston, Massachusetts. See Registry of Deeds, 121:231, and 290:1. Also, in the probate office see dockets 17375, 17376, 21185. James Smithwick's father, Francis Smithwick, lived on North street in New Ross. See Rd 323-73-211858.
culture. Britain and Ireland, likewise, were eager to resume transatlantic trade. Wartime activities and blockades had snapped supply lines of grain and raw materials coming from America—materials that included barrel staves, an absolute necessity to the provisions centers of the southeast. Merchants from Ireland sought to encourage business with American firms and wrote of the advantages of opening trade routes to Ireland after the war. One of these promoters was Edward Forbes, a Quaker merchant in Dublin who would become Kavanagh and Cottril's primary contact in the timber trade. In 1784 he wrote the following letter, one that provides an important perspective on the commercial opportunities open in Ireland during this period:

Dublin, 10th April, 1784

Christopher Champlin, and
Samuel Fowler and son [Newport, R.I.]
Gent.,

...As your state is now as free and independent as our own, I hope our Commercial intercourse will increase daily, and on my own part I shall you may depend studdy to promote it. Our infant Manufactures of every kind are daily improving and increasing, which consist of all sorts of Goods made as in Manchester, Course frizes, flanels, Rateens, Shallons, Durants, and Morains and Worsted and Silk Goods the best in Europe, and our linnens I need not tell you are rivald by none, and cheaper than can be shipt from London from whence hitherto America was supply'd....

Our Parliament is desirous to give the American States all possible encouragement to trade with us, and as an instance they lowered the duty on Tobacco to 11 d, in England 15 d is paid, and all your Goods and products are allow'd to be imported and remain here for a Market 6 months without paying
any other Expence or Charge then that of Storage...No duty paid on any of American Produce, except 11 d on Tobacco and 2 d per barel (of 4 1/2 bushels) of wheat...

Your most humble Servant,
Edw'd Forbes

As revealed in this letter, there were great opportunities during the early Republic for ambitious young merchants like Kavanagh and Cottril. And, as suggested above, one final variable contributed to their success in transatlantic trade: They were in the right place at the right time.

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CHAPTER II

MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT

As James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril crossed the Atlantic in 1784, the New World was in the process of an extraordinary burst of activity and expansion. New territory was opening up along the New England frontier and trans-Appalachian west, resulting in waves of migrants streaming into the backcountry from older communities along the eastern seaboard. This territorial expansion also attracted a significant movement of peoples from Europe in the years surrounding the American Revolution. Travelling from the Rhine valley, the Yorkshire highlands, or the backlanes of Dublin city these newcomers were drawn by a positive image of opportunity and new beginnings across the Atlantic, and were enabled by a vigorous passenger trade into North American ports. They moved into the coastal frontier and backcountry between the Penobscot in northern Maine and the St. Marys along Florida's Spanish borderlands; playing an important role in settling this vast new territory on the American frontier.

Yet as Bernard Bailyn and others have recently made clear, we know very little concerning the dimensions, the details, or the process of this westward movement across the Atlantic. This is particularly true of those emigrants coming from Ireland during the eighteenth century. While scholars estimate that over 250,000 Irish crossed the Atlantic during
this time, they have yet to be studied in great detail, particularly those of native Catholic origin, who numbered as many as 100,000.¹ The purpose of this chapter, therefore, will be to explore the nuances of native Irish emigration into early New England: to outline the different patterns of migration during the eighteenth century; and to investigate the varied experiences and lives of Irish settlers. In particular, I will focus upon the Kennebec frontier of mid-Maine, where Kavanagh and Cottril established their successful career.

Coming to the Kennebec in 1788 Kavanagh and Cottril would have encountered a surprising number of Irish folk already part of the social landscape. These included men such as Patrick McGuire, a tailor in Boothbay; John Dooley, a farmer in the backcountry community of Ballstown; and John O'Brien, the Dublin-born schoolmaster of Thomaston. Many of the Irish


Terminology used in this chapter to identify the different peoples leaving Ireland is as follows: "Native Irish" to denote Gaelic Catholic Irish; "Ulster-Scots" to identify the Scotch-Irish leaving northern Ireland; and "Anglo-irish" referring to Anglican Protestants. Unless specifically identified, those of "Hiberno-Norman" background (referring to the descendants of families who came to Ireland during the Norman conquest) will be amalgamated under the heading "Native Irish." During the eighteenth century the great majority remained Catholic, and through intermarriage had become "more Irish than the Irish."
had settled in coastal towns such as Wiscasset and Newcastle, finding work as laborers, mariners or traders. Others, like Dooley, had found their way into the backcountry where they settled as squatters, hoping that improvements they effected on the land would gain them full title. Indeed, traces of these Irish voyagers still remain along the old migration corridors into mid-Maine: towns such as Bangor, Belfast, Limerick, and New Waterford. Place names also abound on the landscape of Lincoln County, sites such as Finn's brook, McMahan island, and Molly Ryan's point, named after the keeper of a waterfront tavern frequented by local fishermen. Their story beckons to be told, along with that of the emigrants who first settled their boundaries.

The District of Maine is an important vantage point from which to explore the early Irish in New England. Maine stood at the crossroads between two important, and little studied, channels of migration: those Irish settlers who ventured into the eastern frontier from the port of Boston; and those who originally took passage to Newfoundland and the Maritimes before migrating to New England. An important source from which to study this migration are the records of port arrivals in Boston from 1763-1769, manifests which include detailed evidence on the arrival of several hundred Irish emigrants. In the years immediately following the French and Indian War, each ship entering Boston Harbor was officially recorded, along with its place of origin, the name of each passenger,
and often the passenger's occupation. As such, these records provide an unparalleled source on Irish emigration to early New England, the routes that were travelled, and the individual circumstances of the emigrants (Table 2.1).

Table 2.1
Ship and Passenger Arrivals, Boston, 1763-1769

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Port/Region of Origin</th>
<th>Number of Ships</th>
<th>Number of Passengers</th>
<th>Percentage Passengers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bristol, Eng.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cape Breton</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecticut</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glasgow</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halifax, N.S.</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>505</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>7.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philadelphia</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piscataqua</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhode Island</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

898  4155  100.0 %


For our purposes, perhaps the most striking pattern...
revealed in the record is the number of Irish fishermen migrating from Newfoundland. During the period between 1763 and 1769, seventy-three ships entered Boston Harbor from Newfoundland, carrying 505 passengers. While many of these were of Anglo-Irish or West Country background, surname analysis reveals that one-third of all passengers, and more than one-half of those identified as fishermen, were of Irish and Hiberno-Norman background, both of which were almost exclusively Catholic in eighteenth century Ireland (Table 2.2).³

Table 2.2
Surname Origins: Newfoundland Passengers to Boston

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Irish</th>
<th>Hiberno-Norman</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master (N=36)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant (N=10)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariner (N=128)</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishermen (N=213)</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (N=22)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total (N=409)</strong></td>
<td>223</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(54.5%)</th>
<th>(26.8%)</th>
<th>(14.4%)</th>
<th>(4.1%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Unknown cases: 96

This movement of Irish emigrants into New England is not surprising if one analyzes the history of the north-Atlantic

fishing banks. Each spring the Newfoundland fleet—largely financed through English west country merchants—would call on ports along the southeast of Ireland to put on provisions and recruit migrant fishermen for the summer season. In 1777 Arthur Young, an English traveller in Ireland, observed that "the number who go passengers in the Newfoundland ships is amazing; from sixty to eighty ships and from three thousand to five thousand (persons) annually." While most of these fishermen returned home at the end of the season, some joined the expanding permanent population of fishing outports such as St. Johns. Others were drawn to New England, finding their way aboard merchant vessels involved in the timber trade between Newfoundland and ports such as Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Boston. The sloop Desire, for example,


arrived at Boston from Newfoundland on December 11, 1766, carrying fishermen Darby Ryan, Luke Doolan, Morris Murphy, John Henneberry, Phillip Donnelly, James Lacey, and Patrick Brennan - all of them carrying names common to the southeast of Ireland, the major recruitment ground for the Newfoundland fisheries.⁵

Customs lists for Boston also reveal that many of the Captains working the Newfoundland and Maritime routes were themselves of Irish background. One finds Peter Doyle, aboard the sloop Two Sisters, Morris Kavanagh, master of the Schooner Two Friends, and Moses Roach, from Wexford, captain of the Squid. They reflect the growing Catholic Irish mercantile connections and shipping interests with Newfoundland and America during the latter half of the eighteenth century.⁶ Furthermore, they also point to the growing number of Irish mariners and entrepreneurs seeking opportunities in the New World. Morris Kavanagh, mentioned above, is a prime example. Originally from New Ross, County Wexford, he was a member of a extended shipping family with branches in Newfoundland, Cape Breton Island, and Halifax.⁷


⁵ Record Commissioners, pg.
While many of the Newfoundland immigrants chose to remain in Boston, contributing to the growing Irish population in the city, some, like Patrick and Roger Hanley, migrated to Lincoln County, Maine, in search of land and economic opportunity. The Hanleys were representative of many Irish fishermen who ventured to the New World in the eighteenth century. In the 1760's, they left their native farming village in Tipperary to look for work along the quays of Waterford city. In time they signed on as laborers to Newfoundland, working several seasons as inshore fishermen before moving on to New England. By 1771, the Hanleys had acquired 200 acres in Bristol Maine, and, like many other Newfoundland immigrants of the period, they became farmers, opting to follow the rural traditions they knew in southeast Ireland. Their experience underlines an important pattern that occurs throughout early American migration: namely, that short-term or seasonal mobility in search of employment often evolved into permanent relocation.

Besides this striking Newfoundland connection, Boston

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See notes and genealogy on the Hanley family compiled by Paul Hanley Furfey. Deposited at the Skidompha Public Library, Damariscotta, Maine. Also see LCRD 9:82, 10:82.

port arrivals between 1763 and 1769 identify nine ships coming directly from Ireland carrying 269 passengers - 6.5 percent of all emigrant arrivals in Boston during this period (Table 2.1). With one exception, these Irish vessels were all carrying indentured servants, and as such represent a small sample of the Irish servant trade then flourishing in American ports, particularly Philadelphia and the Chesapeake. Throughout the eighteenth century, Ireland had supplied a large proportion of America's bound labor, drawn from both Ulster and southern Ireland. While hard figures have not survived, the volume of this servant trade is suggested through a variety of sources. Ulster newspaper advertisements between 1750 and 1775, for example, document the clearance of 442 vessels carrying servants from Belfast, Derry and Newry into the middle colonies and seaboard south. Comparable work on clearances from southern Ireland reveals that 252 ships left from Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Waterford during these same years.¹¹ This southern fleet was bound for a variety

of destinations in the New World, including New England.

New England's servant trade was already well established by the early eighteenth century, as illustrated in the letters and accounts of merchant firms such as Archibald MacPhaedris of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. Encouraged by great profits to be made from the servant trade he wrote in 1717 that Irish labor could turn "abbetter Acct then Aney other Imploymt I can folow." He went on to write to a correspondent in Belfast that he was "sending severall Vessells to Cork, Belfast, Dublin and Waterford for the Bringing over of Servants and Good farmers." Indeed, with kinship and mercantile networks in Ulster, MacPhaedris was able to direct a lucrative trade with Irish ports: sending lumber, barrel staves, and rum across the Atlantic and returning with servants and provisions such as beef and butter. With profits gained from the Irish trade MacPhaedris built a stylish Georgian townhouse in Portsmouth, one lavished with magnificent murals of Iroquois sachems and the battle of the Boyne.

For comparative material on servants leaving from England during this time see Bailyn, Voyagers to the West, pp. 241-344; and David Galenson, White Servitude in Colonial America: An Economic Analysis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

The first quote is taken from Truxes, Irish-American Trade, pg 23. The second, from a letter dated December 1717, can be found in William G. Saltonstall, Ports of the Piscataqua (Cambridge Mass., 1941), pg. 26. On the business career of MacPhaedris see the Papers of A. MacPhaedris and Jonathan Warner, 1716-1813, MS. in Baker Library, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University.
Count cases, early American diaries, and colonial newspapers all indicate the degree to which Irish servants were utilized in early New England. Advertisements for runaway servants, in particular, provide a valuable glimpse into the behavior, physical appearance and lifestyles of the early Irish. One example appeared in the Boston Gazette on November 21, 1768:

Ran away October 1, 1768, from the Rev. Mr. Paul Coffin, of Narragansett No. 1, in York County [Maine], James Fitz Gerald, an Irish Apprentice, of about 18 or 19 years. He is a stocky thick Fellow, has a Broad Face and is not very tall. He wears his own good black Hair, has had the Small Pox, and speaks Broken English. He had on and with him at his Departure, a Wool Hat, an old Whitish Fustian Coat, dark blue or greyish Cloth Jacket, Horn Buttons....and a Book intitled An Introduction for the Indians, in the Form of a Dialogue between a Missionary and an Indian....

These Runaway notices went on to describe the particular skills of the servant, and often any distinguishing features, particularly their language and accent. Some Irish were described as speaking "Bad English", or in the case of James Fitzgerald, "broken English", a sign that he was most likely a native Irish speaker adjusting to a new language as well as environment. Although New England farmers used bound labor on a lesser scale than did their counterparts in Pennsylvania and the Chesapeake, diaries offer ample evidence of Irish servants working alongside family labor. Ebenezer Parkman,

13 Boston Gazette, November 21, 1768.
the minister of Westborough Massachusetts from 1724 until his
death in 1782, employed several indentured servants on his
rural farm, including John Kidney, a 15 year old boy from
Waterford. As Parkman's diary attests, however, this
arrangement soon turned sour: Kidney attempted to rape
Parkman's 13 year old daughter, whereupon Mrs. Parkman refused
to abide with "so brutish a creature". The country parson
quickly sold the Irishman to another master and afterwards
relied upon locally recruited wage labor, and work from his
parishioners.\textsuperscript{14}

While some Irish servants experienced disorientation and
maladjustment in the New World, as illustrated by the number
of runaway advertisements in early American newspapers,
others made good upon securing their freedom dues. One of
these was Matthew Lyon, an indentured servant from County
Wicklow, who, after serving out his time on a farm in
Connecticut, journeyed to the Vermont backcountry. There he
took an active role in the Committee of Public Safety during
the American Revolution, and subsequently distinguished
himself as a frontier entreprenuer, industrialist, and United
States Congressman.\textsuperscript{15}

\textsuperscript{14} Quote taken from Richard Dunn, "Servants and
Slaves...", pg 187. Also see The Diary of Ebenezer Parkman,
33, 37, 55, 64-65.

\textsuperscript{15} On Matthew Lyon see Doyle, Ireland, Irishmen, and
Revolutionary America, pp. 103, 107.
John Sullivan, Revolutionary General from Durham, New Hampshire, and his brother James, who served as Governor of Massachusetts, 1807-1808. Their father, John Sullivan, born into the old Gaelic gentry in Limerick, and their mother Margaret Browne from Cork, had both crossed the Atlantic as redemptioners. The elder Sullivan subsequently worked as a schoolmaster in Berwick, Maine—a common occupation for Irish emigrants in early New England—and gained local renown as a linguist, having acquired several languages while living in France after the Williamite Wars. In time the Sullivans assimilated themselves into colonial society in northern New England, illustrated by their membership in the Congregational church, and most dramatically, by the accomplishments of their

Several writers point to the remarkable incidence of Irish schoolmasters in early America. See, in particular, the series by Richard Purcell on "Education and Irish Teachers in Colonial America" appearing in various issues of Catholic Educational Review during the 1930's. Indeed, in Lincoln county a similar pattern prevailed. During the late eighteenth century one finds in the record several Irish-born schoolmasters, including John O'Brien of Warren, who served in the Revolutionary War; Garrett Burns of Hancock; Thomas Shea of Camden, described in court records as a "Trader alias Schoolmaster"; William Walsh of Thomaston, born in Dublin in 1776; and James Mulligan, another Dublin native who came to Damariscotta Mills at the opening of the nineteenth century. The incidence of Irish schoolmasters in early America can be explained from several perspectives. First, as teaching provided an important outlet for the literate and educated in Ireland during this time, it was natural for some emigrants such as John O'Sullivan to turn to this profession after they arrived in the New World. Also, Ireland at this time had many itinerant schoolmasters who travelled from village to village, teaching in barns and "hedgerow" schools. A few of them may have taken their travelling classroom to America. For more on education and schoolmasters in eighteenth century Ireland see Louis Cullen, The Emergence of Modern Ireland, 1600-1900 (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1981), pp. 235-238.
children. Still, evidence suggests that both sons continued an interest in Irish affairs and identity. General John Sullivan's personal correspondence includes letters to relations in Ireland in which he inquires into family history; and his speculative venture in the Maine backcountry was named "Limerick", after his father's birthplace.17

While the servant trade into New England diminished somewhat during the second half of the eighteenth century (in large part due to the attraction of Pennsylvania with its rich farmland, religious tolerance and recruitment schemes), evidence in customs lists for Boston still suggest an active trade with southern Ireland. During the years 1763-1769 over 250 migrants and indentured servants were landed along the wharves of Boston, the majority coming from ports in southern Ireland (Table 2.3)

17 On the Sullivans see Charles P. Whittemore, A General of the Revolution, John Sullivan of New Hampshire (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961); and Letters and Papers of Major General John Sullivan, ed. Otis G. Hammond (Concord, N.H.: New Hampshire Historical Society, 1930). Concerning Sullivan's Irish correspondence see Nanette O'Sullivan to General Sullivan, September 15, 1788; and Phillip O'Sullivan to General Sullivan, May 16, 1796, in Letters and Papers..., Vol. III, 593-597, 632. John Sullivan the emigrant left a fascinating history of his family in Ireland. They were directly related to the O'Sullivan Beare, from county Cork and Kerry, a prominent old Gaelic family who took an active role in the battle of Aughrim and Limerick during the Williamite Wars. His father, Major Phillip O'Sullivan, was one of the "Wild Geese" who were exiled to France after the war. For the Sullivan family history see Letters and Papers..., 632-634.
Table 2.5
Irish ship arrivals, Port of Boston: 1763-1769

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Port of Origin</th>
<th>No. of Vessels</th>
<th>No. of Passengers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belfast</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinsale</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td>259</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Records Commissioners... Vol. 29; Boston Gazette, 1763-1769, Shipping News

The Brig "Wilmott", for example, arrived from Cork on November 15, 1766, carrying seventy two servants - all consigned to the Boston firm of Creed and Collis. These were most likely auctioned aboard ship where prospective buyers could inspect the "merchandise" and bargain with the agent or captain over the purchase price. Shipboard auctions, as described by contemporaries, were often highly degrading. One army officer, having witnessed the sale of servants along the wharves of Philadelphia in 1773, wrote to his father in Dublin saying "The Irish sell their servants here as they do their horses, and advertise them as they do their oatmeal and beef." Boston was certainly no exception.

Surviving customs lists for Boston reveal several important patterns associated with New England's servant trade with Ireland. One significant feature was the region's shipping networks with Dublin and Cork, towns to which New

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13 Lockhart, Some Aspects of Emigration..., pg. 69.
England merchants sent flaxseed and lumber for conversion into salted provisions for the West Indies. As customs lists and newspaper items reveal, some of these cargoes laden with beef and butter found their way directly to Boston especially in times of short-term scarcity. In the Boston Gazette, for example, one finds the following advertisement on October 22, 1764:

Lately imported in the Snow James and Elizabeth, James Wisty, Master; choice Irish PORK and BEEF of the best quality; fine rose BUTTER in small full bottomed firkins; and Hogs Lard properly preserved for keeping any length of time; all to be sold cheap for Cash by Owen O'Neil aboard said Snow, at Hancock's Wharff.

N. B. The Quality of Irish Provisions, so well known for Goodness in most Parts of America, 'tis unnecessary to say any Thing in Praise of Them, the Quality will best prove themselves.

Along with these Irish provisions travelled Irish servants, particularly from the port of Cork. Evidence of these connections can be witnessed in the shipping manifests

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15 Truxes, Irish American Trade, pp. 143, 160-61. Cork remained a prominent port associated with New England trade. In the early nineteenth century it was an important provisioning stop in the Maine timber trade and firms such as Kavanagh and Cottrill developed significant trading networks in the city. One measure of this trade can be seen in port arrivals and clearances for Cork between 1810 and 1811. During this time 57 ships appeared from Maine ports, 37 of these from Wiscasset. See Cork Mercantile Chronicle, June 1810-September 1811, (microfilm reel # ), NLI.

20 Many of them were recruited by agents in Cork who gathered servants for American merchants and ship captains. One such agent advertised, "Stout and well grown Lads from twelve to twenty years old...will meet with good encouragement by applying to mrs. M'Donogh, in Bruces' Lane." See Truxes, Irish American Trade, pg. 134.
for Boston between 1763 and 1769. Of the nine Irish ships entering Boston harbor, six originated in Cork, with the remainder sailing from Dublin, Kinsale, and Belfast. In addition, the record suggests that some Irish servant ships may have first stopped in the Maritimes before continuing for Boston, as in the case of the sloop Dispatch from Halifax which carried six "Irish servants consigned to Mr. Robert Hallowell".

The majority of indentured servants coming into Boston were young, single males, a pattern found throughout the servant trade into colonial America. Women comprised only five percent of the servant lists between 1763 and 1769, and their small numbers are likely explained by low demand for female servants in New England where domestic labor was largely satisfied by family labor and short-term hired help. Passenger lists further reveal that a significant number of servants were identified as skilled artisans with trades suitable for an urban environment such as Boston (Table 2.5). In 1767, for example, the Massachusetts Gazette...

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21 Records Commissioners..., Vol. 29, pp. 278-279. Besides ships from Ireland, the only other source of indentured servants coming into Boston during this period was from the Island of Jersey. On May 23, 1769, the schooner Molly entered carrying 33 Jersey servants. Ibid., pg. 315.

22 The small number of Irish women emigrating into early America may also reflect traditional and patriarchal control in the homeland over unmarried daughters, a pattern that only began to break down in the early nineteenth century (a fact mirrored in surviving passenger lists which reveal a higher proportion of female emigrants the further one moves past the eighteenth century).
advertised:

Just arrived from Cork in Brig 'Ann and Margaret' Atkins [Captain], A Parcel of hearty likely Servants Men, Women, Boys, Girls from 13 to 20 suitable for Gentlemen, Farmers, Traders: Among them are Weavers, Shoemakers, Taylors, Coopers, Smiths, Barbers, etc.21

Also on board were those identified as carpenters and joiners, servants whose talents would be eagerly sought after in newly settled territories such as Maine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Known cases</th>
<th>Unidentified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>126</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaver</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>Mariner</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spinner</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joiner</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoemaker</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoolmaster</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ship Captain</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensign</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolcomber</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentleman</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Clergyman</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>Physician</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookeeper</td>
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<td>Clockmaker</td>
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<td>Bleacher</td>
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<td>Baker</td>
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<td>Coachman</td>
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<td>Nailer</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mason</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barber</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Piper</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Schoolmaster</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.4
Occupations - Irish Passengers to Boston, 1763-1769

Source: Record Commissioners of Boston Vol 29, pp. 243-317.

One of the most revealing aspects of the Irish passenger lists is the close relationship between the Irish port of origin and the ethnic composition of its passengers. Ships coming from Ulster, for example, carried few passengers of native Catholic background. Aboard the ship John, bound from Belfast in 1767, one finds such distinctive Ulster names as

21 Massachusetts Gazette, October 15, 1767.
Alexander Nichols, William Boyd, and Patrick Campbell, who described his occupation as "piper". They reflect the overwhelming Scots-Presbyterian population in the migration field surrounding Belfast during the mid-eighteenth century. On the other hand, servants drawn from Cork during this period were comprised almost entirely of native Munster Irish, with a sprinkling of Hiberno-Norman and New English. Passengers travelling on the Ann and Margaret, for example, included Darby Conner, Mary Callahane, Timothy Mulcahy, Dinish Ryan, and Honora Coveney - names common in Cork and its hinterlands.  

Of course not all Irish emigrants into Boston came as indentured servants or migrant fishermen. The record indicates that a small minority paid their own fares across the Atlantic and arrived with some capital or marketable skill to establish themselves in the New World. Michael Claire [Cleary], for example, travelled as a free passenger from Cork aboard the brig Hound in 1764. A cooper by trade, Cleary worked some time in Boston before venturing to Maine with Captain William Nickels, an Ulster-Scots speculator recruiting settlers for his lands in Bristol. Cleary subsequently acquired one hundred acres at Pemaquid falls and joined the ranks of Irish emigrants moving into the

24 Records Commissioners..., pp. 277, 297-98. Also see the work of David Doyle who first mentions the close association between port of origin and ethnic content of its passengers - particularly, Ireland, Irishmen, and Revolutionary America, pp. 66-67.
backcountry of northern New England.\

Tradesmen and journeymen such as Cleary were numerous among the wandering population of Ireland, and many tried their luck in the New World during the eighteenth century. In particular, farmer-weavers from linen-producing areas increasingly took ship to America during the Revolutionary era - a trend that caused much concern at home. A letter from Dublin in 1773 lamented that

"The spirit of emigration hath seized the people, and the several counties hitherto famous for the residence of linen manufactures, are now almost dwindled into dreary wastes. The land lies uncultivated; and... scarcely a vessel sails from Ireland bound to any of the plantations but what is filled with multitudes of useful artisans, their wives, and children."

While many of these were Ulster-Scots, a significant minority came from southern Ireland, victims of the handloom-weaving collapse in Cork during the 1760's, and the widespread linen depression from 1771 onwards.\

\[\footnote{Michael Claire came to Boston from Cork on May 30, 1764. \textit{A Report of the Records Commissioners}, pg. 257. My conclusion that Claire and Cleary are one and the same is based on the following evidence: 1) A notice in the \textit{Massachusetts Spy} on April 3, 1788 stated that Michael Cleary "came passenger from Ireland to Boston...twenty four years ago." This would be 1764. 2) The notice further stated that Cleary was from Mitchelstown, county Cork. The obvious port of departure from Mitchelstown would be cork. 3) "Claire" is how Cleary would be pronounced by someone speaking in an Irish accent.}

\[\footnote{Quote taken from Bailyn, \textit{Voyagers to the West}, pp. 37-38. On the decline in handloom weaving see Doyle, \textit{Ireland, Irishmen, and Revolutionary America}, pg. 65.}

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The Irish merchant class were also highly mobile during this period, establishing commercial networks and merchant communities throughout the colonies. Travelling into Boston, for example, in 1767 were six "traders all from ye north of Ireland". Many aspiring merchants were of Catholic origin, the sons of large farmers or traders who set their sights on the New World when confronted with restricted opportunities at home. Perhaps representative of such emigrants was Thomas Burke who left for Virginia in 1772. He explained that while he was "born in Ireland to a once affluent Family,...some Family misfortunes reduced [him] to the alternative of Domestick Indolent Dependence, or an Enterprising Peregrination" to Virginia. The same held true for New England. Burgeoning trade and growing toleration encouraged a small but influential number of traders and ship captains to look toward Boston and Maine during the mid-eighteenth century. One of these was James Smithwick, a ship captain and merchant who emigrated to Boston from New Ross, County Wexford during the 1760's. By the outbreak of the Revolution Smithwick had established himself in the growing timber trade with Europe and the West Indies, acquired shops and warehouses

27 These traders took ship aboard the Rialto leaving Bristol. Their names - John Duffy, Owen Caroline (Carolan), Patrick Carolan, Lawrence Merren - suggest that they were of Catholic origin. One gave his name as "Carrick McRoss", which was most likely a pun on his origins in Carrickmacross, a market and trading town in county Monaghan.

28 Kerby Miller, Emigrants and Exiles, pg. 141. Burke later became the Governor of North Carolina.
on Fish street in the North end, and owned two slaves, one of them suggestively named "Waterford". At the close of the eighteenth century his son, Captain James Smithwick, journeyed to Maine in search of increased opportunities. He followed the well-worn migrant routes stretching into Lincoln County, where he joined Michael Cleary and the Hanleys - earlier Boston Irish who had ventured to the eastern frontier.²⁵

Indeed many of Boston’s Irish community sought land and commercial opportunities in the newly opened territory of Maine. Well-to-do Irish such as Smithwick, and his future partners James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril, settled in port towns such as Bristol, establishing themselves as mariners, shopkeepers or traders. There they were joined by Irish artisans such as Michael Joyce, a cooper from Innisloe, County Kilkenny, who moved north from Boston in 1798. Craftsmen such as Joyce would have been in great demand along the Maine coast due to the rise in shipbuilding and the timber trade. Others pursued more agrarian occupations. Upon gaining their freedom many Irish servants may have been

²⁵ On Irish merchant communities and their settlement in the New World see Truxes, Irish American Trade, chapters 4 through 6; Doyle, Ireland, Irishmen and the American Revolution, 22-50; and the works of John Mannion cited above. Information on the Smithwicks can be located at the Suffolk County Courthouse, Boston, Massachusetts. See registry of deeds 121:231, 290:1; and registry of probate, docket 17375, 17376, and 21185. Also see the Boston Gazette, October 26, 1767, which mentions Smithwick shipping to the West Indies. On the Smithwick’s Irish connections see a lease relating to Francis Smithwick (James’ father) who lived on North Street in New Ross. Registry of Deeds, Dublin, 323-73-211838.
attracted to new land and new beginnings east of the Kennebec. Some set off for the Kennebec and Sheepscot backcountry where they joined the ranks of farmers and squatters carving out possessions in frontier settlements such as Malta.  

The record suggests that a steady proportion of Boston's Irish community did migrate to Maine during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. My analysis of early naturalization petitions in mid-Maine, 1788-1830, reveals that Boston was the most common point of entry for the Irish, followed by Newfoundland, Maine, and the Maritimes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Port of Arrival</th>
<th>Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John NB</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiscasset ME</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle ME</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Andrews NB</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastport ME</td>
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<td>Bath ME</td>
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<td>Halifax NS</td>
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<td>Waldoborough ME</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfast ME</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubec ME</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland ME</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salem MA</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>Mirimichi NB</td>
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<tr>
<td>Castine ME</td>
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<td>Thomaston ME</td>
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<td>Newburyport MA</td>
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<td>Bristol RI</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charleston SC</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savannah GA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valid Cases: 142

Source: Naturalization Petitions, Lincoln and Kennebec County, Maine, Record Group 85, Boxes 477-78, 480, NAW.

A considerable number of these travellers came into Lincoln county, a vast region down east from Portland. Here abundant lands, growing centers of trade, and a relatively

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heterogeneous population offered Irish Catholics chances for opportunity and upward mobility rarely experienced elsewhere in New England. The Irish were not alone. They joined thousands of other settlers streaming into northern New England during the early Republic. Between 1783 and 1820 the population of Maine expanded dramatically: from 56,000 to 300,000 - an increase of 450 percent. And while historians have traditionally viewed this explosion as the product of internal migration from older communities in Massachusetts and Connecticut, evidence suggests that at least part of this increase originated in Ulster and southern Ireland.

How many Irish were living in the Kennebec country when Kavanagh and Cottril journeyed there in 1788? While we may never have a precise figure for the flow of native Irish into Maine, one yardstick exists with which to measure their

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31 This point is made by Kerby Miller in reference to the Middle Colonies; see Emigrants and Exiles, pg. 146. The same holds true for Lincoln county during the eighteenth century. Here one finds abundant land, opportunity, and a variegated social environment in the years surrounding the Revolution. Whereas the majority of settlers living east of the Kennebec were native New Englanders there was, nonetheless, a surprising degree of ethnic variety - including pockets of Ulster-Scots, German Lutherans, native Irish, Highland Scots, plus a scattering of free blacks.

probable numbers: the 1790 census. In particular, there are several studies which estimate the ethnic ancestry of the early American population based upon surname analysis of household heads on the first Federal census (see Appendix A). They suggest that Maine in 1790 was close to 5 percent native Irish—the highest concentration north of Pennsylvania. This figure increases to thirteen percent if one factors in the Ulster Scots who emigrated to the Maine frontier throughout the eighteenth century.\footnote{Thomas L. Purvis, "The European Ancestry of the United States Population, 1790," WMQ, 41 (January, 1984), pg. 98.} This means that based upon a total population of 96,168 in 1790, Maine was home to 12,653 Irish; 8078 being of Ulster-Scots ancestry and 4,615 of Catholic Irish.

While these figures are significant, they still may underestimate those of Irish ancestry in Maine, particularly those of Catholic origin. The problem stems from the methodology used in the original study, overseen by the American Historical Society in 1931. As David Doyle describes for Ireland, "Its method was to take a broad sample of representative surnames to Leinster (such as Moran or Flannery) to Munster (such as McCarthy and Ryan), to native Ulster and to Scots Ulster (such as Orr and Boyd), and to infer from the relationship between the proportions of people of those surnames in Ireland in the 1890's and the proportions of people of the same names in America in 1790 the probable..."
Irish and Scotch-Irish element in the colonial population." In a series of articles appearing in the William and Mary Quarterly during the past decade scholars have expressed reservations concerning the accuracy of this study. In particular, they suggest that surnames of Celtic stock were often underestimated and misrepresented (for example, sampling for the name McDonnell as an indicator of Scots ancestry, when it can also be an Irish-Catholic surname).

For our purposes in Maine there are two specific reservations that need to be addressed. First, the 1931 report overlooked the importance of the Anglo-Norman element in the Catholic population of Ireland, particularly in the province of Leinster. In counties such as Kilkenny, Waterford, and Wexford, Norman family names such as Power and Fitzgerald abound on the landscape, yet find only token consideration in the 1931 sample. In order to minimize confusion with other ethnic stocks, the A.H.A. study made the decision to concentrate on definitively Gaelic names. As several specialists have pointed out, however, this critically skews

\[\text{\textsuperscript{34}}\text{ Doyle, Ireland, Irishmen and Revolutionary America, pg. 60.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{35}}\text{ The first to call attention to problems of method and accuracy in the 1931 A.H.A. study were Forest and Ellen McDonald in "The Ethnic Origins of the American People, 1790." WMO, 37 (April, 1980), pp. 179-199. An appraisal of the McDonald's article appeared in 1984 which was critical of certain findings but basically agreed that Celtic groups in particular were under-represented. See Thomas Purvis and Donald Akenson, "The Population of the United States, 1790: A Symposium," WMO, 41 (January, 1984), pp. 84-119.}\]
the findings since many of those of Gaelic background were traditional Irish speakers, and less likely to emigrate than those of Anglo-Norman ancestry, who had settled in the commercial hinterlands of Dublin, Waterford, and Cork. It was precisely from these hinterlands that a disproportionate number of indentured servants and freemen emigrated in the eighteenth century.\footnote{The early American landscape is one of these Africans who emigrated in the eighteenth century.\footnote{Carrying this further, analysis of the 1790 census reveals that many Irishmen with Anglo-Norman surnames found their way to Maine; emigrants who most likely do not figure in the A.H.A. percentages for Irish ancestry. One locates, for example, Jeremiah Dalton and James Forrestal in Pownalborough, Patrick Lawlor and James Power in Bristol and William Keating in Thomaston. Keating, from Lismore, County Waterford was a shipcaptain involved in the West Indian trade. In later years he acted as sponsor to the children of yet another Anglo-Norman emigrant from Ireland, Matthew Cottril.\footnote{Heads of Families: At the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1790, Maine (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1908), 32-52. For an authoritative review of Anglo-Norman nomenclature in Ireland see McLysaght, Irish Families.}}

Also hidden in the early American landscape are those emigrants of Anglo-Irish background - Anglican Protestants who left the southern counties of Ireland in small to moderate numbers during the colonial period. Carrying surnames such as...
Browne, Dobbs and Smith, it is difficult to distinguish them from English stock and subsequently they have often been identified as such by antiquarians, genealogists, and the A.H.A. report, which assigned their numbers to English ancestry. The fact remains, however, that a small, but noteworthy number of Anglo-Irish journeyed to the New World: men like Sir William Johnson from County Meath, who established a landed estate along the Hudson; and George Berkeley the churchman and philosopher, who came as an Anglican missionary to Newport, Rhode Island in 1705. Still others found their way into northern New England. One of these was Colonel Joseph North of Hallowell, Maine, who served as Justice of the Peace and District Judge for Lincoln County during the late eighteenth century. North's father, Captain John North, had emigrated as a young man from Cloneen, County Offaly, where his family were members of the minor gentry and controlled several hundred acres straddling Offaly and Westmeath.

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38 Kerby Miller estimates that the Anglo-Irish contributed 25% of all Protestants emigrants leaving Ireland during the colonial period. See Emigrants and Exiles, pp. 150-51.

39 Captain John North was born in 1698 in Cloneen, County Offaly. He and his father John North emigrated in 1730, initially landing in Portsmouth, New Hampshire before moving on to Bristol and Pemaquid. Captain North, the son, served as commander at Ft. Frederick at Pemaquid, was appointed surveyor for the Kennebec Proprietors in 1750, and was subsequently appointed Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, a post he held until his death at St. Georges in 1763. For sources and genealogy on the Norths see Miscellaneous Records of Lincoln County, Maine, ed., Elizabeth Reed, Vol II, pp. 159-162; and James North, The History of Augusta (Augusta, Maine: 1870; reprinted Somersworth, N.H.: New England History Press, 1981).
Another Anglo-Irish emigrant was Arthur Browne, the Anglican minister of Queens chapel in Portsmouth, New Hampshire from 1736 until his death in 1773. Browne is representative of many Anglo-Irish who ventured to New England during the eighteenth century. He was born into a privileged clerical family at Mellifont, County Louth in 1699, and educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he took an M.A. Ordained an Anglican clergyman by the Bishop of London, he followed his calling to the colonies in 1729 as a missionary for the S.P.G.F.P. Like other Anglo-Irish in America Browne was one of the elite - he was well educated, held an important position in the community, and moved in the highest social circles - being part of the "Oligarchy" connected with Benning and John Wentworth, the Anglican Governors of New Hampshire. Yet he never lost touch with his beginnings, corresponding with a network of churchmen and relations in Ireland, and sending his sons to be educated at Trinity College. His probate inventory even reveals that in the entry hall of his elegant "Mansion House" in Portsmouth hung "1 map of Dublin College". The Anglo-Irish in America remain unstudied and often unidentified. They represent a small, but important

On their Irish background see the North family history, The Irish Genealogical Office, 2 Kildare Street, Dublin.

40 On Arthur Browne see Mary Cochrane Rogers, Glimpses of an Old Social Capital: As Illustrated by the life of Reverend Arthur Browne and his Circle (Boston, 1922). Also see Browne's household inventory probated July 13, 1773, in the Registry of Probate, Rockingham County Courthouse, Exeter, N.H.
slice of the early American population, as suggested by the lives of Browne, North and others.

While Arthur Browne lived in comfort, grace, and visibility in New Hampshire's social capital, other Irishmen particularly those of Catholic origin living on the frontier of Maine - remained on the periphery. One source that helps to unlock their "hidden" character is the 1790 census. By analyzing ethnic nomenclature and identity one discovers important clusters of Native-Irish on the eastern frontier during the eighteenth century. At Georgetown, Maine, for example, lived thirty-three families of Irish-ancestry in 1790, representing fifteen percent of the town's population.41 Another "community" of Irish settled in the Damariscotta region of Lincoln County, an area loosely defined as falling between the Sheepscot river at Wiscasset and Broad cove at Waldoborough. Here one finds a varied slice of Irish-America, ranging from Charles Callahan, a Loyalist merchant living in Wiscasset, to John and Mary Dooley, an aged couple ending their days as paupers in the backcountry settlement of

41 Heads of Families...1790, Maine, pp. 37-38. In Georgetown of 1790 one encounters such distinctly Irish names as Timothy McMahon, Michael Dooley, John Gahan, Daniel Sullivan, John Quin, Michael Shay, James Mahoney, and Widow Lary [Leary]. Many of them had settled on Parkers Island and intermarried into local society in Georgetown. By 1790 some of them were second-generation Irish, which helps to explain their assimilation, and their lack of response to the Catholic church in Lincoln county (established in 1798).
Balltown. Numbering up to 250 individuals and families between 1760 and 1820, these Irish remain an unstudied element of the multi-ethnic society that made up the Maine population east of the Kennebec (see Appendix B).

What factors explain the invisible nature of Irish settlement in Maine during the colonial period? The record suggests that the majority of native-Irish emigrating to Lincoln County before 1800 were quickly absorbed into frontier life. The process by which they adapted to their new environment should be examined from a number of perspectives. First, it is my opinion that many Irish immigrants in early America were conditioned for assimilation by their earlier experiences at home. For the most part they were rootless men, already separated from family and community ties before they left Ireland. As historians such as Bernard Bailyn remind us, a large proportion of those who moved to America in the eighteenth century were already on the move in their native localities. Some had left the farms and villages of

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Callahan, a merchant and mariner in old Pownalborough, was "banished" in 1778 and fled to Halifax, Nova Scotia. He subsequently commanded several privateers off the Maritimes during the war and perished aboard the ship North in 1779. Callahan's estate, including an elegant townhouse in Wiscasset, was confiscated during the war. Charles Edwin Allen refers to Callahan as an "Irish Catholic" in his History of Dresden (Boston, 1931), pg. 394. For more on Callahan see Miscellaneous Records of Lincoln County, Vol. II, pg. 137; and LCP Vol 2, pg. 60. On the Dooleys who first settled in Balltown during the 1780's see Linwood Lowden, A History of North Whitefield (Hallowell Me., 1985); and the North Whitefield Town Records, Minutes, 1823, in the possession of Linwood Lowden, North Whitefield, Maine.
their youth to live and work in one of the larger cities or seaports. Others wandered as journeymen, tradesmen, and apprentices, or perhaps joined the ranks of indentured servants, petty criminals and adventurers.4 Lawrence Joyce, born in 1786 in the rural village of Inistioge, County Kilkenny, sought his fortune in the bustling city of Dublin where he learned the tailor’s trade. Still single, and in his late twenties, Joyce sailed to the Maritimes and plied his trade up and down the New England coast before settling in Brunswick Maine. Emigrants such as Joyce knew what it was like to leave the villages of their youth, to settle amidst strangers, and to make adaptations along the way.44

As historian Kirby Miller points out, such people may have been rootless in a cultural sense as well: being adrift from family and communal moorings many may have worn their nationality and religion lightly.45 Prior to the American Revolution this was certainly the case in Boston, a city in which the Catholic clergy were distinctly unwelcome, and where Pope’s day was a visible, and often violent, protest against


45 Kerby Miller, Emigrants and Exiles, pg. 141.
Catholicism. John Adams even boasted that Papists were as common in his town of Braintree as a comet or an earthquake. What Adams failed to realize or acknowledge, however, was that lapsed Papists (Irish immigrants) could be found drifting into Protestant churches throughout coastal New England. This was particularly evident as one moved farther away from the regimented establishment of the Bay Colony. In Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for example, marriage records kept at the Congregational church during the eighteenth century reveal several Waterford and Dublin-born members. With names like Maloney, Flynn, and Walsh, they were most likely of Catholic origin.

In Lincoln County, Maine a similar picture prevailed, with Irishmen belonging to several churches throughout the Kennebec Valley. In Georgetown, on Arrowsic island, church records disclose twenty-three intentions of marriage between 1743 and 1756 in which one or both partners were of Irish origin. Local records and probate inventories even suggest that these Irish held important positions in the congregation, as in the case of Patrick McGuire, who, in 1780, owned "one half of the pew in Boothbay meeting house, adjoining the

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47 *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, Vols. 23-27. Between 1716 and 1740 marriage records in Portsmouth record 31 people born in Ireland. Regional origins reveal 3 from Dublin, 2 Waterford, 3 Cork, 1 Galway, 4 Limerick, 1 Tipperary, 5 Antrim, 8 Derry, and 5 "Ireland."
Minister's pew."

In early America one's status and place in the community was often measured by the location of one's pew in the meeting house: those closest to the pulpit were the property and reserve of the town elite. One visual reference of this hierarchical system survives for Walpole meeting house, where a pew plan, dated 1771, shows the prominent position of local elites including Captain Robert Hanley, an Irish mariner from County Tipperary (Figure 2.1).

The conversion of men like McGuire and Hanley to Congregationalism is easily understood if one considers the sex ratio of early Irish immigrants. Since most of those coming to New England were single males, marriage considerations usually meant finding Protestant partners, ultimately involving absorption into local family and community networks. In large part this explains the invisible nature of Irish emigrants in the New World, and the failure of a significant migration of southern and native Ulster Catholics to build a viable Irish-American society before 1800. And while there is some evidence of intra-Irish marriages between native Irish men and Ulster Scots women (suggesting that Irishmen may have preferred Irish wives

Figure 2.1

Polio Plan, 1772
Walpole Meeting House
(after plan in Peter Mallary, New England Churches and Meetinghouses, 1680–1830, pg. 30)
regardless of cultural origin), the majority of Irish emigrants in Maine prior to 1800 married New England women, a pattern that assured their gradual acculturation, particularly by the second generation.\textsuperscript{49}

This is not to say, however, that the Irish simply disappeared. The records of Lincoln County — particularly deed, probate, and court proceedings — provide us with a unique glimpse of their everyday experiences, as well as their assimilation into early American society. If we were to visit Wiscasset, the county seat, on court day in the late eighteenth century, we would have seen a variety of Irish folk appearing before the bench; some to face criminal charges, some to apply for retailers licenses, others to petition for naturalization, or simply, to appear as witnesses. A small sample includes Bryan Ryan, an itinerant peddler who was wrongfully accused of stealing merchandise from a store in Bristol; Captain John Molloy, who was admitted a retailer and

\textsuperscript{49} Native Irish/Ulster-Scots unions in Lincoln county were not uncommon during the eighteenth century. Some examples include Patrick and Roger Hanley of Bristol who married Margaret and Agnes Askins in 1777, the daughters of Alexander Askings from Londonderry, Ireland. Others include Patrick McGuire who married Margaret McCurdey in Boothbay, and William Keating, from Lismore, county Waterford, who married Elizabeth McClean, the daughter of an Ulster miller in Appleton Maine. These intra-Irish marriage patterns changed during the early nineteenth century with the introduction of the Catholic church in Lincoln county and the increase of Irish-Catholic women entering the marriage field. For more on marriage patterns and a comparison with Ulster-Scots, see Doyle Ireland, Irishmen, and Revolutionary America, pg. 69; and Alan Gaily, "Scotland, Ireland and America: Migrant Culture in the 17th and 18th Centuries," Working Papers in Irish Studies, Northeastern University, 1984.
trader in the town of Hallowell; Thomas Shea, a Camden schoolmaster indicted for forgery; and John Fitzgerald, a Revolutionary War veteran from Waldoborough who applied for a pension in 1820. Sources such as these, when combined with town records, church registers, personal correspondence and genealogical data, form a unique portrait of the Irish in Lincoln county prior to 1800. They represent a wide range of origins, experiences and lifestyles, from which a few representative sketches can be drawn.

Travelling down the Pemaquid peninsula south of Bristol in 1788 one would have found a number of Irish farmers working saltmarsh and upland plots overlooking the Damariscotta river. Unlike their relations in the homeland, who worked as tenant farmers and landless laborers, immigrants such as Patrick Lawlor, James Power, Michael Cleary, and Patrick and Roger Hanley had acquired their own property and started independent households. The experiences of a pioneering immigrant in the Damariscotta region, Patrick Hanley, are instructive. Born in County Tipperary in 1741,

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50 For more on these entries consult the court records of Lincoln county. See LCCGSP Vol I (Ryan); Vol II, Jan. 1790 (Holloy); LCSJC, Sept. 1800 (Shea); and LCCCP, July 1820 (Fitzgerald). Fitzgerald's military career can be reviewed in Soldiers, Sailors and Patriots of the Revolutionary War: Maine (Louisville: National Society for the Sons of the American Revolution, 1982), pg. 259. This source, along with company muster records and pension applications identifies several Irish-born Revolutionary War soldiers east of the Kennebec. These include John O'Brien of Thomaston, William Keating of Appleton, Morris O'Brien, a Dubliner from Machias, and Terrance McMahon, a Georgetown farmer and native of county Clare.
Hanley, along with his brother Roger, journeyed to Maine via the Newfoundland fishing banks in 1768. Settling initially in Georgetown (most likely among other outmigrants from the Maritimes) Patrick came to Bristol in 1773 where he and his brother each acquired 100-acre plots next to Alexander Askins, an Ulster-Scots emigrant from Londonderry. Neighborly relations blossomed between the Hanleys and the Askins. In June, 1777 Patrick married Askins' youngest daughter Agness who was then three months pregnant with their first son Robert. In the years to come Agness gave birth to five more sons and six daughters, a family labor force who provided much of the work around house and farm as they grew older.51

Initially Hanley depended upon his brother Roger, and perhaps several hired hands to fell trees, plant food crops, and build a dwelling house - most likely a rough-hewn cabin in its early stages. In time, as his family grew, this structure was replaced by a larger wood-frame house which must have resembled the simple one story vernacular farmhouses ("Cape Cod") found today throughout the New England landscape. A farm began to take shape as Hanley cleared land and forest, and hauled cut timber to the general store at Bristol for a

51 A variety of records were consulted pertaining to Patrick Hanley. See notes and genealogy on the Hanley family, compiled by Paul Hanley Furfey, Skidompha Public Library, Damariscotta Maine. Also LCRD 9:82, 10:82; LCP, Vol. 17, pp. 277-279; Massachusetts Tax Valuation of 1771 (Boston: G.K. Hall and co., 1978), # 1606 0264; and the Hanley genealogy in Christine Dodge, ed., Vital Records of Old Bristol and Nobleboro in the County of Lincoln, Maine (Portland, Maine: Maine Historical Society, 1951).
ready source of cash or credit. Like other holdings along the Damariscotta, much of the land remained unimproved or in pasturage, with only several acres devoted to tillage, most likely a garden plot planted with field peas, potatoes, and corn. Livestock on the Hanley homestead was also typical of New England farms of the period. According to his 1815 probate inventory Hanley owned one yoke of oxen, a pair of steers, four cows, three heifers, two calves, two swine, and twenty-five sheep. Two geese and "four fowls" also made their contribution to the dinner table. As suggested in contemporary farm diaries, Hanley and his sons probably spent much of their time in a seasonal cycle of work on the farm: clearing forest, hauling fuel wood, building and mending fences, plowing fields, planting crops, harvesting, haying and tending his animals.\footnote{LCP, Volume 17, pp. 277-279. The process of settlement on the Hanley farm is suggested by evidence found in early Maine farm diaries. See David Smith, "Maine's Changing Landscape to 1820," in Clark, Leamon, and Bowden, eds., Maine in the Early Republic, pp. 13-25. On farming in early Maine see Clarence Day, A History of Maine Agriculture (Orono, Me: University of Maine Press, 1954); and Howard S. Russell, A Long Deep Furrow: Three Centuries of New England Farming (Hanover, N.H.: University Press of New England, 1976).}

The work activities of the Hanley women were equally taxing. Yet as revealed in recent scholarship, men's and women's work in early Maine were defined by different economic spheres. While men were occupied on the farm and outside in the public arena of trade and politics, women such as Agness
Hanley were occupied in the home and farmyard, being responsible for cooking, washing, milking, tending the garden, poultry raising and feeding swine. Given that most family farms in New England were not completely self-sufficient, women also played important roles in neighborly trade, bartering homemade goods and services for items not produced in the family household, such as cheese or wool. In the Hanley household, for example, evidence suggests that Agness and her six daughters - Mary, Nancy, Sally, Elizabeth, Bridget, and Margaret - were engaged in domestic production of textiles, which they traded with their neighbors. Besides a large herd of sheep which provided wool, the household inventory in 1815 also identified twenty pounds of flax, a spinning wheel, a quilt wheel, and "loom and tackling." The products of this industry, ranging from raw wool to linen yarn to finished cloth, were traded with local women and perhaps those further upriver in Bristol town. This "friendly neighborliness" among women went far to establish a local or community self sufficiency, and in so doing complemented the farming activities of their husbands. To what extent the

Hanley emphasis on weaving and textiles was influenced by Irish and Ulster roots is unknown, although the inventories of other Irish farmers such as Richard Power of Jefferson, and Michael Shea of Georgetown also reveal looms and textile equipment. For the most part, however, the family and farming economy established by the Hanleys, as well as the style of their dwelling houses, resembled those of their New England neighbors.

Besides farming, other occupations were taken up by the Irish along the Damariscotta. Travelling north from the Hanleys into the town of Bristol one would have come upon the house of Richard Meagher, a Waterford-born entrepreneur whose Maine career was built upon a variety of interests. Identified in deeds rather modestly as a yeoman in 1771, Meagher displayed a remarkable degree of social mobility in the years to come. By 1780 he is noted as a mariner, and later as a merchant and "Gentleman" associated with the New

_54_ In many parts of Ireland during the eighteenth century weaving was an important occupation - often combined with farming and husbandry. This tradition may have transferred to Lincoln county as evidenced by the incidence of looms in Irish inventories. From a sample of 30 inventories of Irish farmers between 1796 and 1830, 8 or 27 %, contained looms. For examples see Lincoln county Probate Office, Wiscasset Maine - inventories for Thomas McGuire, Friendship (Vol 17, 153-154); Timothy Reirdon, Georgetown (Vol 7); Richard Power, Jefferson (Vol. 15, 439-441); and Michael Shea, Georgetown (Vol. 25, 88-89). On weaving in Ireland see L.M. Cullen, _Six Generations: Life and Work in Ireland from 1790_ (Cork and Dublin: The Mercier Press, 1970), pp. 51-57.
England coastal trade. His frequent lawsuits point to a busy network of trade ranging from St. Andrews, New Brunswick, to Portsmouth, New Hampshire. With money gained from trade Meagher also speculated heavily in backcountry lands along the Sheepscot river. His holdings, significantly, were called New Waterford, or "Waterford Plantation," a double-barelled title that speaks both of his Irish origins and of his commercial intentions.

Meagher, along with sons James and William, eventually moved his interests to the backcountry, where he took possession of 1600 acres and opened a merchant store in Balltown, soon to be known as Whitefield. Meagher was also appointed justice of the peace, a coveted position that spoke of his standing in the backcountry (a standing that in time would attract the animosity of his neighbors). Like other frontier speculators he set to work recruiting settlers to occupy his lands at New Waterford. Many of them, revealingly, were of Irish origin, suggesting a network of ethnicity and religion that extended into the backcountry. They included Daniel and Henry McKay, emigrants from Belfast; Andrew Kendall a farmer from near Drogheda; Cornelius McGuire from the mountains of Leitrim; and John Lacy who came from county

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55 Meagher's career has been reconstructed from a variety of sources. On occupation and landholding see LCRD 38: 237; 39:12; and 66:69. Consult deed indexes 1761-1784, 1784-1794, 1794-1802, and 1802-1809 for a full picture of his land transactions. On court cases relating to Meagher see LCCGS (Sept., 1796); and LCSJC (June, 1799), (October, 1800).
Carlow by way of the Newfoundland fishing banks. On any given day we may have seen these settlers building fences around rough-hewn cabins and pastures, tending small plots of wheat, oats and potatoes, or gathering along the river to discuss the future site of a sawmill. Indeed, McGuire, in partnership with neighbor Joseph Linscott, built the first gristmill in the area on the Western Branch of the Sheepscot.\textsuperscript{56}

Church and family records reveal that the Irish at New Waterford were linked by more than fieldfences and ethnicity. All of them, together with Richard Meagher, were members of the fledgeling Catholic church established at Damariscotta in 1798. Here they journeyed occasionally to attend Sunday service and link up with other Irish families at special events and weddings. Several marriages, in fact, took place between New Waterford neighbors. Peter McKay, for example, married Mary Ann McGuire in 1807. Likewise, John Lacy married Eleanor Meagher, daughter of Richard Meagher.

\textsuperscript{56} On the settlement of New Waterford see "A Plan of a part of Malta" by Surveyor James Marr, April 4, 1810, Kennebec County Registry of Deeds, Augusta, Maine. Also see deeds pertaining to Richard Meagher, LCRD 45:231, 46:14, 47:187. On the Irish origins of the New Waterford folk and their travels in between see their naturalization petitions, Record Group 85, Boxes 477-478, NAW. John Lacy, for example, stated that "I was born in Ballyknockcrumpin in Ireland 1784 - in the last day of March AD 1800 I sailed from Ross and arrived at Newfoundland where [I] remained until 1803 when I went to Portland where I arrived the 15 of August ... and to Windsor where I have since remained." Lacy's petition was originally filed at the Supreme Judicial Court of Kennebec County; see volume 8 pg. 276.
Godparents for their six children included various combinations of the Kendalls, McGuires, and Meaghers - ties that further reinforced this frontier settlement.  

While ripples of family and community slowly expanded among the Irish of New Waterford, the waters were far from tranquil for Richard Meagher along the Sheepscot. Aggressive and ambitious, Meagher differed substantially from his Yankee neighbors who were largely poor squatters intent on settling sufficient land to pass on to their families. Moreover, the Irishman had allied himself with the Kennebec Proprietors, a speculative company that was in open contention with many of the backcountry farmers. Whereas the company claimed the land by virtue of a vague seventeenth century landgrant, many of the settlers believed that ownership of the land was confirmed by one's physical settlement and improvements, rather than simply a written deed. Increasingly they banded together to resist the surveying teams sent into the backcountry and the financial demands of the proprietors.

Into this cauldron fell Richard Meagher. As a justice of the peace and leading man in the region, he was responsible

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57 On these connections see the parish records of St. Patrick's and St. Dennis church, Portland Diocesan Archives, Portland, Maine.

for maintaining order and enforcing the legal claims of the Kennebec Proprietors along the Sheepscot. Furthermore, his own speculative interests often conflicted with those of his neighbors, who squatted on disputed property or purchased deeds from rival land companies. Not surprisingly Meagher was labeled an agent for the Kennebec company and became himself the target of increasingly violent protests. Indeed, the court records for Lincoln county reveal a remarkable number of suits brought by Meagher against his neighbors during the opening years of the nineteenth century. These included cases of debt, trespass, unlawful cutting of timber on his holdings, and destruction of private property. In 1806, for example, when he and his family attempted to erect a new house frame, it was burned three times in succession by mobs of "white indians". The settlers in turn complained of Meagher, who was certainly not beyond reproach. David Linn, for example, wrote to the Plymouth company informing them that Meagher, a

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5 A sampling of Meagher's legal suits can be seen in docket books for the Lincoln County Court of Common Pleas. These include a plea of trespass against Scribner Mooney (Jan 1, 1802); a suit for debt against Jonas Tarbel (Jan, 1802); and a suit for damages brought against William Nutt and others who "cut down, carried away and destroyed three hundred of the Plaintiff's pine trees...and one hundred of the Plaintiff's hemlock trees," (May, 1804). Things started to heat up in 1806 when Thomas LeBallister, a farmer in New Waterford, led settlers onto Meagher's property and destroyed a pile of clapboards intended for his house. See Commonwealth v. LeBallister, September 1807, LCSJC, Record Book, III, pg. 134. This protest culminated in the burning of Meagher's houseframe, described in a letter, Richard Meagher to the General Court, Feb. 6, 1809, House file 6385, MA. On Meagher also see Alan Taylor, Liberty Men and Great Proprietors, pp. 119, 272-273.
deceiving "Son of Perdition", had encouraged several settlers to occupy (or usurp) a lot of land belonging to Linn. One of them, Irishman John McKay, "went and built on the opposite end in a sly and unmanly manner and then came and throd down my house." Concerning Meagher Linn exclaimed, "Buchanans butter, I think it hard to be doggd by a man that has not Paid for his Land nor never has a bushel of Corn to sell." Here Linn captured the essence of the dispute. Meagher by living off the profits of speculative ventures and settling his own people on the land had done little to improve it.

It is important to recognize that not all the Irish in the backcountry were on the side of Meagher and the Proprietors. In Waldoborough one finds John Fitzgerald, a native of Limerick, who led "a large body of people" against George Ulmer, an agent of Henry Knox. According to one observer, "They told him [Ulmer] he was an enemy of the people; and that he shou'd not leave Waldo[borou]gh alive."60 Linn himself was likely of Ulster background. He travelled to Maine from Coleraine in western Massachusetts - a town composed of a high number of Scotch-Irish settlers.

60 David Linn to Hon. Thomas Lindal, March, 1807, Kennebec Proprietors Papers, Letter file, MeHS. Linn himself was likely of Ulster background. He travelled to Maine from Coleraine in western Massachusetts - a town composed of a high number of Scotch-Irish settlers.

61 On the actions of Fitzgerald see Alan Taylor, Liberty Men, pp. 155, 264-265. Taylor also has found evidence of earlier Irish involvement in land disputes in mid-Maine. In 1761 one leading man in the backcountry, Job Averell, was threatened by the Plymouth Company for siding with a rival land company. He wrote that "Captn. Goodwin has set them that took his grants to fill up my road to the mill and to hinder me from all business and one of them is a Roman Irish man and he has waylaid to kill me." See Taylor, "'A Kind of Warr....," pg 18.
Balltown, likewise, had several Irish families who squatted on land along the Sheepscot and joined their neighbors in resisting the claims of absentee landowners. One of these was John Molloy, from county Wexford, who along with several others was accused of beating and imprisoning James Marr, a surveyor for the Plymouth company. Molloy was tried and released without fine.\(^6\) While the actions of Molloy and Fitzgerald took place in common cause with their neighbors it is possible that they were also influenced by Irish precedent. During the late eighteenth century secret societies and agrarian violence were rampant in rural Ireland, a response to unethical "landjobbers" (of whom Meagher was a latter-day example) who manipulated and outbid occupying tenants.\(^6\)

In time, Richard Meagher was driven out of the Sheepscot. In a letter to the Massachusetts General Court asking for compensation he recounted that his house and property had been burned to the ground and his family scandalized by "a set of Lawless minded Fellows who dress in Indian Dress to kill proprietors, sheriffs and tories (meaning I)." He went on to explain that his family was "scattered abroad from a handsome and good property where we had lived happy thirty years in

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\(^6\) Linwood H. Lowden, *Ballstown West, 1768-1809*, pg. 95b.

Leaving Maine behind, Meagher took up residence in Boston where at age 68 he obtained a licence for an auction and commission business. With remarkable pluck Meagher rebuilt part of his losses - and immediately reinvested in yet another speculative venture, this time on Ironbound island in Frenchman's Bay. His career, while mercurial at best, underscores the fact that for some Irishmen, America opened up a remarkable range of opportunities that were often beyond their reach in the homeland.

For other Irish immigrants, however, transatlantic migration brought only misadventure and disorientation. Evidence from runaway servant notices, town records, and court dockets reveals that some lived a marginal and often hazardous existence as paupers, vagabonds, criminals, and adventurers.

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64 Richard Meagher to Deacon Samuel Goodwin, Dec. 29, 1808 (first quote), Richard Meagher to [unidentified], Dec 29, 1808 (second quote), and Richard Meagher to the General Court, Feb 6, 1809, House file 6385, MA.

65 On this second speculative venture in 1814 see Charles B. McLane Islands of the Mid Maine Coast, Vol. II (Falmouth Me.: The Kennebec River Press, Inc., 1989), pp. 139-141.

66 Maine court records follow the activities of several Irish living on the periphery, such as Patrick O'Brien, a prisoner who was shot while trying to escape by boat across Sunnebeck Pond. See Lincoln County Supreme Judicial Court records, Volume 913, # 140618, MA. A calendar of prisoners at Pownalborough jail also identifies those of Irish origin. Of six prisoners held in July 1790, one finds Thomas Meloney "on suspicion of murder and incest," and Michael Baron [Barron] "for a rape." Meloney, from Cushing, was charged with his sister Johanna for the negligent death of an infant born of Johanna, a "singlewoman." The court, upon hearing testimony, also charged them with "lewdness and lascivious behavior."
One such individual was John O'Neil, a transient laborer who came to the Damariscotta country in 1788. His trial for the "most horrid and barbarous murder" of Michael Cleary helps to illuminate the activities of such peripheral types who would otherwise go unnoticed. It also provides a valuable glimpse into Irish life in Maine; bringing into sharp relief the experiences of several Irish settlers living along the Damariscotta, and the patterns that helped shape their lives.

In 1788 the town of Bristol was growing in both trade and population. James Kavanagh, an Irish trader with Boston connections, had recently occupied a house and store along the waterfront and secured a retailers license to market a wide selection of British manufactures and West Indian goods. Among his customers were a number of Irish farmers living out the country toward Pemaquid --including Patrick and Roger Hanley, Patrick Lawlor, and James Power, a fellow Kilkennyman who owned property at Broad Cove. Also seen periodically was Michael Cleary, who lived at Pemaquid falls, and his new hired hand John O'Neil. Like other landless young men in New

Their father testified that the two were indeed brother and sister and "they have lived in one house together ever since Johanna had her first child." He added that "Johanna has had three children that I don't know who was the father...." LCSJC, Records, Vol. 915, # 140727, MA.

67 The naturalization petition of James Kavanagh, trader, dated June 1790, states that he "hath lived in the town of Nobleboro [previously Bristol] in said County more than two years past." LCSJC, Vol 6, pg. 77. Also see the Ephraim Rollins Map of Nobleborough (1791) which shows the location of the Kavanagh Store; Maps and Plans # 1371, Massachusetts State Archives [MA], Boston.
England, O'Neil hired himself out to local farmers; working the summer and harvest season, and finding odd jobs during the winter. After working the autumn for William Burns, an Ulster farmer in Muscongus, O'Neil wandered down the Damariscotta where he eventually found work with Michael Cleary. Cleary lived alone on a hardscrabble farm south of the Hanleys. A native of Mitchelstown, County Cork, he had emigrated in 1764, leaving behind a wife and child in Ireland. Like many of those coming to America, his early life was characterized by rootlessness and movement. Now, pushing sixty years of age, he may have wanted some company to pass the long winter evenings. He most certainly needed help hauling and cutting firewood, feeding livestock, and slaughtering animals for the winter season.

It was in late January that stories began to circulate about Michael Cleary's new hired hand. Cleary quietly told his neighbors that he did not trust O'Neil and was increasingly afraid to turn his back on him. It appears that O'Neil had something of a checkered past. Years before he had

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68 Court evidence and testimony pertaining to the O'Neil case is somewhat sparse, so in reconstructing the activities of O'Neil and Cleary I have depended upon a variety of sources. The most important are newspaper articles covering the case. See in particular The Massachusetts Spy, April 3, 1788; and October 16, 1788. Also John Johnston, History of Bristol and Bremen (Albany, N.Y.: Joel Munsell, 1873), pp. 374-378.

been convicted of a crime in Ireland for which he was transported to Newfoundland, where he most likely served seven years labor. O'Neil was one of thousands of Irish convicts dispatched to the colonies during the eighteenth century for a variety of crimes ranging from vagrancy to theft to murder. Evidence suggests that their prospects in the New World were not particularly bright. While some quietly faded into the landscape after their indenture, others continued their unruly behavior, as did Richard Roche, executed in New York in 1754, or Samuel Crandall, a ringleader of the anti-Stamp Act Riots in Newport, Rhode Island. After a crime wave through Pennsylvania, perpetrated by convict servants, Franklin even suggested that America transport its rattlesnakes to Britain as a fair exchange for "the human serpents sent us by the Mother country." Given this notoriety it is no wonder that Cleary's fears were aroused. While surviving evidence does not disclose O'Neils's crime in the homeland, he was clearly held in suspicion by Cleary and neighbors alike.

James Power, who lived nine miles from Cleary's farm, may have already heard the rumors when O'Neil rode into his

70 Doyle, Ireland, Irishmen and Revolutionary America, pg. 64. On convict labor in early America see Bailyn, Voyagers to the West, pp. 292-295; and especially A. Roger Ekirch, Bound for America: The Transportation of British Convicts to the Colonies, 1718-1775 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). To date, little has been written on the multitude of Irish servants transported to America.

71 Quote found in Bailyn, Voyagers to the West, pg. 263.
farmyard on the night of February 13. Clearly shaken, O'Neil informed Power that Cleary was very ill and near death. The next day O'Neil returned, bringing news that Cleary had died that afternoon, after having injured his head in a fall. Before he died, however, he had entrusted upon O'Neil his money in order to purchase a suit of new clothes and six gallons of rum for the funeral. O'Neil also produced a will, allegedly written by Cleary, in which he left his farm and livestock to his "kinsman" O'Neil. Such an improbable story no doubt aroused Power's suspicions. In time O'Neil was arrested and a coroner's jury summoned. Upon examination the body showed severe bruises and a head wound, inflicted by an iron bar or shovel. O'Neil was remanded for trial at Pownalborough courthouse, and following his conviction he was executed along the banks of the Kennebec. It was the first capital crime to be tried in Maine.¹²

What motivated O'Neil? Clearly it was the chance of gaining property and a stake in the New World, the objective of most emigrants to early America. Cleary's probate inventory, taken shortly after his death, reveals a one hundred acre farm, livestock, and dwelling house. While his house interior was relatively spartan, containing clothing, two chairs, kitchen utensils, four blankets and "one bed

sack, it also contained cash, outstanding notes and one pair of silver shoe buckles totalling L 50.\textsuperscript{12} Testimony reveals that on the day of his death, Cleary was overheard by a neighbor to have argued with O'Neil over the silver buckle. While we can only speculate, perhaps this argument later escalated into a heated battle, with Cleary being killed as the result. In time O'Neil may have hatched a scheme to acquire not only the buckle and available cash, but also Cleary's entire estate. This involved forging a "will", which he subsequently waved in front of Power and others. Besides being a vital piece of evidence in the case, this document offers a valuable hint of Irish identity on the eastern frontier:

Bristol, the ninth day of February 1788

Kind Sir,

You are my sister's son to be sure, John O'Neil. I am very glad that I have one of my sister's sons along with me, now I deliver everything I have inside and outside to you my nearest Kinsman in blood, and other weighty motives inducing me to [too], do hereby voluntarily and by my own accord and good pleasure and nature - [give] all my lands, Cattle, Stock of Cattle, and all real and personal estate in your favor, and thereby giving you full and complete and immediate possession therof, to dispose of at your pleasure, after my disease[sic]; only reserving for yourself a complete maintenance thereout, which you are hereby bound to give for the said possession and gift.

David Given [neighbor] got my cattle, to work with them till Spring, and you will have them, there is some money due to me at present. Here is all I want of you, to be careful in all you have in mind.

\textsuperscript{73} LCP, 5:169.
The murder of Michael Cleary, and the subsequent trial of John O'Neil help to illuminate a diverse "community" of Irish immigrants resident in the Bristol area during the late eighteenth century. Court testimony, surviving evidence such as the "will" of Michael Cleary, and historical research suggest that the entire case was enacted upon a stage peopled with Irish emigrants. The antagonist and his victim were Irish, as were many of the witnesses, neighbors, and spectators who crowded the Pownalborough Court House during July 1788. Those taking the stand, such as Henry Fosset, Robert Quinn, James Power, and William Burns (who acted as a character witness for O'Neil) were all of Irish or Ulster ancestry. Probate records suggest the same conclusion. Those indebted to Cleary at the time of his death included Ulster-Scots such as Thomas Boyd and Alexander McGlathery, along with James Conners and John Costellow, emigrants of Catholic origin. Costellow, in particular, had a close relationship with Cleary. An Irish merchant in Wiscasset, he served as executor of Cleary's estate, and acted as witness on

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74 Massachusetts Spy, October 16, 1788. Cleary's true will had been registered in Lincoln county on June 14, 1784. It left "my house, barn, and whole of the land" to Thomas Savage, a neighbor. See LCP, 4:18-19.

75 For a list of witnesses giving testimony at O'Neil's trial see LCSJC, Records, Vol. 913, # 140615, MA.
several occasions. Their relationship underscores an important feature of Irish life in early America, one that is often overshadowed by their rapid assimilation to economic and social conditions: it suggests that networks of Irish patronage, identity, and friendship still mattered on the eastern frontier. These networks most likely played an important role in the subsequent success of new merchant firms such as Kavanagh and Cottril, and the emergence of the Catholic church in Lincoln County.

News of the O'Neil case captured the interest and fears of much of northern New England in 1788. Accounts of the trial could be found in newspaper headlines, as well as private letters and diaries. A reference to the execution, for example, appears in the diary of Martha Ballard, a midwife and healer in the Kennebec river town of Hallowell. She recorded on September 4, 1788, that "Jonathan and Taylor [her son and one of the hired hands] went to see the execution of oneal." The Ballards would have been particularly interested in O'Neil's death - Martha's husband, Ephraim, had been the foreman of the jury that convicted the Irishman of murder. Yet other factors may have contributed to Jonathan's journey.

76 LCP, 5:169. Costellow also may have travelled with Cleary from Ireland. The brig Hound, on which Cleary travelled in 1763, also contained passenger John Costellow. See NEHGR, Vol 29, pg. 257.

77 LCSJC, Pownalborough Minute Book (microfilm), July 8, 1788, MA. On Martha Ballard and her diary entry see Ulrich, A Midwife's Tale, pp. 72,99.
to Pownalborough. One must remember that executions were a popular and macabre form of entertainment in early America, and it was not unusual for men and boys to travel long distances to view them. Afterwards, many retired to a local tavern, a common destination on court day to discuss the days actions and to pursue out-of-court activities.

Taverns were an important center of life in Lincoln county during the eighteenth century. Besides dispensing drink, they provided a venue for auctions and estate sales, political meetings, dances, as well as offering rooms for travellers. Records of innkeepers' licenses disclose that several Irish publicans pursued their trade in Lincoln County. One of these was Thomas McGuire, who came from Ireland as a young man and subsequently worked as a tailor before opening a tavern in Waldoborough. Portside-taverns such as McGuire's did a lively drink trade, banking on the business of local artisans, mariners, and transients. Many also doubled as a general store, selling rum, molasses, and drygoods to their patrons. Retailing drink could be a hazardous occupation, however, as witnessed during the 1780's when McGuire incurred at least one fine for tavern violations. On August 3, 1788, McGuire "did...profane the Lord's day by

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78 On McGuire see LCRD, 20:148, 26:121. Also see LCCGSP, Col I, September 1785, for McGuire being admitted an innholder at Waldoborough. Other innkeepers of Irish origin in Lincoln county included Thomas Flynn at Walpole (1773); Michael Ryan of Woolwich (1792); and possibly John Dunn of Georgetown (1771), who also was a ferryman between Georgetown and Parker's island.
permitting four persons, being dwellers in said town of Waldoborough, to abide drinking and idly maintaining their time which is against the peace and law." A heavy fine was assessed, which may have prompted McGuire to seek legal advice, as suggested in his probate inventory of 1813 which lists "1 Quarto volume Massachusetts Laws".\footnote{9}

In portside taverns such as McGuire's one would have encountered a number of Irish who made their living from the sea, those like Martin Rossiter who sailed out of Waldoborough aboard the ship Hibernia in 1790. This area of mid-Maine was blessed with a topography that facilitated transatlantic commerce and mercantile trade. Navigable river systems such as the Kennebec, Sheepscot, and Damariscotta provided both ready access to marketable timber in the interior and a sheltered outlet onto the Atlantic. From these waterborne highways sprang merchant communities at Bristol, Newcastle and Wiscasset - port towns that gave rise to small enclaves of Irish mariners and ship captains during the eighteenth century. At Wiscasset, for example, one finds an ebb and flow of Irish-born sailors appearing in the record, those like James Carroll, Daniel "Dampsay", and Thomas Welsh. Welsh was sixteen when he apprenticed himself to Captain David Payson for five years "to learn the trade or mystery of a mariner." Payson in turn was to provide "good and sufficient

\footnote{9} On McGuire's court case see LCCGSP, Records Vol. I, September, 1788. For his inventory of 1813, which also included "Roman Catholick books," see LCP, Vol. 17: 153-154.
meat, drink, washing, clothing, and lodging and also teach him to read, write, cyphers as far as the rule of three, together with the science of navigation if be capable to learn." Like many mariners working throughout the Atlantic world, Welsh led a rootless life. His indenture in 1804 describes him as a minor "without parents or guardian."

On the other end of the social spectrum one discovers several Irish captains working out of Wiscasset, guiding ships carrying lumber, barrel staves, and fish to the West Indies and Europe, and bringing English manufactures, Jamaican sugar, and Pennsylvania flour back into Maine. This shipping fraternity included Ulster-Scots masters such as Alexander Cunningham and Robert McKown, as well as those of Irish-Catholic origin such as Daniel Fagan, Michael Power, and Thomas McCrate (McCready). Some, like McCrate from County Waterford, became ship owners in their own right and eventually moved into the ranks of the merchant class. By the close of the eighteenth century McCrate managed a fleet of transatlantic vessels including the ship Orient, the schooner John, and the brigs Junius and Shepherdess. During the heady years surrounding the embargo they were employed in the lucrative timber trade, clearing for Cork, Dublin, and

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80 The indenture of Thomas Welsh can found in Special Collections, Wiscasset Public Library, Wiscasset, Maine.
Trans-Atlantic migration brought about a fundamental shift in landscape, economy, opportunity and perception. At first glance the Maine environment, both physical and cultural, must have appeared strange to these Irish immigrants. Unlike the domesticated open-field landscape of the homeland they were now surrounded by vast expanses of seascape and forest, which presented both challenge and opportunity. Timber, in particular, was an overwhelming factor in shaping the lives of new immigrants to Maine. Walking through Wiscasset, Thomas McCrate could not help but notice the pattern that timber engraved on material life and economy. All around him structures were built of wood, in striking contrast to the stone, slate, and thatch of home. Lining the waterfront were merchant stores, timber warehouses, trading ships and busy shipyards - a commercial environment shaped by timber and opportunity. The record suggests that the Irish quickly immersed themselves in this world. Many farmers such as Patrick Hanley doubled as lumbermen, clearing acres of woodland and hauling "loggs" and cut boards to local stores in trade. A few newcomers, such as James Kavanagh and

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Matthew Cottril, even realized great profits from the timber trade; profits that allowed them to diversify into milling, shipbuilding, and land speculation.

The social environment also dictated important opportunities and adjustments for these new immigrants. While Ireland was characterized by a hierarchical social system based upon class and religious affiliation, in northern New England one entered a world where social distinction and economic position was more an indication of age rather than class. Irishmen such as Patrick Hanley must have experienced a sense of opportunity and social mobility undreamed of in the homeland. While it was next to impossible for Catholic farmers to buy land in Ireland, here they could acquire their own property and establish themselves as owner-occupiers. Indeed, the record in Lincoln County suggests that transatlantic migration elevated many landless Irish laborers and tenants to landowning farmers in the late eighteenth century. This material advancement, when combined with religious conversion, inter-marriage, and confrontation with a predominant Anglo-New England culture, often proved a powerful solvent of Irish tradition. As suggested throughout this chapter, an underlying process of assimilation characterized Irish life in early New England, one that helps to explain their "invisible" quality in the years up to the American Revolution.
By the close of the eighteenth century, however, evidence suggests that this process of integration begins to slow down among the Irish. One notices a sense of community developing among the Irish of Lincoln County - a cultural identity expressed in their religious affiliation, family structure, and business networks. In large part this new visibility was prompted by the rise of a remarkable Irish merchant fraternity along the Damariscotta - one that maintained economic and family ties with Ireland. One merchant house in particular, that of James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril, played a prominent role in attracting new emigrants to mid-Maine and provided a social setting where they could prosper. The following three chapters will investigate the firm's impact on the social landscape of Lincoln County - exploring their Atlantic trading networks, their merchant community at Damariscotta Mills, and their support of the Catholic church, an institution that helped to rally cultural identity among new immigrants and old.
Chapter III

THE IRISH MERCHANT TRADE

Among the least studied and little understood aspects of early American colonization has been the movement of Irish merchants to the New World and the development of trade between Ireland and America. Indeed, the prevailing image that Ireland's overseas trade was unimportant throughout the colonial period has only recently been challenged by Thomas Truxes's systematic analysis of Irish imports and exports for the period. Likewise, the study of Irish merchant careers abroad has only lately come to light, thanks to the pioneering research of Louis Cullen, John Mannion, and others. Their


work has underlined the fact that Irish merchant involvement in early America was much more influential than previously believed. In the middle colonies, for example, Irish firms flourished during the eighteenth century, controlling a major share of the flaxseed trade bound for Ulster and directing a lucrative commerce in linen and indentured servants returning to New York and Philadelphia. This pattern was repeated in Newfoundland and the Caribbean where expatriot Irish companies managed a considerable share of Irish commerce and served as vital links in the emigrant trade between Ireland and the New World. Despite these advances in scholarship, however, we still have not completely restored Ireland’s role in the Atlantic economy. Indeed, a recent essay on British Atlantic trade during the eighteenth century (one that appears in an influential "New History" of Colonial British America) makes no reference to Ireland or to the role of Irish merchants in the New World.¹ The following chapter, therefore, seeks to confront head-on this persistent blind spot in early American studies, specifically exploring the most neglected region of Irish mercantile activity: New England.

One area in particular emerged as an important staging ground for Irish mercantile activities in New England – the seacoast villages of mid-Maine. During the Revolutionary era and Federal period, Wiscasset and the smaller ports of

Newcastle and Waldoborough emerged as important outlets for the export of timber bound for Ireland and Britain. While much of this trade was managed by native New Englanders, a considerable number of timber firms had Irish roots and commercial ties.

One of the most successful was the partnership of James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril, natives of Inistioge, County Kilkenny. At its peak their company controlled a lucrative mercantile complex that included over a thousand acres of Maine timberland, seven mills, eight ocean-going vessels, and a prosperous trade with the West Indies and Europe. In the course of their partnership, which prospered for twenty-six years, Kavanagh and Cottril were responsible for the settlement of scores of Irish immigrants on the Maine frontier, the nurturing of a growing Irish community, and the patronage of the Catholic church in Lincoln county - an institution that played a significant role in maintaining Irish traditions and identity. By using their career as a case study we will be able to explore the milieu of a typical Irish firm in early America, and their place in the larger Irish merchant community that was taking root in coastal Maine during the period. To begin, we must understand the lucrative timber trade that flourished between New England and Ireland - a boom that provided the means for aspiring emigrants such as Kavanagh and Cottril to enter the ranks of the merchant class and enabled them to achieve considerable
wealth and status in the New World.

The timber trade between Maine and the Irish ports of Dublin and Cork was a short-lived but dynamic commerce that flowered between 1790 and 1812. Timber had been in short supply in Ireland since the seventeenth century, a legacy of the systematic stripping of the landscape to fuel iron furnaces in England and suit agricultural expansion at home. Except for a few isolated reserves, such as those on landlord estates like Woodstock in county Kilkenny, Irish consumers of timber and building materials depended largely on sources from abroad. Much of this timber was imported from Scandinavia and the Baltics during the eighteenth century, a pattern that slowly shifted during the Federal period in favor of supplies from America, particularly New England (Tables 3.1, 3.2).

Table 3.1
Irish Imports of Timber, 1800-1813 (tons)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>New England</th>
<th>America</th>
<th>Total Imports</th>
<th>American %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>439</td>
<td>15405</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>626</td>
<td>9003</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1802</td>
<td>696</td>
<td>775</td>
<td>19367</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1803</td>
<td>998</td>
<td>1236</td>
<td>26297</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1804</td>
<td>1424</td>
<td>1477</td>
<td>21115</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1805</td>
<td>650</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>21972</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1806</td>
<td>503</td>
<td>574</td>
<td>10682</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1807</td>
<td>934</td>
<td>1199</td>
<td>8496</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1808</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>609</td>
<td>8775</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1809</td>
<td>1770</td>
<td>3190</td>
<td>18660</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>5480</td>
<td>8662</td>
<td>24069</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>12653</td>
<td>22616</td>
<td>32825</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1812</td>
<td>5048</td>
<td>8419</td>
<td>21516</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1813</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>29473</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31347  50717  248655  (12.6)  20

Source: NLI, MSS 353-76, Abstracts of Irish Exports and Imports, 24 Volumes, 1764-1823.
Table 3.2
Irish Imports of Barrel Staves, 1800-1813 (hundreds)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>New England</th>
<th>American</th>
<th>Total Imports</th>
<th>American %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>2680</td>
<td>32699</td>
<td>43619</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>19447</td>
<td>31213</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1802</td>
<td>1819</td>
<td>10495</td>
<td>24495</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1803</td>
<td>2656</td>
<td>30150</td>
<td>55192</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1804</td>
<td>3594</td>
<td>29766</td>
<td>46336</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1805</td>
<td>1146</td>
<td>20776</td>
<td>41979</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1806</td>
<td>2265</td>
<td>26450</td>
<td>56648</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1807</td>
<td>1751</td>
<td>28022</td>
<td>57607</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1808</td>
<td>920</td>
<td>7282</td>
<td>24323</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1809</td>
<td>3539</td>
<td>38619</td>
<td>56327</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1810</td>
<td>7206</td>
<td>35741</td>
<td>62038</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>10012</td>
<td>49731</td>
<td>71066</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1812</td>
<td>5309</td>
<td>21330</td>
<td>53121</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1813</td>
<td>232</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>20581</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>45040</td>
<td>350800</td>
<td>644535</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: NLI, HSS 353-76 Abstracts of Irish Exports and Imports, 24 Volumes, 1764-1823.

Yankee merchants, encouraged by low customs duties in Ireland and energized by the lifting of trade restrictions after the Revolution, expanded enthusiastically into the Irish timber trade, shipping barrel staves, planks and lumber across the Atlantic in great volume. This growing trade in American timber was further enhanced by the outbreak of the Napoleonic Wars. Hostilities caused a disruption in the sea lanes from the Baltic (particularly after 1807) and consequently opened up increased opportunities for American neutral carriers. One indication of the resulting timber boom can be found in British trade circulars for the period, which listed current prices and market demand for American produce. Concerning timber in 1802, one Liverpool merchant announced that "The
importation from America has been considerable lately; still, however, the price keeps steady, and as the demand is very great, we are not inclined to think Lumber will be much lower."

The district of Maine captured a lion's share of this new commerce, not surprising given that the eastern frontier was blessed with a seemingly boundless supply of hardwood timber and boasted a score of navigable rivers and Atlantic ports from which to ship the product. As one writer remarked in 1816:

That Maine possesses abundant resources for foreign commerce, can scarcely be doubted.... Its supply of lumber, and of materials for potash is immense; and its resources for the fisheries are almost inexhaustible. Its situation too is peculiarly favorable. The numerous rivers which intersect it, afford conveyance for lumber, etc. to the markets; and perhaps no country of equal extent possesses more or better harbors. 3

One port in particular - Wiscasset, along the Sheepscot river in Lincoln county - enjoyed a lucrative trade with the British Isles, typically launching as many as thirty voyages per year for Cork, Dublin and Liverpool. Its maritime commerce during the Federal period offers a revealing portrait of the cargoes, shipping routes, and volume of sea traffic.

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4  "Prices Current for American Produce," circular dated August 26, 1802, and distributed by the firm of Anderson, Child and Child, merchants, Liverpool. Special Collections, Wiscasset Public Library (WPL), Wiscasset, Maine.

5  Moses Greenleaf, A Statistical View of the District of Maine (Boston: Cummings and Hilliard, 1816), pg. 60.
involved in Maine's Irish trade. Surviving custom records for 1810-1811 identify a total of 109 vessels leaving Wiscasset for various ports of call. These included coastal schooners bound for Boston, brigs and brigantines plying the West Indian trade, and at least 24 ships (22% of total voyages for those years) making the transatlantic crossing to Ireland. The Irish-bound vessels tended to clear the Sheepscot in spring or early summer laden with lumber, staves, and the occasional consignment of potash and flaxseed. While many sailed directly for Irish ports, others followed a triangular route: clearing Wiscasset with cargoes of timber; calling on southern seaboard ports such as Savannah to put on rice or naval stores; and exchanging these cargoes in Ireland or Liverpool for linens and manufactured goods to be carried home on the return voyage.

Timber ships from Wiscasset began arriving in Ireland in early summer and continued through the month of October. The first port of call was usually Cork, a deep-water port along

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6 Details on shipping were gathered from "Abstract of Sea Letters received and issued in the District of Wiscasset...", 1810-1811, in Box 23, Patterson Papers, Maine Historical Society (MeHS), Portland, Maine. Irish destinations were determined by comparing clearances in the "Abstract..." (which note each vessel and master) with Wiscasset ships and captains appearing in the shipping news of the Cork Mercantile Chronicle (microfilm), NLI.

7 See, for example, correspondance pertaining to the Wiscasset ship "Nancy", which carried turpentine and rice between "Cape Fare" [North Carolina] and Londonderry, Ireland. Alexander Cunningham to David Payson, May 14, 1799, Special Collections WPL.
the southern coast prominent in the provisions trade with the West Indies. During the summer season the city quays would be bustling with activity. Walking their length one would have found a variety of shipping native to Maine and heard the distinct regional dialects of New England among its mariners. Shipping news appearing in the Cork Mercantile Chronicle confirms this strong Yankee flavor. Between June, 1810 and September, 1811, for example, over 91 timber ships entered Cork harbor from New England, 57 of them sailing from Maine.®

Table 3.3
New England Timber Ships entering Cork Harbor June 1810 - September, 1811

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Vessels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boston, Mass.</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiscasset, Me.</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portland, Me.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle, Me.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kennebunk, Me.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren, Me.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waldoborough, Me.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgetown, Me.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arundell, Me.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biddeford, Me.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bath, Me.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portsmouth, N.H.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newburyport, Mass.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penobscot, Me.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castine, Me.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cohasset, Mass.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plymouth, Mass.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Bedford, Mass.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cork Mercantile Chronicle, NLI.

Wiscasset, with 24 vessels, sent the largest contingent, but were also joined by timber fleets from Portland, and Newcastle. Some, like the Nabby of Wiscasset, offloaded timber and barrel staves "for orders" by Cork merchant firms involved in the butter and meat packing industries. Most, however, simply reprovisioned at Cork and sailed on to Dublin or Liverpool.

® Cork Mercantile Chronicle, June 1810 - September 1811, NLI.
Dublin was the primary market in Ireland for Maine lumber, importing 40% of the timber coming into the country from New England (Table 3.4).

Table 3.4  
Percentage of New England Timber Into Irish Ports, 1810-1812  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Port</th>
<th>Timber</th>
<th>Staves</th>
<th>Planks</th>
<th>Masts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belfast</td>
<td>15 %</td>
<td>13 %</td>
<td>61 %</td>
<td>7 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinsale</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newry</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterford</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wexford</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Other</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

100 % 100 % 100 % 100 %

Source: NLI, MSS 353-76, Abstracts of Irish Exports and Imports, 24 Volumes, 1764-1823

Indeed, sailing up the river Liffey toward the new custom house, one could see the mark that timber had etched into the mercantile landscape of the city. All along the south wall, particularly at City quay and Sir John’s quay, stood the timber yards, offices, and auction houses belonging to the city timber merchants. A painting by James Malton in 1800 details this landscape, showing timber ships docked along the south wall, and lumber being rafted ashore (Figure 3.1). Several timber merchants along the quays specialized in the American trade, notably the firm of Forbes and Fawcett, who handled much of the Wiscasset shipping and represented the
3.1 The Marine School, Dublin, by James Malton (c. 1760-1803).
(The National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin)
interests of expatriot Irish companies such as Kavanagh and Cottril. Edward Forbes, the senior member, was a prominent Quaker merchant who owned a large timber and deal yard on Sir John's quay. During the early nineteenth century he and his partner Charles Fawcett advertised a wide range of timber products coming from Maine including milled lumber for building and barrel staves and hoops suitable for Dublin's many breweries and distilleries. One also finds the occasional reference to masts, spars, and ship's timbers intended for the modest Irish shipbuilding industry. Typical was the following advertisement placed in the Dublin Evening Post in 1806 concerning the brig Atlantic, one of Kavanagh and Cottril's ships out of Newcastle:

American Timber
Charles Fawcett and Co. will sell at auction at Davis' store, Sir John's quay, wed. Sept 24 the cargo of the Atlantic consisting of
40 tons of oak timber of large dimensions and superior quality
A few tons of oak plank and board
20 tons of maple, beech and birch timber
60 tons of pine timber of large scantling
A few tons of large square ash timber
Some maple boards and scantling.

Accounts kept by James Smithwick, captain of the Atlantic, reported a net profit from the auction of £1864 or $7644. A large part of this, £921-11-0, was then remitted on

Concerning the holdings of Forbes and Fawcett see RD 559-374-375808; and 581-397-393475. Also see Watson's Almanack and Directory (1805), which located the offices of the firm at 22 Marlborough Street, close to the Customs House.

Dublin Evening Post, September 23, 1806.
account to Kavanagh and Cottril's correspondents in London to purchase linen and manufactured goods for the return voyage.¹¹

Herein lies one of the most important features of the Irish timber trade out of Maine. A major objective for Yankee merchants in the decades following the American Revolution was to secure the importation of British manufactured goods - in response to consumer demand for new styles and products from across the Atlantic. New England, however, produced few commodities that could be marketed directly in England without carrying a high duty attached to them. The Irish timber trade effectively changed the complexion of this trade imbalance. By selling timber in Cork or Dublin, where it was in heavy demand, American traders were able to draw on London or Liverpool merchants through bills of credit - often arranged by the Irish firms whom they supplied. Merchants such as Kavanagh and Cottril, therefore, were able to generate sufficient sterling bills of exchange through their timber sale to fund the importation of English goods for their merchant stores.¹² If we follow the progress of the brig Atlantic in 1806 this relationship becomes clear. Upon clearing Dublin the ship sailed for Liverpool where it picked

¹¹ Legers of captain James Smithwick covering his voyages to Dublin can be found in a lawsuit brought by his wife Elizabeth to recover back pay and commissions from Kavanagh and Cottril. See Elizabeth Smithwick vs. James Kavanagh et al., LCCCP, January term, 1821 (microfilm reel # 124) Maine State Archives, Augusta, Maine.

¹² Truxes, Irish American Trade, pp. 58-61; and Doyle, Ireland, Irishmen and Revolutionary America, pp. 42-43.
up British goods and freight bound for Boston and Maine. Some of this cargo - linen, earthenware, textiles - eventually found its way to the Kavanagh store at Damariscotta where it brought a tidy profit. Similar patterns characterized the dealings of other Maine firms in the Irish timber trade. In May, 1799, Captain Alexander Cunningham, sailing out of Wiscasset, wrote to shipowner David Payson from Londonderry in Ulster:

We have been ridy to sail this 3 days only. Waighting for a fair wind. I have solde all the staves 10000 barrell at L17.10 - 3500 Hhd at L20.10 this currency. I have remitted on to Liverpool to Mr Anderson and Child 1000 pounds starlin.... I received a letter from them [to] inform me that most of the spring goods is gone but they expect to get some frate for Boston.

Along with the movement of merchandise and freight across the Atlantic, another consequence of the expanding trade connections between Ireland and Maine was the transfer of an Irish merchant class to northern New England. During the last quarter of the eighteenth century several enclaves of Irish traders and mariners emerged in coastal towns north of Boston. In Salem Massachusetts, for example, one would have encountered a sizable Irish merchant community that maintained

13 For the range of items found in the Kavanagh store see the probate inventory of merchant William Mooney who managed the store between 1812 and 1820 and later purchased its stock in trade. LCP Vol 32: 89-94.

14 Alexander Cunningham to David Payson, May 14, 1799, WPL.
intermittent involvement in Irish trade. These included both Ulster Protestants and native Catholics such as Simon Forrester, a Cork-born merchant who married the aunt of Nathaniel Hawthorne. Likewise, Lincoln county, Maine developed a vibrant network of Irish merchants and mariners scattered between the ports of Wiscasset, Newcastle and Thomaston. At its peak in the early nineteenth century this group numbered at least 27, a loosely knit fraternity connected as much by timber profits as from any common ethno-religious identity. Among them were merchants of

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Table 3.5
Irish Merchants and Mariners:
Lincoln County, Maine 1785-1815

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Town</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Place of Origin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Francis Anderson</td>
<td>Wiscasset</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>County Down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Costellow</td>
<td>Wiscasset</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Cottril</td>
<td>Nobleborough</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>Inistioge, Kilkenny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex. Cunningham</td>
<td>Wiscasset</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sydenham Davis</td>
<td>Hallowell</td>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>Thomastown, Kilkenny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patrick Doyle</td>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>County Kilkenny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Esmond</td>
<td>Gardiner</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>County Wexford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel Fagan</td>
<td>Wiscasset</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert Hanley</td>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Nenagh, Tipperary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger Hanley</td>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>Nenagh, Tipperary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Kavanagh</td>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>Inistioge, Kilkenny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Keating</td>
<td>Thomaston</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Lismore, Waterford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timothy McCarthy</td>
<td>Georgetown</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas McCrate</td>
<td>Wiscasset</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>Waterford City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John McGuire</td>
<td>Wiscasset</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas McGuire</td>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>County Wexford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert McKown</td>
<td>Boothbay</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Glenarm, Antrim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmund Madigan</td>
<td>Wiscasset</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Thomastown, Kilkenny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Madigan</td>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>Thomastown, Kilkenny</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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considerable wealth and prestige - men like Thomas McCrate of Wiscasset who maintained a string of business correspondents throughout Europe and the Carribean. Others were modest traders, shopkeepers and ship captains, connected in varying degrees to the New England coastal trade.

The Irish origins of these merchants and mariners suggest several patterns regarding the development of merchant communities in early America, and Maine in particular. First, it appears that the movement of overseas merchant talent into northern New England during the Federal period was a selective process, frequently drawing recruits from the more peripheral regions of the Anglo-Celtic world such as Ireland and Scotland (the very regions where population growth and social pressures were on the increase). Overseas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walter Madigan</td>
<td>Wiscasset</td>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>Thomastown, Kilkenny</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Meagher</td>
<td>Whitefield</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>County Waterford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Meagher</td>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>Gentleman</td>
<td>County Waterford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Meagher</td>
<td>Wiscasset</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>County Waterford</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Molloy</td>
<td>Hallowell</td>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>Ireland [?]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Mooney</td>
<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>County Wicklow</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Power</td>
<td>Wiscasset</td>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Power</td>
<td>Jefferson</td>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>County Kilkenny</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Naturalization Petitions, Lincoln and Kennebec County Maine, Record Group 85, Boxes 477-78, 480, NAW; Gravestone inscriptions, Genealogical data.

A good example of a merchant community made up of those from the "celtic fringe" is Newcastle, Maine. Many of the early families prominent in trade and landholding were Ulster-Scots, including the Nobles of Eniskillen, County Fermanagh, and the Borlands of County Derry. In later years Newcastle experienced an influx of peoples from southern Ireland and Scotland, adventurers who brought with them some degree of capital and entrepreneurial skill. These included Irishmen James Kavanagh, Patrick Doyle and William Mooney; and
apprenticeships and migration to the far reaches of New England held little appeal to the aspiring merchant class of more settled, comfortable areas such as London and its environs. Indeed if we look throughout early America, few merchant communities boasted a significant base of London-born or upper class English elites during the late eighteenth century. Instead, merchant talent from abroad was drawn from the hinterlands and the outports of the Empire - from areas of restricted economic and ethno-religious opportunities. Thus Ulster Presbyterians, Lowland Scots, Irish-Catholics, and Quakers alike filled the ranks of trading society in the New World, attracted by increased opportunities across the Atlantic.  

Scotsmen James Sinclair, Captain Daniel McDonnell, and Captain Patrick Lennox. For more on Newcastle, see Arthur Quimby Cushman, Ancient Sheepscot and Newcastle (Bath, Me., 1882).

Recent works have touched upon the Celtic mercantile connections in early America. John Mannion, for example, has written extensively on Newfoundland - an area that fits the "periphery" thesis outlined above. While the north Atlantic cod fishery was operated by English Merchant houses, it was nonetheless southern Irish merchants from Waterford who subcontracted the work of providing fishermen and provisions, and moved to Newfoundland to manage the trade. See Mannion's work cited above. Another location that boasted a wide spectrum of merchants from Ireland and Celtic Britain was Philadelphia. Here were Ulster Scots, Catholic Irish, and Irish Quakers such as James Logan. They played a predominant role in managing the flaxseed trade with Ireland. See Truxes, Irish American Trade, pp. 117-122 and Doyle, Ireland, Irishmen and Revolutionary America, chapter 2. Finally, Scottish traders and factors could be found throughout early America and developed a monopoly over the Chesapeake tobacco trade and the southern deerskin trade out of Charleston. See T.M. Devine, The Tobacco Lords: A Study fo the Tobacco Merchants of Glasgow and their Trading Activities, 1740-1790 (Edinburgh,
Ireland is a case in point. Many aspiring merchants came not from the landed Anglo-Irish "ascendancy", but rather from the old Catholic gentry who were displaced by the social upheavals and land-grabbing of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Representative of such emigrants was Thomas Burke who left for the Chesapeake in 1772. He explained that while he "was born in Ireland to a once affluent Family...some Family misfortunes reduced [him] to the alternative of Domestic Indolent Dependence, or an enterprising peregrination to Virginia."\(^{1}\) Other aspiring merchants were the superfluous sons of substantial farmers (both Catholic and Ulster-Scot) - ambitious youngsters such as James Kavanagh who were encouraged to seek career outlets in trade. Squeezed out by narrowing opportunities at home, this class of younger sons was predisposed to long range mobility, a trend that is revealed in surviving passenger lists from Ireland. Between 1803 and 1806, for example, a striking number of Irish emigrants to America - close to 10 percent - were identified as merchants, traders, clerks and apprentices. Many more identified themselves as farmers - younger sons who travelled with capital and skills to help them get established in the

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1975); also Eric Richards, "Scotland and the Atlantic Empire," in Bailyn and Morgan, eds., Strangers Within the Realm, pp. 67-114.

\(^{1}\) Kerby Miller, Emigrants and Exiles, pg. 141.
new country.\textsuperscript{20} Drawn by opportunity and the promise of betterment, these emigrants were swept into the larger commercial orbits of the north Atlantic world. It is against this background of merchant beginnings and aspirations that the experiences of Kavanagh and Cottrill should be understood.

Upon leaving Ireland in 1784, James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottrill first journeyed to Boston, where a small fraternity of Irish traders and master mariners were established. Details of Kavanagh's early career in the city have, thus far, remained elusive although the "Captain Cavanagh" who regularly sailed out of Boston during this time, bound for Newfoundland.

\begin{table}[h!]
\centering
\caption{Irish Passengers to America, 1803-1805: Occupational Background}
\begin{tabular}{lll}
\hline
Occupational Category & Numbers & Percentage \\
\hline
Merchants/White Collar & 267 & 9.9 \\
Farmers & 949 & 34.9 \\
Textile Workers & 467 & 17.1 \\
Other Artisans & 28 & 1.1 \\
Laborers, Servants & 1004 & 36.9 \\
Other & 3 & 0.1 \\
\hline
2718 & 100.0 & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

Source: \textit{NEHGR} Vols. LX, LXI, LXII, (1906-8), and LXVI (1912); Cormac O'Grada, "Across the Briny Ocean..." in T.M. Devine and D. Dickson, ed., \textit{Ireland and Scotland, 1600-1850} (Edinburgh, 1983) pg. 125.
and Ireland, may have been the same James Kavanagh.  Cottril’s experiences, however, have been easier to reconstruct. Upon his arrival in Boston at the age of 20, he went to work as a clerk or junior partner with Michael Burns, an Irish trader on Windmill point. Burns typified the expanding Irish trading community in Boston at the end of the eighteenth century. His business was modest, focusing on the importation of British and West Indian goods which he marketed from his store on Sea Street. Burn's clientele most likely reflected the stratified character of early seaport communities such as Boston. They ranged from poor widows, artisans and transient seamen, to wealthy ship captains and merchants who made their livelihood along the wharves. The firm also catered to the needs of a growing Irish community in Boston, which at that time clustered about the waterfront and the old North End.

It was during this time that Matthew Cottril forged close

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21 See, for example, the Massachusetts Centinel, July 15, July 29, 1786, which identifies the Ship Jane and Elizabeth and "Captain Cavenaugh" as entering from Newfoundland and clearing for Ireland two weeks later.

22 Concerning Burn’s business enterprise I consulted a number of sources. These include references in the Boston Selectman's Minutes, 1777-1786 (Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1901) which identifies Burns as a licenced retailer with a shop on Bull's wharf, and also licenced to sell spirits; see pg. 46. Also consult records at the Suffolk County Courthouse, Boston: Probate docket # 22543 (Burns); and Registry of Deeds, Vol. 18p, pg. 199. It is interesting to note that Burns' property on Sea Street eventually passed to Matthew Cottril - most likely through Cottril’s second marriage to Eleanor Sweeney, the widow of Michael Burns. See Suffolk deeds Vol. 318, pg. 111.
ties with several of these Irish immigrants, most notably Patrick Campbell, a prosperous farrier, and James Smithwick, a master mariner who owned valuable property and warehouses along Fish street. Campbell (along with Burns) acted as witness to Cottril's marriage in 1793, and the Smithwicks (whose roots were in New Ross close to Inistioge) later went into partnership with Kavanagh and Cottril on several transatlantic timber ventures. From these and other examples a picture emerges of an Irish merchant fraternity in Boston interconnected by personal and business links. Such a network provided the setting, both in terms of support and patronage, that was necessary to launch new mercantile ventures such as Kavanagh and Cottril's, and helps in part to explain their rapid ascent in New England trade.

Within a relatively short time after his arrival — perhaps five years — Matthew Cottril had apparently acquired enough expertise, capital and connections to open an independent business of his own. His naturalization petition in 1793 identified him as a "trader... principally in the town of Boston," and witnesses who wrote on his behalf included prominent local gentlemen such as Jonathan Mason and John

23 Cottril's first marriage to Lydia House of Boston took place at Holy Cross Cathedral in Boston and was officiated by Reverend Francis Matignon. Witnesses included Patrick Campbell, Michael Burns and Mrs. Mary Lobb, widow of James Smithwick the elder. See Boston Cathedral of the Holy Cross, "Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials, 1789-1810," Vol I, November 1793, Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston (AAB), Brighton, Massachusetts. On the Smithwicks, see footnote 46, this chapter.
Indeed, Cottril realized considerable success in Boston, as evidenced by his membership in the Charitable Irish Society, an elite fraternity founded in 1737 and comprising "gentleman, merchants and others of the Irish nation, residing in Boston." Like similar organizations in Philadelphia and New York, the Boston Society pursued both social and charitable activities such as channeling relief to their countrymen "who may be reduced by sickness, old age, and other infirmities and unforeseen accidents." Membership in the Society drew from a wide spectrum of elite, both Protestant and Catholic. One finds those of Ulster-Scots background such as Henry Knox, and second-generation Irish such as James Sullivan, the Attorney General of Massachusetts and Robert Temple, son of a Maine speculator from Tipperary. There were also a significant number of Irish-born traders and shipmasters: Peter Doyle, who captained the brig Sebella to Newfoundland; Daniel McCarthy a "gentleman" from Roxbury who acted as executor to other Irish traders in the town; and John

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24 Petition, Records of Naturalization, 1787-1906, Supreme Judicial Court of Suffolk County, Massachusetts, Record Group 85, Vol. I, pg. 18; NAW.

Magner, who owned extensive property on Oliver's Dock and bequeathed his fortune to the Catholic church in his native Cappoquin, County Waterford. Like Cottril, their careers and transatlantic trading networks have largely been neglected and forgotten.

Despite considerable success in Boston, Cottril set his sights on more distant horizons in Maine, which was then enjoying a boom in its timber trade. Soon after arriving on the eastern frontier in 1795 he entered into partnership with his countryman James Kavanagh, who had earlier established a merchant store and wharf in Nobleborough (now Damariscotta), a prosperous river town in Lincoln county. The partnership quickly emerged as the leading merchant firm along the Damariscotta. In 1795 they purchased the strategic site of Damariscotta fresh water falls, several miles upriver from Nobleborough. With over 500 acres it was a valuable tract that combined waterpower, timber reserves, and access to the sea. Here they developed a lucrative complex of sawmills and

Concerning John Magner, consult his will in Suffolk County Probate, docket # 24838. Dying without immediate family, Magner left money to distant family members and friends in Waterford, and the bulk of his estate (including clothes, books, and money) to the poor in the Waterford parishes of Lismore, Modelligo and Cappoquin. As late as the 1940's one could still find evidence of the "Magner donation" in Lismore parish records. See Robert Lord, et al, History of the Archdiocese of Boston. On Daniel McCarthy see the Boston Centinel, May 9, 1787. It describes him as the administrator of "the Estate of John Bradshaw, formerly of the city of Cork, in Ireland, Merchant, but last of Milton, in the County of Suffolk, in New England...."
gristmills, opened a merchant store, and expanded into land speculation in the interior, a timely strategy given the number of settlers streaming into the Maine backcountry.  

In time the partners divided their empire into distinct spheres of influence. Kavanagh settled at Damariscotta Falls, where he built a fine millseat and managed the company mills. Cottril, remaining true to his town beginnings, opted to establish his seat at Nobleborough, where he directed the firm's overseas trade and shipbuilding. In this way the two partners secured a virtual monopoly over timber and trading along the Damariscotta: their sawmills produced lumber for overseas trade; they built ships from the timber to carry the product to market; and they managed several stores where they sold English and West Indian goods brought home in their ships (Figure 3.2).  

A good place to view the accomplishments and interests of the firm is in Nobleborough town, where Matthew Cottril settled in 1795. Together with Newcastle, its sister village across the river, Nobleborough was the center of a thriving timber and shipbuilding industry during the Federal period. Indeed, sailing up the Damariscotta toward the twin villages

27 The firm's activities in Damariscotta Mills are described at length in Chapter 4.

28 Here there are close parallels between the opportunities of Kavanagh and Cottril and other entrepreneurs on the Maine frontier. See, for example, the career of the Ulmer brothers of Duckport, as described in Alan Taylor, Liberty Men and Great Proprietors (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1990), pp. 155-160.
Damariscotta River Country: 1808

Figure 3.2
one would have encountered a riverscape shaped in large part by the timber trade. On the left bank were large commercial wharves and warehouses reaching into the river channel, the business interests of prominent merchants such as Samuel Glidden and Nathaniel Bryant. Most striking of all was the island wharf of Kavanagh and Cottril, a floating complex of stores and warehouse that served as the nerve center of their overseas trade. Moored along its 100 foot dock could frequently be seen one of several square-rigged vessels in the company fleet, ships that regularly carried timber to Ireland and the West Indies and returned home with manufactured goods for the company store, located in Nobleborough at the east end of the toll bridge spanning the Damariscotta.25

Trade and shipbuilding led to the expansion of the village center in Nobleborough with stores, warehouses, and small wooden shops lining the post road that ran through town toward Penobscot Bay. Also in evidence was a row of handsome Federal-style homes that reflected what one historian has called the "ascendancy of capital" along the timber coast of Maine.30 Most impressive was the attractive townhouse of

25 On Kavanagh and Cottril's holdings in Nobleborough and Newcastle town see plans of Damariscotta eddy (Josiah Jones, 1811), and Damariscotta river (Ebenezer Flint, 1813) in the Massachusetts State Archives, Maps and Plans, # 1742, # 1753, Boston. Also see LCRD Vol. 34:159, 63:4, 72:236, 93:188; and the will of Matthew Cottril which makes reference to personal and business holdings, LCP Vol 30, pp. 155-161.

Matthew Cottril, overlooking the river and company wharves (Figure 3.3). Built by Irish housewright Nicholas Codd in 1801, it boasted a five-bay front and a fashionable interior with drawing rooms and dining areas. Cottril's probate inventory of 1828 provides an invaluable portrait of how these rooms were furnished as well as the luxury afforded a wealthy merchant in the timber trade. Upon entering the house through a columned portico guests were immediately attracted to the handsome semi-circular staircase, a hallmark of Codd's craftsmanship. Opening off the center hall were spacious rooms furnished in the latest style with Sheraton tables, mahogany chairs, sideboards and game tables. Each room was also richly adorned with attractive wall hangings: in all there were twenty six paintings (one by artist B.B. Hill) and numerous gilt framed mirrors which served both as ornate decoration and as reflectors of available light. Many of the expensive pieces in the house, including a carved secretary desk and tall clock, were most likely commissioned from Boston craftsmen and transported aboard the firm's shipping to Nobleborough. Furnishings may also have been

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1 LCP Vol. 28, pp. 437-441.

11 Most of the wealthy timber barons in Maine patronized craftsmen and furniture makers in Boston, New York and Philadelphia - thus imitating the material culture and taste of the urban elite. For more on the movement of high-style culture into mid-Maine see Carolyn Parsons, "'Bordering on Magnificence': Urban Domestic Planning in the Maine Woods," in Maine in the Early Republic, pp. 62-82; and Laura Fecych Sprague, ed., Agreeable Situations: Society, Commerce and Art in Southern Maine, 1780-1830 (Boston: Northeastern University Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
3.3 Matthew Cottril House, Damariscotta, Maine
(built in 1801)
purchased in Ireland or England although no firm provenance has been established. Certainly, it was a house worthy of lavish entertainment, and several celebrated guests, notably Archbishop John Carroll and the Count de Lafayette, were treated to Cottril's Irish hospitality. One must underline, however, that the Cottril mansion was informed not by Irish precedent but rather from more cosmopolitan examples found throughout the Atlantic World. A stately merchant seat, stylish furniture, and frequent entertainment signalled an assimilation to a cultural ideal that was emanating out of England during the period.

Indeed, outside the house guests could have walked through grounds that followed upon the elegant example set by the mansion. Deeds and probate records speak of gardens, orchards, and outbuildings, and along the waterfront one could find a "gandolo" which Cottril used for pleasure excursions upriver. It is clear that Cottril endeavored to create an estate that would communicate his position in the community and present a fashionable front for his fellow merchants in mid-Maine. When he deeded the land adjoining to his townhouse in 1816 he even went so far as to leave strict guidelines

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Press, 1987), particularly the essays by Sprague and Richard Candee.

Details on the Cottril house can be found in the records of the Historic American Buildings Survey, # Me-93 (microfilm), Maine State Library, Augusta. Also see a lengthy article on the house appearing in the Lincoln County News, October 1, 1925.
concerning future construction: "...no other building except a decent two story house with suitable appurtenances shall ever be erected on the land conveyed in this deed lying to the eastward of said Cottrils house wherein he now lives." Yet with all this concern over style and appearance, Cottril was never far away from the means of his wealth and power. Directly adjacent to his merchant seat stood the company store and wharves, and walking along the avenue behind the house one would have heard hammering and construction - the sound of a busy shipyard.

Shipbuilding was a natural adjunct to the firm's timber and maritime interests. With miles of untapped woodland at their doorstep and the need for ships to carry lumber to distant markets, rising merchants such as Kavanagh and Cottril jumped into the shipbuilding trade. As early as 1797 the firm was operating a shipyard in the cove behind Cottril's mansion, a yard that produced at least twenty-five sailing vessels before 1828. For the most part these were square-rigged

14 LCRD, Vol. 93, pg. 190.

15 On the Kavanagh and Cottril shipyards see Mark Wyman Biscoe, "Damariscotta-Newcastle Ships and Shipbuilding," (M.A. Thesis, University of Maine at Orono, 1967); and George Dow and Robert Dunbar, Nobleboro, Maine - A History (Nobleboro, Me.: Nobleboro Historical Society, 1988), pp. 46, 61. Dow and Dunbar are correct in thinking that the firm's shipyard was located in Nobleborough (now Damariscotta village). This is confirmed by early references in deeds and plans. In 1814, for example, Kavanagh and Cottril had a plan of their joint property drawn up by surveyor John Foye in preparation for dissolving their partnership. An appraisal of the Cottril holdings in Nobleborough (marked lot B) made specific reference to a "house, store, barn and shipyard." Appraisal
vessels, heavy draft brigs and ships built to serve in the
booming West Indies and European trade. The Damariscotta
region was a rich source of new shipping during this period.
In addition to Kavanagh and Cottril's there were at least ten
other shipyards within a five mile radius of Nobleborough - a
busy industry that brought lucrative profits to local
shipbuilders such as Nathaniel Bryant, George Barstow, and
John Borland, an Ulsterman who owned a shipyard on Great Salt
Bay. While many of the vessels built in these yards were
destined for Maine trading firms, surviving customs records
also suggest that affluent merchants from Boston supplied the
Nobleborough shipyards with new commissions. There was also
a sizeable market for the resale of second-hand vessels. Ship
naturalizations in Spanish Florida, for example, reveal that
many of its sailing vessels were originally built in Maine and
northern New England.

The shipyards along the Damariscotta were a major source
of employment, attracting a steady flow of artisans into the

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is part of the Kavanagh/Mulligan collection, in the possession
of Alan and Molly Baldwin, Damariscotta Mills, Maine.

16 On the location of shipyards in the Damariscotta
region see Dow and Dunbar cited above, pp. 59-66; also William
Armstrong Fairburn, Merchant Sail (Center Lovell, Maine:
3357-3367. For a good overview on early Maine shipping and
shipbuilding see William A. Baker, A Maritime History of Bath,
Maine and the Kennebec River region (Bath, Me., 1973), Vol I,
Chapters XIV-XIX.

17 Records of the Naturalization of Vessels, East Florida
Papers, 1783-1821, Record Group 599, Series 979 (microfilm
reels 148-149), Florida State Archives, Tallahassee, Florida.
region. These included shipwrights, carpenters, sailmakers, riggers, caulkers, blockmakers, ropemakers, as well as seamen to sail the new ships. Many came from seaport communities in southern New England, skilled craftsmen who were hit hard by recession and lack of opportunities after the Revolution. Others were recent arrivals from the British Isles, voyagers who carried their skills to the New World in search of employment. One of these was John Boulger, an Irish-born shipwright who, along with his son Lestshay, worked at the Cottril shipyard during the early nineteenth century. Boulger learned his trade in Dublin, where he most likely worked at one of the shipyards along the Liffey. While his motivations for leaving Ireland are unknown, he may have been recruited with promises of work in the Cottril shipyards - a possibility suggested by his travel aboard the company brig Atlantic in 1804. In time Boulger settled with his family in the village.

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39 A good source from which to view foreign-born artisans coming into Lincoln County is the register of British Aliens (including Irish-born) kept by the U.S. Government during the War of 1812. In Wiscasset, for example, one finds fifteen artisans including ropemaker Nicholas Arter, rigger William Jerard, and mariner Daniel Dempsey. See Kenneth Scott, compiler, British Aliens in the United States during the War of 1812 (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing co. Inc., 1979), pp. 1-9.
of Newcastle, and walked across the new wooden toll bridge each day to work at the shipyards.\textsuperscript{40}

Other employees resided directly on the premises of Matthew Cottril, living in a wood frame "boarding house" on the backcove next to the shipyard. According to James Kavanagh Jr. this structure originally served as a makeshift Catholic chapel in Newcastle. After being replaced by a new church in Damariscotta Mills, "...it was moved to my Father's shipyard and converted into a boardinghouse for his workmen."\textsuperscript{41} The 1800 federal census reported that 25 men between the ages of 16 and 45 lived on site, a labor force that most likely stayed on only as long as there was work in the shipyard.\textsuperscript{42} In fact the boarding of seasonal labor was

\begin{itemize}
\item On John Bolger see the passenger list of the Brig Atlantic in Handbook of Irish Genealogy(Dublin: Heraldric Artists LTD., 1984), pg. 109; British Aliens...1812, pg. 1; and the Federal Census schedules for Newcastle, Maine - 1810, 1820 (microfilm M252 reel 6, and M33 reel 12) NAW.
\item The 1800 federal census for Nobleborough (microfilm M32, reel 6) identified 37 individuals in the household of Matthew Cottril. These included Cottril, his wife Lydia, son John (age 6), and daughters Mary and Catherine (age 4 and 2). Also identified were one female 1-16 years, six males 10-16 years, twenty males 16-26, and five males 26-45. It is certain that many of these single men lived in the boarding house on Cottril's property next to the shipyard. Resident labor continued to be employed by Kavanagh and Cottril into the next decade. Company accounts refer to "boarding men from April 1812 to Dec. 1813 [21 months] at 15/ per week and grain and corn paid out of the mill...." See account book, 6 December, 1813, in Kavanagh vs. Cottril, LCCCP, April 17, 1819 (microfilm reel # 124); MeSA.
\end{itemize}
quite common in early America, and the larger shipyards were no exception. Moreover, it was a logical strategy of labor employment in an industry prone to seasonal and market variation.¹³

Company accounts, deeds, and probate records identify at least eight ships owned by Kavanagh and Cottril and most likely built in their shipyard. The names of these vessels suggest much about the interests and loyalties of the two partners. Several ships bear the name of family members: The brig Lydia, for example, named after Cottril's wife; and the John and Edward christened after the oldest sons of Cottril and Kavanagh. Other vessels, notably the Erin and the Hibernia look back to the Irish origins of their owners and identify the overseas markets for which they sailed. And finally, one finds in the Fair America an indication of the reception that these men experienced in the New World and the opportunities that they experienced in the Maine timber trade.⁴⁴

Indeed, the transatlantic timber trade was the fulcrum around which the firm of Kavanagh and Cottril turned. Their

¹³ Abiel Wood, a wealthy merchant in Wiscasset, for example, housed 30 laborers near his shipyards in 1800 when business was booming. By 1820, when the shipbuilding industry was in a temporary recession, the number of boarders had diminished to a handful.

¹⁴ To date, eight vessels have been positively identified as belonging to the firm of Kavanagh and Cottril. These are the brig Neptune, the brig Lydia, the brig Atlantic, the ship Hibernia, the ship Fair America, the Erin, the John and Edward, and the Salley.
voyages to the West Indies and Europe brought tremendous profits to the partners and enabled them to assimilate much of the elite culture in Maine. One source from which to explore the patterns and events surrounding this trade are ledgers kept by Captain James Smithwick, master of the brig Atlantic. Between 1805 and 1810 Smithwick made eight voyages in the employ of Kavanagh and Cottril, touching upon Ireland, England, Iberia and the West Indies (Appendix D). His record of cargoes, accounts and ports of call help to paint a vivid picture of the timber trade during the early national period.

James Smithwick was born in Boston in 1770, the son of an Irish trader from New Ross, county Wexford. During the revolutionary era the Smithwicks were one of the leading Irish firms in Boston, owning ships and commercial property on Fish street in the North End, and dabbling intermittently in trade between Ireland and New England. Such a setting was an

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Smithwick's ledgers of voyages, 1806-1810, were presented as evidence in the lawsuit Elizabeth Smithwick vs. James Kavanagh et al., LCCCP, January term, 1821 (microfilm reel # 124), MeSA. Henceforth, they will be cited as "Smithwick ledgers."

James Smithwick Sr. came from New Ross, county Wexford, where the family held property on North Street paralleling the Barrow river (RD 323-73-211858). Henry Smithwick, most likely James' brother, was a mariner working the trade route between Ireland and Boston. His will, probated in Boston in 1778, identified him as being from "the town of Ross McThrew in the county of Waxford" (Ros Mhic Treoin was the Irish vernacular for New Ross). See Suffolk county probate, docket # 16797. Information on the Smithwick's business dealings can be found in the Suffolk county courthouse, Boston: registry of deeds, Vol. 121:231,
appropriate launching pad for a career in maritime trade. With family connections and assistance young Smithwick most likely worked his way through a series of progressively responsible posts: serving as apprentice to one of the master mariners working out of Boston; acting as junior officer aboard a square rigger plying routes between the West Indies or Europe; and finally reaching the position of Captain in his own right, qualified to pilot and command merchant vessels entrusted to his care.\(^7\) His career eventually took him to coastal Maine where his skills were commissioned by wealthy timber merchants, particularly Kavanagh and Cottril. Through a combination of successful voyages and a strategic marriage alliance to Margaret Jackson, the sister-in-law of James Kavanagh, Smithwick entered into partnership with the firm, acquiring a share in several oceangoing vessels including the brig Atlantic.\(^8\) Under Smithwick's command the Atlantic proved to be the most dependable and profitable ship in the company fleet.

By following one of his voyages in close detail we can

\(^{290:1}\); and probate office docket 17375, 17376, and 21185. Also see a family history of the Smithwicks, New England Historical and Genealogical Society, Boston; and references to shipping in the *Boston Gazette*, October 26, 1767.


\(^8\) "Baptisms, Marriages and Burials in the Congregation of St. Mary's church, Newcastle...District of Maine," January 1800, PDA; and Smithwick ledgers.
gather a representative picture of the cargoes, trade routes, and experiences surrounding the Irish trade of Kavanagh and Cottril. Let us begin in July, 1809, several months after Jefferson's embargo has been lifted. Timber ships such as the Atlantic are beginning to clear the Damariscotta, once again making their way toward blue water and lucrative profits across the Atlantic.

Throughout the early summer the brig Atlantic had been moored at the island wharf in Nobleborough, gently riding the changes of tide along the Damariscotta. Timber ships such as the Atlantic were among the most distinctive vessels sailing out of Maine during the Federal period. Larger than the coastal schooners and Caribbean traders, they were designed to carry a cumbersome cargo of timber as well as withstand the rigors of a long transatlantic crossing. The brig itself was over 200 tons and sturdily built. Like most of the vessels working the timber routes she was a three masted square-rigger, designed to exploit a maximum degree of sail space and provide the captain with increased motive power. Throughout most of July, however, the sails remained furled and Smithwick's orders were instead directed toward loading cargo and ships stores in preparation for his voyage. The wharf and landing road along Jacks Point would have been crowded with the teams of farmer-lumbermen who hauled boards and staves to sell to Kavanagh and Cottril for export abroad. In exchange the firm extended to these farmers credit at the
company store in Nobleborough, providing them with rum, flour, textiles and other imported goods and staples.\textsuperscript{49} River gunnelows could also be seen bringing lumber downstream from the Kavanagh sawmills. Planks, shingles and timber were loaded aboard the Atlantic, filling every available niche in the hold. In all, over 260,000 board feet was recorded by Smithwick in his ledger, a cargo that the firm hoped would begin to compensate for income lost during the Embargo.\textsuperscript{50}

Shortly before sailing Smithwick made final arrangements with his crew - signing them on to particular stations and advancing them monthly wages if necessary. Because the brig Atlantic was a square-rigger she needed a large crew (typically ten to twenty sailors) to climb the rigging for each change of sail. While no crew lists survive for the Atlantic, a nominal list does exist for her sister ship the Hibernia, owned by James Kavanagh (Appendix C). Bound for Liverpool in 1790 the Hibernia carried a crew of fifteen: three officers, eleven seamen, and a cook. They were drawn

\textsuperscript{49} For examples of the firm's merchant trade, see company accounts in Kavanagh vs Cottril, LCCCP; and Chapter 4 of this work.

\textsuperscript{50} The length of time it took the brig Atlantic to accumulate its cargo is unknown, although records for the Hibernia reveal that a substantial cargo of timber was loaded in a week or less. Kavanagh and Cottril state that "on the 1st of Decr 1800, they put on board said ship Hibernia (then lying in Damariscotta river...) 180,000 feet of pine boards, 20,000 feet of pine scantling, 60,000 red oak Hhd staves...." The ship sailed on the seventh of December. See William L. Lucey, "A Late Report on the Ship "Hibernia" captured by a French Privateer in the Year 1800" New England Quarterly, Vol. XVII (March-December, 1944), pg. 105.
from a wide range of origins and backgrounds, reflecting the heterogeneous and often transient nature of maritime communities in early Maine. The master, Daniel McDonnell was a native of Greenock Scotland, an outport of Glasgow along the river Clyde. His crew were a polyglot mix of Irish, British, German-American, and New England Yankees, each of whom signed on for $18 a month. Some, like Andrew Schenck the son of a Palatine farmer in Waldoborough, were married with families. Others, such as Irishman Martin Rossiter, lived more transient lives - plying their trade briefly along the Maine coast before disappearing from the historical record. They represented only a small part of the substantial population of sailors that worked out of Maine ports during the Federal period - mariners who made their livelihood from the timber boom and provided a ready pool of labor for shipmasters such as James Smithwick. It was such a crew that prepared to clear Nobleborough at the end of July, 1809, the first stage of a voyage that would last over a year - taking them more than 14,000 miles and touching upon Ireland, Portugal, and Spanish Florida (Appendix D).

While ship accounts do not provide exact dates, the transatlantic crossing typically took six weeks, a journey that could be punctuated by summer storms and temperamental winds. Under Smithwick's command in 1809 the Atlantic made

51 Crew list of the Hibernia (1790), Kavanagh/Mulligan Collection, Damariscotta Mills, Maine.
landfall along the south Irish coast at Cork and then continued into the Irish sea making for the port of Dublin. Previous voyages would have sharpened Smithwick's understanding of the tricky Irish coastline: in a storm he could differentiate between Waterford Estuary and Tramore Bay (a mistake could spell the difference between finding safe shelter and running aground); he knew where to avoid the shallow sandbars of St. George's channel; and he could recognize the lofty peak of Sugarloaf Mountain, signalling one's approach to Dublin Bay. Smithwick also would have been familiar with the mercantile landscape of Dublin as seen from the helm of the Atlantic: the bustling quayside congested with shops and warehouses; the elegant brick merchant houses built in the "Dutch Billie" style; and the new public buildings that emerged during the Georgian period, best symbolized by the customs house, the masterpiece of architect James Gandon.

Beyond the Dublin quays, ancient slipways led to a mass of narrow streets and laneways occupied by petty shopkeepers, tenement dwellers and tavern keepers. Smithwick knew these last places as well. His liquor bills and expenses while on shore confirmed that the mariner's world was characterized by both hard work and hard play. The first business at hand in 1809, however, was offloading his cargo of timber and finding a good price for his efforts. Like other Maine ship captains, Smithwick did business with Charles Fawcett and Company on Sir John's Quay at the south wall. Docking alongside, he employed
a gang of laborers and teams to offload the timber and stack it on the quay. Each piece of timber was then measured and itemized by an official "timber measurer" (city directories identify only 12 in Dublin) who presented both Fawcett and Smithwick with a signed appraisal. The cargo was then advertised and auctioned along the quay with net proceeds being remitted on to London. By all accounts this was a highly successful voyage. Smithwick recorded that the entire cargo, including one mast tree, was sold at a profit of £2,919-19-8 Irish, or $11,971.93 in "Boston currency".52

Rather than return directly to New England, Smithwick and the brig Atlantic sailed in ballast for St. Ubes, a busy outport of Lisbon on the Iberian coast. There he purchased a large shipment of salt and lemons which he carried to Kavanagh and Cottril's representatives in Cork city. High-quality Portuguese salt was central to the provisions industry in Cork, it being used to achieve the remarkable durability of Irish butter and beef shipped to the West Indies.53

As Smithwick concluded his business in Cork that December, winter was already sweeping over the north Atlantic. The political and diplomatic climate was changing as well. In 1809, the United States Congress passed the Non-Intercourse Act, legislation that had a direct impact on transatlantic shipping. In essence it forbade American trade with Britain

52 Smithwick ledgers, 12 February, 1810.
53 Truxes, Irish American Trade, pg. 158.
and France, who were then at war. Like the Embargo it was intended to protect American neutral shipping from seizure by foreign privateers as well as prove to England and France that they needed neutral merchant carriers.54 In response to this new act some American merchants began expanding their trade networks with "approved" countries such as Spain, Portugal, and Russia. Other, however, simply disregarded the legislation entirely - procuring cargoes in locations such as Spanish Florida or the Caribbean and bringing them into the still profitable markets of Britain and Ireland. Ireland's great demand for timber, for example, and the willingness of Yankee merchants to take risks to supply it, led ship captains like James Smithwick to circumvent the trade restrictions. It should come as no surprise, then, that Smithwick set sail from Cork in December 1809 not for Maine, but for Amelia Island, Florida, intending to collect a cargo of timber and barrel staves for the firm of Shea and Stack in Cork city.55

Amelia Island was a small Spanish port on the St. Mary's river just north of St. Augustine. Given the shifting winds of war and diplomacy during the Federal period, Amelia had

54 On the Embargo, the Non-Intercourse Act, and their effect upon Maine shipping see Joyce Butler, "Rising like a Phoenix...," pp. 27-29; also John D. Forbes "European Wars and Boston Trade," New England Quarterly, XI (December 1938), pp. 709-730.

become a popular haven for smugglers and pirates. Its location just across the border from Georgia meant that contraband of all kinds, including African slaves, could easily be spirited up the Sea Islands to Savannah or Charleston.\textsuperscript{56} For timber ships such as the Atlantic, Amelia held an additional lure. As botanist William Bartram pointed out in 1774, the island and surrounding hammocks were blessed with stands of native oak, magnolia and hardwoods (live oak with its heavy angular limbs was particularly prized for shipbuilding). Pine forests were also in abundance across north Florida, giving rise to a thriving naval stores industry. It was here, therefore, that Smithwick negotiated the purchase of 75,000 board feet of pine and oak, 6000 barrel staves, and an unspecified number of hogsheads, perhaps filled with pitch, turpentine, or rice.\textsuperscript{57}

Smithwick and his crew wintered that year in Amelia Island, filling timber orders and waiting for smoother sailing across the Atlantic. During this shore leave they had ample


\textsuperscript{57} Evidence concerning Smithwick and the brig Atlantic in Amelia can be found in the East Florida Papers, FSA. See "Register of departures of vessels, 1784-1821," reel 106 (1808-1809), and 117 (relevant correspondence). On Amelia Island in general see Mark Van Doren, ed., \textit{The Travels of William Bartram} (1792; n.p., Macy Masius, 1928); and \textit{Seeing Fernandina: A Guide to the City and its Industries} [WPA Writers Project] (Fernandina Fla.: Fernandina News Publishing Company), pp. 10-33.
opportunity to explore the town, built on a bluff overlooking the river. Ships of all nationalities lined the wharves that season - English, Bahamian, Spanish, German, even several from New England. Equally alluring were their inbound cargoes: Carribbean sugar, Iberian wine, Sea Isle cotton, and African slaves. Long after the United States outlawed the importation of slaves in 1808, Africans continued to be shipped into Amelia, destined for the expanding cotton plantations of the Gulf states.

Walking into Amelia town Smithwick would have encountered a melting pot of inhabitants that matched the ships flags flying along the riverfront. Here were the houses of Spanish fishermen, mestico artisans, Scots traders, American planters, free blacks and creoles such as "Felipa", described in Spanish deeds and documents as "la bruja", or the witch. One also found Irish emigres such as Don Juan McClure, an Ulster ship captain, and Denis Donaghue who operated an inn likely

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58 On the sea traffic coming into Amelia, and the cargoes carried, see Ward "Commerce in East Florida...", pp. 171-174. Also see "Papers on the arrival of vessels and cargoes," reel 98 (1808-1809, 1810-1811); and "Registers of departures of vessels...," reel 106, East Florida Papers, FSA. A survey of ships clearing Amelia reveals that the majority carrying lumber and barrel staves made for ports in the British Isles. These included Liverpool, Portsmouth, London, Deptford, Plymouth, Greenock and Glasgow, as well as the Irish ports of Cork, Belfast and Londonderry. Indeed, customs lists in Ireland for the year 1810 reveal that 106,700 barrel staves and 337 tons of timber were shipped into Irish ports, primarily Cork. See MSS 353-76, Abstracts of Irish Exports and Imports, 1810, NLI.
frequented by Smithwick and his crew. East of the inn was the hospital of Karl Sontage, a German doctor. Occupying his small infirmary that winter were a number of patients suffering from yellow fever and malaria. Diseases such as these were a particular liability for northern mariners working in sultry climates such as Florida. Without proper sanitation and medical technology disease hastened many to an early grave. Such was the fate of James Smithwick, who came down with fever in the weeks before the Atlantic was due to sail for Cork. He was buried in the nearby hamlet of St. Mary's, Georgia, in a small graveyard overlooking salt marsh and island hammocks.

First mate William Holland, now elevated to captain, guided the Atlantic back to Cork, discharging its cargo of timber and making necessary repairs for the final leg of the journey. Provisions and victuals were put aboard and space in the hold was prepared for the accomodation of Irish passengers bound for New England. Rather than leave in ballast many timber ships dabbled in the emigrant trade, transporting passengers to New York, Boston, or Maine. On this journey the Atlantic carried over twenty passengers to Damariscotta, including Michael Farrell, who later opened a blacksmith shop

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59 Seeing Fernandina..., pp. 67-77.
60 See the memorial stone for James Smithwick in St. Patrick's churchyard, Newcastle, Maine.
in Bristol, Maine.\footnote{Smithwick ledgers, "7th Voyage."} Coming from Cork and its hinterlands, these migrants joined the streams of other voyagers lining the quays of Dublin, Waterford, Belfast, and Derry, each one carrying with them a hope for new beginnings.

Commerce in passengers was an important facet of the Maine timber trade during the Federal period. Because of their size, westbound timber ships such as the Atlantic often ran the risk of having to go out with much unoccupied space (European goods carried on the return journey were generally small manufactured wares or luxury items), or entirely in ballast. Paying passengers, therefore, were a boon to shipowners such as Kavanagh and Cottril. Demanding very little in the way of accommodations, they could be stowed in hastily constructed berths and provided with a modicum of provisions. Income from these emigrants often brought in considerable revenues during peak years and, at the very least, it helped to defray seaman’s wages and other shipboard expenses.\footnote{William Forbes Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine (New York: Russell and Russell, 1967), pp. 68-89; Truxes, Irish American Trade, pp. 127-128.} Such was the case of the Atlantic in 1809. Twenty passengers on the return voyage paid $263: enough to cover the ship’s monthly payroll.

Merchants from every port along the timber coast of Maine participated in this commerce, carrying passengers from
Dublin, Belfast, Derry and Liverpool. Indeed, merchants and shipowners were an important cog in the machinery of emigration to America at this time, and the promise of lucrative profits from the passenger trade played no small part in its inception. Peter Moogk has even argued that "Between the 'push' of uncomfortable circumstances at home, and the 'pull' of a new land's attractiveness, merchants were the principal ingredient in the sustained movement of people to the New World." One such merchant was Abiel Wood of Wiscasset, who owned a fleet of twenty oceangoing vessels during the early nineteenth century. In 1811, several of his ships, including the aptly named Shamrock, were recorded in Dublin offloading timber and taking on passengers bound for Boston and New York. A passenger list for the Shamrock, published in the Shamrock or Hibernian Chronicle in 1811, identified sixty passengers and their families, a group recruited largely from Dublin and its hinterlands. Most of these voyagers embarked for New York, where the ship sailed with cargo and freight. The remainder continued on to Wiscasset under the command of Captain Robert McKown.


The passenger list of the ship Shamrock can be found in Donald M. Schlegel, Passengers from Ireland: Lists of Passengers arriving in American ports between 1811 and 1817.
McKown, like other master mariners in the timber trade had Irish roots himself. His father Patrick came from Ulster in the years prior to the Revolution and settled in Boothbay, Maine. When he died in 1779 Patrick willed son Robert the family house, garden, and "estate" in Glenarm, county Antrim, provided that "he go there for it."

Many of the passengers travelling on Maine timber ships came with marketable skills, quite unlike those Irish migrants leaving during the horrors of the Famine period. Shipping lists and official statistics, such as those kept between 1803 and 1806, describe many as farmers, artisans, and clerks -

[transcribed from the the Shamrock or Hibernian Chronicle] (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co. Inc., 1980), pg. 32. By comparing ships identified in Schlegel's work with customs records for the port of Wiscasset (which record dates, names of vessels, owners, and masters) one can identify several Maine ships carrying passengers from Ireland. In 1811, for example, one finds five vessels from Wiscasset:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ship</th>
<th>Departed</th>
<th>Master</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Arrived</th>
<th>Passengers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>Belfast</td>
<td>J. Scott</td>
<td>Jos. Wood</td>
<td>N.Y.</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shamrock</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>R. McKown</td>
<td>Abiel Wood</td>
<td>N.Y.</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Huntress</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>T. Ronson</td>
<td>R. Elwell</td>
<td>N.Y</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belisarius</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>J. Tinkham</td>
<td>Abiel Wood</td>
<td>N.Y.</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Newry</td>
<td>A. Baker</td>
<td>Abiel Wood</td>
<td>N.Y.</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Passengers from Ireland; and "Sea Letters from the Port of Wiscasset, Box 23, Patterson Papers, MeHS.

New York was a common destination for Maine timber ships leaving Ireland, due to its being a good market for manufactured goods and freight carried on the return voyage. Boston was also popular for this reason. For the most part passengers disembarked in these ports although a steady trickle also came into Maine throughout the Federal period and contributed to the growing Irish community in Lincoln County.

LCP, Vol 2, pp. 81-82. Captain Patrick McKown is buried at Pemaquid Maine within view of Fort King George.
passengers who most likely emigrated out of personal choice and paid their own passage.\textsuperscript{16} That most of this movement involved the "middling sort" during the early nineteenth century was due in large part to the British Passenger Act of 1803, legislation that sharply raised transatlantic fares on American-owned vessels. Consequently, only the more properous and "solid" Irish folk could afford to sail to America at this time, as most of the poorer sort took passage to maritime Canada.

The afore-mentioned Shamrock offers a good example. Upon clearing Dublin in June, 1811, one customs official declared that "many of the passengers per the Shamrock...are very respectable and none under the degree of mechanics and farmers. Not one servant of either sex could be obtained from amongst them."\textsuperscript{17} The significance of this statement is magnified when we consider the Irish immigrants settling in Lincoln county during the early nineteenth century. Many of these Irish, who journeyed on ships similar to the Shamrock, were the younger sons of farmers and shopkeepers, seeking their fortune in the New World. Land deeds and naturalization petitions (which often identify occupation) confirm that they

\textsuperscript{16} For an overview on these lists see Cormac O'Grada, "Across the Briny Ocean: Some thoughts on Irish Emigration to America, 1800-1850," in T.M. Devine and David Dickson, eds., Ireland and Scotland, 1600-1850 (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, Ltd., 1983) pp. 118-130. A full listing can be found in the New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Volumes LX, LXI, LXII, LXVI.

\textsuperscript{17} Schlegel, Passengers from Ireland, pg. 32
had the skills and wherewithal to settle into farms and trades in Maine, a rural experience that differed sharply from that of the urban poor who settled in east coast cities during the 1830's and 1840's (Table 3.7). Lincoln county, in fact, was one of the few locations in the northeast where rural Irish settled in rural settings - a phenomenon that had important ramifications for cultural continuity and identity.

Table 3.7
Occupations of Irish settlers in mid-Maine, 1780 - 1835

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Valid Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mariner</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schoolmaster</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoemaker</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewright</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksmith</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipwright</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentleman</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeeper</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innkeeper</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooper</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carpenter</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priest</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joiner</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawyer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brewer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanner</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldsmith</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stonelayer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaver</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedlar</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valid Cases 224
Missing Cases 35

Sources: Naturalization Petitions, Lincoln and Kennebec County, Maine, Record Group 85, Boxes 477-78, 480, NAW; Registry of Probate, Lincoln County Courthouse; Registry of Deeds, Lincoln and Kennebec County, Maine.

Passengers travelling from Ireland aboard the Maine timber ships were recruited by one of several means. Passage was most often arranged by agents in the major ports who represented the interests of timber coast merchants. Many of these agents, such as Forbes and Fawcett in Dublin, doubled as...
brokers in the timber trade. Besides auctioning off a ship's cargo of timber they also advertised details concerning its departure and arranged accommodation for freight and passengers. Irish newspapers of the period contain frequent advertisements relating to this passenger trade. Notices typically gave information on the name of the ship and its master, its tonnage, accommodation for passengers, destination, and probable date of sailing. Some agents also included references to safety features on board and the "humanity" of the captain in an attempt to lure prospective passengers.

In addition to quayside agents, ship captains also took a hand in recruiting passengers. From pubs, inns, and marketplaces along the waterfront they touted the advantages of their ship and the opportunities to be had at its destination. On occasion, these masters also toured the port's hinterlands, searching for likely candidates in local markets and country fairs. Their efforts are understandable when one is reminded that captains regularly shared in the profits of the voyage.

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On the role of agents in the passenger trade see R.J. Dickson, _Ulster Emigration to Colonial America, 1718-1775_ (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1988), pp. 98-124; and Adams, _Ireland and Irish Migration..._ , pp. 78-79. For examples of newspaper advertisements dealing specifically with the passenger trade see the _Dublin Evening Post_: July 4, 1805 (Brig Nancy of Wiscasset - "for freight or passage, for which she has excellent accommodation..."); July 16, 1805 (Schooner Pattie of Wiscasset); September 3, 1805 (Ship Eagle - "A roomy ship and experienced commander, well known in the passenger trade"); August 6, 1806 (Ship Rover - "She has excellent accommodation for either cabin or steerage passengers"); and October 22, 1807 (Brig Ariadne - "will provide an abundant supply of good provisions and water for the voyage").
An instructive example of the Maine passenger trade can be found in the affairs of the brig Atlantic, captained in 1804 by Robert Askins, a master mariner from Bristol, Maine. Upon selling its cargo of timber in Dublin, the following advertisement was placed in the Dublin Evening Post on June 5, 1804.

For Boston

The American Brig Atlantic, Robert Askins Master, burden 200 tons, double decked, will sail 15th of June, with what goods may offer for freight or passage, for which she has excellent accommodation, apply to the Master on board at the North Wall, or to Edward Forbes and Charles Fawcett, merchants, 22 Marlborough Street.  

According to a passenger list compiled by Captain Askins, twenty one voyagers were signed aboard the Atlantic on June 19. In order to comply with requirements of the Passenger Act of 1803, Askins recorded each passenger's name, age and place of origin, as well as their height, coloring and distinguishing features (Appendix E). Andrew Shortall, for

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69 Truxes, Irish American Trade, pg. 134. Outagents located in the hinterlands also performed valuable service in the Irish passenger trade. They promoted the concept of emigration among Irish folk in their locale, and advertised the advantage of certain destinations as well as particular merchants. To date no evidence has been found of their service to Maine merchants although several operated in the southeast in concert with ships leaving for Newfoundland. See John Mannion and Fidelma Maddock, "Old World Antecedents, New World Adaptations...," pp. 351-352.

70 Dublin Evening Post, June 5, 1804.
example, was described as a laborer from Thomastown, county Kilkenny. He was 21 years of age, five feet, ten inches in height, and of dark complexion. Shortall later settled in Wiscasset, Maine, where he found work as a carpenter and housewright.\footnote{The Atlantic's passenger list has been published in the NEHGR (1908), Vol. LXII, pg. 172; and in the Handook of Irish Genealogy, pg. 105. On Andrew Shortall see Richard Candee, "John Langdon's unusual census of 'Mechanical Labor': The 1820 artisans of Wiscasset...," Maine Historical Society Quarterly, Vol 27, no. 1 (Summer, 1987), pp. 27, 30. Candee mistakenly identifies Shortall as being English.}

Among the interesting features revealed in this passenger list is the strong regional and local flavor to its emigrants. Many of those who sailed aboard the brig Atlantic were drawn from the southeast of Ireland, particularly county Kilkenny. Nine emigrants came from the parish of Thomastown along the Nore valley: among them Sydenham Davis, a gentleman farmer; Samuel Duke, son of a local apothecary; and Walter Madigan, a shopkeeper travelling with his wife Catherine and four young children.\footnote{The children of Walter Madigan were not identified on the passenger list, although they certainly travelled aboard ship with their parents. This is confirmed in the 1850 federal census for Newcastle (which shows them as being born in Ireland), and in the Thomastown baptismal registers (microfilm reel # p 5024) NLI.} Upon closer examination, one finds that most of these Thomastown folk had earlier connections to Matthew Cottril, the ship's owner. The family of Sydenham Davis, who owned the Grenan mills in Thomastown, had close associations with several Cottril brothers who acted as witnesses on local
business transactions. Similarly, there were close ties between Matthew Cottrill and Walter Madigan, which come into clear focus in the New World. Upon arriving in Maine, Madigan and his wife settled first in Damariscotta Mills and later moved to Wiscasset where he was identified in local records as a trader and shopkeeper. When he purchased a store and houselot on Wiscasset Point in 1811, it was Cottrill who extended him a preferential mortgage of $1600. Moreover, Cottrill employed several of Walter's sons in his merchant trade, notably John and Matthew Madigan, who became captains in the firm's timber fleet. The precise relationship between the two families only surfaces in the will of Matthew Cottrill, who bequeathed property in Damariscotta Mills to "my sister Catherine Madigan." Cottrill and Walter Madigan, in other words, were brothers-in-law.

Like the Madigans, many of those who sailed aboard the brig Atlantic in 1804 eventually settled in Lincoln county, Maine. Ralph Moran, who came from the uplands of Raheenroche, county Kilkenny, settled in Hallowell, as did Sydenham Davis who worked as a trader and brewer along the Kennebec. Michael Ryan, from Thomastown, pushed into the Sheepscot

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73 RD 425-452-277761; 424-520-2767887.
75 On Davis' career in Hallowell see KCRD Vol 20:508, 21:482, 14:291, and 15:55; also see Davis naturalization petition, August 3, 1810. Kennebec County Court of Common Pleas, Vol. 12, pg. 189.
backcountry where he homesteaded 100 acres of land owned by Kavanagh and Cottril. John Boulger, mentioned earlier, worked in the firm's shipyards. Their experience, along with Madigan's, raises one of the more provocative and unanswered questions concerning a migration managed by merchants: namely, to what extent did entrepreneurs like Kavanagh and Cottril use kinship and neighborhood networks to attract labor and settlers from Ireland?76 Certainly the two partners maintained close ties with their native Inistioge, exemplified by a tombstone commissioned by "Matthew Cottril, America" to commemorate his deceased parents and family. Kavanagh's son Edward even travelled back to Inistioge and Thomastown for a visit in 1815, staying with relations along the Nore.77 And while no firm evidence of recruitment survives, the close ties inherent between these Maine merchants and their passengers aboard the Atlantic clearly suggests a system of recruitment at work.

Indeed, if one plots the homeplaces of Irish immigrants to Lincoln county a striking pattern appears. Fully one-quarter

76 This question surfaces in the work of John Mannion, "Irish Merchants Abroad: The Newfoundland Experience...," pp. 170-171.

77 A "Memorandum Book belonging to Edward Kavanagh" describes a journey through Ireland in 1816 in which Edward, then 22, visited Thomastown and "took the coach to Ennis", or Ennisteague as it was called at that time. A transcript of this journey is found in the collection of William L. Lucey S.J. at Holy Cross College Archives, Worcester, Mass. It is also reproduced in part in Lucey, Edward Kavanagh: Catholic Statesman, Diplomat from Maine, 1795-1844 (Francesstown, N.H., 1946), pp. 64-57

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of all migrants known to have travelled to mid-Maine between 1790 and 1830 - 62 settlers - came from within a 20 mile radius of Inistioge (Figure 3.5). This migration corridor primarily drew immigrants from along the banks of the Nore and Barrow rivers, the primary arteries of trade and communication in the southeast during this period. Busy with ships and river barges it is easy to imagine messages from American kin and information concerning overseas opportunities filtering into the towns and backwaters along the route. Many, in fact, left for New England during this period, some of them travelling aboard timber ships such as the Atlantic. Others followed years later, drawn by ties of kinship or simply seeking familiar faces from the homeland. 78

Naturalization petitions for Lincoln County, which frequently identify the occupations and home parishes of these southeastern folk, help to sketch a brief profile of these 62 voyagers. Roughly half came from market towns and villages along the Nore and Barrow. Besides Inistioge and Thomastown, several emigrants left from the town of New Ross, an important entrepot for trade along the lower Barrow. These included John Kavanagh and his wife Mary White - possible relations of

78 As recent scholarship underlines, the southeast region, with the exception of Ulster, was the major recruitment ground for Irish immigrants during late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Many left for Newfoundland, others were bound for the Maritimes and New England, including the timber coast of Maine. See Louis Cullen, "The Irish Diaspora in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries."
James Kavanagh. Others journeyed from market towns along the Suir such as Clonmel and a few, notably the Meaghers, traced their origins to Waterford city, then a premier trading center with Iberia and Newfoundland.

Such towns were among the most successful in Ireland and brought to the region a cosmopolitan air and a strong sense of aspiration and entrepreneurial values. They were also hotbeds of emigration, prompted by the pressures of success and economic growth. A fluid social structure and competitive aspirations ruthlessly squeezed out younger sons and led to the presence of relatively mobile elements in the population. These conditions led many to try their luck in America - seeking to improve their condition and satisfy material ambitions. It is perhaps no coincidence that two-thirds of the Irish merchant class in Lincoln County originated from this southeast corner of Erin, an area energized by trade and upward mobility.

John Kavanagh and Mary White left from New Ross during the 1820's and settled in North Whitefield. Thank you to Thomas and Catherine Peckinham of Walpole, Maine for this information.

County Origin of Irish Merchants and Mariners: Lincoln County Maine, 1780-1830

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Kilkenny</th>
<th>Wexford</th>
<th>Waterford</th>
<th>Tipperary</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<tr>
<td>Merchant (N=12)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trader (N=6)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain (N=8)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
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Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.
Outside the towns, many of those travelling to mid-Maine during the early Republic came from agricultural hinterlands scattered along the Barrow and Nore. Six families came from farms in Sutton's Parish, south of New Ross, and twelve came from St. Mullins in county Carlow, a four hour walk from Inistioge over Brandon hill. Here the Kavanaghs had distant relations, and it is possible that they tapped into networks of kin and friends. Also coming to Maine were several immigrants from Bramblestown, Kilkenny, a rich farming area owned by Inistioge landlord William Tighe. The Ryans, in particular, a strong farming family with ties to Thomastown, contributed several sons who settled in the Sheepscot valley of Maine. Like other Irish in Lincoln County they successfully transplanted agricultural antecedents and occupations to the New World.

In short, what we see during the early nineteenth century was a small but steady migration of peoples the southeast of Ireland and mid-Maine. This migration was encouraged (if not managed) by Kavanagh and Cottril and was a integral part of their overall timber trade with Ireland and Liverpool. Much work has yet to be done before the extent of the firm's passenger trade or recruitment networks can be identified. The fact remains, however, that timber firms such as Kavanagh and Cottril or Abiel Wood of Wiscasset were actively engaged

Sources: Naturalization Petitions, RG 85, NAW; Gravestone Inscriptions.
in the Irish immigrant trade, an enterprise that brought scores of Hibernians to the coast of Maine.  

Several of these voyagers, such as Walter Madigan, were drawn to Damariscotta Mills, a rural industrial village established by James Kavanagh in the 1790's. To this we now turn our attention.

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31 The Maine passenger trade slowly declined during the second decade of the nineteenth century. This was due in large part to the ascendancy of the Canadian timber industry which effectively eclipsed the Maine-Irish trade. In the years after 1815 Britain actively choreographed this trade, importing large shiploads of timber from the maritime provinces and initiating a system of preferential tariffs that enabled its success. Hand in hand with the new economic expansion of British North America, England encouraged the movement of people (many of them Irish) to the relatively unsettled regions of Canada. This was facilitated by a series of new passenger acts in 1816 and 1819 which made fares to the United States more than double those to British Canada. This meant that after 1815 most of the Irish travelling to North America journeyed in the holds of timber ships bound for the Maritimes. For more on the rise of the Canadian passenger trade and its impact on Irish migration see William F. Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World from 1815 to the Famine, pp. 68-127; and Kerby Miller, Emigrants and Exiles, pp. 193-197.
CHAPTER IV

DAMARISCOTTA MILLS

From profits gained in transatlantic trade, the firm of Kavanagh and Cottril was able to build a vast empire with interests reaching into every corner of Lincoln County. At its peak their company controlled a lucrative mercantile complex that included over three thousand acres of virgin timberland, six mills, eight ocean-going vessels and a prosperous trade with the West Indies and Europe.

The nucleus of this empire was Damariscotta Mills, a rural industrial village shaped and developed by James Kavanagh at the close of the eighteenth century. In the decades that followed it played host to a growing number of Irish emigrants and tenants who lived and worked alongside their New England neighbors at the Kavanagh mills and shipyard. This remarkable village on the eastern frontier of New England is worth reconstructing in close detail - not only for what it reveals about New World opportunities for emigrant elites such as Kavanagh, but also the degree to which his traditions and values from home were reproduced, modified or discarded in new settings. This chapter, therefore, will explore the dual persona of Damariscotta Mills: both as a representative example of rural industrialization in Federal Maine and as a unique expression of ethnic diversity and identity in early New England.
James Kavanagh first settled in Lincoln County in 1788, opening a store in Bristol and subsequently expanding into shipbuilding and trade. His partnership with Matthew Cottril in 1795 opened up a vast horizon of opportunities, including the acquisition of timberland, mills and water rights at Damariscotta fresh water falls, two miles upstream from Nobleborough. In the years that followed the two partners divided their empire into distinct spheres of influence: Cottril directing the firm's overseas trade and shipping from Nobleborough town and Kavanagh locating his interests at Damariscotta Mills where he managed the company mills and industrial concerns. This division of the firm into separate geographical spheres and duties paralleled their Irish beginnings and complemented their experiences in the homeland. Matthew Cottril, the product of a town mercantile family in Inistioge, easily moved into the same milieu in the New World. Similarly, James Kavanagh's movement to the head of Damariscotta falls, on the far edge of Newcastle town, and his management of speculative activities, farming, and upcountry commerce was most likely influenced by his agricultural beginnings in Cluen.

During the Federal period Newcastle was composed of a wide spectrum of peoples - some of whom were native to the British isles. Indeed, the town was predominantly Scotch-Irish in origin, having been settled in the 1740's by Ulster emigrants such as Archibald Little and Captain James
Cargill. They were part of a larger wave of Scotch-Irish that flowed into Lincoln County as part of the proprietary schemes of Samuel Waldo and Colonel David Dunbar. More recently Newcastle had experienced an influx of peoples from Scotland and southern Ireland; adventurers who brought with them some degree of capital and entrepreneurial skills. Walking through Newcastle town in 1810, for example, one would have encountered a distinct Scottish flavor to the commercial center. Here one would have found trader James Sinclair and tavern-keeper John Turnbull who had travelled from the Lowlands of Scotland. Similarly, along the wharves jutting out into the Damariscotta one could have located Patrick


2 The number of Irish in Newcastle peaked in the years between 1800 and 1820 when at least twenty families resided in the town. These included household heads Walter Madigan, John Boulger, Patrick Boulger, Thomas Codd, Nicholas Codd, Patrick Downey, James Smithwick, Timothy Hannon, William Mooney, Patrick Doyle, Andrew Drea, James Fitzpatrick, James Mulligan, Micheal Power, John Rafter, James Carney, Matthew Hurley, and James Kavanagh. In addition it is likely that other, more transient Irish passed through the village at various times-laborers who have gone undetected in census, town, and church records.
Lennox and Daniel MacDonnell, Ship Captains who came from Port Patrick on the Irish Sea, and Greenock, a busy port along the river Clyde. They were part of the outward thrust of Scottish entrepreneurial skill that populated the trading communities of the Chesapeake, Middle colonies, and the Maritimes. It was in this ethnically fluid environment that James Kavanagh chose to build his career, not surprising given the town's relative openness to emigrants and newcomers.

Despite the significant migration of settlers from southern New England into the Damariscotta region in the years following the American Revolution, it can be argued that Newcastle remained essentially a "Celtic" town, particularly among its commercial elite. Its merchant talent during the Federal period was drawn largely from the marginal and more peripheral areas of the British Isles, not from Maine or England as we may think. This movement from the Celtic fringe of Ireland and Scotland followed the prevalent routes of the timber trade connecting northern New England with outports in Britain, and reflected the mobility (social as well as geographical) of younger sons into foreign trade and colonial pursuits. As scholars such as Louis Cullen remind us "There

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1 See naturalization petitions for James Sinclair and Daniel McDonnell, Record Group 85, Box 480, NAW. Sketches of John Turnbull and Patrick Lennox can be found in Cushman, Ancient Sheepscot and Newcastle, pp. 399, 428-429. On the movement of Scottish entrepreneurs to the New World see Eric Richards, "Scotland and the uses of the Atlantic Empire," in Bailyn and Morgan, eds., Strangers within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire, pp. 67-114.
were too few careers for all the sons of socially ambitious families in a poor country like Ireland. Hence in Ireland as in Scotland, for want of domestic outlets, many of the careers had to be pursued abroad, especially by the socially weaker families who could not command preference or support." The career of James Kavanagh is a good example of this pattern, and there are striking similarities in the career pursuits and aspirations of other Irish and Scottish voyagers to Lincoln County.

One of those who journeyed to Newcastle in the years after the American Revolution was Walter Madigan, the brother-in-law of Matthew Cottril, who worked at the Kavanagh store in the mills before establishing himself in trade. A native of Thomastown, County Kilkenny, Madigan arrived with his family aboard the brig Atlantic in 1804 and subsequently made his way upcountry to Damariscotta Mills. He travelled along the rough-hewn country road that connected Newcastle town with the mills - a three mile walk that presented a striking

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Louis Cullen, The Emergence of Modern Ireland, pp. 116-117. This portrait of Irish and Scottish mercantile ambitions acts to balance the rather overstated "Celtic thesis" that appeared several years ago. This argument by Forrest McDonald and Grady McWhiney sees the Scots and Irish as pastoral, emotional, and often violent - a legacy that they brought with them to the New World. See Grady McWhiney, Cracker Culture: Celtic Ways in the Old South (Tuscaloosa, Alabama, 1988); and as a corrective Rowland Berthoff, "Celtic Mist Over the South," Journal of Southern History, LI (1986), 525-530.

Madigan later branched out into trade himself - establishing a merchant store in Wiscasset. See LCRD 78:9, and 79:237.
introduction into the physical and social landscape of his new home.\footnote{Madigans travels and observations are suggested by a variety of sources. First, see contemporary travel accounts of Maine such as Timothy Dwight, \textit{Travels in New England and New York} (Cambridge Mass: Belknap Press, 1969) Vol. II, pp. 136-166; and Edward A. Kendall, \textit{Travels through the Northern parts of the United States in the years 1807 and 1808} (New York: I. Riley, 1809) Vol. III, pp. 40-170. On the physical and economic environment of mid-Maine see Moses Greenleaf, \textit{A Statistical View of the District of Maine} (Boston, 1815), microcard, Dimond Library, University of New Hampshire; David C. Smith, "Maine's Changing Landscape to 1820," in Clark, Leamon, and Bowden, eds., \textit{Maine in the Early Republic}, pp. 13-26; and Alan Taylor, \textit{Liberty Men and Great Proprietors}, chapter 3.} At first glance the Maine countryside must have appeared wild and untamed to emigrants such as Madigan. Unlike the domesticated open-field landscape of the homeland here one was surrounded by great stands of oak and pine, creating a dark canopy on either side of the road. As Madigan quickly discovered, timber was the principal pivot of the Maine economy around which everything else turned. It provided a ready and valuable commodity for overseas trade. It was utilized in the manufacture of a wide variety of items ranging from barrel staves to furniture; and it fueled a boom in shipbuilding that was felt in every waterfront village in Lincoln County. Even the process of burning wood produced a cash crop - potash - which found wide use as a ingredient in glass and soap.

Timber also engraved a clear pattern on the lifeways and material culture of the scattered farmsteads that dotted the road to Damariscotta Mills. If Madigan had stopped outside
one of these farms to ask directions he would have discovered a very different world from the one he left in Ireland. The Maine farmhouse and outbuildings were constructed entirely of wood and shingle - in striking contrast to the stone, slate and thatch of home. The dwelling house most likely resembled the simple one story vernacular farmhouses ("Cape Cod") found throughout the New England landscape. It consisted of two rooms, kitchen and parlor, on the first floor and sleeping space in a roomy loft upstairs. A massive center chimney provided warmth, fueled by a ready supply of firewood collected from nearby clearings. 

Inside, Madigan would have found a standard of living that was in marked contrast to that of small farmers of comparable station in Ireland. Surviving inventories reveal a table, five or six chairs and perhaps a desk in the parlor; with cooking equipment, crockery, table and chairs in the kitchen. A loom and spinning wheel would also have been kept busy during the evenings. In the upstairs chambers were several beds, bedsteads, and a chest or two. 

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2 On the contents of rural farmhouses in Lincoln county I surveyed a small sample of household inventories in the Registry of Probate, Lincoln county courthouse, Wiscasset, Maine. I also consulted several works on early inventories including Abbott Lowell Cummings, ed., Rural Household Inventories...1675-1775 (Boston: Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, 1964); and Jane Giffen, "Clues to Life in Sandwich [N.H.], 1788-1820: A Look at the
because of the almost complete absence of trees in Ireland, household furniture among small farmers and tenants was very rudimentary, usually two benches, a table and several straw bedsacks. Fuel was also an expensive commodity outside bog areas and Madigan may have lingered a bit longer than usual to enjoy the fire before he set off again.

Damariscotta Mills stood on the far edge of Newcastle town, nestled along the fresh water falls that separated Newcastle from Nobleborough. In 1790 this corner of the town was still relatively unsettled with only a sprinkling of families living in sight of the mills. Most of Newcastle's 131 families (886 men, women and children) lived at the town center. By 1804, however a steady number had moved upriver to the mills, drawn by work in one of several busy shipyards along Great Salt Bay or, like Madigan, attracted by employment in the Kavanagh mills and store. This new focus of population growth and economic activity became apparent as Madigan drew nearer to the village. Increasingly, forests gave way to clearings and fields and several outlying farms came into view. On the left appeared the foundations of a new church, a brick chapel that stood as a tangible sign of the shift away from the older parish center at Newcastle town.

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3 *Heads of Families...Maine* (Washington D.C., 1908), pp. 40-41; Federal census returns for Newcastle, 1800 and 1810 (microfilm reels M32:6, and M252:12) NAW.
Yet it also signified much more. This was St. Patrick's, the centerpiece of a growing "Roman Catholick Society" in Lincoln county. For newcomers like Walter Madigan it was an auspicious introduction to the village. Positioned prominently on a hill overlooking the mills it would serve as a focal point, both geographically and socially, around which new emigrants could rally.

For the better part of an afternoon Walter Madigan had travelled the road to Damariscotta Mills, walking through dense forestation and past rough-hewn farmsteads and pastures. It must have come as a surprise, therefore, when he came upon the elegant Federal mansion of James Kavanagh (Figure 4.1). Situated at the end of an attractive laneway and surrounded by an impressive array of outbuildings, carriage houses, and gardens, it must have brought back images of country estates along the river Nore. Yet the house's bold grandeur and its magnificent prospect overlooking church and village also spoke of a new self-confidence and new order befitting a successful Irish merchant in the New World. The overall design of the mansion as well as its physical setting were calculated to highlight Kavanagh's social position and identity. Like Jefferson at Monticello, Kavanagh had elevated himself atop the highest hill overlooking his holdings. The house was an extension of the man - a metaphor for what he wanted to communicate about himself and his place in the community. Indeed, for new immigrants like Walter Madigan, here was
4.1 James Kavanagh House, Damariscotta Mills, Maine.
(built in 1803)
tangible proof that the New World opened up a remarkable range of opportunities and endeavors that would be beyond their reach in the homeland.

Kavanagh built his house on an equal footing and elevation with St. Patrick's church. It was perhaps no coincidence. During the opening years of the nineteenth century, when both sites were being planned, Kavanagh was the driving force behind community development, both temporal and spiritual. He donated the land on which the church rested, contributed the lion's share of funds needed for its construction, and acted as a major patron to both visiting clergy and resident congregation. It was symbolic, therefore, that Kavanagh should occupy the house nearest the church and that both sites should occupy commanding locations overlooking the village. Seen from this perspective, Kavanagh, like the church, could watch over and guide his people.

The "Mansion house" with its elegant classical lines reflected the best in current Federal period architecture and design. It thus communicated in a "vocabulary" that would have been understood by many of Kavanagh's Maine contemporaries, particularly the elite fraternity of Lincoln County merchants of which he was a part. Its design spoke of an enterprising man with financial resources - one who had outwardly assimilated the taste, culture and values of the
society in which he settled. Therefore, is all the more fascinating when we discover that Kavanagh hired an Irish immigrant, Nicholas Codd, to design and build the structure. Codd, a housewright by trade, had settled with his family in Damariscotta Mills shortly after 1800. During the next decade he pursued an active career as a carpenter in the coastal towns of Newcastle and Wiscasset, erecting and furnishing some of the most elegant Federal style buildings in mid-Maine. His talents were patronized by a wealthy network of merchants and ship Captains in Lincoln County, several of them connected through business, kinship and ethnicity. In particular, Codd's major clients included James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril, who employed him to design and build their houses and commissioned his work on St. Patrick's church, a project that took several years to complete.

Like many of the Irish settlers in Lincoln County, Codd

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10 The diffusion of taste and "genteel culture" in early America is described in Richard L. Bushman, "American High Style and Venacular Cultures," in Green and Pole, eds., Colonial British America, pp. 360-367.

had first ventured to Boston. A native of County Wexford, he arrived in 1796 at age 36 and subsequently found work as a carpenter and housewright. Given his age and his skill as a master joiner and stairmaker it seems likely that he practiced this trade in the homeland. It was in Boston that these talents most likely came to the attention of Kavanagh and Cottril, who had continued to maintain close connections with the Irish-Catholic community in the city. In fact, Codd's movement to Maine in 1800, at precisely the time that both gentlemen were looking to begin ambitious building projects, suggest that they may have actively recruited his services. Shortly after arriving in Lincoln County Codd began construction on Matthew Cottril's townhouse in Nobleborough and soon after its completion moved on to work at the Kavanagh site in Damariscotta. The finished product stands as a

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12 Codd is a surname highly localized to county Wexford, particularly Wexford town, where the name Nicholas frequently appears as a Christian name. See Hilary Murphy, Family Names of County Wexford (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1987). Baptismal records for Wexford town list several instances of babies christened "Nicholas Codd" during the years surrounding 1760 (stated year of birth), yet nothing is conclusive. On his career in America see the Boston Directory of 1798 which lists him as a housewright living on Pleasant street, and the U.S. Marshal's Returns for Enemy aliens during the War of 1812, which identifies him as a "merchant" living in Newcastle, Maine. See Kenneth Scott, comp., British Aliens in the United States During the War of 1812 (Baltimore: Genealogical Press, 1979), pg. 2.

13 Kavanagh family tradition has it that Codd was "shanghied" from Ireland to work on the Kavanagh house in Damariscotta Mills. While fictional, the story may have its basis in the fact that Codd was likely "recruited" out of Boston for the job.
testament to a master craftsman, one who had largely assimilated the prevalent style and construction techniques of New England.

Indeed, the remarkable aspect of the Kavanagh house is that it exhibits few characteristics of Irish architectural tradition. While several features such as a fine Georgian doorway, rectangular sidelights, and fanlight suggest Dublin antecedents, for the most part, as Arthur Gerrier, a keen student of Codd's work suggests, "his buildings lie squarely within the traditions of contemporary New England." We should remember that timber construction had virtually ceased in Ireland during Codd's time in favor of brick and stone. This suggests that upon coming to New England Codd must have had to learn native framing and building techniques. And as underlined above, the upwardly mobile Kavanagh wanted to express a new identity in Maine, one that exhibited the "correct" style and taste. It was Codd's job to translate his patron's desires into tangible form.

Much of the rich detail found on the house exterior was carried inside to the rooms and furnishings. In the center foyer the visitor was greeted by a handsome semi-circular staircase, a hallmark of Nicholas Codd's work in mid-Maine. Today one can still locate an ivory inlay in the newel post bearing the initials "NC", a unique instance in the history of

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Gerrier, "Nicholas Codd."
Maine Federal period architecture where the craftsman signed his work.\textsuperscript{15} Flanking the stairway and center corridor were four large rooms, social space utilized for dining, reception and entertainment. Here too, one could browse through Kavanagh's extensive library, whose volumes suggested a knowledge of the world far beyond the farmsteads and clearings of coastal Maine. To the right of the entryway was the best parlor. Its carved molding, wainscoting and Doric pilasters highlight the status of the town's leading merchant, and its formal arched cupboards were designed to display an expensive collection of fine ceramics and dinnerware, most likely acquired in Boston or through trade with Britain.

Rooms such as these were not private - they were intended exclusively for entertaining visitors, an important (and politic) activity in Kavanagh's time. This function is highlighted in the number of chairs found throughout the parlors. Kavanagh inventories reveal twelve mahogany chairs, two dozen cane-bottomed chairs, and two dozen "common chairs"; seating that was a necessity for parties and special occasions such as the dedication of St. Patrick's church on July 17, 1808.\textsuperscript{16} Writing to Archbishop John Carroll in Baltimore, Father John Cheverus wrote that "the whole assembly (and it was a numerous and respectable one) were hospitably entertained at Mr. Kavanagh's house and feasted upon their

\textsuperscript{15} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{16} LCP Vol. 60: 42-44.
excellent mutton, etc." Yet there was another side to the Kavanagh mansion. Housed in a two story wing extending off the back were more utilitarian areas such as the kitchen, washing rooms and servant quarters. This annex formed the original dwelling house where Kavanagh resided prior to 1803. His ambitious expansion from farmhouse to Great House early in the century was an expression of local ascendency that was characteristic of elite throughout early America.

In style and function the Kavanagh house suited the station of one of coastal Maine's merchant elite. Yet looking closer one discovers several features that reveal sensibilities rooted in Kavanagh's Irish beginnings. An unusual feature of the floor plan, for example, was a small private chapel or "prayer room" located at the rear of the center hallway. In the early nineteenth century this was used by family and visiting clergy who resided with the Kavanaghs during their circuits among the Irish of Lincoln County. The addition of a prayer room in the house most likely looks back to Irish precedent when members of the Old Catholic gentry sheltered Catholic priests during the Penal times and often provided them with a room or barn from which to say Mass. Not far from Kavanagh's home place in Cluen, for example, the

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17 Reverend John Cheverus to Archbishop John Carroll, July 30, 1808, Baltimore Diocesan Archives (copies found in letter files of the Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston (AAB), Brighton, Mass.

Bolger family of Rathsnagadan provided such a resting place for itinerant priests and their example may have been carried by Kavanagh to the New World. Another intriguing survival of Old World tradition in the Kavanagh house was the designation of the rear kitchen ell as the "still room." According to Kavanagh family tradition this was an area for storing food and drink and for washing dishes. In Irish vernacular houses of the period (similar to that in which Kavanagh grew up) there is a stone closet within the kitchen known as a stillen, where crocks of water and milk are stored. The similarity in name and function suggests an interesting continuity - one easily lost amidst the grand Federal style of its surroundings.

If we were to visit the Kavanagh household in 1810 we would find it a busy center of activity. At the head of the household stood James and his wife Sarah Jackson, the daughter of an Ulster-Scots shopkeeper in Boston. The Jacksons were among the first converts in Boston to the Catholic church and

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Stillen is not an indigenous Irish word but most likely a corruption of English terminology - perhaps still, or still room. Within the Kavanagh house another term, the "dingle" was used to describe the enclosed porch leading into the kitchen ell. To what extent this was of Irish origins has yet to be determined. See HABS Me-22, Addendum pg 3 (microfilm), Maine State Library, Augusta.
this fact, coupled with their mercantile backround, must have recommended Sarah as a good match for the upwardly mobile Kavanagh. Indeed, she brought a cultured air to the Damariscotta as evidenced by surviving books in her name (including religious biography and poetry) and the reputation the house gained for social gatherings and parties.\(^{11}\) Her obituary in the *Columbian Centinel* described her as "universally lamented as a most worthy and charitable Lady."\(^{12}\)

In 1810, according to family records and the Federal census, James and Sarah stood at the head of a large and complex "family", one that included kin, boarders and domestic servants. Besides themselves and their seven children, ranging in age from two to fifteen, there was Sarah's father Andrew Jackson, an Ulster-Scots shopkeeper, and her sister Elizabeth Smithwick and family (figure 4.2). On New Years Day 1800, Elizabeth was married in Damariscotta Mills to James Smithwick, scion of a prominent Boston-Irish mercantile family. During much of the next decade the family resided at the Kavanagh mansion while Smithwick, a master mariner, guided company timber ships to Dublin, Liverpool and the Carribean.\(^{13}\)

\(^{11}\) These books include hymnals and religious works such as *Butler's Lives of the Saints*. They are now part of the private collection in Damariscotta Mills.

\(^{12}\) *Columbian Centinel*, January 27, 1813.

\(^{13}\) Information on the Smithwick's living arrangements at the Kavanagh house can be gleaned from accounts submitted in a lawsuit between Elizabeth Smithwick and James Kavanagh.
In 1810, at Kawanaa's house, Pawingaicota Mills
underleaf, names indicate living

Eleven Children

Jefferson, Me.
(1791-1881)
Mary Field

Chairman

Laurel

Lawyer

Auditor

Resident, Washington, D.C. Geo. Corbin

Boston

(1792-1843)

(1847-1893)

(1796-1860)

(1849-1894)

(1803-33) (1804-47) (1804-48) (1806-83)

James Field

Elizabeth = James Switlick

James Kavanagh

Margaret = Margaret Fenwick

Andrew Jackson = Margaret Fenwick

James Kavanagh: Kavanagh, Jackson and Switlick

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Their experience illustrates the close ties of business, kinship and hospitality that bound many Irish merchant families in the New World.

Another member of the Kavanagh household during the early nineteenth century was Patrick Doyle, an Irish clerk employed in the Kavanagh store in Damariscotta Mills. His was an interesting story. A native of County Kilkenny, possibly the parish of Inistioge, Doyle travelled from Dublin aboard the brig Atlantic in 1800 bound for Liverpool and Maine. Company accounts reveal that the firm of Kavanagh and Cottril paid a portion of his passage to America and expended one hundred dollars on his "acct in Liverpool for a watch, clothing, etc." Upon arriving in Maine he boarded at the Kavanagh household and was provided with a series of jobs ranging from

Elizabeth sought to recover $6000 owed James Smithwick when he died in 1811 on a voyage to Florida. Kavanagh responded by submitting a retroactive "bill" for the time the Smithwick's had lived in his house. This included for Captain Smithwick:

- 14 weeks board, 1799 to 1800: $ 64.00
- 20 weeks board, 1800, "liquor included": 80.00
- 24 weeks board, 1806 "all liquors included": 94.00
- 56 weeks board, 1808-1809: 224.00

For "Mrs Smithwick's board":
- 516 weeks (9 years) ending May 1, 1810: 1290.00
- Board from May 1, 1810 to April 1, 1812: 250.00
- Nurses board while Mrs. Smithwick was sick: 40.00
- Board for four children to April 1, 1812: 1290.00

See Elizabeth Smithwick vs. James Kavanagh, LCCCP, January term, 1821 (microfilm reel # 124, Maine State Archives, Augusta, Maine).

Patrick Doyle, naturalization petition, LCCCP, Col. 33, pg. 169; and account books submitted as evidence in Patrick Doyle vs. James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril, LCCCP, August 1819 (microfilm reel # 124, MSA).
farm labor and "working in the garden" to sailing with Captain Smithwick aboard the Brig John and Edward, a stint that left him seriously ill. Upon his recovery Doyle tended the Kavanagh store, a position he held until 1819 when he opened his own shop in Nobleborough center. Doyle's career suggests some of the important patterns of ethnic affiliation and patronage that bound Irish immigrants in Lincoln County to patrons like James Kavanagh. It also raises important questions concerning the extent to which merchants such as James Kavanagh were using family and neighborhood networks to recruit labor from Ireland. As mentioned earlier, it is perhaps no coincidence that one-third of the Irish who settled in Lincoln County between 1788 and 1830 came from Kilkenny, Wexford, and south Carlow – particularly the parishes along the Barrow and Nore rivers, the home ground of Kavanagh and Cottrill.

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16 Irish Heads of Household, Lincoln County, Maine 1770-1830: County of Birth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kilkenny</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>(15.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wexford</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>(9.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>(9.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>(7.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlow</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>(6.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kildare</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>(6.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tipperary</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(4.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterford</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>(3.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(3.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meath</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>(3.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>(2.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>(2.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Louth</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(1.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(1.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longford</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(1.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>(1.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sligo</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicklow</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanagh</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>(1.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offaly</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(0.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leitrim</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>(0.9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Besides family members, boarders, and the occasional visiting clergyman, the Kavanagh household also included an ebb and flow of domestic servants and farmhands. Because of the elite status of the family, and the frequent absence of Kavanagh daughters who attended boarding school in Boston and Montreal, Sarah Jackson depended upon a succession of servant girls to do the cooking, cleaning and needlework. Surviving account books, however, reveal only fleeting references to "Sally" or "the hired girl"; and most of these helpers and their work activities remain silent. They were likely local girls between age fifteen and twenty five - young

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Known Cases</th>
<th>Missing Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Westmeath</td>
<td>5 (2.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo</td>
<td>5 (2.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antrim</td>
<td>5 (2.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Known Cases 212
Missing Cases 53

Sources: Maine Naturalization Petitions, Gravestone Inscriptions, and Genealogical Data

27 References in this chapter to the Kavanagh labor force, the Kavanagh store, and community transactions come from company and personal accounts that have survived in a lawsuit between James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril. In 1816, because of losses sustained during the War of 1812, Kavanagh and Cottril took steps to dissolve their partnership. Discrepencies still existed in 1819 and Kavanagh brought suit against Cottril for $17,836. As evidence in the case both gentlemen presented copies of their accounts - a substantial and valuable collection of data concerning work and community in Damariscotta Mills. See Kavanagh vs. Cottril, LCCCP, April 17, 1819 (microfilm reel # 124, MSA). In the evidence Cottril's ledger ("Dr James Kavanagh to Matthew Cottril") was presented first, followed by Kavanagh's accounts ("Dr Matthew Cottril to James Kavanagh"). Citations to these will henceforth be identified as Account I and Account II. Thus references to domestic servants in the Kavanagh household are cited as Kavanagh vs. Cottril, Account I, May 1, June 23, 1812, January 20, 1813, and March 14, 1814.
single women who hired themselves out as much to gain a knowledge of house work and textile manufacture as they did to bring in wages.

Accounts reveal that James Kavanagh also hired a succession of farm laborers at Damariscotta Mills, some of whom lived on the property. Here we should remember that besides being a merchant and entrepreneur, Kavanagh was also a farmer - not surprising given his agrarian roots in lower Cluen. Like the majority of his contemporaries in Newcastle Kavanagh devoted a portion of his land to raising crops, hay, and livestock (as suggested by field names such as the "bay pasture" and "church pasture"). He also kept a thriving apple orchard which boasted several varieties brought back from Ireland aboard company timber ships. Today the cats head, or "Kavanagh apple", survives only in Damariscotta Mills and at the preservation orchard -- Old Sturbridge Village.¹³

Like most of his neighbors Kavanagh employed a steady stream of agricultural laborers to work the "homo farm" at the Mills as well as several additional holdings in Jefferson and Whitefield. In 1812 and 1813, when his sons were away at school in Baltimore, Kavanagh needed the help of David Murphy and Timothy Cunningham to "care for [the] farms upcountry." He also depended upon several farm hands to bring in the

harvest, laborers such as John Murphy who boarded at the Kavanagh estate for close to a year. It is difficult to determine exactly how Kavanagh looked upon laborers such as Murphy who lived under his roof. While many New England farmers and artisans considered their resident employees as members of the "family", Kavanagh travelled to Lincoln County with cultural baggage that may have precluded this familial and patriarchal role. In Ireland, for example, one found a sharp division between the propertied classes and large tenant farmers (such as the Kavanaghs of Cluen), and the landless laborers and cottiers who worked in their fields and slept in their lofts. It signalled the distance (both physical and psychological) that was growing between the elite and everyday society - a division that found its way to the New World during the eighteenth century.

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Kavanagh vs. Cottrill, Account I, April 19, 1819; Account II, April 3, 1819, MSA. Also see Smithwick vs. Kavanagh, Account entry on March 14, 1813.

As one Irish commentator noted in 1804, there was a distinct segregation between the landlord, or strong farmer, and his cottiers (farm laborers): The master never fed a labourer of this description [cottier]. It was on the contrary, a chief object with him to keep such a person as far away from his dwelling as possible. He therefore allowed him to occupy, at some remote corner of his farm a miserable hut, a mere shell, formed of mud or sods, without loft, apartment or partition and sometimes without any other covering than that of straws or without any other chimney than the door. Besides separate housing this segregation was also indicated by different styles of dress and diet - the laborer in particular being increasingly dependent upon the potato. On this divergence see Kevin Whelan, "Mentalité and the Irish Catholic Middle Class: The Example of the Strong Farmers,"
James Kavanagh conceived his mansion house - known as "Kavanagh" - as the nerve center of his vast interests along the Damariscotta (figure 4.3). It stood at the center of an ambitious complex of mills, shipyard, and farms; and from its doors Kavanagh could direct logging and potash industries as well as pursue speculative activities in the backcountry such as a proposed ironworks along Damariscotta Lake. On the surface there was little difference between Damariscotta Mills and other developing centers of rural industrialization in 1700-1850," paper delivered at the American Conference of Irish Studies, Madison, Wisconsin, April 1991.

Kavanagh had aspirations for the development of Damariscotta Mills as evidenced from the following, which appeared in the Columbian Centinel, March 5, 1800:

A fall of water over Demoscotty Stream, which never fails; with two acres of land, situated in Nobleborough, in the county of Lincoln. The subscribers anticipating the advantages which materially may arise to a person or persons, by erecting Iron Works on said Fall, and prosecuting the same in the centre of a growing country, as there are a number of other Mills on the same stream, with various advantages, which the undertaker of said Iron Works will meet with, to promote the undertaking; and, in particular, as the tide flows to said Fall, and it stands only a few rods from a fresh Lake extending 12 miles long; and adjoining said Lake there are three acres of Iron ore. The terms will be made favorable, by applicant to the subscribers, at Nobleborough.

Kavanagh and Cottril

Federal New England. Water power, and the capital to harness it, created numerous mill-seats throughout rural Maine, each with its resident entrepreneur who cornered the market on land, water rights, and merchant trade. Drawn to these centers were a growing population of artisans, millwrights and laborers, and in time local institutions such as church and school relocated to the centers of economic activity.\(^{12}\)

Travelling through Maine in 1808, Edward Kendall described this process of development, one that bears an uncanny similarity to the growth of Damariscotta Mills and the career of James Kavanagh:

The place therefore, at which a village begins is either a sea-harbour or other landing, where country-produce is exchanged for foreign merchandise, or it is a cataract on a river, or some situation capable of affording a mill-seat. In such a situation, the first fabric that is raised is a solitary saw-mill...The owner of the saw-mill becomes a rich man; builds a large wooden house, opens a...store, erects a still, and exchanges rum, molasses, flower and port for logs. As the country by this time has begun to be cleared, a flower-mill is erected near the saw-mill. Sheep being brought upon the farms, a carding machine and fulling-mill follow.

For some years, as we may imagine, the store answers all the needs of a public house. The neighbors meet there, and spend half the day in drinking and debating. But the mills becoming everyday more and more a point of attraction a blacksmith, a shoemaker, a taylor, and various arisans and artificers, successively assemble. The village, however, has scarcely advanced this far, before half of its inhabitants are in debt to the

\(^{12}\) Alan Taylor describes the growth of similar rural industrial centers and millseats in Liberty Men and Great Proprietors, pp. 156-158; also see Richard Candee, "Maine Towns, Maine People," pp. 54-63.
store. What, therefore, is next wanted is a collecting attorney....

But as the advantage of living near the mills is great...so a settlement, not only of artisans, but of farmers, is progressively formed in the vicinity; this settlement constitutes itself a society or parish, and, a church being erected, the village, larger or smaller is complete. ¹³

The mill-seat that developed around the falls of the Damariscotta closely followed the above scenario. As in Kendall's ideal village the "situation" which gave rise to this growth was the fresh water falls at the foot of Damariscotta Lake; a cataract that divided into two streams that tumbled their way down to the Great Salt Bay. Falling fifty-seven feet, this power source was first harnessed in the 1730's by William Vaughn who built a gristmill and double sawmill at the site. Yet it remained for James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril to realize the site's full potential. In 1795 the two partners purchased the westerly half of the stream that included mills, water rights and five hundred sixty seven acres "commonly known as Lithgow's farm," where Kavanagh took up residence. Five years later, for the astounding sum of $6,333, they cemented their control of the industrial site by acquiring the water rights to the eastern stream "together with the whole of said gristmill and...the easterly half of said saw mill with all the tools, implements, and

appurtenances." Given their Kilkenny origins it is not surprising that Kavanagh and Cottril singled out milling as a primary investment; flour mills and fulling mills were a profitable enterprise along the river valleys of the Nore and Barrow. Thomastown, in particular, where the Kavanagh and Cottril families had mercantile interests, was an important milling town during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. 

By 1810 the firm operated two sawmills in Damariscotta Mills including an extensive double sawmill that spanned the western stream at the head of the falls. Timber for the mills was procured locally, either in trade with lumberman-farmers or directly from the vast timberland the company owned in Jefferson and Whitefield. Between 1803 and 1812 (the peak of their trans-Atlantic timber trade) Kavanagh acquired over two thousand acres in Jefferson, a newly settled community in the Sheepscot backcountry. While roads into the Sheepscot were still primitive and unreliable, these plots were easily

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accessible to Damariscotta Lake, a twelve mile waterway that fed into the Mills. Along this corridor logs could easily be rafted down the lake, as in April 1819, when Rufus Jones of Jefferson was paid for "Bringing down 24 logs which were afterwards divided in the mill."³⁷

While great profits could be reaped from these upcountry lands, it was not always easy. Squatter unrest in Jefferson, and the local sentiment that settlers had rights to unimproved land (regardless of ownership) led backcountry residents throughout the Sheepscot to cut timber wherever they pleased. This action was part of a larger pattern of frontier activism that stemmed from conflicting land claims between the Plymouth Company and their rivals, who traced their claims back to hazy and overlapping grants during the seventeenth century. Simply put, many squatters who had long settled the backcountry and had carved out hardscrabble farms for themselves were reluctant to pay for questionable deeds or respect the rights of new proprietors such as James Kavanagh. This necessitated that Kavanagh remain on his guard, employing several men such as George Jones "for staying upcountry" and "taking care of the timber."³⁸

³⁷ Kavanagh vs. Cottril, Account II, April 1819.
³⁸ Kavanagh vs. Cottril, Account I, March 16, 1814; Account II, July 4, 1818. On frontier unrest in the Sheepscot country see Alan Taylor, Liberty Men and Great Proprietors, especially those entries under Balltown and Jefferson. Evidence suggests that James Kavanagh supported the claims of the Plymouth Company in the backcountry. He acquired deeds from their agents, and allied himself with their
In addition to company timber reserves, backcountry holdings were also acquired as speculative investments. For the merchant class in particular, land speculation was an important tool - among other things it provided a secure method of banking profits gained in the overseas timber trade. In Jefferson, for example, merchants and ship captains such as Moses Carlton, David Boynton, and James Kavanagh all acquired extensive acreage in the boom years surrounding the Embargo. Here, land could be used as collateral for borrowing: property would be leased for several years until the merchant needed to raise cash, then it would be sold to another merchant or investor who had ready capital. This process characterized many of Kavanagh and Cottril's transactions in the backcountry, with land deeds corresponding closely to periods of company expansion or recession, when the firm needed surplus cash.³⁹

Kavanagh account books reveal that several of his holdings in Jefferson were occupied by tenant farmers. While images of self-sufficiency and yeoman farmers have permeated our image of early New England, tenancy was nonetheless a

³⁹ See, for example, land sales between 1820 and 1824, when Kavanagh took out several mortgages and sold backcountry land in a desperate attempt to keep himself financially afloat (after the dissolution of his partnership and economic setbacks). LCRD 112:38, 115:20, 120:57, 120:212, 122:140, 126:240.
common occurrence in rural communities of Maine, the response of the young and the landless to attempt to gain a foothold in their town. Tax valuations indicate that a significant percentage of men who occupied farms and were taxed as householders did not own their land or appear in deed registers. In Hallowell Maine, for example, as many as twenty-five percent of those listed in the 1793 tax valuation occupied their holdings as tenants. The diary of Martha Ballard of Hallowell helps us to understand this phenomenon. On July 4, 1791 she wrote "Mr Ballard at Esquire Coney's this morning. Helpt Mr Densmore framing & raising his House Fraim." Here Martha referred to the holding as "Esquire Coney's" but to the new house as "Mr Densmore's." In fact, Thomas Densmore, a tailor, was a tenant of Coney. Like many early settlers on the eastern frontier he was erecting "improvements" to another man's property in order to gain land and a stake in the community. The record confirms that Densmore was successful: in time he received a deed from Coney and moved into the ranks of property owners in the town.

Edward T. McCarron, "The Social Landscape of Hallowell, Maine: 1793," The Kennebeck Proprietor, Vol. 4, no.2 (April, 1987), pp. 5-11. Comparing the 1793 tax valuation of Hallowell (now Augusta) with deed chains researched at the Kennebec County Courthouse, I found that 25% of those listed with property did not appear in the deeds - reflecting, in my opinion, tenants with long term leases who were in the process of buying or improving property. See footnote 1 of my article, pg. 11.

Similar processes were taking place on Kavanagh's land in Jefferson, where several tenants occupied farms and made improvements to the land. Between 1815 and 1819, George Phillips, an Irish immigrant, rented a piece of property known as "Power's farm" for thirty dollars a year. Like other tenants in Lincoln County, he was young and possessed neither cash nor credit to purchase land and necessary provisions to start his own farm. Yet for Phillips tenancy must have proved an attractive alternative to his life as a wage laborer. During the decade following his arrival in Maine in 1803, the Irishman had moved through a variety of towns in search of work. At the outbreak of war in 1812, for example, he was living in Bangor working as a common laborer, perhaps in one of the lumber camps. His movement to Jefferson, and his acquisition of a tenant farm, represented a step up.\footnote{Concerning Phillips see Kavanagh vs. Cottrill, Account I, April 14, 1819; and Kenneth Scott, British Aliens in the United States during the War of 1812, pg. 8. Phillips was from county Wexford and journeyed aboard the Ship Margaret bound from Dublin to Wiscasset in July 1803. See Irish passenger lists in Handbook of Irish Genealogy (Dublin: Heraldric Artists LTD, 1984), pg. 109.}

In the years between 1812 and 1819, Kavanagh had at least six tenants living on his upcountry farms in Jefferson - settlers equally divided between those of New England origin and those of Irish background. The latter included Phillips, Michael Joyce, and Walter Power, a Kilkenny man by way of the
Newfoundland fisheries.\footnote{Also among those identified in Kavanagh Accounts books were several men who accepted mortgages from Kavanagh to continue farming in Jefferson. These included James Flanders (1809), John Jones (1809) and Eusibius Emerson (1810). As late as 1817 Kavanagh was still paying taxes on some of this property. See Kavanagh vs Cottrill, Account I, March 24, 1817; and Account II April 5, 1819. Also LCRD 55:23, 60:7, 64:213, 64:214, 64:231.} This network, based on ethnic ties and personal obligations, played an important role in securing Kavanagh a foothold in the backcountry and contributed to the expansion of the timber trade. Firstly, frontier unrest dictated that proprietors such as Kavanagh place reliable and trusted people in possession of their lands—settlers who would hold and improve the property under lease and stand up to claims by rival land companies.\footnote{For other examples see Alan Taylor "'A Kind of Warr'", pp. 9-10.} Secondly, by placing tenants on the land Kavanagh could directly tap into rich timber resources, employing tenants as timber cutters and coopers. Michael Joyce is a case in point. During the opening decades of the nineteenth century, Joyce occupied sixty acres in Jefferson north of Damariscotta Lake, where he built a "one story dwelling house", two barns, and outbuildings. Besides farming and lumbering, Joyce also worked as a cooper, an occupation that would have complemented the Kavanagh timber trade. One can imagine Joyce at his coopering shop in wintertime fashioning barrels and staves for shipment downstream to Damariscotta Mills. Indeed, barrel staves were an important export of Kavanagh and Cottrill, items
destined for the West Indies and Irish provisioning towns such as Cork and Waterford. The work of local coopers like Joyce would have been an important adjunct to the firm's business. One last factor recommended Michael Joyce. He was a native of Inistioge. His family occupied a large farm in upper Cluen with fields adjoining the Kavanagh holding. It was his acquaintance with James Kavanagh that most likely drew him to Maine, perhaps with a promise of land and livelihood.

Besides tenants such as Joyce, other settlers throughout the backcountry supplied the Kavanagh mills with lumber and services. The timber industry in Maine - particularly that with export markets in mind - followed a loosely defined seasonal cycle. The season began in winter when farmers, such as those in Jefferson, spent much of their time cutting timber in the forest. With teams of oxen they hauled logs and trees

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During the late eighteenth century America typically supplied about 70% of the barrel staves used in Irish provisioning towns. See Truxes, Irish American Trade, pp. 220-221. For evidence of Kavanagh and Cottrill's trade in staves see Kavanagh vs. Cottrill, Account I, August 29, 1815, and December 21, 1816.

On Michael Joyce see naturalization petition, LCCCP, Vol. 17, pg. 21; also his will and inventory which identifies real and personal estate including a "coopers shop," "One sett of coopers tolls," and "stave machine." LCP Vol. 48: 120-122; Vol. 46:348-349. Joyce's family occupied a tenant farm in Upper Cluen totalling 48 Irish acres in 1811. At that time a William Joyce (most likely Michael's brother) held the lease. See "References to a survey of the lands of Cloan" by James Cotteral, 1811 and Estate Rentals - Woodstock, 1816-1833, WEP. Also see the gravestone of Michael Joyce in St. Denis churchyard, North Whitefield, Maine which identifies him as "A native of Ireland, County of Kilkenny, Parish of Innisteage, town of Cloan."
across the snow to icebound waterways such as Damariscotta Lake, there to await the spring thaw and their journey downstream to the sawmill. Spring brought a busy season of work at the Kavanagh mills. After the ice broke the sawmills worked night and day, both to exploit the high water rushing through the millpond and to keep up with the many shipments of logs being rafted down the lake. By June the island behind the mills was stacked with boards, planks, and ships timber. Throughout the summer and fall these commodities were carried along the "hauling place" to stillhouse wharf where they were loaded on lighters for the short trip downstream to Newcastle center. There to be transferred to the firm's island wharf and loaded aboard ships such as the brig Atlantic bound for distant markets in Europe and the Caribbean.

Capitalizing on profits gained from the sawmills and timber trade, James Kavanagh was able to branch out into a number of subsidiary industries in Damariscotta Mills. By

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\[47\] This process is described in Taylor, *Liberty Men and Great Proprietors*, pp. 77-78.

\[48\] The volume of the Kavanagh sawmills in Damariscotta Mills is unknown, though one can get a sense for its output by analysing the cargo of Kavanagh timber ships clearing for Europe and the Caribbean. The ship Hibernia, which traded with Jamaica, routinely carried 250,000 board feet of lumber - much of it likely cut in the Kavanagh mills. Given that in good years there were four, sometimes five ships making similar voyages, this equates to as much as a million board feet - or 330,000 feet per saw per year in Damariscotta Mills during its peak. By 1850, long after the timber boom had passed, the volume recorded in the Mechanical Census for the mills was still 250,000 board feet of pine and hemlock, 150,000 laths and 75,000 shingles. See Dow and Dunbar, *Nobleboro Maine: A History*, pg. 47.
1814 Kavanagh and Cottril operated two gristmills on each side of the mill stream, established a potash works, and opened a distillery for turning West Indian molasses into rum. During the Federal period rum was consumed in prodigious quantities by the people of northern New England. Every barn-raising, marriage, funeral, quilting party and election called for sharing alcohol with one's neighbor—occasions that undoubtedly suggested a profitable enterprise to newcomer James Kavanagh. He also took advantage of community need to build a fulling mill where local families could bring their hand woven cloth to be cleaned and finished. In later years two carding machines, valued at $175, were added, improvements that eliminated the difficult process of hand carding previously required for weaving.

Walking up the hill from the mills toward the Kavanagh

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49 Thomas Robison, a Scottish trader in Portland, wrote of similar advantages in setting up a distillery in Maine where a scarcity of orchards (and therefore cider) made rum an important beverage in the local diet. He wrote that "It is most people's opinion that we will do exceedingly well. There is no Distillery here at present and very few (if any) who are able to set one up." See Joyce Butler, "Rising Like a Phoenix..." in Laura Fecych Sprague, ed., Agreeable Situations: Society, Commerce and Art in Southern Maine, pg. 20. On drinking culture throughout early America see W.J. Rorabaugh, The Alcoholic Republic: An American Tradition (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979).

50 In the fall of 1814 one finds numerous entries for "cash rec'd from people for cloth dressed in the mill" or individual accounts such as "dressing Dan'l Hall's cloth." Kavanagh vs. Cottril, Account I, January 21, May 31, August 16, October 16, October 24, November 9, November 20, December 9, 1814, Jan 26, March 20, 1815. For reference to carding machines see LCP Vol. 28:441.
mansion a visitor would have come upon several important institutions in the community. The first of these was the village school. During the early nineteenth century, James Kavanagh hired several schoolmasters, such as James Deland, to teach at the small schoolhouse near the bridge. Whether this was a public or private classroom is unclear, although Kavanagh paid the schoolmaster's wages out of his company accounts.\footnote{On schooling see Kavanagh vs. Cottril, Account I, December 18, December 24, 1812 ("pd cash to Jas Deland for schooling"), and March 27, 1813 ("pd Worster for schooling"). The schoolhouse was located on lot 6 of the John Foye plan, LCRD Vol. 94:312, and specified in the "Appraisal of Real Estate" found in the Mulligan Collection, Damariscotta Mills, Maine.} We do know, however, that James Kavanagh put a high premium on education, a tradition he would have carried with him from Ireland. In Kavanagh's day the Penal Laws forbade formal Catholic schools in areas such as Kilkenny. Young James, therefore, most likely attended one of the informal "hedge" schools that were taught by itinerant schoolmasters and poets versed in Latin, Gaelic, and the classics. Arthur Young, who toured Ireland in 1777, was surprised upon finding in the countryside "schools everywhere, where reading and writing are taught..." These schools were part of a long tradition of Irish learning - an intellectual curiosity which James Kavanagh carried to the New World.\footnote{Arthur Young, Tour in Ireland..., pg. 124. On Hedge schools in Ireland see Kerby Miller, Emigrants and Exiles, pp. 76-77; and Daniel Corkery, The Hidden Ireland (Dublin: Gill
Like other elite emigrants, Kavanagh looked upon learning as an avenue to advancement and was determined that his children would receive a "liberal education", one that would enhance their social standing. To this end he provided primary schooling and private tutoring at the Mills, and enrolled his children in Catholic institutions often some distance from home. The experiences of his eldest son, Edward Kavanagh, is instructive. In 1806, at age eleven, Edward and his friend John Cottril were sent to Montreal College, then the closest Catholic school to Damariscotta Mills. By 1810 both boys were enrolled at fledgeling Georgetown College in Washington under the watchful eye of Archbishop John Carroll of Baltimore. Letters between Carroll and Father John Cheverus in Boston suggest that both students were beginning their study for the priesthood, part of Cheverus's bid to recruit Catholic clergy from among New England's Irish elite. In time, however, both boys withdrew from College to pursue private business and liberal study. As Cheverus summed up in 1811, "Mr. Cottril has concluded to keep his son at home and make a merchant of him."

Herein lies an important motivation, and one that framed the remainder of the boys' education: namely the perpetuation and MacMillan, 1924), pp. 201-202.

Reverend John Cheverus to Archbishop John Carroll, 18 October, 1811; same to same, 18 March, 1814; same to same, 26 November, 1810, Baltimore Diocesan Archives (I viewed copies in Lord/Sexton letter files, AAB).
and succession of the firm. As Kavanagh and Cottril knew, durability was one of the keys to success in merchant society, and they took steps to ensure that continuity. Edward Kavanagh, for example, continued his education in the classroom of experience - working in the accounting office of the firm and travelling as supercargo to Europe where he learned the ropes of his father's transatlantic commerce. A notebook kept while on one of these voyages in 1815-16 hints at the variety of experience, both business and pleasure, he gained in the greater Atlantic world.

Shipping out aboard the brig Atlantic in August 1815, young Kavanagh accompanied a cargo of lumber to Liverpool where he helped negotiate its sale and the subsequent purchase of merchandise for the return voyage. On his list of "goods to be bought in Liverpool" one finds a variety of items needed to stock the company store in Damariscotta: Irish linens, shirting, cotton cambric, blankets, chintz, white and yellow flannel, buttons, threads, window glass, iron shovels, salt, and coal. Under a separate heading were goods "for the family," including shawls, gowns, dinner sets, and carpets - items that would have been in great demand due to the

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54 Information on Kavanagh's journey in 1815-16 has been taken from William L. Lucey, Edward Kavanagh: Catholic Statesman and Diplomat from Maine, 1795-1844 (Francestown, N.H.: Marshall Jones Company, 1946), pp. 63-67. Reverend Lucey cited as his source the "Memorandum Book Belonging to Edward Kavanagh", in the possession of Miss Honora McCusker, of Damariscotta - a relation of the Kavanaghs. Unfortunately, on a visit I made to Miss McCusker, she was unable to locate the manuscript.
interruption of trade during the War of 1812.

After loading the goods on board the Atlantic and watching it set sail for Maine, Edward Kavanagh took a grand tour through Europe: sight seeing in Oxford, taking in the theatre in London, and journeying to Ireland, where he spent time in Cork and Dublin. According to his biographer, the Reverend William L. Lucey, Kavanagh also took a coach to Thomastown and "Ennis" (as Inistioge was fondly called) where he undoubtedly visited his relations along the Nore and carried messages home to Maine.\footnote{On Edward Kavanagh's travels in Ireland see William L. Lucey, Edward Kavanagh, pp. 65-66; and his notes taken from Kavanagh's "Memorandum" which are located in the Lucey Collection, Archives of Holy Cross College, Worcester, Massachusetts.}

After spending over a year in Europe, Kavanagh's last order of business was to sail to Paris, where he delivered legal claims seeking damages for several Kavanagh ships captured in the Caribbean by French privateers during the "Quasi-War". It marked the beginning of a legal and diplomatic career that eventually eclipsed his family's interest in trade. A later acquaintance wrote that Kavanagh had "an accomplished education furnished by two years travels in England and on the Continent. Mr. Kavanagh unites great urbanity of manners and amiability of character." Another spoke of Kavanagh's "extensive knowledge of languages spoken
all over Europe."

This educational grooming and travel paid bountiful dividends in years to come. Edward Kavanagh went on to become a United States Congressman from Maine, the Charges d'Affaires in Lisbon between 1834 and 1841, and acting Governor of Maine in 1843. He was the first Catholic to be elected to higher office in New England.\(^5\)

While Edward and his younger brothers were traveling or away at school, it was left to clerks such as Patrick Doyle to manage the day to day business interests at the Kavanagh store. Located at a pivotal corner overlooking the mills, the store played an important role in the economic and social development of Damariscotta Mills. It served as a distribution center for imported manufactured goods and an assembling point for raw materials such as timber and potash which were taken in trade with local farmers. Surviving accounts suggest that an elaborate system of barter and exchange operated at the Kavanagh store. A barrel of pork or several firkins of country butter might be traded on account for imported fabric or West Indian rum. More often, however, timber was the common unit of exchange, credited against debts.

\(^5\) Albert White to President Andrew Jackson, 28 July, 1829; and Edward Fuller to President Andrew Jackson, 20 July, 1829. Kavanagh Collection, Portland Diocesan Archives, Portland, Maine.

\(^5\) In addition to Lucey, cited above, a sketch of Kavanagh's career can be found in John J. Delaney, Dictionary of American Catholic Biography (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1984), pg. 285.
accumulated over time for flour, tobacco, and the like. As historians remind us, the general store also provided a number of other important functions in the community. It operated as an informal bank where merchants such as James Kavanagh extended credit and loans to his customers. It also served as a clearing house where local residents settled personal accounts for goods, work and services through credits at the store.\footnote{Credit extended at the store is revealed most vividly in the years after the War of 1812 when financial setbacks and the dissolution of their partnership caused Kavanagh and Cottril to call in over 20 outstanding debts and notes ranging up to $130 each. See Kavanagh vs. Cottril, Account I, 1814-1816. On the country store as a clearing house for local residents to settle their debts see Laurel Ulrich, A Midwife's Tale, pp. 29-30.}

The store also served a significant social function. It was a meeting place where one went to chat, to find out local news, and perhaps to have a glass of rum with one's neighbors. If we were to visit the store in the early nineteenth century we would meet a wide variety of people from the village and surrounding countryside. Most would have been farmers, men like John Hall who regularly traded butter for store goods. Others were artisans and craftsmen who were attracted by opportunities in the village and nearby shipyards. These included blacksmiths, millers, carpenters, and even a hatter, Jeremiah Russell, who lived with his large family on the Nobleborough side of the mill pond. One also needed the services of shoemakers such as John Linscott and John
Burnham, or tailors such as Michael Burns, an Irishman who fashioned coats and jackets for James Kavanagh.\footnote{On Burns see Kavanagh vs. Cottril, Account I, December 28, 1812, August 9, 1813. A variety of artisans also appear in the account book of Patrick Doyle, the clerk of the Kavanagh store. He makes reference to "Old Mr. Ross for Tayloring" (May 18, 1801), "John Linscott for shoes" (June 1, 1801), "Mrs. Smith for a pair of stockings" (January 30, 1805), "Oakes for mending shoes" (June 9, 1808), "Peter Kehoe for Tayloring" (May 5, 1810), and "Sundry goods to [Jeremiah] Russell for a hat" (May 15, 1810). See accounts presented as evidence in Patrick Doyle vs. James Kavanagh et al., LCCCP, August 1819 (microfilm reel # 124, MSA).}

Irish folk such as Burns figure prominently in the accounts of Kavanagh and Cottril, suggesting that the partners may have patronized Irish artisans and laborers, thus reinforcing ethnic and religious ties in Lincoln County. One meets, for example, Andrew Neef, a blacksmith from County Waterford; Mary Powers, who sold homespun cloth to the store; and Peter Kavanagh, for whom James Kavanagh settled an outstanding liquor bill at John Turnbull's tavern in Newcastle. Peter farmed 100 acres on the Sheepscot river in North Whitefield and was most likely a close relation of James Kavanagh who acted as witness to his marriage in 1804.\footnote{On Peter Kavanagh see Kavanagh vs. Cottril, Account I, October 11, 1813; and LCRD Vol. 112:45. The marriage of Peter Kavanagh and Ann Murphy on September 16, 1804 (attended by James and Sarah Kavanagh) can be found in the Register of "Baptisms, Marriages and Burials in the Congregation of St. Mary's Church, Newcastle, County of Lincoln, District of Maine."}

Another Irishman who appeared frequently in Kavanagh accounts was Walter Madigan whom we met earlier. In particular, one finds several payments to "Mr. Madigan for salmon," which...
raise some interesting questions. As traveller Timothy Dwight remarked in 1807, the rivers of mid-Maine were an excellent source of salmon - a bounty that led many farmers and laborers to supplement their yearly income with river fishing. Salmon was also an important cash crop along the river Nore in Madigan's native Thomastown, and it is probable that he transferred this traditional livelihood to Maine in the early nineteenth century. The degree to which he also transplanted Irish styles of boat building (the two man "cote" described in chapter one) and traditional methods of fishing such as snap netting is still unanswered.\footnote{To date little has been written on the importance of river fishing in early Maine, despite the fact that deeds along the Kennebec make frequent reference to fishing weirs and "priviledges and profits" to be taken from the river. Indeed, one finds evidence in Hallowell of local settlers trading fish for credit at the Howard store. On Irish salmon fishing see Fidelma Maddock, "The Cot Fishermen of the River Nore," in Whelan and Nolan, Kilkenny: History and Society, pp. 541-565.}

Another Irishman who appeared frequently in local accounts was William Mooney, a shopkeeper who rented property from James Kavanagh in Damariscotta Mills. A native of County Wicklow, Mooney emigrated to Boston in 1804 where he established himself as a mariner and trader. In time he was drawn to Lincoln County, not only for its commercial opportunities, but also because of strategic networks of kinship and ethnicity. These networks bore fruit on February 6, 1812, when Mooney married Margaret Cottril at St. Patrick's church in Damariscotta Mills, a service witnessed by James
Kavanagh and the bride's father Matthew Cottril. Soon afterwards, Mooney opened his mercantile store in the village, a venture undertaken under the auspices and approval of the two partners. 

In 1830 William Mooney left a detailed probate inventory that offers an invaluable portrait of his village store as well as the lifestyle and material culture afforded a country trader in Federal Maine. Beginning in 1812 Mooney rented from Kavanagh a house and adjoining fields overlooking the mills for $4.36 per month. The dwelling house was of middling status, most likely a two-story vernacular Georgian with kitchen and parlor on the first floor and chambers above. The household assemblage was comfortable by Lincoln County standards, containing mahogany chests and furniture and several expensive feather beds. Other items suggested that Mooney was part of the local elite (or was aspiring to that position). These included a wardrobe valued at $40, silverware, gold watch and books - all indicative of relative status in early American households. An interesting item

Naturalization petition, Suffolk County [Mass.] Supreme Judicial Court, Vol IV, pg 91 (copy in Record Group 85, NAW). Marriage information found in "Baptisms and Marriages" St. Patrick's Church, Newcastle, February 6, 1812, PDA.

On Mooney's house and property see Kavanagh vs. Cottril, Account I, March 15, 1819, and Account II, March 16, 1819. On his inventory, LCP Vol. 32:89-94. Concerning Mooney's upward mobility, Gloria L. Main, a specialist on early American probate inventories, suggests several artifacts that communicate status: namely silver, books, clocks, and fine clothes. See her "Early New England Farmers: A
in the parlor was "1 scripture painting," an artifact that betrays Mooney's Catholic background and identity.

Like others in Damariscotta Mills, Mooney was involved in small farming - as indicated by his inventory which itemized farming tools, produce and livestock. This stock included one mare and colt, two pigs, one beef ox, one yoke of working oxen, and 4 cows. Since Mooney's inventory was taken in early January (just after the harvest and slaughtering season) we find a picture of a farmstead well prepared for winter. Stacked in the barn lot were fifteen and one-half tons of English hay and nine tons of meadow and salt hay. In the cellars were found seventy pounds of ham, two barrels of pork, one hundred five pounds of hogs lard and three hundred seventy pounds of tallow, destined to be made into candles for the long winter evenings.64

The Mooney store was separate from the house - it stood on a site across the street overlooking the mills. Its close proximity to the mills and industries of James Kavanagh underline the fact that Mooney's interests were closely intertwined with those of Kavanagh and Cottrill. As wholesalers, the two partners distributed much of the imported goods and manufactures that were the backbone of shops like William Mooney. His store inventory, appraised at $1496,
contained a wide selection of European goods that came up the Damariscotta via Kavanagh and Cottril shipping, or by way of coastal schooners plying between Maine and Boston. Textiles and fabrics, in particular, were a popular item on Mooney's shelves, reflecting consumer demand for English styles and materials in the decades following the American Revolution. Other imported items included ceramics, glassware, metalware, and specialty items such as spice and Scotch snuff. Like other country shopkeepers, William Mooney sold and bartered these goods with farmers and artisans, taking in trade local materials such as timber, potash, and pearlash. His inventory also discloses additional items accepted in trade: country produce such as peas and beans; river and ocean fish; and locally produced textiles.

Storekeepers such as Mooney played an important role in the timber and trading networks established by Kavanagh and Cottril. They acted as intermediary agents, retailing manufactures purchased at wholesale from the merchant and taking as payment timber and produce which they forwarded to the merchant. This middleman role was an important cog in the

Evidence in account books suggests that some of the firm's ships returned from Europe directly to Maine. Most, however, went into the ports of New York and Boston. As the Duke de la Rochefoucault observed in 1795, "[Maine] was not equal to the consumption of the cargoes which the ships import...; these are generally carried to Boston...the principal mart for foreign commodities." From Boston these imported goods were then shipped aboard coastal schooners into Maine.

LCP Vol. 32: 89-94.
milling concerns and timber trade of firms such as Kavanagh and Cottril. Their far-flung interests demanded that they secure a trusted "satellite" of shops in the interior with which they could sell goods and from whom they could receive a dependable supply of timber. Thus the country stores were often situated in country areas close to the source of raw materials and timber. Logs taken in payment were delivered by the shopkeeper to the sawmill where they were exchanged (usually through a system of bookkeeping barter) for new goods for the store. The timber was then processed and shipped to the coastal port for export. Indeed, evidence suggests that Kavanagh and Cottril directed such a commercial network in Lincoln County, one that extended from their coastal headquarters in Nobleborough and Damariscotta Mills into the backcountry settlements along the Sheepscot (Figure 4.4).57

Besides Patrick Doyle and William Mooney, allied storekeepers most likely included Richard Power and James Sinclair who acted as retailers, buyers and moneylenders in the backcountry community of Jefferson. Born in Haddington, Scotland, Sinclair was closely connected with James Kavanagh, having first settled in Newcastle in 1793. He subsequently went on to act on the firm's behalf in Jefferson where he

57 My perspective on these commercial networks owes much to Graeme Wynn, Timber Colony: A Historical Geography of Early Nineteenth Century New Brunswick (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), pp. 118-119. Also see Richard B. Sheridan, "The Domestic Economy," in Green and Pole, eds., Colonial British America, pp. 74-75.
Timber and Merchant Networks:

Kavanagh and Cottrell

Figure 4.4

- Wood
- Mercantile Goods
- Merchant-Wholesaler
- Country Storekeeper
- Sawmill
- Farmer-Lumberer
- Farmer

Atlantic Ocean
opened a country store and occupied a farm on land owned by Kavanagh. Besides being an intermediary between merchant-wholesaler and backcountry settler, Sinclair also represented Kavanagh in land transactions and purchases of property in Jefferson. On several occasions he acted as witness to deeds involving the firm in the interior — similar to the role that Patrick Doyle played in coastal transactions. Their service underlines the trusted position that these storekeepers occupied in the mercantile landscape of Kavanagh and Cottril.

Damariscotta Mills grew steadily under Kavanagh's guidance. As Edward Kendall outlined in his memorable image of the Maine village, artisans and laborers were drawn to such communities and encouraged by opportunities in rural industries. During the early nineteenth century the Kavanagh mills created the need for a significant body of labor. On average a double sawmill the size of Damariscotta's required eight millmen and laborers (as well as the occasional visit by the local blacksmith, millwright and carpenter) to keep it in operation during the six month season. The gristmills and fulling mill also employed a steady round of workers, as for example, during the winter of 1815 when Benjamin Noyes,

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62 On Sinclair see naturalization petition, Record Group 85, Box 480, NAW; and LCRD 53:130.


70 Wynn, Timber Colony, pg. 93.
Stephen Whitehouse and Sally Thayer worked cleaning cloth and carding wool."

Survey maps, deeds and census schedules suggest that much of this work force settled in and around Damariscotta Mills. They represented an ethnically mixed community: some were the descendants of earlier Ulster-Scots settlers; others were more recent immigrants from Catholic Ireland. Still others were native New Englanders such as Nathaniel Bryant who operated a tavern in the village and held part interest in the lower gristmill. Bryant, along with David Waters, were the only residents of the village (on the Newcastle side of the falls) to own their own property. The remainder, estimated at seven families in 1814, lived as tenants of James Kavanagh, occupying houselots and small garden plots that were subdivided out of his extensive holdings in the mills. These included Stephen Young, a sawyer in the Kavanagh mills, Joseph Morgan, a farm laborer on the Kavanagh estate, and Timothy Hannon, who likely worked in the mills as well.

The smallholding tenants of Damariscotta Mills differed in character and in opportunities from their counterparts in rural communities such as Jefferson. Whereas tenant holdings upcountry were more fluid and open to "improvement", here in the village land and production was directly controlled by James Kavanagh, who kept a tight rein over subdivision and

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Kavanagh vs. Cottril, Account I, May 23, 1814, and January 21, 1815.
rents. Even such a tenant as William Mooney, who operated a
country store and owned their own farm animals and equipment,
were nonetheless restricted from acquiring real property,
which remained in the hands of Kavanagh, Cottril, and their
heirs. 72

This arrangement was clearly in the proprietor's interest.
With an emphasis on milling and rural industry at Damariscotta
Mills, Kavanagh was increasingly dependent upon wage labor and
artisans - workers who needed to be conveniently housed close
to the mills. Similarly in Nobleborough Kavanagh and Cottril
operated a boarding house for company workers. The 1800
census reported twenty-six men between the ages of 16 and 45
living on the premises of Matthew Cottril, a work crew
employed in the company shipyards. 73 These living
arrangements - boarders and small holding tenants - suited
the nature and size of the firm's operations, which required
a dependable pool of labor from which to draw upon. At the
mills, where the company needed a year-round labor force, the
workers were placed in local dwellings. At the shipyards,
which were more prone to seasonal and market variation, they

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72 Mooney, whose wife Mary Cottril had died years earlier, was cut out of Matthew Cottril's will in 1828. He sued for his portion of the estate and was eventually awarded the land and store which he occupied in Damariscotta Mills. On patterns of landholding and monopoly in the Mills, see a Survey of Damariscotta Mills, 1833, LCRD; and the will of Matthew Cottril, LCP Vol. 30, pp 155-161.

73 Federal census returns, Nobleborough, Maine, 1800 (microfilm M32, reel # 6) NAW.
could be temporarily lodged in boarding houses. These work and
residential patterns, while by no means extensive, do suggest
the interdependence that existed in Damariscotta Mills. Here
families and workers were bound by firm ties of dependency to
James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril - who held the title to
their land and operated the mills, shipyards and country store
upon which their livelihood relied.

In Damariscotta Mills, with its fine country seat,
closed tenancy, and monopoly over land and resources, one is
tempted to see a mirror of the Irish estate, transplanted to
the Maine frontier. There is a striking similarity, for
example, between the physical layout of Damariscotta Mills and
the social landscape of estates such as Woodstock in
Kavanagh's native Inistioge. Like Woodstock, Kavanagh built
his mansion high above the river overlooking his landholdings,
his village and its industries. Surrounded by tenants and
dependencies, it helped to reinforce his status in the
community and communicate his control over the mills, general
store, and church.

Similarly, the management and development of these
properties also suggests Irish antecedents. The church, for
example, was heavily supported and patronized by the leading
man, in this case James Kavanagh. He deeded the land,
provided necessary building capital, and occupied the
prominent lay position in the congregation. He even
encouraged his eldest son to study for the clergy, perhaps intending for him to take over the growing parish in Damariscotta - a move that would consolidate both economic and spiritual allegiance in the community. This strategy was directly analogous to that of affluent Catholic Middlemen in southeast Ireland who sought to maintain cultural continuity and control over their locale by placing surplus sons in the priesthood. Here there was a close relationship between family status and clerical recruitment, a tradition whose roots were firmly imbedded in Kavanagh's home place of Cluen where the Fitzgerals (the Norman Lord) also doubled as the Abbot of the Augustinian friary in Inistioge.

This said, however, one should hesitate before declaring a vast "hidden" Ireland along the Damariscotta. Kavanagh was, like many of his elite contemporaries in Ireland and America, a product of a cosmopolitan culture that emanated from England. Throughout the Atlantic world of the late eighteenth century one finds provincial families modelling their lifestyle, standards of living, and material culture after England's middle class and gentry. In southeast Ireland, for instance, one sees this in the emergence of a Catholic middle class who took on the social pretensions of their Protestant neighbors. Waterford merchants in the Newfoundland trade, for example, built imposing country houses and educated their...
children in England and the Continent. As one contemporary observed, Catholics who made money "were running fast into the neatness and plenty of the English way of living," a trend that would not have been lost on aspiring entrepreneurs such as James Kavanagh.

Similarly in New England one finds among the merchant class and leading families a deference to English fashion and improvements. Indeed, coming to New England, rising elites such as Kavanagh would have found kindred spirits among the merchant class and leading men of the seaport and market towns. Even in Lincoln County one finds a cosmopolitan style and taste transplanted to towns such as Wiscasset, Hallowell, and Gardiner. Ann Hallowell, residing in her family estate overlooking the Kennebec, wrote back to Boston extolling the merits of "this Wooden World...which is by no means such a dull stupid place as you Bostonians may imagine. I assure you I have only passed four days since my arrival on the river without being engaged in a party without or at home...." She

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75 This emulation of the British style is described in Kevin Whelan, "Mentalite and the Irish Catholic Middle Class: The Example of the Strong Farmers, 1700-1850." paper delivered to the American Conference on Irish Studies, Madison, Wisconsin, April, 1991.
went on to exclaim, "I expect in the course of time Kennebec will be one of the most fashionable places on the Continent of America."\textsuperscript{76}

Similar descriptions can be found in the letters of Timothy Dwight, who concluded upon reaching the estate of Benjamin Vaughn in Hallowell that "A more romantic spot is not often found..." Vaughn, a London-born gentleman, was exemplary of English style transplanted to the provinces. His house and garden were "handsome", his agricultural improvements and medical expertise modernizing, and, like Kavanagh, he saw himself as a paternal influence and patron of the town. Dwight spent several days with Vaughan and "enjoyed in a high degree the combined pleasures of intelligence, politeness, and refinement."\textsuperscript{77}

Chances are, such leading men as Vaughan would have found it easy to relate to Irish merchants such as James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril - sharing with them a similar outlook, culture, and behavior. As evidenced by Kavanagh's estate at Damariscotta Mills, and his outward thrust into Atlantic commerce, the Irishman had gone far toward jettisoning the backwardness and lack of polish inherent in his country background. Indeed, years of apprenticeship and immersion in

\textsuperscript{76} Ann Hallowell to Ann Eliot, July 23, 1798; and same to same, September 8, 1798; Hallowell-Gardiner papers, Box 2, Folder 4, Oaklands, Gardiner Maine.

the world of maritime trade had brought about a more cosmopolitan mindset - one closer to the provincial elite among whom he worked and settled. These newer social pretensions are best seen in the elegant style of his "mansion" and gardens, the education of his children, the assigning of a name to the estate (in this case "Kavanagh"), and the assimilation of clothing, furniture and behavior in response to new cultural expectations.

Above all, as one scholar points out, changes among the provincial elite are reflected in their attitude toward popular culture and old allegiances. This was certainly true concerning Kavanagh and his circle, who distanced themselves in important ways from the rank and file of Irish farmers and laborers settled along the Damariscotta. One sees this in the payment and hierarchical structuring of pews in St. Patrick's church (a practice unknown at the time in Catholic Ireland) and the private chapels built by local elite such as Kavanagh. This distancing is also reflected in the fact that both Kavanagh and Cottril moved outside their ethnic sphere to marry native New England women, both daughters of Boston traders and both Catholic converts. Given the upward mobility of these two gentlemen, and the paucity of marriageable women among the Irish community of Lincoln county, it is understandable that they would look toward the

emerging Catholic middle class of Boston for suitable partners. These were above all strategic matches. Apart from marrying into the proper social station, these ties brought Kavanagh and Cottril into alliance with Boston trading families and gave them valuable access to sources of labor, supplies, and capital from which to build their empire.\footnote{Similar marriage strategies were employed by Irish traders in Newfoundland. See Mannion, "The Sweetmans of Newbawn in Newfoundland..." pp. 416-417.}

This formation of new allegiances can be detected in the social sphere as well. Rather than focus on traditional Irish pursuits such as horse racing, gambling, hunting, and public drinking, their habits and persona were shaped and transformed by new opportunity. Befitting their status as leading men, for example, both Kavanagh and Cottril entertained regularly, counting among their guests the Count de Lafayette and Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore. They also took an active role in local politics. Kavanagh, for example, acted as attorney for Newcastle, representing the town at the court of sessions. Likewise, Cottril frequently served as moderator and treasurer of the town meeting in Nobleborough, and was appointed, along with Henry Knox, as one of the first trustees of Lincoln Academy.\footnote{On the political role of Kavanagh and Cottril I found most of my information in the minutes of the Newcastle and Nobleborough town meetings. Microfilm reels \# 0011573 (Newcastle) and \# 0011575 (Nobleborough), Family History Center (LDS), Tallahassee, Fla.} This public role speaks highly of the two gentlemen - particularly in a social environment that...
discouraged Catholics from political office.

In one area, however, the two men followed tradition and resisted acculturation: and that was in the world of religious culture. To that we now turn our attention.
Chapter V

THE CATHOLIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN COUNTY

In the years following the American Revolution, Maine experienced a wave of religious change and ferment, reflected in the numerous revivals and new denominations that swept across the landscape. Indeed, American church historians point to a religious revolution that paralleled and was influenced in part by the struggle for American independence. Just as a new spirit of equality and individualism reordered political life and helped break down traditional privilege and deference, so did this ideology bring about a radical democratization of American church life and a new spirit of religious diversity.¹

One measure of this religious pluralism in New England was the emergence of the Catholic church in traditional Congregational bastions such as Boston. Up to this time Catholicism had been the object of hostility from the political and religious establishment in New England who banned its priests and enacted laws proscribing its practice.

And while certain handicaps still remained after the Revolution, particularly in the degree of religious autonomy one could enjoy under the Massachusetts State Constitution, Catholics could now practice their faith in public without fear of reprisal.\footnote{For a general discussion on anti-popery in early America see Leo P. Ribuffo, "Religious Prejudice and Nativism, in Charles H. Lippy and Peter H. Williams, eds., Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience: Studies of Traditions and Movements (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1988), Vol III, pp. 1525-1530. Also see more specific treatment such as Joseph J. Casino, "Anti-Popery in Colonial Pennsylvania," Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography (1981), pp. 279-309.} This new-found freedom resulted in several small Catholic congregations emerging in New England coastal communities, their membership drawn from the increasing numbers of Irish emigrants arriving during the early years of the Republic.

An important, and little studied, episode in the rise of the Catholic church in New England was the "Roman Catholick Society" of Newcastle Mair, established in 1798 under the auspices of Irish-born merchants James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril. Begun as an informal meeting under lay trusteeship, by 1808 it had evolved into the parish of St. Patrick's, with a resident priest and an extensive congregation including both Irish settlers and native converts. In 1821 St. Patrick's numbered four hundred and eighty eight parishioners, a remarkable 14% of the entire Catholic population of New
England at that time. Throughout the early Republic it acted as a beacon for newly arrived Irish immigrants - attracting them to Lincoln County and its opportunities.

This chapter will explore the pivotal role that St. Patrick's played in the emergence of Catholicism in Maine: its early patronage by Irish laymen and travelling missionaries; its pattern of converts drawn from diverse religious experiences; and its effort to secure religious freedom through legal and constitutional means. St. Patrick's also provides an important vantage point from which to study the social dimension of early Catholicism, particularly the role that the church played in the lives of Irish settlers in early America. The parish in large part helped to soften the change and adjustment that accompanied arrival in the New World, and it provided a focus for ethnic identity and community.

In the decades immediately following the American Revolution the Catholic church in New England remained a small missionary outpost with little institutional structure or

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organization. The majority of the Catholic population lived in Boston where a community of emigrant Irish clustered about the waterfront and old North End. Recognizable Catholic communities also emerged in Salem, Massachusetts, Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and Newcastle, Maine - as evidenced from the missionary records of early priests passing through these areas. Given the growing number of native Irish settling in seaport towns during the late eighteenth century, it was natural that they would attract the attention of Catholic missionaries seeking to bring the faith into the new frontier of northern New England.⁴

Lincoln County, Maine is a case in point. Each year, beginning in 1798, two French priests based in Boston - Jean de Cheverus and James Romagne - visited the "promising flock" at Newcastle, several of whom, such as James Kavanagh, had earlier connections with the Boston church. The two clerics spent alternating seasons at the home of Kavanagh, offering mass to the local Catholic community and ministering to the needs of Irish families along the Damariscotta. They also

¹ In the closing years of the eighteenth century missionaries such as Jean Cheverus visited Irish-Catholic enclaves in Newcastle, Portland, Portsmouth, Newburyport, Salem, Plymouth, and Bristol, Rhode Island. See Robert Lord, John E. Sexton, and Edward T. Harrington, History of the Archdiocese of Boston (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1944), Vol. I, pp. 612-619, 662-666. Specific to Maine see "Baptisms, Marriages and Burials in the Congregation of St. Mary's Church, Newcastle, County of Lincoln, District of Maine." PDA. This register also contains baptisms for Portsmouth N.H. and Portland, Maine - most likely recorded by missionaries Cheverus and Romagne on their travels to Newcastle.
rode circuit into the backcountry of mid-Maine where they visited outlying families and preached to potential converts. The pioneering efforts of de Cheverus, in particular, are worth reconstructing in detail both for what they reveal of the Irish population in early Maine and for the insight they provide into the early development of the Catholic church in Lincoln County.

Jean Lefevre de Cheverus was born at Mayenne, France in 1772, the son of French nobility. With the coming of the French Revolution he fled first to London and then to Boston where in 1796 he became the assistant to fellow emigre, the Reverend Doctor Francis Matignon, pastor of Holy Cross church on Franklin street. At that time the Boston parish encompassed much of New England, including the entire District of Maine. Part of Cheverus' duties involved missionary work "in the eastern parts", an assignment that took him each summer to work among the Penobscot and Passamaquoddy Indians. In 1798, rather than return directly to Boston, Cheverus diverted his trip to visit the Catholic families along the

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\(^6\) Cheverus' work among the Indians of Maine is best viewed through his letters to the Reverend Francis Matignon in Boston and Bishop John Carroll in Baltimore. These letters were copied by Lord, et al, in their study of the Archdiocese of Boston and the copies deposited at the Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston (AAB), Brighton, Massachusetts. Filed chronologically, letters from this collection are henceforth cited as Lord/Sexton files, AAB.

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Damariscotta. Travelling from the St. Croix river with Indian bearers and guides, he journeyed overland through previously unexplored wilderness to the upper reaches of the Penobscot, an adventure that left the priest impressed by the new landscape that surrounded him:

From Friday at noon, till...Monday afternoon, I did not see even a log house. nothing but woods and water. This is not however a gloomy sight; the land is covered everywhere with hard wood which at this time of year looks beautifully green. There was also in many places as fine grass as I ever saw. I indulged the pleasing idea it might one day become the asylum of piety and innocence.  

Cheverus made his way south along the Penobscot to Belfast, Maine, preaching along the way to Indians and settlers at Old Town and Bangor. He clearly envisioned the Maine backcountry as fertile ground for the Catholic church. In an earlier letter to Father Matignon in Boston he wrote "I have some hope of being able to throw some seeds in this wild soil which with the grace of God, may in time produce fruits of life and immortality." Perhaps with this thought in mind Cheverus travelled the final leg of his journey on horseback, following the newly opened post road from Belfast to Newcastle.³

Upon arriving at Newcastle, Cheverus lodged at the house

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³ Revd. Jean Cheverus to Revd. Francis Matignon, 10 August, 1797; Same to Same, June 30, 1798, Lord/Sexton files. AAB.

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⁷ Reverend Jean Cheverus to Reverend Francis Matignon, 7 June, 1798, Lord/Sexton files, AAB.

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of James Kavanagh and celebrated mass at several makeshift sites, including a barn on the property of Matthew Cottril in neighboring Nobleborough. Cheverus was well acquainted with Kavanagh and Cottril through their longstanding connections in Boston. Both men were married in Boston at Holy Cross Church and over the years had forged business alliances with many of the leading members of the Catholic community in the town, particularly trader Michael Burns and merchant James Smithwick. Kavanagh himself played a prominent role in the organization of the Boston parish, serving on its board of trustees and donating $1000 for the construction of a new cathedral. As Cheverus later remarked, "the zeal, the noble generosities of Dear Mr. Kavanagh are above all praise. It is he who encouraged us to begin our church in Boston and who was the greatest help toward furnishing it." Now Cheverus was returning the favor, helping Kavanagh to build a pioneer church in Maine and provide some degree of cultural continuity to the Irish immigrants who would comprise its congregation.

3 Boston Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Baptisms, Marriages and Burials, 1789-1810, Vol I (AAB): November 1793, Matthew Cottril and Lydia House; and June, 1794, James Kavanagh and Elizabeth Jackson. The register goes on to reveal close connections between the two gentlemen and Boston's Irish-Catholic merchant class. Michael Burns, for example, served as witness to Cottril's marriage and both men acted as sponsors for each other's children. After Burn's death, and the death of Cottril's wife Elizabeth in 1811, Matthew married Burn's widow, Eleanor Sweeney.

Between 1798 and 1808 Jean de Cheverus spent at least part of each summer ministering to the growing congregation in Lincoln County. Church records reveal that he followed a rather fixed schedule during these annual missions. The first week was spent in Damariscotta Mills where he offered mass and attended to the Catholics living along the Damariscotta. He followed this with a two week circuit through the backcountry - often ranging up to thirty miles afield to seek out new Catholic families and preach to potential converts. In July, 1799, Cheverus rode circuit along the Pemaquid Peninsula, the Sheepscot backcountry, and the Kennebec River Valley, visiting twelve Catholic families and baptizing eighteen children. Some of these families, such as Edmund Finn's, were recent arrivals on the Maine frontier. Finn, a native of Wexford, had journeyed from the Newfoundland fisheries in 1798. Along with six other Irish families he took up land along the Sheepscot in Ballstown - a squatter community that proved to be particularly fertile ground for Cheverus' efforts. Other families "discovered" by Cheverus during his travels were longer established in Lincoln County. William Keating, for example, a native of Lismore, County Waterford, had come to Thomaston in 1785. A master mariner by trade, Keating married Elizabeth McClean, the daughter of a prosperous Ulster-Scots miller in Appleton. When Cheverus called to their house in 1799 he found six children ranging in age from
one to ten, all of whom were baptized in due course.\footnote{11}

Something of Cheverus' activities during this time can be gleaned from an early account of his labors in Whitefield, a backcountry community that developed a particularly strong Catholic flavor during the early nineteenth century. According to one witness in 1816:

That morning he [Father Cheverus] said Mass and gave Communion to eighteen persons in a room of a log house; the crowd inside was such as to oblige him to chose for his Cathedral in the afternoon a half finished barn; here he preached and afterwards baptized five babies. That morning also two old men who, although raised as Catholics had heretofore proved obstinate, had gone to confession and ... announce[d] publicly their return and repentance. \footnote{12}

While Cheverus ranged far afield on his mission circuits (occasionally travelling as far as Belfast to the east or Bath to the west) he always returned on alternate Sundays to say mass in Damariscotta. His efforts were made easy by James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril who "fitted up as a place of worship at Damariscotta Mills a wooden building which had been previously used as a store." This chapel came to be called St. Mary's of the Mills and it remained in service until the dedication of St. Patrick's church in 1808.\footnote{13}

\footnote{11} "Baptisms, Marriages...St. Mary's Church, Newcastle," entries July 27, 1799 to August 24, 1799, PDA.

\footnote{12} Archdiocese of Boston, Vol. I, pg. 702.

\footnote{13} Edward Kavanagh to Bishop Benedict Fenwick, 18 February, 1832, Lord Sexton files, AAB; and Archdiocese of Boston, Vol I. 613.
Throughout his travels in Maine, de Cheverus carried in his saddlebag a leather-bound register entitled "Baptisms, Marriages and Burials in the Congregation of St. Mary's Church Newcastle, County of Lincoln, District of Maine." This detailed source, chronicling the years 1798 through 1808, offers an invaluable glimpse into the size and structure of the early Catholic community in Lincoln County. During this time de Cheverus and his colleague James Romagne performed two hundred and forty seven baptisms in mid-Maine, recording each initiate's name, age, sponsors and parents. The majority of those christened were young babies, indicative of the growing Irish community in the area. A significant number of baptisms, however, fifty-six in all, involved older children and young adults with Irish surnames - the offspring of Irish emigrants who had settled the Maine frontier much earlier. Indeed, this suggests that the initial expansion of the Catholic church in Maine during the Federal period was fueled by the return of unpracticing Irish and their families.

We should recall that prior to 1800 the vast majority of Irish emigrants to northern New England arrived as single men, 

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14 This baptismal and marriage register represents the earliest record of the Catholic community in Maine. It is located uncatalogued, at the Portland Diocesan Archives, Portland Maine. A breakdown of baptisms by year reveals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Baptisms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1798</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1799</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1800</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1802</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1803</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1804</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1805</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1806</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1807</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1808</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
some of them indentured servants. With the virtual absence of Irish-Catholic women in early America, marriage considerations usually meant finding Protestant partners and ultimately involved absorption into local family and community networks. The children of such unions were often reared in the prevailing Protestant culture—a pattern that was altered in Lincoln County by the arrival of Jean Cheverus and the persuasive influence of a powerful Catholic elite exemplified by Kavanagh and Cottril. The result was that entire families, including New England-born wives and children, embraced the Catholic faith and Irish husbands renewed traditional ties to the church, cultural ties that while dormant, were evidently not forgotten.

The church register, for example, contains several references to marriages "rehabilitated" by Father Cheverus, a process wherein the Protestant wife was baptized Catholic and the couple remarried immediately afterward. Similarly, the children of these early mixed marriages were brought back to the church and baptized en masse. On July 20, 1798, fourteen

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15 On July 20, 1812, for example, Cheverus "rehabilitated" the marriage of Michael Burns, a tailor, and Deborah Sprague his wife. The marriage in Gardiner was attended by her father and sister (most likely Protestants), a further indication of the acceptance of cross-cultural unions in Lincoln County. For other examples of marriage renewals in the Catholic church see those of Abel Cole and Dorothy McGuire (September 16, 1808); William Shea and Ann Coll (July 13, 1812); and Andrew Fitzgerald and Sarah Fuller (August 27, 1813). All are located in a continuation of the earlier register entitled "Baptisms, Marriages, Deaths, St. Patricks, 1806-1823," PDA.
members of the Hanley family in Bristol - ranging in age from two to eighteen - were baptized by Jean Cheverus. Similar renewals occurred among the Meaghers, FitzGeralds, Gahans, Lawlors, and McGuires, all pioneer Irish families in the Damariscotta region. This pattern represents one of the most compelling examples of cultural persistence among the Irish of Lincoln County, but it also raises important questions concerning the allegiance and identity of family members who followed them into the church.

For example, how do we explain the readiness of Protestant wives to embrace the Catholic faith of their husbands? Traditionally, women have been assigned a major role in cultural "nurturing", taking responsibility for childrearing, education, and religious indoctrination. In early Massachusetts, for example, women often formed a majority in their Protestant congregations and took the lead in passing church membership down to their children. On the Maine frontier, however, where marriage choices and religious denominations were more diversified, this role may have become increasingly blurred. Marriages took place between those of different experiences, ethnic background, and religious persuasion. The fact that many frontier brides were migrants themselves - having broken traditional ties with older communities in southern New England - may have encouraged them

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"Baptisms, Marriages...St. Mary's Church, Newcastle," entries 1798-1808, PDA.
to experiment more freely.

Much work has yet to be done on the social origins of these Protestant partners before we can fully understand the motivations which led them into the Catholic church. Several patterns, however, are suggested in the record. First, it appears that some early Irish settlers in Lincoln County - those who eventually returned to the Catholic church - married Protestant women outside the traditional sphere of the Congregational establishment. The Hanleys, for example, married into second-generation Ulster-Scots families, as did Timothy McCarthy of Georgetown, who married Catherine McCobb, member of a prominent Ulster-Maine family. In his will McCarthy even appointed his "esteemed friend" Denny McCobb as executor - suggesting that, along with marriage choices, the lines separating Irish Catholic and Ulster Presbyterian may have been breaking down on the frontier of northern New England.¹⁷

¹⁷ Most scholars writing on early America view Ulster Presbyterians and native Irish as living separate existences in America. See in particular David Doyle, Ireland, Irishmen and Revolutionary America, pp. 77-79. The fact remains that Ulster Irish and Ulster Scots often immigrated in the same ships and settled in the same communities in the New World, a factor that prompted some interaction and intermarriage. Indeed, members of both groups were collectively identified as "Irish" during the colonial period, a definition that only broke down during the nineteenth century with increased immigration from Catholic Ireland and the identification of these newcomers with poverty and transience. Descendants of Ulster Protestants in America, mirroring the nationalistic overtones of their Irish counterparts in the late nineteenth century, called for a clear distinction and identity, hence the term "Scotch-Irish." On the question of identity see Maldwyn A. Jones "The Scotch-Irish in British America," in
Other Irishmen in early Maine married Yankee women from the backcountry, partners who were also most likely beyond the pale of the social and religious establishment. Indeed the weakness of the Congregationalists in the backcountry permitted a wide range of alternative religions to flourish in Lincoln County: Baptists, Methodists, New Lights, and Catholics; all of whom coexisted in close proximity to each other. Given these fluid conditions, marriage to an Irish settler, and nominal adherence to the Catholic faith may have been within the bounds of religious experiment and social experience. Mehitable Clarenboul, for example, the widow of a backcountry farmer in Ballstown, married Walter Power, a Kilkennyman, in 1802. In time their children, including Mehitable's two daughters by her first marriage, were baptized by Jean Cheverus on one of his visits to the Sheepscot.\(^{13}\)

For some Protestant women personal circumstances may have played a role in their conversion. Such was likely the case with Sofia Schenck, daughter of a prosperous Palatine farmer in Waldoborough, Maine. In 1780 she married John Fitzgerald, an Irish immigrant from Limerick who settled amidst the Germans at Broad Bay. Since her family were prominent members

\(^{13}\) On the Clarenbouls see the baptismal and marriage register, St. Mary's Congregation, 1802. Upon baptizing Mary and Rebecca Clarenboul, ages 5 and 13, Cheverus noted they were "children of William (deceased) and Mehitable Clarenboul (now Power)." The marriage between Mehitable and Walter Power took place on January 1, 1802 and was witnessed by Edward and Elizabeth Finn, Michael Joyce, and John Molloy.
of the German church at Waldoborough, it is likely that the Fitzgeralds reared their children as part of the Lutheran congregation there and attended services at the German meeting house overlooking the bay. These networks and allegiances, however, were disrupted in 1799 by an argument over the estate of Andrew Schenck, Sofia's father. The elder Schenck had appointed Jacob Ludwig, a prominent local "gentleman," as his executor. Ludwig, however, had withheld part of Sofia's inheritance, whereby the Fitzgerald's took him to court. Although they eventually recovered their share of the estate, strained relations brought about a small schism within the German church. From that point on the Fitzgeralds, joined later by five other families, attended the fledgling Catholic congregation at Newcastle. Their children were baptized by Jean Cheverus in the wooden chapel of St. Mary's at Damarariscotta Mills.\(^1\)

Evidence suggests that Cheverus actively recruited and

\(^{1}\) On the Fitzgerald case see LCCC, January session, 1800 (microfilm) MeSA. Also see Cheverus' register of "Baptisms, Marriages...." which reveals that the Fitzgerald's first appearance in parish records closely corresponds to the time of the lawsuit. Other German families who converted to the Catholic side, or brought their children to be baptized, included Jacob and Anna Kraus, George and Ruth Leissener, Daniel and Elizabeth Seidlinger, Thomas and Theresa Rupel, John Peter and Mary Gross, and Isaac and Catherine [Fitzgerald] Cole. A switch to Catholicism, however, did not prevent the Fitzgeralds from slipping into poverty and hard times. In a Revolutionary War pension application in 1820 John Fitzgerald stated that they lived in "half of a low dwelling house out of repair." His wife Sofia, age 65, was "in a low state of health and unable to do the work of the family."
choreographed these mass conversions. In 1799, for example, the priest wrote several letters to the Fitzgerald family, essentially instructions preparing the children to enter the Catholic church. One letter, entitled "Rules and Conduct for a Christian Family" gave detailed guidelines concerning prayer, suggested readings from scripture, and group study in early pamphlets called "Catholick Christian" and "The Poor Man's Catechism". Given that the Fitzgeralds had spent years outside the Catholic church Cheverus also felt compelled to add that:

It is not lawful for any Catholick to frequent the assembly of any [Protestant] Society whatever... When we attend the instructions of a preacher we are seen to acknowledge him in some manner as our director and pastor but surely the ministers of the different sects cannot be such. They did not enter the sheepfold by the right door and the first pastor never told them to feed his sheep.  

Cheverus knew well the effect that competing churches could have on a curious congregation. After all, his fledgeling parish at Newcastle comprised a large number of converts drawn over from a variety of religious experiences. The church register at St. Mary's identifies close to fifty adult converts between 1798 and 1822, and together with their children they represent an astounding 35 percent of total

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20 Revd. Jean Cheverus to John Fitzgerald and Family, 19 September, 1799, Cheverus Correspondence, Historical Manuscripts Collection, AAB. Also see in the same collection similar letters such as Rev. Jean Cheverus to Mr. Robert Hanley, # 1.12, AAB.
baptisms for the period (Table 5.1). In a letter addressed to Bishop John Carroll in Baltimore Cheverus remarked that the Catholic community in Lincoln County contained "converts from among all the Sects, even the Quakers, who are the most difficult to bring over."^1

Table 5.1
Catholic Baptisms in Lincoln County
Irish and Convert, 1798-1822

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Irish Families</th>
<th>Adult Convert</th>
<th>Convert Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Infant Age 2-18</td>
<td>Convert Infant Age 2-18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1798-1802</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1803-1807</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1808-1812</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1813-1817</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1818-1822</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Baptisms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1798-1822</td>
<td>514</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Baptisms and Marriages, St. Mary's Congregation and St. Patrick's church, Newcastle; PDA.

What factors explain this remarkable record on the Maine

^1 Archdiocese of Boston Vol I., pg. 613. Baptismal and marriage records for St. Mary's/St. Patrick's identify many of these converts between 1798 and 1808. They included the families of John and Sarah Willard, John and Martha [Keating] Messarvey, Isaiah and Catherine [Fitzgerald] Cole, Priscilla Shaw (baptized at age 69), Issac and Mary Hall, James and Sarah Andrews, William and Mary Groton, Michael and Deborah Sprague, Joseph and Abigail Morgan, Theophilus and Elizabeth Dowe, Spooner and Mary Sprague, Levi and Anna Russell, Jesse Hall, Jacob and Mehitable Dainmouth, Timothy and Judith Jameson, Peleg and Elizabeth Lincoln, Nathan Sprague, Joshua and Margaret [Fitzgerald] Wilson, Gamiel and Elizabeth Gates, and Obediah Morse. It is interesting to note that in 1821, when a census was taken of Catholic families in the parish, very few of the above names appear - suggesting that they and/or their children gradually drifted back to their Protestant antecedents.
frontier? Part of the answer certainly must have been the abilities and personality of Cheverus himself, described by one contemporary in glowing terms:

He is generally regarded as the best preacher in Boston and by many as the best they have heard in America. I myself confess that I have never heard anyone who made a better impression on me. His eloquence is brilliant, agreeable, full of unction, and captivating. Many who come to hear him out of curiosity were so touched that they have become converted. 12

In addition to lively preaching, other factors contributed to the pattern of conversion in Lincoln County. Converts, for example, often ran in particular families. One member or couple would cross over to Catholicism setting off a chain reaction among kin and neighbors. The extended family of Michael and Deborah Burns are a good illustration of this pattern. In 1809, Burns, an Irish-born tailor, migrated to the Kennebec river town of Gardiner where he married Deborah Sprague, a local woman, in a civil ceremony. In time their workmanship brought them to the attention of the Kavanaghs in Damariscotta who commissioned "tayloring" from Michael and "pd Mrs. Burns for weaving." 13 This Irish patronage may have also rekindled religious fervor, for in 1812 on a visit through Gardiner, Jean Cheverus baptized Deborah Sprague and "rehabilitated" the Burns' marriage. Cheverus recorded that the wedding vows were witnessed by "her father and sister."

13 Kavanagh Account Books, December 28, 1812, and August 9, 1813.
Indeed, parish records reveal that several members of the Sprague clan converted to the "Roman Catholick Society," including the families of Spooner and Michael Sprague, as well as Nathan, age 50, possibly the father of Deborah.

Work and neighborhood networks also influenced the recruitment of potential converts to the Catholic church. During the early nineteenth century, for example, several tenants and employees of James Kavanagh at Damariscotta Mills began attending services at St. Mary's chapel. These included the families of Joseph Morgan, a laborer on the Kavanagh estate; Isaac and Jesse Hall, who leased property from Kavanagh; and Stephen Young, who married Morgan's daughter Sarah and worked as a sawyer in the Kavanagh sawmills. James Kavanagh stood as godfather for most of these newcomers and witnessed their marriages, underlining the important patriarchal role he played in the community.

Given Kavanagh's elite position in the town of Newcastle and his prominence over every aspect of social and economic life, it is not surprising that some town folk followed his lead in religious expression as well. In later years several local elite also converted to Catholicism, in large part due

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24 Concerning the religious and neighborhood networks of local residents in Damariscotta Mills see the Catholic parish registers cited above, as well as the Kavanagh Account books presented in James Kavanagh vs. Matthew Cottril. LCCCP, 19 April, 1819 (microfilm reel # 124), MeSA. See entries in the account book May through September, 1812 (Joseph Morgan); March 22, 1814, March 24, 1817 (Jesse Hall); and November 2, 1818 (Isaac Hall). Hall worked 100 acres on the west side of Damariscotta Pond, see LCRD 64:158.
to their close personal and business association with Kavanagh. Samuel Bishop, a prominent lawyer from Dresden who represented the Kavanaghs, was admitted to the church under their sponsorship. After he baptized Mr. Bishop in 1816, Cheverus remarked that "this man of judgement...had been studying and reflecting three years on the idea of becoming a Catholic. He wept with emotion during the whole ceremony, at which several of his colleagues were present. May they follow his example!"

The record of conversions in Lincoln County up to 1820 underlines several important facets of Catholic-Protestant relations during the early Republic. Most significantly, there appears in Maine a stronger ecumenical spirit than we might expect given the negative image of popery in early New England. We should remember, however, that the early nineteenth century was a time of great religious experimentation and curiosity. Maine, for example, was an arena where evangelical sects openly challenged the Congregational establishment and made an emotional appeal to incoming settlers who were flooding into the frontier areas. The same held true for Catholicism. Circuit riders such as Jean Cheverus took their message into the Kennebec and Sheepscot backcountry, offering an alternative to the Congregational establishment. Preaching with a fervent and at times evangelical style, Cheverus managed to appeal to a

\addcontentsline{toc}{subsection}{References}
\begin{thebibliography}{10}
\bibitem{Cheverus} Archdioces of Boston, Vol. I, pg. 72.
\end{thebibliography}
diverse cross-section of the population, many of whom, like their evangelical neighbors, were looking for a new beginning.

Within this climate of change a mutual curiosity led Protestants and Catholics alike to attend services in each others churches. Just as Protestants of all denominations stepped inside St. Mary's church at Newcastle, so were there converts on the other side - Catholics who by reason of marriage, distance, or personal preference gravitated toward Protestant sects. An extreme example was that of Thomas McCrate, a native of Waterford, who was a prominent merchant in Wiscasset at the opening of the nineteenth century. While most likely born into a Catholic family in Ireland, McCrate nonetheless experimented freely in the religious environment of Maine. At the time of his death in 1835 he held pews in the Baptist, Methodist, and Congregational meeting houses in Wiscasset.

The point to be stressed here is that this was a period of fluid and sometimes cordial relations between Catholics and Protestants in New England. When a new toll bridge was completed across the Damariscotta river in 1793, for example, one of those ministers invited to speak at the ribbon-cutting


27 LCP, Vol 41, pg. 259.
was none other than Jean Cheverus. Similarly, when John Carroll, the newly appointed Bishop of America visited Boston in 1791 he was given a warm reception and invited to several social functions. He wrote "It is wonderful to tell, what great civilities have been done to me in this town, where a few years ago a popish priest was thought to be the greatest monster in creation." Carroll's fine welcome in Boston was not unique. In 1800 a subscription list for the construction of the new Catholic church was signed by a host of Protestant gentleman in Boston, including Samuel Parkman, Elias Hasket Derby, and President John Adams, who contributed one hundred dollars. Charles Bullfinch, New England's premier architect of the period, donated plans and services. Weighing these examples alongside the Catholic experience in Lincoln County, Maine, suggests the need to reassess the traditional image of Catholic relations in Federal New

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28 Howard Castner, "The Four Bridges Connecting the Twin Villages," Lincoln County News, June 19, 1947. According to Castner it was Cheverus who cut the ribbon opening the first bridge over the Damariscotta.

29 Acognito, "Ecumenical Stirrings...", pg. 359

30 See "Petition of the Catholics of Boston, May 1803," a copy of which is in Lord/Sexton files, AAB. The original petition is located at the Archives of the New England Historical and Genealogical Society, Boston. Also see entries in the Matignon Account Book, Church of the Holy Cross, Boston (AAB): June 20, 1803, "100 dol from president Adams," and Jan. 25, 1804, "moved that 4 piece of plate at value of $100 or $120 be offered likewise to Charles Bullfinch Esq. with the thanks of the Congregation in acknowledgement of the plan he gave and troubles he has been at in directing the building, without being willing to charge anything for his labours."
England. While a nativist element could be found during this period, one also senses a tentative spirit of toleration for Catholicism, in part brought on by the Republican ideology of equality and freedom of conscience, and encouraged by the positive example of Irish immigrants such as Matthew Cottril and James Kavanagh. It was only with the increasing numbers of Irish-Catholic immigrants after 1820 - many of whom crowded into the cities, competed for jobs, and lived impoverished lives - that widespread discrimination accelerated.

This is not to imply, however, that old prejudices did not exist in the New England of James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril. American culture during the early Republic could be highly discriminatory, and Irish-Catholics were certainly fair game. In newspapers and official documents of the period one finds a variety of examples, ranging from Federalist fears of "Wild Irishmen" lurking under every bed, to the Alien and Sedition Acts, which sought to restrict the numbers of new immigrants coming to America and provide safeguards against perceived subversives and "alien enemies" (not coincidentally enacted shortly after the abortive United Irishman Rebellion of 1798). Cultural stereotypes of the Irish could also be

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31 Harrison Gray Otis, a spokesman for the nativists in New England asserted that he especially "did not wish to invite hordes of Wild Irishmen, nor the turbulent and disorderly of all parts of the world to disturb our tranquility, after having succeeded in the overthrow of their own governments." See John C. Miller, *Crisis in Freedom: The Alien and Sedition Acts* (Boston, 1951), pg. 44. Also Edward
found in rural New England newspapers where jokes and doggerel verse poked fun at an inebriated and dim-witted "Paddy" who was more often than not portrayed as a tinker, servant, or neer-do-well. And certainly in the area of religion one finds compelling examples of discrimination against Catholics. This was true even among the Irish of Lincoln County who enjoyed a rather prominent position in local and economic affairs. During its early years the Catholic community at Newcastle endured several confrontations with civil and religious authorities over the question of religious autonomy and freedom. Two court cases in particular, one involving exemption from paying the local ministerial tax, are worth reconstructing in detail both to illuminate the roles of Catholic protagonists such as Jean Cheverus and James Kavanagh, and to underline the similarity in position and response between the Catholic community and other minority sects such as the Baptists.

In 1798 the District of Maine remained under the umbrella

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32 One of the best collections of Irish jokes in early America can be found in the Farmer's Museum, published in Walpole, New Hampshire during the late eighteenth century. A survey of jokes and limericks in 1793, appearing under a weekly column called "Entertaining Scraps," reveal that several subjects were particularly popular in Irish jokes, such as their presumed ignorance of animal husbandry (often with ribald twists). Also popular were those that poked fun at Matthew Lyon, an outspoken Irish congressman from neighboring Vermont who was the first victim of the Sedition Acts.
of an established state church, as outlined in the Massachusetts State Constitution. Citizens, regardless of religious preference, were required to pay a tax assessment to support the Congregational church in their community and its elected minister. In the decades following the American Revolution this requirement increasingly came under attack, particularly among the evangelical sects whose numbers had quickly formed a majority in settlements along the backcountry. Advocates such as Isaac Backus, a spokesman for the Massachusetts Baptists, called for the separation of church and state. If one of the tenets of the Revolution, he argued, was opposition to "ecclesiastical slavery" (a reference to patriot anger at the installation of an Anglican Bishop over the colonies), how then could the new state government advocate one religion over another? The resulting fight over disestablishment in Massachusetts (which included Maine) took as its battle cry the exemption from payment of the annual ministerial tax, a move that resulted in several important test cases in northern New England.\(^3\)

Into this conflict moved the Catholic community at

Newcastle where for several years James Kavanagh had begrudgingly paid his ministerial tax. Now, with the introduction of a regular Catholic mission in 1798, Kavanagh, along with his business partner Matthew Cottril, asked for exemption from the tax, arguing that they already paid sufficient funds to their own church. When their appeal was turned down by the town of Newcastle, Kavanagh and Cottril reluctantly paid the tax but demanded that the assessment be applied toward the minister of their choice, in this case Father Francis Matignon, pastor of the Catholic parish of Boston. When this request was also refused a rift developed between the partners and the town, as described by tax collector Benjamin Lincoln: "After paying his Ministers tax, Mr. Kavanagh and Cotterill being together, Mr. Cotterill said they had got a writ and would sue the town for said money and was determined to drive it as far as the Law would carry it..." According to Lincoln, Cottril sarcastically added that "...if we cannot get clear as Roman Catholics, then we will turn Baptists, then we will certainly get clear." 34 (A reference to the fact that Baptists were increasingly granted tax exemptions, especially in Maine towns where evangelicals formed a majority).

On November 1, 1799, a writ was issued in Boston in the

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34 Archdiocese of Boston, pp. 560-61. Also see American Catholic Historical Researches, XIX (1902), pg. 122; and the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, Records, 1800-1802, pg. 125, MSA.
name of Reverend Francis Matignon against the town of Newcastle for the recovery of eighty dollars "received [by the town] for the use of said plaintiff." The suit was carried all the way to the Massachusetts Supreme Court, where Kavanagh and Cottril acquired the legal services of then Attorney-General James Sullivan, who predicted "an almost infallible success." The Court, however, ruled in the town's favor, and assessed the costs against Matignon who was present at the proceedings. The Justices went on to lecture the priest on the proper place of Catholics in New England:

The Constitution [of Massachusetts] obliges everyone to contribute to the support of Protestant Ministers and them alone. Papists are only tolerated and as long as their Ministers behave well, we should not disturb them. But let them expect no more than that. 36

The Court's opinion was important on several counts. For one, under Massachusetts law, Catholics in Maine were required to pay tax to the established Protestant church, regardless of whether they paid for the support of their own church and priest. More important, the Court's ruling implied that Catholics in fact had no right whatever to apply for

35 it is probable that Kavanagh and Cottril knew James Sullivan previously in Boston. All three gentlemen were members of the Charitable Irish Society of Boston - its membership role can be found in Michael J. O'Brien, The Irish at Bunker Hill, Appendix III, pp. 213-214.

36 Rev. Jean Cheverus to Bishop John Carroll, 10 March, 1801, Lord/Sexton files, AAB. The Massachusetts Constitution of 1780, in fact, only made specific reference to "Protestant teachers." See Part I, Article III.
exemptions — this was solely the prerogative of Protestant sects. The worst-case scenario of this decision was quickly realized by Father Matignon when he observed that "not only individuals but even an entire Catholic community, such as could easily be established, in the as yet unsettled lands of the state, could thereby be forced by law to provide itself with a Protestant minister: which is absurd and an injury to liberty of conscience."

Efforts to secure Catholic rights in Lincoln County fell on deaf ears until the Maine Constitutional Convention in 1819 when James Kavanagh, Matthew Cottril, and William Mooney presented a petition "on behalf of the Catholics of Maine." Their platform contained several important planks including religious autonomy and the right of Catholics to hold public office. Fearing an attempt by the Convention to write into the Constitution a test clause preventing Catholics from holding office, the petition argued passionately for Catholic rights:

While [the Catholic] is obliged by law to fight for national rights; while he cheerfully takes up arms in the defense of his native country; while he pays his just proportion of the public taxes, he lives an alien on the very inheritance of his father; and what had he done to be thus deprived of the natural

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and inalienable rights of a citizen? Nothing but he is a Catholic. 38

The Maine Constitution successfully responded to these appeals and provided religious and political freedom to Maine Catholics. These advances were soon put into practice by several candidates who jumped into the political arena. Best known was Edward Kavanagh, the eldest son of James. In 1825 he was elected to the Maine State Assembly for Newcastle and went on to lead a distinguished career in the U.S. Congress as well as hold the office of acting Governor of Maine in 1843.39

A second case involving Catholic rights and the Newcastle congregation took place in 1800, this concerning Father Jean de Cheverus. In mid January of that year Cheverus made a special journey from Boston to Damariscotta Mills to celebrate the marriage of James Smithwick, a master mariner in partnership with Kavanagh and Cottril, and Elizabeth Jackson, the sister-in-law of James Kavanagh. Upon returning to Lincoln County the following summer, Cheverus discovered that both a civil and criminal action had been sworn out against


39 On Edward Kavanagh's career the definitive study is Lucey, Edward Kavanagh: Catholic Statesman, Diplomat for Maine.
him for unlawfully performing the marriage. Under Massachusetts law, only resident ministers or justices of the peace could perform marriage ceremonies. In the civil matter Cheverus, who was based in Boston, was accused of acting outside his jurisdiction. The criminal portion of the case was potentially more serious: at issue was the validity of the priest's credentials to perform marriages at all.

The prosecution argued that not only was Cheverus not ordained over a settled parish in Maine, but also that his own ordination had not complied with the Cambridge platform. This held that election to, and formal acceptance of ministerial office (rather than simply an ordination ceremony), constituted true ordination and right to perform marriage. This point of law had been used several months earlier to convict John Murray, a Universalist minister in Gloucester, Massachusetts. In Cheverus' case, however, the Court reluctantly admitted that the priest had been properly ordained according to the rites of his own church. They warned, nonetheless, that if Cheverus had not been settled under a parish in Boston (one that theoretically extended into Maine), he would have been sentenced to an hour in the

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Partly as a result of this case Cheverus entered into a written agreement with the Catholic community at St. Mary's of the Mills, one by which they formally recognized him as their pastor, and he in turn agreed to act regularly as their priest.\footnote{On the Cheverus case see Rev. Francis Matignon to Bishop John Carroll, 14 October, 1800, Lord/Sexton files, AAB. Also Archdiocese of Boston, Vol I, pp. 564-567; and Maine Catholic Magazine, November, 1915.}

Bolstered by this endorsement the congregation at Newcastle embarked upon plans for a permanent church, one that would replace the wooden structure of St. Mary's and more aptly reflect the social graces of the Catholic elite along the Damariscotta. Much of the initiative and direction behind this project can be traced to merchants Kavanagh and Cottril. In 1803, for example, they donated three acres of land on the edge of Damariscotta Mills "for the use and benefits of the Roman Catholic Society of Newcastle and its vicinity." With a commanding view of village and countryside, the land, as originally planned, would accommodate a church and cemetery along with a rectory house, garden, and orchard.\footnote{Archdiocese of Boston, Vol. I, pg. 567.}

A committee was formed to spearhead the project; a group drawn from the oldest and most successful members of the community. These included Kavanagh and Cottril, John Fitzgerald, Roger Hanley, and Patrick Doyle, who acted as

\footnote{LCRD 63:203; and Rev. Francis Matignon to Bishop John Carroll, 10 October, 1805, Lord/Sexton files, AAB.}
The first order of business was raising funds for construction and a subscription list was circulated among the congregation. According to church accounts kept by Doyle and Cheverus, sixty eight people subscribed to the fund - ranging from poor backcountry farmers to "West India Merchants." Not surprisingly the top contributors were Kavanagh and Cottril at $500; followed by Cheverus and Matignon, Captain James Smithwick, and Captain Robert Askins at $100 apiece.\(^4\) It soon became apparent, however, that the $2070 raised in the first subscription would fall short of the necessary costs of building and furnishing the new church. In order to keep the project afloat Kavanagh and Cottril pumped an additional $2000 into the church and contributed a large share of the building materials needed for its construction. Edward Kavanagh, for example, recalled that "a few years before the erection of the brick church one of the vessels of Kavanagh and Cottril had brought a large quantity of lime rock from Dublin... My father sent to Thomaston for lime burners, caused a kiln to be erected and from that rock

\[^4\] This is an example of "lay trusteeship" in early Catholicism, a widespread occurrence that in later years would pose problems for the Church hierarchy.

\[^5\] "Catholicism's Centennial in the State of Maine," unidentified newspaper article, dated July, 1908, located in the files of the Nobleboro Historical Society, Nobleboro, Maine. The article quotes liberally from church account books - account books that to date have failed to materialize in either the Portland Diocesan Archives, or the Archives of the Archdioces of Boston, their logical repository.
was procured all the lime used in the building."

From the beginning, Kavanagh and Cottril were the mainstays of the Catholic church in Lincoln County. The patriarchal role they played in its development, in fact, closely mirrored the example set by Catholic elite in their native Ireland. During the eighteenth century, Catholic middlemen on the "big farms" of south Kilkenny and Wexford were the stimulus behind the emergence of the church after the penal times (a period of repression when open worship and church building were outlawed). They provided lay leadership, built Catholic chapels on the fringes of their land, and recruited clergymen from among their own families. This patronage was directly analogous to the Catholic experience in Newcastle - particularly the pioneering efforts of James Kavanagh. With Cheverus absent in Boston for long periods, Kavanagh was the major catalyst behind the development of the church: he strategically placed the chapel on his land within sight of the family mansion, and encouraged two of his sons to study for the priesthood, perhaps intending them to take over the parish (they both eventually went into more worldly professions). His efforts succeeded in consolidating for the Kavanaghs both personal and spiritual "clout" in the community, and enabled them to maintain cultural continuity and control over their locale. Similar experiences

4 Edward Kavanagh to Bishop Fenwick, 18 February, 1832, Lord/Sexton files, AAB.
characterized the transplantation of the Irish-Catholic church in Newfoundland and elsewhere in the New World. As geographer John Mannion suggests, "There were few closer analogues in the evolution of society and settlement on both sides of the Atlantic than the Irish Catholic church and its middle-class nurture."[47]

Indeed, the Irish merchant elite in New England were significant benefactors of the church and their bequests reveal a strong attachment to Catholicism. In his will, for example, Matthew Cottrill bestowed money to support the local clergy at Damariscotta and left an annual donation "to have masses said for the repose of the souls of my two dear deceased wives....[as well as] my own."[48] Similarly his friend John Magner, a prominent Catholic merchant in Boston, left a significant share of his estate to the church, both in New England and in Ireland. His will, probated in Boston in 1816, serves as a stunning example of the personal and spiritual ties that bound early immigrants with the homeland.

Magner, born in Cappoquin, County Waterford, first


travelled to Boston in 1770, where he established himself as a smith and farrier. Over the years he expanded his business networks to include a store and warehouse on Oliver's dock and property in Lendall's row, which he rented to Irish immigrants. At the time of his death his estate was valued at $24,234 - a sizeable sum for the time. ⁴⁹

Since Magner was not survived by immediate family, he directed that his estate be divided between church and friends. He bequeathed money to Bishop Cheverus and Father Matignon, left his pew in Holy Cross Cathedral to the church, and reserved a privilege in his tomb at the Granary burial ground for the internment of the Catholic clergy (this being several years before the opening of a Catholic cemetery in Boston). He also stipulated that gold plate and money be sent to a far-flung network of gentleman - a gesture that most likely identifies the route of mercantile contacts he maintained throughout the Atlantic world. These included merchants and landlords in Waterford as well as "my kinsman Michael Tobin of Halifax." During the Federal period the Tobins were one of the preeminent Irish merchant families in the Maritimes. ⁵⁰

Finally, Magner specified that half of his estate be

⁴⁹ Suffolk County Courthouse, Boston, Registry of Probate, Docket # 24838. On Magner also see Report, Record Commissioners of Boston Vol. XXV, pg. 129; XXVI, pg. 240; and XXVII, pg. 48.

⁵⁰ Information on the Tobins was communicated by Kevin Whelan, a Newman Fellow at University College, Dublin.
distributed among the parishes of Lismore, Cappoquin, and Modelligo in his native Waterford. He suggested that the money be invested, and the interest be annually appropriated for "the schooling of orphan children and the comfort and support of the poor of each of said Parishes." An extensive inventory was also taken of clothes and religious books to be sent to Ireland. This included jackets, vests, petticoats, gold crosses and ornaments, and "The Old Gentleman's hair as he wore it." In addition several Bibles were sent, one of them identified as an "Irish bible", most likely printed in the vernacular. As late as 1940 the Lismore parish records show that funds were still distributed from the "Magner Charity", a legacy that speaks of the Irish immigrant's attachment to homeland and native church.\(^1\)

Back in Maine, work on St. Patrick's church began on September 17, 1807, under the design and direction of Nicholas Codd, an Irish-born housewright and member of the congregation. Several years earlier Codd had been commissioned to build the mansion houses of Kavanagh and Cottril, still considered among the most elegant examples of Federal period architecture in mid-Maine. The new church followed on Codd's earlier standards.\(^2\) It was built of red


\(^2\) Information on St. Patricks was drawn from a variety of sources including contemporary letters, architectural studies and articles. See in particular the records of the Historic American Buildings Survey, Me-84 (microfilm) Maine.
brick fired locally in Nobleborough and hauled by oxen across frozen Damariscotta Lake in the winter of 1807. Its rich earth tones and texture complimented well the surrounding pasture and woodland (figure 5.1). The interior was finely crafted with plastered ceilings, carved wood molding, and arched windows flanking each side of the nave. To the rear was a small choir loft and gallery, where one can still imagine hearing the singing and plain chant that accompanied the Sunday service. Upon the church's completion Jean Cheverus wrote an enthusiastic letter to Bishop Carroll describing this latest addition to the American diocese, one that had the distinction of being only the second parish church built in New England:

The church is built of bricks, 50 feet in length, and 25 feet in breadth. The height inside, from the floor to the highest part of the arched ceiling 30 ft. five arched windows 15 ft. on each side. Each window has in breadth four panes of glass 11 by 15. The altar, Sanctuary, etc are very neatly finished. There is a small gallery over the door, with a semi-circular window. It is on the whole, a very neat and elegant little chapel. 

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Rev. Jean Cheverus to Bishop John Carroll, 30 July, 1808, Lord/Sexton files, AAB. In 1808 there were four Catholic churches in New England: the two parish churches at Boston and Newcastle, and two Indian mission churches at Oldtown on the Penobscot and at Pleasant Point near Eastport, Maine.
5.1 St. Patrick's Church, Damariscotta Mills
The new church, named St. Patrick’s, was consecrated by Father de Cheverus on July 30, 1803. He chose his sermon that day from the 28th Psalm, appropriately titled "I have loved O Lord the beauty of Thy house, and the place where Thy glory dwelleth." Looking out from the pulpit Cheverus saw a "numerous and respectable" assembly, one that included many of the Irish families he had visited throughout his travels in Maine. The congregation sat on oak plank benches, the women and children on the right and the men on the left - much in the same seating pattern that characterized Irish chapels in the homeland. Indeed the Irish antecedents of this assembly were much in evidence that day, from the harps that stood out in carved relief over the sacristy doors, to the name St. Patrick’s, which Cheverus noted "seems to gratify our friends here." He added that "I like it myself because it proclaims that our church here is the work of Irish piety."

What Cheverus failed to emphasize was that St. Patrick’s was also in large part the work of Irish laymen. Lay trustees and committees elected by the congregation were the

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54 This bi-lateral seating arrangement in St. Patrick’s distinguished it from Congregational churches in New England where seating largely followed a front to rear pattern, and was selected by social status and wealth. The Irish seating division of men on the left and women on the right still continues in country areas of south Kilkenny such as Inistioge and Mooncoin.

55 Rev. Jean Cheverus to Bishop John Carroll, 10 July, 1808, Lord/Sexton files, AAB.
motive force behind the new church - raising funds, overseeing construction and making decisions concerning parish government (decisions made in lieu of a resident clergyman). This arrangement was not unusual in early American Catholic churches, particularly those with immigrant congregations. As church historian Jay P. Dolan argues, this local grass roots approach to church government was a Catholic adaptation of the republican ethos newcomers encountered in Revolutionary America, and the "congregational" style they witnessed in neighboring Protestant churches:

Two major tendencies set the [Catholic] congregational parish apart from the traditional European parish: an emphasis on a democratic model of authority, rather than a hierarchical model, and an emphasis on local autonomy, in which the relationship to authority beyond the local level was poorly defined and only minimally actualized. Clearly such a model of parish was characteristic of American Protestant denominations, and those Catholics opposed to the lay-trustee system did not fail to point this out. But theirs was a minority voice during the Republican period of American Catholicism. 56

Jean Cheverus, who was named the first Bishop of Boston in 1808, supported this congregational approach to parish building. Not that he had any choice. With an acute shortage of priests in early New England, new Catholic communities by necessity had to assume not only the pioneer tasks of buying land and building churches but also the more spiritual

responsibilities of leading the society in prayer and teaching children their catechism. In addressing an early congregation of Catholics in Hartford, Connecticut, Cheverus suggested "You will do well to procure a room and meet every Sunday to perform together your devotions. Let one who reads well and has a clear voice, read the prayers of the mass, a sermon, or some instructions out of a Catholic book..." This style of Catholicism -based on lay participation and direction - continued well into the 1820's in much of the northeast.

As Catholic communities grew in early America some lay trustees even attempted to gain power over recruiting and appointing resident priests. While church authorities such as Archbishop Carroll sought to keep control over priestly appointment, wealthy patrons such as Kavanagh and Cottril often played an important role in these decisions, offering salaries and tangible encouragements to pastoral candidates. In a letter to Carroll in 1808, shortly after the dedication of St. Patrick's church, Jean Cheverus revealed the lengths that lay gentlemen such as Kavanagh would go to secure a full-time pastor:

One thing is wanting to give solidity to this new establishment. A zealous pastor who should reside here constantly.... Mr Kavanagh tells me that the new clergyman will have board and lodging in his family and also have a horse at his disposal. He

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57 Dolan, The American Catholic Experience, pg. 165.
58 Ibid.
will also ensure him 200 dils per annum, part of
which will be paid by the congregation. Clothing
will be the only expense a priest will be at this
place. Washing, mending etc., all will be done for
him. You know the amiable family here. A Priest
is perfectly at home, has a large and handsome
chamber and is sure to be waited upon with
pleasure, and to have at his orders whatever is in
the house. 55

Yet despite the enticements of Kavanagh and the prayers
of St. Patrick's congregation, their pleas for a resident
pastor went unanswered for nearly a decade. The primary
reason was the drastic shortage of priests in the New World.
Emigrant priests from France and Ireland were insufficient to
meet the needs of a growing diocese, and attempts to recruit
a native American priesthood developed slowly despite the
establishment of a national seminary in Baltimore in 1811. It
was not until 1818 that Newcastle was assigned its first
resident pastor, Father Dennis Ryan.

Ryan came from a prosperous farming family in
Bramblestown, County Kilkenny. Like many younger sons of the
Catholic middle class in Ireland, Ryan studied for the
priesthood, entering St. Patrick's Seminary in Carlow in 1811,
where "he received the tonsure." 60 For reasons unknown Ryan

55 Rev. Jean Cheverus to bishop John Carroll, 30 July,
1808, Lord/Sexton files, AAB.

60 On Dennis Ryan's background see Thomas F. and Catherine
Reilly Peckenham, "St. Dennis, 1833-1983," pp. 3-4, manuscript
available at St. Dennis Church, North Whitefield, Maine. Also
see the records of Carlow College which identify Ryan as an
extern (living outside the Seminary) and studying philosophy
between 1808 and 1811, Knockbeg Centenary Book (1948), pg. 50.
left the seminary and took ship to Canada during the War of 1812. His Quebec bound vessel was captured enroute by an American privateer and he soon found himself in Boston where he sought refuge at the rectory of Jean Cheverus. At a time when prospective priests were at a premium, Ryan's arrival in Boston was highly encouraging. Cheverus wrote to John Carroll in 1815:

He has been three months with us, he continues to study divinity, catechises, attends us when we administer the sacraments, etc. He is of mild manners and appears sincerely pious. I have written to Kilkenny for an exeat + if I receive it accompanied with proper testimonies in his favour, after some time I will ordain him.  

In 1817 Dennis Ryan became the first priest ordained in New England. A year later he was assigned to St. Patrick's in Newcastle, both because of his Irish background and his expressed interest in working with immigrants from the homeland. During his first year in Maine the young priest lived with the Kavanaghs and ministered to the needs of a growing congregation. He was described a "doing very well, being loved and respected by all."

The Ryans of Bramblestown appear frequently in the Woodstock estate papers. In 1785, John Ryan, most likely the father of Dennis, leased 185 acres in the townland - a significant holding for the period. In 1816 the family still controlled a sizeable portion. See "List of Tenants, Bramblestown 1785," Fownes Papers, NLI; and Estate rentals for Woodstock, 1816-1831, in the possession of Eddie Cody, Inistioge, County Kilkenny.

Bishop Jean Cheverus to Archbishop John Carroll, 22 May, 1815, Lord/Sexton files, AAB.
Besides his pastoral duties in Newcastle, Father Ryan continued the missionary circuit established by Cheverus - travelling to outlying Catholic families and nurturing new "Catholic Societies" in Whitefield, Hallowell, and Gardiner. A parish census taken in 1821 revealed that Ryan's flock numbered one hundred and eight families scattered throughout Lincoln and Kennebec counties. Surnames indicate that most of them were of Irish origin, families who tended to cluster in seacoast communities such as Bristol and Newcastle, or along the farming frontier of the Sheepscot valley. Yet despite their broad dispersal this was a congregation linked by a variety of networks: work, ethnic affiliation, homeland connections, and New World experiences.

One source that helps to highlight these networks in close detail are surviving parish registers for St. Patrick's, which identify marriage witnesses and the selection of

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Samuel Bishop to Edward Kavanagh, 19 February, 1821, Kavanagh collection, PDA. In this letter, Samuel Bishop inquired of Kavanagh the number of Catholic families living in his locality - information that would be relayed to Jonathan Greenleaf for use in his upcoming book Sketches of the Ecclesiastical History of the State of Maine, published in 1821. Along the margins of the letter Kavanagh made a list of 108 families, identifying the surname of each head of household, and the numbers of family members. By comparing this list with baptismal records for the period we find the Kavanagh missed, or forgot to record, a number of Catholic families in the region. Those living in Gardiner, Maine, for example, are not recorded - parishioners such as Michael Burns and Martin Esmond, a prominent lawyer and patron of the church. Likewise, several settlers in the backcountry such as John McDonnell of Jefferson and the Sheas of Pittston elude Kavanagh's list. The number of Catholic families in 1821, therefore, most likely stands at 120 or more.
godparents for the congregation. Between 1798 and 1822, 524 baptisms took place in the parish, from which a number of important patterns can be discerned. An attachment to homeland identity, for one, was often maintained in Lincoln County through the selection of a godparent from one's home parish or locale. Early immigrants from Kilkenny, for example, tended to choose other Kilkenny families as sponsors, reflecting Irish neighborhood connections and possible kinship ties (table 5.2). Andrew Shortall, a Wiscasset housewright who hailed from the Nore valley, chose each of his five children's godparents from among members of the Madigan and Cottril families - not surprising given that they were his Old World neighbors in Thomastown, County Kilkenny. Similar networks characterized the experience of immigrants from Tipperary, particularly the Hanleys. They chose godparents from a close-knit pool of neighbors and relations, and even recruited marriage partners from among immigrant cousins recently arrived in Lincoln County. In 1817, for example, John Hanley of Bristol, Maine, married his "cousin" Sally

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63 See entries for Andrew Shortall in Baptismal and Marriage register for St. Patrick's, Newcastle, PDA. Shortall emigrated aboard Kavanagh and Cottril's brig "Atlantic" in 1804, accompanied by other natives of Thomastown, county Kilkenny, including Walter Madigan and his wife Catherine Cottril. See passenger list in NEHRG (1908) Vol. LXII, pg. 172. Besides Shortall and Madigan, homeland networks influenced the sponsors of other Irish folk from Lincoln County such as Michael Joyce, a cooper from Inistioge, County Kilkenny. Godfathers to his children included Michael Ryan, Richard Powers, and Patrick Doyle - all natives of Kilkenny (and possibly Inistioge).
Hanley, a new immigrant from the town of Nenagh, County Tipperary. The following year, Sally's brother Patrick married his American cousin Bridget Hanley and settled as a carpenter on the Bristol Peninsula.

Table 5.2
Selection of Sponsors, Lincoln Irish: by County of Origin, 1798-1823

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's Origin</th>
<th>Origin of Godfather</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kilkenny</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wexford</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tipperary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: St. Mary's/ St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Register PDA; Naturalization Petitions, NAW.

Close networks of marriage and sponsorship also characterized Irish folk travelling to Maine from Newfoundland. In 1798, for example, the ship Peggy put in at Wiscasset carrying eight Irish fishermen from Trepassey on Newfoundland's rugged Avalon Peninsula. In time all of these

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54 See notes and genealogy on the Hanley family compiled by Paul Hanley Furfey, Skidompha Public Library, Damariscotta, Maine. Besides local and county networks, one also notices a distinct tendency among immigrants to choose sponsors from their home regions. Immigrants from the southeastern counties of Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford and Tipperary overwhelmingly chose godfathers from the southeast - 78% of the time, as revealed in Table 5.1. This may reflect continuing ties with the region or simply be a result of the high percentage of southeastern immigrants who settled in mid-Maine during the early national period.

55 I did not include godmothers in Table 5.1 because in many instances I did not know the county in Ireland they originated. Naturalization petitions, for example, only give information for immigrant men.
outmigrants settled upcountry in Whitefield, Maine, where they turned to farming, most likely their occupational experience in the homeland. During the early years of the nineteenth century they formed a visible "colony" of kin and neighbors along the Sheepscot river and maintained their Newfoundland connections by acting as witnesses at each other's marriages and as godparents for their children. Of 113 sponsors and witnesses identified for these immigrants in the parish records, at least 46, or forty percent, had Newfoundland origins. This almost tribal experience continued into the second generation and only dissipated as the Sheepscot country experienced a rapid increase of Irish immigrants during the 1820's (drawn from a wide variety of Irish origins).

One of the most striking connections discovered in the parish records were links among members of the Irish elite in

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The total number of outmigrants known to have come by way of Newfoundland stands at 18, roughly 7% of the Irish community in Lincoln county. Most likely there are more whose migratory experiences have remained hidden. The Newfoundland Irish in Whitefield included two John Molloys (perhaps unrelated), Edmund Finn and his brother James Finn, John Breen, Walter Power, and Peter Kavanagh. For background on their journey from Newfoundland and their New World experiences see Thomas and Catherine Peckenham, "St. Dennis, 1833-1983," pp. 1-2; and naturalization petitions, Record Group 85, Box 480, NAW. It is interesting to note that several of the outmigrants - John Molloy, Peter Kavanagh and Edward Finn named James Kavanagh as godparent or witness at their marriage. While only circumstantial evidence this may suggest that Kavanagh had earlier ties to Newfoundland. Indeed, there exists a persistent tradition among the Kavanagh family that James first ventured to Newfoundland before coming to Maine. See William Lucey, "Two Irish Merchants of New England." The New England Quarterly, Vol. XIV, no.4 (Dec., 1941), pg. 633.
Lincoln County, particularly those involved in the maritime trade (Table 5.3). Merchants such as James Kavanagh, Matthew Cottrill, Richard Meagher, and Roger Hanley often appeared as godfathers to each other's children, reflecting both close ties of partnership as well as a sensitivity to status. Merchants also frequently stood as sponsors for the offspring of sea captains working the trans-Atlantic and West Indian trade. Between 1798 and 1812, timber traders acted as sponsors of ship captains on 21 occasions. Matthew Cottrill, for example, stood for the children of master mariners Robert Askins and John Madigan, and witnessed the marriage of Captain James Smithwick - all of whom mastered company ships bound for Ireland and Liverpool. Cottrill's daughters in turn married sea captains Arad Hazeltine and Samuel Glidden - ensuring the survival and continuity of the firm into the next generation. From these and other examples a picture emerges of a cohesive maritime community strengthened and reinforced over time by strategic patterns of sponsorship and marriage alliance.

67 Data from St. Patrick's parish registers reveals that merchants served as sponsors for sea captains 21 times, merchants for merchants 18 times. For comparison with another Catholic maritime community see John Mannion, "The Maritime Trade of Waterford in the Eighteenth Century," in Smyth and Whelan, Common Ground, pg. 223.

68 Parish registers, St. Patrick's Church, Newcastle, PDA.
Table 5.2
Godparent Selection among the Irish Maritime Community: By occupational category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Father's Occupation</th>
<th>Sponsor's Occupation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Merchant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Captain</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Parish Records, St. Mary's Congregation, St. Patrick's, PDA.

While links of occupation, homeland, and kinship characterized the experience of some Irish-Catholics in Lincoln County, others in Dennis Ryan's early congregation had few visible connections. Many had emigrated as single males or members of unrelated nuclear families. For the most part they came from townlands and farmsteads scattered throughout the southeast of Ireland and most likely knew nothing of each other before settling in Lincoln County. They were simply near neighbors in Maine who shared a common ethnic heritage and religious experience.

One pattern in the record, however, significantly came to characterize these Irish folk. Baptisms recorded by Father Ryan (which noted the towns of each initiate) reveal that an increasing number of Catholics settled in the backcountry, particularly in the Sheepscot valley. This trend signifies an important shift in Irish migration into mid-Maine during the early decades of the nineteenth century. Previously, the center of Irish-Catholic settlement had been along the Damariscotta, as evidenced by ethnic enclaves at Bristol and
Newcastle and the emergence of Irish merchant firms such as Kavanagh and Cottrill. By 1820 this pattern was rapidly changing. New Irish emigrants, along with second generation Irish families, were now moving upcountry—attracted by available land and opportunity in Whitefield, Malta, and Jefferson. This movement is best illustrated in the 1821 parish census, where out of one hundred and eight Catholic families, fifty-five, or just over fifty percent, were settled in backcountry communities (Figure 4.2). The number was increasing every day. Given this trend, Dennis Ryan made the radical decision in 1819 to abandon the comfortable confines of Damariscotta Mills and locate his parish seat in the relatively primitive conditions of North Whitefield, ten miles north of St. Patrick's church. Although he continued to celebrate mass at the Mills every fortnight, increasingly his attention was devoted to the upcountry Irish who by 1825 formed a sizable majority of his congregation. In time he constructed a new church from rough-hewn timber, one that overlooked the Sheepscot valley and his growing flock. He modestly called it St. Dennis!

Dennis Ryan's migration to the Sheepscot is important in our study of the Maine Irish. On the one hand it parallels an ongoing demographic trend in Lincoln County, one that saw waves of Irish newcomers settling in the interior, away

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65 I distinguished between backcountry and frontcountry towns by following the lead of Alan Taylor in Liberty Men and Great Proprietors, pg. 27.
DISTRIBUTION OF IRISH - CATHOLICS:
ST. PATRICK'S PARISH, 1821

Source: Samuel Bishop to Edward
Kenmare, 19 Feb., 1821, Kenmare
Collection, Portland Diocesan Archives

Figure 5.2
from the influence of the established elite such as Kavanagh and Cottrill. During this time several farming communities took on a decidedly ethnic character. This was particularly true of North Whitefield, where scores of Irish families clustered about St. Dennis church and established themselves in agricultural occupations not dissimilar to those they had known in the homeland. This sense of identity and continuity suggests a second motive which may have prompted Ryan to move his parish seat into the Sheepscot. By moving to the backcountry he may have been following a distinctive Irish culture taking root - a fresh beginning that was manifested in Irish family ties, farming traditions, and religious identity. Unlike the older coastal communities where Irish mercantile and artisan families were tied to the predominant rhythms of trade and commerce (as well as absorbing a significant degree of assimilation), the Irish farming communities along the Sheepscot presented a more insulated and socially conservative environment where Irish-Catholic life could grow and prosper. Ryan undoubtedly understood this. This persistent identity is today perhaps most visible in the churchyard next to St. Dennis church in Whitefield. Its headstones proudly look back to the specific origins of these backcountry Irish: St. Mullins, County Carlow; Lismore, County Waterford; and Dromore, County Tyrone to name a few. Let us visit these settlers in closer detail to explore their farms, families, and religious traditions.
CHAPTER VI

THE FARMERS OF NORTH WHITEFIELD

Among the stones in the old burying ground in North Whitefield is a monument to Miles Gallagher who died in 1834. Carved in the urn and willow motif common to country churchyards of the period, it stands overlooking the Sheepscoot valley, a fertile region of farms and pine woods. Like most of his neighbors buried around him, Gallagher was a farmer, working one hundred acres on the Eastern River at the time he died. And like most of these neighbors Gallagher was Irish-Catholic, an ethnic identity proudly engraved on his tombstone. Crowned with the words "in excelsis deo" his epitaph tells us that "He was a native of County Tyrone and the Parish of Dromore."

Historians might have difficulty interpreting the importance of Gallagher's tombstone. The Irish origins of this early Maine farmer and the setting of a Catholic churchyard in rural New England do not fit neatly into our conceptions of ethnic America or the Irish. While volumes have been written on the urban experiences of Irish immigrants and their adaptive response to American cities, only a handful of studies (all of them in Canada) have touched upon Irish
settlements in rural farming communities. This chapter - which investigates the family farms, community life, and religious identity of these rural Irish - will add to the growing evidence of Irish rural experience in America. The fact that most of the Irish continued traditional occupations along the Sheepscot makes Whitefield an ideal laboratory to study the nature of cultural transfer and adaptation. Here we can better understand the interplay between the cultural baggage the Irish brought to early America and the transforming effects of the new social and physical environment they encountered.

North Whitefield, originally known as Ballstown, was located fifteen miles north of Damariscotta Mills, in the heart of the Sheepscot backcountry. A landscape of heavily forested hillsides, river meadows and marshy lowlands greeted the first Irish who journeyed up the Sheepscot during the early nineteenth century. Whitefield at that time was still relatively isolated with roads being little more than stump-strewn paths. One traveller described a journey through the backcountry as riding "through a wilderness of swamps without

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any bridges." Even as late as 1827 Bishop Benedict Fenwick of Boston, on one of his surveys of the parish, made note of the untamed character of Whitefield:

The Country around can scarcely yet be said to be settled - the population is thin and scattered. Here and there a farmhouse may be seen surrounded by forests of pines with just sufficient of cleared land to enable the proprietors to live. A few years back and the whole country thereabouts was a wilderness.¹

Indeed this wilderness must have deeply impressed the Irish upon coming to North Whitefield. Unlike the domesticated open-field landscape of their homeland, here they were surrounded by great stands of oak, maple, birch and pine. This new environment presented challenges far beyond the experience of most immigrants. For one it involved a slow, ongoing process of transforming the landscape: cutting and clearing the forest, building houses, barns and fences, and stocking vast supplies of firewood to see them through the long winters of northern New England. Their new home also entailed adjusting to new neighbors. Upon their arrival along the Sheepscot the Irish came into close contact with Yankee farmers, many of whom had migrated themselves from the overpopulated towns of southern New England. Indeed, North Whitefield was a mixed community during the first half of the nineteenth century; approximately three quarters Yankee, and

¹ Benedict Fenwick, Memoranda of the Diocese of Boston, Vol I, pg. 48. Manuscript held by the Archives of the Archdioces of Boston, Brighton, Massachusetts.
one quarter Irish. Their process of interaction, adaptation, and compromise put a distinctive stamp on this upcountry region, one that continues to this day.

The Irish began arriving along the Sheepscot in 1800, initiating a flow of migration that continued into the 1840's. During this period ninety six immigrants settled in North Whitefield with additional families taking up farms in the surrounding communities of Pittston, Jefferson, and Windsor. The first Irish in North Whitefield were outmigrants from Newfoundland, fishermen and their families who landed at Wiscasset in 1798. Attracted by land in the backcountry, they settled originally as squatters, carving out farmsteads along the western branch of the Sheepscot. These included such pioneer families as John Breen, James and Edward Finn, and the Molloys; all of whom traced their origins to county Wexford. As revealed in early town records, they quickly assimilated themselves into the rhythms of the new community: acquiring property, establishing farms, and holding the minor offices of hogreeve, fenceviewer, and surveyor of highways. By the time Whitefield formally petitioned the Massachusetts government for incorporation in 1811, one could find twelve Irish immigrants among its petitioners.³

During the next decade the pace of Irish settlement

³ Whitefield town records, book one (1781-1809) and book two (1809-1842) in the possession of Linwood Lowden, North Whitefield, Maine. Also see Lowden, History of North Whitefield, pp. 123-126.
increased dramatically in Whitefield. New immigrants moved into the areas of Kyes Corner, Hunts Meadow and the old "Catholic" district, forming a visible majority in the northwest corner of the town. Prompted by the growing number of Irish in the backcountry, many of whom bypassed the older Catholic enclave at Damariscotta Mills, Father Dennis Ryan left the comfortable confines of St. Patrick's in 1819 for the rigors of life on the Sheepscot. With ten acres of land donated by farmer James Keating he began work on a new church that would serve his Irish flock.

Dedicated by Jean Cheverus in 1822, the church of St. Dennis was a simple wood-frame structure built in the vernacular style common to country churches in early Maine. Located high on a hill overlooking the Sheepscot valley, it served as the geographical focus of the Irish community in Whitefield, and attracted new Catholic settlers to the town - many of whom settled within earshot of its church bell. Indeed, early town surveys reveal that St. Dennis was the dominant nodal point on the landscape of Whitefield, with Irish farmsteads clustered tightly around its orbit (Figure 6.1). By contrast, the Yankee population converged about the Baptist church and economic center located at Kings Mills to the south. In essence, then, one finds a marked degree of physical and cultural segregation in Whitefield, as measured by the location of church sites. This clustering enabled the Irish to maintain their ethnic identity to a certain degree.
IRISH AND NEW ENGLAND HOUSEHOLDS:
WHITEFIELD, ME. CA. 1830

Figure 6.1
- = YANKEE PROPERTY
* = IRISH PROPERTY
Source: Foote's/Coody Plan, LCRD
(Ca. 1830-1840) —
depicting property lines
and occupiers

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and allowed new immigrants a cushion to adjust to a new environment.¹

Visiting the Sheepscot valley in 1827, Benjamin Fenwick, the newly appointed Bishop of Boston, captured something of the impression St. Dennis must have made upon new arrivals:

The Church in Whitefield is a frame Building finished in the usual style of such buildings in country places. It is of sufficient size to contain a pretty numerous congregation. Situated on a hill in front of the main road it commands an extensive prospect; and painted white is also to be seen from a great distance.²

One senses in Fenwick's words the important role that St. Dennis church played in the community. Besides being the dominant structure on the rural landscape, visible for miles, it was also the dominant institution in Irish lives on the frontier, a beacon of identity that extended throughout the Sheepscot valley. Each Sunday the church attracted parishioners from a wide area surrounding Whitefield: artisans and shopkeepers from the Kennebec river towns of Gardiner and Hallowell; farmers from the nearby communities of Jefferson and Pittston; even those from distant backcountry settlements.


such as Hope and Appleton. Along with their brethren in Whitefield, these Irish gathered at St. Dennis not only to attend devotional services, but also to socialize, to attend civic meetings and to catch up on local news. It was an important way that they could share the common religious and ethnic ties that bound them, as well as maintain close ties of kinship and family.

The immigrant church also filled an immediate need for community leadership, namely in the person of Dennis Ryan, the pastor. Besides tending to the spiritual needs of his flock along the Sheepscot, Ryan took the lead in temporal matters as well. Over the years he built a successful career as a farmer, acquiring 160 acres in Whitefield on which he planted corn and raised livestock. Ryan also operated a lucrative mill complex along the Sheepscot river which included a gristmill and sawmill, valued at $450 in 1823. As one of the few sawmills in the northern limits of the town, it occupied an important place in the lives of the Catholic community. Lumber brought to Ryan's mill provided Irish farmers with a ready source of cash and credit, and enabled them to see their way through the difficult first years of settlement.

Ryan's enterprise, however, may not have been so popular with his superiors in Boston. There are hints in the diary of

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6 See LCRD 120:186, 126:240.

Benedict Fenwick that he was not entirely pleased with the time Ryan spent at outside commitments. On one of his visits of Lincoln county in 1827, the Bishop was "dissappointed at not finding the above Rev'd Gentleman [Ryan, who was attending to business] at Damariscotta upon my arrival." On the following day, as Fenwick visited the church in Whitefield, Ryan on several occasions absented himself to go "on business with his brother." The Bishop later complained that he "again left me to myself and took a walk to his farm in the neighborhood.";

While Fenwick may have been impatient with the priest's secular responsibilities, they should be understood in terms of Ryan's Irish background. In the homeland the priesthood was seen as much as a worldly profession as a spiritual vocation. Clerics were among the most comfortable of social groups among the Catholic Irish during the early nineteenth century, and were principally recruited from among the middle class. This point is underlined in recent studies which reveal that the big farmer class, prevalent in the fertile parishes of the southeast, contributed a significant number of clergy to a Catholic Church re-emerging from the penal times. These priests, such as Martin Doyle of Graigenamanagh, near

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Inistioge, could be middleman farmers themselves: leasing large tracts of land and holding sway over many sub-tenants. They walked a thin line between being role models of spirituality and exemplars of material success in the local parish. Such was the mentalité that helped draw potential recruits such as Dennis Ryan to the clergy. County Kilkenny, in fact, was one of the hotbeds of clerical recruitment in Ireland, and contributed a disproportionate share of the missionary priests who left for Newfoundland and America during the early nineteenth century. Like Ryan they took ship across the Atlantic carrying the baggage of priestly vocation as well as that of middle class aspirations which they hoped to transplant in the New World.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Ryan's career in the backcountry was his success in local officeholding. In 1826, only a few years after arriving on the Sheepscot, Ryan rose to the office of town selectman and was appointed to head the school committee, a position he held for close to a decade. This came at a time when public officeholding was closed to Catholics in Ireland and was a privilege only...

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10 On the career of Martin Doyle, see Michael O'Hanrahan, "The Tithe War in county Kilkenny," in Whelan and Nolan, Kilkenny: History and Society, pp. 486-487. His power and middle-class identity was such that he evicted a number of tenants in Sallybog, near Inistioge, to effect a strategic marriage alliance between his niece and one of the local gentry.

recently granted them by the Maine Constitution in 1821. Indeed, the fact that Whitefield, 70% Protestant, would appoint a Catholic to its highest office is instructive. It reveals a greater degree of tolerance and diversity than we might expect in the New England backcountry, and speaks for the place that Ryan and his Irish congregation held in the community. Perhaps we should not be too surprised, however. In this backcountry community struggling toward respectability, such energy and enterprise as Ryan's would have been highly valued. Furthermore, his status as religious leader, and his reputation as a learned man, recommended him for responsible town office.  

Despite such worldly pursuits, Ryan was a highly successful pastor. He planted St. Dennis in fertile soil along the Sheepscot, and tended the congregation as it began to flower. And flower it did. In 1821 there were approximately sixty families who regularly attended services in North Whitefield. A decade later this number had jumped tremendously - Bishop Fenwick estimated that the congregation contained "upwards of a thousand souls" spread throughout the Sheepscot valley and the Kennebec river towns of Gardiner and Pittston. This increase was most visible in North Whitefield, where between

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11 Ryan was most likely the best educated man along the Sheepscot during the early nineteenth century. Before coming to Maine he had studied philosophy and church doctrine at St. Patrick's College in Ireland and was privately tutored in Boston under the watchful eye of Francis Matignon, formerly Professor at the University of Lyon.
1810 and 1840 the community witnessed a seven-fold increase in Irish heads of household.

Table 6.1
Irish Households: Whitefield

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Native households</th>
<th>Irish households</th>
<th>Irish Percentage of total households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1811</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>(8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1820</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>(11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>(17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>276</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>(27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>(24%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


What factors led to this increase? Certainly the presence of a Catholic church on the farming frontier (especially one with an Irish pastor) was instrumental in drawing Irish to Whitefield. Furthermore, evidence strongly suggests that Dennis Ryan, along with the church hierarchy in Boston, actively recruited Irish-Catholics to settle on farms along the Sheepscot. In his Memoranda, for example, Bishop Fenwick describes finding several Irish families along the docks in Belfast, Maine whom he advised to set forth for Whitefield, where they would be welcomed by Ryan. The Bishop continued his promotional efforts in Boston, encouraging newly arrived emigrants in the city to take up farm land in Lincoln County. Like many social observers of his time Fenwick was deeply

concerned over the growing plight of Irish immigrants in Boston, many of whom lived a precarious existence in congested tenements. His solution was to encourage immigrants to settle in rural ethnic communities such as North Whitefield where they would be insulated and nurtured by the church and encouraged by the positive example of Irish farmers.\textsuperscript{14}

Indeed, naturalization petitions for North Whitefield suggest that the Bishop's efforts were rewarded. Between 1820 and 1835 at least 23 Irish farmers noted that they had resided in the parish of Boston before taking up land along the Sheepscot.\textsuperscript{15} Luke O'Neil, for example, settled in Dorchester soon after leaving his native Kildare. Working as a laborer for several years he saved enough money to move his family to Whitefield in 1821.\textsuperscript{15} Like that of other new arrivals along the Sheepscot, his initial adjustment was cushioned by the benevolence and patronage of Dennis Ryan. According to local

\textsuperscript{14} This process of settling Irish immigrants in the countryside had many adherents. The first attempts were by Irish Fraternal Organizations who petitioned Congress for lands in the Old Northwest. This was followed by the establishment of religious "colonies" in rural America such as that established by Father Demetrius Gallitzin in Cambria County, Pennsylvania. Bishop Fenwick himself, inspired by the success of North Whitefield, founded an Irish Catholic settlement at Benedicta, Maine in northern Aroostock County. This community is the subject of ongoing research by the author.

\textsuperscript{15} Naturalization petitions, RG 85, Boxes 477-78, 480; NAW.

\textsuperscript{15} On O'Neill see naturalization petitions, Record Group 85, NAW; and LCRD Vol 109, pg. 204.
tradition, Irish newcomers often lived for a time at the church rectory, which was fitted with several rough-hewn "apartments" for new immigrants. Here they found work on Ryan's farm or in the sawmill until they were in a position to establish themselves.¹⁷

Who were these Irish? And what were their origins in the Old World? In North Whitefield there are two sources which allow us to draw preliminary conclusions on origin: declarations of intention among naturalized Irishmen (which often identify a specific place of birth); and tombstone inscriptions found in St. Dennis churchyard. These reveal that the great majority of frontier farmers and many of their wives came from the eastern province of Leinster, particularly the counties of Kilkenny, Wexford, and Kildare. Overall, Leinster contributed 45 immigrants, or 62% of the Irish who settled in Whitefield. The nine counties of Ulster followed with 24% and the province of Munster, which included Cork, 11%. Only two emigrants came from the western province of Connaught, the poorest and most densely populated region in Ireland. Here in the marginal uplands of Galway, Mayo, and Leitrim, the Irish speaking majority were more likely to cling to their traditional lifestyle and sense of community (and

¹⁷ This information comes from a conversation with Linwood Lowden of North Whitefield, November 15, 1991. The original rectory, located on Gorman road east of the church was torn down during the 1970’s.
therefore resist emigration) than were residents of more settled and anglicized regions of the north and east.

Table 6.2
Provincial and County Origins:
Whitefield Irish, 1792-1840

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Number of Immigrants</th>
<th>County %</th>
<th>Provincial %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LEINSTER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlow</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kildare</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kilkenny</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longford</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meath</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Westmeath</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wexford</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wicklow</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ULSTER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cavan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derry</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donegal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fermanagh</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyrone</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>24.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUNSTER</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cork</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limerick</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tipperary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waterford</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONNAUGHT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leitrim</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayo</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VALID CASES</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
<td>100.0 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISSING CASES</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Naturalization Petitions, RG 85, Boxes 477-78, 480, NAW; and Gravestone inscriptions, St. Dennis churchyard, North Whitefield, Maine.

Indeed, the homeland origins of the Sheepscot Irish confirm earlier studies which suggest that pre-famine
emigration was geographically selective.\textsuperscript{18} Migration during the early nineteenth century was concentrated primarily in the north and southeast - prosperous regions characterized by market agriculture, population growth, and social pressure.\textsuperscript{19} Here potential emigrants tended to be more skilled than in other regions, and were accustomed to large-scale mixed farming, improved agricultural technology and a growing market economy. Upon their arrival along the Sheepscot many were able to successfully modify and adapt these experiences to new settings along the Lincoln frontier.

One of those who ventured up the Sheepscot at this time was Michael Shea, a native of St. Mullins, County Carlow. His experiences were representative of newly arrived immigrants in the backcountry. Like many who emigrated from Ireland during the 1820's, Shea was caught between rising expectations and restricted opportunities in the homeland. During the


\textsuperscript{19} David Doyle, for example, points to a significant migration of Catholic-Irish from Leinster prior to the American Revolution. See \textit{Ireland, Irishmen and the American Revolution}, pp. 60. Likewise, Ruth Ann Harris, in her work on the \textit{Boston Pilot}, also notes a sizable Leinster migration prior to 1830. See Ruth Ann Harris "Characteristics of Irish Immigrants in North America derived from the \textit{Boston Pilot} 'Missing Friends' Data, 1831-1850," Working Papers in Irish Studies, Northeastern University, 1988, pg. 11.
Napoleonic wars the economy had boomed in his native southeast with Irish farmers supplying a significant share of foodstuffs to the British. The end of the war, however, brought recession and hardship. Many small farmers who had previously taken out long leases and improved their farmholdings could no longer support a large family or provide land for younger sons. Increasingly, emigration was seen as the only option for aspiring farmers such as Michael Shea, who left in search of property and new beginnings across the Atlantic.

Shea, along with his wife Anastasia and four children, left from the port of Waterford in early May 1822, bound for St. Andrews in New Brunswick. Many emigrants between 1815 and 1840 chose the Canadian route since fares to the Maritimes were less than half the price of passages to America. They sailed aboard timber ships into Quebec, Halifax and St. Johns, and then made their way south into New England, many of them walking the coastal roads passing through Eastport, Belfast, and Portland. Local opportunities, particularly in

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20 Several scholars point to the constriction of economic opportunities after the Napoleonic wars as the principal catalyst behind the waves of emigrants who left Ireland between 1820 and 1840. John Mannion, indeed, calls the small and middling farms of the southeast "nurseries" of potential migrants. On this point see John Mannion and Fidelma Maddock, "Old World Antecedents, New World Adaptations: Inistioge Immigrants in Newfoundland," in Whelan and Nolan, Kilkenny: History and Society, pg. 381; also Kerby Miller, Emigrants and Exiles, Chapter 6.

21 On the Canadian route see William Forbes Adams, Ireland and Irish Emigration to the New World: From 1815 to the Famine (New York: Russell and Russell, 1967), pp. 87-98; and George Potter, To the Golden Door: The Study of the Irish
farming, fishing and shipbuilding, enticed some Irish to remain in northern New England, where small colonies of Irish appeared along the emigration route. Such was the case in Whitefield where naturalization petitions for Irish settlers reveal that close to one-quarter travelled by way of Canada.

TABLE 6.3
Port of Arrival: Whitefield Irish 1798-1840

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Port</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Andrews NB</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halifax NS</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John NB</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastport Maine</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lubec Maine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belfast Maine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wiscasset Maine</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brunswick Maine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boston</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Va.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Valid Cases: 50
Missing Cases 46

Source: Naturalization petitions, Lincoln and Kennebec County Maine, Record Group 85, Boxes 477-478, 480, NAW.

The Sheas themselves followed this "emigrant trail": crossing the Passamaquoddy into Lubec, Maine on August 6, 1822 and travelling "to Whitefield from there." Clearly they had a specific destination in mind. Like other Irish immigrants they were drawn to New World destinations through family

connections: Anastasia Shea's brother, John Lacy, had earlier settled in Windsor, Maine just over the town boundary from Whitefield.

Family connections played an important role in promoting Irish settlement in the backcountry. Many of the Irish chose to follow in the footsteps of kin and neighbors who had earlier settled on the New England frontier. As John Mannion describes it, the dynamics of this migration were simple: "A pathfinder or pioneering family established a base; friends and kin followed through a system of information diffusion and remittances for fares." The most compelling example of this serial migration was that from St. Mullins, the home parish of Michael Shea. Beginning in 1799 and continuing across two generations, at least twelve families - most of them interrelated - settled along the Sheepscot.

The pathfinder in this case was John Lacy, a native of Ballyknockcrumpin, a small townland nestled along the Barrow river. In 1800, at age seventeen, he left Ireland for the shores of Newfoundland where he worked as a fisherman for three seasons. He eventually sailed for Portland, Maine and made his way into the backcountry settlement of Windsor where he acquired one hundred acres along Pinhook Creek. In time

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**Mannion, "Old World Antecedents..." pg. 371.**

**On Lacy see his naturalization petition, Kennebec County, Box 478, NAW.**
he was joined by his brother-in-law Michael Shea, and by Phillip Gaffney, a tenant farmer from Ballyknockcrumpin who, after falling into arrears, moved his family to the Pinhook where he settled alongside the Lacys (Figure 6.2).

Gaffney was a pivotal connection in the migration chain. He had earlier acted as witness to the Shea's wedding in St. Mullins and had close ties with several families along the Barrow. In time he probably encouraged these friends and relations to join him across the Atlantic, most notably the Doyles, an extended clan who settled in North Whitefield and Pittston. They named their new home "Carlow Spring" in memory of their Old World origins. This movement of families from St. Mullins was one of several migration chains that linked specific places in Ireland with Lincoln county. Besides

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24 On Phillip Gaffney and his kinship connections see St. Mullins Parish Register (microfilm) NLI. My understanding of St. Mullins families benefitted greatly from interviews with Andy Ralph in Ballyknockcrumpin, and Davy Corcoran of Drumin. Land leases at the Dublin Registry of Deeds (RD 458-547-297025) indicate that Gaffney, along with Murtagh and Lawrence Doyle held the lease for Ballyknockcrumpin. Rentals for the Kavanagh-Borris Estate further reveal that Gaffney fell into arrears, one factor that may have led him to emigrate. He also worked as the woodranger for the estate - employed to prevent subtenants from felling trees and collecting firewood on wooded portions in the estate (a job that may not have held him in high esteem among his neighbors). Social pressure, therefore, may have contributed to his emigration as well. See Kavanagh Estate Papers, Rental Book 1792 - 1810, NLI.

25 Other localized migration channels came from the Nore Valley, centered at Inistioge and Thomastown; south Tyrone, particularly the parishes of Dromore and Clogher; and county Kildare, the source of 10 families in Whitefield. As suggested in the naturalization petition of James Dowden, born in Kildare in 1793, some may have followed kin and relations to the Sheepscot. Dowden's declaration of intention stated
supporting personal ties of kinship and friendship, these networks helped to create a rich texture of homeland tradition along the Sheepscot, and instilled among the Irish a common sense of ethnic experience and identity.25

Initially, Irish immigrants such as Michael Shea and Phillip Gaffney may have begun as farm laborers or tenant farmers, working for Yankee neighbors or Irishmen already established on the Sheepscot. This "apprenticeship" on the land served them well: it allowed new arrivals to become acquainted with their new environment and absorb the specific farming techniques of upcountry New England. In time, however, the record indicates that the majority of Irish acquired farms of their own - most of them within a three mile radius of St. Dennis church. Tax records in 1826 identify 48 Irish farmholders in North Whitefield, each occupying an average of 71 acres.

As depicted in table 6.4, their holdings compared favorably with farm sizes in the southeast of Ireland. The median holding in the parish of Inistioge in 1829, for example, was between 6 and 15 acres, with forty percent of tenants falling

that he "arrived Boston July 8, 1816 and that his intended place of settlement is Whitefield in the District of Maine."

below 5 acres of land. By contrast, the median holding in Whitefield was between 51 and 75 acres. Implicit in these figures is the fact that immigrant farmers in North Whitefield improved their social position quite dramatically in the New World. This should be understood on several levels. First, while it was all but impossible for Catholic farmers to buy land in Ireland, immigrants in Maine were able to acquire clear title to property. In addition, Old World class distinctions were virtually erased in the Sheepscot backcountry. There were no landlords, head tenants, cottiers or landless laborers. Instead, immigrant families from a variety of social backrounds and occupational experiences blended to form a relatively homogenous and egalitarian community.27

Table 6.4
Size of Farm holdings: Whitefield Maine [Irish only] (1826) and Inistioge, Co. Kilkenny (1829)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acreage</th>
<th>0-5</th>
<th>6-15</th>
<th>16-30</th>
<th>31-50</th>
<th>51-75</th>
<th>76-100</th>
<th>101-150</th>
<th>+ 150</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WHITEFIELD (N=48)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holdings</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>31.2</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INISTIOGE (N=553)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holdings</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>39.1</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Whitefield Tax Valuation, 1826, in the possession of Linwood H. Lowden, Whitefield, Maine; John Mannion and Fidelma Maddock, "Inistioge Immigrants...," in Whelan and Nolan, eds., Kilkenny: History and

27 This echoes the description of Newfoundland immigrants found in Mannion and Maddock, "Old World Antecedents,...," pg. Also see David Doyle, Ireland, Irishmen, and the American Revolution, pg 15.
One of those immigrants who settled in North Whitefield during this time was Peter Kavanagh, a native of Inistioge, and most likely a relation of James Kavanagh the merchant.  

As a pioneering farmer his experience was representative of many of his Irish neighbors. Kavanagh arrived in the backcountry in 1801 and eventually acquired 80 acres along the eastern branch of the Sheepscot river. This farm was relatively the same size as that of his kin in lower Cluen, although it contained fewer improved acres. It was nonetheless free of title and restrictions. During the early nineteenth century the family holding in Cluen was increasingly subdivided among brothers, resulting in a dilution of productivity and a decline of social status. In addition, yearly rent per acre in lower Cluen equalled what Peter Kavanagh paid per acre for permanent possession in Whitefield. Clearly, rural farmers such as Kavanagh managed to enhance their opportunities and prospects through

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James Kavanagh and his wife Sarah acted as witness to Peter's marriage in Whitefield in 1801, and later stood as sponsors for Peter's daughter Catharine.

Kavanagh paid 400 dollars for 92 acres in 1818 - a little over 4 dollars per acre. This compares with the annual rent in Lower Cluen of 1 pound per acre (roughly 4 dollars according to the exchange rate during the early nineteenth century). David Doyle also points to inequity in payments between Ireland and America. In Dublin Ireland, rents per acre averaged 31 shillings in 1776 while in Dublin township of Pennsylvania land cost between 2 and 10 shillings to own.
Soon after arrival, Kavanagh devoted his energies to the process of transforming the landscape: cutting and clearing the forest, making fences around the perimeter of his holding, and building a farmhouse and outbuildings. Progress was slow. In 1826, roughly two decades after initial settlement, Kavanagh had only 15 acres improved and under cultivation. Since his family was still young during this time, he most likely depended upon neighbors and newly arrived immigrants to help him clear the dense cover of pine and oak that stood on his farm. Kavanagh pursued a regimen of mixed farming common to northern New England. He planted corn, field peas, potatoes, barley, and rye, which would be used with corn meal to make "rye and injun", the staple bread on backcountry tables. Kavanagh also devoted several acres to pasture, growing English hay in addition to cutting the meadow grasses that grew naturally along the river. Livestock owned by Kavanagh was typical of backcountry farms. In 1826 he had a yoke of oxen, three cows, three heifers, a calf and a horse. He also owned a herd of 16 sheep, the wool from which would provide the basic material for his family's clothing. Finally in his probate inventory we learn that Peter Kavanagh kept several beehives - the fact that they were valued at all suggests that honey may have been a commercial sideline of the

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Information on the Kavanagh farm is gleaned from Whitefield Tax valuations in 1815, 1826.
Besides farming, Kavanagh doubled as a lumberman, spending much of the winter cutting timber in the forest. With teams of oxen he and most of his neighbors hauled logs and trees to Ryan's mill on the Sheepscot where they were cut into boards, planks and shingles. Lumbering in fact was an important adjunct to farming in Whitefield: it provided Irish farmers with a ready source of cash and credit and enabled them to see their way through the difficult first years of settlement. Indeed, as Alan Taylor argues, backcountry farmers in Maine pursued two complementary economic strategies: alternating between raising crops and livestock for subsistence during the temperate months and producing marketable commodities such as lumber and crafts during the winter.¹¹

Besides lumbering, Irish immigrants, like their New England neighbors along the Sheepscot, pursued a variety of winter occupations. Some doubled as artisans. Thomas Shea worked as a shoemaker; Michael Kavanagh (possibly a relation to Peter) had a blacksmith's shop on his farmstead; and neighbor John Molloy was described as a "stonelayer", most

²² Alan Taylor, Liberty Men and Great Proprietors, pp. 77-78.
likely continuing a skill he brought with him from Ireland. Others worked as mariners on voyages to the West Indies or supplemented their farm production with work as part-time fishermen. Family tradition, for example, suggests that John Breen, one of several outmigrants from Newfoundland, periodically worked as a fisherman out of Wiscasset. He and others may also have tried their hand at salmon fishing—adapting southeastern traditions of cot fishing and stake weirs to the rivers of mid-Maine. Finally, a few of the Whitefield Irish found their way into petty trade and shopkeeping. James Gallagher, for example, operated a country store in North Whitefield, selling a wide range of English and West Indian goods. True to his rural background in south Tyrone, however, he still kept his hand in farming, sharing a herd of cattle and sheep with his neighbor Peter Kavanagh.

Kavanagh's farm was in the "Catholic" district of North Whitefield, located a few rods from St. Dennis church. In the midst of stump-strewn fields and rough pastures stood his farm-house, a small wood framed structure that was a visible departure from homeland building traditions. Houses in Kavanagh's native south Kilkenny were constructed of stone, thatch and slate, a style well suited to climatic conditions.

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3 The 1850 census provides a good picture of occupational structure of Whitefield. Not surprisingly, most were farmers with a smattering of traders and artisans.

4 A bill of sale for stock purchased for the Gallagher store reveals silks, fabrics, earthen ware, tin ware, tobacco and sugar. See Whitefield Town Records, May 19, 1840.
and utilizing available native materials. This form, however, quickly became redundant on the New England frontier with its bountiful supply of wood and its endless potential for building uses. Building styles among the Irish, therefore, largely conformed to examples set by their Yankee neighbors; namely the wood framed vernacular "cape cods" that still dot the landscape of northern New England. This style, and the framing skills that went with it, were then passed on to newly arrived Irish on the frontier.

Evidence does suggest, however, that a few immigrants may have modified traditional styles to suit the new landscape. Kavanagh's neighbor John Field, for example, built his house entirely from stone in the 1840's (Figure 6.3) Indeed, several features of the house followed closely upon standard Irish building techniques; namely its unusually thick walls (up to 3 feet in places); stone lintels over door and windows; and its large recessed window alcoves, large enough for an adult to sit in. While others in Whitefield may have followed this stone-built style, only the Field house has survived. This fact suggests that the vast majority of Irish

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[55] On the Field house see an article appearing in the Kennebec Journal, July 22, 1958. To what extent the interior may have reflected homeland antecedents is debatable. John Mannion in his study of Irish farmers in Maritime Canada has discovered a remarkable persistence in the way Irish immigrants designed their interiors: such as the room plan, the size and location of the kitchen hearth, and the arrangement of furniture. See Mannion, Irish Settlements in Eastern Canada: A Study of Cultural Transfer and Adaptation (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), Chapter 7.
Figure 6.3

John Field House

Whitefield, Maine

Built ca. 1835
built in the wood-frame tradition, similar to their Yankee neighbors.

Initially, many of the Irish lived in log cabins, or "logg camps", often crude structures with few comforts. Throughout the early settlement period these log houses predominated among both Irish and New Englander. In the 1801 tax valuation for Ballstown (soon to become Whitefield) assessor Abram Choate noted that "there is no more than teen [ten] houses that is two stories high, the rest is low houses...and a number of log huts." Indeed, tax records suggest that Peter Kavanagh was living in a log house during the first years of his occupancy along the Sheepscot. While no evidence of this early house survives, something of its appearance can be gleaned from an early land survey done for Irish farmer John Dooley. It shows a small one room house with door and window, within which Dooley raised a family of twelve.\footnote{Whitefield Town Records, October 10, 1801; also see Linwood Lowden, North Whitefield, pg 53.. The fact that many farmholders kept log houses into the nineteenth century may be explained by the fact that they were not taxed.}

In time, Kavanagh built a second house, a more substantial structure located in the middle of his property along the Windsor road. This most likely was a central-chimney vernacular farmhouse with two rooms on the first story.\footnote{John Dooley was most likely the first Irishman to settle in Whitefield. His experience, however, was somewhat rocky. He lived near the bottom of the social ladder and his last appearance in the historical record concerned maintenance for him and his wife Mary in the town poorhouse. See Whitefield Town records, December 8, 1810.}
and two chambers above. By modern standards the interior was modestly furnished. According to Kavanagh's probate inventory it contained two beds and bedsteads, two tables, chairs, a bureau, and kitchen ware. Also indicated were "woolen wheels and cradle," used to spin wool to be made into homespun clothing. This snap-shot, however, taken at the end of Kavanagh's life, does not begin to capture the essence of his household. Years earlier, when visiting "the venerable Mr. Kavanagh", Bishop Benedict Fenwick described "a very noisy family" which included Kavanagh, his wife Mary Murphy and their six children. Father Dennis Ryan also lodged for a time with the family, as did immigrant farm laborers who helped Kavanagh in the fields. As with other early American households one finds a rather fluid definition of "family," one that included close kin, boarders, and hired workers.

A survey of North Whitefield in 1830 reveals that Kavanagh's farmstead was connected to his neighbors by a myriad of paths and roads (Figure 6.5). This neighborhood in turn was held together by a web of personal relationships and kin connections, an invisible "map" that enabled immigrants like Kavanagh to navigate a new life on the Maine frontier. If we could plot such a map for Peter Kavanagh we would start by tracing the connections between Kavanagh and his near neighbors. Church records, for example, link Peter closely to

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My images here have been influenced by the work of Darrett and Anita Rutman in A Place in Time, particularly their chapter on "Family, Friends, and Neighbors".
IRISH FARMERS:
NORTH WHITEFIELD, CA. 1830
John Molloy, James and Edward Finn, and John Breen. They witnessed each other's marriages, acted as sponsors for each other's children, and are even buried closely together in St. Dennis churchyard. Indeed, their backgrounds were intertwined. All were outmigrants from Newfoundland, having earlier worked the cod fisheries at Trepassy on the rugged Avalon peninsula. While Molloy, Breen and the Finns landed in Lincoln County in 1798, Peter Kavanagh sailed instead for Boston where he lived for several years in the old North End.³⁹ Local tradition tells of John Molloy and John Breen walking to Boston in search of friends and returning with Peter Kavanagh who settled with them along the Sheepscot.⁴⁰

In the years that followed Kavanagh extended his personal networks to include other Irish families in Whitefield. He held livestock in common with James Gallagher, and acted as godfather to the children of Phillip Millay, and James Keating. His children further reinforced these local bonds, marrying near-neighbors and long-time acquaintances. Daughter Elizabeth married the son of James Keating, and Mary joined

³⁹ Peter Kavanagh appears in the parish records for Holy Cross Church in Boston - subscribing to the building fund and acquiring a deed to a pew. He dissappears from the Boston record in 1801 - the year he first appears in North Whitefield. See Francis Matignon Account Book, Church of the Holy Cross, Boston (AAB).

⁴⁰ This story appeared in the Lewiston Evening Journal, August 25, 1909. It was on the occasion of Whitefield's centenary and recounted stories concerning its pioneer inhabitants.
hands with John Ryan Jr., who lived in the next farm over from the Kavanaghs. Similarly, sons Peter and James chose their partners from local families. They married Elizabeth and Mary Field, sisters who had emigrated as children from county Kildare and grew up in the stone farmhouse described above.

These ties of family, friendship and common roots must have created natural patterns of neighboring in North Whitefield. One can imagine Kavanagh visiting in-law John Field to discuss the sale of a horse or his wife attending Jane Molloy at the birth of one of her seven children. Life along the Sheepscot, in fact, was characterized by socialization and interdependence. The common experience of adapting to a new environment brought forth cooperative ventures between neighbors and community. The Irish, like their Yankee neighbors, frequently pooled resources and labor such as exchanging a yoke of oxen at planting time, or helping a new immigrant clear a field. Collective work parties were also an important part of frontier life along the Sheepscot. Corn husking, barn raising, and quilting brought Irish neighbors together and enabled them to efficiently complete a task that would be next to impossible alone. As in Ireland these work parties were combined with recreation, usually traditional music, dancing and drinking.¹¹

¹¹ In Inistioge, for example, farmers helped bring in their neighbors hay in autumn. These work parties were usually followed by a dance, the "threshing dance" being one of the important social events of the year.
Besides neighborhood ties and communal work parties, traditional links also extended to the tavern, an important institution in Irish-American life. In fact, one of the best places to view the textures of Irish life in Whitefield was at James Meagher's tavern on the western edge of town. James was the son of Richard Meagher, the local speculator and landowner driven out by squatters in 1806. James eventually returned to lay claim to the land, on which he built a prosperous farm and tavern. Like other taverns in northern New England it served a variety of functions, offering rooms and meals to travellers, and drink, gaming, and conviviality to local patrons. Indeed, his license identified him as "an innholder, victualer [and] retailer of spiritus [sic] liquors of all kinds that are good and wholesome." 42

If we were to visit Meagher's tavern during the 1820's we would have seen assembled there a cross section of the Irish community of the Sheepscot. Their voices would have betrayed a strong regional bias to the southeast: the flowing country accents of south Kilkenny and Wexford, and the rolling "r's" of Waterford. Interspersed in their speech one may also have heard the Irish language transferred to new settings. In fact, more than a few of the Whitefield farmers would have been Irish speakers in the homeland or had come from areas where the vernacular was in transition. Much of Peter

42 See Whitefield town records, September 8, 1823.
Kavanagh's south Kilkenny, for example, was still Irish speaking or bilingual in the early nineteenth century. Indeed, as late as 1839, the barony of Gowran, which encompassed Inistioge, still employed several court interpreters. Newfoundland, as well, preserved much of the Irish language in its isolated harbors and fishing stands. Outmigrants such as Kavanagh, the Finns, and John Breen may have continued to speak Irish in Trepassey and likely carried Irish words, ballads and stories into mid-Maine.

A strong oral culture characterized Irish life at home and abroad. Storytelling, for example, was a fine art among these rural people and each community or farming cluster had at least one individual who could weave traditional tales of ancient heroes and family history. Indeed, those who assembled at Meagher's tavern would not have disappointed us. Here was tanner John Furlong, for example, a native of Enniscorthy, County Wexford. As a boy he lived through the battle of Vinegar Hill - the bloodiest confrontation of the abortive rebellion of 1798. His tales of young "croppy boys" taking on British soldiers with nothing more than pikes, or renegade Catholic priests such as Thomas Clinch, who led his parish into battle wearing vestments and wielding a scimitar,

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43 Mairin nic Eoin, "Irish Language and Literature in County Kilkenny in the Nineteenth Century," in Nolan and Whelan, eds., County Kilkenny: History and Society, pg 471.
must have held his audience in rapt attention. Here also was James Keating, an in-law of Peter Kavanagh. He may have spun the remarkable story surrounding the circumstances of his father emigrating to New England. As a 15 year old boy in Waterford, William Keating was spirited away by a press gang for a British merchant ship bound for North America. Terrorized and ill-treated, he served close to a year before the mast until his liberation by an American privateer off the coast of Nova Scotia in 1775. Not one to be ungrateful, the elder Keating subsequently served in the American Revolution and later settled in Lincoln county where he took up life as a mariner and part-time farmer.

Besides lively tales and spirited libations taverns such as Meagher's were also the scene for auctions, town assemblies and public meetings. During the 1820's, for example, several meetings were held at the tavern to discuss a new school for the Irish district. Innkeeper James Meagher and farmer John Molloy both served on the school committee during that time and presented a petition to the town selectmen in 1822

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45 Keating's story can be found in Lewiston Evening Journal, August 25 1909; and Thomas P. Peckinham, "St. Dennis Church, 1833-1983," pg 2. Details were also gleaned from a conversation with Mrs. Joan Talbot Andereg of Whitefield, Maine, a descendant of William Keating.
requesting that their corner of Whitefield be set off into a separate school district (one that would be largely Irish).\textsuperscript{46}

Educational opportunities were important among the Irish of Whitefield: a legacy from the homeland where rural Catholics had a great respect for "the larnin".\textsuperscript{47} Many of those coming to the Sheepscot most likely received a brief education, usually in informal "hedge schools" taught by travelling schoolmasters. Peter Kavanagh's townland of Cluen, for example, played host to several schoolmasters who held class in a local barn or farmhouse. While some of these teachers were "giddy and incompetent," many were genuine poets and scholars, known for their classical education as well as their command over practical subjects such as mathematics and English grammar. These hedge schools, in fact, prepared many native speaking emigrants for a new world dominated by the English language. As one country parson commented in County Kilkenny, "the English language rapidly advances, for so anxious are the people to speak it in the country, that the mountain farmers who cannot speak English, and who send their children to hedge schools, will scarcely allow them to speak Irish at home."\textsuperscript{48}

Indeed, many of the Irish coming to the Sheepscot were

\textsuperscript{46} Town Selectman's Minutes, 1822.

\textsuperscript{47} Miller, \textit{Emigrants and Exiles}, pg. 77.

\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Ibid.}, pg 77.
literate upon arrival - an estimated 57% according to evidence from signatures on naturalization petitions\(^5\) Meagher, Molloy and other Catholics on the school committee wanted to improve upon this tradition by establishing their own school district, one that would be able to hire its own teachers and determine its own curriculum (one no doubt that suited their own Catholic sensibilities and interests). Although the petition was eventually denied, it did set into motion a drive to establish Catholic schooling in North Whitefield - a vision realized in 1872 when St. Dennis Academy was founded. Along with the establishment of the Catholic church, one can see in education the beginnings of group consciousness among the Irish in Whitefield.

Two questions naturally arise from the example of Peter Kavanagh and his neighbors. First, to what extent were Irish farmers and their community patterns influenced by homeland antecedents; and secondly, how successful were the immigrants in adapting to the agricultural life of northern New England?

\(^{45}\) 30 out of 53 naturalization petitions in Kennebec County Courthouse between 1800 and 1842 show a signature for Whitefield Irish. This concurs with English authorities who noted a high level of literacy in the eastern and southern counties of Ireland (the major source areas of the Whitefield folk). A study in 1801 noted that 52% of adult males and 32% of the women were literate. See James Carty, ed., *Ireland from Grattan's parliament to the Great Famine (1783-1850): A Documentary Record* (Dublin: C.J. Fallon, LTD., 1966) pp. 5-7. Lincoln County Court records have yet to be analyzed for signing data.
Concerning the initial question of ethnic survival, several interpretations have been proposed over the years. An assimilationist interpretation has grown out of the work of Frederick Jackson Turner, who saw the frontier as a great equalizer which Americanized and liberated new emigrants. Ready access to land, and the novel adaptations one had to make, quickly transformed European newcomers into independent American farmers. In contrast to this viewpoint, recent work, particularly David Hackett Fischer's Albion's Seed, has emphasized cultural survival in America. In the backcountry, for example, it is argued that rural isolation and ethnic clustering actually promoted the transfer of Old World identity - most visibly in the settlement of the Scotch-Irish.

My research in North Whitefield reveals that cultural continuity among the Irish was a selective process at best. In terms of material culture and farming most evidence suggests that the Irish adapted quickly to the new physical and economic environment in Lincoln county. They easily embraced a new agriculture based on Indian corn and became

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50 Over the years this interpretation has been modified by the work of Timothy Breen and D.W. Meinig who point to a wide variety of adaptive responses in early America - depending upon the region, ethnic composition, and cultural environment one settled in. See Breen, "Creative Adaptations...," in Green and Pole, British Colonial America, pp. 195-232; and Meinig, The Shaping of America: Atlantic America, 1492-1800, pp. 213-226.

51 David Hackett Fischer, Albion's Seed, 605-782.
acquainted with new methods of farming, such as the use of oxen as draught animals, unknown in the homeland. Local tax records reveal that while they initially lagged behind their Yankee neighbors in terms of improved acreage (a factor explained largely by length of occupancy) they had by 1850 reached a proportionate share of land and crop production.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 6.5</th>
<th>Acreage per farm among Irish and Non-Irish in North Whitefield</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average Improved acreage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>41.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yankee</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>36.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: 1826 Tax valuation for Whitefield; U.S. manuscript Agricultural Census, Whitefield, 1850 (Microfilm, MSA).

Like their Yankee neighbors, the Irish owned a wide array of animals whose products were used at home (Table 6.6). Each farm kept several dairy cows for milk products and a herd of sheep for their wool. One or two swine were also raised on the farm, which contributed to the dinner table.
TABLE 6.6
Average number of animals held per farm by Irish and Non-Irish Farmers: Whitefield, 1850

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Horses</th>
<th>Milk Cows</th>
<th>Oxen</th>
<th>Other Cattle</th>
<th>Sheep</th>
<th>Swine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=64)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yankee</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=198)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, Whitefield, 1850.

Tillage flourished as well on Irish farms, a point not missed by Bishop Fenwick on a visit to Whitefield in 1837. He described going "into the field to see the people mowing and gathering in their hay. The crops of wheat, oats and hay [were] very abundant this year. Was greatly gratified to see the face of the country everywhere improved in cultivation since my last visit." The point to emphasize here is that, contrary to the common picture of the relatively 'poor' and tradition-bound immigrant farmer, agricultural statistics indicate that the Irish farmer matched his Yankee neighbor in terms of farm size, livestock, and crops produced.

This picture of agricultural adaptation and prosperity in Whitefield runs against the grain of conventional wisdom concerning the Irish in America. Scholarship has traditionally stressed the urban nature of the Irish and their inability to adapt to rural conditions. Several writers, in

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52 Bishop Benedict Fenwick, Memoranda, Vol II, pg. 123.
fact, argue that the Irish settled in American cities precisely because they lacked the skills and knowledge that would allow them to cope with the market-oriented farming of the New World. Clearly this is not the case in North Whitefield. The Irish there left from regions that were centers of prosperity and commercialized agriculture. Indeed, if one plots their specific places of origin, the pattern that results follows remarkably on zones of strength identified for Catholic strong farmers during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (figure 6.6). The first was in the commercial tillage and dairying areas of the southeast, a wide swath that ranged from Wexford and south Kilkenny through Tipperary. The second encompassed the Pale, particularly the fine grazing and fattening lands of Kildare, Dublin and Meath. The significance of this pattern is that the Irish of Whitefield were already accustomed to large-scale mixed farming and market economy before they left, an experience

51 See in particular Lawrence McCaffrey, The Irish Diaspora in America, pp. 63-64. This point is continued in recent overviews of emigration such as Roger Daniels, Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life (New York: Harper Collins, 1989). On page 132 Daniels asserts that most Irish were "ill prepared" for American agriculture.

Land Origins:
Lincoln County Irish
that enabled them to successfully modify and adapt to new settings.

While Irish farmers adopted indigenous crops and farming practices in Maine, they also retained certain farming traits, carried over from Ireland, that distinguished them from Yankee farmers in Whitefield. As revealed in Table 6.7 they produced potatoes and oats in far greater abundance than did their neighbors.

**TABLE 6.7**

Mean crop production among Irish and Non-Irish farms: Whitefield, 1850. (Bushelage)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Crop:</th>
<th>Corn</th>
<th>Oats</th>
<th>Wheat</th>
<th>Potatoes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>44.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=64)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yankee</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>25.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>32.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(N=198)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: U.S. Manuscript Agricultural Census, 1850.

In 1850, for example, the Irish produced an average of 43 bushels of oats as compared to 25 bushels among non-Irish. It is my belief that this surplus was based upon cultural preference and ethnic foodways. While both groups raised oats and potatoes as feed for their animals, the Irish traditionally had relied heavily on these crops as foodstuffs as well. In the homeland among middling and small farmers, oats or "stirabout" was a staple of the diet - particularly among the small farmer class. Potatoes, as well, were a dietary preference, one that grew in prominence during the
late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Given only a small space of land they brought a prolific yield and could feed an entire family throughout the year, a feature that recommended them for the Sheepscot (where cool and temperamental summers could hinder corn production). Of course, the New England Yankee also discovered potatoes in time, but it was the Irish, I suggest, who popularized its use in the backcountry as a staple on the dining table.55

In addition to foodways and crop selection, the Irish transferred other traits from the homeland—particularly religion and family identity. An important catalyst for this cultural transmission was the increase of women and families in the migration pool. Prior to 1815, Irish migration was mainly that of young, unattached males—a pattern that is confirmed in early census schedules, marriage records, and naturalization petitions for Lincoln County. With the end of the Napoleonic wars, however, this social composition changed, as a larger proportion of emigrants embarked with wives and children.56 Recent studies have stressed the importance of

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56 Statistics for surviving passenger lists indicate a rising number of women and families during the early nineteenth century see Cormac O'Grada "Across the Briny
family migration between 1815 and 1830, most notably Bruce Elliott's study of chain migration among Tipperary immigrants to Upper Canada. Likewise, Peter Toner has suggested that as many as two thirds of the Irish who landed in St. John's, New Brunswick, (many of whom continued on to New England) came with kin.  

In North Whitefield this influx of nuclear families can be detected in census schedules, church records and genealogical data. Of 96 Irish families who settled along the Sheepscot between 1800 and 1840, 54 - or close to sixty percent - involved households where both spouses were born in Ireland (table 6.8). Of these at least thirty eight are known to have been married in the homeland and had children before crossing the Atlantic. Miles and Mary Gallagher, for example, emigrated in 1819 from Dromore, county Tyrone, along with their five children. Gallagher was one of thousands of farmer-weavers who left Ulster and north Leinster after the decline of the cottage-textile industry. Many of these

Ocean..." in T.M. Devine and David Dickson, eds., Ireland and Scotland, 1600-1850: Parallels and Contrasts in Economic and Social Development (Edinburgh, 1983).


58 The Ordinance Survey in 1821 for Gallagher's native Dromore remarked that families left the parish in "considerable numbers", bound for "New South Wales and
migrants travelled in family groups and left with some capital to begin their new lives.

Table 6.8
Marriage Among the Whitefield Irish, 1801-1850

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married in Ireland</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>42.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married in America</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both spouses Irish-born</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>17.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband Irish-born/Wife</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd generation Irish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband Irish-born/Wife</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native New England</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marriage details unknown</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Marriage records, St. Patrick's and St. Dennis church PDA; Whitefield Vital Statistics, (microfilm reel # MSA; 1850 Federal Census for Whitefield; gravestone inscriptions, St. Dennis churchyard, North Whitefield.\(^5\)

The increasing numbers of ethnic families and Irish-born women in North Whitefield helped to preserve a sense of home and identity. As Hasia Diner has outlined in *Erin's Daughters in America*, Irish emigrant women were significant conductors of culture and tradition in New World communities, and helped

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\(^5\) Besides marriage records and genealogical data I used several other methods to determine families originating in Ireland. This included analyzing the 1850 census for children identified as born in Ireland; and comparing birthdates of children identified in vital statistics with the years of emigration stated in their father's naturalization petitions.
Irish families to accommodate to novel conditions. Their primacy over childrearing, education, and domestic economy meant that traditions, foodways, and religious values were passed down to the next generation.60

One indication of this cultural survival is preserved in naming patterns of Irish-American children born to frontier families in Lincoln county. The names of 363 children born between 1790 and 1840 survive in local records - records that provide a striking contrast to those chosen by their Yankee neighbors. The most popular names among Yankee and Irish children were similar: John, James, Elizabeth and Mary. Here the comparisons end, however. Among the Sheepscot Irish one finds a cultural preference for traditional Hibernian names such as Patrick, Bridget, Hugh, and Bryan. Also in evidence are Old Norman names common to the southeast of Ireland: Winnefred, Anastasia, Johanna and Honora (or Nora) for girls; Miles, Maurice (pronounced Morris) and Laurence for boys. Catholic Saint's names likewise made a distinctive mark among the Irish, names such as Francis, Matthew, Ambrose, Dennis, and Jerome. Notably absent were Old Testament names that remained a definitive part of Maine culture into the early nineteenth century. In short, names were a badge of identity that characterized the Irish along the backcountry and distinguished them from their Yankee neighbors (see Appendix

60 Hasia Diner, Erin's Daughters in America (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 198 ).
Certainly the most distinctive and enduring element of Irish tradition carried into the Sheepscot was religion. Arriving in North Whitefield, new emigrants were greeted by a familiar parish system, one that represented an important link with home. As in the homeland, St Dennis church was the center of village life and identity. It was a religious institution which nurtured the devotions and customs of the old country, and it was a social institution which acted to bring immigrants together for socializing and informal business. The fact that the pastor, Dennis Ryan, was Irish also lessened the feeling of alienation that the immigrant would have encountered upon arriving on the frontier. Indeed, in a new environment that demanded the gradual abandonment of material culture, folk traditions, and language, Catholicism itself became a primary expression of Irish identity along the Sheepscot.\(^1\)

Irish Catholic culture has persisted along the Sheepscot into the present day. This is nowhere better illustrated than in the old burial ground next to St. Dennis church. Here one


\(^2\) Kerby Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, pg 332.
finds over two hundred gravestones, many of which commemorate the parish and townland origins of these Irish farmers. If Peter Kavanagh could walk through the churchyard today he would see old friends: Michael Joyce, a fellow native from the "town of Cluen;" William Rooney, from the shores of Lough Erne in Fermanagh; and John Furlong, a Wexford "croppy boy" who found peace in the Maine backcountry. As their inscriptions suggest, part of their culture was deeply rooted in the Irish past. Their origins were important to these people and worth remembering.

Yet like other immigrants elsewhere, they struggled to adapt to a new world, one that demanded a new set of experiences and adaptive responses. This is clearly illustrated in the headstone of Anastasia Shea whom we followed earlier into North Whitefield. Her gravestone, while remembering homeland origins, also exhibits a distinct process of assimilation that Irish experienced in Lincoln county. Rather than boast the richly ornamented style of her native St. Mullins, one in which the passion and crucifixion take precedent, its urn and willow motif followed the prevalent design found in New England churchyards of the period (Figure 6.8). This suggests both a readiness to modify material culture to suit New World conditions, and also a scarcity of Irish craftsmen who could continue homeland styles. Indeed, the local stonecutter who crafted her headstone was obviously unfamiliar with her birthplace. His carving, most likely
6.6 Headstone, Anastasia Shea (1784-1839).
St. Dennis Churchyard, Whitefield, Me.
copied from a written note supplied by relations, interpreted St. Mullins as "Street Mullins". Peter Kavanagh, who came from the other side of Brandon hill, would have smiled.
EPILOGUE

Several miles from Inistioge, along the Barrow river, one can still find a series of fields called "The Americas." Old-timers preserve the tradition that these fields were once populated by a dense cluster of farming families who "grew like mushrooms on the land." For reasons unknown they left for America during the early nineteenth century, perhaps in search of new beginnings. Today their legacy is remembered only in a obscure yet intriguing place name - one that could easily be reproduced in a thousand locations along the length and breadth of Ireland.¹

Similar to the forgotten folk who left "the Americas," we know very little concerning the experiences of early Irish who left for the New World, particularly those who migrated in the years before 1800. While the movement of Ulster Scots has received considerable attention, students of Irish-America have largely ignored emigration from southern Ireland, assuming that an Irish presence did not exist before 1820, and certainly not in the insulated villages of New England. My study challenges this assumption on several levels. It reveals that Irish of Catholic origin, emigrating first as single males and later as nuclear families, settled northern

¹ My information on "The Americas" come from conversations and field notes of Kieran Campbell, an archaeologist working for the Sites and Monuments Record Office, Dublin. He was surveying and mapping early sites and farm communities in County Kilkenny.

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New England in greater numbers than has been assumed. Indeed, their influence in newly settled areas such as Lincoln County suggests that frontier communities east of the Kennebec experienced more diverse and tolerant beginnings than previously believed. To date no study has attempted to investigate these native Irish in Maine: merchants, mariners, and farmers who played a significant role in the peopling of northern New England. My work provides this important perspective, enabling us to explore the routes they traveled into New England, their individual experiences, and their process of adjustment on the eastern frontier.

An important feature of this dissertation is its comparative focus - balancing the immigrant's experiences in Maine with those they left behind in the homeland. Few scholars have probed the European background. As geographer John Mannion writes concerning the Irish, "Rarely...are immigrants traced to their particular places of origin, the complex circumstances surrounding their decision to leave considered, or their behavior in the New World examined with specific reference to their experience in the Old." The present study, which examines the experiences of migrants to Lincoln County, Maine, accomplishes these goals. It explores

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in detail the Irish antecedents of these voyagers and outlines the catalysts which brought them to America: the emerging timber trade between Maine and Ireland, and the activities of expatriate Irish firms such as James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril.

Besides illuminating the experiences of Irish emigrants to early America, this migration to Maine is doubly important because it forces us to reexamine many of the assumptions and stereotypes that have colored our image of the Irish in America. For example, the scholarship on Irish immigration and settlement has largely focused upon the Famine migration of the late 1840's - a literature that paints the Irish emigrant as overwhelmingly urban, impoverished, and unable to cope with large scale farming techniques in America. While this is possibly a fair judgement for the Famine Irish, we must begin to recognize that Hibernians in early America were often the product of migration patterns and beginnings much different than those of the 1840's. Many came from the anglicized southeast, a region characterized by fertile river valleys, commercial farming and overseas trade. Here it was possible for emigrants to obtain skills and capital unknown to their counterparts of the 1840's - cultural baggage that made them view emigration as a means of opportunity and new beginnings rather than dire necessity. Indeed, the rural communities of Lincoln County reveal that many crossed the
Atlantic with means to establish themselves in agricultural occupations and a few — such as James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril of Damariscotta — made a mark on the social, economic and religious climate of their new world.

As a postscript let us return to the world of Kavanagh and Cottril — a commercial world that was rapidly changing during the second decade of the nineteenth century.

Jefferson's Embargo and the War of 1812 had exacted a fierce toll on the firm of Kavanagh and Cottril. Loss of trade and seizure of cargoes by British and French privateers placed the firm at the brink of financial ruin. Family friends such as Bishop Jean Cheverus spoke of "heavy and repeated losses" during the period. In 1806 the brig Atlantic lost a cargo of molasses and rum after being boarded by an English man of war. A similar fate awaited the Ship Hibernia. Sailing for Jamaica with 260,000 board feet of pine timber it was boarded by a French privateer and towed into Puerto Rico. Her entire cargo was confiscated (at a loss of $40,000) and despite protests to the French government not a penny was ever recovered.¹

A second factor contributed to the decline in fortune of these Irishmen, and in turn the weakening of the Maine-Irish timber trade. This involved the pursuit, on the part of England, of a mercantilist trade policy between the mother country and its dominions in British North America. In particular, Britain actively choreographed the rise of a Canadian timber trade after 1815, importing large shiploads of timber from the Maritime Provinces and initiating a system of preferential tariffs that enabled its success. This policy severely crippled American timber interests, and those merchants who continued in the trade were handicapped by exorbitant duties on the British and Irish end. The writing was on the wall as early as 1806 when a lengthy editorial appeared in the Dublin Evening Post. It spoke of the "advantages to be derived from increasing the trade of [Ireland]...with Canada in preference to that which exists with the United States." In particular, the notice stressed the importance of Canadian timber which "no country in the world can equal...." Most importantly, this timber from the Maritimes was "one hundred percent cheaper than from the

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4 Little has been written on the decline of the New England timber trade with Britain and Ireland, except from a Canadian perspective. For an overview see Graem Wynn, Timber Colony: A Historical Geography of Early Nineteenth Century New Brunswick, especially chapter two.
In 1816 Kavanagh and Cottril took steps to cut their losses and dissolve their partnership. They commissioned a series of land surveys and appraisals of joint property, and divided their timber lands in the backcountry. Yet despite their best intentions, the two partners eventually confronted each other in the Lincoln County courts to decide the distribution of company assets. Each presented his account books as evidence, a record that remains the best single source of information concerning the firm. After several years in the courts a committee of referees recommended that Kavanagh pay Cottril $4778 to balance the accounts. Yet throughout the proceedings, according to Jean Cheverus, the two partners "remained good friends."

In the years that followed James Kavanagh continued in the Atlantic trade, an old habit that forced him further into debt. A series of ill-advised loans, and a shrinking market for New England timber forced him to sell much of his property in the backcountry, and give up valuable mill rights in Damariscotta, which were deeded to Matthew Cottril. After Kavanagh's son John was lost on a voyage to Batavia in the East Indies in 1824, the family turned their back on trade for

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5 Dublin Evening Post, 31 July, 1806.

6 On the dissolution of the partnership of Kavanagh and Cottril see LCRD Vol 93: pp 175-207, and James Kavanagh v. Matthew Cottril, Lincoln County Court of Common Pleas, April 17, 1819 (microfilm reel # 124) MSA.
good. Son James turned to farming in Damariscotta Mills and Edward, after settling his father's affairs, pursued a career in politics, a path that led him to the Maine State House and the United States Congress.

Evidence suggests that Matthew Cottril survived the post-war years in sound financial health. He continued to dabble in the West Indies trade - sending a three masted schooner to Martinique and Guadaloupe in 1816 - but increasingly he built upon his domestic empire, concentrating on merchant trade and shipbuilding (a trade that boomed during the 1820's). Sons-in-law John Madigan and Samuel Glidden eventually took over the company shipyards, which flourished due to increased demand for vessels to explore new trade routes with the Orient. Madigan, reflecting the ascendency of his family, built a fashionable house across from the Kavanagh mansion in Damariscotta Mills. His sons went on to become commanders in the United States Navy and lawyers in the new lands opening up east of the Penobscot.

Matthew Cottril died on April 20, 1828 and was buried under a canopy of oak trees in St. Patrick's churchyard. A memorial, published years later, stated that at the time of his death he was "regarded as the wealthiest man in Maine east

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of Portland". His partner of 25 years, James Kavanagh, died two months later and was interred in the Kavanagh plot only a few yards away. As in life, their final destinies were closely intertwined.

The careers of Kavanagh and Cottril help to uncover a forgotten chapter in Irish-American trade and emigration. While much work has yet to be done on the lives of Irish entrepreneurs in early America, the merchant firm of Kavanagh and Cottril suggests several important themes regarding Irish-Atlantic trade and colonial merchant society in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Like many traders in early America, they came from the margins of the British Empire. Restricted by narrowing opportunities at home, they sought their fortunes in the greater Atlantic world where energy and ambition knew few limitations. Indeed, their experience compares closely with other successful merchants coming from modest backgrounds in eighteenth century Britain and Ireland: the Newfoundland traders of Waterford and New Ross; the "Tobacco Lords" of Glasgow and the Chesapeake; and the Scotch-Irish merchants of Philadelphia who made their fortune in the flaxseed trade with their native Ulster. Often the younger sons of prosperous farmers and shopkeepers, these budding entrepreneurs sought apprenticeships in the outports.

1 Lincoln County News, July 16, 1908. At the time of his death, Matthew Cottril's estate was appraised at $44,938. See LCP Vol. 28, pp. 437-441.
of the Empire and in many cases were helped by networks of kin and acquaintance already established in the New World.\(^3\)

The subsequent success of Kavanagh and Cottril in the Maine timber trade also helps to illuminate the cultural opportunities and aspirations open to Irish immigrants in early America. With profits from milling, shipbuilding, and trade they were able to build elegant estates along the Damariscotta - mirroring the lifestyle and taste of the colonial elite throughout the Atlantic world. They sent their children to the finest Catholic schools, intending them to receive a "liberal education" befitting their new-found status. And they took steps to ensure the continued success and ascendency of the firm, as reflected in wills and marriage settlements.

Consider the case of Matthew Cottril. With only one son active in the firm, the future of Cottril's business interests depended in large degree upon his four daughters. Their marriage choices, in particular, were of central importance in the perpetuation of the firm. Each married husbands from strategic local families along the Damariscotta, thus ensuring the Cottril succession. These included Irish merchants

\(^3\) In addition, some, like Kavanagh and Cottril were most likely bequeathed capital to help launch their careers in trade. Edmund Madigan, writing about James Kavanagh and his grandfather Matthew Cottril, states that "these young men came of families in Ireland of fair means, and of education, and it is certain that Matthew Cottril had pecuniary assistance from his family after coming here...." See Lincoln County News, July 16, 1908.
William Mooney and John Madigan as well as Captain Samuel Glidden, scion of a prominent trading family in Newcastle, and Arad Hazeltine, a lawyer and businessman with links to Boston. Together they brought needed capital and expertise to the firm and helped to forge a trail for the future, one built upon trust and ties of kinship.

Evidence suggests, however, that Matthew Cottril may have maneuvered to pass on power to his immediate family rather than merchant in-laws. His will, probated in 1828, placed significant authority in the hands of eldest daughter Catherine Glidden. With her older brother John at sea for long periods of time, Catherine was given administrative control over the vast Cottril estate: including possession of the mansion house and store in Nobleborough, as well as wharves and maritime interests along the Damariscotta. Clearly her position was more than honorific. Cottril's will stipulated that sons-in-law John Madigan and Arad Hazeltine, each "concerned in commerce or navigation," were required to pay a daily rate to Catherine to "lay their vessel or vessels at either of the aforesaid wharves." Her own husband, Captain Samuel Glidden, was exempted from rents so long as he "keep the said premises in as good repair as they are at the time of

---

10 LCP Vol 30, pp. 155-161. Technically the will specified that Catharine Glidden hold the mansion house and merchant properties in trust for Cottril's youngest son Matthew, then age 14. Yet the will also stipulated that she was to have effective control over these interests until he reached the age of 21.
my decease."\(^{11}\)

It is likely that the Cottril daughters had a say over domestic issues as well. It was probably no coincidence, for example, that Samuel Glidden (descended from Protestant stock in Newcastle) and Catharine Cottril were married at St. Patrick's church in Damariscotta Mills. Catharine's spiritual loyalties (coupled no doubt with her father's commercial ascendancy) inclined Samuel toward a new-found allegiance to the Catholic church. Indeed, his marriage with Catharine may have hinged upon his prior conversion. Glidden's experience was part of a larger pattern of conversion among the Protestant population of Lincoln County—one prompted in part by emulation or identification with elite Catholic families such as the Kavanaghs and Cottrils.\(^{12}\)

Throughout their career, James Kavanagh and Matthew Cottril were the mainstays of the Catholic church in Maine. They were the first to recruit Catholic clergy into the eastern frontier, and were the financial backbone of the emerging church—donating funds to the Boston diocese and financing the construction of St. Patrick's, the first

\(^{11}\) A fourth son-in-law, William Mooney, was completely cut out of Cottril's will for having taken "from me unjustly more than [his] equal share of my property would come to - God forgive him." See LCP, Vol 30, pg. 161.

\(^{12}\) The Glidden-Cottril marriage took place on September 4, 1817. The ceremony was witnessed by Matthew and Lydia Cottril and by John and Mary Glidden, the couple's parents. See "Baptisms, Marriages, and Deaths..." St. Patrick's Parish, Newcastle, 1808-1824; Portland Diocesan Archives, Portland, Maine.
Catholic church in northern New England. They also defended the rights of Catholics - testing their prerogative in the Maine courts, and petitioning the Maine Constitutional Convention for freedom of religion. Their efforts represent an important landmark in the history of Catholicism in New England, one that paved the way for religious toleration and diversity in years to come. In this regard they paralleled the activities of their contemporaries in Ireland who sought to bring religious freedom and Catholic identity into the light of the nineteenth century.

The two partners also played an important role in the gradual diversification of New England. Their overseas trade (coupled with that of other timber merchants) prompted the movement of Irish immigrants into Maine, a migration that accelerated in the years after their death. Moreover, their prominent reputation helped to popularize mid-Maine as a destination for their fellow countrymen, and their social and religious patronage provided the initial foundation which supported the rise of Irish immigrants into successful careers in trade and farming.

Finally, we must realize that Kavanagh, Cottril and the Maine Irish were in the right place at the right time. Their migration to northern New England in the years surrounding the American Revolution came at a time when acceptance, indeed encouragement, of new settlers (regardless of ethnicity) was on the increase. This factor helps to frame their successful
adaptation and integration into early American society. Likewise, their movement into the timber trade came at a time of unparalleled opportunities in trans-Atlantic commerce. New markets were opening up in Europe and the West Indies for Maine timber, and increased demand for imported manufactured goods was felt on the home front as well. Kavanagh and Cottril made the most of these opportunities, and in the process forged a unique chapter in the local history and ethnic diversity of early New England.

Today the legacy of James Kavanagh is perhaps best remembered in the elegant Federal-style mansion he built along the Damariscotta and the church he helped establish in 1798 at Damariscotta Mills. They are symbolic of his ascendency on the eastern frontier and continue to impress all who travel to this small village in mid-Maine. One such traveller was poet Robert Lowell who, along with his wife Jean Stafford, lived for a time in a farmhouse just down the road from the estate known as "Kavanagh." An excerpt from his long poem, "The Mills of the Kavanaughs," written in 1951, leaves us with an evocative and lasting image of this community and its founder:

He will abet my thoughts of Kavanaugh,
Who gave the Mills its lumberyard and weir
In eighteen hundred, when our farmers saw
John Adams bring their Romish church a bell,
Cast - so the records claim - by Paul Revere.
The sticks of Kavanaugh are buried here-
Many of them, too many, Love, to tell-
Faithful to where their virgin forest fell.\textsuperscript{11}

PUBLIC RECORDS AND MANUSCRIPTS

AUGUSTA, MAINE
Kennebec County Courthouse.
Registry of Deeds, 1799-1840.
Registry of Probate, Wills and Inventories, 1799-1840.
Maine State Archives
Census Schedules, Lincoln County, Maine (microfilm)
Lincoln County Court of Common Pleas, Records (microfilm)
Lincoln County Court of Quarterly Sessions, Records (microfilm).

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Massachusetts State Archives
Lincoln County Supreme Judicial Court, Records.
Suffolk County Courthouse
Registry of Deeds
Registry of Probate

BRIGHTON, MASSACHUSETTS
Archives of the Archdiocese of Boston
Bishop Benedict Fenwick, "Memoranda of the Diocese of Boston." Includes accounts of his travels to Whitefield, Maine.
Historical Manuscripts Collection
Cheverus Papers
Matignon Account Book

DAMARISCOTTA, MAINE
Skidompha Public Library.
Castner Papers.
Hanley Genealogy

DAMARISCOTTA MILLS, MAINE
Mulligan Papers, in the possession of Alan and Molly Baldwin.
Kavanagh Deeds
Kavanagh Business letters
Account Book, "James Kavanagh, Ross [Ireland], 1771-1772."
Crew List of the Ship Hibernia, 1790

DUBLIN, IRELAND
National Library of Ireland
Abstracts of Irish Exports and Imports, 1764-1823, MSS 353-76
Fownes Papers: MS 8470, MS 7332, MS 8801.
Kavanagh Papers (microfilm reel # 7155)
Lawrence Collection of Historic Photographs
Parish Records, Thomastown, Kilkenny (microfilm 5024).
Parish Records, Inistioge, Kilkenny (microfilm 5021).
Parish Records, St. Mullins, Carlow (microfilm 4196).

Public Records Office
House Books, First Ordinance Survey, 1837.
Griffith's Valuation, 1850.
Charitable Donations, Diocese of Ossory
Betham's Abstracts of Irish Wills

Registry of Deeds

GARDINER, MAINE
Robert Hallowell Papers, Oaklands.
Box 8, "Early Recollections."

INISTIOGE, IRELAND
Woodstock Estate Papers, in the possession of Edward Cody.
Rental Books 1816-1830
Work Books, 1760, 1788
Richard Steile Map, 1765
Manuscript deeds
Tighe Papers, in the possession of Fidelma Maddock.
Deeds and Manuscript maps pertaining to Tighe holdings.

KILKENNY, IRELAND
Kilkenny Public Library
Ordinance Survey Maps, County Kilkenny, 1829.
Tighe Papers, in the possession of Michael O'Hanrahan.
Tighe Estate Census, 1831

NORTH WHITEFIELD, MAINE
Whitefield Town Records, in the possession of Linwood Lowden.
Whitefield Tax Valuations, 1823-50.
Town Selectman's Minutes, 1790-1809, 1809-40.

PORTLAND, MAINE
Maine Historical Society
Patterson Papers, MSS 00-35
Box 23, Wiscasset Shipping, Sea Letters
Portland Diocesan Archives
Edward Kavanagh Papers
Parish Records, St. Patrick's Church, Newcastle
Parish Records, St. Dennis Church, North Whitefield

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA
Florida State Archives
East Florida Papers, 1783-1821; RG 599
 Papers on the arrival of vessels and cargoes, Amelia
Island (microfilm reel 98).
Register of departures of vessels, 1784-1821, Amelia Island (microfilm reel 106)
Customs correspondance (microfilm reel 117)

WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS
National Archives, New England Records Center.
Record Group 85
Box 477-478, Naturalization Petitions and Documents, Kennebec County, Maine.
Box 480 Naturalization Petitions, Lincoln County
Naturalization Petitions, Suffolk County, Massachusetts

WISCASSET, MAINE
Lincoln County Courthouse
Lincoln County Court of Quarterly Sessions, Records
Vois. I and II.
Registry of Deeds, 1760-1840.
Registry of Probate, Wills and Inventories, 1760-1840.
Wiscasset Public Library
Historical Manuscripts Collection

NEWSPAPERS

Boston Gazette
Columbian Centinel (Boston)
Cork Mercantile Chronicle
Dublin Evening Post
Finn's Leinster Journal (Kilkenny)
Lincoln County News
Massachusetts Centinel (Boston)
Massachusetts Spy
Shamrock or Hibernian Chronicle (New York)
A Report of the Record Commissioners of the City of Boston. 


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Tighe, William F. Statistical Observations Relative to the County of Kilkenny made in 1800 and 1801. Dublin, 1802.


UNPUBLISHED MATERIAL


SECONDARY WORKS


Chinnici, Joseph, P., "American Catholics and Religious


Stahl, Jasper,  *History of Old Broad Bay and Waldoboro*.  Vol


APPENDIX A

Ethnic Composition of the United States, 1790
(Percentage of White population)

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>English</th>
<th>Welsh</th>
<th>Scotch</th>
<th>Irish</th>
<th>Scots</th>
<th>Irish</th>
<th>Germans</th>
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### APPENDIX 3

Irish Emigrants to Lincoln and Kennebec County, Maine, 1780-1830

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Emig</th>
<th>Residence</th>
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<td>Antrim</td>
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<td>Antrim</td>
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<td>1809</td>
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<th>Name</th>
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John Nugent 1787 1800 Whitefield Farmer
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Matthew O'Brien 1807 1819 Bath Youghal Cork
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<td>Kilkenny</td>
</tr>
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<td>Cavan</td>
</tr>
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<td>1804</td>
<td>Thomaston Farmer</td>
<td>Corkshin</td>
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<td>Tallow</td>
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<td>Pittston Farmer</td>
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## CREW LIST OF THE SHIP HIBERNIA (1790)
### BOUND FROM WALDOBOROUGH TO LIVERPOOL

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Time of Entry</th>
<th>Discharge</th>
<th>Time of Service</th>
<th>Monthly Wages</th>
<th>Monthly Before Sailing</th>
<th>Advance</th>
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<td>April 26</td>
<td>Nov. 26</td>
<td>7 months</td>
<td>50</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Fanning</td>
<td>Mate</td>
<td>April 25</td>
<td>October 4</td>
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<td>ditto</td>
<td>ditto</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Cox</td>
<td>Seaman</td>
<td>May 15</td>
<td>July 11</td>
<td>1 month/25 day</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>18.00</td>
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<td>John Thorner</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Martin Rossiter</td>
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<td>John Brown</td>
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<td>?? Chale</td>
<td>Cook</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thos Charlton</td>
<td>August</td>
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<td>Danl. Follace</td>
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<td>James Swain</td>
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<td>3</td>
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**Witnesses:**
- Peter Gilman
- Eber. Laurence
- ?? Kookins
- James Smithwick
### APPENDIX D
### VOYAGES OF THE BRIG ATLANTIC: 1806-1810

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Departure and Destination</th>
<th>Cargo</th>
<th>Net Proceeds</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1806</td>
<td>Damariscotta to Dublin</td>
<td>Timber</td>
<td>$ 7,644.46</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Jan.</td>
<td>1807</td>
<td>Ballast</td>
<td>$ 7,870.57</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>1807</td>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>$ 7,419.36</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Sept.</td>
<td>1807</td>
<td>Ballast</td>
<td>$ 7,419.36</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Aug.</td>
<td>1809</td>
<td>Salt</td>
<td>$11,971.93</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>1809</td>
<td>Lemons</td>
<td>$ 4,821.98</td>
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<td>1810</td>
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<td>$10,444.04</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Passengers</td>
<td>$263.00</td>
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**SOURCE:** Ledgers of Captain James Smithwick, in Elizabeth Smithwick vs. James Kavanagh et al., Lincoln County Court of Common Pleas, September, 1821 (microfilm reel # 124, Maine State Archives, Augusta, Maine).
APPENDIX E

PASSENGER LIST OF THE BRIG ATLANTIC: 1804

"Passengers engaged to sail on board the American brig Atlantic, Robert Askins master, burden 196 tons, for Boston. Sworn at Dublin, 19 June, 1804."

Sydenham Davis of Summerhill, Kilkenny. Age 20, height 5'2", dark, farmer.
Ralph Moran of Raheen, Kilkenny. Age 20, height 5'11", sallow, labourer.
Michael Ryan of Thomastown, Kilkenny. Age 22, height 5'7", fair, labourer.
John O'Hara of Kilmurry, Kilkenny. Age 21, height 5'7", dark, labourer.
Walter Madigan of Thomastown, Kilkenny. Age 35, height 6'0", fair, labourer.
Also his wife Catherine, age 28.
Hugh Heffernan of Clemfert, Kings Co. Age 22, height 5'6", dark, labourer.
Andrew Shortall of Thomastown, Kilkenny. Age 21, height 5'10", dark lab.
Daniel Nowlan of Tullow, Carlow. Age 21, height 5'10", dark, clerk.
John Boulger of Dublin. Age 36, height 5'5", dark, labourer.
Also his wife Catherine, age 36.
Samuel Duke of Thomastown, Kilkenny. Age 21, height 5'5", dark, labourer.
Martin Switzer of Navan, Meath. Age 28, height 5'10", fair, labourer.
James Maxwell of Dublin. Age 20, height 5'8", dark, labourer.
Anthony Kearns of Dunleer, Louth. Age 23, height 5'6", dark, labourer.
Andrew Melvin of Bray, Wicklow. Age 25, height 5'9", dark, clerk.
Thomas Reynolds of Klena, Longford. Age 22, height 5'6", fair, clerk.

## APPENDIX F
### NAMING PATTERNS: LINCOLN COUNTY IRISH, 1798-1850
*(comparison with Hingham, 1781-1820)*

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<th>Hingham, Mass.</th>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
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<td>Charles</td>
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<td>Henry</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Michael (20)</td>
<td>James</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Edward (17)</td>
<td>George</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<td>Joseph</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Francis (10)</td>
<td>Samuel</td>
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45  Alice (1)
46  Philomena (1)
47  Maria (1)
48  Laura (1)
49  Victoria (1)

Sources: Parish Records, St. Patrick's and St. Dennis Church, PDA; Federal Census, 1850; and for comparisons with Hingham, Daniel Scott Smith, "Child-Naming Practices, Kinship Ties, and Change in Family Attitudes in Hingham, Massachusetts, 1641-1880," Journal of Social History, (Summer, 1985) pg. 565.