Chapter 2

IRISH IMAGES ON ENGLISH GOODS IN THE AMERICAN MARKET
The Materialization of a Modern Irish Heritage

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INTRODUCTION

Human cultures have long employed material culture to construct group identity. The linkage between identity and physical things was especially significant in sociohistorical situations that included the settlement of peoples into areas they had not previously inhabited. The Irish Diaspora, with its movement of thousands of men and women from their homeland, provides an illustrative and relevant example. In this chapter, we address the materialization of Irish diasporic heritage during the nineteenth century by exploring the meanings embedded within fine earthenware vessels decorated with images of Father Mathew and Lady Hibernia. These evocative objects were produced in English factories targeting Irish immigrants in the United States. The cups were discovered during excavations of two nineteenth-century Irish immigrant tenements in New York City immigrant enclave known as the Five Points.

THE FIVE POINTS, NEW YORK CITY

The Five Points emerged as a distinct ethnic neighborhood within New York City's Sixth Ward during the first decade of the nineteenth century (Anbinder 2001). The area's name derived from the intersection of Baxter, Park, and Worth Streets, and by mid-century it was home to the city's poorest, largely Irish immigrant population. Charles Dickens (1985, 88-90, 125) described the neighborhood as a 'nest of vipers,' and a 'plague spot' whose inhabitants were nothing more than thieves, prostitutes, and drunkards. The photographs of Jacob Riis (1971) later pictorialized Dickens's word images. His pictures exposing the daily living conditions of the city's poor, mostly immigrant, community created a public housing scandal and sparked major reforms in tenement construction and maintenance.

The immigrants in the Five Points lived in substandard, unsanitary tenements (DeForest and Veiller 1970, 37). The buildings were generally four to five stories tall and were intended to house eight to ten families, although many of them sheltering as many as twenty-two families (Ingle *et al*. 1990, 60). By the 1860s, as the population of the Five Points exploded, the large brick tenements were filled to capacity. Absentee landlords, seeking to increase their profits, added additions in the rear courtyards (Fitts 2000, 69).

The rear courtyards were crowded with large privies, wells, and cesspools. Privy vaults, really just wells, were the sole means of sanitation. Because they could not be drained, the vaults commonly overflowed into the rear courtyards and basement apartments (Warring 1889, 586). As a result, many courtyards were 'a serious and potent source of contagion and a means of spreading disease' (De Forest and Veiller 1970, xvii-xviii). Sewer systems were introduced to lower Manhattan in 1842, but individual landlords had to pay for their properties to be connected. Many absentee landlords did not wish to incur this cost (Moehring 1981, 46). The Five Points tenements remained unconnected until well after 1880.

In 1991, archaeologists excavated part of a city block that formed part of the Five Points. The fourteen rear courtyards investigated were associated with structures inhabited by American-born artisans as early as the late eighteenth century, and with mid- to late nineteenth-century tenements occupied mostly by Irish and German immigrants (Yamin 2000). The excavators focused their attention on privies, cesspools,

wells, and cisterns. The archaeological investigations recovered thousands of everyday items including toothbrushes, spittoons, medicinal bottles, and tea sets belonging to immigrant individuals and families living at the Five Points throughout the nineteenth century. The material culture includes domestic as well as industrial objects associated with Irish women taking in sewing or piecework for the surrounding clothiers, as well as German and Jewish tailors working out of shop fronts on the first floor of the some of the tenements.

The ceramic vessels presented in this study were chosen because of their specific Irish symbolism and their importance to expressing a traditional heritage away from home. The three objects were found inside two stone-lined privies. The cups date to the 1850-1870 period. One, a teacup depicting Father Mathew, is associated with tenements housing Irish immigrant families and boarders at 472 Pearl Street. The second teacup and the saucer, exhibiting the image of Lady Hibernia, were found in a privy shared by Irish and German tenants at 10 and 12 Baxter Street. The vessels, decorated in transfer-printed patterns created specifically for Irish consumers, were English-made.

English potters controlled the earthenware market throughout most of the nineteenth century. Their development of transfer printing allowed them to decorate their vessels with more intricate designs than were possible using the earlier technique of hand painting. Skilled artisans copied complex images, like romantic scenes, portraits, and naturalistic animals, and etched them into metal plates. They would then ink the plates, press tissue paper on the ink, and transfer the design to the unfired vessels. After firing and glazing, the image would be permanently fixed on the ceramic vessel.

English potters decorated their vessels with images of their nation's conquests and colonies, using scenes from places such as India and Ireland (Coysch and Henrywood 1982, 187; Ewins 1997, 83; Halsey 1974, 1-4; Snyder 1995, 5-7). The Father Mathew cup carries the maker's stamp of the William Adams pottery. Adams, a Staffordshire potter, was well known for producing ceramic forms decorated with patriotic themes for the global market between about 1815 and 1835 (Snyder 1995, 39). The Lady Hibernia teacup and saucer are unmarked, but the type of fabric, the glaze, and the decorative technique all suggest a date of between about1820 and the 1830s. Among the thousands of artefacts recovered, two teacups and a saucer provide unique insights into the beginnings of the commodification of an Irish and/or Irish-

American identity and symbolism of a romanticized nationalism providing materialization of diasporic group identity.

HISTORY AND MEANING OF THE IRISH DIASPORA

The influx of Irish immigrants to American during the nineteenth century represents a major feature of the Irish Diaspora as a whole. As used here, *diaspora* refers to the forced dispersal or scattering of people from a homeland as the result of famine, war, enslavement, ethnic cleansing, conquest, and political repression. Such events and processes are integral to understanding diasporic history because they form the reasons for the 'flight following violence' rather than freely chosen displacement (Gilroy 1997, 318). The circumstances for quitting the homeland are traumatic and extraordinary, often resulting from the effects of colonialism. Colonization is the process whereby a foreign group establishes arbitrary power over an indigenous group. Native people are considered separate from and subordinate to the ruling power; their position is established and maintained through relations of racism and racialization based on values of differentiation (Ruane 1992, 294-5). The process effectively distorts all forms of the native social structure. The trauma of dispersal forms a collective consciousness of remembrance and commemoration defined by a strong sense of the dangers involved in forgetting the homeland and the process of dispersal.

The Irish Diaspora forms much of modern history of Ireland. The beginning of the seventeenth century marks the establishment of English rule in Ireland and Protestant Ascendancy (Noonan 1998). As a colony, the Irish Catholic majority (850,000) was forced to be subordinate to the Protestant minority (160,000) (Barnard 1973, 31-3). It was accomplished by the Act of Resettlement (1652) allowing for land confiscation and forced transplanting indigenous Irish to Connacht (Barnard 1973, 31, 39; Canny 1973, 592-5; Miller *et al*. 2003, 13). The fertile lands were in turn granted to English soldiers, adventurers, and imported Scottish Presbyterians. The English handed over nearly seven million acres, or almost half of Ireland, to more than 2,000 in-coming Protestant settlers (Bottigheimer 1967, 12-3; Hill 1993, 29). Forced resettlement did not end west of the Shannon. Irish Catholics considered rebels were forcibly transported as indentured servants to burgeoning colonies in the West Indies (Beckles 1990; Fogelman 1998; Houston and Smyth 1993;

O'Callaghan 2000; Ohlmeyer 1999). This marked the first large-scale international movement that continued throughout the eighteenth century.

By the end of the eighteenth-century, Ireland was in control of the Protestant minority. The Act of Union firmly positioned Ireland as a subordinate colony in the British Empire (Whelan 1996, 139). It abolished the Irish Parliament and with it Ireland's ability to act on the developing agricultural crises (Kennedy and Johnson 1997, 55, 57; Mokyr 1983, 281). Economic advancement as a result of the Union was uneven. At least one-third of the population was pushed into extreme poverty. Competition with English manufacturers forced much of Ireland's industry to consolidate in areas such as Belfast and Dublin. As labor opportunities shrank in the industrial sector, many moved to rural areas to compete for work. The overpopulation of rural areas reduced the demand for rural labor, causing a large section of the population to be financially dependent on agricultural employment controlled by the minority of landowners. Landowners became focused on obtaining profits through commercial agriculture that made laborers redundant (Canny 1982, 91-104; Donnelly 1975, 62-3; Guinnane 1994, 304; Young 1996, 667). The Act of Union created sharp class distinctions that ultimately contributed to what Christine Kinealy (1995, 6; 1999, 42-3) refers to as 'the horrific events of the Famine.'

Access to and control of land created a complex web of socio-economic relations and social position. By the time of the Famine, a minority of the population controlled the rural landscape (Beames 1978; Guinnane 1997; Quinlan 1998). Table 2-1 illustrates this point. Members of the landowning class were at the top of the socio-economic structure and controlled most of the rural Irish landscape. Their large estates were subdivided and leased to the farming class. The farming class consisted of commercial farmers and graziers earning a profit from their produce. In turn, members of this class subdivided sections of their holdings and leased them to the majority of the population known as the rural poor (Fitzpatrick 1980, 68). The large numbers of people making up the rural poor classes held the least amount of land (Table #2-1). It was the class of rural poor that was affected by the evictions and famine beginning in 1845.

Table 2-1. Table #2-1. Number of Land Holdings in 1845. (Source: Bourke 1993, 380; Kennedy *et al*. 1999, 162)

Size of Holding	Number	Percentage
Less than or equal to an acre	135,314	15.0
Above 1 acre and not exceeding 5 acres	181,950	19.0
Above 5 acres and not exceeding 10 acres	187,909	20.0
Above 10 acres and not exceeding 20 acres	187,582	20.0
Above 20 acres and not exceeding 50 acres	141,819	16.0
Above 50 acres	70,441	6.0
Unclassified	30,433	4.0
Total	**935,448**	**100.0**

The nation-wide failure of the potato crop between 1845 and 1850 was more catastrophic than other previous failures and was immeasurable compared to potato failures in other European countries, because it occurred repeatedly over successive years (Beckett 1980, 336; Donnelly 2001, 41; Kinealy 1997, 16; Mokyr 1980, 430, 433). It is not our purpose here to detail the voluminous literature documenting the Famine, but briefly to discuss the events that had greatest impact on and was the foundation for the diasporic mentality of injustice and exile of the Irish making up the Irish Diaspora of the mid-nineteenth century.

The Great Famine (or *An Ghorta Mor*) (1845-1852) represents the watershed for Irish dispersal (Erie 1988; Kinealy 1995; McCaffrey 1992; 1997; Meagher 2001; Miller 1985; Ó Gráda 1988, 1989; O'Sullivan 1997a; 1997b; 2000; Scally 1995). At that time between 1 and 1.5 million people were compelled to leave because of large-scale evictions, famine, and disease (Kinealy 1995, 297). The Famine marks the largest global dispersal within the totality of the Irish Diaspora and established a cohesive international network of Irish communities.

The diasporic consciousness emerging from dispersal during the Famine period was based on a shared experience of food shortages, disease, evictions, and death. The majority of rural Irish were dependent on the potato as the sole means of subsistence. During the Famine more than two-thirds of the population lived below the poverty level and were in desperate need of governmental relief (Hetton and Williamson 1993, 575). The only public assistance developed for handling large numbers of people was the Poor Law of 1838. The law brought all existing agencies of poor relief under the jurisdiction of a single institution—the workhouse. Poverty was deemed a moral failure of the individual, with

the exception of the indigent, widows, and the elderly. Therefore, if an individual was destitute and did not match the criteria above, he/she was labeled as lazy and idle (Beckett 1980, 338; McLoughlin 1997, 66; Neal 1997, 333; Ó Cathaoir 1997, 222). The fundamental principle of workhouse aid was to make the poor relief so unattractive that it would represent the final alternative for those seeking help.

In 1845, 130 workhouses existed in Ireland. In 1847 the number tripled. There were more than 115,000 inmates annually seeking refuge in the workhouses during the Famine, which was more than they were designed to accommodate (Kinealy 1995, 24-5; Ó Gráda 1995, 24-5). For example, the workhouse in Fermoy, County Cork, could handle 800 people, but had a population of 1,800. Disease spread quickly as the sick were mixed with the healthy. In the first three months of 1847 over 2,294 people died in the Fermoy workhouse (Donnelly 2001, 103).

The second year of the famine brought new guidelines to control the increase demand by the poor. Relief was granted in exchange for labor on public work projects under the Public Works Act of 1846. The funding for the work was placed squarely on the shoulders of local sources. Projects included building roads and hedge walls, as well as making improvements on estates (Neal 1997, 335). Because of a non-intervention policy, many landowners capitalized on the misfortunes of the poor. Landowners paid 'starvation wages' insufficient to maintain a family even during normal conditions much less during a food crisis (Ó Gráda 1995, 47).

The public works scheme became more advantageous to landowners with the passing of the Quarter-Acre Clause. The clause was a provision of the Poor Law Amendment Act of June 1847 and was intended to be a deterrent against the 'deceptions and impositions practiced by the poor' (Donnelly 2001, 110; Ó Cathaoir 1997, 230). To qualify for public assistance, tenants had to surrender all but a quarter acre of land. Landowners forced tenants to quit their claim to their entire holdings in order to make way for the more profitable pastoral market (Coleman 1999; Scally 1995). Approximately 65,412 families were forcibly evicted from their homes over the course of the Famine period (Davis 2000, 27-8; Donnelly 2001, 140). Clearances were nation-wide and forced a massive torrent of homeless Irish into the workhouses.

Emigration from Ireland assisted or otherwise, was the only alternative for escaping social and economic injustices and inequality. Britain amended the Irish Poor Law in 1847 to allow guardians of the

workhouses to rid themselves of unwanted inmates by providing passage to North America (Kinealy 1995, 312; McLoughlin 1997, 66-8; Ó Cathaoir 1997, 232-3). Landowners, in lieu of paying the high cost of maintaining tenants on public works and poor relief, found it cheaper to forcibly remove tenants from the land and provide the basic cost of travel. Between 1846 and 1855 landowners cleared tenants off their estates and shipped them to North America.

Policies such as the Gregory Clause facilitated mass evictions. This clause mandated that poverty-stricken families could not seek poor relief if they possessed rented lands of at least a quarter-acre (Donnelly 2001, 110; Kinealy 1995, 190; Miller 1985, 287; Silverman 2001, 78). Many tenants were thrown off their holdings, but most refused to enter the workhouses. They often lived day-to-day in poorly built huts or 'sheelings' along the roadsides (Donnelly 2001, 113; Kinealy 1995, 243; Miller 1985, 288). Evictions were violent. Landlords and their hired agents used extreme physical force to remove the people and completely destroy their cabins (Donnelly 2001, 114). Police and British soldiers often accompanied bailiffs carrying out the evictions. Because of the violence they used in burning the roof and leveling the cabin walls, the bailiffs became known as the 'crowbar brigade' (Donnelly 2001, 114; Póirtéir 1995, 231). It is estimated that approximately 500,000 individuals of the poorer classes were evicted between 1849 and 1854, resulting in the abandonment of at least 200,000 smallholdings (Póirtéir 1995, 229). Many of those who left Ireland came to the eastern seaboard of the United States.

Upon entering America, the Irish were placed at the lowest rungs of America's social and economic ladder. Their perceived refusal to adapt quickly to the social structure furthered the belief that the Irish lacked a natural moral fortitude to succeed. Native-born, nationalist Americans racialized Irish immigrants as a group because they deemed them naturally inferior, chiefly because of the social and economic deprivations they had suffered in Ireland. A report of the Massachusetts State Senate (1925, 584) clearly voiced a prominent perception of the Great Hunger-period Irish:

In the commencement and earliest years of the government, those who came here were generally persons of education, of pecuniary means, industry, and character. In coming, they added to the intelligence and wealth of the community; while, as producers, they

assisted in developing resources of the country. Those now pouring in upon us, in masses of thousands upon thousands, are wholly of another kind in morals and intellect, and, through ignorance and degradation from systematic oppression of bad rulers at home, neither add to the intelligence nor wealth of this comparatively new country.

A. H. Everett (1925, 444-5) observed that the living conditions of the rural poor in Ireland accounted for their low social positions in America:

It is the Irishman, and all who, like the Irishman, have been destined to contend with the ceaseless and disorganizing extractions of provincial vassalage. That Ireland is overwhelmed with a beggarly and redundant population; that its millions are starving amidst of plenty, and seem to live only to bring into the world millions as miserable and distracted as themselves, is a matter of common observation, not only to all who have visited the country itself, but to all that have compared it with other states, even in the lowest stage of civilization, and under circumstances generally supposed the most adverse to human improvement. There is no instance on record of so great an inundation of inhabitants breaking into any country, barbarous or civilized, not even when the Goths and Vandals overwhelmed the Roman Empire.

In order for the Irish to establish themselves in America they had to come together as a group to struggle against the social stigma of being the foreign other. American newspapers labeled the Famine Irish as 'culturally conservative,' with a strong need to 'clan together content to live together in filth and disorder' (Miller 1985, 326). Kerby Miller (1985, 134) has argued that the Irish in the mid-nineteenth century were in 'a transition between traditional and modern patterns of thinking and behaving,' and they were dependent on communal support and the bond of family that conflicted with American social behaviors of individualism and competition. Although social traditions of Irish communalism may have been one reason the Famine Irish banded together, the alienating social structure created and enforced by the American public was more likely than not the major factor (Gallman 2000, 10-1).

The formation of a cohesive large-group Irish identity was a complex process bringing together thousands of people connected by a persistent sense of similitude. This was structured around commonalities of

ethnicity, religion, and nationalism that were given social relevance through selected narratives of chosen glories and traumas (Russell 2006; Volkan 2003). Traumatic events involved in quitting the homeland can serve to create a shared memory—perhaps even an imagined history—that, through remembrance and symbolism that is transgenerational and offers a mental representation of that historic injustice (Volkan 2003, 59-65). Much of this shared memory is overtly associated with a rich variety of symbols that act to link the displaced people with their former homeland (Clifford 1994, 307; Cohen 1997, 23; DeMarrais *et al*. 1996, 16, 31; Said 1991, 55; Vertovec 1997, 278-9). The symbolism forms a collective consciousness of remembrance and commemoration reinforced with an idea of danger in forgetting the homeland and the dispersal from it. In this context, heritage formation differs in a diasporic context, in relation to other forms of immigrant identities, because experiencing a diaspora means a permanent loss (Bhabha 1994; Chow 1993).

A diaspora is a transnational process that incorporates the struggle of a displaced group to define its social position as a distinct community (Anthias 1998, 557; Clifford 1994, 308; Kearney 1995, 548, 559). A 'sentimental pathos' toward the symbols of the homeland can be found in every diasporic situation (Cohen 1997, 105; Conner 1986, 16). A perpetual transnational connection—that has emotional, economic, and cultural features—is often manifested through a range of social organizations and institutions. Some members of the diaspora may even experience a sense of guilt for forsaking those who remained in the harsh conditions of the homeland. The attitude may culminate in an overcompensation of identity expressed through traditional rituals and ethnic symbolism (Anthias 1998, 565). This cultural 'return' to the homeland, whether actual or imagined, is critical to the development of social identity in the host land because it anchors the community to a shared connection (Tölöyan 1991; 1996; Vertovec 1997). Over time, the relationship with the distant homeland becomes increasingly romanticized, though it remains a significant element of the new identity (Drzewiecka 2002; King 1998; Panossian 1998a; 1998b; Safran 1991). Maintained social and cultural attachments provide the group with a sense of 'roots' as they challenge the social norms encountered in the host land (Clifford 1994, 308).

In nineteenth-century America, the Irish formed distinct neighborhoods in cities and industrial towns, with names such as the Kerry Patch in St. Louis, Missouri; Dublin Gulch and Corktown in Butte,

Montana; and Limerick Alley in Troy, New York (Dublin 1979; Emmons 1989; Kenny 1998; Meagher 1986; 2001; Mitchell 1986; Towey 1986; Vinyard 1976). Irish immigrants living in such places comprised 87 per cent of America's urban, unskilled work force. At mid-century, one of the most common ports of entry was New York City. Thousands of Irish came to New York and were directed to a section of the city known as the Five Points.

Irish communities in the United States developed a unifying heritage through the shared experience of colonialism and exile. At the same time, they sought to combat the prejudice and enforced racialization they encountered as they were marginalized and categorized as inferior to 'white' America (Garner 2004; Ignatiev 1995; Roediger 1991). Irish Americans thus created a unified Irish identity through the careful use of symbols that served as badges of ethnicity. They used such metaphoric devices to express a civilized and rational heritage to counter the demeaning American stereotypes (Conzen *et al*. 1992, 10; Ní Bhroiméil 2003, 31).

Nineteenth-century America, for all its ethnic diversity, was English in language, institutions, taste, religion, and prejudice. The communities that immigrants created throughout the United States provided a foundation for the formation of a collective heritage of exile as well as insulation for the recently arrived. Irish heritage was a transnational phenomenon. The creation of an Irish identity formed on the basis of struggling against social and economic inequalities in Ireland and America, and a sense of self and respect. Many of the symbols with the most utility evoked deeply felt, ancient Irish history (Brown 1966, 23; Emmons 1989, 94; McCaffrey 1997, 107; Moody 1967, 60; Ní Bhroiméil 2003, 25; Shannon 1963, 132, 134-5).

THE MATERIALIZATION OF AN IRISH HERITAGE

What is particularly relevant here is that continuity of a symbol's meaning may evoke the sense of a shared heritage, and so reinforce traditional social behaviors and values (DeMarrais *et al*. 1996, 17; Volkan 2003, 62). Producers and users of material culture imbue meanings to the objects that are historically, culturally, and even situationally significant. Accordingly, an object's multiple meanings can be contested. According to Fredrick Barth (2000, 31) 'people use

multiple images and perform a multiplicity of operations as they grope for an understanding of the world and fit them to the particular context of events and lives reconstructing their models as they harvest the experiences that ensue.' In the case of a diaspora, reinforcing the memory of historic injustice, objects and images can be imbued with emotion forming the abstract notion or ideal they represent (Russell 2006). Social groups may assign identity-rich meanings on the basis of what they consider ideal. The context of the ideal may be romantic in the sense that it may evoke a better time or 'golden age' (McCracken 1988, 106-8). This age may be fictional, but its importance rests in its ability to promote cohesive ideals that link together the disparate people of a diaspora.

Consumer goods have the potential to be used to allow people to think nationally. Consumers render the objects meaningful. There is no pre-existing appeal, but manufacturers can capitalize on their appeal after the assumed meanings have been established (Foster 1999, 265). Therefore the objects become the materialization of a specific sentiment or worldview and are used by manufacturers to commercialize ethnic pride and a cultural heritage (Kemper 1993, 393; Sissons 1997, 184).

Heritage formation is a process of constant reevaluation of meaning, as immigrants collectively experience the new social relations of their locales of resettlement. The invention and management of an ethnic or national heritage constitutes part of fluid, multifaceted, and subjective social process. Individuals imbue meaning to heritage through the social relations created in reference to shared cultural codes, symbols, and history (Brah 1996, 21, 47; Fortier 1998; Hall 1990, 223; Panagakos 1998; Panossian 1998a; 1998b). The created heritage can be true or false, justified or illegitimate, and can be manipulated to make sense of the world and to define and reshape values (Barth 2000, 31; Mohanty 2000, 32, 43). Heritage is thus a form of 'self-knowledge' that provides a sense of place, and reinforces the emotional significance attached to membership (Ashmore *et al*. 2001; Bhabha 1994; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992; Payne 2000, 2; Tajfel 1981; Woodward 1997).

Archaeologists and material culture specialists recognize today that physical things are not static byproducts of human life. On the contrary, material objects constitute a central feature of the social relations that men and women construct in the course of their everyday world (i.e., Douglas and Isherwood 1979; McCracken 1988; Miller 1983; 1987; Prown 1988; Russell 2006). The archaeology of the Irish Diaspora

investigates one of the most dynamic and inexorably linked periods in Irish and American history. The types of objects recovered from Irish immigrant and Irish-American sites form an important database illustrating the materialization of an Irish nationality and heritage connecting political and social issues both at home and abroad. The process of imbuing meaning in a diasporic context is especially evident in the creation and expression of Irish heritage in America. Among the thousands of artefacts Irish immigrants may have used to create, promote, and maintain their identity include three English-made, transfer-printed vessels recovered from the Five Points section in Lower Manhattan, New York. The Irish symbolism on these ceramic pieces amply illustrates how material culture was employed to express the ideology of an Irish heritage.

The image of Lady Hibernia appears in blue, and represents a seated woman wearing a flowing white tunic. Surrounding her is a shield with a shamrock in its center and a Celtic harp. The border pattern is composed of oak leaves and acorns (Figure 2-1).

The symbols decorating the vessels represent the central core of the then-emerging Irish American heritage. The images were meant to express the ancient or golden age of Irish history and identity before colonization. The use of oaks leaves and acorns as Irish symbols refers to ancient Gaelic history where oak trees represented antiquity, strength, and protection. Artists, storytellers, and promoters of Irish identity used acorns to represent growth and fertility, and shamrocks to indicate perpetuity and longevity. They commonly used the iconic figures of Lady Ireland to represent purity and virtuousness (de Nie 2005, 46). The image of Hibernia on the two ceramic vessels from the Five Points was designed to reflect the utmost of beauty and civility. Her features evoke the ideals of the Enlightenment: civility, morality, and intelligence. This depiction stands in stark contrast to the portrayal of the Irish in the mainstream American media, where artists drew them as ape-like, childish savages (Curtis 2000, 8-10).

Many Protestant politicians and media owners perpetuated the image of the famine-era Irish as a social plague, a 'cultural tumor eating away at America's heart and soul' and a threat to the American way of life (Gallman 2000, 13; McCaffery 1997, 93; 'One of 'Em' 1925, 792; *Putnam's Monthly* 1925, 796; Thernstrom 1964, 58; Vinyard 1976, 205). As a result, many Irish immigrants faced obstacles in obtaining jobs and in accumulating material and financial wealth. Anglo-American idealists

argued that only some individuals had the ability to prosper and succeed; in their view, failure resulted from an individual's innate inadequacy and immorality (Weber 1976; Herzog 1998, 36). Nationalist Americans viewed virtue and intelligence as unequally distributed, with wealth being the most overt sign of one's morality and intelligence.

Figure 2-1. Blue transfer-printed pearlware teacup and saucer with the image of Lady Hibernia and accompanying symbols of the shamrock and oak leaves and acorns. The vessels were recovered from a rear courtyard privy associated with 10-12 Baxter Street tenements from the Five Points, New York City (Courtesy General Services Administration and John Milner Associates).

American politicians and media owners, seeking to naturalize the social and economic stratification they promoted, transformed Irish-Catholic physical attributes into racial stereotypes. They used racialist theories to explain the natural differences in skeletal structures to rationalize class position and poverty. They accordingly depicted Irish Catholics as brutish and ape-like to demonstrate their social inferiority (Curtis 1997; Lebow 1976; McCaffery 1997). Nineteenth-century racialist scientists argued that naturally occurring skeletal or biological characteristics, perceived as either human perfections or flaws, represented the natural order of their constructed social hierarchies. They considered facial features and skull shapes as signals of a group's

advancement or stasis in human evolutionary development, and understood that these characteristics directly reflected upon one's social position (Curtis 1997, 11). Late eighteenth-century scientists argued that a definite relation existed between anomalies in human facial angles and social hierarchy. Two facial types were defined: prognathic—featuring a projecting mouth and jaw—and orthognathic—where the facial profile is vertical from the forehead to the chin. Such racialist thinkers thought that individuals with prognathic features resembled the lower orders of primates, and so they positioned them on the lower rungs of human development. Alternatively, they considered individuals with orthognathic features to represent the height of human development, beauty, and intelligence. Their dehumanization of certain social groups legitimized poverty as a natural flaw rather than revealing imposed social constraints. Broad biological generalities were used to keep those considered socially undesirable in positions of inferiority (Gans 1995). English potter created Lady Hibernia in the vision of beauty and intelligence (orthognathic). It represents a strategic move to capitalize on a market that needed to acquire such symbols to unify a disparate and diasporic group in a foreign land.

The presence of the harp and the shield with the beautifully drawn Lady Hibernia suggests a combination of two images—the female warriors of Gaelic antiquity and the idealized femininity of the Enlightenment. The two ideals link together the strength and valor of a Gaelic warrior-princess with the virtue and compassion of the faithful wife and mother. Late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century artists of Irish nationalism, with organizations such as the Society of United Irishmen and Young Ireland, frequently employed similar symbols on their banners, flags, and mastheads to promote freedom, fraternity, and equality (Curtis 2000, 12-3, 19; Gibbons 1996, 20; Hill 1998, 114-32). Several white clay smoking pipes also recovered at the Five Points exhibited the Celtic harp with Lady Hibernia forming the body of the instrument. This combined Hibernia/harp image has been founds both in Ireland and in the United States where it was adopted by Irish-American organizations such as the Fenian Brotherhood (Comerford 1985; Dooley 2003).

The teacup depicting Father Mathew was recovered from a large privy at 472 Pearl Street. The exterior design shows Father Theobald Mathew either preaching or administering the abstinence pledge to a flock of devoted followers (Figure 2-2). A beehive appears inside the cup

along the upper edge. Busy worker bees fly above the hive, and a shovel, hoe, and rake lies on the ground. The words 'Temperance and Industry' appear above the hive, and 'Industry Pays Debts' below it (Figure 2-3). The symbolism on this teacup constitutes part of the effort to combat the negative stereotypes being presented by many American Protestants.

Figure 2-2. Brown transfer-printed whiteware teacup with the image of Father Mathew extolling the virtues of abstaining from alcohol to a flock of followers. The teacup was recovered from the rear courtyard privy associated with an Irish immigrant tenement at 472 Pearl Street from the Five Points, New York City (Courtesy General Services Administration and John Milner Associates).

Figure 2-3. Interior of the Father Mathew cup from the Irish tenement at the Five Points, New York City (Courtesy General Services Administration and John Milner Associates).

Father Theobald Mathew, an Irish priest of the Capuchin order, founded the Total Abstinence Movement in Ireland. His main objective was to eliminate intemperance from the poor and working class communities, and help the people to better themselves spiritually, emotionally, and physically (Meagher 2001, 162). Father Mathew

became known as a healer because those who took the pledge, once sick with alcohol poisoning, looked healthier when they stopped drinking (Maguire 1864, 113). Mathew's message of abstinence implored people to think of their personal health, the health of their families, and to 'free themselves from the bondage of a degrading and deadly habit' (Maguire 1864, 111).

Throughout the nineteenth century many believed that diseases like cholera were caused and spread by intemperance and excess (Kraut 1996, 156). They equated disease with poverty and immorality, and believed that disease was caused by miasmas that emanated from stagnant water or the decaying things associated with urban slums (Gallman 2000, 86-7). Many American politicians, religious leaders, and physicians argued that those who escaped disease and epidemics were 'the temperate, the moral, the well conditioned' while those who fell ill were the 'imprudent, the vicious, and the poorly fed' (Boston City Document 66 1925, 593).

Health care and the spread of disease remained class-based issues, with ethnic prejudice being a serious obstacle for Irish immigrants seeking proper healthcare (Brighton 2005). In Philadelphia and New York, for example, typhus was commonly referred to as 'Irish fever' (Gallman 2000, 87). Simply stated, much of the alienation of the Irish by the American public and the medical profession stemmed from their being working class Irish Catholics (Blackmar 1995; Condran 1995; Kraut 1995, 1996). At the time of Father Mathew's visit to America, the area around the Five Points had witnessed several serious cholera epidemics.

Protestant members of the middle and upper classes formed American temperance organizations. These organizations were mostly anti-immigrant and anti-Catholic. Their philosophy included both the cessation of alcoholic consumption as well as conversion to Protestantism. Through such means they believed they could force their sense of morality, piety, and respectability on the Catholic population (Boyer 1978; Gusfield 1986; Goodman 1994).

Anglo-America's prejudice was directed towards Irish Catholics. By 1830, American-born Protestants believed that being Catholic meant having allegiance to the Pope, and they perceived this allegiance as a threat to the American way of life. Many believed that Irish Catholics were part of a priest-controlled machine that operated contrary to the national interests (Lord 1925, 807; United States Twenty-Fifth Congress

1925, 738). Journalists writing in the *Protestant, The American Protestant Vindicator and Defender of Civil and Religious Liberty Against the Inroads of Popery*, and other nineteenth-century newspapers warned of a possible papal plot to overthrow all non-Catholic governments in Europe and America. As a result, American-born workers revived the late eighteenth-century 'Pope's Day Festivities,' during which processions, commonly known as 'Paddy Processions,' paraded through Irish neighborhoods with straw effigies of the Pope and St. Patrick (Burrows and Wallace 1999, 401).

A politically based, secret society, The Order of the Star Spangled Banner, emerged during this era of anti-Irish and anti-Catholic sentiment. By the 1850s, people called it the Know-Nothing Party (Gallman 2000, 14; Gorn 1987, 394; McCaffery 1997, 101). The party's platform focused initially on issues of slavery, but soon shifted to the Great Hunger Irish (Baum 1978, 959). The goals of the Know-Nothing Party were to restrict and control immigration by lengthening residency qualifications for naturalization and by excluding all foreign-born residents from public office. The latter policy insured that political and economical power remained in the hands of American Protestants (Address of the Delegates of the Native American National Convention 1925, 745-6; Baum 1978, 973-4; Fry 1925, 736; Knobel 1986, 134-5).

The Know-Nothing Party dominated politics in Boston, New York, and Pennsylvania between 1854 and 1859 (Baum 1978, 960). In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the elected mayor's sobriquet was the 'People's and Anti-Catholic Candidate' (Holt 1973, 313). In Michigan, the Know-Nothing Party produced a pamphlet entitled *Wide Awake! Romanism: Its Aims and Tendencies* expressing the party's sentiments. It read, in part:

> We aim to Americanize America. None but native Americans to office. A pure *American* Common School System. War to the hilt, on Romanism. The advocacy of a sound, healthy, and safe nationality. More stringent and effective Emigration Laws. In short - the elevation, education, rights, happiness of the people. (Vinyard 1976, 224)

These organizations heightened tensions between Irish immigrants and native-born, nationalist Americans creating obstacles the immigrant Irish were forced to negotiate.

Father Mathew came to the United States in 1849 at the request of Bishop John Hughes. Bishop Hughes and the American Catholic Church urged Irish-Catholic immigrants to adopt a social identity that blended traditional Catholic piety with a love for the American moral ideal (Diner 1996, 103). Church leaders promoted the shift away from traditionally held notions of communal life, and pushed instead for individualism and the ownership of private property (Miller 1985, 332-3). They believed that the Americans' negative perception of their newly arrived brethren would change if they saw the immigrants as hard-working, sober, and healthy (Meagher 2001, 152).

By mid-nineteenth century, Father Felix Varela created a temperance league at the Transfiguration Church, located a few blocks northeast of the Five Points. Father Varela was known as the 'Vicar-General of the Irish,' and his temperance association grew to include one thousand men, most of whom were Irish Catholics from the Five Points. Father Varela saw it as his responsibility to create the league when he witnessed the 'health of his flock diminished due to the ravages of alcohol' (Transfiguration Church 1977, 8).

Father Varela invited Father Mathew to visit the Five Points and speak to the parishioners of the Transfiguration Church. He hoped the visit would refresh the people's 'personal worth and dignity' (Transfiguration Church 1977, 8). Historians do not know whether Father Mathew actually made a trip to the Five Points, but he is known to have given a lecture to a large crowd at City Hall within blocks of the Irish immigrant neighborhood (Maguire 1864, 462).

At least nine tenants lived at 472 Pearl Street, and who were parishioners of the Transfiguration Church at the time of the church's temperance movement and after Father Mathew's visit. One of these nine parishioners may have owned the cup, or, given the date of the maker's mark (ca.1820-ca.1840), an immigrant may have purchased it in Ireland and carried it to the United States. Any definitive statement on its ownership is impossible. In any case, its presence suggests at least one Irish immigrant household's or individual's attempt to communicate self-worth through the ideals of temperance, good health, and industry. More importantly, perhaps, may be that the owner of the cup chose to present these characteristics through an Irish Catholic organization.

DISCUSSION

The influx of Irish immigrants to America throughout the nineteenth century represents part of the history of the Irish Diaspora and the interdependent networks of forced dispersal because of colonization and famine. Free will or agency did not govern Irish dispersal at mid-century, instead it was a forced removal overshadowed by violence. In America, the shared sentimental pathos of injustice materialized through idealized symbols of Ireland. The Irish in America sought out mass-produced objects that evoked a certain sense of a shared heritage. The meaning of the symbolism discussed here had historical and cultural significance to the Irish immigrants who owned them.

The three mass-produced ceramic forms inside the two, mid-nineteenth-century privies in New York City have specific Irish symbolism. The image of Lady Hibernia represents a glorified Irish history or heritage, while the Father Mathew cup represents an ideal that Irish in America should aspire to become. Both forms of symbolism reinforced transnational connections, as well as communicated a deep sense of and pride in Irish heritage. In essence, these consumer goods produced by the colonizing power allowed them the opportunity to create an international heritage. The Father Mathew cup is a perfect example because it was utilized to convey the message of Irish-ness, but more importantly the concept of modernity and the emerging capital power of the Victorian-era United States.

The archaeology of the Irish Diaspora in American illustrates the early conceptualizations of an Irish heritage. Today over 40 million Americans claim Irish ancestry. The number of websites and genealogical services available to Irish-Americans indicates that many are interested in their families' ethnic and social history. What is ironic is that a large portion of Irish-American heritage is structured on a unifying concept of nostalgia rather than modernity. It is founded on romantic imagery of a pristine rural countryside. This imagery is mass-marketed to and mass-produced for Irish-Americans. Thousands of Irish-American travel to Ireland annually to gain a sense of what they think is their own identity and heritage. This type of 'return migration' is what Paul Basu (2001, 335) refers to as 'roots tourism.' The journey is made in the pursuit of discovering a facet of history or sense of place that will make an individual's notions of their history, culture, and heritage more tangible. For many Irish-Americans their journey of self-discovery

culminates in the materialization of their heritage through mass-produced symbols of Ireland, for example tea-towels and postcards adorned with shamrocks, leprechauns, and thatched-roofed, stone cabins, as well as heraldic posters and plaques of family surnames. The Irish symbolism from the Five Points archaeological assemblage represents some of the earliest evidence of the materialization of an Irish diasporic identity. The major role of material culture in this process cannot be doubted, though much remains to be learned.

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