Late Nineteenth-Century Ireland’s Political and Religious Controversies in the Fiction of May Laffan Hartley

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Introduction

4. Ibid., 158–60.
8. Ismay’s Children, 296.
14. Standish Hayes O’Grady (1832–1915) was born at Castleconnell, County Limerick, into an Anglo-Irish family. He became a noted Gaelic scholar and translator, and was a cousin of the historical novelist and cultural activist Standish James O’Grady.
15. Donal A. Murphy, Blazing Tar Barrels and Standing Orders (Tyone, Co. Tipperary: Relay Books, 1999.) An account of the changeover to democratic local government in North Tipperary. Ellice Pilkington, Horace Plunkett and George Russell, The United Irishwomen: Their Place, Work and Ideals (Dublin: Maunsel & Co. Ltd., 1911). The “manifesto” of a voluntary organization which aimed to improve the lives of disadvantaged women,


18. Personal Communication from Tom Donovan, Corcamore, Clarina, County Limerick. Donovan, a local historian and member of the Historical Society (Glynn, Co. Limerick), generously provided me useful materials and information in my research.


**Chapter 1: Origins and Early Years**


2. Personal communication from Tom Donovan, member of the Glin Historical Society, Corcamore, Clarina, County Limerick. Regarding burning of pre-1850 estate records, and topography of Ballyhoulihan.

3. William Shaw Mason, “Parish of Kilfergus in the Diocese and County of Limerick,” in *A Statistical Account or Parochial Survey of Ireland* (Dublin: Graisberry and Campbell, 1816), 301, para. XI.


5. William Sha Mason, 301, para. x.


7. Ibid., 56. Tom Donovan’s translation:
   
   Deich bpunt is taistiún ón Ridire bhfiúntach  
   Agus dá pinginn ruadh ó Bhrídín neamhiontach  
   Cúig giní ór ó Dóinál na Féile  
   Ní ón ngaothí ná ón ngrein a thóg sé na tréithre  
   Dhá phhunt is córón ó Chathal de Brún  
   Ach, dada ní bhfuairtas ó Sheanín Giobún!”

8. Ibid., 189.


13. Gibbon Fitzgibbon’s Family Tree, original in possession of Tom Donovan.

14. Alexander Thom. Irish Almanac and Official Directory (A. Thom, Printer/Publisher. 87 & 88 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin, 1835).

15. Gibbon Fitzgibbon’s Family Tree.

16. Ibid.


20. “Gerald Fitzgibbon” (I) in Dictionary of National Biography (London: Smith, Elder, 1890), 155. The letters “Q.C.” stand for Queen’s Counsel, and after a British lawyer’s name they denote that he or she is a senior barrister appointed as a legal advisor to the Crown. (If the reigning monarch is a King, the designation is King’s Counsel). A Q.C. has certain privileges including that of wearing a silk legal gown in court, hence to accept nomination as a Q.C. is to “take silk.” Should a Q.C. wish to become involved in an action taken against the Crown, he/she must get formal permission to do this. This situation had relevance to Ireland for example in political trials when lawyers were briefed to defend individuals accused of treason.

21. Second Leader, Irish Times, 28 September 1882. An evaluation of Gerald Fitzgibbon (I)’s legal and political career. The Irish Times “Second Leader” was and is a short, untitled anonymous piece about a significant happening—in this case, Fitzgibbon’s death. The Second Leader is placed directly beneath the official editorial, or First Leader, which usually deals with major current issues. The tone of the September 28 piece suggests that the writer saw Fitzgibbon as an interesting historical figure but mainly of importance as the father of the current Lord Justice of Appeal, Gerald Fitzgibbon (I).


26. Edward MacLysaght, *The Surnames of Ireland* (Dublin: Irish Academic, 1999), 187. The Huguenots were French Protestants expelled from France in 1685 at the revocation of the Edict of Nantes which originally granted them religious tolerance. Over 10,000 emigrated to Ireland where some joined the army of William of Orange, and others helped in the foundation of the linen and banking industries. Compared to most immigrants they were well-off, most having skilled trades and some even having titles of nobility. French-speaking and strictly Calvinist, they maintained their separate identity and modes of worship until the early nineteenth century, but eventually were absorbed into the Church of Ireland. As people who had undergone persecution for their faith they were greatly respected even by those who did not share their beliefs, and to be able to claim descent from a Huguenot family was a source of pride, as Laffan implies in *The Honorable Miss Ferrard*.


30. *The Irish Catholic Experience*, 220–21. A persistent remainder of penal legislation of 1746 (19 Geo.II c.13.) laid down that a marriage ceremony where one or both parties was Protestant was void in law unless performed by a minister of the Church of Ireland. This statute was not repealed until 1870. Effectively it meant that a “mixed” marriage must take place in the local Church of Ireland parish church. Catholic marriages of that time were not generally celebrated in a church, but in the bride’s family home or in the priest’s house; and they were not accompanied by Mass.


32. “Gerald Fitzgibbon” (II) in *Dictionary of National Biography* (London: Smith, Elder, 1890), 30. He is described as: “Eldest of the three children, two sons and a daughter” of Gerald Fitzgibbon (I). No details of the daughter are given.


36. *Thom’s Irish Almanac and Official Directory* (Dublin: Alexander Thom, Printer & Publisher, 1862). Re: entries of Laffan family, for 1861–1551, for 1862–1515. These page numbers refer to the index of surnames of ratepayers. *Thom’s* provides a record of Dublin ratepayers, but although the index is accurate the “street pages” are not, because when people moved often the “street pages” did not always keep up with their new address.


39. List of pupils attending Blackrock College in 1862, supplied by Rev. Fr. Sean P. Farragher CSSP. With the achievement of Catholic Emancipation in 1829, a need for higher education for the Irish middle-class became more obvious. Trinity College, Dublin, the only university in Ireland was unable to fulfill that need even if the will to do so had been present. English legislation of 1845 set up and financed “Queen’s Colleges” in Belfast, Cork and Galway ostensibly for all students, and these were constituted as the “Queen’s University.” But, to satisfy English Protestant opinion, which resisted denominational education and wanted to avoid controversy, these colleges were without faculties of Theology, Philosophy or History.

The Irish Catholic Church, fearing the spread of religious indifferentism, discouraged Catholics from attending the new colleges, where lowered entry requirements had already attracted criticism.

In 1854 the Irish Bishops, with Papal encouragement, founded the Catholic University in Dublin with Cardinal Newman as Rector. Financed by church-door collections, with no charter or state funding, it struggled to survive but its Medical School attended in the 1870s by Laffan’s brothers William and James, became highly successful and achieved independent recognition for its qualifications.

Newman resigned in 1858, and the Catholic University went through a period of decline until reconstituted by the Jesuits in 1883 under the name of University College with the non-teaching Royal University validating its degrees. Both the College and the Royal University were later included with the Queen’s Colleges in the National University of Ireland (1909). Famous students of University College include James Joyce (from 1895), later Padraig Pearse and Eamon De Valera.


41. Record of entry of the Laffan girls to St. Catherine’s convent school, Sion Hill, supplied by Sister Dominique Horgan, OP, Archivist. Catherine Laffan’s date of birth is unknown but can be deduced from her known year of entry to St. Catherine’s (1871). She would then have been twelve or thirteen years old.

43. Tony Fahy, “Nuns in the Catholic Church in Ireland in the Nineteenth Century” in *Girls Don’t Do Honours: Irish Women in Education in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, Mary Cullen, ed. (Dublin: Women’s Education Bureau, 1987), 23.

44. Personal communication from Sister Theophane O’Dwyer, OP, Local Archivist, Sion Hill Convent, Blackrock.


46. John Nicholas Murphy, *Terra Incognita, or the Convents of the United Kingdom* (London: Longmans, Green, 1873), 167, 620.


48. Ibid., 55–78.


53. “Convent Boarding-Schools for Young Ladies,” 784.

54. Ibid., 783.

55. Ibid., 786.


57. Ibid., 45–48.


60. May Laffan, letter to G.A. Macmillan, undated letter written apparently between November and December 1881. Macmillan Archive, Reading University, no number. Mrs. Pattison (née Emilia Strong) was the wife of Mark Pattison, Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford. Well-known intellectuals, they were both friends of May Laffan. See chapter two.


65. Captain W. T. Lynam, “Mick M’Quaid,” *The Shamrock* (Dublin). It first appeared in this magazine, running from 5 October 1872 to 27 September 1873. This was one of a light-hearted series written around the same comic character.


71. Pope Pius IX: Encyclical to Italian Bishops, 10 August 1863. An example of contemporary Catholic teaching on salvation: “We and you know that those who lie under invincible ignorance as regards our most holy religion, and who, diligently observing the natural law and its precepts, which are engraven by God on the hearts of all, and are prepared to obey God, and lead a good and upright life, are able, by the operation of divine light and grace, to obtain eternal life.”


Tractarian clergy aroused considerable hostility in England when they rejected the title “Protestant,” identified themselves as priests rather than ministers and introduced a Roman Catholic style liturgy in which plainchant, incense, elaborate vestments and ceremonial were used. At first mainly a clerical revolution, the movement came to affect most areas of Victorian life, including art, literature and politics. The Church of England (or Anglican church) formed a division into “High” and “Low” which it has retained in a modified form until the present day. One positive effect of the Tractarian movement was the development of greater tolerance between Anglicans and Catholics; this was noticeable by the end of the nineteenth century.

The Church of Ireland much less influenced by Tractarianism, remained generally “Low Church” in ethos, and maintained a strong Protestant identity.

76. Ibid., Introduction, Section 3, “Papal Aggression,” 52–79.
80. Ireland in 1868, 23.
81. Ibid., 123–27. Regarding “Tenant Right” to receive recompense for improvements.
82. Ibid., 191. Regarding lack of Protestant interest in Irish language.
84. Ibid., 81, 85, 252. Regarding deficiencies of Charter Schools.
85. R. F. Foster, Paddy and Mr. Punch: Connections in Irish and English History (London: A. Lane, 1993), 313 n.64; 322 n.6.
86. May Laffan, The Honourable Miss Ferrard (London: Richard Bentley, 1877), 266.
87. Paddy and Mr. Punch, 188. Illustration of contemporary cartoon with Britannia and Hibernia shown as two sisters.
88. Recess Committee Notes, 6.
91. Davis Coakley, The Irish School of Medicine (Dublin: Town House, 1988), 65–72. Regarding the importance of the Pathological Society. “Chronic Medical”—This colloquialism of the period describes a medical student who is taking an unusually long time to get through his examinations. The medical course was long anyway and it was felt that
students were not always motivated to qualify, because life as a perpetual student was much easier than being a doctor. . . .”

92. May Laffan, letter to G. A. Macmillan, 28 July 1881. Reading Archive, No. 202/91. “I hope it will be all right with Lippincott, I am also writing to my brother in New York to look after the matter.”

93. A Drama in Muslin, Belfast edition (Vizetelly,1886; Belfast: Appletree, 1992), 161. Regarding rowdy Fancy-Dress Ball for Charity attended by heroine.


97. Christy Carew, 37–49.

98. Twenty-five Years Reminiscences, chapter 4. Regarding moral guidance versus social conventions in the 1870s.


Chapter 2: Adult Life and Works


9. Ibid.

10. Mrs. J. Hazlett, Librarian/Archivist at Alexandra College, Dublin. Re: attendance of May Laffan and sister Catherine Laffan at Alexandra in 1870s.


13. Personal communications from J. Laffan Kelleher and M. J. Laffan.


15. May Laffan, letter to G. A. Macmillan, December 1881, Reading University Macmillan Archive.


18. The Reading University Macmillan Archive consists of eleven unnumbered letters addressed by May Laffan to members of Macmillan, Publishers. Correspondence from Macmillan with less well-known nineteenth-century writers was apparently distributed among various British universities in the recent past.

19. The Macmillan Archive in the British Library contains the firm’s letterbooks with numbered and date-stamped copies of all the outgoing correspondence.


22. Ibid., Annie Keary (1825–1879), 345.


34. R. F. Foster, Modern Ireland, 1600–1972 (London: Allen Lane, 1988), 413. Regarding the Richmond Commission: “Though the ‘3 Fs’ (Fair Rent, Fixity of Tenure, Free Sale) might confer tranquillity. . . . they would be irrelevant to marginal tenants in the west; for such, the majority recommendations of the Richmond Commission (investment & economic education) would make more sense.” “Professor Baldwin” has not yet been identified.
35. Arthur Young (1741–1820), an English expert on agriculture, wrote about social and economic conditions in France and Ireland. He spent a period as agent to the Kingston estate of Mitchelstown, Co Cork, but his frank criticisms of the way in which the country was governed, the land managed and the tenants treated angered landlords and led to his return to England. His readable if diffuse account of Ireland was very popular, especially with nationalists, as a reference book.
36. “J. J. Tyler (1851–1901).”
38. May Laffan, Letter to George Grove, 8 September 1881. Reading Archive.
41. No Athenaeum review expressing these sentiments has yet come to light.
42. May Laffan, Letter to George Grove, 5 August (no year). Reading Archive.
43. Dorothy Tennant (Lady Dorothy Stanley) was a well-known illustrator who made a study of domestic subjects and children in particular. Her birth date is unknown. In 1890 she married the African explorer H. H. Stanley. She died in 1926. (Curators at Tate Gallery, London.)
51. Walter Noel Hartley, (WNH), Letter to Professor Haddon, RCSI Letterbook 1890. No. 114. Archive Department, National University of Ireland, Dublin.
53. Ibid., 221. The Marriage Causes & Marriage Law Amendment Act, 1870, which became law in the following year, legalised mixed marriages before a Catholic priest.
54. Personal communication from James Laffan Kelleher (1894–1956).
56. A. C. Holland, *Introduction to the Royal College of Science in Ireland*. Archive Department, National University of Ireland, Dublin.
57. W. N. H., Letter No. 89 to unknown addressee and Report No. 154 to Dean & Council, 1890, RSCI Letterbook 1889–1892. Archive Department, National University of Ireland, Dublin.
60. Personal Communication from James Laffan Kelleher.
63. Ibid.

65. Personal Communication from Karen Anderton, ISPCC (4 April 1997), confirming May Laffan Hartley’s membership and regular attendance at meetings of committees to raise funds and review cases. More detailed records of proceedings were not kept.

66. Count and Countess Plunkett were Catholics, as their use of a Papal title indicates. They were parents of Joseph Mary Plunkett, poet and revolutionary, executed in Dublin in 1916.

67. May Laffan Hartley, Recess Committee Notes 1895.


70. Personal Communication from Michael J. Laffan.

71. Personal Communication from the Librarian, The Mercer Library, College of Surgeons, Dublin. James Laffan went on the British Medical Register in 1882 and remained on it until 1913.

72. Ibid. James Laffan went to Australia and worked there from 1890.

73. Ibid. Charles Morier was on the British Medical Register in Australia from 1883 to 1900 when he went to London with his wife Catherine (Casy) née Laffan and appears to have remained there until 1929.


75. Personal communication from James Laffan Kelleher.

76. Copy of page from Bloomfield Retreat which records May Laffan Hartley’s admission.


78. Information Leaflet on Bloomfield Retreat, and personal communication from Richard Fitzsimmons, Hospital Secretary, Bloomfield.


80. Copy of entry SA052928 in British Army War Records of Officer’s Deaths.

81. Personal Communication from Michael J. Laffan, who recalled that Michael Fitzgibbon Laffan died in America in 1915 and James Laffan died in India in the same year.

82. Entry copied from National Archives, Year 1916. Folio 473, p. 281. Re: Hartley. 15 August. Administration of estate of Mary Hartley late of 10 Elgin Road, Dublin, Widow,


Chapter 3: Class and Politics in Hogan MP

1. Anon. review of Hogan MP, Spectator, 12 August 1876.
3. Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism, Talcott Parsons, trans. (London: Routledge, 1997), 264–265. This controversial and classic sociological text was expanded from an article in a German journal of sociology in 1904. Weber’s thesis concerned the social and political effects of religious belief systems. He suggested that societies where a Calvinist or Puritan form of Protestantism flourished were more likely than others to embrace capitalism, because they thought its productive commercial activity to be essential to please God.
5. Hogan MP, 424.
6. For example: the novels of William Carleton, Maria Edgeworth, Emily Lawless, Charles Lever, Samuel Lover, George Moore, Lady Morgan (Sydney Owenson), Anthony Trollope, Katherine Tynan, “Somerville and Ross” (Edith Somerville and Violet Martin).
8. For example: Rosa Mulholland (Lady Gilbert), whose novels consciously “gentrified” the Irish, for instance in The Birds of Killeey (1883) and The Girls of Banshee Castle (1890). See James H. Murphy, Catholic Fiction and Social Reality in Ireland, 1873–1922 (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 1997), 55.


15. George Moore, *Esther Waters* (London: Walter Scott Publishing, 1894). A sympathetic account of the struggle of an illiterate single mother to keep her child. Also, Rosa Mulholland, in *Nanno* (1899), wrote of the dilemma of a single mother courted by a man who wants to marry her and does not know about her child. Mulholland’s earlier books were written for children and adolescents (“moral tales”) and did not provoke controversy, but her later books introduced political and social issues and were less acceptable to the market. An example of one such book was *Gianetta: A Girl’s Story of Herself* (1889), which contained a realistic description of an actual large-scale Irish eviction, and drew unfavourable comment from the English public.


20. Ibid., 92.


33. *Infra dig.* Abbreviation of Latin *infra dignitatem*, meaning beneath one’s dignity.

34. *Hogan MP*, 311

35. Ibid., 67.

36. Ibid., 148.


39. *A Drama in Muslin*, 77.

40. Land ownership in Ireland. During the second half of the nineteenth century, hard-won changes in the law altered the relationship of landlord to tenant. Movements to secure Tenant Right gradually developed into the realization that “peasant proprietorship” provided a more realistic and long-lasting solution to questions of who actually should own and work the land. This aim was not finally achieved until the twentieth century, but there is no doubt that nationalist landlords such as George Henry Moore, father of the writer, knew long before Tenant Right that when it came it would effectively spell the end of landlords’ social domination, especially in the case of those whose sole income was derived from their tenants. See Andrew J. Kettle and Laurence J. Kettle, *Materials for Victory: Memoirs of Andrew J. Kettle* (Dublin: C. J. Fallon, 1958), 108–132.


42. Land War. The name given by the people to a movement of agrarian protest in Ireland which began in 1879 with the foundation of the Land League. Originally a non-violent campaign against unfair rents and conditions of land tenure, it gradually de-
velopd violent fringe activities, for example, assasinating landlords and their agents, maiming cattle and burning houses. During the 1880’s the crime rate rose, the Irish civil authorities were seriously challenged, and increased numbers of British troops were dispatched to Ireland.

43. Hogan MP, 167.
44. Ibid., 52. The reference is to the poet Schiller.
45. Ibid., 52.
46. Murphy, Catholic Fiction, 29.
47. Examples of contemporary Irish memoirs: Davis Coakley, Oscar Wilde: The Importance of Being Irish (Dublin: Townhouse, 1994); Lady Ferguson, Sir Samuel Ferguson in the Ireland of his Day (London: W. Blackwood, 1890); Maude Gonne MacBride, A Servant of the Queen (London: V. Gollancz, 1938); John Hamilton, Sixty Years Experience as an Irish Landlord (London: Digby, Long, & Co., 1884); Elizabeth Mary Margaret Bourke Plunkett Fingall and Pamela Hinkson, Seventy Years Young: Memoirs of Elizabeth, Countess of Fingall, told to Pamela Hinkson (London: Collins, 1937). Examples of contemporary Irish fiction: George A. Birmingham, The Bad Times (1908); Charles J. Kickham, Knocknagow (1870); John Francis Maguire, The Next Generation (1871); George Moore, A Drama in Muslin (1887); W. E. Norris, The Fight for the Crown (1898); William O’Brien, When We Were Boys (1890).
48. A Drama in Muslin, 125.
49. Hogan MP, 56.
50. Ibid., 31.
51. Ibid., 302–303.
52. Ibid., 146.
54. Thomas Robert Malthus (1766–1834). English economist and demographer, developed the theory that the world’s population must overrun its food supply if means were not taken to keep the birthrate down. He suggested discouraging marriage, encouraging the practice of celibacy, penalising those with large families, and building factory-type institutions to house people whom he thought unfitted to have children at all. He based his theory on statistical evidence which is today considered to be inaccurate. Malthus’s ideas were highly influential, affecting nineteenth-century welfare legislation especially in relation to Ireland.
55. Harriet Martineau (1802–1876) came from a French Calvinist background. In spite of severe health problems including deafness she became a pioneer English sociologist and earned her living as a writer on economic themes. Her works included several novels, and “moral tales” for young people to support the Utilitarian and materialistic
philosophy in which she believed. These writings included an “Irish tale” in which she suggests that the Irish are poor because they are not industrious enough, spending too much energy telling imaginary stories. They need to be made to work hard. She had not, in fact, visited Ireland. Charles Dickens attacked Martineau and her co-theorists in his novel of industrial life, *Hard Times for These Times* (1854).


57. Anon. “Miss Laffan” in *The Cabinet of Irish Literature, selections from the works of the chief poets, orators, and prose writers of Ireland, Vol. IV* (Dublin: Blackie and Sons, 1880), 296–300. There were several editions of this popular anthology, some of which were published in America. The original edition was issued in 1880, but Katherine Tynan edited a revised one in 1905. See note on Charles A. Reade in *The Oxford Companion to Irish Literature*, Robert A. Welch, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 491.

58. William Carleton (1794–1869) an Irish-speaking peasant from Tyrone, became a locally celebrated writer. (Laffan may have been flattered at being compared to him.) Like her, he wrote satiric fiction, and like her maternal relatives he was a convert to the Established Church. His stories were set almost all in the countryside of south Ulster, from which he came.

59. Annie Keary (1825–1879), English daughter of an Irish clergyman, based her popular novel *Castle Daly* (1875) on his stories but, apparently, never visited Ireland.


61. *Hogan MP*, 81.

62. The “Fenian priest” would have been Fr. Patrick Lavelle (1825–1886), subject of Gerard Moran’s biography *A Radical Priest in Mayo* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1994).

63. “Young Ireland” was the name given to a group of middle-class intellectuals, Catholic and Protestant, associated with The Nation newspaper, and seeking to promote a non-sectarian Irish identity. An offshoot of Daniel O’Connell’s Repeal Association, they withdrew from it in 1846 because unwilling to renounce the use of physical force. Following the example of similar movements in Germany and France at the time, Young Ireland hoped for a social revolution, but their attempted armed rising failed, not surprisingly in view of the Famine. Their real success had been gained earlier, when they succeeded in awakening national pride and self esteem through patriotic songs, poems and legends.

64. *Hogan MP*, 82

65. Ibid., 83


67. *Hogan MP*, 86

69. *Hogan MP*, 87.

70. “St. Stephen’s” is a synonym for the House of Commons.

71. *Hogan MP*, 88


73. Ibid., 41, 42.


76. *Hogan MP*, 262.

77. Ibid., 246–47.

78. “Tenant Right.” The name given generally to the aims of the Irish Tenant League in the 1850s and the Land League which succeeded it from 1879 on. The aims included: fair rent for tenancies; free sale, that is a departing tenant’s right to dispose of his interest, including improvements he had carried out to the property; and fixity of tenure giving security against eviction for arbitrary reasons.


81. Pat Daly was an Irish-born emigrant to the United States, probably as a child. He returned to Ireland in the 1860s to help organize cells of the Irish Republican Brotherhood (Fenians). This activity would not have been against American law, but was proscribed in Ireland and Britain, and Pat was one of those Fenians who believed it worthwhile to support constitutional politics and consequently, was keeping a low, non-violent profile.

82. *Hogan MP*, 237.


84. *Hogan MP*, 267.

85. Ibid., 231.

86. Ibid., 272, 73.

87. Ibid., 264.

89. *Hogan MP*, 277.


91. *Hogan MP*, 261.


95. Michael Davitt (1846–1905), nationalist and labour leader, he founded the Land League (1879–1882) and advocated nationalization of land. John Dillon, (1851–1927), son of John Blake Dillon, a Young Ireland leader. He was an MP and an influential politician. William O’Brien (1852–1928), MP, nationalist, journalist and novelist, at first a chief supporter of Parnell, broke with him in 1891.

96. *Eau d’opoponax* is an expensive scent derived from a variety of mimosa.

97. *A Drama in Muslin*, 55,56.

98. Ibid., 99.


108. O’Shea, *Priest, Politics and Society*, 47. “Money given after an election was not deemed as bribery.”


110. Ibid., 1012.

Chapter 4: Class, Identity and Education in *Miss Ferrard*


6. Poteen (or Poitin) is a home-made illicit spirit, once distilled from potatoes, and made in a cast-iron pot (hence the name). Irish.


10. Tawney—Yellow-skinned, or sallow.

11. Kish of Brogues—Literally, “basket of shoes,” this insulting comparison indicates that the speaker considers Helena Ferrard to be unusually ignorant. Irish.


13. Ibid., 98.


15. Ibid., 127.


18. *The Honorable Miss Ferrard*, 145.

19. Ibid., 187.

20. Ibid., 368.
21. Ibid., 243.
22. Ibid., 229.
23. Ibid., 234.
24. Ibid., 367.
25. Ibid., 369.
26. Ibid., 401.
27. Ibid., 417.
28. Ibid., 1.
30. Irish Poplins—Poplin is a woven fabric of wool mixed with linen or silk. Its manufacture is said to have been started in Ireland by the Huguenots, mainly in Belfast and Dublin. Poplin was widely used as a dress fabric in the nineteenth century.
31. The Honorable Miss Ferrard, 246–47.
32. The Miss Persses—The reference is to the daughters of an actual ascendancy family living in County Galway, the future Lady Augusta Gregory (1852–1925) and her sisters.
33. The Honorable Miss Ferrard, 50.
34. Ibid., 40.
35. Ibid., 76.
36. Ibid., 399.
38. “The moss couch I brought thee today from the mountain / Has drank the last drop of thy young heart’s red fountain, / For this good skian beside me struck deep and rang hollow / In thy bosom of treason, Maigread Ni Chealleadh.” Edward Walsh, “Maigread Ni Chealleadh” in Irish Poets of the Nineteenth Century, Geoffrey Taylor, ed. (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1947), 382.
40. The Honorable Miss Ferrard, 28.
42. The Honorable Miss Ferrard, 28.
43. Huguenots—See notes for chapter two.


47. Ibid., 28.

48. The Claddagh was the settlement near Galway City where fishermen and their families lived.


50. Wild Geese—The name given to Irish soldiers who fought in the armies of France, Spain and Austria during the seventeenth, eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

51. Wolfgang Menzel, *History of Germany Vol. III* (London: George Bell & Sons, 1890), 10, 17, 52. Outline of the history of Maurice de Saxe, Duke of Courland. A romantic figure, he was later to appear as a major character in novels, for example M. Alexander’s *The Ripple* (1913) and in operas, for example Francesco Cilea’s *Adriana Lecouvreur* (1902).

52. *The Honorable Miss Ferrard*, 383.

53. Ibid., 348.

54. Ibid., 396.

55. Cassandra. In Greek mythology, she was the daughter of Hecuba and the hero Priam. The gods conferred on Cassandra the gift of prophecy but later punished her by arranging that when she truly foretold the future, none would believe her. The nickname Cassandra is sometimes applied to a person whose predictions are ignored as too depresssing.

56. *The Honorable Miss Ferrard*, 259.

57. Butter-factor. Until the late 1880s butter was one of Ireland’s principal food exports. Butter production took place mainly in Munster, and centred on Cork. The character “Mr. Really,” a Corkman, is a butter-factor, or exporter.

58. *The Honorable Miss Ferrard*, 335.

59. Ibid., 259.

60. Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881). A Scottish historian and philosopher, his “personal statement,” *Sartor Resartus* (The Tailor Re-Tailored) and his dramatic account of the French Revolution were immensely popular and made him famous. His belief in a superior master-race which should alone be permitted to rule others was admired once but was later seen to resemble National Socialism.

61. Ultramontanism was a centrist movement in the Catholic Church, favouring Papal over national or diocesan authority. In nineteenth-century Ireland, where its chief exponent was Cardinal Paul Cullen, it helped to unite Catholics and to confirm their identity, but since the second Vatican Council has received less emphasis.


68. *The Honorable Miss Ferrard*, 187.

69. Hedge-schools—These were illicit pay-schools set up to educate the Irish Catholic population during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Teaching sessions took place in private houses, sheds, or even sheltered hedge corners, hence the name. Curricula varied considerably, some schools offering classics and mathematics whereas others aimed only to teach literacy. Pupils were of all ages and attended irregularly; English was the language of instruction.

70. Alison Jordan, *Margaret Byers* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, Queen’s University, 1990), 4, 7–30.

71. *The Honorable Miss Ferrard*, 275.


73. *The Honorable Miss Ferrard*, 332.

74. Ibid., 152

75. Escritoire—a small writing-desk. French.

76. *The Honorable Miss Ferrard*, 397.

77. Anon., review of *The Honorable Miss Ferrard*, in *Academy*, 22 October 1881.

78. Francis Ledwidge (1891–1917) was born at Slane, Co. Kildare, Ireland. Largely self-educated, he left school at thirteen and worked as a labourer, then as a shop assistant in Dublin. He published mainly nature poetry of which the poem “Twilight in Middle March,” from which the lines quoted are taken, is a fair example. Ledwidge was active both in trade union and republican organizations, but he did not foresee the Easter Rising (1916) and enlisted in the British Army before it took place. He was killed on active service at Ypres, France. Although he saw several years of army service, Ledwidge is not counted as a “war poet” because he did not write about his war experiences, preferring to remain a

Chapter 5: Conflicting Values, Class and Religion in Christy Carew


3. Ultramontanism—see references to chapter four.

4. James Joyce, Dubliners (1914; London: Penguin Books, 1961). Regarding “Colonial Systems.” The existing colonial system of the 1870s was one in which Ireland had no legislative assembly of its own and was politically and economically dependent on England. The emergence of an Irish Catholic middle class put pressure on this already inadequate system and led to agitation for some degree of self-government which would give the Irish a measure of control, for instance, over secondary and higher education and technical training. The Home Rule movement which developed in 1870 envisaged Ireland achieving a status rather like that of Canada, still part of the Empire but semi-independent. It would still leave Ireland in a colonial system, but an easier one.

5. “The Liberties” is the name still given to an area in the city near Dublin Castle. This was a suburb during the medieval period in Irish history when Dublin and its environs were English possessions. In the Liberties, however, the Rule of the local territorial lord replaced the Rule of the King, thereby giving inhabitants some specific rights. By the nineteenth century, the area had become a slum, but it is now being reclaimed.


7. Ibid., 265.

8. Ibid., 10.

9. Ibid., 111–12.

10. Ibid., 383.

11. Papal Infallibility. The First Vatican Council (December 1869–July 1870) defined Papal Infallibility as a dogmatic truth of the Catholic Church, as follows: When the Pope acts as pastor and teacher of all Christians and defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, he is preserved from error by the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Controversy arising about this pronouncement seems to have been mainly to do with the timing, which some held to be inopportune, rather than the content, which most Catholics already accepted. The Roman Catholic Church & the Home Rule Movement in Ireland, 1870–1874, 3–26. The mention of the announcement of the Papal In-
fallibility dogma as a recent event dates the period of the opening chapter of *Christy Carew* to August 1870.

13. Ibid., 152.
15. Ibid., 47.
16. Ibid., 175.
17. Ibid., 22. Regarding phrenology. This once popular study originated with the belief of a Viennese physician Franz-Joseph Gall (1758–1828) that the mental capacity of an individual could be known from the outer configuration of their skull. Gall’s claims to be able to deduce, for example, violent tendencies by examination of irregularities on the patient’s skull were found to have no real scientific foundation.
20. My source for this information is a photocopied report on a judgement delivered in the House of Lords on 13 January 1860 on the Longworth/Yelverton Case, obtained from: The Honorable Society of King’s Inns, Henrietta Street, Dublin 1.
25. Ibid., 51.
26. Kevin Haddick-Flynn, *Orangeism: The Making of a Tradition* (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1999), 272–87. Jocelyn was the family name of the Earls of Roden, notorious for their alleged involvement on 12 July 1849 at Dolly’s Brae, Co. Down, in a sectarian affray in which thirty Catholics were killed.
28. Ibid., 340.
29. Ibid., 341.

31. Anne Devlin (1780–1851), niece of the Wicklow guerrilla fighter Michael Dwyer, helped Robert Emmet in his preparations for insurrection. Destitute in later life, she was supported by a group of nationalist sympathisers which included Fr. Meehan.

32. James Clarence Mangan (1803–1849), poet and translator, was addicted to drugs and alcohol and relied on a group of friends including Fr. Meehan for accommodation, care and emotional support.

33. Bride Street was part of the Liberties.


36. Ibid., 348.

37. Ibid., 368.

38. William Makepeace Thackeray, Vanity Fair (London: Bradbury & Evans, 1846). Becky Sharpe is the “daemonic” heroine of Thackeray’s famous novel contrasting with its “angelic” heroine, Amelia Sedley.


40. Christy Carew, 16.

41. Ibid., 17.

42. Holland was a light-weight linen fabric much used in Victorian times for summer clothes. In earlier days, its unbleached form was used for shrouds.

43. Christy Carew, 7.

44. Ibid., 41.

45. Ibid., 116.

46. Ibid., 148. Esther sings The Coulin, a difficult traditional song originally with Irish words. It does not fit naturally into the English setting devised by Thomas Moore. The effect on some listeners is to make them feel a sense of unease, and Laffan seems to be aware of this. See note 48 for details of Moore’s Melodies.


49. Christy Carew, 237.

50. Ibid., 410.

51. Ibid., 15.
52. Ibid., 21.

53. Trompe d’oeil. This expression (in French, literally “deceive the eye”) is generally used to describe a painting technique which presents deceptive reality, for instance, an imitation door, a window view which does not exist, or an open cupboard which appears to have three-dimensional contents until one tries to grasp them. The technique dates back to the fifteenth century at least and was chiefly used in frescoes or still-lifes; it has some affinity to modern abstract painting. I have used the term to describe a technique employed by some writers, and in this case by May Laffan, of presenting an apparent reality and then quietly demonstrating its untruth.


55. Ibid., 418–19.


57. Christy Carew, 409.

58. Ibid., 89.


60. Christy Carew, 262.

61. Ibid., 259.

62. Daniel O’Connell (1775–1847) was elected Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1841, the first Catholic to hold that office since the sixteenth century.

63. Christy Carew, 426.

64. Ibid., 428.

65. Ibid., 428.

66. Ibid., 61.

67. Frank Hugh O’Donnell (1848–1916). A professional journalist, he was elected M. P. for Dungarvan, Waterford from 1877–1885 when a dispute with Parnell led to the end of his party political career. He was celebrated for his polemical writings, not least his History of the Irish Parliamentary Party (1910).

68. John O’Connor Power (1848–1919). A nationalist and member of the IRB, he was elected M. P. for Mayo in 1874 and attempted to integrate political activists with the constitutional Irish Party. Disagreement with Parnell led to the end of his political career.

69. Christy Carew, 51.

70. The Irish Catholic Experience, 223.

71. Christy Carew, 269.

72. Ibid., 277.


74. Christy Carew, 270.


78. Christy Carew, 263.

79. Samuel Richardson, Clarissa Harlowe, ed. Harriet Ward (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1868). Clarissa Harlowe is a novel told in the form of a diary and letters. Clarissa, a headstrong girl at odds with greedy relatives, is being forced by them into an arranged marriage. She wants to get away from home to give herself time to think, and so involves an acquaintance, Lovelace, in her flight, without knowing that he has sworn revenge for past injury on all the Harlowes, herself included. She has now put herself in his power. Richardson, a bookseller who began writing in his fifties, resisted pressure to create a happy ending, but produced instead one of the first psychological novels in English.

Chapter 6: Stories of Poverty and Hope


4. Ibid., 311–13.

5. Ibid., 299.


11. Anthony Ashley Cooper, Lord Shaftsbury (1801–1885), based his pioneering social reforms on the need to compel the governing classes in England to accept responsibility for the welfare of industrial workers. He introduced the Factory Act of 1833 which regulated (and inspected) the employment of children in textile mills, and he went on to support legislation affecting such vulnerable groups as farm labourers and boy chimney sweeps. A quotation from his speech in Parliament of 6 June 1848 appears to be the first recorded use of the term “arab” to describe a street child: “City Arabs . . . are like tribes of lawless freebooters, bound by no obligations, and utterly ignorant or utterly regardless of social duties.” *Oxford English Dictionary*, compact edition, complete text reproduced micrographically (London: Book Club Associates, by arrangement with Oxford University Press, 1979), Vol. I, A–O, 106, para. 3.


15. Ibid., 4–5.


21. Ibid., 226.

22. Ibid., 216.

23. Ibid., 225.

25. May Laffan, letter to John Ruskin, date not given, quoted by Ruskin in Fors Clavigera, 169.


27. Anon. review of “The Game Hen” Warder and Weekly Mail, 23 October 1880, “... the pugilistic encounters read like an imitation of M. Zola in L’Assommoir.”


29. Ibid., 130.

30. Ibid., 129.

31. Huckster. Name given in Ireland to a dealer in cheap household goods.

32. Game Hen. Feminine of Gamecock or Fighting-cock, a fowl bred for fighting.


34. George Moore, A Drama in Muslin, Belfast edition (Vizetelly, 1886; Belfast: Appletree, 1992), 63–64.

35. Fictional examples of women who “atone by dying”: Oliver’s unnamed mother, and Nancy, Bill Sykes’s “moll” in Charles Dickens’s Oliver Twist (1838); Lady Dedlock in Dickens’s Bleak House (1852); Ruth in Elizabeth Gaskell’s Ruth (1853); Lydia Gwilt in Wilkie Collins’s Armadale (1866).


39. Ibid. 274–78.


44. Harriet Martineau, see chapter three, note 55.

45. Touher, Fear of the Collar, 23.


47. Jacobite. A term relating to James II, King of England 1685–1688. (James = Jacobus in Latin). He was superseded by Prince William of Orange, but still regarded as
rightful king by Irish and Scots who supported the House of Stewart to which he belonged. Followers of James were called Jacobites.


52. 11 Montagu Place, Russell Square was evidently the London address of one of May Laffan’s friends, with whom she was staying. George Macmillan refers to the possibility of Laffan ending up in a less comfortable place, for instance, prison if she is not careful.


54. The Ladies’ Land League was set up in 1881 by Michael Davitt, under the leadership of Anna Parnell, sister of the leader of the Irish Party. The members were women with nationalist convictions, coming mainly from middle-class families, and mostly politically active for the first time. May Laffan knew the Davitts well but we do not know if she was a member of the LLL. Its purpose was to take over Land League activities if the leaders of the main organization were imprisoned, as they were. Unfortunately Charles and Anna Parnell disagreed about the level of responsibility and autonomy allowed to the LLL, and it was wound up a year later at Anna’s insistence. A history of the organization remains to be written, but see Anna Parnell, *The Tale of a Great Sham*, Dana Hearn, ed. (Dublin: Arlen House, 1986).


57. Ibid., 289–90.

58. Ibid., 292.


60. Ibid., 313.

61. Ibid., 340.
62. May Laffan, letter to George Grove, 5 August 1881, 5 August 1881. Unnumbered letter from Macmillan Archive at Reading University Library; Reading, Berks, England.


64. Resident Magistrate. These local magistrates were appointed by the Lord Lieutenant (Viceroy). They were not required to have any legal training, and their appointments were seen as political favours.


68. Ibid., 13.

69. Ibid., 13–17.

70. Ibid., 29. Also see Donnelly, *The Land and the People of Nineteenth-Century Cork*, 198.


72. Personal communication from Mairead Maume, grand-niece of John Sarsefield Casey.

73. Full & revised report of the Eight Day’s Trial in the Court of Queen’s Bench on criminal information against John Sarsefield Casey at the prosecution of Patten Smith Bridge; from Nov. 27th to Dec. 5th, 1877. E. Dwyer Gray, ed. (Dublin, 1877). Report of the Arguments in the Court of Queen’s Bench on Shewing Cause against the Conditional Order for a Criminal Information against John Sarsefield Casey at the prosecution of Patten Smith Bridge, with the Judgments of the Judges, with an Appendix of the Affadavits and documents used on the motion. E. Dwyer Gray, ed. (Dublin, 1878), p. ix.


75. Miss Ferrard, 269.

76. “One of our Own.” This is not a quotation, but a colloquial phrase, meaning “one of us,” as opposed to “one of them.”


79. The Ladies’ Land League paid tenants’ legal costs, but was credited with damaging landlord/tenant relations on the Kingston estate. Laurence M. Geary, *The Land War on the Kingston Estate*, 28, 41, 49.

80. Report of the Arguments in the Court of Queen’s Bench on Shewing Cause against the Conditional Order for a Criminal Information against John Sarsefield Casey at the Prosecution of
Patten Smith Bridge, with the Judgments of the Judges, with an Appendix of the Affadavits and documents used on the motion, E. Dwyer Gray, ed. (Dublin, 1878), 53–57.

81. Whiteboys. A secret society which originated in North Tipperary and County Waterford in the 1760s to obtain redress for local grievances. The members met at night and disguised themselves by wearing white shirts over ordinary clothes.


Chapter 7: A Political Allegory of Fenian Ireland?

1. May Laffan, letter to George Grove, ed. of Macmillan’s Magazine, 5 August 1881.

2. George A. Macmillan, letter to May Laffan, 3 March 1882. Macmillan refers to Laffan’s news that *Beyond the Back Gates* is being published as a serial.


5. Thomas Moore, *Captain Rock*, a description of the origins of terrorism, in the form of a family history; Moore’s *An Irish Gentleman in Search of a Religion*, an attack on proselytism, in the form of an autobiography.


12. Ibid., 190–91.


20. Ibid., 142–43. “While revolution appeared to threaten, normal political activity was impossible.”

21. Ibid., 109. The IRB presented a perpetual threat.


27. Laffan’s readiness to tackle political issues struck reviewers as highly unusual. The following tribute to her qualities comes from an anonymous reviewer in the *Warden & Weekly Mail*, a Dublin paper strongly Unionist and Conservative: “We must in fairness admit that we know of no novelist of our time who has a better grasp of her subject, or a more keen awareness of her country’s deficiencies. Miss Laffan indeed is one of the very few writers of the day who seems to write for a purpose” (4 February 1882, 3).

28. By “Barrettstown” seems to be meant Mitchelstown, in North Cork. The surname Barrett is very common in Mitchelstown, and at the time Laffan was writing *Ismay’s Children*, there were serious agrarian problems there connected to the Kingston estate. There was also a castle, so called. In fact, it was an immense early nineteenth-century house.

29. Demesne or domain. A term commonly used in nineteenth-century Ireland for an estate surrounding a mansion and belonging to it. Norman-French.


31. James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 74. The missing verse is as follows: “Oh, turn around, you wheel of fortune / Turn around, love, and smile on me, / For surely there must be a place of torment, / For those who treat others as you treated me.” The song, “Love is Pleasing,” is traditional, and the author is unknown.

32. A Diocesan College was a boarding school founded by the Bishop of the diocese, to educate boys to university level. The assumption was that some of them would go on to a seminary to become priests, so fees were low and there were always some free places. The education was based on classical and religious studies, and its quality varied. The physical care of the boys was sometimes very poor.

33. Trinity College, Dublin, was founded in Elizabethan days to educate the Ascendancy, that is, upper-class members of the Church of Ireland. Catholics who could afford to do so had to seek higher education abroad. By the 1860s, the time when events in
*Ismay's Children* are supposed to be taking place, Trinity would take Catholic students but would not confer degrees on them. The Irish Catholic Church discouraged Catholics from attending Trinity, preferring to press for a university which would acknowledge their religion.

34. *Ismay's Children*, 104.
35. Ibid., 96.
36. Ibid., 423.


40. Whiteboys. See chapter six, reference number 81.

41. *Ismay's Children*, 117.

43. *Ismay's Children*, 140.
44. Ibid., 174–75.
45. Ibid., 281–82.
46. Ibid., 323–24.
47. Ibid., 362.
49. *Ismay's Children*, 464.
50. Ibid., 417.
51. Ibid., 495.
52. Ibid., 117. Blanche’s maiden name, MacAnalley, identifies her as being from Ulster.

61. Ismay’s Children, 136, 146.
63. Ismay’s Children, 460.
64. *The Irish Catholic Experience*, 62.
68. Father Paul’s brother seems to have been a member of Young Ireland (1844–1848), an offshoot of the political movement working for repeal of the Act of Union between England and Ireland. Following an abortive insurrection, members were transported or permanently exiled from Ireland.
70. Ibid., 207.
74. St. Catherine’s, Dominican Convent, Blackrock, Co. Dublin.
75. Church of Ireland schools received extra income from legacies and charitable funds; Catholic schools did not. Church of Ireland schools were also more influenced by the English public school system.
76. *Recess Committee Notes*, see chapter two, reference 62.

78. John Nicholas Murphy, Terra Incognita (London: Longmans, Green, 1873), 496.

79. Some examples: Dean Farrar, Eric, or Little by Little (1858); Thomas Hughes, Tom Brown’s Schooldays (1857); Harriet Martineau, The Crofton Boys (c. 1840); Talbot Baines Reed, The Fifth Form at Saint Dominics (1887).

80. According to Laffan’s correspondence with Dr. William Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin (see chapter two, reference 58), a number of Dublin families sent children to be educated in England or to Protestant schools in Dublin.


84. Ibid., 119.


86. Ibid., 102.

87. Ibid., 370.

88. Ibid., 105.

89. Ibid., 110.

90. Ibid., 102–103.

91. Ibid., 230.

92. Ibid., 306.

Conclusion

1. W. B. Yeats, “Title of Article” in the Bookman, October 1895.


3. One of these, Hannah Ryan (1872–1928), became the mother of Brendan Bracken, founder of the Financial Times (London), and Winston Churchill’s Private Secretary and Minister of Information during the Second World War.

4. William O’Brien (1852–1928) was first a journalist, then a novelist and a politician. The best-known of his novels, When We Were Boys, is a fictionalised account of his own early life, written during his 1880–1881 prison sentence mentioned in chapter six.

6. George Augustus Moore (1852–1933). Born into an Irish landowning family, Moore lived mainly in France and in England, where he became a successful novelist after his failure to engage with the literary renaissance in Ireland. Deeply influenced by Balzac and Zola, Moore developed an elegant and effective literary style, which he exercised in his Irish novels *A Drama in Muslin* and *The Lake*, and which anticipated literary techniques used by Joyce.

7. James Aloysius Joyce (1882–1941), novelist and poet, and one of the most celebrated innovative writers of the twentieth century.

8. “Somerville and Ross.” This term refers to the literary collaboration of two cousins, Edith Oenone Somerville (1858–1949) and Violet Martin (1862–1915), whose pseudonym was “Martin Ross.” Together they successfully produced five novels and three collections of humorous short stories; following Martin’s death Somerville continued to publish under their joint names. The cousins came from an Irish Ascendancy background and their work reflects this. The short stories depict cunning peasants and bewildered gentry, but attempts, in the novels, to portray middle-class Irish Catholics are unconvincing. Acknowledged to be the finest of their novels is *The Real Charlotte* (1894) which has overtones of Balzac.

9. The Honorable Emily Lawless (1845–1913) was a daughter of the Anglo-Irish Lord Cloncurry. Brought up partly in England, she began her career as novelist in London, but soon gravitated to writing novels set mainly in the West of Ireland, the best known of which is *Hurrish* (1886). This novel deals with the effects of the “Land War” on a peasant family and is told from an Ascendancy standpoint, since Lawless did not believe the Irish to be capable of self-determination.


11. Charles Stewart Parnell (1846–1891), Irish nationalist leader, in 1889 during attempts to get Home Rule for Ireland, was cited as co-respondent in the O’Shea divorce case. The case followed a period of ten years during which his relationship with Kitty O’Shea, the wife of a colleague, was concealed from the public at large, although Irish politicians knew about it. The Liberal Party in Parliament, strongly anti-divorce, promptly threatened to withdraw support from the Irish Party unless Parnell resigned as leader. (The Liberals had earlier in the 1880s ejected Sir Charles Dilke, a prominent Radical politician, from their own party because he was involved in a divorce case.) The Irish Party, the Catholic Hierarchy, and the country split on the question of whether to support Parnell or not. The majority decided not to support him, and this aroused strong feelings for a considerable time even after Parnell died in 1891. But it is difficult, in view of Dilke’s experience, not to consider that Parnell in this case overplayed his hand.