"Heirs of Freedom" or "Slaves to England"? Protestant Society and Unionist Hegemony in Nineteenth-Century Ulster

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Abstract: *Drawing partly on Ulster Protestant emigrant correspondence and partly on new research in Irish religious demography, this article challenges conventional ('revisionist') interpretations of the evolution of Ulster Protestant, especially Presbyterian, society and political culture, from Irish nationalism to British loyalism, in the half-century after the Irish Rebellion of 1798. It posits, for example, that Presbyterian nationalism and republicanism were not so much 'naturally' diluted in Ulster by industrialism, Orangeism, and evangelicalism as they were exported overseas, by mass migration to the USA, 1800-1850, and suppressed in Ulster by hegemonic and reactionary (and largely Anglican) systems and pressures, which many Presbyterians consciously rejected and, they believed, 'escaped' through emigration to an idealized American republic.*

Over thirty years I've read thousands of letters written by Irish Protestant and Catholic immigrants and by their relatives in Ireland.[1] In the past decade my research has centered on letters penned in the 1700s and early 1800s by Ulster Presbyterian immigrants and their relatives in the North of Ireland, with particular focus on what those documents revealed about their authors' political culture – about their sense of ethno-religious or "national" identity.[2] Recently I've re-examined this material in light of the results of another, quite different kind of research – on Irish religious demography in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This essay represents some initial efforts to understand the conjunctions between these sources. My conclusions are tentative, and those concerning nineteenth-century Ulster society and the development of Ulster Unionism sometimes diverge heretically from the current orthodoxies of "Revisionist" scholarship.[3]

I begin with quotations from several fascinating letters written, between the 1790s and the late 1820s, by members of the Burns family – Presbyterian small farmers and weavers in County Armagh, in mid-Ulster – to their emigrant relatives in the United States. In early November 1796, shortly before the French failed to land their army at

Bantry Bay, to aid the United Irishmen's planned revolution against English rule, James Burns, the family patriarch, wrote to his son in western Pennsylvania. "We should all wish to be out of this countrie," Burns complained, "as every year oppression is growing greater," while those in Ulster who dare "grumble" against the government "are counted rebels and hurried away to jail and tried for treason." However, he exulted, "we are looking everyday for an invasion from France, and the most part of Ireland are uniting together under the name of United Irishmen and are striving for liberty."[4] Five months later, the government and Irish loyalists had begun the "dragooning of Ulster"—full-scale military repression of suspected United Irishmen – but Burns remained hopeful. "The people in this kingdom are greatly oppressed by bad trade and . . under the severity of a military law" designed "to oppress the people and prevent them . . . from entering into any combination against government. Notwithstanding," he declared, "the people console themselves that one day or other they will shortly become the Heirs of Freedom."[5]

If Burns wrote any letters to his son during 1798, the year of the United Irishmen's failed rebellion, they have not survived. His remaining letters, penned between 1799 and 1803, referred occasionally to continued "tyranny and oppressive war,"[6] but they were concerned primarily with the health of kinsmen and neighbors, with food and yarn prices, and especially with moral and religious admonitions. "My dear son," he wrote in early 1803, "endeavour to shun e[x]cess in drink and bad company which is an inlett to all ev[i]l ..."[7]

After James Burns' death in May 1804, the letters written from Armagh by his other son, Alexander, were equally apolitical, focusing on mundane, local matters and lamenting the moral "degeneracey of the times" and "the spirit of indifferancey and infidelity [that] has turnd r[eal] relig[i]on out of doors."[8] In his last surviving letter, penned in April 1827 to his emigrant brother's widow, Alexander Burns complained that in Ulster prices were low, rents were high, evictions increasing, "and what is worse the linen trade that so many live by in this country has completely failed." As a result, he reported, "a vast number of our neighbours in this country are selling off their little property and emigrating to [North] America."[9] Yet despite the prevailing distress, Alexander did not make the critical associations between economic and political conditions that his father had drawn during the tumultuous 1790s. In the Burns family, at least, the voices of Ulster's would-be "Heirs of Freedom" had apparently been stilled. Judging from their transatlantic correspondence, the Burns family had been politically demobilized: they no longer looked for collective, political salvation in Ireland itself; rather, they sought personal, spiritual salvation through "real religion" and/or they projected material ambitions across the ocean.

The de-politicization of the Burns family correspondence might seem to confirm the "Two Traditions" model that generally prevails among Irish historians.[10] According to that paradigm, modern Irish (and especially Ulster) history is characterized by permanent conflicts of material interest and of cultural and political identity between Catholic Nationalists and Protestant Unionists. In this view, the 1790s was an ephemeral

and anomalous moment in Irish Presbyterians' political history, as after 1798 they quickly returned, chastened and wiser, to their traditional allegiance to the British Crown and to a renewed emphasis on the interests and, especially, the cultural characteristics that sharply differentiated them from their Catholic countrymen.

Revisionist historians often caution, however, that Irish Catholic history should not be read backward, from the events of 1916-1921, as the linear and inevitably successful progress of Irish Nationalism. If that same lesson is applied to the history of northern Protestants, then we should beware of assuming that the virtually unanimous and militant Unionism that apparently characterized Ulster Presbyterians and other northern Protestants in the late 1800s and early 1900s was a "natural" or "inevitable" development after 1798 and the passage of the Act of Union in 1800. The Two Traditions thesis may be less a cause than a consequence of – or merely a justification for – Unionism and Partition.

Indeed, much of the surviving correspondence between immigrants in the United States and their kinsmen and – women in the North of Ireland indicates that disaffection from landlordism – and from the political system that sustained it – remained common among Ulster Presbyterians long after the events of 1798 and 1800. Most common in their letters were complaints against rack-renting proprietors, against the bishops and clergy of the Church of Ireland (the legally-established Protestant church), against tithes and high taxes, and against oppressive agents, bailiffs, and tithe-jobbers. Also frequent were broad, invidious comparisons between Irish aristocracy and privilege and American democracy and meritocracy. Perhaps more surprising, many Presbyterian emigrants empathized with the plight of their Catholic countrymen and continued to express sympathy for the Nationalist ideals and goals of the United Irishmen. Some argued that many Ulster Protestants had become Unionists only because they had either been coerced or duped – in the latter case, by the British government's and the landlord class's strategy of setting Irish Protestants and Catholics against one another, especially through the instrument of the Loyal Orange Order.

As might be expected, such arguments – what skeptics might denigrate as "crude conspiracy theories" – were often made by exiled United Irishmen in the United States. Thus, in 1807 John Chambers declared from New York City that it was a combination of British repression and inducements that had rendered Ireland's people "into three divisions, [that is]: the Lovers of liberty, the lovers of intolerance, & the lovers of loaves & fishes. The two last seem invariably to unite," he lamented, "& are perhaps now too many for the first."[11]

However, quite ordinary Ulster immigrants made similar statements. For example, in 1818 Daniel Polin, just arrived in Pennsylvania from County Down, reported to an earlier Ulster immigrant that:

> As to Ireland it is in a most wretched state – The resources the people *had* for the making [of] money are completely extinct – The farming interest has undergone

a great change for the worse & there is no hope of any alteration or relief except in case of Revolution [...] It will however take a long time to unite Ireland or to make them behold their grievances thro' one focus, in consequence of the narrow system of party which prevails there – The Government have connived at a disunion of the people & they have succeeded to the full extent of their wishes – The Orange system prevails among the [P]ro[t]estants [i.e., the members of the Church of Ireland] & even [among] some of the Presbyterians – [And t]here is a Catholick party [...] which is opposed to the Orangemen, & these two factions are continually fighting & often murdering each other.[12]

Much later, in 1832, John McMahen, a Presbyterian in County Down, made similar remarks (in a letter to his nephew in America)—remarks occasioned by the Orangemen's provocative, annual march to re-enact and celebrate the final Protestant conquest of Ireland's Catholics at the Battle of the Boyne (1690). "[O]ur much dreaded 12th of July is passed By in peace," McMahen reported. Of course, "the processions... were led on By Lords and Noblemen actuated By self interest" – sadly, "the Vulgar throng [of marchers] not thinking that the[y] were [only] a goverment tool to Support oppression or a Cripple leg for the Church [of Ireland] to stand on."[13]

Not surprisingly, perhaps, some official evidence supports such interpretations. In the early 1800s, both Robert Peel and his successor as Irish Chief Secretary, in Dublin Castle, revealed their conviction that the Union could best be maintained by keeping Ireland's Protestants and Catholics divided: "I hope they will always be disunited," Peel wrote, and "the great art is to keep them so" – to ensure both Protestant dependence on British power and what scholar Frank Wright calls "reactionary dominance throughout" the entire United Kingdom.[14]

Nevertheless, for most historians, statements like those of Chambers, Polin, and McMahen conjure up long-derided Irish Nationalist or Marxist arguments – to the effect that ordinary Ulster Unionists were deluded victims of a kind of "false consciousness," instilled by official and upper-class propaganda, that prevented them from seeing that their "true interests" lay in forging political alliances with Catholic Nationalists – particularly with Catholics who had similar socio-economic backgrounds and grievances.

And indeed, this was precisely the argument made during the Great Famine of 1845-52 by John Mitchel, the radical Presbyterian and Young Ireland journalist from Newry, County Down. In his scathing "Letters to the Protestant Farmers, Labourers, and Artisans of the North of Ireland," Mitchel advised his readers: "[I]f any man talks to you now of religious sects [or religious divisions], when the [real] matter in hand relates to civil and political rights, to [the] administration of government or [the] distribution of property – depend upon it, [al]though [that man may] wear a coronet on his head, he means to cheat you." For example, Mitchel warned, the typical Orange Grand Master was an aristocratic landlord who opposed the legalization of tenant-right – the principal political goal sought by Ulster's Presbyterian farmers – and "had ejectments [i.e., eviction notices] hid under his purple sash and orange aprons."[15]

Of course, thanks to the work of quantitative historians like Joel Mokyr,[16] even Revisionist scholars now concede (however reluctantly) the accuracy of Mitchel's claim that the Great Famine caused one million deaths. Virtually no historians, however, give any credence to Mitchel's radical critique of Ulster Presbyterian society. It is surprising, therefore, to discover that Mitchel's revolutionary prescriptions for Ireland's social and political ills, as well as his interpretation of the Famine itself (as caused by British and landlord malevolence), were echoed by at least some quite ordinary Presbyterian immigrants – by recent arrivals such as the Kerr and McElderry brothers, for instance, Presbyterian craftsmen, schoolmasters, and shopkeepers from County Antrim – and this in the 1840s and 1850s, a half-century after the Act of Union, when, according to conventional academic wisdom, northern Protestants' devotion to the Crown had become virtually unanimous.[17]

The Orangemen "pretend that they are the defenders of the constitution," scoffed John Kerr in 1845, and yet "they disregard & break laws made under that constitution which the[y] pretend so much to reverence." "But what is Orangeism?" Kerr asked rhetorically: it is "[t]he most tyrannical Society in the world. If there be any organisation or body of men, which deserves the [execration] of the friend of justice, the friend of peace, or the friend of his country, it is that of the Orangemen... whose principles are to deprive men of rights which belong to everyone that breathes. [S]uch a society is insufferable, such principles are detestable." "Would the Irishman could see things in their proper light," Kerr concluded. "The [P]rotestants do not see that in depriving the Catholics..., they are [only] binding the fetters of [British] tyranny closer on themselves."[18]

By early 1849 news of starvation and wholesale evictions in Ireland inspired Kerr to express even more radical opinions: "Down with landlordism," Kerr declared, as he eulogized the now-exiled John Mitchell – "the best man in Ireland" – and prayed for a revolution that would overthrow what he called "the vile British Government," that would establish an Irish "Republick," drive "all the pampered aristocracy from the country," and relieve "poor Ireland" from the "tread of the tyrant's heel & . . . the chains of oppression."[19]

Likewise, in 1854 Robert McElderry proclaimed from Virginia that Mitchel's "hatred of the English... ought to pervade the breast of every Irishman." "The Irish are slaves to England," he asserted; "Where is tenant right[?]" he asked. "Where are all the rights asked for by the Irish[?]" "Would that the Irish people could be induced to rise up and by force break off that accursed union with England which Keeps you in bondage to her," McElderry admonished; but, alas, "[i]t is the policy of England to Keep the Irish divided among themselves so that they may be an easy prey."[20]

It is tempting of course, to view such statements as idiosyncratic, as unrepresentative of most Presbyterians in Ulster, especially by the mid-nineteenth century. Yet it is possible such sentiments were still more widespread than contemporaries usually acknowledged, or that scholars have since realized, in part because they could always be expressed more openly (and safely) in the United States than in Ulster itself. Indeed,

in their transatlantic letters many Presbyterians in both America and Ulster remarked that liberal or radical opinions suppressed or self-censored at home could only flower openly abroad. Thus, Robert McArthur, a Presbyterian farmer in east Donegal, envied his brother, a minor Jeffersonian politician in western Pennsylvania, and lamented that, in post-1798 Ulster, even constitutional reform was "a thing Not to be spoken of by any Irishman."[21] By contrast, northern Dissenters in the United States, such as James Richey in Kentucky, happily discovered that "the Irish . . . are particularly well rec[eive]d" as "Patriotic republicans." In fact, declared Richey, "if you were to tell [the] American[s that] you had fl[e]d your country or you would have been hung for treason against the [British] Gover[n]ment, they would think ten times more of you and it would be the highest trumpet sounded in your praise."[22]

To be sure, some Ulster Presbyterian immigrants, such as Robert Crockett in Tennessee, admitted that their political views had been nurtured (if not created) by favorable American environments – in which Irish Catholics usually comprised only small, non-threatening minorities – and so their opinions naturally differed from those of many of their correspondents in nineteenth-century Ulster.[23] Nevertheless, in view of the striking persistence of such views, even to the mid-nineteenth century, it would seem reasonable to reconsider at least two issues or questions. First is whether the Nationalist sentiments and analyses of these transatlantic authors cast doubt on historians' conventional assumptions as to the rapidity and universality – the "normality" or inevitability – of the development of Unionism among Ulster Presbyterians after 1798. Second, and much more controversial, is whether the analyses posited in these immigrants' letters had any bases in fact or logic.

Examining the first of those issues: In the early 1980s, when I wrote my first book, *Emigrants and Exiles*, I followed the interpretations of Revisionists and other scholars to argue that, after 1798, Ulster Presbyterian nationalism and disloyalty to the Crown quickly disappeared – and did so because of a number of mutually-reinforcing developments.[24] First was the northern Presbyterians' "natural" revulsion against reports of Catholic rebels' massacres of southern Irish Protestants (particularly in County Wexford) in 1798, as these revived Presbyterian memories of 1641 and confirmed their traditional fears and allegiances. Second was the spread, in the early and mid-1800s, of Protestant evangelicalism, as the fervor of revivalism (as revealed in the later Burns family letters, for example) united Presbyterians with Anglicans, intensified their common religious identity, confirmed their superiority to the unconverted "papists," and thus heightened both sectarian tensions and pan-Protestant loyalty to "Protestant Britain."

A third explanatory factor was the Loyal Orange Order's growing popularity among Presbyterians, as well as Anglicans, particularly in response to Daniel O'Connell's crusades, from the 1820s through the early 1840s, for Catholic Emancipation (granted 1829) and for repeal of the Act of Union. Like evangelicalism, the Orange Order reportedly embraced Ulster's Protestants in an anti-Catholic and pro-Union alliance. Also spurring the Orange Order's growth was a fourth factor: local competition between

Ulster's Protestants and Catholics over land and employment. During the early nineteenth century, Unionist spokesmen frequently alleged that Catholics were out-bidding ordinary Protestants for leases and farms, thus forcing them to emigrate. Such competition often turned violent, in part because after 1815 economic depression heightened the scramble for scarce resources, but also because in Ulster the contests were formalized and ritualized in frequent, bloody confrontations – the immediate causes of which were usually attributed (then by Orangemen, later by Revisionist historians) to "Catholic aggression."

Finally, the fifth and, by nearly all accounts, the most important factor in forging Protestant, and especially Presbyterian, loyalty to the Crown was the expansion in Ulster, from about 1830, of linen manufacturing and later of ship-building and related industries. These economic developments were all centered in or around "Presbyterian Belfast"; they were controlled by Protestant (often Presbyterian) businessmen; the best jobs were generally reserved for Protestant migrants to Belfast from the Ulster countryside; much of the capital for these enterprises came from Britain, as did the coal that powered the factories; and Britain and its Empire provided their principal markets. As a result, it *would* seem natural, as the loyalist clergyman, Rev. Henry Cooke, declared, that Belfast's economic growth should ensure that northern Presbyterians (and other Protestants) would view the Union with Britain as the source and ultimate guarantor of their profits, wages, and privileged market position.

However, recent research (both my own and that of others) has caused me to question the usefulness of these explanatory factors, and also the comprehensiveness of the result that they allegedly produced. For example, historians identify localism and parochialism as major characteristics of early nineteenth-century Irish rural society. It therefore seems at least questionable whether Ulster Presbyterians' interpretations of 1798 would be shaped primarily by reports of Catholic killings of loyalists (some of whom were also Catholics) in far-distant Wexford – especially when those atrocities paled by comparison with the scale of British and loyalist murder, torture, and house-burnings of Presbyterian (as well as Catholic) United Irishmen and their alleged sympathizers in Ulster itself.[25]

Likewise, research by David Miller and others indicates that evangelicalism was by no means universal among Ulster Presbyterians before the Great Famine, and that, in most parts of the North, Presbyterians did not join the Orange Order *en masse* until the mid-1880s.[26] Until then, the Orange Order remained a predominantly Anglican organization, and the patronage it enjoyed from the Church of Ireland and from much of Ulster's landlord class and magistracy, as well as from Dublin Castle prior to the 1830s – plus the Orangemen's leading role in the counter-revolutionary terror of the late 1790s – largely explains the aversion to Orangeism that early nineteenth-century Presbyterian emigrants often expressed in their letters.[27] Thus, if competition over land and leases between Presbyterians and Catholics was a major aspect of life in early nineteenth-century Ulster, it does not seem to have inspired many of the former to embrace the Orange Order.

Moreover, neither their letters nor the demographic data generally support the notion that successful competition from Catholics forced significant numbers of Presbyterians to emigrate. Indeed, as I've argued elsewhere, I suspect that the "Catholic competition caused Protestant hardship and emigration" argument was less a reflection of social reality than a product of the hegemonic imperatives of Unionist leaders, usually landlords or members of the *haute bourgeoisie*, who needed to deflect attention away from economic conflicts *within* the Ulster Protestant community, to unite the latter against the "eternal" Catholic "enemy."[28] There is no doubt, as historian Sean Farrell has shown, that violent encounters between Ulster Catholics and Protestants were frequent in early nineteenth-century Ulster.[29] However, Farrell's evidence reveals that, first, virtually all such confrontations were between Catholics and members of the Orange Order (who in the pre-Famine and Famine eras were overwhelmingly Anglicans, not Presbyterians); and, second, in almost every instance the casualties incurred by the Catholic combatants were far more numerous and fatal than among their Protestant adversaries. Indeed, between 1798 and 1916, the single most violent and lethal incident in Irish history was the Dolly's Brae massacre, in west County Down, on 12 July 1849, when Orangemen slaughtered at least thirty unarmed Catholics who allegedly threatened their annual march. Such lopsided statistics should at least call into question the argument that "Catholic aggression" was largely responsible for the growth of Ulster Protestant Unionism, especially among Presbyterians.

But what about the argument that regional economic development was the most important factor cementing Ulster Presbyterians' (and other Protestants') loyalty to the Union? Unfortunately, what Cooke and other apologists for Ulster's new industrial order often overlooked was that that the North's economic development was very uneven and its rewards were distributed quite selectively. Although parts of *east* Ulster were relatively prosperous in the pre-Famine decades, thanks to industrialization, ordinary Protestants in mid-, south, and west Ulster – even within mid-Ulster's so-called Linen Triangle, as Alexander Burns' 1827 letter revealed – suffered intensely in the transformation of linen manufacturing from widely-dispersed, cottage-based industry to highly-capitalized, urban- and factory-centered manufacturing. From the late 1820s, rural spinning collapsed, as northern capitalists concentrated spinning operations in Belfast's mills; meanwhile, most handloom weaving contracted geographically, to the immediate vicinity of the city's new factories. At mid-century (coincident with the Famine), the final mechanization and urbanization of weaving more-or-less completed the virtual de-industrialization of Ulster's countryside. As a result, during the pre-Famine period, much of northern Ireland deteriorated into what observers described as an overpopulated rural slum. In and near Belfast itself, the earlier collapse of the once-flourishing cotton industry (a collapse at least partly due to post-Union British competition) wrought severe hardship, and in the 1820s, 1830s, and 1840s, contemporaries described the city's working-class neighborhoods as "a mass of filth and misery," and the "physical condition" of its textile weavers as "worse . . . than that of any [other] class of Irishmen."[30]

Most tellingly, Ulster's economic development did *not* deter mass Protestant migration from Ireland's northern province. Rather, it was the uneven and inequitable nature of that development that served as a principal cause of mass migration—as Ulster Presbyterian weavers, such as the young John McBride from County Antrim, revealed in their letters; thus McBride's explanation that he had emigrated to America so that he would not "have to stand like a beggar at a manufacturer's door."[31]

Indeed, the scale of Ulster Protestant emigration during this period was remarkable, and its composition was highly revealing. As to scale, between the end of the American Revolution and the beginning of the Great Famine, at least one quarter-million—and probably much closer to one half-million – Protestants emigrated, to North America alone, from an Ulster which, near its demographic peak in 1831, contained less than 1.1 million Protestants. Moreover, both denominational and social-class factors heavily determined *which* Protestants had to emigrate and which did not. Analyses of census data confirm contemporary reports that Ulster's Protestant emigrants were disproportionately (indeed, overwhelmingly) Presbyterians as well as predominantly cottage artisans (principally weavers) and small tenant farmers or their children.

Perhaps most startling (particularly in light of the "Two Traditions" thesis), the demographic data indicate that Ulster's Presbyterians and Catholics had almost identically high rates of emigration, whereas by contrast the North's Anglicans generally had much lower rates of emigration. These disparities were particularly marked in the Mid-Ulster or Linen Triangle region, centered on County Armagh, which, significantly, was the epicenter of the Orange Order. Between 1766 and 1831, for example, Anglican growth rates in Mid-Ulster parishes were two, three, even four times higher than those of local Presbyterians (or Catholics).[32] Equally surprising is that these patterns continued through the period of the Great Famine and beyond. Between 1831 and 1861, Ulster's Anglican population declined merely 13 percent, whereas the number of Presbyterians in the province fell 18 percent. Again, the discrepancies in Mid-Ulster were most dramatic: between 1831 and 1861 County Armagh's Anglican inhabitants declined by only 8 percent, while the county's Presbyterian population fell 31 percent.[33]

Unfortunately, census data on religious affiliation were not compiled in 1841 or 1851, so it is difficult to distinguish the Great Famine's *specific* impact on the overall 1831-1861 patterns. After that crisis, Unionist myth-makers would claim that there had been no Famine in "Protestant Ulster"—that northern Protestants' social and moral superiority to Ireland's "feckless" Catholics had ensured their continued prosperity and thereby validated their loyalty to the Union with Britain. However, local studies indicate that Ulster Presbyterians often suffered severely. According to David Miller, for instance, during the Famine period the number of Presbyterians in the town of Maghera, in south County Derry, fell some 30 percent. Likewise, my own research has discovered in County Antrim a number of contiguous and overwhelmingly Presbyterian parishes, inhabited principally by small farmers and cottage weavers, where, between 1841 and 1851, the local populations declined by 20 to 25 to even 36 percent.[34]

Equally important is that Ulster's uneven economic development generated considerable social or "class" conflict – as well as mass migration – among northern Protestants. Of course, historians are aware that, in the late eighteenth century, the inequitable results of the commercialization of northern agriculture, coupled with periodic crises in the linen industry, provoked the emergence of secret agrarian societies – the Oakboys in the 1760s and the Steelboys in the early 1770s – with memberships largely composed of poor Presbyterians, who protested (often violently) against rents, evictions, tithes, high taxes, low wages, and other forms of economic oppression. Less well-known is that various forms of class conflict among Protestants, particularly in industrializing east Ulster, continued for at least several decades *after* the Act of Union of 1800.

I was first alerted to this phenomenon by the discovery of a remarkable letter written by William Coyne, a Belfast craftsman, to his brother in America. In March 1816 Coyne reported:

> We have [had] a little Stir as usual [here] between the Weavers and [the] Manufacturers – particularly Thomas How[e] and Frank Johnson. Several violent attacks have been made on the property of those two individuals, but the most daring of all was on the night of the 28th of February, on the house of Mr. Johnson. As his place had been twice set on fire before, he was well-prepared for a third attack, having the outside of his windows and door covered with sheet iron and [he was also] well [armed] on the inside to meet his assailants. However, notwithstanding, they made the attack about 3 o'clock in the morning of the 28th by forcing off the iron shutters [...] [Then] a heavy firing [of guns] commenced on both sides until the [members of the attacking] party forced the shutters and introduced either a bombshell or some other extraordinarily combustible [device] that soon exploded and rent the house from top to bottom, not a wall or inside partition that was not torn to pieces.[35]

Astonishingly, no one was killed – and within six months five of the alleged assailants were arrested, tried, and condemned – three of them to death, two to public floggings and long imprisonment – for their offense against what the local Unionist newspaper, the *Belfast News-Letter*, called the principles of "commercial good order." However, the public hangings of the weavers who attacked Johnson's house and factory seem to have had little immediate effect. My survey of the *News-Letter* in 1816-18 revealed the frequency in east Ulster of "outrages" perpetrated by Protestant (and principally Presbyterian) weavers and other trade union members in towns like Belfast, and by Protestant (again, principally Presbyterian) small farmers, weavers, and laborers in rural areas, against the persons and property of those whom the members of these illegal "combinations" regarded as economic exploiters. As local judges warned, if east Ulster's upper- and middle-classes (the so-called "friends of order") did not unite and act, quickly and harshly, the region threatened to become as chronically and violently "disturbed" as southern Irish (and Catholic) counties like Tipperary!

Otherwise, they admonished, the North's "turbulent [classes will only] become more audacious."[36]

By the 1830s, however, it seemed that overt examples of class conflict within Ulster's Protestant community had sharply diminished. Indeed, it was in that decade that local notables, such as the Rev. Henry Cooke, as well as visitors from Britain and overseas, became lavish in their praise of Ulster's and Belfast's Protestant inhabitants as exceptionally industrious, steady, and sober – as fully imbued with the "spirit of commercial enterprise" – indeed, with all of the virtues attributed to the happy conjunction of what Max Weber would later call "the Protestant ethic" and the beneficial effects of the Act of Union. Yet, as other, more acute observers noted, even in the 1830s and afterwards, Belfast and Ulster, generally, still contained many Presbyterians and other Protestants who did not behave "respectably" by bourgeois standards, and who were still, as one mill-owner complained, quite resistant to the demands of the new "factory system" and who continued to entertain very "erroneous opinions of the [proper] relations [between] employers and laborers, of masters and servants," in the new industrial order.[37] Likewise, although élite Unionists had already begun to eulogize the alleged superiority of the so-called Ulster "Protestant way of life" – and to argue that the Union with Britain was its principal protection against its Catholic, Nationalist foes – as we have seen, there were still plenty of poor northern Protestants, especially Presbyterians, who would suffer terribly in the Great Famine and who, both before and during that crisis, viewed emigration to America as their only alternative to poverty and exploitation in Ulster.

So, what are the implications of these demographic and social patterns for the questions raised earlier in this essay? How do they illuminate, for example, the transformation of Ulster Presbyterians, from John Burns's hopeful aspirants to be "Heirs of Freedom" in the 1790s, to what Robert McElderry scorned as "slaves to England" in the 1850s?

First, the exceptionally high rates of Presbyterian out-migration, from the early 1800s through the 1870s, coupled with the political sentiments expressed so frequently in Presbyterian emigrants' letters from America (especially in the pre-Famine period), suggest that the Ulster Presbyterian radicalism of the 1790s was not – as historians have argued – "naturally" or "inevitably" diluted at home by evangelicalism or Orangeism or even by the North's much-vaunted economic "prosperity". Rather, it was largely transplanted overseas, by the massive migrations of those who would not, or could not, adapt to the new Unionist order. These emigrants included not only Presbyterians who remained loyal to the ideals of the United Irishmen, but also a much larger number of poor and predominantly-Presbyterian small farmers and weavers who recognized, consciously or unconsciously, that this Unionist order entrenched in power what they called a "landlord aristocracy" and an established church (with its hated tithes) – with all their petty, despised agents and functionaries (bailiffs, tithe-jobbers, etc.) – plus an equally exploitive new class of manufacturers and mill-owners, such as the hated Frank Johnson. It also entrenched in power an Orange Order which, in many parts of pre-

Famine Ulster, many Presbyterians by no means regarded as a universal champion of pan-Protestant interests. In the 1790s even loyal Presbyterians, such as James Steele in east Donegal, had good reason to view the Orangemen as "sworn to destroy all Presbyterians" – as well as Catholics – because of their real or suspected disloyalty to the Crown.[38] Such pressures, backed by at least the threat of force, continued. In the 1820s, as the Scottish visitor to Ulster, Thomas Reid, observed, local Orangemen demanded that all "loyal" Protestants "show themselves" in the annual 12th of July parades; otherwise, Reid's informant added menacingly, "how could we tell whether they are of the right or the wrong sort?" Significantly, Reid noted, "it is not the poor Catholics alone whose allegiance is suspected. Poor Protestants are also thrown into the background. None but Orangemen are the 'right sort.'" Significantly also, in both the pre-Famine and Famine eras, instances of Orange mobs attacking Presbyterian anti-tithe and pro-tenant right meetings were not uncommon.[39]

Thus, in the years after the Napoleonic Wars, when Ulster emigration surged, John Gamble – himself a northern Presbyterian and one of Ulster's most astute observers – noted that the Presbyterian small farmers and craftsmen who flocked to America explained their decisions to emigrate in language that mixed bitter criticism of landlordism and of post-Union Ulster's social and political inequities with republican visions of the political "freedom" and socio-economic "independence" they hoped to enjoy overseas. "Borne down by poverty and oppression," Gamble wrote of his countrymen, "they carry their industry, talents, and energy to a distant and happier land, and [they] never think of the [land] they have quitted [except] with loathing, and of its government with a feeling for which hatred is [too] feeble [a] word."[40]

In short, I suggest that massive Presbyterian emigration helped ensure Unionist hegemony in Ulster by removing from northern Ireland a large and disproportionate number of people who were politically disaffected or who, because of their socio-economic grievances, were very likely to become politically disaffected. For although there is no doubt, for example, that Famine mortality and high emigration rates among northern Irish Catholics served to make Ulster's population more Protestant – and hence establish the parameters of the North's future Partition – it may be equally important that the disproportionately high percentage of Ulster Protestant emigrants who were Presbyterians also served to make the North's Protestant population more Anglican – and thus more "Orange" and loyal and Unionist. In addition, it is arguable that such massive, sustained emigration by *lower-class* Presbyterians (small farmers, cottiers, weavers, and laborers) resulted in a reconfiguration a restructuring – of Ulster Presbyterian society itself, which in turn helped ensure the hegemony of a Presbyterian bourgeoisie, its growth and wealth fueled by industrialization, whose members increasingly linked their economic interests with loyalty to the Union. Put crudely, mass, lower-class migration resolved the dangers of class conflict – as well as political disaffection – that had threatened the emerging Unionist élite in the early 1800s.

Moreover, it is also arguable that Ulster Unionism itself was at least partly a response to both the denominational and the social conflicts that had characterized northern society in the early 1800s. Whatever its abstract merits, Unionism provided a pan-Protestant political program whereby Anglican landlords and the Presbyterian middle classes could unite in defense of shared economic interests to achieve cultural and political hegemony over ordinary Protestants who challenged their authority – as in the Belfast weavers' violent attacks on their employers in 1816. The response to those attacks was instructive: east Ulster's gentry, merchants, and manufacturers – Anglicans and Presbyterians, Tories and Whigs – united in the face of what amounted to class warfare from the lower ranks of their own "Protestant community." Even more important, the logic of their social position obliged all Protestant "men of property" to rely on the coercive mechanisms of the post-Union British state which, after 1800, was the ultimate authority that protected upper- and middle-class Protestant interests against the resentments of both the Protestant and the Catholic poor. By the time of the Great Famine, this inter-denominational, Unionist alliance among the North's Anglican and Presbyterian élite had virtually been finalized, as, in the late 1840s, affluent Presbyterian Whigs joined with Anglican/Tory landlords to deny the Famine's dire effects on poor northern Protestants – and to ratchet up a sectarian rhetoric that identified hunger and want as the peculiar and much-deserved fates imposed by a Protestant God only on "indolent" and "disloyal" Catholics.

During the nineteenth century, élite Protestant hegemony – which also meant Unionist hegemony – was exercised through a variety of means on an Ulster Protestant "community" which, thanks to mass migration and social restructuring, was increasingly composed of those who chose neither "fight" nor "flight" and, hence, were increasingly receptive or vulnerable to élite pressures and Unionist perceptions. Ultimately, of course, hegemony is armored by brute force, and the capture and executions of Frank Johnson's assailants exemplified a policing and court system that steadily became more professional and effective – making successful "fight" virtually impossible. However, there were positive inducements for conformity as well. For example, the evangelical revivals of the so-called "New Reformation" provided northern Protestants not only with spiritual comforts but also a host of charitable and self-help institutions whose benefits were available to those Protestants who demonstrated industry, sobriety, deference, and fidelity to the Unionist order. Likewise, it is arguable that membership in the Orange Order not only provided ordinary Protestants with a sense of fellowship but also with economic advantages that usually sheltered them from pressures to emigrate. Thus, the surprisingly low emigration rates among Anglicans in County Armagh and elsewhere in Mid-Ulster can surely be attributed, at least in part, to the rewards of loyalism – as demonstrated by membership in the Orange Order – and to the consequent patronage they received from landlords and magistrates who themselves were overwhelmingly Anglican and often prominent Orangemen.

In retrospect, it is less surprising that Ulster's Presbyterians eventually embraced the New Reformation and the Orange Order, than that they delayed doing so for so long.

For on local levels, and for Ulster Presbyterians who hoped to avoid emigration, what were no doubt most crucial and pervasive were a multitude of everyday signals, hierarchically imposed but laterally reinforced, that conformity to "respectable" and "loyal" norms of behavior and opinion were essential prerequisites for favorable leases, steady employment, or decent wages. No doubt the most important, initial signals were given by those who had the greatest resources and power to bestow or withhold rewards, but eventually they were reinforced by sub-élites, social intermediaries, and, in the end, but all those who, consciously or unconsciously, acknowledged their legitimacy and thus adhered – sincerely or pragmatically – to the so-called "Protestant way of life." Probably typical, therefore, was the early and mid-nineteenth century transformation of the Harshaw family (Presbyterian farmers in west Down), from avowed Nationalists to staunch Unionists and Orangemen, as its younger members were enmeshed in webs of credit and other obligations to wealthy Orangemen, while the older ones were publicly criticized by their own clergyman for refusing to join the Orange Order or to renounce their old political sympathies.[41]

Thus, by the 1850s, in the eyes of someone like Robert McElderry, the younger Harshaws had indeed become "slaves to England." But, as queried earlier in this essay, did Ulster Presbyterians like McElderry, John Kerr, and John Mitchel have any *practical* (as opposed to a "romantic") basis for urging their co-religionists who remained in Ireland to return to the Nationalist ideals of the United Irishmen (instead of seeking to realize those ideals in the United States)? Could a kind of "false consciousness" be attributed, on any reasonable grounds, to ordinary Ulster Protestant Unionists in the nineteenth century? Most Irish historians would vehemently deny that possibility, contending that the material interests, as well as the cultural differences, between the "Two Traditions" were practically as well as ideally irreconcilable.

And yet, it is not arguable, on the basis of solid evidence (not wishful thinking), that ordinary Ulster Protestants and especially Presbyterians, from the middling and lower ranks of society, did in fact profit greatly from nearly all Irish Nationalist movements? – either from those movements' actual successes or from the efforts of British governments to suppress them by remedying their alleged underlying causes and grievances?

For example, Presbyterians and other Protestant Dissenters gained as much as did Catholics from the British Parliament's commutation of tithes in 1838 and from its disestablishment of the Church of Ireland and abolition of tithes in 1869: both measures were passed in response to Catholic Nationalist demands (by O'Connell and the "Tithe War" agitators in the 1830s) or actual rebellion (by the Fenians in 1867), and both removed longstanding Presbyterian grievances.[42] Likewise, Presbyterians and other Protestants derived as many social and political advantages as did Catholics from legislation such as the Irish National Education Act (1831), the Irish Municipal Corporations Act (1840), the Irish Colleges Act (1845), and the Irish Local Government Act (1898), all of which again were enacted partly if not primarily to undermine or

appease Nationalist agitation. Finally and most important, Protestant tenant farmers shared equally with Catholics in the great material rewards generated by the Irish Land Acts and the Land Purchase Acts of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and from 1870 onward their passage, too, was attributable largely or entirely to British government responses to the Fenian, Land League, and Home Rule movements.

Conversely, is it not also remarkable that Unionist landlords, Anglican clergymen, and most of the leaders of the Orange Order opposed nearly all these reforms from which ordinary Ulster Protestants benefited – especially the Land and Land Purchase Acts? And is it not arguable that, when poor northern Protestants suffered from low wages, rack-rents, evictions, and, during the Famine, from parsimonious relief, in the overwhelming majority of instances their fates were determined (and rationalized), not by their "ancient Catholic foes," but by Protestant proprietors, head tenants, magistrates, employers, and clergymen: in other words, by precisely the sorts of people who, a few decades later, would mobilize the North's poor Protestants to defend a Union and a social hierarchy that, especially (but by no means exclusively) during the Famine, had failed dismally to protect their ancestors and former neighbors from poverty or dispossession?

It was no wonder, therefore, that Unionist mythology could not accommodate the slightest acknowledgment of – much less expressions of gratitude to – Irish Nationalism for these and other striking improvements in the quality of life for ordinary Ulster Protestants. Indeed, at the risk of provocation, one might suggest that British Prime Minister Harold Wilson's 1974 characterization of Ulster Unionists as a "race of spongers" had a much broader, historical application than he ever had intended—confined as his remark was to their twentieth-century demands on the British Exchequer.

Yet, ironically, it was the Irish Nationalist triumphs that brought the greatest material benefits to ordinary Ulster Protestants that also may have ensured the final triumph of Unionist hegemony. The Land and Land Purchase acts tempered and ultimately removed the perennial economic conflicts between Protestant landlords and tenants. Thus, they reinforced the effects of lower-class emigration by creating, to an unprecedented degree, the socially-homogenized "Protestant community" of Unionist mythology. Moreover, those Acts also created a host of new administrative bodies, and of rules and procedures for rent-reductions and for the sale and parcelization of estates that were subject to interpretation – in a multitude of complex and potentially-disputed circumstances – by officials who might be influenced by subjective as well as objective considerations. David Fitzpatrick has suggested that, in County Clare in the early 1900s, Nationalist organizations such as the United Irish League and the Ancient Order of Hibernians gained large memberships less for their ideological or political appeal than because they operated as intermediaries, as "fixers," between Catholic farmers and the administrators of the Land Purchase Acts.[43] If that was true in overwhelmingly-Catholic Clare, then it would be logical to assume that in "Protestant Ulster" it would be the Orange Order (which already united many northern landlords, tenants, and laborers)

that might play an even more decisive role in the selective interpretation and implementation of the new land laws. This in turn might help explain how, despite those laws, Ulster's proprietors apparently retained more land and power than did their peers in southern Ireland, and also why membership in the Orange Order (and overt expressions of Unionist fidelity, generally) – increased so dramatically among Presbyterians and other tenants from the 1880s on. Indeed, perhaps one reason for Ulster Protestants' militant opposition to Home Rule was fear that a Catholic-dominated government in Dublin might appoint officials who would implement the Land and Land Purchase acts in ways less sympathetic to Orange-Protestant landlords and tenant farmers alike.

Of course, many issues of great importance to the development of Ulster Unionist hegemony remain unexplored in this essay. These include the effects of changes in the Irish franchise laws,[44] the doctrinal controversies among Ulster Presbyterians in the early 1800s, and the Ulster Revival of 1859. Likewise, Ulster Protestants' inherited fears of another "native" rising and massacre of northern "colonizers," as in 1641 (the scale of which was grossly exaggerated in loyalist mythology), can never be discounted. Indeed, it is not unlikely that the possible liberalization of firearms licenses (which Ulster's overwhelmingly Unionist magistrates had always confined largely to Protestants – thus ensuring that Orangemen could always "out-gun" their opponents) was yet another "hidden" factor in Ulster Protestants' opposition to Home Rule. Still another probable influence is what might be termed the "feedback effect" on Protestant Ulster from an American "Scotch-Irish" community that, during the nineteenth century, itself became increasingly bourgeois, religiously and politically conservative, and mobilized (socially, culturally, and politically) against Irish-American Catholics and their working-class, religious, and political institutions. From the mid-1800s through the early 1900s, some Ulster Protestant immigrants played prominent roles in American nativist and anti-Irish Catholic movements; and it is likely that the development of Unionism in Ulster, and of a pan-Protestant "Scotch-Irish" identity in America, were interrelated, transatlantic phenomena.[45] Yet the relationships between them have scarcely been studied, despite intriguing clues in the British consular (and spy) reports from the United States.

But perhaps the most intriguing question concerns the long-term cultural and psychological effects on Ulster's Presbyterians of their crushing defeat in 1798 and, more important, of their subsequent disavowal of the ideals and aspirations of the United Irishmen. After all, if McCracken, Munroe, and the United Irishmen's other Ulster Presbyterian leaders had been successful in 1798, doubtless they would have become their community's most revered political heroes and greatest political inspirations (comparable to Bolivar or Washington in the Americas). Perhaps what eventually became Ulster Presbyterianism's triumphalist Unionism – the ferocity of their loyalism and anti-Catholicism – was in some twisted way a response to the disappointments, even the shame, felt by the descendants of the "Heirs of Freedom" – or even to fears that they had indeed become "slaves to England," condemned by their own, not entirely-suppressed

memories of lost (or betrayed) possibilities, and scorned by many of their own republican children from across the Atlantic Ocean.

Notes

1 The initial results of this research were published principally in Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish Exodus to North America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). In this essay, with few exceptions, only quotations from Irish immigrants' letters will be cited in full. Other complete citations can be found in the notes to my other publications, cited below.

2 See Kerby A. Miller, et al., *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan: Letters and Memoirs from Colonial and Revolutionary America, 1675-1815* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).

3 On Revisionism in Irish historiography, see: Ciaran Brady, ed., *Interpreting Irish History: The Debate on Historical Revisionism* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1994); Luke Gibbons, "Challenging the Canon: Revisionism and Cultural Criticism," in Seamus Deane, ed., *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*, Vol. III (Derry: Field Day, 1991), 561-68; and Kerby A. Miller, "Re-Imagining Irish Revisionism," in Andrew Higgins Wyndham, ed., *Re-Imagining Ireland* (Charlottesville, Va., 2006), 223-43, reprinted in Miller, *Ireland and Irish America: Culture, Class, and Transatlantic Migration* (Dublin: Field Day, forthcoming 2008).

4 James Burns, Brackly, Co. Armagh, to James Burns [Jr.], c/o David Atcheson, Washington, Pennsylvania, 12 November 1796 (Burns family letters, courtesy of Professor James F. Burns, formerly of the University of Florida, Gainesville).

5 James Burns to same, 10 May 1797 (Burns family letters).

6 E.g., James Burns to same, 8 April 1802 (Burns family letters).

7 James Burns to same, Ten Mile, Greene Co., Pennsylvania, 22 February 1803 (Burns family letters).

8 Alexander Burns, Brackly, Co. Armagh, to same, Morris township, Greene Co., Pennsylvania, 28 June 1805 (Burns family letters).

9 Alexander Burns, to Elizabeth Burns, Williamsburg, Ohio, 9 April 1827 (Burns family letters).

10 See Kerby A. Miller, "Ulster Presbyterians and the 'Two Traditions' in Ireland and America," in Terence Brotherstone, Anna Clark, and Kevin Whelan, eds., *These Fissured Isles: Varieties of British and Irish Identities* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2005), 260-77, and reprinted in J. J. Lee and Marion R. Casey, eds., *Making the Irish American: History and Heritage of the Irish in the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 255-70.

11 John Chambers, New York City, to Robert Simms, Belfast, 17 June 1807, cited in Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles,* 190.

12 Daniel Polin, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to William Bennet, Mercer, Pennsylvania, 2 June 1818 (Balch Institute, Philadelphia).

13 John McMehen, Tullymore, Co. Down, to Joseph McMehen, Norwalk, Connecticut, 27 July 1832 (Michigan Historical Collections, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor).

14 Robert Peel and scholar Frank Wright cited in Kerby A. Miller, "Forging the 'Protestant Way of Life': Class Conflict and the Origins of Unionist Hegemony in Early Nineteenth-Century Ulster," in David A. Wilson and Mark G. Spencer, eds., *Ulster Presbyterians in the Atlantic World: Religion, Politics and Identity* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2006), 148; forthcoming as slightly revised in Miller, *Ireland and Irish America.*

15 John Mitchel, "Letters . . . ," originally in the *United Irishman* (Dublin), 28 April and 13 May 1848, reprinted in *An Ulsterman For Ireland*, intro. by Eoin Mac Neill (Dublin: The Candle Press, 1917), 1, 22-23.

16 Joel Mokyr, *Why Ireland Starved: A Quantitative and Analytical History of the Irish Economy, 1800-1850* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1985 ed.).

17 Mitchel's opinions were also replicated by elderly Ulster Presbyterian immigrants in the United States – such as James McConnell in Illinois, William Hill in South Carolina, and Robert Crockett in Tennessee – who had imbibed United Irish sentiments in early life, before they left Ireland, and preserved them in the congenial political environments of Jeffersonian republicanism and Jacksonian democracy, particularly in the southern and western states. See the James McConnell letters (Illinois State Historical Society Library, Springfield, Illinois); the Robert Crockett letters (Cumbria Record Office, Kendall, England); and the William Hill letters (South Caroliniana Library, University of South Carolina, Columbia; and T.1830, Public Record of Northern Ireland, Belfast, PRONI hereafter). Also, on Crockett, see Miller, et al., *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, chapters 15, 27, and appendix 3; and on Hill, see Kerby A. Miller, "Scotch-Irish,' 'Black Irish,' and 'Real Irish': Emigrants and Identities in the Old South," in Andy Bielenberg, ed., *The Irish Diaspora* (Harlow, England: Longman, 2000), 139-57, of which a slightly revised version is forthcoming in Miller, *Ireland and Irish America*.

18 John Kerr, Perrysville, Pennsylvania, to James Graham, Newpark, Co. Antrim, 26 November 1845 (MIC 144/1/7, PRONI).

19 John Kerr, New Orleans, Louisiana, to same, 29 January 1849 (MIC 144/1/13, PRONI); see also the letter written by his brother, William Kerr, Cincinnati, Ohio, to same, 5 August 1848 (MIC 114/1/12, PRONI).

20 Robert McElderry, Lynchburg, Virginia, to Thomas McElderry, Ballymoney, Co. Antrim, 31 May 1854 (T.2414/16, PRONI); see also McElderry's letters of 5 September 1851 and 12 December 1853).

21 John McArthur, Greenfort, Burt, Co. Donegal, to Robert McArthur, Shenango township, Crawford Co., Pennsylvania, 27 May 1800 (McArthur family letters; courtesy of C. W. P. MacArthur, Marble Hill, Dunfanaghy, Co. Donegal, and Col. Francis M. McMunigle, Tucson, Arizona); on the McArthurs, also see Miller, et al., *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, chapter 64.

22 James Richey, Hopkinsville, Kentucky, to his parents, Moyrusk, Lisburn, Co. Antrim, 2 March 1826 (Richey family letters; formerly in the collection of the late Professor E. R. R. Green, Queen's University, Belfast; now in PRONI).

23 Robert Crockett, Gallatin, Tennessee, to George Crockett, Sr., Drumnashear, Co. Donegal, 23 December 1825; see n. 17 above.

24 Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, 228-35.

25 The number of loyalists (mostly Anglicans) murdered by rebels at Scullabogue Barn and on Wexford Bridge, both in Co. Wexford, are estimated as between 200 and 300. Lamentable as were those killings, scholarly estimates of total casualties shortly before, during, and after the 1798 Rebellion range from 20,000 to 30,000 (contemporaries' figures ranged up to 100,000), with the overwhelming majority of victims identified as Catholic and Presbyterian United Irishmen (or those reputed to be United Irishmen or their sympathizers), most of whom were killed not in battle but in "cold blood."

26 E.g., see David W. Miller, "Irish Presbyterianism and the Great Famine," in Jacqueline Hill and Colm Lennon, eds., *Luxury and Austerity: Historical Studies*, 21 (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 1999).

27 According to Alan Blackstock's research on the Yeomanry (Ireland's official and virtually all-Protestant – and heavily Orange – militia, 1796-1834), Ulster Presbyterians were also under-represented in that institution – and, when they did join, officials in Dublin Castle often questioned their "sincerity," charging they enlisted only to "screen themselves" against imputations of disloyalty. Blackstock cited in Miller, "Forging the 'Protestant Way of Life," 151.

28 See Miller, "Forging the 'Protestant Way of Life,'" 160-61.

29 Sean Farrell, *Rituals and Riots: Sectarian Violence and Political Culture in Ulster, 1784–1886* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2000).

30 Miller, "Forging the 'Protestant Way of Life,'" 138-39.

31 John McBride, Watertown, New York, to James McBride, Derriaghy, Co. Antrim, 9 January 1820 (T.2613/3, PRONI).

32 E.g., see Miller, et al., *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, appendix 2: "Irish Migration and Demography, 1659-1831" (with Liam Kennedy), 656-73 (esp. 663-68).

33 Kerby A. Miller, "The Famine's Scars: William Murphy's Ulster and American Odyssey," *Éire-Ireland*, 36, nos. 1-2 (Sprint/Summer 2001), 98-103, 110; slightly revised version forthcoming in Miller, *Ireland and Irish America*.

34 Miller, "The Famine's Scars," 100-03.

35 William and E. Coyne, Belfast, to Henry Coyne, Pleasant Valley, Duchess Co., New York, 17 March 1816 (from Roger Hayden, Ithaca, New York); printed in full in Miller, ""Forging the 'Protestant Way of Life,'" 130-33.

36 Miller, "Forging the 'Protestant Way of Life,'" 134-37, 141.

37 Miller, "Forging the 'Protestant Way of Life,'" 143-45.

38 James Steele, Tops, Raphoe, Co. Donegal, to Ephraim Steele, Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 15 May 1797 (Ephraim Steele Papers, Acc. 3876, Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina).

39 Reid cited in Miller, "Forging the 'Protestant Way of Life,'" 155.

40 Gamble cited in Miller, "Forging the 'Protestant Way of Life,'" 164.

41 On the Harshaws, see Miller, "Forging the 'Protestant Way of Life,'" 158.

42 The same argument might be made about the Irish Parliament's repeal of the Sacramental Test Act in 1780, although in this instance the nationalist threat to the political *status quo* came from the "colonial nationalism" and reform demands of Protestant (and especially Ulster Presbyterian) Patriots and Volunteers.

43 David Fitzpatrick, *Politics and Irish Life, 1913-21: Provincial Experience of War and Revolution* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1977).

44 Rather surprisingly, no scholars have investigated the effects of Parliament's 1829 disenfranchisement of Ireland's *Protestant* (as well as Catholic) 40s.-freehold voters, although thousands of Ulster Presbyterian (and other Protestant) tenants and craftsmen must have lost the vote thereby. Perhaps significantly, by the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the Irish parliamentary and local government franchises were finally re-democratized, the political complexion of Ulster's re-enfranchised Protestant voters had been transformed into a vivid Orange.

45 This is my argument in *Irish Immigrants in the Land of Canaan*, but that work only identifies the origins of that relationship in the 1790s and early 1800s. See also Kerby A. Miller, "The New England and Federalist Origins of 'Scotch-Irish' Identity," in William Kelly and John R. Young, eds., *Ulster and Scotland, 1600-2000: History, Language and Identity* (Dubin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 105-18, a slightly revised version of which will appear as chapter 6 of Miller, *Ireland and Irish America*.