

Only Distant Cousins: Irish Protestants and Politics in the U.S., Canada, and Australia

ABSTRACT: In the United States, the (re)discovery and celebration of Irish Protestant ancestry has extended in recent years to arguments by some journalists and politicians—albeit fewer scholars—that there exists yet today an identifiable “Scots-Irish vote”. This paper explores the political behavior of Irish Protestant migrants and their descendants in the U.S. and in a critical state-level case (Kentucky). To assist in identifying the factors that have fostered or mitigated an Irish Protestant political identity, comparative analysis will be constructed between the American experience and the very different ones of two other major recipient countries: Canada (and the province of Ontario) and Australia (and the state of New South Wales). The timing and magnitude of mass migration, settlement patterns, source regions, and religious affiliation have all mattered in determining the political roles played by Irish Protestants in the three former British colonies since the 18th and 19th centuries. Even more important have been the local economic and political contexts, including prevailing political party structures and competition. These factors explain why none of the three case countries, the U.S. included, bears witness to a coherent, identifiable Irish Protestant political legacy.

For the past decade or so, awareness of Irish Protestant ancestry has grown in North America, Oceania, South Africa, and other areas that have welcomed non-Catholic emigrants from Ulster and other parts of Ireland over the centuries. In the United States, especially, this ethnic (re)discovery has extended to arguments by some political journalists and politicians that there exists today a “Scots-Irish vote”. Yet there is no such discussion in Canada and Australia, which have had more recent histories of more intense Irish Protestant political activism. This paper will try to explain that puzzling discrepancy, relying on the secondary literature, historical sources, and census and voting data to examine the three national cases, as well as the critical sub-national cases of Kentucky in the U.S., Ontario in Canada, and New South Wales in Australia. The comparative analysis is organized around the major cross-national differences that scholars have identified in the Irish Protestant experience: the timing and magnitude of migration and settlement patterns in the receiving country; migrants’ regional origins in Ireland and their religious affiliations; and the local economic and political contexts into which they migrated, including prevailing political party structures and competition. In

the end, contextual factors have outweighed cultural and demographic ones, making clear why it is misleading in all three of the case countries—including the U.S.—to speak of a coherent, identifiable political legacy of Irish Protestant migration.

IRISH PROTESTANT MIGRATION, LOST AND FOUND. Reflecting the current boom in interest in oral history and genealogy, people in various parts of the world have been discovering and celebrating their membership in the Protestant branch of the Irish diaspora.¹ Of the millions who left Ireland between the 18th century and World War II, a sizable share consisted of Protestants, most of them from the nine counties of the province of Ulster but many as well from the south. From the colonial period until the 1930s, something on the order of 1.9 million (40 percent of all Irish emigrants) went to the U.S. (Jones 1980), 500,000 (almost half) to Canada (McConnell 2001), and 50,000 (between 10 and 20 percent) to Australia (O’Farrell 2000).

In the mid- to late 19th century, Irish Protestant communities were both criticized and lionized. Clashes between “Orange” and “Green” Irish earned both camps a bad reputation in Australia, Canada, and certain American cities. At the same time, in the U.S. and Canada, community leaders of the so-called Scotch-Irish (i.e., Ulster Scot or Scots-Irish) community, seconded by a host of prominent Protestant academics (e.g., Hanna 1902 ; Ford 1915), praised those “rugged, individualistic, freedom-loving frontiersmen largely responsible for building the American nation” (Lynn 2003: 2). From 1889 to 1901, Congresses of the Scotch-Irish Society of America extolled the virtues of what was defined as a distinct, worthy “race.” One speaker at the Third Congress, held in Louisville in 1891, found important parallels between two “sublime objects”: the Gulf Stream “in the realm of creation” and the Scotch-Irish “in the realm of human history”: “Freedom, general education, and scriptural faith are [the latter’s] peculiarity, just as its greater saltiness, its indigo blue, and its higher temperature are the distinctions of the gulf stream” (Floyd 1891). A Canadian visitor explained why Ulster Scots in his country “adhered to their British connection”; he described Canada’s political system, “the most

¹ The celebrations have come to involve an undifferentiated mixing of Irish Catholic and Protestant heritages, which has been encouraged by Irish governments (see McCarroll 2010). Popular in southern Ontario and mountainous areas of Ulster Scot settlement in the U.S. are festivals that honor highland Scottish culture—belying the lowland origins of the majority Irish Presbyterians who moved there (see Glasgow 2010; and Virginia 2010).

democratic government in the world,” as the “peculiar product of the genius of the Scotch-Irish race” (Acheson 1891).

After the turn of the 20th century, however, the achievements and distinctiveness of Ulster Scots and other Irish Protestants faded. The mass emigration resulting from the Great Famine was principally, if not solely a movement of Catholics. Their sheer numbers—not to mention their status as victims, sense of exile and persecution, and strong nationalism (see MacRaild 2003/04; compare Gleeson 2001)—effectively made “Irish” synonymous with “Catholic,” at least in the U.S. and Australia. Only once studies of “white ethnics” had become popular and more nuanced ethnic survey data had become available by the 1970s and 1980s was there evidence of “growing awareness of the diversity of the Irish diaspora” (Walker 2007: 268).

The ongoing celebration of Irish Protestant roots has resulted in more serious and critical studies of this group in one or more countries (Walker 2007). The old stereotypes and maudlin portrayals have persisted in some quarters, even so, in particular with respect to America’s Scots-Irish (see Fitzpatrick 1989; and Kennedy 2001). The non-Presbyterians among Irish Protestant migrants have for the most part been ignored. James Webb, now a conservative Democratic Senator from Virginia, published *Born Fighting: How the Scots-Irish Shaped America* in 2004. In it he argued that the Scots-Irish’ rugged individualism, militaristic honor culture, mistrust of authority, and populist religious sensibilities inherited from the Scottish Kirk (see Zito 2008) generated a value system that affects their descendants’ voting behavior to this day.

David Hackett Fischer (1989) has argued that rural white voters in large swathes of the South and West share viewpoints rooted in this common cultural heritage. The Scots-Irish first settled in New Hampshire and other parts of New England in the early 1700s before escaping the Puritans’ intolerance (even toward fellow Calvinists) and moving on to interior Pennsylvania. Within a generation, they had spread to the western parts of that state and southern Ohio and down along both sides of the Appalachian Mountains into upland Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi. Some would head further west to Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas, and others eventually “migrated out to the Bakersfield region of California (think *The Grapes of Wrath*), and up the Great Plains to parts of Michigan,

Kansas, Nebraska and Colorado (James Dobson and Tom Tancredo territory, not Denver and Boulder)” (Joseph 2009). By the 1980s, many of these areas had seen a shift among conservative Democrats to supporting Republican candidates, and the Scots-Irish have been cast as archetypal “Reagan Democrats” and the “core culture around which Red State America has gathered and thrived” (Tilove 2008; see Phillips 1999).

Author Tom Wolfe, the National Endowment for the Arts’ Jefferson Lecturer in 2006, agreed with James Webb that the Scots-Irish of the South had provided the needed margin of victory for Republican George W. Bush in the 2004 presidential election (Wolfe 2006). This heritage was fingered again in 2008 to explain Barack Obama’s poor performance among working-class white voters in Appalachia—as opposed to those in, for example, the Upper Midwest and the Pacific Northwest—against Hillary Clinton in the Democratic primaries and against John McCain in the general election (Scallon 2008). Conservative Southern commentators have responded to charges that racism was the problem by alleging that Senator Obama’s Appalachian unpopularity was owing to Scots-Irish traditions of patriotism and military service that worked against the liberal, “culturally confusing” candidate (Reese 2009). According to political analyst Michael Barone (2008), these sorts of attitudinal continuities may suggest that modern political choices are not so much rational responses to the issues of the day as they are links to the past, to Abraham Lincoln’s “mystic chords of memory” (Barone 2008). Even those critical of the value system associated with Scots-Irish migrants have often accepted it as real and influential (Oliver 2005; Bageant 2010).

Notable by its absence is any such discourse in Canada or Australia. Irish migration to Canada was fairly evenly balanced between Catholics and Protestants of several denominations. The latter were acknowledged as a matter of course, although usually lumped into an undifferentiated “British” migration stream. In Australia recognition has grown that what used to be viewed as an almost exclusively Irish Catholic community contained a significant Protestant component (Fitzpatrick 1994). An expanding list of studies of the Loyal Orange Institution (LOI) in these two countries has made it undeniable that Irish Protestants played a central, very visible role—more so than in the U.S.—in a series of major social and political conflicts during the 19th and early 20th centuries (see, among others, Houston & Smyth 1980 & 1984; See 1993; MacRaild

2003/04; Kaufmann 2006; O'Connor 2006; and Laffan 2009). This dusting off of Canadian and Australian history has not yielded any mention of lingering effects of Irish Protestant perspectives or traditions on contemporary political life. More telling is historian Eric Kaufmann's remark on his website (<http://www.sneps.net/research-interests/orangeism>) that his curiosity about Orangeism was sparked in part by the question of a colleague from a British-Loyalist Canadian background: "I wonder what ever happened to the Orange Order in Toronto? They used to run the place."

Several answers have been supplied in the relevant literature to that question and the related one concerning cross-national differences in Irish Protestants' perceived political significance in the past and today. The factors most commonly cited are demographic and cultural in nature: How many Irish Protestants arrived, and when? Where did they settle abroad? Where did they come from in Ireland? What was their religious affiliation?

THE TIMING AND MAGNITUDE OF MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT PATTERNS. When attempting to account for the weakness of the Orange movement, if not the continued political resonance of Scots-Irish values in the U.S., scholarship on Irish Protestant migrants has frequently called attention to their precocious arrival and their concentrated settlement in isolated frontier areas. Thus, this line of reasoning goes, whereas their cousins moved to Canada and Australia after community identities had already gelled, America's Ulster Scots had left Ireland generations earlier. Economic push-pull factors and persecution against Presbyterians drove a mass movement across the Atlantic Ocean to the American colonies beginning around 1717. During the six decades preceding the Revolution, over 200,000 Scotch-Irish migrants settled in America.

While there was a continuous stream of migration, there were definite periods when the flow reached outstanding proportions. The years of greatest influx were 1717-19, 1724-29, 1740-41, 1754-55, and 1770-75—before the establishment of the LOI in County Armagh in 1795 and the failed Irish Rebellion of 1798 launched by the Catholics and Presbyterians of the Society of United Irishmen. When the American Revolutionary War began, migrants from Ulster and their families comprised an estimated one-sixth of the European population in the colonies. Leaving after they had come to feel as

victimized as the native Irish Catholics by English economic and religious policies, they became fervent anti-British patriots and thus immune to unionist Orange sentiments (Prentis 2008).

In contrast, the Irish Protestants who went to Canada and Australia have been prone to embracing precisely those sentiments. Timing, again, has been named as one possible cause. Putting aside modest contingents of Ulster Scots “Planters” recruited to settle land in Nova Scotia abandoned when the Acadiens were expelled in the 1760s and of United Empire Loyalists in the 1780s, the mass migration of Irish Protestants into Canada began in earnest only after Napoleon’s defeat at Waterloo. By that point, the LOI had been founded, and many Irish Protestant migrants were staunch members (Lynn 2003). The same was true in Australia, where these Irish were one of the “founding peoples.” Arriving as convicts and free settlers from the late 1780s and early 1790s to the first few decades of the 20th century, they counted for a quarter of the country’s total intake during that period. In the 1830s and ’40s, many Irish Protestants were convinced to come by assisted passage schemes (known as the Bounty System). Designed to appeal to farmers and skilled craftsmen, “packages” were advertised regularly in the *Londonderry Sentinel* and other newspapers (Parkhill 1987: 65). Those who responded favorably and left for Australia were certainly familiar with and maybe implicated in the sectarian strife in their homeland.

The comparative timing narrative is reasonable, but it does omit key nuances of the American case. The Irish Protestant migrants of the colonial era were not strangers to sectarian conflict, in fact, and their hostility toward Britain after independence had perhaps more to do with contemporary events than with historical hatreds. The wave of Ulster emigration of the 1770s was provoked in large part by harvest failures, a slump in the linen trade, rising land rents, multiplying evictions, and huge tax increases. These troubles led to agrarian protest movements and the formation of secret societies like the “Hearts of Oak” in 1763 and the “Hearts of Steel” in 1769-72. Consisting mainly of Presbyterian farmers, these groups attacked exploitative landlords but occasionally targeted rival Catholic tenant farmers as well. Many “Steel Boys” left for America and fought in the War of Independence (Stewart 1996). The majority of migrants from Ireland to the U.S., both Protestant and Catholic, did back the Revolution; they made up much of

Washington's army and supplied the bulk of the forces winning key battles. Still, there were Irish fighting on both sides of the war (Carroll 2006: 42). As already noted, there were also Ulster Scots among Canada's United Empire Loyalists, Americans who moved north after the British defeat in 1783. It is likely that heavy Irish Protestant involvement in the War of 1812 against Britain had as much to do with tensions between Americans and British at what was then the western edge of the republic as with lingering resentment over repression back in Ulster.

To illustrate with an example, John Ireland, Jr., a Presbyterian farmer born outside Belfast in 1752, decided to migrate to Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, in 1774. At the time, he was a former Steel Boy being sought by local authorities: "He was a man who possessed a strong love for liberty and popular institutions, and it was on account of disaffection towards the British Government that he was compelled to leave Ireland" (W. R. Brink & Co. 1875: 70A; see also *The Biographical Encyclopaedia* 1878: 144-5). One of his great-grandsons, James Beaty Ireland, dictated a family history to his son just after his 100th birthday in 1897. He described how the family came to America: "In his early manhood [John, Jr.] was one of the leaders of a failing revolt against the English Government and, his arrest having been ordered, he was conveyed by his friends on ship-board in a wine hogshead. He was joined by his wife and child and a few comrades, and sailed for America" (Talbert 1959). As the official records of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Pennsylvania State Archives in Harrisburg attest, John, Jr., did not hesitate to continue his opposition: "The Revolutionary War just commencing, he soon cheerfully enlisted in a regiment of Pennsylvania Militia" (Talbert 1959).

After the Revolution, like so many Scots-Irish migrants, the Ireland family took the Great Wilderness Road down Virginia's Shenandoah Valley and then westward through the Cumberland Gap into what would become Kentucky. They settled in the Bluegrass Region north of Lexington. (Groups of descendants would later continue on to southern Illinois, Missouri, Texas, and the West Coast.) James Beaty Ireland, whose half-brother Samuel and several cousins fought in the War of 1812, writes in his memoir of immediate threats and not of ancestral hostilities. He recounts that there was widespread mourning in Kentucky after so many of native sons were killed at the Battle of the River Raisin (near Monroe, Michigan) in 1813, and "[w]hen the news of the Battle of Waterloo

and the defeat and capture of Napoleon Bonaparte [in 1815] was received, there was great sorrow throughout all that country. The people's sympathy was all for the French. There had been so many good men of that neighborhood killed by the British and their allies, the Indians, that the hatred for the English was very intense" (Talbert 1959).

While this saga was occurring, moreover, the flow of emigrants from Ireland, including its northern province, had recommenced. It was not until the 1830s that Catholics constituted a majority of the Irish influx, and Protestants continued to arrive during and after the Great Famine. Brian Walker (2007) notes that "not insignificant numbers of Protestants—Presbyterian and Episcopalian—continued to emigrate to America from Ireland throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" (p. 269). Like their Catholic neighbors, they were increasingly likely to settle in large cities like Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and New York (Lynn 2003).

Typically, Scots-Irish settlement has been portrayed as involving an 18th-century concentration along the Appalachian spine in homogeneous, out-of-the-way communities, succeeded by onward movement by parts of them westward and northward in the 19th and 20th centuries. By then, presumably, their value system had "set." During the initial period, they are seen as having overwhelmed and absorbed smaller ethnic groups, benefiting from their status as internal migrants with key cultural and religious views and a language in common with the English majority (Griffin 2001; see Blethen 2002). "They established in the southern highlands," David Hackett Fischer (1989) contends, "a cultural hegemony that was even greater than their proportion in the population" (quoted in Joseph 2009). One speaker at the Third Congress of the Scotch-Irish Society of America in Louisville remarked that "[i]n Kentucky, as in Tennessee and Pennsylvania, the Scotch-Irish constitute the most numerous and influential part of the population.... Why, Kentucky is Scotch-Irish itself. I can't speak of Kentucky without speaking of the Scotch-Irish, and I can't speak of the Scotch-Irishmen that have lived in Kentucky without recalling the history of Kentucky" (Lindsay 1891).

In both Canada and Australia, migrants were more evenly diffused in terms of occupation, social class, and geography. Irish Protestants spread out into the countryside, living among other migrants from the British Isles. Favored destinations were New Brunswick and then Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island in Canada, and New South

Wales and then Victoria in Australia. Over time, internal migration developed to cities like Toronto, Melbourne, and Sydney—where exclusively Irish Protestant neighborhoods never formed (Jupp 2001; MacRaild 2003/04). Only a few places in the two countries saw concentrated, American-style settlement patterns: the prime examples were rural counties like Dufferin and Simcoe northwest of Toronto; small dairying communities south of Sydney like Shoalhaven on the South Coast and Gerringong and Kiama in Illawarra region; and mixed farming areas of the Hunter Valley north of Sydney.

Another difference vis-à-vis the situation in the U.S. of supposed significance was the numerical and spatial relationships between Protestant and Catholic Irish. The two factions migrated to Canada in roughly equal numbers, so neither of them “dominated or monopolized Irish identity” (Walker 2007: 273). With residential segregation around linguistic lines—English vs. French speaking—in most cases trumping that based purely on religion, there was more inter-Irish contact than might have been expected. In Australia, Irish Protestants were “at the heart of the dominant structures of society” (O’Farrell 1992: 93). Nevertheless, even in a stronghold of theirs like Kiama or the Hunter Valley, they coexisted with a large cohort of Irish Catholic farm laborers. Intermarriage was surprisingly common (O’Farrell 1992: 74-102).

For instance, Samuel Ireland, a distant cousin of the John Ireland, Jr., who ended up in Kentucky, did not leave the Belfast area with his parents as an assisted emigrant until 1838. That was over 60 years later than the American branch of the Irelands and at a time when sectarian violence had been roiling Ulster. A carpenter and cabinet-maker like many of his American relatives, he ultimately put down roots in Parramatta, New South Wales, now a western Sydney suburb. A Presbyterian, he married an Irish Catholic woman from County Clare in 1858 and is buried next to her in a Catholic cemetery.

Received wisdom notwithstanding, stories of such mingling are also far from alien to the Irish Protestant experience in the U.S. Back-country areas like post-Revolutionary Kentucky welcomed modest yet quite visible clusters of English, Welsh, native Irish, Swiss, French, Germans, and Anglicans in addition to Irish Presbyterians. At the local level Scots-Irish dominance appeared less clear cut. In Henry and Scott Counties, Kentucky, the aforementioned Ireland family lived among many fellow Ulstermen and –women, together with pockets of Dutch Calvinists, Irish Catholics,

Reformed Germans, French Huguenots and Catholics, Welsh Methodists, and English Quakers. The outcome of their generally peaceful coexistence and frequent intermarriage was more a pioneer cultural amalgamation than a purely Scots-Irish civilization.

Even more mixing occurred in the areas to which the Scots-Irish moved when they left their Upper South strongholds. Thus by the time Theodore Ireland, great-great-great-grandson of John, Jr., joined the Great Migration and took his family from Kentucky's blacksmith shops and tobacco fields to Detroit's automobile factories in 1918, he already had some Palatinate German and English Anglican blood in his veins. In 1925, his son Richard married the daughter of Polish Catholic immigrants, thereby conforming to a widely observed pattern of blending and gradual integration of the Scots-Irish into the white working class—and, for that matter, the labor movement (see Beynon 1938; and Kirby 1983).

SOURCE REGIONS IN IRELAND AND RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION. Even if the relatively greater resilience of Scot-Irish culture in the U.S. could be attributed to earlier migration and more concentrated and isolated settlement, that argument would have difficulty explaining why Australia and Canada experienced higher levels of Orange-Green conflict in the 19th and 20th centuries. As a result, it has been necessary to add cultural factors relating to Protestant migrants' home regions back in Ireland and their religious affiliation to the demographic factors.

UNITED STATES. America's Irish Protestants were predominantly Presbyterian Ulster Scots from Counties Antrim, Down, Londonderry, and heavily Presbyterian locales in the rest of the province. In colonial America, many Scots-Irish would leave the faith of John Knox, often because of the difficulty of getting properly trained and educated ministers on the frontier. That was a requirement about which the Methodist and Baptist churches and other evangelicals were more relaxed. The huge revivals associated with the Second Great Awakening during the early 1800s also helped win converts to those denominations (Pastana 2009; Rohrer 2010).² The Ireland family of Kentucky followed such an evolution: several of its members participated in the camp meeting at Cane Ridge in 1801, and within two generations of John, Jr.'s, arrival in the U.S. in 1774,

² Some commentators even hold that colonial-era Presbyterian Irish migrants—and their Catholic countrymen and –women—were not that religious before they became Methodists and Baptists (Carroll 2006).

many Irelands had already become Methodists, while others were marrying into Methodist and Baptist families (see Talbert 1959). The Anglicans, English and Welsh dissenters, Dutch Calvinists, and at least a share of the Irish Catholics living in regions of heavy Scots-Irish migration were doing the same. Evangelical Protestant values, Seymour Martin Lipset (1990) has suggested, reinforced Revolutionary values of autonomy, self-determination, and individualism. Religious developments have thus been taken as fortifying the effects of early migration and concentrated settlement. They combined to shift the focus definitively to American realities and to weaken Orangeism and attachment to quarrels indigenous to the British Isles.

Such spats were not completely absent, even so. U.S. immigration historian John Higham (1992) wrote that “[f]ew Americans hated the Catholic Irish more than did the Protestant Irish” (p. 61). They have been accused of filling the ranks of the nativist movement: the Order of United Americans and the American Party (better known as the Know- Nothings) before the Civil War, the American Protective Association in the 1890s, and the Second Ku Klux Klan of the 1910s and 1920s were its major manifestations (MacRaild 2003/04). While Irish Protestants did over time become part of the dominant WASP elite and participated in those movements, their anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant activities occurred primarily in northern and eastern urban areas—not in the backwoods homeland of the Scots-Irish with little fresh immigration. The closest violence against Irish newcomers came to that area was the Know-Nothing election riot in Louisville in 1855. A bustling Ohio River port, it had close ties to the North and a demographic makeup unique in Kentucky: the targets of the aggression there were indeed Irish Catholic immigrants but even more so German Catholics and Jews (and sometimes Protestants).

A “Twelfth” parade to honor Protestant King William’s victory at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690 was recorded in New York City as early as July 1824. In the post-Civil War period, the Northeast and Middle West comprised the “core of Orange America”—in particular, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia, with lodges as well in New York City, Boston, Cleveland, Chicago, Minneapolis, Louisville, San Francisco, and parts of rural eastern Michigan and northern Maine where immigrants from Ontario and New Brunswick had settled. Urban, working-class Scots-Irish and recent Ulster immigrants represented the

lion's share of the membership (Houston & Smyth 1984: 194-205). Anti-Green violence flared in several cities during the latter half of the 19th century, with the most serious incidents occurring in New York City on July 12 in 1870 and 1871. As recounted by Michael Gordon (1993), these riots, in which 68 people died, embodied a struggle between competing visions of America as it was beginning to industrialize and were embroiled in the political fallout from Mayor William M. "Boss" Tweed's financial and corruption scandals. Developments in Ireland were not a big factor in the events. Dependent on immigrants and driven by a zealous devotion to Protestantism, American Orangeism was seemingly not able to survive assimilation, ecumenism, and secularism (Kaufmann 2006: 2-3).

CANADA. More of the Irish Protestant migration to Canada originated in the conservative, agricultural Ulster border counties of Cavan, Fermanagh, and Monaghan. These areas were more Anglican and more supportive of the Orange movement than heavily Presbyterian Antrim and Down. Numerous Protestants also came from the rest of Ireland, including the southern counties (Akenson 1984). Religious discord between English Protestants and the up to then mostly French Catholics marked the 19th century in Canada. Irish Protestant and Catholic migrants fit into their respective camps, and the LOI grew into a multi-ethnic defender of Loyalist Protestantism (Houston & Smyth 1980; O'Connor 2006).

Orangeism arrived in Upper Canada in the first few decades of the 19th century and expanded rapidly. Almost one of every three adult male Protestants was admitted to an Orange lodge between 1870 and 1920 (Kaufmann 2004). "More a social institution than anything else," the lodges welcomed not only Ulster Scots but also other Irish Protestants, English and Scottish migrants, German Protestants, native-born Canadians, and even First Nations people (Kaufmann 1997: 23; see Craig 1963). Members were in a position to receive comradeship, access to health insurance and burial funds, and useful public speaking and networking skills (MacRaidl 2003/04). Irish Protestant migration and the LOI helped to reconcile the split in the Loyalist ranks between the conservative, aristocratic Anglican elite and the democratic/reformist, rural, largely Methodist rank-and-file (Akenson 1984: 137-8).

In view of that integration, the LOI was not long in having noteworthy political influence. It supplied the country with four federal Prime Ministers and numerous provincial premiers, members of parliament at each level, mayors, and municipal councilors; and it played a role in the successful fight against Catholic school funding and other Francophone-led causes in the late 19th century (Kaufmann 2004).

Nowhere was its success—in terms of numbers of members and lodges, organizational network strength, and resonance with local society—more evident than in central and western Ontario. Heavily Protestant, loyal to Britain, and wedged between the U.S. and Catholic Quebec, Ontario developed a “garrison mind-set” like Ulster’s that fit well with the Orange ideology (Houston & Smyth 1984: 197). Eric Kaufmann (2006) has found that predictors of Orange membership included the Irish and conservative Presbyterian and Methodist shares of a county’s Anglo-Protestant population (based on 1931 census data), as well as the size of the local Catholic population in “competition” with the dominant groups. Both Methodists and Anglicans were overrepresented in Ontario’s Orange lodges. Rural Irish Protestant populations were closer knit and more Orange than elsewhere.

Dufferin County, on tableland 100 kilometers northwest of Toronto, provides an illustration. One of the last areas of western Ontario to be settled by Europeans, it long had an economy dominated by livestock raising, mixed farming, and dairying (Dufferin County Forest 1995). A Canadian speaker at the Third Congress of the Scotch-Irish Societies of America opined that “in no part of Canada are there better farms” than in that area, which was “one of the finest rural sections in [the country], and for that matter in the world” (Acheson 1891). The 1931 census indicated that 51 percent of the Protestants in Dufferin County were of Irish descent, the highest percentage in the province, and many of them were Methodists and Presbyterians. The county also had the highest Orange density in Ontario (Kaufmann 2006: 8; see Sawden 1952). Along the agricultural frontier, the LOI was a locus of social life, and from that embeddedness and a religious sense of mission grew a powerful political and patronage function. A study of Ulster Scots in Dufferin County depicts them as highly individualistic, materialistic, and

irascible (see Harris, Roulson and De Freitas 1975).³ Their dominance meant that there was little need to resort to violence, though.

Circumstances were different in Toronto, where Orange-Green conflict marred St. Patrick's Day and July 12th celebrations and marches between 1867 and 1892. When Pope Pius IX declared 1875 a Jubilee Year, the subsequent decision of local Catholics to make a "pilgrimage through quiet Toronto streets on the Sabbath carrying symbols of Popery" was considered beyond the Pale by Orangemen and resulted in a major riot (Kealey 1980: 31).⁴ It was for such clashes that the city earned the sobriquet "the Belfast of Canada." Anti-Catholic fervor was further stoked in the 1890s, when the nativist American Protective Association spread to Canada (MacRaild 2003/04).

The LOI was not only active in the streets. It nurtured close ties with conservative municipal and provincial politicians. Eric Kaufmann (2006) tallies the movement's achievements: Toronto "has had thirty Orange mayors in its history—and few non-Orangemen could win the job until the 1960s. The Ontario legislature was a third Orange in 1920, and no fewer than four Ontario premiers—George Ferguson (1923-30), George Henry (1930-34), Thomas Kennedy (1948-49), and Leslie Frost (1949-61)—have been Orangemen" (p. 21).

By the mid-1960s, however, the LOI was in serious decline, and with it Irish Protestant political influence. To explain its fall, scholars have noted the replacement of the LOI's social and health insurance function by an expanding welfare state, a drop-off in social capital à la Robert Putnam (2000), and the tendency of Orange members to remain rural and working class while professional and other tertiary occupations expanded. More popular have been cultural arguments that stress the weakening of Protestant religiosity, the progression of religious ecumenism, and the attitudinal transformation attendant on the post-World War II waning of the British Empire (Kaufmann 2004).

³ Conversely, Catharine Anne Wilson (1994) has researched chain migration from the Ards Peninsula in County Down to Amherst Island, Ontario. She finds that the Ulster Scots there adopted a more practical and less cantankerous approach to life in their new home than their cousins in the U.S.

⁴ For analysis of Orange-related violence in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, see See 1993; and O'Connor 2006.

AUSTRALIA. As in Canada, a goodly proportion of the Irish Protestants of Australia originated in Ulster border counties like Armagh and Fermanagh. Yet many also came from north Antrim, Londonderry, and Tyrone. Anglicans were the largest single element of the migration, some of them from the southern counties (Fitzpatrick 1994). Unlike the Canadian situation, Irish Catholic migration far outstripped that of Irish Protestants. The latter, including Ulster Scot Presbyterians, managed to merge relatively unnoticed into the English, chiefly Anglican establishment (Edwards 2002).

Australian Orangeism and its political influence were greater and more durable than in the U.S. but less a force than in Canada. The first Orange lodge appeared in Sydney in 1833. After the LOI was outlawed briefly as a secret society, it was reopened in 1845 and soon had plenty of company there and across the continent. In a far-off, transplanted European society in flux during the 19th century, the LOI did what it could to blend Ulster's libertarian Presbyterian and conservative imperial traditions and mobilized to oppose the nationalist/Fenian threat. Irish sectarian battles were refought at a distance of 12,000 miles in Australia at six-month intervals, more or less—at least until the issues faded away after Partition in 1922 (MacRaild 2003/04). The LOI gradually evolved into a multi-denominational and no longer exclusively Irish organization geared toward fighting the power, real and perceived, of the Roman Catholic Church. Orangemen and -women were also driving forces behind the nativist movement that assisted in passing the White Australia policy in 1901 and the temperance movement (O'Farrell 1992; see Blackton 1958).

New South Wales was to Orangeism in Australia what Ontario was to the movement in Canada. The “Ulster of the group” of Australian states (MacRaild 2003/04), New South Wales was the scene of much Orange-Green tension and the LOI's most notable political victories. By the 1880s, over a fifth of state parliamentarians were “brethren of the Orange Order,” and they had an important presence at the local level as well (Laffan 2009:1). Divided on any number of weighty political issues of the era, Orange lodges were united in their anti-Catholicism and reverence for symbols of the British monarchy and empire. The trauma was great, consequently, when a supporter of the Irish revolutionary Fenian brotherhood tried to assassinate the Duke of Edinburgh during his visit to Sydney's Clontarf Park in October 1868. A few months later, state

parliamentarian (and later state premier) Henry Parkes gave his inflammatory “Kiama Ghost” speech, in which he claimed without evidence that the attack had been a Fenian conspiracy.

It was fitting that the member for Kiama would make his speech there. The closest that Australia had to an example of Irish Protestant chain migration, the seaside town consisted of a landowning Anglo-Irish gentry, Ulster Scot smallholder and tenant dairy farmers, and Irish Catholic tenant farmers and farm laborers (Dunn 2007). By the mid-19th century, the population was 39 percent Anglican, 26 percent Presbyterian, and 9.5 percent Roman Catholic (Jupp 2001: 464). Kiama’s family farms participated only to a limited degree in the dairy cooperative movement that was a precursor to trade unions in the Illawarra region (Hagan & Wells 1997).

Henry Parkes’ speech found resonance in Kiama, which was one of the state’s first centers and perennial hotbeds of Protestant evangelicalism, Freemasonry, the Odd Fellows, and the temperance and Orange movements. A band of Waterloo veterans had settled in the area, adding a military element to the mix. There were a number of local LOI lodges—even ones for Foresters and the Grand United Order of Gardeners. Kiama was also known for its sympathies for the Purplemen, reactionaries forming an inner society within the LOI that competed for influence with the more moderate Black Preceptories. Catholics had their own fraternal societies, such as the Knights of the Southern Cross and the Ancient Order of Hibernians (Kiama 2009). In the wake of Parkes’ political rally, a siege mentality took hold of local Protestants. Orangemen patrolled the city armed, and there was a failed attempt to shoot a prominent Protestant farmer, “Loyal” John Gray, who was active in the LOI. Widespread intermarriage, a reasonably balanced demographic picture, and disagreements among Protestant fraternal societies combined to temper the violence, which rapidly petered out (O’Farrell 1992: 103). Sectarian feelings did run high on each St. Patrick’s Day and July 12th well into the 1960s.

The Hunter Valley, north of Sydney and the Hawkesbury River, presents another variation in the ways that ethnicity and denomination interacted in areas of Irish Protestant settlement. In *How Orange Was My Valley*, Tony Laffan (2009) describes a very different LOI movement in a region where Irish farms and coal mines were in closer

juxtaposition than was the case in and around Kiama. He observes that the LOI in the Hunter quickly transcended its Irish roots to include Scots, Cornish, Welsh, northern English, and locally born miners. Fully 45 percent of LOI members were Methodists. Baptists were overrepresented, Presbyterians proportionate to their share of the Protestant population, and Anglicans underrepresented. Industrial Newcastle, at the mouth of the valley, was part of New South Wales' "Bible Belt" (Laffan 2009: 23, 121).

Agreeing to disagree on temperance, dancing, and many political issues, Orangeism emerged first and foremost where competition between Protestants and Catholics over jobs and power was intense. Orange lodges "post-dated the pioneering phase" and therefore did not "play the role of centers for frontier social life as in Canada" (Laffan 2009: 25) or in Kiama. In agricultural areas the Orange lodges were quite diverse, encompassing farmers, farm laborers, cattlemen, and landowners alike. In the coalfields there was often overlap between them and the local miners' lodges. The LOI was not an "anti-working-class organization dominated by conservative Christian fundamentalists" (Laffan 2009: 146). Many Orange "brothers" participated in the emergent consumer societies and labor movements, even holding key positions (Laffan 2009: 74-9). The significant Irish Catholic population provided the bulk of union activists and, as in Kiama and metropolitan Sydney, had its own churches and mutual aid associations. As in Canada, the drop in church attendance and other post-World War II cultural changes are held to account for the waning by the mid-1960s of the Orange movement in Australia—and with it what specifically Irish Protestant collective presence and influence yet remained (Hilliard 1991).

THE ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CONTEXT. It remains unclear why that process, which began and ended later than in the U.S., should have been more effective in Canada and Australia in dissolving collective Irish Protestant social and political identities. Cultural arguments that emphasize source regions and religious affiliation beg the question: how did a lesser propensity for sectarian conflict among America's Scots-Irish translate into greater present-day political visibility? Demographic factors like the timing and magnitude of migration and settlement patterns at first seem to explain this outcome—until common misconceptions are dispelled about when Irish Protestants came to the U.S., where they went, and next to whom they lived.

Acknowledged explicitly or implicitly in most studies of Irish Protestants wherever they migrated is their facility in adapting over time to the host-society system. Their experiences have made them “a quite distinctive and significant group of people, for a specific period of time, in a particular place. In other places, at other points in time, and under different circumstances, their story is not as dramatic” (Lynn 2003). Even for the supposedly easier to characterize Ulster Scot Presbyterians, “identity, as it has been used, proved ephemeral, disappearing and reappearing in a different guise, and changing in response to conditions they encountered and traditions they employed” (Griffin 2001: 6). In the final analysis, careful, nuanced analysis at the national and sub-national levels in the three case countries suggests that the local economic and political context and the types of networks available therein better account for how the descendants of Irish Protestant migrants behave politically today.

KENTUCKY. The importance of context can be seen in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, as noted above one of the post-Revolutionary fulcra of Scots-Irish settlement and home to the highest percentage in the country of residents who describe their ancestry to the U.S. Census Bureau as “American”—widely understood as a proxy for now-forgotten Irish Protestant roots. Yet even in this single midsized state, the descendants of those earlier Ulster migrants have displayed rather divergent political behavior at least since the Civil War of the 1860s.

In the popular mind, the Scots-Irish have been associated with the hillbillies of the Appalachian Mountains of eastern Kentucky. Hardly a region of large farms or plantations, the narrative holds, it experienced little slavery, sided with the Union during the war, and exemplified the political phenomenon of “mountain Republicanism” thereafter. The equally Scots-Irish farmers of the central and northern Bluegrass Region, however, grew hemp and tobacco. Both crops required a lot of labor, and slavery was broadly accepted as part of the area’s economic and social life. The state had a large number of middle-class farmers who owned a small number of slaves—normally in the range of 1 to 7—in contrast to the wealthy planters of the Deep South who tended to have many more (Hutchinson 2000).

Kentucky was a border state, and it was split down the middle by the Civil War. After first declaring itself neutral, the state made the difficult decision to remain in the

Union once the actual shooting had started. A rival Confederate government soon formed. As people took sides, families were often torn apart. Brother ended up fighting brother. The Bluegrass Region was a center of Southern sympathy, as was reflected in the Kentucky Ireland family's Confederate military service. Its members were slave owners, as were the families into which they married.⁵ Meanwhile, another branch had moved to southern Illinois in the 1830s. Several of its members fought on the Union side during the Civil War (W.R. Brink 1875). The two groups kept in touch and protected one another when possible during the conflict. One of the Kentucky Irelands even managed to arrange a prisoner exchange that freed an Illinois Ireland from the infamous prisoner of war camp at Andersonville, Georgia.

After the war, the Illinois Irelands remained solid supporters of Abraham Lincoln's Republican Party. Some pro-North, anti-slavery Republican members of the family who had moved 200 miles or so north to Indiana and Ohio before the conflict would go so far as to drop the final "d" (for "Democrat") in "Ireland", changing their surname to "Irelan". Yet their Kentucky kin joined their neighbors in central and western sections of the state and the rest of the Solid South in voting a straight Democratic ticket (Talbert 1959). So did their Ireland relatives who moved to Detroit during World War I and signed up with the precursors of the United Auto Workers union, albeit for what one can imagine were very different reasons. A Democrat in Michigan was hardly the same as a Democrat in Kentucky. In the 1980s, the famous Reagan Democrats of suburban Detroit, alleged to represent the manifestation of repotted Scots-Irish values (Webb 2004), appear to have been motivated less by notions of individualism and honor than by competition over jobs and housing with African-Americans (many of them also from Kentucky) and hostility to the "party of minorities" (Peterson 1987).

Nor was eastern Kentucky ever as monolithically pro-Union and Republican as normally portrayed. For example, heavily Scots-Irish Floyd County was a locus of pro-Confederate activity and has been reliably Democratic ever since. Anti-Confederate,

⁵ See the 1822 will of James N. Bartlett, father-in-law of Samuel B. Ireland (with addendum of book of accounts, begun January, 1812, Henry County, Kentucky, Will Book 2, pp. 320-325). Bartlett left Samuel several slaves, including "one negro girl Charity at the time given worth two hundred dollars. She was about eleven years old at that time; the price of property varies so much that it is hard to make an equal estimate." Also, a document from 1842 found in local archives showed that Samuel once used "a Negro man, called Jesse" as collateral to secure a mortgage.

Republican, heavily Scots-Irish counties like Clay and Harlan suffered from disproportionately lower levels of spending on their needs by majority Democratic post-war state legislatures (Blethen & Wood 1998). They nevertheless came to vote for Democratic candidates in federal elections, both Congressional and presidential, during the Great Depression in the 1930s. Their local-level Republican counterparts had to adjust. In “poverty-stricken rural Kentucky,” according to University of Kentucky political scientist Stephen Voss, “defense of government-funded social programs has long been a staple of the state’s ‘populist mountain Republicanism’” (quoted in Yakabuski 2010). By dint of bloody struggles, other parts of the Eastern Mountainous Coal Fields area became heavily unionized and anti-Republican.

Present-day congressional and presidential voting patterns reveal the diversity and evolution of politics in the Scots-Irish heartland. (It bears mentioning that Kentucky ranks very high in the U.S. in terms of the share of current residents native to the state.) In the eastern highlands, Clay and Harlan Counties regularly turn out Republican majorities of 80 percent or higher in congressional elections. In Floyd and Elliott Counties, the GOP scores 20 percentage points or more lower.⁶ Overall, the district (the 5th) alternated between the major parties before voting Democratic from the 1930s until the early 1960s and for Republicans since then.

At the presidential level, backing for New Deal and Great Society Democrats has given way to in the Appalachians to strong support for Republican candidates. All of the aforementioned eastern counties except Clay voted for (the Catholic) John F. Kennedy in 1960, Hubert H. Humphrey in 1968, Jimmy Carter in 1980, and Bill Clinton in 1992. In 2008, Barack Obama failed to win a single Democratic convention delegate in the 5th district, the only such instance in the country where that happened (Quinn 2008). He lost Kentucky in the general election by almost 17 percentage points, winning only four mountain counties, including Elliott. It is unique in the U.S. for having voted for the Democratic presidential candidate in every election since it was formed in 1869 and was the second whitest county in the country to endorse Obama. He fell short by a very

⁶ Interestingly, in terms of alcohol sales, Clay and Elliott Counties are both “dry.” Floyd County is “wet,” while Harlan County is “moist” (a dry county with a wet city, Cumberland) (Kentucky ABC 2010). Unlike in Canada and Australia, where Irish Protestants became associated with temperance, that relationship has been less straightforward in Kentucky, the land of Bourbon whiskey and moonshine.

narrow margin in Floyd County (50%-48%) but by huge ones in Harlan County (73%-26%) and Clay County (78%-21%) (CNN 2010).

The Bluegrass counties of Henry and Scott, where the Ireland family lived, most often backed Democratic U.S. congressional candidates from the pre-Civil War period until the late 1960s. Meanwhile, the Great Migration was reducing the competition with African-Americans—down from a quarter of the population to just over 7 percent—that did much to foster Solid South politics. Now part of suburban Lexington, Scott County has since trended more Republican; still primarily rural, Henry County has been more evenly divided between the two major political parties. In between them, Franklin County, home to the state capitol and government bureaucracy in Frankfort, has retained its preference for Democrats. The same is true of Fayette County, which consists of the city of Lexington and includes the large (over 27,000 students and over 11,500 staff members), public University of Kentucky (Kentucky Senate 2010).

In the 2008 presidential election, Fayette County voted for Obama by a 52%-47% score. Franklin County barely went for John McCain, the Republican candidate (50%-49%); in Henry County (59%-40%) and Scott County (60%-39%), the gap was wider. Despite a majority of Bluegrass Kentuckians' continuing self-identification as Democrats, Republican presidential candidates on the whole are now viewed as more in line with the state's prevailing social conservatism.

That cultural trait was the creation in part of the Ulster Scots yet more broadly of the multiethnic mix of Protestant dissenters in independent America's first Wild West. That culture, in turn, fed into and was fed by the rise of evangelicalism across Kentucky. In relatively inaccessible mountain communities, the old pioneer patterns may hold and influence voting outcomes today. However, it is not an identical prism through which the past is reflected in the Bluegrass—even in communities off the beaten path—and it has produced different patterns. And where suburbanization (Scott County), the rise of new industries and professions (Fayette County), unionization (Elliott County), the growth of state government (Franklin County), or other similar forces have brought real change, the culture and political behavior of the descendants of the Scots-Irish pioneers and their neighbors have proven malleable. America's decentralized, multi-level politics explains the variation better than those cultural factors themselves or more narrow institutional

factors such as the unfavorable political opportunity structure presented by a majoritarian electoral system or the potential for “white flight” presented by high labor mobility (compare Kaufmann 2004).

ONTARIO. The story, if not the outcome, is repeated in Canada, as can be seen in Ontario. Ties between the Loyal Orange Institution and the Conservative Party were close across the province. Catholics in Ontario long favored the United Empire Loyalist Tories, making for strange political bedfellows when they merged with the Conservatives after Confederation in 1867. Sectarian tensions built between the fairly evenly matched Orange and Green Irish and reached a head around 1890. The nature of political party competition in Ontario and Canada, along with modest levels of residential segregation, prevented the hostility from developing into religiously-based third parties (Kaufmann 2006). In Toronto, as discussed above, Conservative Orangemen held the upper hand well into the early 1960s. As Eric Kaufmann (2006) notes repeatedly, even so, Orange members of the provincial parliament and city council generally “toed the party line” and “tended to function as a lobby group and an organizational cog in the local Tory/Unionist machine” (pp. 23-4). The LOI “steered a distinctly Canadian political course” (MacRaild 2003/04). Like it, Irish Protestants had blended into the broader population of “British Isles stock” (Hill 2002).

In some respects, the situation was comparable in rural Orange bastions like Dufferin County. It and the neighboring counties of Perth and Simcoe had high densities of LOI lodges and were traditionally Conservative fortresses (Kaufmann 2006; see Blake 1999). On the other hand, there was little competition with Irish Catholics: almost the entirety of the area’s population at first was of Ulster Irish and Lowland Scottish descent and members of Methodist, Presbyterian, or, to a lesser extent, Anglican churches. Orange lodges were more like social centers than Toronto-style political lobbies or headquarters of anti-Catholic organizing. Although people of French, East Asian, Italian, German, and other European backgrounds would join them over the ensuing years, Dufferin County was still majority English-speaking and Irish Protestant into the 1990s (Dufferin County Forest 1995: 9).

Appropriately, the county seat and administrative and commercial center was named Orangeville—albeit not after the LOI but after a Connecticut-born businessman,

Orange Lawrence, who built several mills, a hotel, a store, and other businesses in the village in the mid-1800s. Conservatives long met with few local political challenges. Changes in electoral district boundaries over the years notwithstanding, Dufferin County and Orangeville sent Conservatives to represent them in Ottawa from 1867 until 1968, with the sole exception of 1921.

Traditionally dependent on agricultural production, the county remains largely rural. Yet it is classified today as part of the Toronto metropolitan area and is becoming dominated by its exurban southern end. Orangeville has some industry, but much of the non-farming workforce commutes daily to Brampton or Toronto. Dufferin County has had among the fastest population growth rates in the province over the past several decades (Hill 2002).

This evolution has had a political impact. Orangeville's city hall may have stayed a Conservative preserve, but Conservatives and Liberals have been fighting close battles and alternating in power at the federal district level. The Parliament of Canada's online "History of Federal Ridings since 1867"⁷ shows that Liberal farmer Bruce S. Beer won the seat with under half the vote in 1968, thanks to a strong showing by the New Democratic Party candidate. The defeated Progressive Conservative (PC) candidate was elected in 1972. The defeated Liberal candidate defeated him with less than 50% in 1974. The same Conservative took the riding back in 1979. Iconoclastic Liberal poultry farmer Murray Calder won in 1993 with 35.8% of the vote and was victorious again in 1997 with 42.5%. In 2004, he was defeated by Conservative lawyer David Wilson (42.8%), who won again with 47.9% in 2006 and with 53.2% in 2008. Suburbanization and an influx of new residents have altered politics in part of the county. More typical Irish Protestant behavior holds sway in Orangeville and rural Dufferin County. That said, such continuity does not signify politically in Ontario what it does in rural Kentucky. Nor is Conservative voting unusual in Ontarian rural areas whose residents share a different ethnic/national background.

NEW SOUTH WALES. As in the U.S. and Canada, the vagaries of the economic and political context in Australia have also made it impossible to speak of a coherent Irish Protestant value system or political profile. As in Canada, migrants of those origins

⁷ Accessible at <<http://www2.parl.gc.ca/Sites/LOP/HFER/hfer.asp?Language=E&Search=T>>.

merged with the pro-empire British Protestant establishment, which squared off against the Irish Catholics who did much to forge Australian nationalism (Jupp 2001: 478). Orange-Green conflict was more intense than in the U.S. yet far weaker and more fleeting than in Canada. Rows over specifically Irish matters like Home Rule failed to win local allies for either side, and extremists of all ilks were suspect. The divide between British/Irish Protestant “haves” and Irish Catholic “have-nots” was the serious and durable one (Edwards 2002).

That rivalry, which occasionally led to violence during the late 1800s (Hagan 2006a: 117-8), played out in Australian politics for the next hundred years. Since the turn of the 20th century, elections have essentially pitted the Australian Labor Party (ALP), founded by the worker’ movement, against a non-Labor party or coalition—represented today by the Liberal Party (born of a fusion of the Protectionist and Free Trade parties) and its partners in the National Party (once the Country Party) (Richardson 2009). In a word, Catholics voted for the ALP; Protestants, for the non-Labor parties. Social class overlapped with religion. Sydney’s expanding suburbs were more segregated than the city proper had been: the South West, for example, was an Irish Catholic, working-class stronghold that regularly returned solid Labor candidates (Edwards 2002). A “genuine and soundly based democratic structure” channeled sectarian sentiment into political party competition (Jupp 2001: 478).

Farther south in Kiama, the majority Irish Protestant landlords and farmers and the Orange lodges were firm devotees of the Liberal Party and its predecessors. Their victories became less clear-cut when the local Irish Catholic farm-worker population was added to considerably by a strong influx of Irish Catholic miners into the area’s basalt quarries, a movement spurred by the raw material needs of heavy industry. Nearby Wollongong and other sections of the Illawarra region became major coal-mining and steel-making centers and had a busy industrial port (Clifford, Green & Cline 2006). When Kiama itself has been grouped together with them in a single electoral district, as has been the case most recently since 1981, it has been represented by Labor politicians. To this day, the tidy farmland around Kiama and Shoalhaven brings to mind that found in rural Ulster, and turnout is robust for Liberal candidates. Tourism and easy metropolitan rail links to Sydney have turned the towns themselves into resorts and dormitory suburbs,

and Labor and the Australian Greens have been chipping away at the Liberals' historical advantage there (ABC 2007).

In the lower Hunter Valley, Irish Protestant farms and vineyards wound up thoroughly intermingled with coal-mining operations and the heavy industry that radiated out from the port city and railway hub of Newcastle. Catholics and Protestants did not live in separate neighborhoods or districts, and the tone of the region and local Orange lodges was set by the concerns of the working class. Contemporary Catholic leaders decried the LOI as an "elaborate and rigidly-binding electoral machine" (Laffan 2009: 32; see Cleary 1899; and Ford 1966). In reality, Orangeism in the Hunter Valley was unable to muster a majority position on most political issues, unless they related to a contentious, high-profile issue concerning Roman Catholics or their church. Inspired by Methodism and the Salvation Army, many loyal adherents of the LOI were inclined to embrace Christian social activism in the late 19th and early 20th century. Some of them were active in the local Labor Party, associated with Catholics, instead of in the Country or Liberal parties (Broome 1972). During the Great Strike of 1917, "Orangemen were to be found on both sides" (Laffan 2009: 81). Walter Skelton's sectarian Protestant Independent Labour Party, which broke away from the ALP in the 1920s, did not appeal to all local LOI members (Laffan 2009: 147).

The Catholic Church hierarchy launched a crusade against communism during the Cold War. In the process it precipitated another split in the ALP in the mid-1950s. Again, some LOI members joined the predominantly Catholic ALP (Communist), which renamed itself the Democratic Labor Party in 1957.⁸ Certain Catholics and Protestants, in short, were engaged in common efforts to combat what they saw as dangerously radical elements in the ALP (Hagan 2006b: 183-4).

The LOI's official embrace of temperance and a ban on Sunday sports hurt Orangeism, as did the spread of Freemasonry as a rival fraternal order within the non-Catholic population (Laffan 2009: 95-96, 122-35). Slowly, religious sectarianism ebbed in the lower Hunter Valley, where the ALP reigned supreme. The more pastoral upper Hunter Valley was a bit less affected by mining, industry, and labor unions and opted

⁸ Both party splits were minimized in much of New South Wales by the opposition of the Cardinal Archbishop of Sydney, Norman Thomas Gilroy.

more often for the Liberals and, since the 1920s, the Country/National Party (Clifford, Green, & Clune 2006). More recent elections there have often been close. The Hunter Valley, lower and upper, comprises Australia's oldest and best-known wine region. It has developed into a major tourist attraction and vacation-home destination, a transformation that as in Kiama has softened deep-rooted socially conservative rural Irish Protestant attitudes.

CONCLUSIONS. The analysis in this paper has borne out a piece of accepted wisdom about Irish Protestant migrants: "adaptability became their hallmark" (Blethen 2002). The values and corresponding political behavior attributed nowadays to Scots-Irish migrants in the U.S. exist only in remote areas of the Appalachian highlands. What's more, the dominant culture created there was the colonial-era product of more than a single ethnic group or religious tradition. Scots-Irish who moved on to other sections of the country, in addition to many of those living in some of the first areas of settlement, experienced thoroughgoing social, economic, and political changes over the years. They responded and adapted accordingly, which was reflected in their voting behavior.

In relatively "untouched" Irish Protestant locales in Canada and Australia, vestiges of the original culture are also evident. That culture was not so distinctly Irish as it was imperial and British, and a shift in context also changed the ways in which it was manifested (or not) politically. The economic and political context matters more than demographic factors like the timing and magnitude of migrant flows and settlement patterns or cultural factors like source regions and religious affiliation in explaining whether Irish Protestants have had or preserve a distinctive political identity.

The main lesson for current political discussions in the U.S. is that a Scots-Irish vote per se does not exist. If that phenomenon were to be found anywhere, it would be in Australia or, especially, Canada—where Irish Protestant political activity was more forceful and lasted longer. In actuality, the phenomenon that American pundits increasingly identify as the Scots-Irish vote really concerns working-class and rural white voters, men above all. Because that demographic group's political behavior has been different in the Upper South and Interior West than in states like Oregon, Iowa, or Connecticut, answers have been sought in ethnic roots. It would be wiser to look into the

economic and political setups prevailing in the places to which Irish Protestants moved or the changes undergone in many of their original areas of settlement.

Some political journalists who feel that the Scots-Irish across the U.S. “share common cultural values” admit that they do not form a “self-conscious voting bloc” (Joseph 2009). As Michael Carroll (2006) observes, it is plausible to argue that the Revolution (and its aftermath) on the frontier favored, even generated a cultural climate and related evangelical belief system that imbued Irish and other Protestant migrants. Hence, “claiming an Irish identity today is a way for Protestant Americans to associate themselves with the values of the American Revolution or, if you will, is a way of using ethnicity to be American” (Carroll 2006: 47). In any event, America—and Canada and Australia—almost certainly did more to shape Irish Protestants’ cultural and political identities than the other way around.

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