

2021

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### Recommended Citation

McEneaney, Cian (2021). Changing Attitudes toward Irish Canadians: The Impact of the 1847 Famine Influx in the Province of Canada. *Undergraduate Review*, 16, 90-106.  
Available at: [https://vc.bridgew.edu/undergrad\\_rev/vol16/iss2/11](https://vc.bridgew.edu/undergrad_rev/vol16/iss2/11)

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# Changing Attitudes toward Irish Canadians: The Impact of the 1847 Famine Influx in the Province of Canada

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**Abstract:** Throughout the nineteenth century, Canada regularly received Irish immigrants who became a tolerated and important part of Canadian society. However, between 1845 and 1852, Ireland endured a dreadful famine which saw more than two million Irish paupers emigrate, with their destinations varying across the world. A large portion of Irish famine immigrants travelled to the comparatively empty British North American colony in Canada, passing almost entirely through Quebec. Canadians at first welcomed the idea of large numbers of immigrants to help expand the western frontier, but with a massive exodus of Irish paupers fleeing Ireland in 1847, what arrived in the ports of Quebec ended up terrifying the people of Canada. The deplorable condition of the immigrants strained the Canadian social institutions beyond their means, and shifted the view of Irish Canadians into a negative light. Although quarantined at Grosse Isle, and various other makeshift quarantine stations throughout the St. Lawrence River valley, the unexpectedly disease-ridden immigrants caused typhus, cholera, and dysentery to run rampant wherever they arrived, claiming the lives of thousands of Canadians, as well as many of their own. Societal conditions set in place by previous generations of Irish immigrants to Canada, which allowed them to be a welcomed part of Canadian communities, were broken by this new wave of Irish exiles, and caused public opinion to turn against the Irish immigrants. The betrayal of social norms caused a violent Protestant-Canadian nativist response that lasted for decades after their arrival.

**Keywords:** famine, immigration, Irish Canadians, Quebec, nativism

Throughout the nineteenth century, the Irish regularly immigrated to Canada; prior to the famine period in Ireland (1845-52) more than 250,000 Irish immigrants traveled to a welcoming Canada.<sup>1</sup> These Irish Canadians created distinct communities within cities throughout the St. Lawrence River valley and beyond, helping expand Canadian institutions and infrastructure. However, during the famine period Irish immigration increased significantly, with the largest influx occurring during 1847, and pushing well past the limits Canadian institutions established for the occasion. As thousands of Irish fleeing famine in their homeland flooded into Canadian cities and

towns, they betrayed the acceptable social standards set for them by their forebears.

The reason the Irish left their homeland is indicative of why the 1847 immigrants differed so widely from previous decades, and why exactly Canada became the primary destination for the famine immigrants explains how this societal betrayal came to fruition. Examination of various first-person experiences of those who endured the immigration season of 1847 shows how the Canadian view toward Irish immigrants drastically changed, as Irish of a different stock than what most Canadians expected or wanted began to arrive. This caused a nativist response to the frightening, and largely Catholic, Irish immigrants broadly in Canada, demonstrated by the Protestant populations of Montreal and Quebec City post-1847.

Irish emigration has a longer history than most think, predating what is typically thought to have started with the famine. Ireland produced many Canadian-bound emigrants pre-famine, and though many Irish moved south into the United States upon arrival, a majority of those disembarking stayed in Upper and Lower Canada.<sup>2</sup> These Irish tended to be wealthier Protestants from the Ulster province, who blended in well with the British Protestant majority already present in Canada.<sup>3</sup> During the 1830s, more proletariat Catholic Irish immigrants arrived in Canada, with higher volumes of unskilled workers and domestic servants disembarking in Quebec.<sup>4</sup> These able-bodied and willing immigrants worked to make a fruitful life for themselves in their new home, contributing to expanding Canadian infrastructure in the process.

While tensions between Protestant and Catholic populations globally ran high throughout the nineteenth century, Canadian Protestants tolerated the early Irish Catholic immigrants in communities along the St. Lawrence. Irish Catholics typically occupied the lowest rungs of society in Canada, living in the poorest areas and working low-paying jobs such as farming and general labor.<sup>5</sup> Catholic Irish Canadians found work on public works and are largely responsible for building many bridges and canals during the pre-famine period in Canada.<sup>6</sup> Canadian historian Andrew Holman explains the social conditions that led pre-famine Catholic Irish in Hamilton to be a tolerated part of society: most importantly an efficient use of the space they occupied, a sense of self-sufficiency, and

economic usefulness.<sup>7</sup> The pre-famine Irish immigrants typically met these criteria in Hamilton and other areas of early nineteenth-century Irish immigration in Canada. Catholic Irish largely stayed out of the way of the Protestant majority, which helped set the acceptable standard by which Canadians viewed the Irish immigrants in Canada, until the Irish Famine.

Beginning in 1842, a devastating potato blight ravaged Ireland, causing more than one million deaths due to starvation and fever, with another two million people escaping the blight through emigration by 1852. Emigration from Ireland steadily grew throughout the 1840s, peaking in 1847, which saw the highest levels of emigration with an estimated 400,000 Irish emigrating, more than 100,000 of whom fled to Canada.<sup>8</sup> The ongoing famine in Ireland, in combination with inefficient Poor Relief laws reluctantly funded by profiteering Irish landlords, caused the mass exodus by which Canada became inundated with destitute immigrants.

With Irish workhouses overflowing and degrading soup kitchens closing, the newly amended Poor Relief Laws levied rates from landlords to fund these failing relief schemes, which inadvertently assisted in a mass exodus of Irish paupers. Under the new laws, landlords became liable to pay for new poor relief schemes through increased taxes based on how many tenants resided on their lands.<sup>9</sup> These changes prompted landlords to assist their tenants in emigrating, as buying the trans-Atlantic passage, to Canada in particular, became cheaper than paying for relief that sustained their tenants.<sup>10</sup>

Irish historians unequivocally determine 1847 to be the worst year of the famine in Ireland, being colloquially referred to as “Black ‘47.” After enduring multiple years of a worsening potato crop failure, food prices continued to soar, becoming increasingly unaffordable to the overpopulated pauper class, while a surge in diseases ravaged the swollen Irish population. As relief efforts largely halted by the winter of 1846-47, Ireland saw the largest increase in mortality caused by starvation and fever during the famine period.<sup>11</sup> The grim outlook of the 1847 harvest helped convince those unsure of their fate in Ireland to abandon their homeland in search of a better life as their staple food source, and the ruling class, betrayed them. The spring of 1847 saw the largest increase in emigration than ever before, only that they did not leave Ireland, as historian John Kelly explains, “they were *fleeing*, the

way a crowd flees a burning building: heedlessly, recklessly, with no thought other than to get out.”<sup>12</sup>

With the outward flow of Irish paupers increasing significantly from famine fatigue and given the dire expectations of the coming year, hundreds of thousands prepared to flee their homes, willingly or through assisted immigration. Conditions had grown so terrible in Ireland that the consensus among the Irish peasantry was that anywhere was better than there.

Canadians readied themselves to receive the expected outflow of famine-stricken from Ireland by setting up resolutions to bring the Irish immigrants of 1847 directly to Canada. They rationalized this by expecting to use the influx of immigrants to populate and expand the western Canadian frontiers, as had been done in previous years. Former British Prime Minister Earl Grey, in a speech to the House of Lords on 15 May 1847, perfectly summed up the prevailing mentality of sending great quantities of emigrants to Canada:

... the development of the facilities which Canada possessed for the absorption of [immigrant] labour... was increasing almost in a geometrical ratio, because many of the labourers who went out there became, after a few years, settlers on the land, and able to give assistance in work to new comers, so forming a constantly widening circle... the systematic distribution of emigrants, would operate very advantageously upon the very large emigration of the present year, which... exceeded threefold the emigration of last year, and that the persons now going out would be able to establish themselves successfully and with advantage in the colonies.<sup>13</sup>

The British would send Irish emigrants to Canada in large quantities throughout 1847 to supply Canada with labor, which would create a self-perpetuating, frontier-expanding labor market that could constantly bring more immigrants to Canada. The Government of the Province of Canada agreed with this view, and prepared to gladly accept up to 100,000 Irish immigrants over the course of the year.<sup>14</sup> Both the British and Canadian governments based these assumptions about able-bodied immigrants improving the Canadian frontier on the previous decades of wealthier Irish immigration,

who did actually strengthen Canadian institutions. This time, however, they largely overlooked the deplorable circumstances in Ireland during the famine, which resulted in a different kind of immigrant to Canada, more akin to an exile.

The condition of Irish paupers only strengthened the want for immigrants in Canada out of sympathy, desiring to take in those afflicted so as to ease the Imperial burden the famine caused in Ireland. Throughout 1846, Canadian newspapers frequently published and reprinted articles on the Irish famine in a very compassionate tone.<sup>15</sup> The *Montreal Gazette* reprinted a sympathetic *Manchester Guardian* article on 26 September 1846 detailing the deplorable conditions of the Irish, and outlining the charitable donations generated since 1845. The article highlights the mismanagement of Ireland as the main cause for the Irish plight and predicted the mass exodus of 1847.<sup>16</sup> By the early spring of 1847, the realistic conditions of the large numbers of expected immigrants became more apparent, and began to worry some Canadians.

On 16 April 1847, *Le Canadien* warned the people of Quebec City that the impending influx of “emigration from the British Isles, and from Ireland in particular, toward this continent is readying on a vast scale.”<sup>17</sup> Compounding these anxieties, Canadian institutions suddenly expected a larger-than-normal portion of paupers as the United States continued to impose restrictive measures on immigration. Seeing the deplorable condition of arriving immigrants in early 1847, the United States charged ship captains ten dollars per immigrant onboard, and placed a 1,000-dollar levy on immigrants deemed too old or too sick.<sup>18</sup> These measures shifted the tide of famine Irish across the Atlantic towards Canada, and helped to ensure only the most destitute Irish immigrants arrived in Canadian ports. On 28 April 1847, *Le Canadien* denounced these “strict and isolationist precautionary measures” taken by the United States and claimed, “God forbid that we should wish to close the doors of Canada to the unfortunate immigrants of Ireland.”<sup>19</sup> The United States possessed the luxury of denying entry to any undesirable immigrants, but as a British colony, Canada could use no such measures.

On 5 May 1847, the *Montreal Gazette* reported with a sigh of relief that John Easton Mills,

the Quebec City mayor, planned a meeting for the following week to form a Board of Health to set up sanitation procedures for the expected Irish immigrants.<sup>20</sup> Diseases such as typhus, dysentery, and cholera (then known simply as “fever” or “ship fever”) became the biggest killers among the Irish during the famine, and the emigrants brought these diseases with them to their destinations around the world. The local concern about the inbound sickness continued to grow while cities along the St. Lawrence worked to set up similar Boards of Health. In June, multiple local Boards of Health in major cities along the St. Lawrence set sanitation and relief standards for incoming immigrants, but by October most had shut down due to lack of funding and oversight.<sup>21</sup>

On 12 May *Le Canadien* at the last minute protested “with the utmost energy the idea that certain politicians in Ireland and England have to swamp Canada with the indigent population of Ireland... The conditions in Ireland are the result of poor administration of the miserable country; are we to be the ones to bear the distress?”<sup>22</sup> But the expectations of using the immigrants to expand the frontier prevailed over the dire warnings. Emigrant societies were set up to help the immigrants find work out west, hoping to bolster and develop the western frontier. As the immigration season kicked off on 12 May, the *Montreal Gazette* published a notice to all labor contractors to contact agents of the Department of Labour for immigrant laborers to hire for work on the frontier.<sup>23</sup> The same day, in a letter to the editor of the *Ottawa Daily Citizen*, Nova Scotian J. B. Uniacke welcomed the famine Irish, claiming the immigration schemes set forth in Canada were, “pregnant with advantages for both countries [Canada and Ireland]” and that “the population of Ireland can find happy homes in the British Provinces [of Canada].”<sup>24</sup> However, the immigrants who arrived throughout 1847 were largely sustenance tenant farmers or unskilled workers who could not provide for themselves upon arrival.<sup>25</sup>

Through assisted immigration schemes in Ireland, landlords shipped their tenants wholesale across the Atlantic in an effort to save money rather than ensure their safety at home in Ireland. Many had never been five miles from their homes in Connaught or West Munster and spoke almost entirely Gaelic.<sup>26</sup> They left their homes with little more than the clothes on their back, and the money their landlords provided them for passage. A Limerick landowner, Stephen de Vere, bought his tenants

passage to Canada from London in late April 1847, and traveled with them in steerage the entire two-month voyage in order to document the conditions. Traveling in what he described as one of the better regulated ships, de Vere witnessed the horrors of the passage firsthand. He recorded his entire experience in a letter to the Agent-General of Emigration T. F. Elliot, who passed it on to Earl Grey to read aloud in the House of Lords.<sup>27</sup> De Vere wrote:

Before the emigrant has been at sea a week, he is an altered man...hundreds of poor people, men, women and children, of all ages from the drivelling idiot of 90 to the babe just born, huddled together, without light, without air, wallowing in filth and breathing a fetid atmosphere, sick in body, dispirited in heart; the fevered patients lying between the sound, in sleeping places so narrow as almost to deny them the power of indulging...their agonized ravings disturbing those around and predisposing them...living without food or medicine...dying without the voice of spiritual consolation and buried in the deep without the rites of the Church. The food is generally ill-selected and seldom sufficiently cooked...the supply of water, hardly enough for cooking and drinking, does not allow washing...the filthy beds, teeming with all abominations, are never required to be brought on deck and aired: the narrow space between the sleeping berths and the piles of boxes is never washed or scraped, but breathes up a damp and fetid stench, until the day before arrival at quarantine, when all hands are required to 'scrub up' and put on a fair face for the doctor and Government inspector.<sup>28</sup>

The appalling conditions de Vere described during his experience aboard a Canadian-bound ship provided the perfect environment for disease to proliferate. Ship captains packed their holds full of Irish paupers well past the legal limits, leading to overcrowding. Compounded with a serious lack of sanitation, these colloquially known "coffin ships" ran rampant with typhus, dysentery, and cholera. The entire passage, these ships festered until unloading their human cargo in Canada, with the mortality rate onboard Canadian-bound ships in 1847 calculated to be around 20 percent. Many

historians liken the harrowing passage to Canada to the middle passage of the Atlantic slave trade,<sup>30</sup> and the “fair face” put on by the ship’s crew did not fool the inspectors as the journey to Canada worsened upon arrival.

Every foreign vessel entering the St. Lawrence was required to be inspected for any signs of disease at Grosse Isle before continuing on to Quebec or Montreal. All immigrants who arrived at Grosse Isle quarantined on the island for two weeks to ensure no hidden infection surfaced in them. Those deemed a health risk because of their diseased state were kept in the sanitation hospital until their convalescence or their demise. The Canadian immigration season in the 1840s started in May when the St. Lawrence was largely free of ice, and ended in October when the river began to freeze over again. However, unseasonable weather in 1847 caused the St. Lawrence to remain frozen longer into the spring, delaying the start of the immigration season by two weeks.

The first immigrant ship, the *Syria* out of Liverpool carrying 192 steerage passengers, all emigrating from Ireland, arrived on 14 May.<sup>31</sup> Upon inspection at the quarantine station, the *Syria* was found to have 52 fever-stricken immigrants aboard with nine already dead, and after four days at Grosse Isle the number of sick people jumped to 125.<sup>32</sup> The more ships that arrived at Grosse Isle, the higher the number of dead and dying climbed and the Canadian institutions were simply unprepared. By 23 May the hospital on Grosse Isle, set up with 250 beds, was inundated with 695 sick and dying individuals, most of whom were laid upon straw mats on the shore or in hastily constructed fever sheds.<sup>33</sup> As the immigration season continued, the numbers did not abate, and disease continued to spread unchecked on the island and beyond as Irish immigrants were shipped to the mainland in order to relieve the overcrowding in quarantine stations. Disease reached the shores of Quebec and Montreal by June as sanitation regulations buckled under the pressure of such a disease-ridden population of immigrants.

Previously, the *Montreal Gazette* considered the city to be well prepared for the influx, claiming that 125,000 immigrants arrived during the 1846 immigration season with no issues, proving the system worked.<sup>35</sup> Likewise, the Government of the Province of Canada had been

prepared to take in a large number of immigrants ready to work on the frontier, and did not account for the amount of sick and dying who came instead. During the winter of 1846-47, Dr. Stephen Douglas, the journeyman medical officer in charge of sanitary preparations on Grosse Isle, with adept foresight requested additional funding of 3,000 pounds from the city of Quebec to adequately prepare for the arriving immigrants, but received only 300.<sup>36</sup> For this reason, Douglas lacked the proper equipment and staff to handle such an unprecedented collection of diseased and dying paupers.

On 10 May 1847, the Emigration Committee of Montreal called a meeting to consider what precautions should be taken to prepare the city, but quickly adjourned the meeting due to a lack of attendance.<sup>37</sup> Some Canadians became anxious over the lack of preparedness in the city, and started to panic seeing the steady stream of sickly people building up on the banks of the St. Lawrence. On 21 May, in a letter to the editor of the *Montreal Gazette* titled “The Health of The City,” the author, who signed the letter as “CAUTION” warned that the Government of the Province of Canada had yet to take any serious precautionary measures to protect the inhabitants of Montreal. The author urged the importance of enacting sanitary measures for the incoming immigrants and called for, “the *immediate* attention... of the up and coming Session of the Legislature,” hoping that “the city’s authorities will give the subject that consideration which its importance demands, ere it too late.”<sup>38</sup> But by mid-July, ads frequented the *Montreal Gazette* looking for great quantities of nurses and medical practitioners to tend the sick immigrants in the fever hospitals.<sup>39</sup> It is clear that Canadians expected some famine-stricken Irish paupers to arrive in a diseased state, just not in the startling numbers that did come ashore, and despite warning from “CAUTION,” acted too late.

During the onset of the famine, Canadians contributed to famine relief in Ireland by forming Christian communities in tandem with Irish societies already established in Canada by earlier immigrants, to gather aid in the form of money, clothing, and food.<sup>40</sup> One such Irish immigrant, Frances Stewart, a Protestant Irish immigrant who settled in the Peterborough area in 1822, explained in a letter to her friend back in Ireland how she feared her homeland would be “polluted by the masses of putrefying bodies of animals and decayed vegetables.”<sup>41</sup> Stewart sympathized deeply with

those affected by the famine in Ireland, and by May 1847 raised a total of 364 pounds to send over in famine relief.<sup>42</sup>

Sympathies turned to anxieties as a seemingly endless stream of famine immigrants arrived, and disease began sweeping across the St. Lawrence River valley in their wake. Stewart mentions her building concern as she noted “many poor people...in a state of starvation and bringing with them a malignant type of [Typhus] was the cause of much anxiety and trouble.”<sup>43</sup> Once the wave of diseased immigrants reached Peterborough later in May, Stewart’s attitude towards the incoming immigrants, like that of most other Canadians, changed to a more dreadful tone.

Enduring this ordeal, Stewart lamented to her Irish cousin in June that her sister-in-law contracted fever, along with all five of her children, the former succumbing to the disease.<sup>44</sup> A month passed before Stewart could find the time to write again due to her role as acting nurse when her close friend, and three doctors in the town, also contracted fever.<sup>45</sup> On 9 August, she wrote to her friend: “this was our [family’s] first trial with affliction in long years...wherever those wretched immigrants came they brought with them sickness and death.”<sup>46</sup> Her troubles continued into the following month when her husband later died of Typhus within a week of contracting the disease, sending her into a resentful depression for some time following.<sup>47</sup>

Wherever the famine Irish arrived, the local population reeled with fear, drastically changing Canadian attitudes towards Irish immigrants for the worse. Canadians came to fear and resent the Irish. Immigrants congregated in the cities in huge numbers, which the populations did not expect to see, and although many immigrants ventured from the cities in search of work, they ultimately returned when they could not secure rural work out west.<sup>48</sup> The fear of disease caused those who previously wanted to hire the new immigrants to quickly rescind their offers, leaving a majority of immigrants without work, and crowding the slums of Quebec City, Montreal, and Toronto. What little work the immigrants could procure, they often could not perform due to the physical toll taken by their passage to North America, and subsequent disease.<sup>49</sup> The year 1847 saw more than 20,000 people die, both Irish immigrants and Canadians alike, due to disease brought by the immigrants.<sup>50</sup> At Grosse

Isle alone, the Irish left nearly 6,000 dead buried on the island, and later a bitter cry of resentment in Gaelic inscribed upon a Celtic cross of granite:

On this island Irish people in their thousands died, having fled from the laws of foreign oppressors and from treacherous starvation in the years 1847-48. May the blessings of God be with them. This memorial stone is a symbol of the honor due to them from the Irish community in America. God save Ireland.<sup>51</sup>

The famine Irish broke from the societal conditions which allowed Irish Catholics to be a tolerated part of Canadian society.<sup>52</sup> Inadvertently, they had made an offensive use of the land they occupied, mainly quarantine stations, hospitals, and cities (in that order), directly threatening individual Canadians and their social space. The poor sustenance and tenant farmers of Connaught and West Munster stood no chance of providing for themselves, especially in the state in which they arrived after suffering the ocean journey on coffin ships. Upon arrival, they immediately became dependent on Canadian social institutions, and the influx of 1847 overwhelmed municipalities with the sick and the dying. Providing aid for the famine immigrants put the Provincial Government roughly 35,000 pounds in debt, which it directly blamed the Imperial government in Westminster for causing. The Provincial Government petitioned the Imperial government to eventually cover the expense, and bring them out of the crippling debt.<sup>53</sup> According to Holman, the impression left by the 1847 famine immigrants “betrayed the real experiences of pre-famine Irish in Hamilton,”<sup>54</sup> and so too similar towns across Canada, causing a nativist response against the Catholic Irish immigrants.

After the original, genuine concern for the famine immigrants turned to fear, Canada witnessed a surge in nativism as Canadian-born and immigrant Protestants resented the quickly growing number of Catholics.<sup>55</sup> Loyalty to the British Crown constituted the core element of Canadian nativism, and Protestantism a key concept of that loyalty, meaning Catholics inherently could not be loyal subjects, or at best were considered “suspect.” The famine influx, consisting of roughly 90 percent Catholic paupers, caused an anti-Catholic reaction in Canada which lasted for the remainder of the century.<sup>56</sup> In the historically Catholic Quebec City, Protestants constituted 29

percent of households in 1841, but by 1852 the number decreased to 14.5 percent as Protestants fled from a no-longer tolerable Catholic population.<sup>57</sup> The Irish became characterized as the “ignorant masses,” and “untameable barbarians”<sup>58</sup> because of their breaking custom with the social norms of the early nineteenth century set for them by their forebears.

One example of the nativist response and anti-Catholic sentiments occurred in June 1853 when the Italian anti-Catholic monk Alessandro Gavazzi traveled to Quebec City and Montreal to hold anti-Catholic speeches. His anti-Catholic speeches at the Free Presbyterian Church in Quebec City, and the Zionist Church in Montreal provoked the Catholic Irish inhabitants of those cities to react violently on 6 and 9 June respectively. Catholic Irish responded by hurling stones through the church windows and storming the pulpit in Quebec City, while in Montreal Catholic Irish brawled with the soldiers stationed outside Gavazzi’s speech, resulting in soldiers killing five Irishmen, and denying Gavazzi a third speech planned for the following week.<sup>59</sup> Similar disturbances between Catholics and Protestants periodically occurred in cities for the remainder of the century, and even between other Catholics.

Quebec City almost always possessed a Catholic majority, thus making it the ideal destination for Catholic Irish immigrants. By 1852, 6,344 out of 23,238 (27.3 percent) of Quebec City’s population identified Ireland as their place of birth.<sup>60</sup> Famine immigrants did not expand far beyond the limits of many cities, Quebec City included, and this caused friction between the two large nationalities of Catholics. Due to a lack of employment on the frontier, Catholic Irish immigrants began taking employment in the shipyards and lumber industries typically held by Catholic French Canadians. Though the common link of Catholicism likely mitigated tensions, labor disturbances happened occasionally between French-Canadian and Irish laborers, even where the Irish were most accepted.

At first, Canadians welcomed the thought of a large influx of Irish immigrants because of the identity the pre-famine Irish created for themselves in the years leading up to the famine. The Imperial Government convinced the Government of the Province of Canada that immigrants from the famine-stricken island would prosper and improve Canada, just as the Irish immigrants of

decades past had done. Out of a perceived economic benefit and genuine philanthropy, Canadians welcomed the thought. Once the famine Irish of 1847 arrived, Canadians' tone quickly changed, and the perspective towards the Irish Canadians shifted to a more negative one as this new type of Irish immigrant broke down pre-established societal tolerances. The quantity and quality of the 1847 influx quickly changed how the native Canadian population viewed the Irish, as an entire nationality became defined by the immigrants who arrived in later years. The famine in Ireland caused profit-concerned landlords to pass off the responsibility of poor relief to Canadians out of frugality, while Canadian institutions emplaced to handle the expected influx buckled under the pressure of trying to properly assist the vast numbers of sick and emaciated immigrants. The 1847 immigration season terrified Canadians because of the damage the Irish newcomers caused upon arrival, inadvertently spreading disease and death in their wake. This fear, combined with the Protestant nativist response to the sharp increase in Catholic Irish immigrants, negatively branded Irish Canadians for the remainder of the nineteenth century.



The son of an Irish immigrant, **Cian McEneaney** is an enthusiastic student of Irish and military history and the acting curator at Fort Taber-Fort Rodman Military History Museum in New Bedford. After graduating in the spring of 2021 with a Bachelor's in History and Irish Studies from BSU, Cian plans to attend Trinity College, Dublin in 2022 to pursue a Master's Degree in Modern Irish History.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Robert J. Grace, "Irish Immigration and Settlement in a Catholic City: Quebec, 1842-61." *Canadian Historical Review* 84, no.2 (2003): 226.
- <sup>2</sup> Cecil Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-1849* (London, UK: Harper and Row, 1991), 206.
- <sup>3</sup> Grace, "Irish Immigration and Settlement in a Catholic City," 229.
- <sup>4</sup> Grace, "Irish Immigration and Settlement in a Catholic City," 235.

- <sup>5</sup> Scott W. See, "An Unprecedented Influx: Nativism and Irish Famine Immigration to Canada." *American Review of Canadian Studies* (2000), 442.
- <sup>6</sup> Robert J. Grace, "A Demographic and Social Profile of Quebec City's Irish Populations, 1842-1861." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 23, no. 1 (2003): 55.
- <sup>7</sup> Andrew C. Holman, "Different Feelings: Corktown and the Catholic Irish in Early Hamilton, 1832-1847," *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 23, no. 1 (1997): 41.
- <sup>8</sup> See, "An Unprecedented Influx," 431.
- <sup>9</sup> Desmond Norton, "Lord Palmerston and the Irish Famine Emigration: A Rejoinder." *The Historical Journal* 46, no. 1 (2003): 159.
- <sup>10</sup> Grace, "Irish Immigration and Settlement in a Catholic City," 219.
- <sup>11</sup> Cormac Ó Gráda, *Black '47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy, and Memory*, ed. Joel Mokyr (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 168.
- <sup>12</sup> Italics added for emphasis. John Kelly, *The Graves Are Walking, The Great Famine and the Saga of the Irish People* (New York: Picador, Henry Holt and Company, 2013): 254.
- <sup>13</sup> Sale of Fire-Arms (Ireland) - Emigration. *Hansard*, HL Deb 15 March 1847, vol. 90, cc. 1327-36.
- <sup>14</sup> G. J. Parr, "The Welcome and the Wake, Attitudes in Canada West Toward the Irish Famine Migration," *Ontario History* 66 (1974): 108.
- <sup>15</sup> Parr, "The Welcome and the Wake," 102.
- <sup>16</sup> "Ireland; Its Evils and Their Remedies." *Montreal Gazette*, 26 September 1846.
- <sup>17</sup> *Le Canadien*, 16 April 1847, in Marianna O'Gallagher, *Eyewitness: Grosse Isle, 1847* (Sainte-Foy, QC: Livres Carraig Books, 1995): 15.
- <sup>18</sup> Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger: Ireland*, 213.
- <sup>19</sup> *Le Canadien* 28 April 1847, in O'Gallagher, *Eyewitness*, 25.
- <sup>20</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 5 May 1847.
- <sup>21</sup> Parr, "The Welcome and the Wake," 108.
- <sup>22</sup> *Le Canadien*, 12 May 1847, in O'Gallagher, *Eyewitness*, 422.
- <sup>23</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 29 May 1847.
- <sup>24</sup> *Ottawa Daily Citizen*, 29 May 1847.
- <sup>25</sup> Grace, "Irish Immigration and Settlement in a Catholic City," 237.
- <sup>26</sup> Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-1849*, 206-207.
- <sup>27</sup> Address in Answers to the Speech. *Hansard*, HL Deb 23 November 1847 vol 95 cc14-64.
- <sup>28</sup> D. J. Meghen, "Stephen De Vere's Voyage to Canada, 1847." *The Old Limerick Journal*. Reprinted from *North Munster Studies: Essays in commemoration of Monsignor Michael Moloney*, ed. Etienne Rynne (Limerick: Thomond Archaeological Society, 1967): 139.
- <sup>29</sup> Ó Gráda, *Black '47 and Beyond*, 106.
- <sup>30</sup> Kelly, *The Graves Are Walking*; Tucker, "The Famine Immigration to Canada, 1847"; Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger*; Tim P. Coogan, *The Famine Plot: England's Role In Ireland's Greatest Tragedy* (New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).
- <sup>31</sup> Gilbert Tucker, "The Famine Immigration to Canada, 1847" *American Historical Review* 36, no. 3 (1931): 105.

- <sup>32</sup> Kelly, *The Graves Are Walking*, 275.
- <sup>33</sup> Kelly, *The Graves Are Walking*, 275.
- <sup>34</sup> Parr, “The Welcome and the Wake,” 107.
- <sup>35</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 30 April 1847.
- <sup>36</sup> Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-1849*, 218.
- <sup>37</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 15 May 1847.
- <sup>38</sup> Italics are the author’s own. “The Health of the City,” *Montreal Gazette*, 21 May 1847.
- <sup>39</sup> *Montreal Gazette*, 16 July 1847.
- <sup>40</sup> Parr, “The Welcome and the Wake,” 102.
- <sup>41</sup> Frances Stewart, *Our Forest Home: Being Extracts from the Correspondence of the Late Frances Stewart*, ed. Eleanor S. Dunlop (Montreal: Gazette Printing and Publishing Company, 1902), 211.
- <sup>42</sup> Stewart, *Our Forest Home*, 214.
- <sup>43</sup> Stewart, *Our Forest Home*, 214.
- <sup>44</sup> Stewart, *Our Forest Home*, 216.
- <sup>45</sup> Stewart, *Our Forest Home*, 218.
- <sup>46</sup> Stewart, *Our Forest Home*, 218.
- <sup>47</sup> Stewart, *Our Forest Home*, 222.
- <sup>48</sup> See, “An Unprecedented Influx,” 437.
- <sup>49</sup> Parr, “The Welcome and the Wake,” 109.
- <sup>50</sup> Woodham-Smith, *The Great Hunger: Ireland 1845-1849*, 238.
- <sup>51</sup> Irish Memorial National Historic Site, Grosse Isle. Original text taken from the monument: “Cailleadh Clann na nGaegheal ina mítibh ar an oileán so ar dteicheadh dhóibh ó dlíghthibh na dtíoránach ngallda agus ó ghorta tréarch isna bliadhantaibh 1847-48. Beannacht díllis Dé orra. Bíodh an leacht so i gcomhartha garma agus onóra dhóibh ó Gheadhealaibh Ameriocá. Go saoraigh Dia Éire.” Trans. P. T. Meagher and Cian McEneaney.
- <sup>52</sup> Holman, “Different Feelings,” 42.
- <sup>53</sup> Tucker, “The Famine Immigration to Canada,” 546.
- <sup>54</sup> Holman, “Different Feelings,” 59.
- <sup>55</sup> See, “An Unprecedented Influx,” 430.
- <sup>56</sup> See, “An Unprecedented Influx,” 431.
- <sup>57</sup> Grace, “Irish Immigration and Settlement in a Catholic City,” 233.
- <sup>58</sup> See, “An Unprecedented Influx,” 437.
- <sup>59</sup> *Ottawa Daily Citizen*, 11 June 1853.
- <sup>60</sup> Grace, “A Demographic and Social Profile of Quebec City’s Irish Populations,” 57.
- <sup>61</sup> See, “An Unprecedented Influx,” 447.

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