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EDITED BY
E. MARGARET CRAWFORD

FOREWORD BY
SIR PETER FROGGATT

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'The Scattered Debris of the Irish Nation': The Famine Irish and New York City, 1845–55

Edward O'Donnell

> We regret to have to state that we have had communications from more than one well-informed correspondent, announcing of the appearance of what is called 'cholera' in the potatoes in Ireland, especially in the north. In one instance the party had been digging potatoes-the finest he had ever seen-from a particular field . . . up to Monday last. On digging in the same [field] on Tuesday he found the tubers unfit for the use of man or beast. We are most anxious to receive information as to the state of the potato crop in all parts, for the purpose either of allaying unnecessary alarm, or giving timely warning.

THUS DID THE PEOPLE of New York City receive, in the 4 October 1845 edition of the *Tribune*, the first indication of Ireland's impending disaster. As more information regarding the failure of the potato crop reached New York City, it quickly became apparent that the 'alarm' was not 'unnecessary'. As for the prospect of giving 'timely warning', the size and scope of the Famine devastation rendered any such effort virtually meaningless. No amount of warning could have prepared Ireland for what lay ahead in the coming 'hungry years'.

The same must be said for the societies which experienced the profound secondary effects of the Famine: cities like Liverpool, Boston, and New York which took in the millions of Irish fleeing starvation and death in their native land. As the steady stream of immigrants from Ireland became a torrent, then a deluge, these receptive cities experienced far-reaching social, cultural, political and economic change. By the mid-1850s it became clear to many that neither New York, nor its new Irish residents, would ever be the same again.

The focus of this paper is the impact of the Famine immigration on the largest metropolis in North America, New York City. No city in the nineteenth century, let alone the Famine years, received more emigrants from Ireland. Though the great majority moved on from New York to other parts of the nation, hundreds of thousands remained, making New York City by mid-century not simply America's most Irish city, but the *world's*, with an Irish-born population (203,000) in 1860 greater than that in Dublin or Cork or Belfast.[1]

It should go without saying that given the sheer volume of the Famine immigration, New York City was forever changed. The scope, nature and significance of that change constitutes the heart of this paper, though not its sole purpose. For just as the Famine emigration had a lasting impact on the city, so too did the city have a profound impact upon the Irish and the long-term American perception of them.

I

Perhaps the most significant fact regarding New York City on the eve of the Famine is that in 1845 it already was an 'Irish City'. Although New York's history as a colony is marked by the presence of a few notable figures of Irish ancestry, the beginnings of a recognizable pre-Famine Irish community can be dated to 1798. The ill-fated rising of that year produced a significant number of refugees to New York City, among them leaders like Dr William James MacNevin, William Sampson, and Thomas Addis Emmet, brother of the legendary martyred nationalist Robert Emmet.[2] Together they worked to develop a series of social, charitable, religious, and ethnic institutions dedicated to assisting the fledgling Irish community which grew appreciably after the cessation of the Napoleonic Wars. The city's first Irish newspaper, the *Shamrock* or *Hibernian Chronicle*, appeared in 1810 providing news from Ireland and practical advice to the Irish living in New York City. In 1814 the Irish Emigrant Society opened to offer assistance to the newly arrived. The following year the newly established Catholic diocese of New York opened its first cathedral, named in honour of Ireland's patron saint St Patrick. Other agencies like the Society of the Friendly Sons of St Patrick, founded in the late eighteenth century, grew in this period to assume a wide range of charitable activities.[3]

In contrast to those who would arrive at mid-century, many of the Irish who came during these first decades of the nineteenth century found New York City a place of optimism and opportunity, even if tempered by the melancholy of exile. Unlike those who would flee Ireland during the Famine, these emigrants arrived to find a smaller, less tumultuous New York City. They also brought with them greater capital and occupational skills – fully 48 per cent of Irish arrivals in 1826 were artisans (versus 28 per cent unskilled). 'As yet it's only natural I should feel lonesome in this country, ninety-nine out of every hundred who come to it are at first disappointed', wrote John Doyle to his wife in 1818. '. . . Still, it's a fine country and a much better place for a poor man than Ireland . . . and much as they grumble at first, after a while they never think of leaving it.' Doyle never did and went on to develop a prosperous career as a book seller.[4]

Emigration from Ireland to New York grew steadily through the 1820s as British free trade policies crushed Irish craft industries, most especially linens and textiles, and high rents and land enclosures drove many peasants off the land. Increased trade between Ireland and New York and Liverpool and New York encouraged emigration by lowering the cost of passenger travel. As more and more Irish arrived, they began to make a visible impact upon the city's economy. 'Is not this city prospering and growing by the labour of the poor Irish,' queried William Sampson, 'who swell the capital of our rich proprietors by their hard and daily work? Do they not help to dig our canals, and to erect our works of defence?' Even among those who disliked the Irish, the evidence of the latter's positive impact upon the city's economy was undeniable.[5]

In the 1830s the number and character of Irish immigrants to the city changed markedly. Whereas in previous decades most emigrants from Ireland were Protestants of modest means from Ulster, the overwhelming majority thereafter arrived as poor Catholics mainly from the South and West of Ireland.[6] Over 200,000 Irish emigrants landed at the Port of New York in the 1830s, pushing the city's Irish population to nearly 50,000 by the early 1840s.[7] By that time the institutional network of the Irish community included two newspapers, the Emigrant Aid Society, the recently founded Ancient Order of Hibernians (1836), one notable Irish theatre (Niblo's), and the ten Catholic parishes with affiliated schools, orphanages, and temperance societies. Thus, from an institutional standpoint, it would appear that New York's Irish community was well established on the eve of the Great Famine.[8]

Yet social history that relies on measures of institutional growth is both superficial and misleading. Closer analysis of the Irish community of New York on the eve of the Famine makes clear the fact that the poverty and discrimination faced by the majority of pre-Famine Irish immigrants rendered their charitable, ethnic, and religious institutions barely able to cope. Cast as poor, mostly illiterate, rural people into the swirling, expanding cauldron that was New York City, a large proportion of the pre-Famine Irish found themselves forced to take the lowest-paying and hardest work. Unable to afford decent housing and seeking the comfort of familiar faces, they crowded into Manhattan's lower wards where disease, crime, violence, and mortality rose to unheard of rates. Cholera epidemics claimed the lives of thousands in 1837 and 1842. Riots, at the centre of which were the Irish, broke out in 1834, 1835, 1837, and 1844.[9]

By 1840 a particularly treacherous section of the Sixth Ward, the Five Points, achieved a national reputation. Indeed, it became notorious *internationally*, for when he visited New York in 1842 on his tour of America, Charles Dickens insisted on taking a guided tour of the area, accompanied by a police escort. He recorded his observations in a travelogue entitled *American Notes*, published the following year.

> There is one quarter, commonly called the Five Points, which in respect of filth and wretchedness, may be safely backed against Seven Dials, or any other part of famed St. Giles . . . These narrow ways, diverging to the right and left, and reeking everywhere with dirt and filth. Such lives as are led here, bear the same fruits here as elsewhere. The coarse and bloated faces at the doors, have counterparts at home, and all the wide world over. Debauchery has made the very houses prematurely old. See how the rotten beams are tumbling down, and how the patched and broken windows seem to scowl dimly, like eyes that have been hurt in drunken frays. Many of those pigs live here. Do they ever wonder why their masters walk upright in lieu of going on all-fours? And why they talk instead of grunting?[10]

The horror and contempt expressed by Dickens for the poor Irish of New York was shared by a great many of the city's native-born inhabitants. On occasion this sentiment led to violence against the Irish, as in 1831 when a mob set fire to St Mary's Church, built only five years before and symbolic of the city's growing Irish and *Catholic* presence. Soon the city's vast publishing network began producing some of the best-selling literature of the era – salacious accounts of murderous priests, seduced nuns, and papal plots to send the Irish as the advance guard in a planned invasion of America. One of the leading practitioners of this genre was Samuel F.B. Morse, a man far better known for his career as an artist and perfecter of the telegraph.[11] In 1842 the Irish and their leaders clashed with city officials over the presence of an anti-Catholic curriculum in the public schools and the possible use of public funds for parochial schools.[12] Two years later James Harper was elected Mayor as a staunch advocate of municipal reform, a programme which included establishing a professional police force, mandating regular street cleaning, the prohibiting of wandering pigs from the streets, and ridding the city of the Irish. That election, coupled with word of a deadly riot against the Irish in nearby Philadelphia which left eighteen dead and two churches destroyed, brought tensions to the breaking point. Archbishop Hughes, self-appointed defender of the Irish Catholic flock challenged Harper to rein in his nativist supporters declaring that 'if a single Catholic church is burned in New York, the city will become a second Moscow.' These were chilling words for those who remembered that only thirty years earlier Moscow burned to the ground before Napoleon's invading legions. The message was clear: all that we ask is to be left alone; but if provoked we will fight back and the results will be grave.[13]

Thus even before the first refugees from the Famine debarked at the Port of New York, they faced two formidable problems: one, an Irish community already hard pressed to provide social services and relief to its less fortunate numbers, and two, a hostile host society that had all but fixed its opinion of the Irish as a dangerous, unassimilable, seditious, and utterly undesirable group.

Then in 1845 'the blight' struck Ireland's potato crop, opening one of the most harrowing chapters in recent human history.[14] Many Irish in New York learned of the crisis from local newspapers, both Irish and American. Doubtless, however, most gained such knowledge through letters from loved ones back in Ireland. 'My dear brother I suppose you have heard of the very great failure of Ireland,' wrote John Frazer to his brother in New York in 1847. '[Y]ou cannot compare it to anything more properly than the seize of Jerusalem[;] people are dying so fast with perfect hunger that we cannot attend to see them perfectly inter[r]ed [.T]he crops failing in Ireland this season has left it in the greatest distress.'[15] Not surprisingly, the Irish of New York responded immediately, sending over $800,000 to relatives in 1846 alone. Still, more than a million perished and an equivalent number fled their native land as immigrants, some to England, Canada, Australia, and Latin America, but most to America and its first city, New York.[16]

A brief recitation of the figures is sufficient to convey the magnitude of the Famine emigration to New York. Whereas, Irish immigrant arrivals in 1840 numbered 25,000, they soared in 1847 to roughly 53,000, 113,000 in 1849, and 163,000 in 1851 as shown in Table 1. All told nearly 850,000 Irish entered America through the port of New York between 1847 and 1851, and the numbers continued to average more than 60,000 per annum up to 1860.

Table 1: Irish Arrivals at the Port of New York, 1847–60

Year	Number	Year	Number
1847	52,946	1854	82,302
1848	91,061	1855	43,043
1849	112,591	1856	44,276
1850	117,038	1857	57,119
1851	163,306	1858	25,075
1852	118,131	1859	32,652
1853	113,164	1860	47,330

TOTAL : 1,100,034

While most Irish moved on almost immediately, those that stayed contributed to a demographic revolution in the nation's largest city. It is not enough to say that New York's Irish-born population rose to 175,000 by 1855. That figure becomes magnified in significance when one realizes that it represented 28 per cent of the city's population. Quite suddenly then, the largest city in America had been transformed, from a metropolis in 1840 which was approximately 15 per cent Irish and 25 per cent Roman Catholic, to one in 1855 that was approaching one-third Irish and 50 per cent Roman Catholic. And one must bear in mind the fact that the former figure is for Irish-born residents, and does not include the tens of thousands of persons born in the city of Irish parentage who appear in the census as 'American'.[17] 'There are portions of New York,' noted one visitor in 1860, '. . . where the population is as thoroughly Irish as in Dublin or Cork.'[18] Perhaps, thought many a New Yorker by the mid-1850s, Morse's warnings of a secret papal plot to take over America seemed not so far-fetched after all.

As with the large pre-Famine immigration, the impact of the Famine-era Irish in New York City is only barely conveyed by the raw numbers. A more intensive examination of the Famine Irish paints a vivid picture of a population that would have been hard pressed to survive in New York even if they had emigrated without the dreadful effects of the Famine all too apparent.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the Famine Irish in New York is the remarkable degree to which they – as a people fleeing starvation – arrived so ill-equipped to earn a living. That situation was not of their making, but rather the logical result of taking masses of pre-industrial rural peasants with little or no knowledge of the world outside their village in Connacht and depositing them pell-mell into an environment not only distant and foreign, but also urban, capitalist, and dynamic.

Specifically, the Irish arrived in New York City to an alarming extent bereft of the two essential ingredients for economic success: occupational skills and surplus capital. Whereas only 28 per cent of Irish immigrants arriving in 1826 were unskilled labourers, sixty per cent were by 1836, a figure which grew in the next decade.[19] This general characteristic of the Famine Irish as a whole was made more extreme in New York City by the fact that those who *did* possess money and/or skills were the most likely to move on. 'The pith and marrow of Ireland', commented the *Irish-American* in 1849, 'averaging between 100 and 5,000 dollars per family, have arrived within the past two years, in our seaboard cities. These emigrants do not stop in cities to spend their money and fool away their time. They go directly into the interior to seek out the best location as farmers, traders, and so forth.' Other contemporary assessments echoed similar, if less judgemental, conclusions, noting that 'Irish emigrants of the peasant and labouring class were generally poor, and after defraying their first expenses on landing had but little left to enable them to push their way into the country in search of such employment as was best suited to their knowledge and capacity.'[20]

Those who remained in New York City enjoyed few occupational choices. By the mid-1850s, fully 60 per cent of Irish-born men and women in New York worked either as unskilled labourers or in domestic service, occupations that paid very little and, in the case of men, often suffered from seasonal or quixotic disruptions. Furthermore, in terms of all foreign-born workers, the Irish truly dominated these two fields – 87 per cent of foreign-born labourers and 89 nine per cent of foreign-born domestics came from Ireland. The overwhelming image of Paddy the hod carrier and Bridget the laundress served to solidify the stereotype of the Irish as mentally suited for only menial labour.[21] Compounding this problem was widespread discrimination. Because domestic work brought them into the homes of the native-born, Irish women more often than men were confronted with signs and advertisements such as the following from a New York newspaper in 1840:

> WANTED – An English or American woman, that understands cooking, and to assist in the work generally if wished; also a girl to do chamber work. None need apply without a recommendation from their last place. IRISH PEOPLE need not apply, nor anyone who will not arise at 6 o'clock, as the work is light and the wages are sure. Inquire 359 Broadway.[22]

Irish men, too, faced the sting of discrimination in the workplace, but for different reasons. Irish immigration, asserted one report, undercut the livelihoods of the city's 'native labouring and mechanic classes' by 'crowding them out of employment, and diminishing the rewards of industry. Needy foreigners accustomed to live upon less than our own countrymen, are enabled to produce articles cheaper and to work for lower wages.'[23] Thus, for the Famine Irish in New York, the challenge of earning a living included far more than simply securing a steady job.

The confinement of the majority of the Famine Irish to such poorly paid and sporadic work was the single-greatest contributor to another dominant aspect of the Famine experience in New York – deplorable living conditions. As bad as Five Points was when Charles Dickens visited in 1842, by 1850 it was far worse. 'It is but truth to say,' commented Archbishop Hughes, 'that their abode in the cellars and garrets of New York is not more deplorable nor more squalid than the Irish hovels from which many of them had been 'exterminated [by the British]'.[24] The governors of the public alms house reported that between 1849 and 1858 the Irish accounted for 63 per cent of admissions (18,498 persons). Statistics such as this also hardened stereotypes about the Irish, particularly because they afforded the opportunity to make stark comparisons between the Irish and their other immigrant counterparts, the Germans. In the aforementioned category of assistance, Germans accounted for a mere 4.7 per cent of admissions.[25] 'We, as a people', commented the *Christian Examiner*,

> are intolerant of ragged garments and empty paunches. We are a people who have had no experience in physical tribulation. As a consequence, the ill-clad and destitute Irishman is repulsive to our habits and our tastes. We confound ill-clothing and destitution with ignorance and vice.[26]

Not surprisingly the categories of social distress noted in the pre-Famine Irish community also grew worse. The poor health of the Irish community declined further, in part due to the sheer numbers of destitute people crowding into deplorable housing, in part also because of malnutrition and disease associated with the Famine. As the newspaper *Courier* observed in 1847:

> The ship fever, that cruel scourge of the poor emigrant, starved to death before embarking, and provided [for] in some cases afterwards, worse than the African slave in the slave ship, has made its way notwithstanding the Quarantine Station and Hospital [on Staten Island], to this city and has made great havoc among the emigrants in the lower part of the city.

The cholera epidemic of 1849, which many attributed to Irish Famine sufferers, claimed over 4,000 lives, 44 per cent of whom were Irish. Infant mortality was high, often claiming the lives of more than one-third of children under age five. On a more broad level, for the next decade at the city's public hospital, Bellevue, 85 per cent of the foreign-born admissions were Irish. It is hard to conjure up a more tragic image than that of the countless men and women – the 'scattered debris of the Irish nation' according to Archbishop John Hughes – who survived the ravages of Famine and disease in Ireland and the privations of a long journey across the Atlantic, only to die weeks later of dysentery or tuberculosis in New York City.[27]

Crime and disorder followed poverty and disease. Of those arrested in the 1850s fifty-five per cent were born in Ireland, and lest one attribute that to anti-Irish prejudice, one needs to bear in mind that 27 per cent of the city's police force was Irish-born. Of the 2,000 women prostitutes arrested in 1858, 706 (35 per cent) had been born in Ireland. Street gangs bearing such colourful names as the Plug Uglies, Kerryonians, and Whyos emerged at this time and were predominantly of Irish background. The riots of the 1830s paled by comparison with those that occurred in 1849, 1857 and 1863, the latter being the notorious Draft Riots which claimed well over 100 lives.[28]

In response to these many trials, the Irish of New York strengthened existing institutions like the Catholic church and created new ones to fill crucial voids. Between 1845 and 1865 seventeen new parishes were established in Manhattan, providing for both the spiritual as well as the material well-being of their surging immigrant congregations. New Catholic colleges of St Francis Xavier (Jesuits, 1847) and Manhattan College (Christian Brothers, 1849) along with recently established St John's (Jesuit, 1841) began to educate young men for the professions as well as the priesthood, though the latter's increased numbers barely kept pace with the growth of the Catholic population.[29] Irish Catholic lay men and women founded in 1846 the Society of St Vincent de Paul and in 1849 the Sisters of Charity established the city's first Catholic hospital, St Vincent's. In that same year the Irish community welcomed a new newspaper, the *Irish-American*, as well as a Catholic Temperance Society and the first of many Irish County Societies (Sligo) which served both a charitable and cultural role.[30]

As the Irish grappled with the difficulties of Famine-induced immigration and settlement, New Yorkers by the mid-1850s struggled to explain how and why their city had been transformed. *Harper's Weekly* captured the sentiments of many when it editorialized on the demise of New York since the 1830s. 'What was then a decent and orderly town of moderate size, has been converted into a huge, semi-barbarous metropolis – one half as luxurious and artistic as Paris, the other half as savage as Cairo or Constantinople – not well-governed, not ill-governed, but simply not governed at all.' To no one's surprise *Harper's*, published by former Mayor and James Harper, laid the blame for these developments squarely on the shoulders of the Irish.[31]

II

Clearly, life for the Famine Irish was marked by trial and struggle. Nonetheless, a survey of the many pathologies which afflicted the Famine Irish and their efforts to overcome them serves only a limited purpose. To begin with, it obscures the fact that not all the Irish in New York in the 1840s and 1850s were destitute. In fact, successful Irish men and women could be found in virtually every aspect of New York City society. The example of merchant Alexander T. Stewart is instructive on this point. Born in Ulster, he emigrated to New York City in the 1820s and became a fabulously successful retailer specializing in fine ladies' clothing. His famed 'Marble Palace' at Broadway and Chambers Street was constructed in 1846 by John McGlynn (father of the later famous Fr McGlynn of St Stephen's Church), one of many successful Irish contractors at the time. Finally, Stewart also relied on skilled Irish seamstresses to produce his fine line of clothing. These and many other upwardly mobile Irish immigrants and Irish-Americans living in New York City offset the image of the poor Famine immigrant and provided the financial backing for many of the aforementioned charitable relief efforts.[32]

An exclusive focus on the struggle of the Famine Irish in New York also obscures the larger impact of their arrival on the city. First, it is important to consider that the other side of Irish dominance in back-breaking menial labour was its essential contribution to the rapid growth of the metropolis. At the risk of oversimplification, from a purely economic standpoint, in the American South it was the labour of enslaved Africans that made possible the Cotton Kingdom; in the north it was the sweated labour of immigrants, mostly Irish, that made possible the industrial revolution.

Second, the Irish arrived in New York at precisely the time that all white men were extended the franchise. In cities, as Amy Bridges has pointed out, this meant the birth of the political machine and so-called 'ward politics.' Although the Irish did not invent the political machine, they did become its most vital cogs, first in the Famine era as voters, later as leaders who dominated the city's political structure. So successful were the Irish in attaining political power by the 1870s, that leading politicians in New York State seriously considered depriving the poor [i.e., the Irish] of the vote.[33]

Third, the massive introduction of Catholic Irish to New York City had far-reaching implications for American Catholicism. The intensity of the anti-Catholicism experienced by the Irish in New York shaped the form of Catholicism they developed. Led by their stalwart, if confrontational, Archbishop John Hughes, New York's Irish Catholics developed an inward-focused and defensive Catholic culture and institutional network, the cornerstone of which was the parish school. While such a system of separate schools offered many tangible and psychological benefits in the short run, critics then and now argued that in the long run it inhibited the full participation of Irish-Americans in American life by fostering insecurity and localism.[34]

A fourth impact was the development, refinement and distribution nation-wide of the brutal stereotypes of the Irish. With its more than 100 newspapers and 50 magazines in the 1850s, not to mention its near corner on book publishing, New York City virtually created and then sold to the rest of America the image of the Irish as violent, criminal, drunken, venal papists. Even as late as 1928, the year Al Smith became the first Irish Catholic candidate for president, mainstream newspapers and magazines continued to publish derogatory and demeaning cartoons of Smith and his Irish supporters.[35]

Fifth, the extreme experience of the Famine Irish in New York greatly shaped their self-perception and world-view. If ever there was a prime example of Kerby Miller's thesis of a bitter, 'exile' consciousness developing in America, New York City certainly provided it. Here the Famine generation endured both economic deprivation and discrimination at the hands of people striking for their similarities to the British back home.[36]

Finally, I would argue that the Famine Irish arrival had two additional, long-range results, one in terms of historiography, the other in terms of national experience and memory. The emergence of the study of immigration history in the United States began in 1941 with the publication of Oscar Handlin's groundbreaking study of the Boston Irish. Armed with new-found statistical methods Handlin painted a grim picture of desperate immigrants, horrible living conditions, and violent discrimination.[37] His work was followed by similar studies of the Irish in Philadelphia, New York, Jersey City and other east coast metropolises, all of which dramatized the legion of obstacles that confronted the Irish and the long uphill struggle they waged to achieve economic and social success. In a word, the historic image of Five Points was so intense that it dominated for decades the historical interpretation of the Irish experience in America as a whole. Appropriately, scholarship in the last fifteen years has uncovered a geographically, economically, and socially diverse Irish-American experience. The varied stories of the Irish who passed through New York – to cities like Pittsburgh, Albany, Detroit, Cleveland, St Louis, New Orleans, Denver, Butte, and San Francisco – is one full of exceptions to the east coast, New York model. In many cases, the Irish there experienced less discrimination, less poverty, and faster upward mobility and political empowerment, and often with a less dominant political machine or Catholic Church. The Five Points experience, we now know, formed but *one of many* aspects of the overall Irish migration during the Great Famine.[38]

The experience of Famine-era Irish in New York City also opened a new and central chapter in American political culture and society. In a word, the Irish arrival prepared the United States for the successive waves of immigrants to come. The cultural, economic, religious, and political changes brought to the nation's Empire City by the Irish hegira raised the critical questions of ethnic diversity, religious tolerance, and cultural pluralism. The city's initial answers – riot, slander and calls for restriction – caused pain, but ultimately failed in the face of an emergent political creed of inclusion. By the turn of the century New York City had all but forgotten about the 'Celtic Menace.' Instead the same language of fear and derogation now focused on the Italian and the Jew. And yet forty years would pass – and 20 million immigrants arrive – before nativists achieved immigration restriction (1921). Even in curtailing immigration and extending preferences to some groups over others, they left intact the tradition and principle of continuous and diverse flow of immigration.

Tellingly, the traditions of toleration and acceptance established (however begrudgingly) in the wake of the Famine Irish arrival proved stronger than those of fear and restriction. The restrictions on immigration lasted only 40 years and were repealed in 1965 in favour of a system more equal and magnanimous (at least initially). Time will tell if these traditions will prevail yet again as the United States enters its newest phase of anti-immigration sentiment. Given the fact that so many of the legacies of the Famine in Ireland and America were tragic, the establishment and perpetuation of the principle of ethnic inclusion would be a fitting legacy for those who overcame suffering and death and arrived in New York City hoping for a second chance.

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17 Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City*, p. 188; Rosenwaike, *Population History of New York City*, p. 41 and 53.

18 Thomas L. Nichols, *Forty Years of American Life*, 2 (New York, 1968, reprint of 1864 original), p. 69.

19 Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, pp. 195-196.

20 *Irish American*, August 26, 1849, quoted in Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City*, p. 62; John Francis Maguire, *The Irish In America*, (1868), pp. 214-15; Hasia Diner, ' "The Most Irish City in the Union":The Era of the Great Migration, 1844-1877', in Ronald H. Bayor and Timothy J. Meagher (eds), *The New York Irish*, p. 91.

21 Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City*, p. 219.

22 Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City*, p. 67.

23 Association for the Improvement of the Condition of the Poor, *Ninth Annual Report* (1852), p. 22, quoted in Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City*, p. 103.

24 Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, p. 37.

25 Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City*, p. 201.

26 *Christian Examiner*, 1848, quoted in Griffin, p. 49.

27 John Ridge, 'The Great Hunger in New York', *New York Irish History*, 9 (1995), pp. 5-12; Carl Wittke, *The Irish in America: A Political and Social Portrait* (Baton Rouge, 1956), p. 42; Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City*, pp. 52-54; other indications of the ill-health of the Irish abound. For example, 70 per cent of the foreign-born admissions to the city's mental hospital in the 1850s were Irish (Ernst, p. 54). The overall death rate of the Irish in 1850 was 43 per cent higher than that of their German neighbours. (Rosenwaike, p. 41.)

28 Ernst, *Immigrant Life in New York City*, pp. 58, 203; Edward K. Spann, *The New Metropolis: New York City, 1840-1857* (New York, 1981) pp. 316, 440; Herbert Asbury, *The Gangs of New York* (New York, 1928), *passim*. For full accounts of the many riots, see: Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for*

American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War (New York, 1990); Adrian Cook, *Armies of the Streets: The New York City Draft Riots of 1863* (Lexington, 1974); Joel T. Headley, *The Great Riots of New York, 1712-1873* (New York, 1970, reprint of 1873 edition); Richard Moody, *The Astor Place Riot* (Bloomington, 1918).

29 Despite church building efforts, the size of the average parish grew from 8,500 in 1840 to 11,000 in 1865. The ratio of priests to parishioners remained constant at one priest for every 8,500. Dolan, pp. 13, 66.

30 Dolan, *The Immigrant Church*, pp. 13, 112-13, 121-4; Bernadette McCauley, 'Taking Care of their own: Irish Catholics, Health Care and Saint Vincent's Hospital, 1850-1900', *New York Irish History*, 8 (1993-94), pp. 51-54; John Ridge, *Sligo in New York: The Irish from County Sligo 1849-1991* (New York, 1991, passim.

31 Spann, *The New Metropolis*, pp. 315.

32 Diner, "The Most Irish City in the Union", pp. 95-97.

33 Oliver E. Allen, *The Tiger: The Rise and Fall of Tammnay Hall* (New York, 1993); Amy Bridges, *A City in the Republic: Antebellum New York and the Origin of Machine Politics* (Cambridge, 1984); Steven P. Erie, *Rainbow's End: Irish- Americans and the Dilemmas of Urban Machine Politics, 1840-1985* (Berkeley, 1988).

34 Leonard Riforgiato, 'Bishop John Timon, Archbishop John Hughes, and Irish Colonization: A Clash of Episcopal Views on the Future of the Irish and the Catholic Church in America', in William Pencak, et al. (eds), *Immigration to New York* (Philadelphia, 1990), *passim*.

35 For more on the dominance of New York City in media and printing, see Edward Spann, *The New Metropolis*, pp. 406-7.

36 Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles*, pp. 338-44.

37 Oscar Handlin, *Boston's Immigrants: A Study In Acculturation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1941).

38 Donald H. Akenson, 'The Historiography of the Irish in the United States of America', in Patrick O'Sullivan (ed.), *The Irish in New Communities*, (New York, 1993).