THE SECRET LIVES OF OBJECTS
HIDDEN HISTORIES OF DUBLIN DESIGN

NCAD MA IN DESIGN HISTORY AND MATERIAL CULTURE

EDITED BY LISA GODSON

The Little MUSEUM of DUBLIN

ID2015 Ireland the Design Island

NCAD DUBLIN
National College of Art and Design
A Recognised College of University College Dublin

THE SECRET LIVES OF OBJECTS
HIDDEN HISTORIES OF DUBLIN DESIGN

NCAD MA IN DESIGN HISTORY AND MATERIAL CULTURE

EDITED BY LISA GODSON

Published by the Little Museum of Dublin, and kindly supported by ID2015 and the Design and Crafts Council of Ireland
Editor Lisa Godson **Editorial Assistant** Lynda Dunne
Design and layout Simon O'Connor
Object photography Alex Kearns
This book is typeset in Newzald and DinPro.

Contents

Foreword

Dr Lisa Godson

THIS PUBLICATION HAS ITS ORIGINS in an assignment undertaken by students on the MA in Design History and Material Culture at the National College of Art and Design. Each student was invited to select an object from the collection of the *Little Museum of Dublin*, and research it to produce a written analysis of how it was produced, distributed, consumed and understood. The brief was developed in a workshop where we imagined all the questions you might ask about an object – what does it feel like to touch? What does it smell like? How similar is it to other objects? What was it designed for? Has it been used in other ways since then? Who might have owned it? Where might it have been stored? How was it circulated? What values might be associated with it?

The objects were selected quite quickly at the museum, in an almost giddy atmosphere; they seemed almost too lowly to be the subject of much consideration. The researchers started by sizing them up, observing their colouring, their texture, figuring out their dimensions, noting how they bore their past lives through the marks of their use. From this starting point, each student got to know 'their' object intimately, as a thing. In terms of how each assemblage of materials was first brought together, and formed into a recognisable object, we had a further workshop on manufacturing and 'materiology' with NCAD industrial design lecturer Enda O'Dowd. Graphic design historian Mary Ann Bolger helped us decipher the printing on most of them. And then everyone disappeared, their specific object drawing them into different worlds.

Many of the objects had no specific provenance other than ebay or anonymous donation, and detective work became key to understanding them. For example, Alison MacCormaic's research into a plastic thatched cottage ornament led her into souvenir shops and conversations with importers of 'fancy goods', who were able to trace its origins to Hong Kong in the 1970s. In uncovering the working methods in the factories that produced such souvenirs in great quantity, she realised this particular ornament was 'designed' through a specific visual reference, and found the 'original' cottage on a John Hinde postcard. Oral history was also significant for Eimer Murphy in researching a protest postcard made by the conservation movement S.A.D.D. (Students Against the Destruction of Dublin). Lengthy conversations and rounds of emails led not only to the identification of the designer and maker of the card, but also a strong sense of how we construct our relationship to the past, and how our understanding of objects is always emergent rather than fixed.

Other objects were deeply linked with a specific individual, although they all led to far more than biographical details. Lynda Dunne's research into an ordinary tailor's tape measure that had thread and beads added to it led her to the story of the deaf and blind Doctor James Hanlon (1908- 1961). Adapted by his secretary for him, through interviews with family members and a consideration of the nature of touch, Lynda arrived at an understanding of how this very simple item was essential to Hanlon's being in the world. Donna Gilligan's choice of a chocolate box featuring Lord Mayor of Dublin Alfie Byrne similarly focussed partly on Byrne as a 'celebrity' character (the so-called 'shaking hand of Dublin') but also on of the nature of gift-giving, reciprocation and the sweetened deal.

The objects open up the past in highly specific and unique ways – a menu from Restaurant Jammet, as analysed by Rory Hutton, demonstrates the nature of fine dining in Dublin in the 1930s, a streamlined hood hairdryer discussed by Fiona Dunne prompts a discourse on the nature of female employment and the influence of Hollywood on female grooming, a telephone sign from the 1930s led Paula Vallely to consider the relationship between infrastructure and the Irish language, a film poster discussed by Elaine McDevitt provides insights into the uneasy accommodation between Irish folklore and the impetus to attract American investment in Ireland.

Ultimately, the work by these students offers new insights into both the past and the objects that have survived. As well as new analyses and insights, they provide new stories – Therese McKeone's research into a humble bottle traces a circle between a gambling racket, the eradication of TB, milk and glass-making.

In the research and writing of these studies, it became clear that they were worth sharing beyond the classroom. In helping us realise this, we are grateful to Year of Irish Design 2015, the Little Museum of Dublin, all staff on the NCAD MA Design History and Material Culture, Enda O'Dowd, Mary Ann Bolger and everyone who helped to bring these stories and objects more fully to light.

Dr. Lisa Godson, National College of Art & Design

List of illustrations

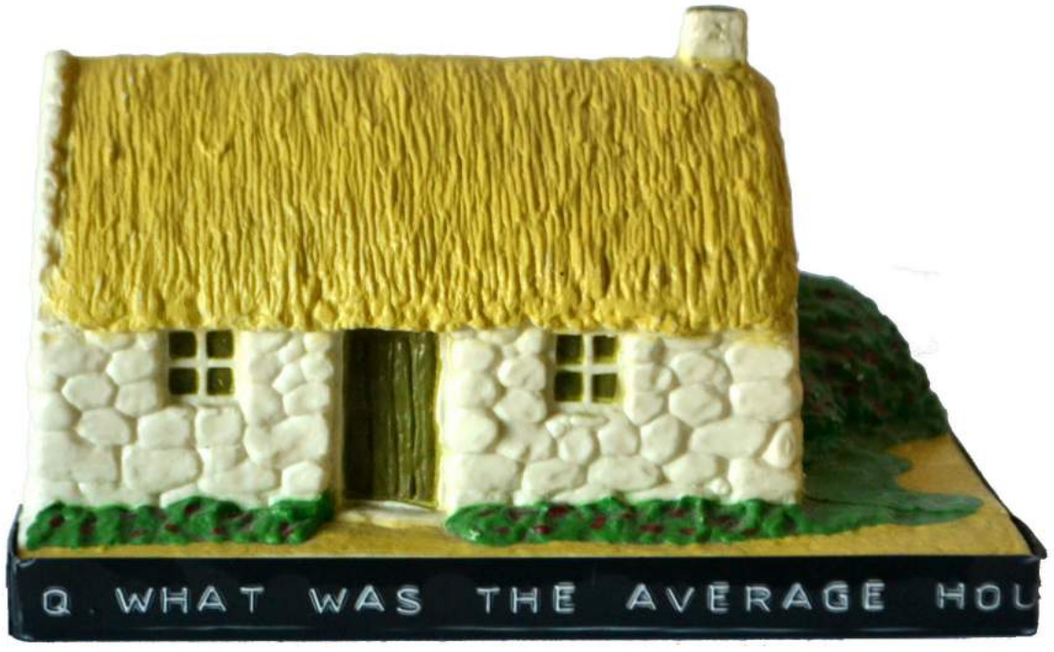


Figure 1.1. Miniature Thatched Cottage, Polyester c.1975 – 1985, Hong Kong

Thatched Cottage Ornament

Alison Mac Cormaic

Introduction

A rather simple ornament sits above a rather grand fireplace in the drawing room of a large Georgian house in St Stephen's Green, Dublin (Figure 1.1). It jostles for space between an old clay pipe, a framed bottle of Findlater's stout, and a rubber bullet. Welcome to the Little Museum, a hotchpotch collection of 'all things' Dublin produced and consumed between 1900 and 2000. The small, plastic thatched cottage arrived on the fireplace in 2014, when it was purchased by Trevor White –the museum's director – from a car boot sale in Newmarket Square. We can see that it is lightweight, small, and - if not for a cryptic message concerning Dublin house prices - it could almost be described as insignificant. In this essay we are following its journey.

To explain why the ornament came into existence we must first consider the 'real' thatched cottage, and how it became an Irish symbol of a romantic and idyllic way of life. For hundreds of years cottages were the traditional and commonplace home for rural dwellers. With its strong visual connections to evictions and emigration, the thatched cottage has long played a significant role in the Irish psyche. Many traditional Irish ballads connect the small dwelling to immigration and longing. For example, the poem 'Old Woman of the Roads' by Padraic Colum (1881-1972) – learned by many Irish school children – begins, 'O' to have a little house'.[1] Similarly, 'Noreen Bawn', a song about immigration by Neil McBride written in 1910, opens with, 'There's a spot in old Tír

1 Padraic Colum, 'Old Woman of the Roads' (1954).

Connal, there's a wee house in the glen'.[2] In this essay, I will trace the cottage's gradual shift as an icon of Irish nationhood to an image adored by the diaspora, but often considered twee or kitsch by the inhabitants of Ireland. I will follow the production of plastic souvenirs in the 1970s and discuss our changing views of this kind of ornament today.

Representing Nationalism

Thatched cottages are not a uniquely Irish phenomenon. At one time they existed across the British Isles from the Outer Hebrides to Devon and Cornwall. What *is* uniquely Irish is the ideology and emotive feelings that surround them. In his book *Banal Nationalism*, Michael Billig suggests that our common understanding of the term nationalism is misleading.[3] He proposes that, instead of associating nationalism only with those on the edges of our society, we should recognise that it is very much more deep-rooted, affecting all peoples who live together in a country or district. He suggests that 'In so many little ways, the citizenry are daily reminded of their national place in a world of nations…the image of banal nationalism is not a flag which is being consciously waved with fervent passion; it is the flag hanging unnoticed on the public building'.[4] Tricia Cusack suggests that for Ireland, the image of a thatched cottage was a powerful example of this quiet 'banal nationalism.' She observes that nationalism 'commonly looks back to the golden age of a simple 'folk' society, and conversely nationalist ideology assumes that the 'folk' has a residual presence in existing peasant or rural communities'.[5]

Irish cultural nationalists of the nineteenth and early-twentieth century popularised certain aspects of identity that were considered unique to Ireland. These were often associated with the west of the country, particularly Connemara, where the rural way of life had kept alive a language, dress and vernacular architecture considered distinctly 'Irish'. An example of dedication to this idea of the West is Patrick Pearse, the nationalist and leader of the 1916 Easter Rising who, from 1909, owned a thatched cottage in County Galway for pastoral recreation.[6] At the 1908 Franco-Russian exhibition in London, the largest commercial attraction was a model Irish village called Ballymaclinton, featuring 'traditional' whitewashed thatched cottages. The village had a post office from which visitors could send postcards. Figures suggest over 2 million visitors attended the exhibition, which returned annually to the same site until the outbreak of war in 1914.[7] Postcards sent from Ballymaclinton must have found their way into many homes, and this may have been a factor in the thatched cottage becoming a common and widespread embodiment of Ireland.

On the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, the thatched cottage of the Western seaboard was mobilised to communicate Ireland's new independence and autonomy. The rural people and their homes were idealised and glorified as the authentic 'folk' of a country that needed a past to build on, with the thatched cottage as the perfect visual symbol, epitomising family, kinship and the heart of communities.

The artist Paul Henry (1876-1958) lived and painted in Achill, County Mayo, between 1912 and 1919. His atmospheric paintings of rural homes softened the real-life poverty and hardship with the picturesque visions of his brush. These turned out to be the perfect images to define the emerging Irish state. Cusack suggests that Paul Henry's powerful images of sea, sky and cottage provided visual ideals for the state, as they suggested what England was not – a rural idyll as 'the other' to England's increasingly urbanised and industrialised landscape.[8] The thatched cottage in the landscape as the ideal Irish home might be seen partly in terms of Hobsbawm's 'invented tradition'. This refers to the phenomenon across Europe during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, when it was fashionable to glorify pre-modern society, suggesting that it was a simpler, harmonious, innocent and even happier time.[9]

The thatched cottage was particularly photogenic and was also represented in early travel brochures, for example those written by A.V. Morton, first published in the 1930s, which introduced many potential visitors to the beauty of the rugged West. The thatched cottage developed as a nationalist symbol and as a tourist symbol at roughly the same time during

2 Neil McBride, 'Noreen Bawn' (1910).
3 Michael Billig (2005) *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage), p.5.
4 Billig *Banal Nationalism*, p. 8.
5 Tricia Cusack (2001) 'A 'Countryside Bright with Cosy Homesteads': Irish Nationalism and The Cottage Landscape' *National Identities* 3 (3), 221-38, p. 223.
6 In the ownership of the Office of Public Works and open to visitors, Teach an Phiarsaigh is the site of a new visitors centre, funded as part of the 1916 centenary commemorations.
7 Srephanie Rains (2011) 'The Ideal Home (Rule) Exhibition: Ballymaclinton and the 1908 Franco-British Exhibition' *Field Day Review* 7, 5-21, p.6.
8 Cusack, p.230.
9 See Eric Hobsbawm (1983) 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions' in Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (eds.) *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: CUP), 1-14.

the first half of the twentieth century. For Irish people this iconography was characterised as a connection to their own unique past and this related to tourist expectations of Ireland as quaint and rural. Such an evolution of a country's iconography is commonplace, and is noted by Donald Horne as 'tourism becom(ing) a celebration of the nation and a definer of the national past'.[10]

The Souvenir On examining the original packaging of the plastic cottage in the Little Museum, a small red diamond logo with 'Barco Brand' stamped on the side of the box reveals that a firm called Barclay Distributors were behind its manufacture. In the 1970s, the company operated from Bow Lane in Dublin[11] and was managed by Michael Cornick and Brian Wolfson. They were the second generation of an earlier family business called Barclay Ireland, which traded from Eustace Street.[12] The business was established by their Jewish immigrant fathers in 1952.[13] They designed, sourced and imported Irish souvenirs, selling them on to wholesalers who then distributed them to the retailers.[14] This was confirmed by Maurice Sweeney, a travel agent who operated during the 1970s and remembers buying the same plastic cottages from a wholesalers' company on Ormond Quay.[15] Barclay Distributors ceased trading in 2002 but Michael Cornick still works in the industry today with his company MBC Agencies. He believes the cottage was made in Hong Kong and was first manufactured in the mid-1970s, with production continuing up until the early 1980s. He estimated that between 10 and 12,000 of them were made annually - along with one particular leprechaun figure, it was Barclay's most popular seller.[16]

Belleek pottery, known for their porcelain goods, produced an ornamental thatched cottage in the form of a cruet set in the 1890s and then 'thatched' cheese covers in the 1920s. However, the first Belleek cottage with a purely ornamental purpose was not made until 1980.[17] Instead, the first Irish thatched cottage souvenirs were homemade ornaments made from the 1950s or before. These were cut from sods of turf that were then whitewashed, given a straw roof and painted with windows and a door.[18] Both *Campaign* (the magazine of the Institute of Creative Advertising and Design) and the seminal *Design in Ireland* (aka the Scandinavian Report) made disdainful references to those early souvenirs, the report describing them as 'clumsy reproductions of Irish rustic houses made of painted peat' and counselling that these 'rough and artless products should not be encouraged.'[19] During the 1960s, plaster cast music-box cottages were made in Bray, Co. Wicklow[20] and in the 1970s pottery cottages were produced in large numbers in Asia. Michael Cornick describes the early days of the manufacturing industry in the Far East. 'At first everything was made in Japan, they made the porcelain…the next big thing was gypsum it didn't work because it chipped, it was a kind of a chalky substance. Then it moved onto plastic, which was made first in Hong Kong, this was the stepping ground into China.'[21]

These products served the growing Irish tourist market; figures show that in 1978 over 2 million visitors spent £328 million, and a whole new industry of souvenirs, ornaments and trinkets developed around them.[22] Although most contemporaneous writings were upbeat in their promotion of indigenous Irish craft, the newspapers and journals of the time were sometimes critical about importation. It seems that, from the professional design commentators to angry teenage girls, Irish people felt cheated that their souvenirs were not made locally. Foreign production was very new and – perhaps naïvely – unaware of the imminent opening up and subsequent explosion of the trade from the East, Irish people were hopeful that they could stem the flow and keep up with souvenir production in their own country. Some souvenirs that would have been for sale alongside thatched cottages were blackthorn shillelaghs carved by local Irish craft-workers, Irish character dolls, tea towels from linen mills in the North and a range of ceramic imports from Japan which were stamped with 'Déanta sa tSeapan.'[23]

10 Donald Horne (1994) *The Public Culture: the Triumph of Industrialism* (London: Pluto Press), p.8.
11 *Thom's Dublin Street Directory* (1991) p. 1235.
12 *Thom's Dublin Street Directory* (1974) p. 862.
13 Garvey, Cornick, personal communication (henceforth pers. comm.) (September 2015).
14 Garvey, pers. comm. (September 2015).
15 Sweeney, pers. comm. (January 2015).
16 Cornick, pers. comm. (September 2015).
17 Cleary, pers. comm. (January 2015).
18 Carty, pers. comm. (August 2015).
19 Kaj et. al. (1961) *Design in Ireland* (CTT: Dublin) p. 25.
20 Powell, pers. comm. (December 2014).
21 Cornick, pers. comm. (September 2015).
22 Furlong (1979), cited in *Bord Failte Annual Report* (2009), p. 191.
23 In the 1950s, the Irish government set down legislation that all souvenirs must state their country of origin, by the 1960s this was often written in Irish. This compulsory labelling ended when Ireland joined the EU and a Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) was introduced. Tax allowances were given to products imported from China and Hong Kong because they were classified as underdeveloped countries.: Powell 2015, pers. comm.; Breen 2015, pers. comm.; Cornick, pers. comm (all 2015).

As it ceased being produced in the 1980s, it was believed that the Barclay's plastic cottages had disappeared from today's souvenir shops. This was until Liam Garvey of *Gifts from Galway*,[24] a prominent souvenir shop in the city, purchased a warehouse of souvenir goods that had lain undisturbed for 'between thirty and fifteen years.'[25] Today, on the shelves of his premises in Shop Street, Galway, one can find the same cottage ornaments as the Little Museum one, selling for €4.99 and complete with the original cardboard packaging with acetate see-through panel.

From Postcard to Ornament

Figure 1.2. 'Thatched Cottage, Connemara, Co. Galway, Ireland' Postcard John Hinde **Ltd., c.1966**

In terms of a visual source for the design of the cottage ornament, we might trace it to a postcard of a Connemara cottage, printed c.1966 by the John Hinde company (figure 1.2). This was established by the photographer John Hinde in 1956, and its romantic images were hugely important in the promotion of Ireland.[26] Like other postcard designers, Hinde offered the tourist an idealized version of Ireland. He was not adverse to changing and altering details to accentuate a perfect beauty in the rural idyll; 'telegraph poles, cars and TV aerials were marked down for magic removal'.[27] In the postcard, the left hand window has an overhanging top sash, typical of sash and casement windows of the time, but the window on the right has been 'made up'. Perhaps the actual window was too dilapidated or it may even have been without a window at all, although such a portrayal of poverty would have been too extreme for John Hinde. Like a more modern-day Paul Henry, he strove to portray a romantic beauty, not hardship and destitution.

24 http://www.galwaybaygifts.com/about-us [accessed 01.09.2015]
25 Garvey, pers comm. (2015).
26 Keogh (2004), p16.
27 Parr (2002) *Our True Intent Is All For Your Delight. The John Hinde Butlin Photographs* (London: Chris Boot), p.124.

The connection between postcards and ornaments was confirmed by Michael Cornick, who remarked that 'in Ireland all the souvenirs ever made go back to John Hinde and his iconic postcards.'[28] The similarities are corroborated with visual clues. It is likely that the designer operated within the Hong Kong factory and it seems as if a very particular eye copied everything down to the last detail, being unfamiliar with the nature of thatched cottages and keen not to leave anything out - just in case that one element might be the most vital.

Visual clues in the texture and shape of the cottage indicate that a prototype was made from clay. The walls were built by addition – 'adding on' or building up the clay one rolled out stone at a time – rather than subtraction – 'taking away' or carving into the clay – of which there would be visible signs of tool marks. The five corner stones of the cottage closest to the camera follow the form of the five stones in the original postcard, and one could speculate that this is where the designer began. The only change to the cottage is the addition of a rose bush, but even this follows the shape of the shadow at the side of the house on the postcard – see figure 1.3 for outline drawings of the cottage on the Hinde postcard and that of the cottage in the Little Museum.

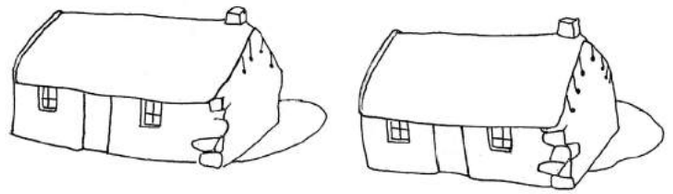


Figure 1.3. Outline drawings of cottage in John Hinde 'Thatched Cottage, Connemara' postcard (LHS) and Little Museum thatched cottage ornament (RHS), Alison MacCormaic, 2015

After production the ornament was packaged and transported to Ireland for sale. *Irish Cottage* is printed on the gift box packaging and *Thatched Cottage* appears across the front of a similar cottage found recently for sale in America on the Etsy website. This cottage's colours are subtle and delicate and it is more 'dated looking', demonstrating that the same cottage was manufactured over a number of years, the Little Museum ornament

28 Cornick, pers. comm. (2015).

being made more recently. To our eyes the 'Thatched Cottage' inscription repeats unnecessarily the 'subject' of the ornament. This tautology was more commonly placed on tourist items made in the Far East and according to Cornick, this cottage was the very first of its type to include this now common wording.[29]

The Irish Diaspora Any conversation with those involved in the souvenir industry quickly turns to the Irish-American tourist. For reasons of finance, the majority of visitors in the 1970s were of an older generation who were often interested in history, and keener on the image of the thatched cottage. Not only did it symbolise a historical Ireland, but it could be directly connected to their own past. Irish-Americans could have bought the cottage as a visual memory of their own ancestral home or heritage. The emergence of a booming American tourist trade in the 1970s was developed from the close ties to Ireland through the generations of immigrants. The diaspora's love of the Irish thatched cottage was strengthened through frequent cultural references, for example the film *The Quiet* Man (1952), Irish American presidential visits to ancestral homes, and even Princess Grace of Monaco having tea at the Widow Mulchrone's cottage in County Mayo, where her grandfather was born.

The Cottage as Kitsch - The Souvenir and Plastic Souvenir shops are an interesting phenomenon. They are situated in towns and cities the world over and the purchasing of holiday keepsakes or reminders is a very common activity for visitors, but it is unusual for locals to visit these outlets, let alone buy any of their products. It seems the more an object becomes representative of its country for non-nationals, the less of an identity it holds for that country's national population. Residents often presume a lack of authenticity towards their own country's tourist objects, and according to Stephanie Rains this is what gives souvenirs their 'kitsch' distinction.[30] She explains:

> Twentieth-century tourist and diaspora objects require...a high degree of stylisation in order to ...[represent] a culture that is otherwise distant or unknown. If they are to operate as markers of ethnic identity in a multi-ethnic society ...[and to] embody fully the touristic memory of a visit to Ireland, they must display their markers of both ethnicity and experience vividly and in such a way that they will be recognisable with a minimum of cultural 'work' or prior knowledge on the part of consumers. And it is through this process of the standardised representation of Irish ethnicity that these objects become situated as kitsch according to standard rules of taste and aesthetics.[31]

The objects that are circulated amongst the diaspora are vulnerable to becoming kitsch partly because they hold so much meaning for the diaspora, and so little for those at home, with these processes speeding up with twentieth-century mass production. The cottage ornament was among the material culture that was available to tourists during the 1970s and '80s. With its potential to stir strong emotive feelings in Irish-Americans and it becoming such a clichéd symbol of Irish identity, to those living in Ireland it may have appeared kitsch.

Investigating the cottage ornament has thrown light upon our changing feelings towards the beauty of plastic. In her book *Early Plastic*, Susan Mossman notes that, 'the vast production runs that make [plastic] affordable can become synonymous with cheap and disposable'.[32] She explains that we are well and truly living in the age of plastic, 'but culturally many people have difficulty admitting it'.[33] The negative associations of plastic has affected the design of some recent souvenirs, as can be seen for example with objects sold at the *Treasure Chest* souvenir shop, a family business that was established in Galway in 1966. The shop manager Ultan Bennet describes the shelves of modern plastic leprechauns, sheep and shamrocks as 'ceramic'.[34] The product from which they are made is called Alabastrite, and nowadays is commonly used for souvenirs as well as many other general household ornaments.

Described as a 'heavy resin', items made from Alabastrite are produced in the same way as other plastics and resins by being poured into a mould, but the addition of powdered stone gives the ornament an important extra weight; it feels heavy and substantial in the hand.[35] The primary difference between the two plastics is one of weight. The Little Museum cottage is extremely light, and it could be knocked easily from a mantle-piece or shelf; in fact the chipped green paint on the rose bush suggests a fall. Perhaps more

29 Cornick, pers. comm. (2015).
30 Rains (2004) 'Celtic Kitsch: Irish-America and Irish Material Culture' *Circa* 107, 52-57, p. 52.
31 Rains, p. 53.
32 Susan Mossman (1997) *Early Plastics: Perspectives 1850-1950* (London: Leicester University Press) p. 135.
33 Mossman, p. 135.
34 Ultan Bennet, pers. comm. (December 2014).
35 www.wisegeeks.com [accessed 21.04.2015]

importantly, the ground stone in the Albastrite objects give them a definite loud chinking sound when placed on a shelf. Both the weight and the 'chink' allow us to think that this new kind of plastic is something that it is not – it could conceivably be described as a 'posh plastic'. These souvenirs' true material is hidden, and the retailer and consumer are likely unaware that they are buying plastic. Well cognisant of plastic's lack of prestige, the manufacturers have pushed technological advancements to develop a product that could be termed 'ceramic.' Alabastrite goods are the modern equivalent of the plastic ornaments from the 1970s and 80s, and it was the production of this new material that pushed polyester to redundancy in souvenir and ornament production.

The Thatched Cottage Today It seems that today the thatched cottage has gone out of favour, with both Irish people and tourists. Perhaps its kitsch connotations have caught up with it, or maybe contemporary tourists are less connected to their past as they clamour for more 'up to date' Irish icons of sheep or mini Guinness ornaments. Its popularity has waned in recent years, most especially in the last decade.[36] On recent searches in Carroll's of Dublin and the Treasure Chest in Galway, only a few examples of thatched cottages are available for sale (figure 1.4). It is now found most commonly printed on two-dimensional surfaces, on tea towels, oven gloves or postcards. As a three-dimensional ornament it continues to exist in two styles. One is in gimmick form, as a ceramic thatched cottage that burns tiny bricks of real turf to create the smell that reminds the diaspora of home. When found as an ornament, it has shrunk and either hangs as a decorative trinket or as a fridge magnet. Interestingly, most examples have still retained their 'Thatched Cottage' labelling.

Figure 1.4. Range of thatched cottage souvenirs in Carroll's of Dublin and The Treasure Chest, Galway, 2015

The cottage ornament in the museum is quite small, being only 11cm long, 5.5 cm high and 5.5 wide. According to Susan Stewart in her book *On Longing*, we react differently to objects when they are found in the miniature. She says: 'The miniature…presents a diminutive, and thereby manipulatable version of experience…which is domesticated and protected from contamination'.[37] Small versions of larger objects can give rise to powerful feelings that can draw us into the object, and pull our mind into a magical world. We sometimes imagine ourselves stepping in through the door and living our lives at that size.

The Second Sale In her discussion of literature and material culture, Janell Watson discusses the use, collection and sale of 'bibelot', a term popular in nineteenth-century referring to a wide range of knick knacks and second hand goods.[38] She suggests that there are four locations where any type of ornaments, souvenirs and artefacts can be found; the marketplace, the house, collections, and the museum. Each venue is quite different but linked together by their display of objects or 'their mutual involvement in the world of goods'.[39]

We know that this ornament has belonged in all four locations. It began its life as a new commodity in a 1970s souvenir shop; next it was most likely displayed in a home – perhaps on a fireplace, as discolouration to the plastic on an end gable suggests that the cottage sat with its side, rather than its back, to a window. Then, in 2014, it went back into the sales sphere to be bought at a car boot sale for twenty cents, and six months later it was exhibited in The Little Museum. Many museum exhibits have travelled through these four 'homes'. This crossover of an object's location category is especially true with a 'peoples' museum' such as the Little Museum of Dublin. Their collections are formed of less precious, everyday objects from only the very recent past, many of which might easily still be found in our homes today.

"I Got it for Twenty Cents at a Car Boot Sale!" Gregson and Crewe have written extensively about the car boot sale as a sphere for selling, buying and enjoying. They describe car boot sales as places where 'conventions of the marketplace are suspended

36 Bennet, pers. comm.; Powell, pers. comm.

37 Susan Stewart (1984) *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham and London: Duke University Press), p. 69.

38 Janell Watson (1999) *Literature and Material Culture from Balzac to Proust: the Collection and Consumption of Curiosities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).

39 Watson, p. 7.

or abandoned.'[40] Comparisons are made between the fun of a car boot sale and the rather flat experiences of purchase in a shopping centre or supermarket. They say that although these commercial spaces are at 'the margins of the formal economy society', they are popular because people often have a desire to break away from the conventional form of purchasing.[41]

We do not know if Trevor haggled down the price with good-natured laughs and cheery banter, but even if the ornament is not to everybody's taste, its low cost can be described as a good deal. Bargain hunting is an important aspect of second hand sales. It can make for theatrical purchases, giving powerful personal memories that, in turn, infuse the new possession with an immediate history. Not only are there stories from the purchase – the entertainment, the trading or the revelry – but perhaps even anecdotes from the object's past. This can personalise an object, giving it a history to bring with it into its new life.

We will never know if the seller could have helped us with the cottage's history. Much of this essay is focussed on tourism, and with that the implication that all the ornaments produced left the country as souvenirs - but this one stayed at home in Dublin. It is possible that it was bought in a Dublin shop run by Hector Grey, an important character in the early supply of souvenirs. He sold inexpensive goods from his shop, first in Mary Street and then Upper Liffey Street, as well as supplying souvenirs to other outlets nationwide.[42] Over the decades the thatched cottage image seems to have gone out of favour with Irish residents, but in the early days, when it was still part of the nationalist agenda, it was likely commonly purchased by Irish home tourists. Today, although the emblem is considered too overpowering for many, as a symbol it is not completely lost to the tourist, and many Irish people are still very fond of the thatched cottage and all that it suggests.

Dymo tape Inscription Another aspect of second hand acquisitions, one which is often only revealed after the purchase, is the possibility of making physical changes. Previously-owned purchases are often personalised.[43] Trevor bought the ornament without a direct purpose, until he decided to add an inscription with Dymo Tape, an embossed hard plastic tape.[44] Although it is still available today, its popularity in the 1970s and 1980s suggests that the inscription was contemporaneous with the cottage. It reads: 'Q. What was the average house price in Dublin in 1996 A. Eur. 83, 071'.

In Ireland, this brings to mind the years of rapid economic growth from 1995 - 2007, which ended abruptly with the property crash of 2008. In his book written during these 'boom years', David McWilliams likens Irish people's love of property to a drug addiction. He says, 'We are all buzzing. It is impossible to have a conversation without the subject of house prices turning up…[about] the fortunes made, the extravagances, the opulence or the dreary sameness of new estates'.[45] This tape was stuck on by Trevor White in early 2014 after the 'crash', at a time when the Dublin housing market had begun to make a recovery, and the dream of affording a house was again unattainable for many. I believe that, although there are some thatched cottages left in Dublin, for Trevor the house suggested the rural, and in order to be included in the museum, something had to link it back to Dublin. The statement could have been attached to a model of any house, and in fact a Georgian townhouse or even a three bed semi-detached might have been more appropriate. It now symbolises not only the heady days of the Celtic Tiger, but also the clashing of cultures between Dublin and the rest of the country. The thatched cottage was used probably because it happened to be the model that was available, but as it was produced by Barclay Distributors, a Dublin company since 1952, perhaps it has no better home.

Conclusion Hunting for the iconic origins of the thatched cottage ornament, we find Irish vernacular builders, Paul Henry, early travel writers, world's fairs, the Irish Free State, nationalism, the *Quiet Man* film and tourism amongst its many influences. Investigating its production reveals those who had a direct hand in its creation; John Hinde, Michael Cornick, an unknown eastern designer and Trevor White all had a part to play to its physical appearance today.

Studying the ornament's consumption, we can propose that after its initial popularity with Irish people, the fondness for it by the tourists and diaspora kept its iconography from slipping into obscurity. Without this history, the image of the thatched cottage may not

40 Nicky Gregson and Louise Crewe (1998) 'Tales of the Unexpected: Exploring Car Boot Sales as Marginal Spaces of Contemporary Consumption' in *Transactions of the Royal Geographical Society* 23 (1) pp. 39-53, p. 39.
41 Gregson and Crewe, p.40.
42 [www.infiniteireland.blogspot.ie: accessed 21/04/2015].
43 Gregson and Crewe, p.47.
44 White, pers. comm. (November 2014).
45 David McWilliams (2005) *The Pope's Children. Irelands New Elite* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan), p. 69.

have been so enduring. Looking back on the production reveals a society that was initially exasperated and surprised by manufactured imports but which, in the intervening years, has become slowly desensitised and accustomed to this mass importation of goods across national boundaries. It reveals the complacency of today's world, in which many people have lost touch with ideas that commerce could be carried out in any another way.

Studying the production and consumption of this ornament has uncovered some interesting theories about our relationship to iconic images of Ireland, our relationship with the Irish diaspora, and our society's relationship with plastic. The thatched cottage ornament represents much more about Ireland and its people than would seem at first glance. With its more recent relegation to the far corners of the Irish gift shop, the cottage could be considered redundant in its materiality and in its iconography – but it is precisely because of this that it has proved to be a perfect indicator of changing Irish taste and consumer practises, and deserving of its place on the mantelpiece in the Little Museum of Dublin.

Public Telephone Sign

Paula Vallely

Figure 2.1. Public Telephone Sign, Mild steel coated with vitreous enamel, handle and inner bolt iron, two mild steel hex nuts and one mild steel washer, Dublin, c.1932

This essay investigates a public telephone sign commissioned by the department of Posts and Telegraphs in the 1930s, and establishes its importance as a piece of twentieth-century material culture, addressing its function, ownership and value, as well as themes of national identity, linguistics, communication and signage design.

Production The sign is 141cm² and made from a panel of mild steel and formed iron, typical materials used in public signage – for the dimensions of the different parts, see figure 2.2. It has been painted using two colours of vitreous enamel. The iron handle is quite an ornate component of the otherwise practical design. The sign is bi-lingual, with the Irish appearing in lowercase firstly, and the English in uppercase below, in differing typefaces. The back and front of the sign are to identical design.

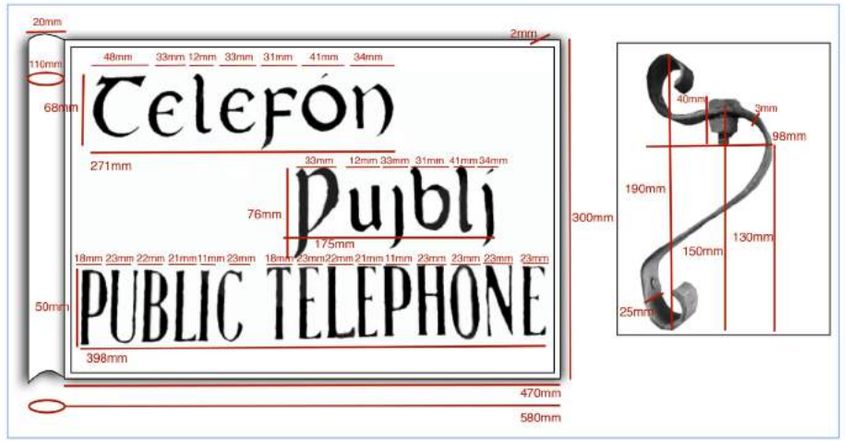


Figure 2.2. Analysis of dimensions of Public Telephone Sign, Paula Vallely, 2014

Mild steel is relatively lightweight, relatively cheap to produce, and strong. As a very malleable material it is easy to work with, and needs fairly low levels of technology. In his study of the history of Irish street signage, Tom Spalding outlines the process common in the early decades of the twentieth century for casting of iron, mild steel and aluminum metal signs, noting that aluminum was the most common material used for signage from 1935 to the present day for economic reasons.[1] As such, it is likely that the telephone sign pre-dates 1935.

Vitreous enamel is a granulated glass known as frit (an alkali borosilicate chemical) mixed with various metal oxides for colour, and can be identified by a smooth glossy finish and long-lasting colour-fastness. As enamel does not fade under ultraviolet light, it would have been the optimum choice for a sign purposely manufactured to be situated outside. On this sign, it is evident that the traffic yellow enamel has been applied to the mild steel first and the emerald green after, as the emerald is sitting in relief to the yellow. The unusual font used on the sign tells us that it has been designed by a draftsman or sign-painter who would have designed a full-scale stencil, which could then be used on a larger scale to produce numerous uniform signs. Once painted, the enamel would be fused to the metal through baking in a kiln at a temperature between 750 and 850 °C. Once cooled, the inner bolt and handle were attached by hand.

The state department of Posts and Telegraphs (hereafter referred to as P&T) funded the signage, but Dublin Corporation would have managed it and put out a tender for its manufacture. Metal production and finishing companies in both Ireland and England would have tendered for the business, with the sign either produced wholly in the UK, as was the case with Irish road signs that were manufactured almost entirely in London at this time; or the raw metal materials would have been imported from Britain and the sign manufactured and finished in Ireland.

It is difficult to ascertain an exact manufacturer for the sign as the finish and processes used to produce it are typical of metal works and finishing in Britain and Ireland at this time, and no makers' mark is visible on the object. Unfortunately, P&T accounts are not accessible, and therefore, we could not investigate their expenditure or financial dealings with metal foundries or sign enamellers/japanners between the periods of 1922-1935. But we can establish that the Department had been working with Dublin-based enamellers Hammond Lane Metal Company, James Sharkey & Co and Stephen Grant, who specifically designed bi-lingual signage in the 1920s.

TÁIBLE 2 :—AN MÉID BA GHAEDHILGEOIRÍ DE GACH CÉAD DE SNA DAOINE UILE I nGACH CÚIGE DE SHAORSTÁT ÉIREANN LE LINN GACH MÓRÁIRIMH Ó 1851 GO 1926.

TABLE 2 :—IRISH SPEAKERS AS PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL PERSONS IN EACH PROVINCE OF SAORSTÁT ÉIREANN AT EACH CENSUS FROM 1851 TO 1926.

Bliain	Saorstát Éireann	Laighin Leinster	Mumha Munster	Connachta Connacht	Ulaidh (3 Contaethe) Ulster (3 Counties)	Year
	%	%	%	%	%	
1851 ...	29·1	3·5	43·9	50·8	17·0	1851
1861 ...	24·5	2·4	36·0	44·8	16·7	1861
1871 ...	19·8	1·2	27·7	39·0	15·1	1871
1881 ...	23·9	2.1	33·5	44·6	19·5	1881
1891	19·2	1·2	26·2	37·9	17·8	1891
1901 ...	19·2	2·3	25·7	38·0	20·7	1901
1911 ...	17·6	3·5	22·1	35·5	20·4	1911
1926 ...	18·3	8·8	20·4	31·7	22·9	1926

Figure 2.3. Irish Speakers as a percentage of total persons in each province. Census of Ireland, 1926

Typeface and Language Two languages, English and Irish, in differing typefaces, sizes, and upper and lower case are shown on the sign. The English language is in Didone, a typeface established in the later eighteenth century and identifiable by the upright strokes and specific contrast between thick and thin lines. The lower case Gaelic lettering is more comparable to calligraphy as it appears to have been devised specifically for the sign. Its primary function on the sign is concerned with the communication of identity rather than legibility.

As Garrett Reil notes in his report on Ireland's dual-language signs 'signage is a visible statement we make about the importance of the Irish language,' and the use of the distinctive 'Irish type' or 'Cló Gaelach' in the telephone sign reveals the cultural politics of the state at the time of its production.[2] The Irish language consumes more surface

1 Tom Spalding (2013) *Layers: The Design, History and Meaning of Public Street Signage in Cork and Other Irish Cities* (Dublin: Associated Editions).

2 Garrett Reil (2008) *Comharthaí bóthair dátheangacha na hÉireann: Tuairisc agus moltaí – Ireland's Dual-language Road Signs: report and recommendations* (Dublin: Conradh na Gaeilge), p. 65.

area on the sign than the English (see figure 2.2). At a ratio of 1.59:1 Irish to English, it appears more prominent to the reader of the sign, whereas the English is secondary. As Tom Spalding has written in relation to P&T, 'as an agency of the state they reinforced the state's policy of Gaelicisation within the public realm by their use of Irish.'[3]

The 1926 census reveals that 8.8% of Leinster's population was fluent Irish speakers at this time, well below that in the three remaining provinces. Dublin County had the lowest percentage of Irish speakers in the province (7.5%). There is a significant increase from the previous 1911 census where only 3.5% of the total Leinster population were Irish Speakers, and indeed a large increase overall in the 75 years prior. We can see from the 1926 Census review that one-third of Irish speakers were of school age (<15years), and that the number of Irish speakers declined once they left school.[4] Thus, it does not stand to reason that the sign should be written in Gaelic for ease of understanding, when the vast majority of users of the public telephone (who would not have been children) did not commonly speak the language. Therefore, other influences were at play when the sign was being designed, with the cultural politics of the recently-founded Free State (1922) the key factor. As Foley writes in relation to that post-civil war period, 'type [played a role] in constructing a national identity during the country's broken political, cultural and nationalist histories.'[5]

Colour The colour green is widely treated as the national colour of Ireland, although until the latter part of the eighteenth century it was 'St. Patrick's blue.' Green was seen as a more fitting colour to assert Irish distinctiveness from British, and became widespread in the context of the surge in nationalism and republicanism at the start of the nineteenth century.[6]
In his study of colour perception, Luigina De Grandis has analysed which colours the retina most reacts to: green comes fourth, preceded by yellow, white and red. Signage guidelines suggest that green is best suited to signal a right of way, exits and shelters whereas blue is visible in even in poor light, so is best used for non-imminent danger signposts.[7] The yellow colour identified on the sign might be described as traffic yellow, a colour once popularly used on public signage. The signs' emerald green colour is likely to have been chosen partly due to national sentiment, rather than with reaction or reception times in mind. While green with white lettering had been a common background colour for signage since 1905, the golden/yellow in this case may have been chosen due to nationalist reasons, because of its similarity to the national flag of green white and gold.

Design In the late nineteenth century, 'pay station' telephone booths were used largely by the wealthy. In the USA, William Gray forced the development toward a 'general public use' phone booth by enabling self-payment into the booth, doing away with the phone booth attendant. This meant that the public telephone could be set up in a variety of places, within businesses, on the street, in post & telegraph offices, banks, village centers, and department stores. The earliest users of the telephone system would have been bankers, but this trickled down to the general public despite the general view at the beginning of the twentieth century that it would never become popular. For example, this attitude was expressed in *The Times* in 1902: 'the telephone is not an affair of the million…an overwhelming majority of the population does not use it and are not likely to use it at all'.[8]

The sign does not 'point' to an area – it does not include an arrow or distance measurement as to where one could find a public telephone kiosk. This leads us to believe that the signage was erected in very close proximity *to*, if not *on* the phone booth itself. But should effective *de*sign not de-sign? The lack of indicators suggests that the sign was attached to a business - such as a shop (and not a Post Office, as there is no mention of 'Oifig an Phoist') and directed the user inside to a public telephone booth, which had become quite common in Ireland from the mid-1920s. For example, an advertisement for Cleary's appeared in the *Irish Independent* in 1926 mentioning the 'public telephones on the ground floor.'[9] Many 'Office to Let' advertisements of this time mentioned that there was a public telephone installed in the building.[10]

3 Spalding, p.131.
4 Irish Free State (1926) *Census of Population of Irish Free State on 18th April, 1926* (Dublin: Stationery Office).
5 Thomas Foley (2010) 'Inventing Souls; Irish Type, Representation and Nationalism', p. 1. Available from ‹http://www.thomasfoley.net/› Accessed 11.11.2014.
6 Jeanne Sheehy (1980) *The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past: the Celtic Revival, 1830–1930* (London: Thames & Hudson).
7 Luigina De Grandis (1986) *Theory and Use of Colour* (Poole: Blandford).
8 Cited in Asa Briggs (1991) *Serious Pursuits: Communication and Education* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press) p. 82.
9 'Next Week - Visit Clearys Today' *Irish Independent* 4 September 1926 p. 1.
10 For example, see 'Offices to Let' *Irish Independent* 14 September 1935, p. 15.

In contrast to public telephone signs produced in the late-nineteenth and earlier twentieth century, P&T branding does not appear on the 1930s sign. It seems commonplace for signs in the mid-twentieth century to not bear the utility logo, but instead use colour and type to distinguish themselves. When the Irish public telephone service was no longer state-run in the 1990s, we see a move firstly with a change in colour, thereafter a change in information shown, typeface and logo.

Ownership The Irish public telephone 'experiment' as Mr. P Mulligan, Chief Engineer of the Post Office called it, was launched in May 1925 in Dublin. This was under the governance of the state department P&T, which was accountable for Ireland's postal and telecommunications services from 1924 to 1984. This department was one of the largest civil service departments in Ireland in this era, showing the importance placed on communications from the foundation of the state. However, even by the 1930s, 'the public [did] not yet appreciate the commercial and social advantages that the telephone system offers' speculates *the Irish Independent*.[11] At this point, Ireland was still lagging behind, with the USA having 1 telephone for every 6 inhabitants, Great Britain having 1 telephone per 26 inhabitants, and Ireland having only 1 telephone per 100 inhabitants.[12]

However, there was a surge in public kiosks erected in the streets of Dublin to meet the demands of the public. In 1932, there was a 150% increase.[13] This may have been due to the Eucharistic Congress, the large-scale international religious event held in June of that year. By 1935, the public telephone was 'no longer a novelty or a luxury, but a necessity,' remarked *the Irish Examiner*.[14]

Value The exact original cost of the sign is unknown, but we can speculate that it was between 5 and 10 shillings (or €44.92 - €89.85 in today's money.) As *the Irish Times* reports, the Dublin City Commissioner accepted a tender for the supply of 544 bilingual enameled street nameplates at 5s 11d per plate, and rejected another price of 10s 6d. These would have had similar manufacturing costs to the sign in question here.[15]

11 'Matters of the Moment - The Telephone Habit' *Irish Independent* 7 January 1930, p. 6.
12 'Matters of the Moment'.
13 '150 Per Cent Increase - Dublin's Demand for More 'Phone Kiosks' *Irish Press* 6 July 1932, p. 6.
14 'Telephones' *Irish Examiner* 4 April 1935, p. 8.
15 'Dublin Notes' *Irish Times* 22 August 1929, p. 3.

Before the introduction of the public telephone, mail and telegraphy were the only form of non-present communication in Ireland. When telephones were introduced, Ireland had a very efficient telegraph and postal system already established with 2 million telegraphs delivered and 390 million items circulating in the postal system in 1929.[16] Telephones quickly became accepted as being part of everyday life, as we can see from more than 21 million calls being made in Ireland in 1929 in the table in figure 2.3 (and as reported in the *Irish Independent*.)[17]

In 1943, 1,913 post offices were operating in Ireland, 991 of which had public telephone facilities, and telephone kiosks became commonplace. Erskine Childers, Minister for P&T (1951) declared, 'young people in the country particularly, are beginning for good or ill, to dislike isolation, and communications of every kind are now regarded as essential to modern civilisation.'[18]

Statistics For The Department Of Posts And Telegrams (Year Ending 31st March 1929)	Amount
Letters Posted	120,790,505
Printed Papers Posted	41,052,715
Newspapers Posted	8,079,940
Postcards Posted	8,426,275
Parcels Posted	4,870,800
Letters Delivered	124,947,185
Printed Papers Delivered	55,263,780
Newspapers Delivered	10,935,485
Postcards Delivered	10,503,625
Parcels Delivered	5,326,587
Telegrams Delivered	2,483,164
Telephone Conversations	21,300,000
Value of money orders issued for all places	IR£5,273,609
Sent to the United States	IR£28,401
Received from the United States	IR£1,609,588
Value of postal orders issued	IR£1,437,188

Figure 2.4. Statistics for the Department of Posts and Telegraphs, Year ending 31st March 1929, Source: Ireland for Real (Department of Posts & Telegraphs, 201

'Telephonography' was a new media for people that changed perceptions of time and place. As E.G. Hall puts it, this innovation is 'extending man's contact with man.'[19] Ireland was exponentially opening up for the public because of this development in communication throughout the twentieth century, with consumers beginning to place a very high value, reliance, and dependence upon it from the 1930s.

16 E.G. Hall (1993) *The Electronic Age: Telecommunication in Ireland* (Dublin: Oak Tree Press).
17 'Matters of the Moment'.
18 Hall, *Electronic Age* p. 56.
19 Hall, *Electronic Age* p. 85.

Function

Typeface & Language Bilingual signage had been prevalent in Ireland from 1924, and in accordance with the Official Languages Act 2003 must be a component of all public body signage today. Spalding's investigation into street signage in Cork shows that 39% of public & private nameplate signs in Cork are bilingual. Of those that are private signage, 2% are in Irish, and 1% are bilingual. It would appear that when the public is faced with choosing the language themselves, it is evident that the majority favour English. Given that Cork is the third largest city in the island of Ireland, we could extrapolate this data to be a representative viewpoint of the wider population of Ireland. There is, and has always been, a debate on what the Irish language typeface should look like. The usefulness of both the language itself and the type is evident as an expression of a national identity both at home and abroad, and its decline and revival has been riven by religion and politics.[20]

Communication Today, the Irish language is broadcast daily, through television broadcaster TG4 and numerous radio broadcasters such as RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta. It is also widely promoted by the voluntary community organisation Conradh na Gaeilge. *Lá*, the first Irish language newspaper was established in 1984 and sold 5,000 copies per day at its peak. The newspaper ceased publication in 2008 due to official funding being withdrawn by Foras na Gaeilge because of insufficient circulation.[21] We could speculate that the Irish population seem to want to watch and listen to the Irish language, but are not as keen to read it.

In an interview with Conradh na Gaeilge's president Julain De Spáinn (2015) regarding their campaign for dual language signage and their ongoing talks with the Department of Transport, he urges that as Irish is the official language of the Republic of Ireland according to the Constitution (but only a regional language in Northern Ireland), Irish should be as legible as English language is on signs in the Republic. If it is secondary on signs, it only undermines the position of Irish as a first language, and suggests it has a lower status than English.

20 See for example Dermot McGuinne (1992) *Irish Type Design: A History of Printing Types in the Irish Character* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press) and Brian Ó Cuív (1969) *A View of the Irish Language* (Dublin: Stationary Office).

21 'Irish Language Newspaper to Close' *Belfast Telegraph* 16 December 2008.

The bilingual debate has been ongoing for decades. *The Connacht Tribune* newspaper reported one such case in 1983, where a sign is erected in Irish only, in the face of much opposition, as well as reports of seven 'English only' signs being vandalised in 1976 by an Irish language group.[22] In a letter to the editor of *the Irish Independent*, a correspondent criticised what he described as Conradh na Gaeilge's force-feeding of the Irish language to the Irish state. He insisted that the success of the Irish language would rest on its subconscious and easeful infiltration into society.[23] However, when speaking of national symbols, Mike Billig urges that effective signs of nationalism must still illicit a conscious awareness with the viewer. We could say that Billig rightly captures it - 'seldom has the creation of national [identity] been a harmonious process.'[24]

The hypocritical actions from government and politicians are the example set for the public in Ireland. Policies are put in place and an official language defined, and yet English is still the spoken language in Dáil Éireann since 1922. In order to overcome the 'social language barrier' that Schiewe alerts us to in his investigation of linguistic barriers in Germany in the later nineteenth century, he recognises the political capacity of language: 'the ruled must speak the same language as the rulers.'[25]

The Official Languages Act of 2003 that governs public body road signage does not state what relative size or order the Irish and English language should be in, only that both must exist. Through Conradh na Gaeilge's commissioning of Reil's report, De Spáinn tells us that the Department of Transport has agreed to trial the design of equal prominence and legibility of English and Irish on road signs from 2015.

Ownership The telephone sign did not go from being a useful commodity on a Dublin street directly to a donated artifact in the Museum. It had been kept before it was donated as a piece of memorabilia, a piece of 'Irishness' and a part of Dublin to be treasured, and not waste to be discarded. Objects are central to memory, and the Little Museum of Dublin houses social and collective memory from Dublin from the twentieth century up to the present day.

22 'English Sign' *Connacht Tribune* 18 November 1983, p. 49.

23 'Language Bill Gimmickry' *Irish Independent* 12 August 1978, p. 8.

24 Mike Billig (1995) *Banal Nationalism* (London: Sage), p. 27.

25 Schiewe, (2008) *History of Language as a History of Communication* (Berlin: Birkhauser) p. 75.

Both the front and back of the sign can be seen in the museum, at a similar height to where it would have been viewed when in use. The signpost is bracketed to the chimney breast wall, a focal point of a room in the museum. It is displayed with other telephony memorabilia from the era, and thus, it is contemplated with its surrounding objects. It does not bear a museum reference number. This type of haphazard display is unusual for a museum, but the viewing strategy in the Little Museum of Dublin differs in its' approach. Everyday objects are consumed haphazardly, chaotically, and subconsciously, and that is perhaps how they ought to be viewed in their present positions.

Figure 2.5. Stills from Bye Bye Now (Dirs. Aideen O'Sullivan and Ross Whitaker, 2012)

The 2012 documentary *Bye Bye Now*, directed by Aideen O'Sullivan and Ross Whitaker, demonstrates the importance of the public telephone in Irish life (see figure 2.4 for stills). It was a life line in rural Ireland: 'sure having a chat is better than twenty letters.'[26] In the film, we see how the community is reluctant to see the removal of the public telephone, and view it as an important part of local history. While people could keep letters and telegraphs as memory stimuli of a conversation that was had, the phone booth itself is a stimulus to memories of that which might otherwise be forgotten. In 'Bye Bye Now,' residents discuss the telephone box in terms of the links with the past that seem as if they are being stolen from them, and they actively protest against its removal together as a community, suggesting it is a public memory of a private space.

Signage by government-owned bodies like P&T was where the man and woman on the street encountered the state. Public telephones were a public service, but have since become a commodity. An Telecom Éireann (formerly part of P&T) became privatised in 1999 and henceforth, the public telephone is no longer a service, but a paid-for and marketable commodity.

The government shareholding postal service 'An Post,' which had been previously part of the P&T department, still uses the established green and yellow colours that are similar to the Little Museum sign in their branding and signage. As a privatized company, Telecom Eireann was quick to distinguish and rebrand itself, using colours of blue and white in place of green and yellow.

Value It is difficult to commodify the sign in the present day 'signpost market' in monetary terms. A similar sign was on sale on eBay in the US market in Autumn 2014 for the equivalent of €260, where 12 consumers were 'watching' the item. The Little Museum sign was placed experimentally on eBay for sale, in an attempt to commodify it in the present Irish market. One bid of £30 was placed by a UK bidder (the lowest reserve amount), and 23 watchers were interested. Twice as much interest is shown in the object in the UK/Irish Market as the American market for a similar item, but the item does not appear to be regarded as particularly 'valuable' at £30, similar to its cost price.

Because of their declining usage, Telecom Eireann are removing public telephone booths from their public spaces, or re-using them for different services. One suggested solution is to use them to store defibrillators - 'the phone box infrastructure is already there and it should be used to good effect.'[27] Or as O'Mahony and Daly suggest respectively, they could be used as garden furniture, or indoors in bars and restaurants.

26 *Bye Bye Now* (2012).

27 'Councillor calls for disused phone boxes to store defibrillators' *Irish Examiner* 05 November 2013.

In his study of public design, Michael Erlhoff discusses 'the competing notions of what constitutes the public and their blurred relation to the private.'[28] The sign points to a private space for the public. John Burke of Burke Joinery Ltd. explains why he now makes public phone booths, when everyone has a private phone; 'the reason is, if you're in a pub, a restaurant, your offices, your phone rings, you've a private call coming to you...you step inside the phone box, take your call or make your call, step out and it's all done in your [own] privacy.'[29]

Although people communicate on their private telephones, they do so in a more public manner than they ever did when using a public telephone. A once-private communication via a public vessel is now public communication via a private vessel. Conversations happen everywhere, on the pavement, on the bus, in a shared office, 'as if they had nothing private to conceal from the public sphere,' with public and private spaces now indistinguishable.[30] We do not need the signpost for its original purpose any more, because public communication now surrounds us - rather than occurring in a pre-designated signed area.

Public telephones are becoming increasingly rare, and those that exist are rarely maintained. Even private home telephones are decreasing in favour of mobiles phones. The majority of public telephone booths that do exist in Dublin do not have signage directing anyone to them. The last original K1 style public telephone kiosk stands on Dawson Street in Dublin's City Centre, having been refurbished and relocated here in the mid-1980s to commemorate the formation of Telecom Éireann. It does not have a sign post near it.

With these diversifications of use of the telephone booth, and the lack of public telephones, the signpost could no longer fulfill its original purpose as the information showing on it is incorrect. However, it is of value, and symbolises a time when communications development and identity was momentous to the public in Dublin.

Through investigating the design and materials used in the sign, we can positively ascertain that it was made post-1922, and pre-1935. We could however further speculate that the likely commissioning of the sign was circa 1932/1933 by a member of the Fianna Fáil party (Ministers for P&T at this time), either Joseph Connolly or Gerald Boyland, who were promoting a revival of the Irish language and culture. The sign is not typical in design to a sign used in Dublin today, but mirrored the social and technological circumstances in Ireland in the 1930s when it was made.

Evaluation The public telephone signpost is a good example of twentieth-century Irish design, values, history, developments, culture and society. It is over 80 years old and yet can reveal to us more about modern Ireland than any citizen of the same time-period perhaps could. It is now rightly standing in the Little Museum of Dublin where it has the opportunity to resonate with the pertinent viewer. The sign displays four words, and yet - says so much more than that.

28 Michael Erlhoff (2008) *Designing Public* (Berlin: Birkhauser), p. 192.
29 'Irish telephone boxes dial into White House and beyond' (http://www.thejournal.ie/irish-telephone-box-white-house-1362332-Mar2014/) Accessed 31.10.14
30 Erlhoff *Designing Public* p. 87.

Figure 3.1. Wella Evenflow Hairdryer, Galvanised mild steel, c.1950, Wella Rapid Ltd

Wella Evenflow hood hair dryer

Fiona Dunne

Introduction The object analysed in this essay is a Wella 'Evenflow' hood hair dryer that currently illuminates a corner of a first floor room in the Little Museum of Dublin – in its recycled life as a standard lamp. Uncovering the manufacture and design of the object through its materials and shape place its production firmly within the time-frame of the mid-twentieth century. The essay further examines the consumption and use of the hood hairdryer to explore the historical, social and cultural significance of hair, particularly in relation to gender.

Production Hairdryers have evolved over the course of the twentieth century from a type of home-made device using a vacuum cleaner to blow warm air over the head to devices adapted specifically for the purpose of drying hair. Essentially, all hairdryers use an electric fan to blow air across a heating coil, and are assembled from a series of workings, which include an electrical motor, fan blade, copper wiring, switching mechanisms and other electrical components.

The hooded hairdryer in the museum (figure 3.1) consists of a rigid dome which is designed to fit over the head, set on a portable four-legged frame which in turn is set on castors. It is made from mild steel, an alloy based on a combination of carbon and iron. The steel is processed into molten metal in a blast furnace, poured into trays of varying width, and then cold-rolled or hot-rolled to the required thickness.[1] As it has a tendency to rust, it can undergo treatments such as galvanization to combat such corrosion.[2] This is a process of enamelling, which is applied at very high temperatures by dip-coating the

1 Daniel Kula and Élodie Ternaux (2009) *Materiology: the Creative Industry's Guide to Materials and Technologies* (Amsterdam: Frame Publishers) p. 245.
2 Kula and Terneaux *Materiology* p. 219.

finished item in zinc, or – alternatively – by electroplating it. Colour may be added in powder form during this process lending a characteristic mottled pattern to the material, as has been the case in this object. This forms a strong surface material which protects the steel from corrosion. The use of mild steel for the hair dryer would date it to mid-twentieth century, as subsequent models would have been made of plastic.

The shape of the hood is largely determined by the use for which it was intended; to fit over a head, possibly with rollers on it. From the front opening, it tapers backwards to its narrowest point at the back, which has 13 small holes piercing the aluminium; these air vents would have provided a safety feature of the object. Inside the hood there is an oval-shaped metal piece covered in a wire mesh, which would have been attached to the interior of the hood by means of 3 long screws. This interior mesh provided another safety feature.

Inside the shell, the electrical element is contained between the interior wall and the outer hard shell. Electric current flows through a wire to create heat in the hairdryer. The heating element is made from an alloy of nickel and chromium called nichrome, which in contrast to other copper electric wire does not rust when subjected to high temperatures. The connection to the electrical supply is at one end of this wire, which then supplies current to the heating coil. It is likely that the electrical components would have been manufactured elsewhere, and the plastic and metal components assembled in a factory.

The hood has been designed to tilt upwards and downwards in a backward and forward movement, and is held at an angle of approximately 45 degrees. It is attached to a metal pin, in turn attached to a curved bracket, which is set onto the pole holding the hood. All the pieces connecting the hood and pole are attached by means of screws. The use of screws in the object also dates it as being an early model, as later models were made principally from moulded plastics with the holes and pin attachments already made to promote ease of assembly.

Labels Located below the hood are two circular labels; one is a metal label which shows the name of the appliance, featuring the words 'Evenflow' and 'Wella'. The label is probably the outcome of an industrial designer's collaboration with a graphic designer, such is the strength of the 'conjunction of the image with the text.'[3] The name 'Evenflow' sounds reassuring, which may have had a soothing effect on a customer entrusting herself to being encased within the confines of this hairdryer.

Figure 3.2. Wella Evenflow Hairdryer, detail of label

The other label contains information about the manufacturer and the object, showing the registered trade mark of Wella Evenflow and its British origins. Wella originated in Germany in 1880, but by 1930 it had expanded its manufacturing and distribution to other European countries, including Britain. The serial number is 5 B 1108 and the model number is B3. The label on the other side of the bracket contains the original brand logo of Wella – a stylised female head in silhouette with a banner of hair flying behind her, as if borne by a breeze, (Figure 3.2.) above the Wella name. This is the original Wella brand logo as conceived by the parent company (ca.1924) when the Wella brand name was patented. This logo was revised in 1974; the stylised head was retained, but simplified and tilted slightly backwards.

Fonts and Logo The type of font chosen to symbolise a company is signficant; as Judith Zaichkowsky argues, 'fonts generate their own connotative meaning.'[4] Even very early research in this area, such as that undertaken by A.T. Poffenberger and R.B. Franken in 1923, would contend that consumers perceived abstract qualities differently according to the font type chosen.[5] Hence, a bold font such as that used by Wella could represent abstract qualities such as strength and dependability, giving visual expression to the desired company image. There is a case to be made here for, in the words of Beatrice Warde, 'Transparent or invisible typography where you are conveying a message…that you are implanting a desire, straight into the mind of the reader.'[6] Warde's contention in her classic essay is that typography should disappear, so that the 'Mental eye focuses through type and not upon it.'[7] The success of the

3 Richard Hollis and Robin Kinross (1992) 'Conversation with Richard Hollis on Graphic Design History' *Journal of Design History* 5 (1), 73-90, p. 76.
4 Judith Zaichkowsky (2010) 'Brand Governance: Managing and Safeguarding Brand Equity' *Journal of Brand Management* 17 (8), 548-60, p. 9.
5 Cited by Zaichkowsky, p. 8.
6 Beatrice Warde (1955) *The Crystal Goblet* (London: the Sylvan Press) p. 3.
7 Warde *Crystal Goblet* p. 4.

message created by the Wella font lies in the fact that it is absorbed by the viewer through subconscious understanding. The Wella logo, with its combination of a dominant illustrative component – the abstract female head – and the clear and crisp lettering, has the desired effect of inducing both visual recognition and cognitive recall.

Streamlining The shape of the hood hair dryer owes much to the 'streamlining' of design as applied initially to industrial and large-scale objects, such as airplanes, automobiles, trains and buses. Arising through observations from the natural world, scientists in the nineteenth century realised that the forms of dolphins and sharks, from their rounded spheroid heads to their tapering bodies, reduced the drag caused by wind or water resistance, enabling them to move more efficiently. As observed by American designer Walter Dorwin Teague, 'this line defines the form that bodies take when they have adapted themselves most perfectly to the flow of air or water currents.'[8] Smooth forms, lack of excessive ornamentation and the teardrop shape characterise streamlining. Bush states that streamlining 'imposes order upon complex forms, clarifying their purpose.'[9] Streamlining might be described as an aesthetic response to a change in consumer taste, influencing the design of many items down to the smallest domestic appliance. Initially, domestic appliances were acceptable as functional objects, and the principal demand of them was that they performed the action for which they had been purchased. However, public taste developed a desire for the products which inhabited their domestic space to be visually attractive as well as functional. Jeffrey Meikle puts forward the idea that streamlining 'expressed a popular belief that social processes had to be made smoother and less complex', and that a more efficient society, using the most up-to date technology, would help it 'to flow smoothly, without friction, through the chaos of the Depression.'[10] This search for coherence found philosophical expression in Teague's desire to find the perfect form, which exists in the object through a combination of its proposed function, materials, and method of making. Technology could be made more visually attuned to the domestic environment by encasing the object in a smooth outer shell, to contain and obscure the inner incomprehensible components.

8 Walter D. Teague (1940) *Design this Day: the Technique of Order in the Machine Age* (New York: Harcourt Brace) p.164-5.
9 Donald J. Bush (1974) 'Streamlining and American Industrial Design' *Leonardo* 7 (4) 309-317, p. 317.
10 Jeffrey Meikle (2005) *Design in the USA* (Oxford: Oxford University Press) p. 114.

From the oval hood of the Wella hood hair dryer – reminiscent of the aerodynamic principles evident in automobile design – to the curved feet of the base, the flowing lines place its design firmly within the sphere of influence exerted by exponents of streamlining. It is interesting to note the name 'Evenflow' bears a remarkable similarity to the first car designed under the influence of streamlining, the Chrysler 'Airflow'. The names of both conjure up images of effortless and uninhibited movement. The interior workings of the hood hair dryer are concealed within a smooth exterior shell down to the castors, which are barely visible, as they are almost encased in the curved base. It possesses the visual coherence, lack of embellishment and biomorphic form of streamlining.

Consumption It is likely that this hood hairdryer would have been in use in a hair salon in Dublin from the 1950s, and possibly for several subsequent decades. While such dryers were also purchased for home use, it may primarily be described as one of the tools of the trade or profession of hairstyling. This type of hairdryer was in use in salons from the 1950s to the 1970s, when a version with an outer shell constructed from plastic was introduced. Their usage is now largely replaced by the hand-held blow-dryer. How can its consumption – that is its use – help us to understand the society and material culture within which it functioned?

Hair has had huge symbolic, emotional and sexual significance throughout history. It can be manipulated by being coloured, cut, shaped, straightened and curled. Its style, length, shade and even quantity can be transformed by the use of fake hair and wigs. It is a substance which is bound up with a person's sense of self and identity. The whole act of hairstyling is a very intimate one and involves a considerable amount of trust and surrendering of control. There are so many processes to which hair can be subjected by the hairdresser: shampoos, rinses, sets, perms, styling, layering, tinting and cutting. Danielle Soulliere's study into the ethnography of hair suggests a number of 'core categories' around client/stylist behaviours involving stylist tasks, consultation tasks, clerical tasks and clean-up tasks. Her study serves to cast some light on the complexity of the client/stylist relationship, and the trust, or in some cases dependence, involved in that relationship.[11]

11 Danielle Soulliere (1997) 'How Hairstying Gets Done in the Hair Salon' *Michigan Sociological Review* 11 (3), pp.41-63.

By examining the importance of hair, the importance of this object in its ability to effect a transformation in a woman's appearance becomes clearer. Penny Howell Jolly explains: Head and body hair remains one of humans' most important means of expression, whether with regard to issues of identity and class status, politics and gender or moral character and self-esteem. Believing that what is on the outside reflects what is inside, we manipulate our hair to reveal to others who we are, or at least who we want to be.[12]

Hair has been symbolic of beauty, virginity, lust, sexuality, modesty. In some cultures, it has become synonymous with sexuality to such an extent that unbound hair is never revealed in public - for example, for adherents to certain forms of Islam, only a husband is permitted to see a woman's hair.[13] It has been a symbol of strength, the loss of which robs the victim of all power, as in the Biblical story of Samson and Delilah.[14]

The cutting of hair has been used to symbolise a break with the past, as in the cutting of a novice's hair on entry to a convent; Victoria Sherrow observes that 'these haircuts symbolized religious devotion, group identity and humility, as well as the renunciation of worldly things and personal vanity.'[15] A similar interpretation, with an additional nuance of social control, may be ascribed to the military hair cuts imposed on new recruits. It has also been used to inflict humiliation on a subject; witness the public head-shaving of collaborators in France after the Second World War. Further examples of hair-cutting as punishment are highlighted in reports into abuses in Irish religious-run institutions such as the *Murphy Report*. One such incident concerned the shaving of girls' heads at St Martha's industrial school in Bundoran by the St. Louis nuns.[16] In literature, there is a memorable incident in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* of a visit by Mr Brocklehurst, his wife and daughters to the orphanage in which Jane was living. An inmate's naturally curly hair earned his disapproval, and the headmistress was ordered to have it cut, despite Brocklehurst's female relatives having their hair adorned in fashionable ringlets.[17]

12 Penny Howell Jolly (2004) *Hair Power, Untangling a Social History* (New York: Frances Young Tang Teaching Museum) p. 71.
13 Quran (24 30:31).
14 Judges 16:19.
15 Victoria Sherrow (2006) *Encyclopedia of Hair: A Cultural History* (Portsmouth: Greenwood) p.271.
16 'Suffer the Little Children' *Irish Independent* 25 April 1999, p. 42.
17 Charlotte Bronte, *Jane Eyre* (1847), p.83.

The Sociology of Hair Anthony Synnott's essay on the sociology of hair describes it as 'Our most powerful symbol of individual and group identity', and as not only a physical phenomenon, but also 'A social one, a symbol of the self and of group identity, and an important mode of self-expression and communication.'[18] He stresses the contradictory nature of its meaning when he writes that 'First it is physical and therefore extremely personal and second because, although personal, it is also public rather than private.'[19] The observations he and others make on how hair materialises ideology and gender can be historically located.

The Role of the Hair Salon By the mid-twentieth century, the hair industry was hugely important economically, both for product sales and employment. For example, in the USA in 1950:

> There were manufactured about 10,000 permanent–wave machines and about 45,000 driers. In the United States in 1951 there were about 127,000 beauty parlours, employing 350,000 people and patronized by about 3,750,000 women. It was estimated that four out of every ten American women coloured their hair.[20]

These figures reflect what was happening in the Irish and British markets (albeit on a much smaller scale). Even a brief perusal of newspaper advertisements in the 1950s show a significant number of 'Wanted' adverts for salon personnel. Newspapers and magazines of this decade also show a large number of hair-related advertisements, for example in relation to hair products and for salon services. In the 1950 edition of *Thom's* Dublin street directory, there are listings for 225 'Hair Dressers and Perfumers' with male and female salons listed together.[21] By 1961, 'Hairdressers' were listed alone, and there were separate entries for female (222) and male (133) – showing a significant growth in the industry.[22] In an article on womens' lives in Ireland in the 1950s, Caitriona Clear demonstrates the economic importance of the industry, estimating that the number of

18 Anthony Synnott (1987) 'Shame and Glory: a Sociology of Hair' *British Journal of Sociology* 38 (3), 381-483; p. 381 and p. 410.
19 Synnott, 'Shame and Glory', p. 381.
20 Richard Corson (1965) *Fashions in Hair: The First Five Thousand Years* (London: Peter Owen) p. 626.
21 *Thom's Directory* (1950), p. 2109-10.
22 *Thom's Directory* (1961), p. 123-4.

women working as hairdressers 'more than doubled between 1946-1961.'[23]

This is also significant, as it was during the post-war decades that women were being encouraged to find their social identity in the domestic sphere. At a time when gender roles were becoming increasingly polarised, a substantial number of women were finding employment in this industry. The hood hair dryer would have played a significant part in the hands of these stylists, as a material object capable of moulding and transforming the appearance of their subjects – that is, their customers. Its very shape and appearance contributes to this notion of moulding and manipulation, as the client undergoes a type of processing in the salon.

In the era associated with the hood hair dryer, many women would not only have had their hair 'done' on a weekly basis, but this was possibly the only time it was washed. It was a promise of something indefinable but closely connected to a more glamorous world. It connected women to that world, and removed their sense of 'otherness'. It contained the possibility of achieving perfection, defined as the perfect home life; perfect home, children and husband.

Meaning and Context We invest objects with a context which we think we understand because we have come to that knowledge 'by other means.'[24] We view objects through a distorted lens of our own making, because our judgement is informed by prior knowledge and experience. We tend to desire the provision of a coherent narrative in discussion of objects, to place them within a defined period of history and a particular cultural frame, to prove something to ourselves – that is, that we understand their significance. There is a mistaken notion that an object is somehow so connected to its time that it reveals the thinking of its designers and users. This ignores the diversity of tastes, limits of income, patterns of consumption, choices of objects, education, and availability of materials, among other issues. The object – the hood hair dryer – is created for the end user, who utilises it as one of their tools of trade, the trade being that of a hairdresser. But a further consumer is the person on whom the object is used as part of her visit to the hairdressing salon. Who then is the end user? This duality of function lends an ambiguity to the concept of ownership of the object. Is this ambiguity shared by the end users being the hairdresser and client, one being the active user and the other being the passive recipient? Therefore, this analysis can be approached in terms of the relationship between the perspective of object and end user. In this case the salon staff member will perceive it as a tool of her trade, and the customer will see it as part of a process of transformation. Thus, perspective endows the object with meaning and informs its context. Perception of value also comes into play here, with a different value placed on the object by our two end users.

Influence of Media and Advertising In the 1950s, the hair industry was influenced by large numbers of Irish cinema-goers, from whence came the inspiration for many of the current hairstyles, some derived from historical dramas:

> The beehive (fifteenth-century Italian), the bouffant style (late eighteenth century), the Egyptian look, and stiffened hair bows all were fashionable within the space of a very few years in the mid-twentieth century, when styles worn by the fashion leaders changed with astonishing rapidity.[25]

The hood hair dryer would have been an essential tool in achieving these styles, as some of them were quite complex requiring much time under the machine drying out a head festooned with rollers, which then required teasing out into the required shape. Looking at images of rows of women sitting under hairdryers they have all the appearance of sitting under a giant mould. This is not too fanciful a notion as the hairdos of the time were similar to one another due to fashions in hairstyles being followed quite slavishly. Film stars were hugely influential in determining choice of styles:

In the mid-twentieth century even high school girls could and sometimes did wear styles popularized by Jacqueline Kennedy or Brigitte Bardot. Hair was no longer just women's crowning glory – it was big business. And the taste-makers intended it to stay that way.[26]

Magazines were also influential in promoting the 'latest' fashions, through articles relating to hairstyles, advertisements and illustrations of popular fiction. An example of

23 Catriona Clear (2013) 'Woman's Life magazine and women's lives in Ireland in the 1950's' *Saothar: Journal of the Irish Labour History Society* 38, p. 73.

24 Christopher Pinney (2005) 'Things Happen: or from which moment does that object come?' in Daniel Miller (ed.) *Materiality* (Durham: Duke University Press) 256-272, p. 260.

25 Corson *Fashions in Hair*, p. 636.

26 Corson *Fashions in Hair* p. 637.

this may be seen in 'Creation' magazine of February 1957. Primarily a fashion publicatin, most of the articles and advertisements were devoted to Irish designers such as Irene Gilbert, Raymond Kenna and Sybil Connolly. What is striking is that a significant number of advertisements not devoted to fashion are about hair designs and hair styles.[27] All of the models are wearing their hair in short softly waved styles, with only one exception – the model in a *Denis of Dublin* advertisement whose hair is long, although quite likely to be a hair-piece, as the style refers to the new Dior chignon.[28] The magazine is aimed at a wealthy clientele, judging by the prices of the clothes. However, in other, less expensive, magazines of the time, one will find many adverts devoted to hair – although other advertising content tends to feature beautifully coiffed housewives lovingly gesturing at some domestic object or product. It is a fair assumption that many hours were spent under an appliance similar to the Wella Evenflow hairdryer to achieve such perfection.

Conclusion As a material object, the Wella Evenflow hairdryer is of its time in terms of design. The use of mild steel and screws in its construction place it firmly in the mid-twentieth century, as later models were made of more lightweight plastics. Streamlining of domestic and everyday items had become well established by the mid-twentieth century, and this object carries elements of this style. Its most common place of use would have been a hair salon, and this particular object was in all probability used in a Dublin salon of the mid-twentieth century. It was there that its transformational and moulding properties were put to use interpreting the hair fashions and styles of the time. This information would have been gleaned from magazines, advertisements and films of the era, translating an image into reality for the customer and perhaps facilitating an entrance into a more glamorous world, or an escape from a more mundane one. The hood hairdryer had the magical ability to change outer appearance, and make the ordinary beautiful. Like a mould, one went under it as one person and emerged a more glamorous version of oneself.

27 *Creation* (1957), p.54 and p. 56.
28 *Creation* (1957), p. 58.

Figure 4.1. 'Fake Banknote' Protest Postcard, 7.4 x 14.8 cm. Offset Lithograph print, ink on card, Designed by Colm Murray, Dublin 1988

S.A.D.D. Protest Postcard

Eimer Murphy

'Tell those people in City Hall
We're not gonna let those buildings fall
If this road goes through today
We'll save Dublin anyway!'
(Chant by S.A.D.D. to the tune of 'I want to be a Drill Instructor' from the 1987 film Full Metal Jacket)

This essay is about a small object with a very big story: a protest postcard produced in 1988 by Students Against the Destruction of Dublin (S.A.D.D.), an activist movement which aimed to highlight the decay of Georgian Dublin and to lobby for its preservation. Although S.A.D.D. evolved into a much larger organization, the core groups and founding members came from the schools of architecture at University College Dublin and Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT) Bolton Street. They came together with a shared goal: to protect the built heritage of the city, then under serious threat due to a controversial road-widening scheme, a culture of property speculation, and a series of proposed developments in the city centre. S.A.D.D.'s methods included protest marches, occupation, the wrapping of buildings and public monuments with declamatory banners, letter-writing campaigns and the use of sharply honed satire.

The postcard was created as part of a campaign to lobby against a proposed shopping centre development on Bachelors Walk. Its arresting graphics, clever wordplay, and no-holds-barred yet passionate message neatly encapsulate the spirit of the group in one object. It emerged from an era that has become synonymous with political controversies and scandals, and a cavalier attitude to planning permission and development. The combination of retrospective knowledge of the corruption then rife in planning, and the naive but passionate sentiments of the students gives the postcard the power to draw wry smiles from those who observe it, as I have witnessed in the museum on several occasions.

The cards were donated by Ian Lumley, the heritage officer of An Taisce. Mr. Lumley himself explains the significance of the postcard on the Little Museum website, where he names the postcard campaign as 'one of the turning points in reversing the destruction of the city'.[1] Armed with this official confirmation of the postcards' significance, I began approaching members of S.A.D.D., anticipating distinct memories of this important cultural artefact they had created. My intended methodology was to arrange interviews with the key players, but I soon found that this group has had many members over the years, and the 'key players' had changed often. Each time I contacted someone new, they would put me in touch with two or three other members. The bulk of this communication happened through e-mail; at one point I was the centre of a whirlwind of e-mails into which 15 or so people were copied, all reminiscing about their S.A.D.D. days. For the purposes of this essay I have chosen to limit the number of voices to those of four or five people who were central to the production of the card itself.

As I spoke with them, it became clear that the postcard had not been particularly significant to those within S.A.D.D. Very few of the members had any clear memory of the postcard campaign, and those who did have clear memories remembered specific things about their own contributions to it, making it difficult to corroborate facts by cross-checking accounts. This amnesia about the postcard was frustrating, but the more people I spoke with, the more I realised why the postcard must have seemed a relatively minor event in the history of this group.

The Central River Bank Of Ireland It was Colm Murray who actually designed the postcard, although initially even *he* did not recall that. I sent him a photograph of the postcard, and it was this visual reminder that triggered his memory. He responded: 'I did design that, yeah, I remember. It was a word play on "Central Bank of Ireland". I was besotted by maps at the time, and in particular, John Rocque's map, which is what we reproduced here."[2]

More accurately, they created a parody of the £10 note from the then-current series B banknotes, Irelands first decimal currency (figure 4.2). It was commissioned following a state-run competition by the group Servicon, described by *Design* magazine as 'an ad-hoc consortium of planning and design consultants, based in Dublin'.[3] The group included architects Richard Horley and Brian Hogan, stonecutter Michael Biggs and artist Patrick Hickey.

Figure 4.2. Series B Irish £10 note (reverse), Designed by Servicon, 1976

This banknote series was generally admired for the quality of its design; an obituary for Patrick Hickey describes the designs as 'extraordinarily beautiful'.[4] The lettering by Michael Biggs for the notes had originally been designed in 1953 as a modern version of uncial. The banknotes were not his only State Commission; Michael Biggs' typeface is part of the fabric of the city. He used it in designs for several memorials, for example those created for the 1966 commemorations of the 1916 Rising at Arbour Hill and the Garden of Remembrance, among others.

The reverse side of the note features a section of John Rocques' 1756 map of Dublin showing the city quays in their Georgian heyday. In his introduction to *John Rocques' Dublin*, Colm Lennon says, 'Rocques' map captured the emergent culture of leisure', showing the new Phoenix Park and Rotunda Gardens for example, as well as the infrastructural improvements to the city which included the developments of the quays.[5] It all showed Dublin emerging 'as a great Metropolitan Centre'.[6] However, by the 1980s, the Dublin quays were in a terrible state of dereliction; one S.A.D.D. member Orla Kelly described them as looking like 'a gappy set of teeth'.[7] Frank McDonald remarked that the riverside buildings are: 'The essential Dublin. Individually unremarkable as works of architecture, collectively they are superb…If they are allowed to disintegrate…the most

1 ‹http://20thcenturydublin.com/2013/10/06/fake-banknote-postcard› [accessed 21 April 2015].
2 Murray pers. comm. (November 2014).
3 *Design* (1974), p. 311.
4 *The Independent* 19 November 1998, available at ‹www.independent.co.uk› [accessed 21/04/2015].
5 Colm Lennon and John Montague (2010) *John Rocque's Dublin: a guide to the Georgian city* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy), p. xvii.
6 Lennon and Montague *John Rocque's Dublin* p. xx.
7 Orla Kelly pers. comm. (November 2014).

memorable aspect of the city will be lost'.[8] The £10 note was therefore a potent symbol of what was being lost in Dublin at the time. This idea, coupled with the underlying suspicions of corruption and property speculation that lay behind much of the dereliction led to the choice of the note as the basis for the protest postcard.

Published in 1985, the title of Frank McDonalds book *The Destruction of Dublin* became a catchphrase to describe the dereliction and neglect of the inner city. The book gained notoriety for its no-holds barred style; it named developers and politicians and called them out over decades of bad planning decisions. McDonald cites many reasons behind the destruction: the 'headlong rush for modernity' of the 1960s Lemass era, the Office Premises Act of 1962 which 'laid down minimum standards for all office buildings... [which] provided yet another impetus for redevelopment', and the 'inner Tangent' road widening plans which had already had an enormous impact on the City Centre.[9] This was alongside the lingering legacy of the tenement era – in the 1960s, two tenement buildings collapsed, killing four people. The resulting scare had angry tenement dwellers marching on City Hall demanding better housing. Dublin Corporation, under pressure to deliver, embarked on a policy of demolition. The Local Government (Sanitary Services) Act of 1964 was the result. Commonly known as 'the Dangerous Buildings Act', this legislation gave local authorities the power to demolish any building deemed unsafe. During an interview, Brian O'Brien referred to this act as 'the worst thing to happen to Georgian Dublin'.[10] It certainly contributed to much of the demolition in the city centre, and precipitated the building of new modern housing estates on the outskirts. With the families gone to the suburbs, many local businesses shut up shop. These and other factors contributed towards what Mary Harney (then Junior Minister for the Environment) described as 'a doughnut shaped city with a hole in the centre and all the people living outside'.[11]

In the 1970s, conservationists started to fight back in a number of organised campaigns. Given labels in deliberately combative language, two of the most high profile and controversial of these campaigns were what became known as 'The Battle for Hume Street' in 1969 and the 'Battle for Wood Quay' in 1978, both of which ultimately failed.[12] However, from these movements grew a mood of resistance to the continuing destruction. Many members of S.A.D.D. were influenced by the efforts of this preceding generation to take action.

We are architecture students and our city is dying.
If you are interested in forming a movement contact Roisin Murphy in second year.[13]

S.A.D.D. started in early summer of 1987. Roisin Murphy, an architecture student in DIT Bolton Street, was deeply impacted by the dereliction she saw around her, remarking that 'I was from Kildare and had to take a train to my hometown every weekend where I would pass down through Smithfield and onto the quays, observing the slow decay of the city.'[14]

Many of the people I interviewed recalled feeling that the idealistic theories about conservation and 'people-centered' city planning they were studying were completely at odds with the reality they saw around them. *The Quays Projects,* for example, was cited as one of the biggest influences on their thinking around urban planning. This was a 1985 initiative by Dublin City Councils' Inner City Development Committee and the UCD School of Architecture. Students were invited to submit designs and ideas to regenerate and re-populate the inner city. Gerry Cahill of the UCD architecture school writes in the introduction to *The Quays Projects* that the publication was 'intended to stimulate action to regenerate the city centre, by presenting ideas on how our city might be... The projects illustrate that the quays provide a physical framework within which regeneration can take place.'[15]

In contrast to these ideals, Murphy recalls one of her lecturers telling her that 'there was no place for conservation' in the college, and that if she focused on it, she would fail the course.[16] 'Out of a sense of fraught desperation' she wrote up messages on lecture studio chalkboards

8 Frank McDonald (1985) *The Destruction of Dublin* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan), p.287.
9 McDonald, *The Destruction of Dublin*, p. 13.
10 Brian O'Brien pers. comm. (November 2014).
11 Mary Harney *Irish Independent* 19 August 1992.
12 McDonald, *Destruction of Dublin* p. 82-94.
13 Roisin Murphy, pers. comm. (December 2014).
14 Murphy, pers. comm. (December 2014).
15 Gerry Cahill (1986) (ed.) *Dublin City Quays, Projects by the School of Architecture, UCD* (Dublin: The Orchard Press) p.5.
16 Murphy pers. comm. (December 2014).

calling for members of a new conservation group.[17] The first people to sign up were fellow Bolton Street students Brian O'Brien and Eunan McGloughlin. A name was hurriedly chosen in a direct homage to Frank McDonald's book *The Destruction of Dublin* when the students went on a recruiting campaign for other members. Murphy recalls that 'the following term I went out to Cathal Brugha Street and gave a speech … it was very charged and the hall was full. Then to UCD to another one; I met Ciaran Cuffe there and the rest is history.'[18]

The students joined a demonstration organised by An Taisce against the neglect of a number of listed Georgian townhouses on Clare Street and adjacent South Leinster Street, bringing their homemade banners and youthful enthusiasm, and entered a building itself. A report in the *Irish Times* named the newly-formed group as S.A.D.D. and so the name stuck – despite the fact that, as Brian O'Brien recalls, 'Almost every meeting someone would inevitably propose to change the name as the abbreviation had become something as an embarrassment.'[19]

This first report articulates the formation of important links which were to be key to the success of S.A.D.D. as a protest group; their link with An Taisce, Ian Lumley in particular, and the connection with Frank McDonald, then environment correspondent of the *Irish Times*. The support and encouragement of these two individuals and the organisations they represented ensured that the students' activities were always publicized and validated. In the days before social media they had their own publicity machine, issuing press conferences alerting McDonald to their activities, and in turn he and members of An Taisce 'kept us informed' about at-risk buildings and upcoming developments.[20] They received a phenomenal amount of press coverage, particularly in 1988, Dublin's Millennium year, when Dublin conservationists such as Senator David Norris used the press to focus on ongoing issues in the city. S.A.D.D. themselves hosted an exhibition in the atrium of Trinity College in March of that year. Called 'Tempest, a storm in the mildness of the Millennium Year', the exhibit featured artworks and ideas designed to provoke thought and criticism of the way 'our city is run now and will be run after the millennium'.[21]

17 Murphy pers. comm. (December 2014).
18 Murphy pers. comm. (December 2014).
19 O'Brien pers. comm. (November 2014).
20 Ciaran Cuffe pers. comm. (October 2014).
21 'Tempest' publicity material (1988).

S.A.D.D. quickly established a profile. They identified endangered buildings and occupied them in a manner designed to attract the most attention and publicity. They became known for their huge banners, hand-painted with witty and memorable slogans, and for their use of megaphones, music and chants in order to make their presence felt (figure 4.3). One of the group, Colman O'Siochru, had an enormous space on the top floor of 120 Thomas Street (now Lidl supermarket), and this was often used for 'banner making parties'.[22] The banners were made by sewing sheets together, and the painted slogans were usually a committee effort, according to Colm Murray: 'In my recollection the one that got the most snorts of sarcasm got it. There were some witty people around – Ciaran, Roisin – who could be relied upon to get a punchy message into a few words'.[23]

Figure 4.3. Occupation of Eccles Street by S.A.D.D., 1988, Private archive of Ciaran Cuffe

In terms of their impact on the conservation movement, Frank McDonald remarked that they 'injected a new and youthful vigour' and 'took the discussion about the future of Dublin out of drawing rooms and polite meetings and into the streets.[24] Between adrenaline-fuelled activities such as illegal occupations in cold derelict buildings, highly charged marches, and scaling buildings to hang these banners, it is little wonder that so few members of S.A.D.D. remember the smallest and quietest of their protests: the postcard itself.

Don't Destroy the Central River Bank of Ireland Colm Murray told me that the wording on the card, like the banners, would have been a committee effort. On designing the layout for the card he said: 'We were used to making models, and drawing out plans

22 Colm Murray pers. comm. (December 2014).
23 Colm Murray pers. comm. (November 2014).
24 McDonald 2015, pers. comm. (07/01).

by hand. This was pre-C.A.D [computer assisted design], pre-computers really.'[25] His memory of the UCD Architecture department was that 'there were very limited resources available, the sum total of technology or equipment available to us then were cameras and photocopiers'.[26] Murray was unable to remember anything about where the postcard was printed, but he is adamant that it was not printed on the UCD campus, and has a memory that the students cut the postcards themselves from printed sheets.

Murray was also clear in his recollection that 'Ciarán had a very early Mac, one of the first ones I remember seeing, and he put the text together for the back of the postcard'.[27] The design for the front was drawn by Murray using the simple method of placing tracing paper onto a £10 note, and then tracing over the image with a drawing pen. This information led to the realization that if Murray had traced directly from the banknote, then the postcard should be the actual size of the note, 86 x 146 mm. However, at 74 x 148mm, it is substantially smaller. It seems logical to conclude that the size of the card was reduced in order to get as many cards as possible from an A4 sheet.

Murray used materials readily available to him as an architecture student, using tracing paper and Staedler fine line drawing pens to produce the postcard design. He recalls that he traced the letters of 'Central Bank of Ireland' from the banknote, and simply moved the paper backwards and forwards as he traced the extra letters for 'Don't Destroy the Central River Bank of Ireland'. Where a letter did not exist on the original banknote, for example the letter V in 'river' or the 'S' in 'SADD', he 'made it up' – either by using part of an existing letter or drawing a new one, freehand, in an imitation of the Michael Biggs style.[28] This method accounts for the inconsistencies in spacing and lettering, and the somewhat erratic lines. This becomes more obvious when the lettering is isolated from the background image. Similarly, the shapes of repeated letters vary widely, such as the two upper case 'D's and the three 'T's in 'Don't Destroy the…' This gives the card a somewhat naive and home-made element, and the improvised 'look' of a protest graphic, adding to its success as a design.

25 Murray 2014, pers. comm. (19/11).
26 Ibid.
27 Murray, pers. comm. (November 2014).
28 Murray, pers. comm. (November 2014).

Murray admits that the choice to go from the three colours of purple in the original banknote to just one would most probably have been 'purely economic'.[29] He was adamant, however, that the choice of blue instead of the original red, and the decision not to retain the denomination of the note but instead repeat the pound symbol, was consciously done to 'avoid any allegations of forgery', something which he repeated on subsequent occasions.[30]

My inexperience with taking oral histories led me at first to interpret his account of drawing the postcard to mean that he had hand drawn the entire image. It was only much later, in a follow-up interview, that I discovered this not to be the case. Murray had hand-traced the message only. He then photocopied the banknote, blanking out the original lettering, and used the photocopier again to marry the two images together. Although this is not as good a story as the first version, it did make sense of several reiterations that Murray made about the necessity of avoiding any suggestion of a willful forgery. Since it is illegal to photocopy legal tender, I suspect that this would have been uppermost in the mind of the person who had physically placed the banknote onto the photocopier to make copies. A standard photocopier from the mid-1980s might also be incapable of capturing fine distinctions of shading; I propose that much of the detail of the original banknote may have been lost during the photocopying process, which accounts for the visible differences between the two images.

When it came to the printing, Murray drew a complete blank. Not one S.A.D.D. member had any clear memories of where the postcard was printed, or how much it had cost. There was a consensus that it had been printed commercially, and that as S.A.D.D. held fundraisers they could have covered that cost. There was an early clue when Ciaran Cuffe produced an intriguing letter from the Womens' Community Press, calling for postcard designs. Further investigation proved that the students did avail of this offer, however there has been some speculation that this may be the source of the idea for the postcard campaign.

Roisin Murphy and Colman O'Siochru both mentioned that they had often used the Print Well Co-op in the Dublin Resource Centre for other projects, and offered it as the most likely place they would have used to print the card. However, when I showed it to Sean

29 Murray, pers. comm. (November 2014).
30 Murray, pers. comm. (November 2014).

Sills of the Distillers Press in NCAD, he came up with an alternative theory. He identified the process used as offset lithography; a process that uses a flat surface and a chemically treated printing plate. A water and ink mix is added to the plate; the chemical attracts the ink and repels the water. A rubber drum is rolled over the plate, which picks up the inked image and transfers it to the paper. In the postcard example the balance of ink and water are off, which creates the lighter blue areas where the water has 'crept' into the ink and diluted it. This is particularly evident on the '£' symbols (figure 4.4).

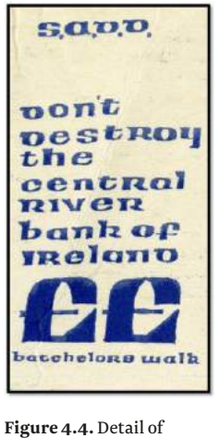


Figure 4.4. Detail of protest postcard, 1988

Sean agrees that although the Print Well Co-Op would have printed using this technique, he says that many institutions would commonly have used an AB Dick, i.e. a small version of the litho press, for in-house printing. Sean attended the Bolton Street School of Printing himself, and later lectured there from 1978-1983. He concluded 'knowing that the school of architecture is one floor above the school of printing, I think it is feasible that they would have been printed in Bolton Street.'[31]

Print and graphics have long been associated with revolution and protest. In *Graphic Agitation* Liz McQuistan argues that since evidence of political cartooning has been found on the walls of Pompeii, and that during the Renaissance a practice developed of hanging placards with political commentary around the necks of statues, it would seem that 'talking back and arguing (graphically) in the streets is evidently one of our longest traditions.'[32] Graphic representations of revolutionary ideas in the form of satirical cartoons delivered the message even to those who could not read, and the development of a strong visual 'language' meant ideas could even cross borders.[33]

Although initially it would seem difficult to place an object as innocuous as a postcard in a context of political activism and protest, in fact, since its invention the postcard has been an agent for change and has always held a surprisingly subversive aspect. In 1899, the *Standard* expressed this: 'The illustrated postcard craze, like the influenza, has spread to these islands [Great Britain] from the Continent, where it has been raging with considerable severity.'[34]

In 1869, the Austro-Hungarian post office issued the first pre-paid postal cards, which almost instantly revolutionized communication. Postcards were the cheapest method yet of communicating by post, and the quickest; in some cities a postcard sent in the morning could be with the receiver that evening. By the standards of the day, this was instant communication. In *The Postcard Age*, Lynda Klich and Benjamin Weiss argue that the postcard was nothing short of 'a new communication technology. And like any new technology, postcards were disruptive. [As postcards] changed patterns of behavior and altered expectations about privacy and public morals, they prompted a great deal of debate.'[35]

One of the biggest concerns was the initial distrust of a communication medium that allowed eyes other than those of the intended recipient to see its message. It was of particular concern to those of the upper classes, as the idea that anyone, in particular the servants, might access your private communication was a genuine fear.[36] The imposed brevity of the message had detractors of the postcard claiming that the new medium would destroy the English language, an argument that we have heard leveled at both e-mail and text message in more recent times.[37] Almost from the beginning, postcards were associated with new radical ideas; postcards displaying the work of the artists of new art movements such as the Avant Garde, Futurism, and later Constructivism communicated ideas of the modern world.[38] The Suffragette movement was one of the first to use the new medium to spread its message.[39] However, the commodification of ideas is entirely democratic; while postcards were produced by activists to promote their ideas, they were also produced in equal numbers by outsiders to denigrate or lampoon them.

31 Sean Sills, pers. comm. (January 2015).
32 Liz McQuistan (2006) *Graphic Agitation: Social and political graphics since the 1960s* (London: Phaidon) p. 14.
33 McQuistan *Graphic Agitation*, p. 15.
34 Cited in Rogan (2005) 'An Entangled Object: the Picture Postcard as Souvenir and Collectible' in *Cultural Analysis* 4, 1-27, p.3.
35 Lynda Klich and Benjamin Weiss (2012) *The Postcard Age* (London: Thames & Hudson) p. 12.
36 Klich and Weiss *Postcard Age* p. 37.
37 Rogan 'An Entangled Object', p. 6.
38 Klich and Weiss, *Postcard Age*, p. 37.
39 McQuistan, *Graphic Agitation*, p.18.

The more the picture began to establish itself as part of the appeal of the card, the less space was left for the message itself. This was eventually solved in 1902 with the introduction of the split back. The design element of the line down the centre, with designated spaces for the address, message and stamp means that – since the S.A.D.D. example is of a different shape and dimension to a postcard (typically 6" x 4") – it is the layout of the back and the use of these symbols that signifies it is a postcard.

The students have laid out the back of the card so that the sender need only add their name and tick the appropriate box. This makes it quick and easy to fill in and send off so as to get as many posted as possible. It has the added effect of leaving no room for the thoughts and sentiments of the sender: this gives S.A.D.D. complete control over the message. I feel that the public nature of a postcard's message lends it extra power as a protest object as the message is seen by many people as well as the intended receiver.

With the back of the S.A.D.D. postcard, I once again came up against the vagaries of memory. Ciaran Cuffe confirmed Colm Murray's sense that setting out the type was his contribution. He remembered his difficulty in working with the limitations of the program he used and that it 'took ages' to create the square 'tick boxes' and to place the type inside the square for the stamp position. However he refuted one aspect of Murray's memory – that of Cuffe having used his own, very early, Macintosh computer. He confirmed that he had used a Mac, but that it was the computer in UCD, as 'I didn't get my own Mac until 1991.'[40]

Digging for Memories In an essay on Walter Benjamin's memory work, Esther Leslie comments:

> Those who wish to approach their own buried past must be prepared to dig, unafraid to return repeatedly to the same matter, turning over soil in the manner of an archaeologist…Remembering occurs in the present, and the present accommodates the recollector.[41]

40 Cuffe pers. comm. (December 2014).

41 Esther Leslie (1999) 'Souvenirs and Forgetting; Walter Benjamin's Memory-work' in Marius Kwint et.al. (eds.) *Material Memories: Design and Evocation* (Oxford: Berg) 107–122, p. 108.

Since I was dealing with other people's memories, I could only encourage them to dig. I did this by trawling through newspaper archives; each time I found something that mentioned S.A.D.D. I e-mailed it around to the group. There were interesting memories accessed with this method. Several members had had letters published by the *Irish Times*, and seeing again the words written by their younger selves had quite an effect. On reading his letter Colm Murray, who had remembered nothing about it beforehand, had an instant emotive memory of his father's reaction to the letter being printed in the paper: 'I had used the word "surely", and my dad told me with the use of that word I had lost the argument. He said it was too soft a word and I hadn't been affirmative enough. He just dismissed it like that. I was gutted.'[42]

Murray, as the card's designer, dug deeper than most; he e-mailed me several times as new memories were triggered. Ciaran Cuffe physically dug as he made several searches through boxes and attics to find photographs and documents. He seems to have had a more obviously archival approach, keeping letters, documents, records of meetings and copies of press releases. In contrast, Orla Kelly (another S.A.D.D. member) e-mailed me a photograph of a postcard she had kept. Interestingly, she had treated the card as an artwork and pasted it into a scrapbook: 'I had been doing a drawing of a Galway Hooker boat underneath and just stuck the image over it along with parts of a Gaugin painting that I liked at the time.'[43]

A black and white version of the card surfaced again when Colman O'Siochru contacted me to say he had found another black and white card, it was the actual size of the £10 note. Murray felt, and others agreed, that this was printed on Canson paper, which is the paper that would have been used in the architecture studios in college. The group concluded that this was another test version of the card, printed on a college photocopier.

The exhibition *Disobedient Objects* at the Victoria and Albert Museum (2014-15) focused on the material culture of protest; on the improvised, hand-made or arts and crafts nature of the objects made. Protest or disobedient objects such as banners, posters, graffiti, even giant puppets and props have to command attention in noisy environments, for example during street protests. They tend to be large, colourful, humorous or sometimes shocking,

42 Murray pers. comm. (December 2014).

43 Orla Kelly pers. comm. (November 2014).

whatever it takes to get the message across. Protests rarely gain access to buildings, so the messages of objects more commonly associated with protest (such as banners and placards) remain on the streets. In the accompanying publication, Carrie Reichardt says that in relation to protest ceramics, it is the 'assumed politeness of the medium' which allows it to get through, and that 'there is a power in the double take that occurs between form and content.'[44] Postcards appear innocent, and so they are delivered directly to their intended recipients. The public nature of the card's message ensures that it spreads. This is all the more subversive if the recipient is a member of government, especially since the state's own postal service has delivered the activists' message directly to the heart of the parliament.

There's PLAC and SPUC and the FCA,
And Free Nicky Kelly and the IRA
From the song Lisdoonvarna, by Christy Moore (1983)

I first came to Dublin in 1989; the final college year of many S.A.D.D. members was also my first. I remember the growing mood among student bodies, the SUI monster meetings around the right to abortion information debate, the wider global movements including student protests in Tiananmen Square all building toward change such as the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989. That year also saw a significant protest in Dublin called the 'Parade of Innocence'. This was a street performance created by Dublin's artistic community to highlight the case of the Birmingham Six following the release of the Guildford Four. 400 actors, directors, musicians, puppeteers and theatre technicians created a spectacular moving pageant with little funding, just the will to be a force for change. There was a mood that change *was* possible, but that action was essential. This was the era in which S.A.D.D. operated.

Recently I was talking online with Donal O Kelly, one of the artists who conceptualized the Parade of Innocence. Mentioning this project I showed him some photographs of the S.A.D.D. banners and this was his answer; 'Wow. It's blown my hollow boast that the Parade of Innocence was the first demo to put a banner across the ha'penny bridge.'[45]

44 In Catherine Flood and Gavin Grinden (2014) *Disobedient Objects* (London: Victoria and Albert Museum), p. 13.
45 Donal O'Kelly, pers. comm. (December 2014).

Roisin Murphy says of the postcard itself;

> It was a complete rounding off of all the thinking that lay behind the group. It also sought to represent the city quays as an icon which the £10 note did. You couldn't get people to understand the quays as they were in such disarray the note was a cohesive symbol and drawing that was immediately identifiable and covetable like the quays themselves.[46]

In 'Achieving the promise of Oral History in the Digital Age', Boyd notes; that 'The digital revolution has dramatically altered users expectations regarding what the internet can provide.'[47] In 'Messiah with the Microphone? Oral Historians, technology and sound archives', Robert B. Perks discusses how the new online technologies have made the roles of oral historian and archivist converge: 'The ethics of the interplay between technology, sound archives, oral historians, their interviewees, and wider public users have never been more debated.'[48] These two points resonated with me while undertaking this research. Firstly, when I began this project, there was little to no information online about S.A.D.D. As a result of this project, boxes of ephemera and other primary source material were unearthed, scanned and digitized. This material is being collated and there is now a Wikipedia entry on S.A.D.D. in the pipeline, and suggestions have been made to consolidatie the various pieces of ephemera together into one online archive of the group.

Within the parameters of this essay, I have barely scratched the surface of the story of S.A.D.D. not to mention the Green Street Trust, an organization founded by many members after graduation. The impetus behind the Green Street Trust was to renovate the Debtors' Prison on Green Street in Dublin 1 and put it to use as social housing. Many members of S.A.D.D. have said that they formed the trust because, after many years of protesting against everything negative that was happening in the city, they themselves wanted to contribute something positive. The story of the Green Street Trust is itself fascinating, but that is a whole different essay.

46 Roisin Murphy, pers. comm. (November 2014).
47 Doug Boyd (2010) 'Achieving the Promise of Oral History in the Digital Age' in Donald A. Ritchie (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History* 285-302, p.291.
48 Robert P. Perks (2010) 'Messiah with the Microphone? Oral Historians, technology and sound archives' in in Donald A. Ritchie (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Oral History* 315-332, p. 316.

Endnote As a result of this project and in a fit of nostalgia, several members of S.A.D.D. gathered together at the Debtors' Prison on December 23rd, 2014. We have to thank Mr. Paul Condon of the OPW for allowing us into this amazing building for a look around, after which I gathered the group onto the steps outside to recreate a photograph taken in 1991 (figure 4.5). Some members were missing from our photo; sadly Rachel MacRory died very young, and others like Garret T. Kelly now live abroad. However, Frank McDonald represents those absent in the new version, which seemed fitting as he was practically a silent member of the group.

Figure 4.5. Former members of S.A.D.D. on steps of former Debtors' Prison, Green Street, Eimer Murphy, 2014: Back (standing) L to R; Anna Rackard, Roisin Murphy, Graine Weber, Jerome O Drisceoil, Colman O Siochru, Front (standing) Frank McDonald, Emma Kelly, Eunan McGloughlin, Deryk Fay, Ciaran Cuffe (seated) Colm Murray.

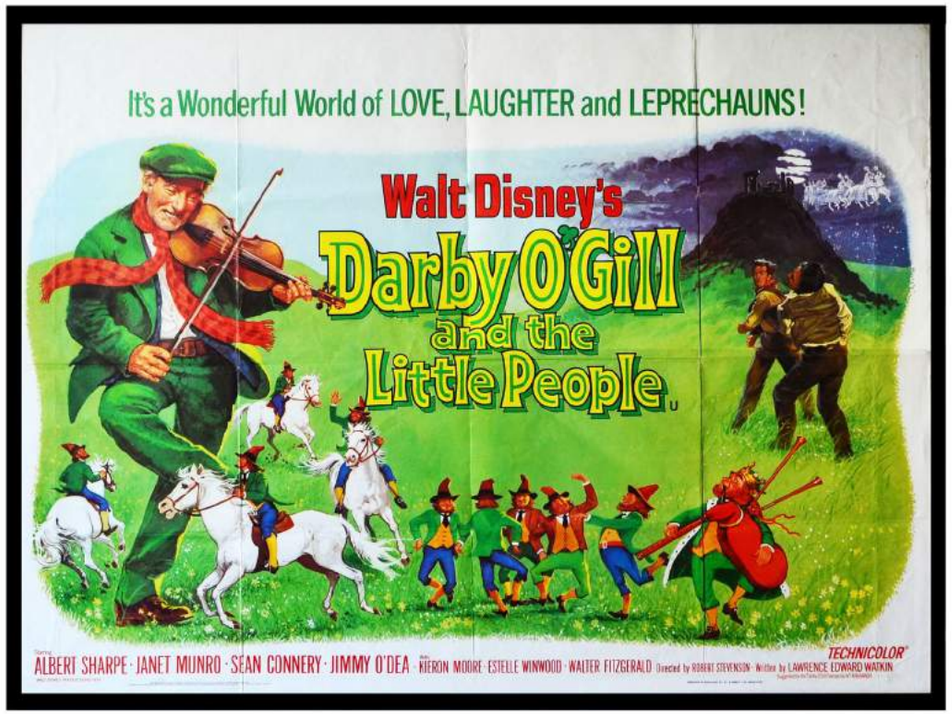


Figure 5.1. Darby O'Gill and the Little People Poster, Four-colour lithographic print on paper, 1978, Designer Brian Bysouth, Printer W. E. Berry Ltd.

Leprechaunism as Commodity: the Enervating Materialism of a Darby O'Gill and the Little People Poster

Elaine McDevitt

Introduction A 30" x 40" quad poster, folded four times, becomes a 7.5" x 10" sextodecimo sheet. That is the amount of space, to a depth of perhaps a millimeter, that this poster (figure 5.1) took up in somebody's drawer, press, box or storage unit for up to 36 years. This was between 1978, when the poster was produced for the re-release of *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* and May 2014, when it was finally auctioned as part of a 1940s-1980s 'Irish Interest' film poster collection by Whyte's auctioneers, and sold to The Little Museum of Dublin for €450.

There are several key dates that help to give the subject of both the film and poster a context. The first is 1946, when Walt Disney was welcomed to Ireland, and given open access to the Irish Folklore Commission Archives whilst researching a film about 'the little people'. The second significant date is 24 June 1959, when *Darby O'Gill* opened in Dublin, becoming the first Disney film to premiere outside the US. The poster production date of 1978 is also crucial. Not only had Walt Disney himself died by then, but it allows us to view the representations and issues portrayed in the film through a poster designed nearly 20 years later.

Perhaps the most seismic shifts in Irish society took place in the years our poster spent folded up into a 7.5" x 10" rectangle. As promised by the auctioneers, who inferred that

the seller was connected with film distribution, the poster is indeed of 'Irish interest' – but what interest does it serve? In what ways is the object socially and culturally significant? As a paper advertisement produced in the UK for a film produced in the US – based loosely on Irish folklore and set in Ireland, directed by an English ex-patriot living in Hollywood but premiered in Ireland – what can it tell us about the development of Irish identity in the twentieth century, and about the employment of folklore in portraying Irishness and the various tensions involved? What reflective capacities does this piece of design allow us? By exploring the background and material relevance of the poster, we can observe the commodification of the leprechaun, its effect on Irish identity, and the ways this commodification has been condoned, endorsed and rejected.

Materiality and Production By the 1970s, the UK Quad had long been the predominant film poster size in the UK, 'mirroring the compositional shape of the classic 3:4 cinema screen ratio itself'.[1] Our *Darby O'Gill and the Little People* (hereafter referred to as *Darby O'Gill*) 30" x 40" UK quad was painted in gouache by Brian Bysouth, one of the principal artists involved in the British illustrated film poster industry. Most of these artists have remained largely unknown, despite Sim Branaghan's assertion that the realm of the film poster 'illuminates not only the history of the national cinema itself, but the whole field of popular visual culture in the UK over the last century.'[2] The film distribution company would have first supplied film stills to Downton's Advertising, who would have worked on several design options and, in turn, would have supplied Bysouth with the selected layout so that he could work on the final artwork.[3] It is likely it would have taken Bysouth approximately two days to produce the artwork, and he would have invoiced for a sum of roughly £300 at the time.[4] Space would have been left for the relevant text and credits to be overlaid.

The poster informs us that it was printed in Berry's, one of the two film poster printers in the UK in the 1970s, and distributed by National Screen Service (NSS), who retained ownership of the posters by hiring them to exhibitors 'under license'. Posters were folded by machine, with quads folded in half three times into eight panels ('octavo'). When these were later posted out by the NSS, they were often folded in half again, into sixteen panels ('sextodecimo'), as this gave a convenient folded size of 7.5" x 10". This was equivalent to the size of a set of stills; the two items then easily fitting into a standard foolscap envelope. In the case of our poster, this explains its crisp fold marks, still evident although flattened and locked into a frame in The Little Museum.

Ian Whyte of Whyte's Auctioneers explained how, due to their high production costs, film posters distributed within Ireland would have been sent with the film itself, and would have travelled within Ireland from cinema to cinema.[5] Given that the re-release was unlikely to have been on full circuit release, and that there were fewer than 150 cinema screens operational in Ireland at the time, it is possible that no more than fifty copies of the poster ever existed in Ireland.[6]

Figure 5.2. Range of posters, VHS and DVD covers for Darby O'Gill and the Little People 1959-2004

Material Matters The poster itself is a colourful montage of the story of the film, focused on the interactions between Brian the King of the Leprechauns and the title character Darby O'Gill. The central focus is a scene of merriment where Darby, dressed in similar attire as in the film, is dancing and playing the fiddle surrounded by four leprechauns on horseback. More leprechauns, along with King Brian, are seen to dance in the foreground. Elsewhere in the montage, we see a less light-hearted scene with the representation of two characters involved in a physical altercation, as the 'death coach' rides out over the fairy

1 Sim Branaghan (2006) *British Film Posters: An Illustrated History* (London: British Film Institute), p. 12.
2 Branaghan *British Film Posters*, p. 12.
3 Branaghan *British Film Posters*, p. 14.
4 Quoted in Eddie Shannon (2012) 'An Interview with Brian Bysouth' <http://www.filmonpaper.com/blog/an-interview-with-brian-bysouth/> [accessed 30.10.14].
5 Ian Whyte, pers. comm. (2014).
6 Unesco Institute for Statistics, see < http://data.uis.unesco.org/>) [accessed 21/04/2015].

mountain, replete with clouded moon. This expression of light and dark reflects perfectly the tensions and unease evident between the commodification of 'leprechaunism' and the emergence of an independent, modern Irish identity.

At first glance, not only is there no real departure in style between our 1978 poster and other examples relating to the film's original release, its 1978 re-release and its eventual VHS and DVD releases, but there are striking similarities (figure 5.2). Many of the posters have concentrated on the particular scene in the film where Darby O'Gill plays the fiddle for the 'little people'.

Despite a manuscript font being favoured in the opening credits of the film itself, the *Darby O'Gill* posters only sometimes use manuscript-style Celtic scripts, and often use relatively modern sans-serif type fonts for the tagline and small print. In the case of our 1978 example, the specific font used appears to be a compressed version of Franklin Gothic.

'Authentic' Folklore and Irishness in Darby O'Gill Disney and his colleagues first visited Ireland in 1946 to begin research for a film based on Irish folklore. Disney's Great-Grandparents and Grandfather had emigrated from Kilkenny to the USA in the mid-nineteenth century, and he took much personal interest in the project. Although the film was initially to be based on an original script by John Tucker Battle, it eventually became an interpretation of Herminie Templeton Kavanagh's stories *Darby O'Gill and the Good People,* first published between 1901 and 1902 in serial form. Disney's personal interest, coupled with the great lengths that Dr. Seamus Delargy – the director of the Irish Folklore Commission – went to in ensuring the Disney team had access to the 'research, ethos and endeavours of the Irish Folklore Commission' makes the 'tension between praise and panning' with which the film was received all the more interesting.[7] Even in 1946, Disney's intention to make the film was met with teasing, tongue-in-cheek and somewhat protectionist press coverage; a journalist for the Irish Times remarked: 'Let us hope, however, that any tempting offers from Hollywood will not cause a large-scale emigration of our sprites and elves; and nothing could be more damaging to any self-respecting leprechaun than the enervating materialism of the cinema world.'[8]

7 Tony Tracy (2011) 'When Disney met Delargy: Darby O'Gill and the Irish Folklore Commission', *Folklore*, 78, 44-60, p. 57, p. 45.

8 'Luring the Leprechaun' *The Irish Times* 29 July 1946, p. 5.

The lightness and darkness portrayed in the film and the 1978 poster are suggestive of the portrayals of Irishness both at the time of the original release in 1959, and at the time of the poster's production in 1978. Given Disney's personal ethos, the inclusion of darker elements is not surprising. He wrote:

> Life is composed of lights and shadows, and we would be untruthful, insincere, and saccharine if we tried to pretend there were no shadows. Most things are good, and they are the strongest things; but there are evil things too, and you are not doing a child a favor by trying to shield him from reality. The important thing is to teach a child that good can always triumph over evil.[9]

In *Darby O'Gill*, we see examples of these lights and shadows in the characters themselves and the use of folklore. A commentator in the *Irish Press* in 1959 remarked: 'Maybe, Disney made it mainly for children, and if he did, he should have left out the banshees and the death coach and the headless coachman. They positively sent shivers down my back.'[10] The darker elements referred to in the *Irish Press* are not the particular issues that create tension when considering the subject now. Disney's family films were all exercises in fantasy, and this particular film centered around a leprechaun tale, so it is not realistic that the viewer should expect an accurate portrayal of Ireland. However, there are themes that emerge from the film that pander to stereotypes, connect to further issues pertinent to the Irish identity question and, according to Fintan O'Toole, 'induce a strange unease in Irish culture.'[11]

Before the film went into production, Walt Disney's Production Executive Larry Lansburgh wrote to Delargy: 'I feel that the Irish leprechaun and fairy theme is a very delicate subject and unless it is handled well, might tend to ridicule the tradition that your Folklore Commission has been trying so hard to preserve'.[12] The 'delicacy' of the subject and the sensitivity with which it is handled was particularly pertinent. As Tracy observes:

9 Walt Disney.

10 *Irish Press* 29 June 1959, p. 7.

11 Fintan O'Toole (2009) 'How 'Darby O'Gill' captured an Ireland rapidly fading', *The Irish Times*, 27 June 2009, p.45

12 Tracy 'When Disney met Delargy', p. 51.

> In the sensitive environment of post-war Ireland where official agencies were keen to discourage perceptions of the country as a rural backwater, the balance between 'blarney' and folklore, between entertainment and ethnography reflected larger cultural tensions in an Irish society that wished to take its place among modern, industrialised western democracies while maintaining a strong post-colonial sense of national identity all its own.[13]

It is in understanding this gap between how Ireland and the Irish wished to be portrayed, and the commodification of aspects of Irishness that were beginning to be understood as 'authentic' elsewhere, that we begin to pinpoint the specific cause of tensions. Ireland is portrayed as bucolic, anti-materialist and mythical throughout the film. Despite the pot of gold being featured in many of the promotional posters for the film, riches are not necessarily portrayed as important to the principal characters. For example, Darby says, "What's gold to a man who is too sick or too sad to enjoy it?"

In her work on Irishness and popular culture, Diane Negra asserts that fantasies of Ireland 'posit a culture unsullied by consumerism and modernity' and continues that 'Irishness is nevertheless a buy-in category and it comes in a staggering variety of consumable forms across a broad spectrum of outlets'.[14] The film undoubtedly played a significant role in the commodification of mythical Ireland, and promotional material played no small part in this. This material and the film itself, in wrapping Ireland up as a consumable entity, added to a visual vocabulary that articulated a particular understanding of Irishness. Certain assumptions are echoed in the film and poster that are similar to those summarised by Vincent Cheng:

> I daresay that we each carry with us certain personal assumptions about the Irish spirit, such as: Gaelic inflections and influences; the rural and peasant West … folk traditions; pub culture and a communal life of bibulous, even drunken, joviality; music, dance … a quality of mists, fairies, spirits, and an ineffable mystique or otherworldliness.[15]

13 Tracy 'When Disney met Delargy', p. 46.

14 Diane Negra (2006) *The Irish in Us: Irishness, Performativity, and Popular Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press), p. 3-4.

15 Vincent Cheng (2000) 'Authenticity and identity: catching the Irish spirit'. In: Derek Attridge and Marjorie Howes (eds.) *Semicolonial Joyce* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press) 240-261, p. 241-242.

In terms of the 'bibulous, even drunken' aspect of Irish experience, there are consistent references to alcohol in the film — Darby mentions that he has been told that dancing, whiskey and hunting are the three things the little people were "mad after". However, it seems that whiskey and alcohol in general is something that not only the 'little people' in the film were "mad after", but many of the 'big people' too. Darby himself is known to regularly sit in the pub telling stories and when Pony (Kieron Moore) doesn't believe some of these stories, he says, "Give me another large one and then maybe I'll see leprechauns too". Later, Michael (Sean Connery) also aligns an ability to see leprechauns with the consumption of alcohol when he asks if Darby sees the leprechauns when he has "had a couple". Over a few tankards of poitín, Darby and King Brian sing 'The Wishing Song', the lyrics to which include "Singin's no sin and drinkin's no crime". It is in the pub when characters Michael and Pony finally have a physical fight and, although this is a short scene, it features strongly in our 1978 poster. In his study of *The Quiet Man*, another film significant in its portrayal of Irish identity for an American audience, Richard Boyle remarks: 'Certainly many of the depictions of the Irish worldwide from the nineteenth century onwards suggest that they were awash with alcohol, constantly involved in alcohol-induced fights and attracted to debauched celebrations.'[16] It is difficult not to interpret some of the revelling and brawling portrayed in the poster and film as part of a tradition that accounts for the uncomfortable position *Darby O'Gill* holds as a representation of Irishness.

More uncomfortable still is the passivity of the Irish in how they are represented. This is touched on by Richard Allen in his study of *The Quiet Man* when he remarks: 'Until recently they [that is, the Irish] have had no real control over the way they have been portrayed in films.'[17] By the time *Darby O'Gill* was released in 1959, the country was emerging from an economic recession that had seen half a million people emigrate and – to put it crudely – it needed the business that Americans could bring. As such, Disney's welcome to Ireland was not only in response to his wish to get 'a real picture of our country before attempting to produce his film'; it was also informed by economic reasons.[18] The 1927 UK Cinematographic

16 Richard C. Allen (2008) 'I've Come Home, and Home I'm Gonna Stay. The Quiet Man in Irish-American Cinematic History' in Richard Allen and Stephen Regan (eds.) *Irelands of the Mind: Memory and Identity in Modern Irish Culture* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars) 110-128, p. 116.

17 Allen, 'I've Come Home' p. 115.

18 Irish consul San Francisco to Department of External Affairs, as cited in Roddy Flynn (2009) 'Projecting or Protecting Ireland? The Department of External Affairs and Hollywood 1946-1960' in Ruth Barton (ed.) *Screening Irish-America: Representing Irish-America in Film and Television* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press), 211-232, p. 212.

Act (1927) had required that companies exhibiting films in the UK reserve 10 percent of screen time for domestic productions, 'effectively blockading funds in the UK'. It defined any part of the Commonwealth, including Ireland, as British – which meant that Ireland could benefit from these funds. This coincided with a time when Sean Lemass had 'turned his thoughts to ways in which overseas production might be attracted to the country.'[19]

This sentiment, echoing the economic advantages of welcoming Walt Disney to Ireland and the increasing acknowledgement of the value of diasporic tourism, is reflected in one particular scene in the film that places Ireland firmly in a dependent role: when a letter arrives in the post office from a son in America, it is immediately stated that "there'll be money in that." Some contemporary reception to the film, perhaps foreseeing commodified 'leprechaunism', acknowledged this less fantastical issue — having described in detail the fictional Kerry village of Rathcullen as presented in the film, one journalist sums it up: 'But, sure, 'tis all a leg-pull, and you'd never know but it might fool some tourists into coming here to look for the place, or maybe even a few leprechauns. They have as much chance of finding one as the other.'[20]

Walt Disney expressed a belief in 'the little people', and even thanked King Brian and his leprechauns in the opening credits of the film. Of course, 'real' folklore is an oxymoron, and within the 'wonderful world of love, laughter and leprechauns!' of *Darby O'Gill*, the leprechauns are, as one might expect, given a starring role. However, despite their imaginary status, leprechauns have evolved to be represented visually in hat and attire that is not dissimilar to nineteenth-century representations of the simianised 'Paddy'. While acknowledging that leprechauns are generally represented in a non-aggressive manner as in the case of the poster, it is impossible not to recognise the demoralising stereotype. Alongside other expressions of Irishness within the film — namely, the Irish as reverent, colonized, dancing, drinking and fighting – it is easy to see how the film could cause offense. However, it does not appear that the film was interpreted with any particular disdain at the time; Fintan O'Toole notes: 'We would like to think that we kicked up a fuss about *Darby O'Gill*, that we found it deeply offensive. I don't think we did.'[21] We must question the point at which the leprechaun became a negative and reductive stereotype.

19 Flynn 'Projecting or Protecting Ireland?', p. 215.
20 *Irish Press* 29 June 1959, p.7.
21 O'Toole (2009), p.45.

'New Spirit in the Ould Sod': Consuming and Selling the Leprechaun By 1959, a more culturally and economically assertive nation was emerging — in his discussion of the expression of identity on St Patrick's Day, Mike Cronin notes that 'Whilst not an instantaneously prosperous nation, the Ireland of the early 1960s was one with more self-confidence than had been evident in the 1950s.'[22] When *Darby O'Gill* became the first Disney film to premiere outside the US, Walt Disney and his wife attended both the premiere in the Theatre Royal on 24th June 1959, and a commemorative supper held in their honour afterwards in The Mansion House. This occasion, and the material culture surrounding it, can give us fresh insight into the paradoxes that surround the film and its promotion.

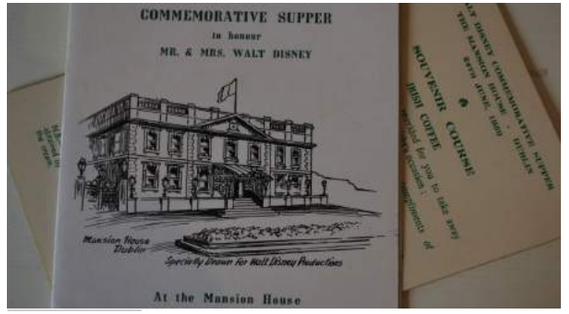


Figure 5.3. Programme for the commemorative supper to honour Mr. and Mrs. Walt Disney, Mansion House, Dublin, 24 June 1959, Author's Collection

In a menu and souvenir card (figure 5.3) dating from the Commemorative Supper, we see an interesting juxtaposition of 'stage Irishness' and more modern aspirations. The menu itself consists of 'Cantaloup [*sic*] Melon' which was presumably quite rare in Ireland at the time; the mid-course and main course used local and therefore 'authentic' in-season ingredients, and were followed by 'Iced Irish Mist biscuit Leprechaun's hut'. There is a contemporary drawing of The Mansion House on the front that has been 'specially drawn for Walt Disney Productions'. The back of the menu is graced with a picture of Mickey Mouse who, of course, had nothing to do with the film, but was certainly a popular figure amongst the aspiring Irish advertising community at the time. Bernard Share, when discussing the shortcomings of advertising and design education in Ireland in 1961, complained that '[Students]... are being largely left to fend for themselves...Some of them arrive in Agencies with their portfolios of 'Donald Ducks

22 Cronin (2011) 'Funereal black trucks advertising Guinness': the St. Patrick's Day Industrial Pageant' in Linda King and Elaine Sisson (eds.) *Ireland, Design and Visual Culture: Negotiating Modernity, 1922-1992* (Cork: Cork University Press), p.158.

and Mickey Mouses'... in the hope of persuading an Art Director that they have a right to a place in his studio.'[23]

It is in the souvenir card that we most fully see modern aspirations shadowed by their more mythical and commercialized counterparts — an Irish Coffee glass, Carrigaline pottery plate (figure 5.4), 'King Brian's whip' and Leprechaun cigarettes were provided to guests in a notably modern 'polythene bag'. Despite the likelihood that it was Walt Disney Productions that organised the commemorative supper, we can in no way doubt that the commodification and commercialization of the leprechaun on this occasion was very much endorsed and supported by the Irish brands involved. Even Irish Coffee itself, which was at the time a relatively new invention, and the recipe for which was printed on the card, was given the 'Oirish' treatment with the various ingredients described as 'rich as an Irish brogue' (cream), 'strong as a friendly hand' (coffee), 'sweet as the tongue of a rogue' (sugar) and finally, 'smooth as the wit of the land' (whiskey). The language and tone used to convey the Irishness of the film is impossible to ignore — with brogue, rogues, wit and land all being mentioned in a simple recipe for Irish coffee. Whilst this tone is sometimes experienced within the film itself, it is evidenced much more strongly within its promotion; 'A touch o'blarney ... a heap o'magic and a load o'laughter', for example.

Figure 5.4. Plate produced for the commemorative supper, Carrigaline Pottery, 1959, Author's Collection

The 'blarney', as described in some posters for the film, was instantly embraced to commercial effect outside of the company. Willwood confectioners regarded themselves as being:

> Extremely fortunate to be the only Chocolate or Confectionery Company in Ireland or Britain to be given such a license [to use the Darby O'Gill brand] and we look forward, with the aid of these products and the advertising attaching to them, to increase sales of Confectionery and Chocolate, both here and in Britain.[24]

It was only a matter of time before 'Darby O'Gill' bars, guesthouses and other commercial ventures began to appear, both nationally and internationally. We begin to see the commercialization and commodification of Irishness through a visual and cultural language that heavily relies on the leprechaun, and brings about change in the international construction, importation and selling of Irish identity.

Darby O'Gill undoubtedly added to the popularisation of the leprechaun as a symbol of Irishness, and the perpetuation of certain stereotypes. Four years after the film premiered in Dublin, John F. Kennedy undertook a much-publicised visit to Ireland. To mark the occasion, *Time* magazine issued a cover featuring Irish Taoiseach Sean Lemass. Reflecting Lemass' expansionist economic development policies that saw substantial increases in GNP and employment, the caption read, 'New Spirit in the Ould Sod', and Lemass was depicted against a pair of shamrock-embellished curtains in front of an industrial backdrop of factories. Between Lemass and the backdrop stands a leprechaun. The following year, the University of Notre Dame American football team – long referred to as the 'Fightin' Irish', and having officially added a leprechaun to its cheer team in 1960 – employed its now famous leprechaun logo after it was published on another cover of Time magazine. The Notre Dame logo, as previously discussed, compares admirably to the simian representations of Irishmen in the nineteenth century.

Diane Negra comments on the recent popularity of Irishness in terms of it seeming 'increasingly to serve as the ideal guilt-free white ethnicity of choice' in the USA. However, that was not always the case, neither in 1946 when the 'little people' film was conceived, nor in 1959 when *Darby O'Gill* was eventually released, and certainly not in the London of 1978 when our poster was produced.[25] At that time, the influence and perpetuation of negative Irish stereotypes had a very real resonance in the everyday lives of the Irish diaspora. In relation to one particular stereotype, Grainne O'Keeffe-Vigneron cites a case of unlawful discrimination in the UK during the 1970s when 'An Irish job applicant, after answering a question about his nationality, was asked: "Do you have a problem with

23 Bernard Share (1961) 'The men with the Mickey Mouses' in *Campaign, the Journal of the Institute of Creative Advertising and Design* 2 (8), p. 1.

24 *Sunday Independent* 1959.

25 Negra, *The Irish in Us* p. 11.

drink?"[26] Added to this, the attacks by Irish Republican groups in England only served to aggravate the old stereotype that 'Militant Irish nationalism contained no lofty ideals or legitimate goals and reflected instead the base instincts of degenerate and man-killing beasts who belonged in zoos if not prison.' [27]

However, whilst we cannot ignore the more sinister montage elements in our 1978 poster, particularly the fighting scene, they are in fact reasonably accurate portrayals of scenes within the film, and are likely to simply reflect a wish to advertise the film to the entirety of its intended audience, namely adults as well as children. In general, the film posters are selling a mythical Ireland. Of course, all film and film promotion is reproduction, and 'in the Irish case authenticity is only ever reproduced, filtered and reconstituted through a process of authentication and recognition of status (thus creating a further eddy of paradoxes).'[28] Somehow, the folkloric figure of the leprechaun, having been reconstituted through a process of authentication, has come to appropriate all things Irish. Indeed, it seems that the 1946 article after which this essay is titled almost predicted the 'enervating materialism' and commodification of the leprechaun — 'Tempting offers from Hollywood' have indeed caused 'A large-scale emigration of our sprites and elves.'[29]

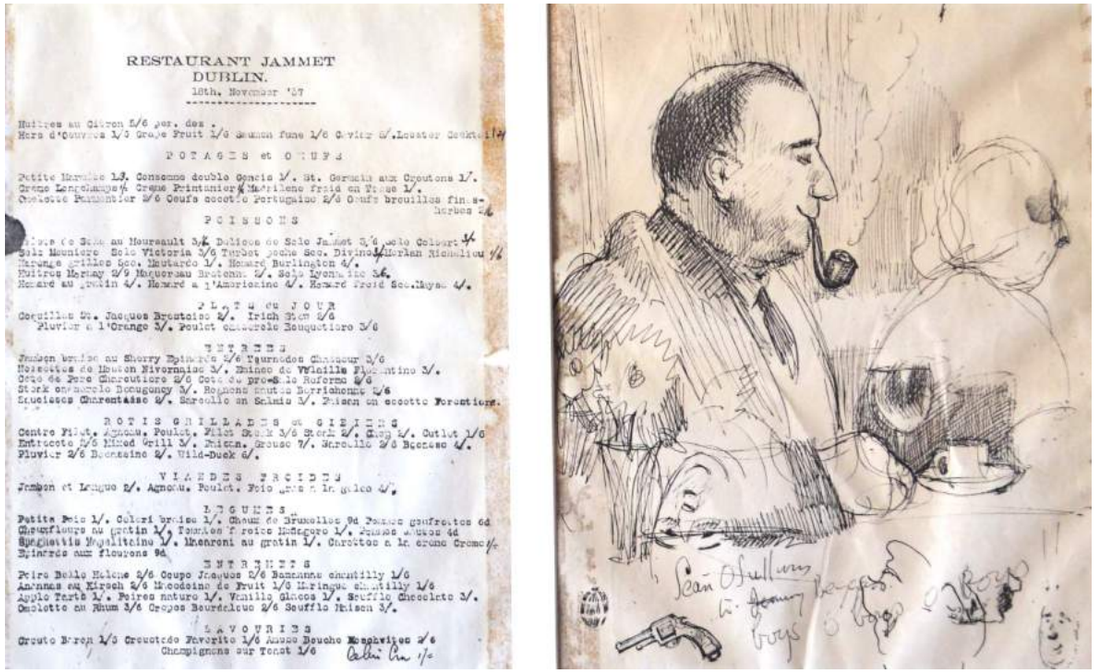
Conclusion Between 1978 and 2014 — during the time our poster was quietly stored — the Irish political, social and media landscape changed utterly. Ireland saw the hunger strikes, the introduction of independent television stations, the X-case, the lapse of the Section 31 broadcasting ban, the closure of several Irish newspapers, the decriminalisation of homosexuality, the Good Friday agreement, the introduction of divorce, the visit of Queen Elizabeth II, the Celtic Tiger, two economic recessions, and the visits of three American Presidents — Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton and Barack Obama – who all claimed Irish descent.

When viewing the construction of Irish identity as reflected through this particular piece of material culture, we encounter paradox and tension. If we are to presume that *Darby O'Gill* was accepted internationally as an accurate representation of Ireland, we can be in no doubt that the film and accompanying posters have helped to solidify stage Irish mythology, or that it re-enforced negative stereotypes, but that would seem to underestimate the ability of any film viewer to differentiate between reality and fantasy.

If we ask if *Darby O'Gill* and our particular poster treat Irish folklore with the delicacy referred to by Larry Lansburgh back in 1947, we can read it as a story of good intent, but an intent that ultimately failed. The absorption of the film into popular culture coincided with a more focused commodification of Irishness. The force with which the leprechaun, and, more specifically, the drunken leprechaun, has been embraced as a symbol of Irishness could not have been foreseen by Lansburgh, Disney or indeed, Delargy. In some ways, if it led to the 'hyper-commercialization' of Irishness, it may have also contributed to the international acceptance and assimilation of the Irish diaspora in their respective host countries – but it also left them with a stereotype to deal with that could at best be described as irksome. In an interesting parallel to our 1970s example, a 26-year old Irish woman was recently denied a teaching role in South Korea in a much publicised email that read 'Hello Katie, I am sorry to inform you that my client does not hire Irish people due to the alcoholism [sic] nature of your kind.'[30]

Certainly, the images as portrayed in the poster have now permeated every level of diasporic culture, and are evident in many films and advertisements. Whilst the date of the poster itself serves to emphasise a particularly difficult time within Anglo-Irish relations, it also tells us that in 1978, a British illustrative poster designer carefully rendered leprechauns on paper; a Bradford print company lined up the plates to mass produce those images as quad film posters; and a London distribution firm gave approximately fifty of those posters one extra fold, so they could fit into the envelopes that would contain them in their journey across the Irish sea and into Irish cinemas, where Irish cinema-goers would hand over money to see a film conceived by one of the most successful and famous of their Irish-American diaspora. Whether we view the current status of the leprechaun as amusing or offensive, these basic facts about one piece of material culture at a pivotal social, cultural and political moment are heartening. They remind us that, regardless of meaning and subtexts, people continue to go about their daily lives, and all of the time cultures assimilate and meaning evolves. And so it might become with the negative portrayals of Irishness — the symbolism and meaning of the leprechaun will continue to evolve and may eventually return to a less reductive form.

26 Grainne O'Keeffe-Vigneron (2003) 'The Irish in Britain: Injustices of Recognition?' *Sources*, 33-43, p. 36.
27 L. Perry Curtis (1997), p. xxiv.
28 Graham (2001) *Apes and Angels: the Irishman in Victorian Caricature* (revised edition) (Washington: Smithsonian Press), p. 59.
29 *The Irish Times* 1946.
30 *Irish Independent* 6th November 2014.



RESTAURANT JAMMET
DUBLIN.
18th. November '37

HORS D'OEUVRES

POTAGES et OEUFS

POISSONS

PLATS du JOUR

ENTREES

ROTIS GRILLADES et GIBIERS

VIANDES FROIDES

LEGUMES

ENTREMETS

FAVOURITES

Figure 6.1. Dinner Menu for Restaurant Jammet, Nassau Street, Dublin for 18th November 1937, Print, typewriter and ink on paper, Sketch by Sean O'Sullivan, November 1937, Anonymous donation

Restaurant Jammet Menu / Sean O'Sullivan Drawing

Rory Hutton

This essay focuses on a menu for Restaurant Jammet in Dublin dated 18th November 1937, framed beside a sketch signed by Sean O'Sullivan. Through examining this object, we will explore gastronomy in Dublin at this time, Jammet's clientele, and what else was happening in the world on the date of the menu which suggests the topics of conversation that were happening over dinner.

Description Both menu and sketch are on the same type of paper indicating that they are two parts of one item. In its mounted condition, the paper measures 8.34 inches by 10.78 inches. Un-mounted, it would measure 8.5 inches by 11 inches, making the paper Medium Quarto which is a standard size for paper in Britain and Ireland at this time.[1] The paper on which the menu is written bears a header in Clarendon typeface.[2] In her book *Exploring Typography*, Tova Rabinowitz states that the Clarendon typeface was designed in 1845, remained popular until the 1920s, and enjoyed a revival in the 1950s.[3] This tells us that when the menu appeared in 1937, the typeface might have already been considered old-fashioned. Perhaps the restaurant had always used this typeface and simply never thought to change it, or perhaps it is a conscious effort to evoke the spirit of an earlier time.

The menu offers a very comprehensive choice of dishes under specific headings: Hors d'oeuvres (appetisers), Potages et Oeufs (soups and egg dishes), Poissons (fish), Plats du Jour (specials), Entrées (mains), Rotis Grillades et Gieiers (roasts and grill), Viandes Froides (cold meats), Les Legumes (vegetables), Les Entremets (dessert), and Les

1 Robert Ritter (2002) *The Oxford Guide to Style* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.26.
2 Philip Meggs and Rob Carter (1993) *Typographic Specimens: the Great Typefaces* (Oxford: John Wiley & Sons), p. 118.
3 Tova Rabinowitz (2005) *Exploring Typography* (New York: Delmar Cengage Learning), p.124.

Savouries (savouries). Most of the offerings on the menu and the date are typed, with the exception of some of the prices and one dish, which are written in by hand. The menu is dated 18th November 1937. This very precisely dates the object and tells us that it is only intended to last for one day and cannot be reused, thus promising the customer a unique experience. Some parts of the type written text are quite faded, possibly indicating the menu has been typed on a machine with an old ribbon, or that it is one of several carbon duplicates. Some of the letters are slightly out of line which indicates an old, well-used typewriter. If necessary, this would allow us to identify the particular typewriter should it appear in a 'who-done-it' style line up!

The drawing which is framed to the right of the menu is signed, 'Sean O'Sullivan to Jammey Beggars boys o boys o boys!!' This is perhaps sketched on the back of a duplicate of the menu. Sean O'Sullivan was a celebrated Irish portrait painter working in Dublin at this time. Only a few weeks before this dinner, a drawing by Sean O'Sullivan RHA of Madam Fitz-Gerald appeared in the *Cork Examiner* newspaper to promote Ponds Cold Cream. His connection with Ponds appears to have earned him numerous commissions to draw the society ladies of the day; on May 30, 1938 a drawing of Miss Beryl Talbot appears in the *Irish Independent,* also advertising the virtues of Ponds Cold Cream.[4]

The drawing is of a balding middle aged man; he is well dressed and smoking a pipe while holding a glass of wine. On the table in front of him we can see a stem vase with two blooms, possibly dahlias or carnations, and a cup and saucer, probably a coffee cup because of its square shape. This may indicate that he has already eaten and is now relaxing to smoke and enjoy his glass of wine. His face bears a content expression as smoke billows lavishly from his pipe, suggesting he is pleased with his surroundings. At the next table, a woman sits with her back to us. Towards the bottom of the page there are a few doodles which do not appear connected to the image - a small revolver and a grenade, as well as three quick sketches of faces, one with a particularly exaggerated nose and chin. These are perhaps his fellow diners.

At least two reproductions of the Sean O'Sullivan sketch seem to survive. The first is in the Sean O'Sullivan archive at The National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL); it is from a magazine article written in French and dated spring 1980. The name of the magazine was unfortunately not recorded. The article was lamenting the loss of, 'un grand restaurant François.' Among photographs of the restaurant's staff and menus was the Sean O'Sullivan sketch. It was described as an 'auto-portrait de Sean O'Sullivan chez Jammet,' which not only sheds light on the subject of the sketch, but it also dates it to the same year as the menu. The fact that it is written in what we must assume to be a French magazine allows us to understand the regard with which Jammet's was held internationally.[5]

The second reproduction appears in Alison Maxwell's book *Jammet's of Dublin,* and tells us that Sean O'Sullivan sketched the self-portrait on the back of a menu as a gift for Jimmie Beggans the sommelier in 1957.[6] Considering the date of the accompanying menu in the Little Museum of Dublin example, and the fact that the drawing is on paper of the same dimensions and colour, this date may be discredited. Jimmie Beggans worked at Jammet's from 1928 until its closure in 1967. It is therefore just as likely that he met Sean O'Sullivan in 1937.[7] Maxwell's book also suggests that the face in the bottom right hand corner is Beggans, but sheds no light on the other faces or the grenade and revolver.[8] After his career at Jammet's, Beggans went on to work as sommelier at the National Gallery of Ireland restaurant where the director, James White, had a reproduction of this sketch made. The sketch was mounted and hung in the National Gallery restaurant.[9]

We know that Sean O'Sullivan dined at Jammet's. There is a very amusing story which is recounted in the book *Jammet's of Dublin,* where Nicholas Gormanston saves the artist from drowning by fishing his drunken head out of a bowl of pea-green soup.[10] This image of the drunken artist is further reinforced by a court appearance outlined in the *Irish Independent* where O'Sullivan was 'charged with being guilty, while drunk, of disorderly behaviour by shouting at the top of his voice at Lower O'Connell St. between 10 and 11 o'clock on Wednesday night.'[11] It could be conjectured that O'Sullivan had just left Jammet's on this evening.

4 *Irish Independent* May 30 1938, p.7.

5 NIVAL, IE/NIVAL AR/1880.
6 Alison Maxwell (2012) *Jammet's of Dublin* (Dublin: The Lilliput Press) , p.145.
7 Maxwell *Jammet's*, p. 143.
8 Maxwell *Jammet's*, p. 145.
9 Maxwell *Jammet's*, p. 145.
10 Maxwell *Jammet's*, p. xiii.
11 'Painter in Court' *Irish Independent* 22 January 1943, p.3.

Given the evidence outlined above and the signature, we must assume that the sketch is by Sean O'Sullivan. Because the style is much looser and more spontaneous than the drawings that appear elsewhere, this might be as unrefined and natural as a doodle on a restaurant napkin. Picasso notoriously 'produced such sketches on the spur of the moment and on whatever paper he had at hand, be it napkin, newspaper, envelope or trade card.'[12] It would be nice to imagine that on the night of the 18th of November 1937, Sean O'Sullivan was dining at Jammet's and used this sketch to pay for his dinner in the style of Picasso or Matisse, his flamboyant European contemporaries.[13] This seems all the more plausible when we consider that in 1903 an artist by the name of Bossini paid off his sizeable debt in the restaurant by painting wall murals representing the four seasons.[14] As previously mentioned, upon first seeing the inscription on the sketch, it appears to read, 'Sean O'Sullivan to Jammy Beggars boys o boys o boys!!' This is contradicted by Alison Maxwell's interpretation that it read 'Jimmie Beggans' and not, 'Jammy Beggars.' While this compliments Maxwell's story of the sketch hanging in the *National Gallery's* restaurant where Beggans was working, it is still worth considering the possibility that it does indeed read 'Jammy Beggars', referencing the Dublin slang term meaning 'to have a good time at somebody else's expense,' this term was often associated with this restaurant.

It would be interesting to know how the menu was first displayed. Considering that Jammet's used monogrammed crockery, perhaps it is also possible to imagine that the menu was presented bound in a leather folder with the Jammet's monogram emblazoned in gold on the cover.[15] The paper could easily be replenished each day, but the folder would remain the same. The Little Museum of Dublin explained that the menu was donated by a woman who previously worked as a waitress at Jammet's.[16] Unfortunately, it was not possible to contact the donor, as her conditions for the donation were that her name must not be attached to the menu. Therefore, I must resort to conjecture - since the *Little Museum* only opened its doors in 2011, I wonder if it is likely that someone who was old enough to be waitressing in 1937 was still alive by then? Perhaps the menu was kept by the restaurant, framed and displayed as a prized possession and only when the restaurant was closing in 1967 did it come into the possession of the donor? This theory, if true, would complement the idea of O'Sullivan using the drawing as a form of currency rather nicely!

The *National Gallery of Ireland* holds many letters from Sir William Orpen to his lover Mrs. St. George, which were sent from Jammet's restaurant. Many of the letters have sketches of the artist sitting at his table, waiting, or longing for Mrs. St. George. In several of these sketches, the composition is remarkably similar to that of the Sean O'Sullivan sketch. In figure 6.1 we can see the artist sitting alone at a table except for the ghostly outline of Mrs. St George sitting opposite him. His figure is in profile and similarly to the Sean O'Sullivan drawing, we can see his right cheek. On the table in front of him we see a glass of wine and on the wall behind the table is an indication of the 'Four Seasons' wall mural. The main difference here, however, is that while in his sketch O'Sullivan looks peaceful and contented, Orpen looks miserable and heartbroken as he looks down into his glass of wine.

This side profile composition used by both O'Sullivan and Orpen appears to be popular amongst artists for self-portrait doodles. For example, in a letter from Paul Nash to his sister Margaret Nash he has also chosen to represent himself seated at a table, writing, and once again seen in profile with his right cheek facing the viewer. Just as with Sean O'Sullivan, Nash has portrayed himself smoking a pipe. The one thing that is still baffling about the O'Sullivan sketch is the revolver and the hand-grenade; surely these are the most puzzling, and therefore intriguing part of the sketch. The proportion of the two pieces makes them too small to be part of the main composition. Given the turbulent political climate at the time, perhaps this holds some reference to the threat of war looming over Europe.

In his paper 'The History of Restaurant Jammet,' Mairtin Mac Con Iomaire describes the main dining room 'with a lovely faded patina to the furniture, snow white linen, well cut crystal, monogrammed porcelain, gourmet sized silver-plated cutlery and

12 Gary Tinterow and Susan Stein (2010) *Picasso*. Exhibition held The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (New Haven: Yale University Press), p. 68.
13 Robert Hauptman (2011) *Authorial Ethics: How Writers Abuse Their Calling* (Maryland: Lexington Books), p. 95.
14 Maxwell *Jammet's*, p. 10.
15 Maxwell *Jammet's*, p. 16.
16 The Little Museum of Dublin, pers. comm. (November 2014).

gleaming decanters.'[17] A photograph of Jammet's from the Irish Architectural Archive (IAA) is inscribed on the back 'supper room as it was' and dated 1926, and we can see that it was decorated in the Belle Epoque style. The ceilings are very high, while large murals depicting the four seasons decorate the walls. An ornate plaster frieze, cornice, and ceiling rose can be seen, as well as two brass chandeliers each with five glass shades emanating electric light. The tables are covered in white linen cloths, and the seating is a mix of bentwood and square backed leather chairs with brass studding. This room was considered to be the most beautiful in the establishment. Originally designed in 1903 at the Andrew Street premises, the room was so iconic that it was reconstructed at Nassau Street in 1926. A passage on interiors from *Restaurant Management* (1927) states that, 'the decorative feature of a restaurant is the proprietor's greatest salesman.'[18] This was clearly understood by Jammet's. They were selling not only Haute Cuisine, but an entire French experience.

In their book *Understanding Human Behaviour and the Social Environment*, Charles Zastrow and Karen K. Kirst-Ashman state 'The attractiveness of a room shapes the kind of communication that takes place and also influences the happiness and energy of people working in it.'[19] The book goes on to explain how factors such as dim lighting, comfortable seating and subdued noise levels are designed to encourage customers to talk more and spend more time in a restaurant or bar, while bright lights, noisy surroundings and uncomfortable furniture is designed to repel them and move them on as quickly as possible.[20] Given the luxury and beauty of the interiors at Jammet's we can assume the interior was designed to encourage the customer to relax and take their time.

Upon examination, the IAA photograph may have been taken later than 1926. Jammet's moved to its Nassau Street premises in this year, and after carrying out extensive alterations to the building to make it suitable, it seems unlikely that they would have left the plasterwork on the ceiling with cracks and looking so jaded. From Alison Maxwell's book we learn that, by the 1940s, the Four Season's panels and many of the other paintings were showing the effects of smoke and an inevitable accumulation of dust and grime. Some had faded, and their varnish was yellowing.[21] Furthermore, when describing the dramatic makeover given to the grill room at Jammet's in 1947, architect Noel Moffett stated:

> Fortunately the main restaurant downstairs facing Nassau Street was such a marvellous interior, we never touched it. We just cleaned it and left the decoration exactly as it was. And so the contrast between that and this ultra-modern Grill Room on the first floor was very noticeable.[22]

This evidence considered, I think it is fair to assume that the IAA photograph represents the restaurant as it was before the revamp of the 1940s and is probably closer to the date of the menu than to 1926. Upon closer inspection of the photograph, we can see sprigs of what looks like mistletoe hanging from the light fittings, this is particularly appropriate to the date of the menu and gives us a sense of the atmosphere the menu might have been seen in. Three men in dress suits can also be seen in the photograph, presumably waiters. When describing his memories of this timeless interior as it was in the 1950s, the wine salesman Aidan Kelly said:

> Over the porch entrance was the simple word Jammet in gold capitals. Through the entrance you stepped into a perfect 1920s' style vestibule, small, with black and white tiles floor, gleaming bevelled glass doors with polished brass handles, mahogany bentwood coat-stands and uniformed commissionaire to greet you. To either side was a matched pair of two black lacquered wrought iron umbrella stands with brass drip trays. You moved directly from the vestibule into the belle epoch dining salon, with 'lively' murals on the walls, round tables covered in excellent linen, Louis-style chairs, chandeliers and red carpeting.[23]

While this passage gives us a great impression of what it must have been like to visit Jammet's on any evening between 1926 and 1967, one or two things will inevitably change

17 Mairtin Mac Con Iomaire (2009) *The Emergence, Development and influence of French Haute Cuisine on Public Dining in Dublin Restaurants 1900-2000: an Oral History* (Unpublished PhD thesis, Dublin Institute of Technology), p. 2.
18 J.O. Dahl (1927) *Restaurant Management* (New York & London: Harper and Brothers), p.67.
19 Charles Zastrow and Karen K. Kirst-Ashman (2010) *Understanding Human Behaviour and the Social Environment* (Belmont: Brooks/Cole), p. 457.
20 Zastrow and Kirst-Ashman *Understanding Human Behaviour*, p. 458.
21 Maxwell *Jammet's*, p. 56.
22 Maxwell *Jammet's*, p. 52.
23 Maxwell *Jammet's*, p. 36.

over the years as furniture wears out or is upgraded. The bentwood and Jacobean revival dining chairs could hardly be described as 'Louis-style,' and are perhaps evidence of the 1940s revamp, an attempt to capitalise on the Belle Epoque ambiance of the space. In his essay 'Maid and Mistress,' W. den Boar described the nostalgia which existed for the imaginary 'Belle Epoque' in a post-Great War Europe.[24] This could also indicate another reason for the survival of this distinctive decorative scheme and its re-appropriation at Nassau Street in 1926.

In the 1930s, several of Nancy Mitford's novels including *Highland Fling* (1931) and *Christmas Pudding* (1932) featured glamorous upper-class characters who dined at the Ritz in London or drank at its bars. Jammet's was to Dublin what the Ritz was to London.[25] *The Irish Hotelier* described Jammet's as a place, 'where all the best people can meet the best people and some of the next best.'[26] As we have already established, Sean O'Sullivan presumably dined at Jammet's on the evening of the 18th November 1937. Jammet's was something of a gathering point for the artists and bohemians of Dublin. Madame Jammet was herself an artist and the Jammets decorated the walls of their establishment with the works of the major Irish artists of the day. It became the gathering place for the artists and the literary figures such as W.B. Yeats, Liam O' Flaherty, Seán O' Sullivan, Harry Kernoff, Micheál Mac Liammóir, Hilton Edwards, A.E., Brinsley MacNamara, James Stephens, Lennox Robinson, F.R. Higgins, Seamus O'Sullivan, Peadar O' Donnell, Francis Stuart, Frank O' Connor, Miss Somerville, J.M. Hone, and Walter Starkie.[27] However, it was not only artists and bohemians that dined at Jammet's. Also flocking to its doors was what remained of the landed gentry set:

> Lina and her sister were both grandmothers of the smart variety. They had owl-like profiles that once had been Grecian, and beautifully crimped golden red hair. The dresses were tight and expensive, their hats were enormous. Harmless, elderly butterflys, they fluttered or rather flapped from flower to flower in the fields of pleasure. From bridge parties to ballrooms, from race courses to suppers at Jammet's.[28]

24 W.D. Boar (2005) 'Vicissitudes of Historiography: Maid and Mistress' *Storia Dells Storiografia*, 48, 70-72, p. 72.
25 Tony Farmar, (2010) *Privileged Lives* (Dublin: A&A Farmar), p. 205.
26 Maxwell *Jammet's*, p. 121.
27 Mac Con Iomaire, p. 2.
28 'Elderly Butterflies' *Irish Independent* 29 March 1910, p. 4.

This beautifully poetic piece, written by Mary Costello, gives us a real sense of the leisure and luxury associated with Jammet's. Lina and her sister are clearly distinguished ladies with disposable incomes who are living their lives in pursuit of pleasure. But it was not only the high-class ladies who were to be found at Jammet's. In James Joyce's book *Ulysses* we are told 'that highclass whore in Jammet's wore her veil only to her nose.'[29] Diana Vreeland described the era of the Belle Epoque as a 'highlife, lowlife, life, life-grandeur and poetry.'[30] This quote gives us a sense of the bygone world which was still preserved at Jammet's amid its painted walls, bentwood furniture and abundant menu. When Egon Ronay came to Dublin as late as 1963 he wrote of Jammet's: 'As if by magic the turn of the century has been fully preserved beyond the swing door…Space, grace, the charm of small red leather armchairs, fin-de-siècle murals and marble oyster counters exude a bygone age, Ritz and Escoffier would feel at home here.'[31] This considered, perhaps it is fair to say that on the evening of 18th of November 1937, Jammet's shared more in common with the exclusive culture of Ireland in 1900 than it did with the independent Ireland of 1937.

On entering the supper room at Jammet' s on the 18th of November 1937 one would expect to see the best dressed and most fashionable set in the city. According to Dympna Galway, fashion correspondent for the *Sunday Independent*, 'This Autumn-Winter 1937 is a season of colour, you may as well make up your mind to it. Fashion favours the brave'[32] She implores her readers to 'take your courage in both hands and step forth in colours you have never worn before.' She identifies the colours of the moment as petrol blue, cerise, royal blue, pale blue, and bright emerald green and strongly encourages striking contrasts.[33] The colour craze was further reinforced in the *Sunday Independent* of the 14th of November 1937, where Arnotts advertised an event to showcase 'the latest, colourful evening frocks.' According to the newspaper, the event was to take place on the 17th of November 1937, the day before the dinner at Jammet's.[34] It would be nice to think that one of the colourful frocks found its way to Jammet's the following evening.

29 James Joyce (2010 [1922]) *Ulysses* (London: Wordsworth Editions), p. 354.
30 Diana Vreeland and Philippe Jullian (1982) *La Belle Epoque*. Exhibition held at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1982-1983 (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art), p.3.
31 Farmar *Privileged Lives*, p. 201.
32 'Fashion Page' *Sunday Independent*, 10 October 1937, p. 7.
33 'Fashion Page'.
34 'Arnotts Model Fashions' *Sunday Independent* 14 November 1937, p.2.

In the newspapers for 18th November 1937 and the days and weeks surrounding it, one can see numerous advertisements for Christmas gift ideas: 'Good Santas Give Parker,' 'A Pair Of Fur Back Gloves make a charming xmas present,' and a very amusing advertisement for the 'Hoover Junior' which encourages wives to 'tactfully, draw his attention to the very little money needed for so very big a gift' at a cost of £10.15s.[35] Given the date of the menu, Christmas gifts might likely form part of the small talk over dinner, but if one was having a more serious discussion, hot topics of the day included Japan's invasion of China: one headline ran 'Fate of Nanking in balance.'[36] Herr Hitler and the 'European Situation' was another important concern of the day. The *Sunday Independant* for the 14th of November 1937 ran the headline 'Nazi Colonies Truce for Britain?'[37] Perhaps these were among the topics discussed over dinner at Jammet's on the 18th of November 1937.

While there is not much information available about the kitchen at Jammet's, it is known that there was only one kitchen to serve seven venues, and that the finer ingredients were sourced from Brendan Byrne of South Anne Street.[38] Given the prestigious nature and success of Jammet's it is most likely that when it re-opened on Nassau Street in 1926, it would have had a fully up-to-date modern kitchen.

When advising restaurateurs on devising successful menus *Restaurant Management* stated that:

> The Menu is to the restaurant what the program is to the theatre manager-both must please the public if they expect to remain in business. But the restaurant manager has the most difficult job. Public tastes become jaded. The weather changes or prices go out of sight. A hundred and one things occur to make menu planning a scientific task.[39]

The menu that appeared at Jammet's on the 18th of November 1937 is written predominantly in French, suggesting that the clientele were wel-versed in that language, at least in relation to food. It opens with a selection of six hors d'oeuvres including what *Au Petit Cordon Blue* refers to as 'those aristocrats, the smoked salmon (saumon fume), the cavaire (Caviar), and the oyster (huitres).'[40] Such delicacies were an opportunity to display social graces to fellow diners. Contemporary books on etiquette were very concerned with the correct way to eat. Oysters for instance, 'are eaten with a dinner fork or a special one; the shell is held in the left hand and the oysters extracted and eaten by means of the fork.'[41]

The menu then leads onto 'Potages et Oeufs.' According to *Au Petit Cordon Bleu,* soup 'is the only fitting prelude for every meal.' However, it is to be approached with caution as *Table Etiquette* warned, 'no noise should be made while drinking soup.'[42] One soup on the menu is St. Germain aux croutons. This is a type of pea soup named after a district of Paris and commonly found in recipe books at this date.[43] Perhaps this is the pea-green soup in which Sean O'Sullivan almost drowned. The importance of wine as an accompaniment to the meal cannot be over emphasized. All the contemporary cookbooks that were referred to had sections on wines to be served with various dishes. In *Etiquette for Men* of 1937 we are told to expect up to five glasses:

> The smaller wine-glass is for sherry, usually taken with the fish. Then there will be a small tumbler or a wide bowled, stemmed glass in which you will take Burgundy, hock or claret. The slender-stemmed glass with a wide, shallow bowl is for Champagne, taken after the entrée. There will also be a wine glass for port and a tumbler if whiskey is being served.[44]

The *Complete Illustrated Cookery* of 1934 suggests offering Sherry, Hock, Champagne, Port, Claret and liqueurs to a guest at a dinner party.[45] It is hard to imagine a modern cookbook suggesting such a variety of alcohol.

The menu then offers 'Poissons' (fish) with a choice of nine dishes. While it may never be

35 'Good Santas Give Parker'; 'Hoover Junior', *Irish Independent* 18 November 1937, p. 8, p. 7; 'Fur Backed Gloves' *Irish Independent* 24 December 1937, p. 4.
36 'Fate of Nanking in Balance'*Sunday Independent* 14 November 1937, p. 1.
37 'Nazi Colonies Truce for Britain' *Sunday Independent* 14 November 1937, p. 1.
38 Maxwell *Jammet's*, p. 60.
39 Dahl *Restaurant Management*, p. 120.
40 Dione Lucas and Rosemary Hume (1936) *Au Petit Cordon Bleu*, p.7.
41 G.E. Roberts, (1938) *Table Etiquette* (London: George Routledge), p.94.
42 Roberts *Table Etiquette*, p.94.
43 Lucas and Hume *Au Petit Cordon Bleu*, p. 14.
44 G.R.M. Devereux (1937) *Etiquette for Men* (London: C. Arthur Pearson), p. 93.
45 Anon. (1934) *Complete Illustrated Cookery* (London: Associated Newspapers), p. 680.

possible to figure out what such dishes as 'Delices de Sole Jammet' or 'Homard Burlington' consisted of, it is interesting to note that these dishes were presumably understood by many of the customers and unique to Jammet's. Burlington is almost certainly a reference to the Burlington Hotel, the original premises taken over by the Jammet's in 1900.

Next on the menu we find four dishes under the heading 'Plats du Jour'. Here among other dishes we see the unlikely inclusion of Irish stew. Perhaps this is a nod to the restaurant's location. *Restaurant Management* suggests including local food types when planning a menu.[46] In *The Complete Illustrated Cookery,* there was a recipe for 'Ragout a l'Irlandaisse'.[47] Despite its rather ostentatious name, this stew contains only mutton, onions, water, potatoes, salt and pepper. This is very much in keeping with traditional Irish stew recipes and shares no similarities with French cuisine beyond its name. Perhaps this dish exists to put at ease any member of the public not acquainted with haute cuisine, but wishing to dine in the opulent surroundings of Jammet's. Also under 'Plat du Jour' we can see 'Poulet casserole bouquetiere' for which I found a recipe in *Au Petit Cordon Bleu*.[48] By comparison with the rather poor Ragout a l'Irlandaisse this recipe contained no fewer than sixteen ingredients.

The diner then comes to the 'Entrees' and here, yet again, the diner is presented with an exhaustive selection of eleven dishes in all. When reminiscing about her life as a household cook in the 1920s, Margaret Powell recounts her amazement at first seeing grouse, partridge and pheasant. She recalled that, when growing up, 'The only bird we had at home was a chicken for Christmas.'[49] This account may be a decade older than the menu at Jammet's, but it still gives us some idea of the opulence Jammet's was offering its customers and the privileged lives that those customers must have enjoyed. Under the Heading 'Legumes' we can see 11 dishes. Among them, there are several of Italian origins, namely 'Macaroni au Gratin' and 'Spaghettis Napolitaine'. This is followed by the 'Entrenets' (desserts) where 13 sweet dishes are presented. The menu finally draws to a close with a selection of four 'Savouries.' The *Complete Illustrated Cookery* suggests that at the end of the meal, a selection of cigars and cigarettes should be offered to guests on salvers with either a spirit lighter or boxes of matches.[50] Perhaps a waiter at Jammet's helped Sean O'Sullivan to light his pipe after dinner just before he produced the sketch.

In *Au Petit Cordon Bleu,* we are told that 'For the gastronome, dining is an art; a well-balanced meal is an artistic production, a harmonious concord of savour and substance.'[51] This could have been written for Jammet's, considering the attention to detail evident in both the interior design and the food there, not to mention the artistic and glamorous set that frequented the restaurant. Unfortunately, Jammet's closed its doors in 1967. The premise on Nassau Street is now home to an Irish bar and sadly none of the great interiors have survived. However, a trip to the Little Museum of Dublin to see this menu gives us some impression of what it would have been like to be presented with such a mouth-watering selection of the finest French cuisine, perhaps while seated next to Sean O'Sullivan as he drank his 'St. Germain aux Croutons.'

46 Dahl *Restaurant Management*, p. 120.
47 *Complete Illustrated Cookery*, p.255.
48 Lucas and Hyme *Au Cordon Bleu*, p. 81.
49 Margaret Powell (2012) *The Downstairs Cookbook* (London: Pan Macmillan), p. 3.
50 *Complete Illustrated Cookery*, p. 681.
51 Lucas and Hyme *Au Cordon Bleu*, p. 7.

Figure 7.1. Commemorative chocolate box, Cardboard formed from cellulose, c.1936, Urney Chocolates, Tallaght, Co. Dublin

Alfie Byrne commemorative chocolate box

Donna Gilligan

Object This essay presents an object biography of a small, shallow, rectangular box which was previously used as packaging for a gift of chocolates from Alfred Byrne, the Lord Mayor of Dublin (Figure 7.1). The detailed decorative printing on the lid of the box serves to present its origins and status as a significant gift object. The box lid shows a photograph of Alfred Byrne, and a representation of his official residence of the city Mansion House. The imagery is flanked by the Irish national and Dublin city flags, and is surrounded by a Celtic interlace border with a single provincial heraldic crest at each corner. It is augmented by a hand-written autograph from the Lord Mayor himself, using his popular common abbreviation of Alfie. The printed text attests to the origins of the box as a gift from the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress, and lists a number of years that the Lord Mayor has held his place in office. Based on the latest year listing printed on the lid, the box is thought to date to 1936.

The box does not appear to have been altered or repaired, and its appearance after its life cycle of approximately 78 years shows that it has been valued and cared for by its previous owner/owners. However, adhesive has sealed the lid of the box permanently. As a result of this, the object has become two-dimensional in nature, rather than a fully manipulatable three-dimensional object. As such, the interior of the box cannot be viewed, and neither can the base, where a manufacturer mark would have been most likely to have been displayed.

Production The box itself is most likely a die-cut creation, and is composed of cardboard formed from cellulose.[1] It fits the style of a traditional chocolate box with its elegant shape and high level of aesthetic appeal through its printed design. It measures 16 x 8.5 cm, and has a depth of c.3 cm. Contemporary advertising shows that chocolate in this period was boxed by pound weight, and the sizes of the boxes often reflected the weight of the chocolates within, possibly reflecting a standardisation of box size for specific weights.[2] Based on the dimensions of this box, as well as through size comparisons with similar contemporary boxes on the packaging collector marketplace, it is possible that this box originally held a half pound of chocolates.

Provenance This chocolate box was specially produced on the orders of the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alfie Byrne, as a gift object to be distributed to selected members of the public. Although largely thought to have been produced as gifts to have been distributed to foreign dignitaries, research has revealed documentation of three members of the public who claim to have been presented with similar chocolate boxes by Byrne – suggesting that they may have been more widely dispersed than originally proposed.[3] These commemorative or promotional boxes are presumed to have been regularly produced during Alfie Byrne's unparalleled ten years in office, but do appear to have been manufactured in limited quantities, and only allocated to a select number of recipients rather than circulated more widely.[4]

The chocolate box was produced by Urney's Chocolates, a successful confectionary manufacturer based on the Belgard Road, Tallaght, Co. Dublin from 1921 to 1980 (figure 7.2).[5] At its peak, the factory was one of the largest trading in Europe, and would have been one of the biggest Irish manufacturers of chocolate during the 1930's.[6] Urney's Chocolates appears to have had a frequent trading relationship with Alfie Byrne, as he purchased the sweets and lollipops which he famously distributed to children on the street from this company.[7]

1 D. Kula, É. Ternaux, Q. Hirsinger, M. Jannelle, O. Matréri, B. Gomez, A. Maji (2009) *Materiology: the creative's guide to materials and technologies* (Basel: Birkhūser), p. 26.
2 See for example the *Irish Independent* March 30 1929, p. 1.
3 David McEllin, pers. comm. (December 2014 and January 2015).
4 McEllin pers. comm. (2014).
5 McEllin pers. comm. (2014).
6 Karen Nolan (2010) *Sweet Memories: the Story of Urney Chocolates* (Dublin: Blue Rook Press).
7 David McEllin (2013) 'Legendary Lord Mayor Alfie Byrne' in Ruth McManus and Lisa-Marie Griffith (eds.) *Leaders of the City: Dublin's First Citizens, 1500-1950* (Dublin: Four Courts Press), p. 164.

Figure 7.2. Postcard of Urney Chocolate Factory, Tallaght, Co. Dublin, Date unknown

The 1930s were a time of adjustment and upheaval in the comparatively new Irish Free State. During the 'Economic War' of 1932 – 1938, Ireland placed a 20% duty tax on British exports to Ireland in response to a similar duty tax imposed on Irish exports to Britain as a consequence of the Irish government's refusal to pay land annuities.[8] This resulted in a push by the Fianna Fáil government for the rise of native industry and independence from British goods, with head of government Éamon de Valera linking industrialisation with self-sufficiency.[9] The government placed a steep two pence tax on cartons of imported sweets, doubling their original price, and making these imported goods too expensive for Irish consumers.[10] As a result, the domination of the Irish confectionary market by the British manufacturers began to decrease, which encouraged Irish businesses to launch their own operations.[11] In a poor Free State recently released from a stable colonial economy and trading market, sweets and chocolate were one of the few luxuries available in a time of scarcity of consumer goods.[12]

By the 1930s, large confectionary companies began to overtake smaller local firms.[13] This saw a rise in emerging corporate strategies, such as branding, advertising and marketing, as the

8 Diarmaid Ferriter (2004) *The Transformation of Ireland 1900-2000* (London: Profile Books), p. 368.
9 J.J. Lee (1989) *Ireland 1912-1985 Politics and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 187.
10 Damian Corless, *You'll Ruin Your Dinner: Sweet Memories from Irish Childhood* (Dublin: Hachette Press: 2011), p. 27.
11 Corless *You'll ruin your dinner*, p. 27.
12 Corless *You'll ruin your dinner*, p. 32.
13 Corless *You'll ruin your dinner*, p. 25.

larger companies competed for market share and dominance. The emergence and expansion of confectionary factories facilitated increased employment for women in Ireland. While sweet production in Britain and the United States became progressively more mechanised, Irish manufacturing did not – small factories and budget limitations meant that a hands-on production process was retained. These practices provided a large number of low-paid jobs for women including roles on the factory floor, production line and in box making.[14]

An assessment of the census figures for the occupation of box maker in 1936 suggests that it is most likely that a female employee originally assembled the Alfie Byrne chocolate box, as the data shows that female workers outnumbered males eight to one in this profession at that time.[15] Due to the large number of contemporary female floor workers in production line roles in confectionary factories, it is also quite likely that a woman may have fulfilled the role of packing the box with its chocolate product.[16] Keeping the circumstances of the Economic War in mind, it is likely that the Alfie Byrne chocolate box would have been manufactured in Ireland, as census figures for 1936 show a high number of people involved in the box manufacture trade.[17] The census figures also show a significant number of professionals occupied in the printing trade, also suggesting that the printing of the basic product of the unbranded box could have taken place in Ireland.

As Urney's was a large factory with significant output, it is likely that the plant may have had their own on-site facility which carried out box production and/or assembly, as well as printing. Following the large import tariffs imposed by the Fianna Fáil government in 1934, records show that the Sweet Seller's Association suggested that Irish businesses take up the role of 'fancy box making' in order to meet the absence of Christmas novelties previously imported from Britain.[18] As one of the largest and most successful companies of that period, it seems that Urney's tried to fill the gap in the market, and provide these types of novelties themselves. Keeping pace with changes in the confectionary market was also key, as this was a period of ongoing developments and inventiveness in packaging, with new innovations beginning to replace the traditional forms of glass jars and tin cans.[19]

14 Corless *You'll ruin your dinner*, p. 89.
15 Census (1936), Table 2, p. 8. Available at http://www.cso.ie [accessed: 22/04/2015].
16 Corless, *You'll ruin your dinner*.
17 Census (1936), p.8.
18 Corless *You'll ruin your dinner*, p. 70.
19 Corless *You'll ruin your dinner*, p. 70.

It can be suggested that the Alfie Byrne chocolate box began its product life as a generic Urney's chocolate box which was updated and re-used by the manufacturer for this specific contract. An examination of the printing and typography by graphic design historian Mary-Ann Bolger led to her opinion that the Celtic interlace border used on the box lid was a pre-existing decorative frame, which was probably used on other boxes by the manufacturer.[20] The type or assortment of chocolates initially stored in the Alfie Byrne chocolate box is uncertain. However, a recipient of a similar chocolate box asserts that the box given to him by Alfie Byrne contained *Tara Chocolates*, a brand produced by Urney's during this period.[21]

There is a strong possibility that the chocolates held in the interior of the Alfie Byrne box were of the *Tara Chocolates* range from Urney's. With this in mind, it seems reasonable to suggest that the Irish interlace and heraldic pattern which is seen on the Alfie Byrne box may have originated in use on the boxes of the *Tara Chocolates* range, a brand which aligned itself with Celtic symbolism and heritage. The use of these pre-existing boxes and specific range would potentially have been a more efficient and cost-effective choice for the manufacturer, while the choice of product and visual symbols would have suited Byrne's applied thematic print, evoking national pride. The use of a proudly Irish brand manufactured by a successful Irish business would also be a suitable choice for use in a promotional product aimed at impressing and influencing foreign dignitaries.

The printing on the box lid has been produced by the process of offset lithography, most likely photo offset printing, whereby photolithographic plates are used to transfer images and type from original materials.[22] Missing sections of overlapping text suggest that the text formed part of the original photo or scan used for the main photolithographic plate, and that the printing of the photographs and text was a single combined process.

The text on the lid reads: 'With sincere good wishes from The Lord Mayor of Dublin Alderman Alfred Byrne, and The Lady Mayoress'. 'Mansion House' and 'Dublin' are also printed on the left and right corners of the lid. A small capitalised text is used for the

20 Mary-Ann Bolger, pers. comm. (November 2014).
21 Eamonn MacThomais (1986) *Janey Mac me Shirt is Black* (Dublin: O'Brien Press), p.16.
22 Garo Antreasian and Clinton Adams (1970) *The Tamarind book of lithography: art & techniques* (New York: Harry N. Abrams).

majority of the text, with a larger elaborate copperplate script used for the text 'The Lord Mayor of Dublin' and 'The Lady Mayoress'; the font for the former is the largest of all of the text used. The deliberate use of the decorative copperplate font provides a visually impressive and glamorous presentation style to the dignitary titles.

Further to the latter explanatory text, the years of 1932, 1933, 1934, 1935 and 1936 are printed on the bottom right-hand corner of the box. At first glance, these are assumed to represent the years that Byrne has spent in the position of Lord Mayor. However, in actuality, Byrne served as Lord Mayor from 1930 onwards, which means that the printed text excludes 1930 and 1931 from its listing.[23] This seems an unusual exemption; the box serves as an excellent opportunity for public promotion and advertisement, and the exclusion of the two further years of office appear to diminish Byrne's achievements. Due to the spacing and appearance of this text it seems unlikely that this is as the result of a typographic error, and seems more likely that this was the result of a deliberate decision to present only the years displayed here.

It is the author's suggestion that the boxes, while potentially mainly produced as gifts for dignitaries, were also dispersed to visitors and members of the public at special events. This seems probable, as the three recorded recipients of a similar chocolate box uncovered by this research comprised: a schoolchild who encountered Byrne on the street, a child who attended an election celebration in the Phoenix Park, and a visitor travelling to Dublin.[24] This theory seems further strengthened by the use of the handwritten signature, which augments the printed decoration on the box lid. This reads 'Best Wishes from Alfie Lord Mayor'.

The addition of a personal inscription on the exterior of the box can be seen as a form of celebrity autograph. Byrne was an immensely popular public figure, who was viewed as a national luminary during his period in office.[25] His autograph on the chocolate box lends a form of official authentication to its origin. The centre of the box lid shows a circular photo portrait of Alfie Byrne wearing his chains of office, the lower image shows the Mansion House, with an Irish flag flying from its roof and a second obscured flag. The residence is portrayed as a large, impressive, opulent building, with blooming flowerboxes on the windowsills and the status symbol of a luxury car parked in front. It presents the image of a celebrity residence or a luxury lifestyle, exhibiting the privilege and authority associated with the role of Lord Mayor.

The chocolate box displays a varied mix of symbols and images on the exterior of its lid. It is important to consider that by 1936, the Free State had only been in existence for 14 years, and the imagery on the box shows a strong use of national symbols and heraldry which had been conceived and re-appropriated by this time. Each corner of the rectangular box displays one of the four heraldic provincial symbols, with Connacht, Ulster, Munster and Leinster represented in this form. These crests are joined by the use of a decorative Celtic interlace border, which shows zoomorphic interlace representations, which revived in popularity during the period of the Celtic Revival.[26] There are also two depictions of flags – one of an Irish national flag represented in the colours of green, white and yellow, and a second flag representing Dublin city.

Ireland's establishment as a Free State, and the legacy of the Celtic Revival, resulted in issues with the representation of the Irish flag and the use of heraldic representations.[27] The Celtic Revival had focused on the favouring of styles and artworks produced in advance of the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169.[28] Thus, symbols which were deemed to derive from Anglo-Norman or British influence were rejected by those wishing to form a new identity, and portray a true Gaelic representation or style. Both of the two main political parties of the Irish Free State – Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael – promoted 'Irish Ireland policies'; a conscious effort to counteract and overcome the previous dominance of English influences on the cultural landscape of the country.[29] Celtic Revival artworks and symbols became popular amongst both nationalists and those who simply appreciated their high aesthetic and cultural imagery. Alfie Byrne had personally and politically declared sympathy and support for a number of nationalist causes, and it is

23 McEllin, 'Legendary Lord Mayor Alfie Byrne', p. 152.

24 *Sunday Mirror* (25th July 1999); MacThomais (1986), p.16; ICON (2009), p.6; T. Larson *The Vagabonds: Escape from Europe In 1939* (London: Universe Books: 2005), p.xvii.

25 McEllin, 'Legendary Lord Mayor Alfie Byrne'; Bill Cullen (2001) *It's a Long Way from Penny* Apples (Dublin: Mercier Press).

26 Jeanne Sheehy (1980) *The Rediscovery of Ireland's Past: the Celtic Revival 1830 – 1930* (London: Thames & Hudson), p. 24.

27 Brian Kennedy and Raymond Gillespie (eds.) (1994) *Ireland – Art into History* (Dublin: Town House & Country House Press), p. 104; Ewan Morris (2005) *Our Own Devices: National Symbols and Political Conflict in Twentieth Century Ireland* (Kildare: Irish Academic Press), p. 39.

28 Sheehy, *Rediscovery of Ireland's Past*, p. 8.

29 Kennedy and Gillespie *Ireland*, p. 133.

possible that the imagery used in the box design reflects these sentiments.[30] However, it could also be argued that the national symbols were chosen from an aesthetic viewpoint, as well as promoting a clear Irish theme for use as a promotional gift for foreign visitors.

Brian Kennedy comments that a political republic, rather than a cultural republic, was created in the first decades of independence.[31] An anecdote recounted by the former Director of the National Gallery of Ireland, Dr George Furlong, illustrates the changing acceptance of symbols previously thought of as insufficiently Irish. While proposing a new design for a State Christmas card in 1936, Furlong's suggestion of the use of the four heraldic provincial shields was rejected by Eamonn De Valera, on the grounds that they were probably of Norman origin. However, the following year De Valera requested this precise design, as the 1937 treaty had once again laid claim to use of the provincial shields.[32] The use of these heraldic shields on the Alfie Byrne chocolate box could show that these formerly rejected emblems were once again returning to common public use, and had begun to lose their previous connotations.

The national flag depicted on the box lid is made up of green, white and yellow sections. There are two possible reasons for this. The first reason may be as a result of recurring problems and confusion with the correct depiction of flag colours following the adoption of the national flag after the formation of the Free State. The tricolour was very much a new symbol in 1922, and adoption of this choice of flag was not met with universal approval at this time.[33] Records of a parliamentary question from 1926 show that the president was quizzed on which was the correct third colour of the flag other than green and white 'because it varies, even in government buildings? Sometimes it is a pale, sickly yellow, and sometimes it is red?'[34]

The final stage of official recognition of the national flag only took place through Article 7 of the 1937 Irish Constitution, which specified the national flag as the tricolour of green, white and orange. Further to this, no civilian flag code was introduced until after the Second World War. It can be noted that it is possible that the Irish flag seen in the photo print on the chocolate box is mounted incorrectly, with the orange section siding with the flagpole rather than the green, but the black and white image makes it impossible to claim this with certainty. The other alternative to the incorrect colouring of the printed flag on the box may lie in budgetary or printing limitations for the design, as the pattern – printed by offset lithography – is a four-colour print.

Consumption At its most basic level, this object was used as packaging for a gift of branded chocolate. However, the imagery and ideology of the printed imagery on the box, as well as the clear associations with the celebrity figure of the Lord Mayor, show that the object was used for a wider number of reasons. The ideas presented visually through its aesthetic appeal, as well as through the implications behind the gift object of the chocolate, serve to imbue the packaging with influence, attraction and ideology. The box was used as both a gift and a promotional object by Alfie Byrne, and was presented by the Lord Mayor to dignitaries and selected members of the public.

The limited and natural wear seen on close examination of the box shows that the object underwent relatively restricted handling, suggesting that it may have been kept safe in storage, or in a place of display which did not facilitate regular usage. The main wear occurs in the bruising and tattering of the lid edges, which appears to be equally present on all four edges. It is most likely caused by storage or display in an area where its edges were pressured by flanking objects, such as in a tightly packed box of several items.

Due to the celebrity status of Alfie Byrne, it could be argued that the use of the chocolate box changed over the course of its life. Beginning as a gift of confectionary, once the chocolate was consumed, the box was designed to be maintained as a form of souvenir or object of display. Following this, the box may later have become a form of heirloom or keepsake as it passed between generations of a family over the 78 years of its life. In its most basic aspect, this object can also be viewed as a piece of waste. As a regular piece of ephemera, it is mainly designed as temporary packaging for a foodstuff, and it has completed its primary function as a storage receptacle. However, waste often serves to maintain meaning and a story of those who used it in its first capacity, and this informs us of its origins, associations and past lives.[35]

30 Ann Dolan (2008) 'From the Files of the "DIB": 'The Shaking Hand of Dublin' *History Ireland* 16 (1), p. 66; McEllin, 'Legendary Lord Mayor Alfie Byrne', p. 153.
31 Kennedy *Ireland*, p. 140.
32 Kennedy *Ireland*, p. 140-141.
33 Morris *Our own devices*, p. 38.
34 Cited in Morris *Our own devices*, p. 39.
35 Caitlin DeSilvey (2006) 'Observed Decay: Telling Stories with Mutable Things' *Journal of Material Culture* 11(3), 318-338.

Alfred Byrne, Lord Mayor of Dublin One of the best-known and most popular characters to have held the position of Lord Mayor of Dublin city, Alfred Byrne (known commonly as 'Alfie') is a prominent figure in the story of Dublin in the twentieth century (figure 7.3). Known as 'the shaking hand of Dublin' for his incessant canvassing, he held the position of Lord Mayor a record ten times – concurrently from 1930 to 1939, and again for a final time from 1954 to 1955.[36] In advance of becoming Lord Mayor, he had served as an alderman and councillor of Dublin Corporation for thirteen years. His popularity was greatly as a result of his policies and efforts to improve the living and social conditions of the poorer residents of the city, as well as through his regular public appearances, social inclusion events and his famous charisma. Active in city politics, he was also regularly involved in international affairs and diplomatic visits.[37]

Figure 7.3. Alfie Byrne in Mayoral Robes. Courtesy Little Museum of Dublin

Byrne held a high level of national and international fame during his long reign in office. His fame can be understood in his role as an 'idol of production'; a form of celebrity common in the first half of the twentieth century.[38] He formed the inspiration for the character of the Mayor of Beaugency in James Joyce's 'The Cat and the Devil', a story in which a clever mayor outwits the devil.[39] His informal relationship with the public – where he walked the streets meeting people in person, distributing confectionary and coins, and dealing with constituents on a one-to-one basis – would be considered exceptional by today's standards. Throughout his ten years as Mayor, Alfie Byrne shaped a distinct public persona, with his name forming the recognisable feature of a strong political and personal brand.[40]

36 Dolan 'From the Files of the "DIB", p.66); McEllin 'Legendary Lord Mayor Alfie Byrne', p.152.
37 McEllin 'Legendary Lord Mayor Alfie Byrne', p.152.
38 Philip Drake and Michael Higgins (2006), 'I'm a celebrity, get me into politics. The political celebrity and the celebrity politican' in Su Holmes and Sean Redmond *Framing Celebrity: New directions in celebrity culture* (London & New York: Routledge Press), p.87.
39 J. E. Lewis (1992) 'The Cat and the Devil' and 'Finnegans Wake' Source: *James Joyce Quarterly* 29 (4).
40 Jane Pavitt (2000) (ed.) *Brand New* (London: V & A Publications), p. 21.

He easily assumed the role of celebrity as well as politician, and is portrayed as a glamorous, charismatic character in 1930s Dublin. Recalling an encounter with Alfie Byrne, a contemporary memoir recounts:

A black Vauxhall Wyvern motoring car pulled up…and out he popped, resplendent in a light grey pinstriped three-piece suit, the gleaming watch-chain on his waistcoat, and a dark grey cravat contrasting with his starched, snow-white shirt collar. The patent-leather shoes sparkled on his feet and the finishing touch to the ensemble was a pink rosebud in his lapel. Within seconds, half the neighbourhood was out on the street. 'Who's the fancy Dan in the car? He's like a film star!'[41]

Marshall comments that celebrity status can only be successful with a 'commonality of experience', whereby a para-intimacy and knowledge of the individual is provided by an advanced communication network, connecting the public to the individual.[42] In the case of Byrne, his communication network was served by his one-on-one regular public meetings, his penchant for generosity and theatricality, and widespread public promotion – such as the commemorative box discussed here. His association with Urney's Chocolates may even have acted as a form of celebrity endorsement for the company.

He travelled nationally and internationally as a public representative, and personalised chocolate boxes such as the one profiled here would have served well as corporate or diplomatic gifts to the officials he encountered. In 1935, Alfie had travelled in his capacity as Lord Mayor to the United States and Canada, carried out a number of visits to Britain in the same year, and fulfilled a cross-border visit to Newry, Co. Down in 1936. In January 1936, he controversially represented the city at the funeral of King George V in England.[43] During the period that this chocolate box was produced, Byrne would continue to undergo a number of international visits from which he could, and most likely did, distribute this type of souvenir gift. Analysing the chocolate box under Mauss' potlatch system, the object can be viewed as a gift providing mana or prestige to the recipient through its associations and uniqueness. The obligation of the return gift in order to maintain this mana could take the form of providing a vote, a political promotion or a favour for the

41 Cullen *It's a Long Way*, p. 105.
42 P. David Marshall (2006) (ed.) *The Celebrity Culture Reader* (London: Routledge), p. 20.
43 McEllin, 'Legendary Lord Mayor Alfie Byrne', p.158-9.

giver in the future.[44] It is not an exaggeration to claim that the boxes, while a generous gesture, would also have served as a stealthy means of visual promotion and publicity for his role as a public political figure. The gift rendered him memorable to the recipient, with the box providing a lasting memory of their encounter and an enduring reminder of the occasion when they had been personally awarded the prize.

Research shows a common association between Byrne and the theme of food as gifts. As well as his practice of distributing chocolate and sweets, he also held ice-cream parties for children in the Mansion House and was part of the committee which introduced free meals of milk and buns for children into Dublin schools.[45] His membership of the Dublin Corporation school meals committee allowed him to pursue and promote his interests in nutrition, and improving the needs of the less fortunate in the city.[46] Chocolate was formerly widely promoted for purposes of nutrition and good health, and the use of chocolate as a gift object may have helped Byrne fulfil his aims of public nourishment.[47]

The gift of chocolate Chocolate has long been considered a luxury object, and as such has commonly been used as a gift. Marcel Mauss comments that most gifts go from the powerful to the less powerful, and this is an aspect which can be understood in terms of the gifting of confectionary and coins by Byrne to children and the poorer inhabitants of the city. Barthel also comments that the gift of chocolate implies an act of patronage or power, one which has been regularly seen in examples such as the passing of chocolate bars from American soldiers to German children, or in the transmission of the gift of chocolate from men to women, potentially as a step in seduction.[48] Byrne's regular gifts of chocolate to children can certainly be interpreted as an act of benefaction, and his more formal gifts of boxes of chocolate to foreign dignitaries could be construed as a form of political seduction, through the formation of friendship and promotion of authority.

44 Marcel Mauss (2011 [1925]) *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (Mansfield Centre CT: Martino Publishing).
45 Stories from Home (2015). Available from: <http://www.cabrahistory.com/?p=76> [accessed 22.04.2015].
46 McEllis, pers. comm. (2015).
47 Sidney Mintz (1985) *Sweetness and Power: the Place of Sugar in Modern History* (London: Penguin Books), p. 106; Corless, *You'll Ruin your Dinner*, p. 56.
48 Diane Barthel (1989) 'Modernism and Marketing: the Chocolate Box Revisited' in *Theory, Culture and Society* 6 (3) 429-38, p.433.

Chocolate Boxes The term 'chocolate box' has been used to conjure connotations of romanticism, sentimentality and old-fashioned design, and the early chocolate boxes of the 1920s and 1930s were described as 'largely sentimental holdovers of Victorian romanticism.'[49] Chocolate boxes have generally refrained from acknowledging their product in their exterior visual imagery. The images presented on the boxes – animals, flowers, landscape scenes - are those with no clearly understandable relations to the product within the box. Pevsner used the example of the chocolate box to argue for a change in 'honesty' of production in industrial design, counselling that a product's design should be derived from its industrial origin and social function. Barthel further comments that chocolate 'denies its own status as a factory product' by the images presented in its boxing.[50]

The Alfie Byrne commemorative box can be said to represent a typical style of chocolate box, with the exception of the relatively formal print on its lid. While it can be argued to deviate from traditional 'chocolate box' style in its exterior scene and message, it still presents quite a romanticised or idealised tableau. The image of the beautiful Mansion House with blooming flowerboxes and luxury car parked in front is a representation of symbols of wealth, power and success. This is a visual theme often explored on chocolate box imagery, which commonly feature scenes of opulent mansions, fertile landscapes and expensive shopping districts, presenting a desired lifestyle or coveted dream to the consumer. Barthel suggests that, to those unable to afford extravagant homes or lifestyles, chocolate boxes offer 'A similar, if more contained, promise of privilege and transcendence above everyday needs and political agendas'.[51] Considering the high poverty rates and squalid tenement life of 1930s Dublin, this particular image must have appeared dream-like to the contemporary inner-city Dubliner. When we consider the Alfie Byrne chocolate box as a potential gift for international dignitaries, we can also assume that the exterior image on the box was intended to impress and influence representatives in politics and society, providing them with a lasting favourable memory of the Lord Mayor, his authority, and his sophisticated lifestyle.

49 Nikolaus Pevsner (1937) *An Enquiry into Industrial Art in England* (New York: Macmillan), p. 12; Barthel, 'Modernism and Marketing', p. 429.
50 Barthel 'Modernism and Marketing', p. 429.
51 Barthel 'Modernism and Marketing', p. 437.

Barthel comments on the strong association of the female gender with the product of chocolate, and likewise the chocolate box. She remarks on the common depiction of female activities or consumer roles – such as luxury shopping districts – feminised images, such as flowers or animals on chocolate boxes, and the defined gender images required on boxes to make the contents 'appropriate' for men or women.[52] However, the Alfie Byrne box can be said to portray a relatively gender-neutral or slightly masculinised image, which would be attractive and appropriate for both sexes to enjoy. Barthel also observes the tradition of chocolate as a luxury product, associating its brand with noble and aristocratic connections in order to emphasise their extravagance and special nature.[53] The connection here between the gift of chocolate associated with a prominent and celebrated Irish political figure can be seen to mirror this tradition, with the association lending a form of exclusivity or luxury to the chocolates gifted.

Ownership of the box The original ownership of this object is not known. It was purchased from a seller on the Ebay online marketplace in 2012 by Trevor White, director of The Little Museum of Dublin, for €10.00. Research has uncovered four individual records for three recipients of similar boxes of chocolates from Alfie Byrne. The first recipient was Éamonn MacThomáis, a well-known Irish broadcaster and historian, who commented in an interview that his happiest childhood memory was when he and his school class were each presented with a box of chocolates by Alfie Byrne at was seven years old. He comments on his pride at receiving the gift, and mentions that 'There was a crest on the box.'[54] The second chocolate box recipient uncovered was Maisie Morgan, who was interviewed in her later life for an article in a community newsletter.[55] When discussing memorable characters that she had encountered in her life, she referenced Alfie Byrne, and commented: 'When he became Lord Mayor, he held a big party for all the inner city kids in the Phoenix Park. We all got a box of sweets with his picture on it which I still have upstairs.'[56] The third and final chocolate box recipient was Thomas Larson, a foreign visitor to Dublin in 1939 who was travelling around Europe in a 'vagabonding' adventure. While detailing his time in Ireland in his memoirs, he mentions: 'Then, the great Lord Mayor Lord Alfie Byrne of Dublin presented me with a box of chocolates, and had me sign the sweep-stakes drum.'[57]

The visual appearances of two of the three boxes of chocolates are detailed in these first-hand accounts; Maisie Morgan notes that Byrne's picture was on the box, and Eamon MacThomais mentions that there was a crest on the box. Both of these descriptions can be compared to the 1936 chocolate box profiled in this essay, which incorporates both of these elements in their design.

The recipients and their attitudes and memories can tell us much about their interpretation of the Alfie Byrne gift, and the ceremony of acceptance. The three recipients all appear proud of their role as beneficiaries, and even a foreign visitor – presumably unfamiliar with Byrne – found the event significant enough to include in his memoirs. The two Irish recipients of the boxes stress in their accounts that they maintained the boxes long after they were emptied, demonstrating that the packaging was a special and lasting souvenir of the significant occasion. All three recognise the act of receiving the gift from the character of Alfie Byrne as an important and memorable incident in their lives – one which is later authenticated and recalled by the preserved object of the chocolate box.

A souvenir object Whilst a container, it can be assumed that the empty packaging of this box would have been retained as a souvenir or memento. The records detailing the impressions of those who received the boxes highlight the importance and unique nature of the event of the gifting. The box represents the experience of an unrepeatable event, which authenticates the encounter and internalises the external experience. The boxes are a souvenir of individual special experience rather than common exterior sights, which reduces the experience into the miniature or two-dimensional representation.[58]

Conclusion In summation, closer examination of the Alfie Byrne chocolate box reveals a wealth of information on its role, creators, associates and even contemporary Ireland itself. Consideration and understanding of the box as a piece of printed packaging for

52 Barthel, 'Modernism and Marketing', p.432.
53 Barthel, 'Modernism and Marketing', p. 433.
54 *Sunday Mirror* July 25th 1999.
55 ICON (2009), pp. 6-7.
56 ICON (2009), p. 6.
57 Thomas Larson *The Vagabonds: Escape from Europe 1939* (London: Universe Books), p.xvii.
58 Susan Stewart (1993) *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (Durham: Duke University Press), p. 138.

consumer goods informs us about developments in Irish industry, economy, markets and trade, as well as those employed in these areas. Contemplation of the design and distribution of the box provides knowledge regarding cultural influences, as well as contemporary political ambition, marketing and promotional practices. The design also reflects the process of identity formation in the new Free State during this period, through the selection and appropriation of public imagery and national symbols. While the box holds little monetary value, its value today has two main sources. Firstly, the chocolate box serves as a significant souvenir piece for former recipients, authenticating the event of their meeting with the celebrity politician Alfie Byrne. It stands as an important object of nostalgia, most likely retained as a keepsake representing a personal memory of an individual special experience. Secondly, the box today represents an important part of the material culture of early twentieth century Dublin. As a rare piece of ephemera, it serves as a significant physical object used as a means of narrating the past to the museum visitor. Today, the Alfie Byrne chocolate box serves as a microcosm of 1930s Dublin, hiding an abundance of social, political and national history within its simple materiality._

Figure 8.1. Half pint milk bottle, Glass, c.1937, Irish Glass Bottle Company, Ringsend, Dublin for Hatch & Sons, Leeson Dairy, 6 Lower Leeson Street, Dublin 2

Hatch & Sons Milk Bottle

Therese McKeone

Figure 8.2. Base of Hatch & Sons Milk Bottle

This essay focuses on a small, wide-mouthed, glass half-pint milk bottle (figure 8.1). It has red lettering on the front that reads: 'Hatch & Sons/Grade a Tuberculin Tested Milk/Dairy Farmers/6 Lower Leeson Street/Dublin.' The bottle has several marks that include a raised circle on the base alongside the letter 'R' and the number 18 .

A milk bottle may seem a pretty unassuming object; something taken for granted as everyday objects usually are. However, when we look at this object from the past it becomes more than a vessel for holding milk; through it we can catch fragments of a society that in many respects has disappeared. It can convey cultural understandings and put in context many developments in relation to urban agriculture, the understanding of health and disease, the history of manufacturing in Dublin and the emotive associations brought to bear on objects from the past. Once a modern phenomenon representing cutting edge technologies, today it is often reduced to a vessel for nostalgic musings.

Production History There are several distinguishing marks on the bottle that may help us discover where, when and how the bottle was made. In relation to the general history of glass manufacturing in Dublin, the demand for glass from France in the eighteenth century encouraged a wealthy English company to build the first 'glass house' in 1787 on Charlotte Quay. In subsequent years, glass factories were established on Fitzwilliam Street, Fitzwilliam Quay, Cambridge Place and Richard Street.[1] A factory was later built on the site of the works at Charlotte Quay for the Irish Glass Bottle Company. Designed by the architect Thomas Holbrok in 1870-71, it was reported on in *The Irish Builder* in 1870: A new glass and bottle manufactory is to be erected on the site of the old glass works, Ringsend . . . The chimney will be over 100 feet in height, and all the newest appliances

1 Frank Hopkins (2003) *Rare Old Dublin: Heroes, Hawkers and Hoors* (Dublin: Mercier Press).

and inventions adapted to the production of glass are embodied in the designs.[2] Ringsend was particularly attractive to glass manufacturers for several reasons. It was located near an abundance of sand, an essential element in glass making as it constitutes up to 80% of the material needed to make a glass bottle. Ringsend was also right beside Dublin port, which was important for the export of manufactured goods. It was also singificant for the importation of coal, of which a vast quantity was needed for glass making. The use of coal as opposed to wood created a greater heat which allowed for crystal clear 'flint' glass to be manufactured.[3] In Ireland there was no tax on coal used in the glass manufacturing industry, a further attraction for investors.[4]

Glass-makers came to Dublin from overseas, in particular Scotland. They settled in Ringsend and became a well-established group in the community, recognized by their pale complexions owing to their long hours inside the factory working in 12-hour shifts, usually from six in the morning to six in the evening. It was a well-respected profession that was very difficult to infiltrate. The glass workers tended to keep to themselves and usually the bottle-makers' sons were offered the chance to become apprentices.[5]

Bottle-making was traditionally undertaken by a five-man crew that could make about 216 bottles during one 12-hour shift.[6] While the same method of producing glass bottles did not change for hundreds of years, towards the end of the nineteenth century mechanization was on its way. An Irish-American, Micheal J. Owens, (1859-1923) revolutionized the glass bottle making industry. In 1869, at the tender age of ten, Owens took up a position as apprentice in a bottle making factory. He worked his way up to become manager of Edward Libby's glassworks in Toledo. By 1902, funded by Libby, he had successfully invented the first machine to automatically blow bottles.

The earliest semi-automatic press and blow machines of 1880, designed by Howard Ashley, enabled one worker to produce 1560 bottles in the same time a 'crew' would produce 720.[7] By the time Owens' fully automated machine came along, which was capable of producing 240 bottles per minute, the writing was on the wall for the traditional glass bottle makers.

One of the first automatic machines to be used in Europe was installed at the Irish Glass Bottle Company at Charlotte Quay.[8] On the base of our 'Hatch and Sons' milk bottle is a circular mark, slightly off-centre (figure 8.2). The circle mark is known as a 'valve' or 'ejection' mark and is a definitive indication of machine-made manufacture, using a press and blow machine. This mark was formed by machines that utilized a push rod valve to eject the partially expanded 'parison' out of the 'blank mold' (the press part of the process) when shifting the parison to the second blow mold (the blow part of the process.)[9]

A valve mark is usually perfectly round and roughly 12 to 14 millimeters in diameter, and this is the case with our Hatch milk bottle. It is most commonly observed on wide mouth milk bottles made from c.1900 through to the 1940s and occasionally after that.[10] The base of the bottle also has the letter 'R' and the number 18 on it. Having spoken and corresponded with several bottle experts and dairy industry people, it is safe to assume that this refers to the glass manufacturers mark, with the 'R' standing for Ringsend.

A further clue in enabling our dating of the Hatch and Sons bottle is the typography on it. This is varied in style. The 'Hatch & Sons' lettering is in a fluid and free flowing script from the 1930s, suggesting hand-lettering. The rest of the typeface is a version of a Cheltenham font. The words have been printed on the bottle using a method known as 'applied colour label' (A.C.L.) or 'applied permanent label' (A.P.L). This was a permanent labeling technology that replaced embossing on milk bottles by 'slug plates' a sand blasting technique typical of pre-1930s bottles. It is a method of labeling, lettering, or decorating a bottle by applying a mixture of borosilicate glass and mineral or organic pigments (and other substances) with a low melting point to the bottle through a metal screen and then

2 *The Irish Builder*, 1st June, 1870.
3 Diane Twede (2009) 'Cereal Cartons, Tin Cans and Pop Bottles: Package-Converting Technologies that Revolutionized Food and Beverage Marketing, 1879-1902' *Conference on Historical Analysis & Research in Marketing* 267-76 , p. 271.
4 Hopkins *Rare Old Dublin*.
5 Hopkins *Rare Old Dublin*, p. 86.
6 Twede 'Cereal Cartons' p. 271.
7 David Dungworth (2012) 'Three and a Half Centuries of Bottle Manufacture' *Industrial Archaeology Review*, 34 (1) 37-50.
8 Lundberg, (2013).
9 Fay Tooley (1953) *Handbook of Glass Manufacture: a Book of Reference for the Factory Engineer, Chemist and Plant Executive* (New York: Ogden Publishing).
10 Julian Harrison Toulouse (2001) (ed.) *Bottle Makers and their Marks* (Blackburn: Blackburn Press).

baking it in a furnace to form what can appear to be a 'painted label.'[11] It is also referred to as 'pyroglazing' (a copyrighted name of the Thatcher Manufacturing Company, USA). The process was invented in the 1920s, but first appeared on milk bottles in 1933 in the USA.[12] By 1935 it had gone global.

A.C.L. was immediately embraced by the bottle manufacturing industry for several reasons. The process did not significantly add to the time it took to manufacture a bottle and it was inexpensive with the added feature of providing dairies with an attractive bottle that was instantly recognizable. This solved the problem of the dairies bottles going missing and perhaps being used by another dairy. Most bottles were reused up to fifty times during their life-time. Its use on our bottle means it could be no older than 1935.

Hatch & Sons and the Urban Dairy The Hatch dairy is first mentioned in the 1887 *Thom's* directory, where Joseph Hatch and his father William are listed as occupants and dairymen. William Hatch's Last Will and Testament of 1891 was destroyed during the Civil War in 1922, but it is safe to assume Joseph inherited the business at 6 Lower Leeson Street where it remained and flourished (despite adversity) until 1950. Joseph Hatch was an ambitious man. He was a dairy proprietor, farmer, Dublin City Councilor (representing Fitzwilliam ward from 1895 to 1907), Justice of the Peace, and an active member of various agricultural committees, such as The Dublin Cowkeepers and Dairymen Association, of which he was President.[13] This association was a hugely influential body with over 500 members. It was powerful enough to lobby the Privy Council in 1890, and make sure that a clause in 'The City Improvements Bill' dealing with city dairy yards was promptly removed.[14] According to *Slater's Royal National Directory*, in 1894 Dublin city had 370 dairies. It was a vital, thriving industry.

It was common practice for dairy cattle to be let out to grass in the summer months, hampered only by outbreaks of pleuropneumonia and foot and mouth disease where the Privy Council forbade the movement of cattle out to grass.[15] For this purpose, Joseph Hatch purchased Drimnagh Castle and lands in the early twentieth century, and set about restoring it in order to use it as a summer residence.[16]

Joseph and Mary Hatch had six children: Joseph Aloysius (Louis), Hugh, Kathleen, Eileen, Cecilia and John. All lived above the shop at 6 Lower Leeson Street, which was a dwelling described in the 1911 census, as "First Class," owing to the fact that it had more than twelve rooms.[17] On their father's death, Louis and Hugh Hatch were the main beneficiaries of the estate and continued to run the dairy business and farm, respectively.

Dairying has had a long history in Dublin. Even in the twentieth century, while most farmers had sold their lands for development, they kept their yards to keep dairy herds and provide milk to the bustling city. They became commonly known as 'cowkeepers.' With the advent of hay making and extensive crop growing, fodder became available and cows could, from October to the first of May be housed, fed and milked in these inner city farmyards. From the 1880s, the main city cattle market was in Prussia Street. Joyce wrote about it in *Ulysses*:

> Those mornings in the cattle market, the beasts lowing in their pens, branded sheep, flop and full of dung, the breeder in hobnail boots trudging through the litter, slapping a palm on a ripened hindquarter, there's a prime one, unpeeled switches in their hands.[18]

Grade A Tuberculin Tested The quality of milk available in Dublin in the early twentieth century was often dubious; it was dirty and had a very high bacterial count which created many health issues. Due to its high nutritional content, it was offered to children first. Tragically it was so contaminated it did the opposite of what was expected, and contributed to Dublin's high infant mortality rate. Six to ten percent of the deaths from tuberculoses below the age of 5 years were attributed to the Bovine Baccillus.[19]

In the 1900s, milk was generally sold 'loose' and the quart delph jug was the common

11 www.sha.org (2014).
12 Cecil Munsey, pers. comm. (2015).
13 *Last Will and Testament of Joseph Hatch*, (1918), p.1.
14 *Freemans Journal* 6 June 1890, p.1.
15 *Freemans Journal*, (1892), p.2.
16 Mary Monks Hatch, pers. comm. (January 2014).
17 *Census of Ireland*, (1911).
18 Joyce, James. *Ulysses*, (Bodley Head edition 1960), p.71.
19 Calmette, (1923), p. 334.

measure, seen on the kitchen dresser of a household. Joyce wrote in *Ulysses,* 'Then he went to the dresser, took down the jug Hanlon's milkman had just filled for him, poured warm bubbled milk on a saucer and set it slowly on the floor.'[20] The state of the milk jugs 'presented by persons who purchase loose milk in shops' was often a contributory factor to the uncleanliness of the milk, with some being 'unwashed and most unsuitable to act as milk containers.'[21] The bottling of milk then was seen as important in maintaining hygiene standards.

Dr. McWeeney (1864-1925) was a graduate of the Catholic University and studied bacteriology in Vienna and Berlin. He was Professor of Bacteriology and Pathology at the Catholic Medical School and Pathologist at the Mater Hospital. Dr. McWeeney was part of the Public Health Movement (1890-1914) and a founding member of the National Association for the Prevention of Tuberculosis (N.A.P.T.) established in Dublin in 1899.[22] In 1906, N.A.P.T. approached Lady Aberdeen, (1857-1937) the wife of Ireland's Viceroy (1906-1915) to aid them in their fight against T.B. Lady Aberdeen or 'Lady Microbe' as Arthur Griffith, rather churlishly, but comically, referred to her, established the Woman's National Health Association in 1907 in response. Lady Aberdeen and Dr. McWeeney became good friends and he was her advisor on all things T.B. W.N.H.A. was a voluntary charitable organization whose main aim was to improve maternity and child welfare and fight T.B. Together, the W.N.H.A. and N.A.P.T. would change common misconceptions about T.B. through their public health campaigns, and alert people that T.B. was a contagious disease and not as was previously widely believed, a hereditary disease. [23]

In 1907 W.N.H.A. organized a T.B. exhibition and conference in Dublin, which the then chief secretary of state, Augustine Birrell, referred to as 'a somewhat gruesome thing.'[24] The exhibition traveled around the country in caravans. There were over 300 lectures given by leading scientists and 900 demonstrations given about what should be done to avoid contagion. The advice given by N.A.P.T. and W.N.H.A. in the case of bovine T.B. was to boil milk. This advice was ineffective. The only way the T.B. bacillus (discovered by Koch) would be removed was through pasteurization. Pasteurization is a process developed in 1863 by Louis Pasteur whereby liquid was exposed to high temperatures, 145 degrees for 30 minutes to kill all bacteria. Pasteurized milk first appeared in Ireland in 1901 and was commercially introduced into Ireland by the Hughes Brothers in 1924. Hatch Dairies also offered pasteurized milk as seen in the bill here.


LEESON DAIRY
Phone 62482 6 LOWER LEESON STREET,
DUBLIN..... 19
M.....
Bought Hatch & Sons
Milk and Cream Contractors
Pure New Milk
Pasteurised Milk
Rich Fresh Cream
New Laid Eggs
Choicest Creamery Butter
General Groceries
Licensed Retailers of HIGHEST GRADE MILK.
Account furnished
Amount paid

Figure 8.3. Invoice for Hatch & Sons/Leeson Dairy

Attempts were made through different legislation to clean up the milk. In 1925, an agricultural bulletin was published called 'Urban Milk Supply.'[25] In it, recommendations were made regarding improvements in dairy practices and hygiene. It emphasized the pressing need for clean milk and recognized that reforms had to take place. It outlined the most important factors in the production of milk:

Milk should come from healthy animals
Cows should be kept clean, particularly udders and teats
Utensils should be thoroughly cleaned and sterilized
Milk should be kept free from odors and flavours
Prompt cooling and delivery of milk.

It also recommended the grading of milk. Three grades were recommended, 'Certified,' 'Grade A,' and 'Pasteurized.' The milk from our Hatch dairy was of a 'Grade A' standard which meant 'bacterial content not to exceed 200,000 per cubic centimeter when delivered to the consumer in bottles or sealed containers. Date of production and 'Grade A' on each bottle cap.'[26] The bulletin also recommended 'different coloured wording should be insisted on for the three grades, e.g. black, blue and red so that the public would easily recognize the grade of milk by the caps used on the bottle.'[27]

20 Joyce, James. *Ulysses,* (Bodley Head edition 1960), p.66.
21 Tribunal of Inquiry, (1947), p.51.
22 Jones, (2001).
23 Jones, (2001).
24 Jones, (2001), p.106.
25 M. Grimes (1925) *Urban Milk Supply [Agricultural Bulletin No. 1]* (Cork: Cork University Press).
26 Grimes *Urban Milk Supply.*
27 Grimes *Urban Milk Supply.*

Milk could not be given the 'Grade A' status unless it had passed the tuberculin test, which had been relied upon for sometime to determine whether or not a herd was free of tuberculosis. Joseph Bigger, an eminent pathologist, conducted a survey of Dublin milk in 1919-1920 and in 1926-33. Bigger found that, whereas only 2% were of certified standard (best grade) in 1919-20, this had increased to 31% in 1926-27 and to 62% in 1932-33.[28] The number of tuberculin-tested herds around Dublin had risen from one in 1919 (the Hatch herd) to 16 in 1933. In the Commission of Inquiry of 1919, David Houston, a consultant on agricultural bacteriology to the Irish Agricultural Organization Society stated:

> You spoke of the Tuberculin Test. Is it recognized authoritatively by those who ought to know that it is a genuine, reliable test?- I have on that point spoken to Professor Mason, who is one of the best known veterinary authorities in Ireland, and he tells me that the test, when properly carried out, may be certainly depended upon.[29]

In 1942, Rockefeller representatives, including Dr. Daniel P. O'Brien, visited Ireland to discuss the milk question with the Taoiseach, Eamon de Valera. The desirability of milk consumption, even if contaminated, formed part of their enquiry. They reported that he (de Valera) 'would like to pasteurize all the milk in the country but apparently so far has not been able to bring about the measure due to the reluctance of farmers and others. He takes the attitude that it is better to feed the public bad milk than no milk at all.'[30]

Joseph A. Hatch (Louis) was chairman of The Highest Grade Milk Producers Association in 1943, and Hatch Dairies advertised the cleanliness of their wares not only on their bottles, but in newspapers. At the time our milk bottle was manufactured, post-1935, tuberculosis was still a massive health crisis in Ireland. The 'Grade A' labeling on our bottle states, 'Tuberculin Tested.' This gives a clear indication of the level of public concern about the safety of milk, a concern that had existed for decades. Packaging, as Hine says, 'mirrors its expected customers and what we want.'[31]

28 Joseph Bigger (1932) 'The Clean Milk Campaign in Dublin' *Irish Journal of Medical Science* 83 (November) , 533-664.
29 *Commission of Inquiry into the resources and industries of Ireland* (1919) (Dublin), p.111.
30 Daniel O'Brien (1942) *Report on Conditions in Ireland* IV4.
31 Hine *The Total Package*, p. xi.

The Glass Bottle Company, the Sweep and the eradication of TB At the time our bottle was manufactured, the Irish Glass Bottle Co. had been purchased by Joseph McGrath (1887-1966). Joe McGrath was a former IRB gunman and the first Minister for Defense in the Irish Free State. He was most famous for establishing the Irish Free State Hospitals' Sweepstakes in 1930. The Sweepstakes was essentially a lottery to raise funds for hospital building, and described by Readers Digest as, 'the greatest bleeding heart racket in the world.'[32] It also made McGrath one of the wealthiest men in Europe. With the money raised from the massive profits of the sweep, he purchased the Irish Glass Bottle Company.

McGrath and his associates sold tickets illegally in England, Canada and America. They preyed upon the Irish immigrants and sold massive quantities of tickets that had been smuggled in the upmost creative of fashions. The amount of money leaving the British Isles (funding the Irish Free State) was so extensive that the British Government banned it. Often, the winners of the sweepstakes were contacted by the sweepstake and made an offer they would not refuse. The sweepstake was the first to find out who had won the draw and would send an envoy or make a telephone call to the winner offering to buy their ticket for a considerable sum of money. At this point, the winning ticket holder had no idea he was holding the winning ticket, and would readily agree to the deal losing out on massive sums of money that were happily pocketed by McGrath and his associates.

Irish hospitals in the 1930s were in a chronic condition. There was a serious shortage of beds and the country was riddled with T.B. Hospitals had little or no state funding and the notion that they would benefit from this new sweepstakes venture must have been very welcomed. McGrath and his partners, Richard Duggan and Captain Spencer Freeman, enjoyed massive tax free profits while the hospitals had to pay 40% tax on the 10% profit they received from the sweepstake.[33] The way in which McGrath exploited the hospitals, nurses, Gardai, and blind children he rolled out to perform the actual draws was beyond cynical. It was meant to lend an air of honesty and respectability to a business that was anything but. The government had not the money or the inclination to fund the hospitals themselves, and so it seemed the sweepstakes was untouchable.

32 Coleman *The Irish Sweep*.
33 Coleman *The Irish Sweep*.

In her book *The Irish Sweep* Marie Coleman maintains the sweepstakes transformed the Irish hospital system in the 1930s.[34] Within the first year of the sweepstakes, the national maternity hospital received enough money to enable them to purchase three buildings on Holles Street and double their number of beds. In a city where the infant mortality rate was one the highest in Europe, this was widely and greatly appreciated. Before the end of the same year, the Coombe and the Meath hospitals received £67,000 and £150,000 respectively. By the end of the 1930s, most counties in Ireland had benefited from the sweepstakes in the form of a new hospital. It would be the money from the sweepstakes that allowed Noel Browne, Minister for Health, to finally eradicate T.B. in the 1950s.

The Decline of the Urban Cowman In the Irish Folklore Commission archives, there are accounts by previous generations of Dubliners describing their memories of Dublin's dairies and milk men.

> The milk man used to come round in a beautiful pony-car, one would be beating out the other and they were lovely, We used to call it the "milk gig" and they would have two big churns at the back and all the top of them would be done out with brass and the pipe would come out to the back of the thing. He would go round all the houses round Pidgeon House road serving the milk and you would get a pint of milk for a penny, and you got the tilly...[35]

By the 1940s, the cow-keepers were beginning to die off. There were so many odds stacked against them. The cost of milk production had gone up and the price the producers were getting for their milk allowed for a minimal margin. This led to numerous milk strikes. The *Milk (Regulation of Supply and Price) Act* was introduced in 1936 to ensure a constant supply of milk for human consumption over the winter and to guarantee a minimum milk price to producers.[36] Up until this point the cowkeepers decided the price of milk amongst themselves. Joseph A. (Louis) Hatch was one of the seven Dublin milk producers nominated to the Dublin District Milk Board.

The milk strike called in July 1936 was a week-long strike. Trains delivering milk to the city were intercepted by strikers and the milk spilled on the tracks. The strike was settled when a 25% increase in price was negotiated.[37] The population of Dublin had grown and the lack of cow-keepers in the inner city meant that the existing ones had to buy milk from country milk suppliers to satisfy the demand. In Dublin city in 1943 there were 694 registered producers supplying 20,447 gallons of milk daily, which was an average of 29 gallons per each producer.[38] In 1944 Dubliner's consumed 43,910 gallons daily and in 1945 they consumed 46,437 gallons daily. By 1946 there were 171 cow-keepers operating from 160 dairy yards in the city. They had 4,050 cows in herds varying from 25 to 125, and were supplying 16% of Dublin's milk by producing 25 gallons a day each. There were 22 suppliers of "Highest Grade" milk, which was under 2% of the entire market.[39] There was a massive shortfall and the cow-keepers became wholesalers and distributors. The inner city cow-keepers herds were more exposed to disease than their counterparts, the retailer producers. Joseph Hatch prudently purchased his lands at Drimnagh. He had a healthy herd and was secure in the knowledge that his pastures would not be sold for development, thus guaranteeing him a future in the business. However, that business, which had thrived in the city for close to a thousand years, was to disappear within three decades of his death.

By the 1950s, the inner-city cow-keeper had also completely disappeared, partly due to the re-development of suburban land for housing. One year after the death of Louis Hatch in 1952, the dairy at Leeson Street was sold at auction, as advertised in the *Irish Independent*:

> HATCH'S DAIRY, 6 Lower Leeson Street
> Extensive premises 124 ft. in depth
> With open site and rear entrance; Earlsfort Terrace.
> Valuable situation. Suitable for any business. Auction 9th November
> Murphy, Buckley & Keogh LTD., phone
> 71555 (3 lines)[40]

34 Coleman *The Irish Sweep*.
35 Irish Folklore Commission (1950) Interview with Mag. Doyle Ringsend, p. 267
36 Doyle *Milk to Market*, p. 168.
37 Doyle *Milk to Market*, p. 32.
38 *Tribunal of Inquiry*, (1947), p. 51.
39 *Tribunal of Inquiry*, (1947), p. 45.
40 [Advertisement] *Irish Independent* 17 October 1953.

Figure 9.1. Tactile Tape Measure, 1.9 x 152.4 cm, Coated cotton canvas tape, brass, thread, beads, Howard Wall Limited, adapted c.1954 by Josephine Kearney, Designer: Dean & Co. England

Tactile Tape Measure

Lynda Dunne

My intention in this essay is to shine a light on a tactile tape measure owned by the deaf blind doctor James Hanlon. I will analyse the object from its production to its consumption, examining its importance as an assistive aid and a reciprocal gift and how it gave Hanlon the opportunity to cultivate his senses, especially his sense of touch, a vital form of communication for him.

Description

The object in question is a cotton canvas imperial tape measure, measuring inches from 1 to 59. While we have no exact date of manufacture, we know that it was altered in 1954 to make it a tactile tape measure for Dr. James Hanlon. There are brass tips, with the inscription 'DEAN' on one side and 'LONDON' on the reverse side, folded over both ends. These are decorated with stamps and have a brass eyelet closure. The tape has print markings in black ink in Century Typeface. The inscriptions 'DEAN' and 'MADE IN ENGLAND' are printed in black and the typeface is Caslon IV and is in sans serif uppercase.

Figure 9.2. Detail of tactile tape measure showing beads added to indicate yard measurement

The following details are alterations that have been added to the tape measure. Black cotton tacking thread is stitched to the tape in straight stiches on one side of the tape. On the reverse side, the stitches are diagonal because the sewing needle would have pierced through the tape measure to continue the straight stitch on the other side. Seed beads of various opacity and transparency are stitched to the top of the tape. They mark every inch and two seed beads are stitched to mark every nine, eighteen, twenty-seven, forty-five and fifty four inches. Three seed beads are stitched vertically to mark thirty-six inches, a yard (figure 9.2). The tape measure has a series of perforated holes from the sewing needle and thread. It is a small, lightweight and flexible object.

The object was originally produced as a tailors' tape measure by a company called Howard Wall Limited, based in Hackney, London. Howard Wall was in existence from the late-nineteenth century until the 1980s and were primarily known as a firm of metal stampers. Their entry in *Whitakers Red Book*, the 'who's who' in business (1914) reads:

> 1914 Manufactures of stay busks, bodice steels, hose supporters and tailors' and other tape measures. Specialities; "H.W. Velvet Grip" hose supporters and Boston garters, " Hovens Clip" hose supporters, Gair's blouse and skirt grips, Dean's tailor Tape measures, Bedington's surveyors and builders' tape measures.[1]

The clothing and footwear industries employed many people in the Hackney area from the late nineteenth century until the 1960s:

> The making of clothes and footwear employed over 15,000 in 1901. One third, including 2686 bookmakers, were men; women included over 2,00 dressmakers, over 2,000 shirt makers or seamstresses, 1,000 tailors, over 900 milliners and over 900 artificial flower makers. (Census, 1901, table 35). Although never so concentrated as they were father south, clothing workers multiplied until by 1964 there were almost as many in Hackney as in London's old East End.[2]

Brass stamping and fabric coating are the two processes of manufacturing required to make the tape measure. The rubber coating on the cotton canvas tape is possibly Gutta Percha, a natural latex and thermoplastic. As a small firm manufacturing metal products and located away from the river Thames, it is unlikely that Howard Wall Ltd had the facilities to fabric coat or dip mold the cotton canvas tape. There were rubber industries in the Hackney Wicks area beside the River Thames, who manufactured and produced rubber products. A firm called George Spill and Co. manufactured waterproof textiles in the Hackney Wicks area in the late nineteenth century, making a vast array of rubber products. They are listed in the catalogue of the International Exhibition of 1862, examples of their wares included '7 pieces of Para rubber in sheets; 10 pieces and 4 rolls of manufactured and mixed rubber.'[3]

We can only assume that Howard Wall Ltd ordered multiple rolls of cotton canvas tapes to be coated in latex. They then likely stencil-printed or screen-printed the coated tapes and then they were ready for metal stamping. In terms of whether a Mr. Dean ever existed, I found this evidence:

> In Newington, South London, a certain Edward Dean was advertising himself in 1846/51 as a 'tailor's measure maker' and more clearly yet, in 1861, as a measuring tape maker. His company became Dean, Lerro and Co and by 1900 was just Dean and Co. Moved to the Ashby Works in Hackney Road 'sole makers of Dean's and Pickles tapes'. Edward Dean, died in 1866, leaving his partner William Lerro to carry on the business until the 1890s when he seems to have died and the firm moved to Hackney.[4]

The Hackney Archives from the 1900 includes the following Title Lease:
Title; Lease for 6 years
Description; (1) leases to (2) one building of the three known as Ashby Works, Hackney Road (adjoining Cotton Gardens, with entrance between Nos. 29 and 31 Hackney Road) and a shop next to No. 5 Hackney Road, reserving to (1) his engine house in the main premises. (R. Howard Wall occupy another part of the Ashby Works).
Date: 20 April 1891[5]

It is possible Edward Dean's partner Lerro became established in the Ashby works alongside Howard Wall Ltd. With time, Howard Wall maintained or took over the Dean and Co tape measure company. They continued to manufacture the Dean tape measure until the 1980s.

1 *Grace's Guide to British Industrial History* (2015) 'Howard Wall Ltd.' Available at: ‹http://www.gracesguide.co.uk/Howard_Wall ›[Accessed 13 January 2015].

2 Baker, T. (1995) 'Hackney; Economic History'. In *A History of the county of Middlesex* (Volume 10), p. 96 Available at: ‹www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/middx/vol10/pp92-101 › [Accessed 13 January 2015],

3 Anonymous (1862) *The International exhibition of 1862, the illustrated Catalogue of the industrial department* [Volume 4; Foreign Division] (London: Printed for Her Majesty's Commissioners), p. 66.

4 Liz (2001) 'A challenge to the erudite', Google groups, 1 March. Available at: ‹https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/soc.genealogy.britain/PRkKv3lVRpg› EMAILS [Accessed 13 January 2015]

5 Hackney Archives Department (2014) LEASE for 6 years. Available at: ‹http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/rd/ef47655c-7ee3-4b66-91ec-3575d4b2e9bd> [Accessed 13 January 2015].

Adaptation The tactile tape measure belonged to Doctor James Hanlon. What was originally a mass produced object was altered by his secretary Miss Josephine Kearney in 1953 and became his personal possession until his death in 1961. Veronica Freeman, Hanlon's eldest daughter, donated it to the Little Museum Of Dublin along with several other objects and photographs associated with the doctor.[6] These included the first blind bus pass issued to Hanlon, his sunglasses and his braille watch (figure 9.3). The photographs include one of him wearing his sunglasses to conceal his eyes while he consults with a young patient, holding a doll. A further photograph shows Doctor Hanlon with the famous deaf-blind American activist Helen Keller, both holding hands, and the photograph is autographed by Helen Keller. The third photograph is of Jim with his wife Betty holding hands, tactile talking.

Figure 9.3. Bus pass owned by Dr. James Hanlon, Little Museum of Dublin'

Figure 9.4. Photograph of Dr. James Hanlon with Helen Keller, Little Museum of Dublin

Jim, as his daughter Veronica called him, was a prominent eye, nose and throat surgeon in Dublin in the 1940s (pers. comm. 19.11.14). He became deaf and blind after a series of misfortunate events in his medical career:

As a 42- year- old surgeon, at the height of his professional powers, his life took a strange and tragic turn. He developed a freak ocular infection when a patient coughed sputum into his left eye during a routine medical examination. After an unsuccessful operation in London, infection began to impair his vision, and before long spread to the other eye, through a process known as sympathetic ophthalmia. Within the space of a few months, Hanlon went blind. His troubles, however, were not to end there. His doctors attempted to control the infection by using relatively large doses, by today's standards, of streptomycin- a new antibiotic at the time, which had severe side effects on his hearing, eventually making him blind and deaf.[7]

6 Veronica Freeman, pers. comm. (November 2014).

7 Eoin Burke-Kennedy 'Blind and deaf doctor who was 'hero for all' *Irish Times* 24 January 2012, p. 44.

We do not know if Josephine Kearney owned the tape measure or if she bought it purposely to alter it. If she did purchase the tape measure, this may have been from one of the haberdashery stores or departments in Dublin, such as Switzers on Grafton Street, Murphy Sheehy on Castle Market and Pim's Department Store on South Great Georges Street. The tape measure was an ordinary inexpensive object used in home dressmaking, gents outfitters and tailors workshops. It was a utilitarian object, from its original function to its altered function; it continued to be an object that measured. The modifications made to the tape were delicate and the attention to detail was perfect. Throughout the rest of the essay, I will refer to Doctor James Hanlon as Jim and his secretary Miss Josephine Kearney as Jo.[8]

Jo transformed a very ordinary object into a skillfully accurate assistive aid for Jim. The type of tactile tape measures available for the visually impaired at that time were similar to the tactile measuring tapes we see for sale on the National Blind Council Of Ireland and the Royal National Institute For The Blind web pages today (2015). I believe Jim's tape was made the way it was because he specially requested it to have various accurate pressure points to allow him to use it simply. The thread markings were slightly raised to distinguish the quarter, half and three quarter inches along the tape. The beads were higher raised pressure points to distinguish the inches. Two and three beads stitched together, marked the inches he specifically needed. Jim would have used the tactile tape measure similarly to reading braille. Braille must be read serially, with the reading finger sliding unencumbered straight across the line. There is no tracing movement involved, no attempt to connect the dots to make them form a roman letter. Also, braille depends on active rather than passive touch. Fluent braille readers do not pause on each cluster of dots but feel a rhythm of rising and falling dots as the finger moves.[9]

Jim had the tape adapted so he could activity touch it and recognise immediately what he needed to know. Touch was to become one of his enhanced senses. His heightened sense of touch became a valued communication tool to the world around him, from his professional career, into his family life and his social life.

Jim's sense of touch did not just rely on his hands, the soles of his feet acted as a sensory tool while working as a physiotherapist on polio patients. Jim's sense of kinesthesis was

8 Veronica Freeman, pers. comm. (November 2014).

9 Georgina Kleege (2006) 'Visible Braille/ Invisible Blindness' *Journal of Visual Culture* 5 (2) 209-18, p. 214.

evident while diagnosing and treating patients:

> Hanlon soon became adept at diagnosing the early signs of the disease. Veronica remained convinced her father's success in detecting the various stages of the disease was linked to his own disabilities which, she believes, enabled him to perceive non-visual signs from the body. She recounts one episode where he recognised one patient's symptoms on the basis of the subtle vibrations her gait made on the floor as she entered his consulting rooms. As a result of his success with polio patients, other physicians began to refer patients to "the blind doctor" as he was affectionately known, especially those with less obvious symptoms.[10]

I believe Jim's enhanced tactile awareness and tactile memory were skills he modified from his own experience. Jim could move around the home without a cane or a stick. He knew how many footsteps it took to navigate each room in the house and knew where everything was. Furniture was never moved unless he was told about it. This was in contrast to Helen Keller, who was taught to feel and sense vibrations, textures and temperatures by touching and feeling. She developed similar body sensory awareness with time. In her article about Helen Keller, Georgina Kleege mentions that:

> Helen Keller identified at least three different aspects of touch that she found meaningful; texture, temperature and vibration. In fact, she understood sound as vibrations that the hearing feel in their ears while the deaf can feel them through other parts of their bodies. Thus she could feel thunder by pressing the palm of her hand against a windowpane, or someone's footsteps by pressing the soles of her feet against floorboards.[11]

I believe Jim actively improved his sense of touch. He was adjusting his public and private life around active touch. He was tactile signing with his wife Betty, his children, his family and colleagues by communicating in real time. Veronica said he was so quick at understanding tactile signing he would have you moving on to the next word, quicker than the word was signed on his hand. Jim had a sense of tactile awareness; nevertheless he still had to adapt. According to Veronica, the tape measure aided in his sensory awareness and was 'like his eyes'. He 'measured everything' and measurements were very important to him.[12]

Use According to Jim's daughter, he used the tape to measure his children when they were growing up: when they played hurdles in the garden, three bamboo sticks would be joined together and Jim would measure the height of the jump, he used the tape when repairing their bikes and he used the tape measure to help him make his golf clubs.[13] The tactile tape measure gave him the freedom and aided his skills to make golf clubs. He could continue to use his hands for pleasure and to make golf club for his children and himself. The inches marked on the tape could help Jim measure the individual he was making the club for and match the shaft to their height. Jim had selected inches emphasized on the tape. Thirty-six inches was possibly a good aid to measuring the length of the shaft and the lower inches gave accurate measurements in making the woodenheads of the golf clubs. The detail and craftsmanship that went into Jim's golf clubs was extraordinary. He carved, shaped, sanded, varnished, drilled and set brass and steel plates into the heads of the golf clubs. Leather straps were wrapped perfectly around the shafts and fine thread bound around the leather of the shaft to keep it in place. Accurate measurements were crucial in the detailed work crafting these golf clubs.

The tape measure assisted a new pleasurable experience for the doctor. With time, he naturally adapted his life to being a visually impaired individual. He continued to function as a professional active man. Unknown to some of his patients as being blind and deaf, he continued as normal. Some patients could not recall noticing anything different about Jim, other than wearing sunglasses in winter.[14] Georgina Kleege's article 'Blindness and visual culture' suggests blindness is often perceived as tragic – this would seem to run counter to Jim's experience:

> And as we move beyond the simple blindness versus sight bin I hope we can abandon the clichés that used the word 'blindness' as a synonym for inattention, ignorance or prejudice. If the goal is for others to see what we mean, it helps to say what we mean.

10 Burke-Kennedy 'Blind and deaf doctor'.
11 Georgina Kleege (2005) 'Blindness and Visual Culture, an Eyewitness Account' *Journal of Visual Culture* 4 (2) 179-90, p. 187.
12 Veronica Freeman, interview, January 2015.
13 Veronica Freeman, interview, January 2015.
14 Veronica Freeman, pers. comm. (November 2014).

> Using the word in this way seems a vestigial homage to the hypothetical, meant to stir the same uncanny frisson of awe and pity. It contributes on some level to the perception of blindness as a tragedy too dire to contemplate, which contributes in turn to lowered expectations among those who educate and employ the blind. It also contributes to the perception among the newly blind themselves that the only response to their new condition is to retire from view.[15]

Themes of giving and reciprocation are significant in relation to the tactile tape measure. In relation to his secretary, as well as altering the tape measure for Jim, she learned to tactile touch with him with touch a form of communication for them. Touch was so important to Jim, and the sense in which it is always reciprocal is emphasised by Howes and Classen in their study of the social practice of senses:

> Each of the senses has its own particular characteristics. Touch is intimate and reciprocal; when we touch someone, that person feels our touch. Sight by contrast, operates at a distance and requires no physical interaction. Compared to touch, which attaches one body to another, sight is detached.[16]

While Jo devoted her career to him, Jim encouraged her to continue her work with the National Council for the Blind of Ireland:

> It was Dr. Hanlon who encouraged Josephine to devote her whole time to vision impaired people. This became her life's work for 25 years with the NCBI, first as assistant County Organiser and from 1967 as home teacher and social worker for the NCBI Wicklow branch.[17]

The tactile tape became part of an exchange of friendship and comradeship. It became part of a cycle of giving and taking. It was one object in a sequence of giving, receiving and repaying. In the moral conclusion from Mauss's *the Gift* he comments
Much of our everyday morality is concerned with the question of obligation and spontaneity in the gift. Things have value, which are emotional as well as material; indeed in some cases the values are entirely emotional.[18]

Jim was at the forefront of the change in rehabilitation and physiotherapy after the Second World War, being the first blind-deaf person in the world to qualify as a physiotherapist. He was not accepted to study in Dublin, however he was successfully accepted to study physiotherapy in England, where major changes were happening in relation to disability laws in the wake of the war. Following his training, he worked at the Richmond Hospital and Central Remedial Clinic in Dublin 'where he was to transform services and become an inspiration to many people'.[19]

Individuals and objects played crucial roles in Jim's life. The same can be said of Helen Keller and her assistant Miss Anne Sullivan who nurtured her through life. Tactile objects such as the braille typewriter and watches opened up the world to Helen Keller and were prized possessions. In Keller's book *The World I Live in*, she wrote:

> My world is built of touch-sensations, devoid of physical color and sound; but without color and sound it breathes and throbs with life. Every object is associated in my mind with tactile qualities, which combined in countless ways, give me a sense of power, of beauty, or of incongruity.[20]

From the late 1940s, there were new approaches to rehabilitation, physiotherapy and changes in design for people with disabilities. After World War Two there were so many disabled soldiers and civilians having to adapt to new ways of life. Accessible design and design for all was required to respond to individual's living standards. Design and functional changes were happening in everyday products. The needs of the disabled and older people had to be incorporated into design and functionality. Jim had his tactile tape measure enhanced for his usability. The solution to his needs was adapted to a tape that had been designed for general use in the nineteenth and twenty century. Some elements of accessible design can be seen in Jim's tactile tape measure. Obviously it is Jim's

15 Kleege 'Blindeness and Visual Culture', p. 189
16 David Howes and Constnace Classen (2014) *Ways Of Sensing, Understanding the Senses in Society* (London: Routledge), p. 8.
17 Frank Callery (2015) *The History Of Blindness in Irish Society* [unpublished manuscript].
18 Marcel Mauss (1967 [1925]) *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* (London: Cohen & West), p. 63.
19 Callery *History of Blindness*, p.137
20 Helen Keller (1909) *The World I Live in* (New York: Century), p. 7.

personal possession and it is altered especially for him. However, elements like alignment, affordability, consistency, usability and symmetry are all elements in Jim's tape. Some of these elements are also in purpose-designed tactile tape measures for the visual impaired. What makes Jim's tactile tape different is its usability.

Figure 9.5. Tactile tape measure of a type issued since 1920s, Available from Royal National Institute for the Blind 2015

Since at least 1925 and as shown in figure 9.5, commercially-produced tactile tape measures usually include eyelets marking every inch.[21] Such tape measures are aligned, affordable and consistent, but their usability is as a more general assistive aid, because the eyelets are indicating crudely the measurements. Only in recent years have the measuring tapes for the visually impaired advanced to speaking tapes, braille tapes and fiberglass materials not prone to stretch. Tactile tape measures were and are generally catalogued under daily living and hobbies, however it was necessary also for Jim's professional life.

Jim sought to do much more with his hands. An ordinary tape measure was adapted to function as an aid to his hands. The aesthetics and features of the tape measures on the market for the visually impaired were not of a high enough standard for Jim. His hands expressed what his mind felt and his eyes could not see. The book *The Hand, an organ of the mind* expresses eloquently the power of the hand:

> The range of functions that hands serve arguably exceed any other part of the body. Hands sense, like eyes, but they also speak, sculpt, spar, and shape our world. They are both input systems and output systems. They allow us to survive as individuals, and link us together socially.[22]

21 A similar tape is shown in a National Institute for the Blind advertisement for 'Games and Apparatus for the Blind' carried in an issue of *The Beacon*, a magazine 'devoted to the interests of the blind'; see *The Beacon* (1925) 9 (108), p. 18.

22 Zdravko Radman (2013) *The Hand, an Organ of the Mind; what the Manual Tells the Mental.* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press), p. xvii.

The value of Jim's tactile tape measure has changed over its 'life'. Its deliberate alterations and its unique story hold great sentimental and irreplaceable provenance. It is infused with emotion, identity and memory. Anat Hecht in her paper 'Home Sweet Home: Tangible Memories of an uprooted childhood' refers to 'extensive literature devoted to memory and loss, memory and narrative; memory and the senses; memory and object'.[23] Jim's tactile tape measure embraces all these attributes as a valued personal possession.

Conclusion Gathering the research presented here on the tactile tape measure has provoked an interesting insight to a very humble, simple object. It was a tool that helped Jim's overcome his visual impairment, assisting his everyday life with accuracy. Jim worked astonishingly well with the tactile tape measure, using it to craft golf clubs, repair bikes and for a range of other everyday functions. The tactile tape measure was a reciprocal gift; it was an object that became part of a cycle of giving and receiving in Jim's life. Jim's wife, family, colleagues and patients, participated in his cycle of gift exchange. It was an object that helped him to imagine the unseen. It gave him pleasure and his ability to foster his sense of touch. Jim's daily life was one of order and ritual and the tactile tape measure aided him in his functioning. This analysis essay touches on areas that I believe highlight the characteristics of the tactile tape measure and how Jim, the consumer, adapted to using the tactile tape measure. I believe further research could focus on Jim's natural tactile awareness, on design and the senses and the importance of tactile objects in everyday life.

23 Anat Hecht (2001) 'Home Sweet Home: Tangible Memories of an uprooted childhood', in Daniel Miller (ed.) *Home Possessions: Material Culture Behind Closed Doors* (Oxford: Berg) 123-45, p.123.

RNEY
al Dark
1 11/16 OZ. NET
RT CHOCOLATE
RNEY
LK CHOCOLATE
ILK TRAY
1 7/8 OZ. NET
Regal
1 11/16 OZ. NET
MILK CHOCOLATE
URNEY
CHOCOLATE
PEPPERMINT CREAM
1 7/8 OZ. NET
milk choc
WEIGHT 1 1/2 OZS NET
INGREDIENTS
URNEY
semi-sweet chocolat
WEIGHT 1 1/2 OZS NET
INGREDIENTS
URNEY
CHOCOLATE
WO and TWO
1.13/16 OZ. NET WEIGHT
MILK CHOCOLATE CARAMEL
ROVALS
URNEY
INGREDIENTS: MILK CHOCOLATE. SUGAR. GLUCOSE. INVERT SUGAR &C.
URNEY
MILK TRAY
WEIGHT 15/16 O.. NET
INGREDIENTS
URNEY CHOCOLATE
URNEY
almond crisp
milk chocolate
CHOCOLA
URNEY
INGREDIENTS
PLAIN CHOCOLATE
SUGAR. GLUCOSE.
WEIGHT 15/16 O

This publication is one outcome of a collaboration between the Little Museum of Dublin and the NCAD MA in Design History and Material Culture. Participants have each chosen an artefact from the museum's collection to research and analyse. Unearthing the fascinating histories behind seemingly mundane things, their findings suggest the many ways the design, circulation and use of objects afford us new understandings of life and experience in the city.

The Little MUSEUM of DUBLIN

ID2015 Ireland the Design Island

NCAD DUBLIN
National College of Art and Design
A Recognised College of University College Dublin