The Greening of Otago: Irish (Catholic) Immigration to Otago and Southland 1840 to 1888

By the 1850s Ireland had become a nation of emigrants and the prospect of emigration an expected stage in the Irish life cycle, usually when young. As David Fitzpatrick has written "Growing up in Ireland meant preparing oneself to leave it." An index of the extent of this phenomenon at mid-century is the proportion of those aged 5-24 in the 1851 census of Ireland who had disappeared at the next census ten years later, so-called 'cohort depletion'. For every Irish county except Dublin, Antrim and Kildare the 'disappeared' amounted to over a quarter of the population. The comparable figure for England and Wales in the same period was under 10 percent.

The Irish diaspora reached every part of the world and led to the development of sizeable Irish concentrations in every English-speaking country. The mechanics of this spread merits greater study and this paper will focus on the chronology and characteristics of the Irish migration to the southern part of New Zealand in the first decades of systematic European colonisation. Its theme is the de facto discrimination against Irish immigrants to Otago and Southland in the period and the factors which saw this being circumvented. Throughout the period there was a huge pool of prospective Irish immigrants available and in Otago a need for immigrants. Between this Irish supply and Otago demand however were intervening forces which might be likened to a dam, coloured Presbyterian blue for emphasis. This paper will trace the green tide which began as a trickle over the dam in the mid 1850s and eventually became a steady stream, adding a distinctive emerald tinge to the south.

A note on terms of reference. The focus is not Irish immigrants per se but the Catholic Irish. In some of the discussion which follows however I will be dealing with sources which make it impossible to distinguish the Catholic Irish from the undoubtedly sizeable stream of Protestant Irish who came here. The Protestant Irish are much less easily distinguishable in demographic data and to a large extent remain an unknown quantity in colonial society. From the 1860s, however, the Catholic Irish dominated Catholic society in New Zealand and this distinguishing feature, Catholicity, can be usefully utilised as a measure of the Catholic Irish ethnic group. As Akenson has remarked, while Irish does not equal Catholic in colonial New Zealand, Catholic more or less equals Irish.

There was however a brief period before the Otago Church was Hibernicised. Because the Irish Catholics developed migration chains based on kin and locality networks to establish their first significant presence in the south, it is necessary to analyse how the initial toehold was made in a predominantly Scottish and Presbyterian community, which was ipso facto hostile to any such inroads being made. Consideration of Catholic activity in Otago has usually begun with Bishop Pompallier's brief missionary visitation in 1840. This reflects a general view that equates Catholicism with its clerical representatives. If we step back from that narrow identification and look instead to the lay Catholics of the period it was in the 1830s that Catholics first settled in the south. It was to these men, the earliest Catholic woman arrived in Riverton in the summer of 1839/40 and was not visited, that Pompallier came for his brief visitation in 1840. A tiny number certainly but not insignificant. William Anglem,a master mariner who had settled on Stewart Island, is supposed to have studied for the priesthood and taken his Maori bride Te

Anau to Sydney for a proper Catholic wedding in the 1830s. He and those who followed him baptised their own children too, sacramental activity recognised in some cases years later when at last priests began to call.

Pompallier was greeted by an international mixture of Irish, French, Spanish, Portuguese, English and others in 1840 and certainly some of those who brought their children to him for baptism were not Catholics at all - Richard Driver and William Haberfield are two such, who were clearly taking advantage of the presence of a churchman of whatever brand. Others however left some evidence of a real Catholic identity. Owen McShane for instance, a notorious early Riverton character who arrived from Sydney in 1837 and distilled whisky from cabbage tree leaves, built the first jail at Bluff and became its first inmate and first escapee. McShane never had wives or children so there is no record of marriage or baptisms to substantiate his affiliation but in 1857 he gave Fr Petitjean the considerable sum of £5 to build a Catholic chapel in Dunedin. Bridget Watson, an Irish woman who came to Riverton from Sydney with her English husband in 1839, and William and Jane Barry who were brought over to Waikouaiti by John Jones in the early 1840s, were all devout Catholics. The latter pair were also Irish speakers.

This 'forerunner' period, with southern New Zealand a distant outpost of the New South Wales economy and its European population drawn largely from Port Jackson and its environs, gave way to the period of the 'early settlers' in 1848, when the first immigrant ships of the Scottish Free Church settlement arrived in Otago. These settlers were ideally to be an exclusively Free Church Scots Presbyterian group, motivated in forming a new settlement as much by evangelical fervour as the prospect of material advancement. It was a central tenet of the Otago scheme, reflecting its genesis in the 'class' settlement theories of Edward Gibbon Wakefield, that the population would be homogenous in its religious identity, and that its schools and churches would reflect a religious consensus at the heart of the new society. The ideal was flawed from the outset with a disappointing response from the Free Church congregations in Scotland but it was not abandoned. Suggestions that there was virtually no selection of the early settler group and that their pious profile is almost a myth go far too far. The stop-start confusion of the Otago scheme's genesis, pressure of time and inexperience did impact on the first couple of ships which were sent. Edmund Smith's unflattering account of his fellow-passengers on the "John Wickliffe" is testimony to that. Therafter however there seems to have been a much greater degree of selection and both William Cargill and Thomas Burns, the civil and religious leaders of the settlement, recorded their continuing and steadily increasing satisfaction with subsequent boatloads of immigrants sent to Otago by the Lay Association in Scotland.

The arrival of Catholics and specifically Irish Catholics is a useful litmus test of the success with which the 'class settlement' was maintained, and this period from 1848 until the goldrush in 1861 which finally destroyed any hope of preserving this character of the settlement marks a second phase of Catholic history in Otago. The Free Church identity and religious motivation were undoubtedly a positive dymanic in Otago's development from 1848. The flipside of the narrow and exclusive attitudes of the Free Church settlers was hostility to the outsiders who perforce had had to be accepted as part of the scheme. Historically attention on this group - the 'little Enemy' as it was called - has focused on the main body of English episcopalians. Little attention has turned to the Catholics who were part of the 'outsider' grouping and identified with

it against the dominant Presbyterians. Catholic commentators have been far too generous for a start, universally paying tribute to Thomas Burns as the good minister of the settlement who visited one and all in the early years on his visitations. In point of fact Burns was no friend of the Catholics in the early settlement, and as a man of his time and convictions a fervent anti-papist as of course were his congregation. His treatment of visiting clerics gives some hint of this. When Bishop Selwyn visited the settlement in 1848 the two had a very cordial evening together and exchanged gifts, similarly the Lutheran Wohlers received courteous treatment on his way south to Ruapuke in 1849. When Fr Seon arrived in Otago in November 1850, the second Catholic visitation to the south since 1840, Burns noted in his diary "RC arrived from Wellington" and on the following Sunday gave his congregation a "caution as to the RC priest." No cups of tea for the little Frenchman.

An echo of the contemporary Catholic reaction to this episode survives in an historical article written in 1925 but based on material gathered from the old Catholic identities about 1890. "The news of the arrival of a priest soon spread among the members of the 'Kirk', and more than one curious result was produced. In the first place Dr Burns deemed it necessary on the Sunday to warn his congregation to beware of the 'wolf in sheep's clothing' who had come among them lest the infant settlement should be led to forget its original character and high mission. Fr Seon was jocularly informed that Dr Burns had been good enough to announce his arrival. It is related that upon hearing this the meek old priest called upon the Doctor, and with grateful sincerity thanked him for making the fact of his arrival public and so assisting him in letting the scattered Catholics know." Burns himself makes no mention of such a visit in his diary, however, and it sounds like a good story but makes the point. Certainly the 'scattered Catholics' received little help from the newspaper on this or subsequent priestly visitations through the 1850s. While there were reports in Otago news columns on the activities and plans of Wesleyan and Anglican missionaries the only press attention the priests received was as entries in the shipping arivals.

The establishment of Dunedin in 1848 brought many 'forerunners' (a term to denote Europeans who preceded the New Zealand Company settlers) to the society of the new town and on the first of his regular visitations of the settlement Burns recorded details of many of these former whalers and other riffraff who hardly fitted the profile of the settlers. Few of them lingered however and the Session Minutes of the Deacon's Court recorded in 1852 that most of these types had removed themselves to the heads or to the territories to the north or south beyond the boundaries of the Otago block. Much the same could be said of the Catholics as Dunedin and its periphery became an overwhelmingly Free Church domain in the early 1850s. Who then were the 'scattered Catholics' of 1850? Apart from the few 'forerunners' who remained, there were a mere handful of new arrivals. Some were part of the civil administration sent down from Wellington, much to the chagrin of the Free Church settlers. Charles Stewart and Isaac McLean came as policemen and were English Catholics from Staffordshire who did not remain long in Otago. There were others like the "Philip Laing" sailor from Co Kerry, William Welsh, or the Frenchman, August Sourdon, who threw in their lot with the Presbyterians. There were only three enduring Catholic settlers who came to Otago on Lay Association ships. All were Scots and all of them had married Presbyterian wives. Two; William Poppelwell and Neil Joseph Bruce McGregor, were capitalists who had bought Otago land before leaving Britain. The third John Dalton was the step-father of Donald Reid, or in other words did not bring his Presbyterian

wife and family into the Catholic fold. Both McGregor and Poppelwells wives did in fact become Catholics and so too did Poppelwells brother-in-law Duncan McLaughlin.

Poppelwell and McGregor were the outstanding Catholic personalities of the early settlement. They were both men of great character and substantial capital with the associated influence that this gave them in the small and struggling Otago community. Poppelwell's son recorded in 1925 however that his father had been turned down on his first application to come to Otago in 1847, although when the company learned that he had previously been in Otago, they had no scruples on pumping him for information about Otago - this being before the first ships had arrived and when hard knowledge of the place was scanty. He was then accepted for the third Association ship the "Blundell", and arrived in 1848. It was Poppelwell who wrote to Bishop Viard in Wellington in 1850 requesting that a priest visit Otago, which resulted in Seon's appearance 10 months later. Mass was first celebrated in Dunedin at the Poppelwell's house in NEV.

The Poppelwells stayed in NEV until 1853 and then moved out to Tokomairiro. Neil McGregor moved out onto the Taieri plain as soon as he arrived in 1850, becoming one of the first settlers to do so. The homesteads established by these two became the twin poles of Catholic Otago in the 1850s and remained so right up to 1861. When Irish Catholics did began to slip in to the settlement they were naturally drawn to Tokomairiro and the Taieri, where they found employment and a welcome. The records of early baptisms give testimony to this patronage with Poppelwell or McGregor godparents ubiquitous and many marriages are known to have been celebrated at the Poppelwells. Every Sunday William Poppelwell led the prayers of the mass at Sunwick.

From 1848 to 1853 the organisation of Otago immigration was largely in the hands of the Lay Association in Edinburgh and led to a slow but steady increase in the province's population with some 2000 sent out according to the 'class settlement' principle - with no Irish Catholics and only three Scottish Catholics getting through . With the collapse of the New Zealand Company in 1853, however, the Lay Association was left without funds to organise immigration and the flow of immigrants slowed to a trickle. Volumes did not pick up again until the Provincial Government was instituted and established its own immigration scheme in 1855. A key feature of this scheme is the degree to which it maintained the selection criteria excluding Irish Catholics and its success in doing so.

The first point to note is that the personalities controlling operations hardly changed. William Cargill, the former New Zealand Company Resident Agent, was elected unopposed as the first Superintendent, the Provincial Council was dominated by the Free Church party and the same Edinburgh legal team which had acted for the Lay Association was retained as the Province's agents in Scotland. An Immigration Ordinance was passed and £4500 voted for Immigration purposes. Division arose immediately over the terms of the Ordinance, which stated as the aim of the immigration programme the recruitment of immigrants from "Great Britain and Ireland" and established a London as well as an Edinburgh agency to facilitate it. This led to a request from Cargill to the Provincial Council to substitute Scotland alone as the field of recruitment and questioning the suitability of a London-based agency in advancing the interests of Otago.

He maintained that extending recruitment beyond Scotland would be "a sinking of the Otago settlement".

The Council refused to make the alteration and a public meeting on the question was called. John McGlashan, the former Lay Association secretary now himself a colonist, took the lead in proposing a resolution that future immigrant selection should follow the lead of the defunct Association and went further in arguing that there should always be a Scottish ascendancy in Otago, which the Provincial Government was letting slip and with it the well-being of the colony. This went down like a lead balloon and the meeting descended into a stormy debate on the relevant merits of the English vs Scottish national character. There were no champions for Ireland. The end result was the defeat of the narrow view and support for a broader immigration policy.

Cargill however had control of the correspondence with the Home Agents and he followed his own counsel in reiterating the most narrow view of selection with a heavy stress on nationality. This led to a strong reaction from the Council and indirectly to a second front being opened in Melbourne to bring in the labourers who were desparately needed by many settlers wanting to break in their land. W H Reynolds was sent as the provincial agent to Australia to recruit £600 worth of labourers. Cargill's instructions to Reynolds nonetheless laid it on as thick as porridge - "Otago essentially a Scotch colony, an offshoot of the Free Church but embracing all other Presbyterians" and he was to give "full scope for what may be called National predilections in a useful sense" by circulating the relevant statistics of the colony to "proper parties". Indeed he was counselled against newspaper advertisements, which would do "little else than Mob and worry the agent with what he does not want." The resulting small stream of immigrants passed muster with Cargill but were disappointingly few and did not meet the labour needs of the settlers.

Cargill preferred a small and 'select' flow of new settlers above all else and he maintained these views to the bitter end. Supply was unable to meet the demand for labour, however, and there was steady pressure to increase the flow of migrants. In 1857 Cargill appointed James Adam, a Free Church immigrant of humble background who had done well in Otago, to act as a special immigrant agent in Scotland and recruit settlers like himself. His instructions reflect the cautious practice insisted on by Cargill, no doubt with his own bitter experience of recruiting for the original party, "you must give no circumstance to the laying on of ships until you have procured such a sufficient no of approved Emigrants as will make it probable that you will be able to procure the full no required for the ship, without being obliged to have recourse to persons whom you would have rejected but for the necessity of supplying such a given number."

This was one of twin planks of the immigration operation, which provided for a high degree of selection. The other was the emphasis on nominated immigration, whereby those in Otago who were already approved were able to obtain preferential consideration for their friends and family. As Cargill said in his last address as Superintendant in 1859 " as like draws to like so the solid and respectable elements in the first selections have attracted and put in motion a progressively increasing stream of emigrants from the old country of a similar character." Applications from Otago settlers could still be vetted at the other end but as the demand for

immigrants increased, the difficulty of recruiting enough 'select' immigrants began to put pressure on the operation and the nomination scheme provided a potential achilles heel to Cargill's system, providing the opportunity for a less desirable 'like' to draw its own 'like' into Otago.

The rot actually set in under Cargill but really bloomed under James Macandrew, his successor as Superintendent, who initiated a major expansion in the immigration programme from the beginning of 1860. Reynolds' venture in Melbourne back in 1855 had delivered a small number of new settlers who were well received and further batches of Victorian imports followed. It is not clear how many of the passengers were assisted on the third lot of Victorian immigrants to arrive per the "Gil Blas" in March 1856. They included in any case a number of men with Irish names, two of whom are identifiable as Irish Catholics in subsequent records in Otago. The most important of them was William Cavanagh, who seems to have been the first immigrant from Galway to arrive in Otago. In any case his activities in establishing a chain of settlement from Galway can be documented from the scanty surviving record of the immigration process in these years. Paralleling Cavanagh's activities were those of Mary Desmond, a Catholic from the Cork/Waterford border, who arrived in Otago as a servant to the Irish Episcopalian Musgrave family in late 1858 on the "Agra". Mary Desmond probably used the nomination system to bring out her brother Patrick and perhaps William Ryan from Waterford, also on the "Stormcloud" in 1860. Ryan is then on record as the sponsor of the Lynchs from Villierstown, Waterford, on the "Melbourne" and they were accompanied by a number of immigrants from neighbouring areas of Cork.

Some of those they brought out can be tracked and connections assumed thanks largely to the fact that few of the immigrants bothered to clear their bills with the Provincial government and so feature, along with those who had nominated them for assisted passages, in the Debtors List of 1869. The unusually detailed passenger lists published by the newspapers for the "Stormcloud", "Lady Egidia" and "Melbourne", which arrived in 1860/61, provided home addresses for the immigrants and provide further evidence of migration chains from particular localities. From these sources it can be established that following Cavanagh's arrival in March 1856, five young Galway immigrants arrived, presumably as nominated immigrants, on the "George Canning" in 1857. Further Galway immigrants arrived on the "Alpine" and "Sevilla" in 1859, and again on the "Gala" in 1860, with Cavanagh documented as the nominator of Patrick and Annie Forde in the latter case. Further and larger batches arrived from Galway in January and March of 1861 on the "Lady Egidia" and the "Melbourne", with Cavanagh and the Fords again on record as the colonial nominators of the immigrant arrivals.

These two migrant streams can be seen in the chronological list of Catholic associates to mid 1861 and in the accompanying map showing the close proximity of the home territories of many of these people. It should be borne in mind that there was no official dissemination of information on immigration to New Zealand in southern Ireland until late 1873; the immigrant chain and the local grapevine must be assumed to have been the mechanism by which these two small groups reached Otago. The establishment of these two chains occurred before Macandrew's expansion of the immigration policy in 1860. There is a broad correlation between the despatch of the ships bringing these early Irish immigrants and increased

difficulties in recruiting suitable immigrants in Scotland. The "Sevilla" for example, which left Scotland in 1859, included two parties of Scottish Catholics as well as a German, Galway and Galway Presbyterian family, and was the subject of a complaint to the Home Agents over the moral character of its immigrants. Drunkeness was the main complaint but Henry McCormack and his sister, subsequently pillars of the Dunedin Catholic community were named as "troublesome" on the voyage, while Catherine Murchison, a single Scots Catholic, had a baby during the voyage. Her brother was a former seminarian who initiated efforts soon after his arrival to bring a Scottish priest to Otago, and Catherine married the deceased Bridget Watson's husband in Riverton. The Home Agents reply pointed to the increasing numbers as making it "lately impossible ... to detect every individual shall have that character .. that we aim at", and particularly so for applications received out of Scotland.

In December 1859 after just making up the number on the "Gala", the agents had particular difficulty in filling a quota of 200 adults, which they had guaranteed the shipping agents in order to get the "Stormcloud" laid on for the Otago route. The complement was only filled after extensive newspaper advertisement "in consequence of the unwillingness of parties to leave this country in the winter season, and the recent disaster at sea [the wreck of the "Royal Charter"] on the British coast." Then came the change in Superintendent and Macandrew's first communication requesting an immediate increase in the numbers to 500 men and 100 women over the next months. "The grand policy of the Government is Immigration", he wrote, and interestingly enough specifically requested a drive to obtain English rural labourers in preference to Scots on the grounds that they were likely to remain longer in the labour market. The difficulties in procuring enough immigrants to fill Otago-bound ships were experienced again in the latter half of 1860. For the "Lady Egidia" despatched in October "more than the usual difficulty' was encountered, difficulty exacerbated by the news from Taranaki of a British defeat " as it is hardly possible to convince intending Emigrants that in Otago there is hardly any possiblility whatever of a collision with the Maoris". The agents then had to guarantee a further 100 emigrants to Captain John Robertson, who had come back to Scotland from Otago with plans to buy a ship and establish a regular run to Otago. Macandrew instructed the Otago agents to give him a full complement of emigrants, which left them in a difficult posistion when Robertson had the "Melbourne" ready for service in December 1860, midwinter. This was the complete reverse of Cargill's strict injunction against being beholden to deliver a set number of immigrants by a set date. The agents met the target but only by including, as they noted, "a more than usual number from Ireland."

Further ships with assisted and nominated Irish immigrants arrived in the second half of 1861 but the discovery of gold in the middle of the year had a vastly greater impact on the 'greening' of Otago. Such is clear from the census statistics [see Table] and from conventional wisdom on the significant Irish contingent among the flood of miners who poured into Otago from Victoria. A burgeoning Catholic population, now overhwelmingly Irish, necessitated the first permanent Catholic priests to come to the province. Hard data on these immigrants is virtually non-existent at present. There are no official records tabulating the names, let alone the nationality, of the arrivals from Victoria. Census returns were destroyed and civil records of birth, death and marriage do not state places of birth until 1876 and 1880 respectively. The level of permanent settlement among the goldrush arrivals also remains a moot point. While some 64,500 came to the province from Australia from 1861 to 1863, 24,500 departed for Australia in the same

period. Nonetheless the stimulus of the gold discoveries and the new population attracted from both Britain and Australia marked a major demographic shift in Otago. With a net immigration gain of 40,000 from Australia in these three peak years alone a major new element was introduced into the province, aptly commemorated in the contemporary satirist Charles Thatcher's term as the "New Iniquity".

It is clear from biographical evidence that the early Galway immigrants profited from their early foothold in the settlement. A fair number of them had early success on the gold diggings and invested the proceeds in land, much of it in Southland to which there seems to have been an important communal migration in 1861-62. This coincided with the southern portion of Otago seceding to form the independent province of Southland, and the establishment of a separate immigration programme for which much more solid data survives than for the equivalent operation in Otago for this period. I would therefore like to offer some analysis of the Southland immigrants of this period before turning back to an examination of the major central government immigration schemes for both regions from 1872-88.

The Southland immigration scheme was relatively short-lived owing to the impecunious financial situation of the province by the mid-1860s. There were a total of 15 immigrant vessels chartered by the Southland Provincial Government, 14 of them between 1862 and 1864, and one in 1868 in a short-lived revival of direct immigration to Bluff. These ships brought just over 1500 assisted and nominated immigrants, and at least 700 full fare paying immigrants came with them. Without the stimulus of government funding there had been no direct immigrant shipping from Britain to Bluff before 1862, and very little ocurred after the cessation of the scheme. The assisted immigrants thus form a very important ingredient in the peopling of Southland in this period, particularly in bringing in families and single women. Arrivals via Australia and Otago were a more important source of single male, however, and in every year except 1864 greater than the overall numbers from Britain.

Southland was represented in Britain by John Morrison, based in London, but he established an agency in Glasgow in 1862 and despatched ships from both ports. The focus of immigrant recruitment was on Scottish immigrants, in competition with Otago and a growing number of other colonies. Morrison always struggled to recruit enough suitable immigrants since the Southland terms of assistance compared badly with those on offered by Otago and other destinations. Southland only ever offered free passages to a few selected single women, while Otago offered free passages for single women on a large scale in 1862 and Queensland offered full assitance to all immigrants at the same time. The requirement for immigrants to pay half the fare up front was a serious barrier to the labouring families that were particularly wanted. Without families to offer a sort of moral protection, however, it was difficult to get single women to embark on an immigrant ship, and in any case such unchaperoned single girls were not considered a good idea by the Provincial authorities.

Fortuitously, a return was prepared in late 1864 detailing the 12 ships sent to Southland to September of that year, with a breakdown into national groups and a further division into assisted and nominated immigrants. This provides a firm base of data on the immigrants involved and allows us to make definite connections between recruitment difficulties in Britain and the despatch of Irish immigrants. It clearly establishes that nomination remained the main

mechanism of Irish immigration to the south, in contradistinction to its importance to English and Scottish immigration. It is also clear that Irish immigrants were only a small proportion of those brought out to the province.

Morrison advertised throughout Scotland and in England and used sub-agents in various districts in both countries. He was however in the practise, perhaps of necessity, of arranging ships and then having to fill them to a set number of emigrants. He offered this as a reason for the higher than desirable number of assisted single men on the first ship sent, the "Robert Henderson" but thought this better than delay or paying for empty space on the ship. This practise of guaranteeing a quota and then having to fill it, the presence of a small number of Irish settlers already in Southland and the importance of nominated immigration to the Southland scheme - it was supposed to make up 40 percent of the immigrants selected - made it almost inevitable that there would be at least some Irish immigrants on the Southland ships.

Southland, unlike Otago (in the Cargill era) had no overt selection policy, which would have ruled out these immigrants as suitable recruits. It seems clear, nonetheless, that Irish applicants were last on the list as ships' complements were filled and more likely to figure in numbers where there was some pressure on filling the boat. Where the reverse was true, as in the case for the "Helenslee" in July 1863, where rejected applicants for assisted passages paid full fares to make the passage, the emigrants included no Irish and were described by Morrison as "of a very high class". Three months later the situation had deteriorated in Scotland with bad news from the war in New Zealand and, despite extensive advertising all over Scotland, there were very few applicants for passages on the "Edward Thornhill". The large number of Irish accepted for passages, over a third of the 84 passengers, seems to have required some explanation. Morrison wrote, "A very large number are Irish: I would however remark that all of them are nominated emigrants, no applications having been granted to any from that district excepting James Murphy who is husband of Bridget Caulfield on the nominated list."

Throughout 1864 Morrison experienced continuing difficulty in recruiting immigrants as employment conditions in Scotland improved and competition with alternative destinations sharpened. The "Edward Thornhill", nonetheless, marked the highpoint of Irish contingents on the Southland ships. It should perhaps be remembered that the nomination scheme did not involve a free passage but required a substantial financial commitment by both the nominator and the nominee in paying the fare back over time. Given the small number of Irish settlers in Southland, there were a mere 122 Catholics [117 Irish] recorded in Southland in December 1861, and their relatively humble situations, it is perhaps remarkable that so many nominated passages were underwritten in this way. The immigration scheme was a major financial burden for the province and as its financial position deteriorated in 1864 the much needed infusion of population simply became too expensive. Operations were suspended at the beginning of 1865.

Lists of the Southland immigrants survive as bare statements of names and amounts owed and, for some of the ships, as more complete passenger lists with ages and occupations. It is possible to attempt identification of the Irish immigrants by the names they bear, and for someone familiar with the settler families, names like Boyle, Caulfield, Cavanagh, Crowe, Ford, Fahy, Finnerty, Lavelle, Hughes, Qualter, Scully and so on have a Galway ring to them. Obituaries also allow connections with particular ships to be made. These are haphazard methods of

identification however. The contention that these Galway families dominated Irish Catholic immigration to Southland is best demonstrated by an examination of the nomination applications for the "Chile" in 1868, which fortuitously, and uniquely for Otago and Southland immigration, survive as a complete body of records among the Provincial papers.

The "Chile" represents a final gasp of Southland's own immigration operation after a revival in provincial fortunes in 1867. Applictions for nominated passages were invited at the end of that year and in late 1868 these were accomodated on the "Chile", bound for Otago with a quota of passengers for Southland. All of the 46 odd passengers were nominated by friends and relations in Southland and the application forms provide details of both parties, including the relationship between them. Some of these details are included in Table 3 which shows that of the 72 potential immigrants, half were Irish and 40 percent of them were from Galway, and indeed from the same parishes and townlands as the original Otago Galway immigrants of the 1850s. William Cavanagh, the first link in the chain, actually features here both as a nominator for two relatives in his own right and as surety for Daniel Caulfield's party of three. Just over a third of the nominees did not take up these assisted passages, and less than half of the Scottish nominees did so. Nearly 80 percent of the Irish nominees took up their passage, however, and they made up 60 percent of the actual passengers per the "Chile", or 76 percent if we ignore the 10 children aboard. With such poor results both in terms of numbers and in the 'quality' of the immigrants it is perhaps not surprising that the "Chile" was not followed by more shipments. For the purposes of this paper the "Chile" serves to substantiate the importance of the nominations scheme in the Southland immigration operation. It represented a foot in the door for the small Irish portion of the provincial population, providing an opportunity to bring in their friends and relations, almost all young and single. For the most part this was a Galway foot.

By 1867 the Catholic proportion of the population had risen to just over 10 percent in both of the southern provinces, or just under 6000 people. Immigration was then taken into the hands of central government with the passage of Julius Vogel's Immigration and Public Works Act in 1870. Over the next decade the colony's population doubled and almost 30 percent of net immigration to New Zealand from 1860 to 1950 occurred in the fifteen years 1870-1885. As Donald Akenson has written "It was the Vogel period, more than any similar span of time, that was determinative of the ethnic mix of New Zealand's Anglo-Celtic majority." The volume of immigration in this period quickly eclipsed the efforts of the previous decades and gave the population a major new demographic profile. This paper will therefore conclude with a consideration of the Irish 'Vogel immigrants' to Otago and Southland between 1872 and 1888.

The first point to be made is that unlike the earlier periods under consideration the records of immigrant arrivals from 1872 to 1888 are very good and largely extant. Just over 33,000 immigrants were brought to the south on Vogel's scheme in this period and passenger lists survive for over 30,000 of them. These lists give ages, occupations, counties of origin, show family groups and also note which immigrants were nominated for their passages by friends or relatives in the colony. Only two surviving passenger lists do not provide the county of origin data, and one of these vessels was known to carry a full complement of Germans, Poles and Danes from Hamburg. This allows the county of origin of 90 percent of the immigrants over the full period to be identified with a degree of accuracy.

The Irish immigrants made up 26.4 percent of this sample and have been broken down into county groups in Table 4. There were some immigrants from every county in Ireland but 80 percent came from counties in Ulster and Munster, with Galway the only county outside these provinces to figure among the top ten counties of origin. Cork is way out in the lead. The comparison with the respective county proportions of the Irish population in 1861 is also shown here. These figures hide some very significant variations over the period, however, and if these time frames and sequences are matched against those of the Vogel scheme as it related to Ireland some interesting points emerge.

The first period is from 1872 to the end of 1873. This saw the first of the Vogel shiploads arrive in Otago but was a period during which there was no direct promotion of New Zealand as an immigration destination in the south of Ireland and before the introduction of free passages for nominated immigrants flowed through to produce arrivals in Otago. The higher cost of the passage to the Antipodes compared to the trans-Atlantic or British route meant that official assistance from the colonies and the remittances of those already there were critical factors in determining who might venture south. This meant that Otago was more likely to figure as a potential destination for people with friends or relations already there or for areas with close ties to Scotland, such as the Ulster counties of the northwest, where information about assisted immigration would be more widely disseminated. The break-down of county groupings supports this characterisation. The surviving record provides a sample of 77 percent of the passenger lists for this period, involving 3306 souls. Of this number 369 or 14.5 percent were Irish. Just on 44 percent of these Irish immigrants were nominated by connections in the colony. 70 percent of the immigrants were drawn from 10 counties, which had had only 40 percent of the Irish population in 1861. Top of the list was Galway with 14 percent of the Irish group, over half of them being nominated. The neighbouring Connaught counties of Mayo and Sligo also contributed significantly and we can see in this some support for the notion that information on the Otago immigrant market was being disseminated on the unofficial but highly developed Irish grapevine. All of the other top ten counties were in Ulster, except for Dublin and Kerry, the latter perhaps an echo of the highly developed migration chain from Kerry to Canterbury established in the 1860s.

Major developments in New Zealand and Otago toward the end of 1873 produced a significant shift in the volume and direction of the Irish migrant flow from early 1874 and a similar analysis of the next two year period [Table 5] highlights a major alteration in the composition of the Irish migrant group. Controversy first arose on the Irish quota of the immigration programme in late 1872 when it was discovered that the government was making arrangements to bring German and Scandinavian settlers via Hamburg and yet had no immigration agents in Ireland. This drew fire from prominent Irish-born politicians. In late 1872, therefore, instructions were sent to the Government Agent in London to organise an Irish agency in Dublin and send immigrants in proportion therefrom. Much was made too of the revelation that of 116 sub-agents only 8 were in Ireland [1 in Galway the rest all in Ulster] and only 15 out of 116 advertisements were in Irish papers, all of these in Belfast and Londonderry. Political debate in 1873 centred on the scheme to establish a special Ulster settlement at Kati Kati in the Auckland province and the promotion of this scheme through Orange Lodges in the north of Ireland. More important for this paper, however, was the extension of the system of sub-agents through the south, the institution of free passages for nominated immigrants from October 1873, and the activities of Caroline Howard as

an immigration agent for Otago in the south of Ireland. Caroline Howard ran an employment agency in Dunedin for domestic servants and was keenly aware of the overwhelming demand for domestic labour in Otago. In Ireland on business she was appointed an immigration agent and in late 1873 and early 1874 mounted a vigorous recruiting campaign in the south and arranged direct shipping for immigrants from Queenstown in Cork.

By 1874, therefore, Irish immigration was no longer so dependent on the migration chain, step-wise migration from England or Scotland or the unofficial diffusion of information on the New Zealand route. Advertisements and sub-agents had increased awareness of the colony as a destination across a wider geographic area, free nominated passages made the antipodean journey more attractive, and an enthusiastic Otago representative in the person of Caroline Howard was organising the first direct shipments from an Irish port. The figures for Irish immigrants to Otago and Southland reflect these developments dramatically [Table 6]. These were the peak years for immigration generally with almost half of the total Otago volume in the period 1872-88 coming in these two years alone. The Irish group made up just under 23 percent of these immigrants and only 12.5 percent of them were nominated immigrants. Cork, the focus of Caroline Howard's activities, shot to the head of the county rankings, while Galway slipped to the 7th most important county, with a markedly higher rate of nominated immigrants. Five of the top ten counties were in Munster, the rest apart from Galway were in Ulster, and the Munster immigrants constituted almost half of the total volume. This effectively defined the pattern of Irish immigration for the rest of the period of assisted immigration.

There is not time here to examine the unfortunate reception accorded the immigrants recruited by Caroline Howard. Suffice to say that the Otago Daily Times did little for their chances by labelling the single women as "certificated scum" from the Cork workhouse, battle was joined by Bishop Moran's Tablet and in the political fall-out Mrs Howard was sacked and the direct shipments ended after the third vessel left Cork. Within a few years Otago politicians, with former Superintendent James Macandrew leading the charge, were looking for a formula to limit Irish immigration without overt discrimination on the basis of nationality. While assisted immigration was available, however, and particularly the system of nominated passages, the momentum created in 1874/75 made such attempts futile. By the mid-1870s Otago's population had a solid green edge to it: the Irish had settled in for the long haul. Their very presence stood as a mark of

the failure of the settlement to preserve its original character, although their contribution at the provincial workface, whether on the goldfields, the farms, the roads and the railways, or in the kitchens and parlours helped make Otago the leading province of New Zealand by the 1880s. To quote David Fitzpatrick again, "Most of those who left [Ireland] were virtually unemcumbered by training, expertise or accomplishment. They emerged from a context of enforced idleness and ignorance full of eagerness to learn how to labour and to serve."

Seán G Brosnahan
Otago Settlers Museum