

Chapter 4

THEFLINNS MOVE WEST

The Irish Come to America, and Their Effect on the UNITED STATES.

The purpose of this chapter is to tell the story of the Gaelic invasion of America and its part in the making of the United States, by the Flinns and other people of Irish origin and descent. It is a great story, and it continues the history of the Celtic-Gaelic-Irish (Scotic) American people. The abundance of available material is embarrassing, since I felt, for the sake of brevity; I had to leave much by the wayside. All of it is of interest, but I had to debate with myself as to what to exclude in this paper to keep it short enough for people to read and enjoy.

This story is not well known at all and it should be. It has been so well covered up, or neglected, by historians that few modern Irish or Americans are even aware that some of the Irish families displaced by the Cromwellian settlers were enslaved and shipped to the 'Barbadoes' and other Caribbean Islands to work the cane fields along with the black 'Kaffirs' from Africa; that nubile lasses of 13 years, and older, were chained and shipped to Australia to bear children for the colonists there!

So far I have been unable to uncover many details about this post-Cromwellian era. The following quote is from O'Hart, Vol. I. page 801, and it only tells a fragment of the story: "The dispossessed Irish proprietors, or their sons, who remained in Ireland, were the gentlemen who, in 1707, were described in the (Irish) Act, 6 Anne, c.2, "For the more effectual suppression of Tories;" and who were, on presentment of any Grand Jury of the counties which they frequented, to be seized and sent on board the Queens Fleet, or as slaves to Barbadoes, or to some of the English Plantations in America: "...the merchants of Bristol had agents contracting with them for men, women, boys and girls to be sent to the sugar plantations in the West Indies who were of an age to labor, or if female, were marriageable and not past breeding; and gave directions to all in authority to seize those who had no visible means of support (the majority, having lost their land), and to deliver them into the hands of the Bristol sugar merchants."

Ireland must have exhibited scenes in every part, much like the slave hunts in Africa. How many girls of gentle birth must have been caught and hurried to the 'private prisons' of these 'slave- catchers' none can tell Ireland, after that, lay void as a wilderness. Five-sixths other people were gone; perished from starvation, the plague, or carted away as slaves. Those with the means, who escaped the 'catchers', moved to America. This was such a 'black period' in English history that it was mostly covered-up, neglected or hidden; perhaps in shame or for political reasons. At any rate, most Americans alive in the twentieth century know nothing of this. Strong indeed, or lucky, were the Irish who survived this period of hate and persecution. As a wise man once said (or should have): "We have enough religion to let us hate, but not enough to let us love."

IRISH ACHIEVEMENT IN AMERICA

Much publicity has been given to the fact that a large number of United States Presidents have had the Irish blood, and Press references to great Americans of that stock have been common. Due credit must be given to historians who have recorded their emigration to America in the 18th century, and have examined the situation which produced it.

However, the average person is not a student of history, and such knowledge of it as he may be expected to acquire must come to him in popular form. As of the present, no brief yet comprehensive outline of Ireland's mark on the United States has, to my knowledge, been generally available, or sufficiently emphasized. I hope that you will finish reading this chapter, as you are not likely to find it printed elsewhere. Unhappily, this kind of neglect or mis-reporting has been frequent, but simply to rage against it is vain indeed. The best antidote is the detailed truth, which follows. Now, to estimate the Irish achievement, it is necessary, first of all to prove that an achievement was possible. It is necessary to prove that we were in America in sufficient numbers to make possible a great Irish contribution to the United States. My first task, here, then, is to make it clear that from the year 1718, (when our Laughlin Flinn came over) and all through that century, a continuous stream of emigration poured from the North of Ireland, Ulster. Why! There was a variety of causes, all of which influenced, more or less, the people concerned.

There was religion. After the siege of Derry, a certain amount of tolerance was granted to Non-Anglicans, out of gratitude for services rendered by them during the war. But there were still grievances that were unforgiven. The validity of Non-Anglican Church marriages was denied.(1) Non-Anglicans (mainly Catholics, but also Presbyterians, and Quakers) were barred from teaching or learning in schools. They were compelled to serve as Anglican church-wardens. They were often not allowed to bury their dead without the funeral service of the Established (Anglican) Church. Moreover, in the reign of Queen Anne, the Sacramental Test for all office-holders was restored (must be Anglican), and there was considerable interference with Presbyterian ministers and Papist being murdered or beaten.(2) This curtailment of tolerance spurred much resentment, and the non-Anglicans knew it was an attempt to purge them. They recalled that without their services Derry could not have been held against King James, and King William would have been left without a foothold in Ireland. On the other hand, Archbishop Boulter contended that religious intolerance was not a factor leading to the emigration, and that the blame for it was chiefly due to high rents;(3) while the Irish gentry on a Commons Committee reported that "the inclination to emigrate is increased by the new and burdensome demand made by the clergy of the 'tithe of agistment', and the extreme cruelty in the treatment of the homeless, dispossessed families by the 'slave catchers'."(4) If we accept the Archbishop's view, we must disbelieve what the early emigrants said after their arrival in America (5) and presumably they would know the reasons that induced them to leave, and we must also dispute the verdict of the most eminent historians on both sides of the ocean.

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My research shows, however, that the above were not the only factors or even the only important factors leading to this emigration. There were six years of drought between 1714 and 1719 (6). There was disease that caused a high death-rate of sheep in 1716. (7) There was an outbreak of smallpox in 1718.(8) There was a scarcity of silver and copper coin that hampered trade. (9) The woolen industry had languished, and the linen trade was not flourishing.(10) There were three very bad harvests in 1725,1726, and 1727, so that in 1728 the price of food was higher than in living memory,(11) and the minister of Templepatrick declared that there was not seed enough to sow the fields. (12) There was a hard freeze in 1739, followed by famine and disease, and history states that in 1740 the mortality caused by scanty and improper food was very high.(14) There was a failure of the potato crop in 1756-7.(15)

Perhaps the over-riding reason was that 95% of their land had been confiscated by the English. These English landlords kept the previous owner as tenants and charged them extremely high rents (for farming their own land) and the resulting increase in tithes.(16) After the siege of Derry, rents were low. Leases were granted on easy terms, for the English landlords were eager to get tenants;(17) but when these leases ran out, the rents were raised to an exorbitant figure again.(18) Finally, about fifty years after the emigration began, the leases on one Lord Donega 11 's estate expired, and the rents were then so greatly increased that thousands of tenants were unable to pay them. The tenants were evicted in great numbers and these County Antrim and Down (where the Flinns lived) evictions resulted in a wholesale emigration to North America.(19) They arrived in time to swell Washington's army, and as Froude puts it: "the foremost, the most irreconcilable, the most determined in pushing the quarrel to the last extremity, were those who the Bishops and Lord Donegall and company had been pleased to drive out of Ulster. "(20) We can truly say, then, of these Irish emigrants in the 18th century, that it was not of their own free will they left their native sod. For various reasons, religious, social, and economic, they were compelled to go. As Froude says, they were driven out.(21) WHEN? 1718-1774

There awaits the New Land:
They shall subdue it,
Leaving their sons' sons
Space for the body,
Space for the soul.

(This small poem, prophetic and nostalgic, written by W .F. Marshal, is even yet apropos.)

As to the emigration itself, let's now consider its extent and quality.

"The Five Ships": We begin with 1718, for it was in that year that what had been a trickle became a flowing stream of Irish leaving. In July and August of that year five ships from Ireland anchored in Boston Harbor. Two of these probably sailed from Dublin, stopping possibly at Belfast, and taking on more passengers; one of them sailed from Derry; one from Coleraine; and one from Glasgow via Belfast. Shortly afterwards there arrived two more ships, one from Dublin and one from

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Derry.(22)

These ships carried emigrants from the valley of the River Bann and the valley of the Foyle. The venture was not without some preparation, for during the period 1682-1718, several ministers and licentiates from Ulster crossed to America. Two of these ministers, William Holmes, of Strabane, and Thomas Craighead, of Donegal, went out in 1714, and, through Holmes' son, who was a ship's captain, were in touch with many of their friends in Ireland.

"New Derry"

William Boyd, of Macosquin, and William Comwall, of Clogher, came with the emigrants of 1718. In the same year there went out, among others, the Rev. William Elliott, the Rev. James Woodside, the Rev. James McGregore, and the Rev. William Tennent. Laughlin Flinn, his father and his brothers also came on one of these ships. I do not know which one. These men built up the Presbyterian Church of North America. These emigrants of 1718 (a Thomas Flinn came out in 1702 and I can't find out for sure who he was) founded and settled the township of New Londonderry (what else?) in New Hampshire. Some of them 'hunted through' Pennsylvania and Maryland and settled in Virginia, with the Flinns. In a short time they founded numerous settlements along the Atlantic Seaboard, including northeast to New Hampshire and Maine.

I am emphasizing these Presbyterians simply to show that the early emigrants were mainly from the North of Ireland, yet a few were from the south and west. If there were more from the south, there would have been more Catholics here in the 1700s. There were few, at least in the first half of the 18th century. Until John Carrol came over, much later, there were no more than a handful.

These early emigrants were mostly small farmers or tradesmen (Laughlin Flinn was a Blacksmith.)

They had been living in rural areas of Ireland. They sent out a petition to Governor Shute before they sailed. 328 Irishmen signed the petition. 315 wrote their own names. Only 13 signed with their marks. (23) So they were fairly well educated people.

These people introduced the New World to two things that were never seen here before; the small flax spinning wheel and the Irish potato. (Actually, the Irish Potato originally came from America, carried to Europe by the Spanish Traders in the early 16th century.) A family named Young, from Burt, in Donegal, presented a few of these strange potatoes to their neighbors, but they thought they might be poisonous, and the potatoes were thrown into the swamp. Eventually a man named Walker, in Andover, Massachusetts, was persuaded to plant a few. They blossomed and produced their seed in what we call potato "apples." A Mrs. Walker made a valiant effort to cook these apples. She tried them boiled, and she tried them roasted, and in the end pronounced them unfit for food. But in the following spring, when Mr. Walker was ploughing his garden, he turned up some potatoes, and when these had been cooked, the verdict was

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enthusiastic. They loved them!

It need hardly be said that those emigrants of 1718 were a tough people. They were settled on the Indian border, and were an efficient protection to the province, which was what they were intended to be, and this was, indeed, the reason why they were at first welcomed by the earlier English colonists. They were a terror to the Indians, and they soon gained a reputation for fighting and pugnacity that often left them in bad odor with the Quakers and the State Authorities. It is recorded that their arrival on the frontier was resented by some of the colonists nearby, who organized an expedition to drive them out by force. When these people arrived at the edge of the clearing, they found the Irish emigrants assembled for worship, their minister in their midst. One good look was sufficient. There was no attack. Very quietly they made for home, and I have no doubt it was the best of their options. (27)

In the War of Independence, Major Gen. John Stark, of New Derry, fought from Bunker Hill till the end of the war, and, in 1781, he was commander-in-chief of the Northern Department of the United States Army. He was the son of an Irishman, who came to New Derry in 1719. Seventy men from New Derry went with him to the battle of Bennington, and the Rev. James McGregore's grandson was an officer on Stark's staff. (34)

General Reid, of New Derry, held a command in the New Hampshire forces all through the war. He was at Bunker Hill, Long Island, White Plains, Trenton, Brandywine, Germantown, Stillwater and Saratoga. He was with Washington in Valley Forge. He was with Sullivan's (from County Kerry) expedition against the Six Indian Nations. He was in command at Albany in the last summer of the war, and later he commanded all the forces of his State. (35)

Major Robert Rogers, of New Derry, (39) commanded the famous Rangers raised in New Hampshire in 1756, the forerunners of the gallant band of riflemen that fought the British so valiantly under Morgan in the revolution. Two Flinn brothers fought with Morgans Riflemen. It is interesting to note that the Rangers, who were in the beginning companies of Home Guard raised to protect the settlers from the Indians, and, later, rifle companies in the British service, were the principal force in defeating the Red-coats. Most of Rogers' men in 1756 were from the same Irish stock. You readers may remember that if you saw his exploits in that famous movie "Northwest Passage." The film is a strange jumble, and some of it is reminiscent of the later expedition of George Rodgers Clarke, but as it is presented, it can only be related to Rogers Rangers.

But into every walk of life this Irish group of emigrants and its off springs sent out men of distinction, men like Matthew Thornton, (40) who signed the Declaration of Independence, and Horace Greeley, founder of the New York Tribune, and a national figure in the anti-slavery movement. Nearly half of our early Governors had the Irish blood, (41) while all down the Atlantic Seaboard the Irishmen rapidly forced their way to the front, and the Puritan and the Quaker were left behind in the race for fame.

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In all this I am merely trying to show that in 1718 there was an important emigration from Ireland which had far-reaching results in the new world. I still want to show that the emigration persisted on an extensive scale throughout the 18th century.

In the spring of 1718, an Irish minister wrote to a friend in Scotland as follows: "There is like to be a great desolation in the Northern parts of this kingdom by the removal of several of our brethren to the American plantations. No less than six ministers have demitted their congregations, and great numbers of their people go with them. (42) Archbishop King confirms this testimony in a letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury at the same time. He says: "Your Parliament is destroying what little trade is left us. These and other discouragements are driving away the few Protestants that are left us: insomuch that some thousands of families are gone to the West Indies" (43)

Again, in 1728, the Rev. William Livingston writes of the way in which the people are being driven out of the country to America by want, high rents, and exorbitant tithes. In the same year Archbishop Boulter, in a letter to the Secretary of State in England, goes into greater detail. He states that "it is certain that above 4,200 men, women, and children have been shipped within three years, and of these above 3,100 last summer. The whole North is in a ferment, and people every day are engaging one another to go next year. The humor has spread like a contagious distemper, and the people will hardly bear anyone who tries to cure them of their madness. "(44) In the following year he writes again: "The humor of going to America still continues. There are now seven ships at Belfast that are carrying off about 1,000 passengers thither. " (45)

James Logan was an Irishman from Lurgan. He was a man of great eminence in Pennsylvania. At one time or another he was Provincial Secretary, President of the Council, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas, Mayor of Philadelphia, Recorder of Philadelphia and Governor of Pennsylvania. Not a bad record for an Irishman in his new country.(46) His remarks on the emigration are dated 1725. "It looks as if Ireland were to send all her inhabitants. If they continue to come they will make themselves Proprietors of the Province. Last week there were no less than six ships, and every day two or three. " (47) Logan was a Quaker, and no great friend to his fellow country-men. He and the Quakers really seem to have believed that the Irishmen, if they continued to come, would devour the whole country. The Quaker policy, therefore, according to some Irish-born cynics of later date, was to get the newcomers away to the Indian border as quickly as possible, where their love of fighting would make them useful. The Quaker merchants would sell them (and the Indians) gunpowder, and if some of the emigrants were killed, what matter? They were only a set of turbulent Irishmen. So you see, the Irish, in many ways, were their own worst enemy.

But however this might be, the emigration continued. Proud's History of Pennsylvania states that by 1729 some 6,000 Irish had come over, and for several years prior to 1750 about 12,000 annually. (48) In September 1736, one thousand families sailed from Belfast alone. (49)

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The same story is told in Baird's History of Religion in America, Harrison's "The Scot in Ulster," and Hodge's Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in America. Indeed so serious was the shape of things at home that as early as 1728 the Presbyteries in Ulster were asked to report unofficially to the Government on the causes of the emigration, and were exhorted to use their influence to keep the people at home. (50)

But the emigration went on. Johnson, in his history of Emigration from the United Kingdom to North America (London, 1913, p. 2) quotes figures from The Gentleman's Magazine of 1774 to show that "in the five years 1769-1774, no less than 43,720 people sailed from the five Ulster ports of Londonderry, Belfast, Newry, Larne, and Portrush to various settlements on the Atlantic Seaboard. These points of departure were thus responsible for an annual outgoing of at least 8,740 souls." An eminent American historian (51) writes that between 1730 and 1770, at least half a million souls were transferred from Ireland to the colonies, while Froude says that in the two years which followed the Antrim evictions, 30,000 Protestants left Ulster.

The famine of 1740 and 1741 gave an immense push to the movement, and it is said that for several years the emigrants from Ulster annually amounted to about 12,000. (52) More than 30 years later, Arthur Young found the stream still flowing, and he tells us that, in 1773, 4,000 emigrants sailed from Belfast. (53) Approaching the subject from another angle, a modern American writer estimates that in the three years from 1771 to 1773, at least 100 ships were engaged full time in emigrant transportation from the North of Ireland.

I hope that these facts will make clear what I set out to say, that there was a continual flow of emigrants from Ulster to North America in the 18th century, and that this emigration was in numbers sufficient to make possible a great Irish contribution to American progress and United States independence.

Where?

The next point to consider is; "Where did all these people go after their arrival in America? Some of them, as we have seen, went to Pennsylvania and New Hampshire, and to the New England States. Others went south, by sea and land, to Virginia, to the Carolinas, and to Georgia. Our ancestors settled in the area of Kent Co. Maryland. All of them had one thing in common: they were the pioneers on the road to the West. They had no notion of settling down in East Coast towns to be servants and laborers, politicians, bureaucrats and cops. (The New York and Boston Irish Cops, etc., came over in the mid-1800s, from other parts of Ireland) .The Irishman's urge was towards the backwoods and the Indian frontier. President Theodore Roosevelt in his "Episodes from the Winning of the West" writes: "It is doubtful if we have fully realized the part played by this stern and virile people. They formed the kernel of that American stock who were the pioneers of our people in their march westward." (54) And Charles Hanna, in his work on the Irish, refers to them as "that indomitable race, the sons of Milesius, whose pioneers in unbroken ranks from Champlain to Florida formed the advance guard of

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civilization in its progress to the Mississippi via Kentucky and the Cumberland Gap who first conquered, subdued and planted the wilderness in between."

These Irishmen, indeed, went far a field. They went out to Western Pennsylvania, around Pittsburgh, where a member of Congress was able to say not so long ago: "It is Irish in substantial origin, in complexion, and history Irish in the countenances of the living and in the records of the dead."(55) They went from Pennsylvania down the valley of the Shenandoah, and down the Holston river into Tennessee and North Carolina. A native of Tennessee has declared: " An overwhelming majority of the early settlers of our State was Irish. Every Tennessean descending from our first settlers is to be put down as of this people if he cannot prove his descent to be otherwise. No Church other than theirs, the Presbyterian Church, was founded in East Tennessee for sixty years after its first settlement. " (56)

In the Valley of Virginia, as in the Valley of the Cumberland, the Irishmen were in overwhelming numbers. Thomas Jefferson, United States President said that the Irish held the valley between the Blue Ridge and the North Mountain, and that they formed a barrier there which none could venture to leap. You can read about this in Mary Johnston's novel "The Great Valley." They went on through Virginia in great numbers to the Carolinas.

In 1736 Henry McCulloch, an Irishman, (and, possibly, one of my maternal ancestors) was granted 64,000 acres in North Carolina (at this point in time, Tennessee was still a part of North Carolina), and to these lands he brought between 3,000 and 4,000 of his countrymen.(57) A historian of South Carolina (58) says that there was no country that gave them so many of their inhabitants as Ireland. The historian of Georgia (59) says that its prosperity is largely due to the Irish people and their descendants, and from them, he adds, the blood was scattered throughout the South and Southwestern States. Kentucky was first settled by Irishmen from Virginia and North Carolina.

East of the Allegheny Mountains they formed the protecting wall between the red men and the tide- water. But not for long did our people endure the mountain frontier. (Patrick Flinn settled Cabin Creek in 1740). Everywhere they leaped across it, and opened out the country in the West.", said Governor Gilmer of Georgia.

I have mentioned Rogers' Rangers and "North West Passage. " Many of you will have seen another well-known picture, "Sergeant York", which gives a glimpse of life in the border country between Kentucky and Tennessee. It adds interest to that picture to know that the people there are largely of Irish stock, that they retain some remnant of Ulster speech, and that of such people is Simon Kenton, the Indian Scout and fighter. His memory is still cherished in that region, as the 1992 picture, "Last of the Mohicans", testifies. James Fennimore Cooper fashioned the character of 'Hawkeye' from the experiences of this Kenton, a friend of Daniel Boone and the Flinns. A renegade Irish criminal named Simon Girty, joined the hostile Indians and murdered John Flinn, of Cabin Creek, West Virginia. So, you see, there is history in fiction, as well as fiction in history.

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But the mountain region from Pennsylvania to Kentucky has perhaps a less worthy interest for us from Northern Ireland. These mountains once harbored a rebellion which took a United States Army to put down, and the rebellion occurred because the authorities tried to stop the making of untaxed poteen (white lightning (60)). The industry, as you know, still flourishes in out of the way places. Our forebears, it seems, brought it with the spinning wheels and the potatoes. An early 18th century Irish ballad goes like this:

" Gather up the pots and the old tin can,
the mash, the barley and the bran.
Run like the Devil from the excise man
Keep the smoke from rising, Barney.
Keep your eyes well peeled today,
The tall tall men are on their way,
Searching for the mountain tay (dew);
In the hills of Connernara.
Swing to the left, swing to the right,
The excise men will dance all night,
Drinking up the tay,
'till the broad daylight;
In the hills of Connernara.

The modern version of this song in the Appalachians, goes:

"Down the road here from me'
There's an old holler tree'
Where you lay down a dollar or two,
Then you go 'round the bend,
And when you come back again
There's a jugfull of good old mountain dew (tay)."
(It goes on and *on*.)

It is not difficult to see the roots of our early mountain music, and fiddle tunes. Our mountain jigs and dances are also obviously from the Irish step dancing. (The Ui'Linn Pipers of Ulster were a branch of the Flinn Clan.) (But I digress, sorry).

Ireland's mark on America is also visible in its place names. There are eighteen towns in the United States named after Belfast. There are seven Derrys, nine Antrims, and sixteen Tyrones. There is a Coleraine in Massachusetts. New Hampshire has Stewartstown. Washington, Ohio, and Iowa each have a Pomeroy. Hillsborough is in New Hampshire, Illinois, North Dakota, Wisconsin and Texas. Maine has Newry. Ohio has Banbridge. In twelve States there are twelve Milfords. In Michigan there is a town named after that river that was once dyed red with Irish blood, the famous River Boyne. There is a Baileyboro in West Texas, real close to where the Garvins (my wife's family) lived.

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"The Irish/ American Achievement"

We have now traced our family and countrymen across the ocean. We have seen that they came in very large numbers and over a long period of years. We have seen something of their distribution in the American Colonies. It remains now to deal with the further question; what did they do? What was the nature of their contribution to the United States?

"The Road West"

In the first place they led the way to the West. It was they who steadily pushed the frontier back, over the Alleghenies, fighting Indians like 'Doublehead' and 'Cornstalk', when Patrick Flinn settled on Cabin Creek in 1740, whose son, John, was later killed by Simon Gerty; a renegade Irishman who fell in with the Indians, to what became Surry County, North Carolina with Thomas Flinn; then to Flinn's Creek, Tennessee where George Flinn settled in 1794; and on to Flinn's Cove in Cumberland County (originally White County), where John Flinn was an early pioneer; then to Gwinette Co., Georgia .with Travis Flinn in the 1840's; then to Union Parish, Louisiana, where my grandfather was born; then to Anderson County, Texas where my father was born; to New Mexico, where I was born. (Read Chapter 7; "MEMORIES", wherein I described the hardships and joys of depression era New Mexico.) They fought the Indians, blazed trails, surveyed land, and settled the land. Then, when the neighbors got too close, and land got scarce, they couldn't stand it, and moved further west. That is what they did. They scratched a living out of rocky soil; they hunted deer, elk, buffalo and bear; they fought the 'Redskins' when they had to, and made friends with them when they could. That is what they did! God bless'em!

The modern 'Yuppie' generation will never understand the hardships they endured to survive. Now we complain bitterly if the 'cable' goes out and interrupts a favorite TV program! We want the Government to supply us with Health Care and food when we don't want to work for it. As you can see, this is reverse 'evolution'; we assure survival and breeding of the unfit. The current generation is the first in the History of Man which has not out-performed its parents! At this rate we will revive the Stone Age in about 1,000 years. Our 30th generation descendents may be back in the caves.

(Oops! I must have digressed again. Sorry. Sermon over! So, back to the subject. ...)
Theodore Roosevelt is emphatic on the point. that the Irish pioneered the American West. He was a man of action, with a spirit akin to that of the Irish pioneers. He is, however, only one voice out of many to tell the same story, and to argue the matter further would only irritate you, dear reader, since Ireland's pre-eminence on the frontier is a thick slice of American history. And indeed, if argument were required, it would be almost enough to mention the names of Daniel Morgan of Morgan's Riflemen, who was born at Ballynascreen, of Robert Rogers of Derry and his Rangers, of George Rodgers Clarke, who more than any other man secured the North-West Territory for the United States,(61) and of such famous Indian scouts as Simon Kenton,(62) Davy Crockett, and Daniel Boone.(63)

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"The Revolution"

But their record on the frontier was rivaled by their valor in the war of the Revolution. They were eager to fight in that war, and they were the first to proclaim it. Here is what President McKinley said about them in 1893: "They were the first to proclaim for freedom in these United States: even before Lexington, the Irish blood had been shed for American freedom. In the forefront of every battle was seen their burnished mail (figuratively speaking only) and in the rear of retreat was heard their voice of constancy. (64) There was very little "burnished mail" in Washington's rag-tag army, and the General's lip would have curled at such flowers of rhetoric in such a connection: but he would have been the first to admit the truth in those lines, the courage, the steadfast loyalty, the unshakeable determination and fighting quality of his soldiers of Irish origin and descent. The reference by President McKinley to the Irish blood shed before Lexington is explained by the fact that the first encounter between British and Americans was not at Concord nor Lexington, but on the Alamance River in North Carolina on May the 14th, 1771, between the Irish of that region and a British force under Governor Tryon. (65)

The well-known American historian Bancroft is just as emphatic as McKinley. "The first voice publicly raised in America to dissolve all connection with Great Britain came, not from the Puritans of New England, as dominant American historians would have you believe, nor from the Dutch of New York, nor from the Cavaliers of Virginia, but from the Irish". (66) The reference here, as in McKinley's, is to the Mecklenburg Resolutions of Independence. (67) These Resolutions were adopted by a convention of Irish which met in North Carolina some time before the issue of the later, well-known declaration drafted by Jefferson. The Resolutions were drafted and proposed by Dr. Ephraim Brevard, of Huguenot-Irish descent. The convention was summoned by Thomas Polk, whose ancestors came from the Donegal border to found one of the great families of America. Up till a short time ago in Ulster, the surname Pollock was almost invariably pronounced Polk (Poke), but today there seems to be little relish either for the pronunciation or for this written form of the name. Yet a President of the United States, several American Generals, and many distinguished men, including one who was both a general and a bishop, preferred the name with its original sound, and have left it famous. (Many Irish names have been Anglicized by English law. Many Flinns, coming over in the late 1700's and 1800's, had to change the spelling to Flynn. Flinn is a bit closer to the original Ui'Fhloinn, and I like it that way.)

A similar Declaration of Independence was issued by the people of Irish origin and descent in New Hampshire, and this declaration also preceded the declaration of Congress. (68) President Theodore Roosevelt referred to these Irish Declarations when he said: "The West was won by those who have been rightly called the Roundheads of the South, the same men who before any other declared for American independence" (69)

"The Army"

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Throughout the length of the war General Washington made obvious his high regard for the American troops of Irish origin. He vowed that if push came to shove, he would fight his last battle by their side. Other troops came and went, and sometimes his army was small but small or great, a large proportion of it had the Irish blood, the Irish tenacity of spirit, the Irish determination to see a thing right through to the end. "If defeated everywhere else," said the great leader, "I will make my last stand for liberty among the Irish of my native Virginia. "

There was a total of 39 Flinns in the Forces under General Washington.

Dr. Mackintosh, in an address to an Irish Congress, has described these soldiers of our race in words that are strictly true: " At Derry, at Valley Forge, at King's Mountain and at Brandywine, they were the first to start and the last to quit."

As to their actual numbers in the American army, an American writer of that period asserts that up to the coming of the French, Ireland had furnished troops in the ratio of 100 to 1 of any other nation. (70)

There is good reason to believe that, during the war, the Irish formed one third of the total population. The writer's estimate of our troops engaged is perhaps extravagant, but it may have been true at certain periods of the war, and especially true at times, if you consider the regulars as distinct from the militia. It is well known that the record of Congress in the war was far from credible. They would not give Washington enough regular troops, and would not properly equip, clothe or feed the troops that he had. Those who wish to read about this in history can read about it in the novel "Rabble in Arms! Congress wanted to fight the war on the cheap, with militia; it feared to demand long-term service in a Regular Army, like we have today. They pandered to complaints, (it was a good thing for us, that the ACLU did not then exist) and was fertile ground for military intrigue, letting Washington down again and again. He had many claims to greatness, but among them this must never be forgotten, that he was able to keep an army in the field when a lesser man would have thrown up his hands in disgust. Militia, like our modern National Guard, here today, and gone tomorrow, was no substitute for regular troops of the line, yet again and again the general's appeals for more regulars fell upon deaf ears. (But this may be better than the 6 trillion dollar debt we now owe, because of our congress) There were times, therefore, when his army was small and since it is generally agreed that the Irish were steadfastly enthusiastic for the war, it could very well be that often they made up the greater part of his men. One famous force of regulars was the Pennsylvania Line, and these were Irish almost to a man. (71) Indeed, all the evidence we can obtain confirms the predominance of our people in the army and in the war effort. Joseph Galloway was a delegate to the first Continental Congress, but he became bitterly pro-British, and he sailed for England. He appeared before a committee of the British House of Commons and was asked, "What were the troops in the service of the rebels chiefly composed of?" He replied; "I can answer the question with precision. There were scarcely one quarter of them natives of America. Half of them were Irish. The other quarter was English and Scotch! Before the same committee, and in answer to the same question, (almost a hundred years later) Major

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General Robertson said: "I remember General Lee, the American General, telling me that half the rebel army in the Civil War was from Ireland."(72)

And it is clear that a similar impression must have prevailed in England, for Lord Mountjoy said in The House of Commons, "We have lost America through the Irish. Our thanks to Cromwell!. (For driving them out of Ireland). And how else can you explain Horace Walpole's famous jibe to the Cabinet? "I hear that our American cousin has runaway with an Irishman. "

Let us go on now to some of the exploits of our people in the war. There was a battle fought at King's Mountain, in South Carolina; and it is a moderate estimate to reckon half the population of that State as of Irish origin at that time. Things were looking black just then, and even Washington's brave spirit seemed to quail. "This is a dark hour," he wrote, "and I don't know what is to become of us."(76) In this battle, a body of American militia {we would call them National-Guard) after a forced march of four days, attacked and defeated a British force of twice its size, killed the British commander and 180 of his men, and took upwards of 1,000 prisoners. The five colonels in this rag-tag American force were all Irish, or their descendants, as were the troops. Both Washington and Jefferson said that this battle was the turning "point of the war. (77)

Victories like this were not typical of the war.(78) It wasn't all glory. The war dragged on year after year, with few victories and many defeats. The British lost it because, for a short time, they lost command of the sea. They lost it because it's Government clung to the vain hope of settlement by negotiation and was vigorous in its prosecution only by fits and starts. The view that it was carried on merely to please the King has no basis in history; and there is much evidence to show that the bulk of the people at home (in England) approved the war or were indifferent to it. But the Government was hampered by a formidable anti-war party in Parliament, a party that was formidable not because of its numbers, but because of its eloquence and ability. Yet, in none of these considerations, temporary loss of sea power, sluggish generalship, or Parliamentary opposition, is there the real reason for England's loss. They lost the war because year after year General Washington and his ragged array of Irishmen were in their face on the battlefield and refused to disappear! No nation could have finally conquered America. No nation can conquer a people that keeps it's soul and is determined in resistance.

Nothing, however, brings more conviction of the great part played by our people in the Revolution than to consider the number of American officers of high distinction who were of Irish origin or descent. General Richard Montgomery was born near Convoy in County Donegal. He fell while gallantly leading his men in an attack on Quebec. By a strange coincidence, the British commander on that occasion, and the man who saved Canada for the British Empire, was General Sir Guy Carleton, who was born near Strabane, only a few miles from Montgomery's home. The two generals were old acquaintances who had served together in the British army. (80)

"The Civil War"

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The Civil War was the most dreadful and the bloodiest war ever fought in the History of the World. As far as I am concerned, the less said about it here, the better. Suffice it to say that it also was well attended by Irish descendants, on both sides.

"The Declaration of Independence and the Presidents " Leaving the discussion on battles and war, let's look at the Irishman's achievements in peacetime. These achievements are significant; the Irish were not just warriors.

The issue of the Declaration of Independence is the most important event in the history of the United States, and one of the notable events in world history .The document itself is in the handwriting of an Irishman, Charles Thompson of Maghera, Secretary of the Continental Congress, who landed in America as a penniless orphan boy, robbed of all he possessed by a ship's captain. He died, an honored man, a man so renowned for uprightness of character that the Delaware Indians named him "the man of truth, II and John Adams called him "the life of liberty , II and his name was the basis of a proverb: "It's as true as if Charles Thompson's name were to it. "(105)

The Declaration that was first transcribed by an Irishman was also first printed by an Irishman, John Dunlap of Strabane. (He was a descendant of the Dunleavy's, who were co-chieftains and relatives of the O'Flinns in Ulidia in what is now County Down, back in the twelfth Century.) It was first read in public by the son of an Irishman, Colonel John Nixon (sound familiar?). And the only signature on it for a month was the name of a man whose ancestors were from County Down, John Hancock, President of Congress and Governor of Massachusetts. (106)

Let us take a look at some of the other signatures on this great document: William Whipple; his parents came to Maine from Ulster in 1730. Robert Paine, his Grandfather came from Dungannon. Thomas McKean, his father was born near Ballymoney. Thomas Nelson, his grandfather came from Strabane. Matthew Thornton, his father sailed in one of the five ships in 1718, as did Laughlin Flinn and his brothers. George Taylor~ his father was an Irish Minister. Edward Rutledge, like his brother John, was the son of an Irish emigrant. (107)

This is a respectable representation, and further investigation would probably make it larger. But, I think I've made my point.

The list of men of Irish origin who have held the office of President of the United States is even more impressive. Up till the present time, a good half of the presidents were of his stock, on the maternal or paternal side: John Adams, John Quincy Adams, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk, James Buchanan, Andrew Johnson, Ulysses Grant, Chester Alan Arthur, Grover Cleveland, Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, John F. Kennedy (a descendant of Brian Born), Lyndon Johnson, Richard M. Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter (a descendant of the Munster MacCarthy's who drove the Flinn's from Macroom Castle), and Ronald Reagan. (Billy Jeff Clinton was born a 'Blythe', which is British, but his mother was a Kelly.)

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Of Vice Presidents we have Calhoun, Clinton, Wilson, Johnson, Breckinridge, Hendricks, Arthur, and Lyndon Johnson again.(108)

After the Revolution there were thirteen States. Of the first Governors of these States, seven were of Irish origin. But the men of our race who held high office are many. There are state Governors by the dozen and Justices of State Supreme Courts by the score.

CURRENT STATUS OF IRISH IMMIGRATION :

As of 1994, Ireland still had a favored status for admission of its people to the United States. We can legally import as many as five thousand Irish per year. So, you see, they continue to come.

The wave of Northern Irish immigration began to decline in the 1840s, due to its decrease in population. There weren't that many left to leave! However, the Southern Irish moved in to fill the gap. The potato famine of the 1840s encouraged the destitute to come to America. Relatives in the U. S. assisted them, in many cases, to come across. They lived in the slums of New York, Boston and Pittsburgh in unbelievable squalor, having arrived penniless on these bountiful shores. They were called 'Shanty-town Irish', while the older, more established immigrants, who came up to a century before, were called 'lace-curtain Irish'. The 'shanty town Irish' were reviled by the press, public officials and the general population up until the turn of the 20th century, when their efforts to pull themselves up by their own bootstraps became effective. They gradually pulled themselves up to an acceptable social level by hard work and perseverance. The early ones fought in the civil war, and afterwards, built bridges, railroads, steel mills, constituting a significant part of the laboring class, the backbone of America.

Meanwhile, the 'lace-curtain' Irish, (Earlier Irish) maintained their position amongst the leaders, both political and financial of the Nation. The average person then did not know they were Irish and certainly didn't relate them to the newcomers.

Up until the turn of the twentieth century, nearly half of all Americans were Native born Irish, or their descendants. However, as of 1992, those of German descent have finally out-numbered the Irish. In third place are those from Latin America, then Asians.

The Irish- American vote and influence, early on in our history, were weighty factors in American politics. Yet in the twentieth century, the Irish are seldom singled out as being of a separate race of people, as Latin's and Asians are, and rightly so. We are all Americans, and the press should begin to quit emphasizing racial issues, by the label 'African Americans'. 'Nuff sed.

SOME AMERICANS OF IRISH DESCENT FROM THE EARLY PERIOD

William Killen; 1722; First Chief Justice of Delaware.

James Adams; c. 1732; Founded the "Wilmington Courant" in 1782.

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Adam Boyd; 1738 ; Issued the first edition of the "Cape Fear Mercury" in 1769.

John Rutledge; 1739; Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Andrew Brown; 1744; Published the first issue of the "Philadelphia Gazette."

John Dunlap; 1747; First printed the Declaration of Independence.

David Raney; 1749; Eminent historian: "History of South Carolina."

Robert Dinsmoor; 1757; American poet.

Robert Fulton; 1765; Pioneer steam-boat builder.

Hugh McCall; 1767; Historian: "History of Georgia."

Andrew Jackson; 1767; Justice of the Supreme Court of Tenn., and later President.

John B. Gibson; 1780; Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Pa.

John C. Calhoun; 1782; Vice-Pres.; Sec. of War; Sec, of State.

Alexander Porter; c. 1785; Justice of the Supreme Court of Louisiana.

William Patten; 1790; Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Samuel Nelson; 1792; Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Thomas McKean; 1799; Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of pa.

William W. Campbell; 1806; Eminent historian and jurist.

William Orr; 1808; First to make and sell paper containing wood fiber.

Cyrus McCormick; 1809; Inventor of the reaping machine.

Edgar Allan Poe; 1809; Poet and writer .

Alexander Campbell; 1809; A Presbyterian who founded the "Disciples of Christ", which later evolved into the "Church of Christ" .

James McKim; 1810; Founder of the "New York Nation."

Asa Gray; 1810; Famous American botanist.

Horace Greeley; 1811; Founder of the "New York Tribune"; Presidential candidate;

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Anti- slavery leader .

William V. McKean; 1820; Editor-in-Chief of the "Philadelphia Public Ledger ."

John C. Breckemidge; 1821; Vice-Pres.; Major-Gen.; Confederate Sec. of War

Joseph Medill; 1823; Proprietor of the Il Chicago Tribune."

Robert Bonner; 1824; Founder of the "New York Ledger"

Grier, Robert; son of Isaac Grier (IV.); Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Morse, Samuel Finley B.; 1791; inventor of the telegraph; (Finley, from his great-grand-father, Samuel Finley). (11).

U S GOVERNORS OF IRISH BIRTH OR EXTRACTION

The dates are dates of birth.

James Logan; 1674; Pa.

John McKinly; 1721; Del.

John Hancock; 1737;Mass.

Thomas Nelson; 1738;Va.

George Clinton; 1739; N. Y.

John Rutledge; 1739; S.C.

Edward Rutledge; 1749; S.C.

Jeremiah Smith; 1759; N.H.

John Bell; 1765; N.H.

Samuel Dinsmoor; 1766; N.H.

William Findlay; 1768;Pa.

De Witt Clinton; 1769; N. Y.

Jeremiah Morrow; 1770; Ohio.

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Samuel Bell; 1770; N .H

James Miller; 1776; Ark.

Joseph Read; 1778; Pa.

Andrew Pickens; 1779; S. C.

Allen Trimble; 1783; Ohio.

Patrick Norble; 1787; S.C.

Charles Polk; 1788; Del.

Joseph M. Harper; 1789; N.H.

William Patterson; 1790; N.J.

Robert P. Dunlap; 1794; Me.

William L. Ewing; 1795; Ill.

John M. Patton; 1797; Va.

Samual Dinsmor; 1799; N .H.

Thomas McKean; 1799; Pa.

Hugh J. Anderson; 1801; Me.

Noah Martin; 1801;N.R

Robert M. Pat ton; 1809; Ala.

John B. Cochran; 1809 ;Del.

Samuel W. Black; c.1811;Neb.

(By the end of the first quarter of the 19th Century, the Irish Race had so blended in with others, that it becomes difficult to continue this list with any degree of accuracy).

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