



The Irish in the San Francisco Bay Area
ESSAYS ON GOOD FORTUNE





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DONALD JORDAN AND TIMOTHY J. O'KEEFE
EDITORS

CUMANN LITEARHA AGUS STAIRE



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c/o Professor Timothy J. O'Keefe, History Department, Santa Clara University,
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Contents

Preface	ix
Introduction	1
<i>Timothy J. O'Keefe</i>	

PART ONE

IRISH IDENTITY IN LITERATURE AND THE POPULAR PRESS

7

A Literature of Good Fortune	8
<i>Matthew L. Jockers</i>	
Irish Catholic Identity and California Public Life: Peter Yorke versus C. K. McClatchy, 1890–1916	28
<i>Steven M. Avella</i>	

⊗ VIGNETTE: The Irish Literary and Historical Society of San Francisco	51
<i>Donald Jordan</i>	

PART TWO

ETHNICITY AND TROUBLED ETHNIC RELATIONS

53

California Clash: Irish and Chinese Labor in San Francisco, 1850–1870	54
<i>Daniel J. Meissner</i>	

St. Peter's Parish in San Francisco: The Rise and Eclipse
of an Irish Parish, 1913–1964 87

Jeffrey M. Burns

⑧ VIGNETTE: Michael Casey (1860–1937) 104

Peter Imperial

⑧ VIGNETTE: Vivian Moore Hallinan (1910–1999)
and Vincent Hallinan (1896–1992) 106

James P. Walsh

PART THREE

IRISH-AMERICAN CULTURE AND ACCULTURATION

109

Old Age Pipers and New Age Punters: Irish Traditional Music
and Musicians in San Francisco, 1850–2000 110

Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin

Women in Irish Dance in San Francisco, 1900–1935 133

Lynn Lubamersky

Maggie's Boarding House: Irish-American Assimilation
in San Francisco, 1910–1930 149

Daniel P. Walsh

⑧ VIGNETTE: An Irishman Goes to San Francisco 165

Michael Corrigan

PART FOUR

EDUCATION AND EDUCATORS

171

Pioneers in the Classroom: Irish-American Teachers in San
Francisco in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries 172

Janet Nolan

Educating Catholic Young Men—“Principally Irish”: Men’s Catholic Colleges in the San Francisco Bay Area	189
--	-----

Timothy J. O’Keefe

☉ VIGNETTE: Frank Quinn Remembers: Irish Oral History of the Mission District	213
<i>Cecilia McDonnell</i>	

PART FIVE

SAN FRANCISCO, SILICON VALLEY, AND IRELAND

221

Diplomatic Snapshots: The Irish Consul in San Francisco, 1933–1947	222
--	-----

Dermot Keogh

San José–Silicon Valley and Ireland	245
-------------------------------------	-----

Tom McEnery

☉ VIGNETTE: San Francisco’s Robert Emmet Monument	256
---	-----

Timothy J. O’Keefe

PART SIX

IRISH-AMERICAN IDENTITY: PERSONAL EXPERIENCE
AND HISTORICAL EVALUATION

261

Fragments of Identity, Lost and Found	262
---------------------------------------	-----

Kevin Starr

The Evolution of the Thesis: The Irish Experience in California Was Different	273
---	-----

James P. Walsh

☉ IN MEMORIAM: Donald E. Jordan, Jr. (1945–2003)	295
--	-----

Robert Tracy

Essay Contributors	299
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Bibliography	302
--------------	-----



Preface

With its enviable geographical location and rich historical tradition, the San Francisco Bay Area has long been recognized as one of the most dynamic urban areas in the United States. Home of a sophisticated and vibrant multi-ethnic population, cutting edge research and technology, and some of the nation's premier educational institutions, it has been in the forefront of social and cultural change. From the great mid-nineteenth century immigration prompted by the discovery of gold, Irish immigrants and their Irish-American descendants have been among the most significant elements in the region's population and contributors to the Bay Area's development. For the last sixty years, the Irish Literary and Historical Society of San Francisco, founded and sustained by the heirs of that community, has provided a consistent focus on Irish culture and history. Through its monthly meetings, featuring distinguished speakers on virtually all aspects of Irish and Irish-American life, and through its long-established tradition of scholarly patronage, the Society has made a noteworthy intellectual contribution. This collection, *The Irish in the San Francisco Bay Area: Essays on Good Fortune*, is the latest example of that generous pattern of support and patronage.

The current volume was inspired and originated by Donald Jordan, historian and Irish studies scholar, professor, and college administrator. In launching the project, Don was ably assisted by an editorial committee consisting of Gearoid Ó hAllmhuráin, James P. Walsh, and J. Patrick Goggins, former president of the Irish Literary and Historical Society. Don had a particularly close long-term relationship with the Society, serving as a director of the organization for some twenty years. He frequently addressed the members at their monthly meetings, and even more frequently, he chaired sessions that attracted a wide variety of notable Irish and Irish-American scholars. This association with the members of the Irish Literary and Historical Society was mutually beneficial—Don sharing with them his extraordinary knowledge and love of Irish history and, in turn, being enriched by their enthusiasm, insights, challenging questions, and cultural commitment. Sadly, Don did not live to see the publication of this book to which he devoted so much care and attention, even during the last days of his struggle with cancer.

I was honored to be asked to assume the editing of this volume and bring it to a successful conclusion. From the start, this work has been developed under the aegis of the Irish Literary and Historical Society, and I would like to express my gratitude for its sponsorship and for the very generous individual patronage of its members. I would also like to thank the Office of the Irish Consul General in San Francisco for its encouragement and financial support of this project. Santa Clara University also facilitated the completion of the book with a timely research grant.

Timothy J. O'Keefe