FOUR

Education and Educators

With the influx of women and entire families following rapidly in the wake of the first tide of men heading for the gold fields, education of the youngest arrivals became a concern of San Franciscans. From the available statistical data, we can see that Irish families took full advantage of the city's educational opportunities and saw education as a necessary and valued avenue to success and middle-class status. With their financial support and the sacrificial generosity of Irish nuns, a system of parish and private schools started as early as 1849. Although these privately funded schools educated a large percentage of Irish Catholic children, many Irish children crowded into the city's public schools. In the fairly open-minded and secular San Francisco society of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the public schools were relatively free of the sectarianism that frequently characterized public education elsewhere in the nation. These schools also provided employment opportunity and an avenue to middle-class respectability, and young Irishwomen quickly established themselves as teachers in the public schools of San Francisco. In the first essay, Janet Nolan analyzes the contribution made by these talented and determined women, while pointing out the ethnic and gender biases and obstacles they sometimes had to overcome.

Although higher education for women usually meant attendance at normal schools offering training for careers in public education, three Catholic men's colleges were available to the small percentage of young Irish-American men who continued their education. In the second essay, Timothy O'Keefe traces the close connections between these institutions and the Irish community in the San Francisco Bay Area and the common culture they shared.

*Pioneers in the Classroom**

Irish-American Teachers in San Francisco in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries[1]

Janet Nolan

In 1872, after four years in a national school classroom, sixteen-year-old Catherine Harrington left Ireland for San Francisco where she worked as a maid and took in washing before marrying Irish-born James Curry in 1889. They had two children: Viola, born in 1892, and John, born in 1894. Patrick O'Donnell also spent four years in an Irish national school before arriving in San Francisco at the age of twenty in 1876. Three of his daughters—Mary, born in 1892; Genevieve, born in 1897; and Regina, born in 1901—graduated from San Francisco's Normal School and began teaching in the city's public schools in the late 'teens. Mary later married Catherine Harrington Curry's son John but continued to teach, retiring only in the 1950s. Mary's daughter, Catherine Ann Curry, became a member of the Sisters of the Presentation, a Ph.D., an archivist, and a teacher in San Francisco.[2]

Patrick O'Donnell taught his daughters the value of education. He called the family's dining room where the girls did their homework the "library," and he hung a map of Ireland on the wall emblazoned with "The Harp That Once in Tara's Halls" in bold letters across the bottom. Although Mary thought it "pretentious" for her father to call the dining room a "library," Patrick felt very differently. Although his own father couldn't read, he could, thanks to his Irish education. His American children, he insisted, would surpass him and go to high school.[3]

Pioneers

The O'Donnell girls' upbringing illustrates a familiar pattern among Irish Americans at the turn of the twentieth century when the daughters of Irish immigrants dominated the teaching ranks of large American cities like San Francisco. In fact, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, Irish-

*From *Servants of the Poor: Teachers and Mobility in Ireland and Irish America* by Janet Nolan. Copyright © 2004 by University of Notre Dame. Notre Dame, Indiana 46556.

American women comprised almost one half of all the teachers in San Francisco's public primary and grammar schools, making them the largest single ethnic group among the city's teachers at that time.[4]

The high percentage of Irish-American women teaching in the city's public schools at the turn of the twentieth century demonstrates an important point of the Irish experience in San Francisco that has been too-long overlooked: by the turn of the twentieth century, large numbers of Irish-American women had entered the lower middle class by becoming teachers. Since boys could more easily find well-paid skilled work without years of advanced study and girls could not, the daughters of Irish San Francisco stayed in school longer and entered white-collar work at least a generation before their brothers.[5] These women also entered professional work in numbers unrivalled by any other second-generation immigrant women in San Francisco at the time.[6] Ironically, in an era when social mobility was measured almost exclusively in male terms, women were often the leaders in Irish San Francisco's advance.

The remarkable success of Irish-American women teaching in San Francisco at the turn of the twentieth century was tied to their educational achievements, achievements realized at a time when educating women was reserved largely for a small upper class among native-born Americans. Even as their elite contemporaries enrolled in the newly established "Seven Sisters" colleges for women in the East, however, Irish-American women flocked to four-year academic programs in high schools, followed by one to three years of normal school training. In an age when most Americans spent less than eight years in school altogether, the Irish-American women teaching in San Francisco had spent a minimum of thirteen years in school.

The roots of this female educational mobility can be connected to the distinctive configurations of emigration from Ireland. From the mid-nineteenth century forward, hundreds of thousands of young, unmarried women left their homeland permanently, armed with the literacy and numeracy learned in Ireland's national schools. By the late nineteenth century, in fact, the schools had become training grounds for emigration, particularly for girls.[7]

Begun in 1831, the national schools were the first state-funded system of primary education in the United Kingdom. A generation before their English counterparts, Irish children studied a fairly sophisticated curriculum of reading, writing, and arithmetic, and they received training in such salable skills as agricultural techniques for boys and needlework and cookery for girls. Furthermore, girls, even more than boys, attended school in greater numbers and for more years, especially as women's opportunities for paid work diminished in the economic restructuring after the Famine.[8]

The national schools also offered their students a new model for female attainment, that of an educated *lady* like the teachers standing before them. Unlike their earth- or shop-bound mothers, teachers provided a seemingly independent model for girls to emulate. Hannah Casey Cotter, for instance, dreamed of becoming a teacher as a child in County Cork. According to her granddaughter Caren Cotter Ellis, Hannah loved her Irish school days and told her descendants how she had often played teacher

after school by reading to a stone circle of "pupils" arranged around her. After immigrating to San Francisco in 1913 at the age of thirty-three, Hannah worked as a housemaid before marrying County Kerry native Sylvester Cotter, a city fireman. Their daughter-in-law, Ellis's mother Clare McGrath Cotter, realized Hannah's childhood dream by becoming a teacher in San Francisco.[9] Pioneering women like these led their families and their communities into the ranks of America's educated middle class.

Influx

The city of San Francisco arrived in a hurry after gold was discovered in the mountains to its east in 1848. By 1849, it had a population of ten thousand. By 1850, the year California entered the Union, San Francisco was already an important commercial center, and the city had a public school.[10] By 1851, San Francisco could boast of having the first free public school on the Pacific Coast.[11] In 1852, Catholics were one-third of the total population of thirty-seven thousand, and most Catholics in the city had Irish origins.[12] By 1860, 6,100 of the city's 14,000 school-age children were enrolled in the public schools, and an additional 2,100 attended private schools, almost two-thirds of which were run by pioneering Irish-born nuns. Catholic school enrollment peaked in 1863, falling after that year as the state withdrew funding from denominational education.[13] San Francisco's largely working-class Irish Catholics went to public, not parochial, schools for the most part as a result. In 1865, elite cosmopolitan schools joined the public system, attracting well-to-do students with their foreign language curriculum.[14]

With the advent of the transcontinental telegraph in 1861 and the transcontinental railroad in 1869, San Francisco's isolation ended, and the city's population doubled between 1870 and 1890, rising from almost 150,000 to almost 300,000. By 1880, almost forty-five thousand attended the city's public schools. In 1906, on the eve of the earthquake, nearly fifty-eight thousand pupils sat in the city's public classrooms. Rapid recovery from the devastating earthquake of 1906 allowed the population to reach 456,000 by 1915.[15] In order to accommodate the growing demand for classroom space, San Franciscans embarked on a rapid building campaign. By 1891, the city supported seventy-four schools: forty-nine primary, sixteen grammar, four high, and five evening. By 1909, the city's schools numbered ninety-five.[16] As the Irish proportion of those living in the city rose along with overall population in those years, the Irish presence in San Francisco's schools became ever more pronounced.[17]

The number of Irish Americans teaching in San Francisco expanded along with the public school system. In 1886, for instance, 245 of the 752 teachers in San Francisco, or about a third of the total, had Irish last names. In 1910, 390 of the city's 804 primary school teachers had Irish last names, an astonishing 49 percent of the total.[18]

San Francisco hired its first Irish-American teachers when it was still a Gold Rush boomtown reachable only by trek across an isthmus or a continent, or by sea around the Horn. The three

Kennedy sisters, Alice, Kate, and Lizzie, are cases in point. The product of an Irish education begun at a local school two miles from her childhood home in County Meath, Ireland, Kate completed her education at a convent in Navan where she studied four languages besides English. She home-taught her younger sisters, basing their lessons on her convent-bred language skills. The Kennedys immigrated to New York during the Famine of the late 1840s. Alice was the first of the family to reach San Francisco, arriving in the city in the early 1850s. Alice was also the first of the sisters to take a teaching job in the Gold Rush boomtown's fledgling public schools. When the nativist Know-Nothings briefly won control of the city government in the mid-1850s, however, Alice lost her teaching post supposedly because of her Irish accent. Despite this setback, Kate and Lizzie joined her in San Francisco in 1856. In 1858, Kate and Lizzie passed the San Francisco teacher examination with "top grades," and received their primary school teaching certifications. The Kennedy sisters were especially proud of this accomplishment. Despite their Irish birth, they had bested their American-born rivals on the examination, a vindication of sorts for Alice's rude treatment by nativists a few years before.[19] Kate's teaching career began in one of the twelve classrooms of the Greenwich Primary School in 1858. By 1862, she had risen to the rank of principal teacher at the school.[20]

Figure 4-1 Kate Kennedy: teacher, principal, and activist for women's rights. *Photo credit: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.*

Although Kate claimed to have abandoned her Catholicism in Ireland when a local priest blamed the Famine on Providence rather than on what Kate insisted was British misgovernment, her convent education served her well. In 1867, on the strength of her foreign language abilities, she was appointed principal of San Francisco's North Cosmopolitan Grammar School, which offered instruction in French and German. At the time of her appointment, Kennedy was the only woman holding such a high rank in the city's teaching hierarchy, but at a salary of $180 a month, she earned considerably less than the $202.50 paid her male counterparts.[21] This injustice spurred Kennedy to launch the first of her many campaigns on behalf of women teachers. Insisting that women ought to be paid the same as men for the same job, she succeeded in getting the California State Legislature to pass an equal pay for equal work law in 1874, one of the first such laws in the world.[22] Kennedy also won tenure and pensions for San Francisco teachers, safeguards that would allow them to make teaching a lifetime career for the first time.[23] Although many of Kennedy's hard-fought gains on behalf of San Francisco's female teachers were later contested, her efforts set precedents that eventually prevailed throughout the United States.

After Kennedy's death at age sixty-three in 1890, the superintendent of schools, John Anderson, noted that although she had fought many uphill battles in her long teaching career, she "possessed . . . admirable qualities of head and heart. . . . It is sad," he continued, "to record here there were those who would not accord her the esteem and honor which were justly her due." Nevertheless, he concluded, "She lived to triumph over those who sought to wrong her. . . . Hers was the courage of honest conviction."[24]

Kennedy's work was again recognized in 1908, when, in memory of her determination to better the working lives of San Francisco's female teachers, the Kate Kennedy School Women's Club was founded, with Irish American Margaret Mahoney, a physician and a city teacher, as first president. Mahoney, herself the daughter of Irish immigrants, later became the president of the San Francisco Teachers' Federation.[25] Dedicating themselves "to further teachers' rights professionally, to secure equal salary for equal work, [and] to gain recognition for promotion based on credentials regardless of sex," the Kate Kennedy clubwomen carried on the work begun by Kennedy herself to improve the pay and working conditions of San Francisco's teachers.[26]

Lizzie Kennedy's teaching career mirrored her sister Kate's. By 1885, she was the principal of the city's South Cosmopolitan Grammar School and held a Life Certificate permanently guaranteeing her position in San Francisco's schools. Lizzie's daughter Elizabeth Burke followed her mother and aunts into the ranks of San Francisco teachers. By 1892, she held a Grammar Grade Certificate to teach in the city's schools. In 1910, she was teaching the seventh grade in the Croker Grammar School, earning a salary of $1,224 a year.[27] The Kennedys received posthumous recognition for their lifelong commitment to public education in San Francisco when two new schools were named in their honor. Today, San Francisco's Kate Kennedy School and the Burke/Delmar School, named for Lizzie, are community landmarks reminding San Franciscans of these Irish-American teacher pioneers.[28]

As the careers of the Kennedys and O'Donnells suggest, teaching was often a family affair among San Francisco's Irish, and the city's teacher directories document this pattern. In 1891, for instance, eighteen of the twenty-eight pairs of sisters with Irish last names teaching in the city's schools lived at the same address.[29] Teacher directories also provide insight into the volatility of teaching careers in the city. Despite their hard-fought campaigns to secure "Life Certificates" guaranteeing them permanent employment in San Francisco's schools, city teachers did not often remain at any one school for their entire careers, and the rapidity of their transfers between schools suggests chronic insecurity in terms of individual careers. Sisters Emma and Alice Stincen of 816 Chestnut Street, for example, first appear in the 1891 directory when Emma held a principal teacher position at the Whittier Primary School on Harrison Street, and her sister Alice was the principal of the same twelve-classroom North Cosmopolitan Grammar School on Filbert Street where Kate Kennedy had once been principal. By 1909, the Stincens had moved to a house on a corner lot at 976 Chestnut Street, and Alice was now the principal of the Pacific Heights Grammar School. Emma joined her sister at

the Pacific Heights School, teaching the third and fourth grades under Alice's supervision. A year later in 1910, however, both sisters had left the Pacific Heights School and each other's workplace, with Emma returning to the Whittier School and Alice moving to the Grant School. Both continued to share the same home.[30] Like the Kennedy and O'Donnell sisters before them, the Stincens moved among the city's schools and, apparently, up and down the career ladder.

Alice Rose Power's career, on the other hand, demonstrates that permanent upward mobility was possible for some Irish-American women teaching in San Francisco. Encouraged by her Irish-born parents, Powers began her career as a teacher in San Francisco's Edison Grammar School, and was soon made principal of the Washington Irving School. After her election in 1919, she sat on the San Francisco Board of Education until 1932, and between 1934 and 1939, she served on the California State Board of Education. In addition to her teaching and administrative duties, Power wrote several classroom texts, including the *Power Graded Speller, Jingles: A Reader for Beginners,* and *Poems for Memorizing.* When she retired in June 1943, the Council of San Francisco School Women issued the "Alice Rose Power Commendation" with the inscription, "You will always be remembered for your devoted career of civic and professional activities. . . . We attest to your leadership, loyalty to your pupils and teachers, and your fidelity to educational ideals."[31]

The impact of education on the mobility of San Francisco's Irish-American women is also revealed in the life of Urania Cloney Moran. The daughter of Irish immigrants, Moran was born in 1873 in rural Illinois. She graduated from St. Vincent's Academy for Girls in LaSalle in 1891. The then nineteen-year-old Urania enrolled in a teachers' college in Fort Jefferson, Iowa, where she wrote, "True friends are like / Diamonds pre[c]ious but rare / False ones like leaves / Found everywhere," in the flyleaf of her copy of the *Twelve Lectures on the History of Pedagogy.* Perhaps because she found few true friends in Iowa, after graduating in 1894, Urania migrated further west to teach the children of cavalry men stationed at Fort Crook, Nebraska. Eventually, she rejoined her family when they moved to Kansas and found another teaching job nearby. By 1901, at the age of twenty-eight, she abandoned the Great Plains forever and found a teaching job in San Francisco. Although her teaching career in the city was cut short by her marriage to County Leitrim native Michael Moran, Urania remains a pioneer of Irish-American female mobility. She was the first in her family to attend college, the first to leave home alone, and the first to travel unescorted by train over the Rockies to San Francisco.[32] Her grandniece recalls that Urania's daughter, Urania Moran Garner, was "so proud of her mother's teaching skills that she, too, became a teacher after graduating from Berkeley in 1928." Mrs. Garner taught for the next thirty-seven years before retiring in 1966.[33] The teaching careers of San Franciscans Patricia Fleming Walsh, the daughter of County Galway-educated Mary Huvane Fleming, and thirty-year veteran San Francisco teacher Judith Comisky McGovern, whose grandmother also attended an Irish national school before immigrating to the city, illustrate the female educational dynamic among city's Irish as well.[34]

Figure 4-2 Pioneers in education, teachers of Lincoln School, San Francisco, 1886. *Photo Credit: San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library.*

Although most Irish-American teachers worked in San Francisco's public schools, women religious belonging to Irish orders were also pioneers in the city's educational history. Mother Theresa Comerford, for example, joined the Presentation Order in her native Ireland before arriving in San Francisco in 1854, just six years after the discovery of gold in 1848 and fully two years before Kate Kennedy. Shortly after her arrival, Comerford and her Presentation Sisters started the Powell Street School, the only tuition-free Catholic school in the city. In 1869, Comerford opened a second school at the corner of Taylor and Ellis Streets. Mother Mary Baptist Russell, another Gold Rush pioneer and co-founder of San Francisco's Sisters of Mercy, left her native Ireland for the city in 1854.[35] Today, women religious remain integral to the success of education in San Francisco as the career of Catherine Ann Curry, a member of the Presentation Order and the daughter of San Francisco teacher Mary O'Donnell Curry, attests. Curry's unpublished doctoral dissertation remains the most definitive history of the city's schools, a history shaped in part by her own family, as we have seen. Her work as a scholar, teacher, and archivist has also spurred new generations to reach high educational goals.

Margaret O'Sullivan, later known as Sister M. Columba, was another pioneer in San Francisco's educational history. O'Sullivan was born in 1893 near Listowel, County Kerry, the fifth of the seven children of Timothy and Mary O'Sullivan. In 1911, at age eighteen, she joined the Sisters of Mercy in Burlingame, California. According to her memoirs, she moved to the San Francisco area,

> In the year 1909, [when] an important letter arrived in the farming area of Fingue, a suburb of Listowel. It was addressed to [my father], and was sent by Mother Camillus, superior [and foundress] of St. Gertrude's Academy, in Rio Vista [on the Sacramento River]. It said: "Having learn[ed] from your two sisters, Sisters Benedict and Martha, that you have five daughters, I am wondering and hoping

> that two of them would be blessed with vocations to the religious life, and would like to come to California."[36] My father and mother took several days to talk over this matter before mentioning it to us. . . . We [already] knew quite a bit about the academy from our aunts' letters [and] glances seemed to rest on Mary and me, as Mary had finished at Presentation School that year, and I . . . had two more years to go. I was all for it, . . . but [Mary] didn't seem too enthusiastic . . . and Mary [withdrew] before it was too late. [Another sister] Elizabeth stated that she would love to become a sister. . . .[37]

"It was arranged that Mother Camillus [would] take care of the trip, . . . have a person meet us in Sacramento, get us to the river boat where we would be met again and taken to St. Gertrude's. . . ." Sister Columba remembered, "Thank God, we got the Postulants' caps five days after arrival, on the Eve of All Saints, 1909."[38]

In 1917, at the age of twenty-four, Sister Columba took her final vows. After teaching in Rio Vista and Sausalito for many years, Sister Columba spent the remaining two decades of her career at San Francisco's Holy Name School. Her community remembers her love of Ireland as a "holy passion," and that her classroom gifts had been so great, "she could teach a radiator fractions."[39] In these ways, she exemplified the devotion to education found in so many women in Irish America.

Challenges

Although the San Francisco Irish faced less discrimination in terms of their ethnicity and religion than their counterparts in cities further east, anti-Irish and anti-Catholic rhetoric and the circumscription of teacher autonomy and mobility had existed since at least the 1850s, when Alice Kennedy reportedly lost her teaching job because of her Irish accent. After the election of an Irish Catholic mayor, Frank McCoppin, in 1867, and the advent of "Blind Boss" Christopher Buckley's political machine in the 1880s, protestants of all classes allied against the growing Irish and Catholic presence in the city's schools.[40] As a result, throughout the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century, San Francisco's Irish teachers faced serious challenges to their upward mobility, despite their growing qualifications.

The clash between protestant and Catholic cultures in San Francisco's public education was apparent in California Superintendent of Public Instruction and future San Francisco School Superintendent John Swett's insistence in 1865 that the schools were embarked on a "great mission . . . to train the children of the common people for the occupations of the common life."[41] This "common life" was to be based on the Anglo-Protestant traditions inherited from the Founding Fathers and championed by common school pioneer Horace Mann of Massachusetts. Acclaimed as the "Horace Mann of California," New England-native Swett saw Mann's common school ideal as a continuation of the Pilgrim and Puritan traditions, the very bedrocks of American civilization.[42]

Henceforward, San Francisco school personnel must be fully versed in this heritage. Lessons were to be based on a specified group of school texts, and primary schools were to teach the "rudiments of

an English education," while grammar schools were to teach "the common branches of an English education."[43] While these dictates surely referred to an English-*language* rather than an English-*cultural* education, the distinction between the two would probably not have seemed significant to most school authorities.

Swett created a book list for teachers to facilitate this immersion that included Arnold Guyot's *The Earth and Man,* a geography with a distinctive point of view. According to Guyot, there was a great contrast even among superior European races between the "free and intelligent . . . Protestant of the north, and the . . . superstitious . . . Catholic . . . of the south." To Guyot, the United States was the culmination of European civilization and the "true offspring of the Reformation."[44] The protestant point of view was reiterated in an 1888 American history textbook in wide use in the schools: "Luther and his followers protested against the sinfulness and impurity of the Church of Rome."[45]

Perhaps because of the steady increase among San Francisco's public school teachers and pupils, however, sectarianism in the classroom became more muted over time. Although the Board of Education in 1851 required teachers to open each school day with a reading from Scripture, by 1864, Protestant Bible reading was no longer common in the schools. By 1870, a more-inclusive Superintendent Swett could report that although, "Occasionally we hear of sectarian difficulties in our public schools, common sense, concession, [and] compromise will bring us to . . . understanding and harmonious action . . ." By 1874, even the recitation of the Lord's Prayer was outlawed as sectarian.[46]

Anti-sectarianism, of course, could cut two ways, and measures designed to curtail overtly protestant values in the classroom could also be used against those of Catholics. In 1891, for instance, the Board of Education's "Course of Study" pamphlet warned the increasingly Catholic teaching force to "avoid all occasions [of] alluding to sectarian subjects," threatening immediate dismissal if they used any "sectarian or denominational" publications in the classroom.[47]

By the late nineteenth century, in fact, San Francisco's Protestants and Catholics alike supported the inclusion of "American" values in the school curriculum. In the same Board of Education pamphlet that warned against sectarianism in the schools, teachers were instructed to "impress on the minds of their pupils the principles of morality, truth, justice and patriotism; . . . teach them to avoid idleness, profanity and falsehood; . . . instruct them in the principles of free government, and . . . train them up to a true comprehension of the rights, duties and dignity of American citizenship."[48] In 1898, the Department of Public Instruction further required, "Every classroom be supplied with a national flag and the same should be saluted every morning." On Mondays, the salute was to be accompanied by the pledge of "allegiance to my flag and to the Republic for which it stands—one people, one language, one flag."[49]

Despite the encouraging diminution of overt sectarianism in the schools in the course of the late nineteenth century, San Francisco's teachers faced other obstacles in those years. In his *Annual Report* of 1890, for instance, Superintendent John Anderson indirectly expressed his concern over the Irish

presence in the city's schools by remarking that the teaching corps was increasingly composed of unqualified political appointees rather than fully trained educators. Complaining that he "is seldom, if ever, consulted . . . in the selection of teachers," Anderson insisted that choosing personnel for the city's classrooms was "the most sacred duty imposed on the Board [of Education]." Nevertheless, this was the "duty . . . more than any other[,] the members of the Board are least capable of performing . . ." Instead, teaching jobs had become political spoils. "Nominally there is an election of teachers," Anderson noted, but, "practically there is no election . . . the Board . . . appoints some friend or favorite to the Substitute class, and the party thus named . . . is sure to be elected. . . . We have never known a rejection."[50] Since the Irish now held powerful positions in city and school government, and their numbers among the city's teachers were steadily rising, Anderson's targets are clear.[51]

Eight years later, in 1898, then Superintendent Reginald Webster took up Anderson's cry. In his *Annual Report* of that year, Webster wrote, "The method employed in electing teachers . . . is antagonistic to scholarship. . . . It is eminently political and the application of 'personal patronage.'" By this time, the Board of Education had Irish-American members, including a Miss P. M. Nolan, and Webster implied that teacher appointments were going to friends of sitting members rather than to fully qualified applicants. After all, he continued, "There are more persons who want to teach than there are schools to be taught," but "[a]s long as the Board of Education is elected at large, there is little hope of an improvement in the method of the appointment of teachers."[52] By implication, as long as San Francisco's large Irish population elected its own to the school board, Irish-American teachers would be even more numerous in the city's classrooms, regardless of their qualifications. In his *Annual Report* of the following year, Webster continued his campaign against appointing teachers on a political basis by quoting Cecil W. Mark on the lack of standards in selecting teachers. "For many years," Mark wrote, "Boards of Education have been governed entirely in their selection of teachers . . . not by the fitness of, but by personal friendship for, the teacher appointed, or by the request of some personal political friend."[53] In 1900, when a new city charter ended school board elections in favor of mayoral appointments, critics like Webster and Mark may have been crestfallen when Irish American James Duval Phelan won the mayoralty, and the numbers of Irish-American teachers continued to rise.[54]

Even more subtle approaches to stemming the tide of supposedly unqualified Irish political appointees into teaching appeared as school authorities tightened teacher training requirements and classroom supervision. Educational standards for teachers rose, and by the late nineteenth century, a four-year academic high school diploma was a prerequisite for a city teaching post. Undaunted, San Francisco's Irish girls flocked to the city's high schools. In 1886, almost 15 percent of the 910 Girls' High School graduates had Irish last names. By 1909, girls enrolled in the now five high schools in San Francisco outnumbered boys by almost two to one, 1825 girls to 971 boys, and many of these girls were Irish Americans.[55]

Although formal teacher training beyond high school was not mandatory in San Francisco until after the turn of the twentieth century, the city's Irish also took advantage of the educational opportunities offered by San Francisco's normal school.[56] First opened in 1857, the normal school had graduated 31 new teachers by 1877. By 1880, 70 graduated, more than doubling the normal school class of only three years before. In 1891, the graduation class exploded to 414. Between 1890 and 1899, the number of graduates grew again. The proportion of Irish Americans among the graduates grew apace. In 1888, over one-quarter, or 27 of the 99 graduates, had Irish last names, and by 1898, almost one-third of the graduating class, or 37 of 127, had Irish last names.[57]

Unable to stop the influx of Irish San Franciscans into high school and normal school classrooms, school authorities were forced to try other means of restricting their entrance into teaching. After 1880, teachers with high school diplomas but no normal school training, the vast majority of the teaching force, had to sit for a new "Examination for Teachers," which in 1885 included questions on "Algebra (through quadratics), Physiology, Music, Drawing, Book-Keeping, Elementary Physics, [the] Science of Living Things, and Herbert Spencer's Essays on Education." Normal school graduates were exempted from the teachers' examination, presumably because they had already demonstrated their competence and cultural conformity by mastering a difficult curriculum of algebra, arithmetic, grammar, geography, word analysis, American history, the "elements of natural philosophy and botany," as well as zoology, astronomy, elocution, and practice teaching, all taught with a "special reference to the methods of teaching" while in training.[58]

Perhaps because of the success of Irish Americans in gaining seats in the normal school, however, a proposal to limit the number of normal school students to one hundred was suggested by watchdogs on the school board in 1890. In addition, a stiffened normal school curriculum was introduced in 1892 as another hindrance to fainthearted applicants. "Methods of Teaching" along with lessons in science, entomology, arithmetic, grammar and composition, freehand drawing, psychology, "light gymnastics," and a four-month stint of practice teaching in a city school were among its course requirements. By 1897, normal school entrants had to provide proof of graduation from a four year academic high school, a feat so rare among the students in the city's schools that as late as 1914, school authorities estimated that less than one child in a hundred graduated from high school.[59] Irish-American women were, however, able to meet these challenges as their growing numbers in the teaching force at the turn of the last century attest.

Gender, perhaps even more than ethnicity, posed problems for the women teaching in city schools, and by the late nineteenth century, San Francisco's female teachers faced growing restrictions on their professional autonomy as male "experts" wrested control of school curriculum and administration from them. Women who had formerly been able to rise up from the teaching ranks into positions of authority in the school system now faced career roadblocks, much as Kate Kennedy had at the end of her own career.

The formal reduction of female supervisory authority began in 1880, when the word of the principal, usually a former teacher promoted from the ranks herself, regarding the competence of her teachers was no longer sufficient by itself. From now on, a principal had to "report . . . any and all incompetent teachers" to the school board. Furthermore, "a single neglect . . . to make such a report shall subject such principal to suspension." The deputy superintendent, almost always a man, must "observe carefully the methods of teaching and discipline pursued by teachers," and twice a month, he was to present a written report to the school board on the "efficiency of the teachers . . . visited by him." After all, Superintendent Anderson noted in 1888, "teachers are made for the schools, and not the schools for the teachers."[60]

As the ethnic composition of the city's teaching force changed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the heightened supervision of teachers and their still mostly female principals also manifested itself in ever more precise rules and regulations governing teacher behavior. In 1880, the school board issued new "Duties for Teachers." Henceforward, teachers must "punctually keep the hours for opening and dismissing school" and "be in their classrooms fifteen minutes before 9 o'clock." Principals must report any teacher "late three or more times in one month," and such transgressions were punishable by dismissal.[61] At the end of the school day, teachers were "expected to correct papers in their homes," focusing on "good penmanship." After all, the report concluded in a bit of a non sequitur, "A man might be an excellent accountant, but none will want him as a bookkeeper, unless his writing was good."[62]

Despite the new regulations, school officials still fretted over teacher deportment. In his *Annual Report* for 1888, Superintendent Anderson noted that, "[F]ew of our teachers devote themselves to . . . any well-devised plan for self-improvement" and lamented, "[that] day has passed." Nevertheless, he insisted that his suspect teachers take "every opportunity to teach civility and courtesy. . . . In dress and manner, [they] must *be* what they want their students to *become*." After all, "no teachers can expect to make their pupils more civil or more courteous than they [are themselves]." In the same report, Deputy Superintendent Babcock added his voice to Anderson's. "Every teacher should be a lady or a gentleman in taste, dress, carriage and character," he wrote, "and every Principal should be a model for the . . . teacher. . . . [But] it may not be too much to say that the average . . . teacher is not in habits or manners what . . . youth . . . should copy."[63] Principals, therefore, needed to "give due attention to [a teacher's] personal neatness and cleanliness, and any who fail in this respect must be sent home to be properly prepared for school." Since a teacher lost a fifth of a day's pay for each hour she was absent from the classroom, being sent home to wash her hair was not only embarrassing but expensive.[64]

Official suspicion against the women teaching in San Francisco continued after the turn of the twentieth century. In 1902, teachers became part of the civil service system and the school board no longer chose San Francisco's teaching staff.[65] In 1917, the Department of Interior's Bureau of Education added its authority to the curtailment of teacher mobility in a series of recommendations for im-

proving the city's schools. Noting that only 17 of San Francisco's 1,104 elementary school teachers were male in that year, the report's "Summary and Recommendations" urged that "the proportion of men principals should be increased, and the present unwise policy of appointing all principals from the San Francisco corps of teachers should be abandoned."[66] Since the overwhelming majority of the city's teachers were women, the report's implications were clear: schools should henceforward be run by university-trained men, not locally trained women. School officials took this advice, and by the late 1920s, access to principalships and other administrative posts in the school system had been effectively closed to the now largely Irish-American female teaching force. These women would now remain in the classroom under the supervision of male administrators.

The curtailing of upward career mobility for women teachers did not go unchallenged by them, however. As early as 1888, Superintendent Anderson noted that if "the charges of incompetency be produced against any teacher, however undeserving, . . . immediately the cry of persecution is raised . . . with the allegation that the removal is attempted [because of] some political or religious bias."[67] This "cry" took on a new life in the 1920s when, in a pamphlet widely distributed among city voters, San Francisco union leaders denounced the school department's policy against teacher promotions. Claiming that twenty-one recently hired San Francisco school principals "have been imported from other states, . . . over the heads of local college graduates," the pamphlet also revealed that all but three of these new hires were men. Furthermore, in a list of 163 additional "imported principals and teachers," fully 112 were men. Only three of the fifty-one women named on the list were Irish. "Graduates of San Francisco and California colleges have been barred from the public school department and numerous teachers [have been] imported to take the places they could fill," the pamphlet concluded.[68] The pamphlet's message was clear: the city's public schools had been taken over by male outsiders, and female citizens were being denied their rightful place in the city's educational hierarchy.

Despite these attempts to limit access to teaching jobs to all but the most highly educated and to curtail upward teacher mobility into principalships, the daughters of Irish San Francisco overcame many of the challenges imposed by gatekeepers trying to keep them out. Ironically, these challenges not only failed to stem the influx of Irish Americans into the city's classrooms, they also served as goads to even greater educational achievement among the very women they were designed to displace.

Legacy

Except for the extraordinary success of individuals like Alice Rose Power, however, the days of upward career mobility for the women teaching in San Francisco's schools were on the wane by the second decade of the twentieth century. Henceforward, ever fewer "principal" teachers rose from the ranks of the classroom teacher. University-trained male "experts" now supervised the schools. Despite the challenges leveled at them, the daughters of San Francisco's Irish were nonetheless pioneers of public education in the city. As the largest single ethnic group among San Francisco's teachers

throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, they fought for better working conditions, salaries, and pensions for the mostly female teaching staff in the city's public schools.

In an era when women were not yet full citizens of the Republic, the talents of San Francisco's Irish-American women teachers enabled their families and untold numbers of their students to enter America's middle class. In the space of one generation, these women fulfilled the educational legacy bequeathed to them by their immigrant forebears like Catherine Harrington Curry, Patrick O'Donnell, Hannah Casey Cotter, and thousands of others. Nevertheless, the achievements of the women teaching in San Francisco, like those of their mothers before them, are rarely acknowledged, and even today, Irish-American mobility in the city is mostly measured by the accomplishments of men.

Notes

1. The author is grateful to the National Endowment for the Humanities and Loyola University Chicago for supporting the research for this essay. She also thanks the late Patrick Dowling, his wife Maureen, and Catherine Ann Curry, P.B.M. and Ph.D., for their generosity to her and to her work.
2. Catherine Ann Curry, telephone conversation with author, 12 January 1998, San Francisco.
3. Catherine Ann Curry, letter to author, 27 March 1998.
4. This figure comes from counting the number of women primary and grammar school teachers with Irish last names (390 out of a total of 804 teachers, or 49 percent) listed in the "Directory of Teachers," San Francisco Public Schools, *Annual Report of the Board of Education, San Francisco, 1910,* 52–100. I decided whether or not a name was Irish by consulting Edward MacLysaght's classic *The Surnames of Ireland,* 7th ed. (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1997). Many of the "English" names surveyed by MacLysaght have Irish origins. Despite MacLysaght's guidance, however, I chose not to count "English" names in the Directory if their Irish origins were unclear. In addition, teachers with Irish mothers but non-Irish fathers or husbands could not be counted. As a result, the number of Irish Americans among San Francisco's teachers cited here may be an undercount.
5. See Janet Nolan, "St. Patrick's Daughter: Amelia Dunne Hookway and Chicago's Public Schools," in Ellen Skerrett (Ed.), *At the Crossroads: Old St. Patrick's and the Chicago Irish.* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1997), 103–117.
6. Janet Nolan, *Ourselves Alone: Women's Emigration from Ireland, 1885–1920* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1989), 82, Table 14.
7. Janet Nolan, "The National Schools and Irish Women's Mobility in the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," *Irish Studies Review* 18 (Spring 1997), 23–28.
8. Janet Nolan, "The Great Famine and Women's Emigration from Ireland," in E. Margaret Crawford (Ed.), *The Hungry Stream: Essays on Emigration and the Famine* (Belfast: Queen's University Press, 1997), 61–70.
9. Caren Cotter Ellis, letter to author, 16 September 1998.
10. Patrick J. Dowling, *California: The Irish Dream* (San Francisco: Golden Gate Publishers, 1988), xiv, 242; R. A. Burchell, *The San Francisco Irish 1848–1880* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 28.
11. *Thirty-Seventh Annual Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools of the City and County of San Francisco for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1890* (San Francisco: W. M. Hinton, 1890), 8.

12. Catherine Ann Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans: Public and Catholic Schools in San Francisco, 1851–1906" (Ph.D. dissertation, Graduate Theological Seminary, 1987), 1.
13. Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 109, 30, 31, 34, 20.
14. The sophisticated foreign language curriculum offered by the cosmopolitan schools was aimed at keeping middle- and upper-class San Franciscans in the city's schools by providing them with an elite education formerly available only in private academies. These schools were also incentives for German and other non--English-speaking immigrants to enroll in the public schools. Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 36.
15. United States Department of the Interior, Bureau of Education, *Bulletin. 1917, No. 46: The Public School System of San Francisco, California* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1917), 10.
16. Department of Public Schools, City and County of San Francisco, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Schools for the School Year Ending June 30, 1880* (San Francisco: W. M. Hinton, 1880), 289; Department of Public Schools, City and County of San Francisco, "Secretary's Report," *Thirty-Third Annual Report of the Superintendent of Public Schools for the School Year Ending June 30, 1886* (San Francisco: W. M. Hinton, 1886), 49, 50; *Report of the Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education, San Francisco, California, for the Fiscal Years 1906–07 and 1907–08* (San Francisco: Neal, 1907), 7; *Directory of Teachers and Schools, 1891; Directory of the Department of Public Schools, 1909*
17. See James P. Walsh, "The Irish in Early San Francisco," in James P. Walsh (Ed.), *The San Francisco Irish, 1850–1976* (San Francisco: Irish Literary and Historical Society, 1978), 11; William A. Bullough, "Christopher Buckley and San Francisco: The Man and the City," in Walsh, *San Francisco Irish,* 28; Burchell, *San Francisco Irish,* 3; and Dowling, *California,* xiv.
18. John Swett, "Report of the Principal of the Girls' High and Normal School (August 1886); "Secretary's Report," and "List of Teachers," in *Thirty-Third Annual Report, 1886,* 30, 49, 79–92; *Directory of the Department of the Public Schools, 1909,* 148; San Francisco Public Schools, "List of Schools and Teachers," *Annual Report of the Board of Education, San Francisco, 1910,* 52–100.
19. Department of Public Schools, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report, 1880,* 60. See also Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 56, 90; Catherine Ann Curry, "Three Irish Women and Social Action in San Francisco: Mother Theresa Comerford, Mother Baptist Russell, and Kate Kennedy," *Journal of the West* 31 (April 1992), 66–72; Miriam Allen deFord, "America's Marx and His Rebel: Henry George and Kate Kennedy," in *They Were San Franciscans* (Caldwell, ID: Caxton Printers, 1947), 144, 146; and Dowling, *California,* 241, 242.
20. Department of Public Schools, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report, 1880,* 43, 60.
21. Department of Public Schools, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report, 1880,* 60, 54.
22. Dowling, "Kate Kennedy: Women's Suffragist and Educator," in *California,* 242; Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 91.
23. Eileen M. Murphy, telephone conversation with author, 12 January 1998, San Francisco. See also Dowling, "Kate Kennedy," in *California,* 241, 244; and deFord, "America's Marx and His Rebel," 147, 151.
24. J. W. Anderson, *Thirty-Seventh Annual Report 1890,* 10, 11.
25. Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 92, 313.
26. DeFord, "America's Marx and His Rebel," 153.
27. Department of Public Schools, *Thirty-Third Annual Report, 1886,* 79; San Francisco Public Schools, *Annual Report of the Board of Education, San Francisco, 1910,* 57.
28. DeFord, "America's Marx and His Rebel," 152.

29. San Francisco Board of Education, *Directory of Teachers and Schools of the Department of Public Schools, City and County of San Francisco, June 8, 1891.*
30. San Francisco Board of Education, *Directory of Teachers and Schools*; San Francisco School Department, *Directory of the Department of Public Schools of the City and County of San Francisco, November 1, 1909* (San Francisco: Phillips and Van Orden, 1909); *List of Teachers, Schools, and Residences, 1909;* and San Francisco Public Schools, *Annual Report of the Board of Education, 1910.*
31. San Francisco School Women, "Alice Rose Power Commendation" [hand lettered] June 1943 (San Francisco: United Irish Cultural Center Library Archives). My thanks to Tom Carey, the Center's librarian, for drawing this citation to my attention.
32. Inscription [Xeroxed], enclosed in Urania Michaela Moran, letter to author, 4 March 1998.
33. Moran, letter to author, 19 April 1998.
34. Patricia Walsh, email to author, 16 September 1998; Sandy Finegan, email to author, 1 September 1998.
35. Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 112, 109; Curry, "Three Irish Women," 66, 67.
36. Margaret O'Sullivan (Sister M. Columba), "Annals of the Sisters of Mercy," n.d., 1, quoted in Gerald O'Sullivan, "Sister M. Columba O'Sullivan, R.I.P.," [Xeroxed], c. 1987; Neilus O'Sullivan, email to author, 9 November 1998.
37. Sister M. Columba O'Sullivan in O'Sullivan, "Sister M. Columba O'Sullivan, R.I.P.," 1, 2.
38. Sister M. Columba O'Sullivan in O'Sullivan, "Sister M. Columba O'Sullivan, R.I.P.," 1, 2. Sister Columba's immigration experience seems not to have been uncommon. According to Caren Cotter Ellis, American nuns made regular scouting expeditions to Ireland in hopes of gathering up surplus girls to fill American convents. Her great aunt Molly Cotter is a case in point. Unceremoniously "shipped off to the U.S. to become a Daughter of the Presentation Order," at the age of fifteen, Molly eventually became Sister Mary Regina and earned a degree in nursing. Despite her success in America, her brother in Ireland never forgave his father for having "virtually sold his sister into slavery." Ellis, letter to the author, 16 September 1998.
39. O'Sullivan, "Sister M. Columba O'Sullivan," 2.
40. Victor L. Shrader, "Ethnicity, Religion, and Class: Progressive School Reform in San Francisco," *History of Education Quarterly* 20 (Winter 1980), 385, 386; Moses Rischin, "Introduction: The Classic Ethnics," in Walsh, *San Francisco Irish,* 5; and Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 187.
41. John Swett, *Superintendent of Public Instruction, Reports (1865),* 121, quoted in Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 43.
42. Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 39.
43. Department of Public Schools, City and County of San Francisco, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report, 1880,* 16, 21, 22, 25.
44. Arnold Guyot, *The Earth and Man: Lectures on Comparative Physical Geography, In Its Relation to the History of Mankind* (Boston: Gould, Kendall, and Lincoln, 1849), quoted in Department of Public Schools, City and County of San Francisco, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report, 1880,* 52, 53.
45. Department of Public Schools, City and County of San Francisco, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report, 1880,* 250.
46. John Swett, *Appendix to Journals of Senate and Assembly, Eighteenth Session* (Sacramento, 1870), I, *Third Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Education,* 14, quoted in Burchell, *San Francisco Irish,* 169–170.
47. Public Schools of San Francisco, *Course of Study* (San Francisco: J. R. Brodie, 1891), 11.

48. Public Schools of San Francisco, *Course of Study,* 12, 21.
49. Department of Public Instruction, San Francisco, California, *Schedule of Work for the Primary and Grammar Grades, July 28, 1898,* 16.
50. Anderson, *Thirty-Seventh Annual Report, 1890,* 14.
51. Superintendent Anderson's fears were no doubt exacerbated by the fact that only the year before, in 1889, the Buckley machine had refused a teaching appointment to his predecessor John Swett's daughter, and then fired Swett. Swett reappeared in 1891 as the new Progressive school superintendent. Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 244, 281.
52. Reginald Webster, *Annual Report of the Public Schools of the City and County of San Francisco for the School Year Ending June 10, 1898* (San Francisco: W. M. Hinton, 1898), 29, 30, 31.
53. Cecil W. Mark, "Our City School System," in Reginald Webster, *Annual Report,* 7.
54. Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 270.
55. Department of Public Schools, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report, 1880,* 289; Department of Public Schools, "Secretary's Report," *Thirty-Third Annual Report, 1886,* 49, 50; *Report of the Superintendent of Schools . . . for the Fiscal Years 1906–07 and 1907–08,* 7; *Directory of Teachers and Schools, 1891; Directory of the Department of Public Schools, 1909.*
56. Benjamin F. Gilbert and Charles Burdick, *Washington Square, 1857–1979: The History of San Jose State University* (San Jose, CA: San Jose State University, 1980), 1.
57. *Directory of the Department of Public Schools, 1909,* 57, 58; Department of Public Schools, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report, 1880,* 29, 274–276; *Thirty-Seventh Annual Report, 1890,* 15, 42; Webster, *Annual Report of the Public Schools, 1898,* 61; *Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1899,* 17; R. H. Webster, "Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools," in *The Annual Report of the Public Schools of the City and County of San Francisco for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1901,* 55; *Annual Report of the Superintendent of the Common Schools of the City and County of San Francisco for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 1888* (San Francisco: W. M. Hinton, 1888), 104; and United States Department of Interior, *Bulletin. 1917, No. 46,* 228.
58. *Rules of the Board of Education and Regulations of the Public Schools of San Francisco Adopted February 25, 1885* (San Francisco: A. L. Bancroft, 1885), 18.
59. *Revised Course of Study for the Public Schools, June 1892,*197; *Course of Study, Public Schools, San Francisco, California, 1897–1898* (San Francisco: H. S. Crocker, 1897), 111; *Some Conditions in the Schools of San Francisco: A Report Made by the School Survey Class of the California Branch of the Association of Collegiate Alumnae, May 1st, 1914: What Kind of Education Shall San Francisco Buy in 1914–1915?* (San Francisco: Walter N. Brunt, 1914), 51.
60. *Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1888,* 23.
61. Department of Public Schools, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report, 1880,* 18, 19.
62. *Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1899,* 151.
63. *Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1899,* 13, 20, 59.
64. Department of Public Schools, *Twenty-Seventh Annual Report, 1880,* 92, 23, 21.
65. Curry, "Shaping Young San Franciscans," 271.
66. U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Education, *Bulletin. 1917, No. 46,* 64, 231.
67. *Annual Report of the Superintendent, 1888,* 20.
68. San Francisco History Center, San Francisco Public Library, *Partial List of Importations in [the] San Francisco School Department* (pamphlet, no date), 2, 3.

Educating Catholic Young Men—"Principally Irish"

Men's Catholic Colleges in the San Francisco Bay Area

Timothy J. O'Keefe

Even before he arrived in Gold Rush San Francisco, Joseph Sadoc Alemany, the newly appointed bishop of the sprawling diocese of Monterey, was already concerned about the education of Catholic youth in his frontier see. After his consecration in Rome, he made a begging pilgrimage through Europe trying to collect priests, brothers, and nuns who could minister to the flock awaiting his arrival on the Pacific Coast. Alemany realized that his enormous diocese was an unsettled and unruly place and that the new city of San Francisco was, as one shocked Catholic cleric called it, "a villa, a brothel, or Babylon."[1] Knowing that many of the immigrants flocking to the mines of the Sierra Nevada and the makeshift dwellings of San Francisco were Irish, and that he would need English-speaking priests and teachers, Alemany naturally turned to Ireland for help. He stopped at All Hallows, Drumcondra, Maynooth, St. Patrick's College, Carlow, and Dominican houses in Dublin to beg for help.[2] Once he arrived in San Francisco and saw the needs of the burgeoning Catholic population at first hand, Alemany's pleas to the Irish hierarchy became even more urgent. He implored Cardinal Cullen, the Archbishop of Dublin, and the directors of the seminaries in Ireland for teachers. Alemany insisted that the offspring of Catholic families, "principally Irish," were likely "to grow up in indifference and infidelity unless we take immediate measures for their Christian education."[3] The Irish responded to the bishop's written entreaties and to his subsequent visits to Ireland. A stream of dedicated priests and nuns arrived in San Francisco to serve the pressing demands of new parishes and new parochial schools.

The Irish were by no means the only Catholics in California. Mexican Californios, Germans, French, Chileans, Native American converts, and a welter of other nationalities made up the multiethnic fabric of the Catholic Church in California. But in San Francisco, as in so many East Coast cities, the Irish and Catholicism became virtually synonymous—a reality symbolized by the *Monitor,* founded by three young Irishmen to publish "Irish and Catholic news."[4] By 1852, there were already an estimated 1,400 children of Irish parentage in San Francisco, not counting children born

in Ireland. A generation later, there were about 80,000 Irish immigrants and Irish Americans in San Francisco, constituting a third of the population of the city.[5]

Relatively free of the heavy hand of ethnic and religious bigotry that characterized the East Coast cities, in San Francisco and its surrounding area, many of the Irish did quite well for themselves. In San Francisco, the playing fields of city politics became familiar turf for the Irish, and during the 1860s, the city elected Frank McCoppin as its first Irish mayor. During the same decade, California sent two Irishmen—John Conness and Eugene Casserly—to serve in the United States Senate. Though many of the less affluent Irish lived in the working-class sections of the city south of Market Street and in the Mission District and engaged in various kinds of manual work, families like the Sullivans, Murphys, Tobins, Phelans, O'Sullivans, Olivers, and Donohues quickly numbered among the economic elite of the city.[6] Even more quickly, the Irish became the dominant element within the Catholic population of San Francisco. The archbishop of the rapidly expanding city may have been a Spaniard, but many of the donations that built the churches and Catholic schools of his diocese came from Irish Catholics, and, more often than not, the priests and nuns who staffed them were Irish.

Like other parents, the Irish were ambitious for the education and advancement of their children, and early census data for the city show high attendance rates at schools by Irish children. Many of these youngsters did not enroll in Catholic schools, since some Irish Catholics, despite the frowns of their pastors, saw little danger in placing their children in public schools that were free of compulsory Bible reading and the evangelical fervor that marked many eastern public schools. Other parents undoubtedly could not pay the required fees at Catholic institutions and were ashamed to request help. Still, a very substantial percentage of all Irish parents were concerned enough with their children's religious and moral upbringing to enroll them in Catholic schools. A largely Irish Catholic population created a successful private parish school system that was sustained by the economic sacrifice of parents and the dedication of underpaid nuns. [7]

With the pervasive Irish influence in Catholic parishes and schools, it is somewhat ironic that Santa Clara College and St. Ignatius College, the first Catholic efforts at higher education in California, were not Irish foundations but, rather, the work of Italian immigrant priests.[8] The two colleges were started by Italian Jesuits who made their way from Oregon to California in response to urgent appeals for help. The first Jesuits, Father Michael Accolti and Father John Nobili, arrived in the Bay Area in 1849. In the time-honored Jesuit tradition, the two priests believed, "The hopes of Catholicity in these parts lie mainly in the training of youth in religion, morals and letters. . . ."[9] They quickly agreed to the hierarchy's request that they found colleges to educate Catholic boys. Bishop Alemany gave Father Nobili the dilapidated Mission Santa Clara, well removed from the more egregious vices of the Babylon to the north, as the site for the new Santa Clara College. It was anything but an ostentatious beginning. "The church and its ornaments were sadly out of repair," in the words of the college's first president, and the few attached buildings "were in a condition of dismal nakedness and

ruin." The human conditions were not much better, according to Nobili. "The old had become lax and indifferent. The young were growing up in *almost* utter ignorance of Christian doctrine."[10]

The circumstances of San Francisco's Jesuit college founded four years later were hardly more promising. The college, a day school named in honor of St. Ignatius, was located "in a hole surrounded by sand hills," in the words of a Jesuit brother employed at the new school, and only fitfully connected by a boardwalk to Mission Street.[11] Like their fellow Jesuits at Santa Clara, Father Anthony Maraschi and the other priests who constituted the first faculty of the school were Italians, and the work of both colleges would be sustained over the next decades by a small stream of missionaries from the Turin Province of the Society of Jesus. It was to these unprepossessing foundations that Irish Catholics turned for anything resembling higher education in California. In their turn, the Jesuits naturally looked for Catholic recruits for their colleges to the sons of Irish families—families who had just built St. Patrick's church, the second Gold Rush parish in San Francisco, and whose numbers were increasing throughout the city. From their earliest days the Jesuit schools, which accepted boys from the primary grades through college level, depended on the Irish community for students. This was particularly true of St. Ignatius College. For decades after the enrollment of Richard McCabe, its first pupil, the Irish dominated the student body. Its most generous supporters were Irish, and when the school needed loans to erect new buildings, the administrators naturally looked to the Hibernia bank. During the early years of the college at Mission Santa Clara, students came from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, and the boarding school enrolled Protestant as well as Catholic youngsters. There were enough boys from old Californio families and Hispanic students recruited from outside the state to warrant printing a Spanish language college catalog. However, the sons of Irish immigrants were present from the beginning, and they became increasingly more numerous over the decades.

The new colleges appealed particularly to that part of the Irish community that had taken advantage of California's economic opportunities. They could afford the tuition charged by the colleges, and they were willing to invest in the religious training and intellectual rigor that distinguished a Jesuit education. The Italian Jesuits were demanding teachers and disciplinarians. Moral formation, personal discipline, and upright conduct were fundamental to their educational enterprise. St. Ignatius's third catalog stated, "The greatest attention is bestowed on the religious and moral training of the students," and the "systematic effort to develop character" continued to be a principal goal of the college.[12] Nor was the correct and civilized comportment of their young charges to be ignored. The 1894–1895 St. Ignatius catalog made it clear that "Great stress is also laid on the development, in all students, of the manners of perfect gentlemen." Both Jesuit schools strove to replicate the classical European tradition and the intellectual formation of gentlemen. In the tradition of the Jesuit *ratio studiorum,* they emphasized the classics, Latin and Greek; modern European languages, especially French, German, and Spanish: and mathematics and science. The Jesuits at St. Ignatius, perhaps even more vigorously than those at Santa Clara, insisted on the primacy of the traditional

curriculum. The college restricted the awarding of degrees to "such students as have attended the Classical Course and passed, at its close, a successful examination in Latin and Greek."[13] At the turn of the twentieth century, the St. Ignatius college catalog defended this traditional Jesuit approach, claiming that the study of the ancient classics promoted mental discipline and "is the only means that gives a normal development of all the faculties, forms a correct taste, [and] teaches the student how to use all his powers to the best advantage. . . ."[14] While young Irishmen like James Duval Phelan and Zacheus Maher completed this rigorous classical curriculum, most Irish students (or their parents) opted for the more practical science and commercial courses.

The academic disciplines were familiar ground for the European Jesuits, however they were often ill at ease in their new environment and uncomfortable speaking the local language. Italian was the preferred means of communication among the faculty in some Jesuit residences, and world news was garnered from Italian and French newspapers.

The Jesuits realized the linguistic and cultural disadvantage they suffered from in California, and when Santa Clara's first president died a few years after the founding of the school, they hoped to replace him with an American, "or at least a well-Americanized Irish president."[15] An "Americanized Irish president" would be a more appealing spokesman for the colleges among their Irish clientele, and he would also reflect more accurately the ethnic reality of the Jesuit campuses. However, during Santa Clara's and St. Ignatius's first three decades, no American or Irish Jesuit was available to take charge of the institutions, and the administration of the colleges remained firmly in Italian hands.

In addition to setting them apart from Irish and Irish-American Catholics, the Jesuits' Italian culture and their accented and non-idiomatic English sometimes became the target of ridicule by anti-Catholics. The Methodist *California Christian Advocate* insisted that even the graduates of the "Romish colleges" were speaking with foreign accents.[16] For the success of the Jesuit schools, it was imperative to obtain native English speakers to instruct students properly in their native tongue, and the administrators naturally turned to Ireland. The Jesuit Province in Ireland provided some assistance by sending out a few Irishmen. The first of these, Michael O'Farrell, S.J., taught English and rhetoric at St. Ignatius and quickly became a bridge to the Irish population of the city. According to the flowery description of an early historian of the college, O'Farrell's "nationality was a passport to many hearts in which memories of an isle across the waters could never be extinguished."[17] Other Irish immigrants or first generation Irishmen, like Edward Allen, later to be president of St. Ignatius College, and Richard Gleeson, a future president of Santa Clara, came to the California campuses as a result of recruiting trips to the Irish communities in the East by desperate Jesuit administrators. But the most visible Irish presence at the Jesuit colleges during their early years was provided by the lay teachers, virtually all of whom were young Irishmen with names like Haley, Shallo, Kelly, McLaughlin, Barry, Grace, Egan, Fallon, Finn, Farrelly, and Molloy.[18] One of their students, a native Spanish-speaking boy at Santa Clara, proudly recorded in his diary that his Dublin-born teacher had

praised his recitation of a poem—the boy had expressed himself "with the feeling of an Irishman."[19]

Although Irish-American youngsters formed the bulk of the student population at St. Ignatius, the lack of understanding between the Italian Jesuits and the working-class Irish of San Francisco was forcefully demonstrated when the college began constructing a new campus in 1878. Located on Van Ness and Hayes, the new buildings, according to a San Francisco newspaper, would constitute "one of the finest collegiate establishments erected in this State."[20] The Jesuits awarded a contract for bricks to the Patent Brick Company, which employed Chinese laborers. This outraged Irish workers in the building trades who were suffering from the effects of a serious economic recession. The Chinese, who crowded the shanties of Chinatown and eked out an existence on pitifully low wages, provided convenient scapegoats for the pent-up anger of the city's white working classes. Holding forth in the sandlots near the proposed Jesuit building site, Denis Kearney, the flamboyant Irish demagogue, rallied the unemployed workers against what he and his Irish followers considered an insult to the Irish Catholics of San Francisco. The Irish-dominated Brick Makers' Protective Association, supported by the San Francisco press, claimed, "Several hundred brick makers will be discharged very shortly unless the church . . . gives the Union its contract."[21] One hostile newspaper railed against the Jesuits, insisting, "There ought not to be a brick made by coolie labor in the edifice." The money for the building had come from the white working classes, the paper argued, "mostly from those of Irish birth and blood." The Jesuit administrators were reminded, and none too subtly, that they depended on Irish students and Irish money in the collection plate of the Jesuit church. Their own voluntary contributions to the church, the workers insisted, should not be used "to support their coolie competitors and drive themselves to penury and starvation."[22] Using the threat of an "indignation meeting" by his followers at the Jesuits' building site, Kearney pressured Father Varsi and Father Maraschi to cancel their contract.[23]

In an effort to diffuse the situation, the Jesuits met with the labor leaders, defending their original contract on the grounds that their agent had not known the firm employed Chinese labor. For the Jesuits, this was obviously an issue of extreme sensitivity because it threatened to alienate their college from the Irish community on which they depended. However, Kearney, whose anti-Chinese agitation had already earned the ire of the archbishop, did not overplay his hand. He personally negotiated with the college president, and he was soon able to tell his followers that the Jesuit had guaranteed him that "no brick would go into the building that was manufactured by Chinese labor."[24] Irish workers were pacified by reports of Father Varsi's new contract with the Patent Brick Company. It stipulated that the firm hire white laborers and that 150 Chinese workers were to be laid off.[25] The voice of the Irish in San Francisco was far too powerful to be ignored by Catholic educators.

Although Santa Clara and St. Ignatius were founded and dominated by Italian Jesuits, Saint Mary's College, the third men's college in the Bay Area, was a thoroughly Irish enterprise from its inception. Its origins are linked to the dissatisfaction of Archbishop Alemany with what he considered the exces-

sive cost of the two Jesuit colleges. Alemany complained to the President of All Hallows in 1858 that in his view the Jesuits "had not yet succeeded in doing anything of much account for the boys."[26] In the archbishop's view, St. Ignatius "charged rather too much," and few of his Catholics could take advantage of Santa Clara "owing to the high, too high prices of the College."[27] Alemany's own life was a model of poverty, and he was famous for the number of patches on his simple Dominican robe. His criticism ignored the number of students attending the Jesuit colleges who paid little or no tuition. However, he had support in the Catholic community for a new college that would "bring the higher branches of instruction within the means of numbers who are precluded from such benefits."[28]

Alemany sent his Vicar General, Father James Croke from Kanturk, County Cork, to seek donations from Catholic miners in the Mother Load. Croke and two other Irish-born priests spent weeks combing the gold country and returned to San Francisco with thirty-seven thousand dollars. Most donations came from Irishmen in the mining fields. Their names are preserved in Father Croke's entry book—Nolan, Casey, O'Brien, Holohan, Cooney, Riordan, Quinn, and the others.[29] The new Saint Mary's College opened in 1863, with Father John Harrington, a diocesan priest and a native of County Cork, as its first president. Harrington began the college's lengthy sequence of Irish-born presidents. Under the guidance of Alemany's clergy and a staff of amateur teachers, some fresh off the boat from Ireland, the college struggled through its first difficult years. The school was so short of revenue that it even agreed to take responsibility for young delinquents turned over to it by the San Francisco police.

Luckily, Alemany soon obtained a band of Christian Brothers to provide the leadership and experienced teaching staff his college so sorely lacked. The nine Brothers who arrived at the port of San Francisco in 1868 were members of a French foundation devoted to educating boys from the lower and middle classes, and the archbishop considered them exactly the down-to-earth instructors and disciplinarians the college needed. As the *Daily Alta California* put it, the Brothers would offer "a thoroughly practical education. . . . They appear to understand in what education really consists, and how important it is to train our youth in such a manner that they may be able on leaving college to take their place with credit in the counting houses, the mining district, or the law or medical school."[30] But equally important to the success of their work, most of the Brothers were Irish by birth or parentage, and they quickly won the affection and support of the Irish community in San Francisco.

Brother Justin, the first Christian Brother to serve as president of Saint Mary's College, was a particularly outspoken and charismatic leader, a gifted fund-raiser, and a popular orator. On St. Patrick's Day, 1870, Brother Justin displayed his Irish credentials when he served as "Orator of the Day" at a public celebration in the state capital. After parading around Sacramento in a carriage, accompanied by an honor guard and a brass band, he delivered a long and enthusiastically received survey of Irish history. Appropriately for a college president, Brother Justin gloried in Ireland's heroic Christian past, when the educated Irish had carried "the torch of science to the benighted nations of

Europe." But the Famine immigrant from Cong, County Mayo, reached his stride when he roundly condemned England's "unparalleled perfidy," "barbarous cruelty," "rapine," "wholesale confiscation," "sacrilege," and "murder."[31] Quickly establishing himself as a leading figure among the San Francisco Irish, Brother Justin spent much of his time during his years as president of Saint Mary's cultivating support and raising funds among his fellow immigrants in the city and throughout the state. His conviviality and instant familiarity with the local Irish community was too much for one of the non-Irish Christian Brothers at the college. In an intemperate outburst, this critic declared that under Justin's leadership, "St. Mary's College is like a rendezvous for drunks."[32]

All the early presidents of Saint Mary's were Irish, and so also were most of its students, teachers, and donors. In the words of the official historian of the Christian Brothers in the West, Saint Mary's College was "essentially a creature of Irish Catholicism," and the "extent of Irish influence at Saint Mary's in the nineteenth century was amazingly wide and deep."[33] Unlike the Italian Jesuits at Santa Clara and St. Ignatius, who worked under the disadvantage of being foreign in both language and customs during the early decades of their ministry in California, virtually all the Brothers were native English speakers. According to one enthusiastic press report, they would "insist on the necessity of a thorough knowledge of our own language."[34] Most of the Brothers were also immediately familiar to Irish Catholics as fellow Irishmen. They could offer the children of Irish families the promise of a comforting sense of community and ethnic solidarity. This was particularly important, since, like the Jesuit schools, Saint Mary's taught boys in the primary and high school grades, as well as offering college level training. Although the Christian Brothers were less well trained academically than the Jesuits, and were dismissed as "stupid dull 'Micks'" by one anti-Catholic San Francisco newspaper, they nonetheless won the confidence of Irish mothers and fathers of the city.[35] They sent their sons to the Brothers in increasing numbers, and Saint Mary's quickly, if temporarily, surpassed the enrollment in the two Jesuit colleges. Alemany praised the work of the Brothers, and in an 1882 Pastoral Letter, he singled them out as the "pre-eminent" educators in his archdiocese.[36]

Saint Mary's College competed with the Jesuit schools by offering Greek and Latin in its classical program, which prepared the most talented or the most ambitious young men for the higher professions. However, one of the undoubted reasons for the Brothers' early popularity was that they were traditionally concerned for the vocational needs of the middle and working classes. It was not surprising that, like their fellow students at the Jesuit schools, the number of young men at Saint Mary's College pursuing the commercial diploma far exceeded the number enrolled in the elite and academically prestigious classical degree program. What most Irish immigrants and their sons wanted, and what Saint Mary's and, somewhat more grudgingly, the Jesuit colleges gave them, were the necessary training and the practical tools to succeed in the robust competitive atmosphere of the West.[37]

The new state of California was well served by the three colleges. Although the schools' academic pretensions and their enrollments were necessarily limited, the Catholic colleges functioned success-

fully as officially chartered institutions of higher education before the first publicly funded state university was established at Berkeley (1868), and well before the founding of California's richly endowed private universities such as Stanford (1885) and the University of Southern California (1880). And although nineteenth-century America's predominantly immigrant Catholic population, including many of its religious leaders, is often characterized as having little interest in higher education,[38] the three Bay Area Catholic men's colleges were inspired by the archbishop of San Francisco and supported and patronized by a largely Irish population. Among the twenty-eight Jesuit colleges established throughout the United States, only five were founded before Santa Clara began to educate the young men of frontier California.

The ethnic advantage enjoyed by Saint Mary's Irish-born Christian Brothers over the Italian Jesuits in Northern California did not last long. With the appointment of Robert E. Kenna, S.J., as president of St. Ignatius in 1880, and of Santa Clara three years later, the Jesuit administration of the two colleges became increasingly Irish in personnel. Although American-born, Kenna had been educated at St. Coleman's College in Fermoy and later at Santa Clara College. From there, he entered the Jesuits and became the first in a series of Irish presidents who would guide Santa Clara and St. Ignatius. The roster of Kenna's immediate successors at Santa Clara over the next half century forms an uninterrupted litany of Irish surnames: Riordan, Gleeson, Morrisey, Thornton, Murphy, Maher, McCoy, and Lyons.

At both Santa Clara and St. Ignatius, this period was the heyday of Irish dominance. At the latter, for example, as late as the 1920s, all its Jesuit trustees, with but one exception, were of Irish parentage. The teaching staff at the Jesuit institutions remained heavily Irish, as did the student body.[39] At all three colleges, students with Irish surnames dominated the list of academic medal winners, as they did the baseball, football, and track teams. When St. Ignatius founded an alumni association, its first president, J. F. Sullivan, and all but one of the officers were of Irish descent.[40] Irish-American graduates of the three Catholic colleges entered swiftly and forcefully into California's public life. Santa Clara graduate Stephen Mallory White argued before the United States Supreme Court, served as district attorney of Los Angeles County, state senator, and United States senator. Garret McEnerney, a graduate of Saint Mary's College, enjoyed a flourishing private law practice, served as an attorney for the State of California, Chairman of the Board of Regents of the University of California, and Counsel for the United States in the first case heard before the Hague Tribunal. St. Ignatius graduate James Duval Phelan, in addition to being a successful banker, businessman, and patron of the arts, became mayor of San Francisco and the first popularly elected United States senator from California. Richard C. Tobin was United States minister to Holland, and John Ryan became chief engineer for North American Construction at Hetch Hetchy.[41] Like many of their fellow graduates from the Catholic men's colleges, each of these men was born of Irish parents. The Irish community was the springboard for their leap to economic or political success, and the colleges provided them with the educational and cultural tools required for that success.

Naturally, many Irish-American graduates remained close to their colleges. The graduates of St. Ignatius frequently celebrated their marriages at the campus church and, at the end of their lives, many were buried from it as well. Saint Mary's alumni regularly contributed poetry and essays to the campus publications. Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Irish, whether alumni of the colleges or not, frequently proved their friendship toward the colleges in very tangible form. Irish businessmen and professionals like Peter Donohue, Frank Sullivan, and James Duval Phelan were among the schools' most important patrons. After a lifetime of generosity toward the Jesuit schools, when Phelan died in 1930, the terms of his will provided another fifty thousand dollars to his *alma mater* and a similar bequest to Santa Clara.[42] Irishwomen Bertha Welch, Mary Horgan, and Mrs. Charles Harney were also devoted friends of the Jesuits and gave substantial donations to the San Francisco college. The names of many of the buildings at Santa Clara University and the University of San Francisco (formerly St. Ignatius College) permanently record this history of Irish benefaction to the Catholic colleges. When St. Ignatius launched a fund-raising campaign in 1919, Irish Americans contributed generously, and their efforts were given a boost by the world's most famous Irish tenor, John McCormick. Not only did McCormick entertain the guests by singing at the inaugural banquet, he also donated a check for a thousand dollars to the campaign.[43] The Jesuits of St. Ignatius also tried to tap San Francisco's enthusiasm for the Irish struggle against England by planning a reception for Eamon de Valera during his visit to the city in 1919. Although de Valera's purpose was to raise funds for the Irish Republic, the Jesuit event sponsored for him in Shell Mound Park was to solicit donations for their own college.[44]

The strictly limited curricular offerings at the Catholic colleges did not allow the variety of elective courses that later characterized higher education in America. During the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Irish sentiment was not institutionalized in the shape of formal courses on Irish history, literature, or language. Nevertheless, the ethos of the colleges was informed by a pervasive Irish identity. This Irish character was grounded in more than the ethnicity of many students, faculty, and administrators. It was defined by college holidays and rituals, informal celebrations, activities of student clubs, themes of dramatic productions and topics for rhetorical competitions, and the welcome extended to campus guests and visiting speakers. Campus publications unselfconsciously included Irish poems and articles about Ireland. At Santa Clara, this Irish identity was symbolized by a large painting of St. Patrick, paired with one of St. Ignatius, flanking the main altar of the Mission Church.[45]

Sympathetic faculty encouraged students to study Irish themes, and student essays and speeches frequently expressed strong nationalist feelings. When students recounted Irish history in school essays and graduation speeches, these young Irish Americans doubtlessly reflected the sentiments of their immigrant families. But these were reinforced and strengthened by college mentors such as John Bernard Quinlan of Saint Mary's College, a native of Tipperary, a former Fenian, and an out-

spoken critic of landlord evictions of Irish tenants. For them, Ireland's past was "the story of the mighty deeds of her sons and the wisdom of her sages; a story crimsoned with the blood of patriots true and tried." It was a chronicle of England's "long-continued effort to destroy the nationality and extinguish the liberty-loving spirit of the Irish people."[46] In ornate and impassioned language, befitting a fresh college graduate at the turn of the century, John P. Callaghan of Saint Mary's College recounted the sad experience of Irish youngsters schooled in a foreign tongue. "Irish words were declared contraband, and the bright-eyed boy who unwittingly lisped in the broad, mellifluous Keltic of his fathers, was subjected to condign punishment by the heartless pedagogue who wielded the birchen scepter."[47] Clearly, student prose echoed both the polemical style and the ardent patriotism of their nationalistic sources.

During the 1880s and 1890s, Irish-American students naturally equated Ireland's struggle for autonomy with the American revolutionary tradition. "Her fight is the fight of humanity—the battle of human rights—a battle for the principle on which this great republic was founded—the right of the people to make their own laws, in their own parliament."[48] The colleges celebrated the centenary of the 1798 United Irishmen Rebellion with school events that demonstrated student identification with a common Irish heritage. At Saint Mary's College, for example, Leo Tormey concluded a special school assembly with a stirring and comprehensive denunciation of British policy in Ireland: "The day is not far distant when haughty Albion, crushed by the weight of guilt, shall crumble to her ruin." A bloody defeat of the redcoats would ensure the victory of the principles of the heroes of "The '98," and at long last "the glorious harp and shamrock, glowing with thrice its former luster, will wave again in College Green, upheld by a true and generous people."[49]

Irish sentiment at the colleges also took the form of more light-hearted entertainment featuring student talent. Popular vaudeville shows as a matter of course featured Irish poems and Irish-American songs like "My Irish Molly O."[50] Theatrical productions were a staple of Jesuit education, and the campus efforts often reflected the Irish interest of faculty and students. During the early years of the twentieth century plays performed at Santa Clara included *The Limerick Boy, The Irish Attorney, Paddy Mill's Boy, Robert Emmet,* and *The Shamrock and the Rose*. Some of these suffered from the stage-Irish humor and phony brogues typical of the period. Other performances, however, imitated the theatrical experiments in contemporary Ireland, dramatizing important incidents in Irish history and evoking Irish nationalist aspirations. The printed programs for plays commemorating the 1798 rising contained excerpts from Robert Emmet's last speech and poems by Thomas Moore. Audiences as large as two thousand persons cheered the patriotic sentiment of the plays, and the local press praised the performances of "the brilliant boys of the college."[51]

At all the colleges, one of the major festivals of the year was St. Patrick's Day. The day's celebrations, which continued until after World War II, might include an Irish play, as well as jigs and reels, Irish songs by soloists and chorus, and patriotic speeches and sporting events.[52] The St. Patrick's

Day events on the Santa Clara campus were particularly elaborate under the presidency of Richard A. Gleason, S.J. A special publication records the events, beginning with Solemn High Mass, a banquet at noon, an orchestra playing Irish melodies, poems, songs, Father Gleason's address to the faculty and students, and a special visit to the campus of representatives of the Ancient Order of Hibernians. Included in the printed program was a nationalistic article by C. F. Deeney, S.J., which, replete with high-minded and idealistic language about Ireland's mission in the world, was remarkably similar to the contemporary nationalist rhetoric of Patrick Pearse. But there was also a distinctly American flavor to the celebration. Another faculty essay in the printed program applauded the athletic prowess of Irish-American sportsmen, and the day concluded with a thoroughly American activity—a baseball game between Santa Clara and Stanford.[53]

Irish and Irish Americans were welcome visitors at the Catholic colleges and perhaps none more so than that outspoken defender of the Catholic Church, Father Peter Yorke. He was immensely popular at the three colleges where he gave stirring addresses to the students on issues of the day and was a frequent guest at dinners with faculty and senior students. St. Ignatius College honored Father Yorke in 1896 with a formal reception in recognition of his defense of Catholic doctrine. To the students and faculty of St. Ignatius, Yorke fought the righteousness fight, and his speeches and hard-hitting newspaper articles made him a hero. Saint Mary's also had a special place in his affections, and according to the Christian Brothers' historian, he was "almost worshipped" by the Brothers.[54] A number of the Saint Mary's faculty contributed articles to Yorke's newspaper, *The Leader*. Brother Benedict, like Yorke himself a champion of the Irish language, published his columns in Irish, insisting that in an independent Ireland the old language should be restored as the popular tongue and "only patriots should be tolerated."[55] The Brothers' Irish enthusiasm and Saint Mary's continued service to working-class Catholics, particularly the sons of Irish immigrants, appealed to Yorke's patriotic and egalitarian instincts.

In Father Yorke, the three Bay Area campuses gained a self-appointed champion. The Catholic colleges were confident in their mission to graduate students of outstanding moral character who adhered firmly to the faith of their fathers, but they had reason to be defensive about their size, their academic quality, and their facilities. These increasingly paled when compared to the expanding University of California and well-endowed private colleges such as Stanford University. As early as the economic depression of the 1870s, Brother Justin of Saint Mary's College pointed out the erosion of the school's Catholic middle-class clientele and the lure of the public institutions. In his mind, all too many parents were sending their children to the public schools. After a generation of integration and assimilation, Father Yorke feared the same result and sprang to the defense of the Catholic colleges. At the Saint Mary's commencement soon after the turn of the century, he launched a vigorous attack against what he considered the presumption of Benjamin Ide Wheeler, president of the University of California, and President David Starr Jordan of Stanford University. Against Stanford's claims to a superior fac-

ulty, Father Yorke boasted (to what must have been a surprised but highly appreciative audience), "It is far more likely that St. Mary's College . . . has the superior staff."[56] Stanford's rich curriculum, which allowed students early specialization, was dismissed as poor pedagogy when contrasted with the firm and consistent moral and intellectual formation provided by the Catholic colleges. As for the public institution at Berkeley, Yorke insisted that Catholic parents were right to be distrustful of a university that excluded Catholics from its faculty and Board of Regents. Yorke dismissed the increasing number of Catholic parents who sent their children to the secular universities as "flunky-Catholics."[57]

With their limited curricular offerings and seminary-like discipline, the young men at the Catholic colleges were often isolated from the cultural mainstream. For that reason alone, foreign visitors were welcome. Irish visitors in particular found an eager audience for their message at the Catholic colleges. Visiting Catholic clergy, like the bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise who spoke at St. Ignatius and the other colleges in 1878, were enthusiastically received.[58] The students and faculty at Santa Clara gave an ecstatic welcome to General Gideon Joubert, of the Orange Free State, who had fought against the British army during the Boer War. For Irish nationalists, that conflict had become a symbolic contest for the rights of small nationalities, and the young cavalry officer, with his slight limp from a war injury, made a dramatic impact on the students and faculty. They cheered the Transvaal flag and responded with "thunderous applause" to Joubert's denunciation of British imperialism.[59]

Two of the most distinguished Irish visitors to the campuses were Douglas Hyde, the founder of the Gaelic League, and W. B. Yeats, the poet, nationalist, and principal architect of the Abbey Theater. Both men received enthusiastic receptions as champions of Irish literature and Gaelic culture, and their visits attracted large crowds to the colleges. Yeats was hosted by San Francisco's former mayor and St. Ignatius College graduate, James Duval Phelan. Accompanied by a distinguished group of Irish Americans from the city, Phelan chauffeured Yeats to Santa Clara and to a tumultuous welcome by students, faculty, priests, and civic dignitaries who crowded the stage. The college band played Irish airs and a student, Gerald Beaumont, welcomed the nationalist poet with his own patriotic verses:

> Well hast thou wrought, O son of Moore,
> With thrilling voice and mystic pen,
> To raise thy people, crushed and poor,
> To a dearer place in the hearts of men.

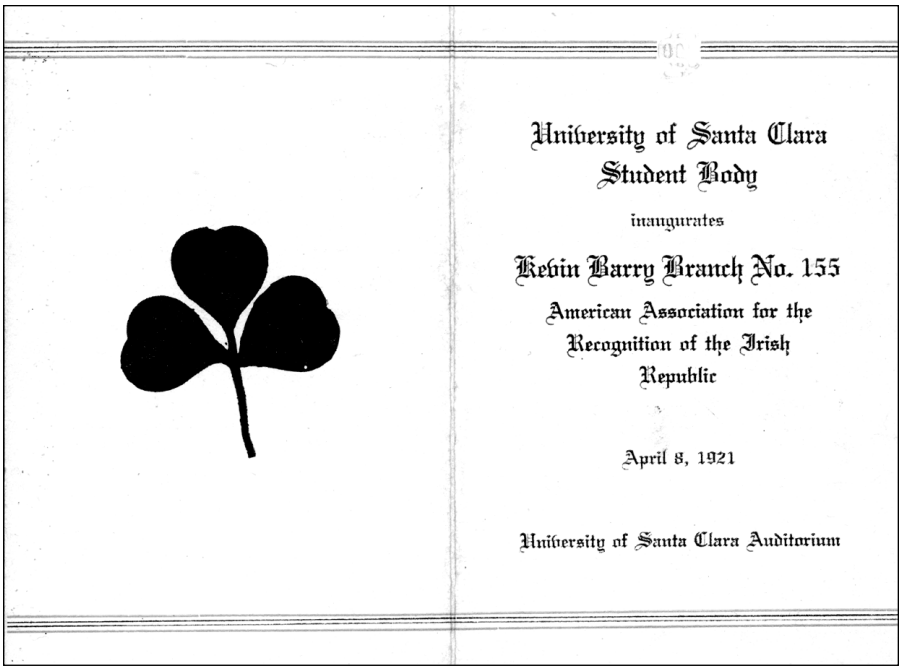
Never at a want for words, in a two-hour speech Yeats traced the revival of the Gaelic language and the development of Irish theater, while emphasizing the importance of American support for Ireland.[60]

During his visit to St. Ignatius and Santa Clara in 1906, two years after Yeats's tour, Dr. Douglas Hyde, later to become the first president of Ireland, pleaded for the rescue of recent Gaelic literature and for the survival of the language itself. Under huge Irish flags decorating the stage at Santa Clara,

Hyde spoke movingly of a native literature that was dying out because of the loss of priceless manuscripts. He concluded by expressing the hope, "Our half million of Irish speakers shall never grow less, but continue to hand down for the delight of multitudes in a free and prosperous Ireland of the future that speech and accents of a great and historic past."[61]

During the Anglo-Irish war of 1919–1921, sentiment at the Catholic colleges was predictably on the side of the Irish David against the Imperial British Goliath. The *Ignatian* and Saint Mary's *Collegian* featured poems and essays glorifying the enduring spirit of rebellion in Ireland and the heroes who had given their lives in the good fight. At Santa Clara, President Timothy Murphy, S.J., actively endorsed the Irish struggle on behalf of the Jesuit college. Of all the Santa Clara administrators, Murphy was probably the most direct and outspoken when it came to Ireland's struggle for independence. He "flayed Great Britain for her centuries of tyrannical oppression" and questioned the "racial loyalty" of Irish Americans who remained indifferent to the appeal for funds to free Ireland. Evoking the memory of the American soldiers who fought and died for liberty during the recent Great War, Murphy demanded the same right for Ireland.[62] In spring 1920, the school sponsored a collection for the American Commission on Irish Independence. Setting the example for others, Father Murphy opened the drive with a contribution of a thousand dollars from Santa Clara College. Students manned tables around the auditorium and collected hundreds of dollars from the sale of Irish bonds. The young men at St. Ignatius College were equally enthusiastic and, mobilized by Maurie Conklin, an energetic sophomore nicknamed "the Sunset Sinn Feiner," launched an Irish Bond drive. Vincent Hallinan, later to have a distinguished career as a leading San Francisco attorney, became an officer in the Irish Bond Club, delivered public speeches, and wrote poems and essays in the campus publications espousing Ireland's struggle for freedom after "seven hundred years of torture."[63] The 1921 yearbook proudly recorded the collection of $1,250 at St. Ignatius College to help Irish victims of "the barbarous warfare waged by the tyrannical British."[64]

When Terence MacSwiney starved himself to death in an English prison, his self-sacrifice struck a responsive chord in the impressionable young men at the Catholic colleges. His action immediately became the theme for patriotic tributes in the Saint Mary's *Collegian.* In an article entitled "Ethics of the Hunger Strike," the author, Matthew J. Dooley, claimed MacSwiney as an Irish martyr, inspired by both patriotism and religious zeal. His death had riveted world attention on English despotism, renewed Irish morale, and refuted Britain's unlawful authority. To the student author, MacSwiney was a victim of the same English cruelty and hypocrisy that had driven many students' parents and grandparents to find refuge in America.[65] As the Anglo-Irish conflict continued, student denunciations of English policy in Ireland became even more strident. The execution of Kevin Barry, a young student from a sister Jesuit school in Dublin, made a particular impact at the two Bay Area Jesuit campuses. At Santa Clara, students honored the young Irish patriot by founding the Kevin Barry Branch of the American Association for the Recognition of the Irish Republic. Father Joseph Sullivan, one of the Je-



University of Santa Clara
Student Body
inaugurates
Kevin Barry Branch No. 155
American Association for the
Recognition of the Irish
Republic

April 8, 1921

University of Santa Clara Auditorium

Introduction . . Rev. T. L. Murphy, S. J.

"WE OURSELVES"

A Drama of the present time among the hills of Tara

Act 1---A Cobbler's Shop.
Act 2---The Same.
Act 3---The Hills of Tara.

CAST

Jerry O'Callaghan . .	Emmet Daly '23
Larry Ryan	Arthur Saxe '24
Myles O'Malia . . .	James Comer '24
Paddy Nolan . .	Michael Dunne '24
Jack Riley . . .	Francis Smith '24
Sergeant Bullman R. I. C. .	George Ryan '24
Constable O'Connell R. I. C. .	J. Jackson '23
Tommy McDonald . . .	Robert Shields '24
Mickey Dolan . . .	Delwin Brunetti

Cast---(Continued)
The Irish Volunteer Army:

Floyd Regan '24	R. McCauley '24
Francis O'Shea '22	H. Robidoux '24
Louis Lettunich '24	J. M. Murphy '24
E. L. Driscoll '24	M. Dunne '24
R. Driscoll '24	F. Smith '24
J. Dempsey '24	A. Saxe '24
J. O'Brien '24	E. Daly '23
H. Maloney '23	J. Comer '24

America's Obligation, George A. Nicholson '16
Star Spangled Banner . Student Body
Declaration of Independence . . . . James B. O'Connor '20
Santa Clara and Ireland, Charles R. Boden '23
CONFERRING OF CERTIFICATES
Soldiers of Erin . . Student Body
"The Cause" . . Rev. P. C. Yorke
Anthem . . . Student Body

Figure 4-3 *Photo credit: Santa Clara University Archives.*

suit administrators, organized "the best brains among the students in order to propagate and spread the truth about Ireland," and the school sponsored a huge rally, including a speech by Father Yorke, demanding recognition of the Irish Republic.[66]

After the controversial Anglo-Irish Treaty in 1921, campus opinion quickly followed the lead of the Catholic hierarchy in Ireland and accepted the Free State. There were occasional expressions of sympathy for the Republicans, but with the end of the dramatic military conflict, attention to Ireland waned. Student interest in events in their ancestral Irish homeland ceased being a matter of immediate concern on the Catholic campuses. Like the American nation as a whole, during the 1920s and 1930s the students turned their attention to issues and concerns closer to home.

While the Catholic men's colleges enthusiastically celebrated the Irish heritage of their students and faculty, and even displayed Irish flags alongside the Stars and Stripes at some official college functions, by contrast, none of the Catholic men's colleges was particularly interested in honoring California's Spanish or Mexican traditions. Hispanic names appear in the first roster of students at St. Ignatius College, and early on Santa Clara had encouraged young native Californios to enroll and officially patronized societies for Spanish-speaking students and others interested in Hispanic culture. But the Santa Clara

University historian notes that overall Santa Clara made little effort to appreciate or preserve the local culture.[67] The state's Mexican heritage was largely ignored except for occasional theatrical productions, evoking romanticized visions of the California past, and the mission revival architecture of some campus buildings. Despite the existence of a substantial Mexican-American community in the Bay Area, there were relatively few students of Hispanic ancestry at the colleges.

Long before the days of political correctness, the young Irish Americans who gloried in their own Irish heritage freely traded good-natured barbs with students of other ethnic groups. While class rosters and yearbook photographs reveal very few Asian Americans, Hispanics, or African Americans enrolled in the colleges, the other European-American students provided ready foil. The editors of the St. Ignatius College yearbook, for instance, talked lightheartedly about the campus "Irish-Wop" intramural football game.[68] Well into the 1940s, Jesuit novices, the future professors at St. Ignatius and Santa Clara, played baseball games matching "the Irish versus the world." Ethnic pride took the relatively harmless form of boasting about the blessing of being Irish rather than some other nationality. For Irish-Americans students, there was an implicit and easy identification of being Irish with being American. In the Saint Mary's student newspaper, for example, Edward McGlade compared the "brilliant" Irish quite favorably with "temperamental" Latins, "phlegmatic" Germans, and "stolid" Scandinavians. And although the author acknowledged that the country needed "all good citizens, no matter from whence they come . . . ," he boasted, "The Irishman in America comes about as close to the requirements of an ideal citizen as . . . is possible. . . ."[69]

Humor could sometimes become callous, however, and pride occasionally gave way to arrogance. Disregarding the fact that many of them were themselves sons and grandsons of immigrants, Irish-American students at the Catholic campuses were not immune to the racial stereotyping and periodic manifestations of xenophobia that were all too common in California society. Following the lead provided by St. Ignatius College's most distinguished alumnus, the influential Irish-American Senator James Duval Phelan, an editorial in the Saint Mary's *Collegian* summarily rejected the aspirations of Japanese immigrants and their families. Unlike the quiet and unassuming Chinese, who "seem abashed at the idea of vying with the Americans," the "little men from Japan" were aggressive and "ultra-obnoxious." "The Japanese is a foreign material that cannot assimilate the spirit of the American," the author insisted. With all the arrogance of an established proprietor, the young writer concluded, "The persevering little man from the land of the chrysanthemum must seek other climes."[70] Such condescension ill became the descendants of immigrants who had benefited from the social freedom and the economic opportunities of the Bay Area and California.

During the inter-war decades, Irish Americans on the West Coast, like their fellow citizens throughout the country, became passionate fans of that distinctive American pastime—collegiate sports. Competitive athletics of any kind had a strong appeal to the young men at the three Catholic colleges, and the rosters of most team sports were full of Irish names. During the 1920s and 1930s,

intercollegiate matches were to prove immensely popular with the public and the most effective means of gaining community support for the schools. Typical American sports dominated the scene, but it is not surprising that there was at least an ephemeral effort to introduce Irish games on the Catholic campuses. The Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) had been one of the formative forces in modern Irish nationalism, and many Irish immigrants had brought with them a love of traditional games. Among the Irish-born Christian Brothers at Saint Mary's, there were devotees of hurling, and Brother James Shanahan, a champion hurler from Tipperary, helped organize a college team made up of students and young Christian Brothers. As a result, hurling enjoyed a brief popularity on the Saint Mary's campus. Instruction manuals and equipment were brought from Ireland, and in 1934 the college team played against local Irish clubs. The games drew enthusiastic crowds of spectators to Ewing Field, near the present campus of the University of San Francisco. However, although the matches were appropriately "racy of the soil," in the best GAA tradition, injuries sustained by the student players quickly convinced college authorities to abandon the sport.[71]

The controlled violence of American football provided the small Catholic schools an unrivaled vehicle for excitement, publicity, and enthusiastic community support. Although American football had also been banned because of numerous injuries to players when it was first introduced to the local colleges, it had staged a triumphant return. Throughout the country, the inter-war years were the heyday of football at Catholic colleges. Intercollegiate competition gave the schools regional or even national prominence and conferred on them a distinction they often lacked as academic institutions. The spectacular success of Catholic teams such as Notre Dame's Fighting Irish undoubtedly provided the countless "subway alumni" a means of celebrating their ethnic and religious pride. But participation by Catholic colleges in intercollegiate football was also a way of refocusing immigrant interest and directing enthusiasm toward a demonstrably American activity. For supporters of the Catholic college teams, the gridiron could serve as a complement to the melting pot.[72]

Of the schools on the West Coast, Saint Mary's most successfully and sensationally blended American football and the campus's traditional Irish heritage. This was the work of the flamboyant Edward "Slip" Madigan. A former All-American lineman on Knute Rockne's championship Notre Dame team, Madigan arrived at the Saint Mary's campus, then located in Oakland, when the college's football fortunes were at their nadir. Under his direction during the 1920s and 1930s, Saint Mary's enjoyed its glory years on the football field. Self-confident, outgoing, ambitious, good-looking and fast-talking, a man with a sense of style, and a notorious self-promoter, Slip Madigan carefully cultivated a flamboyant and theatrical Irish persona. He provided good copy for sports writers, and Pat Frayne, of San Francisco's *Call-Bulletin,* coined the nickname "Galloping Gaels" for the Saint Mary's team, formerly called the Saints. With considerably more imagination than accuracy, the press described Madigan's Saint Mary's players as "Irish huskies from Butchertown, South City, and the valleys, who prayed out of the corner of their mouth."[73]

The Galloping Gaels nickname capitalized on the fame of Madigan's alma mater, and the coach frequently boasted that he intended to make Saint Mary's the Notre Dame of the West.[74] At the beginning of his career at Saint Mary's, the sobriquet was well earned because the college fielded a largely Irish squad. Madigan's 1923 roster included O'Rourke, Collins, Corrigan, O'Grady, O'Brien, Conlon, McVay, Tobin, Kelly, Rooney, and Farrell. With these players, he turned diminutive Saint Mary's into a football powerhouse. During the following years, Madigan's teams became more diverse as he aggressively recruited young Italians, Germans, Hispanics, Portuguese, and Slavs. Whatever the ethnic makeup of his team, the flamboyant Irish-American coach of the Gaels played the ethnic card conspicuously. On one road trip, he outfitted his football players in "Irish" uniforms—green silk jerseys with gold harps on the chests, green silk pants, green socks, and bright red helmets.[75]

Figure 4-4 Edward "Slip" Madigan, the professional Irishman who brought his Saint Mary's Gaels football teams to national attention. *Photo credit: Santa Clara University Archives, Henry Schmidt Photograph Album.*

So successful was Madigan in promoting the Gaels and himself that he became a national celebrity. A Hollywood movie would be based on his career, and as late as 1992, the country's most popular sports magazine wrote of the "wild Irishman who thrived in a circus atmosphere, the P.T. Barnum of football."[76] Madigan was reputed to be the best-paid football coach in the nation, and when the Gaels played Fordham in New York, Al Smith attended Madigan's parties and Joseph P. Kennedy sat on the Gael bench.[77] A standing joke at Saint Mary's was that SMC meant "Slip Madigan's College."[78]

Predictably, the Irish community enthusiastically supported the Saint Mary's Gaels. A *Call-Bulletin* cartoon quipped, "50 Million Irishmen Can't Be Wrong."[79] But the Gaels also became great favorites of Italian and other working-class Catholics of San Francisco. As one historian put it, for the Irish and the Italians, supporting Saint Mary's "was tantamount to a political and even a religious act."[80] When Saint Mary's played the powerful public universities, or Stanford and USC, the contests took on mythic proportions. According to Randy Andrada's history of Saint Mary's football, for working-class immigrants and their families, the Gaels became the symbolic champion of the little Catholic employee against the wealthy Protestant employer.[81] Although the argument may be exaggerated, Saint Mary's victories in Kezar Stadium during the bleak years of the depression doubtlessly provided faithful supporters of the Galloping Gaels ecstatic moments in which the little guy could defy the odds and win.

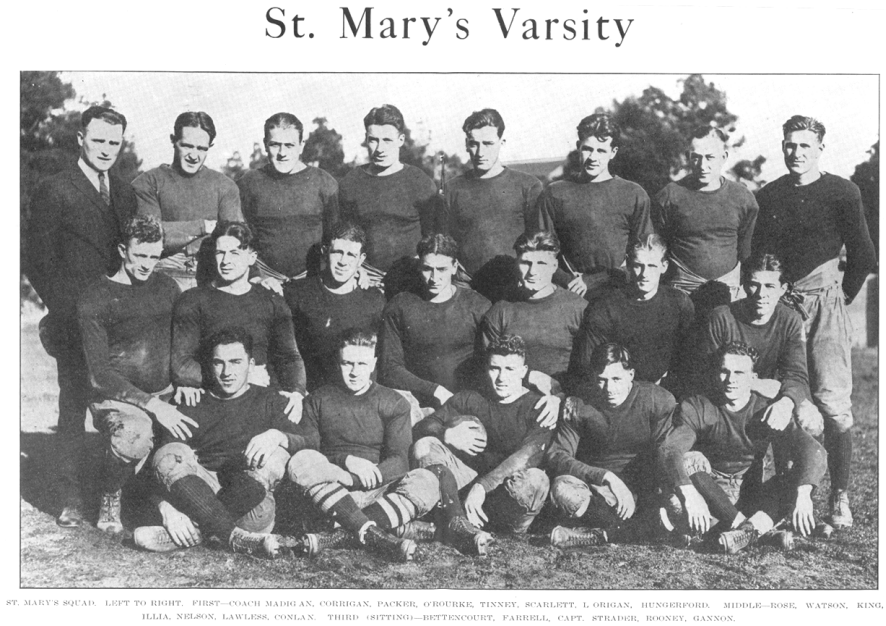


Figure 4-5 Coach Edward "Slip" Madigan and his 1924 Saint Mary's College Varsity Football Team, dubbed the Galloping Gaels. *Photo credit: Football Program Saint Mary's versus Santa Clara Football Game, Thanksgiving Day, 1924, Santa Clara University Archives, Football Programs Collection.*

Saint Mary's status as the Catholic football powerhouse on the West Coast declined in the late 1930s. By contrast, the Gael's major rival, Santa Clara, coached by the former Notre Dame All-American, Lawrence T. "Buck" Shaw, now gained a national reputation. The handsome, dignified, and gentlemanly Shaw was an Irish American of a different type from Madigan—neither a locker room orator nor a showman—but his Broncos could make as good a claim to the "Irish" mantle as Madigan's team.[82] For nearly twenty years, Saint Mary's colorful head coach had earned the school an immense amount of publicity—both good and bad. However, the college, with its small student enrollment and rapidly increasing debts, could no longer afford Madigan's flamboyant style and expensive salary. The coach was fired in 1939, and although the Gaels fielded some extraordinary teams even after World War II, the colorful era of the "professionally Irish" Slip Madigan was over.[83]

During the inter-war years the dominating presence of Irish Americans on the Catholic campuses, although gradually eroding numerically, was still strong. The University of San Francisco graduation lists in the late 1930s indicate that about half the B.A. degrees and a third of Commercial and Law degrees were awarded to young men with Irish surnames.[84] As the dominant ethnic culture, and with the prevailing Irish Catholic ethos at the three campuses, Irish-American youngsters had not required special campus organizations to bolster their status or provide them with a sense of ethnic or cultural security. The whole campus had, in effect, reflected their primacy. However, with increasing representation of the sons of other European immigrant groups, particularly Italians, ethnic student clubs became a staple of campus life. In the years before World War II, these clubs boasted a serious cultural commitment. At the University of San Francisco, both the Irish and the Italian clubs carried on philanthropic activities and sponsored programs on art, culture, and history. After the war, the clubs revived, still claiming a cultural purpose. Saint Mary's Irish club, Eire Oge, along with sponsoring picnics, football games, and dances, attempted to cultivate interest in the political and cultural life of

Ireland and periodically hosted Irish speakers and musical groups.[85] At the University of San Francisco, the Clanna Eireanna and the Irish Club, the successors to the earlier Padraic Pearse Club, likewise continued to claim their purpose was "to stimulate an interest in Irish culture and tradition."[86] But at all the campuses, the Irish clubs increasingly devoted their attention to intramural sports contests and the annual banquet to celebrate St. Patrick's Day.[87] Members of the Irish clubs marched in the St. Patrick's Day parade in San Francisco, along with the USF band, the Gael's pep band, and ROTC units from both Jesuit schools.[88] Eire Oge entered a float in the annual parade, and Saint Mary's students were usually asked to carry the statue of Saint Patrick along the parade route.

Ethnic pride provided a rationale for these student clubs, but pursuit of a good time was paramount. The description of the Irish Club in the Santa Clara's 1964 yearbook might easily apply to the Irish groups at all the Catholic campuses: "A Delegation of the Irish Element Promoting School Spirit and Devilment. . . ."[89] Biology was hardly the chief criterion for membership and, as the Irish got more distant from their immigrant roots, it is not surprising that the roster of campus Irish clubs included names like Kugler, Tomsic, and Sanchez, and Murphy and Dorney appeared as members of the Italian club. The spirit of the groups was certainly more celebratory than scholarly, and the clubs did little to break down the stereotypical identification of the Irish with drink. The 1959 University of San Francisco yearbook quipped that "the members of the Irish club are well known for their capacity—for enjoyment," while a few years later club members were photographed for the yearbook in front of a liquor store.[90]

The very existence of Irish clubs on the Catholic campuses was an acknowledgment of the fact that the colleges were no longer Irish preserves. By the 1950s and 1960s, Irish Americans were simply one among many ethnic groups enrolled in the Bay Area Catholic colleges. As before, there were plenty of Irish names in the roster of undergraduates, among student leaders, and on sports teams, but the day of the identifiably Irish campus was over. The frequently trivial nature of the club activities was an indication that no Irish organizations were actually needed on the campuses. The Irish had had several generations to integrate into American society, and they had done so with conspicuous success. Irish clubs were, in effect, an anachronism. By the advent of the 1970s, the Irish were thoroughly mainstreamed.

During these decades, the three colleges also changed rapidly in character. Their physical plants expanded, enrollments burgeoned, women students were admitted, and their academic curricula diversified and reflected more and more closely those of the major secular universities. In a more permissive atmosphere and with the abandoning of restrictive campus regulations, the Catholic colleges became increasingly similar in their daily round of activities to secular educational institutions. Just as the American Catholic hierarchy was no longer the monopoly of the Irish clergy, so too did the administration of the colleges became more ethnically inclusive. By the 1980s and 1990s, the presidents of the three colleges bore names like LoSchiavo, Rewak, Schlegel, Anderson, and Locatelli. Reacting to

the civil rights movement of the 1960s, the colleges recognized the obligation to recruit new ethnic minorities to their campuses. Santa Clara, for example, had matriculated no African-American student until 1949, and almost twenty years later, students of color made up only three percent of the total enrollment of the college.[91] The student population at the three Bay Area colleges now became increasingly more diverse. With its quintessential urban campus, the University of San Francisco led the way and its student body gradually reflected the successive waves of ethnic migration into the city. By the 1980s and 1990s, Hispanic, African-American, and Arab students had their own clubs on campus, as did students from Korea, Vietnam, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Norway. The Catholic colleges became very different institutions from the small, religiously protective enclaves that had for so long served the sons of Irish immigrants. At a considerably slower rate, these changes were reflected in the composition of their faculty.

Irish interest did not cease to exist on the Catholic campuses, any more than did the enrollment of Irish-American students, but it tended to be expressed in more specialized and academic forms. With diversification of the curriculum, there was now room for the occasional course in Anglo-Irish literature or Irish history. These courses were particularly popular among students of Irish descent and were usually taught by professors who themselves were of Irish heritage. The college libraries collected scholarly books and journals relating to Irish subjects, and these were supplemented by donations received from the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Irish Consul General, or private Irish-American donors.[92] But at none of the campuses did the Irish language constitute part of the regular foreign language offerings. At the University of San Francisco, for example, the General Catalogs in the early 1990s indicate that, in addition to the time-honored Greek and Latin, there were classes in French, Spanish, Italian, German, Japanese, Hebrew, and Mandarin Chinese—but no Gaelic language.

Santa Clara and Saint Mary's both sponsored special Irish programs that brought distinguished Irish scholars to the campuses. Santa Clara twice offered intensive term-long "Irish Institutes," combining undergraduate courses on Irish history, literature, and culture with a lecture series by distinguished Irish visitors such as Garrett FitzGerald and Thomas Kinsella. Saint Mary's College sponsored an Irish Week featuring readings of Irish poetry, historical lectures, and the staging of John Molloy's *Dublin's Seven Mortal Sins*.[93] Because of their shared Irish traditions, the conflict in Northern Ireland received considerable attention at the three colleges. But though the long struggle for a free and unified Ireland had been a paramount interest early in the century, attention was now primarily concerned with issues of religious and political discrimination. Concern for the blatant violations of human rights in Northern Ireland was a manifestation of the schools' strong institutional commitment to social justice in all areas of the world. The administration at Saint Mary's College made its opposition to paramilitary violence in Northern Ireland quite clear when the regional president of Northern Aid was selected as Grand Marshall of San Francisco's St. Patrick's Day parade. Saint Mary's students were forbidden to participate.[94] The University of San Francisco recognized John Hume's

leadership in the nonviolent struggle for civil rights in Northern Ireland by awarding him the St. Thomas More medal, and Santa Clara University conferred on him an honorary degree. The future Nobel Peace Prize winner was also in residence at Santa Clara for a week in 1992, discussing Northern Irish issues with students in undergraduate classes and with local civic and business leaders.

Just as the Irish community had successfully blended into the mainstream of California and American life, so too had the three Catholic colleges also become part of the mainstream of American higher education. The University of San Francisco, Saint Mary's College, and Santa Clara University, while continuing to proclaim their traditional Catholic identification and maintaining some distinctive academic aspects in their curricula, had evolved into complex modern institutions of higher education. Late in the twentieth century, each of the colleges could boast competitive academic standards, attractive residential campuses, highly trained and predominantly lay faculties, ethnically and religiously diverse student clienteles, a wide array of specialized majors, and respectable graduate and professional programs. But even though much had changed at the Catholic colleges, there was a very real consistency in policy. By the end of the twentieth century, the same institutions that had once served the sons of Irish immigrants so well now welcomed a new, ethnically diverse student population equally ambitious to pursue the American dream.

Notes

1. Gerald McKevitt, S.J., *The University of Santa Clara, A History 1851–1977* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1979), 18.
2. John Bernard McGloin, S.J., *California's First Archbishop: The Life of Joseph Sadoc Alemany, O.P., 1814–1888* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), 100–101.
3. Brother Matthew McDevitt, "The History of St. Mary's College (1863–1963)," 52–53. Typescript, Saint Mary's College Archives.
4. McGloin, *California's First Archbishop,* 169.
5. R.A. Burchell, *The San Francisco Irish, 1848–1880* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), 3–4.
6. Brian J. Godfrey, *Neighborhoods in Transition: The Making of San Francisco's Ethnic and Nonconformist Communities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 73–77; Burchell, *San Francisco Irish,* 3–8.
7. Burchell, *San Francisco Irish,* 161–168, 175; McGloin, *California's First Archbishop,* 151–154.
8. For reasons of space, this essay does not include the Catholic colleges for women in the San Francisco Bay Area.
9. Joseph W. Riordan, S.J., *The First Half Century of St. Ignatius Church and College* (San Francisco: H. S. Crocker, 1905), 30.
10. Riordan, *First Half Century,* 41.
11. Riordan, *First Half Century,* 77–78.
12. John Bernard McGloin, S.J., *Jesuits by the Golden Gate: The Society of Jesus in San Francisco, 1849–1969* (San Francisco: University of San Francisco Press, 1972), 23; *University of San Francisco General Catalog, 1937–1938,* 8.
13. *Catalogue of St. Ignatius College, 1894–1895,* 5.
14. *Saint Ignatius College Catalog, 1899–1900,* 13.

15. The quotation was generously provided by Gerald McKevitt, S.J., from his manuscript "Brokers of Culture: Italian Jesuits in the American West, 1848–1919," forthcoming from Stanford University Press.
16. *California Christian Advocate,* 3 September 1874, cited in McGloin, *Jesuits,* 32.
17. Riordan, *First Half Century,* 138.
18. McGloin, *Jesuits,* 13.
19. McKevitt, *University of Santa Clara,* 40.
20. *Daily Alta California,* 8 July 1878.
21. *Daily Morning Call,* 3 July 1878.
22. Unidentified newspaper of 3 July 1878, cited in Riordan, *First Half Century,* 217.
23. *Evening Bulletin,* 8 July 1878; *San Francisco Call,* 2 July 1878, cited in Riordan, *First Half Century,* 215–216.
24. *Daily Alta California,* 8 July 1878; McGloin, *California's First Archbishop,* 14, 294–296.
25. The white laborers were further encouraged by Kearney's guarantee that the president of St. Ignatius had agreed that "the Sand-lot . . . might select a man to watch these people, and see that they didn't put in a single brick that was made by Chinese labor." *Daily Alta California,* 8 July 1878. One of these contested bricks from the Van Ness and Hayes building, ironically identified by a cross on one surface, is preserved in the Archives of the University of San Francisco.
26. Ronald Eugene Isetti, F.S.C., *Called to the Pacific: A History of the Christian Brothers of the San Francisco District, 1868–1944* (Moraga, CA: Saint Mary's College, 1979), 7.
27. McGloin, *California's First Archbishop,* 196, 203.
28. *San Francisco Herald,* 21 March 1860, cited in McDevitt, "History of St. Mary's College," 19.
29. McDevitt, "History of St. Mary's College," 8–17.
30. *Daily Alta California,* 19 August 1868.
31. Unidentified newspaper clipping, Clipping File, vol. 1, Saint Mary's College Archives.
32. Isetti, *Called to the Pacific,* 66.
33. Isetti, *Called to the Pacific,* 36.
34. *Daily Alta California,* 19 August 1868.
35. *San Francisco Illustrated Jolly Giant,* 1 October 1873, cited in Isetti, *Called to the Pacific,* 39.
36. *Pastoral Letter of the Bishops of the Province of San Francisco to the Clergy and Laity of Their Charge* (San Francisco: P. J. Thomas, 1882).
37. For a thorough discussion of the controversy surrounding the classical program at Saint Mary's College, see Isetti, *Called to the Pacific,* 28–36, 110–168. The official historian of Santa Clara University notes that of the several thousand students attending the college during its first half century, fewer than a hundred graduated with the Bachelor of Arts diploma. A member of the Jesuit faculty at St. Ignatius complained to one of his superiors that the traditional curriculum did not serve the needs of the school's clientele. "Oh what a waste of time are Latin and Greek for so many students that I now see working for a living—as grocer, butcher, and who knows what else." Cited in McKevitt, "Brokers of Culture."
38. William P. Leahy, S.J. *Adapting to America: Catholics, Jesuits, and Higher Education in the Twentieth Century* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1991), 42–43.
39. The *Ignatian* of 1925, for example, indicates that of the forty senior law students at St. Ignatius College, twenty-seven had easily identifiable Irish surnames, as did half of the seniors in arts and science.
40. *Saint Ignatius College, Bulletin of the Division of Arts and Sciences,* 1928.
41. *Ignatian,* 1925, 40.

42. James P. Walsh and Timothy J. O'Keefe, *Legacy of a Native Son: James Duval Phelan and Villa Montalvo* (Los Gatos, CA: Forbes Mill Press, 1993), 250–251.
43. McGloin, *Jesuits,* 104–105.
44. *San Francisco Chronicle*, 19 July 1919.
45. McKevitt, *University of Santa Clara*, 16.
46. Unidentified newspaper clipping, Clipping File, vol. 2, Saint Mary's College Archives.
47. Unidentified newspaper clipping, Clipping File, vol. 2, Saint Mary's College Archives.
48. Unidentified newspaper clipping, Clipping File, vol. 1, Saint Mary's College Archives.
49. Unidentified newspaper clipping, Clipping File, vol. 1, Saint Mary's College Archives.
50. Henry Walsh, S.J., "Annals of Santa Clara," part 1, 332. Unpublished typescript, Santa Clara University Archives.
51. *San Jose Daily Mercury*, 17 March 1904.
52. Saint Patrick's Eve Programs, 1900 and 1904; Entertainment in Honor of St. Patrick, 16 March 1924, Events File, Santa Clara University Archives.
53. The College Press, vol. 1, no. 7. Program of Events, 17 March 1908. Santa Clara University Archives.
54. Isetti, *Called to the Pacific,* 230.
55. Unidentified newspaper clipping, Clipping File, vol. 2, Saint Mary's College Archives.
56. Newspaper clipping from *The Call,* Clipping File, vol. 2, Saint Mary's College Archives.
57. James P. Walsh, "Peter C. Yorke: San Francisco's Irishman Reconsidered," in James P. Walsh, ed., *The San Francisco Irish, 1850–1976* (San Francisco: Irish Literary and Historical Society, 1978), 43–45.
58. Riordan, *First Half Century,* 213.
59. *San Jose Mercury and Herald,* 18 September 1904, clipping in Santa Clara University Scrapbook, 1904–1921, Santa Clara University Archives.
60. "Literary Lecture" Program, 29 January 1904, Events File, Santa Clara University Archives; *San Jose Daily Mercury,* 30 January 1904.
61. *The Semi-Weekly Journal,* 17 March 1906, clipping in Santa Clara University Scrapbook, 1904–1921, Santa Clara University Archives; *San Jose Daily Mercury,* 17 March 1906.
62. *The Journal*, 4 March 1920, clipping in Santa Clara University Scrapbook, 1904–1921, Santa Clara University Archives.
63. *Ignatian,* 1920, 77–84.
64. *Ignatian,* 1921, 87.
65. Matthew J. Dooley, "Ethics of the Hunger Strike," *Collegian,* October 1920, 5–6; December, 1920, 102–103.
66. Clipping in Santa Clara University Scrapbook, 1904–1921, 166, Santa Clara University Archives; see also McKevitt, *University of Santa Clara,* 186.
67. McKevitt, *University of Santa Clara,* 39.
68. *Ignatian,* 1928, 148.
69. Edward M. McGlade, "The Irish in America," *Collegian,* March, 1916.
70. *Collegian,* October, 1920, 20.
71. Patrick J. Dowling, *Irish Californians: Historic, Benevolent, Romantic* (San Francisco: Scottwoll Associates, 1998), 406–408.

72. A much more critical assessment of the celebrity of football on Catholic campuses is offered by Edward G. Power, *Catholic Higher Education in America, A History* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1972), 278–280.
73. *The Coast,* December, 1939, 22, clipping in Madigan File, Saint Mary's College Archives.
74. Randy Andrada, *They Did It Everytime: The Saga of the Saint Mary's Gaels* (San Francisco: Powder River Publishing, 1975), 3–7, 46, 56; Isetti, *Called to the Pacific,* 333.
75. Andrada, *They Did It Everytime,* 135.
76. *Sports Illustrated,* Fall, 1992, 96, Madigan File, Saint Mary's College Archives. The film, starring John Wayne and directed by Michael Curtiz, was *Trouble Along the Way*.
77. Andrada, *They Did It Everytime,* 104–117.
78. Isetti, *Called to the Pacific,* 338.
79. Andrada, *They Did It Everytime,* 50.
80. Isetti, *Called to the Pacific,* 336.
81. Andrada, *They Did It Everytime,* 53, 57, 64.
82. Art Rosenbaum, *San Francisco Chronicle,* 8 November 1972, clipping in L. T. "Buck" Shaw file, Santa Clara University Archives.
83. *The Coast,* December, 1939, 22, clipping in Madigan File, Saint Mary's College Archives. Despite the popularity of football and the publicity gained by Saint Mary's College and Santa Clara from their prowess on the gridiron, it has been argued that success came to the Catholic campuses at a cost. The emphasis on intercollegiate athletics and the investment of money and energy into sports programs may have been a shortsighted policy that undercut academic priorities. Saint Mary's College was forced to suspend payments on its bonds in 1934, and was sold at auction three years later. In 1932, the entire California Province could boast only one Jesuit who held a Ph.D. In a remark made of St. Ignatius College, but that might have been applied to any of the colleges, one Jesuit reported to the California Provincial: "We are only in our infancy in regard to what is expected of us for higher Catholic education. Year by year many of our most desirable students are compelled to enter godless universities because we are not yet able to meet their needs in certain higher courses." Leahy, *Adapting to America,* 36, 131. See also Power, *Catholic Higher Education in America*, 278–280.
84. *University of San Francisco General Catalog,* 1937–1938. St. Ignatius College changed its name to the University of San Francisco in 1930.
85. Undated press release [c. 1950] and flyers for concert of 7 March 1983, Eire Oge file, Saint Mary's College Archives. Members of the Irish club at Saint Mary's employed a variety of spellings for the title of their organization: Eire Og, Eire Oge, Eire Oghe.
86. *University of San Francisco General Catalog, 1968–1969,* No. 1, Vol. 42, 265.
87. *Don,* 1954, 39.
88. *San Francisco Foghorn,* 12 March 1954.
89. *The Redwood,* 1964, 190–191.
90. *Don,* 1959, 146.
91. McKevitt, *University of Santa Clara,* 300.
92. Program of Hibernian Collection Dedication Ceremonies, 4 May 1958, Hibernian file, Library Collection, Santa Clara University Archives; undated clipping, Eire Oge file, Saint Mary's College Archives.
93. Undated announcement, Eire Oge File, Saint Mary's College Archive.
94. *Collegian,* 9 March 1989.

Frank Quinn Remembers: Irish Oral History of the Mission District

Cecilia McDonnell*

The Chilean novelist Isabel Allende describes San Francisco's Mission District as a "cradle of interlocking lives," in which a mosaic of ethnic identities have coexisted since the Ohlone Indians ceded their settlement to Spanish colonists in the eighteenth century. The rich and colorful life of historian Frank Quinn, who was born and raised in the Mission District when it was a prodigal center of Irish-American culture, is a vivid microcosm of Allende's hypothesis. Although his primary career was in city government, his secondary avocation as an oral historian saw him devote over four decades of his life to archival and genealogical research of the Bay Area's Irish community, its settlement patterns, as well as its mosaic of celebrated luminaries, both social and political. A visit to his home in the Sunset began with a carefully indexed family tree whose period photos extended over generations of Quinns, Lannergans, and McDonnells and a cultural journey which stretched from the shores of post-Famine Conamara and the tenant farms of the Golden Vale to the lumber yards of Northern California. Icons revealing their umbilical links with the "old country" occupied pride of place beside family keepsakes in Quinn's front room, while the smell of freshly brewed tea from the kitchen proclaimed the opening scene in an age-old ritual of Irish hospitality. Both Frank and his wife Jessica Quinn were warm hospitable people, unpretentious about their gifts of folk memory and astute in their perceptions of the changes which have affected Irish-American life since their childhood in the 1920s.

Quinn's story began long before the 1906 earthquake focused world attention on San Francisco. Its genesis lies in the pasture lands of Cork's Golden Vale in a social milieu dominated by the Longuevilles and the St. Legers and immortalized in the drawing room prose of Elizabeth

*The author wishes to thank the Quinn family for their hospitality and for their permission to quote from Frank's book *Memories of Old San Francisco: Growing Up in the Mission District* (San Francisco Archives Publication No. 4, 1985). Frank Quinn died in October 2003.

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Bowen. Frank's father, Timothy Andrew Quinn, was born in the townland of Knockeenacurrig, close to the village of Kiskeam outside Mallow in North Cork, on 16 October 1885. The last of a family of nine, Timothy Quinn grew up in a household which had contributed its own share to the struggle for tenant proprietorship. His father had been a Land League activist during the 1870s, a family penchant which was not lost on Timothy Quinn's older brothers in the following decades. In a colonial cocoon of high-walled estates, lorded over by a resolute aristocracy and ceded eventually to land-hungry grazers, the opportunities available to the sons and daughters of small tenant farmers were hardly encouraging. Leaving his oldest brother to occupy the family farm on what was once an immense Longueville estate, Timothy Quinn headed for Queenstown in 1908 and immigrated to the United States. He eventually made his way to California where he found work as a lumberjack in the Feather River country. Six years afterwards, on 13 September 1914, he married Catherine McDonnell, a legal stenographer, whose grandfather Alexander McDonnell had immigrated from Magh Iorrus in the Conamara Gaeltacht in 1850. Timothy Quinn and Catherine McDonnell first met at a dance organized by the Knights of the Red Branch, which enjoyed the patronage of young Irish Americans during the early 1900s. The building which housed the Knights functioned as a social and cultural center for Irish communities in the Mission District and still stands today on Mission Street between 7th and 8th Streets.

Earning three dollars a day at Allen and Dettman lumber dealers on Islais Creek Channel, Timothy Quinn was considered to be well off by Irish working-class standards. Marriage, however, marked the end of Catherine McDonnell's paralegal career. The traditional social and economic mores of the day, which placed strict barriers between marriage and female employees, decreed that Catherine would now "settle down" to her new role as housewife and mother. It was in her family's three-storied Victorian house on Howard Street that Frank Quinn was born on 5 June 1915.

Frank recalled that his grandparents' seven-room flat was a spacious place, with ten-foot high ceilings and rooms which were filled with sunshine. The building contained a store at street level while upstairs the seven-room flat consisted of a parlor, three bedrooms, a dining room, a large pantry, and a kitchen where his grandmother cooked the family meals on a wood and coal stove. Howard Street, where he spent the first years of his life, was once an avenue of well-to-do merchant and professional families, but like most young families anxious to establish their independence, the Quinns moved to new quarters on 24th Street in early 1918. Young Frank's new surroundings added further to his growing skills of social observation.

Three-quarters of a century later, he retained vivid recollections of the corner stores, bustling street life, theaters, and door-to-door delivery men that constituted one of the busiest shopping districts west of Chicago. "We always took a walk down Mission Street. It did not

matter that Mission Street ran north or south. The walk was always *down.* And as far as we were concerned, Mission Street ran from 16th Street to Army Street. This eleven-block stretch of commerce was alive with people both by day and by night. For us there was never a need to venture downtown, for every need could be satisfied on Mission Street." Frank's memory retained litanies of Mission Street furniture stores (Lachman Bros. and Redlick-Newman's), jewelry stores (Granat Bros. and Aubert's Diamond Palaces), clothing stores (Columbia Outfitting Company and the Majestic Clothing Store), and an inordinate number of mortuaries, which he could reel off as if they were still just next door.

For theater enthusiasts, the Mission District was a mecca of stage shows and vaudeville delights in the early 1900s. In the days before the movies, live stage performances were the order of the day at the Roxie, the Cameo, and the Grand Old Victoria. Quinn recalled that the Wigwam Theater on Mission Street was one of the first in the district to feature motion pictures which were accompanied by an organist by day and an orchestra by night. "On Saturday afternoons, the Wigwam offered Uncle Eddie's Show which appealed to children. One stunt I remember was when Uncle Eddie brought children to the stage and had them eat crackers. The first child to whistle after consuming the soda and crackers won a prize."

The Roaring Twenties reached their zenith in the Mission District with the opening of the 3,500-seat El Capitan Theater in 1929. This magnificent building offered live stage acts as well as motion pictures. The Saturday afternoon show at El Capitan was the high point of the week for Quinn, who recalled the names of its emcees, chorus girls, and performers with the same enthusiasm as a Hollywood buff of today. "Going to the movies on Saturday afternoon was *de rigueur* for us. That was the day on which the serial was presented. The serial motion picture was a thriller. Presented in chapters, from week to week, each chapter ending with the hero or the girl in some impossible situation from which there seemed to be no escape. The film lured us back, week after week, to see how that perilous problem was solved."

Frank Quinn attended high school in the Mission District during the Depression era when extra money for entertainment was a rare line item in most young Irish families. However, schoolboy imaginations were not always found lacking when faced with deficits. Quinn recalled that "the theater demanded an admission fee, and our financial situation found us woefully lacking in the price of admission. On a balmy summer night, three of us made our way to the stage door alley of the El Capitan Theater off Capp Street. Our plan was to loiter in the alley, where there was an exit door from the theater. If we were lucky, a patron exiting from the show would provide us with the means of dashing inside. We would simply take advantage of the opened door and ignore the patron, and hope that no vigilant usher was nearby."

In 1921, at the venerable age of six, Frank Quinn started school at St. Peter's on Alabama Street, which was run by the Irish Christian Brothers and the Sisters of Mercy. Both orders en-

joyed a considerable reputation as educators at home in Ireland and among Irish communities overseas. In the pedantic scholarly atmosphere of St. Peter's, Quinn recalled that most of the nuns and brothers were either "Irish or pro-Irish." In a milieu where Irish republicanism was reinforced by flamboyant notables like Eamon de Valera and Father Peter Yorke, it was hardly surprising that in the Irish classrooms of the Mission—while the War of Independence raged back home—declarations of patriotism were extolled with pride, even by youngsters. Quinn's first venture into the world of political oratory came when he was a six-year-old schoolboy in St. Peter's when he gave a dramatic recitation of a poem detailing the daring rescue of six Fenian prisoners from an English penal colony in Australia. "Imagine a six-year-old freckle-faced redhead boy reciting: 'My ship is manned by Yankee tars and I'll sail her to hell with her jib-boom afire.' The result of my impassioned oratory was that the nun secured another nun to take charge of the class and, led by her, I went from classroom to classroom reciting my poem."

During the 1920s, Quinn's father was a member of several Irish societies in San Francisco, especially the Rebel Cork Society whose ranks were filled by hundreds of his countrymen (some of whom had refused to recognize the Irish Free State government in the wake of the Civil War). Accordingly, the Quinns enjoyed many of the social events which these societies organized, not least their Irish picnics and pageants which were held in Shellmound Park in Oakland. The Easter Rising of 1916 electrified Irish people throughout the United States. As far west as California, it was reenacted in Shellmound Park by military-style cadet units from the Bay Area's Irish societies. Although Frank Quinn was still young enough to take the "casualties" for real, he remembered, "The grandstand of the racetrack became the General Post Office. Men in civilian attire became the rebels couching defiantly behind make-believe walls. British troops, dressed in military uniforms, assailed the rebels' position. With my father holding me by the hand, I watched the mock war. I heard the crack of rifle fire. I saw British troops advance relentlessly. I saw them fall dead on the field. I witnessed the dead being carted off the field. Then, I saw the white flag raised and witnessed the Irish surrender."

While a new Ireland was unfurling six thousand miles away, the "Roaring Twenties" and the "Hungry Thirties" were set to leave a very different imprint on San Francisco's Irish communities. From 1919 to 1933, the 18th Amendment to the Constitution prohibited the sale of intoxicating liquor. The period was marked by an open contempt for the law and the inevitable closing of legalized saloons. The latter were replaced by camouflaged illegal establishments known as blind pigs, or speakeasies, where liquor was sold openly. Fronted by legitimate-looking grocery stores or tobacco shops, these blind pigs operated brazenly throughout San Francisco and especially the Mission District during Frank Quinn's youth. He recalled, "As a teenager, I had no difficulty in getting into these flourishing blind pigs although I did not drink. A shot of moonshine went for twenty-five cents—a shot being an ounce. As the depres-

sion of the 1930s deepened and money grew more scarce, the price in my neighborhood dropped to two shots a quarter."

When the Quinns moved to a new flat on the corner of 24th Street and Alabama during the depression, they found that their new quarters were above a thriving blind pig. This location led to a cozy business arrangement with the resident bootlegger, who agreed to pay half the family's rent in return for liquor storage space in their kitchen pantry. The well-hatched plan, however, was not altogether beyond the bounds of the law. Frank remembered,

> He was no bother to us. He simply would enter the kitchen by the back steps, take what he needed from the pantry, and be on his way. This clever situation insured the bootlegger against loss of his stock should he be raided either by the police or by the prohibition agents—more popularly known as Pro-Highs. One afternoon, when I was in grammar school, I came home by the back of our building. There was noise from the back of the flat, and I smelled a dreadful odor. When I got upstairs, I looked out the bedroom window to the narrow alleyway below and realized immediately what was taking place. The Pro-Highs had raided the bootlegger. They were busily engaged in destroying his stock in trade by smashing bottle after bottle on the unyielding concrete of the alleyway. I shall never forget the crashing of glass on pavement and the odor of that liquor. Our pantry was not touched however. The value of the arrangement was proven in the end.

Prohibition, he said, "made lawbreakers of many of us in that long-gone era that was legally dry but actually as wet as wet could be. Ignoring and flaunting the dry laws was a popular pastime. It even reached into the home. Many people took to brewing beer in the home. We were no exception."

While Quinn's disclosure of certain "home industries" during Prohibition may suggest that the Mission District was a law onto itself, nothing could be further from the truth. During the 1920s and 1930s, the San Francisco Police Department was a bastion of first-and second-generation Irish. He recalled that they ruled the streets of the Mission District with an iron hand and were as apt to don the role of good Samaritan and social worker as they were the role of law enforcer whenever the occasion arose. Unlike Chicago, the streets of San Francisco during Prohibition were controlled as much by the collective mentality of Irish immigrant mores as they were by the lawmakers in City Hall. The following episode, in Quinn's own words, is a case in point:

> This woman went up to a cop on the beat in 24th Street and she said, "My husband went into so-and-so's blind pig across the street, and he spent his entire week's wages of $35, and I want to get it back." So the policeman caught her by the arm and walked across the street and went into the blind pig. He went right up to the owner and said, "This lady's husband (he named him) was in here, and he spent his entire paycheck of thirty-five dollars here." And the proprietor said "No! He spent some money here, but he was already drunk when he came in." The policeman said, "Give her thirty-five dollars." The proprietor turned around, hit the cash register and put $35 on the bar. The cop wanted no trouble on his beat. They kept this town as clean as could be during

> Prohibition. You had no Chicago-style gangsters here. You could walk anyplace by night and have no fear of being robbed or mugged.

The 1930s were bleak years in America. As the shock of the Wall Street Stock Market Crash resounded across the country, fifteen-year-old Frank Quinn entered the grim world of commerce first as newspaper boy (selling the *San Francisco Call* on the corner of 18th and Folsom Streets) and later on as a butcher's boy in the Mission District. His workday at the meat market began taking orders before school. He returned in the afternoon to make deliveries in a 1927 Model T Ford and helped with the ritual of closing, "scraping the blocks, washing counters, raking sawdust, putting meat into the ice box, and generally getting the place ready for the morning. My wages were nine dollars a week. That was more than the going rate for a butcher boy."

As Roosevelt's New Deal unfurled feebly among a depressed and aggravated populace, Quinn graduated from St. Peter's High School in the Mission District. He was seventeen. It was May 1933, and the prospects of finding work were nil. He recalled,

> Men and women were being laid off from work at an alarming rate. It was an exercise in futility to search for work. Wherever I went, it was the same old story: "Kid, we're going to lay off so many employees this weekend." Local charities stepped into the breach, but their resources soon proved to be inadequate as the number of unemployed grew and grew. It was President Roosevelt's swift action that gave hope to those out of work. The Works Progress Administration and other government agencies created public works jobs that paid men and women eighteen dollars a week, . . . which was sufficient to support a family. However, I recall seeing tar paper shacks built in the desolate area of Islais Creek—shacks in which men found shelter against inclement weather.

Social and economic conditions in San Francisco's Skid Row (an area south of Market from Third to Sixth Streets) were especially desperate during the Great Depression. Quinn remembered seeing menus in the district offering three to four doughnuts and a coffee for as little as ten cents.

> I was once accosted by an old gentleman down on his luck who asked me for five cents for a bowl of soup. Startled, I asked him if it was actually possible to get a bowl of soup for five cents. He assured me that it was. I gave him the nickel. On another occasion something similar happened when my personal fortune amounted to the fabulous sum of fifty cents. I was on my way to the Victoria Theater on 18th Street when a young man stopped me and asked me for a dime. For a moment I hesitated. After all, I had only fifty cents. But I broke down and gave him ten cents. Without a word of thanks, he took the dime and ran directly across 16th Street to a restaurant. There was no doubt about his hunger. My conscience overcame me. I followed him into the restaurant and gave him fifteen cents more. My personal fortune was reduced to twenty-five cents, and my conscience rested easily. Admission to the Victoria Theater was fifteen cents. A milk shake at Mooney's on the way home was ten cents. I was well off.

Quinn's family could be counted among the more fortunate. The lumber firm of Allen and Dettman, where his father worked, retained all their employees by working them every other week. Despite the decrease in pay, this scheme safeguarded an income for the Quinns. To offset their losses, however, the family's connections managed to take care of their own. Frank's cousin was manager of the Civic Auditorium. Through his efforts, Frank was able to secure temporary jobs at events such as the annual auto show and dog show. As he says, "I was employed as a janitor and glad to be employed. The pay was good. Five dollars a day."

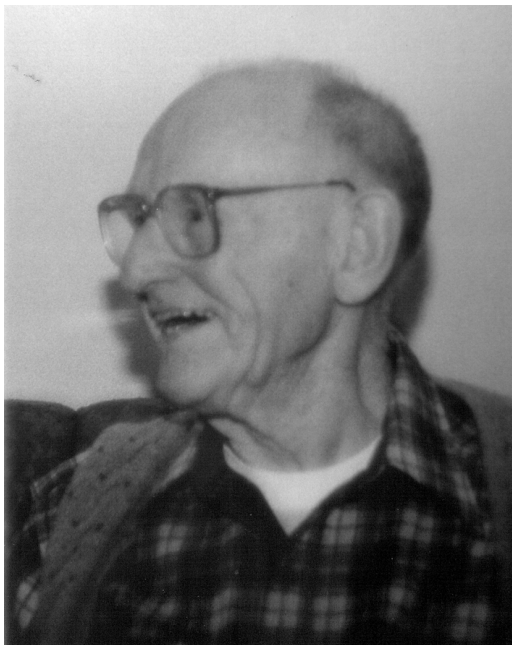

Figure 4-6 Frank Quinn reminiscing about the past. *Photo credit: Cecilia McDonnell.*

In 1935, together with thousands of others, Frank Quinn took a civil service examination for the Post Office Department, which was held at Galileo High School. The list of eligible candidates took a long time to be posted, but when it did, Frank discovered that he had passed high enough on the list of names to get a permanent job as a letter carrier. In 1936, he went to work for the Post Office. Apart from a tour of duty in the Pacific (also in the mail sector) during World War II, Frank Quinn spent his entire working life after 1936 working for the city of San Francisco. Prior to his "official" retirement, he became Registrar of Voters for the city and county of San Francisco. For a young Irish kid who began his working life as a newspaper boy and butcher's assistant during the depression, Quinn's story, in its own model manner, is a testament to human endurance and self-belief.

While Quinn may have retired from official city work, his life well into his eighties was still full of challenges and opportunities. In his seventies, he regularly took the bus from his Sunset home to one of San Francisco's many archive libraries, and he taught a local history course at the University of San Francisco. His courses were filled to capacity at each offering, and his unique teaching style was greatly admired by his students and colleagues at USF. Quinn was a regular visitor to Ireland since his first trip in the mid-1950s when he was curious enough to cross the border to see for himself the consequences of partition. On returning to his father's village of Kiskeam in Cork, he even paid an uninvited visit to Longueville House to see what remained of "the gang my father's people had to tip their caps to before they came to the United States." Very much a rebel Corkman in his own right, Frank Quinn had a finger on the pulse of Irish-American life. In 1993, he and his wife Jessica hosted a crew from KQED

and gave them a walking tour through the Mission District of their youth. Their debonair television appearance for a series on San Francisco neighborhoods was a classic exposé of oral history in the making. Televised many times during the past ten years, Quinn's walk "down Mission Street" exemplified much that is essential in the tapestry of Irish-American life in old San Francisco.