

IRISH PROTESTANTS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY MANCHESTER: THE TRULY INVISIBLE MINORITY?

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Studies of Irish migrants in nineteenth-century Britain have underlined the fact that the influx was very largely working-class and Catholic and have ignored the gender dimension. Research is gradually refining the picture, particularly with regard to gender (O'Sullivan 1-24) and, to a lesser extent, class (Foster 289-291), but the Protestant Irish migrant experience in Britain remains relatively neglected. In 1989 Lowe remarked: "Very little is known about Irish Protestants in Lancashire, or anywhere else in Britain" (Lowe 2). After twenty years little progress could be discerned: "Protestants remain largely invisible in the growing body of work on Irish migrants to England" (Morgan & Walter 171).

This, of course, is in sharp contrast to elsewhere in the Irish diaspora, where Protestant migrants of Ulster background in particular have attracted considerable attention in North America and the Antipodes (Akenson 53). Traditionally, the relative neglect of the Irish Protestant migrant in Britain has been put down to the inadequacies of the nineteenth-century census, with its omission of data on religion in Britain and the argument that the much less numerous Protestants integrated easily, thanks to their religion and their generally unionist politics (Morgan & Walter 171). Moreover, much of the work on Protestant migrants which has been done has concentrated on sectarian conflicts on Clydeside and Merseyside and the role of the Orange Order in mobilising Protestant Irish migrants in opposition to Catholicism and Irish home rule,¹ though some recent research has uncovered Irish Protestant elements elsewhere in Britain and has emphasised the welfare role of the Order² in helping them adapt to life in Britain. This chapter, based on a long-term study of nineteenth-century Irish migrants in the Manchester region, tries to tease out the Protestant element in the Irish migrant inflow with particular reference to two personal narratives and the role of the Orange Order.

It is hardly surprising that there are only vague estimates of Irish Protestant numbers in Britain. One authoritative source suggests that in the last quarter of the nineteenth century 20% of the estimated 1,500,000 Irish-born who arrived in England and Wales were Protestant, with particular concentrations in London, Glasgow and Liverpool (Connolly 232). In the case of Manchester, there are hints of Irish Protestants in the

1 A particular emphasis in McFarland on Scotland and Neal (*Sectarian Violence*) on Liverpool.

2 MacRaild (*Faith*) has detailed this dimension of the Order in work on the north-east of England and Cumbria.

city in the first decade of the nineteenth century, as demonstrated by the appearance of the Orange Order. The Order had been founded on 21 September 1795 following a clash at the Diamond crossroads near Loughall, Co. Armagh, between the Catholic 'Defenders' and the Protestant 'Peep O' Day Boys.' Each local lodge was to be authorised by a warrant and to consist exclusively of Protestants dedicated to uphold the Protestant religion in church and state (Haddick-Flynn 134-144). In the tempestuous times surrounding the 1798 rebellion in Ireland, the Order spread rapidly. It appealed not only to Irish Protestants, but also to soldiers in the British army and militia regiments stationed in Ireland and attracted by its religious outlook and loyalist politics. The first lodge in England was set up in 1798 when Colonel Stanley's First Regiment of Lancashire Militia returned to Manchester with warrant number 220 and in the next few years other returning regiments also established lodges in the city (Senior 151). The Order also began to attract local loyalists and Irish Protestant migrants who were to become the backbone of the movement in Britain (MacRaild, "Networks" 164). The lodges "were, in some respects, a cross between old comrades' associations, drinking clubs and 'King and Country' loyalist groupings" (Haddick-Flynn 204), though, as will be shown later, they also had a significant role as mutual assistance groups. Of the 35 civilian lodges found north of a line from Chester to Hull in 1811, 23 were in the Manchester region (Neal, "Manchester Origins" 14). In 1803 the first public Orange Order procession in England took place in Oldham on July 12, the anniversary of the victory of the iconic King William III over the Catholic King James II at the battle of the Boyne in 1690 (Haddick-Flynn 205). Such processions quickly became a defining feature of the Order, and in 1807 Manchester was the scene of the first clash between the Order and Irish Catholics in Britain.

The sequence of events was described by an indignant and uncomprehending local newspaper:

We are sorry to find that a portion of that spirit which has often disturbed the harmony of our sister country, exists in this part of the Empire. Monday last a body of Orangemen, as they are termed, paraded with their sashes and favours to hear divine service [...] when, on their return, a very serious and alarming affray took place between them and a body of the Greens, as they are called [...] The conflict was desperate [...] Let us hear no more of such disgraceful outrages – at which savages and Hottentots would blush. (*Cowdroy's Manchester Gazette* 18 July 1807).

Perhaps in response to this, the following year it was decided to organise the Lancashire lodges into England's first County Grand Lodge and then shortly afterwards to set up the Grand Lodge of the English Orange Institution, which was based originally in Manchester before it transferred to London in 1820 (Neal, "Manchester Origins" 18-19).

Overall, the total of Irish-born people in Manchester shadowed the general trend in England, reaching a total of 52,000 or 15.4% of the city's total in 1861 and declining steadily thereafter, though of course there were growing numbers of second and subsequent generations (Busted 9). When the parliamentary commissioners investigat-

ing the state of the Irish poor in Great Britain came to collect evidence in Manchester in January and February 1834, several witnesses hinted at an Irish Protestant presence, but only one ventured an estimate of numbers. Fr. Daniel Hearne, parish priest of St. Patrick's Church, which served Angel Meadow, the largest and most long-lasting Irish neighbourhood, gave evidence. He was widely acknowledged to have an unparalleled insight into local living and working conditions. He noted, "there are also a great many Irish Protestants in my district," but at this stage admitted that as for their numbers "there is no means of ascertaining" (*Report* 43). However, commission chairman George Cornwall-Lewis, who wrote the introduction to the final report, suggested that in 1833 there were about 35,000 Irish-born people in the city of which 5,000 (14.3%) were Protestant.³ Interestingly, when Fr. Hearne spoke at the city's St. Patrick's Day celebrations in March 1842, he estimated that "the Irishmen in Manchester, and their immediate descendants, numbered upwards of 70,000" and added, "there were upwards of 8,000 Irishmen who were not Roman Catholics," suggesting 11.5% were Protestant (*MG* 23 Mar 1842).⁴

At this time there were also some hints about the denominational make-up of the city's Protestant Irish. Up to mid-1845 Irish Presbyterians had worshipped in temporary premises, but in August that year the *Manchester Courier* reported: "The foundation stone of Trinity Presbyterian Church [...] for the use of the Irish Presbyterian Church assembling in the Corn Exchange was laid." The ceremony was conducted by the redoubtable Rev. Dr. Henry Cooke, champion of Irish Presbyterian orthodoxy and pan-Protestant political unionism. In his address he warmly praised the project as likely to have "a beneficial effect on young Irishmen from the north of that country, great numbers of whom came to Manchester for employment." It was reported that "behind the church, it is intended to erect school houses" (*MC* 16 Aug 1845). The project suggests a comfortable, prosperous element amongst the city's Protestant Irish, a point borne out by the first of the two personal narratives to be considered here.

The career of Mitchell Henry (1826-1910) indicates that those Irish Protestants with extensive personal wealth and family connections could not merely move easily within society in Britain, but could also enjoy several careers. Henry was second-generation Ulster Protestant, born in the fashionable Ardwick district of Manchester in 1826. His father Alexander was born in Loughbrickland, Co. Down, and his mother in Dromore. In 1805 his uncle founded A. & S. Henry, a Manchester firm specialising in the finishing, marketing and warehousing of cotton goods, which expanded into premises in six other cities. Henry was educated privately, at University College London, and at a medical school which eventually became part of Manchester University. Graduating FRCS in 1847, he set up a practice in London's Harley Street in 1848,

3 *Report* vii; Cornwall-Lewis gave no source for this figure.

4 The following sigla will be used throughout: *MG* (*Manchester Guardian*); *MC* (*Manchester Courier*); *MEN* (*Manchester Evening News*); *MCN* (*Manchester City News*).

and in 1857 was appointed a surgeon at Middlesex Hospital (*MG* 24 Oct 1910). In 1862 came his first change of career when, following the death of his father, he abandoned medicine and returned to become a partner in the family firm.

Three years later Henry embarked on a political career, facilitated by the fact that his father had been a prominent Manchester Liberal and M.P. for Lancashire South from 1847 to 1852. He failed to be elected for Woodstock in 1865 and was equally unsuccessful in Manchester in 1867 and 1868. The latter campaign was notable for two developments. On 10 October 1868 he launched *The Manchester Evening News*, as an election newsheet. Once the campaign was over, he sold it to the proprietors of the *Manchester Guardian*, who published it as a Liberal-leaning daily.⁵ A second development was Henry's growing emphasis on Irish issues. In 1867 he had referred to English 'errors' in the government of Ireland, reminding his audience that "he knew Ireland well, being attached to it by hereditary ties, and residing there for some part of every year" (*MG* 15 Nov 1867). His links to Ireland had been strengthened when in 1849 he married Margaret Vaughan of Dromore, Co. Down. As a keen angler he frequently visited west Galway, and this had led him to purchase a 13,000 acre estate from the Blake family. There he had constructed the splendid Kylemore Castle and became an improving landlord, spending heavily on wasteland reclamation and local schools. This led one supporter in the 1868 campaign to recommend him to voters on the basis of his "important business connections with Manchester, his intimate and personal knowledge of Ireland, his large and liberal employment of Irishmen in the sister isle" (*MG* 21 Jul 1868). In terms of policy, he made it clear that though he was "a sincere and attached member of the Church of England," he supported disestablishment of the Church of Ireland, denominational education and Irish land reform and opposed inspection of convents.⁶ In 1871 he was returned unopposed as Liberal M.P. for Co. Galway.

He became a close associate of Isaac Butt, taking a prominent part in the organisation of the founding conferences of the Home Rule League in 1873. In parliament he specialised in finance, arguing cogently that Ireland had long been overtaxed. His personal vision was an Ireland which exercised self-government as an integral part of a federal United Kingdom, to be won by constitutional agitation (*MC* 19 Mar 1877). He struggled unavailingly to bring order to Butt's personal finances and often stood in for him at political engagements. On Butt's death in early 1879 Mitchell was mooted for leadership of the Parliamentary Party, but Parnell, with his eye on the post, preferred William Shaw as being easier to replace, as indeed happened in May 1880 (Hourican 628). Henry found himself uncomfortable with the increasingly militant tactics adopted by Parnell and his associates, and matters were not helped when, at a

5 *MG* 7 Oct 1928; the paper was sold by the Guardian Media Group to Trinity Mirror plc in 2010.

6 *MG* 18 Aug 1868 and 3 Sep 1868. Ultra Protestants regularly campaigned for inspection of convents to ensure no nuns were forcibly detained.

public meeting in Manchester's Free Trade Hall in late 1879, Parnell publicly contradicted him after he had made a speech on land reform (*MG* 11 Nov 1879). Henry's unease increased as the Land League campaign got under way. Early in 1881 he publicly condemned what he described as "a reign of terror in Ireland," arguing that Land League tactics had "unhinged society completely" (*MG* 5 Jan 1881) and diverged from the party line to support the vigorous coercion policy of Chief Secretary Forster. He also broke ranks to support Gladstone's 1881 Land Act when party policy was to wait and test it in the courts (Jackson 121). By 1882 he feared for the whole future of the union of Ireland and Britain, believing "the course taken by a certain number of the Irish representatives has completely poisoned the mind of parliament [...] all sympathy for the country has been destroyed" (*MG* 12 Aug 1882). By 1884 his alienation was complete and the following year he stood down from the Co. Galway seat, convinced Ireland was heading for "eventual disgrace and [...] civil war" (*MG* 5 Sep 1885). He was returned as a Liberal for Glasgow Blackfriars in 1885, but opposed the Home Rule Bill and was defeated when he stood as a Liberal Unionist in 1886. He returned to the family business in Manchester, converted it into a limited company in 1889 and served as chairman until 1893. Growing financial difficulties led him to sell the Kylemore estate in 1903 and retire to Leamington where he died in 1910.

Although his political career was truncated, the notable feature of Henry's narrative is that he had careers in medicine, business and politics, moved easily between the three and when the political path was blocked, simply returned to business. The combination of great wealth, family networks and professional qualifications enabled him to circulate on both sides of the Irish Sea. But for those of Irish Protestant background who lacked such wealth and family links to business or professional qualifications the experience of settlement in Britain was not so simple (McAuley 62). It has been suggested that for some this process of adjustment was helped by the Orange Order (see MacRaild, "Networks" 164-184), and it is proposed to illustrate this by reference to the history of the Order in Manchester from the 1830s onwards and the personal narrative of the Irish-born William Touchstone.

Following its arrival in Britain at the end of the eighteenth and the early nineteenth century, the Orange Order had a troubled history. To some extent their loyalist politics led members to find favour in conservative circles, especially in the troubled years after 1815 (Senior 156). However, the authorities were also nervous of the secretive, oath-bound nature of the Order and the disturbances which frequently followed their demonstrations. This official wariness probably lies behind the refusal to allow lodges to take part in the Manchester procession which marked the coronation of King George IV in 1821 (*MG* 7 Jul 1821). It also partly explains legislation such as the Unlawful Oaths Act (1823) and the Unlawful Associations Act (1825), though these were also aimed at parliamentary reform groups and embryonic trades unions. Manchester was generally regarded as a stronghold of the Order (see MacRaild, *Faith* 43), and in the 1820s its demonstrations proceeded quietly. In July 1829, it was

reported that “a numerous and respectable body of the members of the Local Orange Association of Manchester, assembled at an early hour in the morning [...] Having formed a procession [...] they marched to St. Philip’s church, Salford” (*MC* 18 Jul 1829).

But the early 1830s developed into a particularly troubled period. Riots broke out in 1830, 1834 and 1835, and there is evidence of ongoing low-level sectarian feeling even during quieter times. In July 1830 lodges met for dinner in their club rooms above various taverns “according to annual custom” (*MC* 17 Jul 1830). As usual they displayed a flag, but on the north side of the city this provoked violent reaction from local Irish Catholics who went from tavern to tavern, seizing the flags, breaking windows, destroying furniture and a portrait of a former Grand Master. The disturbances died away as police and soldiers arrived (*MG* 17 Jul 1830). The following three years were relatively quiet, but a court case in February 1832 illustrated how sectarian feeling was not far beneath the surface. A Protestant resident of Angel Meadow, who had given evidence in court against a local Catholic, was beaten by relatives of the defendant and his family “upbraided by their neighbours, who are Catholics, with being ‘bloody heretics and Orangemen’.” A local newspaper linked the incident to “the ill feeling which exists in that district of the town amongst the lower classes of Irish” (*MG* 3 Feb 1832).

In 1834 and 1835 this latent feeling erupted in large-scale conflict. The violence in 1834 accompanied an Orange procession from central Manchester to and from the Church of St. George, Hulme, on the south west side of the city, a church often associated with Orange events. As lodge members gathered at various taverns, “decorated with scarves, ribbons or lilies of orange [...] they were first derided and insulted and afterwards jostled, struck and pelted by groups of Irish Catholics.” On their return they were again attacked, but the trouble died away when police and dragoons appeared (*MG* 17 Jul 1834). The following year the police had made extensive preparations to forestall any trouble, and unsuccessful efforts were made to persuade the lodges to cancel the parade (*MG* 18 Jul 1835). The procession itself did not encounter any problems aside from minor scuffles, leading one observer to describe it as “marked by decorum and moderation” (*MC* 18 Jul 1835). However, the following evening a Catholic crowd attacked a beer house owned by an Irish Protestant and displaying a portrait of King William III and had to be dispersed by police (*MG* 18 Jul 1835). This was the last large-scale conflict in Manchester between the Order and local Catholics, aside from an isolated outbreak in July 1888 (*MC* 9 Jul 1888; *MEN* 9 Dec 1888).

Alongside and contributing to the atmosphere surrounding such incidents, curious rumours were circulating at national level in the first half of the 1830s. Catholic emancipation in 1829, parliamentary reform, revision of the tithing arrangements of the Church of Ireland in 1832, and rationalisation of its bishoprics in 1833 seemed to ultra-Tory elements to be a mounting assault on the crown and constitution. This led

to loose talk in some circles about replacing the Princess Victoria as heir presumptive by the Duke of Cumberland, Grand Master of the Order (Haddick-Flynn 266). In this overheated atmosphere the House of Commons set up a Select Committee into the Orange Order, which reported unfavourably in 1835, and in April 1836 the Grand Lodge of Ireland dissolved the Order (Haddick-Flynn 270-271). The movement was further weakened when in 1835 the Grand Protestant Association was formed, partly as a replacement for the Order. Some lodges did affiliate but others stood aloof and the debilitating split was not fully healed until 1876. Additional problems were caused by the Party Processions Act of 1850 banning all parades, and the Party Symbols Act forbidding public displays of partisan iconography. Since processions and the public wearing of regalia were inherent features of the Order's activities, these were crippling blows.

It is highly likely that the Twelfth of July in particular continued to be held in low-profile fashion in private gatherings such as the dinner held in Manchester in July 1851 (*MC* 19 Jul 1851). But overall, the Order is elusive in the middle years of the century. However, a valuable glimpse of the motivations of ordinary members and how they looked upon the Order is provided by the evidence given by two Manchester lodge members during the court cases held following the riot of 1834. Under cross-examination John Hanniford declared: "I have been an Orangeman 17 years; I was made in Armagh [...] I had been in a lodge before I was five years old: it is a charitable society and I call them a loyal body of men [...] I was a purple mark man [...] I belonged to the yeomanry in Ireland [...] It is eight years since I left Armagh". When John Wilson was cross-examined he responded: "I am an Orangeman and was made in Magherafelt, county Derry, about fifteen years ago. I belong to the purple; it is to assist one another, and we admit nobody but loyal men [...] the same Orangeism as in Ireland is practised here."⁷

Significantly, both witnesses stressed the charitable dimension of the Order, and from quite early on Manchester lodges were assisting members who had fallen on hard times. In November 1824, Manchester LOL 8 had paid £2.17s.6d to Thomas Bates for five weeks' sickness, ten shillings to John Marsden for one week's sickness, and £2 to William Robinson for his wife's funeral. Friendly societies were a defining feature of Victorian Britain, and the Friendly Societies Acts of 1855 and 1875 provided mutual aid groups with a firm legal framework. Under its aegis individual Orange lodges came together to form area-wide sick and burial societies. The Manchester Loyal Orangeman's Sick and Funeral Society formed in 1893 had a clear statement of its carefully calculated scale of entrance fees and rates of assistance and the conditions of payment. Sickness payments started at two shillings per week and tapered off entirely after a year. The funeral grant was £12. By the late 1860s there are signs that the Order in Manchester and elsewhere was reviving. One

7 *MC* 13 Sep 1834. There were gradations of rank within the Order distinguished by colour.

reason was the appearance on the political agenda of a series of issues which resonated with its traditional concerns, including the growth of the Anglo-Catholic movement within the Church of England with its emphasis on elaborate ritual, liturgy and vestments. Another was the proposal to disestablish the Church of Ireland. There was also alarm at the growing coherence and strength of the Irish nationalist movement and its coalescence around the Home Rule project. The repeal of the Party Processions Act in 1872 and the reunification of the Order in 1876 also contributed to rising confidence.

Public celebration of the Twelfth of July resumed and a series of large-scale meetings were held in Manchester, especially in the years 1869-75. These were colourful affairs. Regalia were worn, bands played traditional tunes, indoor fireworks ('Kentish fire') were set off, orange scarves, umbrellas, and handkerchiefs were flourished, and there were fiery speeches. In February 1869 one speaker at a meeting threatened that if Prime Minister Gladstone proceeded with Irish church disestablishment he would have to face "200,000 armed Irish Orangemen [...] a great army of English and Scotch Orangemen [...] and a vast number in the army and navy too" (*MG* 16 Feb 1869). In July one speaker was concerned about "the action of the ritualistic party in the Church," which he compared to "the action of dry rot in a ship" (*MG* 7 Jul 1870). In 1871, there was a procession from central Manchester to the meeting place, accompanied by six banners and four bands, with 200 factory girls "flaunting blue and yellow ribbons, and singing snatches of popular songs, chiefly "Rule Britannia"; although they "once or twice came into collision with a smaller number of girls who exhibited green favours," there were no serious incidents. Gladstone was condemned for his intention to "hand over the nation to the dominion of the Pope and priests of Rome" (*MG* 17 Jul 1871).

April 1872 saw one of the most significant events in the history of the Orange Order in Manchester when it played a leading role in the four-day visit of the Conservative leader Benjamin Disraeli. An estimated 30,000-40,000 people marched through the city, one observer noting the presence of the Orange Order, "whose societies formed perhaps the larger portion of the procession." On reaching the meeting hall each organisation was allowed to present two representatives to the leader. During his stay Disraeli had been made an honorary member of Salford LOL 169, and he greeted its delegates with the words "That is one of the greatest distinctions I ever received. I hope I shall be a loyal brother" (*MG* 3 Apr 1872).

The events of these years illustrated the nature of the relationship between the Order and the Conservative Party during this period. The 1867 Reform Act had doubled the electorate and, taken together with the Secret Ballot Act of 1872, had challenged both main parties to devise an appeal to the newly enfranchised, more prosperous element in the working class. The Conservatives developed a theme of loyalty to crown, church, constitution, and empire along with measures of social reform, all of which resonated with many of the traditional concerns of the Order. However, the re-

lationship was never intimate or easy. For Orange leaders the party was not always sufficiently robust in defence of Protestant interests, and the meetings were sometimes marked by criticisms of local Conservative MPs. The party, for its part, gladly used the Order as a useful institution for mobilising a significant section of the new voters, but simultaneously held it at arm's length out of wariness at the adverse publicity in the event of disturbances, its preoccupation with Irish issues, which had only a limited and regional appeal, and a patrician distaste for some of its more earthy manifestations. Conservative speakers at Orange events therefore had to perform a careful balancing act. When in November 1875 the Manchester MP W.R. Callender spoke at an Orange rally, he adopted the tactic of making it clear that whilst not a member of the Order, he shared their outlook on such issues as support for denominational education, opposition to disestablishment, and defence of the role of the church as "the leading, active, ever present representative of Christian truth and social order" (*MC* 3 Nov 1875).

But for the Irish-born William Touchstone (1822-1912) there were no such nice distinctions. Born in Bandon, Co. Cork, he came to Manchester at an early age and worked as a warehouseman. A devout evangelical Christian brought up in the Church of Ireland, he was active in the parish church of Blackley district on the north side of the city, where he became a Sunday school organiser and a regular participant in the Whit walk Sunday School processions. A teetotaler from the age of 17, he served on the Council of the Temperance Society. When Irish Church disestablishment became an issue he helped organise the Northern Church Defence Association, putting in "faithful, untiring and indefatigable labours" as secretary and lecturer (*MC* 17 Dec 1912). He was also a founder of the Warehousemen and Clerks' Provident Association in the 1850s, serving as Chairman for four years and a director for seven (Anon.).

In politics he was a convinced Conservative. In 1866 he found yet another outlet for his administrative energies when he helped found the Lancashire Constitutional Association: "For many years no Conservative demonstration in Manchester was complete without Mr. William Touchstone." In one year alone it was estimated he had travelled – but never on a Sunday – 20,000 miles and addressed up to 300 meetings (*MCN* 21 Dec 1912). One acute observer suggested: "it is not too much to say that to his sturdy advocacy of his principles [...] is due in no small degree the preponderance of Conservative principles in some Lancashire districts and the existence in such large numbers of 'the Conservative working man'" (*MEN* 16 Dec 1912). A cogent public speaker, he was approached to stand for parliament on several occasions and offered a salary to do so, but refused on the grounds that this could compromise his independence of judgement (*MEN* 17 Dec 1912). His political work brought him into close contact with successive generations of Conservative national leaders, but he was particularly close to Benjamin Disraeli and on several occasions was a guest at Hughenden, his Buckinghamshire country home. He played a key role in persuading him to come to Manchester and speak in the Free Trade Hall in 1872, a considerable

achievement since at that time Disraeli's wife was suffering from an eventually fatal illness and mass meetings were never his favourite format (Aldous 221).

Complementing his political work, Touchstone was notably active in the Orange Order, regularly attending and speaking at meetings against ritualism, disestablishment, and Irish Home Rule (*MG* 12 Jul 1886). He served as Deputy Grand Master of England and for 33 years was Honorary Grand Secretary for England, the Isle of Wight, and the Isle of Man. He died in December 1912, but not before signing the Ulster Covenant against Home Rule. At his funeral the only wreath permitted was from the Grand Master of the Loyal Orange Institution of England. His opponents paid tribute to his integrity and sincerity. Even the Liberal *Manchester Guardian* paid tribute: "Church and state and throne were to him more than just symbols. He revered them all" (*MG* 17 Dec 1912). He had clearly found a niche in his adopted city thanks to the institutional frameworks of the Church of England, the Conservative Party, and the Orange Order, which had provided channels for his considerable organisational talent.

This essay has pointed to a definite Irish Protestant presence in nineteenth-century Manchester, has provided some suggestion of numbers in the early decades of the century and has shown that there are traces of the two major Irish Protestant denominations, namely Presbyterians and Anglicans and one major institution, the Orange Order. The personal narratives have demonstrated that Irish Protestants were noticeable in the public life of the region, most notably in business, politics, and church life. In some ways this bears out the long-lived contention that they have been difficult to isolate for study because their religion and outlook enabled them to blend so easily into mainstream British society. Even Henry's support for Home Rule was expressed within an explicitly mainstream British framework, as a Liberal supporting a federal United Kingdom. But there are indications that integration in nineteenth-century Britain was not equally easy for all Irish Protestant migrants. For second-generation people like Henry, the British state was a single commercial and cultural entity in which they could move easily thanks to wealth, family connections, and professional qualifications. However, the sectarian conflicts in the early decades of the century suggest that for some the process of adjustment could be problematic. Here the activities of the Manchester Orange Order and the Touchstone example bear out the contention that the Order could play a key role for lower-class Protestant migrants by providing a familiar framework for fellowship amongst like-minded people, a welfare net in times of difficulty and an outlet for those like Touchstone with basic education but considerable ability.

Many aspects of the Protestant presence remain for investigation. Actual numbers are as elusive as ever, along with denominational breakdown, and work remains to be done on the second generation. Nor is it clear whether Irish Protestants lived in distinct neighbourhoods. It has been shown elsewhere that there were well-marked Irish dominated working-class districts in nineteenth-century Manchester and that

there was a Protestant presence in these areas. But whether Irish Protestants were residentially segregated from Irish Catholics of the same social class is one of the many features awaiting further research.

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