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News from Home: Letters from Golden and Bruree to Sydney (1851-1859)

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1. INTRODUCTION

When people move country, most of them leave behind only a few footprints at major checkpoints. Historians of Irish migration to Australia are still struggling to assemble a collective profile of that movement. Their usual sources, apart from official statistics, are the scanty traces preserved in civil and church registers, valuation and census returns, passenger lists and directories. Alas, these lists of names reveal almost nothing about the experience of migration: why people left, why they chose Australia, how they fared there, in what senses they remained 'Irish' after departure. Nor do they tell us anything of the impact of migration on relations and neighbours who remained in Ireland. Despite the accumulation of basic data concerning the Irish in nineteenth-century Australia, the personal significance of migration remains obscure.

Private letters provide unique insight into what migration meant for those affected by it. They are a major source of information about the process of migration and living conditions beforehand and afterwards. But a letter is seldom a dispassionate factual report, despite the tendency of migration historians to ignore its other functions. Most letters are written in order to persuade or influence the reader, and often to console the writer. The devices employed by letter-writers, as well as their choices of topic, allow us to glimpse their mentality.¹

So far, the only major analysis of Irish-Australian correspondence is Patrick O'Farrell's idiosyncratic commentary on letters written almost entirely by Ulster Protestants. O'Farrell assumed that few letters survived from southern Ireland, as a result of inadequate literacy, the destruction of 'continuity with the present' through poverty and catastrophe, and the inadequacy of funding for archives.² While it is true that interesting sequences of letters involving typical southern emigrants are difficult to locate, my appeals have already uncovered enough material for a second book giving due weight to the poor, the semi-educated, and southern Catholics. If any readers of this journal know of the survival of letters either to or from Australian emigrants, I should be delighted to hear from them.³ Meanwhile, the letters discussed here must serve to suggest the richness and fascination of other testaments which lie forgotten or unrevealed, in lofts or under beds dotted about Ireland and Australia.

2. BACKGROUND

The University of Melbourne Archives provide the unexpected home for a fascinating collection of letters written to the forbears of Daniel Joseph Duggan, an auctioneer, journalist and politician born at Louisa Creek (west of Mudgee, New South Wales) on 20 October 1855. Duggan died on 27



February 1910 at Malvern, a suburb of Melbourne, having achieved modest celebrity as a member of the Victorian Legislative Assembly (1894-1904) and President of the Board of Land and Works (1900-2). In Tarnagulla (near Dunolly in Victoria) he had applied his reputed 'sagacity and good humour' to an impressive range of committees: the mechanics institute, the race club, the cemetery, the Oddfellows and the Australian Natives Association.⁴

Daniel was the eldest child of Michael Duggan from the parish of Rockhill (or Bruree, Co. Limerick) and Johanna Hogan from Golden (Co. Tipperary). They had been married as Roman Catholics on 3 May 1854 in St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney. Michael Duggan was a storekeeper at Louisa Creek, where a series of huge nuggets of gold had been discovered in 1851 and 1852. He was prosperous enough to buy land in inner Sydney worth £400 in April 1855, but moved with his family to Sandy Creek (Tarnagulla) in 1857 and remained there until his death in 1883. The detail of Michael's passage to Australia is uncertain, although a Michael Duggan from Rockhill arrived in Sydney on the *Cornwall* in 1850.⁵ Johanna Hogan had reached Sydney on the *Ramillies* on 11 August 1850, along with her sister Mary and brothers Edmond, James and Daniel. The five siblings were all returned as Catholic house servants or farm labourers, able to read and write, and without living parents or connections in the colony. Johanna was aged 25, a decade younger than her brother Ned, and all the Hogans had been shipped out at state expense apart from their deposits of £2 each.⁶

Daniel Duggan's parents had emigrated in the wake of the Great Famine from parishes about 30 miles apart, but both situated in the rich dairying region of Munster known as the 'Golden Vein'. Apart from Clare, Tipperary and Limerick were probably the two counties with the highest rates of assisted emigration to Australia during the second half of the nineteenth century.⁷ Michael Duggan's origins are obscure. Letter 5 shows that his widowed mother Mary was living in Bruree in 1856, with support from a Catholic curate and John Duggan, presumably a relation. But no Duggan family was recorded in the parish as an occupier of taxable property, either by the commissioners of tithes (1827-9 and 1834) or by the surveyors for Griffith's Valuation (1852). Daniel's Duggan forbears were possibly kinsmen of Michael Duggan in the neighbouring Catholic parish of Ballyagran, who held a house valued at seven shillings per annum and 4 perches of waste in Derraulin, about three miles west of Bruree.⁸ This may be the Michael Duggan whose child Cornelius (by Johanna Daley) was baptised in Ballyagran parish in 1843, with a Mary Duggan as godmother. Two Duggan baptisms were registered in Rockhill parish: that of Mary (daughter of Thomas Dugan and Anna Connell) in 1858, and John (illegitimate son of John Dugan and Bridget Lynch) in 1848.⁹ We may surmise that the emigrant Michael Duggan's parents had been labourers or servants, either occupying a valueless hovel or as lodgers. Their relationship to the Duggans listed for the district remains unknown.

The background of the five Hogan siblings from the parish of Golden is less shadowy. As letter 2 indicates, the Hogans were labourers and servants living in the townland of Mogh, about four miles north of their employer's house at Athassel Abbey (by the ruins of an Augustinian priory). Valuation records show that Edmond Hogan occupied a house valued at 15 shillings and rather more than two acres of land, with twice that value, in 1851. He had held the house since 1847 at least; but the family had evidently been reared in Cloughleigh, a townland replete with Hogan households and immediately to the east of Athassel Abbey.¹⁰ The Catholic parish registers for Golden (and Kilfeacle) survive only from 1833, too late to catch the arrival of the Hogans.¹¹

Apart from a single letter from Mary Duggan to her married daughter Catherine, the collection consists of six letters to Johanna and Ned Hogan, written during the 1850s by their employers William and Eliza Dalton of Athassel Abbey.¹² William Dalton was a large farmer occupying 159 acres in Athasselabbey North and South and nearly 269 acres in Mogh (1851). Abbey House was a plain but substantial building, ranking fiftieth in valuation among the 'big houses' of Clanwilliam



Barony.¹³ His lands were valued at £153.10s and £197.15s respectively, with buildings worth £12.10s and £2.15s. Dalton was also lessor of several labourers' dwellings, comprising land and buildings valued at £11.17s. The tithe books of 1832-3 confirm his occupation, though the Mogh property was then divided with Mrs Mary Dalton. His farms were leased from Francis Greene, Colonel William Dickson and the Revd George Smithwick. The main house was of quite impressive dimensions, being 41.0 x 28.6 x 19.6 feet.¹⁴ But the Dalton family was soon to disappear from Abbey. The Revision Books show that the Mogh property had passed to William's son James Dalton by 1856 (see also letter 7b), and so to Daniel Ryan in about 1865. The Abbey property went to William's widow Eliza in 1869 and their son William in 1877; but the Greene farm was repossessed by the landlord in 1893, while the remaining fragment eventually passed out of the family in 1914.¹⁵ When the census was taken in 1901, the once imposing Dalton presence in Abbey had been reduced to William and his wife Margaret, both literate, articulate in English and Irish, aged 50 and without family or servants at home in their modest house of three rooms.¹⁶

So far, we have revealed nothing interesting about the Irish-Australian connection. Only personal testaments such as the letters which follow are capable of breathing life into these skeletal biographies. The most enjoyable way to read them is in sequence and without editorial interference (here limited to the introduction of paragraph and sentence breaks).¹⁷ Though the Daltons were probably unrelated to the Hogans, their letters show greater warmth and vigour than many intra-family communications. The correspondence is intimate but informative, eloquent and sometimes sardonic. Yet it is no product of high culture: William Dalton's onomatopaeic spelling and conversational prose suggest an education not much superior to that of the destitute Mary Duggan in Bruree. In order to demonstrate the importance of these letters as a source for migration history, I have added a detailed commentary on their contents. Passages relevant to about 20 topics are summarised for dissection (letters being cited by number and paragraphs by letter). Though written from Ireland to Australia, the letters illuminate the process of migration as well as the mentality of Famine survivors remaining in Munster.

3. COMMENTARY

(A) The Functions of Correspondence

The **importance of letters** was itself a major preoccupation of letter-writers. Eliza Dalton emphatically thanked Johanna Hogan 'for not forgetting to write me tho in a distant land' (4a); while her husband was 'overjoyed' on hearing from brother Ned after having given 'you all up for lost and being ungreatfull but in this I find I was Mistaken' (7a). William had earlier reminded Johanna that a major benefit of education was to enable her to write to him: 'how greatfull you Should be to the Father and mother that gave you the opertunity of doing so' (2a). Reproach was however a more common theme than gratitude. Mary Duggan was 'greatly troubled at your long Silence' after 15 months (5a); while Eliza Dalton chided Johanna Hogan for speaking 'of triffling postage to me who Shall always be anxious to hear from you' (3b). The Daltons complained three times (1c, 3b, 6d) about the reticence of their former shepherd Matt Blake, who had rented a house on the home farm and one of whose sons had a Mary Dalton as godmother.¹⁸ Indeed, William observed that 'a good many went from golden and Not a word from them' (1c)—discouraging news for the historian in search of concealed letters. Marriage, whether human or celestial, threatened correspondence: as William asked Ned of his siblings, one of whom had become a Presentation nun, 'What is become of Judy I never heard from her but once since she married nor neighthor from James or Dan. Poor Mairy I suppose is saying her prayers' (6a).

Letters were not the only missives exchanged between Ireland and Australia. **Newspapers** were



almost as important a source of information, and were read avidly in both countries. The Daltons repeatedly thanked the Hogans for sending William the *Sydney Morning Herald* and the Sydney *Freeman's Journal* (1c, 2a, 2e, 2g, 4a, 6a, 7a). The gift of newspapers, like letters, was intended to be reciprocal: as William put it, 'Now Dear Johana write often and send the papers and I will write often and send you papers' (2g). The Dalton letters record transmission to Sydney of journals including the *Tipperary Vindicator* (Nenagh), the *Free Press* (Clonmel) and the London *Dispatch* (1c, 2h, 7c). Tokens and presents such as agnus deis and other blessed objects were sometimes enclosed in letters (4g, 5b), though in this collection there is no reference to the common practice of exchanging locks of hair or 'likenesses'.

The recurrent insistence on frequent and reciprocal communication reflected the anxieties and insecurities of friends and relations separated by oceans. The letter was a vital **instrument of persuasion**, and failure to elicit a reply was evidence of faltering influence. Mary Duggan's halting cry for help (letter 5) adopts many devices apart from bald admissions of poverty such as 'all I want is enough to eat' (5d). It appeals to her daughter's pity, stresses the generosity of priests and cousins with less obligation to assist her, and declares her horror at the thought that some unknown family affliction might have prevented money being remitted to Bruree. The sharpest insinuation is that her children preferred to assume that the widow was already dead: 'As for thinking of My death or Causeing ye not to Send Me any Money never fear for when it is the will of God to Call on Me John Dugan will let Ye Know at on[ce]' (5d). The structure of the letter is four cycles of four elements (reproach, prayer, declaration of destitution, consolation), though in the fourth cycle (5d) the second and third elements are reversed. The outcome of this powerful appeal to a daughter's emotions and responsibilities is unknown.

(B) *The Process of Emigration*

The Dalton letters offer stark illustration of the **effects of depopulation** in Munster during the 1850s. William Dalton echoed Goldsmith in stating that Golden had 'become a deserted village' with houses empty and lands idle, while Cloughleigh was 'all Deserted' (1b). This impression is confirmed by annotations to the House Book of the valuation for Cloughleigh (made after February 1847), which shows that of 81 houses originally listed 29 were later 'tumbled' or put 'down'.¹⁹ In 1858 he wrote with some hyperbole that 'there is not one house to the 20 in this country that was when you left' (6c). The sense of desertion had a more immediate location for Eliza, who lamented that Abbey House was 'now lonesome as deserted' (4f). Several letters explored the connection between depopulation and economic recovery. In 1851 there was 'no great improvement in this Country Since yee left it'; but by 1858 the country had been 'improving very much for the last 5 or 6 years notwithstanding there are numbers going to your country' (1b, 6b). Eliza noted in 1854 that 'although this Country is much improved Strange to Say the remaining few as discontented. In every Season they are facing the wild ocean particularly to Austrilia' (4b). Contemporaries, like historians, were puzzled that the impulse to emigrate had not diminished as prosperity returned. The full explanation of emigration might be unclear, but William Dalton had no doubt that the shift from tillage to pasturage was a major factor. In 1851 he remarked that the wheat had 'got Quite Black like the potatee Blight. This destroyed all the tillage farmers they are all runing off to america' (1b). The letters give no hint of the distaste for emigration noted in 1844 by Edward Dalton, a large grazier and middleman living at Ballygriffin (a mile and a half north of Abbey): 'as long as an Irishman can get a foot of ground here he will not emigrate... The greatest pride they can boast is, that here their father was born, and their grandfather'.²⁰ Now, all Munster seemed on the run.

Emigration was a diffuse process, following many **paths**. The Kennedys of Mogh, of whom there were several families occupying small holdings in 1833 and 1851, sent family members to England,



America and Australia (1b, 1c, 3b). Australia was clearly a major destination for Golden emigrants,²¹ as William Dalton implied when writing that 'you Could Not think how lonely every place is here. Every one that Can g[o] to yee and to America are going' (2f). Many of his relatives had left for America, including James Dalton of Rochester (New York State), who wrote to his wife and children on 8 May 1852 promising to 'send' for them in three months' time. His wife should 'have Courage dont be one Bit in dread the Great God will send yu Safe'; for once in America 'ye May Bid adue to poverty for Ever'.²² By 1854, however, Australia seemed to some the preferable country. Weather affected the decision: when told of the 'very delicate State of Health' of one of the Smithwicks who had settled in Buffalo, New York State, Eliza remarked that 'it appears the Severe climate of America disagreed with him as well as with many others' (4c). Australia had positive attraction also, and Eliza reported that 'the name of the gold mines are So Inducing the are even leaving America for that part of the world'; while her own son John had recently come home from America and its climate, quarrelled with his father, and gone 'on his way to Melbourn or Sydney' (4b, 3a, 4f). The availability of state assistance to Australia encouraged William to seek free passages to Melbourne for a neighbour's nieces, who 'would be a treasure to whoever would get them' (6d).

In 1854, Eliza reflected that Johanna 'must feel quite at home, Surrounded by So many of your neighbours who are all I am sure equally willing to love and respect you' (4a). The letters give some hint of the **networks** whereby Irish settlers found security and assistance on arrival in Australia. The Daltons named many neighbours, ranging from labourers to landlords, who had made their way to Australia (3b, 4c, 4g, 7e). When John Dalton was making his way to Australia, his mother assumed that her former servants would provide guidance: 'Perhaps either you or your Brothers would See him before I hear from you again. Need I tell them to be attentive and give him every necessary information' (4f). Migration menaced but did not destroy the reciprocal duties binding relations and neighbours in Ireland, whose force was manifested by the flow of remittances from overseas. These could be quite substantial: in 1851, Edward Dalton referred to payments of £10 to Ned Hogan's aunt, and as much as £30 from 'Ned Kenedys Brother who lives in Sidney' (1b, 1c). The responsibility for maintaining aged parents devolved upon both sons and daughters, as Mary Duggan emphasised: 'Dear Catherin Speak to Michael at once and try what ye will do between ye for Me as I am greatly in the need of it and the Sooner I would get it the better' (5d).

Marriage was the crucial test of an emigrant's successful adjustment to Australian society. An Australian marriage always threatened to loosen bonds with Ireland: as William Dalton observed ruefully of the neglectful Judy Hogan, 'as to Judy I suppose She has given us up all for the husband' (7a, cf. 6a). Her brother Ned continued to write to the Daltons after marrying Mary Riely at St Mary's Cathedral, Sydney, on 20 May 1852—evidently he did not give up everybody for his wife.²³ Eliza congratulated Johanna rather stiffly 'on your Brother Edward getting so worthy a Companion, and a young family' (4d). William, however, was moved to compose a magnificent meditation upon the bashful Ned's miraculous submission to a woman whose love might prove transient: 'He says that She was a good loving wife he Should wait untill the honney Moon was over' (2d). He had discussed the matter with 'the lads in Mough', and concluded that 'there must be something very tenting abut her when She throw a leg under Ned. Yes Poor Ned.' His main concern was that Ned would now neglect Johanna, whom William strongly urged to get married herself (as she did a few months later).

Contrary to the belief of many historians, emigration from post-famine Ireland was by no means an irreversible movement. **Return migration** from America and Britain was commonplace, though not generally recorded by official enumerators. William Dalton reported the return not only of his son John but also of William Scully, owner in fee of over 300 acres in Ballinaclough (immediately south of Mogh): 'Scully ran away to america and left Ballinaclough he came Back again and would

give it to any one that would take it' (1b).²⁴ Returned emigrants and visitors sometimes gave themselves airs, to the amusement of Eliza. Speaking of Bridget Fitzgerald, once matched with James Hogan but since married to an English Protestant, she wrote: 'About 12 months Since She paid us a visit in first rate Style, She wore a Gold Watch and well it became her' (4e). The passage between Australia and Ireland was too arduous and expensive to encourage frequent reverse movement. Yet William lived in hope that his beloved Johanna would return to her birthplace: 'Come home I will get yee a good [h]usband it is a pitty you should Breed in any place but Cloghleigh' (2h).

(C) *Economic Transformation*

The rapidly changing profile of **agriculture** was naturally a preoccupation of the Daltons. In 1851 they still had 'the potatee blight but not So bad'; seven years later it was a problem of the past (1b, 6b). The desire to switch from tillage to pastoral farming was strengthened by occasional infestation of wheat crops (1b, 6b) as well as price movements favouring livestock. In 1858 there was 'such a glut of forrein corn tillage farmers are not at all well off in this country but graziers are doing well'; while in the following year land was 'not to be got for love or money in this country notwithstanding this was the worst year on tillage farmers that come for the last forty years while those that were in the grazing line were equally good' (6b, 7b). Even before the Famine, Edward Dalton had remarked on the misery of tillage farmers in the Golden district. The small farmers cultivated potatoes, wheat and oats but no longer turnips, and were 'generally, in a desperate state, and scarcely get anything to eat but potatoes'.²⁵ The post-Famine agricultural statistics record a marked decline in the proportion of cultivated land under tillage crops after 1850, and a corresponding increase in the proportion of larger farms. In the Tipperary Poor Law Union, the percentage of land under wheat was 12 in 1850, 7 in 1854 and only 3 in 1874; though the amount under potatoes recovered from 15 in 1850 to 21 in 1854 before declining to 16 in 1874. Meanwhile the percentage under meadow and clover rose from 30 through 35 to 60 by 1874. Unfortunately the allocation of land in the immediate neighbourhood of Dalton's farms (the electoral divisions of Golden and Rathlynin) was reported only for 1850, when wheat was far more important and meadow less prominent than for the Tipperary Union as a whole.²⁶ The Golden experience, as filtered through correspondence, illustrates the complex interaction between agricultural reorganisation and migration.

Statistics of **yields and prices** are scattered through the letters in forms easily comprehensible to Munster emigrants if not historians. In 1850, the yield of wheat per acre fell short of three barrels in Abbey and a single barrel in Mogh (1b). The official estimate for Co. Tipperary was 3.6 barrels of 20 stone, the lowest yield in the period 1847-60. In 1858, William reported that 'we had not since the potato blight come such a splendid crop as we have this year'; but the stated yield of 20 barrels presumably refers to the poor crop of 1857, when the official figure of 24.1 barrels was the lowest since before 1847 (6b).²⁷ Dalton consistently lamented the low price of wheat: a shilling a stone in 1851, 14 pence falling to 9 pence for the new crop in 1858 (1b, 6b). At the Dublin corn exchange average wheat prices were indeed low in the years ending October 1851 and 1858, at 13 pence and 15.5 pence respectively; but the price of wheat had moved cyclically through a peak exceeding two shillings in 1854, 1855 and 1856. Dalton had a substantial dairy herd, including 40 milch cows in Mogh alone by 1858 (6c), and he stressed the high price of butter at £4.10s per hundred weight in 1851 and £5 two years later (1b, 2e). These prices considerably exceed those officially reported—a fact which may reflect the splendid quality of 'a firkin of the right Sort from abbey one of Mrs Murnanes Make' (2e). The meat prices for 1853 and 1859 (2e, 7b) reflect the sharp increases recorded officially after 1852.²⁸ To an informed contemporary, the dry statistics sprinkling Dalton's letters would have

conveyed an exciting tale of agricultural transformation.

That drama was also reflected in the rapidly changing **price of land**. In 1844, Edward Dalton had reported that the 'usual rent of average good land' in the Golden district was between 40 and 50 shillings per acre for grazing land and 40 shillings for tillage; while manured conacre land (the prevalent mode of payment for labourers) was let at between £8 and £10.²⁹ The Famine violently lowered land prices, so that lettings at 25 and even 10 shillings per acre were reported in the early 1850s (1b, 2e). In 1858, however, William Dalton remarked that 'land that let here some time ago for 15£[?] is now let for £25. I very fortunately got a lease of Mough for a guinea an acre. It is a pound an acre better now than when you left' (6c). Next year, he observed resentfully that his son James had taken over Mogh with 'a lease of his own life and thirty one years after for 200 a year what I paid 328 for and Made Money and educated My family' (7b). William's rent of a guinea a statute acre for Mogh fell far short of the 50 and 55 shillings per Irish acre (equivalent to 1.62 statute acres) which he was paying for the Abbey farms in 1832.³⁰ Dalton was a farmer comfortable and confident enough to trade temporary hardship for future prosperity, rather than cut his Famine losses. As he sighed in 1851, 'I hope as we held until now that we will be able to go a head' (1d).

Ready access to **employment** was probably a stronger incentive to leave Munster for Australia than was the promise of higher wages. In 1851, Dalton remarked that Ned Hogan's wage was 'small but when the employers there comes to Know year [your] worth I am sure it will be double the sum you mention' (1a). Eliza rather begrudged losing Johanna to her 'Amiable Mrs.' in Sydney; while William suspected that she was being undervalued if not underpaid: 'Dear Johana if those who you live with Knew year Worth as I do What a treasure they would Set on yee' (4a, 2b). He had assured 'the ruffins yee left after yee that I wished to god I Kept one of yee at home and gave him a hundred pounds a year I would put three in my pocket' (2b). In fact wages in Munster never approached that amount. But John Duggan in Bruree was earning £60 in 1856; and two years later Butler of Ballicurran was 'paying 18s a week to ten men he hired in Golden on Sunday and their diet' (5d, 6b). In 1844, 'the highest wages in the neighbourhood' of Golden had been 8 pence per day (about £10 per annum for a permanent labourer).³¹ Depopulation had thus caused a spectacular increase in the price of labour, outweighing the effect of new 'farming implements' which allowed Dalton to 'do buisness with one third what we had in your time here' (6b).

Despite the alleviation of poverty after the Famine, the fear and often reality of **indebtedness** remained widespread. The former Catholic curate of nearby Donaskeigh, who died of fever shortly after his removal to Cashel in 1852, had insured his life for £100 'lest he may die in debt' (3a). This priest, the Revd Michael McDonnell from Gurtinahoe, was the son of a substantial farmer occupying 127 acres, and doubtless shared in the anxieties and insecurities of his class.³² Rising farm prices troubled labourers and the poor as much as they benefited farmers. Mary Duggan was unable to repay loans from 'the priest and a few Friends'. She was 'very bad[ly] off this time past, every thing here is So dear and I am not able to do any thing that would help to Support Me' (5a). Economic recovery brought prosperity to some, but worry and indebtedness to others. William Dalton, prospering in Golden, was no more representative of post-Famine Ireland than Mary Duggan, languishing in Bruree.

(D) Social Adjustment

The **marriage** system in Munster, with its associated property transactions and elaborate rituals of negotiation, differed greatly from that facing the emigrant. Eliza Dalton hoped that James Hogan, 'a great favorite of mine as he was always Graceful And timid', would find a wife in Australia. But she trusted that he would not 'forget the many pleasant Hours my poor Children passed with him Match Making for him and Bridget Fitzgerald more betoken' (4e). Two completed matches were



reported, illustrating the social gulf between the Daltons and the Duggans. Mary Duggan reported proudly that her benefactor 'John Dugan is married and got £90 fortune and a very respectable woman he is promised More' (5d). Mary's emphasis on his wife's respectability would be easily understood, if John were indeed the father of the illegitimate child mentioned in section 2. James Dalton's fortune was no less than £1,500, but failed to give his father satisfaction: 'He is Now living in Mough. I had house room enough but his wife preferred living in her own house' (7b). She was a stranger from Nenagh, 30 miles to the north of Abbey but within the social map of a strong family like the Daltons. William regretted that he had not exercised his parental entitlement to control the dowry: 'They were great fools I left him all his fortune which I am now Sorry for as I made both of them Mad with Money'.

Social and family relationships were of course of central concern to letter-writers. The ideal of unity within the family or social group was both menaced and enhanced by the disruptive influence of migration. Mary Duggan celebrated both her cousin's dutifulness in Bruree, and the solidarity of her two married children in Australia:³³ 'It gave me great Consolation to Know ye were all living so united for it will bring the blessing of God on ye' (5c). Eliza Dalton shared Mary's longing for family harmony, bemoaning the fact that her son John had been 'badly received by his Father' on returning from America: 'In confidence I am telling you that this among the many other Severe trials I have to bear has had a bad effect on me as I thought his Father Should forget the past and receive him more kindly' (4f). It is worth noting that these letters, unlike many others, make almost no reference to discord between unrelated people. When William Dalton wrote that he had been chortling with the lads in Mogh about Ned Hogan's marriage, he was also conveying the absence of class conflict between farmers and labourers, rich and poor.

Famine and migration convulsed Irish **culture** as well as its economic and social institutions. Survivors naturally rejoiced in evidence of continuity and tradition in the period of adjustment. William Dalton remarked gleefully (6c) that Ned's 'old friend Mickleen Hogan' had given 'two thousand pounds some time ago for an estate and a few days after I was coming from the fair of Kilfeacle and he was sitting in a little [word omitted] he has on the tipping [?Tipperary] road eating his dinner and what was it a little bowl of yellow maize stirabout. So you see it is hard to break an horse of his troth' [trot].³⁴ This sentimentalisation of maize, a novelty probably of the previous decade, illustrates the rapidity with which traditions develop in Ireland. Yet Dalton was aware that the comfortable ways of the recent past were often impermanent. His memory lingered upon Johanna and her 'Beautifull Clean ord[er]ly little Cottage', into which he rejoiced to come 'when I had an hour to Spair of a wet day' (2d). He wondered if Johanna recollected 'the little dresser and all the chionee [?china] that you had on it'. One is reminded of Mrs Donovan's dresser in Kickham's *Knocknagow*, scoured into 'snowy whiteness' and laden 'with plates with blue rims, and some cups and saucers in which red and green predominated'.³⁵ Like yellow meal or maize stirabout, dressers were a recent innovation in Ireland: as Gailey points out they had little function until the dissemination of cheap delft and china, which 'may well' have occurred only *after* the Famine in some regions.³⁶ William Dalton lamented that Johanna and her dresser were lost to him: 'I road by your little Cottage a few days ago and the thisels were growing in the middle of the road' (2f).

(E) Religion and Politics

In the period of 'devotional revolution', one might expect frequent reference to **virtue and piety** in the correspondence of Irish Catholics. The episcopal visitations for 1847, 1852 and 1855 show that Golden had fairly high levels of religious observance in diocesan terms. Sunday catechism and instruction were available; up to a tenth of the Catholic population were monthly communicants; and confraternities of the Blessed Sacrament and the Blessed Virgin Mary had been organised.³⁷



Poor Widow Duggan made far greater use than the Daltons of the language of religion, with her agnus deis, blessings and prayers (letter 5). Apart from one sacred token and her appeal for a nun's prayers (3a, 4g), Eliza Dalton was less effusive in her protestation of faith. But she and William were both fertile of moral judgements. They rejoiced in the Hogans' 'honour and honesty and gratitude', 'honorable life' in Tipperary, 'Most honest Industrious Religious life' in Australia, and generally 'Superior' qualities (2b, 3a, 7a, 4a). Mary Duggan also admired the family into which her son had married, asking that Johanna be told 'that her Kindness to Me will be remembered before the Throne of God to Call blessings on her and family' (5a).

The Daltons disagreed as to whether virtue was better expressed in secular or spiritual life. Eliza was 'delighted at the choise' that Mary Hogan had made in becoming a Presentation nun; and she slyly suspected that Johanna had 'a notion of imitating your Sister who Seems So happy in retiring from the world otherwise you would not be reconciled So far from your fond Brothers' (3a, 4f). The convent would shelter the emigrant from the secular world. But William, embittered by the monetary and physical costs incurred by his own daughter's removal to a convent,³⁸ warned Johanna to 'Stay out Side get Marrid' (2d). He made fun of Mary Hogan's religiosity, declaring 'that god Never created a being to go shut themselves up for life and Say their prayers. But poor Mary was always fond of praying as Kit often told me when ever I Should Send her to the dairy house that She Spent the Morning Saying prayers & it would be well that She Spent Some time Saying them' (2c).

Priests, unlike nuns, were regarded as pillars of the secular world. For Mary Duggan they were generous and considerate protectors (5a, 5b); for Eliza Dalton they were men of courage, dying of fever 'amidst the wailings of the poor', and also products of her own social circle (3a, 3b); for William, they were worth a terse reference: 'Your frind Father McDonnell is Dead he was removed to Cashele got feaver and died' (2g). William respected the 'old priests of 50 years Standing' (7d); but he execrated the more radical younger priests, who would be 'roasting potaties in the ashes as they Were reared' or 'Minding the pigs were it not for peels grant to Mynooth College'.³⁹ But he sent Johanna an address by the Revd D.W. Cahill,⁴⁰ to remind her 'of the old Country and the old religion' (2g). He was probably as proud as his wife to learn that the temperance campaigner Father Mathew, born a few hundred yards away from Abbey in Thomastown Castle, had met their son Willy in America and said 'he is a credit to his Country' (3a).⁴¹

If William Dalton was ambivalent in his respect for the clergy, he was consistent in his distaste for politicians and politics. South Tipperary was a region notorious throughout the century for its **unrest**: in Golden, 20 deaths had occurred in a faction fight in 1807 and two more fatalities in 1815; while in the early 1880s an old man was to die in Cloughleigh while waiting to be evicted by officials compelled to walk from Tipperary for lack of a hackney car.⁴² The Protestant parson of Golden and a parishioner had died in the tithe protests of 1832; the Catholic landlord James Scully of Golden had been murdered in 1842; and great sectarian bitterness had been generated by the Hawarden evictions in nearby Dundrum.⁴³ By 1853 the police had been 'removed from Mough Ned Kennedy Steward there as usual he will miss them' (3b). This pithy comment suggests that the departure of the constabulary was premature. Six years later, however, William noted a 'great improvement in this Country Boath in the prices and in Conduct of the people' (7b). He remarked upon the tenant right campaign, which had received much support from the clergy including the late Father McDonnell, saying that such a right was 'impossible to Frame' but worth promoting because 'it is by Making fools of half the world the other half lives' (7c).⁴⁴

Dalton's account of **politicians** ranged between ridicule and withering contempt. He told Ned Hogan that 'your frind Smith O Brine',⁴⁵ whose revolutionary peregrination in 1848 had covered much of south Tipperary, could not be compared 'to anyone but to Don Quixet When he went to



fight the wind mill' (1c). The Young Irelanders were 'formed by a parcel of half educated priests' without respect for seniority (7d). Their publicist Charles Gavan Duffy was a venomous 'ruffin' who found himself too 'well matched' in Ireland,⁴⁶ and 'said I will try my hand in Melbourn and glad I will be to have a country and to Sell[?] it' (7e). Daniel ('the') O'Donoghue, the bombastic Tipperary M.P. from Kerry and Duffy's associate, was a 'Skow pool' (7c): perhaps a variant of *scóilpiúil*, a dialect term suggesting 'dynamo' which is here used pejoratively.⁴⁷ The Sadleirs and Scullys, who had 'robbed the country with their Bank' (6c), were no mere pickpockets.⁴⁸ Their elaborate network of clientage was well established in the Daltons' neighbourhood. Indeed James Scully of Athassel was a shareholder in the Tipperary Joint-Stock Bank, and by 1856 had become its chairman of directors. He worked hard to placate depositors worried by rumours of the bank's imminent collapse, and signed £2,000 in worthless 'receipts' for those willing 'to take his signature instead of money'.⁴⁹ Parliamentary politics in mid-century Tipperary did not encourage nationalist ardour. William Dalton's political ideology was expressed most clearly in his jest about the Maynooth grant: 'I always Said the British government Never gave anythin but to trample on the old country' (7d). Politicians, whether Irish or English, were rogues, deceivers, liars. Above all, they were absurd.

People mattered, though. These letters from Munster to Sydney document the loyalties, hopes, resentments and fears of persons for whom public events had little practical importance. Their attempts to keep in touch with friends and relations in Australia exemplify the difficulties of maintaining group cohesion amidst physical separation. Equally eloquent is the silence that followed the final letter.



'News from Australia', by George Baxter (10th May 1834)

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FOOTNOTES:

1. The interpretation of letters is discussed in my article "'An Ocean of Consolation": Letters and Irish Immigration to Australasia', in David Fitzpatrick (ed.), *Visible Immigrants: Neglected Sources for the History of Australian Immigration* (Canberra, Australian National University, 1989), 47–87.
2. Patrick O'Farrell, *Letters from Irish-Australia 1825–1929* (Belfast, Ulster Historical Foundation, 1984), 5.
3. Please contact me at the Department of Modern History, Trinity College, Dublin 2 (phone 772941, extension 1595 or 1020).
4. Papers of Mary Teresa Duggan and family, correspondence 2/1/1–6 and 2/3/1, and obituaries, reproduced by permission of the Archivist, University of Melbourne; K. Thomson and G. Serle, *A Biographical Register of the Victorian Parliament 1859–1900* (Canberra, ANU Press, 1972), 58; *Table Talk* (1 March 1895), 3; *Argus*, Melbourne (1 March 1910).
5. NSW Marriage Registers, vol. 100, no. 307 (microfilm reel AO 5038, State Library of NSW); *Table Talk* (1 March 1895), 3; Duggan Papers, 1/1; information from Mr Richard Reid, ANU.
6. Immigration Agent's List and Immigration Board's List for *Ramillies*, Archives Authority of New South Wales (AANSW), 4/4819 and 4/4919 (microfilm reels 837 and 2461, SLNSW). For guidance on sources for assisted immigration to NSW, see Richard Reid, 'From Ballyduff to Boorowa', in Richard Reid and Keith Johnson (eds.), *The Irish Australians* (Belfast, Ulster Historical Foundation, 1984), 27–33; and Richard Reid, 'Tracking the Immigrants', in Fitzpatrick, *Visible Immigrants*, 23–46.
7. County rates of assisted emigration (per capita of census population) were calculated for NSW, Victoria and Queensland during 6 periods ranging between 1850 and 1887. In each case Clare had the highest rate, followed by Tipperary, while Limerick's rank ranged between fourth and sixth. Statistics were abstracted from the annual reports of Immigration Agents for the various colonies, published in the *Votes and Proceedings* of their parliaments.
8. Tithe Applotment Books (TAB) 17/83–4; Primary Valuation (PV) 17/3, Public Record Office, Dublin (PROD); Field Book for parish of Corcomohide (1850), in Irish Valuation Office, Dublin (IVO). No Duggan was listed for Derraulin by the tithe commissioners, nor in the Revision Books of Griffith's Valuation in IVO (1858 onwards).
9. Catholic parish registers, microfilm reels 2428 and 2430, National Library of Ireland (NLI).
10. TAB 27S/21, 13; PV 27/1; Valuation House Book, 5.1451, PROD. Edmond Hogan is not listed as a titheable occupier in Mogh (1833), or in the first Revision Book (1856). By 1856 his holding had passed to William James, and thence to Cornelius Turner before 1862 (cf. letter 3b).
11. Microfilm reel 2503, NLI.
12. Apart from a probable spell at the gold diggings in about 1853 (2h), Ned Hogan remained in Sydney until at least 1870. He may be the Edward Hogan whose death was registered in 1894: microfiche index to NSW Death Registers, 94/06342 (SLNSW).
13. See Denis G. Marnane, *Land and Violence: a History of West Tipperary* (Tipperary, the Author, 1985), 92.
14. TAB 27S/21, 13; PV 27/1; Valuation House Book (1846), 5.1454, PROD.
15. From that date the occupier of both farms was James Burns, the third of the sequence of new tenants holding from the Greens after Dalton's removal or eviction: Revision Books, IVO.
16. Census schedules, 1901, Tipperary 165/2, PROD.
17. Original spelling, capitalisation, grammar and syntax have been retained, and no excisions made. Doubtful readings and editorial clarifications (italicised) are given in brackets. I am grateful to Mr Marcus Bourke for assistance with interpretation of local idiom. The original letter 6 has been lost, and my text is based on an earlier transcription in the Duggan Papers.
18. Baptismal Register, Catholic parish of Golden and Kilfeacle (5 October 1834): microfilm reel 2503, NLI. In 1846 Matt Blake, shepherd to his neighbour William Dalton, occupied a rent-free house initially valued at £2.5s.4d: House Book, 5.1454, PROD.
19. House Book, 5.1456, PROD. One house was unoccupied from the first. Another was erased but marked 'not tumbled'.
20. *Devon Commission*, Witness 846, Q 146: House of Commons Papers [HCP], 1845 [Cd. 657], xxi.
21. Two family groups from Golden, as well as the Hogans, sailed to Sydney on the *Ramillies*. Neither family is named in these letters.
22. James Dalton to his family in the Golden district, 8 May 1852: photocopy kindly made available by Mr Eddie Dalton, Cloughleigh.



23. NSW Marriage Registers, vol. 98, no. 102 (microfilm reel AO 5038, SLNSW).
24. The arrogant and sometimes violent attempts at estate reorganisation by William Scully generated many bitter incidents in the vicinity of Golden between the 1840s and 1860s. In America, however, his techniques of farm management and his speculative flair made Scully exceptionally rich: see Marnane, *Land and Violence*, 96–9.
25. *Devon Commission*, loc. cit., Q 94.
26. *Returns of Agricultural Produce in Ireland* for 1850 and 1854, and *Agricultural Statistics of Ireland* for 1874: HCP, 1851 [1404], l; 1856 [2017], liii; 1876 [C 1380], lxxviii. In 1850, the percentage of land under wheat was 27 in Golden and 24 in Rathlynin (including Mogh), while corresponding figures for meadow were only 14 and 13.
27. *Agricultural Statistics* for 1860: HCP, 1862 [2997], lx. The predicted yield of 40 barrels per *quarter* in 1853 (2e) far exceeds the official county return of 54.8 per *statute acre* in that year, and even exceeds the yield of 20–30 barrels (of 21 stone) per *quarter Irish acre* reported by Edward Dalton in 1844: *Devon Commission*, loc. cit., Q 25–6.
28. *Cowper Commission*, HCP, 1887 [C 4969], xxvi, 960–7. These price statistics combined average figures from the *Dublin Gazette* with maximum and minimum prices published in *Purdon's Irish Farmers' and Gardeners' Almanac* for 1886.
29. *Devon Commission*, loc. cit., Q 21, 96.
30. TAB 27S/21, PROD. William's lease of the Smithwick farm stipulated the even higher rent of £3 sterling (per Irish acre) in addition to taxes and charges: Landed Estates Court Rentals, 9 November 1877 (Smithwick estate), 130/16, PROD.
31. *Devon Commission*, loc. cit., Q 99.
32. James O'Shea, *Priest, Politics and Society in Post-Famine Ireland: a Study of County Tipperary 1850–1891* (Dublin, Wolfhound Press, 1983), 341, 309.
33. Catherine Duggan had evidently married Patrick S. Flood at St Mary's Cathedral on 31 March 1853: information from Ms Marion Stell, ANU.
34. Several readings in this transcription seem dubious: the original is lost.
35. Charles J. Kickham, *Knocknagow or the Homes of Tipperary* (Dublin, James Duffy, 19th ed., 1914), 151. The novel may have taken its title from a place near Kickham's birthplace outside Cashel, 5 miles north-east of Abbey: R.V. Comerford, *Charles J. Kickham* (Co. Dublin, Wolfhound Press, 1979), 224.
36. A. Gailey, 'Kitchen furniture', in *Ulster Folklife*, 12 (1966), 19–22; cf. Timothy P. O'Neill, *Life and Tradition in Rural Ireland* (London, Dent, 1977), 25–6.
37. O'Shea, *Priest, Politics and Society*, 322. The returns do not however demonstrate the extension of religious observance between 1847 and 1855.
38. The reported cost of £100 per annum for five years suggests that Maria Dalton had been a boarder rather than a nun in a convent. While £500 would not have been an extravagant price for reception into an Irish religious order, it would normally have been paid in advance as a 'dowry'. See Catriona Clear, *Nuns in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1987), 87.
39. In 1845, Sir Robert Peel's government had increased the annual state grant for St Patrick's College, Maynooth, from £9,000 to £26,000.
40. This address was probably that given by Cahill at a *soirée* in Dublin on 8 August 1853, before his departure on an American mission, in which he denounced Tom Paine, applauded Napoleon III, and provoked 'successive fits of convulsive laughter' by his recitation of a poem ridiculing Protestant 'sainted spree-missionaries'. See his *Letters... and Speeches on Various Subjects* (Dublin, James Duffy, 1856), 306–22.
41. See Most Revd David Mathew, 'Father Mathew's Family: the Mathews in Tipperary', in *Capuchin Annual* (1956–7), 143–52; Kevin Whelan, 'The Catholic Church in County Tipperary, 1700–1900', and William Nolan, 'Patterns of Living in Tipperary, 1750–1850', in William Nolan (ed.), *Tipperary: History and Society* (Dublin, Geography Publications, 1985), 216, 303, 323.
42. Paul E.W. Roberts, 'Caravats and Shanavests', in Samuel Clark and James S. Donnelly, Jr (eds.), *Irish Peasants: Violence and Political Unrest* (Manchester, University Press, 1983), 88; Patrick C. Power, *History of South Tipperary* (Cork, Mercier, 1989), 191; Marnane, *Land and Violence*, 43–5.
43. Thomas McGrath, 'Interdenominational Relations in Pre-Famine Tipperary', in Nolan, *Tipperary*, 271–7.
44. See O'Shea, *Priest, Politics and Society*, 59–60, for clerical involvement in the Tenant League.
45. Dalton was presumably jesting when he asked if Ned had called to see O'Brien, who in 1851 was still in Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) on a ticket of leave. See Blanche M. Touhill, *William Smith O'Brien and his Irish Revolutionary Companions in Penal Exile* (Columbia, University of Missouri Press, 1981), 116.



46. For Duffy's contrasting account of his own translation from Young Irelander to 'Prime Minister' (*recte* Premier) of Victoria, see Sir Charles Gavan Duffy, *My Life in Two Hemispheres* (London, Unwin, 1898), 2 volumes.
47. O'Donoghue, whose reputation has been somewhat restored by recent research, was declared a bankrupt in 1870 while still a Member of Parliament. As a Nationalist opponent remarked, so provoking a challenge to arms, 'he calls himself The O'Donoghue, just as he might call himself the Rajah of Seringapatam'. See R.V. Comerford, *The Fenians in Context* (Dublin, Wolfhound Press, 1985), 58; T.D. Sullivan, *Recollections of Troubled Times in Irish Politics* (Dublin, Gill, 1905), 156. Mr Marcus Bourke kindly suggested this interpretation of 'Skow pool'.
48. For accounts of the growth and collapse of the Sadleir–Scully network, see Duffy, *My Life*, vol. ii, 18, 62; J.H. Whyte, *The Independent Irish Party 1850–9* (Oxford, University Press, 1958), 161–2, 174–5; Marnane, *Land and Violence*, 73–6. Among John Sadleir's relations, his brother James and cousins Francis and Vincent Scully were Members of Parliament (representing Tipperary in the first two cases).
49. *Thom's Directory* for 1857; memoir by James Hackett in John B. O'Brien, 'Sadleir's Bank', in *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, 82 (1977), 36.

LETTERS

(1) *William Dalton (Tipperary) to Ned Hogan (NSW), 15 May 1851*

Abbey May 15 1851

Dear Ned

(a) I received yours of the 15th of october on the 1th of aprill last and would hav answered before now but you will be surprized when I tell you I had not time to do so. The month of March Come so wet that it is now Som here are finishing the oat Crop. I was glad to find by your letter that yee all arrived Safe in Sidney and are employed. I am not Surprized at this as it is only What yee always Meritted. The wayge you menton is small but when the employers there comes to Know year worth I am sure it will be double the sum you menton. I was Sorry to See by you[r] letter that the girls ha[d feavour but it] was fortunate that they got over it.

(b) There is no great improvement in this Country Since yee left it. Wee hav still The potatee blight but not So bad. They heald very well this Winter and there is a greadale [from dialect *greadle* = little, rather than *great deal*] planted [?] this Season but wee had a complete feature in the wheat crop last year. The wheat in abbey did not produce 3 brls to the acre whilst others had not one. It got Quite Black like the potatee Blight. This destroyed all the tillage farmers they are all runing off to america and th lanlords are worse of than the tennants. Scully ran away to america and left Ballinaclough he came Back again and would give it to any one that would take it. The field that James plowed for Me before he went did not Make a barl to the acre and the highest price for wheat this year is one Shilling. I have Mough now for a guine an acre. Poor rates are as high [?as] ever they are 4[?]s.7D in the pound in golden this rate which Place is become a deserted village. Ther is not a house at this Side of the Bridge but one and Mr Dwyers house no one taken with it and the one third is not in the rest of the village. Cloaghleigh is all Deserted there is no one takin with old Cook part left Idle Creagh has the most part lying Idle. I am Sorry to tell you that your uncle is dead God Knows it is an ease to him. I Saw your aunt a few day ago She is well and She was after getting ten pounds from her Son in law. We hav Tom Scully place in Kiffe[?] all Idle Since November last. There is an English fellow living in Killmore he has it for £1 5 an acre. Ned Kenedy left Mough and is gone to america his farm Idel and no one taking with the only thing here doing well is Butter it is now worth 90 Shillings a cwt. Stock of all Kind is reating high.

(c) Ned Kenedys Brother who lives in Sidny Sent him 30£ a few days ago I do not Know what will become of it untill we will hear from him. I am surprized that I Never herd from Matt Blake Since he went or what is become of him. There are also a good many went from golden and Not a word from them. I must giv you great Merit for Writing so soon and the Newspapers was a great treat. You do not Say a word about your frind Smith O Brine [Smith O'Brien] did you Call to See him. I see by the papers that he is as mad as ever he put an end to the repeal before he lef old Ireland. I cannot compare him to anyone but to Don Quixet



When he went to fight the wind mill. I Send yee a newspaper and will be always glad to hear from yee.

(d) Mrs Dalton desires to be remembered to yee all and hav to tell yea that I hav Buirided Me only Daughter Poor Margret Sinc yee left. I hope as wee held untill now that we will be able to go a head.

Remembr me Dear Ned to your Brothers and Sisters and Blive mee your truly

William Dalton

Menton in your next is there any account of Mrs Dwyer

(2) William Dalton (Tipperary) to Johana Hogan (NSW), 20 August 1853

the abbey golden

august 20 1853

Dear Johana

(a) Yours of the 23 of March reached the abbey on the 5th of this month together with two numbers of the Morning Herald and on the 15th of this Month the Morning Herald of 28th of May Directed to Mrs Dalton with your name in it arrived here. I need not tell you how greatfull Mrs D and I are to you for your Kindness, and how happy we all felt on receiving your very Kind and affectionate nice letter. What a comfert it is to you to be able to write Such a letter and how greatfull you Should be to the Father and mother that gave you the opertunity of doing so which I am Sure you are.

(b) Yes it was always my opinion of you and family that yee all were possed [*possessed*] of that Degree of honour and honesty and gratitude which was very rear to be found in an other family and what I often Said Since yee left that you Couldent but have look [*luck*] which I am glad to percive by your letters. Yes indeed Johana it is now I Know year wor[th] when I am Dealing with a Set of robbers that I cannot trust one of them. Not so when I had yee. I came home quite Content with the Keys of all my barns under year care but now I must Stay and bring them home every night. Often I told the ruffins yee left after yee that I wished to god I Kept one of yee at home and gave him a hundred pounds ayear I would put three in my pocket. I hope I need not adviz[e] yee to follow the Same line of life in a forren land as I am sure that Nothing will induce yee to act other Wise. Dear Johana if those who you live with Knew year Worth as I do What a treasure they would Set on yee. You Mention that you are living with a leady & if She Know Your Worth as Well as I do What a treasure She Would have in you but if you live with her for any time She then will say that I have not told half your worth. Yes Johana for your Morel Conduct honour and honesty I would be Security to any amt Not for you a lone but for any Member of your family.

(c) The leadies here were very glad to hear that poor little Mary was gone to the Convent as to my part I think you can Save your Soul out side as well as her. I was nevr fond of Convents. You Canot but remember that I had my darling Maria in one of them for five...years paying a 100£ a year for her and Came hom to Me with her health impaired. Besides my Notion is that god Never created a being to go shut themselves up for life and Say their prayers. But poor Mary was always fond of praying as Kit often told me when ever I Should Send her to the dairy house that She Spent the Morning Saying prayers & it would be well that She Spent Some time Saying them.

(d) The last letter I received from your Brother Ned he Said he wrote it three days after he was Marrid. You will blive Me When I tell you that I laughed harty as I always thought that Ned would never hav the Courage of of Marring [*marrying*] any Woman. He Says that She was a good loving wife he Should wait untill the honney Moon was over But when I told the lads in Mough that he was Marrid young Loyde Cursed out that he did not think he would marry the first leady in Ireland. I asked him Why his answer was that if a girl looked at him that he would run a mile from her So that I am apt to think there must be something very temting abut her when She throw a leg under Ned. Yes Poor Ned in him She has got a treasure and I tell the loving wife though loving She is that She got ten times a more loving husband. I wish poor Ned and his loving Wife from the bottom of My heart every look but I hope that your Brothers thoughts are not wained [*weaned*] from you and to be Candid wd[?] feel More happy to hear that you were Marrid [*born*: ?and in your] own house. Tell your [*born*: ?Brothers from] me that [I] hope the will not Neglect



your welfare as to you they owe a gredale [*great deal*]. Let turn their thoughts and think of the Beautifull Clean ord[er]ly little Cottage they had to Come in to after their day Leabour Whilst under your Care I have never gone into it Since yee left. How often did I rejoice in going in to it when I had an hour to Spair of a wet day to See everything So orderly and Clean. Do you recollect the little dresser and all the chionee [*?china*] that you had on it. Tell your Brothers that I will expect to hear that you are in your own house in your next letter. They one and all promised me when parting in Dundrum that the would take Care of you and indeed I am s[ure] they will. Do not offer to think of following Mary. Stay out Side get Marrisd and you [torn: ?will always] be a treasu[r]e to the[m] [torn: ?and the house] they live in [half-line missing].

(e) This Country is fast Improving land is in as great demand as ever. For the las twenty years we had not Such a Crop of potaties. I Break the field oposite Jack Kenedy and I am sure it will produce 40 brls to the Quarter [*rood*]. Pork is 3£ a cwt Butter £5 a cwt Beeff 7D a lb Mutton 6D every thing that grass feeds are as high as they were in Bonaparts time. I See by the paper you sent me that Irish Butter Sells high in Sydney. I wish I Could Send you a firkin of the right Sort from abbey one of Mrs Murnanes Make. Your old native Spot Cloughleigh is all let. Keffin[?] has 300 acres but very low by[?] 10s an acre Willy Scully is living in Larry Creagh[s] house [?in] Castle Park [2 or 3 lines torn off].

(f) You Could Not think how lonely every place is here. Every one that Can g[o] to yee and to America are going Still we hav near enough yet. You May Judge I road by your little Cottage a few days ago and the thisels were growing in the middle of the road.

(g) Now Dear Johana write often and send the papers and I will write often and send you papers. Your frind Father McDonnell is Dead he was removed to Cashele got feaver and died. Yee say nothing about my last letter. Ned Should have it long as I directed to Mr Gibbins for yee. I Send yee News papers with this. You w[ill] read a Speach of Docter Cahils it will remind yee of the old Country and the old religion. Fare well Dear Johana god Bless yee give my love to all the fam[ily] [2 or 3 lines torn off].

(h) Do not forget to write often. I send the free press the [Vi]ndicator the lon [*?London*] Dispatch and will be always happy to hear from you if the boys are Sucsefull at the [D]jegenns [*diggings*]. Come home I will get yee a good [h]usband it is a pitty you should Breed in any place but Cloghleigh.

Farewell god Bless yee. Your Couzin received your letter with the enclosure She seems greatfull.

(3) *Eliza Dalton (Tipperary) to Johana Hogan (NSW), 4 September 1853*

Abbey Sept 4th.. 1853

Dear Johana

(a) Need I say I am indebted for the kindness you evinced in writing and also how I rejoice for your welfare. Indeed I should be ungrateful, if I were not interested for you and each of your family. In justice to them I must say that few in honorable life better than them left this Country. You wont forget to give them my best wishes, particularly to Mary I am delighted at the choise she made. Tell her to pray for me. It has been the will of God to afflict me with a Succession of severe trials, nor am I rid of them yet. Mr.. Denis is in the last Stage of consumption very probable before this reaches you He will be laid in his resting place. He has the Sympathy of all who knew him but what avails it to those who are conscious of immediate danger. You will also be sorry to hear that your kind friend the Rev Michael Mc.Donnel caught fever in discharge of his duty Survived only a few days. He was waked and buried in the Chapel of Cashel, Amidst the wailings of the poor, for whom he Seemed to live. He was only a few months Curate to his Uncle and lest he may die in debt had his life insured for £100. His poor Sister the Nun daily visits his Grave not to weep but pray. You Cant expect much news from me whose thoughts & attention are engaged by my dying son. Mr John is at home Since last April you never saw him looking better he does not like the climate of America. Mr Willy was well when las I heard from him. Father Matthew met him and Said he is a credit to his Country.

(b) I sent your letter to your Aunt McGlin knowing it would be a comfort to her and enclose you her note. Since last November we have not heard from Matt Blake his address Robert Cassels Esqr. Islend Lake



Cooma Manaroo. Will you give them my best wishes. You can also say that two of James Ryans Sisters left Abbey for Melbourn last June. James Magraths the Coopers daughter is also in Melbourn. Julia Kenedy left for America her Sister has an excellent situation in England. The Turners who lived with Mr Wayland are in your old habitation. Mr Wayland gone to Austrilia his family in Dublin. The police are removed from Mough Ned Kenedy Steward there as usual he will miss them. Why Should you Speak of trifling postage to me who Shall always be anxious to hear from you, and also expect that nothing will prevent your brothers. Mrs.. Quinlan was here last Sunday we were talking a long time of you. Her Son will be ordained next Summer. Mary A Dwyers best wishes to you all. She is sorry that those of her family who went to America Are not in your Country.

Adieu dear Johana

And Blieve me
Most Sincerely Yours
Eliza Dalton

(4) *Eliza Dalton (Tipperary) to Johanna Hogan (NSW), 22 July 1854*

Abbey

July the 22nd. 1854

My dear Johanna

(a) I received your letter, which has conveyed a great deal of information and rejoice to hear that you and your Brothers and Sister are so well and happy. Your name Shall be always dear to me for not forgetting to write me tho in a distant land. Mr.. Dalton is also indebted for the newspapers he so frequently gets and says it must be both troublesome and expensive. All this does not in the least Surprise me as I always Could See Something most Superior in you and each of your family. I am also delighted to hear the Account you give of your Amiable Mrs.. May God bless her tho, on reflection I then Say to myself I grudge you to to another. No doubt you must feel quite at home, Surrounded by So many of your neighbours who are all I am sure equally willing to love and respect you.

(b) Although this Country is much improved Strange to Say the remaining few as discontented. In every Season they are facing the wild ocean particularly to Austrilia. The name of the gold mines are So Inducing the are even leaving America for that part of the world.

(c) How happy I am to hear [tha]t my neighbours Doctor Smithwick and Mr Power are so comfortable of course tis only what they have a strong claim on. A few days ago I got a letter from my Son William Saying Mr. William Smithwick who lives in Buffalo is in a very delicate State of health. When last he visited him there was no hope of his recovery. It appears the Severe climate of America disagreed with him as well as with many others.

(d) Tis time for me to congratulate you on your Brother Edward getting so worthy a Companion, and a young family. Hoping to hear of an addition to them, in your next letter. From what I know of him and heard of his wife tis to be expected the Children of Such parents must be good.

(e) I also Sincerely wish his Brother James will imitate his example. He was a great favorite of mine as he was always Graceful And timid. He cannot forget the many pleasant Hours my poor Children passed with him Match Making for him and Bridget Fitzgerald more betoken. No young Ladie could go through a greater course of Blushes. She is now married in Hull to a Gentleman of the established Church but She continues a good Catholic. About 12 months Since She paid us a visit in first rate Style, She wore a Gold Watch and and well it became her.

(f) My dear Johanna I have been telling Mary Dwyer that I Suspect you have a notion of imitating your Sister who Seems So happy in retiring from the world otherwise you would not be reconciled So far from your fond Brothers. When next you write to your dear Sister will you Say every thing affectionate for me and Mary A Dwyer who is most anxious for your welfare. She is my only companion as Abbey House is now lonesome as deserted. Since former letter I told you of my Son John being in America but on hearing of his Brother Denis's illness he came home, badly received by his Father. He is now on his way to

Melbourn or Sydney. In confidence I am telling you that this among the many other Severe trials I have to bear has had a bad effect on me as I thought his Father Should forget the past and receive him more kindly. Perhaps either you or your Brothers would See him before I hear from you again. Need I tell them to be attentive and give him every necessary information.

(g) My Sisters are all well they were here lately and are indebted for your kind enquiries. Poor Mrs.. Murnane is very Comfortable with Mr Sadlier. She comes to See me every Christmas, her Son is on the way to Sydney from thence to Bathurst to his Brother. I cannot conclude without again desiring you to remember Mary A Dwyer and me most affectionately to your Brothers and dear Sister and remain

Always Sincerely
yours

Eliza Dalton

PS

I Send under the Seal a triffling [words blotted: ?Scapular Solemnlie] Blessed

(5) *Mary Dugan (Limerick) to her daughter Catherine and son-in-law (NSW) 5 May 1856*

Bruree May 5th. 56/

My Dear Daughter and Son in law

(a) Catherine I am greatly troubled at your long Silence. It is now 15 Months Since I had the pleasure of a letter from you. I would be very happy to hear from Michael and his Wife. For her Kindness to Me I am truly grateful and I Constantly pray to the Almighty God to bless and prosper ye all. Dear Catherine I am very bad[ly] off this time past, every thing here is So dear and I am not able to do any thing that would help to Support Me. The fact is only for the Kindness of the priest and a few Friends that is lending me a little from time to time expecting every other day to hear from ye that I could pay them. Dear Catherine I hope there is nothing amis with you or your Brothers family that Kept ye so long without Sending Me any assistance. Believe your own Mother would rather perish than hear there was any thing wrong with any of ye. Catherine give My Sincere love to your Husband and Brother and Johannah and tell her that her Kindness to Me will be remembered before the Throne of God to Call blessings on her and family.

(b) Dear Catherine let me Know have you and Michael an increase in yuer familys Since ye wrote last. Only for Father Birmingham and John Duggan I should go to the workhouse and the thought of going there would break My heart. Give My best love to My Grandauther Maryann and tell her I am thankful to her for her Kind token to Me. Dear Catherine let me Know did you receive the four Agnes Dies I Sent they were all the treasure I could Send. Father Meany enquires very often for you.

(c) I am greatly in debt as the dearness of the past times and the trifle for My Lodging together with every other little call and haveing nothing to depend on only Almighty God and yeer goodness to assist Me. So I hope if relief for Me is not on the way to Me you will give it no delay as I am very Badly off. Let me Know are ye all together as ye were when ye wrote last. It gave me great Consolation to Know ye were all living so united for it will bring the blessing of God on ye. Dear Catherine I hope in your next letter ye will Mention John Dugan for I cannot tell you how very Kind he is to Me.

(d) As for thinking of My death or Causeing ye not to Send Me any Money never fear for when it is the will of God to Call on Me John Dugan will let Ye Know at on[ce]. So let not the fear of looseing the Money be the Cause of Keeping Me in want any longer, tho at presant thank God I am in good health in fact all I want is enough to eat. Dear Catherin Speak to Michael at once and try what ye will do between ye for Me as I am greatly in the need of it and the Sooner I would get it the better.

I Conclude this wishing all and every one of ye the Choisest gifts of Heaven, health wealth and the grace and blessing of the giver of all good gifts Almighty God is the Sincere prayer of Your Mother

Mary Dugan

P.S. John Dugan is married and got £90 fortune and a very respectable woman he is promised More. He is very well off he has 60£ a year and in good health.

(6) *William Dalton (Tipperary) to Ned Hogan (NSW), 17 August 1858 [from transcription of lost original]*

Abbey Golden
August 17/58

Dear Ned

(a) Why should old acquaintance be forgotten. I was thinking it was the case until receiving by this mornings post the Sydney Herald and Freeman which I feel much obliged to you. I would always feel a pleasure in hearing from any member of the family. What is become of Judy I never heard from her but once since she married nor neighther from James or Dan. Poor Mairy I suppose is saying her prayers.

(b) This country is improving very much for the last 5 or 6 years notwithstanding there are numbers going to your country. To give you an idea how hirein going on here Butler of Ballicurran is paying 18s a week to ten men he hired in Golden on Sunday and their diet. I am entirely out of tillage thank God. Wheat is not worth more than 14D a stone in this country and it is thought the new wheat will sell at 9D a stone. There is such a glut of forrein corn tillage farmers are not at all well off in this country but graziers are doing well. We had not since the potato blight come such a splendid crop as we have this year. We have 20 barrels to the acre. The blight is gone this year and corn is equally good. I am cutting wheat in Mough today. I have only Loyde and his son cutting it. Would [word missing] from the farming implements we have got since you left we can do buissness with one third what we had in your time here.

(c) All your friends here is doing well here. Your old friend Mickeleen Hogan is still alive and doing well. He gave two thousand pounds some time ago for an estate and a few days after I was coming from the fair of Killeacle and he was sitting in a little [word omitted] he has on the tipping [?Tipperary] road eating his dinner and what was it a little bowl of yellow male stirabout. So you see it is hard to break an horse of his troth [?trot]. The Scully and Sadlers are all knocked to pieces. They robbed the country with their Bank. Land that let here some time ago for 15£[?] is now let for £25. I very fortunately got a lese of Mough for a guinea an acre. It is a pound an acre better now than when you left. I have 40 dairy cows there and it is as good as Abbey for butter. The five tennants that remain on Cloughleigh are very happy having the land under the Courts. There is not one house to the 20 in this country that was when you left.

(d) I never heard a word from Matt Blake but twice since he left. There is a free imigration for some young females. I am trying to send out two little girls neices of Peggy Dwyers. If they are successful in going I will write by them to you. They would be a treasure to whoever would get them. I blive it is for Melbourn they are taken.

I am Dear Ned, Yours truly

William Dalton

(7) *William Dalton (Tipperary) to Ned Hogan (NSW), 22 February 1859*

Abbey Febury 22/59

My Dear Ned

(a) Yours of the 9th December last reached me on the 12th of this month and I am Sure you will blive me when I tell you how overjoied I felt on receving it. In deed I gave you all up for lost and being ungreatfull but in this I find I was Mistaken So far as you are concernd. I receive the Sydney paper regular for which I feel Most greatfull to you and I am Sure that you will blive Me when I tell you that I will feel Most happy in hearing from you. I am glad that all the rest of the family are doing well and in deed the Could not be otherwise as in living a Most honest Industerus Religious life it [if] they Should have luck in their undertakins. Remember Me to poor Mairy when you See her. As to Judy I Suppose She has given us up all for the husband.

(b) James has got Marrid last Novembr to a girl from Neanagh he got £1500 fortune he is Now living in Mough. I had house room enough but his wife prefered living in her own house. They were great fools



I left him all his fortune which I am now Sorry for as I made boath of them Mad with Money. Mough is greatly improved Since you left. He has a lase of his own life and thirty one years after for 200 a year what I paid 328 for and Made Money and educated My family. Land is not to be got for love or money in this country notwithstanding this was the worst year on tillage farmers that come for the last forty years while those that were in the grazing line were equally good. Every thing that can be laid on the grass is gone beyond the value Mutton 8D and Beef 7D a lb Pork equally Dear. In fact there is a great improvement in this Country Boath in the prices and in Conduct of the people.

(c) You will See by the papers I send you that wee are Seeking tennant Wright what wee never can get as it is imposible to Frame one but as the old Saying goe[s] it is by Making fools of half the world the other half lives. You will think a greadle [little] of the Thurless Meeting when you read it but you will be Surprized when I tell you it was got up by the tag rag of this Country by a few village attorneys and a Skow pool [?from dialect *scóipiúil*, suggesting 'dynamo'] of a MP we have the O'Donohoo. He is a Kerry Man he is a frind of OConnels but Never recognized him.

(d) But there is in this Country the venom of that ruffin Duffy who is gone over to yee they young Irelandders who is formed by a parcel of half educated priests it was Most aful [awful] to See those young fellows abusing old priests of 50 years Standing fellows that would be Minding the pigs were it not for peels grant to Mynooth College. They get when in College a nough to eat and Drink and their education and 25£ a year to Cloath them. Where it not for this wee would have those fellows roasting potaties in the ashes as they Were reared and when there is vacation in Summer they have this money and in place of coming home to their parents the are too full of money and them that reared them too poor they go about Spending and Sporting. I always Said the British government Never gave anythin but to trample on the old country.

(e) I am Sorry that my frind and Couzin is made a fool and a tool of by that Duffy He tryed his hand in this Country at every but he at last Came to the Conclusion that he was to well Known and to well matched and he said I will try my hand in Melbourn and glad I will be to have a country and to Sell[?] it
Mark [erased: you will]
[no continuation]



Paying the passage money at the emigration agent's office in Cork, 1851.