
Background Migration over Time: the Irish in mid-Victorian Cornwall*

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Abstract

The census manuscripts of 1841 and 1851 show that Cornwall was just a way-station for the Irish-born. They came from southern Ireland, put down few local roots and moved on, with only 30 per cent remaining in the county and 15 per cent in the same parish. Few found jobs in agriculture or mining, Cornwall's leading industries. Many were unmarried and, of those who were married, most had English spouses. In 1841 60 per cent of Irish husbands with Irish wives had military or government connections. Perhaps 20 per cent of the Irish-born were not migrants in the usual sense, being visitors, students or the children of English-born parents.

Introduction

In areas outside London and the industrial cities that received most Irish migrants to mid-Victorian Britain, the presence of individuals born in Ireland may be attributed in large part to what, on an analogy with the background radiation in the universe, could be called *background migration*. Certain occupations involved movement around the United Kingdom, often in directions unconnected with the main channels of economic migration. During such movements these career transients could find a spouse or have a child. They could lay down new roots, return to their origins, or move to yet other places. Such migration, as with background radiation, was at a low rate and with no clear direction. Its result was to leave deposits of non-natives in communities all over the United Kingdom, even in the face of what Keith Snell has described as local xenophobia.² A study of the Irish-, Welsh-, Scottish- and Yorkshire-born in Hertfordshire in 1851 analysed some of the pathways by which this background migration occurred.³ These pathways, of which one of the most important was marriage, were ways of circumventing formal and informal barriers to settlement. This article studies such background migration among the Irish-born in Cornwall, but extends the analysis to the Irish-born in 1841, hence looking more clearly at pre-famine migration.

Cornwall was another county in which few individuals born in Ireland were to be found.

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² See K.D.M. Snell, *Parish and Belonging: Community, Identity and Welfare in England and Wales, 1700–1950* (Cambridge, 2006), especially Chapter 2.

³ P.M. Solar and M.T. Smith, 'Background migration: the Irish (and other strangers) in mid-Victorian Hertfordshire', *Local Population Studies*, 82 (2009), pp. 44–62.

In 1841 they accounted for only 0.28 per cent of the county's population and in 1851 for 0.42 per cent. It is the only county in England for which there are easily accessible data from *both* the 1841 and the 1851 censuses, which makes it possible to see the Irish-born in Britain before and after the distress migration of the late 1840s.⁴ Quantitative study of the Irish in Britain has been dominated by work that has drawn on the manuscripts of the 1851 and subsequent censuses, yet Frances Beechey showed many years ago that the period of the Famine was associated with changes in the characteristics of the Irish in York.⁵ The pre-Famine Irish population of York was older, had higher status occupations, was less residentially segregated, and was more likely to be intermarried with the English than were their post-Famine counterparts.⁶ Other than Beechey's work, the only other study to have used both the 1841 and 1851 censuses to investigate the Irish-born is John Herson's work on Stafford, though Herson restricts his analysis to families that were present in both censuses, covering only 37 individuals in 1841.⁷

It would be far-fetched to claim Cornwall as representative of Britain, but studying the county does offer a chance to see whether the findings in the Hertfordshire study are robust. Cornwall was, like Hertfordshire, predominantly agricultural, but it differed in having a booming tin and copper mining industry as well as a long sea coast.⁸ Both of these county studies contrast with the usual focus of studies of the Irish in Britain, which has been on cities. By taking in rural and small-town Britain they can help address the question of why most of the Irish-born were indeed concentrated in cities. The results for these two counties may also serve to stimulate work on other counties, or perhaps prompt a more general analysis of the Irish-born in Britain as more accessible data from the mid-Victorian censuses become available.⁹

Persistence

The most important result of this study is that in Cornwall the Irish-born in 1851 were essentially a different population from the Irish-born in 1841. Of the 985 individuals recorded in the 1841 census only 240 could be even tentatively matched to persons in the 1851 census. The crude persistence rate was thus only 24 per cent. But this understates

4 Thanks are due to the volunteers of the Cornwall Online Census Project who transcribed the census material and to the FreeCEN (<https://www.freecen.org.uk/> [accessed 4 August 2020]) and Cornwall Online Census Project (<https://sites.rootsweb.com/~kayhin/cocp.html> [accessed 4 August 2020]) websites for making it easily and freely available to researchers.

5 The literature on the Irish in Britain has been surveyed in Solar and Smith, 'Background migration'.

6 F. Beechey, 'The Irish in York, 1840–1875' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of York, 1976), pp. 36, 40, 45, 83, 190, 196, 236; see also F. Finnegan, *Poverty and Prejudice: a Study of Irish Immigrants in York, 1850–75* (Cork, 1982).

7 J. Herson, *Divergent Paths: Family Histories of Irish Emigrants in Britain, 1820–1920* (Manchester, 2015).

8 On the economic history of Cornwall in this period, see B. Deacon, 'The reformulation of territorial identity: Cornwall in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Open University, 2001), Chapter 6; or B. Deacon, *Cornwall: a Concise History* (Cardiff, 2007), pp. 99–111.

9 Such data are now available through the I-CeM project, but only from the 1851 census. See K. Schürer and E. Higgs, *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM) Names and Addresses, 1851–1911: Special Licence Access*, 2nd edn [data collection]. Colchester: UK Data Service, 2020, SN:7856. doi:10.5255/UKDA-SN-7856-2.

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persistence for two reasons. The first is that the potentially matchable population would have been reduced by mortality. A rough adjustment, assuming a crude death rate of 22 per 1000, would raise the persistence rate to just over 30 per cent. The second reason for adjusting upwards is the impossibility, using only census information, of matching single women who married between the censuses. An upper-bound adjustment would be to remove from the calculations the entire population of single women between the ages of 10 and 29 years as well as all individuals in this category that were matched. This would further raise the persistence rate to only 32.5 per cent. Hence it seems reasonable to conclude that no more than one third of the Irish-born resident in Cornwall in 1841 were still there in 1851.

Looking backward from the larger population of 1851 makes persistence even less common. The crude persistence rate is 16 per cent, but again two adjustments are necessary. The first is to take out all of the children under the age of ten years, who could not have been there in 1841; this raises the rate to 18 per cent. The second, to take account again of the impossibility of matching women who married, is to remove from the calculations both all of the married women aged between 20 and 39 years and all such women who were matched. The result is a persistence rate of 19.5 per cent: less than a fifth of the Irish-born resident in Cornwall in 1851 had been there in 1841.

The contrast with the English-born population is striking. Rough indicators of persistence for the Cornish-born can be calculated from the 1841 and 1851 censuses. In 1841, 323,634 of the county's inhabitants were Cornish-born, of which, at 22 per 1000 mortality, about 260,000 would have survived to 1851. In 1851 there were about 245,000 Cornish-born inhabitants aged ten years or more. Assuming these were all survivors from 1841, an upper-bound estimate for persistence would be 94 per cent. But in 1851 there were roughly 33,000 Cornish-born persons aged 10 years or more living elsewhere in England and Wales, so there must have been movements of the Cornish-born in and out of the county. If we assume that all of these out-migrants had lived in Cornwall in 1841, but left the county to be replaced by in-migration of the Cornish-born living elsewhere in 1841, then the corresponding persistence rate, clearly a lower bound, would have been 65 per cent.¹⁰ By contrast with the Irish-born, of whom less than a third persisted, two-thirds or more of the Cornish-born remained in the county from 1841 to 1851.

These persistence rates for the Irish-born are very low. The handful of studies that have looked at overall persistence during the 1850s have done so at parish or town level and have produced crude persistence rates in a fairly wide range from 30 to 65 per cent.¹¹ The crude

10 This calculation involves subtracting the Cornish-born living elsewhere in Britain in 1851 from the Cornish-born in Cornwall in 1841, then calculating the persistence rate with an allowance for mortality. This clearly understates the persistence rate since many of the Cornish-born elsewhere in Britain in 1851 may well have left Cornwall before 1841.

11 J. Robin, *Elmdon: Continuity and Change in a North-west Essex Village, 1861–1964* (Cambridge, 1980), p. 190; P.R.A. Hinde, 'The population of a Wiltshire village in the nineteenth century: a reconstitution study of Berwick St James, 1841–71', *Annals of Human Biology*, 14 (1987), pp. 475–85; B. Wojciechowkska, 'Brenchley: a study of migratory movements in a mid-nineteenth century parish', *Local Population Studies*, 41 (1988), pp. 28–40; Christopher French, 'Persistence in a local community: Kingston upon Thames, 1851–1891', *Local Population Studies*, 81 (2008), pp. 18–36.

rate for the Irish-born in Cornwall is below the bottom end of this range and applies to an entire county. If only those who remained in the same Cornish parish are counted, the crude persistence rate drops to 15 per cent, only slightly higher than the nine per cent that Beechey found for the Irish-born in York.¹² This result at county level confirms what studies of Wrexham and York have found at town level for the Irish-born in post-Famine decades, which is very high rates of turnover.¹³

Most of the Irish-born in Cornwall were thus in transit during the 1840s. Comparisons between 1841 and 1851 do not refer to a population with continuity of residence, but to two largely distinct populations. With that in mind, overall similarities and differences in the experience of the Irish-born before and after the famine can be analysed as can similarities and differences in the experiences of those who remained in Cornwall between 1841 and 1851 ('persisters') and those who did not ('transients').

The 'accidental Irish' and other non-migrants

The Irish-born were not spread evenly across Cornwall. In 1851 none were to be found in 39 per cent of the census sub-districts and only one or two in another 21 per cent. In northern Cornwall the Irish-born were particularly rare. In 1841 the largest concentrations, three or four times those in the northern registration districts, were to be found in the Falmouth and St Germans districts (the latter was opposite Plymouth). In 1851 these districts were joined by Redruth, which in 1841 had contained relatively few Irish-born.

Many of those in sub-districts with only a few Irish-born, as well as some of those elsewhere, were what might be termed the 'accidental Irish'. Their English parents at some point lived or worked in Ireland and had a child or two before returning to England. In Cornwall, such trajectories can be clearly seen in the household compositions of English-born coastguard officers who had children born not only in Ireland, but in many other places in Britain as well. For example, the 1841 census shows Thomas Stephens and his wife Mary, both born in Cornwall, having a daughter born in Cornwall in 1829, three subsequent children born in Ireland, and four more born in Cornwall. The nature of the service seems to have involved frequent moves.¹⁴ People born in Ireland of English parents were not Irish migrants in the usual understanding of the term. Their numbers must have been quite large. In the censuses they can only be systematically detected as children for whom the birthplaces of their parents were recorded. Of the children with at least one parent whose birthplace was known, 43 per cent of the Irish-born in 1841 had two English-born parents. In 1851 this was slightly higher, at 46 per cent. If children whose only identifiable parent was English are included, the shares rise to 62 per cent in 1841 and 52

12 Beechey, 'The Irish in York', p. 400.

13 P. Jones, 'The Irish in Wrexham, 1850–1880', in P. O'Leary (ed.), *Irish Migrants in Modern Wales* (Liverpool, 2004), pp. 83–100, here at pp. 84–5; Beechey, 'The Irish in York', p. 400.

14 The primary duty of coastguards in nineteenth-century England was to observe and intercept smuggling activity. To avoid the risk of collusion with smugglers, those employed as coastguards were strangers to the communities where they were employed and so would almost all be migrants.

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per cent in 1851. Adding in those with an English-born father and an Irish-born mother raises the shares to 73 per cent and 58 per cent, although this last group must lie near the uncertain boundary of 'Irishness'. Children who persisted across the censuses were more likely to have had English parents.

There were certainly 'accidental Irish' among the adult population as well, but the census does not make it possible to observe their parents' birthplaces. Names are a clue: men called Trathen and Tregaskis were unlikely to be Irish. Adam Crymble has used the surnames of Irish- and non-Irish-born in the 1841 census to assess the 'Irishness' of individuals found in Old Bailey records.¹⁵ A similar exercise for Cornwall was beyond the scope of this article.

The census also recorded people who were authentically Irish, but whose presence in Cornwall on census day was clearly temporary. The 1851 census explicitly recorded some individuals as visitors, though this was not the case in 1841. In 1841 there were 12 Irish-born pupils attending a Falmouth school. To judge from their names, which include Grubb, Malcolmson and Nicholson, they seem to have come from families of prominent Irish Quakers. Neither visitors nor students should be thought of as migrants in the usual sense.

The Cornwall data suggests that to arrive at the true population of Irish migrants in rural and small-town Britain a larger correction may be needed than the 11 per cent suggested by the Hertfordshire data. For Cornwall in 1841 the children and adults with either two English parents or an English parent and an unidentified other parent, along with travellers and students, comprised about 20 per cent of the Irish-born recorded in the census. A similar calculation for 1851 arrives at 19 per cent. Since children accounted for the largest share of the 'accidental Irish' who could be observed, the analysis which follows concentrates mainly on the adult population, that is those aged 20 years and over.

Characteristics of the Irish-born adult population

The demographic characteristics of the Irish-born differ only slightly between 1841 and 1851. The share of adults was slightly higher in 1851, though a correction for 'accidental Irish' children would eliminate this difference. Among adults, males outnumbered females, slightly more so in 1841 than in 1851. The age distributions are awkward to compare because of pronounced age heaping in 1841, but it appears that among adults there were in 1841 relatively fewer people in their twenties and relatively more in their forties and fifties. This feature was more marked among women than among men. Despite the relative shortage of young adults in 1841, the number of persons who had never been married appears to have been markedly higher: 43 per cent in 1841 as against 30 per cent in 1851. The difference was greater for males than for females. In part, this result might be due to the difficulty of identifying widows and widowers in the 1841 census, particularly among older age groups but, leaving out people aged 50 years and older gives a similar result, 48 per cent unmarried in 1841 as against 36 per cent in 1851.

15 A. Crymble, 'A comparative approach to identifying the Irish in long eighteenth-century London', *Historical Methods*, 48 (2015), pp. 141–52.

Those Irish-born who had married were likely to be in a ‘mixed’ marriage. Of the marriages for which the birthplaces of both spouses can be identified, only 22 per cent in 1841 involved two Irish-born persons. Irish women with English husbands accounted for 42 per cent and Irish men with English wives the remaining 36 per cent. In 1851 the share of ‘unmixed’ marriages rose to 26 per cent, which corresponded to a decline in the share of marriages involving Irish women and English men. Persisters were more likely to be in ‘mixed’ marriages than were transients. By contrast with Hertfordshire, the share of ‘mixed’ marriages in 1851 was a good deal higher in Cornwall, 74 per cent as against 64 per cent.

The occupations of the husbands of Irish-born wives tell us something about how these Irish women may have arrived in Cornwall. Irish-born women married men with a broad range of occupations, both in 1841 and in 1851. Professional men and men in skilled trades were perhaps a bit over-represented and miners and labourers under-represented. Those with Irish husbands, that is, in ‘unmixed’ marriages, were quite distinct, especially in 1841. Over 60 per cent of the husbands had a government connection. Most were in active military service and a few were military pensioners. The remainder were a policeman, an excise officer, a customs officer and a workhouse governor. In 1851, government connections accounted for only 28 per cent of ‘unmixed’ marriages, as Irish couples headed by miners and labourers had become more common.

The greater share of the unmarried in 1841 was reflected in the fact that more people lived either as lodgers or in households headed by parents or other family members (these last two groups are taken together since the 1841 census, unlike that in 1851, did not specify family relationships within households). In 1841, 41 per cent of Irish-born adults fall into these categories, as against 34 per cent in 1851. Although the share of adults living in other persons’ households falls with age, the higher share in 1841 than in 1851 was persistent across all age groups. Those living in others’ households were also, not surprisingly, under-represented among those remaining in Cornwall from one census to the other.

The occupational structure of Irish-born adult males in Cornwall, as classified by the Historical International Standard of Classification of Occupations (HISCO) system, is shown in Table 1, along with similar data for the Irish-born in Hertfordshire and for the entire population of Cornwall. The HISCO database provides standardised occupations for the many variants that appear in historical sources.¹⁶ The most distinctive feature among the Irish-born in Cornwall is the large share of protective service workers, just under a quarter of all those employed in both 1841 and 1851, and much larger either than that in the county as whole or in Hertfordshire. This reflects the increasing share of the Irish in the British military from the late eighteenth century onwards and the fact that there were more barracks and other military installations in Cornwall than in Hertfordshire. This military presence was augmented by the large number of Chelsea and Greenwich pensioners among the Irish-born. By comparison with Hertfordshire, the significant and

16 For an overview of HISCO’s classification see History of Work Information System, *HISCO Tree Of Occupational Groups* [2020] <https://historyofwork.iisg.nl/major.php> [accessed 27 May 2020].

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Table 1 Occupations by sector: adult males in Cornwall, 1841 and 1851, and Hertfordshire, 1851

HISCO code	Occupational description	Irish-born	Irish-born	Irish-born	All
		Cornwall	Cornwall	Hertfordshire	Cornwall
		1841	1851	1851	1851
		%	%	%	%
0, 1	Professional & technical	9.4	4.8	11.0	1.8
2	Administrative & managerial	0.4	0.2	3.8	0.2
3	Clerical	2.9	2.0	4.2	1.5
4	Sales	18.1	14.8	15.9	2.9
58	Protective services	23.8	23.6	6.1	0.6
Rest 5	Other services	4.0	2.3	1.5	1.7
6	Agriculture and fishing	5.8	10.7	18.6	31.4
71, 72	Mining and metals	6.5	10.9	0.0	26.4
75, 79, 80	Textiles, clothing and leather	6.9	4.1	7.2	6.2
95, 97	Construction	2.5	15.5	7.6	8.7
98	Seamen	6.1	4.5	0.4	5.3
99	Labourers	6.9	3.0	15.2	3.8
Rest 7–9	Other industry	6.9	3.6	8.7	9.5

Note: HISCO – Historical International Standard Classification of Occupations.

Sources: 1841 and 1851 Censuses of England and Wales: for the 1841 censuses, see FreeCEN (<https://www.freecen.org.uk> [accessed 4 August 2020]) and Cornwall Online Census Project (<https://sites.rootsweb.com/~kayhin/cocp.html> [accessed 4 August 2020]); for the 1851 census, see K. Schürer and E. Higgs, *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM) Names and Addresses, 1851–1911: Special Licence Access*, 2nd edn [data collection]. Colchester: UK Data Service, 2020, SN:7856. doi:10.5255/UKDA-SN-7856-2.

rising share of men working in mining and metals is not surprising, given the importance of copper and tin mining in Cornwall. But the Irish were severely underrepresented in this sector within Cornwall, as they were throughout industry, except in textiles, clothing and leather and maritime labour. The Irish-born were over-represented among the professional, administrative and clerical occupations, and were particularly prominent in sales, with hawkers accounting for most of those occupied. The occupations of ‘persisters’ were fairly similar to those of ‘transients’, with hawkers and professionals relatively rare among ‘persisters’ and miners and other commercial occupations relatively abundant. Pensioners also figured prominently among those who remained from one census to the other.

Underlying these changes in occupational structure was an increase in the numbers of adult males employed, from 277 in 1841 to 450 in 1851.¹⁷ This growth was almost entirely accounted for by four activities. The most important was railway construction, with 57 labourers concentrated in the parishes of Phillack, St Erth and Camborne. At the time of the 1851 census the West Cornwall Railway, which would open between Truro and Penzance in 1852, was being constructed between Camborne and Hayle. Next in

¹⁷ Only 67 adult males who were occupied in 1841 were still occupied in 1851. Of these 38 had the same occupation and another 12 were pensioners in both years.

importance was the military, accounted for in almost equal parts by the coast guard and the army. The number of Irish-born men employed by the coast guard roughly doubled, from 25 to 47. In the army the number rose from 23 to 48, as those at the Budock barracks, near Falmouth, grew from 19 to 28. There were also 17 Irish-born soldiers recorded at Maker, near Plymouth; none had been recorded in the 1841 census, either in Cornwall or in the part of the parish that had been in Devon until 1844.¹⁸ These soldiers probably manned the new artillery battery that had been constructed at Maker Heights in 1845–1846.¹⁹ The third growth activity was mining, in which the numbers of Irish-born grew from only 14 in 1841 to 47 in 1851. Here the labour market seems to have opened up to the Irish. In 1841 fully half of the Irish-born miners had English-born wives, suggesting that they already had local connections. In 1851 less than a quarter were married to English women. Finally, the number of agricultural labourers grew from 10 to 33. Here the importance of local ties also diminished: in 1841 four were married to English women; in 1851 only six.

The occupational data can also be rearranged by social status using the HISCLASS system. The HISCLASS database collapses the HISCO occupations into 12 or 7 social classes.²⁰ The results are shown in Table 2. Fewer Irish-born males in Cornwall were in high status occupations than in Hertfordshire, which may reflect Hertfordshire's proximity to London, but the Irish-born were still over-represented in these occupations relative to the rest of Cornwall's males. There were also more lower skilled workers in Cornwall than in Hertfordshire, which largely reflects the classification as such of military personnel, and far fewer unskilled agricultural workers. On the other hand, with respect to the county at large, the Irish-born were over-represented among unskilled non-farm workers and severely under-represented in agriculture generally and among skilled workers.

The censuses can provide some clues about the origins of migrants and the timing of migration. The 1841 census usually only recorded the birthplace of the Irish-born as 'Ireland', but for 35 per cent of adult males and 40 per cent of adult females in the 1851 census it was possible to identify the county of birth in Ireland. The results by province, along with those for Hertfordshire, are shown in Table 3. For Cornwall, as for Hertfordshire, Cork and Dublin were major suppliers of migrants, but Cork was much more important in the case of Cornwall, not surprisingly given Cornwall's proximity to southern Ireland.²¹ From the mid-1830s to the early 1850s steamers between London and Cork were sometimes scheduled to stop at Falmouth.²² There were relatively few migrants

18 The Devon returns were accessed on 29 September 2012 at the Devon Heritage site under Maker parish (<http://www.devonheritage.org/Places/Maker/Maker1841censuspage14.htm> [accessed 4 August 2020]).

19 *The Standard* (London), 19 August 1845, 17 April 1846. I am grateful to Roger Collins of the Rame History Group for these references.

20 For a brief introduction to HISCLASS see M.H.D. van Leeuwen and I. Maas, 'A short note on HISCLASS', November 2005. Available at http://historyofwork.iisg.nl/list_pub.php?categories=hisclass [accessed 15 June 2020].

21 Post-Famine immigrants to south-west England and south Wales tended to come disproportionately from counties Cork, Waterford and Limerick: see L. Miskell, 'Custom, conflict and community: a study of the Irish in South Wales and Cornwall, 1861–1891' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Wales, 1996), p. 27.

22 *Southern Reporter* 31 Oct. 1835; *Cork Constitution* 20 April 1851.

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Table 2 Occupations by social status: adult males in Cornwall, 1841 and 1851, and Hertfordshire, 1851

	HISCLASS category	Irish-born	Irish-born	Irish-born	All
		Cornwall	Cornwall	Hertfordshire	Cornwall
		1841	1851	1851	1851
		%	%	%	%
1	Higher managers	0.0	0.2	4.2	0.3
2	Higher professionals	5.4	5.6	11.8	1.7
3	Lower managers	1.8	0.7	1.1	1.2
4	Lower professionals, clerical and sales	12.3	5.3	7.6	3.7
5	Lower clerical and sales	0.4	0.2	1.9	0.6
6	Foremen	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0
7	Skilled workers	11.9	8.4	13.3	20.7
8	Farmers	0.4	0.4	0.8	9.3
9	Lower skilled workers	33.9	37.6	6.5	30.7
10	Lower skilled farm workers	0.4	1.1	0.0	5.4
11	Unskilled workers	28.5	31.6	34.2	9.7
12	Unskilled farm workers	5.1	8.9	17.9	16.7

Note: HISCLASS is a Historical International Social Class Scheme. See M.H.D. van Leeuwen and I. Maas, *HISCLASS: a Historical International Social Class Scheme* (Leuven, 2011). Innkeepers have been re-classified throughout as lower, rather than higher, managers.

Sources: 1841 and 1851 Censuses of England and Wales: for the 1841 censuses, see FreeCEN (<https://www.freecen.org.uk> [accessed 4 August 2020]) and Cornwall Online Census Project (<https://sites.rootsweb.com/~kayhin/cocp.html> [accessed 4 August 2020]); see K. Schürer and E. Higgs, *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM) Names and Addresses, 1851–1911: Special Licence Access*, 2nd edn [data collection]. Colchester: UK Data Service, 2020, SN:7856. doi:10.5255/UKDA-SN-7856-2.

Table 3 Birthplaces of the adult Irish-born in 1851: Cornwall and Hertfordshire

	Cornwall	Cornwall	Hertfordshire	Hertfordshire
	males	females	males	females
	%	%	%	%
Co. Cork	33.0	42.9	19.8	22.4
Rest of Munster	19.0	12.6	18.5	17.3
Co. Dublin	14.0	17.7	13.6	16.3
Rest of Leinster	8.4	12.1	19.8	25.5
Ulster	22.3	9.6	12.3	13.3
Connaught	3.4	5.1	16.0	5.1
Total number for which a county is stated	179	198	81	98
No county stated	334	301	195	134

Source: K. Schürer and E. Higgs, *Integrated Census Microdata (I-CeM) Names and Addresses, 1851–1911: Special Licence Access*, 2nd edn [data collection]. Colchester: UK Data Service, 2020, SN:7856. doi:10.5255/UKDA-SN-7856-2.

from Connaught or from Leinster outside the Dublin area. The number of males from Ulster was quite high, but closer inspection reveals that half were either serving in the army or pensioned from it.

As for the timing of migration, the presence of English-born children gives a very rough indication about when an Irish-born parent might have arrived in England. For households with an English-born child present the average ages of these children were 11.5 in 1841 and 10.9 in 1851. This measure understates the length of the parents' stay in Britain for two reasons. First, the Irish-born parent could have arrived in England well before the child was born. Second, the English-born child observed in the census may not have been the eldest child born in England. But, probably more seriously, it overstates the lapse of time since migration because it does not take into account couples with no English-born children. If all of these couples are assumed to have been recent migrants (value equal to zero, an overstatement), then the average age of the eldest observed English child falls to 8.0 in 1841 and 5.8 in 1851. The greater difference in 1851 is due to the larger numbers of couples with no English-born children, which confirms what might be suspected, that the Irish-born population of Cornwall in 1851 was the result of a more recent immigration than was the population in 1841.

Conclusion

How, in general, might we characterize the adult Irish-born populations of Cornwall in 1841 and 1851? In 1841 the population seems to have had two fairly distinct components. About one third of the adult males were clearly transients, with little local attachment. They tended to be young, unmarried (or, if married, with Irish wives) and lodgers. They were occupied as hawkers, soldiers and seamen or in certain trades (masons, cutlers, textile workers), government jobs (customs and excise officers), and professions (notably surveyors, perhaps occupied with the contemporary tithe apportionments). The corresponding segment among females was mainly young unmarried servants. Another tenth or so of the adult males worked for the police, the navy or the coastguard and tended to be a bit older; married (often to Irish women); and household heads. This group, along with the women married to English and Irish men in these occupations, was inherently transient due to the nature of its employment. The rest of the adult male population, somewhat over half, had stronger local ties. The men tended to be older, householders and married, especially to English wives. They also seemed to have more settled occupations (or to be military pensioners). However, even taking into account that it was older, hence more subject to mortality, this group still had a fairly low degree of persistence.

There are hints, especially in analysis of the ages of English-born children of Irish parents, that the Irish-born population in 1841 was the result of a somewhat older stream of migration. It is thus possible that the Irish-born had been somewhat more persistent before the 1840s. Until 1841 Cornwall's population had grown at a rate similar to that for England and Wales, but in the 1840s there was a distinct slowing of population growth and

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the beginning of large scale out-migration.²³ This could have accounted for lower persistence in the 1840s.

The 1851 the population of Cornwall, overwhelmingly the result of recent immigration, was different in several ways. The transient element was still there, augmented considerably by the influx of male railway labourers and soldiers and of female servants. However, more of these individuals were married, often to Irish spouses. The police, coast guard and navy segment remained important and similar in its characteristics to that in the early 1840s. The more settled element comprised more miners and agricultural labourers, many of whom were married to Irish spouses. Given the increased opportunities for the Irish-born in mining and agriculture, it might seem that the post-Famine population would be more persistent. However, an admittedly rough and partial attempt to match the Irish-born in 1851 to those in 1861, involving only those with names ending in the letters A to D, yielded a crude persistence rate of only 25 per cent, very similar to that observed between 1841 and 1851.

Cornwall thus seems to have been way-station for the Irish-born, both before and after the Famine. The Irish arrived by a variety of routes, among which the more important were military or government service and marriage to an English spouse. But few seem to have put down strong roots. Before the Famine they were little involved in either agriculture or mining, the main sectors of the Cornish economy. By 1851 Irish-born participation in these sectors had increased somewhat, but still remained relatively low. The Irish-born worked mainly in the secondary and tertiary sectors, and seem to have been highly mobile. Where the Irish-born went when they left Cornwall remains a question for further research. Did they, like many Cornish emigrants in this period, go to the United States or Australia?²⁴ Or did they move on to other cities and towns in the United Kingdom?

23 B. Deacon, ‘“We don’t travel much, only to South Africa”: reconstructing nineteenth-century Cornish migration patterns’, in P. Payton (ed.) *Cornish Studies Fifteen* (Exeter, 2007), pp. 90–116.

24 Deacon, ‘The reformulation of territorial identity’, Chapter 7.