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**The Dublin Library Society and its
Founding Members: Associational Activity
and Cultural Patriotism in Late-
Eighteenth-Century Dublin**

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the Robert Gordon University for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Abstract

In late-eighteenth-century Dublin, options were limited for an expanding reading public who wished to consult quality printed works. During this period of the Anglican Ascendancy, membership to institutional libraries or participation in associational activities was largely limited to elites and those from the Established Church. The Dublin Library Society provided a public reference library service without restrictions of confession, connection, elections, or status—with admission based only on ability to pay the initial two-guinea charge (and one thereafter).

Using hitherto neglected primary sources, particularly contemporary newspapers, this thesis will examine the origins of the Dublin Library, public reaction towards it, and its position promoting cultural patriotism and inclusivity in public library service provision in late-eighteenth-century Dublin. Also, a detailed prosopographical analysis of the library's founding subscribers, specifically for their occupational backgrounds and associational activities, will show that the library represented a cross-section of Dublin's reading public and help identify the social and cultural milieu in the capital. Through a combination of historical and prosopographical research on the library and its members, this study aims to contribute to both library history and the wider fields of social, cultural, and urban history of Dublin. The library was founded amidst a backdrop of Irish patriotism evidenced by the achievement of legislative independence from Britain. Dubliners expressed their patriotism through participation in clubs and societies that promoted Irish cultural, commercial, political, and social improvement and self-sufficiency. Further Enlightenment ideals of toleration and intellectual cultivation were embodied in these associations. By the end of this examination, the Dublin Library Society will be regarded not only as significant in the expansion of Dublin's literary public sphere, but also a noteworthy location of the Irish Enlightenment in the capital.

Keywords: Dublin Library Society, Dublin, eighteenth century, public libraries, subscription libraries, cultural patriotism, associational culture, Enlightenment

Acknowledgements

Just before submitting this thesis, our daughter, Soraya, quipped, 'When you're done, you owe me five years of your time. And I *will* be collecting!' The realisation that this project has taken up a little over half of her lifetime, thus far, did not sink in then. Rather, it has been a constant source of contemplation since the thought of a return to studies. This dissertation would never have come to fruition without the guidance, support, and positive reinforcement from my thesis supervisor, Professor Peter H. Reid. He is the catalyst behind this academic challenge and, without fear of exaggeration, there is no way that I would have attempted—never mind completed—this work had it not been for his timely, uplifting words of encouragement and expert advice. I owe him an immense debt of gratitude and will be forever grateful.

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Abbreviations

- AD* George Dames Burtchaell and Thomas U Sadleir, *Alumni Dublinenses: A Register of the Students, Graduates, Professors and Provosts of Trinity College in the University of Dublin (1593-1860)*, New ed. (Dublin: Alex. Thom & Co., 1935)
- Archer* Luís de Camoëns and William Julius Mickle, *The Lusiad: Or, the Discovery of India. An Epic Poem. Translated From the Original Portuguese of Luis De Camoëns*, 3rd ed. (Dublin: Printed by Graisberry and Campbell, for John Archer, 1791); Thomas Pennant, *Some Account of London*, 3rd ed. (Dublin: Printed for John Archer, 1791); Philip Yorke Hardwicke et al., *Athenian Letters, Or, the Epistolary Correspondence of an Agent of the King of Persia, Residing At Athens During the Peloponnesian War: Containing the History of the Times, in Dispatches to the Ministers of State At the Persian Court: Besides Letters On Various Subjects between Him and His Friends* (Dublin: John Archer, 1792)
- Bartlett, Revolutionary Dublin* Thomas Bartlett, ed., *Revolutionary Dublin, 1795-1801: The Letters of Francis Higgins to Dublin Castle* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004)
- Brown, Irish Enlightenment* Michael Brown, *The Irish Enlightenment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016)

- CHLBI 2* Giles Mandelbrote and K. A. Manley, eds., *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland, Volume II, 1640-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)
- CHLBI 3* Alistair Black and Peter Hoare, eds., *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland, Volume III, 1850-2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)
- Clubs and Societies* James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell, eds., *Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010)
- DIB* *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, accessed 24 October 2017, <http://dib.cambridge.org/>
- Dickson, Dublin* David Dickson, *Dublin: The Making of a Capital City* (London: Profile Books, 2015)
- Dickson et al., United Irishmen* David Dickson, Dáire Keogh and Kevin Whelan, eds., *The United Irishmen: Republicanism, Radicalism and Rebellion* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1993)
- DLS* Dublin Library Society
- DLS, Catalogue, 1792* Dublin Library Society, *Catalogue of Books Belonging to the Dublin Library Society. To Which are Prefixed the Laws of the Institution, and a List of Subscribers* (Dublin: Printed by Graisberry and Campbell, 1792)

- DLS, *Catalogue*, 1806 Dublin Library Society, *Catalogue of Books Belonging to the Dublin Library Society* (Dublin: Printed by Charles Downes, 1806)
- DLS, *Laws*, 1822 Dublin Library Society, *Laws and Regulations of the Dublin Library Society*, 1822
- DLS, *Members List*, 1812 Dublin Library Society, *Members of the Dublin Library Society: Thus Marked M.L. Members for Life. - V.P. Vice-president. - C. Committee - C.A. Committee of Accounts*, (Dublin: Burnside, Printer, 1812)
- Edwards, "Catholic Committee" R. Dudley Edwards, "Minute Book of the Catholic Committee, 1773-92," *Archivium Hibernicum* 9 (1942): 1, 1a, 2-172
- ESTC *English Short Title Catalogue (ESTC)*, accessed 26 January 2017. <http://estc.bl.uk>
- Howell, *Dublin Library Society* John Bruce Howell, *A History of the Dublin Library Society, 1791-1881* (Halifax, NS: Dalhousie University, 1985)
- KIAP Edward Keane, P. Beryl Phair, Thomas U Sadleir, eds., *King's Inns Admissions Papers* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1992)
- Libraries and Their Users* Paul Kaufman, *Libraries and Their Users: Collected Papers in Library History* (London: Library Association, 1969)
- LIH *Library & Information History*

- McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland* Ian McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland: The Isle of Slaves* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2009)
- McDowell, "Personnel" R.B. McDowell, "The Personnel of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, 1791-4," *Irish Historical Studies* 2, no. 5 (March 1940): 12-53
- McDowell, "Proceedings" R.B. McDowell, "Proceedings of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen," *Analecta Hibernica* 17 (1949): 1, 3-5, 7-143
- Melton, *Rise of the Public* James van Horn Melton, *The Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001)
- ODNB *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*: <http://www.oxforddnb.com/>
- OHIB 3 Raymond Gillespie & Andrew Hadfield, eds., *The Oxford History of the Irish Book, Volume III: the Irish Book in English, 1550-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006)
- OHIB 4 James H. Murphy, ed., *The Oxford History of the Irish Book, Volume IV: the Irish Book in English, 1800-1891* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011)
- Pollard, *Dictionary* M. Pollard, *A Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550-1800: Based on the Records of the Guild of St. Luke the Evangelist, Dublin* (London: Bibliographical Society, 2000)

RDS	Royal Dublin Society. <i>Past Members Database</i> http://entrants.rds.ie/pastmembers/index.php
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
Watson, <i>Almanack, 1792</i>	Samuel Watson, <i>The Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack, Compiled by Samuel Watson, For the Year of Our Lord, 1792</i> (Dublin: Printed for Samuel Watson [et al.], 1792)
WDD 1791	William Wilson, <i>Wilson's Dublin Directory, For the Year of Our Lord, 1791</i> (Dublin: Printed by William Wilson, 1791)
WDD 1792	William Wilson, <i>Wilson's Dublin Directory, For the Year 1792</i> (Dublin: Printed by William Wilson, 1792)
Woods, "Catholic Convention"	C.J. Woods, "The Personnel of the Catholic Convention, 1792-3," <i>Archivium Hibernicum</i> 57 (2003): 26-76

Part One:
Introductory Particulars

Chapter 1: Introduction

In 1799, a Dublin barrister voiced his opposition to a pamphlet advocating Union between Ireland and Great Britain. First, he delivered a speech at a meeting of the legal fraternity. Inspired by the approbation of his peers, the lawyer sought a wider dissemination of his views through the publication of his first political pamphlet.¹ On his motive, 'a sense of Public Duty was the deciding principle, which has induced me to launch my Frigate of Patriotism into the Sea of Public Opinion'.²

Before this burst of political activism, **George Barnes** was not a celebrated pamphleteer, nor had he been an active member of political societies. By all accounts, this naval officer-turned-barrister was an otherwise unremarkable Dublin professional, who simply decided to express his feelings on Union and its implications for Ireland through the medium of print. Throughout this ninety-nine-page pamphlet are footnoted bibliographical references—often citing volume and page numbers—to numerous political and historical works that Barnes had consulted to support his arguments. He cited such luminaries as Burke, Blackstone, Goldsmith, Hume, and Locke, and referred to the Irish statutes in his work. From this, the library historian would wonder where Barnes conducted his research. It could have been from within the confines of his private library. Although not a member of any institutional library, he might have been acquainted with a fellow of Trinity College Dublin for brief access to the college library. Or perhaps he was lucky enough to find such contemporary works as Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* at the public library of Archbishop Narcissus Marsh. In this case, however, Barnes revealed the location of his researches in a note at the end of his preface: 'That the correctness of my quotations may be the more easily ascertained by the Public,

¹ According to the *ESTC*, George Barnes authored one pamphlet in 1798: George Barnes, *Strictures on "An Account of the Proceedings of the Acting Governors of the House of Industry," by George Barnes, Esq. Barrister at Law, and a Member of the Corporation Instituted for the Relief of the Poor, &c. Submitted with Deference to the Lord Chancellor, and Lords Committee of Charity* (Dublin: Printed by J. Chambers, No. 5, Abbey-Street, 1798).

² George Barnes, *The Rights of the Imperial Crown of Ireland Asserted and Maintained, Against Edward Cooke...The Second Edition, With Additions* (Dublin: Printed for W. Gilbert, 1799), [iii].

I have preferred the editions to the books quoted, which are in the Dublin Library, Eustace-street, to all others'.³

Important Irish institutional libraries such as Trinity College Dublin (1592), the (Royal) Dublin Society (1731), and the Royal Irish Academy (1785) have facilitated Irish academic, literary and scientific production throughout the nation's modern history. While the first two had been flourishing earlier, from the late-1780s onwards the Royal Irish Academy joined them during a time of heightened pride in Irish legislative independence. But the Irish nation would have to wait until the establishment of the National Library of Ireland, in 1877, for a free and inclusive repository that welcomed an expanded reading public. In that ninety-year gap, many Dubliners like Barnes found an interim solution at the Dublin Library Society in Eustace Street in 1791:

This institution recommends itself to every patriotic and enlightened mind; and, if carried on with spirit and liberality, will redound much to the credit of this city, as it tends to diffuse knowledge, excite literary curiosity, and facilitate literary exertions, by supplying the means of information to men, who may be possessed of talents, tho' not of opulence.⁴

Such a library would have suited someone like Barnes, who, as it happened, served on its inaugural library committee in 1791. Judging by his donation to the Dublin Library of ten volumes on a variety of subjects, he had likely kept a modest private library. However, the range of quality works available—at hours convenient to the daytime professional—suited him and evidently aided his 'literary exertions'. This is a study of the origins and impact of the Dublin Library Society in the first decade of its establishment. It was an institution that did not discriminate on confessional grounds during a time of sectarian strife throughout Ireland. Crucially, in a city swept by patriotic fervour, the Dublin Library was a hitherto unrecognised locus of the Enlightenment public sphere in late-eighteenth-century Dublin, and many of its founding members were involved in other associations that advanced the cause of Ireland during this time.

³ Barnes. *The Rights of the Imperial Crown of Ireland Asserted and Maintained*, iv. Dublin Library Society founding members are highlighted in bold throughout this study.

⁴ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, iv.

There are opposite views whether research into the Dublin Library Society is justified. On the one hand, it only existed for ninety years while other libraries in Dublin (Marsh's Library and the libraries of Trinity College, the Royal Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy)—all established before the Dublin Library Society—surely have benefited from greater attention due to their remaining in operation today. Together with the Linen Hall Library in Belfast, these libraries have each been the subject of full-length studies, enriched by extant institutional, archival sources such as visitor books, minute books, ledgers, and registers.⁵ The National Library of Ireland, established from a foundational transfer of a sizable portion of the Royal Dublin Society library's holdings in 1877, has also been the subject of numerous publications that continue to materialise from centenaries of significant events ranging from the fictional wanderings of Leopold Bloom to the library's place within Ireland's struggle for independence.⁶

Almost no early manuscript-source evidence of the operation of the Dublin Library Society exists before 1822. Therefore, twentieth-century descriptions of this library have relied chiefly on nineteenth-century histories and guides of Dublin. Although John Bruce Howell uncovered the society's extant laws and regulations from 1822, it may well have been the consensus among library historians that because the Dublin Library Society morphed into a 'billiards society' in its final years, perhaps it did not deserve any further attention other than consignment to essentially a footnote in Irish library history.⁷

⁵ Muriel McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003); Muriel McCarthy and Ann Simmons, eds., *The Making of Marsh's Library: Learning, Politics and Religion in Ireland, 1650-1750* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004); Muriel McCarthy and Ann Simmons, eds., *Marsh's Library – A Mirror on the World: Law, Learning and Libraries, 1650-1750*. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009); Peter Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin: A History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Henry F. Berry, *A History of the Royal Dublin Society* (London: Longman, 1915); T. Ó Raifeartaigh, *The Royal Irish Academy: A Bicentennial History, 1785-1985* (Dublin: The Academy, 1985); Bernadette Cunningham and Siobhán Fitzpatrick, eds., *Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2009); John Killen, *A History of the Linen Hall Library, 1788-1988* (Belfast: Linen Hall Library, 1990).

⁶ Gerard Long, *A Twinge of Recollection: The National Library of Ireland in 1904 and Thereabouts* (Dublin: National Library of Ireland, 2005); Felix Larkin, ed., *Librarians, Poets and Scholars: A Festschrift for Dónal Ó'Luanaigh* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007).

⁷ J. Warburton, J. Whitelaw, and Robert Walsh, *History of the City of Dublin, From the Earliest Accounts to the Present Time*, 2 vols. (London: Bulmer & Co., 1818); *The Picture of Dublin for 1811: Being a Description of the City and a Correct Guide* (Dublin: Printed for the Proprietor by J. and J. Carrick, [1811]); Howell, *Dublin Library Society*. Even the *Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland* (2006) merely identified the Dublin Library's establishment in 1791: James Raven, "Libraries for Sociability: The Advance of the Subscription Library," in *CHLBI* 2, 246.

On the other hand, ninety years is a long time. Surely, interest could be piqued by the question of rudimentary public library provision in Dublin before the National Library and rates-supported public libraries came on the scene. Numerous studies, primarily concerned with the burgeoning print culture in eighteenth-century Ireland, have materialised on the history of books, newspapers, readers, and the print trade in Ireland.⁸ Most have touched on the Dublin Library at some point, acknowledging noteworthy books and booksellers associated with it.⁹ Another area of interest was the eighteenth-century expansion of the reading public in accordance with the availability of print. Indeed, the library historian must be interested in exploring public access to print, in tandem with studies on private libraries.

Intriguingly, the final decade of the eighteenth century was a period of significant social and political upheaval in Irish history. The establishment of a public subscription library at the beginning of this decade would accordingly deserve some consideration from the social and political historian, especially when a complete list of the library's founding subscribers exists.¹⁰ In one instance, an article analysing two poems in an anthology of eighteenth-century Irish poetry referred to the editor being 'associated with a strange organisation known as the Dublin Library Society'. A contemporary example has an informant to the authorities in Dublin referring to the Dublin Library as a 'rendezvous' for leading Irish radicals during their revolutionary phase. Therefore, the library as a venue in the social and political setting of eighteenth-century Dublin attracts themes outside library history—previously identified by its 'institutional anchorage'—and justifies an exploration into an example of how 'libraries construct society'. Hence, the story of George Barnes leaves both the library and social historian intrigued about the social composition of this 'lost library'.¹¹

⁸ See the literature review, from p. 25.

⁹ Máire Kennedy, "The Domestic and International Trade of an Eighteenth-Century Dublin Bookseller: John Archer (1782-1810)" *Dublin Historical Record* 49, no. 2 (Autumn 1996): 94-105; Máire Kennedy, "'Book mad': The Sale of Books by Auction in Eighteenth-Century Dublin," *Dublin Historical Record* 54, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 48-71; Richard C. Cole, "Community Lending Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," *Library Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (April 1974): 111-123; Richard Cargill Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers, 1740-1800* (London: Mansell, 1986).

¹⁰ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, x-xxiv.

¹¹ Andrew Carpenter, "A Verse Confrontation in Late-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá Chultúr* 25 (2010): 36; Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 7 March 1798, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 227-228; Alistair Black, "Information and Modernity: The History of Information and

Already, a recent study of Irish associational culture has opened up further areas of interest.¹² The editors of *Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* remark that their volume is the first of its kind from a solely Irish perspective but concluded that despite providing a much-needed overview of the societies, there was much more 'forensic scrutiny of individual societies' needed and an investigation of their participants.¹³ Consequently, a study of the Dublin Library Society and its founding members in the first years of its operation will fill a gap in our understanding of early public libraries in Dublin, and contribute to the social and urban history of the capital in the latter part of the long eighteenth century.

It is entirely possible that the Dublin Library Society has not received sufficient attention as a significant Irish public library because it was not free to the public, nor was it awarded royal chartership or enshrined by a parliamentary statute. Indeed, scant attention was paid to the Dublin Library in the 1848-49 *Report on Public Libraries* in Dublin, essentially because access could not be gained 'freely': one had to pay to use it.¹⁴ However, in exploring ways of enhancing services to the public, the libraries they centred on were restrictive—although free from monetary obligation—or were institutional libraries that allowed non-members only in exceptional circumstances. Marsh's Library, while established by Act of Parliament (1707) as 'a publick library for ever', limited its entrants to chiefly Anglican gentlemen and scholars. Even students at Trinity College found it difficult to freely consult library material. Meanwhile, membership to the Royal Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy required proposers, nominations, and elections, followed by prohibitive dues. Consequently, if one could not visit these libraries, access to print was limited largely to ephemeral and light reading in Dublin coffee houses

The Eclipse of Library History," *Library History* 14 (May 1998): 39; Jonathan Rose, "Alternative Futures for Library History," *Libraries & Culture* 38, no. 1 (Winter 2003): 53-54; Mark Towsey, "Book Use and Sociability in Lost Libraries of the Eighteenth Century: Towards a Union Catalogue," in Flavia Bruni and Andrew Pettegree, eds., *Lost Books: Reconstructing the Print World of Pre-Industrial Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 417-418.

¹² James Kelly and Martyn Powell, eds., *Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010). Peter Clark briefly addresses Irish associational culture in Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies: 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

¹³ James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell, "Introduction," in *Clubs and Societies*, 35.

¹⁴ Great Britain. *Report from the Select Committee on Public Libraries; Together with the Proceedings of the Committee, Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix* ([London]: Ordered by the House of Commons to be Printed, 23 July 1849), 161.

and circulating libraries. Therefore, it will be argued, despite the initial monetary charge of two guineas (and one annually thereafter), the Dublin Library Society was relatively more 'public' than most other libraries in Dublin at the time.

Importantly, contemporary English examples of voluntary associationalism have shown that the subscription library acted as 'both a social adhesive and a social emollient', while it facilitated the dissemination of 'new cultural, scientific and political ideas'.¹⁵ In eighteenth-century Ireland, the Anglican Ascendancy—supported by an institutionalised penal code—enabled the dominance of the ruling classes from the Established Church. This ensured the exclusion of most Catholics and Dissenters from participating in formal associational venues in the Dublin public sphere or, Ascendancy public sphere. However, towards the end of the century, the Irish capital's first voluntary, non-proprietary subscription library opened its doors to almost anyone who could afford the fee—regardless of class or religious persuasion—amidst the emergence of the middle and professional classes, while sectarian divisions continued in the city and throughout the country.¹⁶ Therefore, by investigating who these 310 founding members were, and whether they had among them other affiliations, more can be learned of the composition of this library founded during a period of immense political and social activity. What becomes clear is that several of its members belonged to other important institutions, largely associated with promoting Ireland's literary and historical culture, economic self-sufficiency, and varying forms of independence. Earlier forms of Irish patriotism centred on the drive by the Anglo-Irish to resist English encroachment into their affairs while separating themselves from the native Irish. This evolved into a movement wherein Anglican antiquaries identified themselves with Ireland's ancient past. Coupled with this was a growing sense of Irishness, distinct from other parts of the composite monarchy across the Irish Sea.¹⁷ Studies in Irish art, music, literature, history, and science were

¹⁵ David Allan, "Politeness and the Politics of Culture: An Intellectual History of the Eighteenth-Century Subscription Library," *LIH* 29, no. 3 (September 2013): 167; Towsey, "Book Use and Sociability in Lost Libraries of the Eighteenth Century," 415.

¹⁶ Although there was no explicit regulation, no evidence of women as members has come to light.

¹⁷ Clare O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations: Antiquarian Debate and Cultural Politics in Ireland, c.1750-1800* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2004), 6.

actively encouraged and disseminated for the cultivation and improvement of the Irish people 'ever more aware of the political significance of their activities'.¹⁸ Many expressed their support for this Irish cultural patriotism through membership of such enlightened societies as the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy, and the Dublin Library continued this practice as a more inclusive promoter.

Indeed, Enlightenment ideals of improvement, democracy, and toleration were at the fore in the establishment of these institutions during a period in which Dublin's public sphere shifted away from the limited, exclusive, official realm to a diverse, expansive, unofficial one. While the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy embodied this gradual shift, the Dublin Library represented a natural continuation in the evolution of enlightened moves towards greater public participation in societies. In a library context, greater public access to quality print—unhindered by restrictions of connection or confession—enabled a greater diversity of Dubliners to benefit from public library provision in the late-eighteenth century.

Understandably, the absence of institutional, archival documents from the Dublin Library's early years has possibly discouraged library historians from further examination of its origins. However, the use of other primary-source material, chiefly in the form of contemporary newspapers, will result in an alternative history of the Dublin Library, showing its origins based on patriotic and Enlightenment principles. Moreover, a prosopographical study of its founding members and their associational connections will reveal more about the library's early composition than hitherto attempted.

Aims and Objectives

Although the Dublin Library Society lasted until 1881, this examination will only focus on the first decade of its existence but will also address public perception of it in the first few decades of the nineteenth century. Any attempt to make this a complete history of the library would lessen the attention given to those

¹⁸ Martyn J. Powell, *The Politics of Consumption in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 75.

early years of which there is much less extant, institutional documentary evidence. Also, while purposely framing this library as a venue of a varied form of Enlightenment in Ireland, attention to Enlightenment texts will be limited. Rather, the library itself, and the founding membership, are the subjects of analysis. Therefore, the central aim of this project is:

- To examine the origins and motives of the Dublin Library Society, the public perception of its utility, and its place within society in late-eighteenth-century Dublin.

This will be achieved by implementing the following objectives:

- To study the environment in which the Dublin Library Society was founded, exploring themes of patriotism, improvement and Enlightenment in the literary public sphere of eighteenth-century Dublin.
- To provide a detailed account of the formation of the Dublin Library Society, using hitherto neglected primary sources.
- To examine the composition of the founding members of the Dublin Library through an analysis of their occupations and associational activities, by way of a prosopographical research process.
- To investigate public reaction to the establishment of the Dublin Library and assess its societal impact, in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, as an enlightened, cross-confessional and inclusive public institution.

Recurring themes of cultural patriotism, associational activity, and Enlightenment principles are identified within the historical and prosopographical research methods employed to reach these objectives. Dublin was awash with national pride after legislative independence from Britain was realised. A thriving print trade coincided with an active culture of associational life in the capital, and it was in this setting that the Dublin Library Society was formed. Therefore, an exploration of the library and its founding members—especially in the context of their relationships amongst each other and their participation in the wider associational culture within Dublin—will highlight the Dublin Library as a promoter of cultural patriotism and a location

within Dublin's 'Enlightened public sphere' in the eighteenth century.¹⁹ By the end, this institution will be viewed as a contemporary cross-section of Dublin society, and an example of early cross-confessional cooperation during the country's political and religious upheaval, thereby demonstrating this research undertaking as a useful contribution to the social and political history of Dublin. Also, as a contribution to library history, when relative ease of access is considered, the Dublin Library filled the gap of public library service provision until the arrival of the National Library of Ireland and rates-supported public libraries.

Structure of Dissertation

Chapter 2 will be a review of what has been written on the Dublin Library Society thus far. To date, what is known comes largely from nineteenth-century histories and guidebooks. Yet for a library that lasted almost a century, drawing over 300 subscribers upon its establishment, then up to 1,200, twenty years later, it remains somewhat puzzling that there is scant mention of it in recent library histories, and indeed, social and urban histories. To examine the library from a different angle, Chapter 3 will focus on the methodological approaches to this study. Greater reliance on primary sources such as newspapers has resulted in a different version of events leading up to the establishment of the library. Also, the use of a prosopographical approach will help explain how a greater understanding of the members themselves—their occupations and affiliations—can exemplify certain shifts in demographic participation in cultural activities. The first two chapters in the second part will provide a thematic background before an introduction to the Dublin Library Society. Chapter 4 begins with a survey of Irish history and historiography and includes an assessment of the defining characteristics within Irish history. A brief overview of literacy and education highlights the divide along confessional lines in eighteenth-century Ireland. Early Enlightenment principles also enmeshed with attitudes towards Ireland's relationship with Britain. Chapter 5

¹⁹ James van Horn Melton explains his preference of 'Enlightened public sphere' to Jürgen Habermas' use of 'bourgeois' public sphere, to more accurately highlight the advancement of the middling classes in the eighteenth century. This also takes into account the inspiration drawn from the Enlightenment through the practice of sociability, inclusivity, and—in the case of Ireland, especially—cross-confessional associationalism: James van Horn Melton, *Rise of the Public in Enlightenment Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 10-11. For further explanation of Melton's 'Enlightened public sphere', see p. 42.

continues the contextual analysis of the environment in which the Dublin Library was established. Coffee houses—supported by a thriving print trade—acted as early information centres with important and ephemeral news and reading material demanded by an expanding public. Circulating libraries also provided a book-rental service during the eighteenth century, and radical reading societies served the lower social orders. This sets the scene for Chapter 6: an examination of the origins of the Dublin Library Society and public reaction to the arrival of a subscription library to compliment the other intellectual institutions in the city.

Chapter 7 introduces the committees and members by their professions, providing empirical evidence of a broader representation of membership than other contemporary societies in Dublin. Chapter 8 examines Dublin Library founding members' participation in other associational activity chiefly concurrent to their involvement with the library. This will help to identify commonalities and relationships among the members and establish a connection between the Dublin Library and other clubs and societies within a movement of cultural patriotism in eighteenth-century Dublin. Chapter 9 will outline examples of the Dublin Library as a venue for the promotion of Enlightenment ideals in a sectarian environment. The concluding chapter will provide a summary before examples of original contributions to knowledge highlight the significance of the Dublin Library in Irish library history and in the broader fields of social and cultural history in late-eighteenth-century Dublin. Finally, two appending prosopographies of the library's 310 founding subscribers will support the text and provide descriptions of the members, their occupations, associational participation and relationships with other members.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

As outlined above, the study of the Dublin Library Society and its members remains an under-researched topic within Irish library history. Much of what has been written about the library originates from nineteenth-century sources, namely guides and histories of Dublin. Where there is mention of the Dublin Library, largely brief descriptions have simply confirmed its identification as one of three Irish voluntary subscription libraries (Belfast in 1788 and Cork in 1792) set up in the late-eighteenth century. In a sense, this perhaps hinted to interested researchers that a greater understanding of the library has been wanting. On a larger scale, it remains that a publication devoted to Irish library history itself has yet to be undertaken.¹ What follows is a review of what is known and written on the establishment of the Dublin Library Society from the nineteenth century onwards, including literature on the related environment in which the public subscription library was established. Contemporary primary sources will feature in the methodological approaches in the succeeding chapter. First, an overview of the multi-faceted historical umbrella under which this study sits will further strengthen its justification as a worthwhile contribution to library history and the wider field of Irish historiography.

Beyond Library History

Recent debates in the field of library history relate to the approaches taken in this investigation. As will be discussed below, previous studies of this institution have chiefly relied on a library history angle: that is, the history of the library itself. However, the dearth of institutional documentation on the library's early years has thwarted any attempts at fresh analyses, using the same approach. It was clear that further work in this area needed a re-evaluation of methods and interpretations surrounding a study of this eighteenth-century subscription library. Before exploring the relevant literature, a look at current arguments involving the direction of library history will help explain the approaches taken

¹ In her ambitious *History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland*, Mary Casteleyn provided a brief survey of two rather involved topics. Coverage of the Dublin Library Society is largely limited to its affairs in the nineteenth century, from the 1820s onwards, when the library was already well established. Although useful for preliminary research into Irish library history, there are only four bibliographical references in the endnotes despite a detailed bibliography: Mary Casteleyn, *A History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland: The Long Traced Pedigree* (Aldershot: Gower, 1984), 236-242.

here to provide a new interpretation of the Dublin Library and its impact on the social and political environment in which it flourished for nine decades.

In a 1995 essay in the academic journal *Library History* (as it was known at the time), Alistair Black called for a 'new library history' in response to the gradual elimination of library history from the study of librarianship in universities. He recognised that library historians have in the past tended 'to describe and chronicle, rather than theorise and interpret'. Other sub-fields within history needed to be embraced in library history research so that a study of a library should not simply include some contextual history, but that there should be an inquiry into whether the historical study of libraries could add to social history, among other sub-fields. Black followed up his contention with another article on the notion of library history positioning itself as a 'sub-set' of a more appealing 'information history'.² Here, he argued that the focus on library history as merely a history of an institution has hindered further analysis of, and exposure to, wider historical perspectives.

Black's articles stimulated debate within the fields of book history and library and information history, with Donald G. Davis, Jr. and Jon Arvid Aho presenting several options for the future. Importantly, the authors took exception to Black's portrayal of library history as being burdened by its 'institutional anchorage' and preferred to project the library as 'an institutional presence within society'. Hence, library historians could focus on a particular library with a view to studying its impact on 'cultural and intellectual transmission' within a society. As will be presented, a prosopographical approach as part of new research on the Dublin Library Society—wherein its founding members are studied—has furnished the means to examine the social and cultural milieu of eighteenth-century Dublin. It is this 'social penetration of library culture' that warrants greater attention to be paid to library history within the wider field of social and—especially for the Dublin Library—political history. Indeed, before advocating the creation of a multi-disciplinary field of book studies, Jonathan Rose endorsed library history as 'intellectual history' after questioning the

² Alistair Black, "New Methodologies in Library History: A Manifesto for the 'New' Library History," *Library History* 11 (1995): 76-77; 80; 84-85; Black, "Information and Modernity," 39.

sincerity of information historians in accommodating library history in modern historiography. In the case of the Dublin Library and its impact on eighteenth-century society, 'historical conversations' are addressed within social, cultural, religious, and political historiography.³

The outcome of this debate is evident in how Black and Rose envisaged these disciplinary links. Black noted that library historians should 'reach out to wider history, but wider history should be encouraged to embrace us'. Acknowledging this, Rose stated that we have already witnessed the contributions by library historians to historiography: 'Since at least the 1940s, library historians have been explaining how society constructs libraries: now they are explaining how libraries construct society'.⁴ Thus, this history of the Dublin Library is not hampered by any institutional burden; rather, it is an example of how the investigation of a library encourages a wider historiographical study. Returning to the barrister George Barnes, access to the Dublin Library allowed him to compose and publish his political treatise for public dissemination at the end of the eighteenth century. Indeed, his stated objective was to contribute to the wider public debate on Union with Britain. With the thought in mind that he conducted his research in a library composed of members from all confessions, this study will shift from the conventional 'describe and chronicle' approach to an exploration of how the library helped to shape societal and political attitudes through its adoption and promotion of inclusivity in an otherwise largely sectarian environment. The following review of relevant literature will justify the need for the fresh approaches discussed by Black, Davis Jr. and Aho, and Rose.

Library and Book Histories

The above debate on the past and future of library history is played out in the following examination of literature on the Dublin Library, over the years. Past histories of eighteenth-century libraries in the British Isles have not adequately

³ Donald G. Davis, Jr. and Jon Arvid Aho, "Whither Library History? A Critical Essay on Black's Model for the Future of Library History, With Some Additional Options," *Library History* 17 (March 2001): 21-37; Black, "Information and Modernity," 39; Davis and Aho, "Whither Library History?," 25; Towsey, "Book Use and Sociability in Lost Libraries of the Eighteenth Century," 433; Rose, "Alternative Futures for Library History," 51; 53; 57.

⁴ Black, "New Methodologies," 80; Rose, "Alternative Futures for Library History," 53-54; Towsey, "Book Use and Sociability in Lost Libraries of the Eighteenth Century," 437.

addressed Ireland. Thomas Kelly's history of libraries in Great Britain (1966) did not claim to address Irish libraries but identified two (King's Inns and Trinity College Dublin) after Union with Britain in 1801. The three-volume set, *Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland*, included several articles that somewhat anecdotally and extraneously addressed Irish libraries. For the second most-populated city in the British Isles, the simple naming of the Dublin Library Society as an example of a Dublin subscription library did not make for any insightful original contribution regarding this library.⁵

Contextually, James Raven provides a relevant examination of the nature of subscription library provision, and Joanna Innes analyses the place of the public library within eighteenth-century culture and society.⁶ The third volume's relative strength in addressing Irish libraries after 1850 shows that greater attention is paid to libraries about which there are sufficient, extant sources.⁷ Nonetheless, Robin Alston remarked that the overall project was admirable for assembling 'what is known about the history of libraries in Britain' but concluded that the contributors could have been pressed to produce 'evidence based on original research'.⁸ In fairness, the editors of the first volume, suggesting that their publication could be regarded as complimentary to the *Oxford History of the Irish Book*, acknowledged the lack of attention towards Irish library history.⁹ This was indeed the case, especially since an example of library provision during Ireland's sectarian history included the execution for treason of the librarian of the Linen Hall Library in Belfast in 1803.¹⁰ However, through the employment of new approaches, a study of the Dublin Library Society can add to our understanding of the nation's complex political situation.

⁵ Thomas Kelly, *Early Public Libraries: A History of Public Libraries in Great Britain Before 1850* (London: Library Association, 1966), 169; Raven, "Libraries for Sociability," 243, 246.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 241-263; Joanna Innes, "Libraries in Context: Social, Cultural and Intellectual Background," in *CHLBI* 2, 285-300.

⁷ Alistair Black and Peter Hoare, "Introduction: Sources and Methodologies for the History of Libraries in the Modern Era," in *CHLBI* 3, 1-6. For Ireland, see Moran and Quinn, "The Irish Library Scene," in *CHLBI* 3, 253-265; and Gerard Long, "The National Library of Ireland," in *CHLBI* 3, 266-275.

⁸ Robin Alston, "Review Article: *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland*," *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, 7th series, 8, no. 3 (September 2007): 336.

⁹ Elisabeth Leedham-Green and Teresa Webber, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland, Volume I, To 1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 9.

¹⁰ Giles Mandelbrote and K.A. Manley, "Introduction: The Changing World of Libraries—From Cloister to Hearth," in *CHLBI* 2, 3.

Importantly, the *Cambridge History of Libraries* has no doubt inspired several projects of greater specificity in English and Scottish contexts.¹¹ Furthermore, as Elisabeth Leedham-Green and Theresa Webber had been anticipating, it has provided valuable British context for the study of another discipline connected to Irish library history: the history of the book. Two volumes of the *Oxford History of the Irish Book* feature substantial evidence of library activity in Ireland in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.¹² However, for 250 years leading up to the end of the eighteenth century, as one might expect, private libraries are prominently examined within aspects of the print trade in various 'cultures of print'.¹³ Encouragingly, in the third volume, the Dublin Library Society receives more than an identification and recognition of its year of establishment (1791). In her essay, Deanna Rankin provides examples of patriotism within the Irish print trade, citing one of the Dublin Library's founding regulations that, where possible, Irish imprints were to be procured over British ones.¹⁴ Alas, that is the only reference to the Dublin Library in that volume.

The fourth volume of the *Oxford History of the Irish Book* (1800-1891) devotes a subsection of five essays on 'Libraries and Reading', indicating the connection of library and book histories.¹⁵ Of note, Clara Cullen, who had previously examined the state of Irish library provision during the 1848-1849 House of Commons report on public libraries, describes the Dublin Library Society as

¹¹ For example, in a subscription library context: David Allan, *A Nation of Readers: The Lending Library in Georgian England* (London: British Library, 2008); K.A. Manley, *Books, Borrowers, and Shareholders: Scottish Circulating Libraries Before 1825: A Survey and Listing* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Bibliographical Society, 2012); John Crawford, "The Community Library in Scottish History," *IFLA Journal* 28, issue 5-6 (October 2002): 245-255; Mark Towsey, "Reading the Scottish Enlightenment: Libraries, Readers and Intellectual Culture in Provincial Scotland, c.1750-c.1820," PhD diss., St. Andrew's University, 2007; Mark Towsey, "'Store their Minds with Much Valuable Knowledge': Agricultural Improvement at the Selkirk Subscription Library, 1799-1814," *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 38, no. 4 (2015): 569-584; Rebecca Bowd, "Useful Knowledge or Polite Learning? A Reappraisal of Approaches to Subscription Library History," *LIH* 29, no. 3 (September 2013): 182-195.

¹² Brian Walker and Robert Welch, general eds., *The Oxford History of the Irish Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006-2011). Of this set, the relevant volumes are *OHIB 3* and *OHIB 4*.

¹³ Raymond Gillespie and Andrew Hadfield, "Introduction: The English Language Book in Ireland, c.1550-1800," in *OHIB 3*, 6.

¹⁴ Deanna Rankin, "Historical Writing, 1700-1800," in *OHIB 3*, 285.

¹⁵ *OHIB 4*. In their introduction to the third volume of *OHIB*, Gillespie and Hadfield discuss the 'changing histories of the book', reminding readers of Robert Darnton's 'communications circuit' in relation to the production, distribution and dissemination of print: Gillespie and Hadfield, "Introduction: The English Language Book in Ireland, c.1550-1800", in *OHIB 3*, 4-5. Darnton also includes libraries and book clubs, along with purchasers and borrowers, as part of the reception and dissemination phase in the circuit: Robert Darnton, "What is the History of Books?" in David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery, eds., *The Book History Reader* (London: Routledge, 2002), 11-12.

one of the popular 'reading spaces in Dublin'.¹⁶ Gerard Long, surveying Irish institutional collections, also draws attention to the Dublin Library, some of whose founding members were affiliated with Trinity College Dublin and the Royal Irish Academy, but who wished to independently 'establish a scholarly library in the sciences and literature'.¹⁷

Like the Cambridge library history undertaking, the Oxford Irish book history project paid more attention to Irish libraries in the nineteenth-century than in the eighteenth-century. However, Dublin coffee houses, circulating libraries and their connection with the print trade have received greater coverage than the Dublin Library, chiefly in library history and Dublin local history journals. For this study, they are contextually important because they provided an early, rudimentary public library service before the Dublin Library. Moreover, their impact on eighteenth-century society has garnered attention from researchers of library history and other fields of historical study.

Unlike their London counterparts, no evidence exists that Dublin coffee houses acted as early lending libraries.¹⁸ Rather, they were early information centres that made available to the public all types of printed products from auction catalogues to newspapers to parliament votes.¹⁹ Many of these items were printed on the premises and coffee house proprietors often combined their beverage businesses with the production and dissemination of print, in addition

¹⁶ Cullen, "Dublin's Nineteenth-Century 'Public' Libraries," *Library History* 23 (March 2007): 49-61; Cullen, "Reading Spaces in Dublin," in *OHIB* 4, 274-280.

¹⁷ Gerard Long, "Institutional Libraries and Private Collections," in *OHIB* 4, 286. Also of note, Roisín Higgins examines the phenomenon of political reading rooms set up by an Irish newspaper advocating the repeal of the Act of Union: Roisín Higgins, "The *Nation* Reading Rooms," in *OHIB* 4, 262-273.

¹⁸ For London coffee house libraries, see Markman Ellis, "Coffee-House Libraries in Mid-Eighteenth Century London," *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, 7th series, 10, no. 1 (March 2009): 3-40; Markman Ellis, *Coffee-House Library Short-Title Catalogue*, accessed 22 November 2016, <http://www.bibsoc.org.uk/sites/www.bibsoc.org.uk/files/Coffee%20house%20libraries%20short%20title%20catalogue%2008.pdf>; Paul Kaufman, "Coffee Houses as Reading Centres," in *Libraries and Their Users*, 115-127; and George S. McCue, "Libraries of the London Coffeehouses," *Library Quarterly* 4, no. 4 (October 1934): 624-627.

¹⁹ For coffee houses and the print trade in Dublin, see Hyder Abbas, "'A Fund of entertaining and useful Information': Coffee Houses, Early Public Libraries, and the Print Trade in Eighteenth-Century Dublin," *LIH* 30, no. 1 (February 2014): 41-61; Kennedy, "'Book mad': The Sale of Books by Auction in Eighteenth-Century Dublin," 48-71; "Dublin's Coffee Houses of the Eighteenth Century," *Dublin Historical Record* 63, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 29-38; "'Politicks, coffee and news': The Dublin Book Trade in the Eighteenth Century," *Dublin Historical Record* 34, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 76-85. For English coffee houses and the public sphere, see Steve Pincus, "'Coffee politicians does create': Coffeehouses and Restoration Political Culture," *Journal of Modern History* 67, no. 4 (December 1995): 807-834; Brian Cowan, "The Rise of the Coffeehouse Reconsidered," *Historical Journal* 47, no. 1 (2004): 21-46; Brian Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Rise of the British Coffeehouse* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2005).

to the hosting of auctions and other book sales.²⁰ The Dublin book trade benefited from Ireland being outside the British Copyright Act (1709), and as a result, a lucrative reprint trade developed.²¹

Despite the emergence of circulating libraries from 1735 and the inclusion of novels and romances catering largely to women, demand for quality material eventually increased.²² Circulating library keepers, most of whom were booksellers doubling as book lenders, gradually included more histories and polite literature in their loan stock and advertised as such. Richard Cole noted that Vincent Dowling's advertisement for his Apollo Circulating Library listed a whole range of subjects.²³ It would seem, therefore, that Dubliners were not only content with literary entertainments but demanded quality, intellectual reading material in an environment graced by the Enlightenment that had been sweeping through Britain and continental Europe.

Dublin Library Society

Established in 1791, the Dublin Library Society operated in the capital's city centre as a voluntary subscription library for ninety years. Understandably, contemporary descriptions of it as a public library venue appeared in several histories and guidebooks of Dublin in the nineteenth century.²⁴ In particular, two include substantial entries on the Dublin Library and have been the chief primary sources for subsequent descriptions in secondary sources up to

²⁰ Abbas, "A Fund of entertaining and useful Information," 42-46. For coffee house proprietors who were members of the print trade, see M. Pollard, *Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550-1800* (Oxford: Bibliographical Society, 2000).

²¹ Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*; M. Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550-1800: Lyell Lectures, 1986-1987* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); Richard B. Sher, *The Enlightenment & the Book: Scottish Authors & Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006), especially Chapter 7: "The Rise and Fall of Irish Printing," 444-502.

²² For studies on Dublin circulating libraries and other subscription libraries, see Cole, "Community Lending Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland". A belated publication of a 1952 PhD thesis also covers "Aspects of Bookselling": James W. Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin: A Bibliographical Enquiry* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1998), 86-91. Also, see Abbas, "A Fund of entertaining and useful Information," 47-56; Abbas, "Coffee Houses, Early 'Public' Libraries and the Print Trade in Eighteenth-Century Dublin," 78-119; and Mairead Treanor, "The Circulating Library and the Diffusion of Information in Mid-to-Late Eighteenth Century Dublin" (MLIS diss., University College Dublin, 2004). For British context with some Irish content, see K.A. Manley, "Booksellers, Peruke-Makers, and Rabbit Merchants: The Growth of Circulating Libraries in the Eighteenth Century," in Robin Myers et al., eds., *Libraries and the Book Trade: The Formation of Collections from the Sixteenth to the Twentieth Century* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press, 2000), 29-50.

²³ Cole, "Community Lending Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 114-115, citing the *Hibernian Journal*, 22 January 1794.

²⁴ For example: *Picture of Dublin for 1811*, 171; and John James McGregor, *New Picture of Dublin: Comprehending a History of the City...* (Dublin: Printed for A.M. Graham, 1821), 229.

present times. First, John Warburton, **James Whitelaw**, and Robert Walsh produced their sizable two-volume *History of the City of Dublin* in 1818. They emphasised that prior to 1791, Dubliners longed for a centrally located public library with convenient opening hours, stocked with a variety of quality reading matter, and open to 'all without discrimination, except those of conduct and character'. The authors related that meetings held in the bookseller **John Archer**'s shop in Dame Street evolved into a society in which 'any respectable person' who could pay the annual subscription was admitted. To accommodate such rapidly increasing numbers, the society decided to move to rooms in Eustace Street where they remained until another relocation to a purpose-built facility at Burgh Quay (no date was given), close to the main thoroughfare joining the north and south sides of the River Liffey. With an impressive selection of reading material and liberal opening hours and terms of admission, 'the arrangements of this society are such as those of an institution intended to promote a taste for literature in a country ought to be'. The authors noted that by 1818, the library had almost 1,200 members. In his 1948 essay on proprietary libraries in England, Frank Beckwith referred to Warburton et al. while noting the Dublin Library's relatively open policy of membership: 'an unusually comprehensive widening of the gates, perhaps meaning, however, that it opened them a little more widely than the neighbouring Trinity library, limited as that was to graduates and none other'.²⁵

The second, oft-cited, nineteenth-century history of the capital was John Gilbert's three-volume set based on the city's geographical areas—effectively a street-by-street chronicle of Dublin.²⁶ Gilbert paid special attention to coffee houses and their proprietors, members of the print trade and their shops in the city, various illustrious and significant persons who inhabited the capital, and numerous clubs and societies that convened in the city centre. The author described John Archer's bookshop at 80 Dame Street as 'the rendezvous of the literary men of Dublin during the last ten years of the eighteenth century'. After turning onto Eustace Street, the author revealed that the preliminary meeting

²⁵ J. Warburton, J. Whitelaw and Robert Walsh, *History of the City of Dublin, from the Earliest Accounts to the Present Time*, vol. 2 (London: Bulmer & Co., 1818), 942-943; Frank Beckwith, "The Eighteenth-Century Proprietary Library in England," *Journal of Documentation* 3, issue 2 (1947): 86-87, 98. Beckwith also acknowledged that libraries in Hull and Dublin both had generous opening hours: *ibid.*, 93.

²⁶ J.T. Gilbert, *A History of the City of Dublin*, 3 vols. (Dublin: James Duffy, 1861).

for the formation of the Dublin Library Society took place at Archer's on the evening of 10 May 1791. Another meeting at the Royal Irish Academy on 21 May resulted in the selection of the inaugural committee of twenty-one. In June 1791, the auctioneer James Vallance, at 6 Eustace Street, provided them with apartments 'consisting of a first-floor with two rooms, furnished with shelves, and connected by a sufficiently commodious passage'.²⁷ Although stating that the principal architect of the Dublin Library was the chemist **Richard Kirwan**, two prominent members of the Dublin book trade—a bookseller and an auctioneer—had a hand in the early setup of the Dublin Library Society.²⁸ Gilbert concluded his section on Eustace Street and the Dublin Library by providing the date (April 1809) of the library's move to Burgh Quay.²⁹

Both Warburton et al. and Gilbert usefully chronicled institutions like the Dublin Library in their histories, opening the door to library historians to explore them further. However, until John Bruce Howell in 1985 (examined below), subsequent library histories did not significantly add to our knowledge of this subscription library. Perhaps this was due to a contentment among library historians to simply identify and provide a brief description before moving on to the next institution. But taking into consideration the political and religious environment of eighteenth-century Dublin, the authors' comment in 1818 that the library was cross-confessional in composition should have invited further analysis, especially since an extant, printed catalogue from 1792 listed all 310 founding subscribers.³⁰ An examination of their backgrounds can contribute to an assessment of this library's impact on society in Dublin, in that period.

To a great extent, Paul Kaufman has been influential in a revival of library history in the 1960s. A considerable amount of recent research has built on what he had explored in several essays. Ranging from coffee house libraries to cathedral libraries, with settings all over England, Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, Kaufman's 1969 publication, *Libraries and Their Users*, brought together his

²⁷ Gilbert, *A History of the City of Dublin*, 2:278; 314-315.

²⁸ For both John Archer and James Vallance and their roles in the Dublin book trade, see Kennedy, "The Domestic and International Trade of an Eighteenth-Century Dublin Bookseller," 94-105; and Kennedy, "'Book mad': The Sale of Books by Auction in Eighteenth-Century Dublin," 48-71.

²⁹ Gilbert, *A History of the City of Dublin*, 2:315.

³⁰ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, xi-xxiv.

collection of articles in one volume, where similarities and contrasts abound. In his essay from 1963, "Community Libraries of Ireland and Wales," Kaufman noted the uniqueness of the Dublin Library Society's establishment as a strictly reference library until 1817 when a lending library was introduced.³¹ Acknowledging the sectarian character of eighteenth-century Irish history, he added that it was 'highly significant that one of the society's laws prohibited either religious or political discussion within its precincts!'³² Here, the environment in which the Dublin Library operated is acknowledged but not pursued as an avenue of interest within the broader field of Irish history.

Kaufman noted that he used Gilbert as a principal source to describe the Dublin Library. He also referred to a brief essay in the *Short Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, by Alexander MacWilliam, on the Dublin Library. MacWilliam recounted Gilbert's description but added an excerpt from a paper delivered by the librarian of the Dublin Library, James O'Neill Mackle, in 1862.³³ Mackle's lecture was on the life of the library's founder, Richard Kirwan. According to Mackle, it was on 10 May 1791 that Kirwan called together 'two or three friends—men of congenial minds'. Meeting in a room above John Archer's shop, Kirwan 'took the chair, and submitted his plan, which was approved of, and his next step was to appeal to the public spirit and taste of the city'. Mackle reported that eleven days later, on 21 May, forty-five others had joined the scheme and a meeting was held in the Royal Irish Academy to elect the Dublin Library's first committee of twenty-one. Despite the unquestioned leadership of Kirwan, the chemist deferred to the uncontested election of the respected **Earl of Charlemont** as their President. But in adulation, Mackle stressed Kirwan's 'labour and zeal' in the library's establishment, 'and under his fostering hand it grew up strong and healthy'. Even well after the library was dissolved in 1881, MacWilliam commended the Dublin Library's legacy as 'a Society which was in active being for the greater

³¹ Paul Kaufman, "Community Libraries of Ireland and Wales," in *Libraries and their Users*, 174. However, a Dublin Library sub-committee announced the establishment of a circulating library service in 1815: *Freeman's Journal*, 29 September 1815, for which see p. 154.

³² Kaufman, "Community Libraries of Ireland and Wales," 185, n. 12.

³³ James O'Neill Mackle, *Reminiscences of the Life of Dr. Richard Kirwan: A Lecture Delivered 12th May, 1862, in the Dublin Library, D'Olier Street, by James O'Neill Mackle, Esq., Librarian and Secretary* (Dublin: R.D Webb and Son, 1862).

part of a century, and which must have had an educative value difficult to over-estimate'.³⁴

In 1974, Richard Cole added to Kaufman's work on Irish library history with an article on community libraries in eighteenth-century Ireland. This time, through a perusal of eighteenth-century newspaper advertisements, Cole identified another eighteen circulating libraries throughout Ireland. He also expanded on John Archer's General Book-Repository, which he considered a literary society more than a lending library or reading society. Referring to Kaufman and several (aforementioned) nineteenth-century Dublin histories, Cole also regarded the General Book-Repository as the predecessor of the Dublin Library Society. His descriptions of newly identified Dublin circulating libraries and public libraries in Armagh and Belfast added to the corpus of knowledge and demonstrated that this part of the British Isles could be included as a participant in the development of community libraries at this time.³⁵ However, neither Cole nor Kaufman, having identified the significance of Irish commercial circulating libraries preceding the establishment of subscription libraries in Ireland, pursued further examination of the Dublin Library Society itself. Rather, Cole transferred his attention to the Irish book trade with an important monograph, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers, 1740-1800*, exploring the nature of the Irish reprint trade—booksellers, collectors and the types of books involved.³⁶

A brief, 1985 pamphlet remains the only publication to date dedicated to the history of the Dublin Library Society.³⁷ During his studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, John Bruce Howell came across a manuscript dating back to 1822, which remains the earliest extant original documentation from the Dublin Library.³⁸ Using a list of subscribers from the printed 1792

³⁴ Mackle, *Reminiscences of the Life of Dr. Richard Kirwan*, 7; Alexander MacWilliam, "The Dublin Library Society, 1791-1882," *Short Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Ireland* II, no. 6 (1925): 125.

³⁵ Cole, "Community Lending Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 111; 115; 122-23.

³⁶ Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*.

³⁷ Howell, *A History of the Dublin Library Society, 1791-1881*.

³⁸ DLS, *Laws*, 1822. Howell's PhD thesis in Library and Information Science (1984), and his lifelong specialisation, was in the field of African libraries and bibliography (Yvette Scheven et al., *African-Related Theses and Dissertations, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1921-1988* (Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois, 1989), accessed 19 November 2016, <https://www.library.illinois.edu/ias/wp-content/uploads/sites/20/2016/12/dissertations1921-1988.pdf>).

Dublin Library Society catalogue, Howell gave brief descriptions of some of the library's committeemen, highlighting the more prominent and noted Irishmen in society at the time. While only six of the twenty-one pages of text are devoted to the first decade of the library's existence, it nonetheless provided an important—and long overdue—overview of this voluntary subscription library 'founded in 1791 because there was no adequate library service for intellectuals and the middle class in the city'. Equally significant an observation was Howell's comment that the library was non-sectarian throughout its existence. Moreover, through his identification of many Royal Irish Academy members who played a prominent role in the leadership of the fledgling library, Howell cogently posited: 'It is in this extension of intellectual thought, in a manner consistent with the ideas of the Enlightenment, that makes the society's existence important for the history of Irish thought and institutions'.³⁹ Howell's pamphlet, though, covering the library's entire ninety-year history, could not have included an elaboration on this as the majority of the work covered the library's operation in the nineteenth century. Consequently, further research on the origins of the library and its composition of membership could develop from Howell's effort.⁴⁰ Therefore, this study intends to utilise the rich resource of the contemporary newspaper to concentrate on those hitherto unexplored early years and subsequent public reception. Combined with a prosopographical approach for the composition of the members, this 'new library history' will incorporate investigations in social, religious and political history to provide a fresh interpretation of the history of the Dublin Library and its role in Irish society, thereby building on Howell's astute conjecture.

The last publication to address the Dublin Library Society appeared in a volume of essays on associational culture in Ireland. Johanna Archbold's "Book Clubs and Reading Societies in the Late Eighteenth Century" developed from the work of J.R.R. Adams, Kaufman, and Cole, and also incorporated elements of social and political history through the identification of members from various

³⁹ Howell, *Dublin Library Society*, v; 6.

⁴⁰ A 1987 review of Howell's pamphlet suggested a 'revised and enlarged second edition': Norma Jessop, "Reviewed Work: *A History of the Dublin Library Society, 1791-1881* by John Bruce Howell", *Irish University Review* 17, no. 1, Thomas Murphy Issue (Spring, 1987): 152.

libraries in Ireland.⁴¹ Also highlighting the Dublin Library's non-sectarian character, Archbold noted the 'considerable crossover in the memberships of these societies' that 'contributed to the intellectual importance and atmosphere' of the library.⁴² In fact, much of the section in her essay devoted to the Dublin Library depicted the diversity of its members by providing a sample of such occupational backgrounds as city alderman, schoolmaster, brewer, physician, clergymen, and Trinity College fellows. Once again, gradually increasing interest in this library from a social history perspective is at play here. Additionally, Archbold's comment that the Dublin Library 'complemented those learned institutions whose libraries functioned in a more restricted fashion' indicates the rather neglected significance of this library as a public library service provider from the late-eighteenth century until the arrival of the National Library of Ireland (1877) and rates-supported public libraries in Dublin (1884).

The 'Public' in Context

Any study of library history is inevitably confronted with the confusion over interpretations of various terms in the absence of universally accepted standards. Variations abound, for instance, when defining types and categories of libraries. The idea of a cathedral library is clear—but not when it is also considered an institutional library.⁴³ An institutional library, in the context used here, refers to anything from a university library, like Trinity College Dublin Library, to a society library, such as the Dublin Society or the Royal Irish Academy. For this study, complex definitions of book clubs, book societies, reading clubs, and reading societies will be left to others to resolve.⁴⁴ The Dublin circulating libraries discussed below were all commercial, for-profit businesses set up on a subscription basis.⁴⁵ Unlike the other Dublin private

⁴¹ Archbold, "Book Clubs and Reading Societies in the Late Eighteenth Century," in *Clubs and Societies*, 138-162. For book clubs and reading societies in Ulster, see J.R.R. Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man: Popular Culture in Ulster, 1700-1900* (Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University of Belfast, 1987).

⁴² Archbold, "Book Clubs and Reading Societies in the Late Eighteenth Century," 156.

⁴³ Kelly, *Early Public Libraries*, 241. For cathedral libraries in an Irish context, see Raymond Gillespie, "Irish Cathedral Libraries Before 1700," in Charles Benson and Siobhán Fitzpatrick, eds., *'That woman!': Studies in Irish Bibliography: A Festschrift for Mary 'Paul' Pollard* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2005), 176-192.

⁴⁴ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 28-29; Kelly, *Early Public Libraries*, 242-243; Paul Kaufman, "English Book Clubs and their Social Import," in *Libraries and Their Users*, 36-64; Manley, *Books, Borrowers, and Shareholders*, 119-123; Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common*, 23-41.

⁴⁵ Kelly preferred this description of circulating libraries: Kelly, *Early Public Libraries*, 243.

subscription libraries, also considered below, the Dublin Library Society was a non-profit institution. It has been recently suggested that because it did not start out as a lending library, it should be classified as a 'reading society rather than a private subscription library'.⁴⁶ This is problematic, as it would suggest an emphasis on its members collectively reading and discussing selected material rather than any notion of the place as a reference library for research based on convenient and liberal terms of access. Another salient point here is that the emphasis was on establishing a permanent 'library' of books, pamphlets, journals and other reference material found in an academic library or a (future) national library or central public library.⁴⁷ It is certainly true that despite being a non-profit, non-proprietary subscription library, the Dublin Library, by its monetary admission requirement, should understandably be regarded as a private subscription library. However, a distinction should be made between the Dublin Library and other contemporary private subscription libraries, especially when considering further library service provision for eighteenth-century Dubliners. First, essential clarification must be addressed on several terms and concepts used below centring on the word 'public'.

The term 'private' when used to describe libraries has generally referred to those belonging to individuals. However, understandably, while coffee houses and circulating libraries facilitated a wider reading public, subscription libraries that limited membership to those who paid admission fees have been known as 'private subscription libraries'.⁴⁸ Recent research into Dublin's circulating and subscription library scene resulted in a taxonomy largely based on the subscription charges and whether or not a space was provided for readers to gather for reading and discussion on the premises.⁴⁹ However, further research into the Dublin Library Society has warranted a reconsideration of these criteria. Paul Kaufman, David Allan, and Keith Manley have all explored at some

⁴⁶ Archbold, "Book Clubs and Reading Societies in the Late Eighteenth Century," 158.

⁴⁷ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 29; DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, iii-iv.

⁴⁸ Kelly, *Early Public Libraries*, 242; Mark Towsey, "Reading the Scottish Enlightenment," 67; K.A. Manley, "Jeremy Bentham has Been Banned: Contention and Censorship in Private Subscription Libraries before 1825," *LJH* 29, no. 3 (September 2013): 170-181. David Allan also highlights the difficulties of library nomenclature, especially when considering the variety of names given to subscription libraries in Georgian England: Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 63-64.

⁴⁹ Bernard Dornin, Anthony Gerna, and Richard White are three examples of Dublin subscription libraries that contrasted with most Dublin circulating libraries that loaned books to be read elsewhere: Abbas, "'A Fund of entertaining and useful Information,'" 51-55.

point, the usefulness of the 'catch-all appellation' of the 'community library'.⁵⁰ This, indeed, would be an ideal way of differentiating the Dublin Library from its fellow, private subscription libraries. Alas, it did not have a lending library until 1815. Therefore, library historians may object to its classification as a community library, given that past studies of community libraries have highlighted their book-lending facilities within their communities as a logical criterion.⁵¹ Also, although it will be posited that the Dublin Library acted as a public reference library—available to more of the urban community than most other libraries in Dublin at the time—calling it a 'community library' somewhat ignores the idea of the structured associational format of the non-proprietary subscription library, in which the members, through their annual fees, contribute towards the purchase of library materials.⁵²

From here, the debate returns to the concept of 'public' in an eighteenth-century library context before addressing it from a wider historical and philosophical perspective. Public libraries, as are familiarly known today, refer to the rates-supported ones that appeared in Dublin in 1884, enabled by the Irish Public Libraries Act (1855).⁵³ These were accessible to all, free of charge and without barriers of status, connections, or religious persuasion. However, in an eighteenth-century context, very few libraries could be regarded as accessible to all. They tended to be private libraries bequeathed to the state or the city.⁵⁴ For example, in Dublin, the private library of the Anglican Archbishop Narcissus Marsh was donated to the state and established as a 'Publick Library for Ever' in 1707 by Act of Parliament. However, although Marsh left instructions defining the 'public' that would benefit from his

⁵⁰ Paul Kaufman, "The Community Library: A Chapter in English Social History," in *Libraries and Their Users*, 188-222; Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 14-15; Manley, *Books, Borrowers, and Shareholders*, 11-17; K.A. Manley, "Scottish Circulating and Subscription Libraries as Community Libraries," *Library History* 19 (November 2003): 185-194.

⁵¹ *Freeman's Journal*, 29 September 1815. Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 15. The National Library of Ireland was established in 1877 and, although it was not a lending library, it acted as a free, community reference library until rate-supported public libraries appeared in Dublin in 1884: Long, "Institutional Libraries and Private Collections," 283-285.

⁵² Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 15; Kelly, *Early Public Libraries*, 242.

⁵³ Catherine Moran and Pearl Quinn, "The Irish Library Scene," in *CHLBI* 3, 253; Clara Cullen, "'Dublin is also in great need of a library which shall be at once accessible to the public and contain a good supply of modern and foreign books': Dublin's Nineteenth-Century 'Public' Libraries," *Library History* 23 (March 2007): 49-61.

⁵⁴ Thomas Kelly refers to the British Museum Library, dating from 1753, as a publicly financed library: Kelly, *Early Public Libraries*, 13.

munificence, the governors and guardians limited admission to 'All Graduates and Gentlemen'.⁵⁵ Also, as will be highlighted below, Marsh's Library was an Anglican institution in the age of Anglican domination over Dissenters and a Catholic majority. Therefore, further restrictions on access would have significantly reduced the meaning of 'public' and 'All Graduates and Gentlemen' in this regard.

Similarly, Matthew Yeo notes that Humphrey Chetham's seventeenth-century bequest of his private collection to the city of Manchester for the foundation of a public library was not meant for the public, as much as it referred to 'public service' or the public institutions of the state.⁵⁶ Herein lies the early interpretation of the 'public authority' of state institutions and a private realm of individuals 'assembled into a public body' that German philosopher, Jürgen Habermas regarded as the 'bourgeois public sphere'.⁵⁷ By the late-eighteenth century, 'public', in a library history context, was widely referred to by booksellers, circulating library keepers, and subscription libraries in newspaper advertisements and notices, to mean the reading public.⁵⁸

In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas identified the development of this nascent public realm—separate from that of the state—where an expanded print culture and higher literacy levels contributed to the rise of coffee houses and salons as venues for reading and discourse.⁵⁹ His discussion of these themes—as well as the composition of participants within this eighteenth-century 'bourgeois' literary public sphere—has attracted the attention of those involved in library, information, and book histories, as well as social and intellectual history.⁶⁰ In his analysis of serial print in eighteenth-

⁵⁵ McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen*, 43; 45.

⁵⁶ Matthew Yeo, *The Acquisition of Books by Chetham's Library, 1655-1700* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 4-5.

⁵⁷ Jürgen Habermas, "The Public Sphere," in Frank Webster, ed., *The Information Society Reader*, 352. For commentary on Habermas's arguments, see Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1992). For an analysis of Habermas and the term 'public', see Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 3-15; and in an information studies context, see Frank Webster, *Theories of the Information Society*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2006), 161-202.

⁵⁸ Joanna Innes, "Libraries in Context: Social, Cultural and Intellectual Background," in *CHLBI 2*, 297; Kaufman, "The Community Library: A Chapter in English Social History," 218-221.

⁵⁹ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, MA: M.I.T. Press, 1991); Craig Calhoun, "Habermas and the Public Sphere," in Craig Calhoun, ed., *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, 8-9.

⁶⁰ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 224-230; Webster, *Theories of the Information Society*, 163-167; Michael Harris, "Locating the Serial: Some Ideas about the Position of the Serial in Relation to the Eighteenth-

century England, Michael Harris described Habermas's model as 'empirically weak' and his chronology to be somewhat 'shaky'.⁶¹ Acknowledging the diversity of members in voluntary subscription libraries in Georgian England, David Allan found that 'bourgeoisie' would have to be defined 'so loosely that the term would lose most of its meaning as a tool for precise social classification'.⁶² For his part, Habermas's overview, using examples of Germany, France, and Britain, could not have applied to every setting. Rather, for this study, some of the dynamics that he outlined in other theatres occurred in the eighteenth-century Dublin public sphere, in which the Dublin Library was situated.

First, however, there are cogently relevant points to Habermas, in relation to the Dublin Library Society's diverse occupational representation and its location within Dublin's public sphere. On the early makings of the bourgeois public sphere, Habermas described officials from the 'administrative apparatus of the state' joined by 'doctors, pastors, officers, professors, and scholars'. Added to them was the rising merchant class of bankers and manufacturers: 'the real carrier of the public, which from the outset was a reading public'. Urban locations for this literary public included coffee houses, salons, and 'table societies'. Commercial reading societies emerged, giving a wider public access to 'culture products' at a price. These were joined by 'private reading societies' whose members 'elected their executive committee according to bylaws, voted on the acceptance of new members by majority and generally dealt with disputes in parliamentary fashion'. Although there were no elections for Dublin Library subscribers, there are parallels with Habermas: 'at the close of the eighteenth century the public of the educated strata expanded to include strata of the self-employed petty bourgeoisie'. These were shopkeepers and tradesmen who, Habermas continued, also participated in associational culture through 'trade societies which took the form of reading societies. In many cases, they were branches of the bourgeois reading societies'.⁶³ As will be shown, the Dublin Library Society's diverse occupational composition was

Century Print Culture," in Eleanor F. Shevlin, ed., *The History of the Book in the West: 1700-1800*, vol. 3 (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), 407-409; Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 3-15.

⁶¹ Harris, "Locating the Serial," 409.

⁶² Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 225.

⁶³ Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 23; 30; 71-72; 165.

representative of a cross-section of Dublin's reading public in the late-eighteenth century. It will also be contended that the voluntary subscription library represented an extension of the literary public sphere that began with the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy. In this case, Habermas's point about 'trade' and 'bourgeois' reading societies is not without similarities when examining eighteenth-century Dublin public libraries.

The participation of the nobility—as a form of aristocratic activism—and the incorporation of tradesmen and shopkeepers into the literary public sphere made the 'bourgeois' label problematic for the same reason that David Allan had suggested.⁶⁴ Importantly, the early-eighteenth-century Dublin public sphere was essentially an Ascendancy public sphere reserved for adherents of the Established Church. Due to a range of penal laws, Catholics and most Dissenters were excluded from participation until later in the century when Enlightenment attitudes of toleration, civility, and improvement introduced cross-confessional fraternisation in the Irish associational world. James van Horn Melton's preference for the term 'Enlightened public sphere', therefore, appears more appropriate than 'bourgeois', when discussing the Dublin Library. For Melton, the Enlightened public sphere 'fostered more inclusive practices of sociability, and by widening the sphere of discussion and debate it did have the potential to challenge the prerogatives of traditionally dominant institutions and elites'.⁶⁵ As will also be discussed, the Dublin Library was open to Anglicans, Catholics, and Dissenters alike. Therefore, in a sectarian environment, it acted as Dublin's *de facto* early public library in the late-eighteenth century and into the next, until the arrival of the National Library of Ireland and the free public libraries as are known today. Moreover, many of its members also promoted Enlightenment ideals through their participation in other associational activities. For these reasons, the term 'public subscription

⁶⁴ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 225. Peter Clark explains aristocratic activism as reflecting 'the growth of new-style personal nobility in Georgian Britain, a world in which peers were obliged to present an image of openness and accessibility, to provide leadership rather than authority': Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 253. The Earl of Charlemont was a key Irish example of this through his support of the library without exercising authority over the institution despite being named its first President.

⁶⁵ Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 11.

library' is preferred for the Dublin Library, differentiating it from the other short-lived private subscription libraries in Dublin.⁶⁶

Two exceptions make it inaccurate to suggest that this was a public library in the modern-day sense. First, while female readers were the target market for circulating libraries, there is no evidence of female membership to the Dublin Library Society.⁶⁷ For what it is worth, there is no mention of rules forbidding women either.⁶⁸ While there is substantial evidence of female participation in British subscription libraries, almost none exists for eighteenth-century Dublin.⁶⁹ Máire Kennedy has suggested this had more to do with the unappealing formality of the subscription library compared with the circulating library; however, further exploration into this would stray from the aims of this project.⁷⁰ It is important to note, though, that this was a reference library without a lending library until 1815. Any perusal of books had to be conducted onsite, raising questions of contemporary social mores.⁷¹ Second, the initial admission fee of two guineas (and one guinea thereafter) excluded those on lower incomes. Of course, participation in this enlightened, literary public sphere suggests possessing the knowledge to read, thus excluding a large portion of Dublin's poorer classes.⁷²

⁶⁶ Hyder Abbas, "Coffee Houses, Early 'Public' Libraries and the Print Trade in Eighteenth-Century Dublin" (MSc. ILS, Robert Gordon University, 2011), 100-119; Abbas, "'A Fund of entertaining and useful Information,'" 54-55.

⁶⁷ For women permitted to view an exhibition of prints in the library, in the company of a male subscriber, see p. 148.

⁶⁸ Peter Clark notes: 'In some societies, such as the Dalkeith library society in Scotland, women were specifically prohibited from office-holding': Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 200-201.

⁶⁹ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 78-82. Toby Barnard notes that it is inconclusive that women read in Marsh's Library, although Muriel McCarthy suggests that Jonathan Swift may have invited female writers from his literary circle to the library: Toby Barnard, "Libraries and Collectors, 1700-1800," in *OHIB 3*, 132; McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen*, 98-99. Women were allowed into the Dublin Mechanics' Institution in 1839: Clara Cullen, "Reading Spaces in Dublin," in *OHIB 4*, 278. Outside the capital, women were admitted to the Belfast Reading Society and the Cork Subscription Library: Casteleyn, *A History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland*, 104.

⁷⁰ Máire Kennedy, "Women and Reading in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," in Bernadette Cunningham and Máire Kennedy, eds., *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1999), 83. This remains an under-researched topic, perhaps due to greater attention paid to reading experiences rather than female involvement in formal library societies. See Bernadette Cunningham and Máire Kennedy, eds., *The Experience of Reading: Irish Historical Perspectives*.

⁷¹ For women in Dublin society and their restrictions within Dublin masculine associations, see Dickson, *Dublin*, 155; and Powell, *The Politics of Consumption*, 50-56, 75-89, and 102-116.

⁷² Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 117. This study will concentrate solely on English, as it was the dominant language in Dublin among both the native Irish and the Anglo-Irish, especially in commerce and trade. Toby Barnard identified the necessity of literacy in English: 'The urgency of earning bread in an inhospitable environment and of engaging with the processes of law and government increased the pressures to learn English. These incentives help to explain the better provision of schooling, which in turn gradually improved levels of literacy, especially in the larger towns. The gulf widened between those able, if they chose, to cooperate with the new English order and to participate fully in trade and law and those who, because of

Associational Culture

The Dublin Library Society appeared in 1791 amidst a period of increased public participation in library societies across the British Isles. This was partly due to the popularity of clubs and societies in general, characteristic of the practice of polite sociability with the promotion of intellectual discourse, improvement, and civic pride.⁷³ Johanna Archbold's aforementioned piece on reading societies was one chapter in a long-overdue volume that brought together research on Irish associational culture, *Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*.⁷⁴ Inspired by Peter Clark's work on the British associational world,⁷⁵ contributors to the Irish version provided fresh analyses of well-known institutions, such as the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy, and introduced readers to the lesser-known ones. Themes of sociability, improvement, and patriotism were promoted by these societies and their members actively participated in the expanding public sphere of eighteenth-century Ireland.

From a British perspective (with numerous Irish examples throughout), Clark's thematic approach to associational life, the societies themselves, and their functions, has a particular relevance for this study. He illustrates the clear patterns and trends that occurred in London and spread throughout the British Isles. For example, the rise of the wealthy merchants, manufacturers, and bankers into the upper classes and, in some cases, marrying into gentry families. Concurrently, the professional classes of doctors and lawyers also contributed to the changing composition of British and Irish society. Membership in societies allowed these men to establish networks and relationships, often to further their careers and to potentially increase their connections with others whose paths they would not normally have crossed.

the language that they spoke and lack of literacy, were athwart these worlds': Toby Barnard, "Print Culture, 1700-1800," in *OHIB* 3, 34-35. Ian McBride also notes: 'Already by the 1690s, advanced literacy was common among middling sorts, including skilled craftsmen and traders, supplying the booksellers with their market': McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 302. Irish was widely spoken and read in rural Ireland. For studies in Gaelic print culture, see James Kelly and Ciarán Mac Murchaidh, eds., *Irish and English: Essays on the Irish Linguistic and Cultural Frontier, 1600-1900* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2012).

⁷³ Raven, "Libraries for Sociability, 241-263; James Kelly & Martyn J. Powell, "Introduction," in *Clubs and Societies*, 21.

⁷⁴ James Kelly and Martyn J. Powell, eds., *Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2010).

⁷⁵ Peter Clark, *British Clubs and Societies, 1580-1800: The Origins of an Associational World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

In addition, civic and national pride played a part in participation in societies, as did—in cultural societies—a passion for learning and knowledge.

Complementing Clark's analysis of British associational life, *Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* featured essays on individual societies and subject-related ones, such as charitable, commercial, and political bodies. These are all relevant for this study of the Dublin Library and its members, many who belonged to one or several of these societies. Moreover, as Archbold suggested, the Dublin Library was part of the intellectual life and cultural fabric of eighteenth-century Dublin. Indeed, as will be argued, this short-lived institution represented a gradual ease of access to quality reading material, facilitating those members of other intellectual societies such as the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy. Conversely, those who were not members of these two societies also benefitted from the Dublin Library's provision of a library service to an expanding reading public. Therefore, a study of those contemporary, improving, political, commercial, or charitable societies, in which Dublin Library founding members participated in significant numbers, can contribute to an increased understanding of the library's membership within the wider Irish society.

Social historian Toby Barnard added to the corpus of literature on one of the oldest existing societies in Ireland, the Royal Dublin Society (1731; commonly known as the Dublin Society before and after its chartership in 1750) with an essay on improving societies.⁷⁶ Tracing the society from its origins, Barnard highlights its promotion of 'practical patriotism' and 'economic nationalism' to counter the influence of and reliance on British goods amidst sluggish Irish economic conditions. However, despite its enlightened qualities, it remained a predominantly Protestant institution: 'There is little evidence that the Dublin Society opened up a public sphere to those hitherto excluded from it; rather it enlarged the outlets for sociable and philanthropic associations among

⁷⁶ Toby Barnard, "The Dublin Society and Other Improving Societies, 1731-85," in *Clubs and Societies*, 53-88. Also, see James Livesey, "Dublin Society in Eighteenth-Century Irish Political Thought," *Historical Journal* 47, issue 3 (September 2004), 615-640; and James Livesey, "A Kingdom of Cosmopolitan Improvers: The Dublin Society, 1731-1798," in Koen Stapelbroek and Jani Marjanen, eds., *The Rise of Economic Societies in the Eighteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 52-72.

prosperous Protestant men'.⁷⁷ Nonetheless, many of its members also became founding members of the Dublin Library in 1791 and continued to promote cultural patriotism in a cross-confessional setting. In doing so, the Dublin Library was much more representative of Dublin's social and cultural milieu in the eighteenth century.

Michael Brown's most recent study on the Irish Enlightenment⁷⁸ (discussed below) follows his numerous contributions to publications on the European Enlightenment and Marsh's Library.⁷⁹ For *Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, he combined his interest in the Irish Enlightenment debate with the origins and foundation of the Royal Irish Academy. Through a tracing of its history and a perusal of the preface to the Academy's first *Transactions*, Brown strengthened his argument of the presence of an Irish Enlightenment embodied by the Academy. For Brown, the emphasis on intellectual contributions in science, polite literature, and the antiquities indicated an enlightened advancement away from any political or religious influences. Irrespective of the concern that the royal charter and overwhelming dominance of Anglican membership (of the first thirty-eight, only two were Catholic) diminished this thesis, 'the Academy gestured in the direction of creating an Enlightenment counter-public, and rather than replicate the public projected by the state, subverted it by prioritizing mental achievement over political status'.⁸⁰

Political societies in eighteenth-century Ireland were most prominent in the years before and after 1784, when Irish legislative independence from Britain was achieved and the struggle to maintain it continued. James Kelly and Ultán Gillen each contribute essays on influential societies such as the Monks of the Order of St. Patrick (Monks of the Screw), the Whig Club, and the Whigs of the

⁷⁷ Barnard, "The Dublin Society and Other Improving Societies," 53; 63; 88.

⁷⁸ Michael Brown, *The Irish Enlightenment* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

⁷⁹ Michael Brown, "Was there an Irish Enlightenment? The Case of the Anglicans," in Richard Butterwick, Simon Davies and Gabriel Sánchez Espinosa (eds.), *Peripheries of the Enlightenment*, SVEC 2008, no. 1 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2008), 49-64; Michael Brown, "The Location of Learning in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," in McCarthy and Simmons, eds., *Marsh's Library—A Mirror on the World: Law, Learning and Libraries, 1650-1750*, 104-126.

⁸⁰ Michael Brown, "Configuring the Irish Enlightenment: Reading the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*," in *Clubs and Societies*, 163-178; 167.

Capital.⁸¹ All were decidedly patriotic in their advocacy of Irish concerns in trade and constitutional rights, however differing were their views on the degree of Irish independence that should be pursued. Many members from these societies became founding members of the Dublin Library. Therefore, an examination of these societies in Chapter 8 will add to our understanding of the library and its members in the politically charged atmosphere leading up to the 1798 Rebellion.

Two other essays on Irish associational culture are of relevance to this study. James Kelly examines the role within Irish society of charitable institutions, citing examples of assistance to certain groups such as the 'Irish Musical Fund for infirm musicians' and the Society for Distressed Roomkeepers (also known as the Society for the Relief of Sick and Indigent Roomkeepers). He also notes the 'Literary Teacher Society' for distressed teachers and their families. Known earlier as the Abecedarian Society, many of its founding and later members joined the Dublin Library at its inception. In the other article, Lisa Marie Griffith provides the background for two commercial entities related to this study: the Ouzel Galley Society and the Dublin Chamber of Commerce.⁸² Together with the Bank of Ireland, these three institutions had as members a significant number of influential merchants and bankers who actively supported, and participated in, social and cultural endeavours in Dublin.

The dissemination of print—especially through pamphlets, newspapers and advertisements—played a large part in shaping public opinion. It also contributed to increased public awareness of issues, and certainly encouraged participation in those societies pursuing Irish intellectual advancement, self-sufficiency, and commercial and legislative independence. Therefore, a collective study of several Irish societies—to which many Dublin Library founding members belonged—reveals clear evidence of a blossoming of associational activity, promotion of social, cultural, commercial, and political awareness, civic pride, and a national consciousness that contributes to the

⁸¹ James Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800," in *Clubs and Societies*, 264-289; Ultán Gillen, "Opposition Political Clubs and Societies, 1790-98," in *Clubs and Societies*, 290-311.

⁸² Kelly, "Charitable Societies: Their Genesis and Development, 1720-1800," in *Clubs and Societies*, 100; Lisa Marie Griffith, "Dublin's Commercial Clubs," in *Clubs and Societies*, 109-125.

understanding of the social milieu in eighteenth-century Dublin. It is through a prosopographical approach that the dynamics of associational culture can help explain who these subscription library founding members were.⁸³

The Enlightenment in Ireland

In Dublin, where this examination will focus, Enlightenment ideals permeated the city's clubs and societies, especially the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy of which a substantial amount has been written.⁸⁴ Both—as well as Marsh's Library—remain in existence today with bicentennial and tercentennial occasions resulting in a burst of publications of institutional histories celebrating milestones in associational and intellectual activity.⁸⁵ The eighteenth-century coffee house has been recognised as a 'location of learning' in a shift away from the official public sphere of such Anglican institutions as Archbishop Marsh's Library and Trinity College Dublin to an unofficial one where the dissemination of print and enlightened discourse were encouraged.⁸⁶ The coffee house has also been regarded as an important venue for the growth of civil society 'before Enlightenment writers such as David Hume and Adam Ferguson [...] theorized its significance'.⁸⁷ However, despite the conviviality and sociability of the eighteenth-century coffee house, James van Horn Melton has noted that notwithstanding its reputation as 'an arena of the Enlightened public sphere', there was not as much social mixing of the classes as had been previously romanticised.⁸⁸

⁸³ Gillen, "Opposition Political Clubs and Societies," 310; Towsey, "Book Use and Sociability in Lost Libraries of the Eighteenth Century," 433.

⁸⁴ Livesey, "Dublin Society in Eighteenth-Century Irish Political Thought"; and Livesey, "A Kingdom of Cosmopolitan Improvers: The Dublin Society, 1731–1798"; Brown, "Was There an Irish Enlightenment? The Case of the Anglicans"; Brown, "Configuring the Irish Enlightenment."

⁸⁵ James Meenan and Desmond Clarke, eds., *RDS, The Royal Dublin Society, 1731-1981* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1981); Ó Raifeartaigh, *The Royal Irish Academy: A Bicentennial History, 1785-1985*; McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen*; McCarthy and Simmons, eds., *The Making of Marsh's Library*; McCarthy and Simmons, eds., *Marsh's Library: A Mirror on the World: Law, Learning and Libraries, 1650-1750*; W.E. Vaughan, ed., *The Old Library, Trinity College Dublin: 1712-2012* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2013). For other works on Trinity College Dublin, see Vincent Kinane and Anne Walsh, eds., *Essays on the History of Trinity College Library Dublin* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000); and Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*. For Belfast, see Killen, *A History of the Linen Hall Library, 1788-1988*. Occasionally, a venerable institution could attract attention for the wrong reasons. For the controversy surrounding the sale of their non-legal books, see Colum Kenny, *King's Inns and the Battle of the Books, 1972: Cultural Controversy at A Dublin Library* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002).

⁸⁶ Brown, "Location of Learning in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland."

⁸⁷ Cowan, *Social Life of Coffee*, 192.

⁸⁸ Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 249; Aytoun Ellis, *The Penny Universities: A History of the Coffee-Houses* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1956), xv.

But it has been duly summarised and analysed that coffee houses and various types of public libraries and reading societies, in general, have been regarded as significant venues for the opportunity to access, disseminate, and discuss works by 'Enlightenment authors' that were reprinted or imported.⁸⁹ In comparing Dublin and Edinburgh, Richard Sher wrote: 'Dublin far surpassed Edinburgh in numbers of inhabitants, bookshops, and imprints, and its access to the American market was growing. Yet Dublin never hosted a broad-based Irish Enlightenment, the way that Edinburgh became a center for authors of the Scottish Enlightenment'.⁹⁰ Leaving aside this assertion for a moment, Enlightenment works from Scotland, England and continental Europe nevertheless appeared on shelves of private and public libraries across Ireland and may well have been instrumental in shaping views of significant groups and individuals in eighteenth-century political and cultural thought.⁹¹ Surprisingly then, for an institution that has been noted in the primary sources for its inclusiveness, toleration of faith, democratic values, and improving qualities, there is little or no reference in the secondary literature to the Dublin Library Society as an example of an Enlightenment venue in eighteenth-century Ireland. Yet, when contemporary newspapers are examined, the Dublin Library appears as an exemplary bastion of Enlightenment ideals, especially after rebellions across the country in 1798 destroyed any advances made in bridging the sectarian divide.

Michael Brown's recent history of the Irish Enlightenment argues that, contrary to sectarian policies of penal laws ensuring a minority Anglican domination over the Dissenting and Catholic majority (among other factors), Ireland 'was a vigorous and controversial participant in the transcontinental experiment of creating a modern world' characterised by civility, democracy and secularism.

⁸⁹ Ultán Gillen, "Varieties of Enlightenment: The Enlightenment and Irish Political Culture in the Age of Revolutions," in Richard Butterwick, Simon Davies and Gabriel Sánchez Espinosa (eds.), *Peripheries of the Enlightenment*, SVEC 2008, no. 1 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2008), 164; Ellis, "Coffee-House Libraries in Mid-Eighteenth-Century London," 6, 23-40; Allan, *A Nation of Readers*; Towsey, "Reading the Scottish Enlightenment"; Killen, *A History of the Linen Hall Library, 1788-1988*. The third volume of the *Cambridge History of Libraries in Britain and Ireland* has two sections titled: "Enlightening the Masses: The Public Library as Concept and Reality"; and "Libraries for National Needs: Library Provision in the Public Sphere in the Countries of the British Isles": *CHLBI* 3, vii-ix.

⁹⁰ Sher, *Enlightenment & the Book*, 500.

⁹¹ Máire Kennedy, "Reading the Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 45, no. 3 (Spring 2012): 355-378; Jim Smyth, "Wolfe Tone's Library: The United Irishmen and 'Enlightenment'," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 45, no. 3 (Spring 2012): 423-435; Kevin Whelan, "The United Irishmen, Enlightenment, and Popular Culture," in Dickson et al., *The United Irishmen*, 296.

Chronologically, Brown examines eighteenth-century Irish history through an analysis of the Irish Enlightenment as a movement and idea in three phases: religious (1688-ca. 1730), social (ca. 1730-ca. 1760), and political (ca. 1760-1798). For Brown, 'the study of one aspect of Irish intellectual life provokes a wider cultural history of the country'. For this study on the Dublin Library amidst the intellectual and social history of eighteenth-century Dublin, Brown's work is important, especially since its identification of venues of Enlightenment in Ireland include the sociability within an 'unofficial public sphere', or 'literary public sphere' of coffee houses and circulating libraries in Dublin, and the social and political characteristics of Enlightenment ideals found in associational activity, particularly in the Royal Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy.⁹²

In a chapter titled 'The Enlightened Counter Public', Brown extends Ireland's Social Enlightenment to the period between 1730 and 1780, characterised by a wealth of intellectual activity and public participation—in many instances, cross-confessional—within a literary public sphere that operated alongside the official public sphere of the church and state represented by such institutions as Marsh's Library, Trinity College, and the Theatre Royal.⁹³ Coffee houses and bookshops—closely linked to the burgeoning print trade—represented Dublin's unofficial public sphere (arenas of 'social mixing' and 'informal sociability'), with Brown mapping this geographical area within Dublin's city centre:

In many ways, the coffeehouses, taverns, and bookshops of the capital city identify the heart of the Irish Enlightenment. If the culture of Enlightenment can be found anywhere in midcentury, it is to be found in the handful of streets between Dame Street and the Liffey, and from Fishamble Street down the Hill to Eustace Street. It was here that the clearinghouse for information and ideas was centred. Ideas flooded in from the port or were carried in from the countryside, to be weighed, measured, and redistributed in the coffee houses, taverns and bookshops of the neighbourhood.⁹⁴

Brown then contrasts the 'reserved and sheltered retreat' of Marsh's Library with the bustling competition among circulating libraries that emerged from their expanded bookselling businesses. Citing Cole's 1974 article on Irish community libraries, he identified John Archer's 1788 General Book-Repository

⁹² Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 3-7; 10-14, 21, 159, 305; 10; 210-304.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 212-219; Brown, "Location of Learning in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 107-108.

⁹⁴ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 241; 229.

as having 'acted more like a club than a library'. Following on, Brown noted that Hope Circulating Library was founded in 1796. In concluding the subsection, he noted: 'Although these establishments were often ephemeral and limited in their scope, they represented a challenge to the market which Marsh's initially monopolised; a common experience for the official public sphere in midcentury'.⁹⁵

Continuing with subscription libraries identified by Brown in locating the Irish Enlightenment, the Cork Library Society (1792) is mentioned as an example of a venue within the provincial 'counter-public sphere'. The Belfast Reading Society (1788), later known as the Belfast Society for the Promotion of Knowledge (1792), was noteworthy for its 'social mixing' bringing together the working classes and the middle orders.⁹⁶ However, despite significant attention devoted to coffee houses and early public libraries in eighteenth-century Dublin—certainly more than any other publication from a discipline other than library history—there is no reference at all to the Dublin Library Society (1791). Brown noted Archer's General Book-Repository in 1788, and he highlighted Eustace Street as an area within the 'heart of the Enlightenment', yet the Dublin Library (at 6 Eustace Street, a few doors in from Dame Street) went unnoticed. Despite its ninety-year history and lack of extant institutional documentation of its operations (minutes of meetings, admissions registers, etc.), this omission is perplexing, given the lack of the same in regards to the coffee houses, circulating and subscription libraries mentioned. Furthermore, in terms of longevity, the Dublin Library outlived most of the cited establishments.

Staying within the broad category of the Social Enlightenment, Brown turns to Irish associational activity marked by cross-confessional relationships and tinged with patriotism:

The club was an ambition and a location; an agenda and rendezvous. Clubs provided the Enlightenment with a means of determining and implementing a course of action. They provided the Enlightenment with social capital, bringing together unrelated actors for shared, commonly non-political ends. The ambition of many of these heterogeneous

⁹⁵ Ibid., 219-220.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 233; 263.

associations was the common weal, beginning with the desire to make Irish society a more pleasant community in which to live; allowing divisions of the political past to be softened and the wounds of confessional conflict to be healed by mutual correspondence, collaboration, and cooperation.⁹⁷

Associations such as the Royal Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy represented these Enlightenment ideals of civility, improvement, secularism and toleration. However, of the Dublin Society's royal charter, Brown notes that the 'cost was a submission to political fortune and a loss of institutional flexibility'. Similarly, for the Royal Irish Academy, he notes the 'intervention and oversight' by Dublin Castle in a period of political instability.⁹⁸

As for interconfessional sociability, Catholics were not able to become full members of the Dublin Society but were eligible to receive awards in competitions. In the case of the Royal Irish Academy, its evidence of cross-confessional inclusivity is noted by the inclusion of two Roman Catholics in the second round of membership admission. Another Catholic, **Theobald McKenna**, and a Presbyterian, **William Drennan**, also were admitted later; but despite this, the Academy remained a predominantly Anglican institution during this time.⁹⁹

Also, in a chapter titled 'Communities of Interest', Brown explores the endeavours of charitable societies, mercantile institutions, and the Catholic Committee, in Ireland's Social Enlightenment. In subsequent chapters, he traces a 'Political Enlightenment' with the emergence of radical societies like the United Irishmen calling for legislative reform, then republican independence. For Brown, this represented the gradual retrenchment of opposing sides and ultimately the collapse of civil society in 1798.¹⁰⁰ However, the work conducted in this investigation of a library institution—incorporating approaches and angles from several areas within the study of Irish history—will highlight the Dublin Library as evidence that Brown's Irish Enlightenment

⁹⁷ Ibid., 252-253.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 261; 304.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 250-251 & 259; 304; Brown, "Configuring an Irish Enlightenment," 167.

¹⁰⁰ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 282-300; 439.

did not fade among the library's members and in public opinion after 1798 and into the nineteenth century.

Brown's reasons for excluding the Dublin Library Society as a location of the Irish Enlightenment are unclear. It is possible that it did not fall within one of his delineated categories but rather represented the Social Enlightenment ethos despite its chronological establishment during the Political Enlightenment—when the Enlightenment project began to fragment and ultimately disintegrate with the 1798 Rebellion. The United Irish movement was key to this politicisation of the public sphere and Brown argues that the last quarter of the eighteenth century represented a 'shift away from a literary mode'. However, Brown referred to the Royal Irish Academy as part of both the Social and Political phases of the Irish Enlightenment. Similarly, he states that Marsh's Library was 'caught between two generations of the Enlightenment', with its holdings representing the official public sphere, supported by the church and state, while its public library provision represented a venue for the advancement of the 'literary public sphere'.¹⁰¹

As will be posited below, deeper analysis of the early years of the Dublin Library Society and its members signifies that this institution did exemplify a location of both of Brown's Social and Political Enlightenments, even surviving the latter's fragmentation and destruction beyond 1798 and well into the late-nineteenth century. The following holistic historiographical examination of the Dublin Library in eighteenth-century Dublin will show that the Irish Enlightenment that Brown has identified as coming to a halt in 1798, continued in the form of this voluntary subscription library. Free from the obligations and oversight that accompanied royal chartership, it was a significant provider of a public library service to an expanding, literary public and a more balanced example of interconfessional sociability than the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy. Nonetheless, Brown's examination of eighteenth-century coffee houses, public libraries and societies—to which many Dublin Library founding members belonged—as evidence of locations of the Irish Enlightenment,

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 250; 304; Brown, "Location of Learning in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 106-107, 126.

further strengthens the contention that the Dublin Library deserves greater attention.

Conclusion

The secondary literature examined here represents what has been written on the Dublin Library Society over the years. In some cases, there are also examples where one would have expected more original research on the Dublin Library, and some, conspicuously, where there is none. The fields of library history and book history both have benefitted from multi-volume projects but, clearly, an Irish version of David Allan's work on the lending libraries of England, and works by Keith Manley and Mark Towsey on Scottish circulating and subscription libraries, would be useful to future researchers in Irish library history.¹⁰² However, most studies on the Dublin Library have been examined from a conventional library history framework, whereby historical context is provided to 'describe and chronicle' the institution. Through an investigation of available primary sources and an examination of the library's founding members, greater emphasis is now placed on social and political history to show how the Dublin Library managed to 'construct society' in eighteenth-century Dublin.¹⁰³

Considerable work has been undertaken on Irish associational activity. Many societies, to which several Dublin Library founder members belonged, have been addressed in *Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*.¹⁰⁴ Together with Michael Brown's 2016 project on the identification and mapping of an Irish Enlightenment, both have investigated Irish social and political history to uncover a thriving culture of active participation in societies, not only for reasons of sociability or networking, but for purposes of improvement and patriotism.¹⁰⁵ Surprisingly, Brown did not include the Dublin Library in his assessment of the destruction of the Irish Enlightenment in the 1790s. Had he

¹⁰² Allan, *A Nation of Readers*; Manley, *Books, Borrowers, and Shareholders*; Towsey, "Reading the Scottish Enlightenment."

¹⁰³ Black, "New Methodologies in Library History," 80; Rose, "Alternative Futures for Library History," 54.

¹⁰⁴ *Clubs and Societies*.

¹⁰⁵ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*.

done so, it may well have provided him with an example of *where* the Enlightenment survived after 1798.

As for studies in Irish history, surveys of eighteenth-century Ireland, urban histories of Dublin, and thematic histories have provided a clearer picture of the environment within which the Dublin Library was formed.¹⁰⁶ Notably, Clare O'Halloran focuses on eighteenth-century Irish antiquarian efforts to link Ireland's ancient past to contemporary political culture. Her investigation is relevant to this study as she outlines Irish cultural patriotism through the work of Catholic and Protestant antiquaries 'driven by similar needs to produce works which would validate the rights of their respective religious communities'. Importantly, some also saw their 'desired validations to be compatible and even mutually enhancing, and an indication that Ireland had moved beyond a past riven by sectarian tensions', and to distinguish her culture as separate from Britain. After focusing on the Royal Irish Academy, O'Halloran ultimately concludes that political tensions at the end of the century were too much for the 'antiquarian enterprise' and sectarian divisions hardened.¹⁰⁷ Therefore, by engaging with O'Halloran's work, the impact of Dublin's first voluntary subscription library can be assessed in the context of the political environment in which it managed to survive.

Additionally, some founding members of the Dublin Library were Irishmen prominent enough to have biographies written about them—either full, multi-volume works or articles in recent journals, such as the *Dublin Historical Record* or *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*. Only a few, however, mention the Dublin Library Society, but are nonetheless fruitful for learning more about individuals' backgrounds, motivations and, in some cases, connections with other Dublin Library members.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*; Dickson, *Dublin*; Dickson et al., *United Irishmen*; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*; Jim Smyth, *The Men of No Property: Irish Radicals and Popular Politics in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998); Patrick Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country: The Papist Constituency in Eighteenth-Century Dublin* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998); Powell, *Politics of Consumption*.

¹⁰⁷ O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, 7; 158-181.

¹⁰⁸ Examples of biographies include: James Gandon, *The Life of James Gandon, with Original Notices of Contemporary Artists, and Fragments of Essays* (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1846); Joseph W. Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803: Catholic Emancipationist," *Dublin Historical Record* 14, no. 2 (August 1956): 41-49; Monica Nevin, "Joseph Cooper Walker, 1761-1810," *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 126 (1996): 152-166.

Certainly, the absence of an in-depth examination of the Dublin Library in the field of library history—beyond mere identification—is as puzzling as the absence of its existence as a public institution in the social histories of eighteenth-century Dublin.¹⁰⁹ Consequently, the intention of the following examination is to present the library as an important subject within eighteenth-century Irish library history, while emphasising its significance as part of the cultural fabric of Irish society in the late-eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth. Greater emphasis on primary sources—many of which have hitherto not been used—will provide an enhanced interpretation of the early history of this institution. These, along with the approaches used for implementing this project, will be discussed in the following methodological examination.

¹⁰⁹ Dickson, *Dublin*; McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*; Powell, *Politics of Consumption*. Constantia Maxwell mentions 'A Dublin Library Society' in a footnote in Constantia Maxwell, *Dublin Under the Georges, 1714-1830* (London: Faber and Faber, 1956), 201.

Chapter 3: Methodology

At the back of John T. Gilbert's *History of the City of Dublin* (1861) there is an eight-page list of sources from where the author—Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy, at the time of writing—gathered information on a multitude of subjects. For his brief description of the Dublin Library and its founding members, Gilbert referred to the 'Records of the Dublin Library Society, MSS'.¹ Written in the mid-nineteenth century, while the library was still in operation, these manuscripts likely would have been held there, and therefore accessible. In 1925, forty-four years after the Dublin Library ceased operation, Alexander MacWilliam composed a short essay on it but noted that he was unable to locate the manuscripts.² Those records could have enabled MacWilliam, and those after him, to produce a more detailed examination of this eighteenth-century Dublin subscription library. Unfortunately, they remain lost and the earliest extant manuscript from the library is an annotated volume of laws and regulations from 1822.³ The loss of such early, unique, institutional documentation has resulted in an incomplete and somewhat hazy interpretation of the library's early years.

However, this dissertation—based on historical research—will provide a clearer picture using sources and methods hitherto not employed in previous literature on the library. This section will address the research methodologies used to examine the early years of the Dublin Library and its founding members. An initial introduction to the appropriate research methods will be followed by a summary of the primary and tertiary sources used to extract the research data. This will be succeeded by a detailed description of the application of the data collected from the primary sources to the methodological approaches. There will also be an examination of the systematic processing of the data required to carry out this investigation. Finally, issues in the methodological procedures—limitations and parameters—will be discussed.

¹ Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin*, vol. 2, viii [Authorities].

² Alexander MacWilliam, "The Dublin Library Society, 1791-1882," *Short Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Ireland* II, no. 6 (1925): 121-131; Kaufman, "Community Libraries of Ireland and Wales," 185.

³ DLS, *Laws*, 1822.

Research Methods

This study is a historical investigation concerning the operation and membership of the Dublin Library Society (1791), chiefly in the last decade of the eighteenth century. As mentioned in the Literature Review, most of what has been written on the Dublin Library has come from nineteenth-century sources—not contemporary to this timeframe. A robust examination of the secondary sources had resulted in some key entry points: previously consulted primary sources, such as newspapers. In some cases, the perusal of certain newspaper titles and dates provided from the secondary sources had resulted in the further discovery of previously unreported public library activity. However, while most of the secondary sources had repeatedly used the same entry points, a thorough study of a selection of contemporary Dublin newspapers marked the beginning of a focus on these primary sources, using historical research methods.

All primary sources used for this historical research project were evaluated for their authenticity, reliability, content, and production. In the case of Irish newspapers, for instance, the *Freeman's Journal*, despite its previous platform reflected in its name, was in the pay of the governing authorities towards the end of the eighteenth century, rendering much of its news simply government propaganda. Therefore, external and internal criticism, when examining the sources, has helped the researcher steer through the interpretations of historical evidence, sometimes clouded with bias but, in the absence of absolute historical truth, is often not without its significance.⁴

The broadly chronological narrative of the dissertation is divided between historiography and prosopography. In the construction of an alternative history of the origins of the Dublin Library, a chronological narrative is combined with the analysis of various themes in Irish contemporary society. In other words, the events leading up to the establishment of the Dublin Library are outlined, together with a study of associational culture and ideas centred on cultural

⁴ W.H. McDowell, *Historical Research: A Guide* (London: Longman, 2002), 109-114; Arthur Marwick, *The Nature of History*, 3rd rev. ed. (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1989), 221-223; John Tosh, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, Methods and New Directions in the Study of Modern History*, 5th ed. (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2010), 124-130; Robert Munter, *The History of the Irish Newspaper, 1685-1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 188; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 18; Tosh, *Pursuit of History*, 130.

patriotism, the Enlightenment and the expansion of the public sphere in eighteenth-century Dublin.⁵ Through a prosopographical study of the founding members of the Dublin Library—and their affiliations with other societies—more can be learned about the composition of the library than previously explored. Therefore, the employment of historiographical and prosopographical methods represents a significant shift in approach to library history than approaches taken in the relevant literature discussed in the previous chapter. Here, the library and its founding members become part of a hitherto unexplored examination of the social and cultural fabric of eighteenth-century Dublin.

It is now essential to elaborate on the prosopographical approach. Often used in social history, prosopography can be regarded as a sub-discipline within this particular vein of historical research, bringing together 'all relevant biographical data of groups of persons in a systematic and stereotypical way'.⁶ Where biographical research is concerned with both internal (personal) and external (non-personal) information of usually noteworthy individuals, prosopographical research focuses on primarily the external qualities of largely unremarkable, 'ordinary' individuals. Konrad Verboven et al. explain: 'Prosopography is not interested in the unique but in the average, the general and the "commonness" in the life histories of more or less large numbers of individuals'.⁷ It has often been referred to as 'collective biography', involving the 'investigation of the common background characteristics of a group of actors in history by means of a collective study of their lives'.⁸ Lately, however, some have disagreed with the term, 'collective biography'. Like Lawrence Stone, K.S.B. Keats-Rohan regards such works as the *Dictionary of National Biography* or the *Complete Peerage* as collective biographies.⁹ Rather, Keats-Rohan suggests, prosopographical research entails 'the amassing of

⁵ This methodological approach is detailed in: Tosh, *Pursuit of History*, 130-131.

⁶ Konrad Verboven, Myriam Carlier, and Jan Dumolyn, "A Short Manual to the Art of Prosopography," in K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, ed., *Prosopography Approaches and Applications: A Handbook* (Oxford: Unit for Prosopographical Research, Linacre College, University of Oxford, 2007), accessed 3 December 2016, <http://prosopography.modhist.ox.ac.uk/images/01%20Verboven%20pdf.pdf>, 37.

⁷ Verboven et al., "Art of Prosopography," 37.

⁸ Lawrence Stone, "Prosopography," *Daedalus* 100, no. 1, *Historical Studies Today* (Winter 1971): 46.

⁹ Stone, "Prosopography," 49; K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, "Biography, Identity and Names: Understanding the Pursuit of the Individual in Prosopography," in Keats-Rohan, ed., *Prosopography Approaches*, accessed 3 December 2016 <http://prosopography.modhist.ox.ac.uk/images/06%20KKR.pdf.pdf>, 143.

biographical details about individual persons with the sole aim of studying them as members of groups'. It involves gathering and organising data from disparate sources in the attempt to learn more about a group of people—especially those whose lives have not already been documented, or for which there is little readily sourced information. Prosopography, therefore, is 'closely connected to the problem of scarcity of historical data'.¹⁰ For the first time, all 310 names that appeared on the list of founding members of the Dublin Library Society have been researched chiefly for their occupations and social backgrounds to gain further insight about the 'hidden history' of this institution. Recent explanations of the views of prosopographers highlight the relevance of the prosopographical approach for this study: 'Much of this hidden history is revealed by identifying the public offices held by prosopographical subjects, and hence prosopography is also directly concerned with the history of institutions'.¹¹

In addition, Verboven et al. emphasise that the systematic organisation of scarce, relevant data could add further significance 'by revealing connections and patterns influencing historical processes'.¹² Therefore, collective biographies such as the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* and the *Complete Peerage* 'provide the raw materials for prosopographers' for compiling biographical information towards a contribution to a history of a group or institution. This distinction is important and relevant to note. C.R. Robinson explains:

Whereas biography is about exemplary or otherwise distinctive individuals, prosopography compiles and organises those items of biographical data that mark an individual's belonging to a group. Biographies accentuate the individual; prosopographies make individuals members.¹³

Therefore, a prosopographical approach is ideal for what is essentially an institutional history of a library and its founding members. The scarcity of

¹⁰ Verboven et al., "Art of Prosopography," 36.

¹¹ Karl Ferdinand Werner, "L'apport de la prosopographie à l'histoire sociale des élites," in K.S.B. Keats-Rohan ed., *Family Trees and the Roots of Politics: The Prosopography of Britain and France from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1997), cited in Modern History Research Unit, University of Oxford, "Prosopography: Definition," Modern History Research Unit, University of Oxford, "Prosopography Research," accessed 3 December 2016, <http://prosopography.modhist.ox.ac.uk/prosopdefinition.htm>.

¹² Verboven et al., "Art of Prosopography," 37.

¹³ Chase F. Robinson, *Islamic Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 66, quoted from Keats-Rohan, "Biography, Identity and Names," 141, n. 10.

biographical data on the 310 members—only forty-nine appear in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*—necessitates a prosopographical approach to gain further insight into the institution as part of the associational world in the eighteenth century and, therefore, to contribute to Irish historiography.

Regarding the founding members of the Dublin Library, the intention of employing a prosopographical approach is to examine primarily the occupations and social backgrounds of the members, as well as their affiliations to other institutions and possible connections to other members. As this is just one part of the dissertation—and not a full-length prosopographical investigation—limitations had to be imposed. Consequently, there is very little genealogical analysis. A preliminary attempt, a time-consuming and often frustratingly labyrinthine affair, did not yield sufficiently relevant results to justify an exhaustive exercise. However, some family connections from the secondary and tertiary sources have been useful, highlighting, of course, the benefit of genealogical research to the prosopographical method.

This section introduced the most appropriate methodological approaches for addressing the challenges of gaining further insight into an eighteenth-century Dublin subscription library and its founding members. The following will detail the main primary and tertiary sources used before examining the implementation of the research methods for this study.

Primary and Tertiary Sources

One of the reasons why the Dublin Library Society has been ignored over the years in the field of Irish library history is due to the lack of extant, primary institutional sources. In its 1822 manuscript detailing the library's laws and regulations, there are references to a proposal book (for prospective acquisitions), an accounts ledger, and twenty-four volumes of library journals. (These, presumably, would have been the manuscripts to which Gilbert referred.) None of these have resurfaced since the library's demise in 1881. Another setback, this time for all researchers of Irish history, was the destruction by fire of the Irish Public Record Office, housed in the Four Courts building in Dublin, during the Irish Civil War in 1922: 'seven centuries in the making, the central archives of English governance in Ireland were lost in a

couple of hours'.¹⁴ It is unclear, however, if anything of direct relevance to the Dublin Library would have been held there but certainly information on founding members of the Dublin Library would have. Alternatively, this study has relied on the following primary and tertiary sources to overcome the loss of such important public and institutional records.

As this is an examination of the early years of the Dublin Library, three extant literary productions of the library are of relevance. The manuscript, *Laws and Regulations of the Dublin Library Society* was started in 1822 but includes annotated cross-references from the library's (lost) journals to rules dating back to May 1791, as well as annotations and addenda up to 15 June 1861.¹⁵ Unfortunately, there is no reference to any member of the library, nor is there any indication of how the library was formed. However, its importance lies in the gradual shaping of the laws and the democratic structure to which the library adhered, in keeping with similar subscription libraries elsewhere in Ireland and Britain.¹⁶ The other two works are the printed catalogues of the Dublin Library Society in 1792 and 1806.¹⁷ Importantly, the 1792 catalogue includes a full list of the first 310 members. This was the starting point for the prosopographical analysis. Additionally, this catalogue contains a list of the first committee and officers of the Dublin Library Society, the main rules and regulations, a list of donors and their donations, and the catalogue itself, in alphabetical order by title—not subject. These were all vital in understanding more about the beginnings of Dublin's first library society. The 1806 catalogue only contains the titles of the volumes in the library, in subject order and volume size within. The two catalogues were compared to ascertain the classification of titles based on subject categories and to determine whether

¹⁴ DLS, *Laws*, 1822, 40; Dickson, *Dublin*, xi. Important demographic, civil and ecclesiastical records were kept there: Caitriona Crowe, "Ruin of Public Record Office Marked Loss of Great Archive," *Irish Times*, 30 June 2012, accessed 3 December 2016, <https://www.irishtimes.com/opinion/ruin-of-public-record-office-marked-loss-of-great-archive-1.1069843>.

¹⁵ DLS, *Laws*, 1822. There is also another manuscript from 1863 at the National Library of Ireland. After its perusal, it was found to be of no use for this dissertation as it focuses on largely the last decade of the eighteenth century: Dublin Library Society, *Laws and Regulations of the Dublin Library Society, Revised* (Dublin, 1863).

¹⁶ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 83.

¹⁷ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792; DLS, *Catalogue*, 1806. Other extant catalogues are from 1810, 1823 (lending library), and 1857: Dublin Library Society, *Catalogue of the Books Belonging to the Dublin Library Society* (Dublin: Printed by Thomas Burnside, 1810); Dublin Library Society, *Catalogue of the Books in the Lending Departments of the Dublin Library Society. To the 1st of August, 1823* (Dublin: Printed by N. Kelly, 1823); Dublin Library Society, *Catalogue of the Library of the Dublin Library Society and Hibernian Athenaeum* (Dublin: Printed by J.M. O'Toole, 1857).

there was a subject emphasis in the library's acquisitions in its first fifteen years of existence. Additionally, after determining the totals, the library's holdings grew from 319 volumes in 1792 to 1,842 titles by 1806. Therefore, an examination of them can reveal more of the direction in which the library intended to strengthen its collections.

In the absence of further institutional documentation, extant contemporary newspapers have been vital for a reconstruction of the establishment of the Dublin Library and for assessing public reaction to it. The library itself used newspapers to promote further membership, inform the public of its progress, and announce upcoming general meetings for its members. Despite this, newspaper research on this library has been largely ignored. In the only recent publication specifically about the library, Howell's 1985 *History of the Dublin Library Society, 1791-1881*, newspaper references are from 1881 and 1882—addressing the closure and dispersal of the library. As mentioned, the decision to examine several newspapers in the years leading up to, and after, the establishment of the Dublin Library, has resulted in substantial historical evidence supporting the claim that this is an under-researched topic and newspapers an under-used resource. Similarly, Martyn Powell observed a previous neglect for this primary source, noting, 'the most surprising absentee from Irish work on consumption is newspapers'. Inaccuracies and omissions in finding aids have also played a part. The intrepid library historian Paul Kaufman had to reconcile with identifying only three circulating libraries after following an index of eighteenth-century Dublin newspapers at the National Library of Ireland that failed to include numerous others. A decade later, Richard Cole ignored the list, carried out his own examination of the papers, and discovered considerably more evidence of library activity than Kaufman.¹⁸

Newspapers have been used as important primary sources for publications on book history, especially regarding book sales and auctions. The eighteenth century saw an explosion of newspaper titles. This was a lucrative business, especially for the coffee house proprietor who printed his newspaper at his

¹⁸ Howell, *Dublin Library Society*, 30 & 32; Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 2; Kaufman, "Community Libraries of Ireland and Wales," 173; Cole, "Community Lending Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 111-112.

premises where he would also host book auctions. Importantly, several Dublin papers carried pages of advertisements for bookshops and other commercial libraries. The burgeoning print trade and public demand for print were subjects of letters to the editor and news-pieces themselves. With the growth of local news—as opposed to imported news from London and abroad—newspapers reported on the latest social and cultural additions to a city that would populate with parliamentarians during session and country gentlemen during the winter months.¹⁹

The *Freeman's Journal* (1763) began as 'the first patriotick channel of popular intelligence', a proponent of the Whig-Volunteer movement that sought greater legislative independence for Ireland. However, by 1782, the paper was taken over by Francis Higgins who turned it into a propaganda organ of the authorities at Dublin Castle and effectively did away with its status as a popular, patriotic newspaper. The three newspapers that contained the greatest amount of historical evidence in relation to the Dublin Library—and, for that matter, booksellers and commercial libraries—are the *Dublin Chronicle*, the *Dublin Evening Post*, and the *Hibernian Journal*. All three were regarded as non-sectarian, patriotic (i.e. in support of reformers in parliament) newspapers with a sizable amount of space devoted to the promotion of literature. Indeed, these papers, along with several others, were part of a literary and political culture that promoted—and occasionally criticised—the activities of clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Dublin.²⁰

Although the digitisation of newspapers has made access much easier, unfortunately, this has not yet applied to eighteenth-century Irish newspapers. For those that have been digitised and proprietary access is possible, optical character recognition (OCR) has allowed the researcher to focus on chosen keyword searches, thereby avoiding having to skim through pages upon pages

¹⁹ Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*; Kennedy, "'Book mad': The Sale of Books by Auction in Eighteenth-Century Dublin," 48; Abbas, "'A Fund of entertaining and useful Information'," 42-46; McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 111; Dickson, *Dublin*, 154.

²⁰ James Kelly, "Political Publishing, 1700-1800," in *OHIB 3*, 227-229, citing *Freeman's Journal*, 13 August 1773; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 18; Douglas Simes, "Ireland, 1760-1820s," in Hannah Barker and Simon Burrows, eds., *Press, Politics and the Public Sphere in Europe and North America, 1760-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 121; E. Magennis, "Lucas and Patriotism in Mid-Eighteenth Century Ireland," *Irish Journal of Medical Science* 184 (2015), 549; Dickson, *Dublin*, 205; Gillen, "Opposition Political Clubs and Societies," 310.

of minute text. However, the technology is not as reliable with old newspapers, with text often difficult to recognise either from fading or too much ink. Although the *Freeman's Journal* has been digitised in its entirety, it contains very little in the way of historical data on the Dublin Library.²¹ Most of the newspapers, in which there is an abundance of relevant historical evidence, have yet to be digitised and have been examined using the conventional medium of microfilm. Time-consuming and exhausting, their availability in this format is still far more convenient and less-cumbersome than the hardcopy originals.²²

While newspapers were integral to the examination of the origins of the Dublin Library, prosopographical research on its 310 founding members required several primary and tertiary sources. Yearly almanacs and directories were important and reliable reference works, providing names, addresses, and occupations of eighteenth-century Dubliners. *The Treble Almanack*, consisting of the *Gentlemen and Citizens' Almanack*, *English Registry*, and *Wilson's Dublin Directory*, was a contemporary 'quick-information' source, much like the almanacs and telephone books of the twentieth century. For David Dickson, the appearance of Peter Wilson's *Dublin Directory* in 1751, and annually thereafter, 'was a sign of the complexity and scale that Dublin's business world had reached, for apart from London, no other city in the British world saw this kind of regular publication for some decades'.²³ As well as identifying names of Dublin Library founding members in sections for merchants, traders, lawyers, and physicians (to name a few), the directories in the 1790s also provided sections with lists of members belonging to various clubs and societies.

Other sources used in identifying founding Dublin Library members were the *Alumni Dublinenses (AD)* and the *King's Inns Admissions Papers (KIAP)*; these are lists of students of Trinity College Dublin and/or members of the legal body for law students, King's Inns, respectively.²⁴ Similarly, the *Dictionary of Irish*

²¹ The conspicuous absence of news on the Dublin Library may well reveal something about the newspaper as well. For a discussion of newspapers, see p. 69-71.

²² The National Library of Ireland holds the bulk of the newspapers examined in this dissertation.

²³ Dickson, *Dublin*, 177.

²⁴ *AD*; *KIAP*.

Architects database lists architects, builders, and other tradesmen related to the construction of houses and buildings across Ireland.²⁵ An ongoing, online, tertiary-source project of the Royal Dublin Society aims to provide brief biographies of past members of the society, founded in 1731. Several members of the Dublin Library appear in the database and their biographies, where available, list the members' proposers for election into the society.²⁶ Unfortunately, the Royal Irish Academy's Membership Certificates project, where past members' documents are available online, starts from 1838; but their minute book from the Academy's early years is extant.²⁷ However, Dublin directories for the years 1791 and 1792 contain sections on the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy, with lists of their members.

Mary Pollard's *Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550-1800* is an exhaustive reference, relevant for circulating library activity and for gathering information on the twenty-one members of the print trade who were Dublin Library founding members. Prosopographies of members of two Irish political societies, the Catholic Committee and the Dublin Society of United Irishmen have also been useful for revealing further associational activity. Similarly, the Rebellion Papers, held in the National Archives of Ireland, include documents in relation to the surveillance by Dublin Castle of agitators leading up to and after the 1798 Rebellion. These include letters from informers and informants to Dublin Castle that mention Dublin Library members.²⁸

Finally, the long-awaited project of a *Dictionary of Irish Biography (DIB)* has been a benefit to researchers of Irish history who had previously relied on the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB)*—and before that, the *Dictionary of National Biography (DNB)* for Irish content. John Bruce Howell, in 1985, had to rely on the latter for references to the first Dublin Library

²⁵ Irish Architectural Archive, *Dictionary of Irish Architects, 1720-1940*, accessed 30 November 2016, <http://www.dia.ie>.

²⁶ RDS.

²⁷ Royal Irish Academy, *RIA Minute Book*, vol. 1. Information gathered during visits to the Royal Irish Academy in June 2016.

²⁸ Pollard, *Dictionary*; C.J. Woods, "The Personnel of the Catholic Convention, 1792-3," *Archivium Hibernicum* 57 (2003): 26-76; R.B. McDowell, "Personnel of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, 1791-4," *Irish Historical Studies* 2, no. 5 (March 1940): 12-53; Rebellion Papers, RP/620, National Archives of Ireland, Dublin; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*; McDowell, "Proceedings of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen," *Analecta Hibernica* 17 (1949): 1, 3-5, 7-143.

committee of twenty-one, yielding him only eight entries. Today, from the two committees of 1791 and 1792, the *ODNB* has entries for thirteen Dublin Library committeemen while the *DIB* is a little more helpful (for this researcher) with sixteen from a total of thirty-eight. The Dublin Library is not mentioned in any of the entries in either dictionary—unsurprisingly, since mention of library membership was surely not as important to the conventional biographer. But the former numbers are significant as they appear to indicate that—especially in the case of the *DIB*—many of the biographies of these committee members have been under-researched.²⁹

Historical Research Process

This section will describe the research process executed for this dissertation. Before examining in detail the two main research approaches involved here, a comparison of library catalogues has facilitated further understanding of the subject areas where the Dublin Library Society had endeavoured to strengthen. In the absence of institutional records, especially the proposal book in which members were encouraged to enter their desired acquisitions, two contemporary printed catalogues, published in 1792 and 1806, remain the only extant primary sources with which to work. The 1792 catalogue has two sections relevant to this research process: a list of donors and the titles they gifted to the library; and the library catalogue itself. The latter is numbered 1-319, but is in alphabetical order by author, not by subject, with an abbreviated title and size, as well as location and year of publication for each record. Catalogue entries of donated titles are conveniently marked with an asterisk; therefore, 195 donations from 319 titles shows that there were 124 purchases in the library's first year.³⁰

However, any further analysis of the library's early holdings required a classification system to be imposed on this catalogue. Helpfully, the 1806 catalogue was divided into sixteen subject categories. These had sub-sections based on size and abbreviated author-title entries (not in alphabetical order)

²⁹ Howell, *Dublin Library Society*, 3-4; *DIB*; *ODNB*.

³⁰ If they were not asterisked, the number of donations could have been determined from the separate list of donations.

as well as locations and years of publication within.³¹ Subject categories were then allocated to all 319 titles from the 1792 catalogue using the 1806 catalogue subjects. Numbers of titles were then tallied for each subject area. Figures from the 195 donations separated by subject show which categories the donors strengthened with their gifts, thereby setting the foundation for a potential purchase strategy. The purchases classified into subjects revealed which areas of study the library intended to strengthen. Therefore, the combined figures by subject allow for a better understanding of the motives of acquisition for the library's members, in the absence of archival records from the institution.

The shortcoming of the 1806 catalogue is that it is not enumerated. Once the figure of 1,148 book titles was tallied, a comparison could be made between the holdings in the first catalogue and those in the second. Statistical data from this analysis of the subject categories could also be synthesised and their significance explored. Altogether, the study of these catalogues, as will be shown, has resulted in conclusions supporting the contention that this subscription library acted as a public reference library in the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

Here, attention focuses on the historical research process, using the aforementioned primary and tertiary sources, supported by relevant secondary sources. A robust and thorough examination of the secondary sources was carried out at the beginning of the research project. Originally, the intent was to work on a broader investigation of early public libraries in Dublin. Previous aims and objectives reflected this. However, the perusal of those primary sources—in other words, entry points—from the secondary works on the Dublin Library revealed an absence of newspaper references to this subscription library throughout the 1790s.³² The line of thinking went, if Cole were to have uncovered fifteen more circulating libraries than Kaufman by simply skimming the newspapers for library activity, then there must be in those newspapers, at the very least, a notice of a newly established public subscription library in

³¹ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1806.

³² Keith Manley discusses the battles between the Dublin Library Society and the newspaper and periodical press from 1813 and later: Manley, "Jeremy Bentham has Been Banned," 179-180.

Dublin. All previous sources, including the nineteenth-century histories of Dublin (the earliest being 1811), acknowledged that the Dublin Library had been established in May 1791.

An extensive search through late-eighteenth-century Dublin newspapers was conducted while completing an article based on a master's thesis.³³ This resulted in quite substantial findings in relation to the initial plans of establishing the Dublin Library Society. Although only a difference of a month, an issue of the *Dublin Chronicle* on 12 April 1791 reported that plans were already afoot to create the—already named—Dublin Library Society. Continued research resulted in the discovery of an earlier date of its genesis.³⁴ Furthermore, the tone of the official advertisements, as well as the commentary and opinions emanating from the newspapers and their readers, suggested that patriotic, enlightened motives and civic pride were at play in the formation of this library service. Therefore, together with a list of the 310 founding subscribers, it was then concluded that enough historical evidence existed to focus on an examination of the early years of the Dublin Library and its members within the social and cultural milieu of eighteenth-century Dublin.

Clearly, as Martyn Powell and Richard Cole have suggested, contemporary newspapers were an untapped resource for evidence when verifying historical records, identifying and assessing societal issues, and importantly, gauging public opinion. Caveats applied, however. In his work on consumption, Powell warned that the 'gnashing of teeth by patriotic editors and correspondents did not always reflect broader consumer attitudes'. Conversely, Cole has shown that newspaper editors, and the booksellers who gave them lucrative advertising revenue, were successful in shaping public opinion through the promotion of the Irish print (and reprint) trade with their 'Buy Irish' campaigns.³⁵

It is this obsession with patriotism that reverberates throughout newspaper reportage and advertisements in the eighteenth-century Dublin press aimed at

³³ Abbas, "A Fund of entertaining and useful Information," 41-61.

³⁴ See p. 139-141.

³⁵ Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 2; Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, 14 & 22-39.

the reading public. These papers were highly politicised, especially towards the end of the eighteenth century when several newspapers were in the pay of the governing authorities at Dublin Castle.³⁶ Opposition newspapers, such as the *Dublin Chronicle*, *Dublin Evening Post*, and the *Hibernian Journal* considered themselves patriotic promoters of greater legislative independence from Britain, a fairer balance of trade, and a relaxation of the penal laws on Dissenters and Catholics. These expressions of democratic values and toleration counteracted the government-subsidised conservative newspapers, such as the *Freeman's Journal* and *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* who considered a patriot to be loyal to the government. They denounced the opposition and their newspapers as seditious and unruly. Historical research methods of triangulation and external and internal source criticism were applied to investigate the motivations of certain newspapers, not for an analysis of interpretations of political history, but to determine why the opposition, 'patriot' papers included notices and news on the Dublin Library, while the conservative papers did not. Therefore, the validity and authenticity of reportage on the Dublin Library is not in question, other than a reminder of the typical, eighteenth-century, exaggerated expressions of patriotic valour that graced the pages of opposition papers.³⁷

After all, this is a relatively uncontroversial subject, compared with international affairs and domestic unrest. On the other side, the conspicuous absence of attention paid to the Dublin Library from the conservative press could be regarded almost as noteworthy and indicative of their opinions than if there were reports of criticism. This is not to say that these government-sponsored newspapers did not encourage cultural innovation locally. The *Freeman's Journal's* editorial in praise of public libraries in Paris concluded that the same should be established in Dublin for the benefit of the people. Such is

³⁶ This was vice versa as well. In his book, Padhraig Higgins highlights the politicisation of the Irish public: 'The density of Irish political culture was also closely related to the distribution and consumption of print. As with any study of Irish political culture in the eighteenth century, my analysis relies extensively on contemporary newspapers. The culture of print was an inclusive instrument of politicisation': Padhraig Higgins, *A Nation of Politicians: Gender, Patriotism, and Political Culture in Late Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010), 9. Also, see R.B. MacDowell, "Irish Newspapers in the Eighteenth Century," *The Crane Bag* 8, no. 2 (1984): 40-43.

³⁷ For an analysis of validity and reliability of newspapers as legitimate primary sources, see Roberto Franzosi, "The Press as a Source of Socio-Historical Data: Issues in the Methodology of Data Collection from Newspapers," *Historical Methods* 20, no. 1 (Winter 1987): 5-7.

an example of attempts made by these eighteenth-century newspapers on behalf of the people, for the public good.³⁸

On those eighteenth-century news commentaries and advertisements that effusively praised the efforts of booksellers and libraries as patriotic promoters of the Irish nation, their exaggerations must not be ignored entirely. For, this was a period of increased public participation in promoting Ireland culturally and economically. Progressive, Enlightenment thought abroad was rubbing off on the periphery, and it is noteworthy that the founders of the Dublin Library said as much in their introduction to the 1792 catalogue, when they recommended their institution 'to every patriotic and enlightened mind'.³⁹

This statement reflects the library's mission of appealing to like-minds. From a methodological perspective, it is also exemplary for stressing that such eighteenth-century quotations in their original form are preferred to paraphrasing in order to preserve and highlight the contemporary emotions of the commentators and advertisers. It is also important to preserve this unaltered style of eighteenth-century passionate prose, with its boldness of lofty expectations and hopes that the Dublin Library will patriotically serve the Irish people in their learning and improvement towards a more prosperous Irish nation, distinct from the British.⁴⁰ It should also be noted here that the newspaper proprietors themselves saw their efforts, and those who ran other periodical publications, as vital in reaching out to an expanding reading public:

Perhaps nothing has more essentially contributed to the general improvement of this country than those periodical publications which are communicated so extensively amongst all ranks of people; and contain such subjects of useful information as tend to enlarge the ideas and rectify the opinions of men.⁴¹

While the exaggeration is evident, producers of newspapers and other periodicals were undeniably instrumental in the mass dissemination of

³⁸ *Freeman's Journal*, 3 May 1786.

³⁹ Gillen, "Varieties of Enlightenment"; DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, iv.

⁴⁰ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 10.

⁴¹ *Dublin Chronicle*, 28 January 1792.

information products during a reading revolution that occurred in eighteenth-century Ireland.⁴²

In addition to the motives of newspapers and their editors in expressing and shaping public opinion, a measured approach to understanding the complexities of Irish political history—as far as it relates to the social and cultural history of Dublin—requires attention to the general historiography of Irish modern history. This is discussed in Chapter 4, but it is important to note here that this is included for contextual purposes only and not as an analysis of arguments and approaches among historians.⁴³

Prosopographical Research Process

Throughout the dissertation, there has been a heavy reliance on identifying the founding members of the Dublin Library and assessing their involvement within the cultural and social milieu of eighteenth-century Dublin. A list of founding subscribers in the 1792 catalogue was the starting point to conduct a prosopographical analysis. The catalogue was available as early as 16 March 1792, ten days before the election of the second committee and officers for that year. This explains why the first committee (1791)—not the second—is listed near the front of the 1792 catalogue.⁴⁴ As mentioned, the primary purpose for this approach was to discover the occupational and social backgrounds of the members, their affiliation with other associational bodies, and any relationships or connections—in addition to library membership—that could lead to a better understanding of the overall composition.

Initially, the intention was to focus solely on the first two library committees—a total of thirty-eight committeemen and officers. It was anticipated that a prosopography of these two early committees might help explain why these men were selected, and, indeed, who they were. The first source used was the *Dictionary of Irish Biography (DIB)*, in which sixteen of the thirty-eight had entries. The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB)*—previously the

⁴² McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 63.

⁴³ For recent comments on Irish historiography, particularly for interpretations of the 1798 Irish Rebellion, see *ibid.*, 413.

⁴⁴ *Dublin Chronicle*, 17 March 1792; *DLS, Catalogue*, 1792, x.

Dictionary of National Biography—had entries for thirteen of the same sixteen members. None of the entries mentioned the Dublin Library Society. Adequate biographies—some full-length, some journal essays—have been written about those sixteen Dublin Library committeemen and officers in the *DIB*.⁴⁵ However, the remaining twenty-two would prove much more challenging. Therefore, of the thirty-eight, at this point, it was clear that a prosopographical analysis of these men would first require a system involving the perusal of numerous primary and tertiary sources to extract the relevant data, and the criteria for what to extract needed to be devised beforehand.

First, the thirty-eight names from the two committees were listed in alphabetical order in an Excel spreadsheet. The names were recorded in precisely the same manner as the 1791 list and the library's notice for the 1792 committee was included in at least three Dublin newspapers. For example, beside **Arthur Browne**'s name were letters indicating some of his credentials: 'Arthur Browne, L.L.D., S.F.T.C.D., M.R.I.A.'. Immediately, he is recognised as Doctor of Law, Senior Fellow of Trinity College Dublin, and Member of the Royal Irish Academy. In the case of **Theobald McKenna** (M.D., M.R.I.A.), he is identified as a physician and a member of the Royal Irish Academy.⁴⁶ These two are examples of simple, straightforward identification of two main historical questions posed by this prosopography: occupation and associational activity. There were strong connections between the committeemen of the Dublin Library and the Royal Irish Academy, and the latter's reputation as a respectable intellectual body is evident by the inclusion of 'M.R.I.A.' next to those who were affiliated with it.

In most cases, however, there was no occupational indication. **Joseph Cooper Walker** had 'Esq., M.R.I.A.' next to his name, indicating that he was a member of the Royal Irish Academy but with no discernible occupational title. It was clear that he was not a physician, TCD fellow, or, for that matter, a Member of Parliament (M.P.). In this case, his *DIB* entry describes him as a clerk in the

⁴⁵ From the thirty-eight, only John Archer, bookseller to the Dublin Library Society, has been the subject a biographical essay despite having no dedicated entry in the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*; see Kennedy, "The Domestic and International Trade of an Eighteenth-Century Dublin Bookseller," 94-105.

⁴⁶ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, x.

Court of Exchequer at the Treasury Office in Dublin Castle. This is matched with the same name and occupation in a Dublin directory for the year 1792.⁴⁷ That he was designated with an honorific of 'Esq.' indicates his respectability in the community. Indeed, his Royal Irish Academy membership suggests that there was more to the man than simply being a civil servant. Further research revealed that he was a distinguished antiquarian, aesthete, and author. For the twenty-two of the thirty-eight without *DIB* entries, the Dublin directories for 1792 were examined for matching names. With separate listings for physicians, lawyers, merchants and traders, this primary source was useful for identifying these committeemen in their respective occupational categories. For example, '**James Bradish**, Esq.' appears as a Dublin Library Society Committee member for 1792. The inclusion of 'Esquire' usually connotes either a landed gentleman or one of the respectable professions (other than M.D., M.P., F.T.C.D., etc.).⁴⁸ In Bradish's case, he appears in a list of attorneys in a 1792 Dublin directory: 'Bradish (James), K.C.E. [King's Bench, Common-Pleas, Exchequer], Solicitor-in-Chancery, Aungier-street'.⁴⁹ In this same list of attorneys are colleagues **George Barnes**, **Colley Grattan**, and **John Fullerton**—all fellow Dublin Library Committee members. Already, a pattern has emerged of these attorneys—all Solicitors in Chancery, save Barnes—participating in the Dublin Library Society through their subscription and subsequent election to its committee, and, by extension, associational activity in eighteenth-century Dublin.

However, questions remained unanswered as to their link to the Dublin Library. At this point, the historical data extracted from the Dublin directories were inserted into separate columns in the prosopography spreadsheet with the names of the two Dublin Library committees. Each column represented a detail relating to each member that, when combined, could provide a short biographical sketch with specific prosopographical characteristics that could add to further knowledge of the composition of the library's committeemen. Birthdates and death dates were recorded, wherever possible. To limit the number of occupational categories, a column was allocated for broad

⁴⁷ *DIB*; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 59.

⁴⁸ An explanation of 'Esq.' in the context of eighteenth-century Dublin is discussed on p. 187.

⁴⁹ *WDD* 1792, 119.

categories that included any related occupations. For instance, 'Legal' was used as an occupational category for barristers and attorneys; the 'Medical' category consisted of physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries. Separate columns were used for marking which members were involved in clubs and societies such as the Dublin Society, the Royal Irish Academy, the Catholic Committee, the United Irishmen, and the charitable Abecedarian Society, to name a few. For context, addresses were recorded, as were any other information linking one committeeman with another. For example, **Samuel Walker** and Joseph Cooper Walker were brothers and both served on the inaugural library committee in 1791.⁵⁰ Also, a biographical entry in the *DIB* revealed that J.C. Walker, **Edward Ledwich**, and the **Earl of Charlemont** (first president of the Dublin Library) were all active in the Royal Irish Academy and as part of a 'literary circle' of friends.⁵¹ All these types of historical and biographical facts were inserted into the relevant spreadsheet columns and research was conducted to determine primarily the composition of the committees by the broad occupational categories of Academic, Clerical, Legal, Medical, Mercantile, Gentlemen, and others. Also, statistics were used to show how many were members of particular societies. This was supported by such relevant research—where possible—on who proposed whom into those societies that required proposers for admission by ballot. For instance, a physician, **William Drennan** proposed a brewer, **John Sweetman** for membership into the Dublin Society of United Irishmen in November 1792.⁵² Drennan was President of the United Irishmen at the time, and both he and Sweetman served together on the Dublin Library Committee for the same year.

This is known because of extant proceedings and lists of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, a political organisation that advocated greater legislative, and later, republican independence from Britain. Formed six months after the establishment of the Dublin Library, an informer to Dublin Castle documented occurrences of the meetings and, importantly, the proposers and candidates for admission to the political club. The historian R.B. McDowell compiled a

⁵⁰ Nevin, "Joseph Cooper Walker, 1761-1810," 152-153.

⁵¹ Rosemary Richey, "Walker, Joseph Cooper," in James McGuire and James Quinn, eds., *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, 9:702-703.

⁵² McDowell, "Proceedings," 40.

prosopography of these members from 1791 to 1794. Through this, and from other research, five Dublin Library committeemen were members of the Dublin United Irishmen, with another two affiliated at some point.⁵³ However, upon the discovery that an additional twenty-seven founding members of the Dublin Library were also identified as members of the Dublin United Irishmen (bringing the confirmed total to 32)—second only to the Royal Irish Academy (35), in terms of other societies—the idea of enlarging the prosopographical analysis to include all founding members from the 1792 Dublin Library Society list was thought to carry greater overall significance for understanding the composition of the library’s entire membership. Although a formidable challenge, it has resulted in a complete prosopographical analysis of occupational breakdown and associational activity. McDowell noted the importance of such an undertaking in his rationale for the United Irishmen list:

About the other political clubs of this period we can discover only a few fragmentary facts. But the Dublin Society of United Irishmen contained several men with literary leanings, and what is even more important, met in the capital, at a time when the government, owing to events abroad, was particularly anxious to know what was going on in left-wing circles.⁵⁴

In his list of 425 United Irish members, McDowell identified their occupations, addresses, dates of admission, and other relevant information. Significantly, he highlighted the large number of members from the cloth trade, and a sizable number of professionals (including fifty-six lawyers) who joined the society. Through the identification of occupations and backgrounds, McDowell could conclude that the composition was primarily middle-class and that a significant portion were advocates promoting Irish national interests, including fairer terms of trade with Britain and beyond.⁵⁵ Caution was exercised in the matching of names from these documents with the Dublin Library Society list. For example, Matthew Young, a woollen-draper in Francis Street is listed as a United Irishman and therefore not the same **Rev. Matthew Young** from

⁵³ McDowell, “Personnel,” 12-53. Members were: William Drennan, Lewis Lyons, Theobald McKenna, William James MacNeven, and John Sweetman. Richard Kirwan was said to have joined in 1795 and Joseph Pollock reportedly attended at least one meeting but did not join. For Dublin Library members who were Dublin United Irishmen, see p. 230-245.

⁵⁴ McDowell, “Personnel,” 12.

⁵⁵ McDowell, “Personnel,” 15-17. There were also fourteen members from the print trade in this list: *ibid.*, 15. When isolating ‘intellectuals’ within the society, McDowell combined ‘the legal and medical elements’ with the booksellers and ‘a few miscellaneous individuals’ to reach the number of ninety-nine: *ibid.*, 16.

Trinity College Dublin.⁵⁶ However, physicians Henry Kennedy and Walter Wade in the United Irishmen list were likely the same **Henry Kennedy**, M.D. and **Walter Wade**, M.D. that appear in the Dublin Library list, especially since they both appear as members of the College of Physicians in the Dublin directory for 1792.⁵⁷

Recently, C.J. Woods compiled a prosopography of delegates to the Catholic Convention, a meeting of Irish Catholic political leaders who represented the Catholic Committee, the political group who pressed for relaxation and removal of penal laws enforced on Catholics and Dissenters by the minority Anglican ruling class. The surviving "Minute Book of the Catholic Committee, 1773-92" provides evidence of participation in this society by future Dublin Library members. Woods also noted that the composition of this society was drawn largely from middle class Dubliners but stressed that the term 'merchant' could loosely refer to small businessmen or owners of large-scale business interests.⁵⁸ All these lists were used to extract data on Dublin Library founding members who were members of such political societies as the United Irishmen and the Catholic Committee. In the case of 'Mr' **Lewis Lyons**, his name is included in a list of members of the charitable Abecedarian Society, for aid of distressed schoolteachers, but he does not appear, nor is his occupation evident, in the Dublin directories for 1791 or 1792. However, both prosopographies identified him as a schoolmaster in Arran Quay, Dublin.⁵⁹ Therefore, as Woods has noted, prosopographies of one institution could stimulate and enhance further research by providing information on lesser-known individuals hidden or absent in the conventional sources.⁶⁰ Accordingly, these prosopographies have acted as templates for those that appear in the appendices below.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 53; *DLS Catalogue*, 1792, x.

⁵⁷ McDowell, "Personnel," 38 & 51; *DLS, Catalogue*, 1792, xviii & xxiii; *WDD* 1792, 132.

⁵⁸ Woods, "Catholic Convention"; Edwards, "Catholic Committee"; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 28-30; Smyth, *Men of No Property*, 141.

⁵⁹ McDowell, "Personnel," 39; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 57. Dublin Library Society founding members, Sisson Putland Darling, John McCrea, and Samuel Whyte, are all identified as schoolmasters in a section titled 'Merchants & Traders' in *WDD* 1792, 67, 34, 103 (respectively).

⁶⁰ McDowell's research in 1940 of newspapers in the 1780s resulted in his discovery of an advertisement by Lyons of the opening of his school in 1787: McDowell, "Personnel," 39, citing *Dublin Evening Post*, 6 September 1787. For Lyons, McDowell (repeated by Woods) makes the only reference to the Dublin Library Society, noting that he was: 'Member of committee of Dublin Literary Society': *ibid.*, 39; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 57.

Other lists, such as the Trinity College Dublin *Alumni Dublinenses* and the *King's Inns Admission Papers*, were used to corroborate any information already obtained from the directories and elsewhere, or, for that matter, when individuals could not be identified from the directories. They also provided further useful information such as dates of birth and death, as well as years of study. These were also invaluable to prove that the students in these lists were indeed the same persons that appeared on the Dublin Library list. For instance, George Barnes is a common name. He appears as 'George Barnes, Esq.' in the 1792 Dublin Library members list and is recorded as an attorney in a Dublin directory of the same year. The honorific 'Esq.' given by the Dublin Library fits the designated, respectable legal profession. Added confirmation that this was the same George Barnes came from two other sources. First is an entry in the *King's Inns Admission Papers* that, in addition to revealing that he was the son of a barrister, gives his year of birth (1767), entry to the English inns in 1791, and his admission to the bar in 1795. The second source is from inscriptions in a book that Barnes donated to the Dublin Library Society in June 1791: 'A present to the Dublin Library from Mr. George June 14th 1791'; and 'Ex libris George Barnes 1767'. Therefore, it can be asserted that George Barnes, Esq. was initially an attorney at the time of the publication of the 1792 directory and that his birth year in the King's Inns records matches that of the inscription in his book donation to the subscription library of which he was a founding committee member. Also, from the title page of his *Rights of the Imperial Crown of Ireland Asserted and Maintained* (1799), he is noted as a barrister.⁶¹

Any explanation of the use of 'Esq.' next to the name of a Dublin Library founding member could be aided by equal attention paid to the use of 'Mr' before the name. McDowell notes that 'Esq.' was used for the 'respectable members of the middle class'. However, this is somewhat problematic as by the end of the eighteenth century, well-respected and prosperous businessmen like booksellers **John Archer** and **Richard Edward Mercier** could well have

⁶¹ *KIAP*, 20. The book was Louis de Bougainville's *Voyage to Falkland's Islands...*: Rulon-Miller Books [Online Sales Catalogue Entry For] *The History of a Voyage to the Malouine (or Falkland) Islands, Made in 1763 and 1764 ... Translated from Dom Pernety's Historical Journal, Written in French. The Second Edition*, accessed 2 October 2017, <https://www.rulon.com/pages/books/26328/antoine-joseph-pernety/the-history-of-a-voyage-to-the-malouine-or-falkland-islands-made-in-1763-and-1764-in-order-to-form-a>. An entry for this donation from Barnes appears in *DLS, Catalogue*, 1792, xxv; Barnes, *Rights of the Imperial Crown of Ireland Asserted and Maintained*.

deserved that honorific, in its late-eighteenth-century usage. Archer was the first bookseller to the Dublin Library and Mercier was the elected secretary. It is possible that shopkeepers ('Mr') were separated from merchants ('Esq.') using these devices. Yet, anomalies occur, as while most merchants were designated with 'Esq.', **Bartholomew Maziere**, the owner of Bartholomew Maziere & Co., Merchants, was listed with 'Mr' rather than 'Esq.' in the Dublin Library list. Rare occupations also posed challenges. When attempting to establish the profession of 'Mr' **Thomas Harding**, M.R.I.A., he was finally located in the 'Merchants and Traders' section of a Dublin directory: 'Harding (Thomas) Mathematician, Trinity-place', explaining the puzzlement of his election to a premier academic society in Ireland without the social designation of 'Esq.' like most of his peers.⁶²

Faced with the challenge of homonyms in different primary and tertiary sources, without any further indication of definitively identifying the desired individual, the prosopographer can take context into account. However, the range of occupations of founding members of the Dublin Library makes it difficult to identify the correct one simply on context. For instance, there are three men named **William Allen** contemporary to the foundation of the Dublin Library Society. One is 'Inspector of Tobacco, Wine & Porter Merchants' and another is an attorney. The third is a print seller.⁶³ There would be nothing out of the ordinary in any three of these occupations, as there are several other civil servants, attorneys, and members of the print trade who subscribed to the Dublin Library. However, given that the 1792 Dublin Library list consistently regarded members of the print trade as 'Mr', and that civil servants and attorneys were listed as 'Esq.', it is more likely that William Allen, map and print-seller, was the most accurate of the three.

Reliance on a single printed list of the Dublin Library founding members has its obstacles in the form of typographical errors or imperfections. The names of the committeemen and officers are repeated in the contemporary newspapers but the entire list of founding members was not. Therefore, it can be time-

⁶² McDowell, "Personnel," 17; *WDD* 1792, 72; *DLS, Catalogue*, 1792, xix; *WDD* 1792, 51. For an explanation of 'Esq.' as it pertains to gentlemen, see p. 187.

⁶³ Verboven et al., "Art of Prosopography," 58; *WDD* 1792, 118, 13; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 6-7.

consuming when one searches for a name that is misspelled in the first place. For example, perhaps the result of an imperfection in the ink, **Edward Sohan** in the printed list appears to be 'Mr Edward Soban'. However, Soban is an unattested surname. As it turned out, in other primary sources, there was an apothecary named Edward Sohan who shared a business with a fellow Dublin Library founding member, Mr **William Lionel Jenkins**, called Jenkins & Sohan, Apothecaries (6 College Green). The *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine* listed Edward Sohan as a warden of a Masonic lodge in Palace Street, Dublin and he was also implicated in the harbouring of a fugitive United Irishman in 1798, based on files kept at Dublin Castle on subversive activity.⁶⁴

The most reliable tertiary source for identifying members of the Dublin print trade in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is Mary Pollard's *Dictionary of Members of the Dublin Book Trade, 1550-1800*. This was used for identifying all the Dublin Library founding members who toiled in the print trade as drawing masters, booksellers, newspaper proprietors, and circulating library keepers, to name a few. It was also invaluable for recording business partnerships. For instance, both **John Archer** and **William Jones** worked for **Luke White** during the latter's bookselling phase. Archer and Jones both acquired the celebrated library of Denis Daly in 1792 and commissioned James Vallance to sell the books at auction in rooms at Vallance's house, 6 Eustace Street—also the home of the Dublin Library Society.⁶⁵

Another example of a business partnership discovered among Dublin Library founding subscribers was that of **Randal McAllister** and **Arthur Grueber** who became partners after Grueber's apprenticeship with Luke White ended. Grueber and McAllister parted just months before they joined the Dublin Library, with McAllister later forming a joint publishing venture with another bookseller **James Moore**. Grueber, who later became Librarian of the Dublin Library Society (1807-1820), published **Edward Ledwich's** *Antiquities of*

⁶⁴ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, 22; Verboven et al., "Art of Prosopography," 61-62; *WDD* 1792, 56; Registry of Deeds Project Ireland. *Registry of Irish Deeds*, Memorial no. 334589, 30 March 1798, accessed 29 January 2017, <http://irishdeedsindex.net/index.html>; *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine*, April 1794, 294; "County of the City of Dublin. Examination of Edward Sohan of No. 156 Great Britain Street, in the County of the said City, Apothecary," Rebellion Papers, 620/37/162, National Archives of Ireland, Dublin.

⁶⁵ Pollard, *Dictionary*, 11-12.

Ireland at the end of 1789.⁶⁶ Pollard's work also incorporated relationships between bookseller/publisher and author, and these are included in this study where both (or all) parties were Dublin Library members.

John Archer also employed **Richard Edward Mercier** in his bookselling business before the latter started his own. This was around the time of the beginning of the Dublin Library Society and Archer was chosen as bookseller to the library and Mercier elected secretary. Mercier, a Huguenot, called his business Mercier & Co., with a silent partner, identified by Pollard as **John Dumoulin** (also Huguenot), but with no reference to his occupation.⁶⁷ Only Dumoulin's wife, 'Pollina' was listed as a boarding-school mistress in the Dublin directories.⁶⁸ The business connection between Mercier and Dumoulin (and the latter's occupation) can be explained through information provided in the *King's Inns Admissions Papers* on the Dumoulin's son, John Franklin: '3rd son of John, Dublin, wine merchant, and Pauline Mercier', sister of the bookseller.⁶⁹ Hence, the extraction of historical data from various sources, once analysed and synthesised, can allow one to explain the connection between two fellow Dublin Library members—in this case, Mercier and Dumoulin. The latter (discussed below) was also involved with his wife in the Abecedarian Society (for distressed schoolteachers) along with several other Dublin Library founding members. Therefore, one can draw the conclusion that many of these members were familiar with each other as they engaged in associational activity in eighteenth-century Dublin. In the case of Dumoulin, his motivation for joining the library likely had more to do with his interest in books and his support for his brother-in-law and business partner, than the fact that he was a wine merchant.

Unfortunately, connections such as these were not as frequent and clear as any researcher would desire. **James Bradish** was one of twenty-eight attorneys who joined the Dublin Library Society at the same time. He was elected to the 1792 committee along with fellow attorneys, Colley Grattan, and

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 261-262.

⁶⁷ The name of the bookselling business was changed to Richard Mercier & Co. in 1793: *ibid.*, 173.

⁶⁸ *WDD* 1792, 39.

⁶⁹ *KIAP*, 146.

John Fullerton—all Solicitors in Chancery.⁷⁰ Apart from that, not much else was gathered in terms of biographical data on Bradish. **Thomas Archdeakon, Jr.** was another committeeman about whom very little is known. Archdeakon was an artist and engraver, having worked on a publication by **Samuel Whyte**.⁷¹ It is curious then how these committeemen were not necessarily prominent in society yet both were elected to committees of the Dublin Library.

As part of the historical research into the Dublin Library, John Archer's General Book-Repository has been regarded as the forerunner to the idea of the subscription library (discussed below). Set up above his shop, this was a sort of literary meeting-place for locals. There is no information on the composition of this group but Archer did have a loyal group of subscribers to his numerous publications—often Dublin reprints of London imprints. In the eighteenth century, publication by subscription was a popular procedure, with the purchaser leaving a deposit in advance to cover the cost of publication. The buyer often would be familiar with the bookseller/publisher as a regular customer or friend. In some cases, subscription lists indicated familiarity between the author and the subscribers. In her study of the readership of books in eighteenth-century Ireland, Máire Kennedy found that these lists were 'usually not a random collection of names; the persons tended to be linked in one or more ways'. A study of three subscription lists around the time of the establishment of the Dublin Library Society reveals that Archdeakon Jr., Bradish, Dumoulin, Fullerton and Grattan were all active subscribers to Archer's publications.⁷² This will be discussed in detail below but it is possible that an analysis of subscription lists from this period could shed light on the participation of some Dublin Library members who were less-prominent in

⁷⁰ *Hibernian Journal*, 2 April 1792; WDD 1792, 119-123.

⁷¹ Samuel Whyte, *A Collection of Poems on Various Subjects, Including the Theatre: A Didactic Essay*, (Dublin: Printed for Robert Marchbank, 1792), viii.

⁷² Máire Kennedy, "The Readership of Books in Ireland, 1700-1800," *Revue LISA/LISA E-Journal* [Online] III, no. 1 (2005): 41. The lists examined were in: Thomas Pennant, *Some Account of London*, 3rd ed. (Dublin: Printed for John Archer, 1791); Luís de Camoëns and William Julius Mickle, *The Lusiad: Or, the Discovery of India. An Epic Poem. Translated From the Original Portuguese of Luis De Camoëns*, 3rd ed. (Dublin: Printed by Graisberry and Campbell, for John Archer, 1791); and Philip Yorke Hardwicke, et al. *Athenian Letters, Or, the Epistolary Correspondence of an Agent of the King of Persia, Residing At Athens During the Peloponnesian War: Containing the History of the Times, in Dispatches to the Ministers of State At the Persian Court: Besides Letters On Various Subjects between Him and His Friends* (Dublin: John Archer, 1792).

Dublin's eighteenth-century associational world but had developed relationships with other sections of society through this publication procedure.

As mentioned above, some societies admitted new members only after two proposers put forward their names for election. The recording of proposers, therefore, has been extremely useful and reliable in determining relationships and connections among members of these societies. The Dublin Library did not require proposers or elections for admission (only elections at the committee and officer level) but the Royal Irish Academy and the Dublin Society did. Records for the relevant years (1785-1800) are not extant for the Royal Irish Academy but the Royal Dublin Society's *Past Members Database* has been extensively consulted in this prosopographical research.⁷³ Wherever records exist, proposers of past members are included in a member's entry in the appending prosopographies. These have revealed some startling findings that were otherwise difficult to uncover in the secondary literature, and indeed in other primary sources. For instance, the successful silk merchant **William Cope** was a staunch advocate of the Anglican Ascendancy through enforcement and maintenance of the oppressive penal laws on Catholics and Dissenters. He was admitted into the Dublin Society in 1772 and five years later, proposed **Thomas Braughall**, a prosperous Catholic silk merchant, into the Dublin Society. The data gathered, analysed and synthesised from the primary and tertiary sources again reveals the dynamics of such prosopographical research. The ascent of the wealthy Dublin merchant **Jeremiah D'Olier** in the capital is an example here. From the RDS records, Cope and Braughall both proposed D'Olier for election to the Dublin Society on 26 January 1792. D'Olier was then appointed as a Director of the Bank of Ireland in late-March 1792 and elected to the 1792 Dublin Library Society committee a few days later.⁷⁴ This illustrates the importance of using the primary and tertiary sources for the prosopographical method to enhance our

⁷³ RDS. Interest in prosopography is growing. The organisers of the Royal Irish Academy Certificates of Membership project note on their website that 'the information contained in the extant certificates can inform us about the composition of the membership over time and can yield other data, e.g. who were the proposers, were some members more active than others in proposing candidates for election? What were their affiliations? Who were the movers and shakers? Can the certificates provide us with information about antiquarian or scientific networks?' Unfortunately, for this study, at the time of writing, the earliest certificate uploaded was for 1838: *Royal Irish Academy Membership Certificates, 1785-1920*, accessed 25 October 2017, <https://www.ria.ie/library/library-projects/ria-membership-certificates-1785-1920>.

⁷⁴ RDS; *Hibernian Journal*, 30 March 1792; *Hibernian Journal*, 2 April 1792.

understanding of associational culture and the shaping of the social milieu in eighteenth-century Dublin.

Conclusion

Using historical research methods, particularly a prosopographical approach, primary, secondary, and tertiary sources have been consulted to piece together a history of the origins of the Dublin Library Society and a study of its founding members. This provides evidence of their participation in associational activity, as part of the social and cultural environment of eighteenth-century Dublin. In the absence of minute books, admissions registers and other institutional documentation, newspapers—a largely neglected primary source—have been consulted extensively. Other primary and tertiary sources yielded a sizable amount of historical data that was inserted into an Excel spreadsheet and matched with the names of the Dublin Library founding members from a list in the library's printed catalogue of 1792. Originally, a prosopography was envisioned only for the first two Dublin Library committees of 1791 and 1792. A sociogram of these officers and committeemen (p. 164) shows how connected these members were with one another and with their membership in the same societies. However, after further research, it was decided that a more comprehensive picture of the occupational composition and associational participation of all 310 founding members would give a more complete picture of the library's membership, and be a useful contribution to Irish library history, associational history and the social history of eighteenth-century Dublin. Although the *Dictionary of Irish Biography* is still an ongoing project, to date, only forty-nine out of 310 founding members (16%) have entries.⁷⁵ By the end of this research process, eight Dublin Library members remained unidentifiable.

Wherever they existed, connections involving Dublin Library founding members have been highlighted and explored in the chapters below and in the appending prosopographies. This is by no means exhaustive or complete. It must be emphasised that the prosopographical analysis here is not the sole basis of this historical investigation. Therefore, limitations on the breadth of

⁷⁵ *DIB* (online edition), accessed 29-30 October 2016, <http://dib.cambridge.org>.

historical questions asked of each Dublin Library member were imposed. Occupation and associational activity were the two main research objectives in the prosopography. Determining the occupations of the founding members would contribute towards a greater understanding of the composition of the eighteenth-century library. Participation in more than one institution and connections among Dublin Library founding members through involvement in other societies were also explored. Greater, in-depth genealogical research may well have further enhanced this work had prosopography been the focus of the dissertation. Also, a sociographical exploration into the library's members—whereby the relations among different social groups are analysed—may also have produced significant results.⁷⁶ Further research in this area would be useful. However, the combination of historical research on the establishment of the Dublin Library and a general prosopography of its members has been intended to place this largely ignored subscription library in the context of the social and political surroundings in the late-eighteenth century. Concentration only on one area would reduce the overall aim of the project. Moreover, the time-period of this study on a library that lasted ninety years has been intentionally limited to the first decade to focus on its establishment and founding members. While the range of prosopographical study includes several years before 1791, concluding observations of the library's reputation for cross-confessional inclusivity extends into the nineteenth century.

Also, a comparative analysis of the library's first two catalogues resulted in findings that ultimately support the aim and objectives of this research. A statistical study of the subject areas has provided more evidence of the formation of the library as a public reference library facility. Together with results from the unprecedented combination of historical and prosopographical methods on the Dublin Library, the findings here will make a significant contribution to the resurrection of a 'lost library culture' from which 'mainstream' historiography will benefit.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Verboven et al., "Art of Prosopography," 40-41.

⁷⁷ Towsey, "Book Use and Sociability in Lost Libraries of the Eighteenth Century," 433-434; Rose, "Alternative Futures for Library History," 53.

Finally, while this dissertation sets out to place the Dublin Library Society as a venue of the Enlightenment in late-eighteenth-century Ireland, this is not a study of the arguments for and against the appearance of the Enlightenment in Ireland, nor is it a study of Enlightenment books available in the library. This would have enlarged the scope of the overall aim of the project resulting in a significant shift in subject discipline from library history to the history of ideas and reading. While related to this study, their inclusion would affect the concentration on the Dublin Library and its members as a study of its early years and the public perception of the institution as a key part of the intellectual and cultural fabric of Dublin at the time.

Part Two:
Eighteenth-Century Irish Society

Chapter 4: Historical Context to 1791

In reviewing the relevant literature, Chapter 2 discussed the merits of expanding library history to incorporate other areas of historical study. For instance, by engaging with wider, mainstream history, the investigation of a library can help identify the cultural milieu of a society. Chapter 3 introduced the methodological tools used to help widen the scope of a study to explore that library's impact on society. This chapter and the next will eschew 'mere *shallow* references to context' that may have sufficed in a conventional library history, and explore the relevant historical themes that occurred in Dublin. Additionally, an examination of early public libraries and the print trade in Dublin into the last decade of the eighteenth-century will illustrate the environment in which the Dublin Library was established in 1791. Importantly, historical coverage continues after the origins of the library are examined, as part of the role the library and its members played in 'constructing society' in Dublin into the nineteenth century.¹

To begin with broad trends in Irish historiography, it is worth noting that the interpretation of Irish history has encountered a number of stages: from the 'colonial' of the English conquerors and their Anglican representatives in Ireland² to the 'nationalist' of the conquered, mainly Irish Catholic majority who eventually won independence in the 1920s.³ In recent years, the 'New Historians' who 'perpetuated the approach of their Victorian predecessors',⁴ were countered by 'revisionists' who, not wishing to return to the 'nationalist'

¹ Rose, "Alternative Futures for Library History," 56; Black, "New Methodologies in Library History," 80; Rose, "Alternative Futures for Library History," 53-54; Towsey, "Book Use and Sociability in Lost Libraries of the Eighteenth Century," 437.

² A contemporary example being: Sir Richard Musgrave, *Memoirs of the Different Rebellions in Ireland...* (Dublin: Printed by Robert Marchbank, 1801), recently the subject of a re-interpretation: James Kelly, *Sir Richard Musgrave, 1746-1818: Ultra-Protestant Ideologue* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009). For an analysis of conflicting interpretations of Irish history along confessional lines, see Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 323-330.

³ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 1. For an Irish nationalistic piece at the time of independence, see Daniel Corkery, *The Hidden Ireland: A Study of Gaelic Munster in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin: M.H. Gill and Son, 1925); McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 7-8. For a recent overview of Irish historiography, see D. George Boyce and Alan O'Day (eds.) *The Making of Modern Irish History: Revisionism and the Revisionist Controversy* (London: Routledge, 1996), particularly S.J. Connolly, "Eighteenth-Century Ireland: Colony or ancien régime?", 15-33.

⁴ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 1. By the 'New Historians', McBride refers to the eight-volume project begun in 1976: *A New History of Ireland* (Oxford, 1976-1986). A second edition appeared in 2008.

interpretation, strove to strike a balance among the previous ones.⁵ Finally, particularly for the eighteenth century, 'post-revisionists' and their successors have sought to right the perceived wrongs of their predecessors through a more holistic approach, incorporating contemporary writings—English and Irish, Protestant and Catholic—within a wider European context of the *ancien régime*.⁶

For the eighteenth century, four main characteristics in Irish history—primarily in Dublin—apply, with regards to the historical context of the establishment of the Dublin Library Society in 1791. First is the concept of patriotism that, although its interpretation changed from the fifteenth century to the end of the eighteenth century, nonetheless continued to be a significant theme throughout. The second characteristic, the Anglican Ascendancy, is vital in understanding the relationship among the ruling classes and the ruled in eighteenth-century Dublin. Two further points—the emergence and subsequent expansion of the public sphere and Enlightenment ideals—both helped shape a changing narrative in Georgian Dublin, influenced in part by trends abroad. All four characteristics gradually coalesced in the eighteenth century, adding to an understanding of the environment in which the Dublin Library Society was established and flourished for almost a century. Indeed, by the end of this study, it will be evident that the Dublin Library was founded in part to embody these shifting societal attitudes. Before delving into the historical background, a brief look at education and literacy will provide some context as to who participated in the expansion of print culture and the establishment of early public libraries in the eighteenth century.

Literacy and Education

Eighteenth-century Ireland was essentially an Ascendancy public sphere—and an English-speaking one. The Irish language was spoken among Catholics who may not necessarily have known how to read and write in their native language. The Catholic elite and the emerging professional and merchant

⁵ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 2-5. McBride cites the start of Irish historical revisionism at the launch of the academic journal, *Irish Historical Studies* (1938): McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 4.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 5-18; 412-413. McBride counts himself as a post-revisionist and this is reflected in the series of which his book is a part: *The New Gill History of Ireland* (6 vols.).

classes were proficient in English, especially in Dublin.⁷ For Catholics and Dissenters, the penal laws restricted education at Trinity College Dublin until 1793. Many of the wealthier Catholics studied abroad, at the Irish colleges across continental Europe. Catholics were not allowed to practice law (until 1794) but could take up medicine as a vocation after training on the Continent. Furthermore, Catholics were forbidden to teach in schools but this was not strictly followed. Given the printing of chapbooks, and other Catholic devotional works by Catholic booksellers like James Hoey and **Thomas McDonnell**, the overall network of production and dissemination suggests that there was greater demand despite the combined discouragement from the Ascendancy penal laws and the Catholic Church.

Estimated literacy levels were the highest among Irish Presbyterians—with its sizable middle class—largely based in Ulster. Education and literacy among the poorer Protestants in Dublin was almost as low as that of the poorer Catholics. For Dublin, literacy levels were roughly 65% of males and 45% of females who could read.⁸ The level of wealth was a significant factor but religion was also influential as the Catholic approach tended towards orality and to follow the papal bull *Unigenitus* (1713) that ‘condemned the proposition that the reading of scripture was for all’. The Protestant approach, on the other hand, aimed at urging people to read the scriptures.⁹ Indeed, there may well have been a hint of Anglican Ascendancy patriotism in the tone of Archbishop of Armagh, James Ussher, who seeking to usurp Ireland’s ancient past, posited in the early seventeenth century that the Protestant Reformation ‘merely restored Irish Christianity to the purity represented by the bibliocentric and non-Roman church created by St. Patrick’.¹⁰

⁷ Maureen Wall, “The Rise of a Catholic Middle Class in Eighteenth-Century Ireland,” *Irish Historical Studies* 11, no. 42 (September 1958): 91-115; Niall Ó Ciosáin and Clare Hutton, “The History of the Book in Ireland,” in Michael F. Suarez and H.R. Woudhuysen, eds., *The Oxford Companion to the Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 194.

⁸ That is, opposed to simply being able to sign one’s name: Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750-1850* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2010), 39, 57. Official statistics for literacy in the eighteenth century are not extant due to the destruction of the Public Record Office during the civil war that raged in Dublin in 1922.

⁹ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 57; Gillespie, *Reading Ireland: Print, Reading and Social Change in Early Modern Ireland* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 44. Brian Burch suggests ‘the problem of language was compounded by religion: much of the educational effort was inextricably tied up with continuing vain attempts to convert the Catholic Irish to Protestantism’: Brian Burch, “Libraries and Literacy in Popular Education,” in *CHLBI* 2, 371-372.

¹⁰ Sean Connolly, “Patriotism and Nationalism,” in Alvin Jackson, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Modern Irish History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 22.

By the late-eighteenth century, however, there was support from enlightened circles for an inclusive education system, with a school in each parish and a 'great school' in every county, for the benefit of the children of Ireland and the greater good of the national project:

Those of less promising abilities are to be instructed in such branches of useful literature as may best suit their capacities, to fit them for trade, mechanical avocations, or for the sea, so as that they may have the advantage of education and theory to enable them to attain the greater degree of perfection in the practical parts of each. By these means national poverty and insignificance, the never failing consequences of ignorance and idleness, will be effectually obviated, while a progressive improvement in learning, arts, manufactures and commerce, add a daily increase to the strength and riches of the State. The children of Roman Catholics, and every other religious description, will be admitted to a participation of these essential national advantages.¹¹

For some, however, one of the intentions of the Ascendancy was to purposely keep the poor busy with work and hardship to block them from any sort of education, thereby preventing any formation of potentially radical thought.¹² Kevin Whelan notes that Ascendancy conservatives were attached to the ideas put forth by Bernard Mandeville in his *Fable of the Bees*, where the 'knowledge of the working poor should be confined within the verge of their occupations and never extend [...] beyond what relates to their calling' for the maintenance of order in society.¹³ An Ascendancy chronicler of the 1798 Rebellion echoed those sentiments, remarking that if taught, the poor would resort to radical ideals: 'Would it improve the morals of the lower class of people to enable them to read the works of Paine, Volney, Godwin and Thelwal, and the Jacobin prints, which give wings to treason?'¹⁴

Here, the struggles within an eighteenth-century Irish society of Enlightenment and counter-Enlightenment ideals pervade. Where on one side there is an advocacy of toleration, civility, and democracy, the other saw the continuation of intolerance, hierarchy, and colonisation. Even 'varieties of Enlightenment'

¹¹ *Dublin Evening Post*, 7 May 1791.

¹² Kevin Whelan, "The Republic in the Village: The Dissemination and Reception of Popular Literature in the 1790s," in Gerard Long, ed., *Books Beyond the Pale: Aspects of the Provincial Book Trade in Ireland Before 1850* (Dublin: Rare Books Group of the Library Association of Ireland, 1996), 106-107, citing *The Union Doctrine, or Poor Man's Catechism* (Dublin, 1798), 6.

¹³ Whelan, "Republic in the Village," 128-128, quoting Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees* (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1970), 191.

¹⁴ Whelan, "Republic in the Village," 129, quoting Richard Musgrave, *Memoirs of the Different Rebellions in Ireland*, Appendix, 826.

clouded matters surrounding education, wherein the Anglican Church of Ireland-sponsored practice of removing Catholic children from their families and placing them in Protestant schools to be raised Anglican was regarded as an altruistic cultivation of 'the mind enlightened by instruction'.¹⁵

Ascendancy Patriotism

To explain themes of Anglican Ascendancy and varying interpretations of patriotism, the Anglo-Norman conquest of Ireland in the twelfth century ushers in the early context here. For despite the invasion by what would eventually be considered the 'Old English', there was comparably a more benign assimilation with the Irish in Dublin than when the 'New English' arrived in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. By the fifteenth century, the Irish parliament indicated through a declaration that Ireland was 'corporate of itself' and bound only by laws made in its own parliament. When combining this early sign of independent corporate governance—albeit based on guild administration—with the lack of sufficient support for the Reformation in Ireland, there appeared a 'language of a shared Irishness, transcending long-standing ethnic divisions'. However, beginning with the plantations of Henry VIII, straight through to the English Civil War, the 'New English', Anglicans born in England, were pitted against the 'Old English' and the Gaelic Irish, who combined, by and large, to form an early confederation: 'Irishmen united for God, king and fatherland [...] in defence of an Irish *patria* with support for pan-British royalism'. But the execution of Charles I and the later restoration of the monarchy in 1660 resulted in the emergence of the 'New English' as the dominant Anglican ruling class—essentially five thousand families ruling over the entire island.¹⁶ The Anglican Ascendancy, ensured civil, religious, administrative, and cultural dominance over both the native Irish and the 'Old English' who despite many of them being Protestant, were regarded as Irish, and therefore, subordinate to the 'New English' settlers. In addition, Scottish Presbyterians, chiefly in Ulster, as well as other Dissenters (Unitarian,

¹⁵ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 3-8; Gillen, "Varieties of Enlightenment," 163-180. This was the Incorporated Society for Promoting English Protestant Schools in Ireland: Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 268-269, quoting James Trail, *A Sermon Preached at Christ Church Cathedral Dublin on the 7th of February 1779 Before the Incorporated Society* (Dublin: G. Perrin, 1779), 2.

¹⁶ Dickson, *Dublin*, 26-27; Connolly, "Patriotism and Nationalism," 28-29; Denis Kennedy, "The Irish Opposition, Parliamentary Reform and Public Opinion, 1793-1794," *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr* 7 (1992): 100.

Methodist, etc.), were equally marginalised.¹⁷ Ireland at this time would have been 80% Catholic and therefore a persecuted majority—an exception to the European context of persecution of religious minorities.¹⁸ While a handful of Gaelic-Irish and Scottish families converted to the Church of Ireland, the 'New English' Anglicans continued to regard them as the Irish and Scots, thereby creating within the island of Ireland a ruling elite based not only on confessional but also on national lines tied to England. For when modern definitions of nation and nationalism are considered, the Anglican elites considered themselves 'a body of people capable of acting collectively and in particular of conferring authority on political institutions' and, as will be addressed below when the Anglicans sought to co-opt ancient Gaelic history as their own, a 'larger cultural system capable of uniting the living and the dead'.¹⁹

Shortly after the Glorious Revolution of 1688-1689, the Anglo-Irish were unhappy with what they regarded as the 'illegitimate intrusions on their rights' by the English government who 'denounced them as "Irishmen" seeking independence'. By the end of the seventeenth century, writers such as William Molyneux had enunciated the Ascendancy line that Ireland—meaning the Anglican elites ruling Ireland—was not a colony of England but an independent kingdom under the English crown: 'an arrangement based on ancient consent, and that the Irish Parliament was thus co-equal with that of Westminster'.²⁰ At the time, Molyneux's effort was considered unhelpful. But as interference from London in Irish affairs increased, he was heralded as a great patriot writer, championing the cause of another modern construct: colonial nationalism. In this setting, the settler population sought a collective identity as transplanted Englishmen who gradually gained a sense of nationalism in that territory, while excluding the natives of that new homeland. Much of the Anglican elite, then, found themselves embracing a form of patriotism whereby they considered

¹⁷ Therefore, reference to an Anglican rather than Protestant Ascendancy is preferred here.

¹⁸ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 202. A Catholic propertied class remained and largely gave their tacit support of the status quo to maintain their local control. This suited the Anglicans, as 'there are not enough Protestants in the country to occupy the soil': John FitzGibbon, *Substance of the Speech of the Rt. Hon. Lord FitzGibbon, Lord Chancellor of Ireland...and the Popery Laws of Ireland* (London: W. Miller, 1793), 10, quoted in Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 416.

¹⁹ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 371, citing David Miller, *On Nationality* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 30, and Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, 2nd ed. (London: Verso, 1991), 9-12.

²⁰ Connolly, "Patriotism and Nationalism," 31; Dickson, *Dublin*, 116; William Molyneux, *The Case of Ireland Being Bound by Acts of Parliament in England, Stated* (Dublin, 1698).

themselves the legitimate representatives of Anglican civilisation in Ireland, in opposition to the encroachment of an overbearing English government that failed to see them as their equals. Enter Jonathan Swift, and Anglo-Irish patriotism was depicted as resistance to the English crown on behalf of 'the whole people of Ireland' but actually referring to 'the true English people of Ireland'.²¹ The *other* 'people of Ireland'—Catholics and Dissenters—had imposed on them a set of penal laws that restricted their freedom of religion and education, as well as ownership of land and access to administrative positions—essentially a systematic subjugation and oppression of the majority of the Irish population to ensure the superiority of the Anglican minority in Irish society.²²

By the 1720s, the English government's annoyance at the Anglican minority's insistence on calling for legislative independence for Ireland over which they hoped to preside, resulted in the Declaratory Act (1720), which 'asserted the right of the Westminster parliament to make laws to bind the People and Kingdom of Ireland'. Ironically, at this point, the English in Ireland were angered over the perception of being treated as slaves by the tyrannical English crown, while they themselves regarded the Irish majority as vastly inferior. The mood in Ireland over the next few decades shifted from 'Ascendancy patriotism' to a sort of 'domestic patriotism' where the Ascendancy elites governed—again ironically as it turned out, largely free from English interference—over Ireland, with a drive towards economic and cultural reform from within.²³

Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century Dublin

Dublin in the 1720s experienced a print revolution fuelled with patriotic rhetoric, with pamphlets and newspapers produced as part of a burgeoning reprint trade (due to Ireland's exclusion from copyright legislation). This coincided with the emergence of a public sphere in Ireland where only an official one had existed. Ian McBride notes that simultaneously the 'emergence

²¹ Connolly, "Patriotism and Nationalism," 32-33.

²² For the penal laws and the Anglican Ascendancy, see McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 194-214 and 273-311; Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*.

²³ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 29; 286 & 90.

of a distinctly Irish political culture' was inculcated in response to the Anglo-Irish sentiment of being treated as slaves in their own country by England. Along with the prolific publishing of Swift's own works, Molyneux's pamphlet had nine reasonably priced editions printed in the eighteenth century, attracting an expanding readership, and providing a 'bracing counter-narrative to the dominant imperial interpretation of Ireland's constitutional status'.²⁴

As stated in the Literature Review, Dublin's public sphere in the early eighteenth century was dominated by the Ascendancy. However, a semblance of the Habermasian bourgeois public sphere in Dublin began to emerge after the rise of the newspaper and the coffee house.²⁵ Access to print influenced public opinion as well as those serving in parliament. Print runs of Swift's and Molyneux's works coincided with the opening of parliamentary sessions and were 'clearly designed to furnish members with arguments'. Moreover, parliamentary debates were available through the newspaper or were simply reprinted and available in coffee houses for the public to peruse.²⁶

If a public sphere in Ireland developed from the realm of the dominant Ascendancy class in a patriotic reaction to their treatment by an encroaching English government, then its expansion was due in part to the increased availability of print and the rise of clubs and societies, where memberships gradually expanded regardless of confessional line. This coincided with the emergence of Enlightenment thought in the European periphery of Ireland, somewhat sooner than previously believed.²⁷ Ian McBride and Michael Brown have recently highlighted early Irish representation in Enlightenment authors (Francis Hutcheson, John Toland, William Molyneux, and Charles O'Connor).²⁸

²⁴ Kelly, "Political Publishing, 1550-1700," 212; McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 295; Dickson, *Dublin*, 116.

²⁵ For a discussion on Habermas and the public sphere in this context, see above, p. 40-42. Also, see Webster, *Theories of the Information Society*, 163-164; and Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 1-15.

²⁶ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 301; Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 17; Kelly, "Political Publishing, 1700-1800," 218.

²⁷ For the connection of the Enlightenment with the Habermasian public sphere as a forum for reasoned debate and rational decisions, see Webster, *Theories of the Information Society*, 164. Melton prefers the term 'Enlightened' to 'bourgeois' public sphere: Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 11.

²⁸ Brown, "Was there an Irish Enlightenment? The Case of the Anglicans," 49-64; Brown, "Configuring the Irish Enlightenment," 163-178; McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 51-99; Ian McBride, *Scripture Politics: Presbyterians and Irish Radicalism in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998). Also, see Ian McBride's chapter, "The Irish Enlightenment and its Enemies," in McBride, *Eighteenth-Century*

When it came to books and reading—tools of Enlightenment principles—by the eighteenth century, there was certainly a reading revolution in Ireland. Moreover, many Irish writers identified with Enlightenment authors in their late-eighteenth century patriotic prose. Therefore, as McBride suggests, ‘the Irish were not merely consumers of Enlightenment literature, but vigorous participants in the key debates of the era’.²⁹ The exponential rise in Irish newspaper titles coupled with the lack of copyright legislation in Ireland, resulting in a flourishing print trade.³⁰ David Allan and Mark Towsey have recently studied the settings of England and Scotland (respectively) for the availability of books—and the practice of reading them—from ‘Enlightenment authors’.³¹ Richard B. Sher and Máire Kennedy have identified Enlightenment texts in Ireland and have shown that the Enlightenment was not simply confined to the importation of texts from Scotland and the European continent.³² For the purpose of this study on the Dublin Library Society, the Enlightenment and the expanded public sphere in Dublin shall be addressed below in terms of their location within Dublin and the ideals that flourished as a result, namely those of a shift away from sectarian attitudes enshrined by the penal laws.³³

Given that this was a different type of Enlightenment—one espoused as a rationalisation and justification for the Anglican Ascendancy—it becomes problematic to equate the Irish scene with others in Europe.³⁴ For example, William Molyneux espoused ‘early’ Enlightenment principles to inspire Irish constitutional independence from Britain—but only within the framework of Anglican supremacy in Ireland. On one hand, he represented the interests of the Ascendancy public sphere through his *Case of Ireland, Stated*, ‘the

Ireland, 51-99. On Francis Hutcheson, see Michael Brown, *Francis Hutcheson in Dublin, 1719-1730* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2002).

²⁹ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 63.

³⁰ For the origins of the newspaper in Ireland, see Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*.

³¹ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*; Allan, “Politeness and the Politics of Culture,” 159-169; Towsey, “Reading the Scottish Enlightenment.”

³² Sher, *Enlightenment & the Book*, 443-502; Kennedy, “Reading the Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century Ireland,” 355-378.

³³ Gillen, “Varieties of Enlightenment,” 163-182; Brown, “Location of Learning in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland,” 104-126.

³⁴ Ian McBride’s chapter, “The Irish Enlightenment and its Enemies,” is especially useful: McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 51-99. Also, see Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, and Gillen, “Varieties of Enlightenment.”

handbook of the Irish Protestant elites'. On the other hand, he was one of the founders of the Dublin Philosophical Society (1683) along with a group of learned men 'to discourse of philosophy, mathematicks, and other polite literature', in the vein of the 'table societies' that Habermas cited as early bourgeois venues of the public sphere.³⁵ Modelled after the Royal Society in London, Molyneux and his associates held their meetings in a Dublin coffee house, a popular venue for such societies without dedicated headquarters.³⁶ Although primarily consisting of Anglican elites, the society nonetheless represented the beginnings of those Enlightenment ideals promoting public opinion and society, 'signifying forms of political community' apart from the official sphere of government, towards the 'natural human urge to collaborate for mutual benefit'. Moreover, the Dublin coffee house, from its first appearance in 1664, was an important location of a 'new informal, or unacknowledged' enlightened public sphere as it was not only *the* unofficial public disseminator of news, but also a public gathering place for rational (and surely irrational) discourse.³⁷ Tellingly, to Jonathan Rose's statement, the simultaneous weakening of the official public sphere validates the contention that these venues helped shape a new society within Ascendancy Dublin.

This highlights recent debates about the early wave of Irish Enlightenment thought, once considered difficult to reconcile with the notion of a public sphere restricted to the Anglican minority, yet also fêted for providing the foundation for later Enlightenment ideals when the Irish public sphere gradually abandoned its sectarian restriction and became more inclusive. An early warning to the English government against its Declaratory Act came with perhaps an unintentional, but nonetheless significant, shift towards an enlightened Ireland, with John Toland's *Reasons Most Humbly Offer'd to the Hon[our]able House of Commons* (1720), 'which implied that English oppression was driving loyal Protestants into a rebellious alliance with papists'.

³⁵ Brown, "Was There An Irish Enlightenment?", 58; McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 279; 65; Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 30.

³⁶ They had also held their meetings in the less-accessible Trinity College Dublin: Toby Barnard, "'Grand metropolis' or 'The anus of the world'? The Cultural Life of Eighteenth-Century Dublin," in Peter Clark & Raymond Gillespie, eds., *Two Capitals: London and Dublin, 1500-1840*, (Oxford: Published for the British Academy for Oxford University Press, 2001), 195.

³⁷ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 399; Brown, "Location of Learning in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 107; Kennedy, "'Politicks, coffee and news'"; Kennedy, "Dublin's Coffee Houses of the Eighteenth Century"; Abbas, "'A Fund of entertaining and useful Information'," 42-47.

Indeed, religious toleration was at the forefront of early Irish Enlightenment themes. The clergyman, Edward Synge (1691-1762) gave and published a sermon on religious toleration in 1725. He was a member of the literary and philosophical group known as the 'Molesworth Circle', who met at the home of Viscount Molesworth (1656-1725), and a friend of Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746). Slowly, in enlightened circles, the tone shifted from a contempt for the native Irish to a suspicion of Catholics specifically, followed by a distrust of 'popery', with allegiance to Rome seen as the main threat to the security and governance of Ireland.³⁸

Throughout the eighteenth century, some enlightened Protestants advocated a relaxation of the penal laws while a conservative cohort regarded its maintenance as 'one way of protecting the Protestant monopoly of the public sphere in this increasingly complex, increasingly Catholic society'.³⁹ In print, 'varieties of Enlightenment' competed for the greater good of Ireland. In his *Letters of Owen Roe O'Nial*, the Presbyterian Monks of the Screw and Whig Club member, **Joseph Pollock** saw religious toleration as the first step towards achieving greater Irish independence and prosperity: 'How far this would contribute to the happiness, greatness and stability of the state, as it would afford an asylum and encouragement to arts, industry and virtue'. By learning to 'lay aside all rancour of prejudice on account of distinctions either political or religious', only then could Ireland release herself from the shackles of British subjugation.⁴⁰

In the last decade of the eighteenth century, some clubs and societies put forward their radical agendas. The Catholic Committee's *raison d'être*—together with the Catholic Society of Dublin—was the abolition of the penal

³⁸ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 301; Edward Synge, *The Case of Toleration Consider'd With Respect Both to Religion and Civil Government* (1725), in McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 169, 207-209. Hutcheson's connections with the 'Molesworth Circle' and the link of the Irish Enlightenment to the Scottish Enlightenment are mentioned in McBride, 76-84, and Brown, *Francis Hutcheson in Dublin, 1719-1730*.

³⁹ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 217. Dissenters were also divided on the relaxation of penal laws for Catholics, given the latter's huge majority in numbers. Rather, Irish Presbyterians generally saw themselves as part of a 'British community' but not English or Irish: McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 290. Historians differ on this subject. Murray Pittock argues that Irish Dissenters, influenced by their Scottish brethren, equally resisted a British identity, in favour of a 'nativist' and 'imagined Ireland': Murray Pittock, *Scottish and Irish Romanticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 102.

⁴⁰ Gillen, "Varieties of Enlightenment," 173, quoting Joseph Pollock, *Letters of Owen Roe O'Nial* (Dublin: W. Jackson, 1779), 24 & 42.

laws, all the while advocating, through numerous printed declarations, an end to sectarianism in favour of cross-confessional unity among the Irish people. A key member, the physician **Theobald McKenna** went further than Pollock by identifying 'the present enlightened and improving period of society' as an opportunity for abolition of the penal laws in their entirety.⁴¹ The political motivations of both phases—legislative independence and revolutionary republicanism—of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen have been well documented in the large corpus of Irish historical scholarship.⁴² There has also been considerable attention paid to literary and cultural elements of the United Irishmen.⁴³ It is a combination of these that has led commentators to debate whether or not the United Irishmen were products of the wider European Enlightenment, within a delineated Irish Enlightenment.⁴⁴ Another medical doctor, **William Drennan** was known for his literary talents, particularly as a political pamphleteer, and the text and several resolutions of the Dublin United Irishmen have been attributed to him.⁴⁵ The Ulster Presbyterian Drennan's father was Thomas Drennan, friend and associate of Francis Hutcheson, and a member of the intellectual Molesworth Circle.⁴⁶ Drennan and Theobald Wolfe Tone, the leader of the United Irish 1798 Rebellion, identified with Enlightenment authors such as Hutcheson, Rousseau, Hume, and Locke. Frustrated with conservative reformers in the Whig Club, William Drennan blasted that 'eating and drinking aristocratic society without any fellow-feeling with the commonality'. Borrowing from Thomas Paine and Hutcheson, he outlined his plan, based on Freemasonry practices, for the creation of the United Irishmen: '...a benevolent conspiracy—a plot for the people—no Whig Club—no party title—the Brotherhood its name—the Rights of Men and

⁴¹ Gillen, "Varieties of Enlightenment," 178.

⁴² Particularly, Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*; Dickson et al., *United Irishmen*; Marianne Elliott, *Wolfe Tone*, 2nd ed. (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012, Liverpool Scholarship Online, 2013, accessed 16 September 2017, doi: 10.5949/UPO9781846317774); and Smyth, *Men of No Property*.

⁴³ Whelan, "The United Irishmen, the Enlightenment and Popular Culture," in Dickson et al., *United Irishmen*; Mary Helen Thuente, *The Harp Re-Strung: The United Irishmen and the Rise of Irish Literary Nationalism* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1994).

⁴⁴ Whelan, "The United Irishmen, the Enlightenment and Popular Culture," 269-275; Gillen, "Varieties of Enlightenment," 174-181; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 423-429.

⁴⁵ *DIB*; Ian McBride, "William Drennan and the Dissenting Tradition," in Dickson et al., *United Irishmen*, 49-50.

⁴⁶ Smyth, "Wolfe Tone's Library," 426; McBride, "William Drennan and the Dissenting Tradition," 50-59; McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 62-63; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 391.

Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number its end—its general and real independence to Ireland, and republicanism its particular purpose'.⁴⁷

Towards the end of the century, in what Michael Brown describes as a 'competition over the question of cultural representation of the people', the clash of the conservative and moderate interpretations of Enlightenment with the radical variety led to the fragmentation of Irish society.⁴⁸ However, as will be proposed below, all three varieties continued to associate in the public setting of the Dublin Library Society. Therefore, a study of this voluntary subscription library where the Enlightenment project continued to flourish will add to our understanding of the social and political history of Dublin.

Dublin in the Eighteenth Century

Dismissed as a 'poor man's version of Bristol' in the 1640s, Dublin, by 1750, was a thriving port city—the economic and commercial centre of Ireland and its political and administrative capital. Dublin Castle was the seat of British rule and the residence of the Lord Lieutenant, the highest-ranking representative of the British crown in Ireland. Parliament House, in College Green, across from the island's main university, Trinity College, was the country's legislative centre. Dublin's population had reached approximately 125,000, second only to London. In mid-century, a little less than half were Catholics, whereas in virtually all other parts of the island, except Ulster, Catholics were in an almost overwhelming majority. Animosity was rife—regardless of how strictly enforced were the penal laws—but as Toby Barnard suggests, the demographic realities suggested a 'practical co-existence' chiefly through trade as there was an increasingly affluent Catholic merchant class at this time.⁴⁹

As mentioned, there was a substantial rise in the number of newspapers in Dublin and other parts of Ireland. The pamphlet press was active as well, and certain segments were becoming increasingly critical of the authorities at

⁴⁷ William Drennan to Sam McTier, 21 May [1791], in Jean Agnew, ed. *The Drennan-McTier Letters*, 3 vols. (Dublin: Women's History Project, in association with the Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1999), 1:357; McBride, "William Drennan and the Dissenting Tradition," 49; Smyth, "Wolfe Tone's Library," 426.

⁴⁸ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 436; Gillen, "Varieties of Enlightenment," 180.

⁴⁹ Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 146; Dickson, *Dublin*, 152; 144-145; Barnard, "'Grand metropolis,'" 188. Also, see Wall, "Rise of a Catholic Middle Class in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 91-115.

Dublin Castle. As early as the 1750s this vehicle for public dissent alarmed the viceroy in Dublin to the extent that he had to notify his superiors in London that 'the notion of a National Interest, distinct from that of the English Government in this Kingdom, has been so industriously propagated, that the infection has spread itself in every part of this country'.⁵⁰ This was the beginning of the authoritarian reaction to the expansion of the Irish public sphere through the arrests of printers and publishers as well as government sponsorship of certain newspaper titles.

Much of the unrest, particularly in Dublin, was against what was perceived as unfair trading practices by England. Despite strong exports to England, trade rules prohibited Ireland from exporting elsewhere. Also, local clothing manufacturers were angered by cheaper imports of British cloth rather than the Irish product. Although 'Buy-Irish' campaigns had been around since the beginning of the eighteenth century, they intensified from mid-century onward, with merchants' newspaper advertisements declaring their commitment to domestic patriotism by carrying Irish-made goods.⁵¹

Legislative independence was also on the agenda for many Irish patriots such as Henry Grattan and the **Earl of Charlemont**. By 1778, recession in Dublin and in the rest of Ireland, coupled with fears of a French invasion, caused considerable unrest, while the Irish authorities, virtually bankrupt and in disarray, failed to put the population at ease. Volunteer militias were set up across the country, led by respected peers, and linked to guilds and the legal professions. The Volunteer movement drew on the earlier ideals of Anglo-Irish patriotism, with calls for legislative independence within the British crown, rather than any notion of siding with the American colonists fighting for a republic.⁵² Simultaneously, the drive for Catholic emancipation was mobilised by the reinvigoration of the Catholic Committee in the 1770s, to petition for the full repeal of the penal laws. Progress was made by the repeal of some

⁵⁰ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 311, quoting from Robert Harris, *Politics and the Nation: Britain in the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 12.

⁵¹ Dickson, *Dublin*, 186. For an examination of the 'Buy-Irish' campaigns and the notion of patriotism in Irish consumption, see Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, specifically 181-191.

⁵² Dickson, *Dublin*, 197-198; Smyth, *Men of No Property*, 22; Ian McBride, "The Harp Without the Crown: Republicanism and Nationalism in the 1790s," in S.J. Connolly, ed., *Political Ideas in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), 159.

laws but many Irish patriots and Dublin guilds were still not in favour of such a radical change in their way of life. Henry Grattan, calling for moderate reform proposed what was essentially an Ascendancy Ireland that would 'accommodate Catholics within a political nation'. Moreover, the demand of free trade for Ireland was a rallying patriotic initiative as several of the Irish Volunteers corps vowed to use only Irish-made cloth for their often-extravagant uniforms.⁵³

After winning a measure of free trade from London at the end of 1779, Grattan lobbied Westminster for legislative independence, citing this new patriot position of 'Ireland's co-equality with Britain under the Crown'. By 1782, Grattan and the Volunteer movement had shifted the notion of 'Anglo-Irish' patriotism to 'Protestant patriotism' through the repeal by Westminster of the Declaratory Act and the termination of Poyning's Law, which had given the British Privy Council control over any proposed Irish legislation. Previously, anti-Catholic legislation could have been rejected by the British Privy Council if it would have led to embarrassment for a British government aiming for support from Catholic allies in Europe. Therefore, the cancellation of this clause freed the Irish parliament from this check. Legislative independence was therefore seen as a victory for the patriots but resistance to the admission of full political rights to Catholics meant that this patriotic movement did not serve an all-inclusive nation. However, in 1782, support from the patriots for Catholic relief came by the removal of restrictions on education and land ownership, with David Dickson noting that the 'supporting rhetoric spoke of enlightenment, toleration and a new age of civic inclusion'.⁵⁴

Culturally, Dubliners tended to look to London and then the Continent for societal trends. Clubs and societies started appearing in the late-seventeenth century along with the ubiquitous coffee houses that established themselves as early public information centres. A thriving theatre scene complimented the frequent appearance of balls and concerts in the city. Dublin would swell with parliamentarians when the Houses were sitting, with the average M.P.

⁵³ Dickson, *Dublin*, 196; Smyth, *Men of No Property*, 21; Dickson, *Dublin*, 199.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 205; S.J. Connolly, "Eighteenth-Century Ireland: Colony or *ancien régime*?", 16; Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, 73; Connolly, "Patriotism and Nationalism," 34; Dickson, *Dublin*, 205-206.

spending £1,400 per year. Some wealthy families would accompany their sons in the capital during the university term. The 'winter season', when wealthy landowners from the country would settle in Dublin during the colder months, also contributed to the influx of wealth that sought entertainment and culture.⁵⁵

In addition to the seasonal urban residents, Dublin was home to the higher courts of law, academies for the young, hospitals, and schools of surgery and medicine. After a continental education, Catholics were permitted to practice the medical profession and by 1762 accounted for a quarter of the listed doctors in the city. Luxury and essential goods were available in the plethora of shops lining the city's narrow lanes and wide thoroughfares, the latter being part of the urban improvement project, the Wide Streets Commissioners.⁵⁶ Major architectural projects were planned and executed, namely the Royal Exchange, the Four Courts, and the Custom House. As mentioned, Anglo-Irish trade had booms and recessions but the Dublin merchants and traders were generally prosperous during the eighteenth century.

The profusion of clubs and societies was another eighteenth-century trend from London.⁵⁷ Many academic, political, charitable, and commercial societies were successful in attracting members and putting forth platforms and causes that contributed positively to society. As a number of these societies ([Royal] Dublin Society [1731], Royal Irish Academy [1785], Dublin Library Society [1791], and others) will be discussed in later chapters, it is important to emphasise here the combination of sociability, improvement, and a sense of national and civic pride that characterised these institutions and their members, akin to the ideal of cultural nationalism expressed in England with the establishment of

⁵⁵ Barnard, "'Grand metropolis,'" 186; McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 111; Dickson, *Dublin*, 154. For the entertainment scene in eighteenth-century Dublin, see Tighearnan Mooney and Fiona White, "The Gentry's Winter Season," in David Dickson, ed., *The Gorgeous Mask: Dublin, 1700-1850* (Dublin: Trinity History Workshop, 1987), 1-16.

⁵⁶ Dickson, *Dublin*, 195-196; Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 167. For more on the Wide Streets Commissioners projects, see Edel Sheridan-Quantz, "The Multi-Centred Metropolis: The Social Topography of Eighteenth-Century Dublin," in Clark and Gillespie, eds., *Two Capitals*, 265-295.

⁵⁷ Clark estimates there were approximately 3,000 clubs and societies in London during the eighteenth century: Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 131. As discussed earlier, the Dublin Philosophical Society was established in 1683 and is considered the oldest known society of its kind, based in Dublin: Patrick Walsh, "Club Life in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century Ireland: In Search of an Associational World, c.1680-c.1730," in *Clubs and Societies*, 36-49.

the Society of Antiquaries (1751), the British Museum (1759) and the Royal Academy (1768).⁵⁸ Furthermore, these groups moved towards greater inclusivity, with Anglicans, Catholics and Dissenters participating. In addition, they represented further examples of the enlargement of the enlightened public sphere in Dublin as memberships expanded to reflect the growing influence of the professional and merchant classes as well as the entry into the public realm (in some societies) of shopkeepers and other tradesmen—previously omitted sectors in the social hierarchy. From the evidence provided in the upcoming chapters, the Dublin Library Society endeavoured to exemplify and influence shifting attitudes of class and confessional inclusivity in facilitating public access to knowledge in Dublin.

Aristocratic leadership was important for influencing the authorities in Dublin and Westminster, and membership of peers to a club or society instantly enhanced its profile. However, a pattern emerged in the late-eighteenth century where aristocratic influence was gradually deteriorating, or at the very least, there occurred a parallel influence on public opinion. For example, Dickson notes a division that formed during demonstrations of the Dublin Volunteers between the aristocratic Volunteer leaders who marched in their finery to 'their Parliament House', and the 'small manufacturers and artisans encouraged and abetted by Kevin Street barristers and guildhall politicians'.⁵⁹ Also, inside Parliament House, one of the proposed reforms was to balance aristocratic control with freeholder representation to loosen the former's grip on influence in parliament. This proved to be ultimately unsuccessful, largely due to intransigence on the part of the 'conservative patriots' but as will be shown, aristocratic influence in other institutions appeared to be on the wane in late-eighteenth-century Dublin.⁶⁰ Moreover, as the chapter below on associations will highlight, schisms occurred between the conservative/elite

⁵⁸ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 399. For Ireland, see *Clubs and Societies*. For Britain, see Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*.

⁵⁹ Dickson, *Dublin*, 200. By 'Kevin Street', Dickson is referring to the meeting of an influential political society that met in a Dublin townhouse in Kevin Street, called the Order of the Monks of St. Patrick (also known as the Monks of the Screw), composed of parliamentarians and close to fifty barristers. This bears some significance for while they met as a society, the barristers marched not with the parliamentarians but with the guild officers and tradesmen. For the Monks of the Screw, see p. 207-208.

⁶⁰ Dickson, *Dublin*, 206; Connolly, "Patriotism and Nationalism," 34.

patriots and the moderate-to-radical patriots, especially after the events of 1789 in France and the unheeded call for further reforms.

Conclusion

The intent of this chapter has been to provide a broad historical context for this study of the Dublin Library Society and its founding members. The recurring theme of patriotism—and its varying forms—has been one of the key characteristics throughout modern Irish history. The Anglican Ascendancy and the enforcement of an exclusionary, sectarian penal code, beginning in the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth century, presided over an expanding public sphere emboldened by Enlightenment ideas, and diffused through a thriving print culture. Before examining the Dublin Library, an overview of this print culture and the library history of Dublin in the eighteenth century will further enhance an understanding of the environment in which the Dublin Library was established. Furthermore, the expressions of patriotism from numerous sectors of the print trade and in the establishment of radical reading societies add to the notion that Dublin was ‘Patriot Town’ in the latter two decades of the eighteenth century.⁶¹

⁶¹ Dickson, *Dublin*, 201-257.

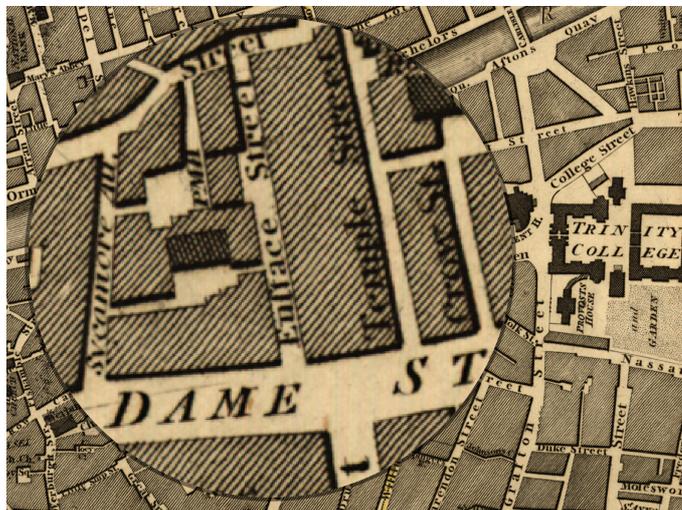


Figure 1 (top) & Figure 2 (above; detail of Eustace Street, location of the Dublin Library Society): A Plan of the City of Dublin [...] 1797 (Courtesy of the Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, LCCN 2004626017)¹

¹ William Faden, Samuel John Neele, *A Plan of the City of Dublin: as Surveyed for the Use of the Divisional Justices to Which Have Been Added Plans of the Canal Harbour and its Junction with the Grand Canal, the Royal Canal, and Every Projection and Alteration to the Present Time, 1797* (London: W. Faden; Dublin: Sold by **W. Allen & J. Archer**, 1797), accessed from the Library of Congress, 21 January 2017, <https://www.loc.gov/item/2004626017/>.

Chapter 5: Eighteenth-Century Dublin Libraries

The bequest of the private library of Archbishop Narcissus Marsh (1638-1713) to the people of Ireland in the first decade of the eighteenth century could be regarded as the earliest single display of Irish cultural patriotism in a library context. However, later in the century, its static holdings and lack of available contemporary and informational printed matter meant that Dubliners had to look elsewhere for print. Even those affiliated with the institutional libraries such as Trinity College Dublin, Dublin Society, and the Royal Irish Academy, were faced with access constraints. Dublin coffee houses became popular venues for an expanding reading public. They had a symbiotic relationship with the print trade in the generation and dissemination of information products in the eighteenth century. Moreover, as in Britain, the Dublin circulating library developed from the enterprising bookseller's inclination to set aside a shelf of books to lend for a fee.¹ Soon, several circulating libraries appeared in the city, in competition with each other. The practice of sociability in Dublin's literary and enlightened public sphere led to the opening of reading rooms within bookshops for the perusal of books, pamphlets and newspapers. In 1791, the Dublin Library Society combined most of these characteristics with a less-restrictive membership, and therefore provided Dubliners with almost a hundred years of public reference library service (and a lending facility from 1815) prior to the arrival of the National Library of Ireland in 1877.

Prior to addressing the origins of the Dublin Library, it is important to highlight the evolution of public access to print during the enlargement of the literary public sphere in Dublin, to 1791. Additionally, themes of patriotism and improvement—developed within the print trade—coincided with a public desire for an accessible repository of contemporary and quality literature in Georgian Dublin. Also, for the lower social orders, radical reading societies provided access to some Enlightenment literature, much to the dismay of those seeking to restrict exposure to such works. This chapter, then, will explore societal

¹ Keith Manley notes that the practice of booksellers lending books in Britain goes as far back as the 1660s but a separate lending stock within a bookseller's shop began with Allan Ramsay's Edinburgh venture in 1725: Keith Manley, "The Road to Camelot: Lotteries, the Circle of Learning and the 'Circular' Library of Samuel Fancourt," *The Library: The Transactions of the Bibliographical Society*, 7th series, vol. 8, no. 4 (December 2007), 399.

influences of libraries and the print trade in eighteenth-century Dublin to highlight their impact on shaping and constructing society.²

Marsh's Library

In the preface to a 1739 publication of Sir James Ware's ecclesiastical history of Ireland, Sir Walter Harris (1686-1761) wrote of Marsh's Library: 'This curious Repository of Learning, I must thankfully own, I found always open to me; as indeed it is to all Lovers of Books at the most convenient Hours, without Delay or Difficulty'.³ Apart from the library at Trinity College, Marsh's would have been the ideal place to find books and manuscripts on clerical history at that time. Founded in 1701 and incorporated as a public library by Act of Parliament in 1707, Marsh's Library remains the earliest example of a public library in Ireland, well before the Armagh Public Library was incorporated in 1773.⁴ Archbishop Marsh thought of the idea of a public library after having experienced, as Provost of Trinity College, the difficulty facing students obtaining access to books for research. Marsh also lamented the lack of reading material relevant to the researches of the 'divines of the city' and those who 'come to it about business'.⁵ This would suggest that the library's strength was in theology and ecclesiastical history, although, together with three other collections comprising the entire library in the eighteenth century (the last bequeathed in 1745), there was also a range of subjects much as one would find in an extensive private library.

W.N. Osborough sees Marsh as a product of the Anglican movement supporting education through the Established Church.⁶ Indeed, the explicitly titled 1707 'Act for settling and preserving a publick library for ever...' opens with Marsh's

² Rose, "Alternative Futures for Library History," 53-54.

³ James Ware, *The Whole Works of Sir James Ware Concerning Ireland, Revised and Improved, In Three Volumes* (Dublin: Printed for the Author, by E. Jones, 1739), 1:[iii].

⁴ For more on Marsh's Library, see McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen*; McCarthy and Simmons, eds., *The Making of Marsh's Library*; and McCarthy and Simmons, eds., *Marsh's Library: A Mirror on the World*. Also, see Abbas, "Coffee Houses, Early 'Public' Libraries and the Print Trade in Eighteenth-Century Dublin," 43-53. W.N. Osborough, "6 Anne, chapter 19: 'settling and preserving a publick library for ever'," in McCarthy and Simmons, eds., *Marsh's Library—A Mirror on the World*, 59. Richard C. Cole lists the year for the Armagh library as 1774: "Community Lending Libraries in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 118.

⁵ McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen*, 41; Richard Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland* (London: J.W. Parker, 1840), ii, 111, cited in McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen*, 41.

⁶ Osborough, "6 Anne, chapter 19: 'settling and preserving a publick library for ever'," 60.

'generous inclinations' to the 'publick good of this Kingdom, for the Propagation of the true Christian Religion, as by Law Established; and for the Encouragement of Learning'.⁷ Prior to this, Marsh had written to a colleague that he wished his library to be 'well furnished with such books as may render it useful to all sorts of persons', significantly specifying subjects apart from religion.⁸ This was enshrined in the 1707 Act, making it available 'for the Use of all Persons' who adhered to the library's rules.⁹ However, in 1713, the governors of the library limited the permitted entrants to 'Graduates and Gentlemen', possibly to restrict either certain persons of an undesired religion or social status, or simply those who did not comport themselves in a gentlemanly manner.¹⁰ Yet, there is little or no evidence to suggest that Catholics were welcome, with the exception of Dr Cornelius Nary (1658-1738), who donated his *New History of the World* to the library in 1720.¹¹ While Barnard stresses that it remains unproven whether Nary read there, the Catholic priest for the parish of St. Michan, Dublin (1698-1738) is reported to have spent time researching there while 'in hiding' from the authorities charged with enforcing the penal laws. If this were indeed the case, according to Muriel McCarthy, it would have been ironic that a Catholic priest was given shelter and leave to study in the library 'whose founder was himself responsible for writing some of the penal laws'.¹² Sir Walter Harris (from the preface to Ware, above) was one of the leading Anglicans calling for the maintenance and enforcement of the penal laws against Catholics, and by all accounts, at least for the eighteenth century, Marsh's Library would have been closer to a 'proto-Representative Church Body library', rather than a public library for all.¹³

⁷ *Public General Acts, 6 Anne c. 19*, "An Act for Settling and Preserving a Publick Library For Ever..." (Dublin: Printed by Andrew Cook, 1707), 173.

⁸ Archbishop Marsh to Dr Thomas Smith, 26 January 1703, in Mant, *History of the Church of Ireland*, ii: 113; Muriel McCarthy, "Introduction," in McCarthy and Simmons, eds., *The Making of Marsh's Library*, 14.

⁹ *Public General Acts, 6 Anne c. 19*, 174.

¹⁰ McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen*, 45.

¹¹ Cornelius Nary, *A New History of the World...* (Dublin, 1720), cited in McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen*, 62.

¹² Barnard also suggests that Nary and other authors could well have treated Marsh's as an early legal deposit library: Toby Barnard, "Marsh's Library and the Reading Public," in McCarthy and Simmons, eds., *The Making of Marsh's Library*, 159; McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen*, 62, citing Nicholas Donnelly, *Short Histories of Dublin Parishes* (Dublin: Catholic Trust Society of Ireland, 1912), 11:50-55.

¹³ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 196-197; Barnard, "Marsh's Library and the Reading Public," 149. Surviving visitors' books begin at 1826: McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen*, 99.

A news piece on Marsh's Library in the *Dublin Chronicle* (5 January 1792) 'regretted that so valuable a Repository is so little frequented'. One of the criticisms of Marsh's, later in the eighteenth century, was that its holdings remained static during a century in which upwards of 24,000 books, pamphlets and newspapers were printed in Dublin. Indeed, an 1811 Dublin guidebook lamented that because of these restrictions, 'very few now derive any advantage from the Doctor's liberal institution'. Consequently, the wider public certainly looked elsewhere in their pursuit of print. Michael Brown singles out the Dublin coffee house as a plausible alternative to Marsh's Library. Moreover, he notes a shift from the quasi-official public sphere represented by Marsh's—a product of the Ascendancy—to an unofficial, literary public sphere represented by the coffee houses, where newspapers and other printed material were available to the wider public for dissemination and discussion.¹⁴ This will be explored after a look at the main institutional libraries in eighteenth-century Dublin.

Institutional Libraries

A few institutions provided a library service to those with affiliations. The formation of Trinity College Dublin's library began within the first few decades of the college's establishment in 1592 to promote 'civility, learning and Protestant piety'. In the time of Archbishop Marsh, fellows or graduate students were only allowed in the Trinity College library in the presence of the librarian, between 8am and 10am, then 2pm to 4pm. These terms remained much the same until the nineteenth century (when in 1817 opening was extended by one hour) but restrictions were relaxed somewhat for fellows to introduce 'strangers' into the library. However, a lending library was introduced in 1762 but, again, the hours were prohibitive (two hours on Tuesdays and Fridays) and borrowing required a deposit equal to the value of the book.¹⁵ As will be shown below, fifteen students became founding members of the Dublin Library Society in 1791, and they must have been motivated to do so from the stringent rules at the College library.

¹⁴ *Dublin Chronicle*, 5 January 1792; Dickson, *Dublin*, 177-178; *Picture of Dublin for 1811*, 172; Brown, "Location of Learning in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 104-126.

¹⁵ Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 1; 70-71; 93-94 & 147-149.

Upon its establishment in 1731, the Dublin Society (examined in Chapter 8) began accumulating manuscripts and printed material for a library. By 1795, the society's library held just over 2,100 books, with several valuable donations and bequests. Access to the library was restricted to members only and even after formal rules and regulations were implemented in 1811, only professors were permitted to borrow books for their lectures. The 1811 regulations also set the library's opening hours: 8am-5pm and 6pm to sunset, from 25 March to 29 September; and 9am to sunset in the remainder of the year. In 1835, plans commenced for the transfer of significant portions of this library for the foundation of a national library. This did not materialise until 1877, when the National Library of Ireland was established.¹⁶

Like the Dublin Society, access to the Royal Irish Academy's library was restricted to its members. The Academy began its collection of books and manuscripts shortly after its foundation in 1785, and its first librarian was appointed in 1788 (Rev. Daniel Augustus Beaufort).¹⁷ The scientist **Richard Kirwan** was appointed Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy on 16 March 1791.¹⁸ His plan to establish the Dublin Library Society shortly after his appointment may well have been influenced by the restrictive access to the Academy's library for its members: there was no reading room and members were allowed to peruse the library shelves only on Mondays.¹⁹

Other libraries worth mentioning are those affiliated with the professions of law (Society of King's Inns) and medicine (College of Surgeons and College of Physicians). All were specialised, occupational libraries restricted to its members, and as will be shown, the books donated by members of the legal and medical professions to the Dublin Library Society upon its foundation indicate an interest in subjects outside their professions. However, as the Society of King's Inns library did not begin operation until after 1792, this might

¹⁶ Berry, *History of the Royal Dublin Society*, 170; 176; Long, "Institutional Libraries and Private Collections," 283-285. For a House of Commons report, in 1836, exploring the possibility of creating a national library from the Dublin Society's holdings, see p. 288.

¹⁷ Siobhan Fitzpatrick, "Introduction," in Cunningham and Fitzpatrick, eds., *Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library*, iii. Within four decades, the Academy's holdings were over 4,500 books, manuscripts and journals: *ibid.*, xi.

¹⁸ Royal Irish Academy, *RIA Minute Book*, vol. 1, 67.

¹⁹ Warburton et al., *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:921.

account for the high number of men from the legal profession (59) that joined the Dublin Library in 1791.²⁰

Dubliners who did not belong to Trinity College or the other institutional libraries were furnished with alternatives to the stagnant holdings of Marsh's Library. Coffee houses and circulating libraries—facilitated by the Dublin print trade—provided a rudimentary public library service to an expanding reading public in the eighteenth century. Gradually, quality print was made available.

Coffee Houses and the Print Trade

When Dublin's first coffee house arrived in 1664, the Irish print trade was under strict government control, with the King's Printer prohibited to print anything that the state deemed to be negative towards it.²¹ Therefore, early-seventeenth century print was limited to the official public sphere, consisting of the church and state, and largely of the propaganda sort. However, some reading material—chiefly religious, but also chronicles, histories and other subjects—reached a nascent Dublin market that was not lucrative enough for English booksellers to exploit, other than orders from the library of Trinity College Dublin.²² Towards the end of the seventeenth century, the government's control of the press diminished, partly due to somewhat lighter regulation and to the organisation of the printers', booksellers' and stationers' Guild of St. Luke the Evangelist, established in 1670.²³

As mentioned above, from the late-seventeenth century onwards, coffee houses acted as early information and reading centres in Dublin. They supplied newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals, broadsides, parliamentary votes, shipping lists, book auction catalogues, and other printed matter for the public to imbibe with their coffee. The mercantile, legal, and journalistic occupations were represented in coffee houses that were situated near buildings like the Custom House and the Royal Exchange, the Four Courts, Dublin Castle, and Parliament

²⁰ Kenny, *King's Inns and the Battle of the Books*, 6-10.

²¹ Kennedy, "Dublin's Coffee Houses," 29; Casteleyn, *History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland*, 44; Gillespie, *Reading Ireland*, 55-74.

²² Gillespie, *Reading Ireland*, 60; 62-68. Of course, there were numerous private libraries throughout the country.

²³ *Ibid.*, 75-77; Pollard, *Dictionary*, ix-xv.

House.²⁴ Newly established societies were often accommodated in the coffee house—the Dublin Society held its first meetings in the Anne and Grecian Coffee House, at Essex Bridge, from 1731.²⁵ Significantly, the coffee house was a public venue for men from a wider range of social orders than previously congregated in a public place other than the church.²⁶ Newspapers such as the *Dublin Daily Advertiser* recognised the potential for wide exposure and were distributed 'gratis' to coffee houses and taverns so that they 'may be read by all degrees of people, to the intent that the advertisements may be universally seen'.²⁷ Newspapers, public notices, and pamphlets were read and discussed in the coffee houses, while news and gossip were extracted from them and printed in the local papers.²⁸

The political establishment was often a target for the newspapermen who frequented coffee houses, evidenced in a letter to a newspaper in 1749: 'I have a certain Coffee-House Acquaintance, who is utterly ignorant of what passes at Home, but perfectly conversant in the Politics and News of Constantinople and Ispahan. He often whispers to me a Paragraph out of a News Paper, to shew his Erudition and Secrecy, two Requisites for a Politician'. Patriotic newspapers like the *Hibernian Journal*, often in trouble with Dublin Castle for criticising the government, even provided hints to reveal the identity of a coffee house spy who, at ten guineas per week, was in the Castle's pay. That newspaper's proprietor, **Thomas McDonnell**, often included examples of political debates in Dublin's coffee houses. On one occasion, at the Globe Coffee House in Essex Street, he denounced a 'grave Gentleman' who attacked the 'impiety of opposing the Measures of Government', before concluding a year later that the political debates that transpire at the Globe were 'very unavailing to Patriot readers'.²⁹ Such was the significance of the coffee house as a venue for the dissemination and discussion of information products that it fuelled

²⁴ Abbas, "'A Fund of entertaining and useful Information'," 42-43.

²⁵ Kennedy, "Dublin's Coffee Houses," 32. The society moved into its own building in 1767 in Grafton Street: Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:23.

²⁶ There is no evidence suggesting women frequented coffee houses, though many were servers or proprietors: Markman Ellis, *The Coffee House: A Cultural History* (London: Phoenix, 2005), 66-67.

²⁷ *Dublin Daily Advertiser*, 7 October 1736.

²⁸ *Dublin Daily Advertiser*, 19 Nov 1736; Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:267.

²⁹ *The Censor*, 17-24 June 1749; *Hibernian Journal*, 17 January 1772; *ibid.*, 22 January 1772; *Hibernian Journal*, 1 January 1773.

public debate on political issues, indicating a formation of an alternative public sphere in eighteenth-century Dublin, separate from Parliament House and Dublin Castle.

The coffee house link with the print trade was not through information dissemination alone, as many coffee house proprietors had printing presses on their premises and several produced their own newspapers, public notices and information sheets.³⁰ For example, Francis Dickson owned the Union Coffee House, at Cork-Hill, and printed an announcement from London declaring victory at the Battle of Malplaquet. He reprinted the notice and distributed copies to other coffee houses but the original print from London was on view at his coffee establishment.³¹ Dickson also printed the *Votes of the House of Commons of Ireland* for several years and, in 1710, printed them at his coffee house. Even examples of early grey literature were available. A notice for a performance in aid of a hospital in George's Lane concluded: 'A printed State of the Hospital from its first Opening, on the 25th of March, 1745, to the 1st of November, 1750, may be seen at all the Coffee-Houses, and is given Gratis at said Hospital'.³²

Book auctions were often held in coffee houses and catalogues were available there for advance perusal—as were the books, in some cases. Also, some books and pamphlets were sold in coffee houses. An Irish reprint of the fourth edition of Jonathan Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, has the following imprint: 'Dublin: re-printed; and are to be sold only at Dick's and Lloyd's Coffee houses, and at the printing-press in Fishamble Street, 1705'.³³ Dick's Coffee House, in Skinner Row—

³⁰ On coffee houses in general, see Ellis, *The Coffee House: A Cultural History*. For the role of coffee houses within the print trade, see Abbas, "Coffee Houses, Early 'Public' Libraries and the Print Trade in Eighteenth-Century Dublin," 54-77; Abbas, "'A Fund of entertaining and useful Information,'" 42-47; Kennedy, "'Politicks, coffee and news'"; and Kennedy, "Dublin's Coffee Houses." Also, see Gilbert, *A History of the City of Dublin*, 3 vols. On the burgeoning newspaper trade in Dublin, see Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*.

³¹ *Late Last Night the Following Account was Brought Over by an Express Arrived Here from Great Britain. Windsor-Castle, September 4. 1709. This Morning Arrived Here Lieutenant-Colonel Graham, Being Dispatched Express from the Duke of Marlborough to Her Majesty, and Brought the Following Letter from His Grace to the Right Honourable Mr. Secretary Boyle* (Published by authority. Printed by J. Tonson, at Grays-Inn Gate. 1709. Re-printed by Francis Dickson at the Union Coffee-House on Cork-Hill; where the original print is to be seen, 1709. ESTC T221096); Pollard, *Dictionary*, 153.

³² Thomas Morell, *Judas Maccabæus. A Sacred Drama. As It Is Performed at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden. The Musick by Mr. Handel* (Dublin: Printed by James Hoey, at the Sign of Mercury, in Skinner-Row, 1751).

³³ Kennedy, "'Book mad': The Sale of Books by Auction in Eighteenth-Century Dublin"; Kennedy, "'Politicks, coffee, and news'"; James W. Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 82-86; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 367; Abbas, "'A Fund of entertaining and useful Information,'" 45.

where proprietor Richard Pue published his *Pue's Occurrences*—was a popular venue that exemplified the interconnection of the coffee house with virtually all functions of the print trade. Unlike London's eighteenth-century coffee houses, there is no evidence suggesting that Dick's, or any other Dublin coffee houses, acted as lending libraries.³⁴ But a culture of reading and discussion was facilitated in the coffee house, resulting in a significant expansion of the reading public to include those from the emerging lower social orders—albeit where women were excluded.³⁵ With the circulating library, they provided alternatives within Dublin's literary public sphere, away from the traditional church/state axis embodied by the public library of Archbishop Marsh and the library at Trinity College.³⁶

Circulating Libraries

Coffee houses were important urban venues for information production and dissemination in the eighteenth century. Habermas highlighted them as early informal venues that 'embraced the wider strata of the middle class, including craftsmen and shopkeepers'. In a Dublin context, they were 'locations of learning', separate from the official public sphere, in 'the heart of the Irish Enlightenment'.³⁷ It is noteworthy, then, that this did not reflect contemporary public opinion. Overall, advertisements and commentary in praise of the coffee house as an information repository, an informal venue for unprecedented social mixing, and a location promoting Enlightenment ideals did not appear in the eighteenth-century Dublin press. However, towards the end of the century, buoyed by events abroad, Enlightenment attitudes promoting intellectual improvement and extensive knowledge were evident in newspaper advertisements and commentary on Dublin's commercial libraries and the booksellers who started them.

³⁴ For London coffee house libraries see Ellis, "Coffee-House Libraries in Mid-Eighteenth Century London,"; Ellis, *Coffee-House Library Short-Title Catalogue*; Paul Kaufman, "Coffee Houses as Reading Centres," in *Libraries and Their Users*, 115-127; and McCue, "Libraries of the London Coffeehouses."

³⁵ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 224-230; Webster, *Theories of the Information Society*, 163-164. For a wider discussion of the public and Jürgen Habermas, see Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 3-15.

³⁶ Ellis, "Coffee-House Libraries in Mid-Eighteenth-Century London," 5; Pincus, "'Coffee politicians does create,'" 807-834; Cowan, "The Rise of the Coffeehouse Reconsidered," 21-46; Brown, "Location of Learning in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 116."

³⁷ Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, 33; Brown, "Location of Learning in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland"; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 229.

The Dublin circulating library emerged from the enterprising practice of a Catholic bookseller, James Hoey, who in 1735—ten years after they first appeared in Scotland—set aside a shelf in his shop for ‘Romances and novels lent to be read’.³⁸ Gradually, Hoey added other, less frivolous subjects, such as histories, travels and voyages, and polite literature, to his growing circulating library venture. Rivals appeared on the Dublin scene and within a few decades, there were circulating libraries all over the city centre. Increased competition resulted in prices and terms becoming more agreeable to a large middle class. Booksellers Richard Watts (1754, Skinner Row) and Thomas Armitage (1762, Draper’s Court) offered terms and prices comparable to Hoey, while James Williams II (1763, also of Skinner Row) lowered his prices to rival the others. Favourable rates resulted in an expanding readership. William Spotswood (1774, 40 College Green) and Stephen Colbert (1775, Stephen Street) were in competition with each other but Spotswood emphasised his borrowing rates to ‘be agreeable to every Class of Readers’. Nicholas Butler (1774, Crane Lane, then Crampton Court) also advertised that his rates were the lowest in the city: ‘By which Means the Lovers of refined and rational Amusement may be entertained and improved at a moderate Rate’.³⁹

Women were excluded as patrons of the Dublin coffee houses but were targeted by the circulating library keepers as a rather untapped market. John Mitchell strategically advertised his circulating library in his edition of *The Lady’s Companion* (1767), while Thomas Hope (1796, 36 Exchequer Street) combined his library with his jewellery trade: ‘Union of Ornaments for the mind and body, best jewellery on one side, novels and histories on the other’. In 1784, ten years after Spotswood’s appeal to ‘every class of readers’, Charles Brown renamed his circulating library the Grafton-Street Library (93 Grafton Street), ‘that in the instance and desire of many of the Nobility and Gentry in the above neighbourhood’, he had ‘opened the most complete and extensive

³⁸ Pollard, *Dictionary*, 292. On booksellers setting up early circulating libraries, see Kaufman, “The Community Library: A Chapter in English Social History,” 190; Manley, “Booksellers, Peruke-Makers, and Rabbit-Merchants,” 32; Manley, “The Road to Camelot,” 398-399.

³⁹ Abbas, “A Fund of entertaining and useful Information,” 49; *Freeman’s Journal*, 28 May 1774; *Hibernian Journal*, 2 Nov 1774. Butler sold his library and book business two years later and entered the jewellery trade. He reappeared as a ‘maker of patriotic Irish sword canes and buttons’, was an active United Irishman (‘a papist and a mad Jacobin’), and became secretary of the radical ‘Strugglers’ Club’, another underground republican group in Dublin at the end of the eighteenth century: Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 83; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 69. For radical reading clubs, see p. 129-130.

circulating library' with 'one hundred copies of every new publication'. Thomas Jackson acquired Spotswood's circulating library (which had since moved to 4 Essex Gate, near Parliament Street) in April 1784, and titled his advertisement, 'Elegant and Entertaining Improvement', hoping to appeal to Brown's desired clientele.⁴⁰

Another bookseller, Anthony Gerna, began his career as an Italian translator and instructor to the nobility as early as 1778, having arrived in Ireland around 1773.⁴¹ Ten years later, he opened his 'Public Library of French Literature' (31 College Green), in which he also included books in the Spanish and Italian languages. This circulating library did not last very long as Gerna decided to sell his library that same year, addressing the nobility and gentry at 'this enlightened Period, when the Polite Languages of Europe, are disseminated for the Intercourse of Knowledge, Elegance of Taste, and Advantage of Science'. Gerna returned in 1790 with his 'Cabinet Litteraire', a sociable library with foreign newspapers and books in a comfortable setting. The *Dublin Chronicle*, perhaps delighted with the advertising revenue, included a piece in its city news section in praise of Gerna: 'As this is the first attempt of the kind in this Kingdom, it is humbly hoped it will be favoured with the Patronage of a learned, generous and enlightened Nation'.⁴²

Vincent Dowling titled an advertisement for his Apollo Circulating Library (13 Suffolk Street) 'Literary Advantage' and began operation in December 1791 with a range of subjects in addition to French, Greek, and Latin works.⁴³ After moving to 21 Suffolk Street in 1794, Dowling emphasised the quality of his library to Dublin readers:

This Collection is by no Means *confined* to mere *Novels* and *Romances*, the *usual* Furniture of Circulating Libraries, but includes the best Authors

⁴⁰ Abbas, "'A Fund of entertaining and useful Information'," 50; William Combe, *The Philosopher in Bristol* (Dublin, [1784]).

⁴¹ Pasquale Anfossi and A. Gerna. *Il Geloso in Cimento: A New Comic Opera...* (Dublin, [1778]), 86; *Dublin Chronicle*, 29 January 1791. On Gerna, see Máire Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, SVEC 2001:7 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2001), 114-116.

⁴² *Hibernian Journal*, 20 February 1788; *ibid.*, 14 April 1788; *Dublin Chronicle*, 1 January 1791.

⁴³ *Morning Post*, 15 September 1791. Dublin Castle informer Francis Higgins, of the *Freeman's Journal*, wrote that he had employed Dowling as a parliamentary reporter but discharged him due to his connection with Catholic Committee leader and United Irishman **John Sweetman**. Higgins was convinced Dowling was about to insert 'a most wicked charge against government relative to Roman Catholic interest': Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 26 May 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 163.

in History, Biography, natural History, Philosophy, Chemistry, Poetry, Dramatics, Politics, and Belles Lettres.⁴⁴

Distancing himself further from the average circulating library, he later boasted a collection of several thousand volumes, and his 1794 advertisement aimed at the cultivation and improvement of readers:

The Fund of Information and Amusement which this Establishment presents, must strike every discerning Mind, friendly to the Improvement of Knowledge and refined Taste, especially in the rising Generation, while the Terms of Subscription unite the Advantages with the strictest Economy, and point out a rational and most advantageous Source of Amusement to those who prefer 'The Feast of Reason and the well stored Mind' before Recreations of a much more expensive and less advantageous Nature.⁴⁵

In total, seventeen separate circulating libraries operated in Dublin in the eighteenth century.⁴⁶ Together with coffee houses,⁴⁷ they provided greater public access to print and were alternatives to Marsh's Library and the restrictive institutional libraries and represented a more inclusive, enlightened public sphere in Dublin.⁴⁸ As evidenced by advertisements and actions by members of the print trade, the notion of an enlightened Irish public was reflected in the business and pleasure of books.

However, the second city of the British Empire lacked a public library where rare, contemporary, and quality reading material could be consulted. In 1791, the Dublin Library Society filled that void, regardless of faith and social status (although two guineas were required to join), at a time when signs of sectarian unrest and patriotic fervour were gripping the city.⁴⁹ Many of its founding members and committeemen were prominent players in the initial drive for legislative independence, and some, eventually, for revolutionary upheaval in favour of a republic. Before examining the library and its members, a closer look at themes of patriotism and improvement within Dublin's literary public

⁴⁴ *Hibernian Journal*, 22 January 1794.

⁴⁵ *Hibernian Journal*, 6 June 1794; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 220.

⁴⁶ A library passed on to relatives or sold on has been treated as one entry: Hoey, Watts, Armitage, Williams II, Mitchell, Spotswood/Jackson, Stewart, Butler, Colbert, Latham, Brown, Gerna, Dowling, Hime, Hope, Twigg, and White: Abbas, "Coffee Houses, Early 'Public' Libraries, and the Print Trade," Appendix 2, 145.

⁴⁷ To date, forty-one separate seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Dublin coffee houses have been identified: *ibid.*, Appendix 1, 145.

⁴⁸ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 220.

⁴⁹ Dickson, *Dublin*, 234.

sphere will further contextualise the historical environment in which the Dublin Library was established.

Patriotism and Improvement

The magnitude of the print revolution in Ireland raised fears among some that an overturning of the entire social order was imminent and that improvement could be detrimental to society. In 1725, George Faulkner, friend and publisher of Jonathan Swift, inserted an editorial on the front page of his *Dublin Journal* expressing amazement at the power of the newspaper in disseminating news to a wider public as a means of 'improving the mind'. However, the object of scorn was not Protestant or Papist, nor was it critic or supporter of the government. Rather, it reflected the writer's disdain for what he saw as an unintended consequence of this printing phenomenon:

[B]ut the cheapness and easiness of the purchase, for the meaner sort of people, for whom these sorts of compositions were never intended, finding they can be learned men at the expence of one penny *per week*, never fail to put themselves upon a level with gentlemen in modern history; the fault of this alluring cheapness has made cobblers and journeymen taylors as familiar with *Stockholm* and *Madrid*, as with their own stalls and shopboards.⁵⁰

It was determined that the remedy for this problem would be to raise the price of the newspaper to make it unaffordable for the lower social orders. The following week, after printing a stern rebuttal from a porter calling himself 'Timothy Broadshoulder', Faulkner acknowledged: 'As I blame Men of Mr Broadshoulder's profession for reading too much of what does not concern them; I must also blame others for reading too little'. He concluded that men should 'want that improved reason and that enlightened knowledge, that should distinguish them from irrational beings'.⁵¹ Such was the importance of the newspaper, that it facilitated an expanded reading public. In identifying the newspaper as an early vehicle of the 'print-capitalism' that assisted the establishment of a 'national consciousness', Benedict Anderson noted Friedrich Hegel's later observation that 'newspapers serve modern man as a substitute for morning prayers'.⁵² Faulkner's ultimate decision to highlight the benefits of

⁵⁰ Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*, 30 March 1725.

⁵¹ Women escaped Faulkner's criticism but not his condescension: 'Romances are, and were always the prerogative of the ladies': Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*, 6 April 1725.

⁵² Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 34-39.

his medium reflected the spirit of improvement through the mass dissemination of print.

In the second half of the eighteenth century, expressions of patriotism blended with the promotion of improvement and encouragement of reading, aimed at a wider public through the marketing of an affordable, Irish-made product. As for other printed matter, the Dublin print trade experienced a boom in what was largely a reprint trade due to Ireland's falling outside the 1709 Copyright Act. This led to an expansion of readers who could afford the cheaper Dublin reprint over a newly released, expensive London import.⁵³ However, some London publishers adjusted quickly and took subscriptions from Irish buyers for London editions at comparable prices. This prompted the same George Faulkner, who thirty years earlier had railed against the expansion of the news-reading public, to launch a patriotic bid to produce his edition for the benefit of the Irish economy:

All the Money of the Dublin edition will be laid out here among the Letterfounders, Paper Makers, Printers, Rag-gatherers, and other Poor People depending on those Branches of Business; whereas any Money that is subscribed to any foreign Edition will drain this poor Country of so much Cash, and be a means of destroying the above Manufactures, and enrich one London bookseller. The Dublin Edition will not only be better printed and much sooner published than the English one, but be almost as cheap again; and may not only be a Means of supporting the above Manufactures in Ireland, but also to frustrate the evil Designs that have been made to destroy Printing in this nation, many attempts having been made for that Purpose.⁵⁴

Such was the importance of the Irish reprint trade on the domestic economy that there was an uproar in the Dublin newspapers whenever it was reported that London imprints of English novels were flooding the Irish market to prevent the production of Irish reprints.⁵⁵ Irish parliamentarians resisted pressure from the British to extend the 1709 Copyright Act to Ireland, arguing

⁵³ Abbas, "Coffee Houses, Early 'Public' Libraries and the Print Trade," 41. Until the Importation Act was passed in 1739, these reprints could legally be exported to England: Ó Ciosáin and Hutton, "History of the Book in Ireland," 194; Kennedy, "The Domestic and International Trade of an Eighteenth-Century Dublin Bookseller," 94.

⁵⁴ Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, 130-131, citing *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 8 April 1758.

⁵⁵ Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 99. For a comprehensive study on the Dublin print trade, see M. Pollard, *Dublin's Trade in Books, 1550-1800: Lyell Lectures, 1986-1987* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). On the Dublin print trade and the Enlightenment, see Sher, *The Enlightenment & the Book*, particularly the chapter titled "The Rise and Fall of Irish Reprinting," 443-502.

that it would destroy the Irish economy and bolster Dutch exports to Britain, without benefiting the British.⁵⁶

Significantly, the Irish print trade was not simply about reprinting English novels cheaply for profit. Many eighteenth-century publishers and printers prided themselves in producing fine Dublin editions of quality works for the masses at reasonable prices, often on principles of cultural patriotism, improvement and wider access. In 1789, John Chambers (5 Abbey Street) amassed 807 subscribers for his edition of *Modern Geography* and stated that he 'published the work "not more with a view to profit than to prove that this country has spirit, when encouraged, not only to undertake literary publications on an English scale of liberality, but even to attempt improvement thereon"'.⁵⁷ **William Jones** (86 Dame Street) opened an advertisement for his 1791 edition of *Shakespeare's Dramatic Works* with 'To the Friends of Literature in Ireland'.⁵⁸ His goal was to produce an improved edition by adding notes and commentary by Samuel Johnson and others but also to include an illustration by an Irish artist. Jones aimed this edition at the 'low and middling ranks' and to 'every class of readers'.⁵⁹ Also aiming at the wider public, Robert Marchbank (10 Temple Lane) proposed to publish by subscription Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* in two volumes and fifty-two numbers, at one shilling each 'To enlarge the Circulation of this Fund of Learning, by facilitating the Acquisition of a Book so indispensably essential for the Perusal of all Ranks and Societies of Readers, especially those whose Circumstances do not permit them to become Purchasers at once of so necessary a Work'. Marchbank also stressed 'that the Subscribers' Names shall be printed, as Patrons of Literature, and Encouragers of the Arts and Manufacturers of Ireland'.⁶⁰

There was an obvious trend among eighteenth-century Irish publishers to present their products as a demonstration of their patriotism and recognition of their subscribers as equally validating their support for Irish initiatives.

⁵⁶ Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, 5.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 21; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 99.

⁵⁸ *Morning Post*, 26 March 1791.

⁵⁹ Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, 20.

⁶⁰ *Hibernian Journal*, 22 August 1794.

Before and after legislative independence from Britain, publications by the likes of Faulkner, Chambers, Jones, and Marchbank indicated a desire to promote the Irish publishing industry as at least equal to the British.⁶¹ The Catholic publisher **James Moore** (45 College Green), also known for his reasonably priced publication of Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* (with **Randal McAllister**; they also proposed Paine as an honorary member of the United Irishmen), embarked on a colossal production of an eighteen-volume Dublin edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1790-1801).⁶² Moore's undertaking, one of the most prominent publications in Ireland in the late-eighteenth century, was better known for its domestic production than its scholarly contents. Moore emphasised in his first volume that he 'was the "Printer, Publisher and sole Proprietor" of the whole work and that he was glad to serve "a discerning and liberal Nation" of readers'.⁶³ In his prospectus for the second volume, Moore stated that the 'work will be printed in superb style, suitable to the spirit and taste of the Irish Nation'. For those who subscribed, Moore pledged to 'record the Patrons of Literature in Ireland, and hand down their names to posterity as encouragers of a Work of such magnitude and celebrity'. Recognising the wider range of readership at the time, he concluded the prospectus by stating the project's aim to appeal to the 'profound Scholar, the accomplished Gentleman, and the Inquisitive Trader'.⁶⁴ Understandably, especially given the advertisements for which he paid to promote his project, newspaper articles praised Moore for his efforts to support the 'Irish Nation'.⁶⁵

Indeed, Irish newspaper proprietors were most appreciative of the revenue from lengthy advertisements of the Dublin booksellers, whom they regarded

⁶¹ Carpenter, "A Verse Confrontation in Late-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 38.

⁶² Pollard, *Dictionary*, 415. The eighteen volumes consisted of 'more than 14,500 pages of articles, and 542 copperplates'. There were also two supplements and various sets had volumes 19 and 20 as plates: Frank A. Kafker and Jeff Loveland, "The Publisher James Moore and His Dublin Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*: A Notable Eighteenth-Century Irish Publication," *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr* 26 (2011): 115. For Moore and McAllister as proposers of Paine for honorary membership of the United Irishmen, see p. 236-237.

⁶³ Johanna Archbold, "'The most extensive literary publication ever printed in Ireland': James Moore and the Publication of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* in Ireland, 1790-1797," in Gillian O'Brien and Finola O'Kane, eds., *Georgian Dublin* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2008), 187; 182-183.

⁶⁴ James Moore, *Dedicated, By Permission, to the King. This Day Is Published in 4to. By J. Moore, No. 45, College-Green, Dublin, Vol. II. ... of Encyclopædia Britannica; ...* [Prospectus for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*] (Dublin: James Moore, 1791), copy at National Library of Ireland, Dublin [L.O. Folder 5/1791/1].

⁶⁵ *Hibernian Journal*, 21 May 1790; *Freeman's Journal*, 24 September 1791; *Freeman's Journal*, 1 November 1791.

as true Irish patriots for their role in helping to cultivate the Irish mind. After attempting his own subscription library for the 'Literary and Fashionable' in 1790, **Richard White** (20 Dame Street) concentrated on his publishing and bookselling business, taking out several ads in the *Dublin Chronicle*.⁶⁶ In an editorial, the paper's owner, **William Sleater**, expressed his admiration for such esteemed, enlightened disseminators of knowledge in Ireland:

It must be a gratifying circumstance to every Irishman, to observe the vast progress this nation is making in its commercial importance, and also, that the minor advantages which await national opulence bear a proportional increase. To the public spirit and national enterprise disseminated amongst us, is to be contributed in a considerable degree, the improvement in Arts, and the progress to refinement, and perhaps there does not occur an instance of a more rapid advance to perfection in any given point, than is at this moment evinced in the superior manner in which the literary publications of this city are at this time executed. In its immediate consequence, it reflects a high degree of respectability on the character of the Booksellers, who, wherever Literature is justly esteemed, must be considered as a respectable order of men.⁶⁷

White was commended for his 'unprejudiced public spirit' in providing a commercial service for the common good. Sleater, a prolific publisher in his own right—almost 160 titles between 1754 and 1800⁶⁸—also benefitted from the Irish reprint trade and included a news section in his paper titled 'Literature' where he related such news and opinions as the above for the Irish literary market. Sleater had similar praise for **John Archer**, whose travels across Britain and continental Europe in search of books to sell in Ireland was received as a curiously patriotic gesture. On one occasion, Sleater reported that Archer had boarded a ship for Holyhead: 'if to promote useful knowledge, and advance the cause of literature be of real service to a country, every friend to Ireland must wish him success'.⁶⁹

Another newspaper proprietor, John Magee of the *Dublin Evening Post*, included similar pieces on the print trade as news stories. For Magee, even the dispersal of a valuable private library was a national concern. On the death of Irish politician Henry Flood in 1791, and subsequent ruminations over his will,

⁶⁶ *Dublin Chronicle*, 4 May 1790; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 607.

⁶⁷ *Dublin Chronicle*, 5 April 1791.

⁶⁸ *ESTC*.

⁶⁹ *Dublin Chronicle*, 3 September 1791.

Magee championed Trinity College as the ideal beneficiary of Flood's reputable collection of books and manuscripts. With a yearly endowment for further acquisitions, the college library had the potential to be 'the most noble repository of literary production in the world' and an honour to Ireland.⁷⁰

Perhaps the most celebrated sale of an Irish private library in the eighteenth century was that of Member of Parliament for Galway, Denis Daly, who passed away in October 1791. Known as 'an obsessive bibliophile', Daly collected many fine first editions and other rarities.⁷¹ After his death, the papers agonised that this valuable collection would be lost to Britain. In January 1792, the *Dublin Evening Post* included a piece in praise of booksellers **John Archer** and **William Jones** for their patriotic rescue of Daly's books so that they could be dispersed—and hopefully kept—in Ireland:

It is with the sincerest pleasure we can inform the public, that the valuable library of the Right Hon. Denis Daly, justly supposed to be one of the first private collections in Europe, will not be sent out of the kingdom for sale, as was at first apprehended. The indefatigable exertions of Mr John Archer and Mr William Jones, booksellers of this city, have prevented this by becoming purchasers of the whole. This is one of the many proofs of the rising state of this country, when two public spirited individuals are to be found to engage in an undertaking of so extensive a nature, in which we heartily wish them success; and have but their efforts to extend the literature of their country will meet with deserved approbation. To this we can add, that the books are now on the way from Dunsandle to Dublin; when they arrive we hope to be able to lay before the public further particulars respecting this interesting literary intelligence.⁷²

Archer, at this point, was bookseller to the Dublin Library Society and Jones was a founder member. They purchased the collection from Daly's family for £2,300 and published a lengthy catalogue of 1,441 items.⁷³ The *Freeman's Journal*, who rarely reported on the Dublin Library, mistook Archer's role there and conjectured: 'The Dublin Library Society, to whom, we believe, Mr. Archer is Treasurer, will have an opportunity of purchasing on reasonable terms; and, in the outset of so useful an institution, it will be of vast advantage, at once,

⁷⁰ *Dublin Evening Post*, 8 December 1791; *ibid.*, 20 December 1791. This was a celebrated topic in Ireland for some time. Flood's will was contested by his brother who was eventually awarded the estate; Trinity College did not receive anything: Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 104.

⁷¹ *DIB*; Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs," 267; Rankin, "Historical Writing," 282.

⁷² *Dublin Evening Post*, 21 January 1792. Daly's residence was in Dunsandle, Co. Galway.

⁷³ Kennedy, "The Domestic and International Trade of an Eighteenth-Century Dublin Bookseller," 96; Rankin, "Historical Writing," 282.

and without trouble, to make so useful an acquisition of elegant and useful learning'.⁷⁴ Another connection with the Dublin Library was that the auctioneer for the sale was the same James Vallance who rented out his rooms at 6 Eustace Street to the library. The Daly auction took place in a room on the same premises.

The sale was set for 1 May 1792 and the preface to the catalogue evinced more of the patriotic valour from these Irish lovers of literature:

They conceived it would have been, in some degree, disgraceful to the literary character of their Countrymen, if such a Library as this was carried out of the kingdom, to enrich the public, or private collections of other Nations.⁷⁵

The bidding was fierce, prompting the **Earl of Charlemont**, in a letter to his friend Edmond Malone, to regard this as a measure of the Irishman's sophistication, discernment, and bibliophilia:

You judged right respecting the sale of our poor friend's books. They have, I believe, sold for almost the double of what the family got for them. During the week of the auction the Dublin world was book mad. All men bought, they who could and they who could not read, and the prices were more than London would have afforded. I am glad of it for two reasons, because Archer is an honest man, and deserved success for the more than Irish spirit of his enterprise, and because four Scotch and two English booksellers were disappointed in their impudent expectation of finding Ireland a land of ignorance, where the best books might be purchased for a trifle.⁷⁶

The *Dublin Evening Post*, reporting that the sale surpassed previous ones in the country in terms of prices, echoed Lord Charlemont's statement about Archer:

The spirit with which the two gentlemen made the purchase, and the indefatigable zeal of Mr Archer—one of the gentlemen concerned—to serve the cause of literature in this country, by bringing into circulation scarce and valuable books, make their success in this adventure a matter of pleasure to the public.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ *Freeman's Journal*, 21 January 1792.

⁷⁵ *A Catalogue of the Library of the Late Right Honourable Denis Daly...* (Dublin: J. Archer and W. Jones, 1792), iii-iv. Of the preface, Deana Rankin notes the 'proud articulation of the links between the library, the nation, and democracy', whether simply a selling pitch or a patriotic approach: Rankin, "Historical Writing," 283.

⁷⁶ Lord Charlemont to Edmond Malone, 15 June 1792, Great Britain, Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, *The Manuscripts and Correspondence of James, First Earl of Charlemont*, vol. 2, 1784-1799, Historical Manuscripts Commission, Thirteenth Report, Appendix VIII, 193-194; Kennedy, "'Book mad': The Sale of Books by Auction in Eighteenth-Century Dublin," 48-49; Rankin, "Historical Writing," 282-283.

⁷⁷ *Dublin Evening Post*, 10 May 1792. Archer and Jones made a profit of 'nearly £1,200 on the sale': Kennedy, "The Domestic and International Trade of an Eighteenth-Century Dublin Bookseller," 97. The New

Despite the proximity of the Dublin Library Society to the sale in which the purchasers of Daly's collection were founding members (and Archer, the library's bookseller), the Dublin Library did not acquire anything at the sale. **Richard Edward Mercier**, former apprentice to John Archer, and secretary of the Dublin Library, purchased at the sale on behalf of Trinity College. From a study of an annotated copy of the Daly sale catalogue, fifty-three separate Dublin Library Society founding members purchased books at the sale, with several making multiple purchases.⁷⁸

Another example of the interest in quality reading material comes from an unlikely medium. One of the sidelines of the Irish stationer was the sale of lottery tickets. Advertisements for Irish lotteries flooded the front pages of Dublin's newspapers from the mid-eighteenth century onward. At the height of Dublin's lottery craze, some booksellers doubled as lottery-office keepers and sold tickets for cash prizes. In 1791, such a commodity were books that an enterprising bookseller set up a lottery in which they were the prizes.⁷⁹ One shilling, therefore, could have netted a grand prize of a book valued at nine shillings and a tuppence.⁸⁰ It was called the Literary Lottery and the list of potential prizes 'comprehends the most valuable BOOKS in the republic of letters, and every new work of merit in Divinity, Law, History, &c'.⁸¹ Evidently, this was not a giveaway of frivolous novels and romances. By the end of the year the office of James Mehain had moved from 75 Aungier Street to 49 Essex Street, at the corner of Crampton Court—next door to **Thomas McDonnell** of the *Hibernian Journal* (at No. 50). The two may have begun a partnership for

York Public Library copy of the catalogue, annotated with prices and totals, suggests a total of £3,370.6.2 was raised from the sale. If these figures are accurate, they would have netted just over £1,070: *Catalogue of the Library of the Late Right Honourable Denis Daly...*, accessed 10 December 2015, <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/012309066/Home>, leaf (verso) between 126 and 127, leaf (verso) between 148 and 149.

⁷⁸ Pollard, *Dictionary*, 406; *Catalogue of the Library of the Late Right Honourable Denis Daly...*

⁷⁹ *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 12 May 1791. It is unclear when this type of lottery started but regular advertisements appeared from 1791. Precedent appears to be scant. In Restoration England, one destitute gentleman was reported to have parted with his library through a book lottery in the hopes of raising more than he would at auction: John Ashton, *History of English Lotteries: Now for the First Time Written* (London: Leadenhall Press, 1893), 44–45. Keith Manley gives a similar example in Scarborough in 1734: Manley, "The Road to Camelot," 405. Phillips dates the combined trade of the bookseller and lottery-office keeper as far back in Dublin as 1760: Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 89.

⁸⁰ *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 14 Jun 1791.

⁸¹ *Dublin Evening Post*, 22 December 1791. Phillips suggested that these would have been from unsold stock: Phillips, *Printing and Bookselling in Dublin*, 89.

the next lottery in June 1792 because the prizes were finer and the ads were larger:

LITERARY LOTTERY
No. 49, Essex-street,
Corner of Crampton-Court
The Drawing will commence on the 22nd June inst.
Sketch of the plan.

2000 Tickets, at 1s. 1d. each.

500 Prizes, Books of Merit, in all Branches of Literature, viz.

The *Encyclopaedia Britannica, or General Dictionary of all Arts and Sciences*, 8 vols. 9l. 2s. -- Highest Prize

The Works of Raynal, Goldsmith, Shakespeare, Gibbon, Buffon, Robertson, Cooper, Moore, White, Adams, &c.

The Travels of Coxe, Brydone, du Patty, Page, Banks, Boswell, &c.

TICKETS selling at 1s. 1d. each

Schemes at large gratis.

Mess. Goodluck and Co. beg Leave to represent that their present Scheme exceeds, for Variety and Elegance of Selection, any they have hitherto offered the Public.⁸²

Eight volumes of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, valued at nine pounds and two shillings, was the grand prize and this could well have been James Moore's Dublin edition as he was up to the tenth volume by the end of 1792—the year in which he completed four volumes.⁸³ Also, in addition to the *Encyclopaedia*, the lure of authors such as Raynal, Buffon, and Robertson, among others, for the sacrifice of just over a shilling suggests these books were in relatively high demand. Indeed, most works by those authors were popular Enlightenment texts that, although Dublin reprints, held their value in the city's bookshops.⁸⁴

In November 1792, Catholic bookseller Bernard Dornin (9 Grafton Street) in the *Hibernian Journal* began his address, 'To the people of Ireland' and declared that his intended publication of an Enlightenment author was imminent. Two months later, upon the release of Voltaire's *Philosophical Dictionary*, Dornin's exaggeratedly premature optimism was palpable:

At a Time when Liberty, and universal Toleration begins to expand itself all over Europe; when Bigotry and Superstition are no more; when every Kind of religious Prejudice seems to have sunk into the Grave with our Ancestors; when Reason, guided by Philosophy, begins to illumine our

⁸² *Hibernian Journal*, 13 June 1792.

⁸³ Kafker and Loveland, "The Publisher James Moore and His Dublin Edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*," 116.

⁸⁴ Abbé Raynal, George Buffon, and William Robertson; Kennedy, "Reading the Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 357-360.

Hemisphere, I have presumed to print this celebrated Work, unquestionably, the *chief d'Ouvre* [sic] of Voltaire.⁸⁵

The tone of Dornin's language—incorporating into his bookselling a mood of growing public optimism towards society—encapsulates the expressions of Enlightenment among members of the Dublin print trade. The above examination of booksellers and publishers has included noteworthy examples of the interest in antiquarian books and the demand for quality reading material—including Enlightenment texts—in Dublin in the late-eighteenth century. Members of the print trade were proud of their businesses and were lauded by the newspaper press. Heavily subscribed publications indicate a significant demand for such important reference works as Johnson's *Dictionary*, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and Chambers' *Modern Geography*—all produced with ideals of patriotism and improvement in mind.

But there was a limit to these ideals in Ascendancy Ireland. Radical literature, influenced by the American and French Revolutions, became a threat to the established social order. Indeed, Thomas Paine was the scourge of the Ascendancy moderates and conservatives, who identified his influences in the United Irishmen's promotion of popular sovereignty, natural and civil rights, representative government, and universal suffrage.⁸⁶ The Ulster M.P. **George Knox**, one of the moderates who sought Catholic emancipation through his motions in parliament, expressed concern with the attitudes of the people exposed by such radical literature. Writing to the Marquess of Abercorn, Knox explained that the north 'was completely inoculated by Paine who persuades every man to think himself a legislator and to throw off all respect for his

⁸⁵ *Hibernian Journal*, 16 November 1792; *Hibernian Journal*, 7 January 1793; Voltaire, *The Philosophical Dictionary. From the French of M. de Voltaire*. [A new and correct edition.] (Dublin: Printed by Bernard Dornin, [1793]). Dornin (1762-1837) also opened a 'Reading Room and Library' with books, pamphlets, plays, and periodicals available at his premises on payment of a yearly fee of one guinea. 'Each Subscriber may take one Book to his own Home; no second can be taken until the first is returned. The Room is open on Sunday, and every Day from seven o'Clock till ten at Night': *Hibernian Journal*, 9 May 1794. Dornin was a United Irishman but not a member of the Dublin Library in 1791. He left Ireland in 1803 for New York, then Baltimore in 1809 (where he opened 'Dornin's Catholic Library'), and finally Philadelphia. Regarded as the first Catholic American bookseller, he also printed **William James MacNeven's** *Pieces of Irish History: Illustrative of the Condition of the Catholics of Ireland; of the Origin and Progress of the Political System of the United Irishmen; and of Their Transactions with the Anglo-Irish Government* (New York: Published by William James MacNeven, 1807): Martin J. Burke, "Irish-American Publishing," in *OHIB* 4, 103, citing David Kaser, *Bernard Dornin: America's First Catholic Bookseller* (Philadelphia, 1966).

⁸⁶ McBride, "The Harp Without the Crown," 175.

superiors'.⁸⁷ In another letter, Knox reported that clubs, generally consisting of 'a few tradesmen, the dissenting minister, the attorney' and an apothecary, in villages all over Ulster were circulating Paine's publications, distributed from Belfast and Dublin.⁸⁸

Similar clubs aimed at the lower orders appeared in the capital a little earlier, such as a 'sixpenny Jacobin club held in one of the lanes off Castle Street' in December 1792, and the Strugglers' Club, among others.⁸⁹ Pamphlets, newspapers, and Paine's publications were the principal reading items, although little else is known of them. However, testimony from members of radical reading societies revealed the types of reading material available. The revolutionary John Daly Burk (1776-1808) was expelled from Trinity College Dublin in April 1794 for denying the Trinity (amongst other dogmas) and went to work in an editing capacity for the *Dublin Evening Post*.⁹⁰ While it is not clear whether Burk was an official member of the Dublin United Irishmen, he was nevertheless co-chair of at least one meeting with forty-two United Irishmen, including **Richard McCormick** and **Thomas Ryan**.⁹¹ (Burk was a member of the Strugglers' Club.) Inspired by such Enlightenment luminaries as Descartes, Hume, Priestley, and Locke, the banished student, along with a French embroiderer simply known as Le Blanc, established the Philanthropic and Telegraphic societies. In August 1796, Francis Higgins reported to Dublin Castle that the Telegraphic Club met in Ross Lane disguised as the Freemason Lodge, no. 21, and that they had 'a private printing press from whence issue various treasonable production's [*sic*']'.⁹²

⁸⁷ Ibid., quoting George Knox to the Marquess of Abercorn, 14 February 1793 (Public Record Office of Northern Ireland [PRONI], Abercorn Papers, T.2541/1181/4/12).

⁸⁸ Whelan, "Republic in the Village," 107, quoting George Knox to the Marquess of Abercorn, 16 March 1793 (PRONI, Abercorn Papers, T.2541/1181/4/17). For book clubs and reading societies in Ulster, see Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man*.

⁸⁹ Smyth, *Men of No Property*, 147. The Strugglers' Club was an offshoot of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen: Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 443. This is an under-researched subject. Names of other such clubs were: Real United Traders, the Union, the States, the Huguenot, Clady, Cold Bone, Dexter, Druid, Shamrock, Athenian, Shoe, and Friendly societies: Whelan, "Republic in the Village," 123; Smyth, *Men of No Property*, 147.

⁹⁰ Joseph I. Shulim, "John Daly Burk: Irish Revolutionist and American Patriot," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, New Series, 54, no. 6 (1964): 5-9.

⁹¹ Francis Higgins to Sackville Hamilton, 16 July 1795, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 88.

⁹² Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 19 August 1796, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 96.

These clubs were regarded as fronts for revolutionary republican meetings. When various members appeared at a trial—at which **William Cope** was a jurist—of an alleged member of the Defenders (an outlawed group later associated with the United Irishmen), they were interrogated about the nature of these clubs.⁹³ When asked if the purpose of the Philanthropic Society was to set up a library for the purpose of improvement, William Lawlor, a gilder who was an informer to Dublin Castle, replied: 'Burke [Burk] and Le Blanc proposed reading, writing and learning French, whichever they chose, and they subscribed to buy paper—but it was a cloak, for if any one came in, they could do nothing to them, as they were only learning to read and write'.⁹⁴ Lawlor explained that the society had a rotating presidency and that he was the treasurer.⁹⁵ A grocer, Samuel Galland, from Crane Lane stated that he was a member of a reading society but that its purpose was not to discuss politics but merely for the 'information of themselves'. He maintained that the Philanthropic Society contained newspapers, 'Goldsmith's *Animated Nature*, Pope's *Works*, Chambers' *Dictionary*, &c'. Another, a master tailor in Townsend Street stated he was a member of the Telegraphic Society from early 1794. He read and discussed with others Paine's *Age of Reason* (the '*vade mecum* of the societies'), but testified that he decided against donating a dictionary of arts and sciences after hearing Burk's views on religion.⁹⁶

Further reports in the *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, linking these Dublin radical reading societies to the remnants of the outlawed Dublin United Irishmen, lamented the influence of Paine's *Age of Reason* and *Rights of Man* on the working classes:

[T]hese doctrines have become unhappily too prevalent in that class of society most susceptible to their mischievous influence. The younger part of the tradesmen, and in general the apprentices [...] have in their leisure hours after work, which should be spent in the society of their masters or parents, where they might hope to improve in industry and morality, have now the mischievous alternative of devoting themselves

⁹³ Thomas MacNevin, *The Lives and Trials of Archibald Hamilton Rowan, the Rev. William Jackson, the Defenders, William Orr, Peter Finnerty, and Other Eminent Irishmen* (Dublin: J. Duffy, 1846), 311. For the Defenders, see Thomas Bartlett, "Select Documents XXXVIII: Defenders and Defenderism in 1795," *Irish Historical Studies* 24, no. 95 (May 1985): 373-394.

⁹⁴ MacNevin, *Lives and Trials of Archibald Hamilton Rowan*, 360.

⁹⁵ The Philanthropic Society met at two venues (at least): High Street and Cork Street, the latter being the residence of a member, Richard Dry: *ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 382 & 407 (italics have been added here for the book titles).

to youthful intemperance, or assembling in clubs instituted for the specious purpose of improvement, under the name of Reading Clubs, but designed for the corruption of their members.⁹⁷

The newspaper argued that these reading clubs ('emissaries of sedition') were 'preparatory schools' where 'not only were the well-known works of Paine, &c. read, but original Lectures on the same subjects were delivered, and with great industry transcribed and disseminated throughout the lower orders of the people'.⁹⁸

The reports were not far from the truth, for John Daly Burk, exiled to the United States, noted that he set up these reading clubs to act as 'nurseries from which to procure men of full intellectual growth and patriotism' with an armed rebellion as his ultimate goal.⁹⁹ Burk, Lawlor, and Le Blanc were also members of the Huguenot Society, composed of tailors, servants, and shoemakers:

At the meetings on the Exchange steps or in Plunkett Street, the society heard Lawlor read extracts from Volney's *Vision of the French Republic*, while "a motion was made to get more books and papers to enlighten the boys and everyone was asked what they would like to learn".¹⁰⁰

As discussed in Chapter 4, to Ascendancy figures like Richard Musgrave, exposing the working classes to Enlightenment texts—or even simply reading and writing—threatened both the social and political order.¹⁰¹ The incendiary combination of reading, education, patriotism, and revolution, inspired by events in France, were enough for Musgrave to regard such reading societies as 'seminaries of sedition'.¹⁰²

The lower-income segments of Irish society who could not afford the initial two-guinea payment for the Dublin Library Society could have visited the city's

⁹⁷ Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*, 5 March 1796.

⁹⁸ Faulkner's *Dublin Journal*, 5 & 8 March 1796.

⁹⁹ Whelan, "United Irishmen, the Enlightenment and Popular Culture," 286, citing John Daly Burk, *History of the Late War in Ireland, With an Account of the United Irish Association* (Philadelphia, 1799), 45-46.

¹⁰⁰ Whelan, "Republic in the Village," 124, quoting John Kennedy, 15 March 1796 (Rebellion Papers 620/23/59, National Archives of Ireland, Dublin).

¹⁰¹ Whelan, "Republic in the Village," 129. Even circulating libraries with light, frivolous texts were just as threatening to some. David Allan writes: 'Accordingly, it was often suspected, and was again and again alleged explicitly by commentators of otherwise disparate viewpoints, that the commercial collections granted license to those who were least qualified to cope with the serious business of reading and who were also most likely to be corrupted by contact with indecent or inflammatory material': Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 120.

¹⁰² Whelan, "United Irishmen, the Enlightenment, and Popular Culture," 281.

coffee houses to read newspapers, pamphlets and other ephemeral literature. However, if they were of a rebellious sort, radical societies existed for some clandestine education and reading of Enlightenment texts other than Paine, much to the detriment of those conservatives who regarded such improving endeavours as anathema to the social order of Ascendancy Ireland. Moreover, attempts by both the government and its critics to shape public opinion in the 1790s eventually led to political divisions that tore Irish society apart by the end of the century.¹⁰³ In this context, it will be shown that the Dublin Library occupied an anomalous position as a proponent of wider public participation—free from political and religious prejudices—in improvement through information access and dissemination during a period of increased politicisation of the public.

Conclusion

Overall, the intent of these last two chapters has been to highlight the historical background of Irish patriotism and Enlightenment ideals communicated to an expanding reading public through the burgeoning print trade. This provides the contemporary context leading into the establishment of the Dublin Library Society, now the focus for the next chapter, with a subsequent chapter examining its founding members. Further historical context will be combined with the succeeding chapter on clubs and societies to which many founding members of the Dublin Library belonged, before and after 1791. The reasons for this arrangement are twofold: 1) to introduce the clubs and societies after the Dublin Library and its members to highlight common associations among the members with the other contemporary societies; and 2) because clubs and societies in eighteenth-century Dublin—in which many Dublin Library members were involved—were directly entwined with events and movements unfolding in the capital during the 1790s. From there, it will be argued that the Dublin Library's place as another location of the city's enlightened public sphere sat firmly within the establishment of other examples of cultural patriotism in Ireland. Importantly, from a historiographical perspective, new approaches in the historical study of various types of libraries—public, radical, exclusive, and

¹⁰³ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 436.

inclusive—also contribute to the wider study of the development of society, in this period.

Part Three:
The Dublin Library Society

Chapter 6: Origins of the Dublin Library Society

Previous chapters addressed some of the major themes that encapsulated modern Irish history leading into the final decade of the eighteenth century. In terms of rudimentary library service provision, coffee houses gave the public access to information products. Circulating libraries acted primarily as lending facilities for fiction and light reading, but gradually improved their collections to meet demand for quality literature. Although its static holdings and association with the Established Church lessened its utility for Dublin's reading public, Marsh's Library remained the only public institution that did not require exclusive membership, as was the case for the libraries of Trinity College, Dublin Society, and the Royal Irish Academy. Significantly, all were locations of the Ascendancy public sphere in eighteenth-century Dublin.¹

Of the institutional libraries, the Royal Irish Academy (discussed in Chapter 8) was formed in 1785 by prominent members of the academic, scientific and antiquarian fields, with regal endorsement and the approbation, support, and leadership from titled landowners. This occurred in an environment of patriotic pride after achievements by the Irish Volunteers in gaining legislative independence from the English crown in 1782. The importance of Ireland—with Dublin as its capital—among the nations of the world was being forged through the creation of learned societies that would make valuable contributions to intellectual output, encouraged by an enlightened world. A measure of greatness for a nation was through its encouragement of learning in an expanding public sphere.

The *Freeman's Journal* published an editorial on the importance of public libraries in 1786, using Paris as the exemplary city to which Dublin would do well to emulate:

¹ Similarly, Murray Pittock discusses several Irish societies from the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy as a part of the 'Irish Anglican public sphere' that sought to differentiate itself, culturally, from the English: Pittock, *Scottish and Irish Romanticism*, 97-98. For debate on whether there existed a native, Catholic public sphere alongside this, see Corkery, *Hidden Ireland*; Joep Leersen, *Hidden Ireland, Public Sphere* (Galway: Arlen House, 2002); and James Kelly, "Regulating Print: The State and the Control of Print in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá Chultúr* 23 (2008): 142-174.

There are a few institutions of any public nature more conducive to the good of society than the means of liberal knowledge; and as that must be principally obtained by extensive reading, it seldom falls to the share of the multitude, as books are so hard to be got. To remedy this, and give all ranks of people an opportunity of consulting the literary productions of all countries and all ages, Paris is remarkable, the public library of that capital being open for the inspection of all those who wish to inform themselves.²

This, according to the newspaper, reflected France's prolific literary and intellectual capability, and that Dubliners would readily accept such an institution as beneficial to the community and the nation at large.³ The article concluded with a suggestion that while public expenditure was used for the most frivolous of ventures, the Irish would certainly approve of an allocation of resources for a repository to house Ireland's literary and scientific output—the Royal Irish Academy's library being a logical venue. The Academy, however, limited its library's access to its restrictive membership, while its hours of availability (Mondays only) and lack of reading room space left many of its members wanting an alternative. Even those who were fellows of Trinity College were only able to access their library for a short time every day.⁴

Demand from the public for access to quality reading material was therefore considered a patriotic pursuit in late-eighteenth-century Dublin, with booksellers and newspapers from the print trade promoting library service provision as a measure of an enlightened and intellectually prosperous society. This chapter will focus on the establishment of the Dublin Library Society, and public reception to it, in this environment. Contemporary newspapers reveal not only an appreciation for a public library utility, but significant support for the institution as a means for Dubliners to express their cultural patriotism.

John Archer's General Book-Repository

By this time, **John Archer** had established himself as one of the most successful booksellers in the country. Having procured important private libraries while making regular book-purchasing sojourns to England and the

² *Freemans Journal*, 3 May 1786.

³ This could be an example of how Irish newspapers would appeal to local patriots to support initiatives to bring Ireland up to a level of cultural innovation that existed in other countries.

⁴ Warburton et al., *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:921; Carpenter, "A Verse Confrontation in Late-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 36; Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 70-71.

Continent, Archer moved into spacious rooms at 80 Dame Street and opened his General Book-Repository on 1 December 1788. No expense was spared to advertise his enormous collection; he published a broadside and took out a lengthy, front-page advertisement in the local papers informing the public of his patriotic duty to Ireland:

But at the present juncture, when the dissemination of Knowledge is a National Pursuit, I should humbly hope that the Pains I have taken, the heavy Expences I have incurred, and the Collection I have made, will be found deserving the Patronage of such as regard the advancement of Literature and the benefit of the Community.⁵

Undoubtedly through his purchases of private libraries and selective additions from abroad, Archer's 20,000-volume collection boasted a vastly superior range of subjects than any other bookseller in Dublin.⁶

Delighted with the reception that his venture had received and that he had attracted the custom of the 'most exalted Characters in this Nation' Archer stressed that his collection was particularly extensive in 'Irish History and Antiquities, Trade, Agriculture, and Natural History, Architecture, Painting, and Mathematics, Critical Learning, Coins, &c. &c. &c'⁷—appealing to members of those learned institutions, the Dublin Society, Royal Irish Academy, and Trinity College. Though one must not forget that Archer was a bookseller and publisher (of approximately 100 titles between 1791 and 1800),⁸ his fitting up of a spacious room above his shop 'for the Reception of the Literati' further emphasised his desire to attract Irish intellectuals both as clients and, favourably, his 'Friends'.⁹ Indeed, a chronicler of Dublin in the mid-nineteenth century referred to Archer's shop as 'the rendezvous of the literary men of Dublin' in the last part of the eighteenth century.¹⁰ As would be expected, many

⁵ *Town; or Dublin Evening Packet*, 6 December 1788; [John Archer], *To the Public ...* ([Dublin: s.n., 1787] [i.e. 1788], ESTC N71237 [Imprint conjectured by cataloguer], [National Library of Ireland MS 27,293(1)]).

⁶ John Archer, *A Catalogue of Books (for 1789 ;): Consisting of Above Twenty Thousand Volumes in Most Languages and Parts of Literature ... Offered for Sale ... 11th Feb., 1789 ... At the Shop of J. Archer, No. 80, Dame-street...* (Dublin, 1789). For Archer, see Kennedy, "The Domestic and International Trade of an Eighteenth-Century Dublin Bookseller," 94-105. For his trade in French books, see Kennedy, "Nations of the Mind: French Culture in Ireland and the International Booktrade," in Michael O'Dea and Kevin Whelan, eds., *Nations and Nationalisms: France, Britain, Ireland and the Eighteenth-Century Context*, SVEC 335 (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1995), 147-158; and Kennedy, *French Books in Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 117-118.

⁷ *Dublin Chronicle*, 10 Feb 1789; *Town; or Dublin Evening Packet*, 6 December 1788.

⁸ Kennedy, "The Domestic and International Trade of an Eighteenth-Century Dublin Bookseller," 95.

⁹ *Dublin Chronicle*, 10 Feb 1789; *Town; or Dublin Evening Packet*, 6 December 1788.

¹⁰ Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:278.

members of the college and the learned societies were also consumers—voracious readers with their own private libraries. Importantly, the hours of operation for this nascent reading society and shop—10am to 9pm—were far more convenient than Mondays at the Royal Irish Academy.

This was the age of associational culture where membership to societies and clubs was all the rage. In Dublin, being part of a group of like-minded individuals was as much an expression of one's patriotism as it was a desire for sociability. Patriotic societies such as the Monks of the Order of St. Patrick (also known as the Monks of the Screw) and the Whig Club were just as active in the pursuit of Irish legislative independence as they were of the fermented grape. Many members of these societies also belonged to the learned institutions mentioned above. Therefore, Archer's initiative was yet another opportunity for like-minded individuals to meet in a more informal setting.

Attempts to establish more overtly commercial reading spaces in Dublin, at this time, were also seasoned with a patriotic flavour:

As the Importance of Ireland in the Rank of Nations increases, a Diffusion of general Knowledge and Information seem to be indispensably requisite. Under this Consideration, the Author of the present Undertaking, actuated by an earnest Wish to be in some Degree serviceable in the Country, in which he, though a Foreigner, has now lived upwards of eighteen Years; with all the Deference of a Man desirous of meriting the Public Favour, submits the following Plan, entirely new, to the judgement of a discerning and intelligent Nation.¹¹

Like Archer, Anthony Gerna's advertising strategy for his subscription library (at 31 College Green) offered glimpses of the public mood that reading and cultivation worked in tandem with national pride as an appealing contemporary pursuit. By making himself 'serviceable to the Community' he was also combining his business venture with a sense of patriotic duty. Gerna continued this theme after the establishment of the Dublin Library Society when he advertised his 'Political and Literary Cabinet' for 'Gentlemen and Noblemen' but also highlighted his holdings of maps, globes, atlases, and several political and historical works as a 'useful institution established on the Basis of public

¹¹ *Dublin Chronicle*, 29 January 1791. Gerna's 'Cabinet Litteraire' originated as his 'Public Library of French Literature', a circulating library in 1788: *Hibernian Journal*, 20 February 1788.

Good'.¹² As mentioned in the above chapter, this very theme continued to be exploited by those newspaper proprietors grateful for the continued stream of advertising revenue from their clients.¹³

The Dublin Library Society

It has already been shown that newspaper proprietors expressed and shaped public opinion through their emphasis on the patriotic and 'enlightened' work of booksellers as disseminators of knowledge for the nation. One week after his news piece in praise of **Richard White** and Irish booksellers in general, **William Sleater** produced a lengthy notice in his section devoted to literary news, this time with the subtitle of Dublin's first non-proprietary subscription library.¹⁴ None of the other Dublin newspapers copied this report for their papers (as they were wont to do) and hitherto, this is the earliest reference to the plan of the Dublin Library Society yet uncovered:

LITERATURE DUBLIN LIBRARY SOCIETY

The establishment of an extensive PUBLIC LIBRARY in a large metropolis is undeniably a matter of general concern. Dublin has long felt the inconveniences arising from the want of such an institution, but an effort has at length been made to remove so material a defect. The DUBLIN LIBRARY will be established on a plan of the most evident utility to the Public, and entirely calculated to merit its protection.¹⁵

The lengthy column described in detail the plans and procedures for this new institution, as well as the principal purpose to purchase rare, expensive books that warrant being included by the subscribers. Their intention was for a library suitable for 'the rising state of this metropolis'. The setting of the subscription of two guineas at the start, and one guinea per annum thereafter, was a

¹² *Hibernian Journal*, 8 February 1792. Gerna retired from the bookselling and library business in 1795, when some of his library was auctioned off by James Vallance at 6 Eustace Street (in the same building as the Dublin Library). His wife, Pauline, operated a boarding school for girls at Belfield, in which students had access to a library on the premises, comprised of much of what Gerna had advertised during his library days: *Hibernian Journal*, 27 July 1795.

¹³ To give an idea of the costs of these advertisements, Francis Higgins reported in April 1795 that the Catholic Committee had run up a bill of £741 19s 0d with the *Hibernian Journal* (run by Catholic Committee member and United Irishman, **Thomas McDonnell**): Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 80. Mid-eighteenth-century rates were roughly two shillings for an average-sized ad and upwards of eight shillings for a lengthy one: Munter, *History of the Irish Newspaper*, 63-65.

¹⁴ For Sleater's tribute to Richard White, see p. 123.

¹⁵ *Dublin Chronicle*, 12 April 1791.

modest price that was anticipated to appeal to greater numbers. There would be something for everyone:

The curious will there obtain access to the most various, the learned to the most important information. The middle orders of society will enjoy advantages which fortune seemed before to have denied them: and the highest may find some works which even opulence cannot always procure.¹⁶

Here, it is useful to reconstruct an alternative chronology of its origins. As mentioned above, all the literature relating to the Dublin Library Society has its genesis on 10 May 1791. However, the above news piece in the *Dublin Chronicle* was from its 12 April edition. Immediately below the article is another piece in a section devoted to small bits of Dublin news:

We have the pleasure to inform our numerous readers, that a number of gentlemen have formed a plan for establishing a public Library in this city, upon an enlarged scale. As this has been an object long wished for, and the advantages arising from so spirited an undertaking so obvious, that it cannot fail of meeting with such encouragement from the lovers of literature as will render it worthy of the increasing greatness of this metropolis.¹⁷

No other clues were given as to the exact date of this meeting. But a column, in the form of a letter to the editor in the *Dublin Evening Post* of 3 November 1791 indicates 22 March 1791 as the date when the same gentlemen who gathered regularly in Archer's General Book-Repository to read and discuss books, pamphlets, newspapers, and philosophical transactions, also considered the idea of starting a public subscription library. Another report described a meeting of 'a half dozen gentlemen to establish a literary Asylum from professional toil and the fatigue of trade'.¹⁸ They agreed to collect 'with the greatest diligence from amongst their friends, those whose names could add weight to their undertaking' and gained Archer's kind permission to 'hang up a proposal for a library in his shop' seeking names of interested potential members.¹⁹ As reported in the *Dublin Chronicle* in April, a general meeting

¹⁶ *Dublin Chronicle*, 12 April 1791. The membership fee for the Royal Irish Academy in 1785 was £5 5s per annum: Charles O'Connor, "Origins of the Royal Irish Academy," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 38, no. 151 (September 1949): 336. In 1818, initial admission was five guineas and two guineas per annum: Warburton et al., *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:921.

¹⁷ *Dublin Chronicle*, 12 April 1791.

¹⁸ *Dublin Evening Post*, 3 November 1791; *Hibernian Journal*, 17 August 1791.

¹⁹ *Dublin Evening Post*, 3 November 1791.

would be announced 'once a hundred names are subscribed'.²⁰ Owing to Archer's 'great assiduity in procuring them subscribers',²¹ they reached their target seven weeks later and a meeting on 10 May—hosted by Archer—resulted in an announcement in the Dublin newspapers of the first official meeting of the Dublin Library Society for 21 May 1791.

Very little is known of the meeting on 10 May other than what has been related from nineteenth-century histories that describe Richard Kirwan chairing a meeting of 'interested individuals' and 'men of congenial minds' who met to draw up plans for the Dublin Library.²² In actuality, the six individuals and their friends or associates who 'could add weight to their undertaking', comprised one-fifth of those who lent their signatures to the list in Archer's. They met to review and finalise the set of rules and regulations (discussed below) drawn up in March, including the adoption of procedures that were similar to those in operation at the Royal Irish Academy, whereby a committee of twenty-one, a secretary and a treasurer would be elected by the members themselves. In other words, those 'interested individuals' present at the 10 May meeting appear to have been the original twenty-one, for at the official meeting of 21 May 'the members at large paid those gentlemen with whom it [the plan of the library] originated, the highest compliment they had in their power, by returning them on the Committee'.²³

Having reached their goal of one hundred expressions of interest, the very first official meeting of the city's newest intellectual venture was held in the Royal Irish Academy. The first official notice from the Dublin Library appeared in the *Dublin Chronicle* and *Dublin Evening Post* on 19 May, and in the *Hibernian Journal* the following day:

DUBLIN LIBRARY SOCIETY

THE DUBLIN LIBRARY SOCIETY will meet at the House of the Royal Irish Academy, on Saturday next, the 21st inst. at two o'Clock precisely, to pay their Subscriptions, elect a Committee, and transact other business.

²⁰ *Dublin Chronicle*, 12 April 1791.

²¹ *Dublin Evening Post*, 3 November 1791.

²² Mackle, *Reminiscences of the Life of Dr. Richard Kirwan*, 7.

²³ *Dublin Evening Post*, 3 November 1791.

Renowned scientist and founding member of the Royal Irish Academy, Richard Kirwan—who was appointed Librarian of the Academy on 16 March 1791²⁴—was the chief architect of the Dublin Library scheme, and his influence may well have helped secure accommodation at the Academy’s spacious rooms in Grafton Street that Archer’s shop could not offer. A month later, another notice from the library for a meeting set for 21 June appeared on 18 June, regarding ‘particular business’, this time ‘By the order of the Committee, Richard Edward Mercier, Sec., June 16, 1791’.²⁵ But one day before the meeting, **Thomas McDonnell**, proprietor of the *Hibernian Journal*, and founding member of the Dublin Library, had already announced what was due to be discussed at the meeting the following day: ‘A house has been taken within these few days past in Eustace-street, for the accommodation of the members of the Dublin Library Society; an institution that promises to be of the greatest utility to the literati of this kingdom’.²⁶

Both McDonnell and Sleater, also a founding member of the library and proprietor of the *Dublin Chronicle*, were active in promoting the new subscription library in their papers and would have been privy to meeting agendas and any news materialising from them. Moreover, their reportage (including John Magee in the *Dublin Evening Post*) reflected their papers’ views of the principles which they wished their countrymen to forge:

The subscription to the Dublin Library Society, we find, is filling rapidly; and surely too much praise cannot be given to those truly patriotic gentlemen, who intend making such bequests as must insure a permanency to so laudable an institution.²⁷

The plan for Dublin’s first public subscription library was evidently considered newsworthy for the Dublin literary scene; but the continuing pattern of connecting it with patriotic sentiment was equally significant. Indeed, the library’s announcement of its official opening indicates this connection:

²⁴ Royal Irish Academy, *RIA Minute Book*, vol. 1, 67.

²⁵ *Dublin Evening Post*, 18 June 1791.

²⁶ *Hibernian Journal*, 20 June 1791. In his 1862 lecture, Richard Mackle mentioned 30 June as the day of the meeting at which **Nicholas Lawless, 1st Baron Cloncurry**, was instrumental in organising the procurement of James Vallance’s rooms in 6 Eustace Street: Mackle, *Reminiscences of the Life of Dr. Richard Kirwan*, 7. The Dublin Library occupied the first floor, formerly the residence of the eminent Dr George Cleghorn, whose nephew, **James Cleghorn**, was a founding Dublin Library member: *Dublin Evening Post*, 11 Aug 1791; Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:314.

²⁷ *Hibernian Journal*, 27 June 1791.

DUBLIN LIBRARY SOCIETY

The Committee of the Dublin Library Society inform the Members that their Rooms (No. 6, Eustace-street) will be opened for their Reception on Monday the 15th instant.

They beg Leave, at the same time, once more to call the Attention of the Public to this infant Institution, and to solicit that Patronage which its Importance and Utility will, they trust, be acknowledged to merit. Calculated at once for private Gratification and public Improvement, it has an equal Claim on their Patriotism and their Taste; and under the Influence of this double Motive it is hoped, that the Friends of Learning and of Ireland, will manifest a generous Emulation in Support of an Attempt, made to promote the Diffusion of useful Knowledge, by facilitating the perusal of valuable Books.²⁸

The same notice gave the terms (one guinea admission and one guinea annually), the hours of operation ('every Day, from 10 o'Clock in the Forenoon till 4 in the Afternoon, and from 6 in the Evening till 10 at Night'), and a list of the twenty-one committee members for 1791, in addition to the elected treasurer, **William Cope**.²⁹

One of the original twenty-one, **Richard Edward Mercier**, was also secretary of the library and his name appears on many of its early information notices. The connection with Archer's bookselling business is clear. For, as Archer was one of the founding members of the Dublin Library—and his shop having been the venue of its genesis—he was unanimously elected bookseller to the Library. Mercier was his protégé, who continued to work out of Archer's shop, accepting applications for Dublin Library membership at 80 Dame Street rather than 6 Eustace Street.³⁰ Watchful eyes were on the library, with its organisation in the early years under considerable scrutiny, in the hopes that it would be a successful and incorruptible addition—free from private gain—to Dublin's cultural landscape. Therefore, the closeness of Archer's bookselling business with the operation of a non-profit library society was a concern from the start as a meeting was held on 25 August 1791 'to consider of the Propriety of empowering the Committee to accept of a Proposal made by Mr. Archer, Bookseller, to the Society, to furnish a certain Value of Books on Credit; or of

²⁸ *Dublin Evening Post*, 13 August 1791.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*

any other Mode of procuring an immediate Supply of Books for the Use of the Library'.³¹ However, Archer's tenure ended the following year when the *Dublin Evening Post* reassured the public of the library's integrity:

The salutary resolutions brought forward last Monday at the general meeting of the Dublin-Library-Society, most effectually remove every suspicion from the public mind of that institution, having originated in any scheme of private emolument. On its first formation, Mr John Archer was unanimously chosen book-seller to the Society; but, finding that many entertained the opinion of its having been set on foot for the advancement of his interest, and apprehending that such an opinion, if suffered to prevail, must necessarily overturn it, he has, with a liberality that does him honour, voluntarily given up his appointment, claiming the custom of the Library, only so long as he is found to supply it on the most reasonable terms: a preference however, to be given to the publishers of any particular work.³²

The *Freeman's Journal* took a rather critical swipe at Archer, taking pleasure in his being deprived of a 'monopolizing job' but the paper also saw this as a positive for the public image of the library.³³

Further scrutiny from the newspapers arose from the selection of a librarian. Four days before the library's opening, an editorial expressed concern that such an important establishment had yet to elect a keeper. This was emphasised as a choice not to be taken lightly, as its 'future character and success' depended on it: 'the qualities he should possess are considerable learning, correct taste and extensive knowledge of books. Without these he will disgrace them and injure the institution'. So important was this selection that a letter 'For the Hibernian Journal to the Members of the Dublin Library' from 'Hibernicus' appealed to those with the power of the vote to choose wisely and elect a librarian whose conduct will exemplify the library as a 'bright example of the taste and patriotism of Irishmen'.³⁴

The same letter, however, revealed an intriguing insight into the motives of the members to appoint a librarian unaffiliated with a religious profession and equally unfazed by religious norms. Hibernicus cleverly combined the choice of

³¹ *Hibernian Journal*, 24 August 1791.

³² *Dublin Evening Post*, 7 July 1792.

³³ *Freeman's Journal*, 28 June 1792.

³⁴ *Dublin Evening Post*, 11 August 1791; *Hibernian Journal*, 17 August 1791.

a suitable librarian with the notion of working on Sundays, as the library was open to the public on that day. He railed against those who objected to the library being open on the Sabbath and who wished 'to elect a gentleman to that office, whose other vocations render an attendance on Sundays impracticable'. The writer implored the members not to choose a person 'who cannot bestow an attendance on those hours for which you are already pledged to the public'. Hence, the elected individual would manage the Dublin Library free from any religious affectation, in keeping with a non-sectarian ethos and pledge to keep religion out of the library.

On 22 August 1791, the members of the Dublin Library Society unanimously elected **Joshua Edkins** as their librarian. Edkins, who was possibly the author of the letter from Hibernicus,³⁵ had compiled a collection of Irish poetry and prose in 1789 and 1790 to great acclaim and was a well-respected literary figure constantly promoting Irish literature—past and contemporary. The position of librarian suited him well, for it provided the opportunity of work in a literary environment, both in terms of books and the many writers who were members. The salary of £30 per annum was pegged to the number of subscribers (at this point, just over 300). Once their numbers reached 500, the librarian's salary would rise to £50. A ceiling of £100 for 1000 subscribers would then be in effect. This contrasts with the salaries of subscription librarians in the English towns of Bradford, Halifax and Lancaster, and in Belfast, where yearly salaries were lower up to and beyond 1800.³⁶ In comparison, a skilled craftsman in Dublin would have been earning between £30 and £45 in 1791.³⁷ Unlike some libraries that provided accommodation for their keepers, Edkins continued to live in Aungier Street, very close to the library's Eustace Street location.³⁸

³⁵ For an explanation of this, see p. 261-262.

³⁶ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 91; Beckwith, "The Eighteenth-Century Proprietary Library in England," 91; Daphne Roberts and Bob Duckett, "The Bradford Library and Literary Society, 1774-1980," *Library History* 22 (November 2006): 216. At Belfast, the librarian's salary was £30 per annum in 1793, and 30 guineas per annum by 1808: Jack Magee, "The Linen Hall Library: The First Hundred Years," *The Linen Hall Review* 5, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 9; John Anderson, *History of the Belfast Library and Society for Promoting Knowledge* (Belfast: McCaw, Stevenson and Orr, 1888), 13, 31, 41.

³⁷ Fergus A. D'Arcy, "Wages of Skilled Workers in the Dublin Building Industry, 1667-1918," *Saothar* 15 (1990): 21-25.

³⁸ Salaries for librarians in the British universities and the British Museum were considerably higher, for which see P.S. Morrish, "Library Management in the Pre-Professional Age," in *CHLBI* 2, 484.

That the progress of this fledgling library was scrutinised in the press gives an indication of its immediate importance in Dublin society. This was a new venture for most of the reading public who perhaps could only have relied on Marsh's Library. As mentioned, Trinity College, Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy had libraries with limited entry even to its members. Although the circulating libraries could offer literary entertainment and some quality works, the establishment of this library meant greater access to rare, expensive, and useful reference literature. For the press, this reflected the evolution of increased public exposure to print begun by the newspapers themselves. Coupled with the notion that this was emblematic of Dublin's enhanced stature as a world city, editorials and letters sang the praises of the institution and its founding members:

The Dublin Library Society is an institution that merits in a high degree the approbation and encouragement of the public, and much praise is due to the formers of the scheme. There is in fact but one public Library, that of St. Sepulchre's [Marsh's], in Dublin; for the College Library, though deservedly in the highest estimation both for the quantity and quality of its contents, is confined to those gentlemen who have, or are members of that learned seminary. But the general diffusion of valuable knowledge, especially in great cities, is not perhaps promoted by anything more than the establishment of public Libraries, where men of a studious turn may have opportunities of consulting authors of the first character, but the high price of whose works keep them mostly out of the hands of common purchasers. The gentlemen, therefore, who have set forward such an institution, deserve the thanks of the community; and we trust that liberal men will patronize and contribute to, what intelligent men have so usefully planned.³⁹

Similarly, the *Dublin Chronicle* proudly reported on the Dublin Library that the 'highest expectations were to be formed of the benefit to be derived from the establishment of a Public Library in this city, nor have they been disappointed'.⁴⁰

The same paper echoed those sentiments of other newspapers in highlighting its approval of the availability of transactions from the major international philosophical societies as a mark of distinction—enhanced, of course, by those from Ireland's own Royal Irish Academy—for Dublin as a truly international city

³⁹ *Dublin Evening Post*, 16 August 1791.

⁴⁰ *Dublin Chronicle*, 27 October 1791.

amidst an age of European Enlightenment.⁴¹ The paper also provided an additional inducement for membership: 'the opportunity offered by no other Library in this city, of admiring the beauties of that superb publication, *Boydell's Shakespeare*, the first number of which is now to be seen by subscribers, at their library in Eustace-street'.⁴² The publication of Boydell's engravings caused a stir in the book world, with booksellers enthusiastically advertising their arrival from London to rave reviews from the Dublin papers.⁴³ A letter to the 'Proprietors' of the *Dublin Evening Post* expressed gratitude for the establishment of the Dublin Library and its promotion of such cultural activities as public access to quality literature and exhibitions. Written either by a woman or in the guise of a woman, 'Amelia' expressed her delight and national pride in what had occurred in Dublin these last few months:

As your paper has uniformly been the harbinger of every thing which could in the smallest degree exalt the name of Ireland among the nations of Europe, or tend to disseminate knowledge, and diffuse patriotism through the land, allow me a female, with a heart beating high in its country's cause, to give a short history of the rise and progress of that most useful society—the DUBLIN LIBRARY.⁴⁴

After describing the library's origins (related above) Amelia identified the founding committee members' admirable duty to the nation: 'At the very first, they began patriotically, by making it a point of honour, that each should make a present of some book or books to the Library; this has been productive of a very good effect, several of the members at large have followed their example'. The writer highlighted the availability in this new public library of the most recent editions of English and French encyclopaedias and the philosophical transactions from European, American, and Asian academies and that 'the unlearned as well as the learned, may peruse all the Historians of any merit, and various books on trade and belle lettres'.⁴⁵

⁴¹ On the significance of the Royal Irish Academy's *Transactions* in Enlightenment Ireland, see Brown, "Configuring the Irish Enlightenment," in *Clubs and Societies*, 163-178.

⁴² *Dublin Chronicle*, 27 October 1791.

⁴³ *Dublin Evening Post*, 28 April 1792. Boydell's commissions of engravings often were associated with a mood of national pride in England: Celina Fox, "Boydell's Shakespeare," *Print Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (2015): 318-319; and R. Dias, *Exhibiting Englishness: John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the Formation of a National Aesthetic* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 2013).

⁴⁴ *Dublin Evening Post*, 3 November 1791.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

Here, the topic switched to the display of Boydell's *Shakespeare*, and some interesting insights into the exhibition details and restrictive admission for women emerge. Anticipating large public interest in the print exhibition, the library committee ruled on 27 October 1791 that those gentlemen who are not members of the library must instantly pay the subscription fee. Only on Mondays and Thursdays can members 'introduce ladies to see the prints,' prompting the writer's appeal to the founding members of the library:

Now Gentlemen permit me to ask you, if those gallant men do not deserve all the praise I have bestowed on them. I assure you if I were a Poet, I would crowd your paper with odes to their praise; but alas notwithstanding their gallantry, I cannot see the prints, for tho' I have two dozen lovers, so unpatriotic are they that not one of them is a member, and I vow thus publicly, that he who first becomes a subscriber, shall have me.

AMELIA.⁴⁶

The dearth of references to female involvement in the library—in fact, this is the only reference to women—invites one to entertain the notion that this letter could well have been written by a woman. However, the admission of having multiple 'lovers' was outside the realm of contemporary social norms. The cynic would believe that the proprietor of the *Dublin Evening Post*, John Magee, while not a Dublin Library member, wrote the letter in gratification of having profited from the advertising revenue from the library's notices. However, that the paper was closely linked to literary circles, it could well be that either Magee or another whimsical male reader was expressing his own genuine feelings that although in admiration of the institution, relaxed admission to view an exhibition—especially for females—would be appreciated.⁴⁷

The above has shown that, heading into 1792, there was positive public reception for the establishment of this cultural institution. Indeed, from Amelia's despair at having known no one who is a subscriber, membership to this library society was regarded as an expression of one's patriotism. Moreover, despite the lack of liberality towards female participation, the relatively less restrictive criteria for admission to this library—without

⁴⁶ Ibid. The inspiration for the name may have come from the popular, eponymous novel by Henry Fielding which addressed issues of female inclusion in education and was readily available at most circulating libraries: Henry Fielding, *Amelia. In Four Volumes* (Dublin: Printed for G. Risk et al., 1752).

⁴⁷ Of course, it could also be inferred that, given the absence of a drive for female inclusivity, this could only have been a call for more subscribers.

proposers, elections and expensive fees—in the heart of the bustling city, made it an attractive public venue that would enhance Dublin’s cultural scene and reflect its members’ dedication to the advancement of the Irish nation within the framework of Ireland’s political and legislative independence from Great Britain. To ensure stability and longevity, the planners used their organisational experience from other societies for this nascent public library, to be examined here.

Dublin Library Society Regulations, Books, and Readers

In addition to interest from like-minded individuals, this voluntary subscription library needed a solid organisational structure and a collections policy to attract enough readers to subscribe. A set of eighteen laws of the Dublin Library Society were drawn up in March 1791, ratified in May of that year, and published in the 1792 catalogue.⁴⁸ The first four covered the criteria for admission: two guineas at the beginning and one annually thereafter, with an alternative ten-guinea payment or a donation of books worth fifteen guineas entitling lifetime membership. Another rule implemented in July 1792 gave lifetime memberships to those who subscribed for fifteen consecutive years.⁴⁹ A list in 1812 indicated that of forty-two founder members, twenty-nine were lifetime members, suggesting that they continued their subscription for twenty-two consecutive years, while thirteen had taken a hiatus at some point.⁵⁰ The next eight regulations centred on the procedures of meetings and elections of an executive comprising a president, four vice-presidents and a committee of twenty-one members. The structures of democratic, corporate governance here mirrored those of other contemporary Irish societies, especially the Royal Irish Academy, and were characteristic of other associational structures of subscriber democracy set up in subscription libraries and other voluntary societies in Britain.⁵¹ Indeed, the entire plan of the library emphasised the idea of empowering private individuals to further a public

⁴⁸ *Dublin Evening Post*, 3 November 1791; DLS, *Laws*, 1822; DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, v-ix. Other laws were added over time.

⁴⁹ DLS, *Laws*, 1822, 2.

⁵⁰ Dublin Library Society, *Members of the Dublin Library Society: Thus Marked M.L. Members for Life. - V.P. Vice-President. - C. Committee - C.A. Committee of Accounts* ([Dublin]: Burnside, 2 January 1812), copy at National Library of Ireland, Dublin, EPH F524.

⁵¹ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 64; R.J. Morris, "Voluntary Societies and British Urban Elites, 1780–1850: An Analysis," *Historical Journal* 26, issue 1 (March 1983): 110.

cause, where an amalgamation of resources would benefit the larger reading community. Where circulating libraries were profit-making institutions, the organisers assured the public that 'every view towards private emolument is excluded from the design'. The promotion of a public library funded by its paid subscribers also included the noble act of donating books, whereby donors could 'still enjoy the use of them, united to a more ample collection than individuals generally possess'. As it happened, this call for a collaborative collection resulted in donations comprising sixty-one per cent of titles in the first catalogue.⁵²

The librarian was charged with the authority to ensure all members had paid their fees and to keep a copy of the minutes from the society's proceedings available to the members for examination. A proposal book also maintained for the members to suggest books for the library to purchase. The final two articles stipulated that this was to be solely a reference library (a lending library was organised in 1815) with liberal opening hours of 10am to 4pm, then 6pm to 10pm, every day of the week. Comparatively, Marsh's Library was open from 11am to 3pm from Monday to Saturday.⁵³

One other article was codified in the Dublin Library Society's rules and regulations: 'No British copy of any book is to be purchased, if an Irish edition of equal utility can be procured'.⁵⁴ This was instituted to support the Irish print industry and trade in keeping with the spirit of 'Buy-Irish' campaigns that lasted throughout the eighteenth century in Ireland. As described earlier, the mid-eighteenth century brought about a movement among Dubliners—inspired by Ascendancy figures like Swift—to challenge the British in manufacturing, and indeed cultural accomplishments.⁵⁵ Irish fashion and the arts were

⁵² DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, iii-iv; xxv-xl.

⁵³ It has been repeated that the lending library was established in 1817: Kaufman, "Community Libraries of Ireland and Wales," 174; Howell, *Dublin Library Society*, 9-10. However, a sub-committee of the Dublin Library published a report in a Dublin newspaper that the decision was taken to open a circulating library as early as 1815: *Freeman's Journal*, 29 September 1815. A separate catalogue of the lending library within the Dublin Library was issued in 1823: Dublin Library Society, *A Catalogue of the Books in the Lending Departments of the Dublin Library Society, D'Olier-Street: To the 1st of August, 1823* (Dublin: N. Kelly, 1823); WDD 1792, 137. The hours of the Dublin Library were adjusted over time: at one point from 8am until 11pm in 1835, but with a reduction in the Sunday opening time to noon in 1848: DLS, *Laws*, 1822, chapter 9, sections 3, 5-7.

⁵⁴ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, ix; DLS, *Laws*, 1822, chapter 9, section 1, 42.

⁵⁵ Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, 14; Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 181-187; 75; Barnard, "Grand Metropolis," 186.

promoted for domestic consumption.⁵⁶ **William Drennan**, presiding over the Dublin Society of United Irishmen in 1793, called for his group 'to confine ourselves to the exclusive use of Irish manufacture'.⁵⁷ Moreover, not only did the Dublin Library strive to appeal to 'every patriotic and enlightened mind', but also to give business to the twenty members of the Dublin print trade who were founding subscribers. Indeed, statistics from the 1792 catalogue suggest the founding members, themselves, had the same idea. From the 319 initial titles, 195 were donations from forty-seven founding members. Sixty-nine had Dublin imprints, comparing admirably with seventy-two from London. However, of the purchases, sixty-six were London publications—more than double the twenty-nine from Dublin.⁵⁸ Understandably, London would have been the publishing centre for many of the rare and expensive works that the library aimed to procure.

Despite the political overtones in the library's patriotic preference of an Irish imprint to a British one, support for Irish cultural and industrial initiatives was the primary objective. Indeed, all official library notices made no attempt at raising political issues. Although later newspaper reports insisted the library was 'strictly Republican in its Constitution', there is no evidence to suggest that this was the case.⁵⁹ Perhaps it was the perception in conservative, pro-Union papers that the Dublin Library was open to anyone—Anglican, Catholic, or Dissenter—who had two guineas to spare, and therefore, not under Anglican Ascendancy influence. But with a crown over a harp as its crest (Figure 3, below), the library institution itself could hardly have been accused of being constitutionally republican, notwithstanding some of its members belonging to the republican phase of the United Irishmen.⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 75-80.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 186, quoting the *National Evening Star*, 23 March 1793.

⁵⁸ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, iv; xxv-xl, 1-31.

⁵⁹ *Freeman's Journal*, 3 February 1812. Conversely, the Belfast Reading Society, in its resolutions inserted in the newspapers, was explicit its call to end the penal laws: 'That Ireland can never deserve the name of a free State, while a great majority of her Inhabitants enjoy the rights of Citizens in so partial a manner; while they are totally governed by the will of others; in a word, while they are unjustly excluded from all share in the making and the administration of the Laws under which they live': *Dublin Evening Post*, 2 February 1792. For the Dublin Library's answer to claims of political/religious bias, see p. 262-267.

⁶⁰ On members of the Dublin Library Society as United Irishmen, see Table 19, p. 233.



Figure 3: Dublin Library Society Crest⁶¹

Also, His Majesty's naval and army officers stationed in the city were welcomed at a lower rate of one guinea per annum from 1809. Finally, the Dublin Library was forced to publicly respond to several enquiries for the use of its rooms 'for purposes foreign to the objects of its Institution'. After a meeting on 14 March 1811, the library inserted a notice in each Dublin newspaper: 'That this Society, being unconnected with any political objects whatever, has uniformly rejected such applications'.⁶² A resolution to this extent was added in 1826:

That the Dublin Library Society, established for the communication of useful knowledge, has wisely discouraged the introduction of political discussion as detrimental to the interests and foreign to the object of its institution. That the Librarian be directed to adopt such means as he may deem most effectual to prevent documents or papers unconnected with the Society, or likely to create any exhibition of political feeling or discussion from being introduced into the rooms of the Society.⁶³

Notably, of the donations to the Dublin Library Society by its founding members in the first year, bookseller **John Archer** donated Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man II*.⁶⁴ However, the polemical political treatise was not included in the library's catalogue, presumably to avoid controversy.

⁶¹ John Plaw, *Sketches for Country Houses, Villas, and Rural Dwellings* (London, 1803), held at Farmleigh House, Phoenix Park, Dublin. Image reproduced with kind permission from the database, British Armorial Bindings, maintained by the University of Toronto and the Bibliographical Society of London, accessed 25 January 2017, http://armorial.library.utoronto.ca/sites/default/files/IDUB001_s1.jpg.

⁶² DLS, *Laws*, 1822, 47; *Freeman's Journal*, 18 February 1809; *ibid.*, 15 March 1811.

⁶³ DLS, *Laws*, 1822, 73.

⁶⁴ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, xxviii.

Of the fifty-four donors, six were individuals who were not actual subscribers, with at least two from London. The Royal Irish Academy donated the first three volumes of its *Transactions* after a motion was presented in October 1791 at an Academy meeting by **William Watson**, and signed by the **Earl of Charlemont**, to gift them to the newly founded library. Other academy and society transactions and memoirs from London, Manchester, Edinburgh, Paris, Philadelphia, and Calcutta were added to the library's serial holdings. The acquisition of ongoing publications such as reviews and parliamentary transactions and registers indicated the beginnings of the Dublin Library's place as a public repository of record. The Earl of Charlemont donated a set of thirteen volumes (and two volumes of indices) of the *Journals of the Irish House of Commons* (1613-1764). One of the founding members, newspaper proprietor **William Sleater**, donated all previous issues of his *Dublin Chronicle*, dating back to 1787, and the library later acquired several volumes of the *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* dating back as far as 1750.⁶⁵

A record of all fifty-four donors and their donations is also included in the 1792 Dublin Library catalogue. Not only are the titles (and book sizes) recorded next to the donors' names, the donated titles are also marked with an asterisk in the catalogue. Each item in the catalogue is listed alphabetically by author and numbered 1 to 319, with an abbreviated title, place and year of publication, as well as the size. There is no separation by subject, so one would have had to browse by author to see what was there. However, the unnumbered 1806 catalogue, containing 1,842 titles (including 694 pamphlets), was separated into subject sections and size within (though, not in alphabetical order within size).⁶⁶

After imposing the same subject classification system from the 1806 catalogue to the 1792 books, an analysis of the library's acquisitions over a fifteen-year period revealed that 'History & Antiquities' represented just over a quarter (26%) of the library's holdings in the first year, outnumbering the next two

⁶⁵ Royal Irish Academy, *RIA Minute Book*, volume 1, 73 (29 October 1791); DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, xxxvii; *ibid.*, xxxiii & 9; Richard Robert Madden, *The History of Irish Periodical Literature, From the End of the 17th To the Middle of the 19th Century...* (London: T.C. Newby, 1867), 2:3.

⁶⁶ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, iii-xl; DLS, *Catalogue*, 1806.

highest subjects combined, 'Theology and Ecclesiastical History' (by fifty) and 'Geographies, Voyages & Travels'. The fourth category consisted of dictionaries in several languages (such as François Alberti's *Dictionnaire Italiano-Francese, et François-Italien*), subject dictionaries (marine, medical, music, etc.), and major contemporary encyclopaedias; for example, fifty-eight volumes of *L'Encyclopédie d'Yverdon* (1770). These, as well as specialist reference works such as the *Catalogi Librorum Manuscriptorum Angliae et Hiberniae* (Oxford, 1697) and Christopher Saxius' *Onomasticon Literarium* (6 vols., 1775-1778), indicate that this was no ordinary public subscription library. It must be re-emphasised that this was not a lending library. Accordingly, the collection was formed based on the idea that rare and important works in these useful or specialist subjects could be procured for perusal on the premises. The valued utility—and sociability—of a reference library facility was explained by a Dublin Library sub-committee report in 1815, when they decided to create a circulating library separate from the existing library:

They [the founders in 1791] had not then the means of purchasing two Libraries—and it being obvious that to distribute the books of the one they were employed in collecting, would remove the chief attraction which brought the Members together, they prudently determined that the Library should always continue on their shelves, in order that every member may be sure of finding there the book he was desirous to consult.⁶⁷

As Table 1 (below) indicates, there were no novels in the library, and this may account for the relatively small holdings compared to established English libraries such as Bristol, Leeds, or Liverpool.⁶⁸

Table 1: Dublin Library Society 1792 & 1806 Catalogues by Subject

Subject	No. of titles		Increase
	1792	1806	
History & Antiquities	83	188	+105
Theology & Ecclesiastical History	33	82	+49
Geographies, Voyages & Travels	31	127	+96
Dictionaries, Grammars & Catalogues	28	46	+18

⁶⁷ *Freeman's Journal*, 29 September 1815.

⁶⁸ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 97. Although, Rebecca Bowd notes that the 'relative absence of modern novels' at the Leeds Library reflected the middle classes' preference for 'serious literature': Bowd, "Useful Knowledge or Polite Learning? A Reappraisal of Approaches to Subscription Library History," 188. Incidentally, one of the library's donations included a 1781 catalogue of books from the Liverpool Library Society: DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, 32.

Poetry, Prose & Drama	27	75	+48
Miscellanies	23	152	+129
Greek & Latin Classics and Translations	14	37	+23
Law, Constitution & Politics	14	129	+115
Natural History, Chemistry, Botany, etc.	12	42	+30
Transactions, etc. of Learned Societies	10	24	+14
Biographies	9	69	+60
Reviews and Magazines	9	44	+35
Arts, Trade & Commerce	8	63	+55
Mathematics and Natural Philosophy	7	21	+14
Anatomy, Physiology, Surgery, Medicine, etc.	6	19	+13
Ethics, Metaphysics & Logic	5	17	+12
Total number of titles	319	1,148	+829

Another significant point of analysis for the holdings of this newly established library was to determine how many titles from each subject were donated and how many were bought. This would give an idea as to which subjects were targeted for purchase. The quality of works given by the fifty-four donors suggests that the librarian, Joshua Edkins, may well have vetted the donations, possibly turning away books that were not suitable for the overall collection.⁶⁹ After separating the donated titles in each subject category (they were marked with an asterisk in the catalogue entries), the difference between the donations and the total in each category was the number of acquisitions by purchase (Table 2).⁷⁰

Table 2: Dublin Library Society 1792 Holdings by Donation & Purchase

Subject	No. of titles	Donations	Purchases
History & Antiquities	83	41	42
Theology & Ecclesiastical History	33	24	9
Geographies, Voyages & Travels	31	18	13
Dictionaries, Grammars & Catalogues	28	12	16
Poetry, Prose & Drama	27	22	5
Miscellanies	23	20	3
Greek & Latin Classics and Translations	14	14	0

⁶⁹ It appears duplicates were accepted as two members each donated a copy of John Rutty's important *Natural History of the County of Dublin*, 2 vols.: DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, xxviii-xxix.

⁷⁰ Newspapers in the 1806 catalogue were included in 'Law, Constitution, and Politicks' rather than 'Reviews, Magazines, &c.': DLS, *Catalogue*, 1806, 26.

Law, Constitution & Politics	14	8	5
Natural History, Chemistry, Botany, etc.	12	8	4
Transactions, etc. of Learned Societies	10	4	6
Biographies	9	8	1
Reviews, Magazines, &c.	9	1	9
Arts, Trade & Commerce	8	5	3
Mathematics and Natural Philosophy	7	3	4
Anatomy, Physiology, Surgery, Medicine, etc.	6	5	1
Ethics, Metaphysics & Logic	5	2	3
Total	319	195	124

Although the largest number of donations were from the 'History & Antiquities' category, the library doubled its holdings in that subject, accounting for just over a third (34%) of overall purchases that year. After receiving twenty-four donations of titles related to religion, a mere nine were purchased. Evidently, this subject was not high on the list of priorities. However, a clear sign of their remit as a public reference library was the purchase of sixteen further titles in 'Dictionaries, Grammars & Catalogues'.⁷¹

Table 1 also shows the total number of acquisitions by subject in the 1806 Dublin Library catalogue. Once again, 'History & Antiquities' received a substantial increase, as did 'Geographies, Voyages & Travels'. The considerable rise in 'Miscellanies', from twenty-three to 152, is puzzling. The titles in this category ranged from the miscellany (compilations of poetry and verse) to the miscellaneous—in many cases, where the books did not go into any other categories. However, upon scanning almost five pages of these 'Miscellanies', many of them could well have been inserted into other given subject areas, thereby reducing its overall total.⁷²

History and antiquities were popular subjects with these members, given renewed interest in Ireland's ancient past—especially among the Ascendancy classes—as part of a wave of cultural patriotism in the latter part of the

⁷¹ One of which was the aforementioned 'Saxii, Christophori, *Onomasticon Literarium*, 6 vols. 8vo. Trajecti ad Rhenum, 1775-1788': DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, 23.

⁷² DLS, *Catalogue*, 1806, 51-56.

eighteenth century.⁷³ But by 1806, the subject of Union with Britain was such a hotly contested topic that books relating to 'Law, Constitution & Politics' rose from a mere fourteen to 129—an increase of 115 over that period when Ireland lost its legislative independence and was incorporated into the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.⁷⁴ Moreover, these statistics do not include the 694 titles in the library's collection of pamphlets, 170 of which (in twelve volumes, plus another twenty unbound) are titled 'Pamphlets For and Against Union'.⁷⁵ Several of these pamphlets and books would have come from donations by Dublin Library members. By 1795, upwards of five hundred donations had been received by the library.⁷⁶ There was also a Proposal Book in which members wrote suggestions for purchases; the committee would then decide on the acquisitions at their next meeting.⁷⁷ In the fifteen years after the establishment of the Dublin Library, its holdings increased to a total of 1,842 titles, including pamphlets.⁷⁸ By 1810, this figure had reached close to 2,400.⁷⁹

As mentioned in the introduction, Dublin Library founding committee member **George Barnes** published a pamphlet of almost one hundred pages, in which he cited twenty works from the holdings of the Dublin Library, for public scrutiny.⁸⁰ With the absence of sign-in books and registers it is difficult to determine what was read by whom—virtually impossible when it comes to a reference library with no lending system. However, this gives some indication as to the importance of the Dublin Library to people of middle-class or even unconventional academic backgrounds (i.e. not studying theology or philosophy, science or classics) who otherwise would not have had access to such material elsewhere and, therefore, unable to effectively contribute to

⁷³ O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*. For this, see p. 253.

⁷⁴ D. George Boyce, *Nineteenth-Century Ireland: Search for Stability* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2005), 1.

⁷⁵ Other subject areas in the pamphlet collection by 1806 are: 'Pamphlets, Miscellaneous'; 'Pamphlets on Irish Affairs'; 'Pamphlets on French Affairs'; 'Pamphlets on Roman Catholic Question'; and simply 'Pamphlets': DLS, *Catalogue*, 1806, 31-46.

⁷⁶ *City and Country Calendar; or Irish Court Registry, For the Year of Our Lord, 1795* (Dublin: N. Kelly, 1795), 259.

⁷⁷ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, ix. This Proposal Book (not in existence), may have been used as a comments book, as a rule was entered on 2 July 1792 stating: 'That any matter written in the Proposal Book except the proposal of books, be signed by the writer': DLS, *Laws*, 1822, 49.

⁷⁸ These figures have all referred to number of titles and not the number of volumes.

⁷⁹ Dublin Library Society, *Catalogue of Books Belonging to the Dublin Library Society* (Dublin: Printed by Thomas Burnside, 1810). This may reflect the number of books only, rather than books and pamphlets combined.

⁸⁰ Barnes, *The Rights of the Imperial Crown of Ireland Asserted and Maintained*, iv.

contemporary public discourse. As addressed above, their remit was to establish a public library, 'where men of a studious turn may have opportunities of consulting authors of the first character, but the high price of whose works keep them mostly out of the hands of common purchasers'.⁸¹

One of those men became one of Ireland's greatest historical figures. Known as the Liberator for his battle for Catholic emancipation, Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847) kept a journal in his early days, while studying law in England. He noted books he either purchased or borrowed at a circulating library, such as Gibbon's *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.⁸² He was later renowned for his oratorical eloquence, a talent perfected by his voracious reading. While in London, he subscribed to a circulating library to 'relax my mind with the study of History and the Belles Lettres, objects absolutely necessary for every person who has occasion to speak in public, as they enlarge the ideas, and afford that strength and solidity of speech which are requisite for every public speaker'.⁸³ O'Connell settled in Dublin in May 1796 and took out a subscription to the Dublin Library Society on 6 December, the same year:

Wednesday, December 7th, 1796. – I yesterday subscribed to the Dublin Library, in Eustace Street. I paid two guineas—a great sum of money for me. But I think I shall have very ample value for it. I mean to spend four days in the week in it there. I am at present engaged in reading Whitaker's *History of Manchester* and Henry's *History of England*.⁸⁴

In his journal, O'Connell continued to record works he perused in the library such as Bayle's *Dictionnaire Philosophique et Critique*, select entries from

⁸¹ *Dublin Evening Post*, 16 August 1791. Similarly, Rebecca Bowd looks at 'ongoing professional development' when examining references to several books in the Leeds Medical Library in works by the library's founders in Bowd, "Useful Knowledge or Polite Learning? A Reappraisal of Approaches to Subscription Library History," 186-187.

⁸² O'Connell mentions 'Cawthorne's Library' from where he borrowed books: Daniel O'Connell, *Daniel O'Connell, His Early Life and Journal, 1795-1802*, ed. Arthur Houston (London: Sir I. Pitman, 1906), 106 (5 January 1796). This is likely 'Cawthorn's British [Circulating] Library': *Robin Alston's Library History Database*, accessed 10 September 2016, <https://www.scribd.com/doc/63097781/Robin-Alston-Library-History-England>.

⁸³ Daniel O'Connell, *The Correspondence of Daniel O'Connell*, ed. Maurice O'Connell (Dublin: Irish University Press for the Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1972-1977), 1:14 (Daniel O'Connell to his uncle, 11 March 1794).

⁸⁴ C.J. Woods, "Historical Revision: Was O'Connell a United Irishman?" *Irish Historical Studies* 35, no. 138 (November 2006): 175; Daniel O'Connell, "O'Connell: His Diary From 1792 to 1802, and Letters. Now for the First Time Published. Part III," *The Irish Monthly* 10, no. 109 (July 1882): 450-451; O'Connell, *Daniel O'Connell, His Early Life and Journal*, 129 (7 December 1796).

Diderot's *Encyclopédie*, and the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.⁸⁵ Four days after subscribing, the library met with his approval:

I spend the greater part of the day in the library. In the perusal of a favorite author I feel not the time slip away. Was the library to remain open till one o'clock, I am sure I should frequently be there at that hour. As it strikes ten, I am forced, very reluctantly, to leave it.⁸⁶

O'Connell was able to return to Gibbon at the Dublin Library: 'The closing of the library prevented me from finishing the 18th chapter of Gibbon, vol. 2nd. Two pages remain unread'. Here, the meticulousness of the diarist allows for a preciously rare observation of interest in the Dublin Library, given the paucity of documentation. But alongside the example of George Barnes, and the newspaper reports praising the library, it is reasonable to conclude that the Dublin Library was a well-used public utility in late-eighteenth-century Dublin. Indeed, as early as the beginning of 1792, it was listed in the Dublin directory under 'Public Offices and Buildings', along with the rest of Dublin's civic institutions.⁸⁷

Conclusion

The intent of this chapter has been to provide an alternative account of the origins of the Dublin Library Society. Previous literature on the Dublin library simply summarised the library's establishment as a 'meeting of congenial minds' who gathered at John Archer's bookshop in May 1791. However, through an exhaustive investigation using contemporary newspaper reports, notices, and advertisements, a clearer, detailed account has emerged. Emboldened by the achievement of legislative independence from Britain in 1782 and the establishment of the Royal Irish Academy in 1785, a spirit of patriotism was in the air in Dublin. Learning and cultivation were linked to the prosperity of the nation and the intellectual and cultural affectations of an emerging metropolis. Members of the book trade were fêted for their literary endeavours, whether it was the provision of reading material for sale or circulation (at a price). The public demand for print was indeed felt to such an extent that Dubliners not affiliated with institutional libraries required access

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 133-135.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 137 (10 December 1796); O'Connell, "O'Connell: His Diary From 1792 to 1802," 451.

⁸⁷ O'Connell, *Daniel O'Connell, His Early Life and Journal*, 146 ([22] December 1796); *WDD* 1792, 10.

to a well-stocked public library with rare and contemporary works. Booksellers such as John Archer and Anthony Gerna sought to capitalise on these sensibilities, offering their library services to the public as a national and civic duty.

A thorough analysis of eighteenth-century newspapers, has facilitated the compilation of a far more detailed account of the beginnings of the Dublin Library Society than has hitherto been related. The scientist Richard Kirwan, who along with the Earl of Charlemont had hosted meetings of the literati at his house, was appointed Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy (of which Lord Charlemont was president) on 16 March 1791. Six days later, a meeting at Archer's General Book-Repository, where several other members of Dublin's literary community had been wont to gather, resulted in the formation of a plan for a public, non-proprietary subscription library, based on liberal principles. Those men who met on 10 May to finalise plans for the library were rewarded for their endeavours by being elected on 21 May as the Dublin Library's first officers and committee of twenty-one. This helps to explain the rather eclectic composition of the library's first committee (to be explored below). Also, the uptake in interest was swift, with all eyes on the library's proper organisation to ensure its permanency as an enlightened, inclusive institution for an expanding reading public.

The library benefitted from a substantial number of donations from its members in 1791 and 1792, enabling purchases to further strengthen subject areas such as 'History & Antiquities' and its section on dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and other quick-reference material. By 1806, after the turmoil of the 1798 Rebellion and the 1801 Act of Union, there was understandably a considerable increase in items related to 'Law, Constitution & Politics'. Pamphlets were collected assiduously and, in keeping with national and academic repositories, the Dublin Library took up the role as a public reference research library from the late-eighteenth century and into the nineteenth.

It is noteworthy here to re-emphasise that the primary sources show that public demand for launching this library had been growing steadily over the years prior to 1791. Motivations for a public subscription library in Dublin were

connected to the spirit of cultural patriotism and associational activity in Dublin at the time, after the establishment of Irish legislative independence. Indeed, as will be shown below, the library's advertisements and the newspaper editorials and stories on the launch of the library, attracted many members involved in other patriotic and national endeavours. Moreover, religion, class or connections were not barriers to admission; the initial fee of two guineas, and one annually thereafter, enabled the middle orders of Dublin society—albeit entirely male—to access, with relative ease, reading material hitherto largely restricted to institutional libraries. Subsequent chapters will highlight the broad spectrum of membership, in terms of occupation and association, and note many relationships among the founding members, beginning with the first two library committees.

Chapter 7: Dublin Library Society Founding Members

Central to an understanding of the origins of a public subscription library are its founding members. The absence of early documentation pertaining to the Dublin Library Society has made it difficult to determine the motives of these individuals for organising a library in Dublin. Through contemporary newspapers and some historical sources, the researcher has some understanding of the functions and procedures of the library, and a general explanation of the society's goals and aspirations. But without minute books, registers, or ledgers from the library, it has been challenging to find out more—specifically, who these founding members were. The chief primary source is the 1792 *Catalogue of Books Belonging to the Dublin Library Society*, also containing the society's first laws and, crucially, a list of the 310 founding subscribers, including the first committee members and officers.¹ While prior attention² briefly had been paid to only those committee members who were later mentioned in Gilbert's *History of the City of Dublin* and in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, this chapter and the appendices will show that prosopographical research into the founding members has led to a better understanding of the composition of the library's early membership. Importantly, an analysis of the early subscribers will further strengthen the argument that the Dublin Library acted as a conduit for increased availability of quality reading material to a wider Irish public, based on principles of inclusion in a patriotic context.

Collectively, the library issued the following statement of its motives in the introduction to its catalogue:

This institution recommends itself to every patriotic and enlightened mind; and, if carried on with spirit and liberality, will redound much to the credit of this city, as it tends to diffuse knowledge, excite literary curiosity, and facilitate literary exertions, by supplying the means of information to men, who may be possessed of talents, tho' not of opulence.³

¹ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792.

² Howell, *Dublin Library Society*; Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:314-315.

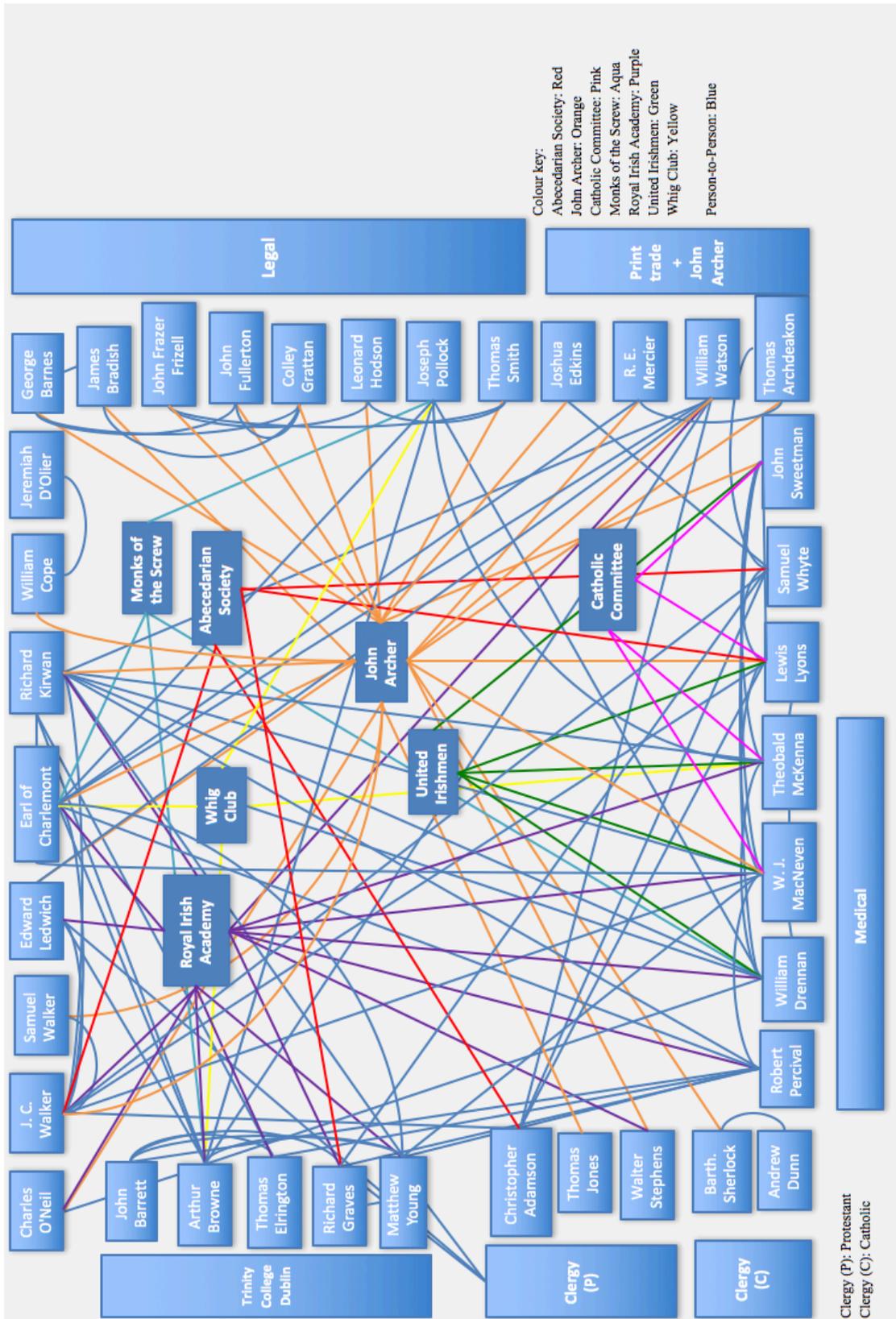
³ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, iv.

In other words, Dublin—and indeed Ireland—would benefit from the establishment of a library that serves those who can afford the initial admission of two guineas (and one thereafter). This would substantially increase the membership as opposed to procedures in other societies by which prospective members—often illustrious—would be recommended and elected for entry to the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy (for which there were also substantial fees). For the first time in Dublin, access to quality, contemporary reading material was not based on membership of the elite. As will be shown, the founding subscribers represented a cross-section of the emerging expanded public where the peer shared the same membership privileges as the tradesman. An examination of the 1791 and 1792 committees and officers will be followed by an overview of the remaining founding members. Where this chapter largely focuses on prosopographical work involving occupations, Chapter 8 will concentrate on the associational connections of these founding members. However, connections among the committeemen and officers will be addressed here, aided by a sociogram on the following page (164). As mentioned, both chapters are supported by prosopographies in the appendices, where can be found entries for those names emphasised in bold type in the text.

Dublin Library Society Committees and Officers, 1791-1792

The first Dublin Library Society catalogue has a list of the 1791 committee members and officers preceding the list of subscribers. In March 1792, a new committee was formed and listed in the newspapers, after the catalogue was published. What set the latter committee apart was the addition of an executive: the unanimous choice of the **Earl of Charlemont** as President of the Dublin Library, followed by the election of four vice-presidents, **Richard Kirwan, Matthew Young, Arthur Browne**, and the M.P. **Charles O’Neil**. In addition, eleven new committee members were elected rather than the seven as was stated in the library’s laws and regulations.⁴

⁴ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, vii.



This graphic shows the interconnected relationships among the Dublin Library committeemen and officers, with each line indicating an associational or occupational connection.

Figure 4: Sociogram of the Dublin Library Society Committeemen and Officers, 1791-1792

This brings the total number of committeemen and officers from the library's first two years (May 1791 and March 1792) to thirty-eight. The sociogram above (p. 164) includes all of them—thirty-seven on the perimeter and **John Archer** (General Book-Repository) in the middle—largely sorted by their occupations. The academic, clerical, legal, and medical professions, along with the print trade, total twenty-seven from this group, with eleven other occupational backgrounds, including one peer.⁵

The sociogram is a tool used primarily in sociography, wherein certain social groups and networks are targeted and analysed within a historical and sociological framework. Here, it is used to illustrate the social network connections among committeemen and officers of the Dublin Library that form this target group.⁶ Not only are their occupational networks highlighted, but their associational connections are also evident, with many linked to the six formal societies in the middle of the sociogram and Archer, who opened his General Book-Repository in December 1788, hosting literary discussions and receiving subscriptions for publications.⁷

Each line represents a relationship among these Dublin Library members and other associational activity. The intricate web of relations highlights the existence of a social and cultural milieu in eighteenth-century Dublin, indicating that many of these committeemen and officers were not only prominent members within this milieu, but that the frequency of their interactions indicates a high level of familiarity. Also noteworthy are the connections between different individuals.⁸ For instance, the Anglican Earl of Charlemont was President of the Royal Irish Academy at the same time as the Unitarian Kirwan was a committeeman and librarian, and the Catholic physician, **William**

⁵ Where the Trinity College Dublin fellows are separated from Edward Ledwich and Richard Kirwan in the sociogram, they are together in Table 3 (p. 166). The remaining eleven are: Earl of Charlemont (peer); Charles O'Neil (Member of Parliament); Jeremiah D'Olier, William Cope (merchants); John Sweetman (brewer); Edward Ledwich (antiquarian); Richard Kirwan (scientist); Joseph Cooper Walker and Samuel Walker (civil servants); Samuel Whyte and Lewis Lyons (schoolmasters). Tables 4 (p. 170) & 6 (p. 176) list the committeemen and officers with their occupations.

⁶ Verboven et al., "Art of Prosopography," 38 & 59.

⁷ The Abecedarian Society, Catholic Committee, Monks of the Screw, Royal Irish Academy, Dublin Society of United Irishmen, and the Whig Club will be discussed in Chapter 8.

⁸ Verboven et al., "Art of Prosopography," 59.

James MacNeven was the Academy’s secretary—hence, their personal links in the sociogram.⁹

Another significant point that this sociogram illustrates is the inclusion of some of the lesser-known committeemen who may not have been members of the formal six societies but who associated with the bookseller John Archer in some way—either through attending his literary discussion room or subscribing to his publications. This will be addressed later in this chapter but Archer’s connections with some of the more prominent Dubliners may well have resulted in further acquaintances being formed. For example, **Leonard Hodson** and **Thomas Smith**, both barristers, are linked in the sociogram with Archer through their frequent subscriptions. Both were elected to the first Dublin Library committee in 1791 and, as mentioned in the previous chapter, would have been present at the meeting on 10 May 1791.¹⁰ Therefore, through Archer, this unremarkable duo would have formed an associational relationship with committee members who were already part of the Dublin milieu. Indeed, several associations related here and in the next chapter are pictured in the above sociogram.¹¹

Table 3: Occupational Composition of the Dublin Library Society Committeemen & Officers, 1791-1792

Occupation	Number in each occupation
Legal	8
Academic/scholar	7 (of which 5 are TCD)
Clergy	5
Print trade	5
Medical	4
Civil servants	2
Members of Parliament/Peers	2
Merchants	2
Schoolmasters	2
Brewer	1
Total	38

⁹ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 78-79.

¹⁰ See p. 140-141.

¹¹ Theoretically, a sociogram could be designed for all 310 members but the logistics of devising a coherent, readable one would be a difficult challenge, given the software available. Therefore, Dublin Library members appear in bold type when included in the narrative text and in the appending prosopographies with the intention of highlighting social connections.

What stands out among the two sets of committees is that apart from there being thirteen members from the Royal Irish Academy sitting, all came from a variety of professions and many of them were prominent members of Dublin society, known for their advocacy of an emerging national ideal among Irishmen. Of the peers, the Earl of Charlemont was an early subscriber to the library, having joined on 12 January 1792 as the 280th member, and therefore could not have been involved with the 1791 committee.¹² When it was decided that the 1792 committee would have a president and four vice-presidents, he was the obvious choice for the highest office. As President of the Royal Irish Academy, the 'revered *eminence grise*' of the Volunteer and patriot movement,¹³ and recognised advocate of the arts and sciences, Charlemont gave the new library society an enhanced legitimacy and reputation as an important institution. That Charlemont agreed to lend his name to the society indicated his approbation for such an endeavour. As it turned out, this aristocratic activism was not taxing for the Earl, as he does not seem to have involved himself in the workings of the library nor did he mention the society in his correspondence.¹⁴ Charles O'Neil, Member of Parliament for Cork, was another gentleman who, like Lord Charlemont, did not sit on the 1791 committee but became one of the vice-presidents in 1792—a parliamentary link (along with Arthur Browne, M.P. for Trinity College) during a period when Ireland enjoyed its legislative independence.

Richard Kirwan, recognised as the founder of the Dublin Library, was widely known throughout Europe as an eminent chemist and geologist, and the meetings he hosted at his Dublin residence attracted many of the city's intellectuals. **Joseph Cooper Walker** was one of them. Walker, who held a position in the Treasury Office at Dublin Castle, was known more as an author and antiquarian who had his own sizable library and art collection. Both Walker and Kirwan were well acquainted with Lord Charlemont and were frequent contributors to the Royal Irish Academy's *Transactions*.

¹² *Freeman's Journal*, 11 March 1819.

¹³ Kelly, "Elite Patriot Clubs," 269.

¹⁴ Howell, *Dublin Library Society*, 5. Peter Clark noted that aristocratic activism 'reflected the growth of new-style personal nobility in Georgian Britain, a world in which peers were obliged to present an image of openness and accessibility, to provide leadership rather than authority': Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 253.

Lawyers, doctors, academics and clergymen were all represented but the commercial and artisanal sectors yielded a significantly high amount of committee members. These were largely booksellers (**John Archer**, **Richard Edward Mercier** and **William Watson**), merchants (silk merchant **William Cope** and jeweller and director of the Bank of Ireland **Jeremiah D'Olier**), and a brewer (**John Sweetman**), but also included two schoolmasters (**Samuel Whyte** and **Lewis Lyons**), an engraver/artist (**Thomas Archdeakon, Junior**), and an editor/anthologist (**Joshua Edkins**), outnumbering the five affiliated with the university (**John Barrett**, **Arthur Browne**, **Thomas Elrington**, **Richard Graves**, and **Matthew Young**). Therefore, there was no one profession or section of society that dominated the committees. This balance appears deliberate, keeping in line with practices of democratically organised institutions throughout the British Isles and beyond. Indeed, years later, a sub-committee reflected on the library's original intentions that committees were chosen 'without distinction of sect or party' and 'no exclusive principle entered into the design of the founders'. Therefore, the library's uniqueness in promoting Enlightenment values of interconfessional sociability started in 1791, survived the sectarianism of 1798, and continued to flourish despite Brown's assertion that the Enlightenment project had collapsed.¹⁵

Of the five connected to Trinity College only Browne was a law professor as well as a Member of the Irish Parliament, representing the university. Barrett was Librarian of the College and was well acquainted with his colleagues, senior fellows, Browne and Young. Elrington and Graves were junior fellows at the time. Kirwan, J.C. Walker, and **Rev. Edward Ledwich** were part of the literati not affiliated with Trinity in their professions but were famous throughout academic circles for their scholarly contributions. Whyte and Lyons were both schoolmasters and the **Rev. Christopher Adamson** also operated a school in Dublin prior to 1791. The professions of these eleven committee members, involved in various educative endeavours, are philosophically connected to the function of a public library and it is understandable that the members would have elected them. As the sociogram illustrates, Adamson, Graves, Lyons, J.C.

¹⁵ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 82-85; Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 257-258; *Freeman's Journal*, 11 March 1819; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 439-448.

Walker, and Whyte were all members of the Abecedarian Society, established to aid indigent schoolmasters and schoolmistresses.

As will be shown, the legal profession was well represented among the 310 founding members. Of the thirty-eight committee members in the first two years of the Dublin Library, nine practiced law while another two—Kirwan and O’Neil—were barristers who, by 1791, had found other vocations. **George Barnes, James Bradish, John Fullerton, and Colley Grattan** were all attorneys while **Charles Frazer Frizell, Hodson, Joseph Pollock,** and Thomas Smith were barristers. Given their practical experience, their contributions would have been invaluable in the formulation of policies and procedures necessary for the creation of a functionally sound democratic, corporate structure.¹⁶

Of the six clergymen who were committee members, and not affiliated with the university, two were Catholic—**Andrew Dunn** and **Father Bartholomew Sherlock**—a sign of the liberal, inclusive, non-sectarian ethos of the library at a time when Catholics were not (yet) admitted into Trinity College and the preaching of Catholicism in churches was technically still forbidden under the penal laws.¹⁷ Edward Ledwich had clerical duties before his move to Dublin in 1790/91 when he concentrated on his research in Irish history and antiquities. Both he and **Walter Stephens**, who also studied geology in Ireland, were members of the Royal Irish Academy by 1791. When including those who taught divinity at Trinity College, the number of clergymen rises to ten. However, they were not solely tied to their churches; rather, they were active in other intellectual pursuits.

Robert Perceval, William James MacNeven, William Drennan, and **Theobald McKenna** represented the medical profession among the committee members. While Perceval is best known for his efforts within the Royal College of Physicians and the establishment of Sir Patrick Dun’s Hospital, the other three physicians are better known for their involvement in the United

¹⁶ While there is no trace of the first ‘laws and regulations’ book, the 1822 version runs to eighty pages, with cross-references to the library’s early journals throughout: DLS, *Laws*, 1822.

¹⁷ Catholics were admitted then only after a few obstacles, including taking the oath of allegiance.

Irishmen and their pursuit of varying degrees of independence and Catholic emancipation. MacNeven and McKenna were also members of the Catholic Committee while Drennan was a key figure in the foundation of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen.¹⁸

While this shows that many of the thirty-eight committee members were colleagues in their professions or shared common occupations, they were also connected in other ways through various organisations and institutions within Irish society. These associations become even more numerous when the 272 founding subscribers are considered. A section similar to this will explore the occupational breakdown of these subscribers. Associational connections among all 310 founding members will then be examined. First, given the importance of the inaugural committee, in relation to the origins of the Dublin Library Society, an investigation of its twenty-one members and three officers takes precedence, followed by the 1792 committee.

1791 Dublin Library Society Committee and Officers

Of the two committees examined here, the first one deserves greater attention when determining the significance of its composition, in relation to the foundation of the library. Moreover, the 1791 committee was elected by the founding members who acknowledged their efforts in forming the general plan of the library (as mentioned above), while the 1792 committee comprised twelve of the returning 1791 committeemen and the remainder who were members in the first year.

Table 4: 1791 Dublin Library Society Committee & Officers¹⁹

1791 Committee & Officers	Occupation
Richard Kirwan, Esq., M.R.I.A., F.R.S., &c., &c.	Scientist
Rev. Matthew Young, D.D., S.F.T.C.D and M.R.I.A.	TCD fellow
Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq., M.R.I.A.	Civil Servant
Rev. Thomas Elrington, B.D., F.T.C.D. and M.R.I.A.	TCD fellow
William James McNeven, M.D., M.R.I.A.	Physician
Samuel Whyte, Esq.	Schoolmaster
Thomas Smith, Esq.	Barrister

¹⁸ *DIB*.

¹⁹ *DLS, Catalogue, 1792, x*. All names are listed here in the order as they appear in the catalogue. Occupations have been added.

Walter Stephens, Esq., M.R.I.A.	Clergyman
William Watson, Esq., M.R.I.A.	Bookseller
Mr Thomas Archdeakon, Jun.	Engraver/artist
Rev. T. Jones, B.D.	Clergyman
Rev. Andrew Dunn	Clergyman
Rev. Richard Graves, M.A. F.T.C.D. M.R.I.A.	TCD fellow
Leonard Hodson, Esq.	Barrister
Theobald McKenna, M.D. M.R.I.A.	Physician
John Sweetman, Esq.	Brewer
George Barnes, Esq.	Attorney
Mr Lewis Lyons	Schoolmaster
Samuel Walker, Esq.	Civil servant
Rev. Christopher Adamson, L.L.D.	Clergyman
Mr Richard Edward Mercier, Secretary	Bookseller
William Cope, Esq., Treasurer	Merchant
Joshua Edkins, Esq., Librarian	Editor/Anthologist
Mr John Archer, Bookseller	Bookseller

Already highlighted in the secondary literature is that nine of the twenty-one 1791 committee were members of the Royal Irish Academy.²⁰ Three of these (**Matthew Young**, **Thomas Elrington**, and **Richard Graves**) were also fellows of Trinity College Dublin. In keeping with the recognition of **Richard Kirwan** as the catalyst behind this library project, his friends, **Joseph Cooper Walker** and **William James MacNeven** accompanied him as part of the Academy nine. MacNeven was also well acquainted with fellow physician and Catholic Committee member, **Theobald McKenna**. Rounding out the nine from the Academy were bookseller, **William Watson** and **Rev. Walter Stephens**, noted for his interest in geology, a field for which Kirwan was renowned.

Richard Kirwan and his *Conversaciones*

Apart from, perhaps, the **Earl of Charlemont**, no academician in the 1790s has been fêted as much as the chemist, geologist and intellectual, **Richard Kirwan**.²¹ Born into a Catholic family, Kirwan converted to the Established

²⁰ Howell, *Dublin Library Society*, 4; Archbold, "Book Clubs and Reading Societies in the Late Eighteenth Century," 156.

²¹ For literature on Kirwan, see P.J. McLaughlin, "Richard Kirwan: Part III. Dublin Before the Union," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 29, no. 113 (March 1940): 71-83; F.E. Dixon, "Richard Kirwan: The Dublin Philosopher," *Dublin Historical Record* 24, no. 3 (June 1971): 52-64; Duncan Thorburn Burns, *Richard Kirwan, 1733-1812: The Philosopher of Dublin: [A Lecture Delivered to the National Committee for the History and Philosophy of Science of the Royal Irish Academy on 2nd December, 2003]* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2003). Duncan Thorburn Burns, "Richard Kirwan's Library: An Eighteenth-Century Chemist's

Church, then to Unitarianism, after influence from Joseph Priestley (1733-1804). But religion did not play a role in the company he kept. While in England, Kirwan became a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1780, an influential member of the Chapter Coffee House Philosophical Society (of which Priestley was an honorary member) in London between 1780 and 1787, as well as the Lunar Society in Birmingham.²² Kirwan attended the London *conversazioni*—meetings among like-minds held in private homes—of Sir Joseph Banks of the Royal Society, and held his own discussion groups at his residence at 11 Newman Street.²³

After moving to Dublin in 1787, Kirwan continued the practice of these meetings among the literati at his house in 6 Cavendish Row. Among the future Dublin Library founding committee members, regular visitors included **Lord Charlemont** (who also hosted them at his townhouse in nearby Rutland Square), **Graves**, **MacNeven**, **Perceval**, and **J.C. Walker**.²⁴ Such gatherings—practiced in Dublin as far back as the 1720s—represented the continued flourishing of the unofficial public sphere, separate from the realm of the church and state.²⁵

Richard Kirwan and the Royal Irish Academy

Two years before his arrival in Dublin, many of those who attended his *conversazioni* joined **Kirwan** as founding members of the Royal Irish Academy, with its earlier meetings held at **Lord Charlemont's** house. The Earl was naturally its first president and **Perceval**, the Academy's first secretary, sat on the Committee of Science with **Young**. By 1791, Kirwan was on the Committee of Science with **Elrington** and Perceval, and his close friend, **MacNeven** was secretary of the Academy. MacNeven and **McKenna**—two of the first Catholics admitted into the Royal Irish Academy—along with the

Collection," in Cunningham and Fitzpatrick, eds., *Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library*, 93-104. For Kirwan's impact on the scientific community in Dublin, see Enda Leaney, "Evanescent Impressions: Public Lectures and the Popularisation of Science in Ireland, 1770-1860," *Eire-Ireland* 43 (2008): 157-82.

²² T.H. Levere et al., *Discussing Chemistry and Steam: The Minutes of a Coffee House Philosophical Society 1780-1787* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 1-2 & 18. Levere believes Kirwan's move to Dublin in 1787 signalled the end of the Chapter Coffee House Philosophical Society: *ibid.*, 19 & 25.

²³ Burns, *Richard Kirwan, 1733-1812: The Philosopher of Dublin*, 4.

²⁴ Dublin Library founding subscriber, the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, **John Thomas Troy**, was also a regular. His house was at 1 Cavendish Row: McLaughlin, "Richard Kirwan: Part III," 73.

²⁵ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 220.

Presbyterian **Drennan** and the Unitarian Kirwan, had likewise formed their own scientific circle.²⁶

Kirwan was also appointed Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy on 16 March 1791 and was evidently well positioned to organise a subscription library elsewhere in Dublin.²⁷ The Dublin Library Society's librarian in 1862 reported that Kirwan frequented **John Archer's** General Book-Repository at 80 Dame Street, set up to encourage discussion and the perusal of a variety of literature.²⁸ It was here where Kirwan engineered the plan for the Dublin Library Society with men from his *conversaciones* and others from Archer's literary circle.

John Archer's Literary Circle

The election of the first committee members is attributed to the respectable standing of these men in Dublin society—membership to the Royal Irish Academy and Trinity College being clear benchmarks—and quite likely their association with **Richard Kirwan**. However, a cohort of less-prominent individuals made up the remainder of the committee and its officers. This invites further investigation into the reason behind their becoming committee members. There is no extant documentation listing the persons who frequented **Archer's** General Book-Repository. However, an analysis of subscription lists for his publications between 1791 and 1792 reveals many of the same names—several of whom were Dublin Library founding subscribers and committeemen.²⁹ When taken into account the explanation in the *Dublin Evening Post* that 'the members at large paid those gentlemen with whom it originated, the highest compliment they had in their power, by returning them on the Committee',³⁰ it is plausible that some were part of Archer's literary circle who congregated in his reading room. After all, as discussed, subscription by publication was popular in the eighteenth century, and it was not uncommon that several subscribers to a publication were well-familiar with each other as

²⁶ Marie Bourke, *The Story of Irish Museums, 1790-2000: Culture, Identity and Education* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2011), 62; Leaney, "Evanescent Impressions," 164; *DIB*.

²⁷ Royal Irish Academy, *RIA Minute Book*, volume 1, 67.

²⁸ Mackle, *Reminiscences of the Life of Dr Richard Kirwan*, 7.

²⁹ Archer. See the sociogram at p. 164 for connections involving John Archer.

³⁰ *Dublin Evening Post*, 3 November 1791.

well as the bookseller/publisher. Therefore, this setting would have allowed normally disparate social groups to mix in the common interest of literary publication—in some cases, an expression of their cultural patriotism. Royal Irish Academy members **MacNeven, Stephens, J.C. Walker, Watson,** and **Young** also appear in Archer’s subscription lists but there were at least twelve other committee members and officers who were part of Archer’s literary circle.³¹

Table 5: Dublin Library Society Founding Members Who Subscribed to John Archer Publications in 1791-1792³²

Mr Thomas Archdeakon, Junior*	William James McNeven, MD, MRIA*
Rev. Gilbert Austin, MRIA	Mr Ambrose Moore
John Beatty	Mr James Moore
John Blachford, Esq.	Charles O'Neil*
Cornelius Bolton, Esq.	Archibald Ormston, Esq.
James Bradish, Esq.*	William Osbrey, Esq.
Rev. Thomas Brownrigg, AM	Mr Thomas Prentice
Daniel Bryan, MD	Joseph Rawlins, Esq.
Francis Burroughs, Esq.	Dominick Rice, Esq.
Robert Burton, Esq.	Rev. Dr. Sherlock*
John Cash, Esq.	Hugh Skeys, Esq.
William Cope, Esq.*	Thomas Smith, Esq.*
Stephen Dickson, MD, MRIA	Walter Stephens, Esq., MRIA*
Mr George Draper, Jun.	John Sweetman, Esq.*
Mr John Dumoulin	Henry Tighe, Esq.
John Thomas Foster, Esq.	Thomas Towers, Esq.
Charles Frazer Frizell, Esq.*	Robert Watson Wade, Esq. MRIA
Colley Grattan, Esq.*	Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq., MRIA*
Mr Arthur Grueber	Samuel Walker, Esq.*
Mr William Jones	William Watson, Esq., MRIA*
Mr Nicholas Kildhal	Luke White, Esq.
Rev. Edward Ledwich, MRIA*	Samuel Whyte, Esq.*
Mr Nicholas Le Favre	Rev. Gore Wood
Mr Lewis Lyons*	John Yoakley, Esq.

48 in total; 17 (*) committee members

When examining the subscription lists for Archer’s publications, lesser-known names like **Leonard Hodson, Thomas Smith** and **Thomas Archdeakon, Jr.**

³¹ The officers were Cope (treasurer) and Mercier (secretary), although Mercier was also part of the committee of twenty-one.

³² Archer.

appear on virtually every list.³³ **Samuel Walker**, younger brother of Joseph Cooper, was also an avid subscriber to Archer's publications, as were **Lewis Lyons** and **Samuel Whyte**, both popular schoolmasters in Dublin.³⁴ The successful brewer and art collector, **John Sweetman**, also appears, along with fellow Catholic Committeemen (and later United Irishmen), Lyons and MacNeven. John Archer himself, as proprietor of the General Book-Repository and host of the literary circle, cannot be forgotten, especially after his designation as bookseller to the Dublin Library by virtual default. His apprentice, **Richard Edward Mercier**, whom one nineteenth-century historian described as having possessed 'extensive and accurate bibliographical information', was then well placed to assume the title of secretary.³⁵

Finally, the wealthy silk merchant and popular municipal politician, **William Cope** repeatedly displayed his support for Archer's publications. With his sizable private wealth and successful business, Cope sat on numerous committees and societies including the Ouzel Galley Society and the Dublin Chamber of Commerce.³⁶ An Ascendancy stalwart, staunchly against any relaxation of the penal laws, he nonetheless gained the support of many Catholics and radicals in the Dublin Corporation because of his responsible financial management and ability to uphold an office free from corruption and patronage.³⁷ He also acted as organiser and collector of charitable donations in a number of parishes.³⁸ It is fitting then that Cope was handed the office of treasurer of the new library.

While this is not definitive proof that these men were all present at the meeting of 10 May, their active participation in subscribing to Archer's publications suggests that they frequented his premises, as part of the literary circle that began with the General Book-Repository, supported his publishing ventures

³³ Archer; **George Barnes**, however, is absent from Archer's subscription lists but it is possible that his fellow legal colleagues were influential in his election. **Rev. Thomas Jones** subscribed to two of the publications: *Some Account of London* and *Athenian Letters*: Archer.

³⁴ *AD*, where can be found in many entries, the names of schoolmasters who taught the students before their entry to the university.

³⁵ Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:334.

³⁶ Explanations of the Ouzel Galley Society and the Dublin Chamber of Commerce will be addressed below, in Chapter 8, on the various societies in Dublin in the late-eighteenth century.

³⁷ Jacqueline Hill, "The Politics of Dublin Corporation," in Dickson et al., *United Irishmen*, 100.

³⁸ *Dublin Chronicle*, 8 Jan 1791; *Dublin Chronicle*, 18 Jan 1791.

and perhaps would have signed the notice posted there for the foundation of a new public subscription library for Dublin.

1792 Dublin Library Society Committee and Officers

In addition to the appointment of a president and four vice-presidents, the selection of the second committee of the new Dublin Library Society indicates an increase of prominent individuals from Dublin's milieu. As two sitting committee members were appointed vice-presidents, nine new committee members were required, instead of the seven stated in Article 8 of the first laws.³⁹

Table 6: 1792 Dublin Library Society Committee & Officers⁴⁰

1792 Committee and Officers	Occupation
<i>President:</i>	
Rt. Hon. The Earl of Charlemont	Peer
<i>Vice-Presidents:</i>	
Arthur Browne, L.L.D. S.F.T.C.D.*	TCD fellow/MP
Richard Kirwan, Esq. M.R.I.A. F.R.S.	Scientist
Charles O'Neil, M.P.*	MP
Rev. Matthew Young, D.D. S.F.T.C.D., M.R.I.A.	TCD fellow
<i>Committee:</i>	
Jeremiah D'Olier, Esq.*	Merchant
Rev. Andrew Dunn	Clergyman
William Watson, Esq. M.R.I.A.	Bookseller
Rev. T. Jones, BD	Clergyman
Leonard Hodson, Esq.	Barrister
W.J. McNeven, M.D., M.R.I.A.	Physician
John Sweetman, Esq.	Brewer
Rev. E. Ledwich, L.L.B., M.R.I.A.*	Antiquarian
Charles F. Frizell*	Barrister
Rev. Dr. Sherlock*	Clergyman
James Bradish, Esq.*	Attorney
Mr Lewis Lyons	Schoolmaster
Rev. J. Barrett, D.D. S.F.T.C.D.*	TCD fellow
John J. Fullerton, Esq.*	Attorney
Samuel Whyte, Esq.	Schoolmaster
Joseph Pollock, Esq.*	Barrister
William Drennan, M.D.*	Physician

³⁹ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, vii.

⁴⁰ *Hibernian Journal*, 2 April 1792. The names listed here are as they were in the newspaper. The occupations on the right side of the table have been added.

Thomas Smith, Esq.	Barrister
Colley Grattan, Esq.*	Attorney
Robert Percival, M.D.*	Physician
William Cope, Esq., Treasurer	Merchant
Mr Richard Edward Mercier, Secretary	Bookseller
Joshua Edkins, Esq., Librarian	Editor/anthologist
Mr John Archer, Bookseller	Bookseller

*New committee members

Joseph Cooper Walker's departure for his European Grand Tour—whereby his unavailability for monthly committee meetings no doubt made any second tenure impractical—also likely diminished brother **Samuel**'s standing as a returning committee member. But without records of the election it is impossible to decipher how this committee was formed. From the names, though, they were familiar faces to the subscribers and returning committee members. **Lord Charlemont**'s appointment as president, and the promotions of **Kirwan** and **Young**—two leading Royal Irish Academy committeemen—as vice-presidents further emulated the leadership structure of the Academy. The elections of two Members of Parliament—**Charles O'Neil** and **Arthur Browne**—gave the new library exposure and a connection to significant government activity that was integral to Dublin's social and economic character. The mercantile and financial sector gained further representation in 1792 with successful merchant and goldsmith, **Jeremiah D'Olier**, fresh from his appointment as a director of the Bank of Ireland in the same week, continuing his ascent onto boards and committees.

The legal profession's representation was further strengthened by the additions of **James Bradish**, **Charles Frazer Frizell**, **John J. Fullerton**, and **Colley Grattan**, the latter, a cousin of the leading Whig parliamentarian, Henry Grattan. Although a barrister, **Joseph Pollock**'s notoriety and popularity stemmed from his patriotic treatises under the alias Owen Roe O'Nial. He and **William Drennan** were prolific in the years leading up to 1791 as literary advocates of greater legislative independence for Ireland. Drennan—who was part of the establishment of the Newry Book Society in 1786—helped form the United Irishmen along with the 1791 Dublin Library committeemen **Lewis Lyons**, **John Sweetman**, **William James MacNeven**, and **Theobald**

McKenna.⁴¹ Another medical man, in addition to Doctors Drennan, MacNeven, and McKenna (an outgoing committeeman), **Robert Perceval** joined his fellow Royal Irish Academy members on the Dublin Library Committee in 1792. Perceval was also Professor of Medicine at Trinity College. **Rev. John Barrett**, Trinity College Librarian, and the noted antiquarian **Rev. Edward Ledwich**, newly inducted into the Royal Irish Academy (at one time proposed by Joseph Cooper Walker) were scholarly additions to the committee. **Rev. Bartholomew Sherlock** doubled the Catholic representation of clergymen on the committee, joining **Rev. Andrew Dunn**. However, the Catholic contingent including the laity—that included Lyons, MacNeven, and Sweetman—did not increase due to the departure of Theobald McKenna.

Dublin Library Society Founding Subscribers, 1791-1792

Those who held seats on the first two committees were vital to the governance of the new Dublin Library Society. The preceding section (with the prosopography in Appendix 1) highlight the professions of these men and, often, their relationships with other committee members. Moreover, many of these committeemen were prominent citizens within Dublin's social and political scene. The significance of the first group of founding committee members to the origins and early operations of the library society is undeniable. However, this voluntary, non-proprietary subscription library required the membership of numerous individuals to make the scheme work. It is equally important to address the 272 founding members to fully understand the occupational and associational connections within the entire Dublin Library membership. After all, it was the members who elected the committees and officers, and when they are considered, a richer picture emerges. For, if they were neglected, an assessment of these associational relationships would appear incomplete. Here, an examination of these early subscribers will provide further insight into the occupational composition of the society and reveal some noteworthy information about who used the library.

⁴¹ Archbold, "Book Clubs and Reading Societies in the Late Eighteenth Century," 145. For the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, see p. 230.

The prosopography of the founding subscribers in Appendix 2 contains brief entries for 272 founding members of the Dublin Library Society. At a glance, Table 7 (below) gives a breakdown of their general occupational backgrounds. It also illustrates the membership of the library as representing a cross-section of Dublin society—that part of male society who could afford the initial fee of two guineas. While it is unclear as to the ratio of Protestants to Catholics, one estimate indicated that of the 310 founding subscribers, there were approximately fifty Catholics—roughly sixteen per cent.⁴²

Table 7: Dublin Library Society Founding Subscribers, by Occupation

Occupation	Number in each occupation
Legal	51
Merchants/bankers	40 (11 bankers)
Clergy	31 (19 Anglican; 10 Catholic*; 2 Dissenter)
Medical (Apothecaries/Physicians/Surgeons)	28 (6 apothecaries; 15 physicians; 7 surgeons)
Tradesmen/shopkeepers	19
Gentlemen	18
Print trade	18
Students	17
Civil servants	13
Architects/skilled artisans	11
Peers/Members of Parliament	6 (of which 3 were MPs)
Schoolmasters	5
Army officers	4
Academic	3 (of which 2 were TCD)
<i>Not identified</i>	8
Total	272

*Includes two priests presumed to be Catholic

Lawyers

There is a sizable representation by the legal profession: almost nineteen per cent. This is understandable, given the abundance of lawyers living in Dublin—the legal and legislative centre of Ireland. Lawyers as a group tended to

⁴² *Correspondent* (Dublin), 15 March 1819. It is not certain, however, whether this also included Catholics who took the oath of allegiance or converted, an example being Dominick Rice, who took the oath to practice law in Ireland (prohibited to Catholics in 1791) but who was an active member of the Catholic Committee. He may have been included as Catholic, as the letter-writer to the newspaper, whence this estimate originated, includes Richard Kirwan as a Protestant. Born Catholic, Kirwan converted to the Established Church, then to Unitarianism.

congregate in the Dublin coffee houses close to the Four Courts and King’s Inns, early in the eighteenth century.⁴³ The legal profession was regarded as a noble, respected vocation and with moves toward Irish legislative independence in the latter part of the eighteenth century, it was certainly an active one. Many lawyers became involved in various societies in Dublin. Together with other emerging professions (such as the medical men), their participation reflected a wider membership to these institutions than simply gentleman elites and the clergy. Therefore, one does not get a sense that these lawyers joined the Dublin Library to have access to legal books despite their prohibitive prices.⁴⁴ Rather, from the books that were donated to the library by lawyers, there was not a great emphasis on looking to build a collection of law resources to benefit colleagues.⁴⁵ These were learned men with broad literary interests who were keen to involve themselves in associational activity—in this case, a library society. In fact, Table 8 (below) indicates the breadth of subject material donated by the lawyers—the highest number of donors (sixteen) from one profession. Also, as indicated above, several were associated with the literary circle of **John Archer**, and active subscribers to his publications.⁴⁶

Table 8: Dublin Library Society Donors from the Law Profession, 1791-1792⁴⁷

Donor	Title
George Barnes, Esq. (C. 1791)	Bougainville’s Voyage to Falkland’s Islands
	Baird’s Dissertations on the Old Testament
	Terentii Comoedia
	Locke on Government
	Harris’s Hibernica
	Batchelor, a Collection of Essays, 2 vols.
	Lettres de M. de Voltaire
	Le Clerc’s Harmony of the Evangelists
	Irish Traveller
	Bower’s History of the Popes, 4 vols.

⁴³ One publican converted his tavern in Christ Church Lane into a coffee house in 1736 ‘by the advice of several eminent lawyers’: *Dublin Daily Advertiser*, 5 Feb 1736.

⁴⁴ **Richard Edward Mercier** specialised in selling law books and became the bookseller to the Society of King’s Inns in 1794. **James Moore** also advertised law books for sale. Prices for these books were generally more expensive than others, some being offered for as much as £2 16s each: *Hibernian Journal*, 23 May 1796.

⁴⁵ There were, of course, books on areas of constitutional law, government, and statutes. But of the 75 titles listed in Table 8, just over a quarter were what would be classified as legal texts.

⁴⁶ For the sociogram, see p. 164. On Archer’s literary circle, see p. 173.

⁴⁷ Titles were not italicised in the catalogue from where these originate: DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, xxv-xl.

Francis Burroughs, Esq.	Ware's Works, 2 vols.
William Cooley, Esq.*	Duncan's Cicero, 2 vols.
	Melmouth's Cicero, 3 vols.
	Melmouth's Pliny, 2 vols.
	Knox's Essays, 2 vols.
William Cuthbert, Esq.	Dr. Lowth's Life of William Wykeham
	Dr. Browne's Divine Analogy
	Huet on the Human Understanding
	Jortin's Dissertations
	Fenelon's Life
	Michaelis's Prize Dissertation
	Clarke and Leibnitz's papers
	Clarke's Doctrine of the Trinity
	Politician's Dictionary, 2 vols.
	Dr. Mead's Catalogue
	Essays on Suicide
	Catalogue of the Books belonging to the Liverpool Library Society
	Transactions in India
	Plato's Works, translated, 2 vols.
Charles Frazer Frizell, Esq.** (C. 1792)	Newton's Milton, 4 vols.
	Warton's Milton
	Muratori Annali d'Italia, 12 tom.
	Catalogi Librorum Manuscriptorum Angliae et Hiberniae
	Science de l'Imprimerie
	Corpus Institutorum Societatis Jesu, 2 vols.
	Selchow, Elementia Juris Germanici
	Warburton's Divine Legation of Moses, 3 vols.
	Index to the Statutes
	Spences' Polymetis
John J. Fullerton, Esq. (C. 1792)	De Lolme on the Constitution
	Smith's Wealth of Nations, 2 vols.
Colley Grattan, Esq. (C. 1792)	Moralia Horatiana, a Antoni Jansen
	Alessandro nell'Indie, Pietro Matastasio
	Bancroft's Natural History of Guiana
Alexander Hamilton, Esq.	Davis's Caesar
	Poems on the Royal Nuptials
Edward Haughton, Esq.	Strafford's State Letters, 2 vols.
	Anderson's National Industry, 2 vols.
	Present State of France
	De Lolme on the Constitution
Robert Maxwell, Esq.	Burnet's History of his Own Time, 2 vols.

Michael Nowlan, Esq.	Lowthorp's Abridgement of the Philosophical Transactions, 3 vols.
	Boerhaave's Chemistry
	Potter's Antiquities of Greece, 2 vols.
	Rutty's Natural History of the County of Dublin, 2 vols.
John Nugent, Esq.	Langhorne's Plutarch, 5 vols.
	German and English Dictionary
Thomas Smith, Esq. (C. 1791 & 1792)	Monthly Review, enlarged, 4 first vols.
	Ledwich's Antiquities of Ireland
	Rushead's Life of Pope
	Lewis's Statius, 2 vols.
Maynard C. Walker, Esq.	Mrs. Barber's Poems
	Art of Prudence, from the Spanish, by Mr. Savage
	Walker's Expedition to Canada
	Bolton's Charter of Trinity College, Dublin
	Platonis Dialogi
	Horatii Opera
	Ball's Poems
	Southwell's Medical Essays, 4 vols.
Benjamin Wilson, Esq.	Grose's Voyage to the East Indies, 2 vols.
	Hughes's Correspondence, 2 vols.
	Voltaire's History of Charles XII
	Sedley's Works, 2 vols.
	Walpole's Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors
Francis P. Winter, Esq.*	Parker's History of the War in India

*Student

**Member-for-Life

C. — Committee

Around the same time as the formation of the Dublin Library, plans were afoot, by about 400 lawyers, to start their own 'Law Club' to be affiliated with the Society of King's Inns, its library having been newly formed in 1788.⁴⁸ It is quite possible that many law books were deposited there but the donations to the Dublin Library by these lawyers—much like the rest of the early donations—reflect the society's remit to hold the famous and lesser-known books of merit in every branch of literature, history, and sciences.

⁴⁸ *Dublin Evening Post*, 5 Jul 1791; *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 24-26 May 1792.

Practicing lawyers comprised twenty per cent of the inaugural membership of the Dublin Library Society. Within this amount, there was an almost even balance of attorneys (thirty) and barristers (twenty-eight).⁴⁹ The latter were on the younger side, with fourteen barristers being called to the Irish bar between 1786 and 1791. Additionally, there were five who became members of the library while still students of law. One of these law students, **Martin French Lynch**, had benefited from recent relaxation of the penal laws to allow Catholics to become barristers from the Society of King's Inns (on taking the oath of allegiance) prompting one newspaper to highlight his admission as a sign of the civil and religious liberty that will 'unite Irishmen by the strictest bonds of friendship and amity'.⁵⁰ While most of the subscribers who were lawyers were from fairly conservative backgrounds, there were (as will be addressed in Chapter 8) some who were, at the very least, sympathetic to the United Irish cause—be it calling for constitutional reform or republicanism. After singling out the United Irishman **Dominick Rice**, an informer to Dublin Castle opined that 'there is not a lawyer who now attends our meetings that even *pretends* to moderation'.⁵¹

Merchants/Bankers

The emergent wealth generated from the mercantile sector in Ireland during the eighteenth century gave rise to the significance of merchants and bankers in Dublin society, especially when it came to their vying for places on important commercial bodies such as the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, the Royal Exchange, and the Bank of Ireland. Membership on committees and societies was perhaps as essential to the potential prosperity of the businessman as the ideal marriage alliance. In the case of the Dublin Library Society, it may be that this was no different. The eighteenth century saw the rise and expansion of the merchant classes that were not necessarily from the established families, or even the Established Church. The thirty merchants and nine bankers who were founder members of the Dublin Library include such noteworthy individuals as **Samuel Dick, Joseph Hone, Alexander Jaffray, William**

⁴⁹ This figure includes the lawyers who were committee members.

⁵⁰ *Dublin Evening Post*, 28 Jun 1792.

⁵¹ McDowell, "Proceedings," 113. On Rice, Thomas Collins reported that 'from every opportunity I have had of knowing Rice's sentiments, I don't think that we have a man amongst us of more dangerous principles': *ibid.*

Digges La Touche, and **Joshua Pim**—with Jaffray and Pim originally Quaker and La Touche from a family of Huguenot merchants. Yet equally significant are the names of **Thomas Braughall**, **John Byrne**, **Randall McDonnell**, and **Richard McCormick**—four successful Catholic merchants who, in addition to benefiting from an access to quality reading material, could have furthered their networking with other businessmen in a non-sectarian environment.

The majority of merchants who were Dublin Library founding members appear to have been from the textile trade, which had been flourishing since 1782. Among others for whom there is more information as to the product of trade, there were five wine merchants (**Robert Alexander**, **William Barton**, **John Dumoulin**, and **William Speer**) and a gold merchant/watchmaker (**Ambrose Moore**).⁵² The Huguenot wine merchant John Dumoulin, whose wife, Pauline, was a Dublin schoolmistress, became a silent partner of his brother-in-law, the bookseller and Dublin Library Secretary, **Richard Edward Mercier**, also a Huguenot, around 1793.⁵³

Clergy

As one would expect from an eighteenth-century subscription library, the clergy would be well represented in the membership, with a total of 29. Also, unsurprisingly, clergymen from the Established Church were in a majority in the Dublin Library Society. Interestingly, though, both Anglican (**Robert Fowler**) and Catholic (**John Thomas Troy**) Archbishops of Dublin joined as founding members in 1791, well into their tenures as leaders of their respective churches in the city. Apart from them, prominent clergymen included friends of the Unitarian **Richard Kirwan**: the Anglican **Lord Bishop of Killala**, **Rev. John Law** and the Presbyterian **Rev. Dr McDowel**. Many of these clergymen were active in producing publications not always restricted to ecclesiastical matters. **Rev. Thomas Campbell**, from Clones, Co. Monahan (and Chancellor of St. Macartan's Cathedral, Clogher) authored and donated his *Strictures on*

⁵² See Appendix 2 for individual entries for the founding subscribers. Unfortunately, many entries have as their professions simply 'Merchant', such were their entries in the almanacs and directories for the 1790s. Dublin Library committee member (1792) **Jeremiah D'Olier**, who will be addressed in the following chapter, was also a gold merchant. A prosopographical entry for him is in Appendix 1.

⁵³ *WDD* 1792; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 173; *KIAP*, 146. The name of the bookselling business was changed to Richard Mercier & Co. in 1793.

the Ecclesiastical and Literary History of Ireland ... also an Historical Sketch of the Constitution and Government of Ireland from the Most Early Authenticated Period Down to 1783, as well as his *Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland*.⁵⁴ The Church of Ireland **Rev. James Whitelaw** later collaborated on the famous *History of the City of Dublin, From the Earliest Accounts to the Present Time* (1818), in which he praised the Dublin Library Society's policy of 'admitting all without any discrimination, except those of conduct and character,' as well as its convenient location, and selection of reading material of 'universal interest' intended to 'promote a taste for literature' in Ireland.⁵⁵ Including 'The Most Rev. Dr Troy', there were eight identified Catholic clergymen who joined the Dublin Library Society within the first year of its establishment—progressive for Dublin in the 1790s and in keeping with the 'spirit and liberality' of the institution.⁵⁶

Medical Professions

There was an equal amount of founding subscribers as clergymen as there were in the medical profession. Of the twenty-nine, fifteen were physicians, seven were surgeons, and another seven were apothecaries.⁵⁷ These included the State Surgeon **Clement Archer**, and the State Physician **Stephen Dickson**, as well as **Sir Robert Scott, Knt.**, who was knighted at Dublin Castle in 1782. **James Cleghorn** succeeded his uncle George Cleghorn as Professor of Anatomy at the University of Dublin.⁵⁸ **Walter Wade** started out as a physician and later became a botanist, a profession through which he was instrumental in establishing the Royal Botanical Gardens at Glasnevin. Clement Archer, **William Dease**, and **John Halahan** were colleagues. **William Brooke** worked alongside **Daniel Bryan** at Jervis Street Hospital School and founded the Association of the Members of the King's and Queen's College of

⁵⁴ This was not exactly 'enlightened' literature; although Campbell did acknowledge in his *Philosophical Survey... the harshness of the penal laws*: McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 95-96.

⁵⁵ Warburton et al., *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:942-943.

⁵⁶ There are two possibly Catholic clergymen who have not been identified: Reverends Thomas Long and Thomas Murphy.

⁵⁷ Apothecaries are listed in numerous editions of the *Medical Register* in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

⁵⁸ *DIB* (George Cleghorn). In 1791, the Dublin Library Society moved into the first-floor rooms of 6 Eustace Street, formerly the residence of George Cleghorn, uncle of **James Cleghorn**: Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:314.

Physicians. **William Lionel Jenkins** and **Edward Sohan** ran a business together at 6 College Green, 'Jenkins & Sohan, Apothecaries'.⁵⁹

Thus, many of these professional men were colleagues and friends and appear to have been avid book collectors. Five (William Brooke, William Dease, **Francis L'Estrange**, Sir Robert Scott, and Walter Wade) had their own bookplates.⁶⁰ Daniel Bryan donated his 1686 edition of James Ussher's *Annales Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, while **James Tandy Wilkinson** of the Royal College of Surgeons donated Ferrar's *History of Limerick* (1787). Of the medical professionals, only **George Maxwell** improved the new library's holdings in medicine with his two donations by Herman Boerhaave: a six-volume set of *Academic Lectures on the Theory of Physic* (1743) and *Method of Studying Physic* (1719).⁶¹

Of the Roman Catholic medical men who can be identified with certainty (as with the clergymen) there were five: **Andrew Daly**, William Dease, **Gerald Dillon**, **Nicholas Elcock**, and **Thomas Ryan**. Most of these men were also active in the Catholic Committee and, along with some of their Protestant medical brethren, were Freemasons and United Irishmen.⁶²

Gentlemen, Peers, and Members of Parliament

There is enough sufficient overlap to justify combining these three sets. Some gentlemen were 'peers-in-waiting'; some peers were also Members of Parliament; and some gentlemen without peerage were also Members of Parliament. **Capel Molyneux**, Esq. succeeded his father as 4th Baronet in 1797; **Roger Palmer**, Esq., of Castle Lackin, Co. Mayo, succeeded his brother as 3rd Baronet in 1819. **Sir Thomas Lighton, Bart.** was MP for Tuam between 1790 and 1798, but his parliamentary credentials were not acknowledged in the initial Dublin Library Society subscriber list. Two Members of Parliament

⁵⁹ WDD 1792, 56.

⁶⁰ Edward A. Martin, *A Dictionary of Bookplates of Irish Medical Doctors: With Short Biographies* (Dublin: De Búrca, 2003), 17, 38, 78, 138-139. Dublin Library committee member **William James McNeven** also had his own bookplate: *ibid.*, 86-87.

⁶¹ Gaspar Erck, an aide-de-camp to the Lord Lieutenant (and eventually Under-Secretary in the Military Department) donated several books, one of which was Diemerbroeck's *L'Anatomie du Corps Humain* (1695): DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, xxxix.

⁶² To be examined in the following chapter.

were barristers called to the Irish bar in 1788: **Hon. George Knox** from Dungannon and **Charles Osborne, M.P.** from Clonmel. **John Thomas Foster**, Esq. (cousin of Irish House of Commons Speaker, John Foster) was a former M.P and **Henry Tighe**, Esq. later became a Member of Parliament in 1797 for Co. Kilkenny. **Sir Pigot Piers, 5th Bt.**, who donated ten guineas to become a lifetime member, and **Sir Richard St. George, 2nd Bt.**, both hailed from Co. Westmeath and, like many country peers and gentlemen, would have been in Dublin for the 'winter season'.⁶³

The Dublin Library Society's use of 'Esq.' at the end of many of its members' names in the list of subscribers is not enough to suggest that every name that included it must have been a gentleman. That there were numerous other names beginning with 'Mr'—and not ending in 'Esq.'—does suggest there was a conscious effort on the part of the compiler to separate the two. Equally unhelpful is the confusion, in sources such as the *Alumni Dublinenses* and the *Registry of Irish Deeds*, of using the Latin *Armiger* (Esquire) in some cases and *Generosus* (Gentleman) in another.⁶⁴ Understandably, in eighteenth-century Ireland, there was less of a hierarchy involving knights and gentlemen. In this case, 'Esq.' connotes a gentleman, while 'Knt.' was used in the case of **Sir Robert Scott, Knt.**⁶⁵ However, without knowing the compiler's criteria for using 'Esq.', a conclusion has been drawn—noting the evolution of such titles—that he included those from noble backgrounds or, perhaps due in part to their families' financial successes, those who could enjoy the life of a gentleman.

Another likelihood, given the emergence of respectable professions outside the clergy and medicine (with indicative titles/letters of their own, i.e. Rev. or MD), is that these men had careers—law, for instance—that had elevated their social status within the city, town, or county. But for this study, those identified as

⁶³ RDS; *WDD* 1792, 109; *KIAP*, 273; 389; Edith Mary Johnston-Liik, *MPs in Dublin: Companion to History of the Irish Parliament, 1692-1800* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2006), 90; 126; Charles Mosley, ed., *Burke's Peerage, Baronetage & Knightage: Clan Chiefs, Scottish Feudal Barons*, 107th ed. (Wilmington, Delaware: Burke's Peerage & Gentry, 2003), 3:3133; 3:3478. Maurice Fitzgerald, Esq. was a student in 1791 and became Rt. Hon. [Knight of Kerry] Maurice Fitzgerald, M.P. for Kerry, 1795-97-1800: Johnston-Liik, *MPs in Dublin*, 88.

⁶⁴ *AD*; Registry of Deeds Project Ireland, *Registry of Irish Deeds*.

⁶⁵ Cole encountered the same problem trying to decipher whether those owners of private libraries in eighteenth-century Ireland qualified as gentlemen when they had 'Esq.' next to their names: Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, 65.

having an occupation are excluded from this designation to isolate that segment of library subscriber who enjoyed a livelihood that did not require them to take up an occupation as such.⁶⁶ Therefore, eighteen gentlemen who were founding subscribers of the Dublin Library fit this rationale. Of these, at least four were graduates of Trinity College (**Henry Arabin, Cornelius Bolton, William Gamble, Thomas Towers**).⁶⁷

Tradesmen and Shopkeepers

Perhaps the most significant occupational category for highlighting the breadth of founding subscribers to the Dublin Library is exemplified by the tradesmen and shopkeepers. Understandably, members of the print trade involved in the production and distribution of print would keenly participate in another medium of dissemination—partly for a common interest, partly for furthering their own business exposure. Also, given the success of the print trade in the eighteenth century, these men would have had the means to afford the initial fee of two guineas. **Thomas McDonnell's** *Hibernian Journal* and **William Sleater's** *Dublin Chronicle* were active promoters of the Dublin Library from its infancy and were vital in its exposure to the reading public through notices from the library and articles written about it. From the 1770s onwards, the two papers—along with the *Dublin Evening Post*—adopted a non-sectarian, patriot agenda and helped shape public opinion and political decisions.⁶⁸

Most of the city's best-known booksellers and publishers were founding subscribers.⁶⁹ **William Allen** (32 Dame Street) concentrated in the sale of maps and prints, especially of Irish counties and drawings by Irish artists, including **Henry Brocas**, arguably the most famous of Dublin engravers at the time.⁷⁰ **John Cash** was known as a paper merchant, bookseller and draughtsman of the 1780 publication of *Views of the Most Remarkable Public*

⁶⁶ Designation of a landowner can be confusing. The son of a possible Dublin Library subscriber James P. Ward is listed in the *Alumni Dublinenses* as: 'Ward, Daniel, Siz. (Mr Carter), June 5, 1792, aged 19; s. of James, Agricola, defunctus', but it is more likely that James would have been a landowner than a farmer.

⁶⁷ AD.

⁶⁸ Powell notes that these newspapers 'became a highly politicised consumer item, critical in facilitating the creation of an imagined community of patriotic Irishmen': Powell, *The Politics of Consumption*, 94-95.

⁶⁹ Namely, Nathaniel Callwell, Arthur Grueber, John Abbot Husband, John Jones, William Jones, Randal McAllister, James Moore, Luke White, and Richard White. Grueber later became librarian of the Dublin Library in 1807.

⁷⁰ The map used above was published in London and 'sold by' William Allen and John Archer (see p. 106).

Buildings, Monuments and Other Edifices in the City of Dublin. **Joseph Walker** (at both 14 Anglesea Street and 79 Dame Street) was printer of the *Hibernian Magazine*, while **John Salmon** was a master bookbinder by December 1791.⁷¹

But what is most striking from this set of founding subscribers is the appearance of several skilled tradesmen and shopkeepers from areas directly unrelated to the print trade.⁷²

Table 9: Tradesmen and Shopkeepers Among Dublin Library Society Founding Members

Trade	No. of
Brewer/distiller	8
Architect	7
Schoolmaster	5
Lottery-office keeper	3
Artisan	3
Linen draper	2
Gunsmith	1
Ironmonger	1
Mathematical instrument maker	1
Music seller and instrument maker	1
Optician	1
Silversmith	1
Tailor	1
Tobacconist	1
Total	36

With a thriving brewing trade in eighteenth-century Dublin, it is unsurprising that brewers were affluent enough to afford membership to the Dublin Library.⁷³ **William Sweetman**, along with his nephew **John** (Dublin Library committee, 1791 & 1792) were part of the Sweetman family brewing empire in the eighteenth century. **James Farrell's** brewery in Blackpitts was in partnership with the merchant and fellow Dublin Library member, **John Byrne**. Five of the eight were members of the Catholic Committee, and apart from

⁷¹ Pollard, *Dictionary*, 507.

⁷² Lottery-office keepers whose sole business was just that are listed separately from those booksellers who were also lottery-office brokers.

⁷³ It should be said that despite the distinction of tradesmen, those brewers and distillers who paid two guineas to join the newly established local subscription library were likely owners of their breweries and therefore should not be mistaken for the labourer who spent his day mashing barley.

John Rivers, a distiller, all the brewers were listed in the 1792 list of subscribers with 'Esq.' next to their names.⁷⁴

The founding Dublin Library members, who appear in the *Dictionary of Irish Architects, 1720-1940*, give an indication of the broad areas of architectural work in the eighteenth century. Although regarded as a stonecutter, builder, and architect, **Frederick Darley** was closer to what would today be considered a property developer. **Nicholas Kildahl** was known as a carpenter and builder but also as a timber merchant. A **Henry Walker** is listed as a land surveyor, while **John Berrell** was a measurer for the Board of Works and later Assistant Architect to the Barrack Board in 1801. **Graham Myers** became known as both an architect and a builder, since he was appointed Architect to Trinity College from 1789 but also involved in other building work around the same time. **William Barber**, having submitted unsuccessful plans for the Royal Exchange in the late 1760s, is recorded as a 'joiner & upholder' in the Dublin directories of 1791 and 1792. Only the famous **James Gandon**, designer of numerous grand landmarks of Georgian Dublin, appears solely as an architect.⁷⁵

Another job that is logically well represented here is that of the schoolmaster. In addition to the two Dublin Library committee members who were schoolmasters (**Lewis Lyons** and **Samuel Whyte**),⁷⁶ there were five who subscribed in the first year: **Rev. Gilbert Austin**, master of a school near Grafton Street between 1789 and 1804; **Rev. John Moore**, Principal at the Academy at Donnybrook; **John McCrea**, Master of the English Academy in Fade Street; **David Bates**, Master of the Royal Military Academy (formerly the Military and Marine Academy), Summer Hill; and **Sisson Putland Darling**, Principal of the Mercantile, Military, and Nautical Academy, Strand, Dublin. All were members of the Abecedarian Society for the aid of distressed teachers,

⁷⁴ Farrell, Kelly, Kennedy, Rivers, and Sweetman. It is uncertain that David Sherlock or Philip Lawless were also Catholics but the latter's son was educated by Catholic schoolmaster and Dublin Library committee member (1791 & 1792) **Lewis Lyons**. There are two men named Valentine Atkinson: one a brewer, the other a confectioner. It is possible that they were one and the same but since other brewers were designated with 'Esq.', he is listed as part of the brewing trade rather than a confectioner: *WDD* 1792, 15.

⁷⁵ *DIA*; *WDD*, 1792, 16.

⁷⁶ **Christopher Adamson**, also a Dublin Library committee member in 1791 was a curate at St. Mark's Church but also known to have operated a school at some point.

of which Whyte was the founder and McCrea co-founder and secretary in 1791.⁷⁷

Two artisans, chiefly painters, **Henry Brooke** (172 Abbey Street) and **John Cullen** (11 Suffolk Street, portrait and miniature painter), were also founding subscribers. Brooke, a 'historical painter' who had several of his works exhibited, was the grandson of fellow Dublin Library subscriber, **Rev. William Brooke**, and a nephew of the poet Henry Brooke. He was also the eventual father-in-law of another Dublin Library subscriber, **Isaac D'Olier IV**, who in 1816 edited and published Brooke's memoirs.⁷⁸ Cullen was less well known.

The remaining trades in the above table show the variety of small businessmen who were founding subscribers to the Dublin Library. Like other contemporary subscription libraries and reading societies in Ulster, England, and Scotland, membership from the likes of tailors, tobacconists, and other similar occupations indicates—certainly in 1790s Dublin—the beginnings of a wider public sphere and a greater variety of backgrounds than the dominance of, initially, the upper classes and the clergy, and the mercantile, medical and legal professions.⁷⁹ Indeed, combined with the print trade this section of Dublin Library Society subscribers (53) slightly outnumbers the lawyers (51).

Government and Army Officers

As the administrative and legislative centre of Ireland, Dublin had a large civil service filled with government officers, chiefly in relation to the collection of taxes and duties as well as maintaining the affairs of the state. These jobs were mainly reserved for the Ascendancy classes and therefore officers would have been affluent with literary tastes and disposable incomes. Indeed, some of them were known not for their careers with mundane titles but rather for their literary endeavours. **Austin Cooper**, cousin of fellow Clerk of the Treasury Office, and Dublin Library Committee member (1791), **Joseph Cooper**

⁷⁷ The Abecedarian Society will be addressed in the next chapter, p. 215-218.

⁷⁸ ODNB; Henry Brooke, *Memoirs of the Life of the Late Excellent and Pious Mr. Henry Brooke*, ed. Isaac D'Olier (Dublin: Printed by R. Napper, 1816).

⁷⁹ Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 64-84; Mark Towsey, "'All partners may be enlightened and improved by reading them': The Distribution of Enlightenment Books in Scottish Subscription Library Catalogues, 1750-c.1820," *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 28, issue 1 (2008): 25-29; Killen, *A History of the Linen Hall Library, 1788-1988*, 9.

Walker, was a renowned antiquarian (like his cousin) whose admiration for the monuments and structures around Ireland is evident from his many sketches of edifices no longer standing today.⁸⁰

Henry George Quin was 'Second Chamberlain of the Exchequer' and 'Clerk of the Quit Rents' in the Exchequer's office but also a bibliophile who in 1794 willed his small but noteworthy 'Bibliotheca Quiniana' to be deposited at his alma mater, Trinity College Dublin, at the time of his passing.⁸¹ Under his father (the Commissioner of Stamps), **Peter Holmes, Junior**, was a secretary at the Stamp Office, later identified by Francis Higgins, an informant to Dublin Castle, as 'young Holmes of the Stamp Office' who allowed those newspapers that were organs of the United Irishmen to be published without stamps.⁸² Also included here are **Caleb Jenkin**, City Alderman; **William Osbrey**, City Marshal; and four army officers.⁸³

Academics and Students

While there were five Trinity College fellows from thirty-eight committee members, there were only two more from 272 subscribers: lecturer **Vesey Ward** and **Rev. George Hall**, lecturer in mathematics, history, and Greek, and a member of the Royal Irish Academy's Committee of Polite Literature with fellow subscriber George Knox, and Dublin Library Committee members **Arthur Browne** and **Rev. Richard Graves**. Another academic who is included here but not affiliated with the college is **Thomas Harding** (Trinity Place), a mathematician and Royal Irish Academy member, who oddly enough, appeared in the Dublin directories for 1791 and 1792 under 'Merchants & Traders'.⁸⁴

Perhaps the most noteworthy part of this section of members—and possibly even the entire body of early subscribers—is the number of men who were

⁸⁰ Peter Harbison, *Cooper's Ireland: Drawings and Notes from an Eighteenth-Century Gentleman* (Dublin: O'Brien Press, 2000). Another of Cooper's cousins, Dublin Library committee member (1791) **Samuel Walker** (brother of **J.C. Walker**) was the draughtsman of several of Cooper's drawings and sketches.

⁸¹ Arthur Rau, "Henry George Quin, 1760-1805," in A.S.G. Edwards, ed., *The Pleasures of Bibliophily: Fifty Years of The Book Collector: An Anthology* (London: British Library, 2003), 79-90.

⁸² Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 197.

⁸³ Thomas Cunningham, John Mercier, Samuel Cooke Weldon, and John Wetherelt.

⁸⁴ *WDD* 1791; 51; *WDD* 1792, 51.

students when they joined the Dublin Library (Table 10).⁸⁵ Without extant records it is uncertain for what purpose these seventeen students decided to subscribe and which books they had consulted there. Certainly, as founding subscribers they would not have had access to the catalogue beforehand. As mentioned above, admission to the college library—and King’s Inns—was limited, so one can surmise that the library’s remit to acquire ‘those great and expensive works’ would have been attractive to these future barristers, bibliophiles, clergymen, merchants, and surgeons. Three of these students—**William Cooley**, **Isaac D’Olier IV**, and **Francis P. Winter**—donated books to the library. Cooley and Winter were law students and, from Table 8 (above) their donations were of classics and histories, while the erudite Isaac D’Olier donated five titles covering philosophy, classics, mathematics, history, and law. His younger cousin, **Isaac Matthew D’Olier** was but sixteen years of age when he joined. His father **Jeremiah D’Olier** was also a founding subscriber and committee member in 1792 and no doubt would have seen this as a good environment for his son in which to cultivate himself.

Table 10: Students Among Dublin Library Society Founding Members⁸⁶

Name	Approx. age in 1791	Particulars
Richard Anderson, Esq.	[19]	Middle Temple 1789, Dec 1789 King’s Inns, admitted as barrister M 1792
John Blachford, Esq.	20	Entered TCD (from Eton) 18 Dec 1788, aged 17, BA, summer 1792
Bryan Cavanagh, Esq. [Kavanagh]	30	Lincoln’s Inn, Nov 1784, admitted as barrister E 1793
William Cooley, Esq.	18	Born 17 Feb 1773, E 1792, Middle Temple T 1792, admitted as barrister H 1796
Oliver Dease, Esq.	18	Entered TCD, 19 Oct 1789, aged 16
Isaac D’Olier, Esq. [Isaac D’Olier IV]	19	Entered TCD, 28 Aug 1788, aged 16; BA 1793, MA, LLB, and LLD 1807

⁸⁵ Table 10 also includes those law students discussed in the above section on members from the legal profession.

⁸⁶ *KIAP*; *AD*; *DIB*; *ODNB*. Richard Anderson’s age is based on conjecture. The *King’s Inns Admission Papers* entry for Bryan Kavanagh states his age as 30 on admission: *KIAP*, 256. Isaac Matthew D’Olier does not appear in the TCD alumni lists but the RDS database indicates he completed his L.L.D. at some point. For Maurice Fitzgerald, an entry in a subscriber list for a 1793 publication of *Bagatelles, or Poetical Sketches...* reads: ‘Maurice Fitzgerald, Esq.; T.C.D’: Edward Walsh, *Bagatelles: Or Poetical Sketches* (Dublin: Printed by N. Kelly, 1793), [v].

Isaac D'Olier, Esq., Jr. [i.e. Isaac Matthew]	16	Born 1775
Maurice Fitzgerald, Esq.	19	Born 1772; entered TCD 1789
Martin French Lynch, Esq.	24	Born 1767; Inner Temple T 1785, admitted as barrister Jun 1792
Francis Magan, Esq.	17	Born 24 May 1774; entered TCD 13 Oct 1788, aged 14; BA 1794; Lincoln's Inn T 1794, admitted as barrister M 1796
George [Frederick] Murphy, Esq.	30	Entered TCD 1785, aged 24, BA 1790, LLB and LLD 1799
William Norcott, Esq.	18	Born 1773; entered TCD 1790; Inner Temple E 1792, admitted as barrister Apr 1797; BA 1795, LLB Aest. 1801, LLD Aest. 1808
Edward Purdon, Esq.	17	Entered TCD 26 Oct 1789, aged 15
Nathaniel N. [Nesbit] Smith, Esq.	23	Entered TCD 14 Nov 1787, aged 19
Henry Tighe, Esq.	19	Born 1771; entered TCD 1779, BA 1792, Lincoln's Inn H 1791, admitted H 1796
Francis P. Winter, Esq.	20	Born 4 Jul 1771; entered TCD 1788, BA 1793
John P. Winter, Esq.	23	Born 1768; TCD BA 1788, Middle Temple 1789, admitted as barrister H 1792

Unsurprisingly, all came from affluent backgrounds and by their donations and future endeavours they were not only readers interested in broadening their horizons but also budding bibliophiles. Richard Anderson, John Blachford, Bryan Cavanagh, and Maurice Fitzgerald all appear as purchasers of books in the annotated copy of the 1792 Denis Daly sale catalogue, which was heralded as one of the great sales of quality rare books in Ireland in the eighteenth century.⁸⁷

Conclusion

Following an examination of the origins of the Dublin Library Society, this chapter began to explore some of the relationships and groups that influenced the formation of the library as well as the backgrounds and occupations of those who formed the first two committees. The patriotic mission statement to

⁸⁷ *A Catalogue of the Library of the Late Right Honourable Denis Daly* [New York Public Library copy], accessed 10 December 2015, <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/012309066>.

the public in their printed catalogue embodied the spirit to which the first committee aspired. Their library was established to benefit the city of Dublin and its people. The committee specifically appealed to those whose pecuniary shortcomings may have hampered their intellectual potential. Hence, an expanded public could enjoy an enlightened cultivation through access to quality reading material, which would, in turn, enrich the city's literary and scientific output beyond that of the existing academic institutions.

Many of the individuals involved in both committees espoused these ideals and were 'patriotic and enlightened minds' in their own right. They were introduced here (and in the supporting prosopography in Appendix 1) but their relationships with other committee members and founding subscribers will be analysed in greater detail in Chapter 8.

The second part of this chapter was intended to illustrate the significance of examining the occupational composition of the first subscribers to the Dublin Library rather than simply focusing on the founding committee members. These founder members came from a diversity of backgrounds, by no means dominated by the upper classes and clergy. Rather, the rise and flourishing of the professional classes is evident in the library's composition, while the emergent trades and shopkeepers are well represented and indicate a gradual move towards a more inclusionary public in late-eighteenth-century Dublin.

Lawyers made up the single largest cohort from one occupation. From the numerous donations by this group they had a wide-ranging set of intellectual interests. Merchants and bankers were an increasingly influential group in the bustling port city of Dublin and their affluence and willingness to participate in further associational activity is evident in the number of their library subscriptions. Like the law, medicine was another respectable and emerging profession with an increasing presence in public institutions of this kind.

As with many of the early public subscription libraries, the clergy and the upper classes were always well represented. Interestingly, both archbishops of Dublin—Catholic and Church of Ireland—were founding members and there was a sense from the writings of some of these clergymen that the library

represented a favourable example of the direction the Irish nation ought to move toward. Also of note is the blend of gentlemen, peers, and Members of Parliament, along with those gentlemen who were later to be elevated to peerage and/or the Irish House of Commons. Other gentlemen assumed offices in various government departments but also pursued literary endeavours and their involvement in the Dublin Library would have been beneficial to them.

The print trade was, understandably, a large group who supported the library. Combined with the other trades and shopkeepers, they slightly outnumbered the lawyers, thereby signifying progress towards a wider representation of the general public than in other contemporary institutions in Dublin. Not forgetting the exclusion of women from this library, the initial charge of two guineas—and one thereafter—would have been prohibitive for those men on lower incomes. However, this pecuniary burden was the only obstacle to admission, something later believed to be an object of pride and allurement by a Dublin Library vice-president in 1819:

I have always considered this, and the easy mode of admission, to be a peculiar advantage to our Institution. For many who can afford to give a guinea, might find it inconvenient annually to give two; and if a ballot were necessary for admission, many would be deterred—not from fear of success, but that they could not give the time and trouble necessary for a canvass.⁸⁸

Finally, the participation of students as founding subscribers—outnumbering college fellows—invites the notion of the Dublin Library Society as an important intellectual utility for young eighteenth-century Dubliners.

When the founding committees, officers, and subscribers are all combined, there is little change in the distribution by occupation. The legal profession made up the largest grouping, followed by merchants, the clergy, and the medical men. However, when the tradesmen/shopkeepers, print trade, skilled artisans, and schoolmasters are combined, they total sixty-one—two more than the lawyers. Also, with peers, MPs, and gentlemen together totalling twenty-six, it becomes evident that the Dublin Library Society, as intended, appealed to the professional and 'middle orders of society' who would have

⁸⁸ *Kaleidoscope; or, Literary and Scientific Mirror*, 22 June 1819. That vice-president was Lieutenant-General George Cockburn (1763-1847).

enjoyed those 'advantages which fortune seemed before to have denied them'.⁸⁹

Table 11: All 1791-1792 Dublin Library Society Founding Members, by Occupation

Occupation	Number in each occupation
Legal	59
Merchants/bankers	42 (of which 12 were bankers)
Clergy	36
Medical (Apothecaries/Physicians/Surgeons)	32 (6 apothecaries; 19 physicians; 7 surgeons)
Print trade	24
Tradesmen/shopkeepers	20
Gentlemen	18
Students	17
Civil servants	15
Academic	10 (7 TCD)
Architects/skilled artisans	10
Peers/Members of Parliament	8 (4 MPs)
Schoolmasters	7
Army officers	4
<i>Not identified</i>	8
Total	310

This chapter (along with the prosopographies in the appendices) examined the occupational backgrounds of almost all founding committee members and subscribers. The following chapter will delve further into their relationships through an enhanced investigation of associational activity, therein addressing themes of patriotism and cross-confessional sociability in an increasingly expanding public sphere in eighteenth-century Dublin.

⁸⁹ *Dublin Chronicle*, 12 April 1791.

Chapter 8: Associational Connections

The previous chapter focused on the founding members of the Dublin Library Society. Their occupations and social backgrounds were summarised and the appendices contain prosopographies of these subscribers. Many of them were members of other societies that will be examined below. The intent of this chapter is to highlight the participation of several founding library members in other contemporary societies in Dublin, and to identify patterns of relationships that emerge within the examination of each society. An ancillary motive is to identify the Dublin Library as a significant addition to Irish society in the capital, especially when considering the social composition and occupations of these members.

Although these founding members came from various occupational backgrounds they by no means stuck to them. Rather, their involvement in clubs and societies in Dublin's social, political, cultural, commercial and charitable circles reveal many intricate connections among them. Therefore, in the absence of institutional primary-source material from the Dublin Library Society, the employment of a prosopographical study, where patterns and linkages within the collective biographies of the members are identified and highlighted, will facilitate a better understanding of the dynamics of the society's foundation. In addition to those who were members of the Royal Irish Academy and subsequently joined the Dublin Library, many names from the 1791 and 1792 library lists also appear in the literature and records of the Dublin Society, the Abecedarian Society, the Dublin Society of United Irishmen and the Catholic Committee. They are mentioned as Freemasons and prominent civic and academic citizens. Some were involved in the various commercial bodies that grew out of Dublin's role as a mercantile and banking centre. All these organisations were regarded as patriotic entities, where 'Dubliners strove to differentiate themselves from and surpass the British'.¹ Their members—whatever their political or religious affiliations—participated,

¹ Stone, "Prosopography," 53; McDowell, "Proceedings," 8; Barnard, "'Grand metropolis,'" 186; Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 75.

not only for associational sociability, networking and business advancement—but also for the greater good of the Irish nation.

Associational Activity in Late-Eighteenth-Century Dublin

Inspired by Peter Clark's survey of the British Isles, the recent, long-overdue contribution to Irish associational culture, *Clubs and Societies in Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (2010), has greatly enhanced our understanding of the significance of clubs and societies exemplifying popular participation in an expanding Irish public sphere. What had been reserved for the clergy, nobility, and the government was, from the latter half of the seventeenth century, gradually extending to the professional, mercantile and other middle classes through the establishment of clubs and societies, coffee houses, and—by the 1790s—early public libraries. Of course, dynamics in Irish urban centres differed significantly from rural Ireland. Of the urban examples, Dublin remains the focus of this study, although Belfast and Cork have emerged as active associational loci in the late-eighteenth century and beyond.²

As mentioned, associational activity in Dublin generally followed trends that occurred in London. Both cities experienced rapid commercial and industrial growth in tandem with a rise in population. Together with greater affluence among some social orders—including the rise of the middle classes—increased leisure time has been regarded as a logistical reason for associational involvement. In a political context, much of this activity of 'associating' rather than 'individualising' intensified in the drive for parliamentary reform.³ All these factors are credited with the blossoming of clubs and societies in the eighteenth century. This coincided with the ideal of a civil society in which rational, intellectual discourse, enhanced and disseminated by a flourishing print culture, enabled greater democratic participation in shaping public opinion.⁴ Furthermore, as will be noted below, the important concern for this

² Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*; *Clubs and Societies*; Máire Kennedy, "The Cork Library Society of 1801," *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society* 94 (1989): 56-73; Killen, *A History of the Linen Hall Library, 1788-1988*.

³ Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs and Societies," 289.

⁴ Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 143-144; Kelly and Powell, "Introduction," in *Clubs and Societies*, 17-18. Kathleen Wilson termed this a period of 'urban Renaissance' in the eighteenth century: Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715-1785* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995), 27-83.

study is *where* in the city was this taking place. Another significant development here is the association of patriotism within civil society and the 'Enlightenment public sphere' in which many of these societies flourished. Improvement was seen as an enlightened, progressive and national pursuit with a move away from individuality towards a more sociable character in the public and civic interest.⁵ Democratic participation, however, in the eighteenth century largely excluded women and the lower social orders, especially those who could not afford the subscription fees that many clubs and societies required, and in some cases, the connections needed for entry.⁶ In addition, Catholics and Dissenters had been excluded from the Ascendancy public sphere, but from what follows, the 1790s saw the formation of intellectual, charitable, political and commercial societies, and examples of interconfessional sociability during a period of sectarian strife.

Previous chapters have shown that the occupational composition of the founding membership of the Dublin Library Society was a cross-section of Dublin society in the late-eighteenth century. News from newspapers and notices from the library suggest the formation of this public institution as a patriotic endeavour to improve the social and intellectual fabric of the city. Many of these founding members belonged to similar associational bodies with common interests. Also, after joining the Dublin Library in 1791, many became part of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, in that same year (or vice versa, into 1792). Therefore, by examining these societies in the context of the Dublin Library founding membership, relationships and common interests can be highlighted to help identify the social composition of the library.

Seven examples of associational culture in Dublin are explored here. The Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy constitute the intellectual grouping and form a natural connection with the Dublin Library Society. The charitable Abecedarian Society, largely composed of educators, shared a common educative ideal with the Dublin Library. Early political societies, such as the

⁵ Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 116; Kelly and Powell, "Introduction," in *Clubs and Societies*, 20-22.

⁶ Kelly and Powell note that the expanding public sphere in an associational realm, fuelled by the sociability through drinking, whether a tavern or exclusive society, 'defined an associational world that embraced both low and high enlightenments': *ibid.*, 22.

Monks of the Order of St. Patrick (Monks of the Screw) and the Whig Club had influential participants who became Dublin Library members, while the leaderships of the later political societies such as the Catholic Committee and the Dublin United Irishmen—many of whom were founding members of the library—signified the increasing influence of the professional and mercantile classes in Irish society. Commercial bodies such as the Bank of Ireland, Ouzel Galley Society, and the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, all featured rising, well-connected individuals who also took part in the first public subscription library venture in the capital.

Table 12: Associational Participation by Dublin Library Society Founding Members in the 1790s

Group	Amount	Percentage
Royal Irish Academy	35	11.3%
United Irishmen	32	10.3%
Catholic Committee	26	8.4%
Abecedarian Society	25	8.1%
Dublin Society	22	7%
Bank of Ireland	10	3%
Catholics of Dublin	10	3%
Ouzel Galley Society*	10	3%
Trinity College Dublin	9	2.9%
Whig Club	9	2.9%
Dublin Chamber of Commerce**	6	2%
Monks of the Screw	6	2%

*Not including two others who joined in 1800 and 1802

**Nine future Dublin Library members were on the first council in 1783

Dublin Society

Addressed in Chapter 3 as an Irish example of practical and cultural patriotism, the Dublin Society was established in 1731—receiving its royal charter in 1749—and is known for its pioneering influence in the promotion and improvement of Irish agriculture, industry, and the arts. It combined the concept of sociability with the advancement of the public good through the

stimulation of intellectual debate in its meetings and the implementation of their results through publication and practice. Principally organised by the 'prosperous and the civic-minded' initially linked to Trinity College and the Irish parliament, the society grew to include landowners, merchants, bankers, and manufacturers—a compilation of what has been described as a 'new kind of urban elite'.⁷ Their chief intent was to create an organisation as a vehicle for exercising 'practical patriotism' and 'economic nationalism' through the improvement and promotion of domestic agriculture and manufacturing, thereby reducing a reliance on British imports to support domestic consumption of Irish products.⁸ In addition, the promotion of drawing and painting schools, together with premiums and prizes for Irish design and sculpture, were meant to instil a sense of Irishness, distinct from Britain.⁹

This cultural and economic patriotism was inspired by the writings of William Molyneux, in reaction to Britain's treatment of Ireland as a dependent. Pride in the nation as a productive community was enhanced by combining economic prosperity with the removal of religion from the models of improvement—ideas espoused by enlightened Presbyterian commentators such as James Arbuckle and Francis Hutcheson.¹⁰ From France, Voltaire—previously critical of the Irish as ungrateful towards their English civilisers—acknowledged Ireland's agricultural, artistic, and scientific output in the mid-eighteenth century, for which the Dublin Society has received considerable credit.¹¹ By 1791, the Dublin Society remained predominantly Anglican, but there was a significant Dissenter representation. For this study, however, it is important to note the connections of many Dublin Society members who became founding members of the Dublin Library, in addition to the other societies addressed in this chapter.

⁷ Barnard, "The Dublin Society and Other Improving Societies," 57-58; Livesey, "Dublin Society in Eighteenth-Century Irish Political Thought," 616; Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 177.

⁸ Barnard, "The Dublin Society and Other Improving Societies," 62-63, 71; Livesey, "Dublin Society in Eighteenth-Century Irish Political Thought," 617-635, for which see an examination of the political motivations of the Dublin Society; and Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 183.

⁹ Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 76-77 and 124-127.

¹⁰ Livesey, "Dublin Society in Eighteenth-Century Irish Political Thought," 631-632, 636.

¹¹ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 2, citing Graham Gargett, "Voltaire's View of the Irish," in Graham Gargett and Geraldine Sheridan, eds., *Ireland and the French Enlightenment* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), 159; Barnard, "The Dublin Society and Other Improving Societies," 76.

Table 13: Dublin Library Society Founding Members in the Dublin Society

Name	Profession	Dublin Society admission	DLS member
Rev. Gilbert Austin	Schoolmaster	1789	S. 1791
Cornelius Bolton	Landowner	1778	S. 1791
Thomas Braughall	Merchant	1777	S. 1791
Rev. Thomas Campbell*	Clergyman		S. 1791
Earl of Charlemont	Peer	1762	S. 1792; President 1792
Lord Cloncurry	Peer/Merchant	1773	S. 1791
Rev. Dean Coote	Clergyman	1750	S. 1791
William Cope	Merchant	1772	Treasurer 1791 & 1792
William Deane	Lawyer	1769	S. 1791
Samuel Dick	Merchant	1771	S. 1791
Jeremiah D'Olier	Merchant/Banker	1792 (26 Jan)	S. 1791; C. 1792
James Farrell	Merchant	1780	S. 1791
John Thomas Foster	Retired MP	1784	S. 1791
Rev. Robert Fowler	Archbishop of Dublin	1779	S. 1791
Leonard Hodson	Lawyer	1790	C. 1791 & 1792
Alexander Jaffray	Banker	1767	S. 1791
Richard Kirwan	Chemist	1776	C. 1791; V.P. 1792
George Maquay	Merchant/Banker	1767	S. 1791
Robert Perceval*	Physician		S. 1791; C. 1792
Joshua Pim	Merchant	1782	S. 1791
Henry Westenra	Lawyer	1769	S. 1791
Abraham Wilkinson	Banker/Merchant	1770	S. 1791

C. — Committee member

S. — Subscriber

V.P. — Vice-President

*Honorary member

The election process of the Dublin Society has given considerable insight into relationships among its members since standard procedure required a prospective candidate to be put forward by two proposers. Records of such procedures, where they exist, can reveal new connections or help legitimise conjectural ones. Before the Dublin Library was founded, many of its future members already belonged to the Dublin Society and while the above table shows an earl and a baron representing the titled—along with three clergymen, one of whom was the head of the Established Church in Dublin—evidence of a

strong level of familiarity among the mercantile men suggests bonds well before 1791.

Importantly, the presence, since 1762, of the **Earl of Charlemont** is significant in this society, the early political societies, the Royal Irish Academy, and the Dublin Library—institutions created with patriotic intentions. A passionate promoter of cultural patriotism in Ireland through his support of the arts and literature, Lord Charlemont was at the head of the movement among patriotic Whig elites for Irish legislative independence, leading the Irish Volunteers to this achievement in 1782. He was an avid collector of art, kept an extensive private library, and hosted several meetings of Dublin's intelligentsia and literati at his townhouse in Rutland Square.¹² Already President of the Royal Irish Academy from its inception, the 'Volunteer Earl' was elected President of the Dublin Library in 1792, and his endorsement for such cultural ventures was in a large sense, exemplary of that aristocratic activism, characteristic of eighteenth-century British elites who would lend their names to worthy causes, supporting them without wielding authority and influence over them.¹³

Among other Dublin Society members who were Dublin library subscribers, future library treasurer, staunch Ascendancy advocate and successful silk merchant, **William Cope** (1772), was one of the proposers for fellow silk merchant—but Catholic—**Thomas Braughall's** bid for admission into the society in 1777. Cope, whose own proposers are unknown, joined Braughall in proposing the jeweller and banker, **Jeremiah D'Olier** on 26 January 1792—two months prior to the latter's election to the Dublin Library Society Committee for 1792, and appointment as a Bank of Ireland director at the same time. Another Bank of Ireland director, **Alexander Jaffray** (Governor in 1791) was an active sponsor within the Dublin Society since he joined in 1767, having proposed another Bank director (and Deputy Governor by 1791) **Abraham Wilkinson** for membership in 1770. The Quaker Jaffray, who

¹² *DIB*; James Kelly, "Lord Charlemont and Learning," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 106C: 395–397; Maxwell, *Dublin Under the Georges*, 212.

¹³ Maurice Craig, *The Volunteer Earl, Being the Life and Times of James Caulfield, First Earl of Charlemont*, (London: Cresset Press, 1948); Clark, *British Clubs and Societies*, 253.

converted to the Established Church to allow him to become a director of the Bank of Ireland, teamed with Braughall to nominate the Catholic brewer **James Farrell** in 1780. Farrell went into business with his brother-in-law, **John Byrne**, the son of the wealthy Catholic sugar merchant Edward Byrne. Edward's partner in the sugar trade, **Randall McDonnell**, was also connected in business to John. McDonnell, who was nominated into the Dublin Society in 1801 by Jeremiah D'Olier, joined with him to propose John Byrne for membership in 1808.

Founding Dublin Library subscriber, **Nicholas Lawless, 1st Baron Cloncurry**, who had been a banker, one of the first directors of the Bank of Ireland (1783) and an active merchant in the woollen and brewing trades, was also a member of the Dublin Society.¹⁴ Lord Cloncurry's land agent was Thomas Braughall, who, along with Jeremiah D'Olier, first proposed the baron's son, Valentine Browne Lawless (from 1799, 2nd Baron Cloncurry) into the society in 1801.¹⁵

A close connection between banker and merchant is borne out of the relationships evidenced by the nomination process for membership into the Dublin Society. This is further strengthened when considering those who were also founder members of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce in 1783 and who became founding subscribers of the Dublin Library Society in 1791: William Cope, Jeremiah D'Olier, Alexander Jaffray, and Abraham Wilkinson. Another three merchants included here are: **Samuel Dick**, a linen merchant and founding director of the Bank of Ireland, who became a Dublin Society member in 1771; sugar merchant **George Maquay**, elected into the Dublin Society the same year as Alexander Jaffray (1767) and a Bank of Ireland director in 1787; and the woollen merchant **Joshua Pim**, a Quaker who did not convert to the Established Church.¹⁶

¹⁴ F.G. Hall, *The Bank of Ireland, 1783-1946: With an Architectural Chapter by C. P. Curran and Biographical Notes by Joseph Hone* (Dublin: Hodges Figgis, 1949), 43-44.

¹⁵ RDS. This was not successful, possibly because Lord Cloncurry was only recently released from the Tower of London after being accused of high treason following the 1798 Rebellion. Lord Cloncurry later became a member of the Dublin Society—nominated by **Peter Digges La Touche**—in 1818, and President of the Dublin Library Society in 1822.

¹⁶ Redmond Morres, a barrister and Dublin M.P. who was not a member of the Dublin Library Society, proposed Pim, Braughall, and Wilkinson for the Dublin Society before his death in 1784. In his lifetime, Jeremiah D'Olier went on to propose 59 candidates for the Dublin Society: RDS.

Of the twenty-two Dublin Library founding members who belonged to the Dublin Society, ten were either bankers or merchants in their professions. The lucrative textile trades that played such a large part of mercantile Ireland in the eighteenth century was a good reason for these people to be involved in a society set up to improve manufacturing and promote business. Moreover, these well-connected and prosperous men regarded membership as another opportunity to strengthen ties in the merchant community and a chance to further their status in urban society.¹⁷ A prime example is Jeremiah D'Olier. Following his election to the Dublin Society on 26 January 1792, D'Olier was elected as a director of the Bank of Ireland towards the end of March and a few days later was elected to the 1792 committee of the Dublin Library. In the Dublin Society, D'Olier went on to propose nine members of the Dublin Library for membership, the earliest being on 31 January 1793, when he and Thomas Braughall nominated businessman, land developer and bookseller, **Luke White**. D'Olier looked out for his kin as well, nominating his son in 1800 (**Isaac Matthew D'Olier**) and his nephew (**Isaac D'Olier IV**) in 1810.¹⁸

Those who joined the Dublin Society were lauded in public opinion. Newspapers were unanimous in their praise of its 'truly respectable and patriotic' members 'whose indefatigable labours to promote the internal wealth of this country, must ever command respect', and that they proudly served 'that great national society for the propagation of agricultural knowledge, industry, and prosperity for Ireland'.¹⁹ Moreover, the society's wide remit attracted people from many professions and pursuits, for the economic and cultural improvement of Ireland. In addition, despite its royal charter, Dublin Castle influence, and Ascendancy roots, Martyn Powell notes that the combination of civic pride with the patriotic consumption of culture increased the importance of the rising middling classes within society.²⁰ Therefore, similarities can be drawn between the Dublin Society and the Dublin Library, with its sizable membership coming from the emerging professional and merchant classes.

¹⁷ Another 56 Dublin Library founding members joined the Dublin Society members after 1792: RDS.

¹⁸ The other four not mentioned were: **John Swift Emerson** (1801); **Rev. James Whitelaw** (1801); **Capel Molyneux** (1803); and **Walter Stephens** (1807).

¹⁹ *Hibernian Journal*, 7 April 1797; *Hibernian Journal*, 7 May 1788; *Dublin Chronicle*, 7 June 1792.

²⁰ Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 78.

Early Political Societies

While the Dublin Society was formed to set Ireland on a path towards less economic and cultural dependency on Britain and to improve the nation's domestic output, the early political societies addressed here pursued legislative independence from Britain. Their members were regarded by many as Irish patriots seeking the right to make their own laws separate from Westminster but within a composite monarchy under the British crown.

The Monks of the Order of St. Patrick, or Monks of the Screw (reflecting their mix of vinous conviviality with political affairs), were formed by several Irish patriots, noted by the son of John Philpot Curran (President of the Dublin Library Society, 1813-1822) as 'a collection of the wit, the genius, and the public virtue of the country'. Its primary goal was to give Ireland 'a constitution and to nourish and diffuse among the people the spirit and intelligence which should render them worthy of the gift'.²¹ Specifically dissatisfied with mild trade concessions given to Ireland, and buoyed by public support for resisting British products, it concentrated on advancing the cause, originally taken up by the Irish Volunteers, of legislating for free trade.²² Primarily composed of peers and parliamentarians, six of its members were influential Dublin Library founding committeemen: **Arthur Browne**, the **Earl of Charlemont** **William Drennan**, **Joseph Pollock**, **Charles O'Neil**, and **William Preston**.²³

There was a distinct literary flavour to these members of the Monks of the Screw as Browne, Drennan, Pollock, and Preston were notable writers and pamphleteers. Browne was an accomplished legal and classics scholar, while Preston was a poet and playwright whose satirical attacks on Richard Twiss won him praise from an Irish public offended by the Englishman's account of his travels in Ireland.²⁴ The Presbyterian barrister, Pollock, whose *Letters of*

²¹ William Henry Curran, *Life of the Most Honourable John Philpot Curran: Late Master of the Rolls in Ireland*, (London: Archibald Constable & Co., 1819), 1:142-147; Christopher Preston, "Life and Writings of William Preston, 1753-1807," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 31, no. 123 (September 1942): 379.

²² ODNB; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 382.

²³ Lord Charlemont was president and O'Neil and Browne were vice-presidents in 1792; Preston was one of the library's vice-presidents in 1799.

²⁴ Andrew Carpenter, *Verse in English from Eighteenth-Century Ireland* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1998), 369; "Monks of the Screw," ODNB. For reaction to Twiss's travels, see Martyn J. Powell, *Piss-Pots, Printers*

Owen Roe O’Nial (1779) referred to the Irish as *helotes* (a Spartan reference to slaves) of the English, was friends with Drennan, a New Light physician, who borrowed from Pollock for his early radical pseudonym, ‘Orellana, an Irish helot’, and addressed readers as ‘Fellow Slaves!’²⁵ Drennan, however, became the more radical of the two, and it is possible the friendship between them strained due to their political differences. Paradoxically, it was initially Pollock who appealed for religious toleration while Drennan was sceptical of those unenlightened Catholics from the lower orders.²⁶ The Irish revolutionary Theobald Wolfe Tone recalled how an early political society he tried to form with Pollock and Drennan did not last due to a ‘rooted dislike for each other, which manifested itself between Drennan and Pollock’.²⁷ Tone and Drennan evidently had more in common, and the two later formed the Dublin Society of United Irishmen in November 1791.

The Monks of the Screw faded around the same time as the formation of the Whig Club of Ireland (1789): ‘All the Aids of Rank, Fortune, Character public and private, Genius, Talents and Eloquence are here united in one Common Cause, the good of the Country’. In practice, the Whig Club was set up to ‘coordinate activity between the Irish Whigs and their British counterparts’ initially from the time of the Regency Crisis. Browne and Pollock joined the **Earl of Charlemont**—a member of several societies that furthered the cause of Irish legislative independence—as founding members of this club. Charlemont, **George Maquay**, and **Joshua Pim**—all Dublin Society members—were fellow Whig Club members with **Francis Burroughs**, **Richard Jebb**, **Theobald McKenna**, **Charles O’Neil** and **Charles Ward**. Burroughs and Jebb were both barristers while Maquay and Ward were directors of the Bank of Ireland. Of the nine, the Catholic physician and political writer McKenna advocated Catholic emancipation and Protestant tolerance in his pamphlet, *A Review of Some Interesting Periods of Irish History* (1786). However, the Whig

and Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century Dublin: Richard Twiss's Tour in Ireland (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009).

²⁵ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 274-275. According to Pádraig Higgins, ‘Helot’ is also based on a story of an African slave who ‘inspired others to revolt’: Higgins, *A Nation of Politicians*, 14.

²⁶ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 387-389, for which see an analysis of selected writings of Pollock and Drennan: *ibid.*, 385-394.

²⁷ Theobald Wolfe Tone, *Memoirs of Theobald Wolfe Tone, Written by Himself*, ed. William Theobald Wolfe Tone (London: H. Colburn, 1837), 1:44.

Club was conservative in its patriotism, preferring to avoid Catholic reform despite championing the 'Sacred Rights of the People' for freedom from an over-reaching British government.²⁸

In 1791, **William Drennan** reduced the Whig Club, in his estimation, to 'an eating and drinking aristocratical [sic] society without any fellow-feeling with the commonality', arguing that they were not radical enough to support the extension of those 'sacred rights of the people' to Catholics.²⁹ Indeed, newspapers took sides. With some irony, the Catholic proprietor, **Thomas McDonnell's** *Hibernian Journal* hailed the Whig Club as 'a union of patriotic virtue, character and abilities'. On the Tory side, *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* gave its conservative Ascendancy view of a patriot: 'No man is a patriot who does not endeavour as far as in him lies to enforce an observance to the laws of his country. Consequently, as the avowed intent of the establishment of the Whig Club, is the abolition of several constitutional acts, no Whig is a patriot'.³⁰

Another early political society of note was the Whigs of the Capital. Founded in January 1791, **William Drennan**, the **Earl of Charlemont**, and John Philpot Curran were among the invitees to this group. But despite the initial presence of parliamentarians and peers, it had a more radical composition with Dublin's civic politicians, artisans, and merchant/manufacturers.³¹ By April 1791, aristocratic and parliamentarian representation at the society had vanished, and a committee was set up—including the bookseller, printer, and founding Dublin Library member, **Randal McAllister**—to publish on behalf of the Whigs of the Capital an inexpensive, subsidised, six-penny edition of Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man* to maximise its dissemination 'for the diffusion of political

²⁸ Watson, *Almanack* 1792, 2; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 410; *DIB*; Watson, *Almanack*, 2.

²⁹ William Drennan to Sam McTier, 21 May [1791], in Agnew, ed. *The Drennan-McTier Letters*, 1:357. For his part, Charlemont did not disagree: '...beef, claret, and communication are, you know, in this country at least, no bad incentives to patriotism': Lord Charlemont to Edmond Malone, 12 July 1789, in Great Britain, Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, *The Manuscripts and Correspondence of James, First Earl of Charlemont*, vol. 2, 1784-1799, Historical Manuscripts Commission, Thirteenth Report, Appendix VIII, 105, quoted in Martyn J. Powell, "'Beef, claret and communication': Convivial Clubs in the Public Sphere, 1750-1800," in *Clubs and Societies*, 353; Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 87.

³⁰ *Hibernian Journal*, 22 July 1789; *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 18 October 1791.

³¹ Gillen, "Opposition Political Clubs and Societies," 291, 300-302. Gillen sees the Whigs of the Capital as 'drawn from the radical middle and lower orders involved in Dublin politics': *ibid.*, 292.

information amongst their countrymen'.³² **Thomas McDonnell** added to this effort by publishing in the *Hibernian Journal* excerpts from the same radical Enlightenment text 'in honour of that patriotic society'. If the conservative newspapers were critical of the Whig Club, they were scathing towards the Whigs of the Capital and McDonnell. An immediate response was to condemn 'the calamity of idle or profligate men disseminating sedition'. Another came in the form of an unattributed pamphlet, dated 15 June 1791, in which the author distanced the Whig Club from the Whigs of the Capital: 'that it will be necessary to inform some of my readers that these two Clubs differ materially both in rank and principles', the latter consisting of 'men whose principles in politics are republican and in religion Presbyterian, enemies to monarchy in the government and establishment in the church'. Furthermore, the pamphleteer went on to attack the dispersal of 'six-penny packets of sedition, for the study of a common people, but lately and scarcely emerging from the darkness of ignorance [...], materials to form a grammar for their infant information'.³³

Membership to patriotic societies such as the Monks of the Screw, Whig Club and the Whigs of the Capital gives an indication of the backgrounds of some founding members of the Dublin Library. Together, they highlight the varying degrees of patriotism that pervaded Irish society leading into 1791. This coincided with the emergence of a Dublin cohort of patriots from diverse backgrounds and professions, challenging the influence of the parliamentary and aristocratic patriots with a view to Catholic relief.³⁴ This becomes more apparent below when two other political societies will be examined—the Catholic Committee and the Dublin Society of United Irishmen—and provides an important setting in which the Dublin Library is shown as a significant location of the enlightened public sphere in the capital.

³² David Dickson, "Paine and Ireland," in Dickson et al., *United Irishmen*, 138; Thomas Paine, *Rights of Man: Being an Answer to Mr. Burke's Attack on the French Revolution* (Dublin, 1791), copy at National Library of Ireland, P730 (14).

³³ Gillen, "Varieties of Enlightenment," 174; *Hibernian Journal*, 8 April 1791; *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 28 April 1791; *Remarks on Mr. Paine's Pamphlet, Called The Rights of Man: In a Letter to a Friend* (Dublin: Printed by P. Byrne, 1791), iv, 6-7; Dickson, "Paine and Ireland," 139.

³⁴ Dickson, *Dublin*, 234-235.

Commercial Bodies

Merchants and bankers together comprise thirteen per cent of the total number of founding members in the Dublin Library Society, second only to lawyers (19%). A brief survey of Dublin's commercial bodies will give insight into the business community's representation in the early days of the library. Families like D'Olier (Huguenot), Jaffray (Quaker), and La Touche (Huguenot) were synonymous with early mercantile Dublin and many of their relatives joined the Dublin Library at the same time. Three significant institutions—the Ouzel Galley Society, the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, and the Bank of Ireland—featured some of the most prominent members of society in eighteenth-century Dublin, many of whom were well-connected, active participants in Dublin's cultural scene.

The Ouzel Galley Society is considered one of the oldest commercial societies in Dublin. It was named after a legendary ship that fell victim to privateers in the seventeenth century, then was subsequently recovered after the insurance had been paid out. As a result, an arbitration body was required to decide on future settlements, and the society was reputedly formed for that purpose. It became an exclusive mercantile club, with membership by invitation only, and numbers restricted to reflect the forty crewmembers aboard the ship. The members were also given hierarchical titles based on a ship's crew.³⁵ Therefore, membership to this society signified elite status in the Dublin business community. As a club, they combined conviviality with philanthropy and arbitration of commercial disputes. It was one of the earlier enlightened societies, admitting Presbyterians and Huguenots as early as 1748, and Catholics in 1783. Furthermore, it gave the impression that shared interest in commercial prosperity trumped religious and political issues. Indeed, in 1782, the Ouzel Galley Society declared its support for the patriot cause when it endorsed the drive for Irish legislative independence.³⁶ Below is a table of those members of the society who were founding members of the Dublin Library.

³⁵ Lisa Marie Griffith, "Dublin's Commercial Clubs," in *Clubs and Societies*, 113; "The Ship," *Dublin Historical Record* 3, no. 2, The Ouzel Galley (1940): 7-39; 21, 33.

³⁶ Griffith, "Dublin's Commercial Clubs," 114-115; Enda MacMahon, *A Most Respectable Meeting of Merchants: Dublin Chamber of Commerce: A History* (Dublin: Londubh Books, 2014), 38-39.

Table 14: Dublin Library Society Founding Members in the Ouzel Galley Society³⁷

Name	Ouzel Galley Society title	DLS member
Alexander Jaffray	1772 (Boatswain's Mate, 1791)	S. 1791
Samuel Dick	1772 (Boatswain's Mate, 1780; Boatswain, 1783; Master, 1791, 2 nd Lt., 1796; 1 st Lt., 1799; Captain, 1800)	S. 1791
Joshua Pim	1776, (Carpenter, 1791; Boatswain, 1796; Master, 1799; 2 nd Lt., 1800; Captain, 1803)	S. 1791
Abraham Wilkinson	1782 (Master's Mate, 1791; Master, 1796; 2 nd Lt., 1799; 1 st Lt., 1800)	S. 1791
George Maquay	1785 (Gunner, 1803)	S. 1791
William Cope	1786	C. 1791 & 1792 (Treasurer)
William Digges La Touche	1788	S. 1791
Charles Ward	1789	S. 1791
Robert Alexander	1798	S. 1791
Peter Digges La Touche	1798	S. 1791
Randall McDonnell	1800	S. 1791
Bartholomew Maziere	1802	S. 1791

C. — Committee member
S. — Subscriber

The Dublin Chamber of Commerce, first proposed by **Joshua Pim**, grew out of the need for a robust commercial trading lobby during negotiations for legislative independence. Of the twelve Dublin Library members who belonged to the Ouzel Galley Society, six were elected to the first council of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, 18 March 1783: **William Cope**; **Samuel Dick**; **Alexander Jaffray**; **George Maquay**; **Joshua Pim** (Chamber of Commerce Treasurer in 1791); and **Abraham Wilkinson**.³⁸ Cope and Maquay belonged to the Chamber's precursor, the Committee of Merchants, and became members of the Ouzel Galley Society after their election to the Chamber. Also

³⁷ "The Ship," 35-36.

³⁸ MacMahon, *A Most Respectable Meeting of Merchants*, 56; 71.

part of that first council were: **John Binns**, business partner of Cope; **John Allen**, a director of the Bank of Ireland; and **Jeremiah D'Olier**, who in January 1792 was proposed by Cope into the Dublin Society. A Catholic woollen draper, **Richard Dillon**, although not on the council, was a founding member. **Alexander Jaffray, Jr.**, was also on the council in 1791.³⁹ Significantly, the above six who were Ouzel Galley Society members and Dublin Chamber of Commerce councillors were all members of the Dublin Society, with, notably, Jaffray sponsoring Wilkinson.⁴⁰ However, the absence of a royal charter or statutory recognition left the Chamber in a weakened state, and with membership on the wane, it disbanded in 1791. It was revived in 1805, with the Catholic merchant **Randall McDonnell** (Ouzel Galley Society, 1800) a motivating force for its return.⁴¹

Several of the same individuals were vital in the establishment of the Bank of Ireland in 1783. A banking crisis in 1760 resulted in there being only two remaining banks established in Dublin: La Touche Bank (owned by the family with four members joining the Dublin Library in 1791) and that of **Nicholas Lawless** (later Lord Cloncurry in 1789). In July 1782, David La Touche, (father of **David La Touche, Jr.**), Lawless, **Samuel Dick**, **Alexander Jaffray**, and **Abraham Wilkinson** were part of a group appointed as commissioners for receiving subscriptions for Bank of Ireland stock. The elder La Touche became the bank's first governor in 1783, with Jaffray, Dick, Wilkinson, Lawless, **Jeremiah D'Olier**, and **John Allen** becoming directors, and **Robert Watson Wade**, its first Accountant-General. **Joseph Hone** and **Charles Ward** both were elected as directors in April 1784.⁴² While the other commercial bodies eventually admitted Catholics, the Bank of Ireland remained intolerant, barring them from leading governor, director, or trustee positions. However, a sign of wealthy Catholic mercantile influence in the city was the contribution of one-tenth of the total capital raised through subscription to get the bank operating in 1783. For example, the Catholic brewer, **William Sweetman**, (uncle of

³⁹ C.J. Woods, "The Social Composition of the Catholic Convention, 1792-3," in David Dickson and Cormac Ó Gráda, eds., *Refiguring Ireland: Essays in Honour of L.M. Cullen* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 2003), 166; *WDD 1792*, 106.

⁴⁰ See p. 204.

⁴¹ McMahon, *A Most Respectable Meeting of Merchants*, 72-75.

⁴² Hall, *The Bank of Ireland*, 12-13; 37; 43-44. Hone was a director for the following years: 1784, 1786, 1790, 1792, and 1794-1803: *ibid.*, 482.

John Sweetman) contributed £3,000, while a distiller, **John Rivers** put forward £3,200. Also, the merchant, **Randall McDonnell**, had over £2,000 in bank stock in 1793.⁴³

By 1791, when the Dublin Library was founded, the following members remained in key positions at the bank: **Alexander Jaffray** was Governor of the Bank of Ireland (1791-1793); **Abraham Wilkinson** was Deputy-Governor (1791-1793) and Governor (1793-1795); and **John Allen** (1783-1806), **Samuel Dick** (1783-1796), **Jeremiah D'Olier** (1783, 1785-1797, 1801-1817), **George Maquay**, and **Charles Ward** were all directors. Dick became Deputy-Governor (1796-1797) then Governor (1797-1799). Jeremiah D'Olier followed him as Deputy-Governor (1797-1799) and Governor (1799-1801). Some years later, Jeremiah's son, **Isaac Matthew D'Olier** had his first tenure as a director in 1820 and eventually became Deputy-Governor (1834-1836) and Governor (1836-1838). Another Dublin Library member, **Robert Alexander** was a director first in 1798 and preceded the younger D'Olier at the two higher positions: Deputy-Governor (1812-1814) and Governor (1814-1816). Finally, **Robert Ashworth** became a director of the bank in 1809.⁴⁴

The names Allen, Cope, Dick, D'Olier, Jaffray, La Touche, Maquay, Pim, Ward, and Wilkinson, stand out as prominent and successful merchants and bankers in eighteenth-century Dublin. All were well-connected and more than likely friends as well as business partners. Some of them were Huguenots and Quakers, two groups who were admitted to the guilds in the late-seventeenth century and the 1720s, respectively.⁴⁵ However, to become officers of the Bank of Ireland, they had to conform to the Established Church. None of them were Catholic but as noted above (and as will be shown below) their relationships and emphasis on business largely superseded any religious antagonism. (Even Cope had cordial associations with Catholics despite his staunch defence of Ascendancy rule.) Catholics, who made up thirty per cent of all Dublin

⁴³ Griffith, "Dublin's Commercial Clubs," 124; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 510; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 69; 61.

⁴⁴ Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 402-403; 479. Nathaniel Callwell was a director from 1847 and eventually Governor in 1866. He was the son of **Nathaniel Callwell**, a lottery-office keeper and stationer, and DLS founding member: *ibid.*, 479.

⁴⁵ McMahan, *A Most Respectable Meeting of Merchants*, 22.

merchants in 1780, played an important role in mercantile Dublin and were among the capital's wealthiest and most prosperous.⁴⁶ The Catholic contingent of merchants who were founding members of the Dublin Library will be examined below. First, a look at a well-subscribed charitable society with an emphasis on education will shed more light on the composition of the Dublin Library Society's founding membership.

Abecedarian Society

Famines and economic recessions in Ireland in the early-eighteenth century highlighted the problem of dependence on aid from the government or the church and necessitated the emergence of charitable societies, coinciding with the rise of associational culture. An early example was the Charitable Music Society (ca. 1710); this was set up to help debtors' families through concert performances, and whose membership consisted of people from all confessions. A greater proliferation of these societies appeared in the second half of the century, many of them providing relief to the distressed in particular occupations.⁴⁷

Samuel Whyte, who operated the English Grammar School (75 Grafton Street)—one of the most popular schools in Dublin at the time—established one such charitable body, the Abecedarian Society, on 26 March 1789 for 'the relief of reduced school-masters and their distressed families'.⁴⁸ Whyte was its founding president and treasurer and its first secretary was co-founder **John McCrea**, Principal of the English Academy (3 Fade Street). Whyte and McCrea, along with several other schoolmasters and schoolmistresses gave an annual subscription of one guinea towards a fund to assist teachers—male and female—as well as 'Tutoreses and Governesses in private families' at their

⁴⁶ Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, 167; Dickson, *Dublin*, 195. For an examination of the wealthier Catholic merchants, see Wall, "Rise of a Catholic Middle Class."

⁴⁷ Kelly, "Charitable Societies: Their Genesis and Development, 1720-1800," 89-92; Dickson, *Dublin*, 157-158. The Irish Musical Fund, for ailing musicians, and the Society for the Relief of Sick and Indigent Roomkeepers are two examples. For an overview of the numerous charitable societies in eighteenth-century Ireland, see Kelly, "Charitable Societies: Their Genesis and Development, 1720-1800," 89-108.

⁴⁸ Abecedarian Society, *An Account of the Proceedings of the Abecedarian Society, Instituted for the Relief of Reduced School-Masters, and Their Families. Dublin, March 28th, 1788* [i.e. 1789]; bound with Henry Murphy, *The Conquest of Quebec. An Epic Poem in Eight Books* (Dublin: Printed for the Author, by W. Porter, 1790).

time of need.⁴⁹ Most subscribers were from the education profession and the fund generated, if poverty struck within their fraternity, was enriched by those 'honorary members' not involved in teaching but who saw it as a worthy cause.

Table 15: Dublin Library Society Founding Members in the Abecedarian Society⁵⁰

Name	Occupation	DLS Member
Rev. Christopher Adamson	Clergyman, lecturer	C. 1791
Rev. Gilbert Austin	Schoolmaster	S. 1791
David Bates	Schoolmaster	S. 1791
John Cash	Print trade	S. 1791
Sisson Putland Darling	Schoolmaster	S. 1791
George Draper	Print trade	S. 1791
John Dumoulin	Wine merchant	S. 1791
Rev. Richard Graves	TCD fellow	C. 1791
Thomas Harding	Mathematician	S. 1791
William Lionel Jenkins	Apothecary	S. 1791
John Jones	Print trade	S. 1791
Nicholas Le Favre	Lottery broker	S. 1791
James Lynch	Optician	S. 1791
Lewis Lyons	Schoolmaster	C. 1791 & 1792
John McCrea (Secretary and co-founder)	Schoolmaster	S. 1791
Rev. Dr. McDowel	Presbyterian clergyman	S. 1791
Robert McGowen	Attorney	S. 1791
Rev. John Moore	Schoolmaster	S. 1791
William Sleater	Print trade	S. 1791
Joseph Cooper Walker	Government officer	C. 1791
Luke White	Print trade	S. 1791
Richard White	Print trade	S. 1791
Rev. James Whitelaw (President)	Clergyman	S. 1791
Samuel Whyte (co-founder)	Schoolmaster	C. 1791 & 1792
John Yoakley	Not identified	S. 1791

C. — Committee member

S. — Subscriber

Of the ninety-five Abecedarian subscribers in 1791, twenty-five were Dublin Library Society founding members, eight of whom were schoolmasters by

⁴⁹ Abecedarian Society, *Proceedings of the Abecedarian Society*, 3-4.

⁵⁰ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80-81.

profession.⁵¹ Other Dublin Library founding subscribers later became honorary members: the banker, **Alexander Jaffray** (1792) and the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, **Rev. John Thomas Troy** (1794).⁵² By then, the society's name had changed to the Society for the Relief of Reduced Literary Teachers, and upon incorporation by Act of Parliament in 1799, the Literary Teachers Society.⁵³ The connection of education and literature in their manifesto can help explain how over a quarter of Abecedarian Society members also became founding members of the Dublin Library. These subscribers were sympathetic to the notion that an 'unremitting attention to literature' had resulted in some educators failing to repay debts from their textbook acquisitions. Therefore, a society—irrespective of religious denomination—based 'upon the principles of Christian benevolence' would lead to unity among those in the profession and 'contribute to the honour and advancement of letters'.⁵⁴ Whyte looked to the 'sister kingdom' for comparison and found that the English 'well understand the influences and advantages of education; they cultivate the means of improvement with care'. Therefore, as the patronage of Irish nobility and gentry 'has hitherto little prevailed in Ireland [...] what might have been effectually done by more powerful hands, the masters of Dublin have now attempted themselves' with the help of their fellow citizens.⁵⁵ A sense of pride can be inferred from a willingness by the middle class to establish and maintain the charity without royal or noble patronage, and can be seen as a demonstration of active citizenship similar to that of the other charitable and cultural ventures.⁵⁶

Those outside the vocations of education and the clergy included an apothecary, lottery-office broker, optician, and a lawyer. But the print trade with six members is well represented here. **William Sleater**, proprietor of the

⁵¹ Austin, Bates, Darling, Lyons, McCrea, Moore, Whyte, and Rev. Adamson (who appears to have been a schoolmaster prior to 1791); nine, if Harding (mathematician) is included.

⁵² Dublin City Library & Archive, "The Abecedarian Society, 1789," accessed 18 September 2016, <http://www.dublincity.ie/story/abecedarian-society-1789>. Rev. McDowel was a Presbyterian minister and Rev. Whitelaw and Rev. Graves were Church of Ireland ministers who were honorary members.

⁵³ John Watson Stewart, *The Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack Compiled by John Watson Stewart For the Year of Our Lord, 1815* (Dublin: Printed by John Watson Stewart, 1815), 205.

⁵⁴ Abecedarian Society, *Proceedings of the Abecedarian Society*, [1].

⁵⁵ Abecedarian Society, *Abecedarian Society: Instituted Thursday, March the 26th, 1789* [broadside, Dublin City Library and Archive].

⁵⁶ Powell, "'Beef, claret and communication': Convivial Clubs in the Public Sphere, 1750-1800," 357.

Dublin Chronicle, was a key figure in promoting the society in his paper. Pauline Dumoulin, wife of **John Dumoulin**, a Huguenot wine merchant, was a schoolmistress and his designation as not being an honorary member suggests their joint membership. Despite his occupation as a government officer, **Joseph Cooper Walker** was more renowned for his active promotion of intellectual endeavours. Walker, along with **Rev. Gilbert Austin**, **Rev. Richard Graves**, and the mathematician **Thomas Harding**, all were founding members of the Royal Irish Academy—established four years prior to the Abecedarian Society—who later became the first subscribers to the Dublin Library.⁵⁷

Notably, five of its members, including co-founder Samuel Whyte were founding Dublin Library Society committee members and they may have influenced the library to adopt a similar fee structure of ten guineas for a lifetime membership.⁵⁸ From this charitable society, with its connection to education, the focus moves to the premier academic society in Ireland towards the end of the eighteenth century, and from where a significant number of its members strove to establish the Dublin Library, six years after its own foundation.

Royal Irish Academy

The Royal Irish Academy stands out among the many clubs and societies of eighteenth-century Dublin as a precursor to the Dublin Library Society. This clearly established connection between the Academy and the subscription library has been addressed in Chapter 6 (above), in relation to the Dublin Library's origins. However, this link will be examined in detail here, concentrating on societal connections of the thirty-five Academy members who became founding Dublin Library subscribers. Whereas Dublin Library members who belonged to the Dublin Society tended to be from the commercial professions, the Dublin Library members in the Academy reflect an understandable academic/antiquarian flavour, but also a strong representation

⁵⁷ Abecedarian Society. *Society Room, Royal Exchange, Saturday, November 14, 1789* (Dublin, 1789), 7, copy at Dublin City Library and Archive. Alexander Jaffray was a member of the Royal Irish Academy by 1790 and the Abecedarian Society by 1792.

⁵⁸ Although the Dublin Library Society imposed an additional guinea in the first year of membership, it was one guinea thereafter. The Abecedarian Society permitted payment of a half-guinea every six months.

from the medical professions. Additionally, similarities are evident in promoting cultural patriotism from the Academy's style of writing and those early notices of the Dublin Library.

The Royal Irish Academy was founded in 1785 and received its royal charter the following year. Its origins are well documented.⁵⁹ Previous similar incarnations that endeavoured to study Irish antiquities, natural history, and the sciences include: William Molyneux's Dublin Philosophical Society (1683-1709), Walter Harris' Physico-Historical Society (1744-1752), and the Hibernian Antiquarian Society (1779-1783) which grew out of the expanding 'select committee' of the Dublin Society's antiquarian section that emerged in 1772 and disbanded in 1774.⁶⁰

On 4 March 1785, a group comprised of Trinity College fellows and some professionals formed the Neosophical Society. Among future Dublin Library Society founding members in this society were: the chemist **Robert Perceval** as its secretary; **Rev. George Hall**, TCD; **Rev. Matthew Young**, TCD; and the writer **William Preston**. Members hosted meetings where they delivered papers and engaged in scientific debate. One of the members reported a proposal by the **Earl of Charlemont** for a 'scheme for establishing in Ireland a Society for the purpose of promoting Science, Literature and the Antiquities'. The Neosophers joined forces with many 'whose names had been on the rolls of the Antiquarian Committee' of the Dublin Society that disbanded in 1774. It has been suggested that this group were the 'Palaeosophers' a group of like-minded Trinity scholars who met in 1782 and engaged in 'the investigation of ancient learning' or 'patristic history'.⁶¹ It is plausible, then, that those who met at the houses of Charlemont and Kirwan for their *conversaciones* could

⁵⁹ Of the substantial literature on the Royal Irish Academy, see O'Connor, "Origins of the Royal Irish Academy"; Ó Raifeartaigh, *The Royal Irish Academy: A Bicentennial History, 1785-1985*; Cunningham and Fitzpatrick, eds., *Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library*; Bourke, *Story of Irish Museums, 1790-2000*.

⁶⁰ Walsh, "Club Life in Late Seventeenth- and Early Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 36-39; Walter D. Love, "The Hibernian Antiquarian Society: A Forgotten Predecessor to the Royal Irish Academy," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 55, no. 203 (Autumn 1962): 419; O'Connor, "Origins of the Royal Irish Academy," 326; Barnard, "The Dublin Society and Other Improving Societies," 68.

⁶¹ Warburton et al., *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:922; Preston, "Life and Writings of William Preston," 380; O'Connor, "Origins of the Royal Irish Academy," 335-336; Brown, "Configuring the Irish Enlightenment," 165; Warburton et al., *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:922.

also have been part of these groups or part of the overall circle.⁶² 'Anxious to make their labours redound to the honour and advantage of their country, they formed a plan more extensive, and admitting such additional names as might add dignity to their new institution', their first meeting of thirty-eight members was held at Charlemont House on 18 April 1785.⁶³ In the preface to the first volume of the Academy's *Transactions*, Robert Burrowes emphasised their goal to continue the patriotic traditions of academic exploration of their predecessors and underlined the importance of royal endorsement. He reserved a special word for the Earl of Charlemont as its head 'at a time when every qualification natural and acquired concurred in pointing out a president, whose zeal for the interests of Ireland could only be equalled by his zeal for the interests of learning'.⁶⁴

Historians have differed on whether the Royal Irish Academy was a 'bastion for patriotism' or whether it had a 'patriotic agenda', especially after having achieved legislative independence with the leading Irish Volunteer as its president. However, Michael Brown argues that its royal charter acted as an instrument effecting 'disciplining controls'—essentially a check for the Irish authorities—over the academy amidst 'the burgeoning public sphere in mid-eighteenth-century Ireland'. Nonetheless, one enlightened trait was religious tolerance in admissions. Where its predecessors (Dublin Philosophical Society, Dublin Society, and the Physico-Historical Society) were bastions of the Anglican Ascendancy, the Royal Irish Academy admitted two Catholics in 1785, one of whom was the noted antiquarian Charles O'Connor (1710-1791), sponsored by another antiquarian, **Joseph Cooper Walker**. This, however, did not interrupt the drive among Anglican antiquarians such as **Edward Ledwich**, who sought to identify their Anglican, English roots with Gaelic antiquity, echoing the Anglican Archbishop of Armagh James Ussher's claim of the Protestant tradition's closer ties to the time of St. Patrick, in a form of

⁶² **William Drennan, Rev. Richard Graves, Theobald McKenna, William James MacNeven, Robert Perceval, Joseph Cooper Walker, and Rev. Matthew Young** were all part of the *conversaciones* with **Charlemont** and **Kirwan**. For more on this, see p. 171-173.

⁶³ Robert Burrowes, "Preface," in *The Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, 1787*, vol. 1 (Dublin: Printed by George Bonham, for The Academy, [1787]), xiv-xv; Brown, "Configuring the Irish Enlightenment," 165; O'Connor, "Origins of the Royal Irish Academy," 336.

⁶⁴ Burrowes, "Preface," xvi; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 301.

Ascendancy patriotism.⁶⁵ Regardless of the agenda, Burrowes' preface promoted cultural patriotism through academic study in Ireland: 'whatever tends to awaken a spirit of literary ambition, by keeping alive the memory of its antient reputation for learning, cannot but prove of the greatest national advantage'.⁶⁶ A further analysis of the role of the Dublin Society, the Royal Irish Academy, and the Dublin Library Society as loci of the enlightened public sphere in eighteenth-century Dublin will follow this chapter. Continuing here is the connection between the Academy's members who were Dublin Library founding members.

Table 16: Dublin Library Society Founding Members in the Royal Irish Academy

Name	Occupation	Dublin Library Society member
Clement Archer	Surgeon	S. 1791
Rev. Gilbert Austin	Schoolmaster	S. 1791
Cornelius Bolton*	Gentleman/landowner	S. 1791
Arthur Browne*	TCD fellow / MP	S. 1791; V.P. 1792
Earl of Charlemont* (RIA President)	Peer	S. 1792; President 1792
James Cleghorn	Physician	S. 1791
Andrew Daly	Physician	S. 1791
William Deane*	Attorney	S. 1791
Stephen Dickson*	Physician	S. 1791
William Drennan	Physician	S. 1791; C. 1792
Rev. Thomas Elrington*	TCD fellow	C. 1791
John Thomas Foster*	Gentleman	S. 1791
James Gandon*	Architect	S. 1791
Rev. Richard Graves	TCD fellow	C. 1791
Rev. George Graydon	Clergyman	S. 1791
Rev. George Hall*	TCD fellow	S. 1791
Thomas Harding	Mathematician	S. 1791
Alexander Jaffray	Banker	S. 1791
Lord Bishop of Killala	Clergyman	S. 1791
Richard Kirwan*	Chemist/Geologist	C. 1791; V.P. 1792
George Knox	MP	S. 1791
Rev. Edward Ledwich	Antiquarian	S. 1791; C. 1792
William James MacNeven	Physician	C. 1791 & 1792

⁶⁵ Brown, "Configuring the Irish Enlightenment," 165-166; O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, 166-167; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 301 & 547; 303; O'Connor, "Origins of the Royal Irish Academy," 336; McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 5, 399-403; Love, "The Hibernian Antiquarian Society," 423; Dickson, *Dublin*, 191-192; Connolly, "Patriotism and Nationalism," 23.

⁶⁶ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 403; Brown, "Configuring the Irish Enlightenment," 168; Burrowes, "Preface," ix.

Theobald McKenna	Physician	C. 1791
Charles O'Neil	MP	S. 1791; V.P. 1792
Robert Perceval*	Physician	S. 1791; C. 1792
William Preston*	Barrister/essayist	S. 1791
Hugh Skeys	Merchant	S. 1791
Walter Stephens	Gentleman	C. 1791
Robert Watson Wade*	Government officer	S. 1791
Joseph Cooper Walker*	Government officer/antiquary	C. 1791
William Watson	Bookseller	S. 1791; C. 1792
Abraham Wilkinson	Banker	S. 1791
James T. Wilkinson	Surgeon	S. 1791
Rev. Matthew Young*	TCD fellow	C. 1791; V.P. 1792

C. — Committee member

S. — Subscriber

V.P. — Vice-President

*RIA founding member in 1785

A total of thirty-five Royal Irish Academy members became involved in the establishment of the Dublin Library Society in 1791. Twelve Academy members (Table 16) held committee positions in the Dublin Library during its first two years. The **Earl of Charlemont** was President of the Royal Irish Academy since its inception and was the logical choice as President of the Dublin Library Society when that office was inaugurated in 1792. **Richard Kirwan, Robert Perceval, Matthew Young,** and **Stephen Dickson** were all members of the Academy's Committee of Science before they helped start the Dublin Library—with the first three being elected to the Dublin Library committees in the first two years. **Rev. Richard Graves** and **William Preston** were on the Committee of Polite Literature, while **James Gandon, Rev. George Graydon** and **William James MacNeven**—proposed by Kirwan—were part of the Committee of Antiquities.⁶⁷ Six of the above served on the Dublin Library committees in 1791-1792. MacNeven, one of only a small minority of Catholics in the Academy, was also its secretary. Graydon was Secretary of Foreign Correspondence, and Kirwan was appointed librarian of the Academy on 16 March 1791, a position he kept until he was elected President in 1800.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Royal Irish Academy, *RIA Minute Book*, volume 1, 74, 26 November 1791.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 16 March 1791.

Fifteen of the thirty-five were founding members of the Royal Irish Academy (marked with an asterisk in Table 16) and so had been acquainted with each other in an intellectual capacity for at least five years prior to the establishment of the Dublin Library. Indeed, **Cornelius Bolton**, the Earl of Charlemont, **William Deane**, **John Thomas Foster**, Richard Kirwan, and Robert Perceval were all members of the Dublin Society before helping establish the Academy. In total, nine RIA and Dublin Library members were also members of the Dublin Society. Table 17 (below) shows their discrete backgrounds, except for **Alexander Jaffray** and **Abraham Wilkinson** who were closely connected through the Bank of Ireland—Jaffray was Governor and Wilkinson, Deputy Governor—in 1791. In fact, these two go as far back as the foundation of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce in 1783, and even further, as Jaffray proposed Wilkinson for membership into the Dublin Society in 1770.⁶⁹

Table 17: Dublin Library Society Founding Members in the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy

Name	Occupation
Rev. Gilbert Austin	Schoolmaster
Cornelius Bolton	Gentleman/landowner
Earl of Charlemont	Peer
William Deane	Attorney
John Thomas Foster	Gentleman (former MP)
Alexander Jaffray	Banker
Richard Kirwan	Chemist/geologist
Robert Perceval	Physician
Abraham Wilkinson	Banker/merchant

Both the Earl of Charlemont and Richard Kirwan are known for their connections with the early success of the Royal Irish Academy and the establishment of the Dublin Library Society. The two hosted meetings, or *conversazioni*, at their homes with several others—**William Drennan**, **Rev. Richard Graves**, **Theobald McKenna**, **William James MacNeven**, **Robert Perceval**, **William Preston**, **Joseph Cooper Walker**, and **Rev. Matthew Young**—all of whom, with the exception of Preston, were elected to the first

⁶⁹ RDS. Certificates of membership for the Royal Irish Academy are not extant for the early years of the academy. So, it is unclear whether Jaffray proposed Wilkinson for membership to this institution.

committees of the Dublin Library Society.⁷⁰ Within this coterie were several from the medical profession (Drennan, McKenna, MacNeven, and Perceval), who, when combined with **Clement Archer, James Cleghorn, Andrew Daly, Stephen Dickson,** and **James T. Wilkinson,** comprised the most numerous of the professions (nine)—four greater than the representation from Trinity College (five).⁷¹ Among these medical men were three Catholic doctors—MacNeven, McKenna, and Daly—who were also active members of the Catholic Committee and various sub-committees (discussed below). **William Watson** appears to have been the only bookseller awarded membership to the RIA around 1791, and it is possible that this was a factor in his being elected to the Dublin Library Society committee for 1792.

Catholic Committee

After examples of commercial, charitable, and academic institutions in eighteenth-century Dublin, the focus returns to two important, later political societies that defined the tone of Irish history at the end of the eighteenth century—the Catholic Committee and the Dublin Society of United Irishmen. The establishment of the General Committee of the Catholics of Ireland in 1756 began a concerted effort among Irish Catholics to lobby for the repeal of the penal laws enforced on them from the late-seventeenth century. Previous petitioning on behalf of Catholics had been limited to the Catholic clergy and the remaining Catholic gentry and nobility in Ireland. From 1756 through to its final session in 1793—with periods of inactivity interspersed—although full emancipation was its eventual aim, the Committee lobbied for a reworking of an acceptable oath of allegiance, the gradual relaxation of particularly harsh penal laws, and the abolition of ‘quarterage’ fees imposed on Catholic traders and merchants by the guilds.⁷² The latter measure allowed Catholics to trade but denied them any other privilege of guild membership. After a hiatus, the Committee revived in 1772 and a surviving minute book from 1773 to 1792

⁷⁰ McLaughlin, “Richard Kirwan: Part III,” 73. For Kirwan and his *conversazioni*, see p. 171. Preston became one of the vice-presidents of the Dublin Library Society in 1799: Stewart, *Gentleman’s and Citizen’s Almanack...1800*, 128.

⁷¹ Although, Perceval was also a professor of chemistry at TCD.

⁷² For the Catholic lobby prior to the establishment of the Catholic Committee, see Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, 53-73. For the Catholic Committee, see R. Dudley Edwards, “Minute Book of the Catholic Committee, 1773-92,” *Archivium Hibernicum* 9 (1942): 1, 1a, 2-172; and Eamon O’Flaherty, “The Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics, 1791-3,” *Archivium Hibernicum* 40 (1985): 14-34; and Woods, “Catholic Convention,” 26-35.

shows the workings and people involved in the committee. The successful merchant, **Thomas Braughall** appears from the outset as a key figure in the committee, while **Richard McCormick**, a poplin manufacturer, appears in the minutes from 1785 and was the committee's secretary from 1788.⁷³ Compositions of sub-committees and their tasks reveal the participation of several future Dublin Library members. The minute book also contains records of the elected delegates for each parish, leading into the Catholic Convention, held in Dublin, 3 December 1792, when the largest group of Irish Catholic leaders convened for a meeting since the late-seventeenth century.⁷⁴ C.J. Woods has compiled a prosopography of the 1792 General Committee of the Catholics of Ireland. Many Dublin Library founding members appear in that invaluable work.

Table 18 (below) shows the names of the delegates and their parishes to where they were elected on 9 February 1791, a few months before the establishment of the Dublin Library Society. Four other names, **William Dease**, **Gerald Dillon**, **William Sweetman** and the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin **Rev. John Thomas Troy**, are also included here to indicate their involvement in the committee at the time.⁷⁵ Twenty-two of the twenty-six were among the 140 members elected in Ireland. Of the thirty-six members from Dublin, ten became founding Dublin Library members a few months later.

Table 18: Dublin Library Society Founding Members in the Catholic Committee in 1791

Name	Occupation	Parish elected to	DLS
Thomas Braughall	Merchant	Dublin (St. Michan)	S. 1791
John Byrne, Esq.	Merchant	Armagh	S. 1791
James Connolly, Esq.	Merchant	Dublin (St. Andrew)	S. 1791
Andrew Daly, MD	Physician	Dublin (St. Mary)	S. 1791
William Dease, Esq.	Surgeon	Not a delegate	S. 1791
Gerald Dillon, Esq.	Apothecary	Not a delegate	S. 1791
Richard Dillon, Esq.	Merchant	Dublin (St. Audeon)	S. 1791
Richard Dodd, Esq.	Merchant	Coleraine	S. 1791
Nicholas Elcock, MD	Physician	Dublin (St. Mary)	S. 1791

⁷³ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 126-127; Dickson, *Dublin*, 195-197; Edwards, "Catholic Committee," 1-2; 92.

⁷⁴ Woods, "Catholic Convention," 26.

⁷⁵ Edwards, "Catholic Committee," 117-120.

James Farrell, Esq.	Tradesman: brewer	Dublin (St. Paul)	S. 1791
John Gorman Kennedy, Esq.	Tradesman: brewer	Dublin (St. Andrew)	S. 1791
Mr Nicholas Le Favre	Lottery broker	Castlebar	S. 1791
Martin French Lynch, Esq.	Student/Barrister	Athenry	S. 1791
Mr Lewis Lyons	Schoolmaster	Dublin (St. Paul)	C. 1791 & 1792
Richard McCormick, Esq.	Merchant	Nenagh	S. 1791
Randall McDonnell, Esq.	Merchant	Armagh	S. 1791
Mr Thomas McDonnell	Print trade	Dublin (St. Nicholas-Within)	S. 1791
Theobald McKenna, MD	Physician	Waterford	C. 1791
William James MacNeven, MD	Physician	Navan	C. 1791 & 1792
James Plunket, Esq.	Merchant	Clonmel	S. 1791
Dominick Rice, Esq.	Barrister	Tralee	S. 1791
Mr John Rivers	Tradesman: distiller	Clonmel	S. 1791
Thomas Ryan, MD	Physician	Roscommon	S. 1791
John Sweetman, Esq.	Tradesman: brewer	Dublin (St. Andrew)	C. 1791 & 1792
William Sweetman, Esq.	Tradesman: brewer	Not a delegate	S. 1791
Rev. Dr John Thomas Troy	Clergyman (Archbishop of Dublin)	Not a delegate	S. 1791

C. — Committee member
S. — Subscriber

For this study, it is noteworthy from the above table that several future Dublin Library founding members were active in the Catholic Committee. Furthermore, many were higher committee officers responsible for policy formation and dissemination, and the arrangement of elections. Prior to 1791, the Catholic nobility dominated the committee, with Lords Kenmare, Fingall, and Gormanston representing the group's aristocratic leadership. In the past, it was simply assumed that these nobles would by right claim the higher

positions within the group.⁷⁶ However, by the mid-1780s, the merchant and professional classes were gaining considerable influence within the committee, especially the Dublin-based Irish Volunteers who, although as Catholics, forbidden to bear arms, were nonetheless leaders in the capital. Textile merchants and manufacturers, **Thomas Braughall**, **Richard McCormick**, and **Randall McDonnell** were successful businessmen, and respected in the community. The **Sweetman** family were well-known brewers and the distiller **John Rivers** was affluent enough to subscribe £3,200 to the establishment of the Bank of Ireland in 1783. The medical men were also gaining considerable influence with **Andrew Daly**, **William James MacNeven**, **Theobald McKenna**, and **Thomas Ryan** all serving on various committees.

As mentioned, merchant and land agent, **Thomas Braughall**, was present at the Committee's first gathering on 1 April 1773; he remained on the committee throughout its existence (rarely missing a meeting), and was often named to select committees.⁷⁷ Braughall represented several counties (and Kilkenny City) before his election to the Dublin parish of St. Michan in 1791, for which he was its delegate at the Catholic Convention on 3 December 1792. Although merchants represented the largest occupation from those who later became founding Dublin Library members, lawyers and medical men were also prominent. **Dominick Rice**, who converted to the Established Church to practice law, joined the Committee on 5 May 1774 and immediately teamed with Braughall in forming a sub-committee of accounts. **Martin French Lynch** was a law student in 1791 and one of the first Catholics to be called to the Irish bar in 1792. **Andrew Daly**, fresh from his medical studies at Leiden, became a member as early as 6 July 1779.⁷⁸ Others from the medical profession were: **Gerald Dillon** [apothecary], **Nicholas Elcock**, **William James MacNeven**, **Theobald McKenna**, and **Thomas Ryan**. Daly, McKenna, and MacNeven were three Catholic members of the predominantly Protestant Royal Irish Academy in 1791.

⁷⁶ Edwards, "Catholic Committee," 27.

⁷⁷ The earliest being 25 June 1778: Edwards, "Catholic Committee," 31.

⁷⁸ Woods, "Catholic Convention," 40; Edwards, "Catholic Committee," 22; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 57; *KIAP*, 296; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 44.

The above section on the Dublin Society showed the relationships among Catholic merchants who were connected in business and occasionally through family.⁷⁹ **Thomas Braughall** and **James Farrell** were early members of the Dublin Society and delegates for Dublin parishes in 1791. They were instrumental in proposing **John Byrne** and **Randall McDonnell** for membership to the Dublin Society years after they were all founding members of the Dublin Library.

Further evidence showing the high regard with which these members of the Catholic Committee were held can be found in their selections to various sub-committees. From a committee of eight appointed to report on resolutions and instructions from parishes throughout the island on 10 February 1791, five (Randall McDonnell, Daly, Braughall, McCormick, and Sweetman) were future Dublin Library members. On 18 February 1791, with **Rev. John Thomas Troy** in the chair, another sub-committee of twelve was appointed, in which six future Dublin Library members (Daly, McCormick, John Sweetman, Randall McDonnell, Braughall, and McKenna) were involved. By the time the Dublin Library was established, these same names—with **Lewis Lyons, Thomas Ryan, Dominick Rice, James Connolly, Nicholas Elcock, and John Byrne**—repeatedly appeared in subsequent sub-committee lists throughout 1791 and 1792. In many instances, they represented just over half of the compositions of committee members.⁸⁰

Extant lists and minutes of the Catholic Committee have given considerable insight into the workings of the organisation, in which Dublin Library founding members played an active part. Another important point for this study is the significance of the schism in the leadership between the lay Catholic nobles and the emerging professional/merchant classes. The latter were successful in wresting control of the Catholic Committee, and a significant number of them joined the United Irishmen. One diarist present recorded the moment at a Catholic Committee meeting in 1792 when '**Randall McDonnell** thrust the Earl of Fingall from the chair and handed it over to **Thomas Braughall**, who then

⁷⁹ See p. 204-205.

⁸⁰ Edwards, "Minute Book," 131 (29 April 1791), 134 (3 June 1791), 150 (1 February 1792), 162 (14 April 1792).

put all the democratic resolutions to the meeting which the deposed nobleman had refused to do'.⁸¹ Many from this 'new order' were Dublin Library founding members (**Braughall, Daly, Richard Dillon, Lyons, MacNeven, McCormick, Randall McDonnell, Thomas McDonnell, McKenna, Rice, Ryan, and John Sweetman**), four of whom were on the Dublin Library committees of 1791 and/or 1792 (MacNeven, Lyons, Sweetman, and McKenna). Virtually all the above members were part of the group of professionals and merchants whose growing influence within the Catholic Committee led to their succeeding the Catholic nobility as leaders and representatives of Irish Catholics at the time.⁸² Part of this influence could be attributed to their respectable standing in the wider Irish society, as part of Dublin's social milieu through their growing membership to other societies and institutions like the Dublin Library Society. Before examining Dublin Library members who were Dublin United Irishmen, another noteworthy Catholic political society formed in the capital in 1791.

Catholic Society of Dublin

An offshoot of the Catholic Committee incorporated several Dublin Library founding members. A group of influential Catholics based in Dublin (and still members of the Catholic Committee) gathered to form the Catholic Society of Dublin. Dublin Library members involved in this society were: **Thomas Braughall, William James MacNeven, Richard McCormick, Theobald McKenna, John Sweetman, and William Sweetman**. Two weeks after its first meeting, the same members joined the Dublin Society of United Irishmen and with McKenna's pamphlet (*Declaration of the Catholic Society of Dublin* [1791]), thoughts of an alliance between Catholics and radicals had spread throughout the capital.⁸³ Membership to the Catholic Society grew to include a further six Dublin Library founding members—**Thomas Archdeakon Jr., James Farrell, John Gorman Kennedy, Nicholas Le Favre, Lewis Lyons, and Randall McDonnell**.⁸⁴ Part of their strategy was to form an alliance with

⁸¹ Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-42.

⁸² The conservative Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, John Thomas Troy was part of the 'old order' allied with the lay Catholic nobility: Smyth, *Men of No Property*, 57.

⁸³ Theobald McKenna, *Declaration of the Catholic Society of Dublin* (Dublin: **Richard White**, 1791); O'Flaherty, "The Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 18.

⁸⁴ [List of Catholic Society Members], *Rebellion Papers*, 620/34/50, National Archives of Ireland, Dublin.

Dissenters to voice grievances against the penal laws and to pursue further legislative independence. Dublin Castle saw them as 'fifty or sixty of the most violent agitators' with republican tendencies. To **William Drennan**, the society represented a 'cabal designed to counteract "aristocratic influence" within the Catholic Committee'. Notably, Jim Smyth has emphasised that the Catholic Society's declaration of 21 October 1791 resembled 'the first public pronouncements of the Society of United Irishmen, founded in Belfast the same month, calling for a "spirit of harmony, and sentiments of affection" between Irishmen'.⁸⁵ Drennan became a founding member of the Dublin chapter of the United Irishmen, to be discussed here.

Dublin Society of United Irishmen

On 9 November 1791, following the lead of Belfast, the Dublin Society of United Irishmen was formed 'for the purpose of moulding and expressing radical opinion'.⁸⁶ The first phase of this political society lasted until the government dissolved it in May 1794. A second, underground phase began in 1795 with a further radical agenda of revolutionary upheaval to form an independent Irish republic—irrespective of confession. Noted revolutionaries Theobald Wolfe Tone and James Napper Tandy were among its founders through both phases. **William Drennan**, known to have written most of their early publications as well as the test and rules based on Masonic conventions, was one of the founders in 1791 but did not take part in the revolutionary stage.⁸⁷

The leadership of the first phase of the Dublin United Irishmen was drawn largely from the professional classes, while its members were chiefly merchants, manufacturers, tradesmen and shopkeepers.⁸⁸ This inclusion of certain social classes hitherto rejected in a political, non-sectarian associational setting unnerved the conservative *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*:

When public and promiscuous Societies are formed, in which multitudes are brought together, persons of low stations and occupations, who are

⁸⁵ Smyth, *Men of No Property*, 55-57.

⁸⁶ McDowell, "Proceedings," 3.

⁸⁷ Tone, *Memoirs*, 1:71; *DIB*; Patrick Fagan, "Infiltration of Dublin Freemason Lodges by United Irishmen and Other Republican Groups," *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá Chultúr* 13 (1998): 69.

⁸⁸ The Presbyterian gentleman, and friend of Drennan, Archibald Hamilton Rowan, was a key member of the society. After his pardon for his part in the 1798 Rebellion, he returned to Ireland and became a vice-president of the Dublin Library Society during the presidency of another radical, Lord Cloncurry, whose father was a Dublin Library founding member.

joined by no common bond of union, except an absurd rage for alteration, and have no other object in view but change, without knowing the value of what they would part, or the effect of what they would wish; it behoves the Government, as the public Guardians, to meet the danger in its onset—to punish its contrivers and abettors.⁸⁹

Earlier in this chapter, a look at a few early political societies indicated membership to the Monks of the Screw and the Whig Club as decidedly aristocratic in character, albeit supplemented by several professionals who became Dublin Library members, including pamphleteers such as Drennan, **Theobald McKenna**, and **Joseph Pollock** who distinguished themselves with their patriotic prose. But some United Irishmen accused the Whig Club of representing the establishment Ascendancy families who co-opted the Catholic aristocracy to further an agenda of light reform—without full Catholic emancipation—while consolidating their influence in political affairs to protect the Ascendancy.⁹⁰ The United Irishmen, on the other hand, were largely middle class and sought more radical parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation. They saw the Whig Club as lacking in ‘fellow feeling with the people’ and ‘were as much self-interested against reform as its enemies were’.⁹¹

William Drennan had been good friends with Pollock and, early on, shared many of the same views towards English influence in Irish affairs.⁹² But as mentioned, Drennan regarded the Whig Club as more interested in dining and drinking than any real reform. He referred to Pollock, once considered the ‘Irish Rousseau’, as ‘the pendulum’ for his wavering views on radical reform.⁹³ Pollock and McKenna were similar in their politics and were prolific in their political writings while both were members of the Whig Club.⁹⁴ Although he attended the first meeting of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, Pollock did not become a member. McKenna left the society in 1793. Both objected to the

⁸⁹ *Faulkner’s Dublin Journal*, 29-31 May 1792.

⁹⁰ Kennedy, “The Irish Opposition,” 100; Kelly, “Elite Political Clubs,” 285.

⁹¹ William Drennan to Sam McTier, 5 February 1791, in Agnew, ed., *Drennan-McTier Letters*, 1:356, in which Drennan asked McTier (in Belfast): ‘How does your Whig Club? The one here literally does nothing more than eat and drink’; Kennedy, “Irish Opposition,” 100.

⁹² Both were members of the Monks of the Order of St. Patrick (Monks of the Screw): Pollock through his alias, Owen Roe O’Niall, and Drennan’s *Letters of Orellana* were two examples of patriotic treatises attempting to influence public opinion towards parliamentary reforms: Kelly, “Elite Political Clubs,” 272-277.

⁹³ *DIB*; Agnew, ed., *Drennan-McTier Letters*, 1:379, 79-81.

⁹⁴ McDowell, “Proceedings,” 7-11. McKenna’s tendency to lean toward moderate legislative reform is reflected in his dual membership to the Whig Club and the United Irishmen, as he ultimately withdrew from the latter in April 1793, after considering them to be too radical.

society's radical trajectory. Accordingly, members of the Dublin United Irishmen—and its forerunner, the Whigs of the Capital—advocated an increasingly radical form of Irish patriotism, from robust parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation in the society's first phase, to revolutionary republicanism in its second phase.

As in the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy, proposals by two existing members were required for new entrants to the Dublin Society of United Irishmen. Again, this procedure gives the researcher some insight into the relationships of certain persons. Also, it could be considered that a prolific proposer of new members can be regarded as one who was an active participant in the society and who wished to introduce like-minded acquaintances to his fellow members.

The Presbyterian **William Drennan** also belonged to the Monks of the Screw, the Royal Irish Academy, and the Whigs of the Capital. **Theobald McKenna** (Catholic Committee, Catholic Society of Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, Whig Club, Whigs of the Capital) and **William James MacNeven** (Catholic Committee, Catholic Society of Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, Whigs of the Capital) were also founding members of the Dublin United Irishmen. All three were physicians and friends with **Richard Kirwan**, the scientist, Royal Irish Academy librarian and committeeman, and founder of the Dublin Library.⁹⁵ Kirwan was sworn into the United Irishmen by MacNeven in 1795/96.⁹⁶

Another Catholic Committee colleague of MacNeven and McKenna, the brewer **John Sweetman's** admission into the United Irishmen was proposed by its president, the physician Drennan, a Dublin Library member in 1791 and a committee member in 1792.⁹⁷ Sweetman, MacNeven, and McKenna were part of the new leadership of the Catholic Committee with merchants/manufacturers **Richard McCormick** and **Richard Dillon**, the barrister **Dominick Rice** and the schoolmaster **Lewis Lyons**—all Dublin United Irishmen. Drennan, Lyons, McKenna, MacNeven, and Sweetman were

⁹⁵ *DIB*.

⁹⁶ Dixon, "Richard Kirwan: The Dublin Philosopher," 62.

⁹⁷ McDowell, "Proceedings," 40 (16 November 1792).

all elected Dublin Library committee members, and therefore would certainly have been acquainted with each other before the Dublin Society of United Irishmen was founded in November 1791.

There were many Dublin Library members who were active proposers in the United Irishmen. Drennan, Lyons, **Randal McAllister**, McCormick, McKenna, MacNeven, **Ambrose Moore**, **James Moore**, and Rice were all frequent proposers—sometimes joint-proposers. While it is difficult to determine how close co-proposers were, in some cases, common professions or previously identified societal connections have indicated that a prior link had already been established. The Catholic McKenna and the Presbyterian Drennan, both physicians, were co-proposers of a Catholic doctor from Co. Kerry.⁹⁸ Two Dissenters, Drennan and Oliver Bond, a wealthy merchant, proposed **Henry Kennedy**, a Catholic physician, on 9 March 1792. **John Byrne**, son of the successful Catholic merchant Edward Byrne, was proposed by Richard McCormick and Theobald Wolfe Tone (the latter two having served together in the Catholic Committee) while McCormick and McKenna were joint-proposers on at least one occasion. Two Catholic Committee delegates for Dublin parishes, the linen merchant **Richard Dillon** and schoolmaster **Lewis Lyons** proposed Thomas White, a wine merchant. The Catholic Committee (CC in Table 19) had a strong representation in the United Irishmen. Of the thirty-two Dublin Library founding members who were Dublin United Irishmen, fifteen belonged to the Catholic Committee and were part of the group that seized control of the Committee from the Catholic clergy and nobility, signifying their role as new representatives for Catholics in Ireland. Moreover, they came from a variety of occupations: medical, legal, mercantile, and various trades.

Table 19: Dublin Library Society Founding Members in the Dublin Society of United Irishmen

Name	Occupation	DLS
Mr William Allen	Print trade	S. 1791
Thomas Braughall [CC]	Merchant	S. 1791
John Byrne, Esq. [CC]	Merchant	S. 1791
Mr Nathaniel Callwell	Print trade	S. 1791
William Dease, Esq. [CC]	Surgeon	S. 1791

⁹⁸ McDowell, "Proceedings," 11 (30 January 1792).

Richard Dillon, Esq. [CC]	Merchant	S. 1791
Mr Joseph Dowling	Ironmonger	S. 1791
William Drennan, MD	Physician	S. 1791; C. 1792
James Farrell, Esq. [CC]	Brewer	S. 1791
Mr Francis Graham*	Apothecary	S. 1791
William Todd Jones, Esq.	Barrister/pamphleteer	S. 1791
Joseph Kelly, Esq.	Brewer	S. 1791
Henry Kennedy, MD	Physician	S. 1791
John Gorman Kennedy, Esq. [CC]	Brewer	S. 1791
Richard Kirwan, Esq.**	Chemist/geologist	C. 1791; V.P. 1792
Mr Lewis Lyons [CC]	Schoolmaster	C. 1791 & 1792
Francis Magan, Esq.	Student	S. 1791
Mr Randal McAllister	Print trade	S. 1791
Richard McCormick, Esq. [CC]	Merchant	S. 1791
Mr Thomas McDonnell [CC]	Print trade	S. 1791
Theobald McKenna, MD [CC]	Physician	C. 1791
William James McNeven, MD [CC]	Physician	C. 1791 & 1792
Mr Ambrose Moore	Goldsmith/watchmaker	S. 1791
Mr James Moore	Print trade	S. 1791
James Murray, MD	Physician	S. 1791
Dominick Rice, Esq. [CC]	Barrister	S. 1791
Mr John Rigby	Gunsmith	S. 1791
Thomas Ryan, MD [CC]	Physician	S. 1791
Hugh Skeys	Wine merchant	S. 1791
John Sweetman, Esq. [CC]	Brewer	C. 1791 & 1792
William Sweetman, Esq. [CC]	Brewer	S. 1791
Walter Wade, MD	Botanist/physician	S. 1791
James T. Wilkinson, Esq.	Surgeon	S. 1791

C. — Committee member

S. — Subscriber

V.P. — Vice-President

[CC] — Catholic Committee member

*Not confirmed

**c.1795-96

The medical professions made up the single largest grouping (ten) in the above list. Four (**William Dease**, MacNeven, McKenna, and **Thomas Ryan**) were members of the Catholic Committee. Catholics who obtained their medical education abroad were not barred from being apothecaries, physicians and surgeons, and so made up a sizable number of practicing medical men in

Georgian Dublin.⁹⁹ Francis Higgins, proprietor of the *Freeman's Journal* and informant to Dublin Castle, had a particular contempt for MacNeven, Ryan, and Dease, naming them as part of a group of subversives: 'in short, every Roman Catholic medical man in the metropolis' met at a United Irishmen meeting held at **Walter Wade's** 'Botanic establishment, Glasnevin', to compose 'various political papers intended for the press and to set on float every publication that could in its tendency inflame the minds of the people'.¹⁰⁰

Conversely, the abundance of lawyers from the Dublin Library are not represented in this list of Dublin United Irishmen. Although they amounted to just under one-fifth (59) of the 310 founding members, apart from **William Todd Jones** and **Dominick Rice**, they were not part of the legal group that made up one-fifth of the first society of United Irishmen. Louis Cullen noted that lawyers were such an integral part of the United Irishmen that 'attendance fell during the two annual circuits of the Irish bar'. Yet, apart from **Peter Holmes Jr.** being implicated in a peripheral manner, and **Francis Magan** turning informant to Dublin Castle (for both, see below), there is only Dominick Rice to whom the informer Thomas Collins refers: '...and from every opportunity I have had of knowing Rice's sentiments, I don't think that we have a man amongst us of more dangerous principles, in fact there is not a lawyer who now attends our meetings that even *pretends* to moderation'.¹⁰¹

Some merchants were regarded as dangerously radical. **Thomas Braughall** was not trusted. **Richard McCormick** was regarded as an 'agitator' while one informer described **Bartholomew Maziere** as 'a staunch republican'.¹⁰² Francis Higgins also singled out **Hugh Skeys, Joshua Pim, John Sweetman,** and **Thomas McDonnell** as 'leaders and abettors of sedition' after warning Dublin Castle of the 'mischief' of the 'Merchant Corps', who were 'avowed

⁹⁹ Eoin O'Brien et al., *A Portrait of Irish Medicine* (Swords, Co. Dublin: Ward River Press, 1984), 108-109. In his report to Dublin Castle, an informer referred to Thomas Ryan as a 'sly, subtle, dangerous fellow': McDowell, "Proceedings," 140. For Catholic Dubliners in the medical profession, see Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, 77-100.

¹⁰⁰ Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 8 July 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 171-172. Walter Wade, formerly a physician, was a botanist credited with establishing the Botanic Gardens at Glasnevin, in Dublin, through the support of the Dublin Society.

¹⁰¹ Whelan, "The United Irishmen, the Enlightenment and Popular Culture," 286; Louis Cullen, "The Internal Politics of the United Irishmen," in Dickson et al., *United Irishmen*, 187; McDowell, "Proceedings," 113.

¹⁰² McDowell, "Proceedings," 46; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 97, n. 25. For Braughall, see p. 241.

enemies of our constitution'.¹⁰³ McDonnell was the proprietor of the *Hibernian Journal* and frequently faced charges of libel and sedition.

The other significant group consists of the various trades. The print (six) and brewing (five) trades, along with the others, show that while not as well represented in the other societies, as a group they were more active in the Dublin Library Society and the United Irishmen. Francis Higgins referred to watchmaker **Ambrose Moore** as a host of several meetings of the United Irishmen, of which he was a 'provincial secretary' and part of a secret committee within the group. 'He is a tradesman in affluence [...] and of the most wicked avowed republican principles'.¹⁰⁴ **John Rigby**, a gunsmith, according to informers, was 'a most desperate man' who led a group of United Irishmen to attend the theatre, 'hiss' and 'put down all such persons as should dare to call for their favourite loyal air of God Save the King'.¹⁰⁵

Two members of the print trade who were founding members of the Dublin Library were significant contributors to the Dublin United Irishmen. As mentioned earlier, Protestant bookseller **Randal McAllister** published a cheap edition of Paine's *Rights of Man*, on behalf of the Whigs of the Capital, in April 1791. Catholic printer/bookseller **James Moore**, described by an informer as a 'mad Jacobin', was also involved in printing the same in March 1791 for mass dissemination.¹⁰⁶ Both were known for their radical publications, often opening their newspaper advertisements with expressions of Irish cultural patriotism ('To the Friends of Literature and the Art in Ireland') or for incorporating a message of unity among the Irish through an audience of all arguments ('AUDI ALTERAM PARTEM, Good people of Ireland').¹⁰⁷

On 1 June 1792, the pair jointly expressed their admiration for Paine's patriotic prose by proposing the writer as an honorary member of the Dublin Society of

¹⁰³ Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 31 March 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 143.

¹⁰⁴ Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 15 September 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 181-182.

¹⁰⁵ Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 17 December 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 203, also n. 73 & 74.

¹⁰⁶ McDowell, "Proceedings," 141; Dickson, "Paine and Ireland," 135.

¹⁰⁷ *Morning Post*, 4 June 1791 (McAllister); *Freeman's Journal*, 3 March 1792: Moore, in an ad for *A Full Defence of the Declaration of the Catholic Society of Dublin; In Which is Contained Also A Vindication of the Civil Principles of the Protestant Dissenters of Ireland. By an Irish Helot* (Dublin, 1792).

United Irishmen; the vote passed 31-6 in favour on 8 June 1792.¹⁰⁸ It did not take the conservative press long for their invective against the United Irishmen and their promotion of Paineite ideals. One month later, a letter in the *Faulkner's Dublin Journal* condemned societies and clubs who think they are patriotic by criticising the state, and singled out readers of Paine as 'missionaries of sedition'.¹⁰⁹

The proprietor of the *Hibernian Journal*, **Thomas McDonnell**, published lengthy excerpts from Paine's *Rights of Man*, and endured the opprobrium of rival conservative newspapers in the pay of the Castle. Another member from the print trade, **Nathaniel Callwell** was a stationer and lottery-office keeper at 41 College Green, near James Moore (45 College Green). Callwell and McAllister were proposed for membership into the Dublin United Irishmen on 27 December 1791. **William Drennan, William Todd Jones, William James MacNeven, Richard McCormick**, and **James Moore** were all identified as members at that meeting.¹¹⁰ Callwell was later identified as the printer of correspondences between the United Britons and the United Irishmen and was described as the commissioner of a 'rebel lottery' in which he sold 'two thousand tickets at one guinea each with the highest prize £300 and the "profits to be applied towards the general system of United Irishmen"'.¹¹¹

Several Dublin Library founding subscribers in the United Irishmen were also members of Freemason lodges in Dublin. **William Drennan** sought to emulate Masonic rituals and principles in the organisation of the United Irishmen. Many Freemason lodges became fronts for the United Irishmen and other radical groups, particularly after 1794 when they were outlawed. Also, it has been suggested that Irish Freemasonry, influenced by its French brethren, acted as a 'vehicle for the advanced ideas of the Enlightenment', as the likes of Rousseau and Voltaire were part of the movement from which the United Irishmen drew inspiration. Furthermore, in the case of the Protestant reformer,

¹⁰⁸ McDowell, "Proceedings," 23.

¹⁰⁹ *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 3-5 Jul 1792.

¹¹⁰ McDowell, "Proceedings," 7. Moore, McCormick, and Drennan were recorded as absent.

¹¹¹ Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 215, n. 25.

William Todd Jones, who campaigned for Catholic emancipation, Freemasons 'took the non-sectarian principle of their craft seriously'.¹¹²

A common Enlightenment characteristic among the United Irishmen, Irish Freemasonry, and the Dublin Library Society, was 'cross-confessional fraternisation'.¹¹³ Two Catholics, the physician **William James MacNeven** and brewer, **John Gorman Kennedy** were admitted to Lodge no. 202 on 11 May 1791—one day after the meeting to finalise plans for the nascent Dublin Library.¹¹⁴ The surgeon **James Tandy Wilkinson**, and MacNeven together founded the Medical Lodge (no. 792) in February 1794 and held their meetings at the Eagle Tavern in Eustace Street, next door to the Dublin Library.¹¹⁵ **Theobald McKenna** was admitted to Lodge no. 190 on 3 November 1791. Kennedy, McKenna, and MacNeven were all Catholic Committee members and United Irishmen, while the latter two and Wilkinson were members of the Royal Irish Academy and the United Irishmen. Other Dublin Library members and United Irishmen who were Freemasons were bookseller, **Randal McAllister**, and **Walter Wade**, deputy grand master from 1793 to 1799, having joined Lodge no. 198 in 1791.¹¹⁶

Many primary sources on the United Irishmen originate from the work of informers and informants who infiltrated the society during both its phases and provided Dublin Castle with intelligence. One of the most notorious was **Francis Magan**, a United Irishman who, indebted to the *Freeman's Journal* proprietor Francis Higgins, provided him with information that was then relayed

¹¹² Fagan, "Infiltration," 68-69; Whelan, "The United Irishmen, Enlightenment, and Popular Culture," 285; Smyth, "Freemasonry and the United Irishmen," in Dickson et al., *United Irishmen*, 172; Patrick Rogers, "A Protestant Pioneer of Catholic Emancipation," *Down and Connor Historical Society's Journal* VI, (1934): 17.

¹¹³ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 270. On Freemasonry in Ireland, see Petri Mirala, "Masonic Sociability and its Limitations: The Case for Ireland," in *Clubs and Societies*, 315-331. For Catholic involvement in Irish Freemasonry, see Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, 126-58, especially 141-144 for the United Irishmen and Freemasonry; Fagan, "Infiltration," 65-85; and Smyth, "Freemasonry and the United Irishmen," 167-175. Also, see Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 270-277; and Jessica Harland-Jacobs, *Builders of Empire: Freemasons and British Imperialism, 1717-1927* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2007), 119-129.

¹¹⁴ Fagan, "Infiltration," 79. MacNeven, having studied in Austria, is believed to have been a member of the revolutionary Masonic society, the Illuminati, in Germany or Austria (see p. 242-243).

¹¹⁵ Fagan, "Infiltration," 72-74. The Eagle Tavern was a popular venue for societies such as the United Irishmen and the Whigs of the Capital. Fagan argues that the Barristers' and Medical lodges acted as fronts for meeting places of the United Irishmen: Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, 141.

¹¹⁶ Jim Smyth, "Freemasonry and the United Irishmen," 174-175; Fagan, "Infiltration," 69 & 84. **William Todd Jones** and **William Drennan** were members of Ulster lodges: Smyth, "Freemasonry and the United Irishmen," 174; Fagan, "Infiltration," 68.

to the Castle between 1795 and 1801. Magan, a student at Trinity College when he joined the Dublin Library as a seventeen-year-old son of a Catholic woollen draper, was called to the Irish bar in 1796 and had been a member of the United Irishmen since 1792. However, he is notorious for revealing the hiding place of Lord Edward FitzGerald, one of the leading Dublin (Leinster Directory) architects of the 1798 Rebellion. Magan informed Higgins, who transmitted the intelligence to Major Henry Charles Sirr, via Dublin Castle. Sirr made the arrest with the aid of his assistant, **John Swift Emerson**, an attorney who was a founding subscriber to the Dublin Library in 1791. **Jeremiah D'Olier** proposed Emerson for membership to the Dublin Society in 1801.¹¹⁷ This gives an indication of the loyalties of Emerson, and possibly D'Olier, to the government against the rebels. Higgins reported to Dublin Castle that D'Olier's speech to the Dublin Corporation assembly expressed his and the corporation's 'loyalty and attachment [...] to His Majesty's person [and] government'.¹¹⁸

1792 Dublin Library committeeman, **Rev. Bartholomew Sherlock**, one of the 'old-order' leaders of the Catholic Committee clergy and lay nobility who were displaced by the emerging professionals and merchants, was an informer to Francis Higgins. Sherlock would dine with Higgins and reveal the actions of his fellow Catholic Committee members. Although he was firmly on the side of the government, a Castle spy had nonetheless reported him as a 'moderate'.¹¹⁹

Dublin Library founding treasurer, **William Cope** was a respected silk merchant (whose partner was **John Binns**), one of the founders of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, a member of the Ouzel Galley Society, and the Dublin Society. But he is infamous for informing Dublin Castle of the United Irish rebellion in Dublin, in March 1798, after hearing the news given to him in confidence by Thomas Reynolds, a United Irishman who was in debt to Cope. Having convinced Reynolds to come forward, Cope received a sizable reward but later complained that his business failed because of his actions.¹²⁰

¹¹⁷ Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 49 & 238; RDS.

¹¹⁸ Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 13 October 1796, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 111.

¹¹⁹ Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 122-123; 220, 267.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 58 & 329.

Revelations to Dublin Castle of the actions of radical conspirators were recorded and housed there until they were deposited some years ago in the National Archives, Dublin. Now known as the Rebellion Papers, they relate chiefly to the United Irishmen. Of course, with its own intelligence apparatus, Dublin Castle also kept examination and interrogation records. One such involved the apothecary (also a Freemason) **Edward Sohan**, the business partner of **William Lionel Jenkins**. By April 1798, house raids were carried out in search for fugitives from the rebellion. Castle officers investigated Sohan on a charge of harbouring a fugitive, William Sampson, a radical lawyer, writer and United Irishman wanted for high-treason. The examination stated that Sampson stayed at Sohan's house and was visited by (among others): '**Lewis Lyons** of Arran Quay, Schoolmaster'. It concluded that Sohan 'was a member of a society calling themselves by the name of United Irishmen, but never took the oath belonging to said society, nor was he ever called upon or required so to do'.¹²¹

Sohan's association with the United Irishmen was clear, with his harbouring a fugitive. Although **Peter Holmes Jr.** was not accused of being a United Irishman, he was singled out as being in a position that would have assisted the society in the dissemination of their ideals. In November 1797, Higgins presented Dublin Castle with an unstamped newspaper, *Press*—essentially an organ of the United Irishmen—and bemoaned the collusion of some public officers:

Yet the inattention of Inspectors of Stamps, or what is much worse their corruption, permits such to be published, at least one half their number, without stamps and it may not be unnecessary for your information that the *Morning Post* is also publicly sold without being stamped. Through young Mr. Holmes of the Stamp Office, [Peter] Cooney, its proprietor, has received great indulgence; but as this print is under the pay of the United Irishmen and levelled against the government, some stop should be put to such shameful practices.¹²²

¹²¹ *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine* 4 (January-June 1794) (Dublin, 1794), 294; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 86; "County of the City of Dublin. Examination of Edward Sohan of No. 156 Great Britain Street, in the County of the said City, Apothecary," Rebellion Papers, 620/37/162, National Archives of Ireland, Dublin.

¹²² Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 24 November 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 197.

Thomas Braughall, the respected and affluent Catholic merchant, has been the subject of conflicting reports on whether he was a United Irishman. He was a good friend of Wolfe Tone, having travelled around Ireland together on matters concerning the Catholic Committee.¹²³ One informer, Leonard McNally, regarded Braughall as one of the United Irishmen's 'cabinet council' in Dublin but qualified: 'though [he] knows everything, he does nothing that attaches responsibility—he is advised with and that is all'.¹²⁴ In May 1798, after the rebellion, Braughall was imprisoned in Kilmainham Gaol and wrote to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in September of that year:

On Thursday the 24th May I went as usual to the Meeting of the Dublin Society, of which I have been these many years a member, in order to discharge the duty of one of its Secretaries, an honourable office to which the patriotic body have annually elected me for some years back, and to which I diligently attend: the Meeting was early adjourned in consequence of the confusion of the day. Returning into Town I was told by a person with whom I am unacquainted that a number of pikes had been dug up in my garden. I replied it was one of the many Idle Tales originating from a late Visit. A few minutes afterwards, I was arrested in the Dublin Library and taken to the Secretary's office at the Castle.¹²⁵

There are almost no extant records of what occurred within the walls of the Dublin Library Society in the eighteenth century. Braughall's letter, anecdotal as it is, reveals nothing of the library's in-house activities but merely as a place where a suspect in the United Irish rebellion spent his time. A similar story in relation to the United Irishmen was recounted in a biography of the celebrated architect and founding Dublin Library member **James Gandon**. This time, it took place in 1797, with Gandon using the Dublin Library as he normally did:

Amongst others who were regular attendants at those reading rooms was a gentleman, who was afterwards implicated as being one of the principal persons involved in the unfortunate Rebellion of 1798. This gentleman asked Mr. Gandon one evening to accompany him into an adjoining room, when he thus addressed him: 'Mr. Gandon, you are a liberal man, and a great favourite with the subscribers; you will permit me to give you a little private advice, feeling as I do a confidence that

¹²³ Tone, *Memoirs*, 1:85-88.

¹²⁴ Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 130.

¹²⁵ Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 44; Thomas Braughall, "[Letter to] His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, Dublin Castle. [From Thomas Braughall], Kilmainham Prison, 24 September 1798," *Rebellion Papers*, 420/42/22, National Archives of Ireland, Dublin.

the communication I make to you will proceed no further. I recommend you to absent yourself for some time to England'.¹²⁶

Gandon, who arrived from London in 1781, was part of the Dublin elite, and architect of several urban projects that remain Dublin landmarks (namely, the Four Courts, Custom House, and the King's Inns). He formed friendships with several people connected with Dublin Castle, including John Beresford, Member of Parliament for Dublin (1797-1804).¹²⁷ Accordingly, this description offers some insight into the interactions—in confidence—between someone like Gandon and a future revolutionary in the convivial surroundings of the Dublin Library.

It is unclear, though, as to whom Gandon was referring as 'one of the principal persons' of the 1798 Rebellion who gave him the friendly warning. By 1797, it could have been one of several United Irishmen who were Dublin Library members. In February 1798, **Joseph Pollock**, whose literary works had long been regarded as patriotic and radical, seemingly penurious, wrote to the Chief Secretary, Thomas Pelham at Dublin Castle, suggesting someone who should be watched:

I intended to have mentioned to you in conversation, a long visit lately understood to have been paid by a professional man in Dublin to the Continent, whence he is returned, probably on Mission—He must be an Illuminatus—is Member of several societies (the Dublin Library, one) and is most capable of doing mischief and I fear most willing.¹²⁸

Pollock was likely referring to **William James MacNeven**, the physician who trained in Prague and Vienna, spoke several languages, belonged to a Freemason lodge in Dublin, and made numerous trips to the continent, including one occasion from 27 June to October 1797 to Paris and Hamburg, to discuss plans for an armed rebellion and invasion from abroad.¹²⁹ Francis

¹²⁶ Gandon, *Life of James Gandon*, 170. While in London, Gandon corresponded with his friend, the historian, **Rev. Edward Ledwich**: *ibid.*, 173.

¹²⁷ Dickson, *Dublin*, 220-225; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 175.

¹²⁸ Joseph Pollock to Right Hon. [Lord] Mr. Pelham, [Friday] 23 Feb 1798, Rebellion Papers, 620/35/152, National Archives, Dublin.

¹²⁹ Fagan notes that MacNeven 'was reported on two occasions at least to be a member of the Illuminati': Fagan, "Infiltration," 79; Deasmumhan Ó Raghallaighi, "William James MacNeven: Born 21 March 1763-Died 12 July 1841," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 30, no. 118 (June 1941): 250-251; Smyth, "Freemasonry and the United Irishmen," 170. The Illuminati, to whom Pollock refers, were a group perhaps linked to Irish Freemasonry that espoused political upheaval against the established authority: Fagan, "Infiltration," 66. The Irish version is based on the Illuminati established in Bavaria in 1776. For the Irish Illuminati, see

Higgins reported to Dublin Castle (24 October 1797) that MacNeven 'is absent for more than three months; they [informers] speak of his address and talents among the leaders of the United Irishmen in terms of the highest encomium and mention his return home by the first week in November'.¹³⁰ On 9 December 1797, Higgins informed Cooke that a 'foreigner' visiting MacNeven 'has brought with him assurance's [sic] from France of an immediate descent on this kingdom, and directing those who intend to aid them to be watchful and in readiness. An insurrection is on one and the same day to take place over Ireland'.¹³¹ Therefore, it is plausible that MacNeven, expecting an invasion to occur towards the end of 1797, was the one who forewarned Gandon.¹³² The two would have been well familiar with each other, having served together on the Royal Irish Academy's Committee of Antiquities for at least four years from 1791.

Pollock was not the only one who was previously known as a radical pamphleteer who turned against his patriot colleagues when they veered into republicanism. Theobald McKenna, after leaving the United Irishmen, became a barrister and opposed his former fraternity, prompting the following editorial in a United Irishmen newspaper:

Doctor McKenna's appearance as junior counsel on the prosecutions of United Irishmen is a political phenomenon of the most extraordinary. To the celebrity of those writings which bear the Doctor's name, may be imputed in a great measure the institution of those United Irishmen he now prosecutes in his character of Counsellor, and of which he was long a true and steady member.¹³³

Finally, while this section has focused on Dublin Library founding members who were United Irishmen, the library itself was implicated at least once as a venue

Shulim, "John Daly Burk: Irish Revolutionist and American Patriot," 23-24; and Smyth, "Freemasonry and the United Irishmen," 168. For its Bavarian origins, see Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 268-269; and John Robison, *Proofs of a Conspiracy Against All the Religions and Governments of Europe, Carried on in the Secret Meetings of Free-Masons, Illuminati and Reading Societies*, 3rd ed. (Philadelphia, 1798), especially 78-204.

¹³⁰ Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 24 October 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 193-194.

¹³¹ Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 9 December 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 200-201.

¹³² It is inferred from his biography that Gandon left Dublin immediately: Gandon, *Life of Gandon*, 170-171. Gandon appears as a Dublin Library subscriber in 1801 from a subscription list for Joshua Edkins' third volume an anthology of Irish poetry: Joshua Edkins, ed., *A Collection of Poems, Mostly Original, by Several Hands*, vol. 3 (Dublin: Printed for the Editor by Graisberry & Co., 1801), unnumbered page [6] between x and xi.

¹³³ *Press*, 9 November 1797.

for sedition. One famous Irishman, Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847), known as the Liberator for his efforts in the nineteenth century towards Catholic emancipation, was not a founding member of the Dublin Library Society but joined in December 1796. His membership in the United Irishmen continues to be the subject of historical debate.¹³⁴ As mentioned in Chapter 6, O'Connell recorded in his journal the date he joined the Dublin Library (6 December 1796), the titles he perused, and the long hours he spent reading there.¹³⁵ After December 1796, O'Connell did not mention the library again in his journal but continued to record a variety of books, pamphlets, and periodicals that he studied, up to the end of March 1797.¹³⁶ On 7 March 1798, Francis Higgins wrote to Edward Cooke at Dublin Castle, convinced that O'Connell was a member of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen and used the library premises as a meeting place:

He wants to be called to the Bar here, merely to please a very rich old uncle, but he is one of the most abominable and bloodthirsty republicans I ever heard. He is open and avowed in the most daring language. His place of rendezvous is at the Public Library, Eustace St., where a private room is devoted to the association of the leaders of the United Society's [sic]. I am the more particular in giving you this information because that place is used by agreement for meetings, conferences etc. etc. or on any emergency or convening them etc. — the Library, Eustace St.¹³⁷

There is no further mention of the Dublin Library being a meeting place for the United Irishmen, or any other radical societies, in the way Freemason lodges were in the eighteenth century.¹³⁸ Without records from the institution itself, it is impossible to determine whether incident books or minute books recorded such activities. A disappointed member, under the pseudonym 'Melanctus', published his *Secret History of the Dublin Library Society* in 1808 and

¹³⁴ W.J. Fitzpatrick, *The Sham Squire; and the Informers of 1798, with Jottings About Ireland Seventy Years Ago*, 6th ed. (Dublin: W.B. Kelly, 1872), 307-308; O'Connell, *Daniel O'Connell: His Early Life and Journal*, 130-132; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 227, n. 75; Woods, "Historical Revision: Was O'Connell a United Irishman?" 173-183.

¹³⁵ See p. 158-159.

¹³⁶ O'Connell, *Daniel O'Connell: His Early Life and Journal*, 146 ([22] December 1796); 214 (31 March 1797). O'Connell's next entry is on 1 May 1797, with no information recorded that is relevant to this study. Bartlett concludes: 'It may be significant that the pages in O'Connell's personal diary covering the period after 1 May 1797 have been torn out. In the matter of O'Connell's involvement in the United Irishmen, Oliver MacDonagh's conclusion may be accepted: "It seems clear then that O'Connell moved in the penumbra of Irish revolution and conspiracy in 1797": Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 227, n. 75, quoting Oliver MacDonagh, *The Hereditary Bondsman: Daniel O'Connell: 1775-1829*, 1:55-56.

¹³⁷ Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 7 March 1798, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 227-228.

¹³⁸ Fagan, "Infiltration," 67; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 446.

lamented, among other points, the degenerating and combustible combination of newspapers and a conversation room, observing that the founders 'nearly converted what was originally intended to be a Reading Society, into a political News-Paper Club'. Moreover, there are indications that Higgins' exaggerations (as he was wont to make) may not have been excessive. After he died in 1802, the *Freeman's Journal*, no longer in the pay of Dublin Castle, restored some of its integrity through its moderate stance. In 1812, the paper praised the Dublin Library for its non-sectarian, all-inclusive representation at the leadership level, with Catholics and Protestants as presidents and vice-presidents, from many professions. In doing so, it noted: 'It is unquestionably an honour to the Society, that although it is strictly Republican in its Constitution, it is not in the slightest degree swayed by religious prejudice'.¹³⁹

Years later, in 1834, an editorial in *The Times* (London) summed up the tone of the Dublin Library in the first three decades of the nineteenth century: 'This literary society has been for the last 30 years perhaps the most noisy Radical and anti-Orange in the three kingdoms—in fact, a very trades union of readers, literary and political'.¹⁴⁰ While this does not unquestionably affirm Higgins' claim, the presence of a significant number of Dublin Library founding members as Dublin United Irishmen indicates that such activities may well have taken place within the library's walls. Furthermore, of all the societies examined here, only the Royal Irish Academy had a greater representation of Dublin Library founding members (thirty-five), three greater than the Dublin United Irishmen (thirty-two), whose members' occupational composition resembled that of the Dublin Library. Significantly, the figure of thirty-two does not include those suspected or found to be assisting or associating with the United Irishmen in some way. Peter Holmes, Jr. and Edward Sohan have already been highlighted above, but as the prosopography in Appendix II will show, **John Binns, Zachariah Foxall, Alexander Jaffray, Jr., Bartholomew Maziere, Joshua Pim, William Preston, and John P. Winter**, all were implicated in some way as accessories.

¹³⁹ Melanctus, *Secret History of the Dublin Library Society, Interspersed with Observations on Those Measures, Which Have Lessened the Utility of That Excellent Institution, and Submitting A few Hints for its Future Improvement*. By Melanctus. (Dublin, 1808), 10; *Freeman's Journal*, 3 February 1812.

¹⁴⁰ *The Times* (London), 22 November 1834.

Literary Associations

All the above formal societies and institutions were prominent structural bodies with sets of rules of governance, regulations, and procedures to which subscribing and elected members adhered. As shown, many Dublin Library founder members were also active in these societies. However, there are other notable connections involving Dublin Library members in a literary capacity—be it in authorship, publications, or publication subscription—that can reveal further relationships and like-minds. Moreover, the demonstration of cultural patriotism through these connections further solidifies the bonds among these men who—regardless of ideology—were interested in cultivating and promoting a sense of Irishness in their endeavours.

It has been suggested above that one of the reasons why **Joshua Edkins** had been elected the Dublin Library's first librarian was because of his work compiling and promoting two volumes of anthologies of Irish poetry in 1789 and 1790.¹⁴¹ In his dedication to Lord Powerscourt in the first volume, Edkins noted that the 'spirit of poesy has, in all countries, marked the progress of civilization, and the manners of the age have taken their polish from the genius of song'. Therefore, his motivation for such an undertaking, he stressed in an address to his patron, was 'to foster and protect the scattered fragments of genius in your Native Land' and 'affix a stamp of approbation on your patriotism' while seeking to 'gratify a ruling passion' for public benefit. Judging from the list of over 600 subscribers—an impressive show of cultural patriotism—and the dozens of authors whose works were compiled here, Edkins certainly had extensive literary connections.¹⁴² With regard to the establishment of the Dublin Library, two years later, forty-six subscribers to Edkins' 1789 volume later became part of the body of 310 founding members of the library, and **William Drennan**, **Theobald McKenna**, **William Preston** and **Samuel Whyte** all contributed works to the project. The latter composed

¹⁴¹ Joshua Edkins, ed., *A Collection of Poems, Mostly Original, By Several Hands*, 2 vols. (Dublin: Printed for the Editor by M. Graisberry, 1789-1790).

¹⁴² Edkins, ed., *A Collection of Poems*, 1: vi-xxviii; Carpenter, "A Verse Confrontation in Late-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 36-38. Analysis of subscription lists is a relatively under-researched topic. In highlighting cross-confessional cooperation for improving the Irish economy, Ian McBride noted that an English translation of a French treatise on commercial societies (Jean François Melon's *Essai Politique sur le Commerce*) drew over five hundred subscribers from Anglicans, Catholics, and Dissenters: McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 90. Also, see above, p. 82-83, 121-122, and 166.

an ode to **Joseph Cooper Walker** after reading his *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (published by **Luke White**).¹⁴³ Whyte praised his friend's contribution to contemporary Irish scholarship in a patriotic identification with antiquity:

The veil of dark antiquity remove,
Our minds irradiate and our taste improve,
And, fill'd with patriotic zeal, the deeds rehearse,
Of chieftains mighty and renown'd in verse.
[...]
To distant ages make the worthies known,
And with his country's glory fix his own.—
Here all my hopes and ambition end,
Suffice it me to be approv'd thy friend.¹⁴⁴

Since 1758, Whyte had been the owner and headmaster of perhaps the most popular school in Dublin, the English Grammar School. The founder of the Abecedarian Society also published works on Irish poetry and song, including multiple editions of *The Shamrock, or Hibernian Cresses: A Collection of Poems, Songs, Epigrams [...] The Original Production of Ireland* and of *Poems on Various Subjects*.¹⁴⁵ The subscriber list of the 1795 edition of the latter indicated that of the 601 subscribers, 321 were former pupils of Whyte. Fifty-two Dublin Library members subscribed to the publication, ten of whom were his pupils.¹⁴⁶

Friendships and literary associations also developed among Edkins and the booksellers and publishers who committed to subscriptions of multiple copies of Edkins' publication (among others) to sell in their shops. **James Moore**, who later echoed Edkins' patriotic fervour with the publication of his Dublin

¹⁴³ Joseph Cooper Walker, *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards: Interspersed With Anecdotes Of, and Occasional Observations On, the Music of Ireland. Also, an Historical and Descriptive Account of the Musical Instruments of the Ancient Irish. And an Appendix, Containing Several Biographical and Other Papers, With Select Irish Melodies. By Joseph C. Walker* (Dublin, Printed for Luke White, 1786).

¹⁴⁴ Samuel Whyte, "To Joseph Cooper Walker," in Edkins, ed., *A Collection of Poems*, 2:244-245.

¹⁴⁵ Samuel Whyte, *The Shamrock, or Hibernian Cresses: A Collection of Poems, Songs, Epigrams, &c. Latin as Well as English, The Original Production of Ireland* (Dublin: Printed by R. Marchbank, 1772); Samuel Whyte, *Poems on Various Subjects: Ornamented with Plates, and Illustrated with Notes, Original Letters and Curious Incidental Anecdotes. In the Course of Which the Pretended Miracles of Vespasian Are Examined and Detected*, 3rd ed. (Dublin: Printed by Robert Marchbank, and sold by Byrne, **Moore**, Rice, Milliken, **Mercier**, &c, Booksellers, and by the Editor, No. 75, Grafton-Street, 1795).

¹⁴⁶ The ten were: Richard Anderson, John Blachford, Francis Burroughs, John J. Fullerton, Leonard Hodson, Rev. Edward Ledwich, George Maquay, Bartholomew Maziere, John Sweetman, and George Vesey: Whyte, *Poems on Various Subjects*, iii-x.

edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1794-1801), subscribed to twenty-five copies of Edkins' 1789 work, while **John Archer** signed up for ten.¹⁴⁷ Archer, as proprietor of the General Book-Repository and host of literary meetings with those mentioned here, became Bookseller to the Dublin Library in its first year and continued an association with the library and many of its members.¹⁴⁸ When **William Preston** released his own corpus of poetry, Edkins and Archer were familiar facilitators. In the back pages of Archer's 1793 catalogue, in which he boasted a total upwards of 30,000 volumes, was a notice of Preston's *Poetical Works*, in two volumes, to be published by subscription: 'The Names of Subscribers are received by **J. Edkins**, Esq. at the Dublin Library, No. 6, Eustace-street, and **J. Archer**, No. 80, Dame-Street'.¹⁴⁹

Edkins' third volume, published in 1801, further emphasised his well-established associations with several members of the Dublin Library Society, his role as their librarian, and his admiration for the institution itself. This time, instead of directing his dedication to a peer-patron, Edkins took the opportunity to celebrate ten years of the subscription library's service to Dubliners: 'To the Gentlemen of the Dublin Library Society, as a token of respect to them, and a mark of regard for their most useful institution, this volume is inscribed by the editor'.¹⁵⁰ In addition, at the beginning of the subscription list, Edkins noted the following: 'Thus (*) marked are Members of the Dublin Library Society'. Out of the 329 subscribers, ninety-two were Dublin Library members and the library itself also subscribed.¹⁵¹ For Edkins, rebellion in 1798, wars on the continent, and the Act of Union in 1801 perhaps prompted his overt patriotism while explaining the reasons for a third volume in his preface: 'that the compiler has endeavoured to erect a monument to his native country' with a 'number of specimens of the poetical talent of IRISH WRITERS [...] reflecting on their native country that credit they are well calculated to bestow'. Edkins

¹⁴⁷ Edkins, ed., *A Collection of Poems, Mostly Original, By Several Hands*, 1:ix-xviii; Carpenter, "A Verse Confrontation in Late-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 38.

¹⁴⁸ For Archer's literary circle, see p. 173.

¹⁴⁹ *Archer's Catalogue of Books For 1793, Comprehending an Uncommon Variety of Rare and Valuable Articles in Every Useful Language and Class of Literature, With the Prices Affixed to Each. ... The Sale Begins on Wednesday, the 3d of April, 1793* (Dublin, Printed for John Archer, 1793); William Preston, *The Poetical Works of William Preston, Esq. In Two Volumes...* (Dublin: Printed for the Author, by Graisberry & Campbell, & Sold by J. Archer, 1793.)

¹⁵⁰ Edkins, ed., *A Collection of Poems*, 3:[iii].

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, [14] p. between x and xi.

continued to emphasise that this volume, irrespective of confession, was 'solely, and exclusively, the GROWTH OF IRELAND [...] composed of poetry strictly and purely IRISH'.¹⁵²

Another officer in the Dublin Library was similarly involved in a patriotic publication. **Richard Edward Mercier**, the library's secretary, produced a publication in serial form, featuring Irish contributions in all subjects. The *Anthologia Hibernica* endeavoured to 'diffuse knowledge and rational amusement throughout the kingdom'. Mercier was thankful for the support of a 'great and enlightened Nation' and recognised the need for a non-sectarian publication that appealed to 'the improved state of civility and knowledge in Ireland'.¹⁵³ Of his 295 subscribers, Mercier received subscriptions from fifty-seven Dublin Library founding members, as well as one from the library itself.¹⁵⁴

Conclusion

The intent of this chapter and this study's prosopographical research has been to gain further insight about the founding members of the Dublin Library Society—rather than simply a list of 310 names—and place them in the context of Dublin's social milieu at a time of heightened national, patriotic sensibilities in Ireland. The clubs and societies examined here illustrate the burgeoning associational culture of eighteenth-century Dublin. While Dubliners originally sought to replicate London trends of clubs and societies promoting polite sociability, conviviality and the expansion of business connections many of these societies—especially in the latter half of the eighteenth century—were established with a decidedly patriotic flavour, formed to promote a sense of self-reliance and independence from Britain in some form or another. Varying interpretations of patriotism nonetheless carried similar messages and,

¹⁵² Ibid., [vi-viii]. Michael Brown identifies a similar connection between poetry and the Irish nation in Charlotte Brooke's *Reliques of Irish Poetry* (1789) leading into a period of sectarian fragmentation within Irish society: 'The *Reliques* constituted a reimagining of the ancient Irish polity, a contribution to an Enlightenment discussion of political culture and an imaginative reconciliation of the disjuncture between the sentiments of the legislators and the manners of the people. [...] In the *Reliques*, Ireland found an imaginative homeland which harnessed the idealism inherent in the Enlightenment's vision of the polity and the people': Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 310.

¹⁵³ Richard Edward Mercier, *Anthologia Hibernica: Or, Monthly Collections of Science, Belles-Lettres, and History: Illustrated with Beautiful Engravings* (Dublin: Printed for R. E. Mercier, 1793-1794), iii-iv.

¹⁵⁴ Mercier, *Anthologia Hibernica*, v-viii.

especially in the case of the United Irishmen, later embraced revolutionary rebellion.

The placement of Dublin Library founding members within the remits of other societies has presented further insight into the backgrounds and intentions of these members. They were vigorous participants in associational activities that reflected both their occupational backgrounds or their desire to engage in societies unrelated to their professions. Moreover, many of them were connected through occupation and/or membership to the same societies—even, in some cases, despite political or religious differences. Furthermore, the identification of Dublin Library members within these other institutions shows that this was not simply a library composed of erudite scholars and clergymen. It was not restricted to members of the Established Church. While it gained a reputation as a venue for radical discourse and planning, there were staunch Ascendancy figures within its walls. It represented a cross-section of Dublin society in the eighteenth-century, and was a clear example of the widening, enlightened public sphere in the capital.

This chapter also included some nineteenth-century impressions of the Dublin Library Society, notably its cross-confessional composition and question of its ideological leanings. In addition, literary associations have indicated the spirit of Irish cultural patriotism that characterised the literary exertions among Dublin Library founding members. The next chapter will build on this and assess the role the library assumed within Dublin's literary public sphere and as a location within the Irish Enlightenment in the political landscape of eighteenth-century Dublin.

Chapter 9: The Enlightened Public Sphere¹

Amidst the politically charged atmosphere of late-eighteenth-century Dublin, the commercial, charitable, cultural, and political associations examined in this study all participated in an Irish Enlightenment. Whether it was advocating political self-determination, improving the overall prosperity, self-sufficiency, and cultural enrichment of the Irish nation and its capital, or embracing confessional toleration, these societies 'allowed private individuals to appropriate, define, and channel "patriotism" through their actions in the public sphere'.²

In this environment, many of these societies were dominated by Anglicans but some provided membership to Catholics and Dissenters, unified in their aspirations to promote constitutional reform or commerce for the greater good of the country. Dublin's commercial societies were regarded as 'a community of traders rather than distinct religious communities'. The Abecedarian Society was a charity in aid of distressed educators, formed in Dublin without support from religious or governmental authorities. It prided itself in not having even to rely on patronage from the peerage, preferring instead to appeal to the middling and emerging professional classes from all confessions to participate in charitable activism for the benefit of society.³

The appearance of these alternate spheres could be regarded as the beginnings of a more inclusive, enlightened society. Paradoxically, many reformers and Catholics who knew and trusted **William Cope** as an honest, incorruptible man elected him to the Dublin Corporation and treasurer of the Dublin Library, despite his stubbornness to uphold the Ascendancy by opposing any relaxation of the penal laws.⁴ Similarly, **Arthur Browne** was a respected Trinity College law professor and MP for the university. Supportive of moderate parliamentary reform, he was not an Ascendancy stalwart. However, his acknowledgement of

¹ Melton, *Rise of the Public*, 10-11.

² Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 262; Higgins, *A Nation of Politicians*, 9, citing Wilson, *Sense of the People*, 67.

³ Griffith, "Dublin's Commercial Clubs," 120; Dickson, *Dublin*, 212; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 287.

⁴ Hill, "The Politics of Dublin Corporation," 100; Griffith, "Dublin's Commercial Clubs," 115.

the suffering of Catholics from the penal laws was tempered by his conclusion that these oppressive measures were within Irish constitutional law 'in defence of Protestants'.⁵ Evidently, commonality of membership to a society did not necessarily translate into common objectives for the direction of Irish society. As Ultán Gillen has noted, various interpretations of Enlightenment existed whereby the same William Cope, a staunch defender of the Ascendancy, would have had similar political views towards Enlightenment principles as the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, **John Thomas Troy**. Conservative Catholic aristocrats, Archbishop Troy, and conservatives within the Ascendancy Enlightenment, all opposed those from the cross-confessional, radical Enlightenment, including the moderates and radicals who took control of the Catholic Committee and to whom William Drennan referred as that society's 'democratic wing'.⁶

While Gillen's explanation of 'varieties of Enlightenment' helps to explain that Dublin's public sphere was not as clearly defined as one would think, Michael Brown's *The Irish Enlightenment*, divides the Enlightenment into three phases in chronological order: religious, social, and political. Brown includes in the Social Enlightenment (ca. 1730-1760) the flourishing of public participation in an unofficial public sphere—featuring coffee houses and circulating libraries—distinct from the official public sphere of the church and state. Brown then separates this phase of improvement and civility—notably cross-confessional sociability—from the final phase of the Political Enlightenment (ca. 1760-1798) that ultimately addresses the fragmentation of Irish society, specifically the disintegration of the entire Irish Enlightenment. Understandably, there are anomalies in this model. The improving Dublin Society (1731) fits chronologically within the Social Enlightenment despite its ban on Catholic membership. Conversely, Brown positions the Royal Irish Academy (1785) as possessing the spirit of the Social Enlightenment despite its foundation in the

⁵ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 320-323. Francis Higgins, in his information to Dublin Castle, regarded Browne as an agitator, encouraging his students to protest in the streets in favour of further Catholic reform. Bartlett, however, opines that this claim is exaggerated: Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 76.

⁶ Gillen, "Varieties of Enlightenment," 179; Elliott, *Wolfe Tone*, 117-118; Agnew, ed., *Drennan-McTier Letters*, 1:357-8. On 'varieties' within the Irish Enlightenment that 'did not map onto confessional identities', see Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 403-407. For a bibliography on Archbishop Troy, see *ibid.*, 571-572. For Dublin Library founding members who were part of the group of reformers within the Catholic Committee, see p. 228-229.

time of his Political Enlightenment, both eras representing a 'general politicisation of social exchange'.⁷

Similarly, while the Dublin Library Society was established during the period of what Brown has termed the Political Enlightenment, it embodied the blossoming of what occurred during the Social Enlightenment. As the Dublin Library represented the continuity of rudimentary public library provision from the coffee houses, circulating libraries, and intellectual societies, it maintained those characteristics of the Social Enlightenment within the public sphere of the Political Enlightenment, firmly grasping those improving, convivial, and inclusive ideals as it steered through the simmering political divisions of the 1790s, culminating in violent upheaval. Inexplicably, despite its diverse social and religious composition—and, importantly, that it prospered beyond 1798—there is not a single reference to the Dublin Library Society in Brown's *Irish Enlightenment*. While some societies started to gradually incorporate select Catholics and Dissenters as members, the Dublin Library was far more progressive in its social and religious inclusivity, much to the detriment of conservatives longing for the return of unfettered Ascendancy dominance. Accordingly, the library's membership was a more accurate reflection of the composition of participants in Dublin's enlightened, literary public sphere in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. This chapter will first explore examples of cultural patriotism that flourished and faded in late-eighteenth-century Dublin, then turn to the Dublin Library as an eager promoter of cultural patriotism and as *another* venue of the enlightened, literary public sphere in eighteenth-century Dublin. Indeed, as will be shown, the Irish Enlightenment project continued through the Dublin Library into the nineteenth century, and acted as a template for the political aspirations of an enlightened public.

Irish Cultural Patriotism

In her analysis of Irish historiography among eighteenth-century antiquaries, Clare O'Halloran emphasises that religion 'was the basis of the political system in the eighteenth century' and that the last two decades witnessed the clash of 'a reactionary Protestant Ascendancy ethos in response to a more assertive

⁷ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 210-304.

Catholicism'. She explores the transmission of cultural patriotism among antiquarians through their studies of Ireland's ancient past, with a link to Irish political culture. While this was largely sectarian, O'Halloran contends that there were important commonalities in antiquarian research among Anglicans and Catholics who both agreed that the concept of the 'island of saints and scholars' was 'central to the sense of identities of both communities'. Some romanticised Ireland's pre-colonial past and 'promoted the self-image of Ireland, and more particularly of Irish Protestants in their struggle for parity of rights with Englishmen'. Similarly, Catholic historians—together with enlightened Anglican antiquaries—strove to defend their Gaelic ancestors against English and Scottish historians who denounced them as barbarians.⁸

Indeed, Irish cultural patriotism for the antiquaries was as much about celebrating Ireland's ancient past as it was about denouncing British criticisms and English claims of superiority. After negative reviews in the English papers of **Joseph Cooper Walker's** work on the Irish bards, **Edward Ledwich** (who had been a contributor to the work) attacked the reviewers: 'There is no Irishman but must view with indignation and contempt the efforts of those London scribblers, called Reviewers, to damp the Genius and impede the rising prosperity of this nation'. This was Irish anger at English attempts to 'raise a laugh at the expense of the Irish'.⁹ For the Irish antiquaries, interest in the Gaelic poetic tradition would restore 'the reputation of Ireland', and exhibit 'a "glow of cultivated genius"' as a 'symbol of cultural defiance against the "arrogant assumption of the English that other cultures are there to be absorbed into their own"'.¹⁰

Historians have noted the significance of the establishment of the Royal Irish Academy (1785), only three years after Irish legislative independence, as an opportunity to give Irish cultural patriotism an 'institutional expression'.¹¹ However, sectarian tensions and violence increased distrust among faiths, and

⁸ O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, 5; 73; 38, 110.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 67. For English criticisms of eighteenth-century Irish culture, see Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 75 & 212-218; and Powell, *Piss-Pots, Printers and Public Opinion in Eighteenth-Century Dublin*.

¹⁰ O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, 119-120, quoting Charlotte Brooke, *Reliques of Irish Poetry* (Dublin, 1789), iv-v; vii-viii; and Kate Trumper, *Bardic Nationalism* (Princeton: 1997), 4.

¹¹ O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, 6, 165.

conservatives within the Academy became reluctant to support further antiquarian research into the country's Gaelic past. After the 1798 Rebellion, Gaelic tradition was associated with sedition, with previous antiquarian 'patriots' like Joseph Cooper Walker no longer critical of colonial policy. The Antiquities Committee within the Academy eventually dissolved in 1810.¹²

The 1790s saw further fissures in the intellectual Academy as an enlightened society when topics in essay competitions were framed to link Gaelic heritage with the violence of 1798. This conservative shift was also marked by the departure of what radicals there were in the Academy: 'The existence of more dynamic societies made the Academy seem mundane. **William Drennan** complained that he had paid twenty guineas "for an absolute nothing, a title of M.R.I.A., more unsubstantial even than the title of King of France".¹³

Drennan's United Irishmen—whose social and religious composition closely resembled that of the Dublin Library—nurtured a cultural movement based on Irish political aspirations. Some historians have concluded that the cultural production of the United Irishmen was only a means of appealing to the public to further their political goals.¹⁴ Also subject to debate is whether the United Irishmen eschewed Ireland's past and sought to cultivate their own political and ideological identity rooted in republicanism, through the production and dissemination of their own romantic, nationalist literature. This has left some to posit that Irish literary nationalism is derived not from the post-Union movements of the nineteenth century, but rather from the United Irishmen in the late-eighteenth century.¹⁵ Kevin Whelan has noted the 'repudiation of the divisiveness of the Irish past' as the reason for United Irishmen to 'indulge in collective amnesia, in order to stress the enabling rather than disabling forces in Irish history'. In other words, only through independence and Catholic emancipation could the Irish nation identify with 'Montesquieu's classic

¹² O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, 172 & 179-181. O'Halloran discusses this in a chapter titled "Ascendancy, Rebellion and the Collapse of the Antiquarian Enterprise: The Royal Irish Academy, 1785-1800," 158-181.

¹³ O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, 175; Powell, *Politics of Consumption*, 79.

¹⁴ Whelan, "Republic in the Village," 101-141; McBride, "The Harp Without the Crown," 169-171. For an analysis of this topic, see Thuente, *Harp Re-Strung*.

¹⁵ Whelan, "Republic in the Village," 101-102; Whelan, "The United Irishmen, the Enlightenment and Popular Culture," 269; McBride, "The Harp Without the Crown," 170.

Enlightenment statement of the relationship between *l'esprit* and *les lois*, or the 'national character' of a society and its laws.¹⁶

With the acceptance that the United Irishmen grew out of the radical wing of the Volunteer movement, Michael Brown refers to the fragmentation of the Volunteers into two groups: one that 'forwarded its Enlightenment ambitions through the projection of a possible future grounded on first principles' of a polity shaped by the people; and the other based on an 'empirical methodology that looked to the past for guidance', linking Irish pre-colonial heritage with the patriot parliamentary opposition that 'helped to restore Ireland a self-respect and a patriotic interest in its own past'.¹⁷ United Irish popular print culture took its influences from Gaelic song, poetry, and prose, and may well have been inspired by the works of Joseph Cooper Walker from the previous decade.¹⁸ Whether or not this is regarded as exemplary of Enlightenment ideals is subject to debate and further discussion elsewhere.¹⁹ Here, the United Irish emphasis on education, reading and dissemination of information to shape and politicise public opinion (discussed in Chapter 5) is of relevance, especially given the sizable number of Dublin Library Society founding members who became Dublin United Irishmen. Even after he withdrew from the United Irishmen in 1794, William Drennan continued to employ his literary flair for the patriotic cause, eulogising fallen heroes and contributing poetry to newspapers and publications in tribute to the United Irishmen. Indeed, throughout the 1790s, the United Irishmen sought to 'accelerate the reception of Enlightenment principles' through the politicisation of popular culture.²⁰

¹⁶ Whelan, "The United Irishmen, the Enlightenment and Popular Culture," 270-271.

¹⁷ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 381; O'Halloran, *Golden Ages and Barbarous Nations*, 6.

¹⁸ *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, citing Mary Helen Thuente, noted that Joseph Cooper Walker 'brought together many of the literary, scholarly, popular, Celtic, antiquarian, political, and musical dimensions of eighteenth-century Irish culture and prefigured the synthesis of literary modes, cultural theories, and musical styles that would occur in the literary productions of the United Irishmen': *DIB*; Thuente, *Harp Re-Strung*, 79.

¹⁹ Beyond the scope of this study, the arguments are nonetheless compelling, incorporating the ideas that the United Irishmen were less patriotic than they were nationalistic, and that they represented the beginnings of revolutionary socialist thought: Whelan, "Republic in the Village"; McBride, "The Harp Without the Crown"; Smyth, *Men of No Property*; Thuente, *Harp Re-Strung*.

²⁰ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 432-434; Whelan, "The United Irishmen, the Enlightenment and Popular Culture," 273, in which Whelan continues: 'Their relationship with popular culture therefore was radically different from a cultural nationalist programme: they wished not to valorise but to politicise it'.

Where the largely conservative antiquarian movement, institutionalised through the Antiquities Committee of the Royal Irish Academy (and its antecedents) sought to promote cultural patriotism through the study of Ireland's ancient past, the United Irishmen, representing the radical Enlightenment, expressed their cultural patriotism directly to the public by incorporating elements of the antiquarian approach into their political message of cross-confessional unity towards the establishment of an Irish republic. Both 'varieties of Enlightenment' nonetheless sought to project a sense of Irishness, distinct from Britain. As shown, both movements succumbed to the events of 1798 and the destruction of the Irish Enlightenment characterised by a return to sectarianism. For this reason, the Dublin Library Society can be regarded as a haven of Enlightenment throughout the 1790s and into the nineteenth century and the arrival of Catholic emancipation.

The Literary Public Sphere

Following on from the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy, the Dublin Library, with its less-rigid admission criteria, included members from more varied occupational backgrounds in an inclusive, non-sectarian environment—essentially an extension of the Academy but with a wider and more open membership policy. Also, from its inception, the Dublin Library was a venue for the flourishing and dissemination of Enlightenment ideals. Therefore, within Dublin, it was exemplary of a hitherto neglected location of the eighteenth-century Irish Enlightenment, posited by Michael Brown. This was an Enlightenment of civility, improvement, and toleration, but later rooted in patriotic sentiment, originating in the movement for legislative independence, and eventually, revolutionary republicanism.

In print, Dublin could not match Edinburgh in producing Enlightenment authors and was either importing or reprinting Scottish works on a large scale to have the appearance of a 'local' Enlightenment.²¹ There may be validity to the notion that London attracted much of Ireland's talent and perhaps this may account for the deficiencies of Dublin as a locus for the Enlightenment. Nonetheless, Enlightenment works from abroad—especially France—were being reprinted *en*

²¹ Sher, *Enlightenment & the Book*, 500; Brown, "Was There an Irish Enlightenment?" 58.

masse in Ireland and were available in Dublin bookshops and libraries.²² But as the eighteenth century wore on, there developed shoots of a more inclusive Enlightenment, at least in Dublin. In a cultural context, Brown contends that there arose a shift from the official public sphere of the church and government embodied in Trinity College and Marsh's Library, to an expanded public sphere via the appearance of alternative 'locations of learning' that included coffee houses, bookshops, taverns, and the theatre.²³ Concurrently, circulating libraries in Dublin also contributed to the dissemination of print with which the rise of the public sphere in the eighteenth century has been associated.²⁴ This occurred simultaneous to the incorporation of the rising merchant and professional classes into the expanded public sphere. A corollary to the gradual move away from church and state, and greater emphasis on Irish self-sufficiency, was the notion of improvement, for which libraries, reading, and the availability of print were fundamental. The emergence of several societies in the eighteenth century also gave rise to the idea of polite sociability. In an Irish context, considering many societies that were established out of a desire to assert one's patriotism, there occurred in these organisations a degree of patriotic sociability. Indeed, Barnard saw the Dublin Society (1731), as an early example of the creation of a public sphere 'alongside, but distinct from, the formal political arena of parliament, the machinery of the Dublin administration and municipal corporations'.²⁵ All things considered, the Dublin Library exemplified these elements within Dublin's enlightened public sphere.

The 1794 edition of a Dublin directory listed the following establishments as representatives of education and the arts in Dublin and the rest of Ireland:

Book V, Education, Arts and Sciences:

For the education of Youth, and improvement of the Sciences and Arts, there sundry institutions, which, though situate in the Metropolis, do not

²² McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 55; Kennedy, "Reading the Enlightenment in Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 355-378.

²³ Brown, "Location of Learning in Mid-Eighteenth-Century Ireland," 104-126. On Dublin's public sphere, Brown notes the east-west 'axis of power' between parliament and Trinity College, Dublin Castle at the midway point, and the 'twin peaks of Anglican confessional authority', Christ Church and St. Patrick's cathedrals, with Marsh's Library providing a western area of learning to counter the 'eastern extremity' of TCD: Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 224-225.

²⁴ Calhoun, "Introduction: Habermas and the Public Sphere," 12-13; McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 219-220.

²⁵ McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 79 & 82; Gillen, "Opposition Political Clubs and Societies," 306; Barnard, "Dublin Society and Other Improving Societies," 53.

belong so properly to it as to the Kingdom at large, over the whole of which their influence extends--these are

- 1 The University of Trinity College
- 2 The Dublin Society
- 3 The Royal Irish Academy
- 4 The Dublin Library Society
- 5 The Protestant Charter Schools²⁶

Only three years old, the Dublin Library Society was already regarded as a worthy compliment to the venerable Trinity College, the practical Dublin Society, and the erudite Royal Irish Academy.²⁷ Moreover, of the five listed institutions and Marsh's Library (conspicuous by its absence), only the Dublin Library was not in receipt of state or church support, thereby firmly ensconced within the unofficial public sphere in eighteenth-century Ireland.²⁸ Therefore, it avoided any possible obligation to ensure numerical dominance of the Established Church, in terms of its governance and committeemen.²⁹ Further contemporary opinion of the Dublin Library as an extension of the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy can be found in a publication calling for reform of the subscription library in 1808, by suggesting the reshaping of original laws and a move to procure a royal charter so that it could 'rank in utility and consequence, after its two elder brothers, the Dublin Society, and the Royal Irish Academy'.³⁰

It has been noted above that there were more Royal Irish Academy members as founding members of the Dublin Library than any of the other societies examined above. Logically then, these members—thirteen of whom became

²⁶ *City and Country Calendar; or Irish Court Registry for the Year of Our Lord ... 1794* (Dublin: Printed for the Proprietors and sold by N. Kelly, 1794), 237.

²⁷ Although, perhaps it is no great significance within Enlightenment debate to be mentioned before the Church of Ireland's Incorporated Society for Promoting English Protestant Schools in Ireland—where Catholic children were removed from their families and raised as Anglicans: Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 264-270. However, the order of progression of the first three on the list does suggest that the Dublin Library was the latest example of promoting education and learning for the public.

²⁸ Michael Brown refers to a clause in the RIA's 1786 charter whereby the Lord Lieutenant had the power to intervene in the affairs of the Academy if necessary: 'It enabled the state to step in if the society was deemed to be detrimental to the political process and the health of the nation as they defined it': Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 303, citing *Charter and Statutes of the Royal Irish Academy for Promoting the Study of Science, Polite Literature and Antiquities* (Dublin: Luke White, 1786), 9-10.

²⁹ After lamenting the increase of Catholics in governing positions in the Dublin Library, a letter-writer to the editor of an Ascendancy newspaper maintained that the library had all along been established as a Protestant institution, with a liberal outlook, but suspected the refusal to seek royal or legal recognition had been a deliberate move towards Catholic dominance: 'We shall soon see that the original intention could never be accomplished and perpetuated, as a Church of Ireland Institution, without procuring a Charter, or some Act of Parliament, as the Established and other Corporations have wisely done': *Correspondent* (Dublin), 17 February 1819. For this, see p. 262-267.

³⁰ Melanctus, *Secret History of the Dublin Library Society*, 40.

Dublin Library founding committeemen—would have intended to design a library plan based on their existing Academy, but with greater accessibility.³¹ Indeed, Richard Kirwan as the librarian of the Royal Irish Academy, would have been mindful of improvements in library provision that the Academy could not provide and that the general public required. The similarities in the two societies' corporate structures also suggest that the RIA was used as a template for the Dublin subscription library. Furthermore, when comparing 'mission statements' of the two societies, the language suggests the same enlightened intentions. Yet, nuances appear in their attitudes toward public outreach and, perhaps in the case of the Dublin Library, a plan free from state-sponsorship. First, excerpts from the preface to the Royal Irish Academy's first *Transactions* (1787) stated the intention of its founders:

To obtain purposes of so great national utility as this Academy proposes to itself, the patriotism of the inhabitants of this Kingdom has had many efforts. [...] Anxious to make their labours redound to the honour and advantage of their country, they formed a plan more extensive, and admitting such additional names as only might add dignity to their new institution, [...] became the founders of the Royal Irish Academy. [...] Whatever therefore [...] by the elegance of polite literature, to civilize the manners and refine the taste of its people; whatever tends to awaken a spirit of literary ambition, by keeping alive the memory of its ancient reputation for learning, cannot but prove of the greatest national advantage.³²

Second, the founders of the Dublin Library advertised their remit in the 1792 catalogue:

This institution recommends itself to every patriotic and enlightened mind; and, if carried on with spirit and liberality, will redound much to the credit of this city, as it tends to diffuse knowledge, excite literary curiosity, and facilitate literary exertions, by supplying the means of information to men, who may be possessed of talents, tho' not of opulence.³³

Of course, one was an academy and the other a subscription library. However, their objectives were comparable. The Dublin Library was clearly influenced by the Academy in adopting a similar language and set of principles. In keeping

³¹ The thirteen were: Arthur Browne, Earl of Charlemont, William Drennan, Thomas Elrington, Richard Graves, Richard Kirwan, Edward Ledwich, William James MacNeven, Robert Perceval, Walter Stephens, Joseph Cooper Walker, William Watson, and Matthew Young.

³² Burrowes, "Preface," x-xv.

³³ DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, iv.

with the expanding public sphere in eighteenth-century Dublin, the subscription library was reaching out to the wider public, not only in the hopes of securing enough subscribers to make their plan work, but also to enable those without established learned credentials or higher offices. Importantly, the Academy sought to 'civilize the manners and refine the taste of its people', whereas the Dublin Library intended to create the environment for any man who wished to refine his own tastes. Hence, the Dublin Library Society facilitated the expansion of the enlightened, literary public sphere in eighteenth-century Dublin. Also, the use of the term 'liberality' implies that this was an institution free from state intervention.

The Dublin Library Society as Interconfessional

The enlightened public sphere in late-eighteenth-century Dublin is encapsulated in an argument put forward by a member of the public in a letter addressed to the subscribers of the Dublin Library Society and published in a Dublin newspaper in August 1791. Written shortly after the establishment of the subscription library, the crux of the letter was to persuade the members of the library to ensure that it remains open on Sundays. Deftly tied to this, was the emphasis on the importance of choosing a suitable librarian. In doing so, Hibernicus (using a moniker indicating his writing on behalf of the Irish people) was expressing his opinion that the future direction of this public institution should be free from state or church authority. After applauding the utility of a 'Public Library' in Dublin, the writer praised the 'sound judgement and unbiassed zeal' in the composition of the committee and the initial management of its affairs.³⁴ For Hibernicus, the issue of a Sunday opening was most important for the logistical accommodation of a diverse, working public and the promotion of a secular library society.

The writer supported the daily opening hours of 10am to 4pm and 6pm to 10pm as suitable for 'every situation of life', especially on Sundays, for those whose livelihoods were not solely that of leisure:

Many, and not the least respectable of your members, are through the week confined to public offices, and to them Sundays alone can become an inducement to join such a body; there are many whose attendance

³⁴ *Hibernian Journal*, 17 August 1791.

cannot be dispensed with from their counting houses or their shops, and there may be some whose misfortunes debar them of that literary recreation on any other day.³⁵

The liberal hours of operation, therefore, reflected the city's contemporary occupational diversity—this was not simply a composition of gentleman, scholars, clergy, and the peerage—and the society's representation of a more inclusive venue within Dublin's literary public sphere. Furthermore, *Hibernicus* welcomed the Sunday opening as a significant departure from religious convention and a ringing endorsement of Enlightenment ideals, much to the dismay of the traditionalists:

But this is not an age of superstition, and I address myself to men capable of distinguishing between the duties of Christianity and the folly of fanaticism; men who know what is a violation of the Sabbath, and what the affectation of religion; who cannot apprehend in how much more eminent a degree the pulpit is more adorned by the florid eloquence of a Kirwan, than the Library by the persuasive pages of a Blair, and have not the hardiness to affirm that the morality of a Johnson is a study inimical to the diffusion of true piety!³⁶

Logically then, the important position of librarian must be appointed to a secular—and confessionally neutral—gentleman and not be occupied by any 'whose other vocations render an attendance on Sundays impracticable'. For *Hibernicus*, the appointment of a librarian who objected to a Sunday opening would tarnish the spirit of the library plan and indeed be ruinous: 'Thus, will an institution, that, if properly conducted, would have exhibited a bright example of the taste and patriotism of Irishmen, "dissolve, and like the baseless fabric of a vision leave not a wreck behind!"'³⁷

As shown throughout, the Dublin Library was founded on the principles of inclusivity and toleration, irrespective of religious persuasion. While the

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid. 'Christianity' is not capitalised in the original. The 'Kirwan' here is likely **Richard Kirwan's** cousin, Walter Blake Kirwan (1754-1805): 'Dublin's most fashionable pulpit orator'; raised Catholic but converted to the Established Church to 'preach a pure and unsectarian morality, and above all, to plead the cause of the poor and the suffering': *ODNB*; McLaughlin, "Richard Kirwan: Part III," 76.

³⁷ *Hibernian Journal*, 17 August 1791. Quoting Shakespeare (*Tempest*, act 4, scene 4) and referencing Hugh Blair and Samuel Johnson, *Hibernicus* displayed his own literary interests and suitability for the job: 'I have no doubt but that person will be found, and in the choice of such a one, I rely on your disinterested suffrage': *Hibernian Journal*, 17 August 1791. This could well have been the editor and anthologist, **Joshua Edkins** as he was elected librarian on 22 August 1791: *Hibernian Journal*, 24 August 1791.

absence of the library's foundational journals has made exploration into the early character of the society difficult, a report inserted into an 1819 newspaper has provided glimpses of the library's explicit motivations. In response to an attack in a Dublin newspaper on the religious and political inclinations of the library, its committee moved to appoint a special committee of nine to 'examine the Journals and report the true principles upon which this Society was originally founded'.³⁸ This group—on which founding committee member **Lewis Lyons** served—reported that the library was formed in March 1791 by a group largely composed of professionals and clergymen from various confessions, with the express purpose of establishing an inexpensive and comprehensive public library for the city. Importantly, theirs was a vision of an institution free from social and religious barriers, without the dominance of any one clique:

Though differing from each other in their religious opinions, they cordially concurred in laying the foundations of an Institution, which was intended for public benefit; without the restriction of ballot on admission; without distinction of sect or party; or exclusive privilege of any kind, whatsoever, for any particular portion of its Members.³⁹

The report continued to describe the election of the library's first committee of twenty-one, and succeeding committees, in precisely the same manner, adding 'no exclusive principle entered into the design of the founders; no such principle was ever recognised, or acted upon in the Society'. In closing, the report noted the presence on this sub-committee of an original founding committeeman (Lewis Lyons) who, with several other founding subscribers still active, 'have the extreme gratification of living to see their utmost views realised, and even succeeded, by the extensive utility of the Institution in its present state'.⁴⁰

Another contemporary example of the cross-confessional ethos in the Dublin Library can be found in a pamphlet, published in reaction to the passing of the Insurrection Act of 1807, which strengthened measures against public disturbances in Ireland that might disrupt British focus on the Napoleonic Wars.

³⁸ *Freeman's Journal*, 11 March 1819.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

Signed 'By an Irishman', before it railed against Henry Grattan for endorsing the legislation and effectively scaling back any hope of progress towards Catholic emancipation, the members of the Dublin Library Society received the following dedication:

Gentlemen, To you I offer this humble token of my esteem, at a time, when in a sister kingdom, the diffusion of knowledge hath deemed but a problematic good, and hardly worth the cost of experiment; when thousands are considered too enormous for the IMPROVEMENT, but millions too scanty for the DESTRUCTION of mankind; I can congratulate you on the want of such oeconomy, on the absence of such prodigality, you have thrown open the doors of knowledge and facilitated access to ALL. Your claims on the gratitude of your country are not slight: may your example spread afar; may learning and truth dispel those clouds of ignorance that have so long overwhelmed us.⁴¹

In 1812, the *Freeman's Journal*, reporting on the library's upcoming election of committee and officers from a multi-confessional field, also added its view of the society as an oasis of inclusion and democracy in the capital: 'Here at least universal suffrage is realized'.⁴² On the laying of the first stone for construction of the new Dublin Library Society building in D'Olier Street in 1819, playwright, dramatist and friend of Daniel O'Connell, Richard Lalor Sheil declared that the library's new premises 'will prove at once a temple of literature and of concord'. Sheil concluded his speech by emphasising the composition of the library's membership and governance as the lead from which Ireland could follow, in the face of external criticism from the sectarian press:

Would to God that we could learn to imitate the example of this Society in the extinction of prejudice and the removal of all religious animosity. The majority of this Association profess the Catholic Religion: yet we have chosen a Protestant Bishop for our President, and a Fellow of Trinity College as the first of our Vice-Presidents, and this simple fact I would advance in answer to all the dirty objurgation that has been flung by ignorant faction against our Society. Long may it flourish—long may it contribute to intellectual advancement, and disseminate knowledge to the extremities of the land.⁴³

⁴¹ An Irishman, *A Letter to the Right Honorable Henry Grattan, On the Subject of His Vote on the Insurrection Bill; and Containing a Review of the Conduct of the Late Administration. By an Irishman* (Dublin: Printed by J. Stockdale, 1807), [3].

⁴² *Freeman's Journal*, 3 February 1812.

⁴³ *The Kaleidoscope; or Literary and Scientific Mirror*, 22 June 1819. The Bishop of Cloyne was President and Stephen Sandes was the T.C.D. Fellow to whom Sheil referred: John Watson Stewart, *Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack ... 1820*, (Dublin: Printed by John Watson Stewart, 1820), 184.

This 'dirty oburgation' to which Sheil was referring was a campaign in the Dublin newspaper, the *Correspondent*, originating from a letter to the paper's editor from one 'Publicola'. Here, frustration among the Ascendancy class was captured with the Dublin Library Society metaphorically representing the gradual decay of Anglican dominance within Ireland, specifically those national and civic institutions in which penal laws had ensured the exclusion of Catholics and Dissenters over the years. Publicola's letter titled, 'A Hint to the Corporation' warned of complacency among liberal Protestants supporting Catholic emancipation and how that would alter the placement of the Ascendancy class in positions of power and influence. Using the example of an institution with which all Dubliners were familiar, he wished to show 'not what the Roman Catholics, if completely ascendant would do, but what they have done'.⁴⁴ For Publicola, the issue was not that Catholics should be barred from that 'flourishing and really-excellent Institution', but that the sheer numbers of them joining will inevitably lead to the election of Catholics in higher positions within the society. This, he believed, was never the intention of the library's founders. Extrapolated to the civic politics of the Dublin Corporation and—with the franchise—Irish parliamentary representation at Westminster, the writing was already on the wall for those members of the Ascendancy class who were enlightened enough to advocate toleration but not receptive to complete confessional equality:

Had the founders of the Dublin Library vested, by a charter, the *mere government* of it in Protestants—leaving, at the same time, all the uses and benefits of it open, and the access to literature free to the whole world without distinction, affording, at a moderate cost, every advantage, as at present, to persons of only decent condition in life, but WITHOUT POWER—we should not have to relate that brief fragment of its history which I am now going to impart to you. The story is an instructive one—and let every thinking Protestant apply it on the present occasion—"De te fabula narratur." For many years the government of the Dublin Library remained in Protestant hands, but not exclusively—for it was intended as an experiment of what *liberality* would do. Its well-chosen collection of books was a fountain of instruction to the middle class of the people. By degrees, however, the Roman Catholic numbers have closed in upon it, on every side, as the sands of the desert.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ *Correspondent* (Dublin), 10 February 1819.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

Publicola proceeded to explain why his story applied to the public, especially the readers of the Ascendancy newspaper.⁴⁶ Although a Protestant king remained on the throne, the prospect of two Catholics as vice-presidents of the Dublin Library Society was a threat to the 'Established Religion' and it was only a matter of time that in the library and the country 'the Roman Catholic leaders and their followers shall gain a *complete* ascendancy'.⁴⁷

A few days after the letter, *Carrick's Morning Post*, neither an Ascendancy nor a whole-heartedly pro-Catholic journal, expressed its incredulity by Publicola's letter, suggesting the editor of the *Correspondent* 'must have been grossly imposed upon, or he would not have permitted its insertion'.⁴⁸ Intending to set the record straight, *Carrick's Morning Post* gave its version of the composition of the subscription library:

The Dublin Library Society is composed of about twelve hundred members, comprising we think a fair representation of the educated portion of the citizens of Dublin. It also includes a large and respectable portion of the professional talent of the city, of every class. In this large and liberal Society of Gentlemen, there never occurs a question or inquiry respecting the *religion* of its Members; it may be estimated, however that the Catholics bear to Protestants nearly the same proportion as among the inhabitants of the city generally—the former being considerably more numerous. It would be no wonder, then, if all its Officers and Committees, which are annually chosen by ballot, were made up of Protestants and Catholics in the same proportion, or nearly so, as their respective numbers.⁴⁹

The report continued to stress that the success and 'good management' of the library can be attributed to its liberality and refusal to emulate other civic institutions in a city rife with sectarianism. For *Carrick's Morning Post*, it was the embrace of cross-confessional democracy that has led to the library's efficiency in 'affording every possible facility to the rising generation, unshackled by ballot on admission, or other impediment, and having

⁴⁶ Brian Inglis, *The Freedom of the Press in Ireland, 1784-1841* (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), 241.

⁴⁷ *Correspondent* (Dublin), 10 February 1819. The two Catholic vice-presidents were Daniel O'Connell and Rev. Dr. Hamill: Stewart, *Gentlemen and Citizens' Almanack, 1820*, 184. As noted above, the Protestant Bishop of Cloyne was President and the other Protestant Vice-President was Stephen Sandes, Fellow of Trinity College Dublin (see p. 264, n. 43).

⁴⁸ Inglis, *Freedom of the Press in Ireland*, 241. The report from *Carrick's Morning Post* was reprinted in the *Correspondent* whose editor 'felt bound, in candour and justice, to copy this article': *Correspondent* (Dublin), 15 February 1819.

⁴⁹ *Correspondent* (Dublin), 15 February 1819.

exclusively for its object the public advantage, not that of particular individuals'.⁵⁰ Moreover, despite the growing number of Catholics as members, it was a testament to the attitude of all its members that Protestants would continue to be elected.

Convinced that the liberality of elective power displayed by both Catholics and Protestants in the Dublin Library will inevitably be replicated in parliamentary elections, Publicola, in a lengthy rebuttal, reverted to the age-old rationale of Anglican tolerance towards Catholics with the intention to convert them. Incorrectly asserting that the **Earl of Charlemont** was the founder of the Dublin Library, Publicola insisted that conversion of its Catholic members was a major objective. The tone of Publicola's arguments suggests a considerable departure from that enlightened approach of interconfessional sociability towards a hardening of sectarian attitudes:

The Dublin Library was founded under the auspices of a distinguished Protestant of the Church of England. As such, it is well known that its noble Patron and earliest President (the late Earl of Charlemont) inflexibly opposed, to his death, that *project*—Roman Catholic Emancipation, as it is called. In patronising the Dublin Library, it seems to have been the intention of its virtuous and patriotic founder, that liberality would reclaim our Roman Catholic fellow-creatures and fellow countrymen, and win them over to their truest and best interests—the being cordially welcomed, as Protestant members of this Protestant Church and State—enjoying thus, without distinction, every privilege, rank, or office, open to any subject. In the meanwhile, so long as they chose, by remaining Roman Catholics, to alienate themselves from the national Church and State, to let them partake at least of the benefit of instruction, in order to open their minds, and to cure them of their prejudices, by liberal self-instruction.⁵¹

Without some sort of tempering of liberality this alleged Anglican educational initiative was in grave danger of becoming wholly Catholic. Consequently, 'the entire Representation of Ireland in Parliament will become Roman Catholic, through the grant of the elective franchise—the same principle which carried on to Emancipation—or the power of being elected—has lost the Dublin Library. This is my argument'.⁵²

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ *Correspondent* (Dublin), 17 February 1819.

⁵² Ibid. The Dublin Library Society issued a statement on this in the *Freeman's Journal* (11 March 1819), for which see p. 263.

Publicola’s doomsday scenario of Catholics outnumbering Protestants in the library’s committee and officer levels became a reality not long after. Two years before Catholic emancipation prevailed in Ireland, in a published list of Dublin societies and institutions giving the ratio of Catholic officers to the number of offices in each society, the Dublin Library Society exceeded all others—save the Charitable Infirmary—both in quantity (fifteen) and percentage (57%).⁵³

Table 20: Catholic Officers in Dublin Institutions (1827)

Society	Number of Offices	Catholic Officers
Charitable Infirmary	27	16
Dublin Library Society	26	15
Kildare Place Society	43	3
Royal Dublin Society	29	2
State Surgeons	9	2
College of Physicians	37	1
Royal Irish Academy	33	0

After emancipation, the Dublin Library endeavoured to maintain its reputation as a cross-confessional institution when its members voted Conservative leader and Trinity College Fellow, Rev. Charles Boyton (1799-1844), ‘the notorious enemy of reform and improvement in every shape’ as a vice-president:

This literary society has been for the last 30 years perhaps the most noisy Radical and anti-Orange in the three kingdoms—in fact, a very trades union of readers, literary and political. The far greater part of the members are Catholic, and were during the struggle for emancipation, coadjutors of the chief opponent of Mr Boyton in this struggle, viz. Stephen Coppinger, Esq., a leading orator in all the Catholic reform and repeal proceedings for the last 20 years. Mr Boyton will now be associated in his honorary labours in this very debateable commonwealth of literature with Lord Cloncurry, President, and Daniel O’Connell, M.P., and the Roman Catholic Archbishop Murray, Vice-Presidents. What a mélange! The excuses for his election are, that the society wished to approve itself of liberal character by admitting an avowed enemy to liberality, who further was known to be in his private character a very jovial fellow, tolerant of fun, frolic, and festivity of all kinds. He had on this occasion 258 votes, while Stephen Coppinger had only 129, exactly half of his victorious rival’s number!⁵⁴

⁵³ The Charitable Infirmary, with fifty-nine per cent of its officers Catholic in 1827, was a Dublin hospital in Cook Street founded in 1718: Dickson, *Dublin*, 121; *Morning Chronicle* (London), 13 September 1827. The Kildare Place Society for Education of the Poor of Ireland was established in 1823: Casteleyn, *History of Literacy and Libraries in Ireland*, 24.

⁵⁴ *The Times* (London), 22 November 1834.

Yet, paradoxically, the society was not as tolerant of sectarian newspapers and periodicals, having banned Watty Cox's ultra-Catholic *Irish Magazine Monthly Asylum for Neglected Biography* in 1809 and the ultra-Protestant *Dublin Evening Mail*, among other publications in its lifetime.⁵⁵ It would seem that this approach, to which Sheil referred above, was taken not to stifle free speech but to remedy the problems caused by the presence of such newspapers and periodicals in the conversation room of the library, given that political discussion was discouraged earlier in the library's history and expressly excluded later.⁵⁶

In addition to toleration, inclusivity, and humanity over spirituality, as examples of Enlightenment ideals, improvement was also a key element.⁵⁷ Indeed, all are evidenced in the declarations of the vice-chairman of the Dublin Library Society in 1819 as he promoted something of greater significance than the availability of science and literature for the average person: 'The advantage, however, to individuals, is in my mind trifling when compared to the great public advantage which is obtained by a diffusion of knowledge, so necessary to uphold both civil and religious liberty, and to which such societies as ours eminently contribute'. The speaker continued to relate the importance of reading and education as a means of improving oneself and the nation:

[A]nd I should infinitely prefer putting a good grammar into a poor man's hand, to a Bible without note or comment. However, as Literary Societies greatly contribute to do away prejudices, it is to be hoped that superstition and fanaticism will be kept in check—you know, that to educate is to civilize, and to civilize is, in fact, to support what we are all interested in—order, and constitutional government. I therefore sincerely hope Literary Societies may flourish and increase all over the world.⁵⁸

⁵⁵ *Irish Magazine and Monthly Asylum for Neglected Biography*, June 1809, 246; Simes, "Ireland, 1760-1820s," 128; Manley, "Jeremy Bentham has Been Banned," 179-180. On the controversy between the Dublin Library and the *Sun*, see *Freeman's Journal*, 16 July 1814. The *Courier* refused insertion of the Dublin Library's notices in its paper in response to the expulsion of the *Sun*: *Freeman's Journal*, 12 September 1814.

⁵⁶ DLS, *Laws*, 1822, 73, (13 April 1826); Dublin Library Society, *Laws and Regulations of the Dublin Library Society, Revised*, 1863, NLI MS 328, [2].

⁵⁷ Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 2-20.

⁵⁸ *The Kaleidoscope; or Literary and Scientific Mirror*, 22 June 1819. The speaker was the chairman of the proceedings, Lieutenant-General Cockburn, who was also a vice-president: Stewart, *Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack ... 1820*, 184.

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that the interconfessional, socially diverse composition of the Dublin Library Society—while including figures from the conservative, moderate, and radical Enlightenments—expressed their cultural patriotism through the promotion of Enlightenment ideals of toleration, inclusivity, civility, and improvement through the accessibility of knowledge for Dubliners. Contemporary examples all show the Dublin Library to be anomalous in relation to the political, religious and social restrictions of Anglican Ascendancy Ireland. While the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy exhibited signs of inclusivity, they nonetheless had restrictive admission requirements of proposers and elections, followed by prohibitive fees. Rather, the membership of the Dublin Library accurately reflected the composition of participants in Dublin’s enlightened, literary public sphere in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Therefore, it was an oasis of Enlightenment, challenging Michael Brown’s contention that the Irish Enlightenment project destructed after 1798. Moreover, despite its initial admission fee of two guineas (and one thereafter) the Dublin Library was more ‘public’ than other libraries in eighteenth-century Dublin because it was open to all, regardless of profession, connection, or confession.⁵⁹ Indeed, it was regarded as an example to which the Irish polity would have done well to replicate on a national scale.

⁵⁹ Of course, this still excluded women and those on lower incomes. The National Library of Ireland (1877) and rates-supported public libraries in Dublin (1884) were free on entry but women were allowed access in 1839 to the Dublin Mechanics’ Institution: Cullen, “Reading Spaces in Dublin,” in *OHIB* 4, 278. Dublin was evidently not as enlightened as counterparts across the water. David Allan discusses subscription libraries in Georgian England, based on ability to pay, as more inclusive than previously imagined, highlighting their acceptance of women and different religions: Allan, “Politeness and the Politics of Culture,” 167.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

In 1830, the Dublin Library Society was praised in a local newspaper as an institution 'open to all, and in which were to be found associated together, men of every shade of political feeling'.¹ Having opened in 1791, the Dublin Library continued to operate as an example of interconfessional sociability in Ascendancy Ireland—after the violence and fallout of 1798 and 1801. Tellingly, the statement epitomises what has been achieved in this study: that a fresh approach to a history of a voluntary subscription library has resulted in a contribution to Irish social and political historiography. In other words, the impact of 'how libraries construct society' is demonstrated by 'reconstructing lost library culture'.² This final chapter will summarise the claims advanced throughout the work before focusing on its contributions to historical scholarship.

Summary

The Dublin Library was a place where the average, middle class Dublin professional went to access quality, rare, and expensive reading material and reference works in late-eighteenth-century Dublin. This is an area that a library historian would wish to explore after concluding that the institutional libraries were restrictive and the holdings of Marsh's Library relatively static, not reflecting the enormous output of literature published in the latter half of the eighteenth century. Nineteenth-century guidebooks and histories of Dublin included the Dublin Library in their brief entries on venues for public access to quality literature. Secondary literature on the Dublin Library, before the 1980s, relied on these same works. Although John Bruce Howell's pamphlet (1985) summarised the library's ninety-year history in twenty-one pages of text, it was nevertheless the catalyst for further research.³

Although neglected as a subject for further analysis in recent multi-volume projects in library and book histories, the Dublin Library recently received some

¹ *Freeman's Journal*, 4 February 1830.

² Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 250-251; Rose, "Alternative Futures for Library History," 53-54; Towsey, "Book Use and Sociability in Lost Libraries of the Eighteenth Century," 434.

³ Howell, *Dublin Library Society*.

attention in a study of Irish associational culture—endorsing the argument that a ‘new library history’ approach could uncover more about a library and contribute to multiple disciplines within history. Additionally, in the time period leading into the establishment of the Dublin Library, arguments on the presence of the Enlightenment in eighteenth-century Ireland have added to the growing corpus of research in Irish historiography. Hence, before presenting the Dublin Library as a product of this movement—and, at least until the late-nineteenth century, a surviving example—attention was paid to major, relevant themes for historical context. Varying forms and definitions of patriotism were woven into the historical narrative throughout Ireland’s history. The Anglican Ascendancy, whereby a minority of five thousand families dominated over the majority population of Catholics and Dissenters through the enforcement of harsh penal laws, regarded themselves first as Anglo-Irish, then simply Irish patriots. In the second half of the eighteenth century, self-sufficiency, improvement, and intellectual cultivation were expressions of Irish patriotism inspired by contemporary Enlightenment thought. Further Enlightenment ideals of toleration and sociability engendered a culture of cross-confessional inclusivity. Indeed, the public mood in the latter decades of the eighteenth century was characterised by support for greater legislative independence from Britain and movements to promote domestic industry and cultural and intellectual activity. By this time, Ireland had experienced a massive expansion and boom in the print trade. Newspapers, pamphlets, and books were widely available to increasingly politicised and literate Dubliners. Coffee houses and circulating libraries acted as venues for public access to print of all kinds—ephemeral, entertaining, and scholarly. Meanwhile, for Dubliners, clubs and societies were associated with a patriotic desire to participate in political, economic, charitable, and cultural endeavours.

In this environment, booksellers, public library service providers, and their customers/patrons were all depicted as patriotic contributors to Irish intellectual pursuits, at a time when such activities had been the preserve of peers, gentlemen elites, and the clergy, particularly through affiliation with Trinity College Dublin, the (Royal) Dublin Society, and/or the Royal Irish Academy. Perhaps a forgotten element was the presence of a rudimentary library provision for the lower orders of society—those who could not have

afforded the admission fees for the Dublin Library. Radical and republican in nature, they were nevertheless examples of Enlightenment ideals of inclusivity and education for the poorer sections of society.

It was in this setting where the Dublin Library Society was established. As very little was known of the origins of this subscription library, this research focused on its formation and the assessment of public reaction towards it. Patriotic support for a cultural and intellectual initiative of this kind grew in the years leading up to 1791, when as early as March, plans were afoot to create a subscription library containing quality works for a wider reading public. Importantly, this was to have liberal hours of operation and be open to anyone—regardless of religious affiliation—who could afford two guineas on admission and one thereafter. No process of proposers and elections for admissions to this library meant that those without connections or status were still welcome to join. Of course, this was not a truly all-inclusive public library, as women and those who could not afford the fees—albeit substantially lower than the Dublin Society or the Royal Irish Academy—did not become members.

The selection of a suitable librarian, and ethical questions surrounding the propriety of one of the founders of the library as the chosen bookseller, were subjects of public scrutiny in the newspapers of the day. This indicated a popular desire for a strong foundation on which to build a public library institution for Dubliners. In keeping with similar democratic structures of British subscription libraries and Irish societies, robust laws and regulations were codified and disseminated to cement the library's intentions for public benefit and permanency in Dublin's literary and intellectual landscape.

Of the rules, one calling for the preference of printed material published in Ireland to British ones, was further evidence of the library's appeal to the patriotic sensibilities of the Irish public, especially the 310 members who joined in the first year. However politically charged this rule may seem, the library nonetheless eschewed political and religious debates or affiliations. Rather, it preferred to focus solely on the acquisition of important reference works, rare, expensive titles (with an emphasis on history and antiquities), and a sizable collection of journals, periodicals, academic transactions, and newspapers—

resembling a repository of record for Dublin. Without records of usage, it is impossible to assess how often the library's holdings were consulted. However, instances in diaries and notes in publications give some indication that the library's collections were appreciated and consulted for personal cultivation as well as participation in public discourse and academic endeavour. Importantly, the Dublin Library provided access to rare and quality literature for the expanding middle classes at a time when such a service was restricted to those with status or connections.

After the origins of the Dublin Library were examined, attention focused on the social composition of its founding members. Prosopographical research was conducted to determine the occupations and associational activities of the Dublin Library first 310 subscribers. In the historical context of late-eighteenth-century Dublin, an analysis of those who participated in this cultural pursuit, has helped to identify a diverse social milieu.

In terms of the officers and committeemen, thirteen of the thirty-eight were members of the Royal Irish Academy, evidenced by the presence of 'M.R.I.A.' next to their names. As for profession, there was not a dominant one. Rather, lawyers and scholars both had high representations but were complimented by other professionals, merchants, and tradesmen. In fact, when including committeemen involved in the print trade with those affiliated with various educative endeavours, there was a significantly large representation of the learning and improvement professions rather than committees dominated by nobles and clergymen. As for clergymen unaffiliated with the college, two out of six were Catholic. When this is combined with four other Catholic committeemen, a fifteen per cent representation of Catholics in higher offices of a society was extraordinary for the eighteenth century, since there were only five Catholics among all 179 members of the Royal Irish Academy in 1791/92 (with only one serving on a committee).

Contemporary newspapers revealed that the men who were present at the first meeting to discuss the initial scheme for the Dublin Library were elected to the inaugural committee by the founding subscribers. After examining the relationships among these committeemen and their professions, there is

enough evidence to suggest that this first committee originated from two informal, associational groups: several Royal Irish Academy members and others who gathered at the homes of **Richard Kirwan** and **Lord Charlemont** for intellectual discourse, or *conversazione*s; and **John Archer**'s eclectic mix who met at his General Book-Repository for literary discussions and who subscribed to his publications. Combined, they represented a much broader spectrum of Dubliners who may not necessarily have moved in the same circles but came together for the common objective to open Dublin's first voluntary subscription library. Conversely, the 1792 committee, with a considerable rise in the number of lawyers, was not as diverse. Also, an executive branch was added, with Lord Charlemont elected as president and Kirwan, a vice-president.

When the professions of the remaining 272 founding subscribers are examined, the legal profession had the highest representation. Many of them donated books and several were also studying law when they joined the library. Merchants and bankers were also well represented in the Dublin Library, as were: the clergy; medical men; peers, gentlemen and Members of Parliament; trades and shopkeepers; civil servants; and academics and students. After examining the occupational composition of these founding subscribers, the professional classes, and the emerging tradesmen and shopkeepers had far greater representation than the traditional clergy and nobility. The less-restrictive rules governing admission—without having to canvass for a proposer and then endure an election process—made it far easier for the emerging orders to join. For the same reason, greater numbers from orders other than the Established Church became members. Therefore, the Dublin Library Society's founding membership represented a cross-section of Dublin's social and cultural milieu in the late-eighteenth century, evolving from the previous Ascendancy public sphere of elites and the clergy.

This milieu is further explored through an examination of the associational connections among Dublin Library founding members, particularly in political, commercial, charitable, and intellectual societies. The Dublin Society, in operation since 1731, was an improving institution that promoted practical and cultural patriotism through the pursuit of Irish economic self-sufficiency and

artistic distinctiveness. Its advocacy of these characteristics resonated among the mercantile classes who also used their membership to improve business connections and, in some cases, assist their ascent into the higher echelons of Irish society. Several Dublin Library founding members were either existing members of the Dublin Society or joined after 1791. Well-connected merchants and bankers often proposed one another for membership into the Dublin Society and together joined other commercial institutions. Where possible, proposals of membership into the Dublin Society among founding Dublin Library members has revealed either established or future connections.

Early political societies such as the Monks of the Screw and the Whig Club advocated increased legislative independence and free trade for Ireland. Together with other political entities (Whigs of the Capital, United Irishmen, Catholic Committee, and Catholic Society of Dublin) pursuing varying degrees of independence and Catholic emancipation, several of their members were also founding Dublin Library members, indicating a spirit of Irish patriotism that extended as far as republicanism. The Catholic Committee's significant shift in leadership—from the nobility to the professional and merchant classes—coincided with a widening of the public sphere in eighteenth-century Dublin. These Catholic merchants and medical professionals made up a large proportion of members belonging to the Dublin Library and were highly respected in the wider community, evidenced by their acceptance to other societies dominated by Anglicans. Importantly, these Catholic Committee members lobbied for relaxation and elimination of the penal laws that supported the Ascendancy public sphere. This was also supported by the Dublin Society of United Irishmen in their movement for greater independence for Ireland, and ultimately towards a revolutionary independence struggle. Only the Royal Irish Academy had more members who were Dublin Library founding members than the Dublin United Irishmen.⁴ This may well have been a reason why the Dublin Library was regarded as a republican club. However, despite claims that some library members were alleged to have participated in republican activities—and, conversely, some were involved as informers to the

⁴ Though, the numbers could be higher if several others believed to be accessories were included. See p. 245.

authorities—no further proof exists to corroborate the claim of the library as a venue of sedition.

Second only to the legal profession as an occupational group within the library, merchants and bankers actively participated in commercial bodies such as the Ouzel Galley Society, the Dublin Chamber of Commerce, and the Bank of Ireland to advance the cause of Irish economic self-sufficiency and prosperity. The Abecedarian Society was a charity established to assist distressed schoolteachers and their families. Accordingly, several of its founders and subscribers were Dublin Library founding members. The society also attracted other educators and supporters of intellectual advancement, including several from the print trade. An educative commonality is evident as twenty-five of its members joined the Dublin Library. Moreover, like the Dublin Library, the Abecedarian Society had a middle-class composition, initially independent of church and state, or noble patronage until an Act of Parliament in 1799.

With thirty-five Dublin Library founding members who were also members of the Royal Irish Academy, the link between these two institutions was strongest. Similar in their governing structures—with the Earl of Charlemont and Richard Kirwan as the two noteworthy figureheads—there was considerable overlap in their mission statements. Where there was a significant number of Dublin Society and Dublin Library members from the mercantile professions, academics and medical men comprised most of the Royal Irish Academy members who joined the subscription library from its creation. They largely consisted of groups that had been active in intellectual societies in the years leading up to 1791. The formation and public reception of these two societies have significant similarities. But while the Royal Irish Academy was more of an elite society—and access to its library depended on its exclusive membership—the Dublin Library represented the expansion of the literary public sphere to include those from other professions and societies, thereby acting as an extension of Irish literary culture. Moreover, the Royal Irish Academy, although open to limited cross-confessional membership—evolving from the Protestant Dublin Society—was nevertheless dominated by Anglicans, under royal patronage, whereas the Dublin Library had a far more inclusive character and remained independent of state influence.

Also noteworthy, although not based on actual meetings, there were literary associations involving several future Dublin Library founding members, suggesting a prior establishment of relationships and commonalities in literary and commercial endeavours, marked by a patriotic promotion of Irish literary talent. Irish cultural patriotism was advanced through multi-volume projects such as **Joshua Edkins'** anthologies of poetry that brought together literary contributions from many Dublin Library members, supported through subscription by several other library members.

The penultimate chapter in this study addressed the presence of varying interpretations of Enlightenment ideals and Irish cultural patriotism in the societies. Although locations of the Irish Enlightenment previously had been identified in Dublin, the Dublin Library has been inexplicably forgotten. The Irish antiquarian movement was active within the Royal Irish Academy and was closely linked to contemporary politics through the study of Ireland's ancient past. 'Varieties' of the Irish Enlightenment clashed at the end of the century but public discourse through the press shows that the Dublin Library survived the collapse of the Enlightenment project in Ireland through its continued promotion of the principles on which it was founded.

From its establishment, the Dublin Library was regarded as an important intellectual and educational institution in the capital. It opened up opportunities for Irish intellectual advancement and library provision in the eighteenth-century that began with the Dublin Society and continued with the Royal Irish Academy. In highlighting its characteristics of interconfessional sociability, improvement, and cultural patriotism, the above study has shown that the Dublin Library was far more accessible than other institutional libraries at the time, priding itself in being 'of national importance'.⁵ Moreover, many Dublin Library members actively participated in the promotion of Irish patriotic ideals inspired by the Enlightenment. Therefore, a reconstruction of this 'lost library', using fresh methodological approaches, has helped to identify the Dublin Library Society as a location where the Irish Enlightenment flourished in late-

⁵ *Freeman's Journal*, 29 September 1815.

eighteenth-century Dublin and beyond, exemplifying a political environment desired by an enlightened public, for the greater good of the nation.⁶

Contributions to Knowledge

The preceding section summarised the main points raised in this dissertation regarding the role of the Dublin Library in the latter part of the long eighteenth century in Dublin. What follows is an assessment whether the aims and objectives were achieved and whether the methodological approaches employed were effective. Examples of contributions to knowledge will be highlight the importance of research into this subscription library and the environment in which it was established. Possible areas of further research also will be explored, followed by closing remarks.

The aim of this project was to examine the origins and motives of the Dublin Library and the public reaction to this institution as an important provider of library services in the city as well as an example of cross-confessional participation in the associational world of late-eighteenth-century Dublin. This was to be achieved through an analysis of the establishment of the library amidst a backdrop of patriotic fervour, but in a society fraught with sectarianism. Also, themes of patriotism and Enlightenment ideals such as improvement and inclusivity were to be explored when assessing public reaction to Dublin's first non-proprietary subscription library. Another objective was to analyse the composition of the library's founding members through an examination of their occupational backgrounds and their involvement in other associational activity. By doing so, further insight was gained regarding the occupational representation of the library and the associational networks in which these founding members were active participants in the social milieu of eighteenth-century Dublin.

An analysis of the Dublin Library's holdings was based on two catalogues from 1792 and 1806. A subject classification system based on the 1806 catalogue was imposed on the 1792 catalogue titles, thereby enabling an analysis of the library's acquisitions by subject to be conducted. The results from this

⁶ Towsey, "Book Use and Sociability in Lost Libraries of the Eighteenth Century," 434.

investigation indicated an emphasis on history and antiquities in the first years of operation. However, while this was evidently maintained in the 1806 catalogue, the turn-of-the-century legislative union and incorporation of Ireland into the United Kingdom saw an understandably dramatic increase in the library's holdings of books and pamphlets in the subject area of 'Law, Constitution & Politics'. Tellingly, in its first year, only nine purchases were made of books on religion, in comparison to sixteen new reference works. Moreover, throughout this fifteen-year period, the library clearly stressed the importance of acquiring these scarce and important, reference materials as one would find in a public, national or academic library. Therefore, in the absence of the all-important proposal book, and other related institutional records, the methodology used here has led to a better understanding of the subject areas within the library's holdings. Indeed, this indicates that the library's remit to provide these works for wider public access was achieved.

Substantial historical research on the background history of eighteenth-century Dublin was conducted, including a robust analysis of the associational world in the capital. This provided the necessary context for an examination of the Dublin Library's origins and the public reception that it received. It was evident that all previous attempts at examining the establishment of the Dublin Library had been incomplete. Using previously neglected primary sources, particularly contemporary newspapers, far more information was gathered, analysed and synthesised regarding the chain of events leading to the opening of the library. Themes of patriotism, improvement, and inclusivity characterised the long-awaited establishment of the subscription library. The primary sources revealed that such a venture was wanting in a city had been witnessing a gradual expansion of a reading public amidst a thriving print culture. Despite the sectarian setting of penal laws and the Anglican Ascendancy, the Dublin Library, through an analysis of its remit and its membership, was far more inclusive than its institutional contemporaries—the library of Trinity College Dublin, Marsh's Library, Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy. Data gathered from contemporary newspapers revealed the library's active demonstration of interconfessional sociability among its members.

As expected, there were methodological challenges in assessing the validity of contemporary newspapers. Considerable analysis of eighteenth-century Dublin papers and their proprietors revealed biases in views on degrees of support or opposition towards independence and Catholic emancipation. While this is meant to be a history of an early public library, one would think that newspaper coverage on this urban library would be universally favourable as a public good. However, while the utility of library service provision for those who could afford it would be universally welcome, the library was indeed established in a backdrop of patriotic fervour with political and religious tensions. An example of this is the letter from 'Publicola' to the editor of an Ascendancy newspaper, in which he provided his own biased and erroneous interpretation of the establishment of the Dublin Library as an institution of the Established Church, going so far as to suggest that Catholics were permitted so that they could be convinced to convert. Publicola's version was refuted by a library committee's report on the foundation of the library from its own journals.⁷

Logically, the same papers that promoted Irish patriotism by calling for increased legislative independence from Britain, the improvement of the balance of trade between the two countries, and, at the very least, relaxation of the penal laws, also promoted Enlightenment ideals of democracy, self-sufficiency, improvement, and toleration. In the context of institutions such as the Dublin Library, representing the shift in Dublin's public sphere away from the official (church and state) institutions to the unofficial, expanding, interconfessional public sphere, it was these same newspapers who promoted the library. Importantly, the library chose to include their notices in the same newspapers as a *quid pro quo* between like-minds. While on the other hand, conservative newspapers in the pay of Dublin Castle, railed against any form of relaxation of the penal laws in support of upholding the Anglican Ascendancy, attacked societies calling for varying degrees of independence, and, in some cases, denounced any form of improvement among readers from lower social orders. Their support for maintaining existing government and anti-Enlightenment policies and institutions can help explain the absence of news and notices about the Dublin Library Society in their papers. This also

⁷ See p. 262-263.

might clarify why the Dublin Castle informant, Francis Higgins, editor of the *Freeman's Journal*, had misgivings about the Dublin Library and labelled it a den of rebellious activity.

However, it was the membership of the Dublin Library—not so much the library's utility—that was an issue for Higgins. One of the objectives of this examination was to learn more about the library through a prosopographical analysis of its members. This was to determine their occupational backgrounds, associational activities, and relationships amongst each other. Greater insight into the composition of the library has been achieved through this approach. Prior identification was limited to those members who had entries in either the *Dictionary of National Biography* (before the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*) or the *Dictionary of Irish Biography*. Understandably, this led to the highlighting of only the noteworthy individuals who joined, thereby leaving out the vast majority. For instance, only forty-nine out of 310 members feature in the *DIB*.⁸ This did not help explain the overall representation of the membership. Impressions given by the listing of notables such as the **Earl of Charlemont**, **Lord Cloncurry** and several Trinity College fellows initially suggested a decidedly upper-class representation. Granted, the library's list of members indicates that clergymen, physicians, and members of the Royal Irish Academy were also prominently represented.⁹ However, the identification of some members of the United Irishmen who had entries in the collective biographies stimulated further exploration into the possibilities of United Irish membership among lesser-known Dublin Library members not in the national biographies.

Therefore, this prosopographical approach helped achieve the objectives of learning more about *all* the members rather than simply the remarkable ones. As prosopography was not the subject for this dissertation—rather simply a methodological approach—this suited the strategy of concentrating on answering the essential, relevant historical questions, such as dates, education, occupations and associational activities of the lesser-known

⁸ *DIB*.

⁹ For a general study on membership composition in English libraries, see Allan, *A Nation of Readers*, 64-78.

individuals and the notable ones equally.¹⁰ Therefore, a partial method was preferred rather than a total one that would have consisted of a far lengthier research questionnaire.¹¹ This way, the results from the prosopographical research complimented the historical research on the library.

The assessment of associational activity among Dublin Library members was a way of determining personal preferences or beliefs. For instance, **William Drennan** belonged to patriotic institutions, championing the cause for Irish independence in varying degrees. His motives were clear. Even his *DIB* entry describes him as a 'physician, patriot, and minor poet'.¹² There were many lesser-known individuals not included in the national biographies whose names were also absent from lists or writings on the various clubs and societies studied here, and so did not appear to participate in further formal associational activity. However, other sources provided clues about these people. **Joshua Edkins**, the Dublin Library's first librarian, did not belong to any clubs or societies, but patriotically promoted Irish literary culture through his publications. **John Blachford** was a Trinity College student in 1791. His father was Librarian of Marsh's Library and his sister was the poet Mary Tighe. Evidently, there were strong literary associations in Blachford's family and this could explain his desire to join the Dublin Library as a student. Further information on him—in the form of an annotated sales catalogue—revealed that he was an avid bibliophile, making numerous purchases of rare books.

Examples like these, where possible, help shed light on the motivations of somewhat anonymous individuals for participating in a subscription library. Significantly, where there are no clues of connections or associational activity, the occupations were very important to determine the overall composition of the library. This enabled the conclusion that the Dublin Library was far more representative of a cross-section of the reading public than similar institutions in eighteenth-century Dublin. For this reason, the prosopographical research makes the gunsmith, **John Rigby**, a more remarkable figure than the Earl of

¹⁰ Verboven et al. discuss 'schools' of prosopographical research: one studying elites; the other, studying anonymous groups, in Verboven et al., "Art of Prosopography," 42.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 47.

¹² *DIB*.

Charlemont. One would have expected such a renowned Irish peer to be part of this library initiative but the idea of a tradesman joining the Dublin Library gives justification and validity to the prosopographical research. Further investigation into Rigby revealed that he was a lesser-known United Irishman and it is conceivable that he was acquainted with some or several fellow United Irishmen who had also joined the Dublin Library at the same time.

Therefore, the valuable evidence drawn from the analysis of occupational and associational activity among Dublin Library founding members justifies this prosopographical research approach as a contribution to knowledge. Initially intended only for the first two committees, the work was enlarged to include all founding subscribers, thereby revealing far greater connections within various organisations. The analysis revealed significant cross-confessional participation in Dublin's associational world in the eighteenth century. Additionally, several members belonged to multiple associations known for their patriotic support of Irish commercial, charitable, cultural, economic, and intellectual efforts. Indeed, the prosopographical research has shown relationships with one another through their active participation in clubs and societies. Also, the worlds of formal and an informal literary associational culture, combined, give evidence to the diversity of the Dublin Library's membership. The sociogram (at page 164) depicting the connections that existed among the 1791 and 1792 Dublin Library committees and officers shows an intense amount of this interconnectivity and evidence of the social milieu in late-eighteenth-century Dublin.

The identification of this milieu has been invaluable for highlighting the Dublin Library's significance in the social and political history of Dublin. John Rigby, and several like him, exemplifies the expanding reading public in eighteenth-century Dublin. Another objective of this study was to show that the Dublin Library developed out of the efforts of the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy, as a product of the 'Enlightened public sphere' in Dublin. Many Dublin Library founding members belonged to one or both intellectual institutions but the Dublin Library was a far more accessible library service provider. However, it has been argued above that perhaps most significantly, the Dublin Library attracted the middling classes who were not members of the

Dublin Society or Royal Irish Academy, since admission was based not on connection, confession or status, but on ability to pay a relatively nominal fee.

As mentioned, prior studies highlighted only those founding members who have appeared in editions of national biographies over the years, the latest in 2009.¹³ Through the methodological approach of a prosopographical analysis, all but eight Dublin Library founding members were identified with at least their occupations listed. This facilitated the conclusion that far from being a library catering to the nobility and clergy of the city, the growing middling classes represented the largest take-up of membership. Also, despite a sizable representation of founding members who, prior to 1791, were members of the Dublin Society and/or the Royal Irish Academy, a clear majority of these members did not belong to either of those societies, nor were they affiliated with the college. Therefore, before the arrival of the National Library in 1877, the Dublin Library Society was the *de facto* public library of Dublin in the late-eighteenth and early-to-mid nineteenth centuries. Indeed, for students, it was an ideal public reference library in the capital, and this adds to our knowledge of public library options in the late-eighteenth century for those in university and law school.

Another worthy contribution to knowledge is the attention given to the Dublin Library as an importantly significant example of interconfessional sociability in the late-eighteenth century. Recent work on associational culture has shown evidence of this within some clubs and societies. However, of the intellectual and educative public institutions active at this time—Trinity College, Marsh's Library, Dublin Society, and the Royal Irish Academy—the Dublin Library was *the* genuine example of an interconfessional association. Although there were similar cases in British libraries with cross-confessional representation in an environment beset by sectarian differences, explicitly formal measures enshrined in law, ensuring the dominance of a minority over a majority was rare in Europe by the late-eighteenth century.¹⁴ Therefore, the Dublin Library

¹³ McGuire, James and James Quinn, eds., *Dictionary of Irish Biography: From the Earliest Times to the Year 2002*, 9 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009). The latest publication to address the Dublin Library Society identified Caleb Jenkin as the City Alderman and Richard Edward Mercier as bookseller to Trinity College: Archbold, "Book Clubs and Reading Societies in the Late Eighteenth Century," 156.

¹⁴ Manley, "Jeremy Bentham has Been Banned," 172-177; McBride, *Eighteenth-Century Ireland*, 202-207.

was more a product of the Enlightenment than it was of the Ascendancy. Hence, the bewildered observations from London at the landslide election victory of an Anglican opponent of Catholic emancipation, over a Catholic reformer, by an overwhelmingly Catholic membership.¹⁵ Moreover, when confession, connection, status, and profession are all considered, the Dublin Library, above all others, can be regarded as a public library for most Dubliners in an eighteenth-century context.¹⁶

Indeed, with the endorsement of the newspaper press, it projected itself as an enlightened institution that could participate with other contemporary societies in the diffusion of Enlightenment ideals.¹⁷ Importantly, the diverse representation of the Dublin Library's founding membership, reflected in its cross-confessional composition, shows that—despite Michael Brown's contention that the Irish Enlightenment project collapsed after 1798—the Dublin Library continued to flourish as an oasis of Enlightenment principles after the Rebellion, when Ireland descended into deeper sectarianism. From an analysis of newspaper reportage in the early years of the nineteenth century, the evidence clearly suggests that the library strove to maintain its interconfessional character and was regarded as a political template with aspirations that it be replicated on a national scale. This is arguably the most significant contribution to knowledge from this examination of the Dublin Library Society.

Intriguingly, the setting of the Dublin Library within the politically charged atmosphere of the 1790s has been mentioned in studies of the United Irishmen in eighteenth-century Irish history but relatively ignored in the field of Irish library history. For instance, the allegation of the library as a meeting place for the United Irishmen has been related in a biography of the Irish emancipator, Daniel O'Connell and in an edited volume of letters from an informant to Dublin Castle.¹⁸ The arrest of another founder member of the Dublin Library, **Thomas**

¹⁵ *The Times* (London), 22 November 1834.

¹⁶ That is, a context whereby women and the poor were still excluded.

¹⁷ Kelly and Powell, "Introduction," in *Clubs and Societies*, 31.

¹⁸ O'Connell, *Daniel O'Connell: His Early Life and Journal*, 130; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 227-228.

Braughall, was related in a biographical essay on him.¹⁹ However, the third similar incident—wherein a fellow Dublin Library member forewarned the architect **James Gandon** that a rebellion was imminent—is the only instance that has already been (only recently) included in a library history context.²⁰ Albeit a small, even anecdotal, contribution to knowledge, further information collected from several sources points to the likelihood of **William James MacNeven** as that person who advised Gandon to abscond.

Finally, unlike all previous secondary-source accounts of the Dublin Library Society, this study has not relied solely on nineteenth-century histories and guidebooks. Rather, perusal of the untapped resource of eighteenth-century Irish newspapers has facilitated the reconstruction of the establishment of the Dublin Library within an environment of cultural patriotism promoted by the library, the newspapers, and their readers. Moreover, it is noted here that the library was founded seven weeks earlier—22 March 1791—than the previously acknowledged date of 10 May 1791.²¹ Additionally, the discovery that the individuals who met at the very first meeting at Archer's General Book-Repository all were elected as the first committee of the library, helps explain how those who were not part of Richard Kirwan's circle or the group from the Royal Irish Academy, could have ended up being elected to the committee. Therefore, substantially more light has been shed on the creation of the Dublin Library than was previously known.

Perhaps one of the reasons why there has not been more work conducted on the Dublin Library Society is that a project dedicated to the history of Irish libraries has yet to be undertaken. Such a work could combine the existing substantial corpus of literature on institutional and private libraries and coffee houses and the print trade in Ireland, along with fresh research in these areas. Also, another possible area of research that could be part of this project is a study of Dublin circulating and subscription libraries of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. And of course, a full-length history of the Dublin Library Society, from its inception to its demise, would also be a worthwhile

¹⁹ Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 44.

²⁰ Archbold, "Book Clubs and Reading Societies in the Late-Eighteenth Century," 157.

²¹ See p. 139-140.

contribution to Irish library history and the wider realm of social and cultural history of Dublin in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is intended that this study of the library's first years can stimulate further interest in research into its subsequent years of operation and membership.

Closing Remarks

In a historical context, the Dublin Library Society, emerged during an episode in Irish society that embraced Enlightenment principles of toleration, civility, and improvement. Significantly, it continued to flourish amidst the destruction of the Irish Enlightenment project due to rebellion and its aftermath. In a library history context, the Dublin Library—incorporating members from its 'two elder brothers, the Dublin Society and the Royal Irish Academy' with the emerging classes—represented an extension of the literary public sphere, separate from church and state.²²

From 1791, the capital's only public subscription library in the eighteenth century had a membership that represented a greater comprehensive cross-section of Dubliners than other contemporary associational entities. In the turbulent years leading into the nineteenth century, the Dublin Library was an oasis of Enlightenment in an increasingly politicised and divided society. Although it prospered in the first half of the nineteenth century, it began its descent into obsolescence around the time of the establishment of the National Library of Ireland in 1877. The recommendation to turn the library of the Royal Dublin Society into a national repository was reminiscent of the motives for establishing the Dublin Library Society and public opinion towards it. In 1836, a House of Commons Select Committee reported that the

Library of the Dublin Society ought to be considered as intended, not solely for the advantage of the comparatively few individuals who belong to the Society, but as a National Library, accessible under proper regulations to respectable persons of all classes, who may be desirous to avail themselves of it for the purpose of literary research.²³

²² Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 404-407; Melanctus, *Secret History of the Dublin Library Society*, 40.

²³ Great Britain, Parliament, House of Commons, *Report from the Select Committee on the Royal Dublin Society, Together with the Minutes of Evidence, and Appendix* (London: [HMSO], 1836), H.C. 1836 (445), xii, quoted in Gerard Long, *A Twinge of Recollection*, 1.

Despite its final demise in 1881—by then, known as much for its billiards room as its library—the Dublin Library nonetheless acted as an important public repository for Dubliners for ninety years. It is curious then, that although established at a time of political, religious fervour and sectarian strife, it has been regarded largely as a footnote in Irish library history. From its foundation, the library actively pursued an admissions policy that transcended other literary and improving societies in the capital. The strength of its early holdings was in history and antiquities, but its relatively comprehensive collection of contemporary newspapers, periodicals, transactions, reviews, dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and catalogues indicates that it acted as the city's *de facto* public reference library. For example, Thomas Bermingham, in his *Statistical Evidence in Favor of State Railways in Ireland*, noted how he was able to access important information in parliamentary reports from the Dublin Library Society in 1841.²⁴ As a chairman of the General Irish Railway Committee, Bermingham used the library for his professional work, but there is insufficient evidence to definitively conclude that others did as well.²⁵ Nonetheless, examples of George Barnes and Daniel O'Connell have shown that the library was an important, influential repository for forming intellectual foundations and shaping political opinions. Moreover, contemporary reports have highlighted that the Dublin Library was a welcome addition to the literary public sphere in the capital and lauded for its enlightened inclusivity and utility during a period of sectarian and political conflicts that culminated in the fracturing of Irish society and, ultimately, political union with Britain.

²⁴ Thomas Bermingham, *Statistical Evidence in Favor of State Railways in Ireland, With the Speech of Thomas Bermingham, Esq. of Caramana, Kilconnel, County of Galway* (Dublin: John Chambers, 1841), Appendix, xciv.

²⁵ For work on the use of libraries in a professional capacity, using the example of eighteenth-century Leeds, see Rebecca Bowd, "Useful Knowledge or Polite Learning? A Reappraisal of Approaches to Subscription Library History," 182-195. For the same in a rural, Scottish setting, see Towsey, "Store their Minds with Much Valuable Knowledge': Agricultural Improvement at the Selkirk Subscription Library, 1799-1814," 569-584.

Appendix 1: Prosopography of the Dublin Library Society Committees, 1791-1792

Dublin Library Society (DLS) committee members in **bold**.

Dublin Library Society (DLS) founding subscribers in **bold italics**.

* Appears as a DLS member in the 1812 list: DLS, *Members List*, 1812

Rev. Christopher Adamson, L.L.D. (d. 1798) — DLS committee: 1791; clergyman, curate and lecturer, St. Mark's Church, Townsend Street, 1772-1797; entered TCD, 31 May 1763; LLB and LLD, 1778; lived at 17 Park Street, Dublin; Secretary, Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1792 (**William Watson** was one of the society's members and booksellers); member of the Abecedarian Society (in aid of distressed schoolmasters and their families) in 1791 of which **Samuel Whyte** was the founder, with **Richard Graves**, **Lewis Lyons**, **Joseph Cooper Walker**, and twenty other DLS founding members (Table 15, p. 215); known to have run a school, having taught Sir Ambrose Hardinge Giffard (1771-1827); died in 1798.¹

Mr Thomas Archdeakon, Jun.* — DLS committee: 1791; artist, portrait and landscape engraver/delineator; attended the Dublin Society School of Architectural Drawing in 1778; provided drawings for **Samuel Whyte's** *Collection of Poems...* (1792); married the daughter of **Joseph Kelly** in 1795; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by subscription and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the DLS; donated Baker's *Biographia Dramatica* (2 vols.) and Harris's *History of Dublin* to the DLS; appears on the 1812 DLS as a lifetime member; his son, Thomas Archdeakon, Jun. appears on an addendum of the same list: 'New Members for 1812'.²

¹ WDD 1792, 138; AD, 4; DIB (entry for John Giffard); Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 81.

² National Library of Ireland (NLI), Online Catalogue, Dept. of Prints and Drawings (PD 1976 TX 31): Grose, *Antiquities of Ireland*, 1, plate 15; NLI, *Online Catalogue*, Dept. of Prints and Drawings (EP GERA-TH [1] I & PA 829); Rosalind M. Elmes, *Catalogue of Engraved Irish Portraits Mainly in the Joly Collection, and Original Drawings* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1937), 79; Willemson, *Dublin Society Drawing Schools*, 2; Whyte, *Collection of Poems* (1792), viii; Archer; *Walker's Hibernian Magazine*, October 1795, 384; DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, xxvii; DLS, *Members List*, 1812.

Mr John Archer (active 1782-1810) — Bookseller to the DLS 1791-1792; publisher, sales agent and one of the most successful and prominent booksellers in the Dublin print trade in the last two decades of the eighteenth century; began his career in Crampton Court, off Dame Street in 1782 as Archer & Cawthorne; settled into 80 Dame Street in 1788; between 1782 and 1800, his name appears as a publisher of over one hundred titles—either as a sole publisher or part of a group of publishers—among them fellow DLS members: **William Jones**, **James Moore**, **William Watson**, **Luke White**, **Richard White**, and *Dublin Chronicle* proprietor **William Sleater**; opened his General Book-Repository in December 1788 as a combination of a bookshop and reading room; a group of individuals—many of whom were subscribers to a number of his publications—met there in 1791 and formed the Dublin Library Society; Archer continued his bookselling business and was bookseller to the DLS until July 1792; during this time he was mentor to DLS Secretary, **Richard Edward Mercier** until the latter started his own business; won praise from one of Archer’s prominent Irish customers, **Lord Charlemont**, for his sale, along with **William Jones**, of the library of Denis Daly (see p. 124-126); also served the Bellew and Edgeworth families; seller, along with **William Allen**, of *A Plan of the City of Dublin [...] 1797* (p. 106).³

George Barnes, Esq. (b. 1767)* — DLS committee: 1791; younger brother of **Thomas Barnes, Junior**; cousin of **Samuel Edmund Barnes**; formerly Royal Navy Officer, then began his law studies (Gray’s Inn/King’s Inn); by 1791: attorney, King’s Bench & Exchequer along with **James Bradish**, **John Fullerton**, and **Colley Grattan**; admitted as a barrister in 1795; had residences at Usher’s Island and 26 Denmark Street; his book donations: Bougainville’s *Voyage to Falkland’s Islands* (his inscription in this book: ‘A present to the Dublin Library from Mr. George June 14th 1791’ and with another inscription at the top of E2(r) ‘Ex libris George Barnes 1767’); Baird’s *Dissertations on the Old Testament*; *Terentii Comoedia*; Locke *On Government*; Harris’s *Hibernica*, 8vo.; Batchelor, *Collection of Essays*, 2 vols. 12mo.; *Lettres de M. de Voltaire*, 8vo.; Le Clerc’s *Harmony of the Evangelists*;

³ Kennedy, “The Domestic and International Trade of an Eighteenth-Century Dublin Bookseller”; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 11-12; Archer; *ESTC*; *Town; or Dublin Evening Packet*, 6 December 1788.

Irish Traveller, 8vo.; *Bower's History of the Popes*, 4 vols.; Barnes was author of the pamphlet, *The Rights of the Imperial Crown of Ireland, Asserted and Maintained*; he wrote in the preface that his purpose was 'to launch my Frigate of Patriotism into the Sea of Public Opinion'.⁴

Rev. John Barrett, D.D. S.F.T.C.D. (1753-1821) — DLS founding subscriber: 1791; DLS committee: 1792; Senior Fellow, TCD; son of a Church of Ireland cleric; entered TCD in 1770, aged 16; DD in 1790; Trinity College Librarian: 1791-1806; 1809-1812; and 1814-1821; also held professorial posts and published a number of works during his career; contemporary of other TCD fellows, **Arthur Browne**, **Thomas Elrington**, **Richard Graves**, **George Hall**, **Robert Perceval**, **Vesey Ward**, and **Matthew Young**, while Barrett was Librarian at Trinity College; fed up with College bookseller William McKenzie, while TCD Librarian, Barrett replaced him with **Richard Edward Mercier**; edited the college's *Codex Z. Dublinenses Rescriptus* of St. Matthew, published by Mercier in 1801.⁵

James Bradish, Esq. — DLS founding subscriber 1791; DLS committee: 1792; lawyer; entered King's Inn in 1777; attorney, K.C.E. [King's Bench, Court of Appeals, Exchequer]; Solicitor in Chancery with **George Barnes**, **John Fullerton**, and **Colley Grattan**; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by subscription and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the DLS; resided in Aungier Street, close to Archer's shop and the DLS.⁶

Arthur Browne, L.L.D. S.F.T.C.D. (1756-1805) — DLS committee: 1791; DLS Vice-President: 1792; Senior Fellow, TCD, lawyer, and MP for TCD; born in Newport, Rhode Island, son of a Protestant missionary; entered TCD in 1772, aged 15 or 16; completed his LLD in 1784 and practiced in the civil law courts; elected to the Irish Parliament in 1783, representing Trinity College 'without the customary family connection'; re-elected in 1790 and 1797;

⁴ Barnes, *Rights of the Imperial Crown of Ireland Asserted and Maintained*, title page & iii; *KIAP*, 20; *DLS, Catalogue*, 1792, xxv-xxvi; Rulon-Miller Books.

⁵ *AD*, 42; Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 355-356; 112; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 77; Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 111-112.

⁶ *KIAP*, 49; *WDD* 1792, 119; Archer.

Regius Professor of Civil and Canon Law, TCD in 1785; Trinity College Librarian for 1791; his work covered a wide range of subjects: religion, literature and law; read Greek, Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish, but also had a working knowledge of German, Hebrew, and Persian; contemporary of other fellows, **John Barrett, Thomas Elrington, Richard Graves, George Hall, Robert Perceval, Vesey Ward,** and **Matthew Young**; author of numerous publications, especially in Irish antiquities; founding member of the Royal Irish Academy of which he was also a vice-president (nominated by **Lord Charlemont** with **Richard Kirwan**) and a member of its Committee of Antiquities in 1792 (with **Rev. Edward Ledwich** and **William Watson**); contributor to the RIA's *Transactions*; member of the Monks of the Screw (with **Lord Charlemont, William Drennan, Joseph Pollock** and John Philpot Curran, DLS President in 1812) and the Whig Club in Dublin (with Lord Charlemont, Pollock, **Francis Burroughs, Richard Jebb, George Maquay, Theobald McKenna, Joshua Pim,** and **Charles Ward**); often voiced his opposition to Dublin Castle, siding with the Patriots: 'claimed that Ireland owed the achievement of legislative independence to events in America rather than British generosity'; believed in the reform of parliament but not republicanism and the United Irishmen; moderate supporter of relief of Catholics from the penal laws; informant Francis Higgins claimed that Browne took to the streets with the students in support of Catholic emancipation; initially against Union but later supported it; after his death in 1805, Browne's celebrated library of law books went to auction, with James Vallance holding the sale at his rooms at 6 Eustace Street, the same location as the DLS.⁷

Rt. Hon. The Earl of Charlemont (1728-1799) — DLS subscriber 1792; DLS President 1792-1799; Caulfeild, James, 1st Earl of Charlemont; born 18 August 1728, Castle Caulfeild, Co. Tyrone; resided in Dublin at Charlemont House, Rutland Square; seat in the House of Lords, 7 October 1755; President of the Hibernian Society in 1755; member of the Dublin Society from 1762; Whig politician; leader of the Irish Volunteer movement that achieved legislative independence for Ireland in 1782; Charlemont was a leading figure

⁷ *DIB; AD, 102; KIAP, 55; Fox, Trinity College Library Dublin, 355; DIB; Bartlett, Revolutionary Dublin, 76; Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800," 270-280; Pollard, Dublin's Trade in Books, 218.*

in the Monks of the Screw (with **Arthur Browne**, **William Drennan**, **Joseph Pollock** and John Philpot Curran, DLS President in 1812) and the Whig Club of Ireland with Browne, Pollock, **Francis Burroughs**, **Richard Jebb**, **George Maquay**, **Theobald McKenna**, **Joshua Pim**, and **Charles Ward**; first President of the Royal Irish Academy's in 1785; revered patriot despite his disapproval of the United Irishmen and the enfranchisement of Catholics, the latter he reluctantly supported in 1793; although he differed greatly in political outlook from many of his contemporaries—and indeed, fellow DLS members—he still drew universal respect from those people with whom he differed; although he did not actively take part in the affairs of the library, lending his name to the presidency gave the fledgling institution invaluable legitimacy and attraction; on his own library and cultural patriotism, Kelly noted that Charlemont was renowned for 'his refined aesthetic sensibility and support for intellectual endeavour' through his willingness to support Irish cultural activity in public institutions; his correspondence involves friends and acquaintances who were members of the DLS: **Joseph Cooper Walker**, **Richard Kirwan**, **Robert Perceval**, **Capel Molyneux**, **John Archer**, and **Richard Edward Mercier**; died in 1799, before Union was imposed on Ireland.⁸

William Cope, Esq. (1738-1820) — DLS Treasurer 1791-1799; silk merchant, local politician; ran a lucrative family business in the silk trade at 81 Dame Street (also an office at Shaw's Court and residence in Merrion Square); formed a business partnership with **John Binns** and relocated to Shaw's Court; active member of Dublin societies and municipal politics; founding member of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce (with **Samuel Dick**, **Alexander Jaffray**, **George Maquay**, **Joshua Pim**, and **Abraham Wilkinson**); member of the Dublin municipal assembly; elected Sheriff of Dublin [declined]; member of the Ouzel Galley Society (with Dick, Jaffray, **William Digges La Touche**, Maquay, Pim, **Charles Ward**, and Wilkinson); member of the Guild of Merchants; organiser of several local charities in Dublin; member of the Dublin Society since 1772; proposed **Thomas Braughall**, a Catholic, for admittance into the Dublin Society in 1777; Cope

⁸ *DIB*; Kelly, "Lord Charlemont and Learning," 395-399; *RDS*; Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, *Manuscripts and Correspondence of James, First Earl of Charlemont*, vol. 2, 1784-1799.

was a ubiquitous and paradoxical figure in Dublin in the last two decades of the eighteenth century; although well-respected by Catholics and Dissenters, he was a staunch defender of Ascendancy politics, frequently opposed to any concessions towards Catholic relief, especially a successful resolution against Catholics in the municipal assembly; despite his Ascendancy stance, he enjoyed the respect and admiration of those radicals who voted for him in the Dublin Corporation; his election as treasurer of the DLS—composed of several radicals and Catholics—can be explained by this description of him: ‘In all these respects, he was the sort of man the radicals wished to see elected to responsible civic posts: possessed of independent means, he would be above the temptation of patronage and corruption, and accordingly able to fulfil his proper constitutional role’; Royal Canal Company director in 1791 with Binns, Ward, **James Connolly**, and **Andrew Daly**; proposed **Jeremiah D’Olier**—a fellow member of the Chamber of Commerce, member of the Dublin Corporation, and prominent merchant—into the Dublin Society on 26 January 1792, before D’Olier’s election to the 1792 DLS committee; Cope maintained his stance against Catholic relief; he was also instrumental in facilitating the passage of information to the government during the 1798 rebellion, after which his reputation, status, and merchant business went into decline as a result; however, he did come to the rescue of his old Catholic friend and fellow member of the DLS, Braughall after the latter had been arrested in the library and taken to Dublin Castle; active subscriber to **John Archer**’s publications by subscription and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the Dublin Library.⁹

Jeremiah D’Olier, Esq. (1745-1817) — DLS founding member: 1791; DLS committee: 1792; goldsmith, jeweller, director and governor of the Bank of Ireland; appointed a director days before his election to the DLS committee; became governor in 1797; founding member of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce (with **William Cope**, **Samuel Dick**, **Alexander Jaffray**, **George Maquay**, **Joshua Pim**, and **Abraham Wilkinson**; in 1791, **Alexander Jaffray, Jr.** was also a member; member of the Guild of Merchants; Dublin

⁹ *DIB*; RDS; Hill, “Politics of Dublin Corporation: 1760-92,” 100; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 82; Griffith, “Dublin’s Commercial Clubs,”; Hammond, “Mr. William Cope’s Petition,” 25-26; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 329-330; Hammond, “Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803”; Archer.

City Sheriff, 1788 and 1790; elected member of Dublin Society on 26 January 1792, proposed by Cope and **Thomas Braughall**; his kinsmen, **Joseph, Isaac, Isaac Jr.**, and **Robert Henry D'Olier** were all founding members; supporter of Roman Catholic emancipation; D'Olier went on to propose fifty-nine candidates for the Dublin Society, chiefly from Dublin's merchant community.¹⁰

William Drennan, M.D. (1754-1820)* — DLS member: 1791; DLS committee: 1792; physician, pamphleteer; Presbyterian, born in Belfast; moved to Dublin in December 1789; member of the Royal Irish Academy and Monks of the Screw (with **Lord Charlemont, Arthur Browne, Charles O'Neil**, and **Joseph Pollock**); Drennan published *Letters of Orellana, an Irish Helot* in 1785, calling for the Irish Volunteers to unite Catholics and Protestants and support the drive for Irish freedom from English control; opposed the Whig Club for its conservatism, in favour of the Whigs of the Capital, joining **William James MacNeven, Randal McAllister, Theobald McKenna**, and **James Moore** towards a 'more assertive reformism'; approximately six months after becoming a founder member of the DLS, Drennan helped form the Dublin Society of United Irishmen in November 1791; several of the founding members of the DLS were also early members of the United Irishmen, including: **John Sweetman** (Drennan was his proposer), **Lewis Lyons, William James MacNeven**, and **Theobald McKenna** (the latter two were also physicians); Drennan served as President of the Dublin United Irishmen and framed many of the society's resolutions; his acquittal for libel in 1794 was aided by the counsel of John Philpot Curran (President of the DLS in 1812); Drennan also knew Kirwan, Pollock, McKenna, and **Robert Perceval** before the formation of the DLS, through their common interests—be it through medicine & science, politics, or their affiliation with the RIA; Drennan was also an active member of reading societies in Ulster, to where he ultimately retired, having withdrawn from the United Irishmen before its revolutionary phase; although occasionally suspicious of Catholic intentions, Drennan continued to

¹⁰ RDS; Griffith, "Dublin's Commercial Clubs,"; *Hibernian Journal*, 30 March 1792; *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 21 April 1795; RDS.

advocate for an Ireland free from sectarian conflict; symbolically, the coffin at his funeral was carried by six Catholics and six Protestants.¹¹

Rev. Andrew Dunn (d. 1823)* — DLS committee: 1791 & 1792; Catholic priest, who studied and was ordained at Bordeaux in 1769; returned to Dublin in 1770; curate at St. Catherine's, Dublin, with **Rev. Mr. McCormick**, while **Reverend Bartholomew Sherlock** was parish priest; appointed Secretary to the Board of Trustees at the newly established Royal College of St. Patrick, Maynooth (today National University of Ireland Maynooth) on 25 June 1795 (DLS founding member, Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, **Rev. John Thomas Troy** was also appointed a Trustee); appointed Librarian and Treasurer to the college on 14 May 1800; donated his collection of 3,000 books to form the college library; promoted to President of the College 24 Feb 1803; resigned as President, 27 June 1807 and returned to his former post as Secretary to the Board of Trustees; at that point, he became parish priest of St. Catherine's (after Sherlock's death).¹²

Joshua Edkins, Esq. — DLS member 1791; DLS Librarian: 1791 until 1803; compiler and editor; resided at Gordon's Lane, Charlemont Street, Dublin in 1801 and possibly earlier; published three anthologies of Irish poetry: *A Collection of Poems, Mostly Original, By Several Hands* (1789, 1790, and 1801); **William Drennan**, **Samuel Whyte** (for **Joseph Cooper Walker**), and **William Preston** were contributors; many of his subscribers to the first two volumes became members of the DLS; likely the author ('Hibernicus') of a letter to the subscribers of the DLS, inserted in a Dublin newspaper, on the importance of choosing a suitable librarian; well-placed as a knowledgeable editor and familiar with most of the library's members, Edkins was chosen unanimously as the Dublin Library's first librarian; accepted subscriptions at the Dublin Library for Preston's 1793 *Poetical Works*, published by John Archer; Edkins' 1801 anthology has a dedication 'to the Members of the Dublin Library

¹¹ *DIB*; McBride, "William Drennan and the Dissenting Tradition,"; Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800," 269-270 & 286; *ODNB*; Agnew, ed. *Drennan-McTier Letters*, 1:357; McDowell, "Proceedings," 37; *ODNB*.

¹² Donnelly, *Short Histories of Dublin Parishes*, 9:224; Cormac Stephen Begadon, "Laity and Clergy in the Catholic Renewal of Dublin, c.1750-1830" (PhD diss., National University of Ireland Maynooth, 2009), 295; Great Britain, *British Parliamentary Papers on Ireland*, "Papers Presented to the House of Commons Relating to the Royal College of St. Patrick, Maynooth (London, 1813), 28; Long, "Institutional Libraries and Private Collections," 291.

Society' and the subscriber list highlights those subscribers who were DLS members then; the DLS itself is also listed as a subscriber; both prefaces have patriotic sentiments; Edkins' motive for this project was to introduce lesser-known literary pieces from Irish writers as a collective celebration of the nation's literary talents.¹³

Rev. Thomas Elrington, B.D. F.T.C.D. and M.R.I.A. (1760-1835) — DLS committee: 1791; entered TCD in 1775, aged 15; became a fellow in 1781; completed his BD in 1790 and DD in 1795; Donegal Lecturer in 1790; became Donnellan Lecturer (1795) and held posts as Professor of Mathematics and Natural Philosopher and Provost (1811); later became Church of Ireland Bishop of Leghlin and Ferns in December 1822; his contemporaries at TCD in 1791 were: **John Barrett, Arthur Browne, Richard Graves, George Hall, Robert Perceval, Vesey Ward,** and **Matthew Young**; founding member of the RIA (served on its Committee of Science with **Richard Kirwan** and Perceval) and author of numerous publications; Elrington was an outspoken critic of Catholic emancipation and was one of only five fellows to have supported the Act of Union.¹⁴

Charles Frazer Frizell (b. 1764 or 1765)* — DLS Member-for-Life: 1791; DLS committee: 1792; son of Richard Frizell, farmer/landowner in Wexford; resided at Harcourt Street, Dublin; entered TCD, 6 October 1781, aged 16; Lincoln's Inn, 6 May 1783; called to the Irish bar in 1788; donated a large number of books to the DLS to become a lifetime member; became a member of the RIA in 1793; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by subscription and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the Dublin Library; his father was possibly the same Frizell who in 1798 was a Protestant who was spared the carnage during the rebellion in Wexford when it was reported that the insurrectionists 'would not hurt a hair of his head as he was known to have behaved well to the poor'.¹⁵

¹³ Edkins, ed., *A Collection of Poems, Mostly Original, By Several Hands; Hibernian Journal*, 17 August 1791; see p. 246-249.

¹⁴ *DIB*; *AD*, 263; Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 140-142; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 77 & 79; *DIB*.

¹⁵ *AD*, 311; *KIAP*, 180; *WDD* 1792, 112; *DLS, Catalogue*, 1792, xxvii; Archer; James Robinson, "Charles Frizell (1738-1812): A Surveyor in Co. Kildare," *Dublin Historical Record* 58, no. 1 (Spring 2005): 9.

John J. Fullerton, Esq. [John Johnston Fullerton]* — DLS member: 1791; DLS committee: 1792; resided at 30 Golden Lane, Dublin; entered King's Inns, T 1790; completed in 1794; attorney, K.E., Solicitor in Chancery, as were **George Barnes, James Bradish, Colley Grattan** and several other DLS members; donated De Lolme's *Constitution of England* and Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* to the DLS in 1791-1792; little else is known of Fullerton except that he was an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by subscription and was likely to have been familiar to those in Archer's literary circle as well those in the legal community.¹⁶

Colley Grattan, Esq. (1754-c.1815) — DLS member: 1791; DLS committee: 1792; resided at 4 Cuffe Street; King's Inns: T 1775; attorney, E., Solicitor in Chancery with **George Barnes, James Bradish,** and **John Fullerton,** and several other DLS members; second cousin of the Irish parliamentary leader Henry Grattan and 'through his mother, Hannah Colley, of Arthur Wellesley, later Duke of Wellington'; Grattan became a coroner when he moved to Kildare just before 1798; like Bradish and Fullerton, he was an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by subscription and was likely to have been familiar to those in Archer's literary circle as well those in the legal community.¹⁷

Rev. Richard Graves, M.A. F.T.C.D. and M.R.I.A. (1763-1829) — DLS Committee: 1792; TCD fellow; entered TCD: 5 June 1780, aged 16; elected scholar in 1782; fellow in 1786; BD in 1794; Trinity College Assistant Librarian: 1795-1798; Trinity College Librarian: 1806-1807; was a junior fellow at Trinity with **Thomas Elrington** in 1791, while **John Barrett, Arthur Browne,** and **Matthew Young** were senior fellows; member of the Royal Irish Academy, where he served on the Committee of Polite Literature with **William Preston; William Watson** published his sermon in 1791 for the United Charitable Society for the Relief of Indigent Room-keepers; belonged to the Abecedarian Society with **Christopher Adamson, Samuel Whyte, Lewis Lyons, Joseph Cooper Walker,** and twenty other DLS founding members (Table 15, p. 215);

¹⁶ *AD*, 212; *KIAP*, 180; *WDD* 1792, 122; *DLS, Catalogue*, 1792, xxx; Archer.

¹⁷ *DIB* (son: Thomas Colley Grattan, 1791-1864); *KIAP*, 197; *WDD* 1792, 123; Archer.

became its President in April 1792; member of the Association for Discountenancing Vice and Promoting the Practice of Virtue and Religion, for which he also gave a sermon published by Watson in 1795.¹⁸

Leonard Hodson, Esq. (d. 1792) — DLS committee: 1791 & 1792; son of a Dublin merchant (Leonard); resided at 108 Bride Street; began studies at Middle Temple/King's Inns T 1775; barrister, admitted T 1779; little is known of Hodson; he was a member of the Dublin Society from 1790; was an active subscriber of publications by subscriptions, especially those from **John Archer** of whose literary circle he was likely a part; deleted from the Dublin Society register in 1792, so presumed deceased by then.¹⁹

Rev. Thomas Jones, B.D. (c.1752-1836) — DLS committee: 1791 & 1792; common name; likely Thomas Jones (c.1752-1836); TCD BA 1777, MA 1809; Curate of Mohill (Ardagh), Co. Leitrim, 1779-1799; Vicar of Moyglare, Co. Meath, 1802-1814; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and possibly part of his literary circle; member of the Association for Discountenancing Vice and Promoting the Practice of Virtue and Religion, 1794, with **Richard Graves** and **William Watson**.²⁰

Richard Kirwan, Esq., M.R.I.A. F.R.S. &c. &c. (1733-1812)* — DLS committee: 1791; DLS Vice-President: 1792-1799; DLS President: 1799-1812; chemist, meteorologist, geologist; resided at 11 Newman Street, London and 6 Cavendish Row, Dublin; Catholic, educated in Poitier and Paris; also studied law, converted to the Established Church to qualify for the bar in 1766; Dublin Society member from 1776; elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 1780; member of the Chapter Coffee House Philosophical Society (London) and the Lunar Society (Birmingham) in the 1780s; founder member of the Royal Irish Academy in 1785; served on numerous committees for several years and was

¹⁸ AD, 342; ODNB; Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 355; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 81; *Rights of Irishmen; or National Evening Star*, 5 April 1792; *A Sermon Preached Before the Association for Discountenancing Vice and Promoting the Practice of Virtue and Religion in St Peter's Church, on Friday 25, April 1795 by the Rev. Richard Graves, B.D. F.T.C.D.* (Dublin: Printed for **W. Watson** and Son, Printers to the Association, No. 7 Capel-street, 1795).

¹⁹ *KIAP*, 231; RDS; *WDD* 1792, 113; Archer; RDS.

²⁰ J.B. Leslie, comp., *Clergy of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh: Biographical Succession Lists* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation Diocesan Council, Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh, 2008), 575; Archer.

a frequent contributor to its *Transactions*; Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy in 1791 (until 1800) and, and as with the DLS, President of the Academy from Lord Charlemont's death in 1799 until his own passing in 1812; friend of **Lord Charlemont** and several fellow scientists, including Joseph Priestley, who introduced Kirwan to Unitarianism; Kirwan's residence at 6 Cavendish Row became a meeting place for discussion among eminent scientists, clerics from all confessions (**Lord Bishop of Killala** [John Law], Priestley, Catholic Archbishop **John Thomas Troy**), and intellectuals; although Lord Charlemont was its first president, Kirwan was the Dublin Library Society's founder and chief architect; as with Lord Charlemont, Kirwan's name gave the fledgling library's status a considerable boost in Dublin society and his extensive network of acquaintances, friends, and colleagues proved to be influential in the library's subscription numbers in its inaugural year; along with Lord Charlemont, Kirwan was friends with fellow doctors and scholars from the RIA: **William James MacNeven** (Secretary of the RIA, 1790-1794); **Robert Perceval** (who also served as Secretary of the RIA, 1785-1790); **Matthew Young** (Secretary of the Committee of Science in 1785 with Perceval); Kirwan was also sworn into the United Irishmen by MacNeven, who along with fellow physicians **Theobald McKenna** and **William Drennan**, formed a scientific circle with Kirwan; appears as President in the DLS 1812 list (dated 2 January 1812, before his death on 22 June 1812).²¹

Rev. Edward Ledwich, L.L.B. (c.1737-1823)* — DLS member: 1791; DLS committee: 1792; clergyman, historian, antiquary; son of a brewer, entered TCD: 22 Nov 1755, aged 18; BA 1760; LLB 1763; Ledwich had several clerical duties in England and in Queen's County (Co. Laois); founder member of the precursor to the Royal Irish Academy, the Hibernian Antiquarian Society; **Joseph Cooper Walker** proposed him for membership to the RIA in its inaugural year but he declined; accepted in July 1791; Ledwich published *Antiquities of Ireland* in 1790 and when his friend, Francis Grose passed away in 1791, he completed Grose's work on the same subject between 1791 and 1794; before this, he clashed with Charles Vallencey on interpretations of Irish

²¹ *DIB*; *ODNB*; *KIAP*, 272; *RDS*; Siobhan Fitzpatrick, "Introduction," in Cunningham and Fitzpatrick, eds., *Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library*, xi; Dixon, "Richard Kirwan: The Dublin Philosopher"; McLaughlin, "Richard Kirwan: Part III"; *DLS, Members List*, 1812.

history—one reason why Ledwich did not join the RIA until 1791, as Vallancey was on the Committee of Antiquities from its foundation; Ledwich also contributed to other works on Irish antiquities and cultural history, including **Joseph Cooper Walker's** *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (1786); however, his interpretation of Irish history was heavily influenced by his political sentiments, especially in his staunch opposition to relaxation of the penal laws and the grip of the Ascendancy on a predominantly Catholic and Dissenting nation; Ledwich was also an active subscriber to **Archer's** publications by subscription.²²

Mr. Lewis Lyons [Lewis Alexander Lyons]* — DLS committee: 1791 & 1792; schoolmaster, Arran Quay, Dublin; represented the parish of St. Paul, Dublin (with **James Farrell**) on the Catholic General Committee (9 Feb 1791) with other representatives, **Theobald McKenna, William James MacNeven,** and **John Sweetman**—all having been elected on the same day; Lyons, **Thomas Braughall, Andrew Daly, Richard Dillon, Randall McDonnell, MacNeven, Richard McCormick, Thomas McDonnell, McKenna, Dominick Rice, Thomas Ryan,** and **John Sweetman** were all part of the middle-class merchant/professional wing that wrested control of the Catholic Committee from the aristocratic/clerical wing; member of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen in 1792; member of the Abecedarian Society in 1791 with **Samuel Whyte, Joseph Cooper Walker, Richard Graves, Christopher Adamson** and twenty other DLS founding members (Table 15, p. 215); active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by subscription, and likely part of his literary circle that also included another schoolmaster, Whyte; Lyons was also on the DLS committee in 1812.²³

William James MacNeven, M.D. M.R.I.A. (1763-1841) — DLS committee: 1791 & 1792; physician, scientist, and activist; Catholic, born in Galway; studied science and medicine in Prague and Vienna; fluent in several languages; returned to Dublin, practicing medicine at 115 Capel Street and 16

²² *DIB*; *ODNB*; *AD*, 489; Love, "The Hibernian Antiquarian Society," 420-431; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 79; Archer.

²³ Edwards, "Minute Book," 117; Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-42; O'Flaherty, "Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-26; McDowell, "Personnel," 39; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 271; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 57; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 81; Archer; DLS, *Members List*, 1812.

Jervis Street (near fellow physician **William Gray**, at 12 Jervis Street); became friends with fellow Galwegian and scientist, **Richard Kirwan** at whose house he would frequent for discussion; elected into the Royal Irish Academy 27 Nov 1790; first Catholic elected to an office of the Academy, as its Secretary a member of the Committee of Antiquities in 1791 (proposed by Kirwan, 26 November 1791) with **George Graydon** and **James Gandon**; at this time, **Lord Charlemont** was President, Kirwan, **Robert Perceval**, and **Matthew Young** were on the Committee of Science, and **Richard Graves** served on the Committee of Polite Literature; close personal friend of **Joseph Cooper Walker**, who hosted many of their meetings in the early 1790s; member of the Whigs of the Capital with **William Drennan**, **Randal McAllister**, **Theobald McKenna**, and **James Moore**; representing Navan, Co. Meath, elected to the Catholic General Committee, 9 Feb 1791, along with (fellow doctor) McKenna, **John Sweetman**, and **Lewis Lyons**; MacNeven, **Thomas Braughall**, **Andrew Daly**, **Richard Dillon**, Lyons, **Randall McDonnell**, **Richard McCormick**, **Thomas McDonnell**, McKenna, **Dominick Rice**, **Thomas Ryan**, and Sweetman were all part of the middle-class merchant/professional wing that wrested control of the Catholic Committee from the aristocratic/clerical wing; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by subscription, and likely part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library; that he kept a private library is evidenced by his surviving bookplate; considered likely to have been a founding member of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen at its inaugural meeting on 9 Nov 1791, having dined two days earlier with its founders: (fellow doctor) **William Drennan**, Theobald Wolfe Tone, James Napper Tandy, McCormick, Thomas Russell, and Samuel Neilson; Richard Kirwan was sworn into the United Irishmen by MacNeven; Francis Higgins remarked of a meeting involving the United Irishmen that included MacNeven, **William Dease**, Ryan, and **Walter Wade**: 'in short, every Roman Catholic medical man in the metropolis' who met to prepare publications 'to inflame the minds of the people'; was a member of at least two Freemason lodges in close proximity to the Dublin Library: joined Lodge 202 (5 Palace Street, off Dame Street) on 11 May 1791 with the brewer **John Gorman Kennedy**; he was also the founding Master of the Medical Lodge (no. 792) at the Eagle Tavern (9 Eustace Street, a few doors down from the Dublin Library at 6 Eustace Street) in February 1794 with the

surgeon **James T. Wilkinson** a warden; MacNeven is also alleged to have been a member of a Dublin chapter of the Illuminati; likely the one who warned the architect Gandon to leave Dublin in advance of an imminent insurrection; his role as a leader in the 1798 Rebellion led to his being struck off the registers of the Royal Irish Academy and the Royal College of Physicians; imprisoned in Fort George, Scotland, with John Sweetman; after travels in Europe, he settled in New York and continued to author works on science and Irish political history.²⁴

Theobald McKenna, M.D. M.R.I.A. (1765-1808) — DLS committee: 1791; born in Dublin, son of a Catholic merchant; trained as a physician; resided at Upper Dorset Street and 99 Abbey Street; elected to the RIA in 1790; active member of the Catholic General Committee (representing Waterford) on 9 Feb 1791 (along with **William James MacNeven, John Sweetman, and Lewis Lyons**); Secretary of the Catholic Society of Dublin in October 1791, formed in response to the continued dominance of the conservative faction within the Catholic General Committee; published his *Declaration of the Catholic Society of Dublin* to promote unanimity among Irishmen and to remove religious prejudices (21 Oct 1791); McKenna, **Thomas Braughall, Andrew Daly, Richard Dillon, Lyons, Randall McDonnell, MacNeven, Richard McCormick, Thomas McDonnell, Dominick Rice, Thomas Ryan,** and Sweetman were all part of the middle-class merchant/professional wing that wrested control of the Catholic Committee from the aristocratic/clerical wing; member of the Whig Club with **Lord Charlemont** and **Joseph Pollock**; member of Freemason Lodge, no. 190 (3 Nov 1791) with **Randal McAllister** and **James T. Wilkinson**; also part of the Whigs of the Capital with **William Drennan, MacNeven, McAllister, and James Moore**; joined the Dublin Society of United Irishmen at its inception on 9 Nov 1791 with **William Drennan**—the two doctors also served on committees within the Dublin UI; MacNeven

²⁴ *DIB*; *ODNB*; Dixon, "Richard Kirwan: The Dublin Philosopher," 62; Royal Irish Academy, *RIA Minute Book*, vol. 1, 74; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 78; McDowell, "Personnel," 41; Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800," 286; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 62; Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-42; O'Flaherty, "Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-26; Archer; Martin, *Dictionary of Bookplates of Irish Medical Doctors*, 86-87; Nevin, "Joseph Cooper Walker, 1761-1810: Part II," 44; Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 8 July 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 171-172; Fagan, "Infiltration," 73-79; *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine*, April 1794, 294; Ó Raghallaigh, "William James MacNeven: Born 21 March 1763-Died 12 July 1841," 250-251; Joseph Pollock to Right Hon. [Lord] Mr. Pelham, [Friday] 23 Feb 1798, Rebellion Papers, 620/35/152; MacNeven, *Pieces of Irish History*.

(another physician), Lyons, and Sweetman were also part of the Dublin UI; entered King's Inns 1792; Lincoln's Inn 1794; called to the Irish bar in 1796; somewhat content with the partial reforms of 1792 (Relief Act, allowing some relaxation of the penal laws) and disillusioned with the increased emphasis on radical republican policies of the UI, McKenna delivered his resignation to Drennan, the UI's President on 26 April 1793; four years later, he appeared on the legal prosecution team against the members of the United Irishmen with whom he had been familiar; he then went on to support Union with Great Britain but subsequently became disenchanted after its failure to bring about full Catholic emancipation.²⁵

Mr Richard Edward Mercier, Secretary (c.1760-1820) — DLS Secretary: 1791-1798; bookseller, publisher, printer, and auctioneer; Huguenot; began career in the book trade as apprentice to **John Archer**, Bookseller to the Dublin Library Society in 1791 and part of 1792, at 80 Dame Street, the venue for the initial meetings for the planning and organisation of the Dublin Library; Mercier as secretary of the DLS continued to receive applications for membership at Archer's shop in Dame Street; shortly before Archer voluntarily relinquished his position as Bookseller to the DLS, Mercier went into business for himself (June 1792), travelled abroad to purchase books, then set up his own shop at 31 Anglesea Street (September 1792); by 1793, the business was known as Mercier & Co., with his brother-in-law and fellow Huguenot, **John Dumoulin** as a 'silent partner' (see p. 81-82); produced his *Anthologia Hibernica*, a four-volume collection of literature celebrating the labours of Irish literary talent (subscriber lists included the Dublin Library Society and many of its individual members); Mercier used his publication to advertise the DLS at least once: he published a letter dated 10 June 1727 from Prince Frederick about the Czarina's death and noted that the original is 'in the collection belonging to that most useful and excellent institution, the Dublin Library Society, in Eustace-street'; in his correspondence **Lord Charlemont**, discussing engraved plates in a particular publication, praised the bookseller: 'I have, moreover, been told by Mercier, an intelligent bookseller of this city,

²⁵ *DIB*; *ODNB*; *KIAP*, 312; Edwards, "Minute Book," 119; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 61; Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-42; O'Flaherty, "Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-26; Fagan, "Infiltration," 78-79; Smyth, "Freemasonry and the United Irishmen," 174-175; Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800," 286; McDowell, "Personnel," 40; *Press*, 9 November 1797.

that some plates were already finished...'; according to a local historian, Mercier 'possessed extensive and accurate bibliographical information'; many of the entries in the *Anthologia Hibernica* included favourable reviews of publications by DLS members (e.g. **John Thomas Troy**, Catholic Archbishop of Dublin, and **Theobald McKenna**); became Bookseller and Printer to the Honourable Society of King's Inns in 1794, and to TCD in 1795, appointed by College Librarian **Rev. John Barrett**; published Barrett's edition of *Codex Z. Dublinenses Rescriptus* in 1801; printed **Richard Kirwan's** *Elements of Mineralogy* for a London bookseller in 1796; went bankrupt in 1807; died 3 April 1820, and buried at the Huguenot Cemetery, Merrion Row, Dublin.²⁶

Charles O'Neil, M.P. (c.1729-1731-1793) — DLS member: 1791; DLS Vice-President: 1792-1793; son and heir of John, Shandrum, Co. Cork; residences at Ely Place, Dublin and Monkstown Castle, Co. Dublin; barrister, Middle Temple 1748, King's Inns E 1754; original member of the Monks of the Screw with **Lord Charlemont**, fellow MP **Arthur Browne**, **William Drennan**, and **Joseph Pollock**; also a Whig Club member with Charlemont, Pollock, Browne, and **Theobald McKenna**; member of the Royal Irish Academy from 1790; Member of Parliament for Clonakilty, Co. Cork, 1784-1793; allied with the opposition in parliament, he was reported to have been 'violent in nature and by disposition an enemy of Government'; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by subscription and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the DLS; re-elected as MP on 31 January 1792—just before his election onto the 1792 DLS Committee at the end of March.²⁷

²⁶ Pollard, *Dictionary*, 405-407; *Dublin Chronicle*, 17 March 1792; *Dublin Chronicle*, 16 June 1792; *Hibernian Journal*, 28 September 1792; "Queries and Replies," *Irish Book Lover* 5 (1914): 106-107; Mercier, *Anthologia Hibernica*, vol. 1, January to June 1793, iii-iv; Brigid O'Mullane, "The Huguenots in Dublin: Part I (Continued)," *Dublin Historical Record* 8, no. 4 (September-November 1946): 126; Mercier, *Anthologia Hibernica*, vol. 1, January to June 1793, 198; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Charlemont Manuscripts and Correspondence*, Lord Charlemont to Edmund Malone, letter 216, 22 Nov 1793, 224; Gilbert, *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:334; Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 112; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 406-407; "Queries and Replies," *Irish Book Lover* 5 (1914): 106.

²⁷ *KIAP*, 384; Johnston-Liik, *MPs in Dublin*, 112; Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800," 270; *ODNB*; E.M. Johnston-Liik and the Ulster Historical Foundation, *History of the Irish Parliament 1692-1800: Commons, Constituencies and Statutes* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2007), 5:406; Archer; Edith M. Johnston, "The State of the Irish House of Commons in 1791," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature* 59 (1957-1959): 22, n. 65.

Robert Percival, MD, M.R.I.A. [Robert Perceval] (1756-1839) — DLS member 1791; DLS committee 1792; physician, chemist; entered TCD 1772; BA 1777; Fellow, King's and Queen's College of Physicians (later, Royal College of Physicians of Ireland) 1783; Professor of Chemistry, TCD, 1783; MB and MD 1793; honorary member of the Dublin Society; founding member of the RIA and its first Secretary; also served on its first Committee of Science with **Stephen Dickson**, the Lord Bishop of Clonfert (John Law, later the **Lord Bishop of Killala**), and **Matthew Young**; acquaintance and correspondent of **Lord Charlemont**, President of the RIA; in 1791, Perceval was on the Committee of Science with **Richard Kirwan**, Young, and Stephen Dickson; was a contemporary of **Rev. John Barrett, Young, Thomas Elrington, Rev. Richard Graves**, and **Arthur Browne**, while professor at TCD; Vice-President, College of Physicians in 1791-1792, while Dickson and **Daniel Bryan** were fellows, **Clement Archer** an honorary fellow, and **William Drennan, Henry Kennedy, James Murray, Robert Scott**, and **Walter Wade** were 'licentiates in physick'; Perceval was instrumental in the development of the Royal College of Physicians of Ireland and the opening of Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital in Blind Quay in 1793.²⁸

Joseph Pollock, Esq. (1752-1824) — DLS member 1791; DLS committee 1792; barrister, essayist; born in Newry, Co. Down; admitted to Middle Temple/King's Inns 1773, called to the bar in 1778; a Commissioner of Bankruptcies in 1791 with **Maynard C. Walker**; Captain of the first Volunteer company in Newry, called for inclusion of Catholics into the Volunteers; friend of **William Drennan**, fellow Presbyterian; anonymously published the *Letters of Owen Roe O'Nial* (1779); resided in Bishop Street on his move to Dublin; became a member of the Monks of the Screw in 1779, joining **Lord Charlemont, Arthur Browne, Drennan** and John Philpot Curran; brother-in-law of **William Todd Jones** (United Irishman); also a member of the Whig Club with Browne, Lord Charlemont, **Charles O'Neil**, and **Theobald McKenna**; was present at the inaugural meeting of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen on 7 Nov 1791 and was admitted as an honorary member

²⁸ *DIB*; *ODNB*; *AD*, 662; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 91; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 76-78.

shortly after; fearing that the UI's politics were becoming too republican for his liking, he withdrew; later became an informer to Dublin Castle.²⁹

Rev. Dr. Sherlock [Father Bartholomew Sherlock] (c.1723-1806) — DLS member 1791; DLS committee 1792; trained in the Irish colleges in France and Lisbon; ordained 1 April 1753; Catholic priest of the parishes, St. Audeon's, St. Paul's, and St. Catherine's, Meath Street, Dublin where he resided for 48 years; took the oath of allegiance in 1777; his curates at St. Catherine's were **Rev. Andrew Dunn** and **Rev. Mr. McCormick**; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by subscription—notably, non-religious titles (for example: *Lusiad*; *Athenian Letters*; *Some Account of London*)—and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the DLS; was initially described as a 'moderate' by a Castle spy but soon after became an informer; died 3 July 1806.³⁰

Thomas Smith Esq. (c.1762-c.1837) — DLS committee 1791 & 1792; very common name but believed to be from the legal profession as there are two possibilities: barrister: Lincoln's Inn, M 1786, LLB, E 1791; or, more likely, attorney: entered TCD 8 July 1778, 'aged 16, son of Ambrose, Causidicus', BA 1783; there is also an entry in the King's Inns register of a Thomas Smith who became an attorney during the Michaelmas term in 1785; a perusal of his commonplace book (which lists the first two committees of the Dublin Library Society) reveals an obituary of 'Ambrose Smith, Esq., Father of the Irish Bar', and throughout the book there is a strong indication of an association with others from the legal profession, including **Pemberton Rudd**; resided in Wicklow and possibly Digges Street, Dublin; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by subscription and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the Dublin Library.³¹

²⁹ *DIB*; *ODNB*; *WDD* 1792, 115; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 57; *KIAP*, 405; Joseph Pollock to Right Hon. [Lord] Mr. Pelham, [Friday] 23 Feb 1798, Rebellion Papers, 620/35/152.

³⁰ Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 123, n. 49; Archer; Donnelly, *Short Histories of Dublin Parishes*, 9:224; Begadon, "Laity and Clergy in the Catholic Renewal of Dublin, c.1750-1830," 326.

³¹ *AD*, 762; *KIAP*, 454; Thomas Smith, *Thomas Smith Commonplace Book*, Representative Church Body of Ireland Library, MS 184; *WDD* 1792, 117; Archer.

Walter Stephens, Esq. M.R.I.A. (c.1772-1809) — DLS committee: 1791; clergyman, mineralogist; son of a landowner, Queen's County (Co. Laois); entered TCD 14 Sep 1787; BA 1791; resided in French Street; elected RIA member 28 Jan 1792; was an active subscriber of **John Archer's** publications by subscription and may well have been part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the DLS; donated Ruddy's *Natural History of the County of Dublin* to the DLS; the geologist William Henry Fitton published much of his and Stephens' geological findings in County Dublin after Stephens' death; later member of the Dublin Society (1808), proposed by **Jeremiah D'Olier**; Librarian of the RIA until his death in 1809.³²

John Sweetman, Esq. (1751 or 1752-1826) — DLS committee: 1791 & 1792; brewer, art collector; revolutionary; described in the *ODNB* as an 'Irish nationalist and brewer'; from a prominent Catholic bourgeois family who started a brewery in King Street South, Dublin before establishing their brewery trade in Francis Street and 83 Stephen's Green, Dublin; uncle **William Sweetman** had a brewery at 92 Lower Abbey Street; a nineteenth-century historian dubbed him 'an eminent and opulent citizen of Dublin, of an old and highly respectable family'; elected to the Catholic Committee with **James Connolly** and fellow brewer **John Gorman Kennedy**—all representing St. Andrew's parish, Dublin, 9 Feb 1791—along with twenty-three future DLS founding members (see Table 18, p. 225), including **Lewis Lyons** and doctors **Theobald McKenna** and **William James MacNeven**; leading member of the Catholic Committee from 1791 to 1792; Secretary of Catholic sub-committees from October 1792; Sweetman, **Thomas Braughall**, **Andrew Daly**, **Richard Dillon**, Lyons, **Randall McDonnell**, MacNeven, **Richard McCormick**, **Thomas McDonnell**, McKenna, **Dominick Rice**, and **Thomas Ryan**, were all part of the middle-class merchant/professional wing that wrested control of the Catholic Committee from the aristocratic/clerical wing; admitted to the Dublin Society of United Irishmen on 16 Nov 1792, proposed by the physician, **William Drennan** (president at the time); active in the United Irishmen until his arrest in 1798; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by

³² *AD*, 779; *RDS*; *DIB* (William Henry Fitton); Walter Stephens, *Notes on the Mineralogy of Part of the Vicinity of Dublin* (London: William Phillips, 1812); Archer; Stewart, *Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack*, 1808, 145.

subscription and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the DLS; Sweetman was also a collector of fine European paintings throughout the latter part of the eighteenth century but was forced to sell them after his arrest in 1798; he was member of the Leinster directory of the radicalised, militarised United Irishmen and frequently mentioned by Francis Higgins who reported to Dublin Castle of several meetings of Catholic Committee and United Irishmen members at his house between August 1796 and January 1798; arrested in Francis-street (at his brewery) as part of a roundup of United Irish leaders on 12 March 1798; detained in Kilmainham Prison then sent to Fort George, Scotland as a 'state prisoner' with MacNeven; Wolfe Tone, before his death, was said to have implied that Sweetman was to be the next leader of the continued struggle for independence; however, Sweetman retired to France, then returned to Dublin in 1820 and was active in the plans to build a Catholic cathedral (St. Mary's Pro-Cathedral) for Dublin; paid £307 for its expenses and was on the building committee for 1822-23, with his brother; died in Dublin in May 1826.³³

Joseph Cooper Walker, Esq. (c.1761-1810) — DLS committee: 1791; born in Dublin, son of Cooper Walker, cabinet-maker; older brother of **Samuel Walker**; educated in Dublin by Revd. Thomas Ball; employed as 'Clerk in the Treasury, Court of Exchequer, Treasury-office, Dublin Castle', along with his cousin **Austin Cooper** and **Robert Watson Wade**; antiquary and book collector, resided first at 15 Eccles Street, then at St. Valeri, Bray, Co. Wicklow where he kept a large art collection and library; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the DLS; one of the original members of the RIA in 1785; contributed to its *Transactions* and was secretary of the first committee of antiquities; friend of the **Earl of Charlemont**, many of their letters discussed rare, antiquarian books and manuscripts; travelled extensively through Europe, chiefly Italy on which he was considered an expert; member of several European academies; also part of the intellectual

³³ *DIB*; *ODNB*; *WDD* 1792, 95; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 59; Richard Robert Madden, *The United Irishmen, Their Lives And Times*, 2nd ed. (Dublin: James Duffy, 1860), 4:94; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 72; Edwards, "Minute Book," 118-167; McDowell, "Proceedings," 40; McDowell, "Personnel," 49; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 77, n. 35; *DIB*; Archer; Bartlett notes the sales catalogue of Sweetman's art collection: "Catalogue of A Small Collection of Capital Pictures, the Property of John Sweetman," in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 77, n. 35, citing the Rebellion Papers, RP 620/42/6.

circle that included Lord Charlemont, **Richard Kirwan**, **Matthew Young**, **William James MacNeven**, **William Preston**, Watson Wade, **William Brooke**, and **Edward Ledwich** (whom Walker had proposed for the RIA in 1785); close, personal friends with fellow academician MacNeven whom he would receive at his house regularly in the early 1790s; studied and published on ancient Irish/Gaelic literature, including *Historical Memoirs of the Irish Bards* (1786) (of which Ledwich was a contributor and brother Samuel had also submitted an essay that was ultimately omitted), and provided English translations of Gaelic songs and poems: 'Walker (a member of the Anglo-Irish elite) was consistent in his praise of Gaelic culture, portraying it as sophisticated and literate'; was said to have been loyal to the Crown but a patriotic Irishman who promoted Ireland's ancient past through his literary endeavours; member of the Abecedarian Society in 1791 with **Samuel Whyte**, **Lewis Lyons**, **Richard Graves**, **Christopher Adamson** and twenty other DLS founding members (Table 15, p. 215); died 12 April 1810.³⁴

Samuel Walker, Esq. (1762-1816) — DLS committee, 1791; lived at 15 Eccles Street, Dublin, and St. Valeri, Bray; son of Cooper Walker, cabinet-maker; younger brother of **Joseph Cooper Walker**; cousin of **Austin Cooper**; educated at TCD, entered in 1779, BA 1784; Examiner of Customs at the old Custom House at Essex Street; moved to the new Custom House at Custom House Quay in 1791 and continued to work there as late as 1815; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications by subscription and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the DLS; a bibliophile, Walker had subscribed to publications during his years at Trinity, with his name appearing on the list of subscribers to *Views of the Most Remarkable Public Buildings, Monuments and Other Edifices in the City of Dublin* (1780) by **John Cash**; later member of the Dublin Society (1812); edited his brother's posthumous *Memoirs of Alessandro Tassoni* in 1815, with contributions from several friends of Joseph Cooper Walker; died 7 Oct 1816.³⁵

³⁴ *DIB*; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 59; Archer; Nevin, "Joseph Cooper Walker, 1761-1810"; Joseph Cooper Walker, *Memoirs of Alessandro Tassoni...*, **Samuel Walker**, ed. (London: Printed for C.P. Archer, 1815), vii-lxxxix; Nevin, "Joseph Cooper Walker, 1761-1810," 156-165; "Joseph Cooper Walker, 1761-1810, Part II," 44; *DIB*; Nevin, "Joseph Cooper Walker, 1761-1810, Part II," 50.

³⁵ Nevin, "Joseph Cooper Walker, 1761-1810," 152-153; *AD*; RDS; Ireland, *Journals of the Irish House of Lords*, 8 vols. (Dublin, 1779-1800), 6:275; Nevin, "Joseph Cooper Walker, 1761-1810, Part II," 38; Walker, *Memoirs of Alessandro Tassoni...*, xxx; Archer; Robert Pool and John Cash, *Views of the Most Remarkable*

William Watson, Esq., M.R.I.A. (c.1732-29 May 1805) — DLS committee: 1791; bookseller, printer; birthplace unknown, though descendant from a Worcestershire family; entered TCD 6 Aug 1748, BA 1753; bookselling and printing business in Capel Street, Dublin; became Printer to the University, 1761; member of the RIA in 1790; part of its Committee of Antiquities 16 March 1792 with **Rev. Edward Ledwich** and **Robert Watson Wade**, while **Lord Charlemont** was President and **Richard Kirwan** and **Arthur Browne** were Vice-Presidents; member and bookseller of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge (May 1792), of which **Christopher Adamson** was its secretary; founder, and printer to, the Association for Discountenancing Vice and Promoting the Knowledge and Practice of Religion and Virtue, with meetings held at his house (the first one, 9 Oct 1792); also bookseller for the Cheap Repository for Religious and Moral Tracts (1795); Watson sold these books at very low prices for maximum dissemination; worth noting that the books he donated to the DLS in 1791 were all secular in nature; active subscriber to **John Archer**'s publications by subscription and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the Dublin Library; unlike other booksellers, he did not subscribe for multiple copies.³⁶

Samuel Whyte, Esq. (1733-1811) — DLS committee: 1791 & 1792; schoolmaster; 'born on a ship near Liverpool; illegitimate son of either Solomon Whyte or his brother Richard, deputy governor of the Tower of London; mother died shortly after childbirth'; first cousin of Frances Chamberlain, wife of the theatre manager, Thomas Sheridan, who became Whyte's patron; educated in Dublin (Samuel Edwards' Academy, Golden Lane); opened his own school, the English Grammar School, on 1 April 1758; through the influence of the Sheridans, Whyte established himself as one of the most well-respected teachers in Dublin and many of the city's wealthiest families sent their children to him; taught a vast array of subjects to boys and girls, Catholic, Dissenter, or Established Church; despite his exposure to wealth and notoriety, Whyte focused his efforts on charitable causes; he directed his sons who performed the play *Cato* at the Crow Theatre in 1771 for the 'relief of confined debtors';

Public Buildings, Monuments and Other Edifices in the City of Dublin: Delineated By Robert Pool and John Cash, With Historical Descriptions of Each Building (Dublin: Printed for J. Williams, 1780); vii; RDS.

³⁶ AD, 864; DIB (grandson: William Watson, 1804-1883); Pollard, *Dictionary*, 595-596; Archer.

co-founder (with **John McCrea**), first president and treasurer of the Abecedarian Society (for distressed schoolmasters and schoolmistresses) in 1789; **Joseph Cooper Walker**, **Richard Graves**, **Christopher Adamson** and fellow schoolmaster **Lewis Lyons** were also members, along with twenty other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216); active subscriber to **John Archer**'s publications by subscription and was likely part of the literary circle at 80 Dame Street before the establishment of the Dublin Library (Whyte subscribed for twelve copies of *The Lusiad* in 1791, presumably for his pupils); authored his own books on education, theatre and produced an anthology of poetry to which many DLS members subscribed (*A Collection of Poems, on Various Subjects*) and **Thomas Archdeakon, Jun.** was one of the engravers; the subscriber list for the third edition [1795] has an asterisk beside all the names of the subscribers who were his pupils, indicating that out of 601 subscribers, 321 were Whyte's pupils, 52 were DLS members, 10 of whom were his pupils; his school went into decline after the flight of many of those families who were his client base after the 1801 Act of Union; Whyte retired and passed away in 1811, before his son closed the school in 1824.³⁷

Rev. Matthew Young, D.D. S.F.T.C.D. and M.R.I.A. (1750-1800) — DLS committee: 1791; DLS Vice-President: 1792; scholar, natural philosopher, clergyman; entered TCD 8 July 1766; BA 1772, MA 1774, Fellow 1775; BD 1782; DD 1786; Donegal Lecturer 1782; Professor of Natural Philosophy 1786; Regius Professor of Greek 1799; founded a society in 1777 on the study of Syriac and theology; catalogued the Irish manuscripts in TCD 1781; deep interest in Irish literature, Gaelic poetry, and ancient Irish history (well-published in these fields) as well as landscape painting and botany; founding member of the RIA—with **Lord Charlemont** as President; served on its first Committee of Science with **Robert Perceval**, **Stephen Dickson**, and the Lord Bishop of Clonfert (John Law, later the **Lord Bishop of Killala**) in 1785; by 1791, **Richard Kirwan** was also part of the Committee of Science, **Rev. Richard Graves**, Committee of Polite Literature, and **William James MacNeven**, Committee of Antiquities and Secretary of the Academy; at TCD,

³⁷ *DIB*; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 613; Maxwell, *Dublin Under the Georges*, 120; Archer; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80; Archer; Maxwell, *Dublin Under the Georges*, 120; Whyte, *Poems, on Various Subjects* (1795), iii-x; *DIB*.

Young was a senior fellow with **Arthur Browne** and **Rev. John Barrett**, when **Rev. Thomas Elrington** and Graves were junior fellows; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may well have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library; 'On 2 February 1798 Young was consecrated as bishop of Clonfert, Ireland's poorest diocese, on the recommendation of the lord lieutenant's principal secretary, who considered Young "the most distinguished literary character in the kingdom"'; died 28 Nov 1800.³⁸

³⁸ *DIB; AD*, 903; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 91; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 78; Archer; *DIB*.

Appendix 2 – Prosopography of the Dublin Library Society Founding Members, 1791-1792

All Dublin Library Society founding members are in **bold** and listed as they are in: DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, x-xxiv.

* - On the 1812 printed list of Dublin Library members (all lifetime members): DLS, *Members List*, 1812.

Robert Alexander, Esq. (1769-1859) — 15 Sackville Street; wine merchant; son of William Alexander, Belcamp, Co. Dublin (Lord Mayor of Dublin, 1787-1788 and 1st baronet of Belcamp, 11 December 1809); announced as a Grand Juror of Dublin on 5 May 1791 with **Robert Watson Wade**; Ouzel Galley Society member and Bank of Ireland director in 1798; 2nd baronet, 1820.¹

John Allen, Esq. — 6 Dorset Street; Bank of Ireland director; fellow directors in 1791: **Samuel Dick, Jeremiah D'Olier, Joseph Hone, Alexander Jaffray, Peter Digges La Touche, William Digges La Touche, George Maquay**, and **Abraham Wilkinson**.²

Mr. William Allen (d. 1826) — 32 Dame Street; map and print seller, with an emphasis on Irish-related works; specialised in printing and publishing maps of Ireland and its counties as well as political caricatures; active, 1783-1810; 'hopes for encouragement in his struggles to revive again the publication of prints in Ireland' (1783); published *The Students Treasure: A New Drawing Book Consisting in A Variety of Etchings and Engravings Executed by Irish Artists...*; seller, along with **John Archer**, of *A Plan of the City of Dublin [...]* 1797 (see p. 106); member of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen.³

¹ RDS; WDD 1792, 153; *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 5 May 1791; RDS.

² WDD 1792, 12.

³ WDD, 1792, 13; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 6-7; *Dublin Evening Post*, 28 Jun 1783; William Allen, *The Students Treasure: A New Drawing Book Consisting in a Variety of Etchings and Engravings Executed by Irish Artists...* (Dublin: Printed by and Published for William Allen, 1789); McDowell, "Personnel," 20.

Richard Anderson, Esq. (d. c.1824)* — Kiltiernan House, Kiltiernan, Co. Dublin; law student in 1791; M.T. 1789, Dec 1789, King's Inns; barrister, admitted M 1792; proposed by **Isaac Weld** into the Dublin Society in 1811; appears as 'Anderson, Counsellor Rich. M.L.' in the 1812 DLS list.⁴

Michael Andrews, Esq. — Fleet Street; merchant; possibly a linen bleacher who died in 1805 and was the father of Michael Andrews (1788-1870), an industrialist with an entry in the *DIB*.⁵

Henry Arabin, Esq. (b. c.1752) — Moyglare, Co. Meath; gentleman (*Alumni Dublinenses* entry for son, John: 'son of Henry, generosus'); entered TCD, 18 April 1769; Magdalen College, Oxford, 1770.⁶

Clement Archer, Esq., M.R.I.A. — 15 Andrew Street and 75 Stephen Street; State Surgeon; Honorary Fellow, King and Queen's College of Physicians in 1791, when **Robert Perceval** was vice-president and censor, **Daniel Bryan** and **Stephen Dickson** were fellows, and **William Drennan**, **Henry Kennedy**, **James Murray**, **Robert Scott**, and **Walter Wade** were licentiates; member of the RIA and the Royal College of Surgeons, where he was the first professor of surgical pharmacy; colleague of **William Dease**, **John Halahan**, and **James T. Wilkinson**.⁷

Robert Ashworth, Esq. — 16 Merrion Square and Dublin Castle; government officer for the Treasury, Agent for Manchester Goods; later a member of the Incorporated Society for Promoting Protestant Schools in Ireland and a director of the Bank of Ireland, 1809-1818, with **Robert Alexander**; mentioned by a Dublin Castle informant as the convenor of a meeting at the Royal Exchange that included **Hugh Skeys** and **Jeremiah D'Olier** to discuss the impact on the Irish banks of the threat of a French landing in 1796.⁸

⁴ *KIAP*, 7; RDS; DLS, *Members List*, 1812.

⁵ *WDD* 1792, 14; *DIB* (Michael Andrews).

⁶ *AD*, 16; *KIAP*, 9; Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses: The Members of the University of Oxford, 1715-1886* (Oxford: James Parker & Co. 1891), 28.

⁷ *WDD* 1792, 132-133; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 77-79.

⁸ *WDD* 1792, 15; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 119.

Valentine Atkinson, Esq. — 15 Marrowbone Lane; porter brewer.⁹

Rev. Gilbert Austin, M.R.I.A. (b. c.1753) — Clergyman and master of a school near Grafton Street around 1789 until about 1804 when he moved his school to Lucan, Co. Dublin; son of a gentleman; entered TCD, 1 Feb 1770, BA 1774, MA 1780; member of the Dublin Society (from 1789), Abecedarian Society (along with twenty-four other DLS founding members [see Table 15, p. 216]), and the RIA; active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791; Austin had a wide range of interests, particularly Irish literature and antiquities, also branching into chemistry.¹⁰

Milo Bagot, Esq. — Clara, King's County; gentleman (*AD* entry for his son Charles: 'son of Milo, generosus [...] King's County'); possibly from a Huguenot family (married Penelope Paumier); Justice of the Peace for King's County from 1797.¹¹

Henry Baker, Esq. — Bride Street; attorney, Exchequer, M 1773.¹²

Mr William Barber — 64 South Great George's Street; joiner & upholder; also listed as master builder and architect; submitted two plans for the construction of the Royal Exchange, Dublin, in 1768-1769.¹³

Mr Samuel Edmund Barnes* — 3 Usher's Street, Usher's Island, Dublin and Powerswood, Co. Kilkenny; possibly a student in 1791, although there is no student record for him in either *AD* or *KIAP*; however, he appears as an attorney by 1797 (King's Bench and Solicitor in Chancery) and in 1800; is designated as a member-for-life in the 1812 DLS list; likely a cousin of **George**

⁹ *WDD* 1792, 15. See p. 190, n. 74.

¹⁰ *DIB* (Thomas Dermody and Jonathan Henn); *AD*, 28; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 73 & 79; Archer; RDS.

¹¹ *AD*, 31; *KIAP*, 16; Stewart, *The Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack...1798*, 92.

¹² *WDD* 1792, 118; *KIAP*, 17.

¹³ *WDD*, 1792, 16; Irish Architectural Archive, *Dictionary of Irish Architects, 1720-1940*, accessed 30 November 2016, <http://www.dia.ie>.

Barnes and **Thomas Barnes, Junior**, as all three appear to live at Usher's Island, with the barrister, Thomas Barnes, Senior.¹⁴

Thomas Barnes, Junior, Esq. — 3 Usher's Street, Usher's Island, Dublin; son of a barrister Thomas Barnes, Senior; entered TCD July 1784, BA 1783; barrister, admitted H 1789; cousin of **Samuel Edmund Barnes**; older brother of **George Barnes**.¹⁵

Rev. John Barret [Barrett] (d. 1823) — Francis Street; Roman Catholic clergyman; returned to Dublin in 1782 from studies in Paris; curate in four Dublin parishes between 1782 and 1812; died in 1823, leaving behind a library with '1,822 titles, including eighteenth-century Irish reprints of Fielding, Goldsmith, Johnson, and Sterne'.¹⁶

William Barton, Esq. (1758-1835) — Clonelly, Co. Fermanagh; wine merchant, grandson of Thomas Barton, founder of a successful Bordeaux wine business (later Barton & Guestier); entered TCD July 1775; BA 1780; listed as a gentleman in the *AD* record for his son.¹⁷

David Bates, Esq. — Belmont, Summer Hill, Dublin; schoolmaster/principal, Royal Military Academy (formerly Military and Marine Academy); author of *Logarithmic Tables ... Printed for the Use of the Gentlemen of the Military and Marine Academy, Belmont, Summer-hill, Dublin. By David Bates, Principal* (1781); appears on a subscriber list for *Voyages and Travels of a Sea Officer* (1792); member of the Abecedarian Society along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216).¹⁸

¹⁴ *AD*, 41; *KIAP*, 20; *WDD* 1797, 130; *WDD* 1800, 122; *DLS, Members List*, 1812; *KIAP*, 20; *AD*, 41. Based on his son's student record in 1835, Samuel Edmund was already deceased: 'Barnes, John Bateman, 1st s. of Samuel Edmund, Powerswood, Co. Kilkenny, decd.': *KIAP*, 20.

¹⁵ *WDD* 1792, 110; *AD*, 41; *KIAP*, 21.

¹⁶ Begadon, "Laity and Clergy in the Catholic Renewal of Dublin, c.1750-1830," 275-276; Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, 26.

¹⁷ *DIB* (Thomas Barton); *AD*, 47. Noting the 'Esq.' designation, it is more likely to be this William Barton over a lottery-office clerk who was also a United Irishman: McDowell, "Proceedings," 130.

¹⁸ *ESTC* N19061, accessed 26 January 2017, <http://estc.bl.uk>; Francis V. Vernon, *Voyages and Travels of a Sea Officer* (Dublin: Printed by William McKenzie, 1792), xiii; *WDD* 1792, 80.

Peter Bayly, Esq. (b. c.1756) — Abbey Street; attorney M 1774, King's Bench, Common-Pleas, and Exchequer; Solicitor in Chancery.¹⁹

John Beatty, Esq. — 12 Capel Street; lottery-office keeper; former bookseller in partnership with his brother-in-law, **Robert Burton**, another former bookseller; both he and Burton resigned from the Guild of St. Luke together 3 Apr 1787; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.²⁰

Mr John Berrell* — Charlotte Street; measurer for the Board of Works; attended the Dublin Society School of Drawing in Architecture and Landscape and Ornament Drawing between 1779 and 1782; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791; appointed assistant architect to the Barrack Board in 1801; elected to the Dublin Society in 1809.²¹

John Berry, Esq. — 1 North Anne Street; merchant.²²

Thomas S. Berry, Esq. [Thomas Sterling Berry] — Address in Dublin unknown; attorney, K.C.E.; Solicitor in Chancery, M 1790.²³

John Binns, Esq. (c.1730-1804) — 20 Fownes Street; silk merchant; business partner of **William Cope** in the silk trade: Cope & Binns, wholesale silk merchants (81 Dame Street, then Shaw's Court, off Dame Street); *DIB* introduces Binns as a 'silk merchant, canal developer, and radical politician'; member of the Society of Free Citizens, formed to resist governmental imposition of increased taxation; along with future revolutionary James Napper Tandy, Binns proposed radical reform within Dublin Corporation after legislative independence was won in 1782; founder member of the Dublin

¹⁹ *AD*, 51; *KIAP*, 28.

²⁰ *WDD* 1792, 18; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 27-28; 67 (as with **Robert Burton**, it is possible that 'Esq.' was inadvertently added to his name on the Dublin Library founding members list as it was unusual for booksellers or lottery-office keepers to be designated 'Esq.');

²¹ *DIA*; Willemson, *Dublin Society Drawing Schools*, 6; RDS.

²² *WDD* 1792, 19.

²³ *WDD* 1792, 119; *KIAP*, 34.

Chamber of Commerce: fellow members in 1791 were: Cope, **Jeremiah D'Olier**, **Samuel Dick**, **Alexander Jaffray, Jr.**, **George Maquay**, **Joshua Pim**, and **Abraham Wilkinson**; involved as a director of the Grand Canal and the Royal Canal companies; the latter with Cope, **James Connolly**, **Andrew Daly**, and **Charles Ward**; represented the weavers' guild in Dublin Corporation; conservative and radical, respectively, in their politics, Cope & Binns nevertheless made a profit of £10,000 in 1791; Binns' name appears in a list of United Irishmen drawn up by an informer on 5 Oct 1793.²⁴

John Blachford, Esq. (b. c.1771) — Altadore, Co. Wicklow; student; entered TCD (via Eton) in December 1788; BA, 1792; son of Rev. William Blachford, Librarian of Marsh's Library (1766-1773); brother of the poet, Mary Tighe, who married **Henry Tighe** in October 1793; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791; from a family of bibliophiles, Blachford made extensive purchases at the Denis Daly sale in 1792; elected to the Dublin Society in July 1798; married the daughter of Henry Grattan in 1814.²⁵

Andrew Blake, M.D. — 21 Drogheda Street; physician.²⁶

John Blake, Esq. — Address unknown; barrister, admitted H 1783.²⁷

Rev. Thomas Blakeney (1770-1845) — 3 Fitzwilliam Square; clergyman; son of an attorney; pupil of **Christopher Adamson**; entered TCD July 1786; BA Vern. 1791.²⁸

Cornelius Bolton, Esq. (1751-1829) — Co. Waterford; landowner and former Member of Parliament for Waterford City, 1776-83, and Lanesborough, 1783-90; entered TCD, 10 Oct. 1769; BA, 1773; member of the Dublin Society from 1778; appointed to the supervising committee of the Poolbeg Street

²⁴ *DIB*; *WDD* 1792, 31 & 106; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 82; McDowell, "Proceedings," 90.

²⁵ *AD*, 68; McCarthy, *Marsh's Library: All Graduates and Gentlemen*, 70; Archer; Archer and Jones, *Catalogue of the Right Honourable Denis Daly*; RDS.

²⁶ *WDD* 1792, 132.

²⁷ *WDD* 1792, 110; *KIAP*, 39.

²⁸ *AD*, 73.

Agricultural Implement Factory, 27 November 1783; founding member of the RIA in 1785; Trustee of the Linen Manufacture Office in 1791; an active subscriber to **John Archer**'s publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.²⁹

Thomas Braughall (1729-1803) — 7 Eccles Street (at 13 Bridge Street until 1784); silk merchant and land-agent; born in Clonsilla, Dublin; educated in Dublin (Rev. Fr. John Fagan of Arran Quay) then in Douai, France in 1748; originally intended to study law but denied entry as a Catholic; set up a very successful and lucrative business in the silk trade; involved in the Catholic Committee as early as 1773; proposed for membership to the Dublin Society by fellow silk merchant, **William Cope** in 1777; took the oath of allegiance in 1778; became a director of the Hibernian Fire Insurance Company in the late-1770s; one of two members responsible for organising the election of delegates throughout Ireland for the Convention; proposed **James Farrell** into the Dublin Society in 1780; joined the Irish Volunteers in 1782; on 21 October 1791, Braughall and **Theobald McKenna** founded the Catholic Society of Dublin, separate from the Catholic Committee to further a radical agenda; published the *Declaration of the Catholic Society* (1791); represented St. Michan's parish in the Catholic Committee (9 Feb. 1791) and the Convention in 1792; appointed Secretary of the Dublin Society in 1792 until 1798; became part of the 'democratic-mercantile', urban, middle-class section that soon dominated the Catholic Committee, wresting power from the 'aristocratic-ecclesiastical' 'rural gentry delegates' (*DIB*); **Andrew Daly, Richard Dillon, Lewis Lyons, Randall McDonnell, William James MacNeven, Richard McCormick, Thomas McDonnell, Theobald McKenna, Dominick Rice, Thomas Ryan,** and **John Sweetman** were fellow Dublin Library members who sided with Braughall; disputed membership of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, but described by an informer to Dublin Castle as 'one of the cabinet council for Dublin' but 'against the violent measures adopted by the party'; on 24 May 1798, Braughall was arrested inside the Dublin Library Society and taken to Dublin Castle for questioning and then to Kilmainham Gaol; Cope and

²⁹ RDS; Johnston-Liik, *MPs in Dublin*, 71; AD; RDS; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 91; WDD 1792, 81; Archer.

Lord Cloncurry (Braughall was his land agent) were involved in the process leading to Braughall's exoneration and release.³⁰

Mr Henry Brocas (1762-1837)* — DLS Member-for-Life: 1791; 9 Gordon's Lane (from 1795); engraver; engraved prints sold by **William Allen** (1787-1788); engraver for **John Archer** publication (*Some Account of London*) in 1791-1792, for **John Jones'** *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine* in 1792-1794, and **Richard Edward Mercier's** *Anthologia Hibernica* in 1793; also, engraver of portrait for **William Preston's** *Poetical works*, 1793.³¹

Mr Henry Brooke (1738-1806) — 172 Abbey Street; drawing master, 'history painter' (*ODNB*); son of Robert Brooke, portrait painter; grandson of **Rev. William Brooke**, diocese of Kilmore and Ardagh; nephew of the poet Henry Brooke (1703-1783), for whom he provided a portrait; and cousin of Charlotte Brooke, author of *Reliques of Irish Poetry*'; became a Methodist in 1765, and hosted John Wesley when he visited Dublin; drawing master at Stafford Street, Dublin, 1770; exhibited *The Raising of Lazarus* at the Society of Artists, William Street, in 1770; painted *The Continnence of Scipio* in 1771 (held in the National Gallery of Ireland); elected to the Dublin Society in 1802; chiefly worked on the decoration of Roman Catholic chapels: 'much in demand to paint interiors as the building program of the Roman Catholic archdiocese expanded at the end of the eighteenth century' (*RDS*); **Isaac D'Olier** (1771-1841) was his son-in-law; D'Olier edited Brooke's *Memoirs of the Life of the Late Excellent and Pious Mr. Henry Brooke* (1816).³²

Rev. William Brooke (1720-1811) — Vicar of Granard and Gowna, diocese of Kilmore and Ardagh 1761-1805; entered TCD 1737, BA 1742, MA 1744; deacon and priest at Kilmore in 1745; grandfather to **Henry Brooke**.³³

³⁰ *DIB*; *RDS*; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 40; Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-49; O'Flaherty, "Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-26; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 130; Braughall, "[Letter to] His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, Dublin Castle, [from Thomas Braughall], Kilmainham Prison, 24 September 1798," *Rebellion Papers*, 420/42/22.

³¹ *DIB*; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 53-54; Kennedy, "The Domestic and International Trade of Eighteenth-Century Dublin Bookseller," 97.

³² *WDD* 1792, 22; *ODNB*; *RDS*.

³³ *ODNB*; Leslie, comp., *Clergy of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh*, 369; Henry Brooke, *Memoirs of the Life of the Late Excellent and Pious Mr. Henry Brooke*.

William Brooke, M.D. (1769-1829)* — North Cumberland Street; physician; born at Granard, Co. Longford; MD, Edinburgh, 1789; Fellow of the King's and Queen's College of Physicians of Ireland in 1792 with **Daniel Bryan** and **Stephen Dickson**; **Clement Archer** was an honorary fellow, while **William Drennan, Henry Kennedy, James Murray, Robert Scott,** and **Walter Wade** were licentiates; worked at Jervis Street Hospital School; founded the Association of the Members of the King's and Queen's College of Physicians; Librarian of the Royal Irish Academy in 1813, and compiled a catalogue of books bequeathed to the RIA by the late **Richard Kirwan**; extant records of his bookplate indicate that he kept a private library.³⁴

Thomas Brownrigg, A.M. (1753-1826) — Co. Wicklow; clergyman; entered TCD, 9 July 1772; BA, 1777, MA, 1780; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791; member of the Dublin Society from 1800; became Chancellor of Christ Church Cathedral, Dublin in 1814.³⁵

Daniel Bryan, M.D. (b. c.1757)* — Usher's Island; physician; entered TCD 1773, BA 1778; Fellow of the King's and Queen's College of Physicians of Ireland in 1791 with **Stephen Dickson**; **Robert Perceval** was vice-president and censor, **Clement Archer** was an honorary fellow, while **William Drennan, Henry Kennedy, James Murray, Robert Scott,** and **Walter Wade** were licentiates; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.³⁶

Francis Burroughs, Esq. (b. c.1764) — North Earl Street; barrister, admitted E 1786; Whig Club member with **Arthur Browne, Lord Charlemont, Richard Jebb, George Maquay, Theobald McKenna, Charles O'Neil, Joseph Pollock, Joshua Pim** and **Charles Ward**; an active

³⁴ Martin, *Dictionary of Bookplates of Irish Medical Doctors*, 17; Watson, *Almanack*, 1793, 78; D. Thorburn Burns, "Richard Kirwan's Library: An Eighteenth-Century Chemist's Collection," in Cunningham and Fitzpatrick, eds., *Treasures of the Royal Irish Academy Library*, 95.

³⁵ RDS; AD, 106; Archer; RDS.

³⁶ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 78; AD, 107; Archer.

subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.³⁷

Robert Burton, Esq. — 2 Capel Street; lottery-office keeper; former bookseller in partnership with his brother-in-law, **John Beatty**; both he and Beatty resigned from the Guild of St. Luke together 3 Apr 1787; concentrated solely on the lottery business thereafter; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.³⁸

John Byrne, Esq. — North Great George's Street; merchant; common name; son of Edward Byrne of Mullinahack, wealthy Catholic sugar merchant in partnership with **Randall McDonnell**; was also a partner in a brewery business with his brother-in-law, **James Farrell**; active member of the United Irishmen, proposed by **Richard McCormick** and Theobald Wolfe Tone; signed the roll and took the test in April 1792; active member of the Catholic Committee, for which he represented Armagh with McDonnell on 9 Feb. 1791, and at the Catholic Convention on 3 Dec. 1792; Francis Higgins reported to Dublin Castle of meetings involving the 'R.C. [Roman Catholic] Superintending Committee' consisting of Byrne, McCormick, McDonnell and **John Sweetman**; the informer Thomas Collins referred to Byrne as one of those United Irishmen who was a member of 'late popish convention and as anxious for a revolution as either [James Napper] Tandy or [Archibald Hamilton] Rowan'; McDonnell and **Jeremiah D'Olier** proposed Byrne for the Dublin Society in 1808.³⁹

Rt. Hon. Lord Cloncurry (1733-1799) — Nicholas Lawless, 1st Baron Cloncurry; Maretimo, Blackrock, Co. Dublin; woollen merchant, brewer, banker; MP for Lifford between 1776 and 1789; son of Robert Lawless, wealthy Catholic trader who conformed to the Established Church, as did Nicholas; member of the Dublin Society from 1773; a director of the Bank of Ireland

³⁷ *WDD* 1792, 110; *KIAP*, 64; Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800," 270-280; Archer.

³⁸ *WDD* 1792, 23; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 67; 27-28 (as with Beatty, it is possible that 'Esq.' was inadvertently added to his name on the Dublin Library founding members list as it was unusual for booksellers or lottery-office keepers to be designated 'Esq.');

³⁹ *WDD* 1792, 24; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 73; RDS; McDowell, "Personnel," 24 (McDowell lists four separate entries for John Byrne); McDowell, "Proceedings," 21-22; Edwards, "Minute Book," 118; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 41; McDowell, "Proceedings," 140; RDS.

from its establishment in 1783, with **Alexander Jaffray**, **Samuel Dick**, **Abraham Wilkinson**, **Jeremiah D'Olier**, and **John Allen**, while **Robert Watson Wade** was the bank's first Accountant-General; **Joseph Hone** and **Charles Ward** became directors the following year; became 1st Baron Cloncurry in 1789; father of Valentine Lawless (1773-1853), 2nd Baron Cloncurry and active United Irishman who became President of the Dublin Library Society in 1822.⁴⁰

William Callaghan, Esq. — 18 Silver Court; apothecary.⁴¹

Mr James Callwell* — Possibly James Caldwell, 2 College Green; printer, active between 1785 and 1788; successfully sued **John Beatty** in 1787.⁴²

Mr Nathaniel Callwell (active 1790-1805; d. c.1832)* — 41 College Green; stationer, bookseller, lottery-office keeper; appears to have been chiefly a lottery broker; proposed into the Dublin Society of United Irishmen on the same day as bookseller **Randal McAllister**; present at that meeting on 27 Dec 1791 were: another bookseller **James Moore**, **William Todd Jones**, **Richard McCormick**, **Joseph Dowling**, **William Drennan** and **William James MacNeven**; relation of James and John Magee (latter of the *Dublin Evening Post*); by 1798, it was alleged that fellow United Irishmen from Belfast were harboured at 'Calwell's Lottery and Toyshop, College-green'; the Crown Solicitor described Callwell as that 'chap that got the addresses from the United Britons to the United Irishmen printed' and that he was also the 'commissioner for managing the rebel lottery'; in his later years, Callwell was admitted to the Dublin Society (1821) and became a director of the National Assurance Company of Ireland.⁴³

Rev. Thomas Campbell, L.L.D. (1733-1795) — Clones, Co. Monaghan; clergyman; entered TCD 1754, LLB & LLD, 1772; Chancellor of St. Macartan's

⁴⁰ *DIB*; *ODNB*; *RDS*; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 43-44; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 322, n. 70.

⁴¹ *WDD* 1792, 25.

⁴² Pollard, *Dictionary*, 79-80.

⁴³ *WDD* 1792, 25; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 80; McDowell, "Proceedings," 7; McDowell, "Personnel," 24; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 215; *RDS*.

Cathedral, Clogher from 1772; honorary member of the Dublin Society; author, and donor to the Dublin Library of a number of publications, including: *Strictures on the Ecclesiastical and Literary History of Ireland till the Introduction of the Roman Ritual, and the Establishment of Papal Supremacy by Henry II, also an Historical sketch of the Constitution and Government of Ireland...*, published by **Luke White** in 1789; friend of **Joseph Cooper Walker** and Dr. Samuel Johnson.⁴⁴

Mr Andrew Carr — 71 Dame Street; merchant.⁴⁵

John Cash, Esq. (d. 1833) — 14 Capel Street (1783-1791), 54 Sackville Street (1792-1795); bookseller, draughtsman, paper merchant; 'delineator' of the publication: *Views of the Most Remarkable Public Buildings, Monuments and Other Edifices in the City of Dublin* (1780); member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216); an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791; elected to the Dublin Society in 1801; became Lord Mayor in 1813.⁴⁶

Bryan Cavanagh, Esq. [Kavanagh] (b. c.1754) — Burris, Co. Carlow, Sackville Street, Dublin (1797); law student; entered Lincoln's Inn, Nov. 1784, at thirty years of age; barrister, admitted E 1793.⁴⁷

Mr Alexander Clarke — Possibly: 29 Chancery Lane; tailor.⁴⁸

James Cleghorn, M.D., M.R.I.A. — 26 North Rutland Square; physician, Professor of Anatomy, TCD; nephew of George Cleghorn (1716-1789), Professor of Anatomy, TCD; member of the Royal Irish Academy; affiliated with

⁴⁴ Mercier, *Anthologia Hibernica*, 4:vi; *AD*, 130; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 76; *DIB*; *ODNB*; John Bowyer Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century* (London: Printed by and for J.B. Nicholas & Son, 1848), 7:759-766.

⁴⁵ *WDD* 1792, 26.

⁴⁶ *WDD* 1792, 27; *RDS*; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 94-95; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 81; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 95; Archer; *RDS*.

⁴⁷ *KIAP*, 256; *WDD* 1797, 124.

⁴⁸ *WDD* 1792, 28.

St. Patrick's Hospital; President of the King and Queens College of Physicians in Ireland (1806); elected to the Dublin Society in 1815.⁴⁹

James Connolly, Esq. — 83 Fleet Street and 42 Aston Quay (office); wholesale corn merchant; Catholic Committee representative (9 Feb 1791) for the parish of St. Andrew, Dublin, along with **John Gorman Kennedy** and **John Sweetman**; Francis Higgins described Connolly as active in the Catholic Committee but more interested in securing government contracts than with reform; 'one of the 21 early subscribers to a "patriotic fund"'; Royal Canal Company director in 1791 with **William Cope, John Binns, Andrew Daly,** and **Charles Ward**.⁵⁰

William Cooley, Esq. (b. 1773)* — Anglesea Street; law student; born 17 Feb 1773; entered law studies, Easter term, 1792, M.T. T 1792; barrister, admitted H 1796; son of Thomas Cooley (1740-1784), famous architect of Dublin who designed the Royal Exchange.⁵¹

Austin Cooper, Esq. (1759-1830)* — Merrion Square, Clerk of the Treasury, Court of Exchequer, Treasury Office, Dublin Castle, in the same offices as his cousin **Joseph Cooper Walker** and **Robert Watson Wade**; also cousin of **Samuel Walker**; like his cousin J.C. Walker, Cooper was a noted antiquarian and lover of literature; travelled extensively around Ireland sketching monuments and buildings, many of which are no longer standing; conservative Protestant and defender of Ascendancy interests; later a member of the Royal Irish Academy, Dublin Society (1808) and Fellow of the Society of Antiquarians.⁵²

⁴⁹ *DIB* (George Cleghorn); *AD*, 155; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 79; RDS.

⁵⁰ *WDD* 1792, 30; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 43; Edwards, "Minute Book," 118; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 122-123; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 43, citing *Dublin Evening Post*, 20 August 1803; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 82.

⁵¹ *KIAP*, 99; *DIA* (Thomas Cooley).

⁵² Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 59 & 65; *DIB*; RDS. Also, see Harbison, *Cooper's Ireland: Drawings and Notes from an Eighteenth-Century Gentleman*.

Rev. Dean Coote [Rev. Dean Charles Coote] (1713-1796) — Kilfenora, Co. Clare; clergyman, Dean of Kilfenora; entered TCD, 1762, DD, 1772; member of the Dublin Society from 1750.⁵³

Robert Cornwall, Esq. — Stephen's Green; attorney, Exchequer, M 1778, K.C.E.; Solicitor in Chancery; Deputy Chief Chamberlain.⁵⁴

Richard Cudmore, Esq. — Aungier Street; attorney, Exchequer, T 1764, K.C.E.; Solicitor in Chancery.⁵⁵

James Cullen, Esq. — Skreeny, Co. Leitrim; barrister, entered Lincoln's Inn, May 1788; admitted E 1791.⁵⁶

John Cullen, Esq. (1761-between 1825 and 1830) — 11 Suffolk Street; miniature and portrait painter; entered the Dublin Society Drawing School in 1774 and won a prize for figure drawing in 1775.⁵⁷

Thomas Cunningham, Esq.* — Address unknown; army officer; appears as Captain Thomas Cunningham in an examination of a case involving his friend **James Cleghorn** on the elections at Trinity College (in which **Arthur Browne** was standing and **Richard Graves** also examined); entered as Captain Thomas Cunningham in **Joshua Edkins'** subscriber list for his 1801 anthology; member-for-life in the 1812 printed list of Dublin Library members: 'Captain Cunningham'.⁵⁸

William Cuthbert, Esq. — 44 Bride Street; attorney, Exchequer, T 1776, C.E., Solicitor in Chancery.⁵⁹

⁵³ AD, 176; RDS.

⁵⁴ WDD 1792, 121; KIAP, 102.

⁵⁵ WDD 1792, 121; KIAP, 114.

⁵⁶ WDD 1792, 111; KIAP, 114. Easter Term in 1791 was between 2 May and 11 June, so it is possible that he was still a student if he joined the library within that period.

⁵⁷ WDD 1792, 33; Willemson, *Dublin Society Drawing Schools*, 23.

⁵⁸ *A Full and Accurate Report of the Proceedings in the Case of the Borough of Trinity College Dublin As Heard Before a Select Committee of the House of Commons, A.D. 1791* (Dublin: Printed for Charles Mills, 1791), 78 & 232; Edkins, Joshua, ed., *A Collection of Poems, Mostly Original, by Several Hands* (1801), [xiv]; DLS, *Members List*, 1812.

⁵⁹ WDD 1792, 121; KIAP, 117.

Andrew Daly, M.D., M.R.I.A. (d. c.1815) — 50 Dominick Street; physician; studied in Leiden; joined the Catholic Committee, 6 July 1779; represented St. Mary's parish, Dublin, with fellow physician **Nicholas Elcock**, 9 Feb. 1791; twenty-five other founding DLS members were on the committee at that time; Daly, **Thomas Braughall**, **Richard Dillon**, **Lewis Lyons**, **Randall McDonnell**, **William James MacNeven**, **Richard McCormick**, **Thomas McDonnell**, **Theobald McKenna**, **Dominick Rice**, **Thomas Ryan**, and **John Sweetman** were all part of the middle-class merchant/professional wing that wrested control of the Catholic Committee from the aristocratic/clerical wing; member of the RIA in 1791; Royal Canal Company with **John Binns**, **James Connolly**, **William Cope**, and **Charles Ward**.⁶⁰

Andrew Darcy, Esq. — Not identified. Possibly a retired surgeon in Jervis Street.⁶¹

Frederick Darley, Esq. (1764-1841) — 88 Lower Abbey Street; stone-cutter/builder/architect/property developer; pupil of **Sisson Putland Darling** at his school at 35 Mabbot Street; belonged to the Guild of Merchants rather than the Guild of Carpenters; admitted a freeman of Dublin in the mid-to-late 1790s; active in Dublin Corporation; a sheriff of Dublin in 1798; Orange Lodge member in 1797; part of the ultra-conservative group in Dublin Corporation (with **William Cope**) opposed to any Catholic reform; alderman (1800); Dublin Society member from 1801; Lord Mayor (1808-1809); in 1811, he was sent by the Castle administration to disperse a meeting of the Catholic Committee, at which **Randall McDonnell** and Daniel O'Connell were present; employed by Trinity College as a stonecutter; also involved in the development of Mountjoy Square, Dublin.⁶²

Sisson Putland Darling, Esq. (1737-1817) — Principal of the Mercantile, Military, and Nautical Academy, Strand, Dublin; before 1785, Darling had a mercantile academy at 35 Mabbot Street, where the son of **John Binns**,

⁶⁰ *WDD* 1792, 132; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 44; Edwards, "Minute Book," 117; Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-49; O'Flaherty, "Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-26; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 79; 82.

⁶¹ *WDD* 1768, 85.

⁶² *WDD* 1792, 34; *DIB*; RDS; *DIA*.

Frederick Darley and Theobald Wolfe Tone were his pupils; member of the Dublin Volunteers in the 1780s; Freemason; 'liberal in his politics'; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216); in 1791, he was the Dublin collector for the Grand Canal Company, under the directorships of **William Digges La Touche**, **Randall McDonnell**, and **George Maquay**; reportedly gave up teaching to work with the Company; 'A fine penman, Darling wrote out "in a most beautiful hand" (according to Tone) the Catholic Committee's certificate to Tone in April 1793, engrossed documents for Dublin Corporation and could well have helped to form Tone's own neat hand'.⁶³

John Dawson, Esq., Jun. — Not identified.⁶⁴

William Deane, Esq. M.R.I.A. (d. 1793) — Ross Lane; Clerk of the Recognizances, Court of Chancery in 1791; TCD BA 1757; LLD 1779; Dublin Society member from 1769; founding member of the Royal Irish Academy.⁶⁵

Oliver Dease, Esq. (c.1773-1821) — TCD student, entered 19 Oct 1789, aged 16; younger cousin of **William Dease**, from a family of medical men (related to College of Surgeons professor Richard Dease); trained as a surgeon; army surgeon, 1809-1816; surgeon at Westmoreland Lock Hospital, Dublin, 1816-1821.⁶⁶

William Dease, Esq. (1752-98) — Usher's Quay; Censor, Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland; born into a Catholic family; older cousin of **Oliver Dease** and father of College of Surgeons professor Richard Dease; educated in Dublin and Paris; founding member of the Dublin Society of Surgeons (1780) and the

⁶³ *WDD* 1792, 34; James Moore, *Encyclopaedia Britannica...* (Dublin: Printed by James Moore, 1791), vol. 3, [subscribers list]; *DIB*; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 82; *DIB*.

⁶⁴ Although a common name, there is insufficient evidence for even conjecture. There is a John Dawson, Castle Street, woollen draper—a prominent United Irishman—but only one son (Alexander) appears in the sources as an adult. A baptismal record exists of a John Dawson, son of John Dawson of Castle Street (11 June 1772) but there are no further particulars for him. The problem is compounded by there being two 'John Dawsons' of Castle Street around the same time. John Dawson, 2nd Earl of Portarlington was born in 1781 and the title of his father (son of William Henry) was created in 1785.

⁶⁵ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 57; *AD*, 219; RDS; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 91.

⁶⁶ *AD*, 220; Laurence Brockliss, "Medicine, Religion and Social Mobility in Eighteenth- and Early Nineteenth-Century Ireland," in James Kelly and Fiona Clark, eds., *Ireland and Medicine in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 101-102.

Royal College of Surgeons (1784), a non-denominational college; Dease was its first treasurer and president in 1789; Dublin's first professor of surgery in 1785; colleague of **Clement Archer** and **John Halahan**; surgeon at the (Westmoreland) Lock Hospital (1785) and the Meath Hospital (1793-98); member of the Catholic Committee; actively involved in the Dublin Society of United Irishmen; Higgins reported a meeting involving the United Irishmen that included Dease, **William James MacNeven**, **Thomas Ryan**, and **Walter Wade**: 'in short, every Roman Catholic medical man in the metropolis' who met to prepare publications 'to inflame the minds of the people'; kept a private library and bookplate (motto: *semper paratus*: 'always ready').⁶⁷

Samuel Dick, Esq. (1742-1802) — 13 Linenhall Street; merchant: Samuel Dick & Co. Merchants; member of the Dublin Society from 1771; Dick and **Alexander Jaffray** both admitted to the Ouzel Galley Society in 1772, with **Joshua Pim** (1776), **Abraham Wilkinson** (1782), **George Maquay** (1785), **William Digges La Touche** (1788), and **Charles Ward** (1789) also joining them; shortly before his death, he became Captain of the Ouzel Galley Society (1800-1802); Dick was one of the first directors of the Bank of Ireland in 1783, with Jaffray, Wilkinson, **Lord Cloncurry**, **Jeremiah D'Olier**, and **John Allen**, while **Robert Watson Wade** was the Accountant-General; **Joseph Hone** and Ward both were elected as directors in April 1784; Dick remained a director of the bank until 1796, when he became Deputy-Governor, then Governor from 1797 to 1799; founding council member of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce (18 March 1783) with **William Cope**, **Alexander Jaffray**, **George Maquay**, **Joshua Pim**, and **Abraham Wilkinson**; in 1791, Jeremiah D'Olier and **Alexander Jaffray, Jr.** were also members of the council; member of the Royal Exchange with Cope, Jaffray, Pim, Wilkinson, and **Peter Digges La Touche**.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ *WDD* 1792, 133; *AD*, 220, where his son, Richard, is listed as: 'R.C. s. of William, Chirurgus'; O'Brien and Crookshank, *Portrait of Irish Medicine*, 105; *DIB*; Edwards, "Minute Book," 104; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 163; Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 8 July 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 171-172; Martin, *Dictionary of Irish Bookplates of Medical Doctors*, 38-39.

⁶⁸ *WDD* 1792, 36 & 106; "The Ship," 7-39; MacMahon, *A Most Respectable Meeting of Merchants*, 38-39; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 43-44 & 402-403.

Robert Dickinson, Esq. — King's Inns, Deputy Accountant-General, Court of Chancery.⁶⁹

Stephen Dickson, M.D., M.R.I.A. — 22 Bride Street and Trinity College; physician; State Physician, Censor, TCD; with **Daniel Bryan**, Dickson was a fellow of the King and Queen's College of Physicians in 1791, while **Robert Perceval** was vice-President and censor, **Clement Archer** an honorary fellow, and **William Drennan, Henry Kennedy, James Murray, Robert Scott**, and **Walter Wade** were licentiates; founding member of the RIA and served on its first Committee of Science with the Lord Bishop of Clonfert (John Law, **Lord Bishop of Killala**), Perceval and **Matthew Young**; Secretary of the RIA's Committee of Science (1791), which included **Richard Kirwan**, Perceval, and Young; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.⁷⁰

Gerald Dillon, Esq. — Lisdornan, Co. Meath; apothecary (*AD* entry for his son: 'Dillon, Gerald Garrett, Pen. (Mr Gray) May 5 1809, aged 15; R.C. s. of Gerald, Pharmacopola'); member of the Catholic Committee but not clear whether he was an active participant: a 'Surgeon Dillon' appears in a list of members present at a meeting in 1778; also an active subscriber of **John Archer's** publications by subscription.⁷¹

Richard Dillon, Esq. — 16 Bridge Street; wholesale woollen draper; represented the parish of St. Audeon, Dublin on the Catholic Committee, 9 Feb 1791; Dillon, **Thomas Braughall, Andrew Daly, Lewis Lyons, Randall McDonnell, William James MacNeven, Richard McCormick, Thomas McDonnell, Theobald McKenna, Dominick Rice, Thomas Ryan**, and **John Sweetman** were all part of the middle-class merchant/professional wing that wrested control of the Catholic Committee from the aristocratic/clerical wing; admitted to the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, 21 Sep 1792; active proposer of new recruits into the United Irishmen, on one occasion acting as co-proposer with **William Drennan** (16 November 1792—the same day

⁶⁹ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 57.

⁷⁰ *WDD* 1792, 106 & 132; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 91; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 78; Archer.

⁷¹ Woods, "Catholic Convention," 45; *AD*, 230; Edwards, "Minute Book," 30.

Drennan proposed **John Sweetman** into the UI); the informer Higgins described Dillon as 'one of the most violent and bloodthirsty' of the United Irishmen, but another informer, 'MacNally placed him on the "moderate" wing of the organisation as someone who desired the "independency of Ireland...[but was]...adverse to anything treacherous or cruel'; banished to Paris in 1798.⁷²

Michael Dodd, Esq. & Richard Dodd, Esq. — North Wall; dry coopers & merchants.⁷³

Isaac D'Olier, Esq. [i.e. Isaac D'Olier IV] (1771-1841)* — Student, entered TCD, 28 Aug 1788, aged 16; BA 1793; MA, LLB, and LLD 1807; member of a prominent Huguenot family in Dublin; son of Richard D'Olier (1737-1816); nephew of **Jeremiah D'Olier**; married Maria Jane Brooke, sister of **Henry Brooke** whose memoirs were edited by D'Olier; prolific in the nineteenth century: Treasurer of the Baggot Street House of Refuge for Women, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, as well as Secretary of the Board of First Fruits; member of the RIA and Dublin Society (1810), proposed by his uncle Jeremiah D'Olier.⁷⁴

Isaac D'Olier, Esq., Jr. [i.e. Isaac Matthew D'Olier] (1775-1835) — Possibly a student; resided in Collegues, Co. Dublin; son of **Jeremiah D'Olier** (1745-1817); cousin of **Isaac D'Olier** and **Joseph D'Olier**; elected member of the Dublin Society in 1800, proposed by his father, Jeremiah; member of the Dublin Society library committee in 1812; eventually became Governor of the Bank of Ireland (1836-1838).⁷⁵

⁷² WDD 1792, 26; Edwards, "Minute Book," 117; Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-49; O'Flaherty, "Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-26; McDowell, "Personnel," 30; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 230 & 106.

⁷³ WDD 1792, 37.

⁷⁴ AD, 235; D'Olier Online, "My Family Tree," created 22 June 2013, accessed 24 October 2017, <http://www.dolier.co.uk/Isaac%20D'Olier%20Family%20Tree/index.html>; Henry Brooke, *Memoirs of the Life of the Late Excellent and Pious Mr. Henry Brooke*; RDS.

⁷⁵ D'Olier Online; RDS; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 402.

Joseph D'Olier, Esq. (d. 1843)* — Address unknown; merchant; son of Isaac D'Olier III (1734-1790); nephew of **Jeremiah D'Olier (1745-1817)**; cousin of **Isaac D'Olier** and **Isaac Matthew D'Olier**.⁷⁶

Robert Henry D'Olier, Esq. (1771-c.1802-3) — No address or occupation identified; part of the D'Olier merchant family; son of Richard D'Olier (1737-1816); brother of **Isaac D'Olier**; nephew of **Jeremiah D'Olier**; cousin of **Isaac Matthew D'Olier**.⁷⁷

Mr Joseph Dowling — 53 South Great George's Street; ironmonger; clerk of **Samuel Dick**; proposed into the United Irishmen by **James Moore** and admitted 8 Feb 1793; took the test and signed the roll at the same meeting (15 Feb 1793) where **Ambrose Moore** and **Dominick Rice** were also admitted into the United Irishmen.⁷⁸

Mr George Draper, Jun. (active 1789-1793; d. 1794) — 71 Grafton Street; bookseller, printer, and stationer; son of George Draper, silk manufacturer; part of the group who published the *Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack* from 1791-1793; in 1791 he printed: *A General Catalogue of Books in All Languages, Arts and Sciences, that Have Been Printed in Ireland, and Published in Dublin: From the Year 1700, to the Present Time*; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216); went bankrupt in 1793; died of yellow fever in Jamaica where he had travelled to act as an agent for the estate of one of the members of the Digges La Touche family (uncertain which one); an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.⁷⁹

Rev. Richard Drury — 28 South Great George's Street; clergyman; entered TCD 1772, BA 1777; Curate Assistant, St. Bridget's Church, Bride Street.⁸⁰

⁷⁶ *Freeman's Journal*, 6 July 1818; D'Olier Online.

⁷⁷ D'Olier Online.

⁷⁸ *WDD* 1792, 37; McDowell, "Proceedings," 64-65.

⁷⁹ *WDD* 1792, 38; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 81; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 168; Archer.

⁸⁰ *WDD* 1792, 137; *AD*, 247.

Mr John Dumoulin — 37 Stephen's Green; wine merchant; wife Pauline Dumoulin was a boarding-school mistress; became a silent partner with his brother-in-law, **Richard Edward Mercier** (Richard Mercier & Co.), 1793-1801; both the Mercier siblings and Dumoulin were of Huguenot descent; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216); an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.⁸¹

John Edkins, Esq. — New Street; merchant; appears on two deeds for a lease of property involving **Phillip Lawless**; probably the brother of Dublin Library Society Librarian, **Joshua Edkins**; possibly Quaker.⁸²

Nicholas Elcock, M.D. — 136 Great Britain Street; physician; represented the parish of St. Mary, Dublin on the Catholic Committee, 9 Feb. 1791, with fellow physician **Andrew Daly**; several other DLS members were representatives of parishes during that meeting.⁸³

John Swift Emerson, Esq. — 33 Molesworth Street; attorney, H 1791, King's Bench; Solicitor in Chancery; aided in the arrest of Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Thomas Russell, leaders in the 1798 Rebellion; proposed by **Jeremiah D'Olier** for Dublin Society membership in 1801.⁸⁴

John Evans, Esq.* — Stephen's Green; attorney, M 1780, K.C.E.; Solicitor in Chancery.⁸⁵

James Farrell, Esq.* (d. 1825) — Blackpitts and Merrion Square; brewer; business partner of brother-in-law, **John Byrne**; member of the Dublin Society from 1780, proposed by **Alexander Jaffray** and **Thomas Braughall**;

⁸¹ *WDD* 1792, 39; *KIAP*, 146; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 173 & 406; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80; Archer.

⁸² Registry of Deeds Project Ireland, *Registry of Irish Deeds*, memorial no. 267355 (for John Henry Edkins, 12 November 1788); *ibid.*, Memorial no. 158254, (December 1765); *ibid.*, Memorial no. 302832 (12 December 1793).

⁸³ *WDD* 1792, 132; Edwards, "Minute Book," 117; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 47.

⁸⁴ *WDD* 1792, 122; *KIAP*, 153; RDS.

⁸⁵ *WDD* 1792, 122; *KIAP*, 155.

represented the parish of St. Paul, Dublin, on the Catholic Committee, 9 Feb. 1791, with **Lewis Lyons**.⁸⁶

Anthony Ferguson, Esq. — Custom House; Assistant Examiner of the Customs, Commissioner of the Revenue; appears to have worked in the same offices as **Samuel Walker**.⁸⁷

Maurice Fitzgerald, Esq. (1772-1849) — TCD student in 1791, entered in 1789; entry in the subscribers list of a 1793 publication: 'Maurice Fitzgerald, Esq.; T.C.D.'; Rt. Hon. Knight of Kerry, Maurice Fitzgerald, Irish House of Commons MP for Kerry, 1795-97-1800; elected a life member of the Dublin Society in 1800; also, a later member of the RIA.⁸⁸

John Thomas Foster, Esq. (1747-1796) — Dunleer, Co. Louth; former Irish House of Commons MP for Dunleer 1776-83 and Ennis 1783-90; son of Reverend Thomas Foster, Rector of Dunleer; first cousin of John Foster, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons (1785-1800); relation of **John Maxwell**; founding member of the RIA and elected to the Dublin Society in 1784; an active subscriber to **John Archer**'s publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.⁸⁹

Rev. Robert Fowler, A.M. (c.1726-1801) — St. Sepulchre's (Kevin Street), Archbishop of Dublin, Church of Ireland (1779-1801); born in Lincolnshire, educated at Westminster School and Cambridge; chaplain to the lord-lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Townshend in 1771; Bishop of Killaloe 1771-1779; life member of the Dublin Society from 1779.⁹⁰

Mr Zach. Foxhall — Either: 1) 12 Nicholas Street, linen draper; or 2) 16 King's Inns Quay, joiner (both spelled Zachariah Foxall); a 'Zachary Foxall, Inns Quay' appears in a list of United Irishmen drawn up by Thomas Collins on 5 Oct 1793;

⁸⁶ WDD 1792, 42; RDS; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 49.

⁸⁷ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 67;

⁸⁸ AD, 285; Edward Walsh, *Bagatelles, or Poetical Sketches by E. Walsh* (Dublin: Printed for N. Kelly, 1793), [v]; DIB; Johnston-Liik, *MPs in Dublin*, 88; RDS.

⁸⁹ RDS; Johnston-Liik, *MPs in Dublin*, 90; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 92; RDS; Archer.

⁹⁰ DIB; RDS.

notice of a 'Zachariah Foxhall, Esq., formerly of Arran-quay, Dublin' who passed away at Abbeyleix, Queen's County in 1824.⁹¹

Mr Thomas Thorpe Frank* — Owenstown, Dublin; gentleman; described as an 'exchange merchant' in 1804; Treasurer of the Dublin Library Society in 1812.⁹²

Mr Thomas Fullerton — Address and occupation not identified; appears in **John Archer's** lists of subscriptions by publication.⁹³

William Furlong, Esq. (c.1748-1829)* — Aungier Street; attorney, M 1772, K.C.E.; Solicitor in Chancery; Dublin Society member from 1796; proposed fellow lawyer **William Norcott** for membership into the Dublin Society in 1804.⁹⁴

William Gamble, Esq. (b. c.1767) — Galway; gentleman; entered TCD, 27 Nov 1784.⁹⁵

James Gandon, Esq., M.R.I.A. (1742-1823) — 7 Mecklenburgh Street; architect; born in England, of Huguenot extraction; settled in Dublin in 1781; designer of major Dublin landmarks including the Custom House, Four Courts, and King's Inns; founding member of the RIA; sat on the first RIA Committee of Antiquities, and in 1791, with **Rev. George Graydon** and **William James MacNeven**; friend of **Samuel Walker** and **Richard Edward Mercier**; fled Dublin just before the rebellion of 1798 after warning from a 'long-standing founding member' of the Dublin Library (likely MacNeven) while they conversed in the library.⁹⁶

⁹¹ WDD 1792, 45; McDowell, "Proceedings," 90; *Cavan Herald*, 26 Oct 1824.

⁹² Registry of Deeds Project Ireland, *Registry of Irish Deeds*, memorial no. 297393 (23 March 1793); Great Britain, House of Commons, *Report from the Committee on the Circulating Paper, Current Coin and Exchange of Ireland* (1804), 83.

⁹³ Archer.

⁹⁴ WDD 1792, 122; *KIAP*, 180.

⁹⁵ *AD*, 316.

⁹⁶ *DIB*; *DIA*; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 91; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 78; Sparrow, engraver, [*Drumcondra Church and Churchyard*] *To James Gandon & Samuel Walker Esqr.: Mr. Horace Hone & Richard Edward Mercier Who Attended the Funeral of the Late Francis Grose Esqr. to the Church of Drumcondra Near Dublin Where His Remains Were Deposited 18 May 1791* ([S.l.]): Published by S. Hooper, 1791); Gandon, *Life of James Gandon*, 170.

Mr Andrew Gibbons — 142 Old Church Street and 6 Essex Bridge; tobacconist/grocer; in business with **Randall McDonnell** as early as 1787.⁹⁷

William Glascock, Esq. — York Street; attorney, H 1772, K.C.E.; Solicitor in Chancery.⁹⁸

Mr Francis Graham — 41 Bolton Street; apothecary; R.B. McDowell lists a Francis Graham, Church Street, grocer, as a United Irishman, admitted 18 Sep 1792.⁹⁹

William Gray, M.D. — 12 Jervis Street; physician, near fellow physician **William James MacNeven** (at 16 Jervis Street); later became physician to the Hibernian Marine Society, 'an organisation that sent homeless boys into the navy and marines'.¹⁰⁰

Rev. George Graydon — Parish of St. Michael, High Street, Dublin; clergyman, prebendary; Secretary, RIA Committee of Antiquities (with **James Gandon** and **William James MacNeven**) and for Foreign Correspondence in 1791; authored numerous essays on science and antiquities in the RIA's *Transactions*; organised the plan for the Academy's museum galleries.¹⁰¹

Mr Arthur Grueber (active 1770-1820)* — 59 Dame Street; bookseller and lottery-office keeper; succeeded **Joshua Edkins** as Librarian of the Dublin Library Society, 1807-1820; worked as a clerk for **Luke White** from 1780 to 1788; went into partnership with **Randal McAllister** from July 1789 to about September 1790; published **Edward Ledwich's** *Antiquities of Ireland* in December 1789; possibly in reaction to McAllister's publication of Paine's *Rights of Man*, Grueber published 'an answer to Paine': *A Defence of the Constitution of England Against the Libels That Have Been Lately Published on It, Particularly in Paine's Pamphlet on the Rights of Man*; news article in 1792,

⁹⁷ WDD 1792, 68; Registry of Deeds Project Ireland, *Registry of Irish Deeds*, memorial no. 260001.

⁹⁸ WDD 1792, 123; *KIAP*, 190.

⁹⁹ WDD 1792, 59; McDowell, "Proceedings," 35.

¹⁰⁰ WDD 1792, 132; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 256, n. 1.

¹⁰¹ WDD 1792, 136; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 78-79; Bourke, *Story of Irish Museums*, 65.

praised the acquisition of the second issue of Boydell's Shakespeare by Grueber, 'who with spirited attention, is always among the first, if not the *very first*, to import every superb and splendid production of the press'; reportedly bankrupt in 1793; reappeared in 1807 to be appointed DLS Librarian; an active subscriber to **John Archer**'s publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.¹⁰²

John Halahan, Esq. (1753-1819) — 74 Marlborough Street; surgeon; founding member of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (1784); first professor of anatomy and physiology, while his colleagues, **William Dease** and **Clement Archer** were the first professors of surgery and surgical pharmacy, respectively; Halahan also held the chair in midwifery; professor of anatomy to the Hibernian Society of Artists; in 1791, Halahan, **Francis L'Estrange**, and **James T. Wilkinson** were all part of the Court of Assistants at the College of Surgeons, with Dease as Censor and Archer, State Surgeon.¹⁰³

Rev. George Hall, D.D., S.F.T.C.D. (1753-1811) — TCD Lecturer in Divinity, Greek, Mathematics, and History (elected a fellow in 1777, and a senior fellow on 14 May 1790); Trinity College Librarian for 1790, and succeeded by **Arthur Browne** and **John Barrett**; other senior fellows in 1791 with Hall were: **Matthew Young**, Barrett, and Browne; **Thomas Elrington**, **Richard Graves**, and **Vesey Ward** were Junior Fellows at this time; founding member of the Royal Irish Academy, and served on its first Committee of Polite Literature with **William Preston**; elected to the Dublin Society in 1811; TCD Provost, 1806-1811.¹⁰⁴

John Hamill, M.D. — 76 Meath Street; physician.¹⁰⁵

Alexander Hamilton, Esq. (1765-1809) — Sackville Street; Cursitor in Chancery; admitted H 1786; Irish House of Commons MP for Ratoath, Meath

¹⁰² WDD 1792, 49; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 261-262; *Morning Post*, 30 April 1791; *Morning Post*, 14 May 1791; *Dublin Evening Post*, 28 Apr 1792; Archer.

¹⁰³ WDD 1792, 133; O'Brien and Crookshank, *Portrait of Irish Medicine*, 95-96; WDD 1792, 133.

¹⁰⁴ RDS; *DIB*; Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 355; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 91-92; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 77; RDS.

¹⁰⁵ WDD 1792, 132.

(1789-90), Carrickfergus (1790-97), Belfast (1798-1800); opposed the 1801 Act of Union; member of the Dublin Society.¹⁰⁶

Mr Thomas Harding, M.R.I.A. — Trinity Place; mathematician; member of the RIA; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216); regular contributor to **Richard Edward Mercier's** *Anthologia Hibernica*.¹⁰⁷

Benjamin Haughton, Esq. [Houghton] — Dolphin's Barn and 42 Cork Street; silk and worsted manufacturer, one of the largest in the city in the mid-eighteenth century and a supplier to Dublin Castle; in 1763, he was involved in the unrest after a Dublin textile dealer chose to import silks from Lyon rather than from local manufacturers; father of **Edward Haughton**.¹⁰⁸

Edward Haughton, Esq. [Houghton] (1760-1833) — William Street and 9 North Frederick Street; son of **Benjamin Haughton**, owner of a large silk and worsted manufacturing business; entered TCD 1772, son 'of Benjamin *textor*' (weaver), BA 1782; barrister, admitted M 1783; became a commissioner of bankruptcy; 'a member of Dublin Corporation and associated with the "patriot" wing of that body'; member of the Dublin Society from 1801.¹⁰⁹

Noah Hickey, Esq. — North Earl Street; attorney, M 1785, K.C.E., Solicitor in Chancery; Deputy Cursitor to **Alexander Hamilton**.¹¹⁰

William Hincks, Esq. — Two possibilities: 1) Custom House Quay; Patentee Officer, Deputy Craner and Wharfinger, in the same office as **Isaac Weld**; possibly in partnership in a related business: 'Dunn and Hincks, Ship-brokers' at 3 Lisburn Street and Custom House Quay; or 2) 5 Linen Hall Street; linen

¹⁰⁶ WDD 1792, 113; RDS.

¹⁰⁷ WDD 1792, 51, where Harding appears as a mathematician in the section titled 'Merchants and Traders'; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80; Mercier, *Anthologia Hibernica*.

¹⁰⁸ WDD 1792, 54; Dickson, *Dublin*, 186.

¹⁰⁹ WDD 1792, 113; AD, 380; KIAP, 235; RDS.

¹¹⁰ WDD 1792, 124; KIAP, 226; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 57;

factor; friend of **William Drennan**; identified as a United Irishman; elected to the Dublin Society in 1803.¹¹¹

Mr Michael Hines* — Not identified; there is an entry for 'Hines & O'Reilly, Pawn-brokers, 2 Essex-gate'; name appears on 1812 list of members-for-life.¹¹²

Peter Holmes, Esq., Jun. (d. 1826) — Merrion Street; son of Peter Holmes (1731-1802) who was a barrister, MP for Kilmallock, 1790-1797), and a Commissioner at the Stamp Office (1785-1802); the younger Holmes does not appear to have attended TCD; father appointed him Secretary at the Stamp Office, Eustace Street in 1796; after his father died in 1802, Holmes, Jr. succeeded him as Commissioner; the elder Peter Holmes was elected to the Dublin Society in 1766, having been proposed by **Richard St. George**; Peter Holmes Jr. was admitted to Dublin Society in 1803; Francis Higgins accused the 'young Mr Holmes of the Stamp Office' of corrupt practices by permitting radical newspapers such as the *Morning Post* and *Press* to be published without stamps; entries for his sons in the *Alumni Dublinenses* designate him as 'Generosus' (gentleman).¹¹³

Joseph Hone, Esq. [Joseph Tarry Hone]* (b. c.1766) — 3 Bachelor's Walk; entered TCD 1782, BA 1787; barrister, admitted T 1788; from a well-known merchant family; Hone and **Charles Ward** were elected directors of the Bank of Ireland in April 1784; other directors then were **John Allen, Samuel Dick, Jeremiah D'Olier, Alexander Jaffray, Peter Digges La Touche, George Maquay, and Abraham Wilkinson**; later supported Catholic emancipation; elected to the Dublin Society in 1799.¹¹⁴

Rev. James Horner (d. c.1846)* — Dorset Street; Presbyterian clergyman; contemporary of fellow Presbyterian **Rev. Dr McDowel**; affiliated with the

¹¹¹ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 68; *WDD* 1792, 39; RDS; William Drennan to Sam McTier, 5 Feb 1791, in Agnew, ed., *Drennan-McTier Letters*, 1:301; McDowell, "Proceedings," 135-136.

¹¹² *WDD* 1792, 54; *DLS, Members List*, 1812.

¹¹³ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 51; *WDD* 1792, 113; RDS; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 197 & 315; *AD*, 407.

¹¹⁴ *WDD* 1792, 113; *AD*, 409; *KIAP*, 234; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 43; *WDD* 1792, 12; RDS.

church in Mary's Abbey (Capel Street), known as the Scots' Church; elected to the Dublin Society in 1801.¹¹⁵

Henry Humfrey, Esq. [Humphrey] (b. c.1757) — 6 Aungier Street; barrister, entered TCD 1773; Middle Temple, 1776, admitted T 1785.¹¹⁶

John A. Husband, Esq. [John Abbot Husband] (active 1765-d. 1794) — 28 Abbey Street; printer, bookseller.¹¹⁷

Edward Irwine, Esq. — William Street; attorney, Exchequer H 1791, K.C.E.; Solicitor in Chancery.¹¹⁸

Peter Jackson, Esq. (d. c.1837) — Aungier Street; office at King's Inns; attorney (Exchequer before 1786), K.C.E.; Clerk of the Rules and Entries and Seal Keeper, Court of Common Pleas; member of the Dublin Society from 1815.¹¹⁹

Alexander Jaffray, Esq. M.R.I.A. (c.1734-1818) — 8 Ely Place; banker; Governor, Bank of Ireland, 1791-1793; from a prominent Quaker family of bankers; partner in the banking firm of Jaffray, Fayle, and Hautenville, 19 Eustace Street; elected a member of the Dublin Society in 1767; admitted to the Ouzel Galley Society with **Samuel Dick** in 1772; elevated to a higher office of that society in 1791 along with Dick, **Joshua Pim**, and **Abraham Wilkinson**; **William Cope** (1786), **William Digges La Touche** (1788), **George Maquay** (1785), and **Charles Ward** (1789) were also fellow members at this time; together with the Catholic **Thomas Braughall**, Jaffray proposed **James Farrell**, another Catholic, in 1780 for membership in the Dublin Society; known for his religious tolerance and sympathy for Catholic relief; founding member of several commercial entities including the Dublin Chamber of Commerce (1783, with Cope, Dick, Maquay, Pim, and Wilkinson)

¹¹⁵ RDS; Warburton et al., *History of the City of Dublin*, 2:817; McGregor, *New Picture of Dublin*, 136-137.

¹¹⁶ *WDD* 1792, 113; *KIAP*, 239; *AD*, 418.

¹¹⁷ Pollard, *Dictionary*, 303; *WDD* 1792, 55.

¹¹⁸ *WDD* 1792, 125; *KIAP*, 243.

¹¹⁹ *WDD* 1792, 124; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 58; *KIAP*, 245.

and the Bank of Ireland in 1783, as a director (after he converted to the Established Church) along with **John Allen**, Dick, Jeremiah D'Olier, Nicholas Lawless (**Lord Cloncurry** in 1789), and Wilkinson; member of the Royal Irish Academy in 1791; 'built up his reputation and expanded his extensive network of business and social connections, through his membership of clubs and his philanthropic work'; Jaffray was also associated with the Committee of Merchants, Hibernian Marine Society, Hibernian Fire Insurance, Royal Exchange, and the Freemason Lodge no. 1, as a Junior Grand Warden.¹²⁰

Alexander Jaffray, Esq., Jun. — 19 Eustace Street; merchant, 'Jaffray and Hautenville, Merchants'; son of **Alexander Jaffray**; member of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce in 1791 with **John Binns, William Cope, Jeremiah D'Olier, Samuel Dick, George Maquay, Joshua Pim** (treasurer), and **Abraham Wilkinson**; in a letter to Dublin Castle, an informer mentioned his name in a list of Dublin United Irishmen: 'John Dawson was in the chair at Weaver's Hall and on returning him thanks Alexander Jaffrey Junior of Eustace Street was called to it'.¹²¹

Richard Jebb, Esq. (1766-1834) — 2 Dominick Street and Rutland Square; barrister; entered TCD 1781, BA 1786, LLB 1789; admitted as a barrister, T 1789; Whig Club member with **Arthur Browne, Francis Burroughs, Lord Charlemont, George Maquay, Theobald McKenna, Charles O'Neil, Joshua Pim, Joseph Pollock**, and **Charles Ward**; pamphleteer and later judge; opposed Union in a pamphlet.¹²²

Caleb Jenkin, Esq., Alderman (d. 1792) — 36 Dame Street; City Alderman, elected 11 Nov 1790; died 11 March 1792.¹²³

¹²⁰ WDD 1792, 12; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 403; RDS; "The Ship," 35-36; RDS; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 43; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 79; Griffith, "Dublin's Commercial Clubs," 121.

¹²¹ WDD 1792, 56 & 106; McDowell, "Proceedings," 135. It is unlikely that this was the same **John Dawson** who was a member of the DLS (see p. 330, n. 64).

¹²² KIAP, 247; Kenneth Ferguson, "The Irish Bar in December 1798," *Dublin Historical Record* 52, no. 1 (1999): 56; DIB; ODNB; WDD 1792, 113; *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 5 November 1791; Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800," 270-280; Richard Jebb, *A Reply to A Pamphlet Entitled, Arguments For and Against An Union*, 3rd ed. (Dublin: Printed for William Jones, 1799).

¹²³ WDD 1792, 56; *Dublin Chronicle*, 17 March 1792.

Robert Jenkin, Esq. — Peter Street; attorney T, 1771, K.E.; Solicitor in Chancery.¹²⁴

Mr William Lionel Jenkins — 6 College Green; apothecary: 'Jenkins and Sohan, Apothecaries'; business partner of **Edward Sohan**; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216).¹²⁵

Thomas Johnson, M.D. — Address unknown; apothecary; appears as an apothecary in the *Medical Register* of 1783 and in sources pertaining to his two sons who became judges; one of his sons, Robert, was proposed into the Dublin Society by **Thomas Braughall** in 1796.¹²⁶

Mr John Jones (active 1786-d. 1828) — 111 Grafton Street; bookseller and stationer; printer of the *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine*; published works by **Samuel Whyte**; in 1791, he subscribed to 130 sets of **William Jones'** *Shakespeare's Dramatic Works*; also issued in 1791: *A General Catalogue of Books in All Languages, Arts and Sciences, that Have Been Printed in Ireland, and Published in Dublin: From the Year 1700, to the Present Time*; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216).¹²⁷

Mr William Jones (active 1778-d. 1804) — 86 Dame Street; bookseller, printer, stationer, lottery-office keeper; took over the bookselling business of **Luke White** in August 1789, including French and Italian books; he and Archer and were partners in publishing, 1789-90; advertised his publication by subscription of *Shakespeare's Dramatic Works*, as 'printed on Irish paper', 21s (published September 1791); an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of

¹²⁴ WDD 1792, 124; KIAP, 248.

¹²⁵ WDD 1792, 56; Registry of Deeds Project Ireland, *Registry of Irish Deeds*, memorial no. 334589 (1 January 1798); Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80.

¹²⁶ *The Medical Register for the Year 1783* (London: Printed for Joseph Johnson, [1783]), 166; DIB (Robert Johnson); KIAP, 250, where there is the following entry for William Johnson: '5th son of Thomas, apothecary, Dublin'; RDS.

¹²⁷ WDD 1792, 57; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 323.

the Dublin Library in 1791; partnered with Archer to purchase the Denis Daly library for dispersal by auction in Dublin through James Vallance.¹²⁸

William Todd Jones (1757-1818) — Address in Dublin unknown; barrister, admitted T 1780; pamphleteer; MP for Lisburn, 1783-90; brother-in-law of fellow Presbyterian pamphleteer, **Joseph Pollock**; one of the first Protestant advocates for Catholic emancipation and further parliamentary reform; Irish Volunteer; Freemason, Orange Lodge, no. 257, Belfast; member of the Northern Whig Club; resided in Dublin after losing his seat; allied with Wolfe Tone and **Richard McCormick** for Catholic relief; joined the Dublin Society of United Irishmen in November 1791; identified as present at a meeting involving the proposals of **Nathaniel Callwell** and **Randal McAllister** into the United Irishmen; also at that meeting on 27 Dec 1791 were: **Joseph Dowling**, **William Drennan**, **William James MacNeven**, McCormick, and **James Moore**; 'by the late 1790s his radicalism had cooled somewhat, and in 1798 he declared his approval of the government's maintenance of order and punishment of traitors'.¹²⁹

Lord Bishop of Killala [John Law] (d. 1810)* — Dublin address unknown; clergyman, John Law, educated at Cambridge; Lord Bishop of Clonfert, 1782-87; Lord Bishop of Killala, 1787-95; later Lord Bishop of Elphin, 1795-1810; as Lord Bishop of Clonfert, he was a founding member of the RIA, serving on the first Committee of Science with **Stephen Dickson**, **Robert Perceval**, and **Matthew Young**; friend of **Richard Kirwan**; at Killala, upon 'finding the people of his diocese almost exclusively Catholic, he distributed Catholic books amongst them, declaring that as he could not make them good Protestants, he would at least make them good papists'; 'held extremely broad and tolerant views for the times in which he lived'; supported Catholic relief in 1793; became one of the Vice-Presidents of the Dublin Library Society in 1795; elected to the Dublin Society in 1796.¹³⁰

¹²⁸ WDD 1792, 57; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 325-326; *Hibernian Journal*, 24 August 1789; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 325, quoting the *Dublin Chronicle*, 10 July 1790; Archer. On Jones's work in the print trade, see p. 121 and 124-126.

¹²⁹ DIB; ODNB; WDD 1792, 113; KIAP, 254; DIB; Rogers, "A Protestant Pioneer of Catholic Emancipation"; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 97.

¹³⁰ DIB; ODNB; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 91; McLaughlin, "Richard Kirwan: Part III," 75; RDS.

Hon. George Knox (1765-1827) — College Green; barrister, admitted M 1788, LLD 1795 (honoris causa); MP for Dungannon, 1790-97, and TCD, 1797-1800; Revenue Commissioner, 1793-1799; member of the RIA; friend of Wolfe Tone; introduced a bill in parliament proposing full Catholic emancipation in 1793; 'he was of the opinion that if wealthy Catholics were admitted to the legislature they would cease to act as a party, attach themselves to the political groups, and class would supersede religion'; bill was defeated, 163-69; voted for the Catholic Relief bill that passed in 1793; member of the Dublin Society from 1800 and served on its library committee, 1812-1816.¹³¹

William Keller, Esq. — 16 Dawson Street; attorney c.1785, K.C.E.; Solicitor in Chancery.¹³²

Rev. John Kelly — No further identification other than his designation as a clergyman; likely Catholic; a 'Rev. John Kelly' appears in a list of subscribers to a publication dedicated to the Catholic Viscount Kenmare, and printed by the Catholic bookseller, Patrick Hoey, in 1791.¹³³

Joseph Kelly, Esq. — Cork Street; brewer; common name; possibly the same Joseph Kelly who represented the parish of St. James on the Catholic Committee in 1781; member of the Dublin United Irishmen, admitted 30 Oct 1792.¹³⁴

Henry Kennedy, M.D. — Aungier Street; physician; Licentiate, King and Queen's College of Physicians with **William Drennan**, **James Murray**, **Robert Scott**, and **Walter Wade**, while **Robert Perceval** was a vice-president and censor, **Clement Archer** was an honorary fellow, and **Daniel Bryan** and **Stephen Dickson** were fellows; proposed into the United Irishmen by fellow

¹³¹ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 54; *WDD* 1792, 114; *KIAP*, 273; *AD*, 475; *DIB*; *ODNB*; Johnston-Liik, *MPs in Dublin*, 100; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 79; Johnston-Liik, *History of the Irish Parliament*, 5:40-41; RDS.

¹³² *WDD* 1792, 125; *KIAP*, 258.

¹³³ Patrick O'Kelly, *Killarney: A Descriptive Poem* (Dublin: Printed for the Author by P. Hoey, 1791), 128.

¹³⁴ *WDD* 1792, 59 & 154; Edwards, "Minute Book," 56; McDowell, "Proceedings," 37 & 39; McDowell, "Personnel," 37.

physician Drennan, in March 1792; one of the 1798 rebel leaders, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, stayed with Kennedy in 1798.¹³⁵

James Kennedy, Esq. — Exchange Street; silversmith; involved in a lease of a house in Gardiner Street with goldsmith and watchmaker **Ambrose Moore**.¹³⁶

John Gorman Kennedy, Esq. (d. 1809) — 28 South King Street; brewer; represented the Dublin parish of St. Andrew on the Catholic Committee, 9 Feb. 1791 with **John Sweetman** and **James Connolly**; reported by an informant to Dublin Castle to have been a secretary at meetings of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, on one occasion involving **Lewis Lyons** and **William Sweetman**; joined the Freemason Lodge no. 202 (5 Palace Street, off Dame Street) on 11 May 1791 with the physician and fellow United Irishman **William James MacNeven**—one day after the meeting of the newly formed Dublin Library; **Edward Sohan** was also a member of this lodge in 1794; in addition, Kennedy became a member of the Freemason Lodge no. 7, at Fleming's Tavern, 9 Eustace Street, in February 1795.¹³⁷

Rev. Alexander Kenny — 105 Thomas Street; Catholic clergyman; returned from Naples in 1768; appears to have belonged to the John Street Chapel in 1789, when he translated into English, and published, works by the Italian scholar Ludovico Muratori (1672-1750), *The Science of Rational Devotion*.¹³⁸

Mr Nicholas Kildhal — 4 Gloucester Street; carpenter, builder and timber merchant; Freeman of the City of Dublin, 1789, Guild of Carpenters; an active

¹³⁵ WDD 1792, 132; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 77-78, McDowell, "Proceedings," 17; McDowell, "Personnel," 38; Madden, *The United Irishmen, Their Lives and Times*, 2:403;

¹³⁶ Registry of Deeds Project Ireland, *Registry of Irish Deeds*, memorial no: 278884 (9 December 1790).

¹³⁷ Edwards, "Minute Book," 118; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 54; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 288; Fagan, "Infiltration," 79; *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine*, April 1794, 294; Fagan, "Infiltration," 75-76.

¹³⁸ Begadon, "Laity and Clergy in the Catholic Renewal of Dublin, c.1750-1830," 307; Lodovico Antonio Muratori, *The Science of Rational Devotion. From the Writings of the Learned and Celebrated Muratori. By the Rev. Alexander Kenny, of John Street Chapel ... To Which Is Prefixed, a Preface by the Translator, Containing, a Critical Analysis of the Work, and a Brief Account of the Author, and His Writings...*, trans. Alexander Kenny (Dublin: Printed by James Byrne, 1789) [ESTC T129482]; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 71-72.

subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.¹³⁹

William Kirkpatrick, Esq. (1769-1844) — Drumcondra House, Dublin and Co. Wicklow; gentleman, landowner; elected a member of the Dublin Society in 1800.¹⁴⁰

Sir Thomas Lighton, Bart. — 22 Stephen's Green; Merville, Dublin; MP for the Borough of Tuam; Baronet of Ireland, created 1 Mar 1791; son of a tenant farmer in Derry; served as a soldier with the East India Company; captured in Mysore with General Mathews who was executed; upon return to London in 1784, Lighton's loyal friendship with Mathews resulted in a lucrative reward from the latter's estate; Lighton returned to Ireland and served as MP for Tuam, 1790-98, and Carlingford, 1798-1800; High Sheriff of Dublin, 1790; elected into the Dublin Society in 1801.¹⁴¹

Rev. John Lahy [John Leahy?] — Possibly Rev. John Leahy, St. Nicholas-Within Church, Nicholas Street, Dublin; entered TCD 1779, BA 1783, MA 1789.¹⁴²

David Latouche, Esq., Jun. [Col. David La Touche, Jr.] (1768-1816) — Harcourt Street and Castle Street; banker: Rt. Hon. David La Touche and Co., Bankers (La Touche Bank); entered TCD 1785; son of the Rt. Hon. David La Touche (David La Touche III) Irish House of Commons MP for Newcastle, 1790-1800 and first Governor of the Bank of Ireland; although there is much written on the La Touche family, Huguenots who made their wealth largely from banking and property development, little is known of this David La Touche during the eighteenth century; elected to the Dublin Society in 1801; Member of Parliament for Carlow, 1802-1816.¹⁴³

¹³⁹ *WDD* 1792, 61; *DIA*; RDS; Archer.

¹⁴⁰ RDS.

¹⁴¹ *WDD* 1792, 109; RDS. Also, see A. M. Fraser, "The Romance of the House of Lighton," *Dublin Historical Record* 7, no. 3 (1945): 112-119.

¹⁴² *WDD* 1792, 138; *AD*, 488; Leslie, comp., *Clergy of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh*, 600.

¹⁴³ *WDD* 1792, 63; *AD*, 483; The La Touche Legacy: The Development of the La Touche Legacy in Ireland, "La Touche History," accessed 24 February 2017, <http://latouchelegacy.com/la-touche-history/>; O'Mullane, "Huguenots in Dublin: Part I (Continued)," 131; RDS.

George Latouche, Esq. (d. 1823) [George La Touche] — Castle Street; banker (La Touche Bank); brother of David La Touche III; proposed by his uncle **Peter Digges La Touche** into the Dublin Society in 1802.¹⁴⁴

Peter Digges Latouche, Esq. (d. 1820) [Peter Digges La Touche] — Castle Street, Dublin and Belfield, Co. Dublin; banker, (La Touche Bank); member of the Royal Exchange with **William Cope, Samuel Dick, Alexander Jaffray, Joshua Pim,** and **Abraham Wilkinson**; member of the Ouzel Galley Society from 1798 (admitted the same year as **Robert Alexander**) and Dublin Society from 1801.¹⁴⁵

William Digges Latouche, Esq. (1746-1803) [William Digges La Touche] — 29 North Stephen's Green; partner in La Touche Bank in 1786; educated in London and conducted business in the Middle East and India; after returning to Ireland he donated his collection of Oriental manuscripts to the Trinity College Library in 1786; director of the Grand Canal Company in 1791, with **Randall McDonnell** and **George Maquay** and cousin David La Touche III (treasurer), father of **David La Touche, Jr.**; **Sisson Putland Darling** was the Company's Dublin collector; W.D. La Touche became chairman in 1794 and 1799; member of the Ouzel Galley Society from 1788, joining **William Cope, Samuel Dick, Alexander Jaffray,** Maquay, **Joshua Pim,** and **Abraham Wilkinson**; elected to the Dublin Society in 1796, with Wilkinson one of his proposers.¹⁴⁶

Philip Lawless, Esq. — 6 Warren Mount; brewer; appears on two deeds involving property owned by the Edkins family (in which **John Edkins** is listed); Lawless' son, Barry, was educated at the school run by **Lewis Lyons,** Arran Quay.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁴ WDD 1792, 63; RDS; The La Touche Legacy: The Development of the La Touche Legacy in Ireland, "La Touche History."

¹⁴⁵ WDD 1792, 63; KIAP, 278; WDD 1792, 106 & 154; "The Ship," 35-36; RDS.

¹⁴⁶ WDD 1792, 63; RDS; Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 107 & 359; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 82; "The Ship," 35-36.

¹⁴⁷ WDD 1792, 63; Registry of Deeds Project Ireland, *Registry of Irish Deeds*, memorial no. 267355, 12 Nov. 1788; *ibid.*, Memorial no. 302832 (12 December 1793); AD, 485.

Mr John Lee (active 1775-1803) — 70 Dame Street (at the corner of Eustace Street); music seller, printer and instrument-maker; shortly after his shop was damaged by attackers reacting to his sale of imported instruments, Lee announced the sale of sheet music to *Rouze Hibernia*.¹⁴⁸

Thomas Lee, Esq. — Three possibilities: 1) 76 Grafton Street; apothecary; 2) 58 Pill Lane; Catholic merchant (linen draper) who belonged to the Freemason Lodge no. 173 from 1768; he was also close friends with the noted antiquarian Charles O’Conor of Belanagare (1710-1791; one of the first Catholics admitted to the Royal Irish Academy), and was admitted into the United Irishmen on 24 Feb 1792; or 3) 58 Aungier Street; attorney H 1754, King’s Bench, Solicitor in Chancery.¹⁴⁹

Mr Nicholas Le Favre — 101 Grafton Street; lottery broker; represented Castlebar on the Catholic Committee, 9 Feb 1791; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216); an active subscriber to **John Archer’s** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791; also a member of the Catholic Society of Dublin with: **Thomas Archdeakon Jr., Thomas Braughall, James Farrell, John Gorman Kennedy, Lewis Lyons, William James MacNeven, Richard McCormick, Randall McDonnell, Theobald McKenna, John Sweetman, and William Sweetman**¹⁵⁰

Francis L’Estrange, Esq. (1756-1836) — William Street; surgeon; Surgeon to Mercer’s Hospital, 1782-1836; in 1791, L’Estrange, **John Halahan**, and **James T. Wilkinson** were all members of the Court of Assistants at the Royal

¹⁴⁸ WDD 1792, 64; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 362.

¹⁴⁹ WDD 1792, 64; Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, 135; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 92; Brown, *Irish Enlightenment*, 327-330; McDowell, “Personnel,” 38; WDD 1792, 125; KIAP, 283. This is a common name and difficult to assess the plausibility of one. Taking the ‘Esq.’ designation into account, generally, apothecaries appear not to have this honorific next to their names, whereas many merchants and all lawyers have. There is a Dr Thomas Lee in the 1812 list but this could well be another person altogether, more likely Dr Thomas Lee who was a nephew of the former Archbishop of Dublin, John Carpenter, from whom **Archbishop John Thomas Troy** assumed the archbishopric in 1786 (Fagan, *Catholics in a Protestant Country*, 172). Either way, for this study, those recorded here came from one of the emerging middle class professions in the eighteenth century.

¹⁵⁰ WDD 1792, 64; Woods, “Catholic Convention,” 56; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80; Archer; [List of Catholic Society Members], Rebellion Papers, 620/34/50.

College of Surgeons, with **William Dease** as censor and **Clement Archer**, state surgeon; President of the Royal College of Surgeons, 1796; Surgeon Dentist to the Lord Lieutenant; elected to the Dublin Society in 1803, with **Edward Haughton** as one of his proposers; kept a private library and his own bookplate.¹⁵¹

Rev. John L'Estrange — St. Werburgh's Church, 9 Werburgh Street; clergyman; entered TCD 1775, BA 1780.¹⁵²

Rev. Mr Long — Either: Rev. Peter Long, who returned to Dublin from Rome in 1791; or Rev. Paul (or Paulus) (b. c.1759) who returned from Paris in 1792; both were Catholic clergyman.¹⁵³

Rev. Thomas Long — No further identification other than his designation as a clergyman.

Mr James Lynch — 26 Capel Street; optician; a member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216).¹⁵⁴

Martin French Lynch, Esq. (1767-1827?) — 199 Abbey Street; law student in 1791; entered I.T. 1785; admitted as barrister June 1792; TCD LLD 1804; 'one of the first Catholics to be called to the Irish bar'; represented Athenry, Co. Galway for the Catholic Committee, 9 Feb. 1791; participated in sub-committees with **Thomas Braughall, Lewis Lyons, Randall McDonnell, William James MacNeven, Richard McCormick, Theobald McKenna, Thomas Ryan,** and **John Sweetman.**¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ WDD 1792, 133; Martin, *Dictionary of Bookplates of Irish Medical Doctors*, 78; RDS; Martin, *Dictionary of Bookplates of Irish Medical Doctors*, 78.

¹⁵² WDD 1792, 139; AD, 498.

¹⁵³ Begadon, "Laitie and Clergy in the Catholic Renewal of Dublin, c.1750-1830," 310.

¹⁵⁴ WDD 1792, 65; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 81.

¹⁵⁵ Woods, "Catholic Convention," 57; KIAP, 296; AD, 517; Edwards, "Minute Book," 143 (31 December 1791) & 150 (1 February 1792).

Francis Magan, Esq. (1774-1843) — 49 High Street; student in 1791; son of a woollen draper, Thomas Magan ('Mercer to His Majesty'), who was an active member of the Catholic Committee represented Dundalk, 9 February 1791; Francis Magan entered TCD, 13 Oct 1788, aged 14, BA 1794; called to the Irish bar in 1796; may have held a position in the Office of the Secretary of Inland Revenue; moved to 20 Usher's Island, near the Four Courts; joined the United Irishmen in 1792; was on friendly terms with Francis Higgins, proprietor of the *Freeman's Journal* (by this time, in the pay of Dublin Castle); Magan fell into financial debt to Higgins, who, by 1797, coerced Magan to become an informer and 'reveal all he knew about the United Irishmen's organisation in the city, and their plans for insurrection'; Magan, to this day, remains infamous for being responsible for the capture of Lord Edward Fitzgerald when he revealed that the leader had been hiding in Oliver Bond's house in March 1798; elected to the Dublin Society in 1834.¹⁵⁶

George Maquay, Esq. (d. c.1821) — 143 Thomas Street; George & J.L. Maquay, 'Merchants & Sugar-bakers'; elected to the Dublin Society in 1767 with **Robert Perceval** as one of his proposers; treasurer of the Whig Club, with fellow members **Arthur Browne, Francis Burroughs, Lord Charlemont, Richard Jebb, Theobald McKenna, Charles O'Neil, Joshua Pim, Joseph Pollock,** and **Charles Ward; William Digges La Touche, Randall McDonnell,** and Maquay were directors of the Grand Canal Company in 1791, with **Sisson Putland Darling** one of its collectors; Ouzel Galley Society member from 1785, joining **Samuel Dick** (1772), **Alexander Jaffray** (1772), Pim (1776), and **Abraham Wilkinson** (1782); **William Cope** (1786), William Digges La Touche (1788), and **Charles Ward** (1789) were admitted shortly after; founder member of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce and served on its council in 1791 with **John Binns, William Cope, Jeremiah D'Olier, Samuel Dick, Alexander Jaffray, Jr., Joshua Pim** (treasurer), and **Abraham Wilkinson.**¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ WDD 1792, 70; Edwards, "Minute Book," 119; KIAP, 320; DIB; ODNB; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 49-50 & 28-29; RDS.

¹⁵⁷ WDD 1792, 71; RDS; Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800," 270-280; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 82; "The Ship," 35-36; MacMahon, *A Most Respectable Meeting of Merchants*, 38-39; WDD 1792, 106.

Charles Martin, Esq. — Stephen's Street; attorney, Exchequer, July 1777, Solicitor in Chancery; Dublin Society member from 1810.¹⁵⁸

William Maturin, Esq. — 71 Camden Street; Clerk of the Munster Road, General Post Office.¹⁵⁹

George Maxwell, M.D. — 12 North Earl Street; physician; graduated from Edinburgh; possibly 'George Maxwell of London', the 'Doctor Maxwell', who in November 1792 was suspected as the 'confidential correspondent of [Archibald] Hamilton Rowan', a leading United Irishman and later President of the Dublin Library Society; an entry in the *King's Inns Admission Papers* for a Henry Maxwell who completed his law studies in 1812 reads: '3rd son George, Dublin, MD'.¹⁶⁰

John Maxwell, Esq. (1767-1838) — Co. Carlow; gentleman; son of Henry Maxwell, Bishop of Meath; later the 3rd Earl of Farnham (1823); relation of **John Thomas Foster**.¹⁶¹

Robert Maxwell, Esq. — Address unknown; barrister; entered TCD, November 1785; admitted to the Irish bar, M 1788.¹⁶²

Mr Bartholomew Maziere (1753-1823) — 6 Mary's Abbey; merchant: Bartholomew Maziere and Co., Merchants; Presbyterian; an informer to Dublin Castle described Maziere as a 'staunch republican'; in 1805 he became President of the Chamber of Commerce, succeeding **Randall McDonnell**.¹⁶³

Mr Randal McAllister (active 1786-1794) — 59 Dame Street, moved to 102 Grafton Street in May 1791; bookseller, publisher, lottery broker; in business with **Arthur Grueber** between 1789 and 1790; associated with the

¹⁵⁸ WDD 1792, 126; KIAP, 328; RDS.

¹⁵⁹ WDD 1792, 72; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 103.

¹⁶⁰ McDowell, "Proceedings," 38; Stewart, *Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack*, 1804, 111; KIAP, 332.

¹⁶¹ RDS.

¹⁶² WDD 1792, 114; KIAP, 332.

¹⁶³ WDD 1792, 72; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 97, n. 25; McMahon, *A Most Respectable Meeting of Merchants*, 76 & 262.

Whigs of the Capital with **William Drennan**, **William James MacNeven**, **Theobald McKenna**, and **James Moore**; on the committee to set up a strategy for disseminating Paine's *Rights of Man*, and was a publisher of the first cheap Dublin edition at 6d, with a print run of 20,000; possibly in reaction to McAllister's publication of Paine, Grueber published 'an answer to Paine': *A Defence of the Constitution of England Against the Libels That Have Been Lately Published On It, Particularly in Paine's Pamphlet on the Rights of Man*; proposed into the Dublin Society of United Irishmen with **Nathaniel Callwell**, at a meeting on 27 December 1791 that included: **Joseph Dowling**, **William Drennan**, **William Todd Jones**, **William James MacNeven**, **Richard McCormick**, and **James Moore**; on 1 June 1792, McAllister (Presbyterian) seconded a proposal by Moore (Catholic) to make Thomas Paine an honorary member of the United Irishmen; the vote passed, one week later, 36-6; mentioned as the printer of the letter by a member calling on the Volunteers to take to arms immediately; McAllister's political motivation was reflected in his publishing, having printed *Whig Club Attacked and Defended* (after 12 August 1790); for a brief period in 1793 (12 Feb to 23 March), his newspaper, *Rights of Irishmen; or, National Evening Star* was the news platform for the programme of the United Irishmen, for which he was sent to Newgate for libel for a squib in which he 'defined parliament as a market where honour and virtue were sold to the highest bidder'; belonged to the Freemason Lodge, no. 620 with **John Rigby**; also a member of Freemason Lodge, no. 190 with **Theobald McKenna** and **James T. Wilkinson**; went bankrupt the following year; appealed to Drennan to send him money in America in August 1794.¹⁶⁴

Rev. Mr McCormick (d. 1796) — Address unknown; Rev. Peter McCormick: ordained in May 1780; spent five years in France before his return to Dublin in 1785; was curate at St. Catherine's parish with **Rev. Andrew Dunn** while **Rev. Bartholomew Sherlock** was parish priest there; parish priest of Finglas, May 1795, and Rush 1795-96.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ WDD 1792, 66; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 376; *Dublin Weekly Journal*, 9 April 1791; Dickson, "Paine and Ireland," 135-138; *Morning Post*, 14 May 1791; McDowell, "Proceedings," 7; Dickson, "Paine and Ireland," 135; McDowell, "Proceedings," 23; 47; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 376; McDowell, "Personnel," 53; Inglis, *Freedom of the Press in Ireland*, 65; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 376; Fagan, "Infiltration," 82; Smyth, "Freemasonry and the United Irishmen," 174-175; Agnew, ed., *Drennan-McTier Letters*, 1:187-90; 214.

¹⁶⁵ Begadon, "Laity and Clergy in the Catholic Renewal of Dublin, c.1750-1830," 312; *Donnelly, Short Histories of Dublin Parishes*, 9:224.

Richard McCormick, Esq. (d. 1827) — 9 Mark's Alley; poplin manufacturer; Irish Volunteer in the mid-1780s; described by an informant to the government as 'an intelligent man, a major (and the best field major) in the volunteers of Dublin—he is violent and was among others determinedly American mad'; Secretary to the Catholic Committee from 1788 to 1793; represented Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, on the Committee, 9 Feb. 1791; member of the Catholic Society of Dublin with **Thomas Archdeakon Jr., Thomas Braughall, James Farrell, John Gorman Kennedy, Nicholas Le Favre, Lewis Lyons, William James MacNeven, Randall McDonnell, Theobald McKenna, John Sweetman,** and **William Sweetman**; McCormick, Braughall, **Andrew Daly, Richard Dillon,** Lyons, MacNeven, McDonnell, **Thomas McDonnell,** McKenna, **Dominick Rice, Thomas Ryan,** and Sweetman were all part of the middle-class merchant/professional wing that wrested control of the Catholic Committee from the aristocratic/clerical wing; one of the founding members of the Dublin Society of the United Irishman, with **Nathaniel Callwell, Joseph Dowling, William Drennan, William Todd Jones, William James MacNeven,** and **James Moore** (27 December 1791); friend of Theobald Wolfe Tone; fled to France in February 1798.¹⁶⁶

John McCrea, Esq. — 3 Fade Street; schoolmaster of the English Academy; co-founder (with **Samuel Whyte**) and secretary of the Abecedarian Society; twenty-four other DLS founding members were part of this society (see Table 15, p. 216).¹⁶⁷

Randall McDonnell, Esq. [MacDonnell] (1762-1821) — Allen's Court, Mullinahack, Dublin; merchant; business partner of successful merchant Edward Byrne and his son, **John Byrne**; involved with them as a distiller and sugar-baker in North Great George's Street; sat on numerous committees and sub-committees of the Catholic Committee; represented Armagh with John Byrne on the Catholic Committee, 9 Feb. 1791; McDonnell, **Thomas**

¹⁶⁶ WDD 1792, 67; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 60; *DIB*; O'Flaherty, "The Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-16; Edwards, "Minute Book," 1-2; 120; Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-49; O'Flaherty, "Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-26; McDowell, "Proceedings," 7; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 79, n. 43.

¹⁶⁷ WDD 1792, 67; John McCrea, *English Academy Fade Street, Dublin: John McCrea, Master. Terms for Pupils, Whether Day-Boys or Boarders...* (Dublin, [1792]), 1; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 81.

Braughall, Andrew Daly, Richard Dillon, Lewis Lyons, William James MacNeven, Richard McCormick, Thomas McDonnell, Theobald McKenna, Dominick Rice, Thomas Ryan, and John Sweetman were all part of the middle-class merchant/professional wing that wrested control of the Catholic Committee from the aristocratic/clerical wing; United Irishman; proposed by **Jeremiah D'Olier** for the Dublin Society in 1801.¹⁶⁸

Mr Thomas McDonnell [McDonnel] (active 1763-d. 1809) — 50 Essex Street; printer, bookseller, newspaper proprietor, lottery-office keeper; started publishing the *Hibernian Journal* in 1788; representative of the Dublin parish of St. Nicholas-Within at the Catholic Committee meeting of 9 Feb 1791; active in the Committee; McDonnell, **Thomas Braughall, Andrew Daly, Richard Dillon, Lewis Lyons, Randall McDonnell, William James MacNeven, Richard McCormick, Theobald McKenna, Dominick Rice, Thomas Ryan, and John Sweetman** were all part of the middle-class merchant/professional wing that wrested control of the Catholic Committee from the aristocratic/clerical wing; decidedly patriotic and supportive of the Whigs and the United Irishmen of which McDonnell was a member; arrested at times and suffered constant pressure from the government for his 'libellous and seditious tendency'; printed and sold numerous publications that reflected his non-sectarian, reformist beliefs; with **William Drennan** as President of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, McDonnell and **Theobald McKenna** together sent in their resignations (on 26 April 1793) which were accepted, but their names were to remain 'on the books'; wrote a number of pieces in his newspaper in praise of the Dublin Library Society and many of its members.¹⁶⁹

Rev. Dr. McDowel [Rev. Dr. Benjamin McDowel] (d. 1824) — Eccles Street and Rutland Square; Presbyterian clergyman; American-born; educated at Princeton; ordained 1766 in Co. Derry; campaigned against the Vestry Act in 1776, restricting voting rights of Presbyterians; settled in Dublin from 1778 until his death in 1824; 'he possessed much social influence and some of the

¹⁶⁸ WDD 1792, 66; *DIB*; Edwards, "Minute Book," 118; Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-49; O'Flaherty, "Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-26; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 97.

¹⁶⁹ WDD 1792, 68; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 383-384; Edwards, "Minute Book," 118; Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-49; O'Flaherty, "Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-26; McDowell, "Proceedings," 75; *Hibernian Journal*, 24 December 1792; McDowell, "Proceedings," 75.

most respectable inhabitants of the Irish metropolis were connected with his congregation' in Rutland Square; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216).¹⁷⁰

Robert McGowen, Esq. — 41 Jervis Street; attorney, E 1788, K.C.E., Solicitor in Chancery; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216).¹⁷¹

Mr John McKenly — Kilmainham, Co. Dublin; gentleman.¹⁷²

George Mead, Esq. [George Meade] — Dublin; gentleman; deed of 3 March 1798 has 'George Meade, gent.' as a witness to a deed, also involving **John Sweetman**.¹⁷³

Mr John Mercier (1741-1804) — Merrion Square and Portarlington, Queen's County; army officer; Huguenot name; entered TCD in 1758; Mercier, 'late Lt. Col. of the 39th Regiment of Foot', recorded in the *Army Register* as having passed away in 1804.¹⁷⁴

Capel Molineux, Esq. [Molyneux] (1750-1832) — Castle Dillon, Armagh; gentleman; 'a man of liberal instincts'; Whig Club member with **Arthur Browne, Francis Burroughs, Lord Charlemont, Richard Jebb, George Maquay, Theobald McKenna, Charles O'Neil, Joshua Pim, Joseph Pollock**, and **Charles Ward**; succeeded his father as 4th baronet in 1797; brother of **George William Molyneux**; opposed the 1801 Act of Union; elected to the Dublin Society in 1803, proposed by **Jeremiah D'Olier**.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁰ *The Report of the Hibernian Sunday School Society for the Year 1810, With a List of Subscribers and Benefactors* (Dublin: Printed for J. Parry, 1811), 11; Pieter Tesch, "Presbyterian Radicalism," in Dickson et al., *United Irishmen*, 42-43; W.D. Killen, *The Ecclesiastical History of Ireland: From the Earliest Period to the Present Times*, vol. 2 (London: Macmillan, 1875), 5:381-382; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80.

¹⁷¹ *WDD* 1792, 126; *KIAP*, 310; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 81.

¹⁷² Eilish Ellis and P. Beryl Eustace, eds., *Registry of Deeds, Dublin: Abstracts of Wills, vol. III, 1785-1832* (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1984), no. 236, 148, in which is described a bequest of four houses in Clanbrassil Street, Dublin, built by McKenly and belonging to him.

¹⁷³ Registry of Deeds Project Ireland, *Registry of Irish Deeds*, memorial no. 334726 (3 March 1798).

¹⁷⁴ *The Annual Register, or A View of the History, Politics, and Literature, for the Year 1804* (London: Printed by J. Wright, 1806), 520.

¹⁷⁵ RDS; Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800" 270-280; RDS.

George William Molineux, Esq. [Molyneux] — 25 Gloucester Street; barrister, admitted M 1780; brother of **Capel Molyneux**; entered TCD 1768.¹⁷⁶

Rev. Thomas Stanley Monck (1762-1842) — Portlaw, Co. Waterford; clergyman; brother of **William D. Stanley Monck** and Charles Stanley Monck, 1st Viscount.¹⁷⁷

William D. Stanley Monck, Esq. [William Domville Stanley] (1763-1840) — address unknown; entered TCD 1783; barrister, admitted T 1789; brother of **Rev. Thomas Stanley Monck** and Charles Stanley Monck, 1st Viscount.¹⁷⁸

Mr Ambrose Moore* (d. c.1846) — 69 Dame Street; goldsmith, watchmaker, property dealer and landlord; Catholic; member of the **La Touche** banking family; active proposer for prospective United Irishmen; the informant Francis Higgins' description of Moore in 1797: 'he is a tradesman in affluence [...] and of the most wicked avowed republican principles'; Higgins also reported a meeting regarding plans for a French invasion that was attended by Moore, **John Byrne, Richard Dillon, William Drennan, Randall McDonnell, William James MacNeven, and John Sweetman**; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791; in January 1800, he 'chaired a meeting of Catholics opposed to the Union'; member of the Dublin Society from 1809.¹⁷⁹

Mr James Moore (active 1786-d. 1803) — 45 College Green; printer, publisher, bookseller, lottery-office keeper; Catholic; several of Moore's ventures reflected his patriotic and/or radical views; he published a 'splendid edition of J. Lodge's *Peerage of Ireland*' in 1789; announced on 24 April 1790 that he was to publish his *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 'the most expensive and

¹⁷⁶ WDD 1792, 115; KIAP, 343; AD, 584.

¹⁷⁷ *Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. XVII, n.s., January-June 1842, (London: William Pickering, 1842), 559; *Burke's Peerage*, 2:2731.

¹⁷⁸ WDD 1792, 115; KIAP, 343; AD 585; *Burke's Peerage*, 2:2731.

¹⁷⁹ WDD 1792, 74; McDowell, "Personnel," 42; McDowell, "Proceedings," 139; Beatrice M. Doran, *Donnybrook Then and Now* (Dublin: History Press Ireland, 2014), 16; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 181-182; 195; Archer; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 181, n. 87; RDS.

spirited' undertaking 'ever attempted in Ireland'; conversely, Moore was involved with the printing and dissemination of a cheap Dublin edition of Paine's *Rights of Man* in 1791; one of the earliest members of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen; on 1 June 1792, together with fellow bookseller, **Randal McAllister**, Moore proposed Thomas Paine as an honorary member of the United Irishmen; printer of the *Anti-Union* in 1799; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.¹⁸⁰

Rev. John Moore — Donnybrook; clergyman and schoolmaster; 'Principal at the Academy at Donnybrook'; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216).¹⁸¹

George Murphy, Esq.* (b. c.1761) — Possibly a student in 1791 (thirty years of age): *Alumni Dublinenses* record for George Frederick Murphy: entered TCD '19 October 1785, aged 24'; BA 1790, LLB and LLD 1799; Joshua Edkins' 1801 subscription list has George Murphy marked as a Dublin Library member, with the letters 'LLD' next to his name; the 1812 Dublin Library members list has: 'Murphy, Dr Geo. Fred. M.L.' [Member for Life].¹⁸²

Rev. Thomas Murphy — No further identification other than his designation as a clergyman.

James Murray, M.D. — 52 Exchequer Street; physician; Licentiate, King and Queen's College of Physicians with **William Drennan**, **Henry Kennedy**, **Robert Scott**, and **Walter Wade**, while **Robert Perceval** was vice-president and censor, **Clement Archer** was an honorary fellow, and **Daniel Bryan** and **Stephen Dickson** were fellows; **John Byrne** was possibly one of the proposers for Murray's admission to the Dublin Society of the United Irishman on 10 February 1792.¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ WDD 1792, 74; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 415-416; *Dublin Chronicle*, 24 April 1790; Dickson, "Paine and Ireland," 134-135; McDowell, "Personnel," 42; McDowell, "Proceedings," 7; *ibid.*, 139; Dickson, "Paine and Ireland," 134; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 416.

¹⁸¹ Mercier, *Anthologia Hibernica*, 2 (July-December 1793): vii; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 82.

¹⁸² AD, 605; Edkins, ed., *A Collection of Poems, Mostly Original, by Several Hands* (1801), [xx]; DLS, *Members List*, 1812.

¹⁸³ WDD 1792, 132; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 77-78; McDowell, "Proceedings," 12.

Graham Myers, Esq. (1746-1801) — Great Brunswick Street and Merrion Street (office); architect and builder; 'submitted an entry in the Royal Exchange Competition of 1768-9 which was judged one of the three best Irish designs'; appointed Architect to Trinity College Dublin in 1789; one of the Inspectors General for the 'Commissioners and Overseers of the Barracks', 1791-1793; recorded as having carried out building work on a house in Stephen's Green in 1793; active subscriber to publications, including Ferrar's *A View of Ancient and Modern Dublin*, in 1796.¹⁸⁴

William Norcott, Esq. (c.1770-c.1820) — Clare Street; student; entered TCD 1790, BA 1795, LLB 1801, LLD 1808; became a barrister, admitted April 1797; 'witty satirist and mimic, Norcott was lionised in the Dublin beau monde'; proposed by fellow lawyer **William Furlong** into the Dublin Society in 1804.¹⁸⁵

Michael Nowlan, Esq. (c.1765-1827) — 40 Camden Street; attorney, Exchequer T 1787; entered TCD 1780, BA 1784, LLB 1787; practiced in England and Wales for most of his career; became Chief Justice of Brecon, Wales from 1824-1827.¹⁸⁶

John Nugent, Esq. — Address unknown; Attorney, Exchequer E 1786, K.C.E., Solicitor in Chancery.¹⁸⁷

Rev. Mr. O'Hara — Possibly Catholic Rev. John O'Hara, who was one of twenty Dublin Library founding members who subscribed to the 1791 printing of the Catholic 'Douai Bible'.¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁴ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 65; *DIA*.

¹⁸⁵ *AD*, 621; *KIAP*, 366; *DIB*; *RDS*.

¹⁸⁶ *WDD* 1792, 127; *KIAP*, 367; *AD*, 623; History of Parliament Online, "The History of Parliament: British Political, Social, and Local History," accessed 22 February 2017, <http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1820-1832/member/nolan-michael-1765-1827>.

¹⁸⁷ *WDD* 1792, 127; *KIAP*, 367.

¹⁸⁸ *The Holy Bible, Translated From the Latin Vulgat: ... The Old Testament, First Published By the English College At Doway, A.D. 1609. And the New Testament, First Published By the English College At Rhemes, A.D. 1582. With Annotations...The Fifth Edition. Newly Revised and Corrected According to the Clementin Edition of the Scriptures* (Dublin: printed by Hugh Fitzpatrick, for Richard Cross, 1791). Among the twenty-one in this subscription list associated with the Dublin Library were three booksellers: **John Archer**, subscribing to twelve copies, **James Moore**, and **Richard White**, subscribing to fifty copies each. The Dublin Library was also a subscriber.

Archibald Ormston, Esq. — Co. Wexford; gentleman; *Alumni Dublinenses* entry for his son, John: entered TCD in 1795, 'aged 15, s. of Archibald, Generosus; b. Co. Wexford'; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.¹⁸⁹

Charles Osborne, Esq. M.P. (1759-1817) — North Great George's Street, Dublin and Newtown, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary; fifth son of Sir William Osborne, Bart.; MP for Borough of Carysfort, 1790-97-1800; entered TCD 1776, BA 1780; barrister, admitted E 1788.¹⁹⁰

Charles Osborne, Esq. — Exchequer Office, King's Inns; Commissioner of Appeals, Exchequer Chamber, with **William Preston**.¹⁹¹

William Osbrey, Esq. — 2 Coppinger's Row; Marshal of Dublin (City Marshal); an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.¹⁹²

Sir Pigot Piers, Bart. (c.1742-1798) — DLS Member-for-Life: 1791 Tristernagh, Co. Westmeath; Sir Pigott William Piers, 5th Bt., son of Sir John Piers, 4th Bt.; TCD BA 1762.¹⁹³

Roger Palmer, Esq. — Castle Lackin, Co. Mayo; possibly the son of Roger Palmer, 1st Bt., created 2 May 1777.¹⁹⁴

John Parker, Esq. — Jervis Street; attorney, Exchequer M 1782, K.C.E., Solicitor in Chancery.¹⁹⁵

¹⁸⁹ AD, 643; Archer.

¹⁹⁰ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 55; *KIAP*, 389; Johnston-Liik, *MPs in Dublin*, 113; *WDD* 1792, 115; AD, 644; *KIAP*, 389.

¹⁹¹ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 61.

¹⁹² Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 72; Archer.

¹⁹³ Mosley, *Burke's Peerage*, 3:3133.

¹⁹⁴ *WDD* 1792, 109.

¹⁹⁵ *WDD* 1792, 128; *KIAP*, 393. There is also a John Parker (active 1778-d. 1796) at 72 Grafton Street, who was a bookseller, printer, and stationer: Pollard, *Dictionary*, 447-448. Since most booksellers did not have the 'Esq.' designation on the DLS list, it is the attorney, in this case.

James Pearson, Esq. — 16 Queen's Street; surgeon; proposed by **Edward Haughton** for the Dublin Society in 1804.¹⁹⁶

William Pearson, Esq. — 16 Cole Alley; attorney, Exchequer H 1778, King's Bench; Solicitor in Chancery.¹⁹⁷

Samuel Pendleton, Esq. (b. 1765) — York Street, Dublin and Mooretown, Co. Meath; barrister, admitted E 1791; entered TCD 1781, BA 1786; Lincoln's Inn E 1788.¹⁹⁸

Mr George Pilkington — Not identified.

Joshua Pim, Esq. (1748-1822) — 15 Usher's Island; merchant: 'Joshua & Joseph Pim, Merchants'; from a family of 'respectable and wealthy Dublin Quaker merchants', chiefly worsted yarn; elected to the Dublin Society in 1782; founding member of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce in 1783; Treasurer of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce in 1791 with council members, **John Binns, William Cope, Jeremiah D'Olier, Samuel Dick, Alexander Jaffray, Jr., George Maquay, and Abraham Wilkinson**; member of the Ouzel Galley Society from 1776, joining **Alexander Jaffray** (1772) and **Dick** (1772), before **Wilkinson** (1782), **Maquay** (1785), **Cope** (1786), **William Digges La Touche** (1788), and **Charles Ward** (1789) were admitted; promoted to a higher office within the Ouzel Galley Society in 1791 with **Jaffray, Dick and Wilkinson**; succeeded **Samuel Dick** as 'Captain' (President) in 1803, and held that office until 1822; Whig Club member with **Arthur Browne, Francis Burroughs, Lord Charlemont, Richard Jebb, Maquay, Theobald McKenna, Capel Molyneux, Charles O'Neil, Joseph Pollock,** and **Ward**; the informant to Dublin Castle, **Francis Higgins** identified **Pim** as republican in his politics and active in associating with the United Irishmen in 1797 as part of a 'Merchant Corps' who were 'avowed enemies of our constitution'; **Higgins** reported a meeting that took place in March 1797 between the heads of the Irish Whigs (**Henry Grattan** and **George Ponsonby**) and 'the leaders and

¹⁹⁶ *WDD* 1792, 134.

¹⁹⁷ *WDD* 1792, 128; *KIAP*, 396.

¹⁹⁸ *WDD* 1792, 128; 115; *AD*, 660; *KIAP*, 397.

abettors of sedition, Messrs **[Hugh] Skeys**, [Joshua] Pim, **[John] Sweetman**, **[Thomas] McDonnell...**’; Pim, Maquay, and Wilkinson continued to express their concerns over financial matters with the government after Union.¹⁹⁹

Thomas Pleasants (1728-1818) — William Street; gentleman, landowner, and philanthropist; originally from Co. Carlow; later moved to a large property in Capel Street, Dublin; gave generously to hospitals, building projects, cultural institutions, and charities in his later years and his bequests; **Peter Digges La Touche** proposed Pleasants for honorary membership of the Dublin Society in 1815 for his ‘extraordinary munificence to the manufacturers of this city’; the Society’s resolution for this award highlighted the endeavours of Pleasants as ‘patriotism so distinguished, and benevolence so usefully extended for the interest and happiness of the working poor of the city of Dublin’.²⁰⁰

James Plunket, Esq. [Col. James Plunkett] — 24 Usher’s Quay; merchant; Catholic Committee representative on 9 Feb 1791 for Clonmel, Co. Tipperary, with **John Rivers**; possibly the same James Plunket who was proposed into the Dublin Society of United Irishmen by **Richard McCormick** on 24 February 1792; if so, he and **Theobald McKenna** were joint-proposers on one occasion on 8 June 1792, the same day **Randal McAllister** and **James Moore** were successful in having Thomas Paine elected as an honorary member of the United Irishmen; previously served in the French army; Francis Higgins described Plunket as ‘a most violent brawler for Catholic Emancipation and parliamentary reform’ and that after a trip abroad, he returned ‘a finished republican’.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ *DIB*; *WDD* 1792, 83; Griffith, “Dublin’s Commercial Clubs,” 118; Kelly, “Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800,” 270-280; Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 31 March 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 142-143; Francis Higgins to Alexander Marsden, 28 December 1801, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 334-335.

²⁰⁰ *DIB*; *ODNB*; Beatrice Bayley Butler, “Thomas Pleasants, 1729-1818,” *Dublin Historical Record* 41, no. 4 (September 1988): 177.

²⁰¹ *WDD* 1792, 83; Edwards, “Minute Book,” 119; Woods, “Catholic Convention,” 45; McDowell, “Personnel,” 45; McDowell, “Proceedings,” 13; 24; Francis Higgins to Cooke, 15 September 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 182.

Mr Thomas Prentice* — 9 North Anne Street; merchant; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.²⁰²

William Preston, Esq., M.R.I.A. (1753-1807) — Gloucester Street; barrister, admitted M 1777; Commissioner of Appeals, Exchequer Chamber with **Charles Osborne**; dramatist, writer, poet; born in the parish of St. Michan, Dublin; entered TCD 1765, BA 1770, MA 1773; completed his law studies in 1777, when he was called to the Irish bar; while at Trinity, he belonged to a literary society called the Neosophers, with **Matthew Young** and **Robert Perceval**; 'purported to have lost out on an academic career as a fellow after writing scathing pieces against the provost of TCD, John Hely-Hutchinson'; Preston 'attacked Twiss's criticisms of Ireland with two 'satirical ripostes'; member of the patriotic and convivial Monks of the Screw with **Arthur Browne**, the **Earl of Charlemont**, **William Drennan**, **Charles O'Neil**, **Joseph Pollock**, and John Philpot Curran (President of the Dublin Library Society in 1812); active in the Volunteer movement; became close friends with Lord Charlemont, **Edward Ledwich**, and **Richard Kirwan**; founding member of the Royal Irish Academy and served on its first Committee of Polite Literature with **Rev. George Hall**; served on the same committee in 1791 with **Rev. Richard Graves**; prominent in Dublin literary circles, Preston wrote several works of literature for the Academy's *Transactions*; in 1793, he published his own *Poetical Works* with a sonnet in praise of the Earl of Charlemont; this two-volume set was sold by **John Archer**, to whom Preston referred as a 'person deserving well of literature in Ireland'; **Henry Brocas** engraved Preston's portrait for this edition; **Joshua Edkins** published an anthology of Irish poems (1789-90) that included Preston's works; his patriotic, prize-winning essay, 'The Natural Advantages of Ireland' (1796) promoted the expansion of Irish manufacturing for the nation to reach its potential, free from dependence on England; had a liberal view of political issues: sympathetic to Catholic emancipation and for Irish legislative independence; likely did not join the United Irishmen but he wrote for the

²⁰² WDD 1792, 84; Archer.

society's journal *Press*, in 1797-98; Vice-President of the Dublin Library Society from 1799.²⁰³

Edward Purdon, Esq. (b. 1774) — Co. Westmeath; student; entered TCD 26 Oct 1789, aged 15.²⁰⁴

Henry George Quin, Esq. (1760-1805) — Dublin Castle; Second Chamberlain, Exchequer Office; entered TCD, 1776, BA 1781; son of Dr Henry Quin, Professor of Medicine, Trinity College (1749-1791) and 'liberal patron of the arts'; Henry George Quin was an avid book collector, especially during his European tours; in 1794, he stated in his will that Trinity College Dublin was to receive his 'Bibliotheca Quiniana', the contents of which were handed over to TCD's librarian, **Rev. John Barrett** in 1805.²⁰⁵

Joseph Rawlins, Esq.* — Golden Lane; attorney, Exchequer T 1790, King's Bench, Solicitor in Chancery; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.²⁰⁶

Dominick Rice, Esq.* — Merrion Street and Eustace Street; barrister, admitted H 1780; converted to the Established Church to practice law; member of the Catholic Committee from 5 May 1774; represented Tralee, Co. Kerry on the Catholic Committee, 9 Feb 1791; Rice, **Thomas Braughall, Andrew Daly, Richard Dillon, Lewis Lyons, Randall McDonnell, William James MacNeven, Richard McCormick, Thomas McDonnell, Theobald McKenna, Thomas Ryan,** and **John Sweetman** were all part of the middle-class merchant/professional wing that wrested control of the Catholic Committee from the aristocratic/clerical wing; active in the United Irishmen: the informer Thomas Collins singled out Rice in his report to Dublin Castle on

²⁰³ WDD 1792, 116; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 61; KIAP, 410; DIB; ODNB; Preston, "Life and Writings of William Preston, 1753-1807," 377-386; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 91; Watson, *Almanack* 1792, 78; Preston, *Poetical Works of William Preston*, ix; Edkins, ed., *A Collection of Poems, Mostly Original, By Several Hands*; DIB; Stewart, *Gentleman's and Citizen's Almanack*, 1800, 128.

²⁰⁴ AD, 686.

²⁰⁵ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 59; Rau, "Henry George Quin, 1760-1805," 79-80; 90; Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 141.

²⁰⁶ WDD 1792, 128; Archer.

24 Feb 1794: 'and from every opportunity I have had of knowing Rice's sentiments, I don't think that we have a man amongst us of more dangerous principles'; alleged to have plotted an assassination of the Earl of Clare in 1798; appears as 'Counsellor Dominick Rice, M.L.' in the 1812 DLS members list; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.²⁰⁷

John Rielly, Esq. [i.e. Reilly] — Two possibilities: 1) John Reilly, Esq.: Foster Place; Commissioner at the Accounts Office; or 2) John Reilly: 'Marybone [Marrowbone] Lane, Dublin; brewer'; proposed into the Dublin Society of United Irishmen by **Richard Dillon**, 5 October 1792.²⁰⁸

Mr John Rigby — 19 Suffolk Street; gunsmith; mentioned in a list of United Irishmen present at a meeting along with **Randal McAllister** and **William Drennan** in December 1795; recorded as present on another occasion with **John Binns** and **Zachary Foxall**; the informant Francis Higgins reported in December 1797 that a cell of the Dublin United Irishmen, 'No. 10, is headed by Rigby, a gunsmith' and that they had planned to visit a Dublin theatre 'to put down all such persons as should dare to call for their favourite loyal air of God Save the King and to call out No King, etc., but to play *Ça Ira*, Patrick's Day, etc.'; member of the Freemason Lodge, no. 620 with **Randal McAllister**.²⁰⁹

Mr John Rivers* — 23 Bachelor's Walk; distiller; founding subscriber of £3,200 to the Bank of Ireland in 1783; Catholic Committee representative on 9 Feb 1791 for Clonmel, Co. Tipperary with **James Plunket**.²¹⁰

²⁰⁷ WDD 1792, 116; *KIAP*, 420; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 30; 68; Edwards, "Minute Book," 119; Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-49; O'Flaherty, "Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-26; McDowell, "Proceedings," 113; McDowell, "Personnel," 45-46; DLS, *Members List*, 1812; Archer.

²⁰⁸ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 70; McDowell, "Personnel," 45; McDowell, "Proceedings," 35. Civil servants and brewers tended to have 'Esq.' designated to them, so it could be either. A third John Reilly (1745-1804) is listed as a Member of Parliament for the Borough of Blessington (1779-83-90-97-1800), but without the designation of 'Hon' or 'Rt. Hon' before, or 'MP' after his name, this has been ruled out: Johnston-Liik, *MPs in Dublin*, 118.

²⁰⁹ WDD 1792, 87; McDowell, "Proceedings," 130; 90; Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 17 December 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 203; Fagan, "Infiltration," 82.

²¹⁰ WDD 1792, 87; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 508-513; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 69; Edwards, "Minute Book," 119.

Mr John Robinson* — 4 Drogheda Street; mathematical instrument maker.²¹¹

P. Cusack Rooney, Esq. [Patrick Cusack Rooney] — 11 Meath Street; surgeon; from a family of Catholic surgeons; member of the Dublin Society of Surgeons in 1783 and the Royal College of Surgeons thereafter.²¹²

Pemberton Rudd, Esq. (b. c.1767) — 11 Upper Merrion Street; barrister, admitted T 1788; son of a carpenter and builder in Merrion Row, Dublin; entered TCD 1782, BA 1787; appears to have been close to fellow barrister **Thomas Smith**; Rudd wrote an obituary of Smith's father, Ambrose, 'Father of the Irish Bar'.²¹³

Matthew Russel, Esq. (b. c.1738) — Possibly: Rev. Matthew Russel, A.M.: 35 Clarendon Street; Curate-Assistant, St. Andrew's Church, Andrew Street, Dublin; entered TCD 1757, MA in 1765.²¹⁴

Thomas Ryan, M.D. — 12 Arran Quay; physician; represented Roscommon at the Catholic Committee meeting, 9 Feb 1791; Ryan, **Thomas Braughall, Andrew Daly, Richard Dillon, Lewis Lyons, Randall McDonnell, William James MacNeven, Richard McCormick, Thomas McDonnell, Theobald McKenna, Dominick Rice, and John Sweetman** were all part of the middle-class merchant/professional wing that wrested control of the Catholic Committee from the aristocratic/clerical wing; admitted to the United Irishman 6 July 1792; the informant to Dublin Castle, Francis Higgins reported that 'Doctor Ryan' was present at a large gathering of Dublin United Irishmen including **Richard McCormick** and other Roman Catholics for a Bastille Day dinner; John Daly Burk (of the working-class reading clubs) was also present at that meeting; two years later, Higgins remarked of a meeting involving the

²¹¹ WDD 1792, 87. This is another common name, with at least five others with the same name in Dublin in 1791. An attorney who completed his studies in 1764 is ruled out as he surely would have had 'Esq.' next to his name. Others with the same name had the following occupations: 'carpenter'; 'linen and cotton manufacturer'; 'poulterer'; and 'house-painter'. All were tradesmen/shopkeepers but the mathematical instrument maker appeared the most plausible of the six.

²¹² WDD 1792, 133; AD, 715; *Medical Register for the Year 1783*, 166.

²¹³ WDD 1792, 116; KIAP, 431; DIA (Stephen Rudd); AD, 719; Smith, *Thomas Smith Commonplace Book*.

²¹⁴ WDD, 1792, 137; AD, 721.

United Irishmen that included Ryan, **William Dease**, **William James MacNeven**, and **Walter Wade**: 'in short, every Roman Catholic medical man in the metropolis' who met to prepare publications 'to inflame the minds of the people'.²¹⁵

Sir Richard St. George, Bart. (1765-1851) — Mount Equity, Athlone, Westmeath; MP for Athlone; Sir Richard Bligh St. George, 2nd Baronet, succeeded his father, Sir Richard St. George, 1st Baronet (created 12 March 1766) after his death on 25 February 1789; born at Woodsgift, Clomantagh, Co. Kilkenny; entered TCD 1782; Secretary of the Knights of the Illustrious Order of St. Patrick (**Dr Robert Fowler**, Archbishop of Dublin was its Chancellor in 1791); active subscriber of publications, especially those of **John Archer**; his father proposed the father of **Peter Holmes, Jr.** into the Dublin Society in 1766.²¹⁶

Sir Robert Scott, Knt., M.D. (d. c.1800) — Marlborough Street and 26 Great Ship Street; physician; Licentiate, King and Queen's College of Physicians since 1786; in 1791, other licentiates were **William Drennan**, **Henry Kennedy**, and **Walter Wade**, while **Robert Perceval** was vice-president and censor, **Clement Archer** was an honorary fellow, and **Daniel Bryan** and **Stephen Dickson** were fellows; he was knighted at Dublin Castle in 1782; kept a private library evidenced from three recorded bookplates—variations of the same design.²¹⁷

Mr John Salmon (active 1780-d. c.1814) — Exchequer Street (between 1780 and 1787) and 12 South Great George's Street (c.1796); bookbinder.²¹⁸

²¹⁵ Woods, "Catholic Convention," 69; McDowell, "Personnel," 47; Edwards, "Minute Book," 119; Hammond, "Thomas Braughall, 1729-1803," 41-49; O'Flaherty, "Catholic Convention and Anglo-Irish Politics," 15-26; McDowell, "Proceedings," 28; Francis Higgins to Sackville Hamilton, 16 July 1795, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 88; Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 8 July 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 171-172. For John Daly Burk, see p. 129-131.

²¹⁶ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 54; AD, 729; *Burke's Peerage*, 3:3478.

²¹⁷ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 77-78; Martin, *Dictionary of Bookplates of Irish Medical Doctors*, 112-113.

²¹⁸ Pollard, *Dictionary*, 507.

Andrew Savage, Esq. — Possibly: Sybill Hill, Co. Dublin; gentleman.²¹⁹

David Sherlock, Esq. — 32 York Street; merchant and brewer; both he and brother Andrew were brewers; possibly a United Irishman in 1798.²²⁰

Hugh Skeys, Esq. — 125 Great Britain Street; wine merchant; appears to have been active in representing merchant interests in political reform; an informer to Dublin Castle reported that Skeys, as a member of the Whig Club, was 'the medium through which the party [the United Irishmen] act with Grattan [on the business of parliamentary reform]'; mentioned by a Dublin Castle informant as present at a meeting with **Jeremiah D'Olier** at the Royal Exchange, organised by **Robert Ashworth**, to discuss the impact on the Irish banks of the threat of a French invasion in 1796; the informant Francis Higgins identified Skeys as part of a 'Merchant Corps' who were 'avowed enemies of our constitution', and reported a meeting that took place in March 1797 between the heads of the Irish Whigs (Henry Grattan and George Ponsonby) and 'the leaders and abettors of sedition, Messrs [Hugh] Skeys, **[Joshua] Pim, [John] Sweetman, [Thomas] McDonnell...**'; Skeys ultimately rejected the republican movement and quit his associations with the United Irishmen before 1798; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.²²¹

Rev. Matthew Sleater (1759-1823) — 4 Bride Street; clergyman; Curate and Lecturer, St. John's Church, Fishamble Street; son of William Sleater (c.1731-1789), printer to TCD and the Irish House of Lords; entered TCD 1773 ('s. of William, Typographus'), BA 1778, MA 1781; brother of **William Sleater**, bookseller and proprietor of the *Dublin Chronicle* newspaper; Matthew is listed as a member of the Guild of St. Luke for printers and stationers and appears to have worked with his father before being ordained for the priesthood; became Deacon of Cloyne in 1781; returned to the capital in 1789 to become Curate at St. John's, Church, Dublin, 'a residence there being more congenial

²¹⁹ Mercier, *Anthologia Hibernica*, vol. 4, (July-December 1794), 79, announcing the birth of his son. There was also a builder and carpenter named Andrew Savage who was in operation at the beginning of the nineteenth century; however, not much else is known of him: *DIA*.

²²⁰ *WDD* 1792, 91; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 230.

²²¹ *WDD* 1792, 93; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 119, n. 31; 143; Archer.

to his studious habits'; published books on the Bible and ecclesiastical history and topography; in his later years, Sleater also worked as a press corrector, particularly for works printed in Greek, Hebrew, and Latin.²²²

Mr William Sleater [William Sleater II] (c.1760-1801) — 28 Dame Street; printer, bookseller, stationer, newspaper proprietor; publisher of the *Dublin Chronicle* (1 May 1787-Mar 1793); son of William Sleater, former printer to TCD and the Irish House of Lords; took over father's business in 1783; brother of **Rev. Matthew Sleater**; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216); reported the early plans for the Dublin Library Society before any other newspaper, so it is likely that Sleater was familiar with the group that frequented **John Archer's** bookshop and devised the original scheme; donated a full set of the *Dublin Chronicle*, including back issues, to the Dublin Library in its first year; printer to the Dublin Society, 1794-1797.²²³

Michael Smith, Esq. — Common name; there are three possibilities—all from the legal profession: 1) Michael Smith (1740-1808), York Street; barrister, admitted H 1769; entered TCD 1754-55, BA 1759, LLB 1777; hometown listed as 'Newtown, King's Co.'; became 1st Baronet, Tuam in 1799; for his son, **William Smith**, see below; 2) address unknown; barrister, began law studies in 1784, admitted T 1788; or 3) 89 Capel Street, attorney, H 1791, King's Bench, Solicitor in Chancery.²²⁴

Nathaniel N. Smith, Esq. [Nathaniel Nesbit Smith] [Smyth as donor] (1768-1792) — Possibly Nathaniel Nesbit Smith, son of a merchant, who died in 1792; may have been a student in 1791, based on the *Alumni Dublinenses* entry for him: 'Smith, Nathaniel Nesbit [...] [entered TCD] 14 Nov 1787, aged 19; s. of Benjamin, Mercator; b. Dublin'; no further identification on him except

²²² WDD 1792, 138; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 527-528; AD, 756; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 527; W. Maziere Brady, *Clerical and Parochial Records of Cork, Cloyne, and Ross Taken from Diocesan and Parish Registries, Manuscripts in the Principal Libraries of Oxford, Dublin, and London, and from Private or Printed Papers*, (Dublin: Alexander Thom, 1863), 2:153; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 527.

²²³ WDD 1792, 92; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 528-529; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80; *Dublin Chronicle*, 12 April 1791; DLS, *Catalogue*, 1792, xxxiii; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 529.

²²⁴ WDD 1792, 116; KIAP, 453; AD, 760; DIB (Sir William Cusack Smith); KIAP, 453; WDD 1792, 129; KIAP, 453.

for a note of his death on, 20 March 1792, in a legal case involving Nathaniel's brother, who inherited father Benjamin's estate from Nathaniel in 1792, but who subsequently died intestate.²²⁵

William Smith, Esq. — Very common name; there are at least two possibilities within the legal profession alone: 1) William Smith, entered TCD 'July 1, 1786, aged 15; son of Ambrose, Causidicus', BA 1791, MA 1799; this would make him the brother of founding Dublin Library committeeman **Thomas Smith** and a student in 1791; 2) there is also a practicing lawyer in 1791, William Smith: 6 Hume Street; barrister, admitted T 1788; entered TCD 'November 22, 1781, aged 16; s. of Michael, Causidicus. (N.F.P. [No further particulars]) LLB and LLD, Aest 1793'; the entry for the same William Smith in the *King's Inns Admission Papers* has him the 'only s. of Michael' who studied at Christ Church College, Oxford before completing his law studies during the Trinity term in 1788; this could make him the son of the first entry for **Michael Smith** (above) as he was Michael Smith, 1st Bart., and William is recorded in the *Alumni Dublinenses* as 2nd Bart; hence, William Cusack Smith (1766-1836), 2nd Baronet, from 1808.²²⁶

John Smyly, Esq. — Baggot Street; barrister, admitted H 1790; educated at Glasgow from 1785; elected a member of the Dublin Society in 1815 and served on its library committee, 1816-20.²²⁷

Mr Edward Soban [i.e. Sohan] — 6 College Green; apothecary: 'Jenkins and Sohan, Apothecaries'; business partner of **William Lionel Jenkins**; Warden of the Freemason lodge in Palace Street in April 1794; in 1798, Sohan was

²²⁵ AD, 760; John Bernard Bosanquet and Christopher Puller, *New Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Court of Common Pleas and Other Courts, from Easter Term 44 Geo. III. 1804 to Trinity Term, 47 Geo. III. 1807. Both Inclusive. With Tables of the Cases and Principal Matters*, 2nd ed., (London: Joseph Butterworth and Son, 1826), 2:38-39.

²²⁶ AD, 762; KIAP, 454; WDD 1792, 116; DIB (Sir William Cusack Smith). Entries in both the AD and KIAP are for 'William Smith' rather than William Cusack Smith. There are also two less plausible options, given the 'Esq.' designation attached to this William Smith: 1) 4 Palace Street; stationer and stockbroker; 2) 90 North King Street; hatter: WDD 1792, 93.

²²⁷ WDD 1792, 116; KIAP, 455; RDS.

implicated in harbouring a fugitive United Irishman at his home, where **Lewis Lyons** is recorded to have visited.²²⁸

William Speer, Esq. — 18 Eustace Street; wine and mineral water merchant; near the Dublin Library, at 6 Eustace Street.²²⁹

Robert St. George, Esq. — Weston, Co. Galway, gentleman; possibly related to **Richard St. George**, Athlone, Westmeath.²³⁰

Rev. Gabriel Stokes (1762-1834) — Leeson Street, Dublin; clergyman; Curate-Assistant, St. Anne's Church, Dawson Street; son of TCD professor, Rev. John Stokes (1721-1781) and Librarian of Trinity College, 1759-60; Gabriel Stokes entered TCD 1779, BA 1783, MA 1802; became rector of Skreen, Co. Sligo in 1798; father of scientist, George Gabriel Stokes.²³¹

John Stokes, Esq. [John Whitley Stokes] (b. 1760) — Leeson Street; barrister, admitted M 1785; son of Rev. John Stokes (1721-1781) and brother of **Rev. Gabriel Stokes**; entered TCD 1773, BA 1778, MA 1781, admitted to the Irish bar in 1785.²³²

Rev. Richard Strong, A.M. (b. 1759) — Rector of Rathdrum, Co. Wicklow; entered TCD 1776, BA 1781, MA 1783.²³³

William Sweetman, Esq. (d. 1847) — 92 Lower Abbey Street and North Great George's Street; brewer; uncle of **John Sweetman**; in the Catholic Committee, as early as 1784; member of the United Irishmen but not as active as his nephew; elected to the Dublin Society in 1806.²³⁴

²²⁸ WDD 1792, 56; Registry of Deeds Project Ireland, *Registry of Irish Deeds*, memorial no. 334589; *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine*, April 1794, 294; "County of the City of Dublin. Examination of Edward Sohan of No. 156 Great Britain Street, in the County of the said City, Apothecary."

²²⁹ WDD 1792, 93.

²³⁰ KIAP, 436.

²³¹ WDD 1792, 137; Alastair Wood, "George Gabriel Stokes, 1819-1903," in Mark McCartney and Andrew Whitaker, eds., *Physicists of Ireland: Passion and Precision* (Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 2003), 85-87; Fox, *Trinity College Library Dublin*, 105; AD, 785; Wood, "George Gabriel Stokes," 85-87.

²³² WDD 1792, 117; KIAP, 465; AD, 785.

²³³ AD, 790, KIAP, 467.

²³⁴ WDD 1792, 95; Woods, "Catholic Convention," 73; McDowell, "Personnel," 49; Edwards, "Minute Book," 103; RDS.

Mr Bladen Swinny* (d. c.1834) — 29 Dame Street; linen draper; active subscriber to publications of **John Archer** and others in Dublin; Dublin Society member from 1821.²³⁵

Most Rev. Dr. Troy [Archbishop John Thomas Troy] (1739-1823)* — Catholic Archbishop of Dublin from 1786 until his death in 1823; member of the Catholic Committee, often the chair at meetings; sided with Lord Kenmare and the conservative, 'aristocratic faction' within the Catholic Committee when the radicals separated from the conservatives in late-1791/early-1792; Troy opposed (and excommunicated) the United Irishmen and their 'French revolutionary principles', preferring to side with the government who urged him to exert pressure and influence on the Catholic clergy to remain loyal to the government; noted to have had a library with close to 1,100 titles.²³⁶

Thomas Frederick Tandy, Esq. — 9 Linen Hall Street; merchant; appears to have been a printer until 1789; possibly a relation of James Napper Tandy (revolutionary and civic politician) and surgeon **James Tandy Wilkinson**.²³⁷

Henry Tighe, Esq. (1771-1836) — Trinity College and Dominick Street; student in 1791; entered TCD 1779, BA 1792, Lincoln's Inn H 1791, admitted H 1796; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791; married Mary Blachford, (Mary Tighe, poet and author), sister of **John Blachford**, 5 October 1793; MP for Inistioge, Co. Kilkenny, Apr-Jul 1797, 1797-1800; elected member of the Dublin Society in 1800.²³⁸

Thomas Towers, Esq. (b. 1758) — Bushy Park, Co. Tipperary; gentleman ('son of Reilly, Generosus'); entered TCD, 1776, BA, 1780; an active subscriber

²³⁵ WDD 1792, 96; RDS; Archer.

²³⁶ DIB; Edwards, "Minute Book," 103-126; Dáire Keogh, "Archbishop John Thomas Troy (1739-1823)," *Archivium Hibernicum* 49 (1995): 106; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 16; Cole, *Irish Booksellers and English Writers*, 25.

²³⁷ WDD 1792, 96; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 559.

²³⁸ AD, 812; KIAP, 480; Archer; DIB; Johnston-Liik, *MPs in Dublin*, 126; RDS.

to **John Archer**'s publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.²³⁹

Shuckborough Upton, Esq. [Shuckbergh/Shuckburgh Whitney Upton] (b. 1767) — Address in Dublin unknown; barrister, admitted T 1790; entered TCD 1783, Lincoln's Inn 1787, BA 1790.²⁴⁰

George Vesey, Esq. (1760-1841) — Baggot Street; barrister, admitted M 1785; nephew of Agmondisham Vesey, MP; entered TCD 1777, BA 1781, Irish bar 1785, LLB 1801; represented Tuam in the Irish House of Commons in 1800; elected as a member of the Dublin Society in 1800 with David La Touche III (father of **Col. David La Touche, Jr.**) as one of his proposers.²⁴¹

Robert Watson Wade, Esq. M.R.I.A. — Dublin Castle; Keeper of the Ledger, Court of Exchequer, Treasury Office, Dublin Castle, in the same offices as **Austin Cooper** and **Joseph Cooper Walker**; first Accountant-General of the Bank of Ireland in 1783 with **John Allen**, Nicholas Lawless (**Lord Cloncurry**), **Samuel Dick**, **Jeremiah D'Olier**, **Alexander Jaffray**, and **Abraham Wilkinson** as the bank's first directors; **Joseph Hone** and **Charles Ward** became directors the following year; founding member of the Royal Irish Academy; an active subscriber to **John Archer**'s publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791; announced as a Grand Juror of Dublin on 5 May 1791 with **Robert Alexander**.²⁴²

Walter Wade, MD (d. 1825) — 74 Capel Street; physician; Licentiate, King and Queen's College of Physicians; son of John Wade, State Chemist, Capel Street, who once proposed the building of a '*pharmacopoeia pauperum* in the city to dispense medicines to the poor'; abandoned Catholicism in 1781, converted to the Established Church and married a Quaker woman; also in

²³⁹ AD, 818; Archer.

²⁴⁰ WDD 1792, 117; KIAP, 488; AD, 831.

²⁴¹ WDD 1792, 117; AD, 839; KIAP, 491; RDS.

²⁴² Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 59; Watson, *Almanack*, 1786, 91; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 43-44; Archer; *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 5 May 1791.

1781, Wade joined the Freemason Lodge, no. 198, 'a prestigious lodge catering to the professional and upper classes of Dublin'; originally an apothecary but practiced as an *accoucheur*, then a physician; in 1791, he was a King and Queen's College of Physicians licentiate with **William Drennan**, **Henry Kennedy**, and **Robert Scott** while **Robert Perceval** was vice-president and censor, **Clement Archer** was an honorary fellow, and **Daniel Bryan** and **Stephen Dickson** were fellows; eventually became a botanist and was instrumental in the foundation of the Dublin Society's Royal Botanical Gardens at Glasnevin; petitioned the Irish parliament to establish a 'Publick Botanical Garden as a Great National Object'; Professor of Botany in the Royal College of Surgeons, 1792-1825; joined the Grand Master's Lodge in 1791 and became Deputy Grand Master in 1793 until 1799; participated in the Dublin Society of United Irishmen during its early, moderate, reformist period; was also a part of the United Irishmen during its later, republican phase but in 1798, 'endeavoured others to pull back from the brink'; in 1797, Higgins remarked of a meeting hosted by Wade involving the United Irishmen that included **William Dease**, **William James MacNeven**, and **Thomas Ryan**: 'in short, every Roman Catholic medical man in the metropolis' who met to prepare publications 'to inflame the minds of the people'; had his own bookplate with its motto: *Pro fide et patria* ('For faith and native land').²⁴³

Mr Henry Walker — Two possibilities: 1) Henry Walker, 79 Dame Street; bookseller and lottery-office broker; probably related to **Joseph Walker** (also of 79 Dame Street); according to Pollard, Henry advertised that he took subscriptions at his shop for the 'proprietor Joseph Walker'; 2) Henry Hamilton Walker, Islandbridge, Dublin; surveyor; apprentice to John Brownrigg, surveyor with both the Grand Canal Company and the Royal Canal Company; Walker 'belonged to the "French" school of cartography in Ireland, working in a style which originated with John Rocque'.²⁴⁴

²⁴³ WDD 1792, 132; DIB; Martin, *Dictionary of Bookplates of Irish Medical Doctors*, 138; Fagan, "Infiltration," 69-70; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 77-78; Dickson, *Dublin*, 210; Martin, *Dictionary of Bookplates of Irish Medical Doctors*, 139; Fagan, "Infiltration," 84; McDowell, "Personnel," 51; Fagan, "Infiltration," 70; Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 8 July 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 171-172; Martin, *Dictionary of Bookplates of Irish Medical Doctors*, 138.

²⁴⁴ Pollard, *Dictionary*, 582-583; DIA.

Mr Joseph Walker (active 1784-d. 1805) — 14 Anglesea Street and 79 Dame Street; printer of (Walker's) *Hibernian Magazine* between 1791 and 1798; probably related to **Henry Walker**, the bookseller.²⁴⁵

Maynard C. Walker, Esq. (Maynard Chamberlain Walker) — Peter Street; son of a physician, Chamberlain Walker; barrister, admitted T 1780; entered TCD 1772; Commissioner of Bankruptcies with **Joseph Pollock** in 1791.²⁴⁶

Robert Wallace, Esq. — Co. Limerick; gentleman; no further identification other than his appearance as a subscriber to **John Archer's** publications; in the subscription list for *The Lusiad*, he appears as 'Robert Wallace, Esq., Limerick'.²⁴⁷

Charles Ward, Esq. — 12 Fownes Street; merchant and a director of the Bank of Ireland; Whig Club member with **Arthur Browne, Francis Burroughs, Lord Charlemont, Richard Jebb, George Maquay, Theobald McKenna, Charles O'Neil, Joshua Pim, Joseph Pollock**; became a director of the Bank of Ireland with **Joseph Hone** in 1784, one year after the bank's establishment; other directors then were **Alexander Jaffray** (Governor in 1791) **Abraham Wilkinson** (Deputy Governor in 1791), Nicholas Lawless (**Lord Cloncurry**), **Samuel Dick, Jeremiah D'Olier**, and **John Allen**, with **Robert Watson Wade**, the first Accountant-General; Ouzel Galley Society member from 1789, joining **Samuel Dick** (1772), **Alexander Jaffray** (1772), Pim (1776), Wilkinson (1782), Maquay (1785), **William Cope** (1786), **William Digges La Touche** (1788); in 1791 he was a director of the Royal Canal Company with **John Binns, James Connolly, Cope**, and **Andrew Daly**.²⁴⁸

James P. Ward, Esq. — Possibly James Ward, landowner, Co. Tipperary, whose son Daniel entered TCD in June 1792; however, Daniel's university record indicates that James had already died when Daniel began his studies.²⁴⁹

²⁴⁵ WDD 1792, 100;

²⁴⁶ WDD 1792, 117; AD, 847; KIAP, 494; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 57.

²⁴⁷ Camoëns and Mickle, *The Lusiad*, [vi].

²⁴⁸ WDD 1792, 12; Kelly, "Elite Political Clubs, 1770-1800," 270-280; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 43-44; "The Ship," 35-36; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 82.

²⁴⁹ AD, 857-858.

Vesey Ward, F.T.C.D. — Fellow, Trinity College Dublin from 1791; noted as a 'morning lecturer'.²⁵⁰

Isaac Weld, Esq. (d. 1824) — Fleet Street; Patentee Officer, Deputy Customer and Collector of the Port of Dublin, in the same office as **William Hincks**; father of Isaac Weld (1774-1856), noted explorer and writer who studied under **Samuel Whyte** in his youth.²⁵¹

Samuel Cooke Weldon, Esq. (b. c.1764-1798) — Address in Dublin unknown; Captain, Fifth Dragoon Guards, Royal Irish Regiment; entered TCD 1781, BA 1785; may have studied law at some point; rank of Captain awarded on 31 May 1789; died 19 April 1798 during the 1798 Rebellion.²⁵²

Edward Westby, Esq. (1755-1838) — 26 York Street; barrister, admitted H 1779; Master in Chancery; elected to the Dublin Society in 1800.²⁵³

Henry Westenra, Esq. (1742-1811) — Dominick Street; High Court of Admiralty, Seneschal, King's Manors; member of the Dublin Society from 1769.²⁵⁴

John Wetherelt, Esq. — Address unknown; army officer in 1794.²⁵⁵

Thomas Whistler, Esq. — Not identified in the 1790s; there is a surgeon from Galway named Thomas L. Whistler in 1804 (Royal College of Surgeons, Court of Examiners, Censor and Staff Surgeon).²⁵⁶

Luke White, Esq. (1740-1824) — 42 Dawson Street; bookseller, publisher, auctioneer, lottery broker, and landowner; printer of the *Charter and Statutes*

²⁵⁰ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 77.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 68; RDS.

²⁵² AD, 867; *A List of the Officers of the Army and Marines, with an Index, A Succession of Colonels, and A List of the Officers of the Army and Marines on Half-Pay*, 39th ed. (London, 1791), 32; *Burke's Peerage*, 3:4113.

²⁵³ WDD 1792, 117; AD, 869; *KIAP*, 507; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 57; RDS.

²⁵⁴ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 61; RDS.

²⁵⁵ Mercier, *Anthologica Hibernica* 1794, vol. 3 (January-June) 1794, 314.

²⁵⁶ Stewart, *Almanack*, 1804, 112.

of the Royal Irish Academy for Promoting the Study of Science, Polite Literature, and Antiquities (Dublin, 1786); **Arthur Grueber** worked under him as a clerk (1780-1788); White made such a large fortune that he had gave loans to the government; handed over his bookselling business to **William Jones**; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216); 'From the 1790s he was a governor of most of the Dublin charities' and 'a liberal Protestant reformer'; owned land all over Ireland but continued in the book trade; proposed by **Jeremiah D'Olier** and **Thomas Braughall** for membership to the Dublin Society, 31 January 1793; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.²⁵⁷

Mr Richard White (active 1789-1794) — 20 Dame Street; bookseller and subscription library keeper; politically active in printing and publishing ventures: published many works on the Whigs, United Irishmen and on Catholic reforms; subscribed to 50 copies of **John Archer's** *Lusiad*, 1791, 50 to the *Holy Bible, Vulgate* and 25 to Shakespeare's *Dramatic Works*; printed *Strictures on the Declaration of the Society [of United Irishmen]*, 1791; 'presented copy of *Appeal From the New Whigs to the Old Whigs* to TCD library' in September 1791; unclear to which faith he belonged: published *Tracts on Catholic Affairs* (1792); 'supplies pamphlets on every side of every political question'; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216).²⁵⁸

Rev. James Whitelaw (1749-1813) — Meath Street; clergyman, statistician, historian; Vicar of St. Catherine's Church, Thomas Street; entered TCD 1766, BA 1771; Abecedarian Society President in 1791 among twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216); proposed by **Jeremiah D'Olier** and **Edward Haughton** for Dublin Society membership in

²⁵⁷ WDD 1792, 102; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 605-607; RDS; *Hibernian Journal*, 24 Aug 1789; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 607; RDS; Archer.

²⁵⁸ WDD, 1792, 103; Pollard, *Dictionary*, 607-608; *Ibid.*, 607, quoting *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, 10 Jan 1792; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 81.

1801; later compiled his *Census of Dublin, 1798-1805* and collaborated with J. Warburton and R. Walsh for the *History of the City of Dublin* (1818).²⁵⁹

Abraham Wilkinson, Esq., M.R.I.A. (c.1739-1803) — 4 West Park Street; Deputy Governor, Bank of Ireland; merchant; by all accounts, he was close friends with **Alexander Jaffray**, who was one of the proposers for his election to the Dublin Society in 1770; Ouzel Galley Society member from 1782, joining **Samuel Dick** (1772), Jaffray (1772), **Joshua Pim** (1776), **George Maquay** (1785), **William Cope** (1786), **William Digges La Touche** (1788), and **Charles Ward** (1789); in 1791, Wilkinson, Jaffray, Dick, and Pim were all elevated to a higher office in that society; founding director of the Bank of Ireland in 1783 with Dick, Jaffray, Nicholas Lawless (**Lord Cloncurry**), **Jeremiah D'Olier**, and **John Allen**, while **Robert Watson Wade** was the Accountant-General; **Joseph Hone** and Ward both were elected as directors in April 1784; by 1791, Wilkinson was Deputy-Governor of the bank until 1793, when he held the office of Governor until 1795; member of the Dublin Chamber of Commerce in 1791 with **John Binns**, **William Cope**, Jeremiah D'Olier, **Alexander Jaffray, Jr.**, Samuel Dick, George Maquay, and Joshua Pim (treasurer); member of the Royal Irish Academy in 1791; proposed **William Digges La Touche** into the Dublin Society in 1796; former director of the Grand Canal Company; trustee of the Royal Exchange with several other Dublin Library members.²⁶⁰

James T. Wilkinson, Esq., M.R.I.A. [James Tandy Wilkinson] — Mercer Street; surgeon, Court of Assistants, Royal College of Surgeons; member of the RIA and the Dublin Medical Society: 'Dublin Medical Society, J. Wilkinson, Secretary, announces a change in the day of their meetings to avoid a conflict with the meetings of the Royal Irish Academy', dated '13 Dec 1791, Trinity College'; in 1791, Wilkinson, **John Halahan**, and **Francis L'Estrange** were all members of the Court of Assistants at the Royal College of Surgeons, with **William Dease** as censor and **Clement Archer**, state surgeon; mentioned in

²⁵⁹ WDD 1792, 137; Leslie, comp., *Clergy of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh*, 910; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80; RDS; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 43-44 & 402-404.

²⁶⁰ WDD 1792, 12; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 403; RDS; "The Ship," 35-36; RDS; Hall, *Bank of Ireland*, 43; Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80; Griffith, "Dublin's Commercial Clubs," 121; RDS; MacMahon, *A Most Respectable Meeting of Merchants*, 38-39; 71.

a list of Dublin United Irishmen as 'nephew to Tandy' (revolutionary and civic politician, James Napper Tandy); possible relation of **Thomas Frederick Tandy**; founding Warden of the Medical Lodge (no. 792) at the Eagle Tavern (9 Eustace Street, a few doors down from the Dublin Library at 6 Eustace Street) in February 1794, with the physician and fellow United Irishman, **William James MacNeven**; also a member of Freemason Lodge, no. 190 with **Randal McAllister** and **Theobald McKenna**.²⁶¹

Benjamin Wilson, Esq. — Two possibilities: 1) 26 Skinner Row; goldsmith; or 2) Stephen Street; attorney, Exchequer, Solicitor in Chancery.²⁶²

Francis P. Winter, Esq. [Francis Pratt Winter] (1771-1847)* — Student in 1791; entered TCD 1788, BA 1793; son of **Samuel Winter** and brother of **John Pratt Winter**; by 1801, he was recorded in a subscription list as Rev. Francis Pratt Winter; in 1812 DLS list as a lifetime member: 'Winter, Rev. F. Pratt, M.L.'.²⁶³

John P. Winter, Esq. [John Pratt Winter] (1768-1846)* — Agher, Co. Meath; law student; TCD, BA 1788, M.T. 1789, barrister admitted H 1791 or 1792; son of **Samuel Winter** and brother of **Francis Pratt Winter**; an informant reported to Dublin Castle that Winter was one of the barristers who presented resolutions protesting harsh government measures of 'coercion and power' at a meeting of the United Irishmen in a tavern at 3 Eustace Street in May 1797; Bartlett notes that Winter 'resigned his commission in the lawyers' yeomanry', that same month.²⁶⁴

Samuel Winter, Esq. (1741-1811) — Agher, Co. Meath; gentleman; father of **John Pratt Winter** and **Francis Pratt Winter**.²⁶⁵

²⁶¹ *WDD* 1792, 103; *Dublin Evening Post*, 17 Dec 1791; McDowell "Proceedings," 133; McDowell, "Personnel," 52; *Sentimental and Masonic Magazine*, April 1794, 294; Fagan, "Infiltration," 75-76; Smyth, "Freemasonry and the United Irishmen," 174-175.

²⁶² *WDD* 1792, 103; 130.

²⁶³ *AD*, 890; Edkins, ed., *A Collection of Poems, Mostly Original, by Several Hands* (1801), [xx]; DLS, *Members List*, 1812.

²⁶⁴ *AD*, 890 ('Irish Bar 1792'); *KIAP*, 517 ('H 1791'); Francis Higgins to Edward Cooke, 18 May 1797, in Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 157 and n. 85.

²⁶⁵ *AD*, 890; Bartlett, *Revolutionary Dublin*, 157, n. 85.

Rev. Gore Wood (b. c.1753) — Donnybrook; clergyman; Curate-Assistant, St. Mary's, Donnybrook; entered TCD 1770, BA 1775; an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.²⁶⁶

Rev. James Wylde [Wilde] — St. Catherine's, Dublin; Catholic; studied in France; returned to Dublin and was curate at St. Catherine's from 1786 to 1806, with **Rev. Andrew Dunn** and **Rev. Mr. McCormick**, while **Rev. Bartholomew Sherlock** was parish priest.²⁶⁷

John Yoakley, Esq. — Not identified; member of the Abecedarian Society, along with twenty-four other DLS founding members (see Table 15, p. 216); an active subscriber to **John Archer's** publications and may have been part of his literary circle before the arrival of the Dublin Library in 1791.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁶ *WDD* 1792, 138; *AD*, 892; Archer.

²⁶⁷ Begadon, "Laity and Clergy in the Catholic Renewal of Dublin, c.1750-1830," 333; Donnelly, *Short Histories of Dublin Parishes*, 9:224.

²⁶⁸ Watson, *Almanack*, 1792, 80; Archer.

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