Abstract:

The nineteenth-century artist, Erskine Nicol (1825-1904) is well-known for his anecdotal and humorous paintings of Irish themes. This article analyses one of his larger oils to show that on occasion he attempted a more serious representation of the rural Irish figure which asks for empathy as opposed to ridicule. The focus is on *An Irish emigrant landing in Liverpool* signed and dated 1871 which is in the Scottish National Gallery. A key part of the analysis is an exploration of the relationship between the painting and a published account of a visit to England by the Irish emigrant depicted.

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REPRESENTING THE IRISH EMIGRANT: humour to pathos?

The dominant visualisation of the nineteenth-century Irish migrant is that of the peasant.[1] On July 6, 1850, the *Illustrated London News* (*ILN*) carried a lengthy account focused on the port of Liverpool entitled 'The Tide of Emigration to the United States and the British Colonies' accompanied by seven engraved illustrations which as the journal had it 'portrayed the principle incidents that occur in port – from the arrival of the family to their final departure from the Mersey.'[2] In the engravings, all of which show the Irish poor, we see an enforced medical check, crowds waiting to board at Waterloo Docks, the ship being towed on the Mersey and scenes of life on the ship to America. Such an emphasis on Liverpool was pertinent as its docks were 'the gateway to America and Britain's main empire trade centre [where T]he city was by far the most important element in a massive oceanic traffic in people, goods and services'.[3] Images from the *ILN* of the mid-century have come to represent a standard pictorialisation of a distraught Ireland. Recent published

accounts of the great emigration of Irish people following the Famine have used and reused these graphic images of shawled women, dark eyed and hatted men and mystified children. Yet despite the claims towards authenticity made by the *ILN*, such images have limited agency when it comes to analytical investigation. It is their very factualness which limits their discussion.[4]

Keeping with the Liverpool setting, this article focuses on a painting of 1871 by the Scottish-born artist, Erskine Nicol entitled *An Irish emigrant landing in Liverpool* (Figure 1). The scene is as the title suggests the docks of Liverpool, possibly Clarence Dock where so many Irish ships landed.[5] A middle aged man with all the appearance of an Irish countryman has disembarked from a ship visible behind and is being taunted by two young boys, one of whom suggests that he is keen to polish the man's very muddy boots. We are amused. We enjoy the look of scepticism on the man's face and how he has dressed himself in heavy yet worn and patched clothing including the thick red scarf and the tall hat and a small cloth bag slung over his shoulder. We notice that he holds his walking stick in a forward position as if to protect himself from engagements such as this one. We also enjoy the ruddy face of the boy on the right and the brazen behaviour of the shoe-black in the bottom left who tugs his cap in pseudo-deference to his potential adult client. His polish paraphernalia together with a discarded piece of newspaper lie on the ground in the left corner on the painting. The scene of the wharf is full of incident with its prominently placed bollard and rusty chain as well as a stack of barrels that await removal. A black man on the far left helps a worried looking white woman and is pointing to where she wants or needs to go. This Irish woman just arrived in Liverpool looks as if she has been crying. Going by his dress the man may be a ship worker perhaps from a visiting American ship. The novelist Herman Melville referred

to the popularity of Liverpool amongst black ship employees in his novel *Redburn* published in 1849 going so far as to say that

> In Liverpool … the negro steps with a prouder pace, and lifts his head like a man; for here, no such exaggerated feeling exists in respect to him as in America. Three or four times I encountered our black steward, dressed very handsomely, and walking arm in arm with a good-looking English woman. In New York such a couple would have been mobbed in three minutes and the steward would have been lucky to escape with whole limbs.[6]

The black man's inclusion in this scene of emigration is Nicol's way of representing the port of Liverpool as a hive of ethnic variety and thus part of a global metropolis, a role it enjoyed well into the twentieth century. As the Liverpool historian W.T. Pike rather pompously stated in 1911, 'Today all seas lead to Liverpool. There is no part of the globe, however remote, whose native may not be met on the Liverpool landing stage, and there is no territory so distant whose products do not pass from time to time through the docks and warehouses of Liverpool.'[7] In Nicol's painting, men on the far right are possibly discussing the arrival of a cargo of cattle that can be seen further back in the painting with a number of drovers who are moving them along.[8] A warehouse on the left, flags and a plethora of ships' masts on the right, what Melville over twenty years earlier had called 'a grand parliament of masts', all of these, along with the huge wheel of the Dublin to Liverpool steamer fill up the rest of the painting.[9] Nicol has painted a very contemporary scene, his protagonists wear recognisably mid to late nineteenth-century clothing while the Liverpool dockside is full of up to date details from a packet steamer to public lighting.[10]

As has been suggested, together with the Liverpudlian contemporaneity we get humour: the dirty boots and the seemingly incongruous presence of the shoe-black. The viewer wonders if the Irishman will succumb to the boy's offer of a polish? At the same time, we know that the man's low social status would imply that

such an act would verge on the absurd. So a degree of humour is there. In 1842 a *Handbook to Liverpool* had written of how:

> Should an Irish packet have just arrived at the time our visitor is at the dock, he will be much amused at the odd scene their decks exhibit! At the stern will be seen, as usual, a freight of bipeds, old and young, holding converse in a jargon that it would be difficult to interpret; whilst the rest of the deck will be crowded with a medley of sheep, pigs and oxen.[11]

Given such attitudes in England towards the Irish, is there more to Nicol's painting than just getting a cheap laugh?

The Liverpool setting is a vital part of the narrative of Nicol's *An Irish emigrant landing in Liverpool* as only twenty years earlier, between 1847 and 1853, so as to escape famine in Ireland, one and half million Irish had landed on these docks of whom half a million were designated as paupers.[12] Many stayed in the city while many others moved on to other parts of England seeking work and shelter while yet another group got onto other boats to sail to America or Australia. Others died of malnutrition and exhaustion. While the two adolescent boys in the painting amuse us and create an entertaining incident they too conjure up a Liverpudlian connection with those dark famine years of a few decades earlier. Numerous newspaper reports of that time inform us of the 'mancatchers' or 'runners' who scoured the docks at Liverpool in search of naïve Irish emigrants who as *The Morning Chronicle* a London newspaper reported in 1850:

> The business of these people is, in common parlance, to 'fleece' the
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> emigrant, and to draw from his pocket, by fair means or foul, as much of his
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> cash as he can be persuaded, inveigled, or bullied into parting with.[13]

Leaving aside the background scenes of ships and seamen, we are faced with the two groups in clear focus, the black man and the white woman to the left and the

Irish emigrant with the two teasing boys in the foreground. Both groups convey uncertainty, where will the woman in the blue shawl end up and will the main character succumb to the shoe-black's offer? It all may seem like a scene of small dramas but therein lies Nicol's challenge to us the viewer.

For just over one hundred years, this Nicol painting has been entitled *An Irish emigrant landing in Liverpool*. Given that title, in the last few decades, this sizeable oil on canvas has been exhibited and reproduced on innumerable occasions as an illustration of the emigration of the Irish in the second half of the nineteenth century.[14] This canvas which measures 141 x 101 cms and a smaller version in an Irish private collection which measures 99 x 71 cms[15] were originally painted thirty years before the Edinburgh brewer and benefactor Sir A. Oliver Riddell of Craiglockhart presented the larger canvas to the Scottish nation in 1905. In 1876, the smaller version entitled *Jim Blake landing in Liverpool* was sold as part of the property of the artist's late friend and patron Andrew Armstrong, a member of the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin, who had a large collection of paintings by Nicol. At the 1876 sale of Armstrong's collection, the smaller version of the painting fetched a little over £745.[16] But thirty years after the sale of the picture when the larger version was presented to the Scottish National Gallery, the painting's title had lost its named protagonist, Jim Blake, an employee of the artist and a native of Co. Westmeath in the midlands of Ireland, and as such, its specific narrative was removed so that it could become a generalised image of a national phenomenon, emigration. The loss of the painting's original title between the 1870s and early years of the twentieth century requires interrogation and raises issues to do with the representation of the Irish and the emigration of its people.

In 1867, the Dublin publisher M.H. Gill produced a short book (only 24 pages) for private distribution entitled *Jim Blake's Tour from Clonave to London*. Written by the eponymous Blake, the account tells of the adventures of an unsophisticated Irishman from the rural midlands who travels from Clonave, a small townland by the shore of Lough Derravaragh in Co. Westmeath via Dublin and Liverpool to London. Blake, who was described by a contemporary newspaper as a 'boatman' spent two weeks in the city, a guest of his patron Erskine Nicol.[17] He marvelled at the seeming luxury of Nicol's house near Kensington Gardens, the hustle and bustle of the late Victorian metropolis and the wonders of London's museums and public buildings. Finally, Blake returned to his rural home and delighted in the comforts of his own hearth.[18]

Nicol had been travelling to Ireland for at least two decades prior to Blake's short trip to London in 1867 and a few years earlier he had established a studio in Clonave where he employed Blake in a variety of tasks as well as using him as a model in a number of paintings of anecdotal scenes usually of a humorous nature.[19] While Nicol and his London house is obviously a key feature of Blake's account of his visit to England, the fact that the artist illustrated the short book with nine wash drawings greatly enhances our interest in Jim Blake's *Tour from Clonave to London*. These illustrations echo the narrative and show Blake feeling seasick on his way to Liverpool, arriving at Liverpool, crossing a busy London street, entertaining Nicol's servants in London and thinking of his wife back in Ireland. The third of these nine illustrations (Figure 2) shows Blake arriving at Liverpool and being accosted by two shoe-shines boys while the caption below exclaims, 'I did not mind any of them', a direct quotation from the *Tour*. Some years later, Nicol would turn this wash drawing into at least two oil paintings, one of which is now in Edinburgh.[20]

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The compositional similarities between the 1867 wash drawing and the 1871 oil are many. In both, a man in a tall hat, wearing a coat and a scarf, armed with a walking stick and a bag slung over his shoulder is being addressed by two adolescent boys one of whom offers to shine the man's boots. The setting is a wharf with tall ships and groups of buildings beyond, to the side stacks of barrels await transportation. The correspondence with the text in Blake's *Tour* is very specific:

> At ½ past 7 o'clock in the morning I looked about me and saw that we were coming into Liverpool. Each side of the river was all ships and boats; all I thought running in and out about me, all sides of the river streaming lights. When she landed their came in 2 fellows to take away my bag; they both fought to see who would have it, then a young lad came to polish my shoes. By dad, says I, this is great respect for me, an Irishman! I did not mind any of them.[21]

In his Preface to *Jim Blake's Tour from Clonave to London*, Andrew Armstrong emphasises that it 'abounds in humour':

> The reader who takes up this little work will, most likely expect to find a merely
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> comic or funny book – I hope agreeably; for, while it is purely natural, it
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> abounds in humour, and is racy of the soil.[22]

Armstrong goes on to say that Blake's account of his trip to London is in his own words, 'except in the matter of punctuation' where editorial input was necessary. Spelling has been left as it was as have all the observations and comments. Armstrong is at pains to stress that this book and the accompanying images are not 'caricatures' but that Jim Blake's *Tour* is an authentic illustrated account of 'a fair type of his class - the peasantry of central Ireland' who in this account travels to England in the second half of the nineteenth century.[23] While light-heartedness is certainly dominant in these drawings and while scenes such as those of Jim Blake taken ill while staying in Nicol's house or of him crossing a busy London street are

indeed humourous, there is, as Armstrong suggests, no outright caricature in the images. Instead they are infused with a gentle, even respectful tone.

The Edinburgh version of Nicol's later enlargement of the scene illustrated in the *Tour* inserts background figures such as a black man and a white woman while to the right we see other disembarked passengers or members of the ship's crew along with cattle being led ashore. In the oil, the shoe shining anecdote is made more explicit with the inclusion of polish and cloths while the foreground has the prominently displayed bollard and chain. More importantly, Nicol has offered a more vivid characterisation of the Irishman. In the original drawing, we see two staring eyes and a face largely covered with a rough scarf. In the oil, the Irishman's head is slightly to the side as he listens to the boys who tease him with one pointing at his dirty boots. This is not a painting of solely humorous intent as was Nicol's habit only a few years earlier. While Nicol's work is still largely uncatalogued, we do know of a number of large scale single figure paintings with titles such as *Missed it* and *Had a nibble* both from 1866 where a man is seen fishing or hunting. While the man in these oils is not identical to the Jim Blake of the Edinburgh painting, the artist's use of a broad-faced countryman with a large nose, long hairy locks or a beard that runs along the lower face and with large eyes and mouth is comparable to Blake's appearance in *An Irish emigrant landing in Liverpool*. Nicol's possible use of Blake as a model is suggested by a chromolithograph after an oil painting by John Ballantyne dating from the mid-1860s which shows the artist in his Irish studio painting a man with a fishing rod surrounded by nets and a basket and it is recorded that Nicol did the Irishman himself.[24]

When one excludes formal portraiture, the making fun of the Irish has had a long visual as well as a literary tradition. Visualising one's own as the butt of humour

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has being going on for centuries: the British, the Americans, the Dutch, all have done it in both paintings and graphic art. What is different with Ireland is that the Irish rarely did it of themselves. The problem with Ireland and with Dublin in particular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was that a sufficiently profitable visual culture was not as forthcoming as that which occurred in cities such as London, New York or Amsterdam. So when it comes to humorous depictions of the Irish we really have to look at how others depicted them and that was mainly done in Britain. And the other major reason for such a deficiency in self-deprecation was the dependency culture of a colonial relationship that existed up until at least the 1920s. Irish people in British visual representation were often the victims of condescension, fear, or as in the case of Nicol, the entertaining or comic.

The highly negative imagery of *Punch* in the decades from the 1860s to the 1880s was created during a period when the threat of Fenian violence was all too real. The 1867 explosions in Manchester and London's Clerkenwell led to a series of what Lewis Perry Curtis Jr. in his book on the Irishman in Victorian caricature has referred to as 'some grotesquely simianized Paddies for *Punch*.'[25] But these cartoons are but one facet of British visualisation of the Irish. They are indeed crude and even racist but as Frankie Morris has pointed out in her book on John Tenniel, it was political agitators who were simianised, the evil brute with malevolent intent was never to be taken as a national symbol.[26] Instead that visualisation was often benign.

Nicol lived in Dublin between 1845 and 1850 and returned nearly annually for short periods of time until well into the late nineteenth century. He made a very comfortable living out of his numerous canvases of Irish humorous anecdote and in discussing one of the illustrations to Anna Maria Hall's *Tales of Irish Life and Character*, published in London in 1909, Amélie Dochy has made the point that Nicol

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turns the drunken Irishman in *Bright Prospect* (Figure 3), a painting dating from possibly the 1840s or 1850s, into 'the rank of a mere articulated puppet, unable to master [his] own body and equally incapable of managing his own country'.[27] Here humour dominates and condescension is mixed with a highly critical political viewpoint. Evoking easy laughs from his audience was of course a common purpose in so much of Nicol's work but in the Scottish National Gallery oil we are offered another side to Nicol's representation of the Irish. Painted in 1871, *An Irish emigrant landing in Liverpool* appeared four years after Nicol had been awarded a silver medal at the 1867 Universal Exhibition in Paris for the humorous paintings *Both Puzzled* and *Paying the Rent*.[28] While no proof exists, Nicol may have travelled to Paris for this exhibition and he may have seen the work of the French realist Gustave Courbet, a speculation which has led Dochy to suggest that a 'new turn' appears in Nicol's work at this time which is 'less tainted with caricature'[29] The Edinburgh painting is not in the same humorous camp as other Nicol paintings nor indeed is it part of the comic visual tradition for the representation of the Irish dominant in the nineteenth century. In the wash drawing of 1867 (Figure 2) which accompanied the published *Tour* we are offered a representation of a named individual, Jim Blake, arriving on the Liverpool quayside on what was to be a well-documented two week adventure in England while the later oil of 1871 (Figure 1), would in time become a generic image of Irish nineteenth-century emigration with all the potential poignancy implied by the abandonment of one's home. What has happened in this change of title, from *Jim Blake landing in Liverpool* to *An Irish emigrant landing in Liverpool* is the move from a jocular or anecdotal image of an Irish countryman visiting the neighbouring island to the decidedly more serious

image of the Irish diaspora visualised by the arrival of an Irish emigrant in Liverpool. Pathos has replaced humour.

Emily Mark-FitzGerald has rightly dismissed Nicol's Irish emigrant arriving at Liverpool from being a 'Famine-related subject' given that the 'main character' is not represented in a distraught state nor does he carry any 'direct reference to Famine-wrought hardship.' Meanwhile Patricia Hardy has firmly placed Nicol's painting within a nineteenth-century British representation of emigration imagery.[30] The latter compares it with the work of Nicol's fellow-Scot, Thomas Faed whose *Last of the Clan* (Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum) dates from 1865 only six years before Nicol's painting and enjoys a similar viewpoint at the edge of a wharf, a prominent ship's chain and rope as well as the focus on an elderly male figure.[31] It is not at all inconceivable that Nicol could have seen Faed's *Last of the Clan* when it was exhibited at the Royal Academy (RA) in 1865.[32] Both pictures are colourful and their characters wear contemporary costumes. From its first exhibition, Faed's *Last of the Clan* was seen as a problem picture which raised concern over the issue of emigration. The RA catalogue famously carried a paragraph most probably written by Faed himself which called attention to the 'feeble old man and his grand-daughter' who were once part of a 'powerful clan' and who now 'owned not a single blade of grass in the glen that was once [their] own.'[33]

While there is no record of Nicol's painting having been publically exhibited or engraved as in the case of the Faed, the issue of emigration does connect the two paintings. By the last third of the nineteenth century emigration had become a national issue and as such a worthy topic for art. Nicol had become serious and Ireland and the plight of its teeming masses was no longer a matter to raise a laugh. The historical fact that millions of Irishmen and women took the boat out of Ireland

implied that a painting of such an act was a more worthy subject matter than an anecdotal illustration of one man's adventures. As a not uncommon technical ploy in a visual narrative, the laughter of the boy on the right together with the pointing boy on the left bring us, the viewer, into the painting and makes the man a momentary object of amusement but such ridicule is also a call for us to think, in this case about emigration. Between the 1830s and 1890s, emigration themes would occasion more than eighty paintings in exhibition venues in London, Edinburgh and Dublin and to that list one must also add the dozens of engraved images of emigration that featured in the *ILN* throughout at least the 1850s.[34] At the RA in London in 1855, for example, Ford Madox Brown exhibited his now celebrated *The Last of England* (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery) while thirty years later in 1883 Nicol's son John Watson Nicol exhibited a Scottish theme *Lochaber no More* (Fleming-Wyfold Art Foundation, London).[35] By painting a scene of emigration in the early 1870s, it is clear that Erskine Nicol was fully aware of current trends in metropolitan centres while at the same time the visualisation of the shoe-black was also gaining traction. Less than a decade earlier, William Macduff had exhibited *Shaftesbury, or Lost and Found* (private collection) at the RA in 1863 and had had it engraved. The image refers to the philanthropist Lord Shaftesbury's concern about child labour and in particular shoe-blacks such as the boy in red in Macduff's painting who points towards an engraved portrait of the great man in a shop window to a fellow street worker, a child chimney sweep.[36] Within a few years of Nicol's Edinburgh painting, artists further afield such as Jules Bastien-Lepage in Paris and John George Brown in New York were exhibiting paintings of the shoe-black boy as a picturesque urban phenomenon where it could be said the social realities of such an occupation were carefully masked in favour of humour and anecdote.[37]

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The figure of the Irishman in Nicol's picture is not comparable to the one and half million Famine-migrants of twenty years earlier who descended on Liverpool as seen in the various *ILN* engravings of July 1850. In the Edinburgh painting we see a fit healthy middle-aged man and to the left a young woman with some flowers in her hair. In creating such agreeable actors in his scene one wonders if Nicol was changing his game from what we might call 'easy' humour to a more serious tone which we might call 'pathos' or 'empathy'? Was the artist attempting to do something very different from so much of his previous work? If we interpret the *Irish emigrant landing in Liverpool* as a painting about disorientation, the two Irish emigrants, the man we can now identify as Blake and the woman behind him, both look uncertain; one of the fall outs of emigration is a state of being lost, being out of one's comfort zone. In this painting is Nicol attempting to rise above his status as a comic artist to one which could merit greater acclaim? Are we being asked to sympathise with these newly arrived Irish emigrants and concern ourselves with their plight? Is Nicol trying to do something different from his much acclaimed previous work?

While already an academician in the Royal Scottish Academy since 1859, Nicol was by the early 1870s, also a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy in London becoming an Associate in 1866.[38] Yet he never achieved the status of a full Royal Academician although resident in a fashionable area of London from 1865. It was at this address, 24 Dawson Place, Bayswater, in a villa named 'Clonave' that Jim Blake stayed for two weeks in perhaps 1866. In 1864, a few years before the Edinburgh painting, Nicol exhibited *The Emigrants* or *Waiting for a train* (Figure 4) as it was called in the RA catalogue.[39] While on exhibition, the painting was awarded a medal by the Society for the Promotion of the Fine Arts, London as the best genre picture.[40] Here, the tone is more sombre than was usual in Nicol's work. We see a

couple waiting on a platform in the train station at Ballinasloe, Co. Galway perhaps about to set off on a journey of emigration. The woman looks decidedly apprehensive.

The winning of various medals for his genre paintings in both London and Paris in the 1860s had considerably raised Nicol's public profile and by the 1880s, art critics in both cities were praising Nicol's work but as Hardy has commented it was the humorous paintings that continued to gain attention.[41] Responding to the 1867 display of Nicol's *Paying the Rent* at the Paris Universal Exposition, the anglophile art critic Ernest Chesneau would later comment that 'At first sight one is most struck with the comical side of the picture' going on to say that 'It is amusing to see the play of the different countenances… the dilapidated hats, with their dirty rims, the threadbare patched coats, [which] are inimitable.'[42] Painted in 1871, the Scottish National Gallery painting of *An Irish emigrant landing at Liverpool* was never publically exhibited so we have no contemporaneous comment on its reception. Yet despite all the praise that Nicol was beginning to reap, he lost out in his ambition to be taken more seriously. In the end, such humorous and playful images as *Bright Prospect* (Figure 3) were to become his visual legacy. In 1870, a year before the Edinburgh picture was painted, James Dafforne wrote a lengthy piece about Nicol in *The Art Journal* which recalled the painting *Missed It*. Exhibited at the RA in London in 1866 a few years before the Irish emigrant, Dafforne said of it that 'The half-stolid, half-comic physiognomy of the awkward sportsman would provoke a laugh in the most sedate.'[43] From the evidence of his many illustrations to Hall's *Tales of Irish Life and Character* published just after the artist's death (Figure 3), Nicol would keep churning out his comic depictions of Irishmen and women to the end of his life. As

Dafforne also wrote, 'the wit, and humour, and particular character of the Irishman have proved an unfailing source of amusement to us in England'.[44]

Such a diet was clearly hard for Nicol to stop serving up. Yet in *An Irish emigrant landing in Liverpool* of 1871 (Figure 1), the Irish peasant does not just invite laughter, for his representation transcends mockery and he becomes an emigrant surrounded by the ethnic mix of a bustling imperial Liverpool who will move on, dirty boots and all. The changing of the painting's title from an image of an individual, Jim Blake, to that of a generic Irish emigrant suggests that there was more to the Irish than that which Dafforne had seen as a 'source of amusement'. Nicol's painting can thus be interpreted as approaching something serious.

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Notes

[1] See Cullen, *Visual Politics*, chapter 4 and Bhreathnach-Lynch, *Ireland's Art*, 52-71.
[2] *Illustrated London News*, July 6 1850, 16-22, quotation is on 19.
[3] MacRaild, *The Irish Diaspora in Britain*, 49.
[4] Hardy, 'Victorian Images of Emigration', chapter 3. See also Coleman, *Passage to America*; Donnelly, *The Great Irish Potato Famine* and O'Sullivan, *The Tombs of a Departed Race* where she discusses the authenticity issue and Quinnipiac University, The Ireland's Great Hunger Museum database; accessed August 8, 2016.
[5] Scally, *The End of Hidden Ireland,* 295, chapter 5.
[6] Melville, *Redburn,* 259-60 (chapter 41).
[7] Pike*, Liverpool and Birkenhead*, 13.
[8] For Irish drovers see Swift, *Irish Migrants in Britain*, 19.
[9] Melville, ibid., 211 (chapter 33).
[10] See Ritchie-Noakes, *Liverpool's Historic Waterfront*.
[11] Quoted in Scally, ibid., 189: *The Picturesque Handbook to Liverpool*.
[12] Boyce, 'From Victorian "Little Ireland" to heritage trail: Catholicism, community and change in Liverpool's docklands', 278.
[13] Quoted in Swift, ibid., 22.
[14] See Tryon Macdonald, *Exiles and Emigrants*, 32; Cowling, *Victorian Figurative Painting*, 169-70; Bhreathnach-Lynch, ibid., 62; also Donnelly, ibid., opposite 197; Swift, ibid., frontispiece.
[15] My thanks for information on the smaller version of the Nicol image from one of the three anonymous reviewers of this article.
[16] My thanks to Helen Smailes for information on Nicol from the Scottish National Gallery files, catalogue number 925.
[17] 'Metropolitan Gossip', *Belfast Newsletter*, March 9, 1876.
[18] See Harte,*The Literature of the Irish in Britain*, 60-3 and Hardy, ibid., 151. John T. Koch sees the Blake publication as a spoof, 'When a Seanchaidhe is not a Seanchaidhe and a Paddy is not a Paddy', 23.
[19] See Rooney, 'Nicol, Erskine', 388-91 and Rooney, *A time and a place*, 17 and Rooney, 'The cottage as stage', 31-9. See also Soden, *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB),* accessed August 8, 2016.

[20] A photocopy of the Christie's catalogue of Andrew Armstrong's 1876 sale is in the Nicol file in the Scottish National Gallery.

[21] Blake, *Blake's Tour*, 3.

[22] Blake, ibid., v.

[23] Blake, ibid., v-vi.

[24] Derbyshire, 'The studios of celebrated painters'. For the 1866 Nicols see photographs in the Witt Library, Courtauld Institute of Art, London.

[25] Perry Curtis, *Apes and Angels*, 37.

[26] Morris, *The Artist in Wonderland*, chapter 21. For the Irish ape-man, see Perry Curtis, ibid., chapter 3.

[27] Dochy, 'Representing Irishness', accessed September 3, 2016, paragraph 16.

[28] *Both Puzzled* is based on a scene from William Carleton's story 'The Hedge School', *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry,* first series published in 1830. The Carleton source is acknowledged in the RA catalogue, see Graves, v, 368.

[29] Dochy, 'Standing at Cultural Crossroads', accessed February 10, 2016, paragraphs 20-21. For Nicol being awarded a prize in 1867 see Dochy, 'Cliché, Compassion ou Commerce?', 454. Dochy refers to the article 'Novelles' in *La Chronique des beaux arts et de la curiosité*, Paris, April 28, 1867, 133. My thanks to Clare Willsdon for suggesting a similarity of representation between Nicol's Irish migrant and Courbet's *Beggar at Ornans* (1868, Burrell Collection, Glasgow). For the British genre winners at the 1867 Paris exhibition, see Mainardi, *Art and Politics of the Second Empire*, 164-5, 222, note 48.

[30] Mark-FitzGerald, *Commemorating the Irish Famine*, 33 and Hardy, ibid., 147-51.

[31] Hardy, ibid., 148.

[32] There is a Faed portrait of Nicol in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

[33] Julian Treuherz, *Hard Times*, 42.

[34] Casteras, 'Oh! Emigration!, 14-16 and Hardy, ibid., appendix 1 .

[35] See Tryon Macdonald, ibid., 26-7 and 56-7 and Nicholson, 'Lochaber No More'.

[36] Treuherz, ibid., 33-4.

[37] See Weisberg, *The Realist Tradition*, 195-7 and Greenhill, *Playing it Straight*, chapter 2 and 184 note 28 and Perry, *Young America*, 135-7.

[38] See Graves, v, 367-8 and Baile de Laperriere, iii, 367-71.

[39] For the painting as a book cover see Swift, ibid., and MacRaild, ibid.

[40] A version of this painting was in Armstrong's Christie's sale of 1876, see note 20.

[41] Hardy, ibid.,158.

[42] Chesneau, *English Painting*, 212. The original was published in 1885. For a contemporaneous London comment see W.W. Fenn, 'Erskine Nicol'.

[43] Dafforne, 'British Artists', 67.

[44] Dafforne, ibid., 65.

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