

*From 'Irish Exile' to 'Australian pagan':
the Christian Brothers, Irish handball, and identity
in early twentieth-century Australia*



Rowan Patrick Light

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of BA (Hons) in History.

The University of Sydney

9th October, 2012.

Abstract

Migrant histories necessarily consider human journeys to new social and cultural realities, marked by discourse around integration and identity. The historiography of the Irish in Australia, dominated by historian Patrick O'Farrell, has lost its fundamental engagement with ordinary migrant experience and fixated on a narrative of nationalism, hierarchy, and elitist politics. This thesis examines the experience of the Irish Christian Brothers in early twentieth-century Australia and the playing of Irish handball in their colleges across the country. In doing so, it seeks a new understanding of Irish-Australian identity through the complex relationship of Catholicism, education, and sport; questioning the extent to which Gaelic games assuaged the transformative and dislocational processes of migration beyond O'Farrell's notion of Irish integration as an imperative of 'Australianise or perish'.

Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
INTRODUCTION.....	4
CHAPTER I: Sport and Irish-Australian Historiography.....	8
CHAPTER II: The Christian Brothers and Irish handball.....	24
CHAPTER III: New sporting culture and integration.....	40
CONCLUSION.....	52
BIOGRAPHY.....	55
APPENDIX.....	68

Acknowledgements

There are many people to whom I am indebted for the finishing of this thesis, not least my family and friends who supported me throughout the year.

I am especially thankful to those who aided my research, in particular Br Dominic Obbens CFC at the Christian Brothers Archive (NSW) whose tireless assistance, dedication, and enthusiasm were beyond reproach. The help of Bob Winter, president of the Australian Handball Council, was also heroic.

I would further acknowledge the support of Paul Rouse, University College Dublin, who first encouraged me to embark on this study of Gaelic sport, and similarly Mark Reynolds at the GAA Archive.

Finally, I would like to express my deepest regard for Mark McKenna, who guided, edited, and gave me confidence in my ideas. I owe him my place at the University of Sydney and my perseverance.

Introduction: Finding a new approach to identity in Irish-Australian history

Having witnessed the public furore around an international football match in 1922 between the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, George Orwell decried famously in an essay titled 'The Sporting Spirit' – originally published in the London *Tribune* - that 'sport is an unfailing cause of ill-will' and 'has nothing to do with fair play'.¹ Rather, 'it is bound up with hatred, jealousy, boastfulness, disregard of all rules and sadistic pleasure in witnessing violence'. Sport, Orwell concluded, 'is war minus the shooting'.

If we were to take Orwell's view of sport in the twentieth century, we would likely conclude that sport was not only incompatible with the peaceful mingling of different sectarian, cultural, and nationalistic interests in colonial and global societies, but in fact an agent of violence and exclusionary politics and cultural identity. It is therefore interesting that in the experience of Irish migrants across the world since the nineteenth century, arriving as many did to hostile societies pocked with sectarian violence, 'this modern cult of sport', far from being an occasion of division and conflict, was in fact a crucial means of social and cultural integration and assimilation; a unifying feature of colonial society, rather than akin to war. This idea of sport as a potent cultural form assuaging migrant experience to new social and cultural contexts, reflects the broadening appeal of sport in history as more than just an extension of politics or nationalism – as was Orwell's main criticism – or as fundamentally irrelevant to the historical narrative, but as a dynamic medium for academic purview.

¹ George Orwell, 'The Sporting Spirit', in *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, ed. Sonia Orwell & Ian Angus, (London, 1968).

The widening appeal of sport reiterates the danger for the modern historian and his contemporary reader, when considering the history of migration, to reduce migrant experience to mere statistics. As Richard Reid points out in the context of the Irish who came to Australia, migration is not about quantity but a journey.² It is an enormously complex experience, marked by social, cultural, and emotional upheaval. Irish-Australian historiography has lost its engagement with the Irish 'journey' in its human and intimate detailing. Sport is therefore enormously pertinent as it intertwines the expression of ethnicity, religion, and community: in itself, it is a communal, social, performative action of belonging, providing an excellent platform on which to discuss ordinary aspects of migrant life where grandiose and elitist politics cannot. By examining the role of handball in Christian Brothers' schools across Australia, its place in the Irish-Australian Catholic community, and the connection between the Irish brothers and the playing of handball to Irishness, we are able to question the preoccupation of Irish-Australian historiography with elitist politics and officiality, as established by Patrick O'Farrell in his narrative of 'Australianise or die'.

This thesis seeks to understand handball as a site of transition for the Irish brothers and the students to whom they imparted an Irish-influenced education, religiosity, and sense of Australian identity, as distinct from Protestant-British concepts of nationalism and ethnicity. The playing and organisation of Irish handball affirms generally that during the first half of the twentieth century, a new generation of Irish-Australians were increasingly articulating an Australian rather than Irish identity. Yet this consideration of sport allows substantial nuance to O'Farrell's seminal notion that this period was marked by a total assimilation into mainstream Australian society, a rejection of Irishness being reflected in the abandonment of Irish political goals and the rise of an Australian-focused Church. It enables the historian to consider how complex migrant loyalties and identities are assuaged but also maintained in contradiction and competition; how the Irish incorporated

² Richard Reid and Brendon Kelson, *Sinners, Saints and Settlers: A journey through Irish Australia* (Canberra, 2010).

themselves into an Irish-Australian framework, distinctive but not excluding them from mainstream Australian society.

O'Farrell made two fundamental assumptions about Gaelic games in Irish communities in early twentieth century Australia. The first was that these sports were either non-existent or in the case of Irish handball, utterly trivial and inconsequential. The second was that the rejection of Irish sports reflected Irish attitudes towards integration. Both his assumptions reinforce Irish-Australian experience as tied to forced, hierarchical, and political movements. This thesis is structured in a way to attempt to address these problems in O'Farrell. Chapter one is accordingly historiographical in its focus, situating Irish-Australian history in its O'Farrell dominance and its subsequent petrification into a limited political and hierarchical discourse. It addresses this in relation to developments in sports history, in particular changing historical attitudes to Gaelic games under the recent revisionist work of Mike Cronin and Paul Rouse. Chapter two analyses O'Farrell's treatment of Irish sport as being absent, or at the most trivial and irrelevant, by considering the place and popularity of Irish handball in Christian Brothers and other Catholic religious schools. The chapter outlines the sport's immense currency in South Australia, Victoria, and NSW, assessing the Irishness of the sport, and its symbolic, experiential, and relational importance for the Irish Brothers. The third chapter considers specifically the way in which Irish handball itself became 'Australianised' in the later part of the twentieth century, and the implications for understanding Irish-Australian integration and handball's identification with a Catholic school culture. Comparisons with other diasporan communities will be sought; specifically Canada and Argentina, in order to better understand the creation of exclusive Catholic school cultures, which forged ethnic and religious identities while allowing successful incorporation into native nationalities.

A clerical or educational-institutional focus was never the initial intention of this thesis. Indeed, in a religious culture so very dominated by the figure of the Irish cleric, I would have

preferred to deal more absolutely with the layman; his sporting culture rather than educational structure. But in the Irish Diaspora, the presence of Catholic religion, the question of education and the interrelationship of these, is inescapable. From Canada, the United States, Argentina, to Australia and New Zealand, the intersection of Irish religious with Catholic education and identity, is as predictable as sectarian tensions between Irish emigrants and the Protestant establishments with which they mingled. This narrative is nonetheless about the ordinary lives and experiences of Irish men, women and children; the very threads in the fabric of Irish-Australian life. A greater understanding of this ordinary reality is a fundamental part of the historian's work; contributing and enriching the human conversation as well as upholding the Irish-Australian narrative. This, in the words of Trevelyan, constitutes the poeticism of history, 'the quasi-miraculous fact that once, on this earth, once, on this familiar spot of ground, walked other men and women, as actual as we are today, thinking their own thoughts, swayed by their own passions, but now all gone, one generation vanishing after another, gone as utterly as we shall shortly be gone as ghost at cock crow'.³ This 'most familiar and certain fact about life' underpins this thesis, a faint testimony in some way to the Irish-Australian community, their past and ongoing part in the Australian story.

Finally, it is hoped that this small work on Irish-Australians and their handball will provoke renewed interest in the history of the Irish in Australia, and a more nuanced appreciation for O'Farrell and his scholarly limitations, leading, most of all, to further studies into the role of sport, the Irish teaching orders, and their schools, in Australian culture and society.

³ G. M. Trevelyan, 'Autobiography of an Historian', in *An Autobiography and Other Essays* (London, 1949), 13.

Chapter One: Sport and problems in Irish-Australian Historiography

Speaking in 1914 at a Jubilee dinner of the Manly Union, the association of clergy established to lobby the Australian Catholic bishops to support the Manly-based St Patrick's Seminary of Sydney, Monsignor McGuire addressed the challenge of establishing an Australian-centred clergy: 'the mission of the Church in Australia is no longer to save the Irish exile, but to convert the Australian race'.⁴ In particular, the Monsignor was engaging in a much localised debate about the need for a native clergy rather than the relying on the importation of priests from Irish seminaries. But more broadly, his comments were descriptive of the changes in Irish-Australian culture since the late nineteenth century: the transition of Irish migrants to an Irish-Australian or even direct Australian identity. As Reid notes, migrant history is more than a record of statistics. Rather, Irish-Australian historical narrative is underpinned by questions around the nature of identity. Why, how and to what extent did Irish migrants and their children experience and undertake assimilation into Australian society in the early twentieth century? From the 1900s onwards until the Second World War marked the high-point in Irish migration in Australian society and the Catholic Church. Subsequent years of economic and social turmoil, disrupted by the First World War and then the Great Depression, as well as the back drop of the emergence of an independent Ireland under the Free State, changed the political and nationalist discourse, and thus the nature of the relationship between Ireland and her exiled sons and daughters across the colonial landscape of the British Empire. It was during this crucial period that the most potent changes in Irish-Australian identity took place.

⁴ Patrick O'Farrell, *The Catholic Church and Community: An Australian History* (Third edition: Sydney, 1992).

In the context of the Diaspora, historians have turned increasingly to organised sport in order to understand this transition of migrant populations to new colonial societies. This new emphasis is accompanied nonetheless by a certain reticence towards sport as the focus of historical purview. Historians have traditionally treated sport as 'essentially ephemeral', as Douglas Booth and Colin Tatz put it, reducing its function in society to mere 'trivia, or "memory", beyond social experience'.⁵ Lincoln Allison points out how sport has been commonly envisaged as 'a trivial diversion from any serious human purpose', 'above and below' the 'political dimensions of social life'.⁶ Marxist and social historians have failed to recognise sporting forms as more than an extension of economic structure and bourgeois-induced distraction from socialist politics for 'freedoms of sports, games, and play'.⁷ A. Lunn, writing in 1927, complained that 'the historian... is apt to forget that sport in some form or other is the main object of most lives, that most men work in order to play, and that games which bulk so largely in the life of an individual cannot be neglected in studying the life of a nation'.⁸ In an age where history was politics, the nature of sport was playful leisure, and as such not serious enough for the historian. Academic scepticism and snobbery have thus dogged the sports historian and belied the cultural imperative which modern sporting forms provide.

A cursory view of the literature on the Irish in Australia demonstrates a particular dearth in academic study of sport. This is not surprising considering that Irish-Australian historiography has remained largely undisturbed over the last two decades, coalesced under the orthodoxy of Patrick O'Farrell and, to a lesser extent, Oliver MacDonagh. It was O'Farrell's seminal contribution to establish over the course of his extensive work on Irish-Australia, that the Irish were not simply influential in Australian society, but a determining factor in the national and cultural trajectory of the nation. Texts such as *The Irish in Australia* and *The Catholic Church and Community* are

⁵ Douglas Booth and Colin Tatz, *One-eyed: a view of Australian sport* (Sydney, 2009).

⁶ Lincoln Allison, *The Changing Politics of Sport* (Manchester, 1993), 5.

⁷ T. R. Young, 'The Sociology of Sport: Structural Marxist and Cultural Marxist Approaches', *Sociological Perspectives* 29, (1986): 3-28, 11.

⁸ A. Lunn, *A history of Skiing* (London, 1927).

comprehensive volumes which remain authoritative in the field. O'Farrell asserted the place of the rebellious Irish Catholic at the centre of Australian history, the participants in a class conflict which 'deflated and confused the English majority', defining Australia's national development.⁹ Indeed O'Farrell asserted that 'until recent, the Irish have been ... the galvanising force at the centre of the evolution of our national character'.¹⁰ In this sense, O'Farrell established twin histories- the British governing narrative, and the Irish rejection of that narrative. It was 'the resistance of the Irish minority to the institutional attitudes and conservatism of the English that gave Australia its distinct national identity', O'Farrell argued.¹¹ The particularity of the cultural input of the Irish, coming as it did at the critical time in the emergence of Australia, contributed to the nation's distinctiveness.¹² Accordingly, a distinct Australian identity was not born in the bush or at Anzac Cove, but was the consequence of Irishness protesting against the extremes of Englishness.

O'Farrell's foundational work, critical and analytic like none other in Irish-Australian historiography, established the field as a serious and scholarly endeavour. He asserted the humanity of Irish-Australians, imbuing a sense of heritage without romanticism; a service to the Irish Catholic past without reverencing its clericalism or parochialism. His criticality and deployment of primary material, such as the use of personal letters, was monumental. As was David Fitzpatrick's significant effort, O'Farrell used personal accounts and correspondence by the ordinary Irish, which revealed intensely psychological insights into cultural, communal and familial fragmentation.¹³ It was through this medium that O'Farrell believed 'the Irish...brought their kinship mentality to Australia, where it gradually crumbled and fell apart, declining into a residual social atomism marked by separation,

⁹ Patrick O'Farrell, *The Irish in Australia: 1788 to the Present* (Sydney, 2000).

¹⁰ Ibid, 10.

¹¹ Ibid, 8-13.

¹² Ibid, 12.

¹³ David Fitzpatrick, *Oceans of Consolation: Personal Accounts of Irish Migration to Australia* (Melbourne, 1995), 24.

isolation, loneliness and eventual alienation of society's individual parts'.¹⁴ In a very real sense, O'Farrell forms the foundation of the Irish-Australian historical edifice.

However, buoyed by the work of MacDonagh and others, the O'Farrell narrative also omitted large swaths of Irish migrant experience, and has truncated the horizons of Irish-Australian historiography. As a history of migration, the central question in this narrative is that of the interaction and integration of migrants into their new colonial environment. As O'Farrell asked: why did the Irish seek an Australian identity, rather than retain their native one? In the early twentieth century, amidst sectarian violence and prejudice, the tension between assimilation and maintaining an outward sense of Irishness reveals an experience of complex identification. 'Although Australians of Irish birth or descent regarded Australia as their homeland, they strongly identified with Ireland' and the 'identification of the Australian Irish was with Ireland as a concept or a symbol' rather than a geographic reality, as one historian wrote.¹⁵ Only a minority of Irish-Australian acted out explicit Irish culture; therefore, the historian's chief concern is the intimate experiential interaction of Irish in Australian society.¹⁶ What did it mean to be Irish in Australia, at the dawn of the twentieth century and towards the mid-century? In what ways did Irish-Australians identify with Irishness, and in what ways did they reject it? How did the 'Irish exile' become the 'Australian pagan', as the Monsignor fulminated? A definitive answer is perhaps, as O'Farrell admitted, impossible. To add further complexity, as demonstrated by Oliver MacDonagh in his work *The Sharing of the Green: a Modern Irish History for Australians*, the very concept of 'Diaspora' allows for more than one homeland.¹⁷ Yet

¹⁴ Patrick O'Farrell, *Letters from Irish Australia, 1825-1925* (Sydney; Belfast, 1984). This is a view also put forth by Kerby A. Miller, *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish exodus to North America* (New York, 1985). Oscar Handlin's *The Uprooted* (Boston, 1973) and *Boston's Immigrants, 1790-1865: a study in acculturation* (Cambridge; London, 1941), and John Bodnar's *The Transplanted: a history of immigrants in urban America*, (Bloomington, 1985), provide important juxtaposition on the views of historians towards attitudes of migrants in the American context.

¹⁵ Jeff Kildea, *Tearing the Fabric: Sectarianism in Australia 1910 to 1925* (Sydney, 2002), 9; O'Farrell, *Irish in Australia*, 5, 197.

¹⁶ L. A. Mazzaroli, 'The Irish in New South Wales, 1884-1914: some aspects of Irish subculture' (PhD dissertation, University of New South Wales, 1980), viii.

¹⁷ Oliver MacDonagh, *The Sharing of the Green: a Modern Irish History for Australians* (Sydney, 1996).

in sport we can attempt to access the personal and navigate the complex and often contradictory attitudes of ethnic identity.

Irish-Australian historians such as Donald Arkenson have argued that ‘the triumph of those good ordinary Irish migrants was that they became good ordinary Australians’.¹⁸ O’Farrell famously put the social, economic, and cultural imperative of integration as a principle of ‘Australianise or perish’.¹⁹ To answer these perennial questions and to validate their own historical interpretations, O’Farrell and Irish-Australian historians typically, have looked at various combinations of political, ecclesiastical and nationalist-cultural movements and public figures to understand Irish-Australian integration and migrant transition. Too often O’Farrell and subsequent historians appeared to fixate on the politics of Irish-Australians at the expense of more intimate personal and cultural realities. St Patrick’s Day, the most important feast in the Irish-Australian calendar in the early twentieth century, with its political symbolism and overt Gaelic cultural religiosity, has been a favoured discourse of Irish-Australian historiography. Changing attitudes of the Catholic hierarchy and prominent Irish-Australian lay leaders towards the annual festival, and the shifting emphasises on symbolic Irish political nationalism, has been the subject of copious scholarship.²⁰ Narratives of Irish-Australia invariably discuss Irish political allegiances: Fenian sympathies; Labor militancy; the Catholic Federation; debates around conscription; the subsequent discourse on the Irish Easter Rising, War of Independence and consequent civil strife. Cultural treatments are limited to the explicitly nationalist and Gaelic revivalist: the Hibernian Society and Gaelic Associations of NSW and Victoria.²¹ O’Farrell grappled with asking ‘why should the Irish push for an Australian identity’, and sought its answer in the policies of the Catholic hierarchy; figures such as Vaughan, Moran and

¹⁸ Donald Harman Arkenson, *The Irish Diaspora: A primer* (Belfast, 1996), 108.

¹⁹ O’Farrell, *Irish in Australia*, 188.

²⁰ For example, Caroline Williams, ‘Moran, Mannix and St Patrick’s Day’, in *Ireland and Australia, 1798-1998: Studies in Culture, Identity and Migration*, ed. Philip Bull, Frances Devlin-Glass and Helen Doyle (Sydney, 2000), 143-151.

²¹ Patrick H. O’Connor, *The Hibernian Society of New South Wales, 1880-1980: A Centenary History* (Sydney, 1980); P. S. Cleary, *Australia’s Debt to Irish Nation-Builders* (Sydney, 1933).

Mannix whose towering presence in Australian public life made for an accessible, simple and linear narrative of changing Irish-Australian attitudes.²²

Other historians have continued this failure to escape a meta-political framework of Irish-Australian experience. Chris McConville's *Croppies, Celts and Catholics* represents a substantial contribution to this narrative which quite clearly utilised the rise and decline of Irish-centred political discourse to describe the integration of Irish-Australia.²³ Although it is clear that the Irish were 'a founding people', the Irish of McConville are prominent in republican causes, trade unionism, and political battles over conscription, but little elsewhere.²⁴ Despite attempts to 'see how the Irish responded to life in the colonies, how they changed' and therefore 'get closer to the ordinary Irish emigrants and their Australian-born children', McConville could not quite escape the overarching elitist and political-urban narrative- a criticism he himself laid against O'Farrell's defence of a hierarchical reading of Irish Catholic history in Australia.²⁵ O'Farrell, McConville, and others engaged with the difficulty of accessing the complex interaction of identities and simplified the narrative by looking at the way Irish Catholic political movements had engaged with the wider social discourse. In this sense, political-nationalist movements have articulated the transition of migrant to native. In the case of the changing dynamics of the Australian church, O'Farrell used the changing ecclesial policies of the bishops, which in the 1910s moved towards an explicitly nativist tone, to indicate integration and argue its case. This has led to the conclusion that there was a large-scale rejection of Irishness and assimilation into Australian society in the twentieth century.

This narrative and its conclusions have been largely unchallenged. Malcolm Campbell has argued that historians need to address national and local contexts of Irish migration in order to

²² O'Farrell, *Irish in Australia*, vi.

²³ Chris McConville, *Croppies, Celts and Catholics: The Irish in Australia* (Caulfield, 1987).

²⁴ E. Richards, 'Irish in Australia', in *The Oxford Companion in Australian History*, ed. G. Daviston, J. Hirst and S. Macintyre (Melbourne; Oxford, 2001), 350.

²⁵ McConville, 138.

‘understand the totality of the Irish migrant experience’.²⁶ Darby and Hassan concluded that some elements of the Irish émigré clung closely to the traditions of the Old Country, based on work in regards to Irish-Australian figures such as H.B. Higgins and Bishop Daniel Mannix of Melbourne, the latter being a man who ‘strove to transplant the tradition of Catholic values of his homeland to his own Australian diocese and pursued that course throughout his long life, despite the opposition of his more liberal co-religionists’.²⁷ In this sense, they were Irish emigrants ‘who lived in Australia but never really became part of it’.²⁸ Indicating the fluidity of identity for Irish-Australians and the impact their Irish origins had on the likes of O’Higgins and Mannix, these historians nonetheless cling to the political and hierarchical figures of Irish-Australia.²⁹ We see some indication that Irish-Australian integration was complex, and a questioning of the contribution of ethnicity to the migrant experience. However, in the end it is focused on the political and hierarchical classes, at the expense of the ordinary Irishman.

The political and hierarchical bias in the historiographical narrative, as established by O’Farrell, has impaired an effective analysis of sport in the life of Irish-Australians. O’Farrell’s own treatment of sport was at best dismissive. In *the Irish in Australia*, he asserted that the Irish Catholic communities in Australia largely rejected Irish sporting forms in favour of local games in order to allow greater assimilation. Colonial games were ‘the avenue through which Catholic schools related to the rest of the Australian sporting community’.³⁰ Critically, attempts by a few energetic advocates for Gaelic games in Australia, O’Farrell argued, failed to secure the complicity of the emerging

²⁶ Malcolm Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922* (Madison, 2008). For a critique and summation of Campbell, see: Jeanne D. Petit, ‘Analysis: Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922’, *The Journal of American History* 95, (2008): 837-838.

²⁷ McConville, 5. John O’Brien and Pauric Travers, *The Irish Emigrant Experience in Australia* (Dublin, 1991), 4. Dermot Keogh, ‘Mannix, de Valera and Irish nationalism’, in *The Irish Emigrant Experience in Australia*, ed. John O’Brien and Pauric Travers (Dublin, 1991), 196-225.

²⁸ John Rickard, ‘H. B. Higgins: “One of those Wild Irreconcilable Irishmen”’, in *The Irish Emigrant Experience in Australia*, ed. John O’Brien and Pauric Travers (Dublin, 1991), 182.

²⁹ O’Brien and Travers, 5.

³⁰ O’Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, 187.

Catholic schools, noting that ‘Irish campaigners for hurling and Gaelic football made virtually no headway in Catholic schools at least in NSW, against those English games, cricket and rugby football’.³¹ With an additional passing reference to the prominence of handball in NSW, this was the extent of O’Farrell’s treatment of the role of Gaelic games in the Catholic education system. His conclusions have been received and reiterated largely unaltered by subsequent scholars of Irish-Australian history. McCarthy’s recent work on modern Gaelic sport in Western Australia exemplifies the dominance of O’Farrell’s position, as he succinctly echoes that ‘The Catholic School system did not take up the cause of Gaelic sport. Rather, it opted to embrace the sports of the Australian working man, in part to ensure the integration of the Irish population into broader Australian society.’³² Peter A. Horton, having written the most significant contribution to the history of the Irish and Australian sport, wrote that ‘the rise of organised sport in Australia coincided with nascent movements of nationhood and political activism’.³³ In this historiography, between O’Farrell, McCarthy, and Horton, we see sport incorporated into a wider narrative of integration: official, political, and forceful. This unwillingness to challenge O’Farrell’s myriad assertions reflects the entrenchment of the traditional narrative, with an added emphasis on the forced nature of integration.

O’Farrell’s neglect of sport is indicative of his academic context. As Daryl Adair states, sport was simply not on the ‘radar’ of social historians until the 1980s, despite Mandle’s first salvo in the 1960s.³⁴ In popular histories of Australia, sport features sporadically, as in Manning Clark’s *History of Australia*, and *The Story of the Australian People* by Donald Horne.³⁵ Geoffrey Blainey, while

³¹ O’Farrell, *The Irish in Australia*, 187.

³² Nick McCarthy, ‘Enacting Irish Identity in Western Australia: Performances from the Dressing Room’, *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 10, (2007): 368-384, 371.

³³ Peter A. Horton, ‘The “Green” and the “Gold”’: the Irish-Australians and their role in the emergence of the Australian sports culture’, *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 17, (2000): 65-92, 67.

³⁴ Daryl Adair, ‘Australian Sport History: From the Founding Years to Today’, *Sport in History* 29, (2009): 405-436.

³⁵ Manning Clark, *A History of Australia* (Melbourne, 1999), 19, 63, 87; Donald Horne, *The Story of the Australian People* (Sydney, 1972), 79, 214.

neglecting sporting references in his general histories, eventually published *The Origins of Australian Football* in 1990.³⁶ It is important in itself that these popular narrators of Australian history considered sport, although explained by the fact that both Clark and Blainey were personally very committed to Australian sports.³⁷ Nonetheless, serious history of the day was political. In Irish sports, we shall see a solution by engaging with more intimate connections.

The historiographical context raises various problems and places the Irish-Australian narrative in a precarious position. Elizabeth Malcolm asks where are 'the others' in this narrative, ordinary and non-political Irish, especially women and children?³⁸ Ann McGrath's critique of O'Farrell's statements about the Irish and Aborigines represents a dissection of his wider narrative and the reinserting of more nuanced realities in Irish-Australian experience. By revising O'Farrell's conclusions that the Irish were more willing to marry and respect Aboriginal women as equals (reinforcing the assimilative and anti-English narrative in his wider thesis), McGrath found that reality was far more complex, noting that 'The intimate ties that bind Ireland, Irish Australia, Aboriginal Australia and Indigeneity include paternity, maternity, family and kinship. Australians of Indigenous and Irish ancestry not only literally change the complexion of these ancestral adventures; they also complicate their chronologies and re-imagine canonical narratives of power'.³⁹ O'Farrell's treatment of Irish-Aboriginals was reflective of a wider pattern in his histories which tend to omit difficult, anomalous forms of Irishness which do not fit into his wider formula of Irish-Australian integration. As McGrath has begun to indicate, there is much more nuance and complexity to Irish-Australian experience than O'Farrell and many of his contemporaries allow. Indeed, Irish-Australian experience was never straightforward and frequently contradictory.

³⁶ Geoffrey Blainey, *A Game of Own: The Origins of Australian Football* (Melbourne, 1990).

³⁷ Adair, 422.

³⁸ Elizabeth Malcolm, '10,000 miles away: Irish Studies Down Under', in *Ireland beyond Boundaries: Mapping Irish Studies in the Twenty-First Century*, eds. Liam Harte and Yvonne Whelan (London, 2007), 39. Donald Arkenson referred to Irish-Australian women as 'the great unknown', highlighting how they constituted half of Irish migration: Arkenson, 157.

³⁹ Ann McGrath, 'Shamrock Aborigines: the Irish, the Aboriginal Australians and their children', *Aboriginal History* 34, (2010): 58-59.

Peter A. Horton, Alan Bairner, and others have shown sport to have been an essential part of the Irish experience, which fashioned narratives of identity and community, plurality and assimilation, as well as providing a platform for the complexities of sectarian, cultural and class conflict. MacDonagh stated that the Irish-Australian narrative intersected with religion, class, and education.⁴⁰ Sport is similarly inextricable from the experience of these dynamics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In broad histories of colonial societies and migrant communities, sport played a vital role 'in the mediation between social reality and consciousness', as Alan Bairner notes.⁴¹ Brian Stoddart states that in British colonial societies, it was sport that 'transferred dominant British beliefs as to social behaviour, standards, relations, and conformity, all of which persisted beyond the end of the formal empire, and with considerable consequences for the postcolonial order'.⁴² In Ireland, as well as 'new world' societies such as Australia, colonial sporting forms became established as 'a colonial reflection of the structure and social context of the game in England'.⁴³ This view is endorsed by Harold Perkins who writes that 'in the case of Britain and its Empire in the last one hundred years or so, sport played a part both in holding the empire together, and, paradoxically, in emancipating the subject nations from tutelage'.⁴⁴ Such an understanding of the role of sport in society has important consequences, not only in regards to social structure, but also ideas of national, ethnic, and community identities. Indeed, when we consider sport as dynamic of colonial society, Stoddart reckoned it 'a most pervasive and enduring

⁴⁰ Oliver MacDonagh, 'The Irish in Australia: A General overview', in *Ireland and the Irish-Australia*, ed. Oliver MacDonagh and W. F. Mandle (Canberra, 1986), 155.

⁴¹ Alan Bairner, 'Ireland, Sport and Empire', in *'An Irish Empire'? Aspects of Ireland and the British Empire*, ed. Keith Jeffery (Manchester; New York, 1996), 58. This was also a conclusion made by John Hargreaves: John Hargreaves, *Sport and Popular Culture* (Cambridge, 1986).

⁴² Brian Stoddart, 'Sport, Cultural Imperialism, and Colonial Response in the British Empire', *Comparative Studies in Sport and History* 30, (1988): 649-673, 650. Further demonstrated in Frost: Frost W. 'Heritage, Nationalism, Identity: The 1861-62 England Cricket Tour of Australia', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 19, (2002): 55-69.

⁴³ Tony Mason, *Sport in Britain: A Social History* (Cambridge; New York, 1989), 321.

⁴⁴ Harold Perkins, 'Sport and Society: Empire into the Commonwealth', in *Sport, Culture, Society: International historical and sociological perspectives*, ed. J. A. Mangan and R. B. Small (London, 1986), 3.

theme in the history of British imperialism'.⁴⁵ Therefore, a consideration of colonial and migrant histories is incomplete, in the context of the British 'White dominions', without reference to sporting culture.

This criticism extends to other historical areas of Irish-Australian community and cultural experience. The development of Irish ethnic art forms, be it iconographic or literary, has been neglected, as is the case in other diasporan communities such as Irish-Argentina.⁴⁶ This thesis in part considers the nature of school communities. Education is a central plank in the Irish story in Australia and deserves in itself a far greater consideration by historians. Without an understanding of educational culture across the country, we cannot understand the formative, fundamental developments that gave Irish-Australia cohesion of identity. Presently that aspect of the historiography has been dominated by centenary publications, frequently tributes by nostalgic old boys rather than critical analyses. At the level of day-to-day community engagement, the centrality of parish life, a corner stone in Irish-Australian life, has too been neglected. Historians, not least O'Farrell, harked often about the policies of the bishops and clerical politics, while neglecting the simple realities of the layman and parish priest. This would indicate a dramatic failure to engage with Irish-Australia has a cultural, human, and lived reality.

⁴⁵ Brian Stoddart, 'Sport, Cultural Imperialism, and Colonial Response in the British Empire', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30, (1988): 649-673. Maria José Roger wrote how in Argentina, 'the Irish were able to form their own community institutions and preserve their traditions. Local literature, music, sports, Argentine culture as a whole was enriched by the contributions of the Irish-Argentines'. 'The Children of the Diaspora: Irish Schools and Educators in Argentina, 1850-1950', accessed August 13, 2012, <http://www.irlandeses.org/education.htm>.

⁴⁶ Reilly, Eileen. 'Beyond gilt shamrock: symbolism and realism in the cover art of Irish historical and political fiction, 1880-1814', in *Images, Icons and the Irish Nationalist Imagination*, ed. Lawrence W. McBride (Dublin, 1999), 98. Clem McCartney and Lucy Bryson have given examples in Northern Ireland, *Clashing symbols? A report on the use of flags, anthems, and national symbols in Northern Ireland* (Belfast, 1994), and Belinda Loftus, *Mirrors: orange and green* (Dublin, 1994).

The historiography of Gaelic games and Irish identity.

Sport is embedded in the common themes of Irish-Australian historiography: the development of Australian identity, the tensions of religion and class; the transition of migrant to native. As one historian put it, sport symbolised 'the transition of native culture to sites of immigration and the adoption of a new nation's culture'.⁴⁷ Given the interconnection of sport and Australian national identity, and the way in which sport provides an important colonial discourse, O'Farrell's negligence is even more acute. The relationship between Irish migrant experience and sport seems to have been particularly important – more so than other ethnic groups. As a general rule, the Irish Diaspora brought their enthusiasm for various codes to virtually all of those parts of the world that have had sizable Irish communities. Sport, both those that the Irish encountered in their new host societies and those they brought with them, performed a number of crucial functions.⁴⁸ 'Sport', Darby and Hassan argue, 'eased [Irish] assimilation and facilitated a degree of acceptance in what could be hostile and unwelcoming environments'.⁴⁹ For other Irish migrants, 'proficiency and success in sports allowed for the promotion and preservation of a strong sense of ethnic pride identity'.⁵⁰ In this Darby and Hassan determined that the Irish, generally speaking, survived as pragmatists, absorbing those cultural forms that would allow them to progress, socially and economically, in their new 'homes'.⁵¹

The limited attempts by O'Farrell and others to understand Irish integration in respect to sport is an extension of a failure to consider Gaelic sport in its own right. The glaring lack of a

⁴⁷ Larry McCarthy, 'Irish-Americans and Sport in the Twentieth century', in *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, ed. J.J. Lee and Marion R. Casey (New York, 2006), 457.

⁴⁸ Paul Darby & David Hassan, 'Introduction: Locating Sport in the Study of the Irish Diaspora', *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 10, (2007): 333-346.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 336.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ McCarthy noted that sport provided a means of expanding social networks and thus the likelihood of finding employment for new arrivals to Australia: Nick McCarthy, 'Irish Rules: Gaelic Football, Family, Work and Culture in Western Australia', *The Australian Journal of Irish Studies* 3, (2003): 33–48, 40.

sustained organisational structure to Gaelic sporting identity among the Irish in Australia has led to the narrative of Irish pragmatism as posited by Darby and Hassan in respect to adopting local Australian and colonial sporting forms, reflecting the inescapability of O'Farrell. The extent to which this was indeed an attitude of assimilation, and the significance of this in understanding the role of sport in the construction of Irish identity, is a question of the nature and cultural identification of Gaelic sports and the way in which the major sporting body of Gaelic sports, the Gaelic Athletics Association, was seemingly inextricably intertwined with Irish nationalism. Mandle's arguable statement that 'that no organisation had done more for Irish nationalism than the GAA', is indicative of the weight historians have given to the links between the evolution of this sporting body and the force of political nationalism'.⁵² Cronin's work on the naming of GAA stadia and clubs highlights this potent relationship between political mythology of militant republicanism and Gaelic sports, noting the way in which 'the majority of GAA grounds...drenched in history, emotion and sometimes blood' has allowed the GAA to conduct itself 'in a way which places history at the forefront of its operations'.⁵³ Marcus de Búrca even went as far as to assert that Michael Cusack in founding the GAA in 1884, sought to initiate a programme whereby sport could revive, cultivate and preserve a separate Irish cultural identity from the impinging English-colonial one, 'so as to provide a kind of moral bedrock for the political freedom which Home Rule would provide'.⁵⁴ Consequently, 'the GAA emerged [after the establishment of the Free State in 1922] as the strongest sporting and cultural organisation in the country'.⁵⁵ The trajectory of this narrative is important because it has informed how historians interpret the choice of Irish-Australians to play (or not play) Gaelic sports. If these games, inseparable from the structure of the GAA, are statements of radical political and

⁵² W. F. Mandle, *The GAA and Irish Nationalist Politics, 1884-1924* (Dublin, 1987).

⁵³ Cronin referred to this special function of the GAA as being heightened by 'a martyr's crown': Mike Cronin, 'Enshrined in Blood: the naming of Gaelic Athletics Association grounds and clubs', *The Sports Historian* 18, (1998), 90-104, 97.

⁵⁴ Marcus de Búrca, *The Gaelic Athletics Association and organised Sport in Ireland* in *Sport in the making of Celtic Cultures* (London, 1999), 107.

⁵⁵ Dermot Keogh, *Twentieth-century Ireland: Nation and State* (Dublin, 1994), 33.

nationalistic allegiance, then their apparent rejection by Irish-Australians would indicate an equally forceful rejection of Irish identity, if Irish identity in Australia is to be understood in political terms.

Historians such as Mandle and de Búrca have made foundational contributions to the history of Gaelic sports and the GAA. Nonetheless, new scholarship from Mike Cronin and others has begun to heavily challenge certain aspects of this established narrative. Cronin and historians such as Paul Rouse argue strongly that the historical focus on the GAA has been wrongly dominated by political meta-narrative, stating the need for a broader understanding of the GAA as a popular cultural movement, in addition to its political component.⁵⁶ This is a historiographical parallel to criticisms that Irish-Australian ethnic identity and integration has been solely interpreted through political or hierarchical standards, Cronin writing that previous historians have generally treated Gaelic sport through 'the medium of political upheaval, emergent nationalism, and state-building'.⁵⁷ Stoddart has outlined this recurrent danger in studies of sport and society which seize upon sport as 'an interesting political sidelight or political issue'.⁵⁸ Cronin argues Gaelic games and its associated codification need to be explored in a wider cultural context, as 'a product of both popular nationalist sentiment and of the English sporting principles adopted by the GAA'.⁵⁹ Richard Doak expressed this basic idea of the GAA as 'the most enduring link to the Irish cultural revival of the nineteenth-century'.⁶⁰ A political history is frequently one limited to 'the official', and this has further prevented a critical and socio-cultural view of the role of Gaelic sports in lives of the Irish, mainly through the use of official GAA records and public correspondence. This understanding of Gaelic games indicates

⁵⁶ Mike Cronin, 'Fighting for Ireland, playing for England? The nationalist history of the Gaelic Athletic Association and the English influence on Irish sport', *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 15, (1998): 36-56; Paul Rouse, 'Why was the GAA founded?', in *The Evolution of the GAA*, ed. Dónal Mac an Ailín, David Hassan, and Roddy Hegarty (Belfast, 2009).

⁵⁷ Mike Cronin, *Sport and nationalism in Ireland: Gaelic games, soccer and Irish identity since 1884* (Dublin, 1999), 37.

⁵⁸ This is perhaps epitomised in the foundational but nonetheless flawed work of Mandle's *The GAA and Irish Nationalist Politics*. Brian Stoddart, 'Caribbean Cricket: The Role of Sport in Emerging Small Nations Politics', in *Liberation Cricket: West Indies Cricket Culture*, ed. H. McD. Beckles and B. Stoddart (Manchester, 1996), 236.

⁵⁹ Cronin, *Sport and nationalism in Ireland*, 37.

⁶⁰ Richard Doak, '(De)constructing Irishness in the 1990s- the Gaelic Athletics Association and Cultural Nationalist Discourse reconsidered', *Irish Journal of Sociology* 8, (1998): 25-48.

that sporting culture was more than an extension of nationalist politics, but served an important communal, emotional, and cultural function for ordinary Irish men and women in the 1890s and onwards. *The GAA: A People's History* by Mike Cronin, Mark Duncan, and Paul Rouse, as its evocative title alludes, attempts to reinsert the personal and popular back into Gaelic sports historiography. A thematic treatment which considers community, media, and places, as well as politics and religion, *A People's History* states that 'too much of what has been written about the GAA focuses on its politics, not least on its apparent contribution to the revolution which brought about the creation of the Irish Free State'.⁶¹ The authors continue; 'The story of the GAA... lies at the very heart of the Irish experience' and its development 'rooted in wider social and economic forces: the spread of the railways, the cultural revival, the drift from the land, emigration and much else'.⁶² This demonstrates the important nuance of Irish historiography and therefore its monochromatic restrictions in its current state. It is highly pertinent that acute cultural expressions such as Gaelic sports be considered – as in the case of this thesis - in the migrants' experience of transition and dislocation, including the GAA but also beyond traditional organisational structures. Migrant experience should not be consigned to a political narrative which would otherwise treat these games as quirky ethnic pastimes, rather than a substantial way of measuring Irish identity.

It is clear that there is pressing need to re-evaluate Irish-Australian historiography in so far as it addresses the fundamental question of Irish integration into Australian society. The narrative, mired in the politicisation and officiality of O'Farrell and others, has reduced Irish-Australian experience and identity to the limited forms of explicit nationalism and politics. Similarly, Gaelic games have historically been narrowly treated as nationalistic; as part of a wider tendency among historians to consider sport as trivial and irrelevant. Irish-Australian history has stagnated because of this; the nature of integration and of Irish identity, relational and experiential, submerged by O'Farrell's imperative of 'Australianise or perish'. Yet a new understanding of sport in the life of Irish

⁶¹ Mike Cronin, Mark Duncan and Paul Rouse, *The GAA: A People's History* (Dublin, 2009), XV.

⁶² *Ibid*, XV.

migrants at the turn of the twentieth century would intertwine the central themes of Irish-Australian history - its sectarianism, class, education - and gives life to ordinary Irish people. In the context of Gaelic games and Irish identity, handball will be the platform of this discussion. Gaelic sport acts as an intimate social and cultural link to Irishness; a symbol of former identity, and of dislocation and transference to a new one, without a strictly political or nationalistic understanding but more immediate and personal. In this way, we will look towards sports such as handball as sites of transition and avenues of communal and familial relationships, which contributed to integration and articulated Irish-Australian identity.

Chapter Two: the Christian Brothers and Irish handball in Australia

A scene in the 1981 film *Gallipoli* depicts ANZAC troops playing Australian Football in light-hearted egalitarian abandon, to a backdrop of the Sphinx and Egyptian desert.⁶³ A film dripping in nationalistic construction and sentimentality, the scene is historically unlikely but ‘descriptive of the desire to link nation and sport’.⁶⁴ The connection between sport and national identity is as potent in Australian history as it is in accounts of the GAA; as Horton notes, ‘Australian sport was, and is, a wonderfully potent expression of the nation’s soul’.⁶⁵ Nonetheless, sport must be understood as relating to its participants more fundamentally than simply through an abstracted ideal such as nationalism. Sport functions in a community in a way other forms of culture, such as literature and elitist politics, cannot: by nature, sport is a communal experience. Sporting forms are intrinsically relational, defined by the interaction and experience between individual players, spectators, teams, and opposition, as well as the accompanying, long-distance audience through newspapers, radio, and now television and online mediums.⁶⁶ In sport, ‘an identity and commonality of experience emerge’.⁶⁷ In respect to Irish identity and sport, ‘if communities, whether a nation or a fraternity of sportsmen, are symbolic constructs created via cultural imaginings, then the example of... [Gaelic games]... allows us to see this cultural imagining in its making and in its most naked and powerful form’.⁶⁸ Ideas of national identity are never homogenous or singular, and institutions like the GAA at

⁶³ *Gallipoli*, directed by Peter Weir (1981, Australian Film Commission).

⁶⁴ Mike Cronin, *Sport and Nationalism in Ireland: Gaelic games, soccer and Irish Identity since 1884* (Dublin, 1999), 18.

⁶⁵ Horton, 66.

⁶⁶ Cronin, *Sport and Nationalism in Ireland*, 19.

⁶⁷ Mike Cronin, David Doyle and Liam O’Callaghan, ‘Foreign Fields and Foreigners on the Field: Irish Sport, Inclusion and Assimilation’, *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 25, (2008): 1010-1030, 1011.

⁶⁸ Patrick F. McDevitt, *May the Best Man Win: Sport, Masculinity, and Nationalism in Great Britain and the empire, 1880-1935* (New York, 2004), 18.

the turn of the twentieth century championed a highly traditional ideal of Irish nationalism.⁶⁹ In the case of the Irish in Australia, we must go beyond public authorities, organisations, or movements in these migrant communities to understand more deeply their experiential and relational identity with Irishness.

Irish handball, described by McElligott as ‘an old game of uncertain age’, resembles squash played with the hand rather than racket, in a similar three-wall or four-wall ‘alley’.⁷⁰ By far the most niche of the Gaelic games, handball ‘nevertheless continues to be honoured as an element in the nation’s distinctive sporting culture’.⁷¹ Healey states how ‘uniquely among Gaelic games, it has a thriving international dimension, being played in the United States, Canada, Australia, Mexico, Spain and other parts of Europe’.⁷² Accordingly, having established the state of Irish-Australian historiography in respect to sport, we can refer to O’Farrell for more precise analysis and critique. Reiterating his major comment on Irish sports and migrant identity, O’Farrell wrote of handball:

‘Enthusiasts for specifically Irish games were not numerous in Australia, but they were energetic and saw that the only way to ensure a future for such sports was to gain their acceptance by Catholic schools. Their efforts to achieve this failed, save for the introduction of handball, an area where they did succeed some success: it became, perhaps, the main informal, playground sport of Catholic private schools, at least in New South Wales, from the late nineteenth century to the 1940s’¹

O’Farrell’s main contribution in this short paragraph is to reduce the role and nature of Irish handball in the Catholic schools to mere triviality. As discussed in the previous chapter, this dismissive attitude situates O’Farrell against the beginning of sports historiography in Australian

⁶⁹ Cronin, *Sport and Nationalism in Ireland*, 19.

⁷⁰ Tom McElligott, *The Story of Handball: The Game, the Players the History* (Dublin, 1997), 9.

⁷¹ Alan Bairner, *Sport, nationalism, and globalization: European and North American perspectives* (Albany, 2001), 77.

⁷² Paul Healey, *Gaelic Games and the Gaelic Athletic Association* (Cork, 1998), 56.

⁷³ O’Farrell, 187.

academic life, amidst the early popular efforts of Clark, Horne, and Blainey, and Mandle's scholarly response. Perhaps because of its lack of political subtext, O'Farrell looks for an organisational structure, or institutional nationalism, and the traditional identifications with a symbolic Ireland which he himself in his histories called into question and challenged. Consequently, his cursory treatment renders handball's cultural and experiential importance to early twentieth-century Irish-Australians impotent, losing its communal and relational qualities.

The period outlined by O'Farrell - from the turn of the century to the Second World War - was a highpoint in Irish migration to Australia, in both demographic and cultural influence. The nature of the Church in Australia was Irish-dominated, with Irish and Catholic becoming virtually synonymous.⁷⁴ Catholicism, Irishness, education, and sport, thus intersected in the wider question of identity. O'Farrell argued that the decision to construct a separate school system at the turn of the twentieth century committed the Church 'to an attitude of estrangement from Australian society, or at least from important aspects of it' and that a 'vital side effect of the education crusade was to strengthen greatly the authority structures of the church, and indeed to petrify the church internally, as clergy and laity, united in a common enterprise, settled down to build their own educational edifice'.⁷⁵ While not delving into the well-worn political and official-hierarchical narrative on which O'Farrell leans so heavily, it is nonetheless important to understand the emergence in the early twentieth century of a Catholic community deeply intertwined with the Catholic education system and Irish religious teaching orders – most prominently, the Marist, Passionist, De La Salle, and Christian Brothers.⁷⁶ The Christian Brothers, like many teaching orders, filled the vacuum of education left by the Catholic Bishops' rejection of the public national curriculum, establishing between 1843 and 1995 nearly one hundred educational institutions across every Australian state

⁷⁴ O'Farrell, *Catholic Church and Community*, 3.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Alaban Doyle, *The Story of the Marist Brothers in Australia, 1872-1972* (Sydney, 1972); S. J. Boland, *Faith of our Fathers: The Redemptorists in Australia, 1882-1982* (Armadale, 1982).

and New Zealand.⁷⁷ Indeed, in the light of the integration and assimilation of the Irish into Australian society at this time, it was the school student experience and dynamic amidst Catholic education and pedagogy that formed an exceptional aspect of Irish-Australian Catholic identity, otherwise homogenise with wider Australian society. As was the case in Irish communities across the globe, sport was key to this exclusive culture.

Was Irish handball in the early twentieth century an ‘informal, playground sport’ of Catholic school boys, devoid of any further cultural significance or identification, as O’Farrell asserted? Handball in NSW and other Australian states, such as Victoria and South Australia, was in fact enormously popular and established sport, regarded as quintessential to the school life of Catholic private school students. More specifically, the Christian Brothers, as an order established in Ireland around 1848 by Edmund Rice for the purpose of educating the island’s poor and neglected, made it an essential platform in their pedagogical ethos. This attitude of the Christian Brothers towards Irish sports clearly flies in the face of O’Farrell’s central assertions. It is also as significant when contrasted with other religious teaching orders. The composition of the Brothers was overwhelmingly Irish, while orders such as the Marist, Passionists, and even the heavily Irish-influenced Jesuit mission in Australia, had mixed European memberships.⁷⁸ Though for many years religious orders had successfully recruited Australian-born members - for example, the Marist Brothers who as early as 1876 (opening their first school in 1872) had only 25% of their community from Europe – the Christian Brothers, with their strong Irish heritage and tradition, did not.⁷⁹ Between 1868 and 1920, 162 Christian Brothers came to Australia from Ireland, and the schools they established across the commonwealth were marked by a strong Irish influence in the training of new native-born members

⁷⁷ For the latest scholarship on the early years of the Christian Brothers in Australia, see Regis Hickey, *Patrick Ambrose Treacy: Christian Brother, Enterprising Immigrant* (Brisbane, 2012).

⁷⁸ David H. Murphy, ‘Irish Jesuit Schooling in Victoria, Australia’, *The Irish Journal of Education/ Iris Eireannach an Oideachais* 25, (1991): 52-28.

⁷⁹ Barry M. Coldrey, *Faith and Fatherland: the Christian Brothers and the Development of Irish Nationalism, 1838-1921* (Dublin, 1988).

and in their approach to education.⁸⁰ This Christian Brothers' school culture was characterised by strict discipline, methodical teaching, hard work, and devotion to academic results. Also oft forgotten is the Brothers' commitment to sport as a means of developing health and character among their young students. This was not unique to Irish Catholic schools, but was part of a wider discourse around health culture and muscular Christianity in British educational reform.⁸¹ In Christian Brothers' schools, Irish attitudes towards Catholicism and religious practice were also obvious; parochial and defensive towards the outside world, with Irish-flavoured piety.⁸² All this contributed to an implicit culture of Irishness, without recourse to obvious political or nationalist forms. New understandings of Irishness need to be broadened beyond those traditional mediums to include sport and thereby understand ethnic identity differently.

The history of Irish handball in Australia shows the sport to be closely related with the institutions of community and culture, emphasising its essential relational dynamics. The earliest references to handball in Australia is legislation passed in first Victoria and then New South Wales which forbade publicans having ball courts in or about their hotels.⁸³ This is consistent with the development of Gaelic football and hurling in Australia, both of which had close associations with Irish drinking establishments, whose owners organised sporting trophies in order to raise profits.⁸⁴ In other diasporan communities, handball was similarly connected with institutions of Irish community: parishes, schools, seminaries, and pubs.⁸⁵ Some general members of the public also engaged in the construction of handball facilities, as did J. J. Leahy in 1906, a keen handball player who set up a court at his residence in North Adelaide. For his enterprise, Leahy was 'congratulated by lovers of

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ The emergence of modern sport is well recorded. See: Eric Dunning and Kenneth Sheard, *Barbarians, Gentlemen and players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football* (London, 2005); Mike Huggins, *The Victorians and Sport* (London, 2004).

⁸² Coldrey.

⁸³ 'Handball', in *The Oxford Companion to Australian Sport*, ed. Wray Vamplew et al (Melbourne, 1994), 200-201.

⁸⁴ O'Farrell, *Irish in Australia*, 186.

⁸⁵ "history of handball", accessed July 12, 2012, <http://www.mainehandball.com/history.htm>.

the grand old national game'.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the sport across Australia came to be primarily associated with the Christian Brothers and their colleges. Almost every prominent handball player in the early twentieth century was linked to the order. The son of the aforementioned J. J. Leahy, Thomas Joseph Leahy, represented South Australian in the National handball competition in Sydney in 1907. Leahy was a graduate of Christian Brothers' College, Wakefield.⁸⁷ Similarly, Neal William Macrossan, youngest child of Irish-born parents, was educated at St Joseph's College, Nudgee, a Christian Brothers' school, where he won prizes for swimming, rifle-shooting, and handball.⁸⁸ These examples demonstrate the manner in which handball was spread and facilitated; tied with Catholic schools and religious and clerical communities. It was part of the fabric of early Irish-Australian life, a feature distinctive from the Irish migrant's colonial environment.

Similarly, Irish handball in the Christian Brothers' schools was heavily contested in competitions and championships, forming an exclusive sporting culture removed from the wider Australian, Protestant-British schools system. The nature of the sport in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries thus intertwined Irish identity, Catholicism, and education. In fact, it seems that handball was the first sport played in the Metropolitan Catholic Colleges competition in NSW, long before Rugby Union and cricket became dominant.⁸⁹ At its height, the sport was played at all major Christian Brothers' schools in New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, such as Christian Brothers' College, Balmain, Wakefield, Lewisham, Goulburn, Albury, Strathfield, and Manly – schools all established between 1892 and 1929.⁹⁰ Far from being a mere 'playground pastime', handball was

⁸⁶ *The Southern Cross*, March 30, 1906.

⁸⁷ 'Thomas Joseph Leahy (1888 - 1964)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, accessed August 8, 2012, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/leahy-thomas-joseph-tom-7135>.

⁸⁸ 'Neal William Macrossan (1889 - 1955)', in *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, accessed August 8, 2012, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/macrossan-neal-william-11028>.

⁸⁹ M. J. Laverack, Christian Brothers' High School, Lewisham, *100 years of sporting achievement: a centenary publication, 1891-1991* (Christian Brothers' Lewisham, 1991). The MCC was established in 1892 as a sports competition between the leading Catholic colleges of Sydney.

⁹⁰ *St Mary's Province NSW/ACT Schools* (Sydney: Christian Brothers' Australia, 2010).

a serious business for the Brothers and their students, with the sport attracting enormous student participation and requiring extensive facilities.

Far from being trivial, handball was a sport which required significant community support and resources - a cultural landmark in Irish-Australian life. While hurling and Gaelic football alternatives required only the importation of equipment such as hurleys and *sliothars* - fields could be commandeered from Rugby or Association football rivals - handball comparatively took far more effort to establish, being played in concrete 'alleys' with rubber balls. Indeed, the balls used to play the sport were the only area of innovation over the course of the century, and such was the Christian Brothers' presence in Irish handball that sports equipment manufacturers consulted the Brothers first when it came to design, quality, and pricing.⁹¹ In 1939, Rostrevor College's student annual reported the donation of £50 by the Australian Handball Association of South Australia, towards the aim of establishing a court.⁹² This was only part of a wider fundraising campaign by a committee of Brothers, headed by Brother Hec Gurr who achieved legendary status in South Australian handball circles, to establish much needed facilities for the burgeoning sport among Rostrevor boarders.⁹³ Indicating the enormity of the challenge, the courts were not constructed till 1941.⁹⁴ After several years these courts were damaged, and so required a further £6,500 for three new courts and extensions to the tennis facilities.⁹⁵ This contradicts O'Farrell's notion that parents were not interested in Irish sports and refused financial and or even nominal support for its

⁹¹ In 1945 we have an example of this when J. G. O'Shennessy wrote to the Brothers stating that 'whatever the Brothers select we will adopt this as a standard'. 'J. G. O'Shennessy to Rev. Brother Mackie', 1945 (Christian Brothers Archive, NSW).

⁹² This is the first reference to handball in the Rostrevor journals. 'Donors to the Handball Court Appeal', *Rostrevor Annual* (1924), Rostrevor College, 49. In the same edition, there is a list of donors towards the impending courts; 112.

⁹³ Brother Hec Gurr is referred to in the South Australian Handball Association Team of the Century with 'great appreciation to all the Christian Brothers who have contributed throughout the last century to our Game'. In 1908, the *Advertiser* indicates the completion of another set of courts at CBC Wakefield, the opening of which was a huge social event, attended by the wider Irish-Australian community: 'new handball court', *The Advertiser* (August 31, 1908), 11.

⁹⁴ "History of Handball at Rostrevor College", accessed May 14, 2012, http://www.rostrevor.sa.edu.au/__files/f/1862/The%20History%20of%20Handball%20at%20Rostrevor%20College.pdf, 34.

⁹⁵ *Rostrevor Annual* (1955), Rostrevor College. Further planning of the court is evidenced in 1950 and 1952.

organisation. Such an exclusive sporting culture could hardly serve the integrationist ambitions of Irish-Australians, according to O'Farrell. Yet handball courts were expensive to establish, and so required a concerted effort by the Brothers, supported by the wider community. This highlights the colouration and complexity in the question of Irish-Australian identity in the early parts of the twentieth century. Despite these difficulties, such was the enthusiasm of the Brothers in Australia that handball courts were often one of the earliest hallmarks of a Christian Brothers institution. In the Christian Brothers' college of St Patrick's College, Goulburn, photographs of new courts accompany the arrival of Brothers in 1898 when the school was handed over by its former Diocesan facilitators. In 1915, a period of 'marked progress' at St Patrick's saw the expansion of important curricular facilities – including a science faculty, new music tutorials, and of course, extensions to the handball courts.⁹⁶ By 1933, St Mary's Cathedral School, run by the Brothers, had extensive courts built, funded by the Old Boys Union despite the property being very limited.⁹⁷ Elsewhere in Sydney, at Christian Brothers', Lewisham, the handball alleys included a pavilion, dressing room and showers.⁹⁸ This reiterates that the involvement of the Brothers required an investment of interest and resources beyond that of a mere playground activity, and that handball enabled participation in a wider communal network.

Handball formed an important aspect of daily school life for the Irish Brothers. The sport was introduced to the schools as an extension of a vibrant handball culture within the order itself: courts and competition could be found first and foremost at the Novitiates and Saint Enda's Juniorate in Mount Saint Mary's Training College, Strathfield. Indeed, such was the popularity of the sport among the Brothers, Scholasticates, Novices, and Junior students that two sets of handball courts were built on opposite ends of the Mount Saint Mary's campus.⁹⁹ The Brothers were as much interested in the

⁹⁶ Bollen, 136.

⁹⁷ 'Handball: additions to school court', *The Sydney Morning Herald* (September 18, 1933), 11.

⁹⁸ See Appendix A.5. The photo in A.6. depicts the pavilion at Strathfield.

⁹⁹ See Appendix A.13. Despite the extra courts, it was still necessary to stagger times for its use. The Juniorate at Strathfield was established in 1922 to provide regular secondary schooling for boys aspiring to be

sport themselves as their students. As one Brother highlighted, it was regarded as extremely fortunate for a newly graduated Brother to be posted to a teaching position at a school with courts.¹⁰⁰ At Rostrevor College, an annual challenge by the student handball champion against one of the Brothers was an important calendar event, with the Brothers 'always seeming to win'.¹⁰¹ In Melbourne, such were the numbers of Brothers playing handball competitively that an annual championship was established. Solely played between the Brothers, the Melbourne Handball Championship was convened in 1931 and consisted of both singles and doubles matches, and by 1933 had grown to three streams of competition, with over forty entrants each year. The finals were played on Easter Saturday at St Vincent's Orphanage Courts, first prize being five guineas donated by the Victorian handball league.¹⁰² A similar handball competition was organised in NSW, the prizes of which were a serviette ring engraved with the winning Brother's name.¹⁰³ Important insight is offered by the annual school visitations by the provincial Superiors, who aimed to ensure the rigor and cogency of the order and their teaching. These Brother Visitors complained with surprising repetition of the over-emphasis on sport in various schools, warning especially of excessive participation of Brothers in handball and other pastimes. A letter from the Provincial Superior Brother Charles Barron in 1918 warned the director of Christian Brother's Ipswich Brother Finbarr Donovan that: 'You are not to proceed with the erection of the handball court at all events for the present.... It will destroy the Brother's privacy, as the pupils and ex-pupils will come out to play on

brothers. The Novitiate is the prescribed year of probation on entering religious life. Before entering the Novitiate a candidate served a short introductory period called Postulancy. The Christian Brothers Novitiate was located in Victoria until 1896; 1897-1908 at Petersham; 1908-1939 Strathfield; 1939-1970 at Minto; 1971-77 Mulgoa. When the Australasian Province was divided into several independent Provinces, each established their own Novitiate. The Scholasticate was a year of teacher training following the Novitiate year. See: D. M. Steward, *Mount Royal to Mount Saint Mary: a history of the Christian Brothers at Mount Saint Mary, 1908-1992* (Sydney, 2004).

¹⁰⁰ *100 Year History of Handball in South Australia* (Adelaide: South Australian Handball Association, 2002), 25.

¹⁰¹ "History of Handball at Rostrevor College", accessed May 14, 2012, http://www.rostrevor.sa.edu.au/__files/f/1862/The%20History%20of%20Handball%20at%20Rostrevor%20College.pdf, 36.

¹⁰² 'Mens Sana', *Our Studies* (April, 1937), 40.

¹⁰³ Several of these rings can be found in the Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.

it'.¹⁰⁴ This was indicative of the enthusiasm for the sport among the school director and the students at the college. Handball is as a specific link to the broader importance of sport in Irish identity - its communal and relational experience - specifically the attractions, values, and identity which participation in handball competitions allowed.

The popularity of handball among the Brothers extended to the student body, and was met with expanded facilities and competitions. In 1956 at Rostrevor, Brother Kelty stated in his Principal's speech 'Our own swimming carnival, athletics competition, tennis and handball competitions are just as keenly contested as the interschool tournaments'.¹⁰⁵ From the 1920s, increasing numbers competed in Christian Brothers' handball competitions, inside and outside the colleges. As at Rostrevor and Christian Brothers', Wakefield, the school year of Goulburn and Waverly was littered with sporting activities, in the summer swimming and cricket; rugby in the winter; and handball throughout.¹⁰⁶ Feast days were marked by sports carnivals, the most important being St Patrick's Day, a considerable part of which were handball competitions. One Goulburn championship saw each of the four Houses put up seventeen doubles teams, requiring a total of 288 matches to be played.¹⁰⁷ Until the 1930s, Irish handball was the most popular sport played at Christian Brothers' Lewisham and Waverly College, with a 1908 Waverly *Prospectus* stating that 'Handball ... is the most popular of all games with the boys, and no wonder, for it affords splendid exercise and is an unending source of recreation'.¹⁰⁸ We know that the popularity and introduction of the sport was an early century phenomenon as schools established after the war – such as St Edward's College,

¹⁰⁴ P. S. Brother Charles Barron to Director of Ipswich Brother Finbarr Donovan' (1918), (Christian Brothers Archive, NSW). CBC Ipswich is now St Edmund's College.

¹⁰⁵ "History of Handball at Rostrevor College", accessed May 14, 2012, http://www.rostrevor.sa.edu.au/__files/f/1862/The%20History%20of%20Handball%20at%20Rostrevor%20College.pdf, 36.

¹⁰⁶ The 1919 *annual* of Christian Brothers', Wakefield', reports how 'handball continues to maintain its supremacy as the most popular game, winter and summer, at the college'. *Christian Brothers College Annual* (October, 1919). Australian Handball Council.

¹⁰⁷ Bollen, 310.

¹⁰⁸ 'On Handball', *Waverly College: Prospectus, Report and Prizelist* (1908), (Christian Brothers Archive, NSW). Laverack, 25. The Lewisham annuals represent the school's earliest archival documentation, and were always accompanied by a photo of the handball champions and commentary on their victories.

Gosford, St Edmund's College, Canberra, and St Patrick's College, Sutherland, which started in 1953, 1954, and 1956 respectively— show no evidence of the sport ever being played.¹⁰⁹ However, at many schools where the sport was established much earlier, the sport retained its vibrancy somewhat into the 1940s. The 1957 Rostrevor annual reported how 'In the two years since the new courts were built, Handball has become a major activity at Rostrevor.... [and] at all free times the courts are occupied'.¹¹⁰ The popularity of the sport was therefore anchored in the context of the early twentieth century, as well as with the changes in notions of Irishness among Irish-Australians. It was a vibrant participation in an Irish game; part of being Irish-Australian and a wider community network.

O'Farrell's treatment of handball is thus not only brief but misrepresentative. Handball was not simply popular, but was intertwined with notions of Irishness, community, and the construction of an Irish Catholic school culture. In a sense, O'Farrell's omission understandable; not only was he writing in a politically-focused period of history writing, it was also the case that, despite handball's enormous presence in Christian Brothers' schools, there is very little explicit documentary evidence to indicate its popularity. Sport generally was omitted from the annual student reports, with only passing references to teams and competitions. This is unsurprising in an educational environment where academic achievement was imperative for the prestige of schools. Reports concentrated purely on the ability of the students to compete at an academic level with the wider Australian schools, detailing their competitiveness and matriculations.¹¹¹ This stands in stark contrast with the daily reality of the Brothers; as one student of Goulburn remarked, as well as their fierce Catholicism 'the Brothers espoused another "religion" – a strong belief in sporting activities' including

¹⁰⁹ *St Mary's Province NSW/ACT Schools.*

¹¹⁰ *Rostrevor Annual* (1957).

¹¹¹ This is clearly evidenced in the Christian Brothers' *Educational Records*, which featured every year the results of every school in every province across the globe.

handball.¹¹² This further validates the need to look beyond official documents and structures, to access ordinary human experience in historical narrative.

The commitment of the Christian Brothers' to handball in Australia was a participation in a historic connection with the sport in Ireland, which further evaluates notions of Irish identity. As early as the 1850s in Ireland, handball and other Gaelic sports were fostered by the Christian Brothers.¹¹³ The GAA, founded in 1891 to codify and promote Gaelic sports, took an active interest in handball, and in 1924, helped establish the Irish Amateur Handball Association, the first major task of which was the arranging of trials and competitions for the Tailteann Games which would occur the same year.¹¹⁴ Reflecting its global interest, the competition was won in a clean sweep by the Irish-Americans. In the early development and popularisation of the game, the Christian Brothers appear throughout. As Barry Coldrey states, 'in so far as Gaelic football and hurling were fostered in Dublin schools, it was in almost every case the Christian Brothers' Schools which encouraged them'.¹¹⁵ The same can be said for handball. By 1904 the Dublin Schools handball league was operating with total support from the order. In fact it seems that only Christian Brothers' schools competed, with a notable exception- St Enda's, the Gaelic school established by Patrick Pearse in 1908, which included handball in a wider program of Irish-Ireland cultural revival.¹¹⁶ This clear and historic relationship between the growth of Irish handball and the Christian Brothers indicates how easily members of the order would have imported the game to their new Australian context. It a distinct Irish cultural feature transplanted to Australia and incorporated into their schools for a new generation of Irish-Australians.

¹¹² Bollen, 103.

¹¹³ Coldrey, 190.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 192.

¹¹⁶ Coldrey, 192-193. Finola O'Kane, 'Nurturing a Revolution: Patrick Pearse's School Garden at St Enda's', *Garden History* 28, (2000): 73-87, 79. Also see: Elaine Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots: St Enda's and the Cult of Boyhood* (Cork, 2004).

Having established this brief picture of handball in Christian Brothers' schools, it is apparent that far from abandoning Irish sports for strictly local forms, out of necessity and conscious rejection of Irishness, the community of the Christian Brothers and their students held at least one Irish sport in a revered position. What does this mean for the artifice of Irish-Australian history? It is obvious that the Gaelic games of football and hurling were not sustained in the Irish-Australian communities, and failed to gain traction among the sons of Irish migrants. As discussed in the previous chapter, the interpretation of this decision has been skewed by the false dichotomy created by historians and popular mythology between so-called Protestant and British sports such as rugby and cricket, and Catholic Gaelic games. Yet the interaction of sport, religion, and class, was far more complicated.¹¹⁷ There was more to Irishness than politics or overt cultural associations, and more to Gaelic games than traditional Irish nationalism. Sports such as handball could express Irish identity in ways more immediate and intimate; and therefore Irish-Australian history needs a reconsideration of how Irish-Australians viewed and articulated their Irish identity.

Handball's Irishness was recognisable to the student to whom the game was taught and so formed part of a wider Irish-Australian identity. The demolition of the handball alleys in 1992 at Goulburn marked 'a break with the Christian Brother and Irish past'.¹¹⁸ Justin Fleming called it the quintessential Irish game of Waverly.¹¹⁹ It allowed immediacy with Irishness for students and Brothers alike, especially as the sport emerged in alumni and public circles as 'Australian handball', shed of its Irish connotations.¹²⁰ In other ways the Christian Brothers were indelibly Irish. These were Irish religious educators, combative and critical of the constraints and persecutions of British Australians, who readily embraced a vision of 'spiritual empire'; the building of a new Ireland, and religious realm in which the piety and fervour they knew in the old Ireland would be experienced in a

¹¹⁷ For example, Christian Brothers and other urban-based, middle-class schools in Ireland rejected Gaelic sports not because of cultural conformity but out of class. Coldrey, 192.

¹¹⁸ Bollen, 539.

¹¹⁹ Justin Fleming, *The Crest of the Wave: A history of Waverly College, 1903-2003* (Sydney, 2003), 20.

¹²⁰ This will be discussed in the upcoming chapter.

transformed nobility in the liberation of the new Australia.¹²¹ In Goulburn, Bishop Lanigan at the dedication of Saints Peter and Paul's Cathedral, the year the Christian Brothers were given control of St Patrick's, Goulburn, remarked significantly that Australia had 'the same races' as Ireland, a new nation 'rivalling the glory of Ireland in its glorious free Catholic days'.¹²² Nonetheless, determining the Irishness of the Christian Brothers, and their attitudes towards assimilationist or integrationist identities, like the wider Irish Australian community, has been problematic. As in the case of Irish history broadly, the Christian Brothers have been subsumed into the Irish political and nationalist radicalism of the early twentieth century.

The identification of the Christian Brothers in Australia with Ireland - outside of handball- is given accessibility in sport, and would otherwise be difficult to determine. Small hints of changing attitudes towards the 'old country' and their new home in Australia can be detected in documents such as the highly significant souvenir for the *Golden Jubilee of the Christian Brothers in Australia*. Published to commemorate 25 years of Christian Brothers' in Australia, the book features an embossed cover with mixed symbolism of Irish-Australian identity: depictions of shamrocks intertwined with golden wattles, flanked by a kangaroo and emu.¹²³ Although the shamrock to modern eyes is a mere trope of Irish culture, during the 1920s and 1930s the plant was emerging as a potent and contested symbol, particularly in literary use.¹²⁴ As Reilly's work indicates, the shamrock in 1920s literature represented 'a text that views Irishness and Catholicism as analogous'.¹²⁵ In this sense, it was more cultural than political or nationalistic, which coherently reflects the lack of political action amongst the Christian Brothers in Australia.

¹²¹ O'Farrell, *Catholic Church and Community*, 194.

¹²² Bollen, 226.

¹²³ See Appendix C.1.

¹²⁴ Eileen Reilly, 'Beyond gilt shamrock: symbolism and realism in the cover art of Irish historical and political fiction, 1880-1914', in *Images, Icons and the Irish Nationalist Imagination*, ed. Lawrence W. McBride (Dublin, 1999), 99. Also see, Jeanne Sheehy, *The rediscovery of Ireland's past: the Celtic revival 1830-1930* (London, 1980), 9.

¹²⁵ Reilly, 100.

In actuality, few members of the order were politically active in respect to 'the Irish Question'. Two Irish Brothers at St Patrick's, Goulburn, during this period had been activists before making their final vows: P. B. Lee had been a member of the Republican Brotherhood and T. A. O'Brien, a speaker for the Irish National Land League. Dublin-born M. C. Brenna was given a warning for outspokenness at the time of the 1916 Uprising.¹²⁶ Nor did the order's symbolic identification with Ireland necessarily decline over the course of the Australian mission. The decision to establish a Juniorate – a finishing school for young men intending to enter the order - at Strathfield in 1922 under the name 'St Enda', indicated continuity with Irish Catholic culture, Enda being an important figure of sixth century Patrician hagiography. The only reference to the Juniorate in O'Farrell is a notation on a sports photo, a strangely brief treatment considering that in Irish history 'Enda' was a name drenched in nationalist sentiment due to Pearse's Gaelic school of that name.¹²⁷ It might be tempting to therefore see this as a political reference. Yet it was a genuine Catholic rather than political sentiment; Enda was a saint venerated for his missionary work and therefore an appropriate patron of the Australian mission which would guide the continuation of the Faith among the dispersed sons of Ireland. In 1934, Brother B. O'Farrell, commenting on the Juniorate in an internal publication of the Brothers, wrote that 'the boys in our classrooms are of the same race...' as Sts Enda, Kevin, Ciaran, and Brendan, and that faithfulness to the Church would 'produce in the souls of the Irish-Australians of the twentieth century fruits of sanctity similar to those produced in their forebears of the sixth, seventh and eighth'.¹²⁸ Almost as to eliminate any doubt as to the origins of the Brothers and their students, a 1924 booklet - published to promote the Juniorate - featured on its cover several symbols of Irish culture, among which were a monastic round tower, greyhound, and harp.¹²⁹ Here we see an implicit Irishness, but one transferred in a Catholic rather than explicitly

¹²⁶ Bollen, 226.

¹²⁷ K. B. O'Farrell, 'The Juniorate at Strathfield', *Christian Brothers' Educational Record* (1974), 127.

¹²⁸ 'Patron Saint of Our Juniorate', *Our Studies* (October, 1934).

¹²⁹ *Mount Saint Mary's, Strathfield* (1924), Christian Brothers' Australia. See Appendix C.2.

political or nationalist sense. It was intended to impart religion with an Irish flavour, assuaging the transition to an Australian identity with a symbolic association with Irishness.

In a very short space, we have been able to conclude the Irishness of handball, its popularity with the Christian Brothers and the students who attended their schools, and so the vibrancy of a Gaelic game during a period when O'Farrell asserted they were being rejected whole-sale along with Irish identity. It was certainly a far more important aspect of the lives of Irish migrants to Australia than O'Farrell allowed; not simply a trivial playground game in NSW, but a dynamic and competitive cultural feature of Christian Brothers' schools across the country. In the next chapter, we shall consider how this reality challenges the historical view of Irish integration and attitudes of Irishness. The spread and reception of handball represented the transference of Irish identity from Irish Brother to students, which did not lead to an nationalistic or political culture but an exclusive Catholic culture with Irish connotations. Significantly, handball was as much an expression of Irishness for the Brothers as it was for their students. In this sense, the sport was a 'site of transition', as Irish-Australian children integrated in wider society without abandoning totally their Irishness, assuaged by a communal identity engendered by Irish Brothers. This brief discussion provides some direction for future considerations, with more research to be done on handball in Irish communities in Australia to deepen this incomplete narrative.

Chapter III: New sporting culture and Irish-Australian integration

‘There is a special spirit about Australian handballers. We have a code of mateship and support for each other in our rivalry and intensity. In Australia we love the fierce battle and honour the desperate effort. We admire losing with dignity or winning humbly. It is something that the Aussie’s recognise in friendships at international level and we welcome all handball players to visit and play Handball “Down Under”.’¹³⁰

The above paragraph, an extract from a longer monograph on the history of handball in Australia, featured in the program guide for the World Handball Championship, held in Dublin, October 2012. The text is highly significant in that it espouses the values and communal features of this ‘Australian game’, in the context of an international stage where other ethnic identities of handball vie and compete - Irish, but also American, Basque, and others. As Healey notes, this thriving trans-national dimension is unique among Gaelic games. It therefore demonstrates how the ‘old national game’ of Ireland, introduced by Irish migrants and popularised by Irish religious, has been transformed into an Australian sport. This is the case not simply in name, but in the important enacting of clear ideals of Australian nationhood and masculinity: notions of ‘mateship’, honour, and friendship. It describes the relationships and experiences of handball players, and indicates their personal relevance beyond politics or expansive organisational control. In an important sense, these words exemplify the complex and multi-layered nature of sport, echoing the speech of Monsignor McGuire: these sons of Irish migrants have become Australians, and handball has been an expression of old, transitional, and new identities. The Irish-Australian historian thus always returns to the question of integration. In the second chapter, we established the enormous communal presence and focus Irish handball

¹³⁰ *World Handball Championship Guide* (2012), (Dublin: World Handball Council).

had across Australia in the Christian Brothers' schools, indicating the severe limitations in O'Farrell's scholarship. The development of handball, paralleling the shift in Irish-Australian identity in the twentieth century, allows us to consider the wider assertions of O'Farrell around an integrationist and yet exclusivist Catholic culture, and the way in which sport mediated these ideas.

Whereas the early history of handball in Australia was clearly Irish, it has since been incorporated into a wider Australian sporting mythology. When did this shift in cultural identification take place, and what are its implications for O'Farrell's 'Australianise or die' and the narrative of Irish-Australia? These questions can be explored first in the way handball shifted from its Christian Brothers' axis towards a state and then national focus. Without the flow of enthusiastic and skilled competitors from the Christian Brothers' alumni, the establishment of an Australian Handball Council would have been impossible. Even today, the implicit association between the order and handball exists with the continued use of alley facilities at schools such as Rostrevor. The formal opening in 1906 of the Adelaide Handball Club took place at Christian Brothers', Wakefield.¹³¹ Indeed, Adelaide seems to have benefitted especially from a strong old boy influence; in the early 1900s, members of the Adelaide Catholic Club at a meeting attended by Brother Carroll, Principal of Wakefield, sought to extend the club to include the organisation of a handball tournament. In 1911, a report on the Inter-state tournament in the *Express and Telegraph* writes that 'Handball is unfamiliar to many people; the play can very soon be followed, for the rules are simple and few'. The writer continues that 'even for the uninitiated, the sight of four well-trained athletes... is one which no sport-loving Australian can view without enthusiasm'.¹³² This is an admission to the exclusivity of the sport - for the most part, handball was known only to the students for whom it was central in their school experience, and the Brothers who taught them. Conversely, the *Express* article appeals to Australians, not to Catholic Irish, identifying with generic ideals of Australian nationalism and

¹³¹ 'Adelaide Handball Club', *The Southern Cross* (May 4, 1906).

¹³² *Express and Telegraph* (April 6, 1911).

sporting culture.¹³³ Further newspaper accounts from the 1920s indicate a shift towards the state and inter-state competitions during the period as the sport grew at club level. Despite evidence of continued connection with the Christian Brothers, such as in 1929 when the South Australian Handball Association hosted its annual dance with over 300 guests at the Christian Brothers' College Hall at Wakefield, an important step was taken in 1936 with the often disparate and disorderly Australian Handball Council seeking affiliation with the Australian Amateur Athletic Union and the International Handball Federation.¹³⁴ This affiliation was not merely organisational, but an important symbolic act: reflecting the generational process of Brothers, students, and old boys which was changing how handball articulated Irish-Australian identity, and necessarily the participation of Irish Catholics in that sporting identity.

The 1930s were a particularly important time in this development, as a new generation of handball players had emerged at state level, frequently old boys of Christian Brothers' schools, but many who identified with their clubs and were remembered by these affiliations. The start of the Second World War crippled or made extinct much of the sport, especially in NSW where large-scale handball playing all but disappeared. Only in South Australia did it survive in any significant, albeit reduced, form.¹³⁵ Following this period, new migrants from other European countries meant the game had entirely Australian connotations; divested of its Irish content which was imparted through the Irishmen who taught it at the colleges. Tom McKnight, an American who arrived in South Australia in 1961, wrote how arriving in Adelaide at age 33, he had his 'first taste of Aussie handball', stating the connection between the clubs and Rostrevor but explaining the 'broader culture of handball, which mostly means banquets and tournaments'.¹³⁶ Handball culture had retained its communal features, perennial in any sporting form, but it had been jettisoned of even its implicit

¹³³ 'Inter-State Tournament', *Express and Telegraph*, (April 12, 1911).

¹³⁴ 'Interstate Handball', *The News* (April 19, 1924). *The News* (September 2, 1929). *100 Years of Handball in South Australia*, 11.

¹³⁵ *Ibid*, 12.

¹³⁶ Tom McKnight, 'A Tale of the Sixties', *100 Years of Handball in South Australia*, 17.

Irish roots. Additionally, by the latter half of the century, relations between the state Handball Associations and the Christian Brothers became disconnected, with the Rostrevor Courts be barred for a period in 1971. In this sense, identity around handball was fluid and detached, yet niche. 'We admire losing with dignity or winning humbly. It is something that the Aussie's recognise in friendships at international level and we welcome all handball players to visit and play Handball "Down Under", as quoted in the guide. Handball culture operated somewhat exclusively, with its own code of honour and identified with a wider trans-national community of handball players. In this way, it exists very much comfortably integrated: Irish handball divested of its Irish connotations, and taken on local form. It was truly a site of integration and transition.

Irish sport and school cultures: comparative studies

The long association of the Christian Brothers' with handball extended beyond mere enthusiasm for the sport and its health benefits. It filled an intrinsic part of their community culture, and their identification with their Irishness while they lived and died in Australia. The letters of Edward Teehan, a Kilkenny-born priest who arrived in Australia in 1918, give us an explicit insight into personal attitudes towards Gaelic sport.¹³⁷ Indeed, Teehan's correspondence - spanning from 1918 to 1960 - is an unused source in Irish-Australian history, held in the GAA archives in Dublin. Teehan served in parishes all over the state of NSW; from St. Benedict's Broadway in Sydney where he arrived in the late 1910s; spending time in Picton, Bankstown, Campsie, and eventually dying in Mascot parish in 1960. During his life, he recorded in detail the situation of Irish migrants in NSW including the activities of Gaelic sports in Australia and contemporary events such as the 1928 Eucharistic Congress in Sydney and the economic depression of the 1930s. Although recorded in the GAA archive as a member of the De La Salle order, we know from the archdiocesan record that Teehan ministered parishes as 'Father' - precluding him from being a member of the order per se.

¹³⁷ See Appendix B.7.

This confusion might be explained by the fact that Teehan had close friendships with De La Salle Brothers, not least Phillip Fanning. It was to Fanning that Teehan wrote over the course of his life in Australia, providing us with this important documentation. Fanning himself lived for a brief time in Sydney, before then returning to Ireland in the early 1920s after leaving the order. The friendship between the two men endured and the archival remnants provide insight into the way in which some migrant Irish religious articulated their experiences of cultural and societal transportation.

Teehan's letters are a rich and intimate resource of human experience. They reveal the realities of migrant experience; a man who had left his home for a foreign realm and now faced a lifetime of assuaging multiple identities. This is a common theme of his correspondence; not simply fragments of news, but a deeply personal exegesis on migrant dislocation. It is accordingly tinged with sadness. In a letter sent in 1928, Teehan wrote to Fanning requesting that he 'please cut out accounts of the important football and hurling marches, especially the latter- put cutting in envelope and post them. I don't expect a letter Phil. Just the cutting of the Thurles to the all-Ireland finals. I'll go to Thurles in spirit each month. What glorious days those were. I wish Tipp easy luck- they ought to about win [sic]'.¹³⁸ 'Go to Thurles' was more than just fandom or sentimentalism. It was an important process of situating his identity with Ireland; harking back to the 'old country' through sport which symbolised not simply enjoyment, but his identity, his upbringing, and community. In this way Gaelic sport provided some way of assuaging dislocation and isolation from his cultural and ethnic homeland, while adjusting him to his new Australian context.

Teehan used sport to identify himself with his Irish home, both in playing Gaelic sports and in writing to Fanning about the sport in his letters. When the local hurling competition collapsed due to the dispersal of players, Teehan despaired at the loss of community and friends, and of his

¹³⁸ 'Edward Teehan to Phillip Fanning, Campsie' (June 8, 1928), (Gaelic Athletics Association archives, Dublin).

isolation in rural NSW.¹³⁹ Indeed, by referring to the way in which Gaelic sports maintained connections with Ireland and the Irish-Australian community, Teehan reveals the way in which sport articulated migrant experience: it allowed him to be a migrant who, despite spending the majority of his life in Australia and dying in Mascot in 1962, remained always identified as Irish and unassimilated in broader currents of Australian society. In this sense, he echoes the experience of the towering political and ecclesiastical figures of this time: 'who lived in Australia but never really became part of it'.¹⁴⁰

McCarthy provides a contemporary but incredibly insightful and relevant example of this communal dynamic in Gaelic games and Irish identity. His scholarship posits St Finbarr's Gaelic football club in Perth as a site of transition, outlining the critical symbolic and actual performance of Irishness, especially at championship finals. McCarthy discusses the currency of Gaelic sports in forming an important basis of Irish 'ex-pat' communities, questioning whether the Western Australian GAA clubs have been 'able to satisfy the popular cultural needs of the newly arrived Irish immigrant and provided a tangible link to their Irish identity through sport'.¹⁴¹ Gaelic games were not necessarily a political or radical nationalistic statement; it was a site of communal and familial ties, and identification with Irishness which transcends political strictures and overt expressions of nationalism. McCarthy helpfully divests these strong cultural links, stating that community identity emerged as 'a means to lessen their sense of loss at leaving Ireland and a very significant aid in the relocation of new immigrants, particularly those with families'.¹⁴² In this sense, St Finbarr's was a place comparable to other diasporan clubs where 'men and women gather together to play and support the weekly Gaelic football matches in a sporting environment which has been transformed

¹³⁹ 'Father Edward Teehan to Phillip Fanning', (May 27, 1929).

¹⁴⁰ Rickard, 182.

¹⁴¹ McCarthy, 'Irish Rules', 33.

¹⁴² Nick McCarthy, 'Performances from the Dressing Room', 368-384; McCarthy, 'Irish Rules', 37-40. The rise of alternative popular forms of leisure is recorded in Richard Waterhouse, *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure: a History of Australian Popular Culture Since 1788* (Melbourne, 1995). Also see: Richard White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity, 1688-1980* (Sydney, 1981).

into a performance space, where notions of Irishness can be created, discarded, and recreated through performances that construct resilience and resistance'.¹⁴³ 'The performance in the dressing room by the St Finbarr's players, including the formal and informal aspects, can be used ... as a means of reinforcing their Irish identity'. In this way, McCarthy suggests, 'many of the players and spectators are drawn to the games specifically to reinforce their sense of Irishness', while acknowledging the sport's accessibility for non-Irish, Australian players.¹⁴⁴ He continues: '...it is the particular combination of Irish history, politics and culture attached to Gaelic sport that allows it to continue to resonate amongst many members of the Irish Diaspora in Western Australia and beyond'.¹⁴⁵ What does this tell us about Irish handball and the Irish Brothers who played and promoted it in Australia? As in the case of Teehan and McCarthy's Western Australian Irish community, as a Gaelic game, handball articulated the practice of Irishness among the Brothers. It allowed them to identify intimately and symbolically with notions of Irishness, in a similarly similar exclusive ethnic association as contemporary Gaelic football in Western Australian. Similarly, handball was able to include Australian participants, indicating a need to think of ethnic identity in fundamentally different ways and its change in migrant contexts.

Irish sport therefore provides for the Irish migrant an exclusivity, played as handball was within the confines of Christian Brothers' and other Catholic schools, which contradicts integration as a forceful and inexorable process. In 1922, the Provincial of the Christian Brothers in Australia, Brother Charles Barron, known for being 'a hard but fair man', wrote to Brother Anselm Kearney, director of the Launceston-based Christian Brothers' College in Launceston in response to the findings of the annual Visitation. Barron stated, 'The Brother Assistant fears that... the [handball] court will bring secular young men and perhaps ladies about the place and that this will be danger of

¹⁴³ Sara Brady, *That Auld Feeling: Performances of Irishness at New York's Gaelic Park* (New York, 2004), 369.

¹⁴⁴ McCarthy, 'Performances from the Dressing room', 381.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

the Brothers mixing up with them. Guard against this: there must be no... handball with seculars'.¹⁴⁶ That the mingling of Brothers and 'seculars' was first the concern of the Visitor, affirmed by the highest authority in the order, indicates that this was not an isolated opinion. Indeed, it offers important insight into attitudes of Brothers towards their colonial context. Barron espouses an exclusivist attitude, not necessarily prejudicial but an awareness of separation and distinctiveness from these 'seculars' – Protestant or masonic English, as well as broader notions of secularity in civil and political society. It was certainly not an attempt to assimilate into the wider Australian community, and it were these attitudes which influenced the school cultures which Brothers not merely taught but led and forged in their own image.

This dynamic of religious leadership, school communities, and Irish sport, is repeated in different contexts in the Irish Diaspora such as Canada, the United States, and Argentina. These societies were similarly protestant and Anglo-dominated, and Irish migrants commonly faced extreme sectarian hostility.¹⁴⁷ Sport and Irish Catholic Identity is one such comparison to the Australian context. Irish migrants progressed politically and socio-economically, and their Irish identity gave way to a more Canadian orientation, 'as Irish Catholic Canadians maintained their religious faith yet came to embrace forms of culture common to the Toronto community, facilitating

¹⁴⁶ 'P. S. Brother Charles Barron to Brother Anselm Kearney' (1922), (Christian Brothers Archive, NSW). In *Edmund's footsteps: lives of deceased Christian Brothers, Oceania* (Sydney: Christian Brothers' Australia, 2009), 56.

¹⁴⁷ Dennis P. Ryan and Kevin B. Wamsley, 'The Fighting Irish of Toronto: Sport and Irish Catholic Identity at St Michael's College, 1906-1916', *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 10, (2007): 495-513. Ryan and Wamsley wrote, 'sectarian difficulties were rife, and the Irish Catholics suffered enormously, earning the city the name 'the Belfast of Canada'. Although Argentina is obviously not a British 'White dominion', the Irish who migrated to that country found themselves living in English-speaking communities, and experienced in microcosm what the Irish in Australia, Canada, and the United States had. The American context has dominated Irish diasporan studies, as evidenced by the sheer weight of historiography Malcolm Campbell, 'The Other Immigrants: Comparing the Irish in Australia and the United States', *Journal of American Ethnic History* 14 (1995): 3-22. Also see: Campbell, *Ireland's New Worlds*. O'Grady's *How the Irish became Americans* is an example of the interpretation of Irish as corresponding with the decline of the nationalist cause after the creation of the Free State- 'hence forth without a cause that had given them cohesiveness, rapidly merged into the population and became Americans of Irish descent'. Joseph O'Grady, *How the Irish became Americans* (New York, 1973).

more moderate approaches to ethnic identity'.¹⁴⁸ Schools were central in this transition, Ryan and Wamsley providing an example in their study of the early twentieth-century development of St Michael's College, Toronto. A diocesan Catholic college, St Michael's took on significance when it came under the direction of Father Henry Carr who oversaw a revival in St Michael's Irish-Catholic identity, forging a strong school identity and gaining prominence and prestige in the wider Toronto community through sport.¹⁴⁹ Indicating the importance of Catholic clergy in infusing sport with assimilative identities in immigrant societies, and mirroring the Christian Brothers' schools in Australia, Carr implemented a sporting agenda which reflected an understanding of the growing significance of sport in broader Canadian society. It was sports such as athletics, hockey, and football which stimulated interaction with Protestant schools, and therefore the wider community. 'While abandoning the tradition Gaelic sports of yesteryear, Irish Catholics remained proud of this distinctive identity', a process embodied in the successes of Carr and St. Michael's.¹⁵⁰

In this sense, Irish-Canadians met similar challenges to their migrant cousins who arrived in Australia, and sought to meet those difficulties with the similar cultural mediums. As Mark McGowan points out, changes of identity from Irish to Canadian were more than just a question of shifting political attitudes.¹⁵¹ The transition of community loyalty from Ireland to Canada indicated 'a transformation from Irish-centric to a Canadian Catholic community with linguistic, economic, ideological, political, social and pedagogical ties to the non-Catholic population of the city'.¹⁵² Assimilation was therefore enabled through sporting forms, which became an essential of the Irish

¹⁴⁸ Dennis Ryan and Kevin Wamsley, 'A Grand Game of Hurling and Football: Sport and Irish Nationalism in Old Toronto', *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 30, (2004): 21-31, 21-23. In the 1850s and 1860s, the Toronto Irish community was nationalistic and culturally exclusive, the basis of which was large-scale Gaelic sports that 'captivated the community as physical demonstrations of a vibrant national culture and so appealed to a sense of solidarity and interest in revolutionary Irish politics'.

¹⁴⁹ Ryan and Wamsley, 'The Fighting Irish of Toronto', 506.

¹⁵⁰ Ryan and Wamsley, 'A Grand game of Hurling and football', 21.

¹⁵¹ Mark McGowan, *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887-1922* (Montreal, 1999). Also see: John O'Flynn and Ainsley Baldwin, *The History of the Gaelic Athletic Association in Canada* (Bloomington, 2008).

¹⁵² McGowan, 5.

Catholic community in Toronto.¹⁵³ Moreover, in conjunction with the work of Clark, we see how the context of Toronto changed as being Catholic was virtually synonymous with being Irish- meaning that the identification of the community with Catholicism over nationality as the main component of a distinctive identity was made easier.¹⁵⁴ Catholicism itself became a ‘badge of ethnic allegiance’ allowing Irish Catholics to maintain their Irishness, while simultaneously becoming fully Canadian.¹⁵⁵ This different approach to ethnic identity, without reference to elitist politics, is very much applicable to our Irish-Australian context.

The playing of hurling by Irish migrants in Argentina is different to the Australian and Canadian contexts because it considers a small section of the Irish Diaspora outside of the Anglo-Protestant ‘White Dominions’.¹⁵⁶ Instead, the Irish in Argentina met hostility within an English-speaking community, which meant early Irish activity in Argentina was highly transient and highly assimilative; they were seen as part of a wider English-speaking community- ‘ingeles’ rather than ‘irlandes’.¹⁵⁷ Differences in this Anglo-community were class, economic, religious, and residential, rather than ethnic. Nonetheless new scholarship around Gaelic games and the Irish-Argentine community reiterates the importance of sport in migrant identities, in particular the place of the Church in relation to this dynamic. Irishness in Argentina was developed from only four to five thousand settlers, driven by the Catholic Church which sought to maintain cultural and spiritual links.¹⁵⁸ At the turn of the twentieth century, Father Anthony Fahy was dispatched by the Irish bishops to ‘take on the work’ of forming a community and a Catholic Irish identity in the midst of the

¹⁵³ Ryan and Wamsley, ‘The Fighting Irish of Toronto’, 498.

¹⁵⁴ Brian P. Clarke, *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1855-1895* (Toronto, 1993), 223.

¹⁵⁵ Clarke, 224.

¹⁵⁶ Helen Kelly considered it ‘qualitatively different’. Kelly’s work is an excellent comparative study which highlights the conflicting identities which emerged among Irish-Argentines. See: Helen Kelly, *Irish ‘Ingleses’: The Irish Immigrant Experience in Argentina, 1840-1920* (Dublin, 2009).

¹⁵⁷ Seamus King and Paul Darby, ‘Becoming Irlandés: Hurling and Irish Identity in Argentina’, *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 10, (2007): 425-438.

¹⁵⁸ Roger. It seems that a total of 10,000-20,000 Irish men and women migrated to Argentina during the nineteenth century. Also see: Carla Battezzati, ‘Education in Values: The Experience of Two Irish-Argentine Schools’, *Society for Irish Latin American Studies* 6, (2008): 99-104.

Argentine Republic. This was a clerical initiative bolstered by prominent lay businessmen - an alliance of Church, community and the Irish Catholic schools - to develop a social and religious structure that allowed for the development of an ethnically distinct Irish community, while availing of the economic opportunities of their host country.¹⁵⁹ This led to a strong and self-sufficient Irish ethnic identity, through specifically Irish Catholic cultural, social and political medium- that is, the Gaelic game of hurling. Catholic priests were central to this evolution; not only in the figure of Fahy, but also in the parishes where from the early twentieth century, clergy led and formed hurling clubs, promoting the game amongst their flocks, even to the point of coaching teams. Moreover, much needed equipment for the playing of hurling was imported through clerical channels, with Argentinean-based Irish priests acting as potent spiritual, material and cultural conduits to the 'old country'. Thus constituted, hurling formed a fundamental expression of Irishness in Argentina between 1900 and the 1940s. It allowed Irish Catholics to mark out, very visibly, their ethnic difference to the wider English-speaking community and locals, laden as it was with cultural and symbolic significance.

Understanding the relationship between Irish handball and the distinctive Irish Catholic identity of the Christian Brothers' schools, is a window into wider developments in Irish-Australian community and culture. Handball among Christian Brothers' students marked the progression towards an Australian-focused identity and the participation in a new national narrative and socio-cultural context. The notion of an exclusive Catholic culture, imparting Irishness in an Australian setting, strengthens some of O'Farrell's claims about education and integration. Fundamentally, it presents the historian with transitional identities which maintained in tension an exclusive identity and yet aspirationally integrationist; the change from Irish to Australian. Inescapably, it was far more nuanced, challenging the way we view ethnic and migrant integration. The experiences of the Christian Brothers, their students, Teehan, and wider participants in Gaelic sporting culture,

¹⁵⁹ King and Darby, 437.

including handball with its divestment of Irishness, is not the totality of Irish experience or integration. Not every Irishman attended a Christian Brothers' school or received a school boy's education, nor engaged in Gaelic games. Yet handball was a site of transition, allowing a discussion on the ordinary realities of the Irish migrant and his participation in a complex identification with a symbolic and dynamic Irishness. Critically, this was invested by Irish religious, and an Australian socio-cultural context, without recourse to nationalism or politics.

Conclusion: Toward a new understanding of Irish-Australia

This thesis is in no way an exhaustive history of Irish handball in Australia, or of the Christian Brothers' association with the sport. Neither in challenging the limitations of O'Farrell does it attempt to assert a new consensus about the nature and extent of migrant integration in the twentieth century. Nonetheless the reality of Irish handball, as reconstructed in this thesis, represents a radical challenge to Irish-Australian historiography: asserting in the academic landscape a Gaelic sport played widely and systematically in Irish communities across Australia.

According to the traditional narrative of O'Farrell and subsequent historians, the Irish who arrived in Australia rejected the pastimes of their native land in favour of local forms. This rejection constituted 'Australianisation' and integration into colonial society. Yet 'Australianise or die' is a narrow and unhelpful discourse which reflects Irish nationalist politics and ecclesiastical policy, rather than the real experiences of ordinary Irish in twentieth-century Australia. Did Irish and their children define themselves by political and nationalistic movements? Was this the nature of their Irish-Australian cultural identity, and their participation in that Irishness? Handball has been neglected as part of a general dismissal of sport in Irish-Australian history. Without institutional, political, official, or ecclesiastical significance, it was the trivial pastime of Irish schoolboys. But to reengage with the question of Irish-Australian integration and ultimately migrant experience, we need new understanding of community and cultural meaning which the Christian Brothers and their students lived through handball. The sport therefore challenges us to recognise the problems in Irish-Australian historiography and fundamentally reconsider Irish integration and identity. Irish handball was a site of transition for Irish-Australians, allowing a shared communal experience, an

activity enjoyable and participatory in the schools, played and encouraged by the Brothers. It is therefore a space for the historian to understand experiences and attitudes of Irish migrants towards new and varied identities in their colonial context.

From the 1890s, hundreds of Irish Brothers migrated to Australia to form part of the crucial educational 'edifice' which would become central to Irish-Australian identity: an exclusive Catholic culture, which schools such as those of the Christian Brothers' reinforced through the mutual experience of the sons and daughters of the Irish Diaspora in Australia, and by forming the nexus of Irish-Australian social and cultural focus. Handball was seminal to the student experience of these Irish schools. The experience of the Brothers who facilitated them was one of dislocation and change; they were religious who identified institutionally, culturally, and personally with Ireland, and required a means to connect and identify with their ethnic context. Whereas O'Farrell and Irish-Australian historians generally have sought to understand these ideas through the question of political activism or nationalistic conformity, by considering sport, specifically handball, this complex process of assuagement to Australian society has been revealed as transitional and contested. It is clear that ethnic identity is far more nuanced than O'Farrell allowed, and requires a new perspective; one which realises that these men identified with Irishness while being incorporated into Australian culture.

For the student of these Irish Brothers, the sport allowed participation in Irishness in a different way. It forged not so much as an exclusive ethnic Irish formulation, but implicit Irishness found through a Catholic educational medium. As in the contexts of Canada and Argentina, the Christian Brothers' schools facilitated the construction of a mixed Irish-Australian identity, an integration of the sons of Irish migrants into Australian society – as was the progression of Irish-Australia – but in a manner more nuanced and contested than a forced 'Australianisation' or rejection of Irishness. An exclusive Catholic culture was achieved by making 'Catholic' the unifying

feature in the educational culture, of which handball allowed student and communal and self-identification with this new Irish-Australian ethnic identity. In this way, through this culture of handball, we achieve a greater understanding of Irish-Australian identity without reducing it to ecclesiastical policy, nationalist political movements or even the officiality of institutional Gaelic sports.

Handball was critical to this Catholic identity, giving it an important exclusive context which students shared in their daily reality: lunchtime games, competitions within the colleges, and finally sports carnivals and inter-college championships which emphasised the wider communal aspects - the Christian Brothers' collegial network. These shared experiences reinforced the experience of handball as tied exclusively to the students of Christian Brothers' schools. Student handball culture, identified with the Irish Brothers and their own personal experiences rather than a historic or ethnic connection with Ireland, shifted so that handball emerged by the 1930s as 'Australian': built on a shared community site, of the alleys, schools, and wider religious context.

Sports history is more than the recording of trivia, but a means of accessing intimate historical realities. Here was a network, not political, official, but relational and cultural: intertwined with religion, education and Irish handball. Profoundly meaningful, handball articulated Irishness for the Brothers and transitional Irish-Australian identity for their students. The sport's enormity and exclusivity is the most significant contradiction to O'Farrell, showing that Irish-Australian experience is better revealed beyond politics, and that integration was far more nuanced, layered, and complex.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Letters

'Father Edward Teehan to Phillip Fanning' 1925-1952. *Phillip Fanning Collection*. Gaelic Athletics Association Archive, Dublin.

Fitzpatrick, David. *Oceans of Consolation: Personal Accounts of Irish Migration to Australia*. Melbourne, 1995.

'J. G. O'Shennessy to Brother Mackie' 1945. Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.

O'Farrell, Patrick. *Letters from Irish Australia, 1825-1925*. Sydney; Belfast, 1984.

'P. S. Brother Charles Barron to Brother Finbarr Donovan' 1918. Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.

'P. S. Brother Charles Barron to Brother Anselm Kearney' 1922. Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.

Memoirs and personal accounts

100 Year History of Handball in South Australia. Adelaide: South Australian Handball Association, 2002.

In Edmund's footsteps: lives of deceased Christian Brothers, Oceania. Sydney: Christian Brothers' Australia, 2009.

Murphy, Kerry. *Kerry Murphy's Memoirs: The Diaries of an Irish Immigrant*. Sydney, 1998.

St Mary's Province NSW/ACT Schools. Sydney: Christian Brothers' Australia, 2010.

The Parish that Changed: The Story of Mascot-Botany Parish from 1885 to 1985. Sydney: Mascot Parish archive, 1985.

World Handball Championship Guide. Dublin: World Handball Council, 2012.

School pamphlets and periodicals

Christian Brothers' Educational Record, 1920-1974. Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.

Laverack, M. J. *Christian Brothers' High School, Lewisham, '100 years of sporting achievement: a centenary publication, 1891-1991*. Christian Brothers' Lewisham, 1991. Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.

Mount Saint Mary's, Strathfield. Christian Brothers' Australia, 1924. Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.

Our Studies, 1920-1934. Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.

Rostrevor Annual, 1924-1957. Rostrevor College Archive, Adelaide.

Waverly College: Prospectus, Report and Prizelist, 1908-1910. Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.

Newspaper

The Advertiser, Adelaide, 1931-1954. National Library Australia.

The Argus, Melbourne, 1848-1956. State Library Victoria.

Express and Telegraph, Adelaide, 1881-1911. State Library South Australia.

Examiner, Launceston, 1900-1954. National Library Australia.

The Mail, Adelaide, 1912-1954. National Library Australia.

The Mercury, Hobart, 1860-1954. National Library Australia.

The News, Adelaide, 1924-1929. State Library South Australia.

Sunshine Advocate, Victoria, 1924-1954. National Library Australia.

The Southern Cross, Adelaide, 1900-1910. State Library South Australia.

The Sydney Morning Herald, Sydney, 1842-1954. State Library New South Wales.

The Western Australian, Perth, 1879-1954. National Library Australia.

Secondary Sources

Film and electronic sources

Agars, Mervyn. 'Thomas Joseph Leahy (1888 – 1964)'. In *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Melbourne, 2000. Accessed August 8, 2012. <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/leahy-thomas-joseph-tom-7135>.

Australian Film Commission. *Gallipoli*, directed by Peter Weir. 1981.

Connolly, P. D. 'Neal William Macrossan (1889 – 1955)'. In *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. Melbourne, 2000. Accessed August 8, 2012. <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/macrossan-neal-william-11028>.

Maine handball. "History of handball". Accessed July 12, 2012.
<http://www.mainehandball.com/history.htm>.

Rostrevor College. "A History of Handball at Rostrevor". Accessed May 14, 2012
http://www.rostrevor.sa.edu.au/___files/f/1862/The%20History%20of%20Handball%20at%20Rostrevor%20College.pdf.

The Society for Irish Latin Studies. "The Children of the Diaspora: Irish Schools and Educators in Argentina, 1850-1950, by Maria José Roger". Accessed August 13, 2012.
<http://www.irlandeses.org/education.htm>.

Journal articles

Adair, Daryl. 'Australian Sport History: From the Founding Years to Today'. *Sport in History* 29. 2009: 405-436.

Bairner, Alan. 'Irish Australians, postcolonialism and the English game'. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 12. 2009: 4-5, 482-495.

Bairner, Alan. 'Wearing the Baggie Green: the Irish and Australian Cricket'. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 10. 2007: 457-475.

Battezzati, Carla. 'Education in Values: The Experience of Two Irish-Argentine Schools'. *Society for Irish Latin American Studies* 6. 2008: 99-104.

Blackton, Charles S. 'Australian nationality and nationalism, 1850-1900. *Historical Studies: Australia and New Zealand* 9. 1961: 351-367.

Booth, Douglas. 'Sports History: What Can Be Done?'. *Sport, Education and Society* 2. 1997: 191-204.

Booth, Douglas. "On the Shoulders of a Giant": W. F. Mandle and the Foundations of Sports History in Australia'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 19. 2002: 151-158.

Bradley, Joseph M. 'The Gaelic athletic association and the Irish diaspora in Scotland, 1897-1947'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 16. 1999: 135-146.

Burley, Stephanie. 'Engagement with empires: Irish Catholic female religious teachers in colonial South Australia 1868-1901'. *Irish Educational Studies* 10. 2011: 1-16.

Campbell, Malcolm. 'The Other Immigrants: Comparing the Irish in Australia and the United States'. *Journal of American Ethnic History* 14. 1995: 3-22.

Carter, Thomas. 'On the Need for an Anthropological Approach to Sport'. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power* 9. 2002: 405-422.

Cronin, Mike. 'Enshrined in Blood: The Naming of Gaelic Athletic Association Grounds and Clubs'. *The Sports Historian* 18. 1998: 90-104.

Cronin, Mike. 'Fighting for Ireland, playing for England? The nationalist history of the Gaelic Athletic Association and the English influence on Irish sport'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 15. 1998: 36-56.

Cronin, Mike. 'The Gaelic Athletic Association's Invasion of America, 1888: Travel Narratives, Microhistory and the Irish American "Other"'. *Sport in History* 27. 2007: 190-16.

Cronin, Mike. 'Projecting the Nation through Sport and Culture: Ireland, Aonach Tailteann and the Irish Free State, 1924-32'. *Journal of Contemporary History* 38. 2003: 395-411.

Cronin, Mike. 'When the world soccer cup is played on roller skates': The Attempt to make Gaelic games international: The Meath-Australia matches of 1967-68'. *Immigrants and Minorities* 17. 1998: 170-188.

Cronin, Mike, David Doyle and Liam O'Callaghan. 'Foreign Fields and Foreigners on the Field: Irish Sport, Inclusion and Assimilation'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 25. 2008: 1010-1030.

Darby, Paul. "Without the Aid of a Sporting Safety Net?": the Gaelic Athletic Association and the Irish Émigré in San Francisco (1888-c. 1938)'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 26. 2009: 63-83.

Darby, Paul. 'Gaelic Sport and the Irish Diaspora in Boston, 1879-90'. *Irish Historical Studies* 33. 2003: 387-403.

Darby, Paul. 'Gaelic Games, Ethnic Identity and Irish Nationalism in New York City, c. 1880-1917'. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 10. 2007: 347-367.

Darby, Paul, and David Hassan. 'Introduction: Locating Sport in the Study of the Irish Diaspora'. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, media, Politics* 10. 2007: 333-346.

Doak, Richard. '(De)constructing Irishness in the 1990s- the Gaelic Athletics Association and Cultural Nationalist Discourse reconsidered'. *Irish Journal of Sociology* 8. 1998: 25-48.

English, Richard. "The Inborn Hate of Things English": Ernie O'Malley and the Irish Revolution 1916-1923'. *Past and Present*, 151. 1996: 174-199.

- Finn, Gerry P. T. 'Trinity Mysteries: University, Elite Schooling and Sport in Ireland'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 27. 2010: 2255-2287.
- Frey, James H. and D. Stanley Eitzen. 'Sport and Society'. *Annual Review of Sociology* 17. 1991: 503-522.
- Grimes, Seamus. 'The Sydney Irish: A Hidden Ethnic Group'. *Irish Geography* 21. 1988: 69-77.
- hAnnrachain, Tadhg Ó. 'The Heroic Importance of Sport: The GAA in the 1930s'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 25. 2008: 1326-1337.
- Hassan, David. 'The Role of Gaelic Games in the lives of the Irish Diaspora in Europe'. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 10. 2007: 385-401.
- Horton, Peter A. 'The "Green" and the "Gold": the Irish-Australians and their role in the emergence of the Australian sports culture'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 17. 2000: 65-92.
- Frost W. 'Heritage, Nationalism, Identity: The 1861-62 England Cricket Tour of Australia'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 19. 2002: 55-69.
- King, Seamus and Paul Darby. 'Becoming Irlandés: Hurling and Irish Identity in Argentina'. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 10. 2007: 425-438.
- MacIntyre, Anthony. 'Review: Wherever Green is Worn by Tim Pat Coogan'. *Fortnight* 396. 2001: 30.
- MacRaid, Donald M. 'Wherever Orange is Worn" Orangeism and Irish Migration in the 19th and Early 20th Centuries'. *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 28. 2003: 98-117.
- Martin, Angela K. 'The Practice Identity and an Irish Sense of Place'. *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 4. 1997: 89-114.
- McAnallen, Dónal, Peter Mossey and Stephen Moore. 'The "Temporary Diaspora" at Play: The Development of Gaelic Games in British Universities'. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 10. 2007: 402-424.
- McCarthy, Nick. 'Enacting Irish Identity in Western Australia: Performances from the Dressing Room'. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 10. 2007: 368-384.

- McCarthy, Nick. 'Irish Rules: Gaelic Football, Family, Work and Culture in Western Australia'. *The Australian Journal of Irish Studies* 3. 2003: 33-48.
- McGrath, Ann. 'Shamrock Aborigines: the Irish, the Aboriginal Australians and their children'. *Aboriginal History* 34. 2010: 58-59.
- Moore, Philip. 'Scouting an Anthropology of Sport'. *Anthropologica* 46. 2004: 37-46.
- Murphy, David H. 'Irish Jesuit Schooling in Victoria, Australia'. *The Irish Journal of Education/ Iris Éireannach an Oideachais* 25. 1991: 52-28.
- Nauright, John. 'Sport, manhood and empire: British responses to the New Zealand rugby tour of 1905'. *The International Journal of the History of Sport* 8. 1991: 239-255.
- O'Farrell, Patrick. 'How Irish was New Zealand?'. *Irish Studies Review* 3. 1994: 25-30.
- O'Kane, Finola. 'Nurturing a Revolution: Patrick Pearse's School Garden at St Enda's'. *Garden History* 28. 2000: 73-87.
- Petit, Jeanne D. 'Analysis: Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922'. *The Journal of American History* 95. 2008: 837-838.
- Rose, A. J. 'Irish , migration to Australia in the twentieth century'. *Irish Geography* 4. 1959: 79-84.
- Rutzen, Brian. 'Review: Sport and Nationalism in Ireland: Gaelic Games, Soccer and Irish Identity since 1884 by Mike Cronin'. *New Hibernia Review/ Iris Éireannach Nua* 4. 2000: 157-159.
- Ryan, Dennis and Kevin Wamsley. 'A Grand Game of Hurling and Football: Sport and Irish Nationalism in Old Toronto'. *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 30. 2004: 21-31.
- Ryan, Dennis P. and Kevin B. Wamsley. 'The Fighting Irish of Toronto: Sport and Irish Catholic Identity at St Michael's College, 1906-1916'. *Sport in Society: Cultures, Commerce, Media, Politics* 10. 2007: 495-513.
- Stoddart, Brian. 'Sport, Cultural Imperialism, and Colonial Response in the British Empire'. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 30. 1988: 649-673.
- Walker, Brian. 'The Lost Tribes of Ireland'. *Irish Studies Review* 15. 2007: 267-282.

Young, T. R. 'The Sociology of Sport: Structural Marxist and Cultural Marxist Approaches'.
Sociological Perspectives 29. 1986: 3-28.

Books, theses, and references

Allison, Lincoln. *The Changing Politics of Sport*. Manchester, 1993.

Alomes, Stephen. *A nation at last?: The changing character of Australian nationalism 1880-1988*.
Sydney, 1988.

Arkenson, Donald Harman. *The Irish Diaspora: A primer*. Belfast, 1996.

Bairner, Alan. 'Ireland, Sport and Empire'. In 'An Irish Empire'? *Aspects of Ireland and the British Empire*, edited by Keith Jeffery, 57-76. Manchester; New York, 1996.

Bairner, Alan. *Sport, nationalism, and globalization: European and North American perspectives*.
Albany, 2001.

Bairner, Alan. *Sport and the Irish: histories, identities, issues*. Dublin, 2005.

Blainey, Geoffrey. *A Game of Own: The Origins of Australian Football*. Melbourne, 1990.

Bodnar, John. *The Transplanted: a history of immigrants in urban America*. Bloomington, 1985.

Bogdanov, Dusko. "Influence of National Sport Team Identity on National Identity". PhD diss., Florida State University, 2011.

Bollen, David. *Up on the Hill: A History of St Patrick's College, Goulburn*. Sydney 2008.

Boland, S. J. *Faith of our Fathers: The Redemptorists in Australia, 1882-1982*. Armadale, 1982.

Booth, Douglas, and Colin Tatz. *One-eyed: a view of Australian sport*. Sydney, 2009.

Braniff, John. *And Gladly Teach: The Marist Experience in Australia 1872-2000*. Melbourne, 2006.

Brady, Sara. *That Auld Feeling: Performances of Irishness at New York's Gaelic Park*. New York, 2004.

Cashman, Richard. *Australian sport through time: the history of sport in Australia*. Sydney, 1997.

- Cashman, Richard. *Paradise of sport: the rise of organised sport in Australia*. Melbourne, 1995.
- Cashman, Richard. *Sport in the National Imagination: Australian Sport in the Federation Decades*. Sydney, 2002.
- Clarke, Brian P. *Piety and Nationalism: Lay Voluntary Associations and the Creation of an Irish-Catholic Community in Toronto, 1855-1895*. Toronto, 1993.
- Clark, Manning. *A Short History of Australia*. Ringwood, 1963.
- Clark, Manning. *A History of Australia*. Melbourne, 1999.
- Cleary, P. S. *Australia's Debt to Irish Nation-Builders*. Sydney, 1933.
- Coldrey, Barry M. *Faith and Fatherland: the Christian Brothers and the Development of Irish Nationalism, 1838-1921*. Dublin, 1988.
- Coogan, Tim Pat. *Wherever the Green is Worn: the Story of the Irish Diaspora*. Dublin, 2002.
- Costello, Con. *Botany Bay: the story of the convicts transported from Ireland to Australia, 1791-1853*. Cork, 1987.
- Cronin, Mike. *Sport and nationalism in Ireland: Gaelic games, soccer and Irish identity since 1884*. Dublin, 1999.
- Cronin, Mike, Mark Duncan and Paul Rouse. *The GAA: A People's History*. Dublin, 2009.
- Campbell, Malcolm. *Ireland's New Worlds: Immigrants, Politics, and Society in the United States and Australia, 1815-1922*. Madison, 2008.
- Darby, Paul. *Gaelic Games, Nationalism and the Irish Diaspora in the United States*. Dublin, 2009.
- De Búrca, Marcus. *The Gaelic Athletics Association and organised Sport in Ireland in Sport in the making of Celtic Cultures*. London, 1999.
- Doyle, Alaban. *The Story of the Marist Brothers in Australia, 1872-1972*. Sydney, 1972.
- Dunning, Eric, and Kenneth Sheard. *Barbarians, Gentlemen and players: A Sociological Study of the Development of Rugby Football*. London, 2005.

- Fleming, Justin. *The Crest of the Wave: A history of Waverly College, 1903-2003*. Sydney, 2003.
- Fogarty, Ronald. *Catholic Education in Australia, 1806-1950*. Melbourne, 1959.
- Handlin, Oscar. *Boston's Immigrants, 1790-1865: a study in acculturation*. Cambridge; London, 1941
- Handlin, Oscar. *The Uprooted*. Boston, 1973.
- Hargreaves, John. *Sport and Popular Culture*. Cambridge, 1986.
- Headon, David. *The Best Ever Australian Sports Writing: A 200-year collection*. Melbourne, 2001.
- Healey, Paul. *Gaelic Games and the Gaelic Athletic Association*. Cork, 1998.
- Hickey, Regis. *Patrick Ambrose Treacy: Christian Brother, Enterprising Immigrant*. Brisbane, 2012.
- Horne, Donald. *The Story of the Australian People*. Sydney, 1972.
- Huggins, Mike. *The Victorians and Sport*. London, 2004.
- Kelly, Helen. *Irish 'Ingeles': The Irish Immigrant Experience in Argentina, 1840-1920*. Dublin, 2009.
- Keogh, Dermot. 'Mannix, de Valera and Irish nationalism'. In *The Irish Emigrant Experience in Australia*, edited by John O'Brien and Pauric Travers, 196-225. Dublin, 1991.
- Keogh, Dermot. *Twentieth-century Ireland: Nation and State*. Dublin, 1994.
- Kildea, Jeff. *Anzacs and Ireland*. Cork, 2007.
- Kildea, Jeff. *Tearing the Fabric: Sectarianism in Australia 1910 to 1925*. Sydney, 2002.
- Lea-Scarlett, Errol. *The Faith of Irishtown: A history of St Felix Parish Bankstown*. Sydney, 1982.
- Loftus, Belinda. *Mirrors: orange and green*. Dublin, 1994.
- Lunn, A. *A history of Skiing*. London, 1927.
- MacDonagh, Oliver. *The Sharing of the Green: a Modern Irish History for Australians*. Sydney, 1996.

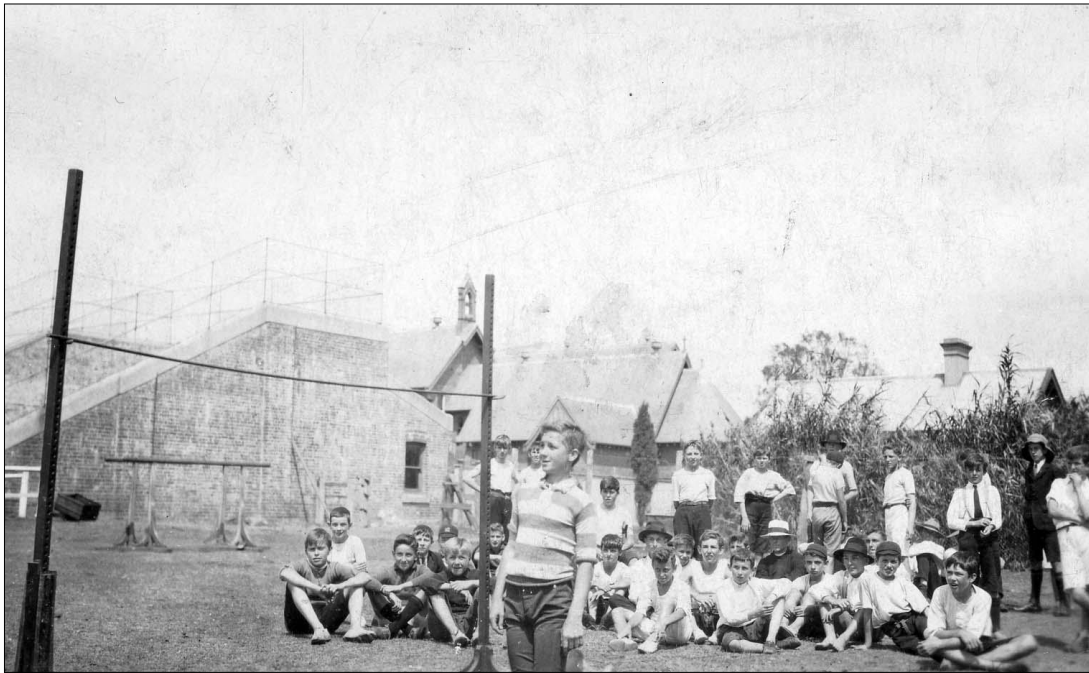
- MacDonagh, Oliver. 'The Irish in Australia: A General overview' . In *Ireland and the Irish-Australia*, edited by Oliver MacDonagh and W. F. Mandle, 155-174. Canberra, 1986.
- Malcolm, Elizabeth. '10,000 miles away: Irish Studies Down Under'. In *Ireland beyond Boundaries: Mapping Irish Studies in the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Liam Harte and Yvonne Whelan, 39-52. London, 2007.
- Mandle, W. F. *The GAA and Irish Nationalist Politics, 1884-1924*. Dublin, 1987.
- Mangan, J. A. 'Noble Specimens of Manhood: Schoolboy Literature and the Creation of a Colonial Chivalric Code'. In *Imperialism and Juvenile Literature*, edited by Jeffrey Richard, 173-194. Manchester, 1989.
- Mason, Tony. *Sport in Britain: A Social History*. Cambridge; New York, 1989.
- Mazzaroli, L. A. "The Irish in New South Wales, 1884–1914: some aspects of Irish subculture". PhD diss., University of New South Wales, 1980.
- McBride, Lawrence W. 'Introduction: Images, Icons and the Irish nationalist imagination, from the Manchester martyrs through the commemoration of the heroes of the War of Independence'. In *Images, Icons and the Irish Nationalist Imagination*, edited by Lawrence W. McBride, 10-16. Dublin, 1999.
- McCarthy, Larry. 'Irish-Americans and Sport in the Twentieth century'. In *Making the Irish American: history and heritage of the Irish in the United States*, edited by J.J. Lee and Marion R. Casey, 457-471. New York, 2006.
- McCartney, Clem, and Lucy Bryson. *Clashing symbols? A report on the use of flags, anthems, and national symbols in Northern Ireland*. Belfast, 1994.
- McConville, Chris. *Croppies, Celts and Catholics: The Irish in Australia*. Caulfield, 1987.
- McDevitt, Patrick F. *May the Best Man Win: Sport, Masculinity, and Nationalism in Great Britain and the empire, 1880-1935*. New York, 2004.
- McElligott, Tom. *The Story of Handball: The Game, the Players the History*. Dublin, 1997.

- McGowan, Mark. *The Waning of the Green: Catholics, the Irish, and Identity in Toronto, 1887–1922*. Montreal, 1999.
- Miller, Kerby A. *Emigrants and Exiles: Ireland and the Irish exodus to North America*. New York, 1985.
- O’Brien, John B. ‘The Australianisation of the Australian Catholic Church: Panico-culprit or victim?’. In *Ireland and Australia, 1798-1998: Studies in Culture, Identity and Migration*, edited by Philip Bull, Frances Devlin-Glass and Helen Doyle, 177-185. Sydney, 2000.
- O’Brien, John, and Paucic Travers. *The Irish Emigrant Experience in Australia*. Dublin, 1991.
- O’Donoghue, K. K. *Brother P. A. Treacy and the Christian Brothers in Australia and New Zealand*. Melbourne, 1983.
- O’Connor, Patrick H. *The Hibernian Society of New South Wales, 1880-1980: A Centenary History*. Sydney, 1980.
- O’Farrell, Patrick. *The Irish in Australia: 1788 to the Present*. Sydney, 2000.
- O’Farrell, Patrick. *The Catholic Church and Community: An Australian History*. Third edition: Sydney, 1992.
- O’Farrell, Patrick. *Vanished Kingdoms: Irish in Australia and New Zealand: A Personal Excursion*. Sydney, 1990.
- O’Flynn, John, and Ainsley Baldwin. *The History of the Gaelic Athletic Association in Canada*. Bloomington, 2008.
- O’Grady, Joseph. *How the Irish became Americans*. New York, 1973.
- Orwell, George. ‘The Sporting Spirit’. In *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, edited by Sonia Orwell & Ian Angus, London, 1968.
- Perkins, Harold. ‘Sport and Society: Empire into the Commonwealth’. In *Sport, Culture, Society: International historical and sociological perspectives*, edited by J. A. Mangan and R. B. Small, 233-251. London, 1986.

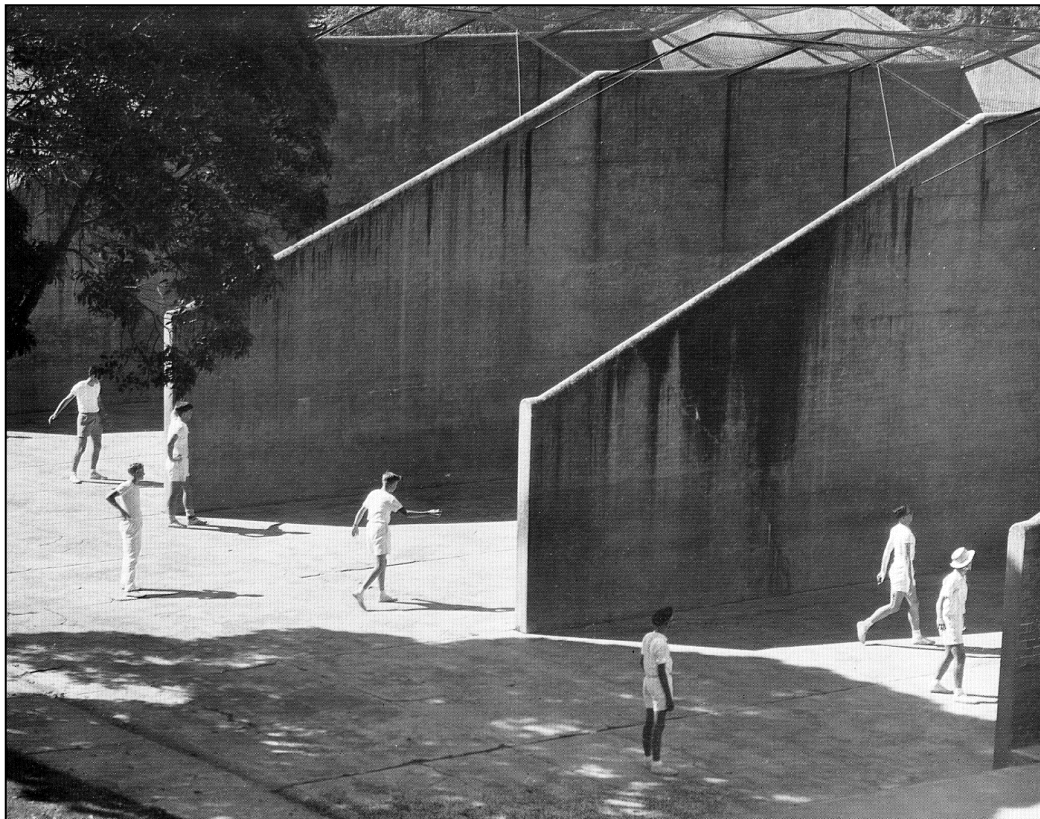
- Quinn, Joseph. "Wartime Cooperation between the United Kingdom and Eire, 1940-42". PhD diss., Trinity College Dublin, 2010.
- Reid, Richard and Brendon Kelson. *Sinners, Saints and Settlers: A journey through Irish Australia*. Canberra, 2010.
- Reilly, Eileen. 'Beyond gilt shamrock: symbolism and realism in the cover art of Irish historical and political fiction, 1880-1814'. In *Images, Icons and the Irish Nationalist Imagination*, edited by Lawrence W. McBride, 95-112. Dublin, 1999.
- Rickard, John. 'H. B. Higgins: "One of those Wild Irreconcilable Irishmen"'. In *The Irish Emigrant Experience in Australia*, edited by John O'Brien and Pauric Travers, 181-195. Dublin, 1991.
- Rouse, Paul. 'Why was the GAA founded?'. In *The Evolution of the GAA*, edited by Dónal Mac an Ailín, David Hassan, and Roddy Hegarty, 118-135. Belfast, 2009.
- Sisson, Elaine. *Pearse's Patriots: St. Enda's and the Cult of Boyhood*. Cork, 2004.
- Steward, D. M. *Mount Royal to Mount Saint Mary: a history of the Christian Brothers at Mount Saint Mary, 1908-1992*. Sydney, 2004.
- Stoddart, Brian. 'Caribbean Cricket: The Role of Sport in Emerging Small Nations Politics'. In *Liberation Cricket: West Indies Cricket Culture*, edited by H. McD. Beckles and B. Stoddart, 239-255. Manchester, 1996.
- Trevelyan, G. M. 'Autobiography of an Historian'. In *An Autobiography and Other Essays*, 1-17. London, 1949.
- Vamplew, Wray, et al, ed. *The Oxford Companion to Australian Sport*. Melbourne, 1994.
- Waterhouse, Richard. *Private Pleasures, Public Leisure: a History of Australian Popular Culture Since 1788*. Melbourne, 1995.
- White, Richard. *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity, 1688-1980*. Sydney, 1981.
- Williams, Caroline. 'Moran, Mannix and St Patrick's Day'. In *Ireland and Australia, 1798-1998: Studies in Culture, Identity and Migration*, edited by Philip Bull, Frances Devlin-Glass and Helen Doyle, 143-151. Sydney, 2000.

Appendices

Appendix A: 'Sites of transition'



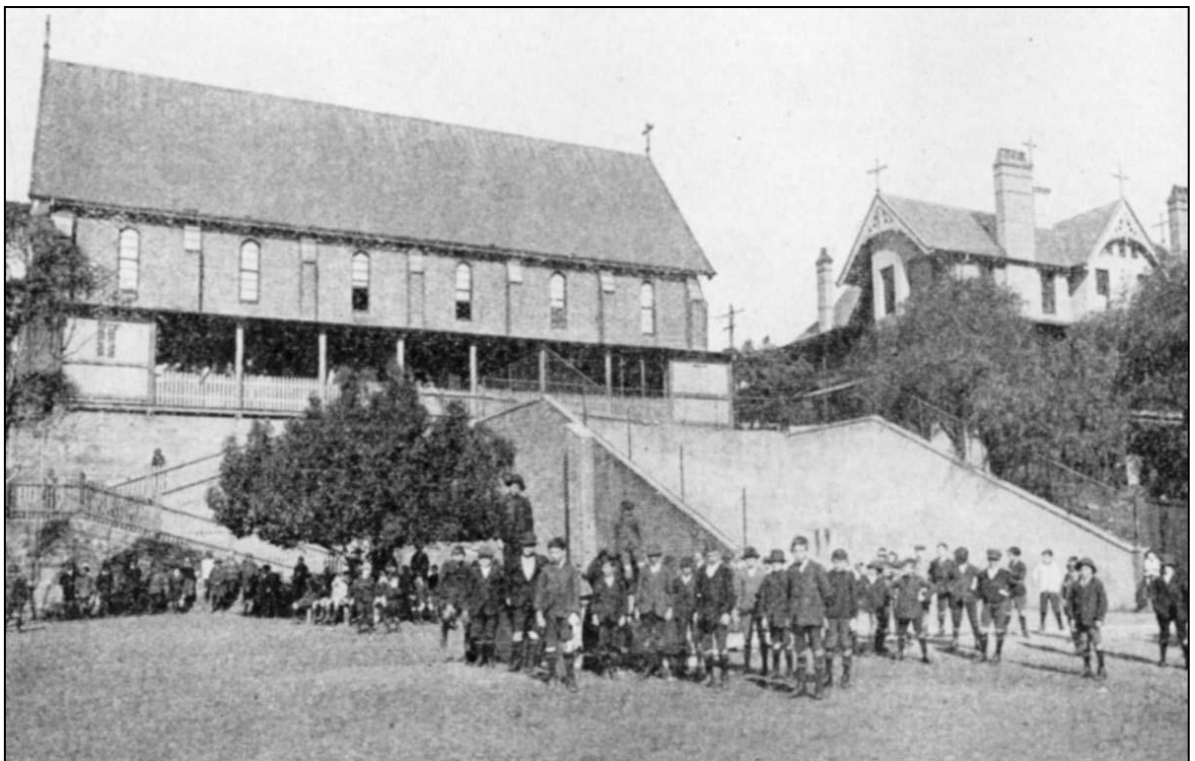
A.1. View of the handball courts at St Enda's Juniorate, Strathfield, as students and Brothers spectate during a sports day, 1922/1923. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



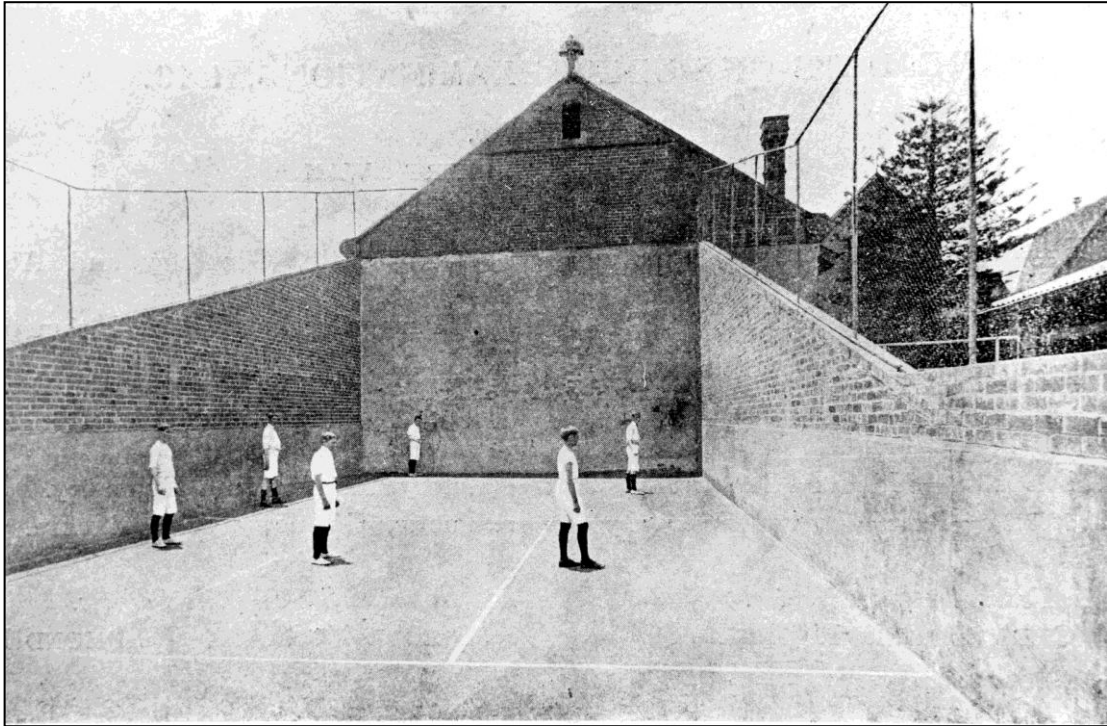
A.2. Juniorate boys at the handball courts, Mount Saint Mary's, Strathfield, 1960s. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



A.3. Aerial view of Christian Brother's College, Balmain, with the handball alley in clear view, probably late twentieth century. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



A.4. Students pose in front of the courts during a handball tournament, Christian Brothers' College, Balmain, 1920s. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



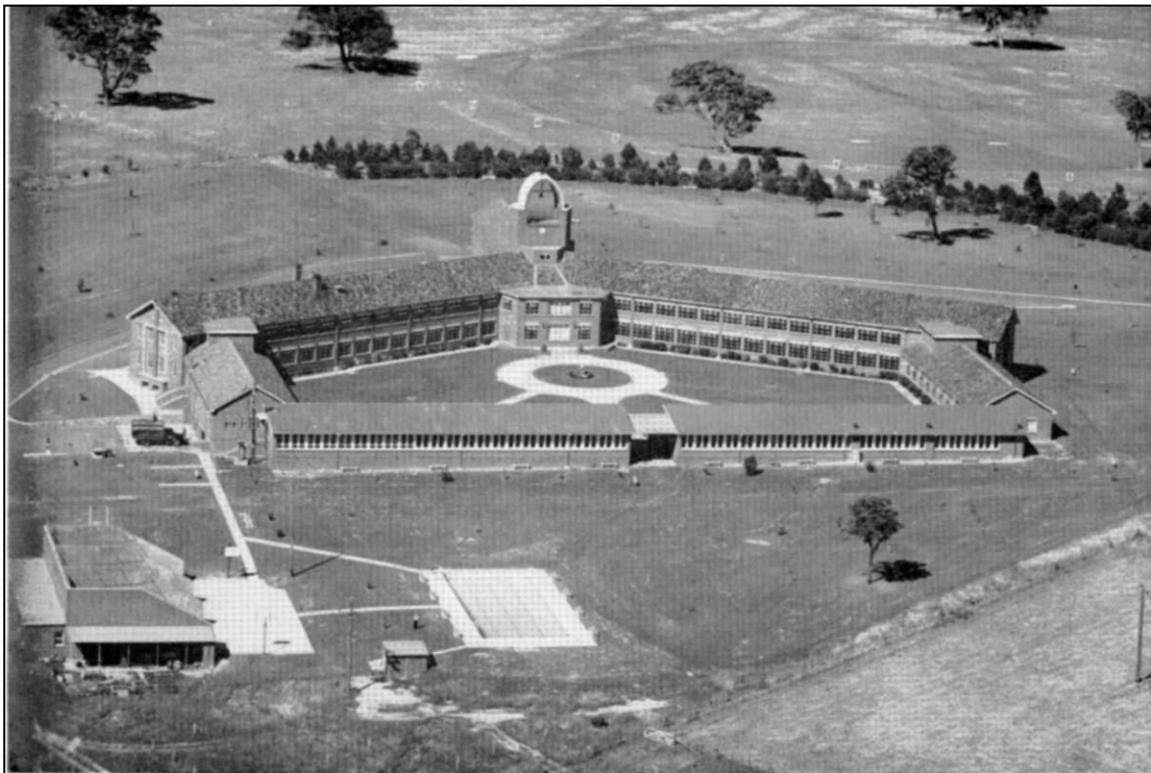
A.5. Students playing handball on the courts, Christian Brothers' College, Lewisham, early 1920s. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



A.6. Christmas Day handball tournament at the Mount Saint Mary's campus, Strathfield. Handball players, Brothers, and other spectators converse under the sports pavilion in front of the handball courts, 1919. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



A.7. Handball courts at St Joseph's, Minto, the Christian Brother's provincial Novitiate from 1939 to 1970. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



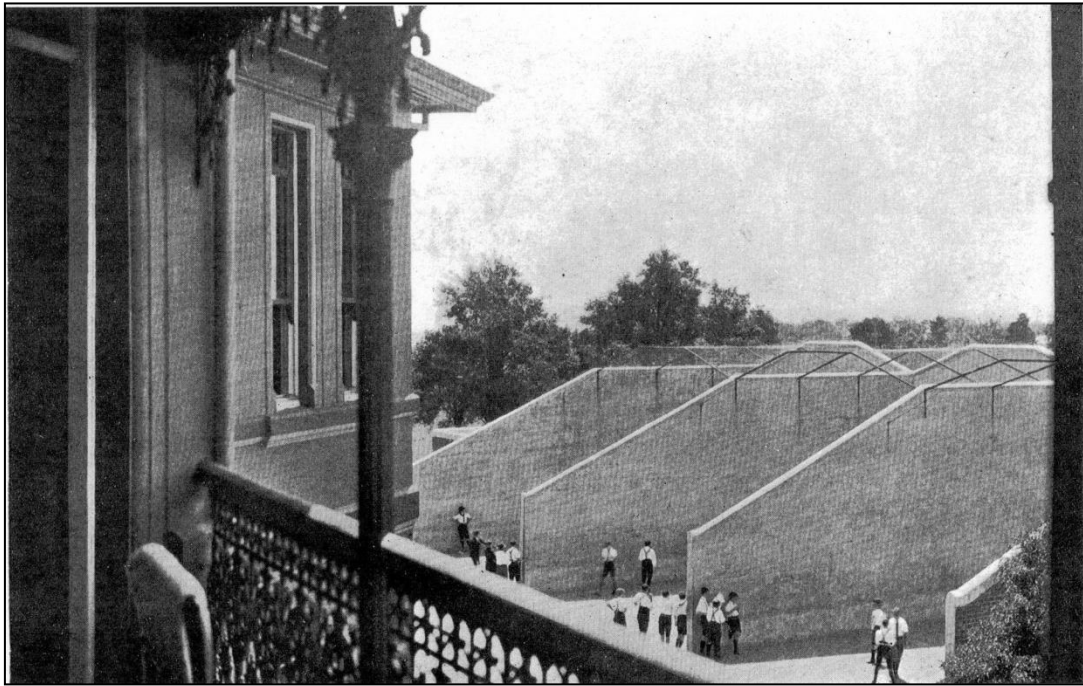
A.8. Aerial view displaying the extensive facilities of the Bundoora Novitiate in Victoria, which served the order in that state from the late twentieth century. The obligatory handball courts can be seen clearly on the left. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



A.9. View of the Scholasticates' handball courts at Strathfield, 1960s. The Scholasticate itself stands directly behind the alley. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



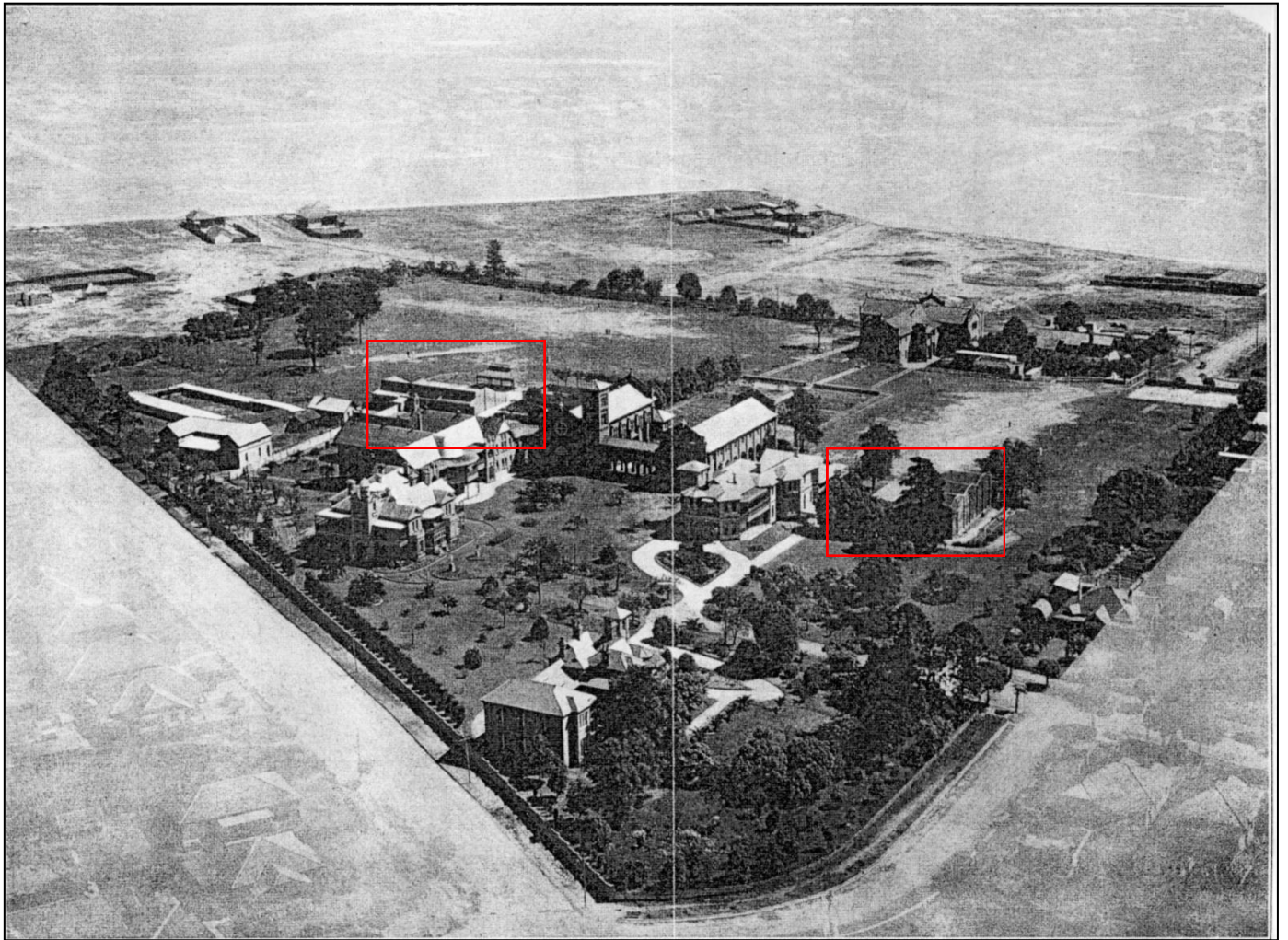
A.10. Close-up view of the Scholasticates' 'alleys', built in 1915 and then extended in 1922. The Barron Memorial Chapel, built in 1925 to commemorate P. S. Brother Charles Barron, can be seen in the background. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



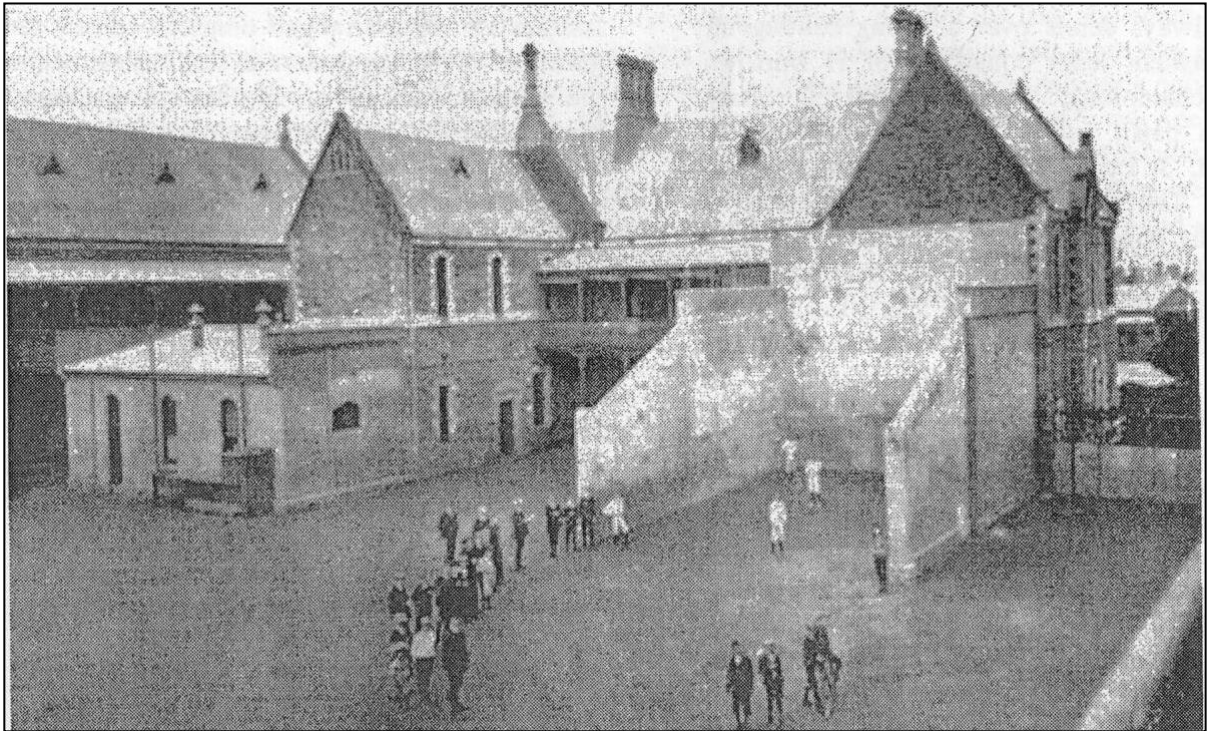
A.11. View of the Junior courts from the St Enda's dormitories, busily occupied by students, 1924. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



A.12. Strathfield handball courts known as 'Davy's Dell', 1958. *Christian Brothers' Archive, NSW.*



A.13: *The Training college*. Aerial view of the campus at Mount Saint Mary's, Strathfield. 1934. The two sets of handball courts are highlighted in red. Taken from *Our Studies*, October 1934—'St Enda's edition'. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW*.

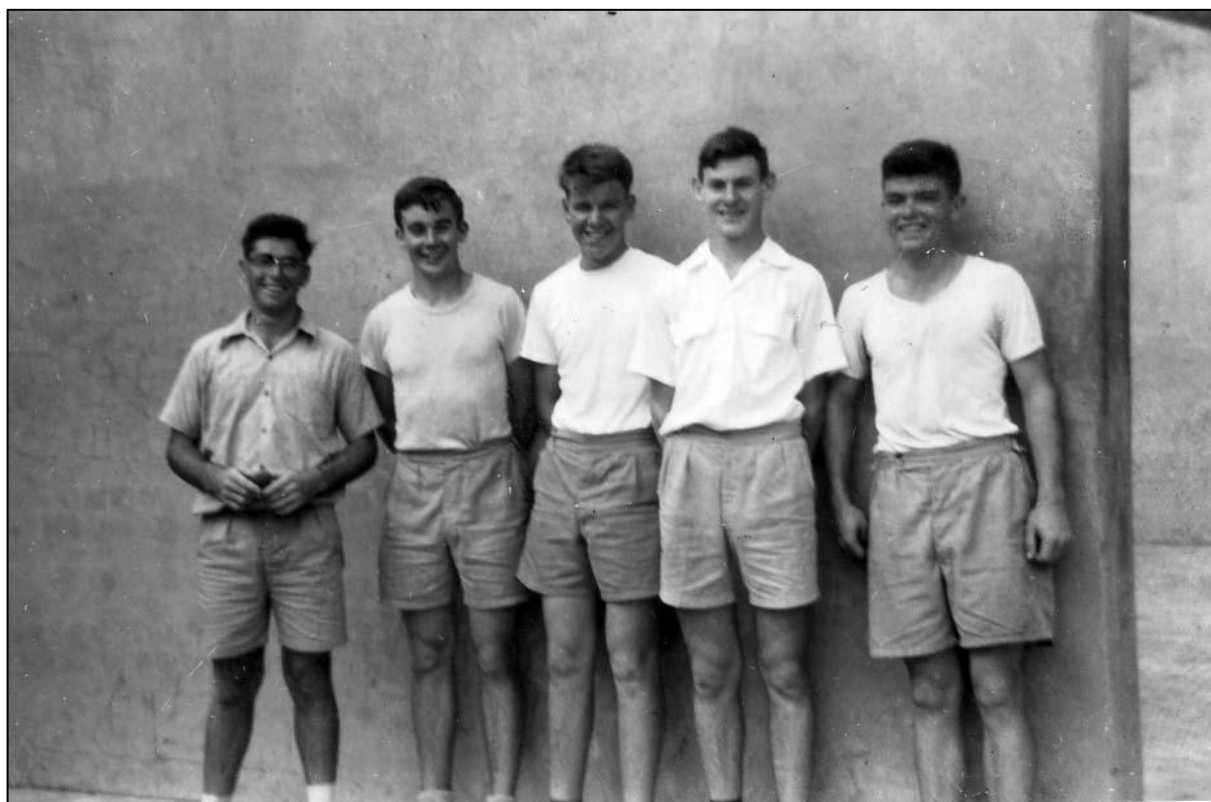


A.14. The handball courts at Christian Brothers' College, Wakefield, Adelaide, 1908. On the occasion of the courts' construction, the *Adelaide Advertiser* reported how 'lovers of the old Irish game of Handball will be pleased to hear that a court has been erected...' (August 28, 1908). *Australian Handball Council*.

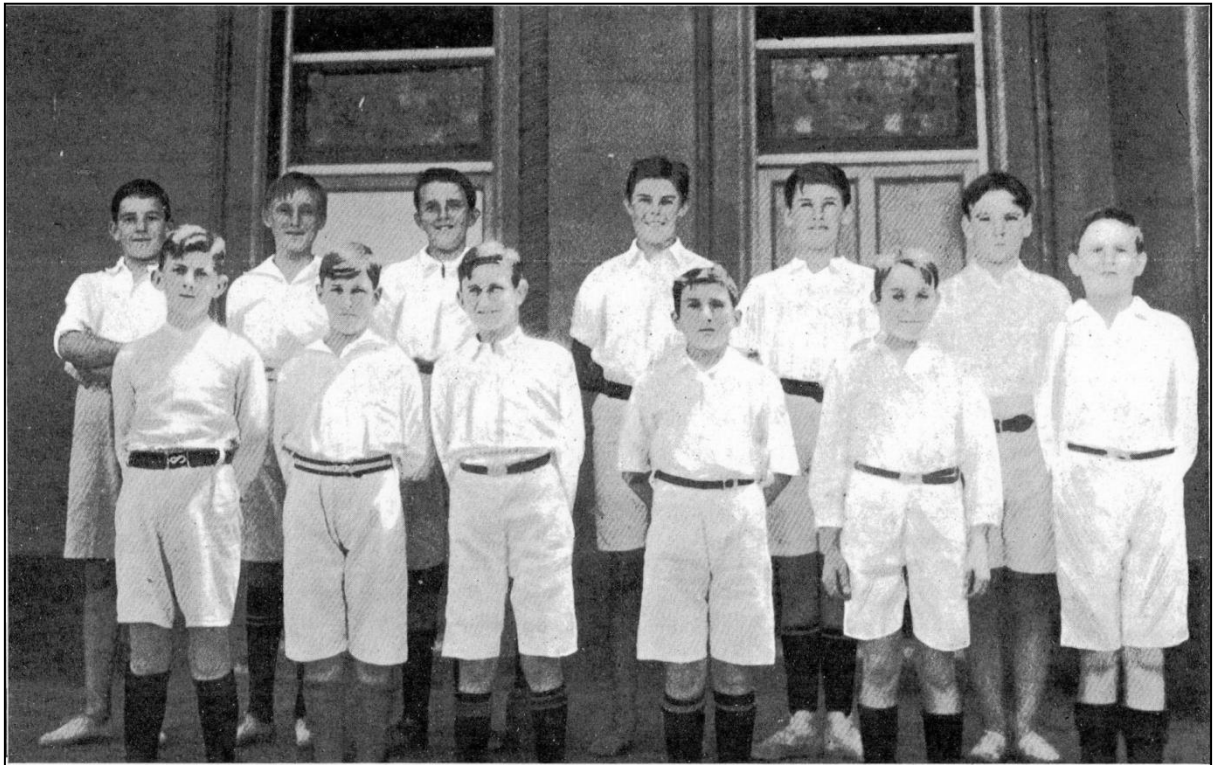
Appendix B: 'Portraits of the past'



B.1. Junior students at St Enda's, Strathfield, due to enter the Novitiate, pose for an end-of-year photo in front of one set of handball courts on the Mount Saint Mary's campus, 1926. *Christian Brothers' archive, Balmain*



B.2. Junior handball players at the courts at St Enda's, 1956. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



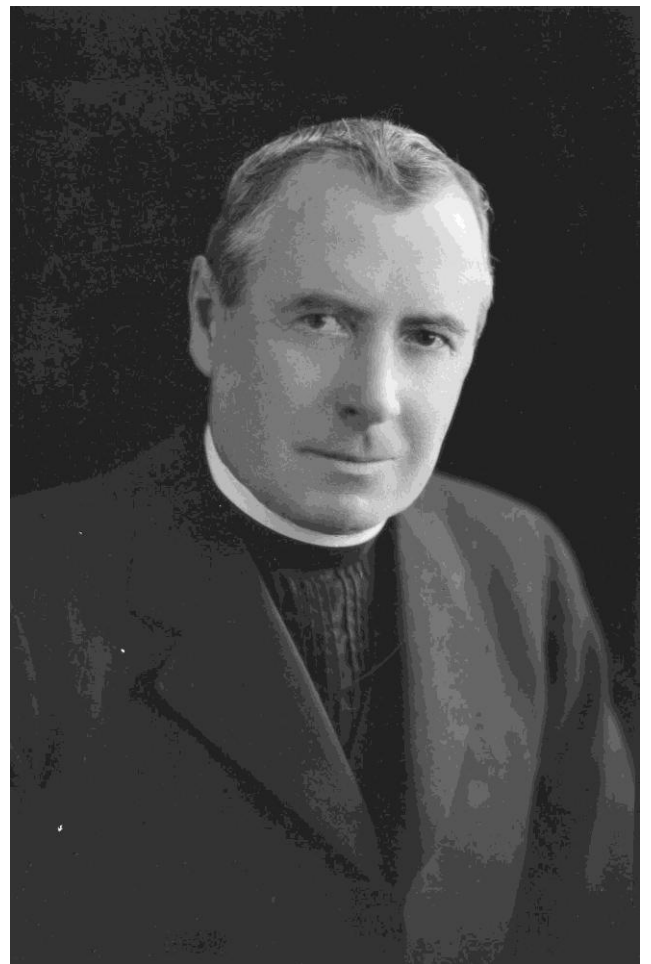
B.3. Three handball teams made up from the students from St Enda's, 1934. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



B.4. Handball champions in the senior, junior, and 'midget' competition at Christian Brother's College, Lewisham, 1910. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



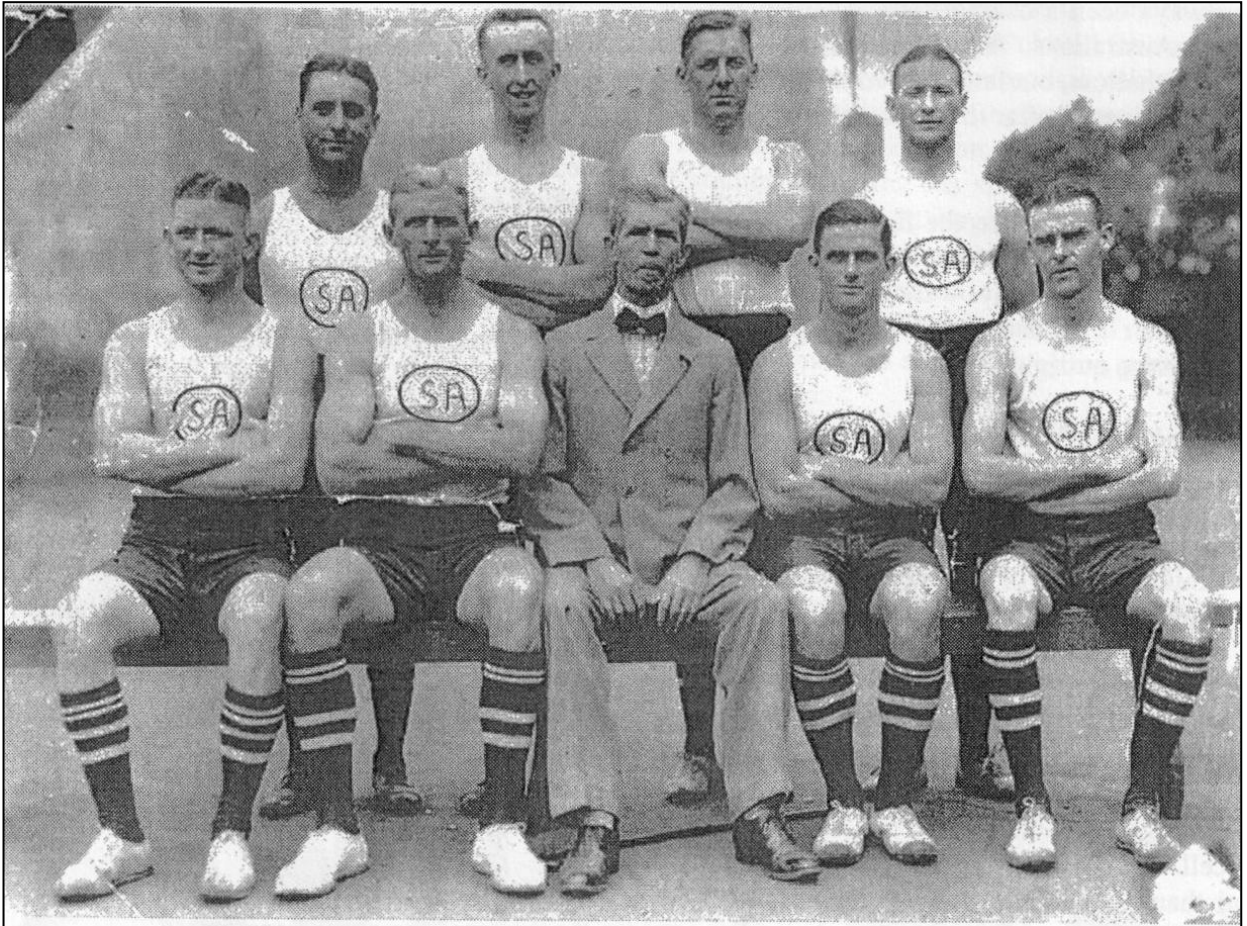
B.5. Brothers Ignatius Doorley and Cornelius McCann, Brother Visitors to Strathfield in 1945, stand in front of a Marian shrine and the back of the handball courts; *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW*.



B.6. Brother Charles Barron, Provincial Superior of the Christian Brothers' in Australia from 1916-1927. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW*.



B.7. Father Edward Teehan, seated centre, at Mascot Parish in 1935 where he served as parish priest till his death on April 25, 1960. *Mascot Parish Records*.



B.8. The South Australian state handball team, 1927. The photo was possibly taken beside the courts at Rostrevor College, Adelaide. *Australian Handball Council*.

Appendix C: 'Symbols of Irish-Australia'



C.1. The front cover of the souvenir book for the Christian Brothers' Golden Jubilee in 1919. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*



C.2. The front cover of a booklet produced in 1924 to promote St Enda's among the Irish-Australian community, featuring cultural and religious symbols of Catholic Ireland. *Christian Brothers Archive, NSW.*

All images reproduced with permission.