

APPENDIX I

SURVEY OF IRISH-JEWISH COMMUNAL MEMORY (2011)

The survey below was conducted among members of the Shalom Ireland web interest group and the Dublin Jewish Progressive Congregation (DJPC) between February and April 2011. The main object was to explore the legacy of communal folklore and the intersection of popular memory with the formal historical record, among current members of Ireland's Jewish community (DJPC) and among expatriates who still strongly identify with their Irish roots (Shalom Ireland). I wished to investigate how ordinary members of the community understand their own family histories, and the factors that inform their memories, impressions and reflections with respect to these. In particular, I wanted to assess the role that is played in the construction of Irish Jewish communal history by three factors: popular images of tsarist Russia, communal arrival myths and the general Jewish meta-narrative of mass emigration (see Section 2.1).

The responses below demonstrate the strong influence that meta-narrative and communal legend continue to wield in the shaping of popular memory. On the other hand, they also reveal a surprising dichotomy between 'official' and more grassroots perceptions of communal history. Even though arrival myths continue to be the order of the day in many formal sources on the community, most of my respondents showed a healthy degree of scepticism as to the veracity of these anecdotes, generally on the basis of little more than intuition.¹ As Section 2.1 has observed, this disconnect between 'official' and grassroots understandings of communal history shows a degree of agency in the way in which the 'official' community chooses to present itself. This may well reflect, albeit unconsciously, the apologetic reasons that have underpinned such presentational choices in the past. The perpetuation of somewhat absurd arrival myths also reflects the implicit irony of the Irish Jewish identity as something unexpected, slightly exotic and even comical.² Contrary to frequent claims, the issue

¹ For a recent example of communal arrival myths in an 'official' source, see 'Jewish Cork: Cork Hebrew Congregation at South Terrace', <http://www.jewishcork.com/history/> (accessed 24 March 2014). For a more detailed analysis of the differences between 'official' and grassroots views, see Wynn, 'Constructs', 69-84.

² Diner, 'Accidental Irish', 1-60.

of identity is something that remains unresolved – perhaps indeed irresolvable – for many Irish Jews.³

A final purpose of the survey was to explore the way in which expatriate Irish Jews reflect upon the place of Jews within Irish society, with a view to analysing broader Jewish perceptions of anti-Jewish sentiment – or the lack thereof – in Ireland (see Section 2.2). Responses to this question illustrate the nostalgic character of Irish Jewish expatriate memory, revealing the nature of what is remembered (or forgotten). These comments shed light upon the current appetite for Irish Jewish history or, rather, the type of history for which there is an appetite.⁴

Questions:

- *[For Shalom Ireland members only]* Your name, current country of residence and how long you have been living there; please include other countries where you might have lived along the way, and for how long.
- What is your understanding of how your ancestors ended up in Ireland?
- What are your perceptions of what life was like for them in the Russian empire?
- *[For Shalom Ireland members only]* What are your reflections on your time in Ireland?

³ Wynn, 'Ireland's Jewish Identity Crisis'; cf. Melanie Brown, 'Irish-Jewish Community Has Evolved To Be Part of the Social Fabric', *Irish Times*, 18 February 2014.

⁴ With thanks to Katrina Goldstone for her insightful observations on this topic.

RESPONSES

From: Heather Abrahamson (DJPC)

Date: 21 April 2011

1. I believe that life was difficult for Jews in the late nineteenth century in Russia and other parts of eastern Europe. They knew about the west and more tolerance and opportunities for them to better themselves in places such as Britain and America. In many cases, relations had already emigrated and sent encouraging reports of where and how they were living. Young men already settled needed wives to start families. If brothers, cousins, uncles etc. had already made the move, they encouraged their relations to join and work with them or for them. Their work, by and large, was portable, as many of them came as pedlars, so wherever they settled, they could move around and trade with local people, making themselves understood by showing their wares. As part of the United Kingdom at that time, and with Dublin, Belfast and Cork as major ports, it was not surprising that many of our ancestors fetched up in Ireland, as much as England. The apocryphal story of Jews disembarking at Cork, thinking it was New York, while tempting to believe, does not seem very plausible to me, as Jews were knowledgeable, smart and fairly clued-in, which is why they tended to flourish wherever they went. I am sure some sea captains took advantage of the naive and asked for a fare to America, fully intending to leave their passengers off in Cork, but how widespread this was I am not sure and I don't think it was the case with my family.

2. I am hazy about my people's life in Russia under the tsars. I understand that they led a very ghettoed existence, due as much to their own desire to lead a Jewish life and, as to a repressive regime which sought to make Jews conform to the rules and institutions of the empire. In the small towns and shtetls, they had all the religious and communal institutions they needed. In the bigger cities they still kept themselves to themselves for cultural and religious purposes, much like any ethnic group. However, I expect their lives were more or less harsh, depending on the disposition of their gentile neighbours and the local governors. The May Laws and the Jewish Pale of Settlement must have made life very difficult, added to which, intermittent pogroms and forced conscription into the tsar's army would have made life intolerable for some. However, I have to be honest and say that, while my

maternal grandparents were very significant in my life, and, in fact, my grandfather lived with us between my ages of seven and seventeen, I never heard any terrible stories about hardship. This could be because they wanted to put all this behind them, or perhaps because they had come solely for economic reasons, choosing a jurisdiction which they knew to be tolerant and promising for their betterment. Certainly they managed to prosper and, in most cases, saw that their children gained a good education, fitting them to succeed in all walks of life. They may have clung to the Yiddish language and their religious beliefs and practices and, of course, marriage within the faith, but, in our case, they strove to speak good English and assimilate as rapidly as possible into the society around them.

I think that's the best I can do, Natalie. We always regret that we did not take sufficient interest at the time and that the opportunity is now lost to us.

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From: David Goldberg (DJPC)
Date: 12 March 2011

I have often thought about that. The information is scanty and I am not sure if it is reliable. My father told the story about his father avoiding conscription into the Russian army. There were eight sons and in order to avoid conscription they each took a different family name, because the first born son was not conscripted. But even today I do not know the names of all eight branches. . . .

My grandfather was Leben Goldberg. He was known as Leben the Red because he had red hair. He came to Ireland somewhere in the late nineteenth century I think. It makes sense that it was late 1890s because they were in Limerick in 1904 when the 'pogrom' occurred with the Redemptorists. He came with his mother Elke, and I do not know if the other brothers came then or not. The story is that they were en route to the USA. The passage was paid from Riga to New York on a ship which brought timber out of Lithuania. When the ship reached Cork or possibly Cobh, the Captain told them that they were in the nearest parish to America. Another unlikely story is that when they reached Cork, one of the passengers who spoke little English asked 'Ver are ve?' and a reply from quayside said 'Ye're in Cork now boy'. He thought he said New York so they all disembarked.

I have no idea of the veracity of either of these stories.

They went to Limerick and settled there until 1904. They then went to Cork. The story is that my grandfather who had two children then, was going to the boat to sail on to New York. He was about to take a train to Cobh to get the ship, but his son caught a hand in the door of the carriage and had to be taken off to hospital. My grandfather was suspicious of such signs and thought it a portent, so he stayed in Cork.

Well that is the story: if you believe it you believe anything. I think it is rather more of a tale.

I think life in Akmian was hard. The family may have been innkeepers, or sheep stealers, or both. I don't know. . . .

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From: Joan Finkel (DJPC)

Date: 14 March 2011

My maternal grandparents came from Riga in Latvia near the end of the nineteenth century. I believe they came as result of the harsh conditions under which they lived and chose Ireland which is where quite a few of their fellow countrymen/women had settled. . . .

Sadly, there had been a big fire where they lived which destroyed all records, so I only have vague memories of my grandmother's recollections, my grandfather having died when I was just a small child. . . .

Regarding the life my grandparents lived back in Riga, my grandmother often spoke of swimming in the river which would indicate it was quite a rural area. . . .

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From: David Isaacson (DJPC)
Date: 10 March 2011

1. They arrived on boats leaving a hostile environment and probably hoping to get to the USA.
2. Hostile and racist and uncertain, perhaps as portrayed in the musical 'Fiddler on the Roof'. . . .

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From: Max Seligman (DJPC)
Date: 10 March 2011

1. What has been explained to me seems by way of a joke. When my ancestors arrived in Cork, it sounded like New York, so they disembarked. My guess is they arrived around 1890 or so.
2. A question for which I do not have an absolute answer – my perception is that Jews have been continuously vilified for mostly unjustified reasons – easy scapegoats. But there is also the belief that my ancestors were economic migrants. . . .

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From: Anne Lapedus Brest (Shalom Ireland)
Date: 8 March 2011

Your name, current country of residence and how long you have been living there; please include other countries where you might have lived along the way, and for how long.

Anne Lapedus Brest. I have lived in South Africa for fifty years exactly. (Left Ireland [in] January 1961.)

What is your understanding of how your ancestors ended up in Ireland?

My great grandfather left Lithuania (Vieksniai) and went to Ireland because he had cousins there. His Brother Siah Lapedus for one, and all his Yodaiken cousins for

another. A lot of people who came over from the Baltic States seemed to have family in Ireland. As to why my great grandfather's brother went there, I can't tell you. There are so many urban legends as to why Ireland. Some say that they were en route to the USA but got tired of the journey and disembarked in Ireland. Others say that they were on their way to the USA and when the Captain called out 'CORK' in a Corkonian accent, which sounded a bit like CARRRK, the passengers thought he was saying New YAARK and got off (MOST definitely NOT likely, but those are urban legends!).

What are your perceptions of what life was like for them in the Russian empire?

Definitely NOT pleasant. They lived under the threat of their sons being drafted into the Army and going off for twenty-five years. They lived with pogroms and threatened pogroms, and there was a huge influx to Ireland in about 1880 from eastern Europe (the Baltic States).

What are your reflections on your time in Ireland?

I lived in Ireland from the time I was born, until I was almost fifteen years old. I have wonderful memories and I loved and still love Ireland. I remember the fresh crisp air, the terrible cold, damp, the wonderful beaches, the fish (plaice – fried in butter) and porridge with CREAM on it, and this cream came from the bottle of milk which was delivered to our door. I remember Johnston Mooney and O'Brien delivering our Bread, I think it was called a 'turnover' and it wasn't sliced. I remember next door bought Kennedys bread which came sliced and in a greaseproof paper. I remember Ireland being a very Catholic country, and the Jewish shops in Clanbrassil Street in the SCR where everyone bumped into everyone. Bewleys, Pims, Cassidys, F. W. Woolworth, and Hughes Bros. (HB) for ice cream. I remember the Dublin mountains and cycling up them, and the fresh green grass and the cattle, and sheep and the beautiful aromas from the country districts.

The wonderful beaches, Malahide, Sutton (Hole in the Wall) and of course going to Bray and climbing Bray Head. Whilst the COLD in Ireland stays in my mind a lot, and trips to Dún Laoghaire to sit in the car whilst the waves smashed up against the grey railed wall, and if we could get out of the car, we'd go to Teddy's and buy Ice-cream (whipped). I also remember wonderful heatwaves, and us going to Brittas Bay, Courtown Harbour, to Galway, and to Howth. Titania's Palace, Powerscourt, the Dublin Mountains, Wicklow Mountains, Sally Gap, Laragh,

Brownies (Jacqueline Woolfson (now Stein) was Brown Owl, and Tawny Owl (can't remember her name), Bnei Akiva (Ellis Yodaiken) and summer-schools, Rathgar National Primary School, and Stratford College high school, Tinkers, Gypsies, Jacobs Biscuits, St. Stephens Green, Herbert Park, the [river] Dodder, Shaws Woods (would make your name MUD if you were seen within a mile of the place), O'Connell Street, Nelson's Pillar, Adelaide Road Shul, Terenure Road Shul, Greenville Hall, so many people on bicycles, rather than in cars, snow and sleet and slush, Telefunken Radio and TV, the [theatres and] cinemas, the Gaiety, Ambassador, Olympia, the Royal, the Ellimans, Rabbi Jakobovitz (*z'l*) and his wife Amelie, (*o'h*), Rabbi and Mrs. Alony, the Glucks, learning ballet with Christine Cane and half of Dublin's Jewish kids being there, and I remember always loving Ireland, loving the city itself, and the surrounding beauty of the countryside. So GREEN everywhere, and so much rain. Conkers around Simchas Torah time, and little boys (under bar-mitzvah) wearing a tallis in shul, churches everywhere and people crossing themselves in the bus when we passed a church, same for a Christian funeral, people crossed themselves as the hearse drove along the roads, Corpus Christi parades, Clarnico Murray, Jacobs Club biscuits, Maccabi, and the long warm evenings on good summer nights, and the smell of freshly cut grass, and daisies and buttercups, nettles in the lane and using dock leaves to alleviate the pain of the sting. Huddling around fires (no central heating in homes then, well, certainly not in OUR home in the 'fifties) and coal in the coal shed, turf and coke. Fire-lighters ('Zip' I think they were called), Lino on the floor and Bronco toilet paper in the loo. Some people had newspapers on a hook [instead]. Philly Rubinstein's butchery with wonderful sausages and *vursht* [salami] and sawdust on the floor. And how JEWISH the SCR [South Circular Road] was in those days. My friendships with Anne Marie Pearson who lived next door to me in Kenilworth Park, Minnie Woolfson, Hilary Rosenblatt, Anita Yaffe, Marcia Rubinstein, Alan Jacks, Aubrey Woolfson, Cyril Newman, Gloria Latherman. My cycling all over Dublin, and to Dún Laoghaire when I got older.

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From: David Lenten (Shalom Ireland)

Date: 24 February 2011

I tend to agree that folklore overrides the real reasons for emigration. My great grandfather left Lithuania as a fourteen-year-old boy and went to Cork, why. Louis [Lentin] thinks to escape military call up for twenty-five years. But who did he stay with, his mother's family, I just don't know. . . .

I think you will find that a significant number came from Akmene, so families followed.

As you know the Clein family is huge but they started emigrating late 1880s to Atlanta . . .

I think the reasons for emigration were a mixture of reasons and not that they thought they were in New York.

Conditions on the ships were appalling if you were travelling third or steerage class. Some would die on route, certainly if they were going to NY. . . .

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From: Martin Simmons (Shalom Ireland)

Date: 24 February 2011

1. Martin Simmons, live in London UK resident here twelve years, prior to that lived fifty-five years in Dublin.

2. My Parents came to Dublin late 1930s.

3. From my grandparents I understood that life was lived in fear of pogroms and they had no expectation that life would be any better, unless they went to the USA, (as it happens, they only got as far as UK).

4. For me, Ireland was a wonderful place, plenty of opportunity for someone prepared to work hard and take limited risks. I never experienced serious antisemitism, just an odd ignorant remark on a couple of occasions. . . .

APPENDIX II

CORRESPONDENCE FROM THE DUBLIN HEBREW CONGREGATION REGARDING THE LIMERICK BOYCOTT (JANUARY TO JUNE 1904)

The letters below, most of which were handwritten by Ernest Harris himself between January and June 1904, are recorded in Correspondence Book No. 1 of the Dublin Hebrew Congregation (DHC). They are transcribed to the best of my ability, given frequent difficulties in deciphering Harris's handwriting and the deterioration of the originals which, in many instances, are badly blotted and/or faded.⁵ This correspondence, which is an invaluable addition to the historical record of the Limerick Boycott, urgently requires proper conservation treatment.

The key aspects of the Boycott letters are:

- **Intervention**

1. Harris felt that the Chief Rabbi should intervene to refute Creagh's accusations, believing that Adler's 'eminence' would lend this a sense of authority. As Adler issued no public statement on the matter, we can assume either that the Anglo-Jewish authorities did not wish to risk giving these allegations further credence by dignifying them with a response,⁶ or that they simply did not wish to heighten the Limerick controversy through a high-profile public dispute between Jewish and Catholic clergy. Adler was, however, happy for Levin to forward his comments privately to the Catholic bishop of Limerick, Dr O'Dwyer (*Letters 9, 10, 15*).⁷

2. Harris reveals that a member of the Jewish community, Morris Harris, had been at least partially responsible for the forceful comments of the Protestant bishop, Dr. Bunbury.⁸ The resentment that Bunbury provoked among Limerick's Catholic population validates the wisdom of Adler's otherwise potentially questionable caution (*Letter 28*).

⁵ The gaps in my transcriptions are marked [...], and words that are not entirely clear to me are flagged [?]. The punctuation, which is erratic, is exactly as in Harris's original letters. Consistent with Chapter Four, the names of those seeking charity as a result of the Boycott have been abbreviated in order to respect their privacy and that of their descendants.

⁶ This was a common Jewish reaction in confronting anti-Jewish canards, for example, in the Beilis Affair (see Section 1.4); cf. Gruzenberg, *Memoirs*, 105-09.

⁷ Simmonds, 'Limerick', 26.

⁸ See also Moore, 'Anti-Semitism', 63 (n.72).

- **Investigation**

The correspondence shows that the Board of Deputies' investigative deputation was divided, with Prag and Harris's sympathy towards the victims winning out over Rehfisch's prejudice and scepticism. This is particularly interesting when weighed against Harris's initial caution regarding the appropriate disbursement of relief. The Board endorsed the deputation's proposal for assisting those poorer families who were most affected by the Boycott, which was intended to return them to self-sufficiency.⁹ As observed in Section 2.3, reading between the lines, even Harris and Prag do not appear to have been unduly concerned about the situation or its long-term consequences (*Letter 38*).

- **Closure**

As far as the Dublin Jewish authorities were concerned, the Boycott appears to have been finished business by late June 1904, when this correspondence terminates abruptly. Nevertheless, the *Jewish Chronicle* continued to report sporadically on the Boycott throughout 1905 (*Letter 40*).

⁹ *Jewish Chronicle*, 10 June 1904.

Letter 1: Harris to Rev. Elias B Levin, 12 January 1904

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of yours of the 12th. inst. enclosing a cutting from the Limerick Echo containing an address of a Father Creagh on Jewish trading in Limerick.

I have read the address with the deepest regret, how one occupying the position of a Minister of Religion should make statements to inflame his hearers against the Jewish Residents in your city, which I am convinced are absolutely and totally devoid of truth, and how any Journal of responsibility could publish such a tirade of abuse passes my comprehension. I have sent the cutting to the Secretary of the Board of Deputies in London and suggested that they should communicate with the Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick, as this will have far more weight than anything I could do.

I remain

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

President DHC

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Letter 2: Harris to Charles Emmanuel, Secretary of the Board of Deputies, 12 January 1904

Dear Sir

I enclose you a letter which I have this morning received from the Rev. Mr. Levin, minister of the Limerick Congregation, enclosing a cutting of the Limerick Echo of 12th. inst. of an address of the Rev. Father Creagh on Jewish trade in Limerick. I have replied that I am forwarding his letter and the cutting to you, so that the Board of Deputies could make representations to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Limerick as they considered it advisable.

I certainly think something should be done in the matter as addresses of this character are most prejudicial [to our poor/poorer?] co-religionists in a place like Limerick.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 3: Harris to Levin, 15 January 1904

Rev. Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your letter of 14th and deeply regret the unfortunate position of affairs in your city. You have acted properly in calling upon the Head of the Police to afford protection and if you do not receive it, write direct to the Chief Secretary's Office Dublin Castle. The notice will be dealt with in the Jewish Press this week, and I have had a reply from the Secretary of the Board of Deputies that he had sent the matter on to the President for his instructions. I am conferring with my colleagues as to the best course to be adopted.

Let every [...] in this outrageous business be not [?], as it must be brought before Parliament at the earliest possible moment.

Have you any prominent business men amongst your congregation?

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

President DHC

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Letter 4: Harris to the Editor, *Jewish Chronicle*, 18 January 1904

Dear Sir

The Jews in Limerick

In your last issue you published an extract from an address of Father/Rev. [?] Creagh making a series of the most disgraceful charges against the Jews resident in Limerick.

I put a full report of the address which appeared in the Limerick Echo to the Secretary of the Board of Deputies, so that the Board could take in such action as they considered fit.

I have posted you a copy of today's Freeman's Journal which contains a letter addressed by the Rev. E. B. Levin to Mr. Michael Davitt and Mr. Davitt's reply which he asked Mr. Levin's permission to publish.

You will notice that the Freeman's Journal makes no editorial comment on such an important matter. I regret to say that the hostile feeling against the Jews in Limerick is very serious, it is unfortunately a town where the bigotry of the lower

order of Catholics against their fellow Protestants is simply shocking, no wonder Limerick is a fast decaying [?] city.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 5: Harris to Editor, *Jewish World*, 18 January 1904

Dear Sir

I have forwarded you a copy of today's Freeman's Journal, which contains a letter from the Rev. Elias B. Levin to Mr. Michael Davitt, and Mr. Davitt's reply.

You have doubtless read the disgraceful and uncalled for attack by a Father Creagh on the Jews in Limerick which places them in a position of grave danger in a town where religious bigotry and intolerance is rampant. I have sent the full address to the Secretary of the Board of Deputies, so that the Board may take action if they so consider it advisable.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 6: Harris to Levin, 18 January 1904

Rev. Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your favor of 15th. inst.

I am very pleased you wrote [?] to Mr. Michael Davitt and was delighted to read his splendid letter in today's Freeman's Journal on the subject. I have always admired Mr. Davitt for his splendid [...] not only for the people of Ireland, but for every oppressed nationality, his refutations of the ridiculous and absurdly bigoted statements of Father Creagh will assuredly have a beneficial effect, may all of us sincerely thank such a champion of religious toleration and a kind friend of our race as Mr. Davitt has shown himself to be.

You will notice that the Freeman's Journal make no comment on Mr. Davitt's letter.

Yours very truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 7: Harris to Levin

Typewritten, very faded and barely legible: appears to be asking the questions to which Harris refers in his letter to Emmanuel, below.

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Letter 8: Harris to Emmanuel, 19 January 1904

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your favor of 18th. inst. relative to the attack of Father Creagh on the Jews in Limerick.

I am quite unable to answer your questions, so have written to the Rev. Mr. Levin but I find I shall not be able to let you have the information in time for the meeting of the Law and Parliamentary Committee on Monday.

I presume Father Creagh is responsible [?] the address has been published in the Limerick papers [the] 'Leader' and the 'Echo'.

I am told that there are a number of [...] in the Limerick Community and that there are no prominent men amongst them, having any weight, all being foreigners of the middle class.

I have forwarded you a copy of the Daily Express of today, giving Mr. Michael Davitt's letter which was published in Monday's Freeman's Journal. I am informed that there is a very serious hatred towards the Community in Limerick. I received a wire from Mr. Levin that reported some members were assaulted and a general boycott was in place.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 9: Harris to Levin, 20 January 1904

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your favour of 19th with cutting from Limerick Echo and Cork Examiner which I have forwarded to the Board of Deputies and suggested that the Chief Rabbi should write a reply to Father Creagh's latest address. I showed it today to the Rev. Mr. Gudansky, who stated he would write a reply but could not do so for a few days owing to his numerous engagements. I think it would be better from the Chief Rabbi as having regard to his eminent position it will have greater weight.

I hope the position of affairs will soon improve.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 10: Harris to Emmanuel, 20 January 1904

Dear Sir

I enclose you a cutting from the Limerick Echo of yesterday's date giving Father Creagh's reply to Mr. Michael Davitt's letter, and as there are quotations in this address of a most serious character, I would suggest that the Chief Rabbi should be asked to write a reply to it.

I make you also a cutting from yesterday's Cork Examiner.

I have not received yet the information from Limerick to enable me to reply to your questions.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 11: Harris to Levin, 21 January 1904

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your letter of 20th. inst. for which I am obliged. I have communicated with the Board of Deputies.

I have been asked why I have not written to the papers to reply to the attacks made upon your community. I thought it better that I should not do so, it would only tend to increase malignity of the attacks, and as the matter is in the hands of a powerful Board.

I notice that you have sought an interview from the Bishop. I hope it will have some result.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 12: Harris to Emmanuel, 21 January 1904

Dear Sir

I enclose you letter received by [?] from the Rev. Mr. Levin reply to some of the questions asked in yours of the 18th. inst.

With regard to his answer to your question no. [...] I am informed by persons who know Limerick, that a system of moneylending is extensively carried out by men who sell drapery goods on the weekly payment system, and lend money to their customers at the same time. I regret to say that this atrocious system is largely carried [?] on by Foreigners in this city.

I see by today's Daily Express, that Dr. O'Dwyer the Bishop of Limerick has been approached by the Community in reference to the attacks made against them.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 13: Harris to Sir Robert Jackson, 21 January 1904

Handwritten, very blotted in parts, faded in others, and largely illegible: appears to be sending apologies for meeting of Protestant Defence association [?], refers to persecution of Limerick's Jews and Creagh's 'nefarious propaganda'.

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Letter 14: Harris to Emmanuel, 22 January 1904

Dear Sir

I enclose you particulars in reference to the Redemptorist Order. You will see that the head of the Order lives in Rome.

I have been told by a Protestant fellow citizen that words could not describe the state of affairs in Limerick, he tells me that Jewish men and women where they appear in the streets are abused and violently assaulted, and that the protection afforded by the Authorities is totally inadequate. I have no faith in the present government of this country, they are afraid of putting an end to this scandalous persecution, and offend[ing] Catholic sentiments.

Unless the Board of Deputies follows some action at once, I must lay the facts before members of Parliament so that it can be brought before the House of Commons at the earliest possible moment.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 15: Harris to Levin, 22 January 1904

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of yours of 21st. inst. with newspaper cutting enclosed, most of it has appeared in today's papers here including Mr. Redmond's letter.

I have suggested that the Chief Rabbi should reply to the attacks, a letter from him would have [...] weight, holding such a position of eminence.

I have refrained from doing anything, until I see what the Board of Deputies intend to do, I am in daily Communication with their Secretary and Solicitor.

I hope that the ill feeling will soon diminish.

Yours very truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 16: Harris to Levin, 25 January 1904

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your favor of 24th. inst., and thank you for the newspaper cutting with an account of the cases before the Police Courts. I had already seen these reports in the Dublin Papers.

I note the Resolution passed by the Officials of the Confraternity, and deeply regret to see Father Creagh's [...] endorsed [...], I fail to see how the poorer Jewish families [...] can make a living in such a bigoted and intolerant a town as Limerick, no wonder it is fast decaying [...] and some effort must be made to give them a start elsewhere.

I have not heard from the Secretary of the Board of Deputies that they are approaching the Chief Secretary on the Subject, I cannot say what steps the Chief Secretary could take, criminal proceedings are out of the question, and this Government is afraid in my opinion to act firm where Catholic issues are involved.

I sincerely hope that today will pass off peaceably [...], I feel there will be great difficulty in collecting money from the poor class of Catholics.

I have been very pleased to read of the excellent encomium passed on your community.

I do not think that I could [...] any service had I come down to your town [?], I am only too glad to be of any service.

Yours very truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 17: Harris to Chief Rabbi, 4 February 1904

My dear Chief Rabbi

I am in receipt of your favor of 31st. ult., and notwithstanding Mr. Leon Spiro's apprehension, I have no fear that the disgraceful bigotry and intolerance recently displayed in Limerick will be repeated in this city. Limerick is a small city where religious toleration has never been one of the characteristics of the majority of its population.

As regards his statement that out of 500 Jews [...], 400 are registered moneylenders, I believe this to be grossly inaccurate, in the first instance the Jewish population here is over two thousand, and I have never heard that there was anything like four hundred registered under the Act. It is deplorable that a large number of Foreign clothes hawkers should come here and combine moneylending with other business of selling drapery goods on the weekly payment system to the Working classes. This system of trading I am informed has greatly increased of recent years.

I thank you for your kind suggestion with reference to consulting privately some of the leading members of my Community. I shall do so and let you know their views.

I remain Dear Chief Rabbi

Yours very sincerely

Ernest W. Harris

President D.H.C.

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Letter 18: Harris to Levin, 3 February 1904

My dear Sir

I am in receipt of your favor of 2nd. inst. enclosing a letter from the Rev. Richard C. Hallowes, in which he advises you to send a report to Rome.

I return you the letter, and would strongly advise you to write to the Chief Rabbi, enclosing the letter for his advice before you take any action, this will relieve you of any responsibility should anything untoward happen, and you may mention to Dr. Adler that I advised you to take this action before doing anything.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 19: Harris to Levin, [26?] February 1904

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your favor. The man C called here, I sent him up to the Board of Guardians, it appears to me ridiculous for a man with £2 in his pocket to think of going to America, he appears to be a man of little intelligence. If his brother thinks he can do any good in the States, he ought to assist him out.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 20: Harris to Adolphe Davies (Treasurer, DHC), 1 March 1904

My dear Adolphe

A man named C has called several times on me, he comes from Limerick and the Rev. Mr. Levin the clergyman there states that he is one of the most unfortunate victims of the Limerick persecution.

He states he wants to get to America, and that the Board of Guardians has given him £2, and he asks £2 from the Congregation. I am not over anxious to see our funds go this way, we may have a lot of those Limerick people coming on us and I am showing them that it is not easy [Harris's emphasis] to get me to sign orders.

Now what is your opinion about this case? And should I sign an order for £2?

Yours sincerely

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 21: Harris to Sydney A Jaffe, 12 March 1904

Dear Mr. Jaffé

I am in receipt of your favor of 10th. inst. this morning, and I regret that owing to pressure of work I have been quite unable to devote any time to the question of raising funds for the relief of the Jewish poor in Limerick.

Do you think that an appeal should be made through the Jewish Press? if so you are quite at liberty to use my name.

The Clergyman who called upon me and stated he intended to raise funds is the Rev. Richard C. Hallowes of Arklow, he has not been here since his first visit.

I regret I cannot give you any more definite information, until I hear from Mr. Hallowes.

Yours sincerely

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 22: Harris to Jaffe, 31 March 1904

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your letter of 30th. inst.

I deeply regret to hear that the boycott still remains in force in Limerick.

I shall be happy to act as one of the Treasurers of the Relief Fund.

Wishing you a happy Pesach.

Yours very truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 23: Harris to [?], 7 April 1904

Typewritten, mostly illegible.

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Letter 24: Harris to Emmanuel, 7 April 1904

Dear Sir,

I am in receipt of your favour of the 5th. inst. last night the contents of which I note, and I am glad to hear that the Law and Parliamentary committee of your Board, have decided to take further action with regard to the Limerick Jews. The reports I receive from Limerick, clearly show that the position of those unfortunate people is undoubtedly serious, and that a strict boycott is still in force against them, and they can neither trade nor recover any of the debts due to them. Father Creagh still privately carries on his campaign, and many a family who were well to do, are now deprived of their private means of livelihood, and their business has been ruined. I read with feelings of disgust the letter of the Lord Lieutenant to your Board, and it does seem a strange thing that such a system of persecution can be carried on in any part of the United Kingdom, and that the Government should take no steps to prosecute the individuals who promote it. I am informed by some of the Limerick community, who have come [?] to consult me professionally as to the advisability of bringing an action for conspiracy against some of the members of the Confraternity that the police only afford them a half-hearted protection, and I fully believe this. At the request of Mr. Sydney A. Jaffe, who formerly resided here but who is now a [...] dentist in Limerick, I have consented to act as one of the Treasurers of a Relief Fund. The Revd. Richard C. Hallowses of Arklow has written and [...] me on the subject with regard to raising a Fund for the poor people who have been ruined, and to maintain them in Limerick as long as the boycott lasts. He has already collected and published a list of subscriptions [...] that he has remitted £36 [...] letter in the Times on the subject of the persecutions.

There is no doubt, that the object in view, is to ruin all the Jewish families so that they will be obliged to leave the city.

[...] Dr. Adler's suggestion, and go down to [...] next week, and investigate the circumstances [...] influential people in that [...], and report to you fully on them.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 25: Harris to Jaffe, 7 April 1904

Dear Mr. Jaffé,

I have had a letter from the Secretary of the Board of Deputies, to the effect that the Law and Parliamentary committee of that Board intend to take further action, with regard to the persecution of the Jews in Limerick, and stating that Dr. Adler has suggested that I should go down and make an independent investigation of the pecuniary needs of the families who have suffered from the result of the persecution.

I cannot leave Dublin this week, but will towards the end of next week be down to carry out my investigations, and [...] to the Board. The Revd. Mr. Hallowes has informed me that he has collected a sum of £36.

[...] of starting a Fund through Jewish [...] after my report.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 26: Harris to Rev. Richard C. Hallowes, 11 April 1904

Dear Sir

I regret that owing to illness I have not replied sooner to your letter of 2nd.

I have to thank you for the very kind interest you have taken in the persecuted Jews in Limerick, I have seen your letter in the Dublin Press and the subscriptions you have raised to your fund. I have heard from Limerick that you have forwarded £36 to Dr. Long¹⁰ under certain conditions and I don't think any conditions should be placed on the distribution of a charitable fund.

At the request of the Board of Deputies I am going to Limerick to investigate the circumstances of each family, and to report fully to them on the sufferers. I have no doubt the result of my report will be that a fund will be opened in London for the Relief of these unfortunate people.

I regret therefore that I shall not be able to assist you in your kind efforts at present.

Yours faithfully

¹⁰ Dr. John Long was a Protestant missionary who had caused considerable controversy among Catholics in Limerick city. See Pat Feeley, 'Aspects of the 1904 Pogrom', *Old Limerick Journal* 11 (Summer 1982): 18; Ryan, 'Jews of Limerick: Part Two', 59-60.

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 28: Harris to Jaffe, 11 April 1904

Dear Mr. Jaffé

Yours to hand. I shall let you know as early as possible date and time of my arrival. You can advise me of the best hotel to stay in, and the most suitable place where I can carry on my investigations for my report to the Board of Deputies.

I shall require to have a list of every family requiring assistance now and possibly in the future, the numbers comprising each family suffering and no of boys and girls. Who do you suggest should have the administration of the proposed fund, I know you have a local Committee, but unfortunately none of you are known to the Board, and they want to be sure that the Fund will be properly administered.

I wrote today to Rev. Mr. Hallows that I had heard that he had remitted £36 to Dr. Long with certain conditions, and that no conditions should attach to a charitable relief fund. I have called a meeting of this Congregation for Sunday 24th, when I have no doubt a Relief Fund will be started with regard.

Yours sincerely

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 28: Harris to Jaffe, 18 April 1904

Dear Mr. Jaffé

I am sorry I was not able to get to Limerick last week, as I have been detained here on important business, and I am plaintiff in a Jury case this week and I have a Sale by Auction at my house on Thursday and Friday of [...], so for the moment I cannot find a day for my Investigation.

The Board of Deputies met yesterday, and I have placed before them some important information.

Mr. Morris Harris told me that he spoke to the Protestant Bishop of Limerick who is an old friend of his, and asked him to refer to the matter of the persecution, and you have no doubt read his powerful speech in Saturday's papers at the meeting of the General Synod, and the resolution passed reference thereto.

Yours very truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 29: Harris to Emmanuel, 28 April 1904

Dear Mr. Emmanuel

I am in receipt of your letter of 27th. I quite agree with you that the greatest possible care should be exercised in disbursing the funds which your Board are collecting, and I clearly see no difficulty in getting the Relief fund properly administered, especially in the present instance for the reasons you give.

What do you think of getting the services of a Known Protestant solicitor to investigate the claims of applicants for relief, of course he would require to be remunerated for his services, but it would be better [...] this, than to see the funds misapplied, there would be no possibility of getting some non Jewish [...]

I should not remit too [...], for if these people find they can exist on charity, they will make no effort to work.

Yours very truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 30: Harris to M. E. Solomons, 4 May 1904

Dear Mr. Solomons

Limerick

I return to you Mr. Emmanuel's letter. I don't mind going down to Limerick for a day with the Investigator of the Board of Guardians, but I don't see what use I can be, as regards disbursing [?] relief.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 31: Harris to Emmanuel, 6 May 1904

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your favor of 4th. inst. I am ready to present [?] to Limerick with the gentleman who is coming across whenever you advise me.

I am informed the best period of the week to find the people at their houses is Saturday and Sunday.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 32: Harris to Jaffe, 10 May 1904

Dear Mr. Jaffé

I leave for Limerick on Friday week by the 9.16 train. I am advised by the Secretary of the Board of Deputies that Mr. I. Rehfisch leaves London today as Investigating Officer in connection with the Relief Fund.

Mr. Joseph Prag a member of the Board of Deputies will also arrive in Limerick at the end of the week.

Will you kindly engage a room for him at the [...] Hotel.

Kindest Regards

Yours sincerely

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 33: Harris to Emmanuel, 10 May 1904

Dear Mr. Emmanuel

I am in receipt of your favor of 9th. inst. and note that Mr. Rehfisch is going to Limerick as investigating Officer in connection with the Relief Fund, and that Mr. Joseph Prag is also leaving for Limerick.

I shall go down on Friday next by the 9.16 train from Kings Bridge Station.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 34: Harris to Levin, 10 May 1904

Dear Sir

I propose to leave by the 9.16 train on Friday morning for Limerick.

Mr. Joseph Prag a member of the Board of Deputies is coming from London to visit Limerick at end of the week.

I shall stay at the [...] Hotel.

Yours very truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 35: Harris to Joseph Prag, 11 May 1904

Dear Sir

I am in receipt of your favor of 10th. inst. for which I am obliged. I note that you will be in Limerick on Friday week.

I shall leave on Friday morning, and stay at the [...] Hotel

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 36: Harris to Hallowes, 19 May 1904

Dear Sir

I have visited Limerick along with two gentlemen representing the London Committee of Deputies of the British Jews. We have closely examined into all the facts connected with the persecution of the Jews there, we have interviewed Father Creagh and other Roman Catholic clergymen, and many leading professional, and mercantile citizens.

We have closely examined into the present [...] of the Jewish people, and have made a report to the Relief Committee in London as to what we consider should be done in each case.

We called upon Dr. Long, and he explained as he had received a sum of money about £36, from [...] and we suggested that as the London Relief Committee would deal with each family requiring assistance, it would be well if he handed over to them, the funds in his hands, so that the money would go to those we have reported need monetary assistance in a systematic matter, he appeared to agree with our views, and if you authorise him he will remit the money to the London Committee.

I shall be glad to hear from you, we thank you for all you have done on behalf of those unfortunate and as far as our enquiries go unjustly treated people.

I remain

Yours faithfully

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 37: Harris to Hallowes, 21 May 1904

Dear Sir

I am much obliged to you for your kind letter of 20th. inst., I have provided a copy to my colleague Mr. Joseph Prag a member of the Board of Deputies and the Relief Committee, as far as I am concerned I should be most happy to give you a copy of our Report, but the original was taken for London, and I have asked Mr. Prag if possible to send me a copy.

We intend at a later date to send in a detailed report on the situation to the Board of Deputies.

We are thoroughly with you that the Jews must be kept in Limerick [...] and our idea is to give those who have lost all their means sufficient money to start business in the districts round the city and to make them a weekly allowance until they can support themselves.

I shall write you again as soon as I hear from Mr. Prag.

Yours very truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 38: Harris to Prag, 24 May 1904

Dear Mr. Prag

I am in receipt of your favor of 18th. inst., also yours of 19th. inst. enclosing copy of your letter to Mr. Alexander and which I herewith return having taken a copy of same.

I concur in every word you have written to him, and I am more than astonished at Mr. Rehfish's action, it is an unheard of proceeding for him to go behind our backs, and bring in a report which we have not seen, or approved of, especially when he had signed ours, and differed only as regards the levels [?] of relief.

In my opinion those unfortunate people in Limerick are in a sad plight, and I do not think that Father Creagh means [?] or intends to allow the boycott to pass away.

I enclose you two cuttings from the Cork Examiner of the 18th. [?] inst., and the Munster News of same date from which you will see that Father Creagh is still active in pursuing and keeping alive his agitation.

I agree thoroughly with you that Mr. Rehfisch has misjudged those unfortunate people, he is a prejudiced Official who is brought into contact with the worst class of East End of London Jews, and his Judgment is warped in dealing with these unfortunate people, who in my opinion taken as a whole are a respectable body of [...], and the charges of extortionate and usurious trading has not been proved, they must charge high prices, as they are dealing with a low class of people who take every opportunity of doing them out of their money. I have great experience of the great [?] losses suffered in this weekly payment business.

I am writing to Mr. Alexander that I fully concur and endorse to the fullest extent the views contained in your letter to him.

I have spoken to everyone here amongst my colleagues in reference to this matter, and I think that for the present the Limerick people should know nothing about our differences, as it would surely get to [?] London, and be used against them by their enemies in the City.

I wrote to Rev. Mr. Hallows in reference to the funds collected by him, and now in Dr. Long's possession, he wishes to see a copy of our report to the Relief Committee before he consents to hand the funds entrusted to him to them, and that if he consents it would be on the strictest understanding that no attempt should be made to enable the Jews to leave Limerick, I wrote to him that we are agreed as to this, and that in reference to giving him a copy of our Report I would ascertain your views.

With kind regards

Yours very truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 39: Harris to Emmanuel, 13 June 1904

Dear Sir

There is a poor man here named LK, who left Limerick in January last, he was employed as a hawker by one of the Jewish Traders in that city, owing to the boycott his employment ceased and he could not get anything to do there, he has been supplied with a Ticket to America, and leaves on Monday next, I think he ought to receive two or three Pounds from the Board of Deputies Fund, and if I am authorised I will give it to him.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 40: Harris to Levin, 22 June 1904

Dear Mr. Levin

Yours of 22nd. inst. to hand. I had a long communication from the Board of Deputies, the Law and Parliamentary Committee has considered the matter very completely, and they are averse to you taking proceedings against the Munster News, as they consider the prospect of success in obtaining a Verdict would be [...] and that the whole matter would be reopened, and all the [...] newspapers about the country would have flowing [...] which would stir up the ignorant population.

On the whole [?] we had better leave the matter alone.

Yours very truly

Ernest W. Harris

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Letter 41: Harris to Emmanuel, 14 June 1904

Dear Sir

Limerick

I enclose you copy of the Munster News and Limerick and Clare Advocate [?] of [?] inst. in which you will see a letter published signed by a Mr. John White, and which was brought [...] my notice by the Rev. Mr. Levin on Sunday last.

I have shown it to my Counsel, and he considers it a most audacious libel, and says that criminal proceedings [?] should be instituted at the instance of the Attorney General, and before taking any steps I consider it right to place the matter before you for your opinion.

I could not take a civil action for Mr. Levin as the outlay alone would be very considerable, unless I received some guarantee for the work.

Yours truly

Ernest W. Harris

[End of Correspondence]