The First Irish lodge in London - The Ship behind the Royal Exchange

(from *Schism: The Battle that Forged Freemasonry*)

Eighteenth-century London was a confluence of competing pressure groups. American colonists, West Indian planters, the great international trading companies, and numerous other foreign and domestic interests all contended with the Irish and Anglo-Irish to influence British government policy. In Westminster and the City, parliamentary legislation affecting Ireland was both promoted and contested, something increasingly necessary after the passage of the Dependency of Ireland on Great Britain Act. Lawyers were instructed, other advisers consulted, and funds sourced and deployed. As today, the combination of financial and professional resources and the political connections available in London were often of fundamental importance to business success and instrumental in making or breaking personal reputation.

London was awash with rival lobbyists and the Irish lobby - perhaps lobbies would be more appropriate - was one of many that competed for influence. The importance of local representation in London was such that it became customary for Irish merchants and the gentry to send a younger son across the Irish Sea to safeguard their family's interests. Influence could also be sought and bought through the agencies of professional lobbyists resident in London or by trading through well-positioned English merchant houses with appropriately solid political and commercial links. Other Irishmen conducted business personally, with a mixture of aristocrats, members of the gentry, and the more middling, travelling to London for the purpose. The city was in any case an attraction itself. London was the capital of the British Empire, the largest metropolis in Europe, and an entertainment, social and intellectual hub with a spectrum of attractions to suit the highest and lowest brow. Aside from merchants, traders and those seeking influence, employment or education, London also attracted ambitious artists and authors hoping to make use of social, family or more distant relationships, and to build the right connections with potential patrons. A minority made their names and rose to success and popularity. Most did not. But for Ireland's elite and middling classes, despite the extended journey and often dangerous passage across the Irish Sea, a visit to London was necessary and commonplace, both a means to an end and an end in itself.

Located behind Edward Jerman's elegant cloistered Royal Exchange building, the lodge at the Ship tavern is the first documented Irish Masonic lodge in London.[1] The setting may have been significant. The Royal Exchange was a principal meeting place for the City of London's cosmopolitan trading community and a hub for commerce. The Ship's membership reflected this and included a selection of wealthy and respectable Irish-connected and Irish merchants, traders and bankers. Lane's *Masonic Records* notes that the lodge, No. 18 in the 1729 list, was constituted on 5 May 1723 and erased just over two decades later in 1745.[2] In the intervening years it relocated in 1727 to the St Paul's Head in Ludgate Street and thereafter, in 1729, to the Crown at Ludgate Hill and to the Sun in Holborn in 1736.

The register of members compiled in 1723 and submitted to Grand Lodge later that year points to many having business and personal relationships outside of freemasonry, at least some of which were cemented through marriage. It suggests that the lodge offered a convenient locus for

[1] Edward Jerman's Royal Exchange was the second on the site and replaced an Elizabethan building destroyed in the 1666 Great Fire. The new Royal Exchange opened in 1669 and survived until it burned down in 1838.

[2] John Lane, *Masonic Records, 1717-1894*.

personal interaction and perhaps a less formal but equally confidential social and business space adjacent to but apart from the Royal Exchange.

Most members were likely to have been initiated into freemasonry in London; others may have been made masons in Irish lodges. There are few confirmatory records either way. Regardless, the Lodge's register contains a unique cross-section of the middling London Irish and those doing business with Ireland - merchants and professionals – and crosses the religious divide from Protestant conformists and dissenters to Catholics and Quakers. As with Munster Freemasonry, the Lodge's composition suggests if not corroborates that secular considerations of affluence and influence were probably more significant criteria for membership than religious denomination, and that potential social and business networking opportunities trumped differences of faith.

English Freemasonry in the eighteenth century was unusual in providing a space where its members could be free of some of the religious and social constraints that existed elsewhere. More specifically, many other clubs and societies excluded the Irish, particularly Catholics. However, despite its interdenominational characteristics and professed tolerance, the raising of financial and commercial interests above religion was found extensively elsewhere in the City of London and was far from limited to the Masonic lodge. As Voltaire, later himself a freemason, noted:

> take a view of the Royal Exchange in London, a place more venerable than many courts of justice, where the representatives of all nations meet for the benefit of mankind. There the Jew, the Mahometan and the Christian transact together, as though they all professed the same religion and give the name of infidel to none but bankrupts.[3]

Philip Crossle undertook a first exercise in analysing the composition of the lodge at the Ship nearly a century ago in the early 1920s. His partly annotated list of members was outlined in a short Appendix to the 1923 *CC Transactions* and this paper makes use of and extends Crossle's tentative biographical notes and, where appropriate, offers alternatives.[4] The paper comprises a series of brief biographical sketches that provide an outline of the Ship's membership. It explores a selection of important overlapping relationships and presents a uniquely Masonic aspect to eighteenth-century sociability among this stratum of the London Irish and their circle.

In certain instances, this paper identifies members of the lodge for the first time. There is, of course, an important caveat to any study of the eighteenth century: the difficulty of identifying specific individuals from contemporary documents. This is a function of the phonetic spelling variations that were commonly used to write individual names. Additionally, a further complication arises where more than one person has the same or a similar name. Nonetheless, for the reasons specified, there is reasonable certainty about the identity of many of the Lodge members detailed.

[3] Voltaire, *Letters Concerning the English Nation* (London: C. Davies, 1733), p. 44.
[4] Philip Crossle, *CC Transactions* (Dublin: Lodge of Research No. 200, 1923), p. 109-112.

The Members of The Ship behind the Royal Exchange, 1723 [5]

John Leigh Esq. (Master)

Mr Cloud Stuart (SW)	Mr Nathaniel Gould (JW)
Mr John Gascoyne	Mr John Hope
Mr Albert Nesbitt	Mr William Bently
Mr John Mason	Henry Cunningham Esq.
Mr Joseph Gascoyne	Mr Henry Hope
Mr John Bourne	Sir James Tobin
Mr Ralph Knox	Mr Bearc. Stonehewer
Richard Warburton Esq.	Robert Allen Esq.
Mr Peter Webb	William Spaight Esq.
William Worth Esq.	Mr Benjamin Lambert
Benjamin Dry Esq.	Abraham Sharigley Esq.
Gerard Bourne Esq.	Captain Patrick Trahee
Mr Jonas Morris	Captain Lionel Beecher
Mr Row Hill	Mr Richard Fitzgerald
William Moreton Esq.	Leon Hatfield Esq.
Mr Springett Penn	Paul Minchell Esq.
Mr Thomas Watts	Mr John Pringle
William Hoar Esq.	Tiss. [Sisson] Putland Esq.
Mr Robert Waller	Mr William Richardson

The Master of the Lodge

Philip Crossle suggested that the Master of the lodge, **John Leigh**, was probably from Greenhills in Co. Louth and a member of the Inner Temple. He also noted that a John Leigh had attended a lodge in Dublin in 1731 and 1733.[6] However, given the commercial and trading context of the lodge's membership, it is perhaps more probable that the Master was John Leigh of Rosegarland in New Ross, Co. Wexford. Leigh would later become MP for New Ross in the Irish Parliament, sitting as the second member from 1727 until 1758.[7] The Leigh family were joint patrons of the seat and John's son, Robert, inherited the constituency in 1759.

In the early and mid-eighteenth century, New Ross was a strategically located and prosperous port town with extensive trading connections to England, the continent and the Americas. The manor of Rosegarland had been granted to Leigh's uncle, Robert, by Charles II following the restoration of the monarchy, together with a mid-size estate of more than 3,300 acres of productive and accessible land in Wexford and Kildare. John inherited the estate at his father's death in 1727.[8] At the time the membership returns to Grand Lodge were compiled in May 1723,

[5] The list was compiled on 15 May 1723. Lane's *Masonic Records* gives the warrant date as 5 May 1723. The latter may be the date on which the lodge was recognised by English Grand Lodge rather than the date of its inception.
[6] Ibid, p. 109.
[7] *Daily Journal*, 21 November 1727.
[8] Sir Bernard Burke, *The Landed Gentry of Ireland* (London: Harrison & Sons, 1912), pp 395-6: *Leigh of Rosegarland*.

Leigh may have been representing the family's interests in London while his father remained in Ireland managing the estate; this would have been a common practice among the Irish gentry.[9]

There is a third alternative identity that might be explored: that John Leigh may have been the Irish born actor and playwright of that name, a member of the New Play House and the Lincoln's Inn players' company. There are two reasons to believe that this was not the case. First, there is no obvious connection to other lodge members whose affluence and social status would have been considerably higher than that of a jobbing actor. Second and more conclusively, such a man would have been unlikely to have had 'Esq.' appended to his name.[10] Nonetheless, freemasonry attracted a number of prominent actors, dramatists and theatrical managers, including Colley Cibber and his son, Theophilus. Leigh, the actor, is known to have had a connection through the stage to Cibber, which may have mirrored a Masonic friendship: 'Cibber Jr.' was later a member of the influential Bear & Harrow lodge in Butcher's Row. Indeed, many actors, artists and other entertainers later became freemasons in order to be close to their current or potential patrons.

The Wardens:
Cloud Stewart – Senior Warden

Crossle was unsuccessful in identifying 'Cloud Stuart'. However, the lodge's Senior Warden was most probably **Cloudesley Stewart**, a descendant of the Stewart family of Athenry in Co. Tyrone. The forename is unusual and probably an abbreviation or nickname derived from Sir Cloudesley Shovel (1650-1707), a popular English naval officer who was promoted to become Admiral of the Fleet in 1705.[11] Although it has not been possible to determine definitively Cloud Stewart's identity, there is strong evidence that the Stewart family was associated with Admiral Shovel.

Originally from Scotland, Captain Andrew Stewart had migrated to Ireland in the 1620s:

> Andrew Stewart, commonly called Captain Andrew Stewart, who, with Lord Castle Stewart, to whom he was related, and his (Andrew's) brother James … went from Scotland to Ireland about the year 1627. On his marriage, he obtained from Lord Castle Stewart the greater part of the manor of Castle Stewart, but afterwards built and resided on another seat near Stewart's Town, Co. Tyrone.[12]

Captain Stewart had four sons. The third, James, was a naval officer, later killed in battle. The connection to Admiral Shovel was noted in *Debrett's Baronetage* which recorded that he married one of the Admiral's daughters: 'James, an officer of the Royal Navy, married ---, daughter of Admiral Sir Cloudesley Shovel, and died gallantly in battle'.[13] The claim was repeated in later

[9] A John Leigh, possibly the same man, lived at the Black Boy tavern in Leather Lane, a second tier area popular with the London Irish. Cf., *London Journal*, 3 June 1727.
[10] Cf. Roland Metcalf, 'John Leigh (*c.*1689–1726?)', *ODNB*, OUP, 2004, online ed. accessed 19.04.2012.
[11] Admiral Shovel was drowned off the Isles of Scilly in 1707. The inability to calculate longitude led to a navigational error. Four ships of the line were lost together with their crews, a total of about 2,000 men.
[12] John Debrett (ed.), *The Baronetage of England* (London: F.C. & J. Rivington, 1831), 3rd ed., p. 1120.
[13] Ibid, p. 1121.

editions of *Debrett's* and expanded in 1893 in *Notes & Queries*.[14] Contemporary newspaper articles also note that a Captain Stewart, possibly the same man, served alongside Admiral Shovel.[15]

Unfortunately, the *ODNB* entry for Admiral Shovel contradicts *Debrett's*.[16] John Hattendorf states that Shovel's second daughter, Anne (1696-1741), married first, the Hon Robert Mansell (*d.*1723), and second, John Blackwood, a West India merchant.[17] However, it is possible that the *ODNB* entry is incomplete. Although there is transparent evidence that Anne Shovel married Mansell in 1718, it is also feasible that she had been widowed by that date.[18] Offering tentative support for this argument is her description in a press report as 'Mrs Shovel, daughter to the late Sir Cloudesley Shovel', as opposed to 'Miss Shovel'.[19] Nonetheless, later press reports omit any mention of an earlier marriage and the obituary of Lady Shovel, the Admiral's widow, refers only to Mansell and Blackwood as being her younger daughter's successive husbands.[20]

In contrast, the Stewart family's records indicate that James Stewart and Anne Shovel had a daughter, also named Anne. It is possible that they also had a son. A pair of oval portraits painted in the eighteenth century in the style of Sir Godfrey Kneller supports *Debrett's* contention of an earlier relationship and the birth of a son and daughter. The portraits depict 'Anne Stewart and Cloudesley Stewart'. They were sold by Christies in London in 1995.[21] The sitters may have been James and Anne's children. Naming a son and daughter after a parent or grandparent was common practice. Nonetheless, there are other options. It is possible that James and Anne Stewart did not marry and that Cloudesley Stewart was a natural son. It is also feasible but less likely that *Debrett's* and *Notes & Queries* are both incorrect and that 'Cloud Stewart' was unrelated to the Shovel family and to the Stewart family of Athenry.

Nathaniel Gould – Junior Warden

Nathaniel Gould (1697-1738), the Ship's Junior Warden, is more readily identified. He was a successful merchant with extensive trading interests in the Baltic, Ireland, continental Europe, Turkey and later the West Indies. The family were prominent non-conformists. Gould's banking and investment connections with Ireland and his relationship with Walter Gould of Munster have been mentioned in association with Munster Freemasonry. Gould's father and uncle were prominent City figures: directors of the Bank of England and East India Company and members of parliament. With their sons, they were also partners in Gould & Co., 'one of the largest suppliers of hemp, pitch and tar to the Navy' and active in the profitable, oligopolistic tobacco trade with Russia.[22] Following his uncle and father's death in 1728, Nathaniel Gould and his older brother, John (*d.*1740), previously junior partners, took over Gould & Co. and invited **Albert**

[14] William White, *Notes & Queries* (Oxford: OUP, 1893), vol. 87, p. 255. Cloudesley Stewart is described as 'probably a descendant of James Stewart, a naval officer killed in battle (third son of Captain Andrew Stewart)'.
[15] *Post Boy*, 6 – 8 August 1702.
[16] John B. Hattendorf, 'Sir Cloudesley Shovel (*bap.* 1650, *d.* 1707)', *ODNB*, (OUP, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008) accessed 10 October 2012.
[17] Cf., also, *Daily Journal*, 30 July 1726. John Blackwood was the son of Sir Robert Blackwood.
[18] *Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, 26 April 1718.
[19] *Original Weekly Journal*, 12 – 19 April 1718.
[20] *London Evening Post*, 20 – 22 April 1732.
[21] Christie's catalogue entry for sale 6867, 8 June 1995. Portrait of Anne Stewart, head and shoulders, wearing a green dress with a pale pink wrap; and Portrait of Cloudesley Stewart, head and shoulders, wearing an embroidered coat with a white cravat, inscribed 'Anne Stewart and Cloudesley Stewart'; ovals 30 x 25in; a pair.
[22] D.W. Jones, 'Sir Nathaniel Gould, (1661–1728)', *ODNB* (OUP, 2004; online edn, Jan 2008), accessed 5 May 2012.

Nesbitt, a member of the Ship and another successful and 'eminent Irish trader', to join the partnership.[23] In addition to their business relationship and obvious connection through the lodge, the invitation would have been spurred by Nesbitt's marriage to Nathaniel and John's sister, Elizabeth, in 1729.[24] The partnership was afterwards renamed 'Gould & Nesbitt'; it developed into one of the most successful merchant trading and banking houses in London.[25]

Like his uncle, Nathaniel Gould later became a director of the Bank of England. He also purchased a seat in parliament and was elected MP for Wareham at a by-election in 1729 following the death of the incumbent, **Joseph Gascoyne**, another lodge member (see below). Gould retained the seat and represented Wareham until 1734.

The Members of the Lodge

Albert Nesbitt (*d.*1753), a younger son, had been sent to London from Ireland in 1717. On his arrival in the City he established Nesbitt & Co. and entered into business on his family's account as a Baltic merchant. He lived at Cattle's Court on College Hill, just north of Thames Street, west of London Bridge. In Ireland, the family had built up large estates at Brenter and Malmusoy in Co. Donegal, which were later inherited by his brother, Thomas. Nesbitt's success in London allowed him later to acquire the estates for himself.

A study by Craig Bailey of the 'Nesbitts of London and their Networks', underscores Nesbitt's strong business links with Ireland:

> the Nesbitts never abandoned their Irish circles. Indeed, Irish connections appear to have been vital for the house at all times it was active in trade. The need for access to Irish markets as well as political and social favours from Irish contacts in London were factors that kept the Nesbitt's 'Irish' and involved in ethnic networks.[26]

In establishing his own trading house and subsequently joining forces to create 'Gould & Nesbitt', the family was doing what many others among the Irish gentry and merchant classes had done before. Despatching a son to London to act as the family's agent to found or join a trading house had become an established formula and an effective mechanism for the Irish gentry to pursue their commercial objectives. The network of expatriate Irishmen created both formal and informal Irish associations in London that encompassed a range of competing and complementary business and social circles and extended into the political sphere. In all three, freemasonry played a part.

Nesbitt used his connections in Cork and Kinsale to facilitate Admiralty provisioning at those ports and it may be no coincidence that **Jonas Morris** of the prominent Cork trading family of that name was a member of the lodge. Similarly, Nesbitt also worked closely with the Dublin bankers, Hoare & Arnold, of which house **William Hoar** (see below), another lodge member, was a probable scion.[27]

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[23] *Daily Journal*, 26 April 1729.
[24] Ibid. Cf., also, Henry Kent, *Directory* (London: Henry Kent, 1740).
[25] Gould & Nesbitt operated from offices in Coleman Street in the City of London until the early 1750s.
[26] Craig Bailey, 'The Nesbitts of London and their Networks', in David Dickinson et al, *Irish and Scottish Mercantile Networks in Europe and Overseas in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Gent: Academica Press, 2006), pp 231-250. Quote from p. 233.
[27] Ibid, p. 236.

In common with other Irish expatriate traders, the Nesbitt's developed extensive non-Irish connections to advance their trading activities. Albert's marriage to Elizabeth Gould can in part be viewed in such a light as can his willingness to ignore religion in the pursuit of profit, trading with Jewish, Catholic and Protestant houses. The importance of government provisioning contracts may have been an important factor in Nesbitt's support for Walpole and his political connections to Newcastle. He entered parliament in 1741, gaining a seat at a by-election at Huntingdon, where he sat as a government supporter until 1747. The constituency was within the influence of Lord Sandwich who wrote to Pelham in 1747 commenting 'as for Mr Nesbitt, my only objection to him is that I can't choose him for Huntingdon without hurting if not endangering, my interest in that borough'.[28] Nesbitt was subsequently nominated to represent Mitchell, a Cornish pocket borough with around 40 electors, where he sat from 1747 until his death in January 1753.

Albert Nebitt's financial success can be measured by the extent of his personal and real estate. In addition to property in London, Sussex and Ireland, he left legacies of over £20,000 and an £800 annual annuity to his wife.[29] In all, three successive generations of the Nesbitt family traded from London until the death of John Nesbitt in 1817. The family's interests included the Caribbean trade in rum and sugar; provisioning British naval and military forces in the Americas, Ireland and elsewhere; iron and coal production; banking; and the continental wine trade. Perpetuating the dynasty, Nesbitt was succeeded by his nephew, Arnold, who had himself become a partner in Gould & Nesbitt.

Richard Fitzgerald was a nephew of George Fitzgerald who founded another thriving London trading house that carried the family name. They were active in both the Anglo-Irish trade and that with North America, the Caribbean and the continent, exporting linen and importing sugar, wine and tobacco. Louis Cullen has commented that George Fitzgerald & Co. cooperated with Nesbitt & Co. and Gould & Nesbitt, and both the Fitzgeralds and Nesbitts had an array of complementary relationships in the Caribbean trade, naval and military provisioning in the West Indies, in the trade with France and elsewhere.[30]

The Fitzgeralds were a landed Catholic family from Co. Waterford who despite losing land after the Williamite War, retained and recovered sufficient estates to maintain their status as members of the Irish gentry. They also developed extensive mercantile interests.[31] George Fitzgerald had moved to London in 1718 having previously been a partner with Bernard Walsh in a Canary Islands trading house. Although his uncle, brother and the majority of the family remained faithful to the Catholic Church, Richard conformed in 1735, most probably to protect the family's assets from legal challenge on inheritance, a path followed by many other affluent Irish Catholic families. He nonetheless had a Catholic wife and remained on excellent terms with his family, despite their being regarded as papists.

In his study of the period, Thomas Truxes noted that London's Irish merchants such as the Fitzgeralds and Nesbitts, represented not only the interests of Irish exporters and importers, but also those of expatriate Irishmen and other clients across continental Europe, the Americas and

[28] 25 May 1747 (N.S.), Newcastle (Clumber) MSS. Quoted in *The History of Parliament*: http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1715-1754/member/nesbitt-albert-1753.

[29] Bailey, 'The Nesbitts of London', p. 235.

[30] Louis Cullen, 'The Two George Fitzgerald's of London, 1718-1759', in Dickinson et al, *Irish and Scottish Mercantile Networks*, pp 251-70, esp. 253-5.

[31] Crossle's suggestion that Richard Fitzgerald was 'perhaps youngest brother and eventual heir of John Fitzgerald, Knight of Glyn, who attended a Dublin Lodge in 1739' is less persuasive.

the Caribbean.[32] The Irish merchant community had grown strongly and internationally from the end of the seventeenth century and by the mid-eighteenth, formed a large emigrant community. Within the City, the number of Irish trading houses had risen to over fifty by the 1760s, to which figure can be added many non-Irish houses that specialised in the Irish trade. Despite a wide spread of religious affiliations, including Quakers, conformist Protestants, non-conformists and Roman Catholics, there appears to have been no division along sectarian lines but rather a strong affiliation based on common Irish interests. An identical pattern is reflected in the membership of the Ship.

Many of the Irish merchant houses were geographically close to each other in the City, with around 40 located in the Cateaton Street district close to St Lawrence Jewry to the north of Cheapside. The area had originally been dominated by the cloth trade and was a natural home to firms that had and continued to specialise in Irish linen.[33] The 1745 Linen Bounty Act provided a small additional impetus to London's Irish merchant community, partly liberalising the way in which the parliamentary bounty was applied and setting more attractive rates for exported Irish and British linen, albeit that the Irish bounty was limited to coarse linens that did not compete with those from England. The mechanics of receiving the bounty, 'that no Irish Linen exported from Great Britain shall be entitled to the Bounty, unless the property of some person resident in Great Britain or America', served to reinforce the importance of the Irish merchant houses and cemented the financial links between Ireland and London.[34]

The significance of the transatlantic route to the Fitzgerald family was such that at least one family member was resident on a virtually permanent basis in the Canary Islands, a waypoint for transatlantic navigation. Other merchant families did the same and it was common for agents to be stationed in Cadiz, Lisbon and other key continental ports. From there they provided market intelligence, monitored or arranged transhipments, supervised the re-provisioning of vessels and ran or oversaw local trading operations. Accurate information was critical to both trading and the banking businesses of merchants providing short term working capital and clearing and issuing bills of exchange, an increasingly important aspect of their business. They also procured or provided insurance and sourced equity capital. Indeed, over time, the Irish-connected merchant houses became integral to the commercial success of their correspondents, both in Ireland and North America.

Sir James Tobin was another merchant and an Irish Catholic.[35] Originally from Kilkenny, he was described in his obituary as 'formerly a captain of a ship in the United East India Company's service; but on some disgust went to Germany, and became there the chief projector of the Ostend East India Company, for which he obtained the honour of knighthood from his imperial majesty.'[36] Highly successful, Tobin was reported to have left an estate worth some £40,000, equivalent to £4 – 8 million today.[37]

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[32] Thomas Truxes, 'London's Irish Merchant Community and North Atlantic Commerce in the Mid-Eighteenth Century', in *Irish and Scottish Mercantile Networks*, pp 271-310.

[33] Ibid, 274.

[34] Thomas Truxes, *Irish-American Trade, 1660-1783* (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), esp. pp 176-9.

[35] He was buried at the Catholic and non-conformist St Pancras cemetery. Cf., Walter H. Godfrey and W. McB. Marcham (eds.), *Survey of London vol. 24: The parish of St Pancras, part 4: King's Cross Neighbourhood* (1952), pp 147-151. I am indebted to John Bergin at QUB for his assistance.

[36] *Read's Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, 14 June 1735. Crossle's suggestion of 'James Tobin, well known in Dublin in the 1740s as treasurer of the Charitable Music society', may be wide of the mark.

[37] Ibid.

Other merchants in the lodge included **Henry Hope**; **Benjamin Dry**, the vintner; and **Ralph Knox**, who, with Samuel Mercer, was a partner in Knox and Mercer, a house that specialised in the transatlantic trade.[38] Knox later became a director of the London Assurance Company and of Royal Exchange Assurance.[39] The two companies had a number of freemasons on their respective boards, including several members of the Ship, as well as several prominent Irish traders. The latter included George Fitzgerald, William Snell and **John Bourne**, seventh on the Ship's membership list, whose directorship of the Royal Exchange pre-dated 1720.[40] It is likely that **Gerard Bourne** was his brother. Crossle commented that the two may have been younger sons of the Bourne family of Burren in Co. Cork, or possibly Cournallane in Co. Carlow.

Brearcliffe Stonehewer was another City luminary, a well-known merchant with a strong connection to the Irish trade in a business inherited from his father. Stonehewer was a member of the Skinners Company and another director of Royal Exchange Assurance and of the London Assurance Company.[41] He also sat on the Court of the City-run Bridewell Hospital, a house of correction and penitentiary for petty offenders.[42]

William Moreton, a barrister, was a member of the Middle Temple who later sat as a Recorder. A prominent City figure, he was another governor of the Bridewell, as was **John Gascoyne**, third on the membership list, a merchant and a director of the Royal Africa Company.[43] Crossle noted that Gascoyne's father, Benjamin, also a merchant, owned a large estate in Ireland; both would have had regular business contacts and connections with Ireland. **Joseph Gascoyne** was John's brother, as was Sir Crisp Gascoyne (1700-61), later elected Alderman, Sheriff and the City of London's Lord Mayor (in 1752). All three were linked to **Thomas Watts**, who married the Gascoynes' sister, Susannah, in the mid-1720s. Crossle noted that **John Mason**, fifth on the membership list and yet another City merchant, was a witness at the wedding.[44]

Joseph Gascoyne (*d*.1728), held a lucrative post in Minorca. He defeated the sitting Tory member of parliament at Wareham in 1722, notwithstanding that 'he was a stranger', and sat as a government supporter until his death in 1728.[45] Gascoyne was succeeded as MP for the borough by **Nathaniel Gould**, who was elected 'without opposition'.[46]

Thomas Watts (*c*.1695-1742), was renowned as a mercurial entrepreneur, lecturer, educationalist and mathematician, with whom Desaguliers had given a joint scientific lecture course at Richard Steele's 'Censorium' at the York Buildings off the Strand in 1719. Watts' *Essay on the Proper Method of Forming the Man of Business*, published in 1716, ran to four editions.[47] It was written at the same time that he founded a school in Abchurch Lane in the City at which he used the methodology he publicised. The school - the 'Accountant's Office' - specialised in basic

[38] Cf., *London Evening Post*, 27 – 30 June 1730.
[39] *London Evening Post*, 26 – 28 June 1729; *Daily Journal*, 28 June 1732.
[40] *Daily Courant*, 1 July 1720; 29 June 1723.
[41] Stonehewer is first mentioned in 1724 although he was a director prior to this date; his name also appears in the *Daily Journal*, 31 October 1727. Cf. also, *London Evening Post*, 26 – 28 June 1729 and 29 June 1732 – 1 July 1732.
[42] *London Lives* online database, accessed 19 April 2012. Stonehewer sat on the board of the Royal Bridewell through to the 1740s.
[43] A magistrate named John Gascoyne was possibly the same person. Cf. also Kent's *Directory*.
[44] Crossle appears to have an incorrect date for Thomas Watts' marriage to Susannah Gascoyne.
[45] *History of Parliament*: http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1715-1754/member/gascoigne-joseph-1728 accessed 12.07.2011.
[46] *London Evening Post*, 13-15 February 1729.
[47] Thomas Watts, *Essay on the Proper Method of Forming the Man of Business* (London: George Strahan, 1716). A second edition was published in 1716, a third in 1717 and the fourth in 1722.

business administration and achieved considerable financial success, moving to larger premises in Little Tower Street to accommodate the growing demand.

> Young Gentlemen are completely qualified for any Manner of Business, free from the interruption and loss of time in Common Schools, at the Accomptant's Office, erected for that purpose in Little Tower Street, at the house lately Sir John Fleet's, where they are taught to perfection, writing, arithmetic, and merchant's accounts, from the Methods of use in real Business, by Thomas Watts, author of the Essay on the proper method for forming the Man of Business. Where also all parts of Mathematics are taught, and Courses in Experimental Philosophy performed, by Benj. Worster, MA, and Thomas Watts.[48]

In the preface to the fourth edition of his *Essay*, Watts set out that his objective was to teach a business education to 'young gentlemen … from about thirteen or fourteen upwards … such as are immediately designed for trades, merchandise, the Sea, Clerkships in Offices, or to Attorneys, or any other Employments in Business'.[49] The school was still functioning successfully in 1730, when Benjamin Worster, Watts' partner, published his own *Course of Experimental Philosophy*. This advertised that the teaching would now be 'performed by Benj. Worster, AM, and Tho. Watts at the Accomptant's Office for qualifying young Gentlemen for Business.'[50] However, Watts and Worcester's lectures were not confined to the school at Little Tower Street. They also presented at the York Buildings on the Strand where, in common with Desaguliers and other eminent peripatetic lecturers, their talks and demonstrations fed a growing appetite for education as entertainment and the desire to profit from the practical application of the new scientific Enlightenment.

In another parallel with Desaguliers, Watts also enjoyed the patronage of James Brydges, the Duke of Chandos, who part financed the move to Little Tower Street and for whom Ruth Wallis has suggested Watts provided insider stock market intelligence and acted as agent for Chandos and others involved in the takeover of Sun Fire insurance.[51] Certainly, Watts became closely involved with Sun Fire following the acquisition of a significant holding by Royal Exchange Assurance. Indeed, according to Relton, Watts became Sun Fire's 'ruling genius'.[52] There is no doubt that he had influence. He was Company Secretary from 1727 until 1734, when he appointed his brother to succeed him, and thereafter Cashier until his retirement in 1741. The position propelled him into a leading figure in the City of London.

In 1725, at around the time of his marriage to Susannah, John Gascoyne, her brother, was given a job at Sun Fire and later succeeded Watts' brother, William, as the Company Secretary. Crisp Gascoyne, Susannah's youngest brother, was given a sinecure from 1749 until 1761. And Thomas Watts' sons, Thomas and Hugh, were also handed jobs at the company and each successively became Secretary. Such nepotism was common and of greater interest are the interlocking commercial relationships between the different members of the lodge. The most obvious are the several common directorships with respect to the Royal Exchange and Sun Fire, but the members' joint influence extended elsewhere and to other organisations. The

[48] *Daily Courant*, 16 January 1719.
[49] Watts, *Essay*, 4th edn., pp ii-iii.
[50] Benjamin Worster, *A Course of Experimental Philosophy* (London: *c.*1730)
[51] Ruth Wallis, 'Thomas Watts (*d.* 1742)', *ODNB*, (Oxford: OUP, 2004; online edn, May 2009).
[52] F.B. Relton, *An Account of the Fire Insurance Companies, Associations, Institutions, Projects and Schemes Established and Projected in Great Britain and Ireland during the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries, including the Sun Fire Office* (London, 1893), p. 286.

arrangements epitomised a growing level of sophistication and nepotism in eighteenth-century finance.

Watts prospered. He was awarded government sinecures through the influence of his political patron, Lord Falmouth, and in 1734, was elected MP for the pocket borough of Mitchell in Cornwall, the parliamentary seat later occupied by Albert Nesbitt. Watts was Falmouth's candidate for the seat and sat as an opposition Whig in the prince of Wales' parliamentary faction. In 1741, he was elected for the equally venal borough of Tregony, another pocket constituency.[53] With around 150 electors, the 'principal customers were the Treasury, who usually bought one seat, and wealthy London merchants, who competed for the other.'[54] Watts died in 1742 having retired from Sun Fire the prior year. He was awarded an annuity at the time, the company recognising that:

> many of the good regulations made in this office and more particularly the scheme and success of the subscription stock (from which era we may date the establishment and good fortune of the office) were owing in a great measure to the contrivances and good services of Mr Thomas Watt.[55]

Crossle suggests that **John Hope** may have been the Ulster Quaker of that name. Hope (*d*.1740), was a successful merchant and linen draper who had inherited a profitable business from his father.[56] He became one of the wealthiest members of the Quaker community in Lurgan, if not in Ulster, and cultivated and benefited from strong commercial relationships within the Quaker community across Ireland and particularly in Dublin. Hope maintained accounts with bankers and merchants in Bristol, Manchester and London, where he would have been a regular visitor.[57] Crossle's identification of Hope, although the most probable, is not definitive and there were two other relatively prominent 'John Hopes' living in London at the time. The first, a brewer, was based in Shoreditch; the second was a merchant and a director of the East India Company.

William Worth (1698-1725), of Rathfarnham in Co. Dublin, eleventh in the list of members, was the grandson of his namesake who from 1681-6 held office as Baron of the Irish Exchequer. Following the Williamite Wars, the family's fortune was established through a commission to manage the Duke of Ormonde, the Lord Lieutenant's, Irish estates. In 1723, Worth would have been representing the family's business interests in London. Two years later he married Jane Saunders (1704-47), of Saunders Court, Kilpatrick in Co. Wexford, in August 1725, 'a lady of a considerable fortune.'[58] Unfortunately, Worth died in November the same year, aged only 27.[59] He was related by marriage to Robert Callaghan who in 1738 became SGW of Irish Grand Lodge, and to William Newenham, who was JGW of Munster in 1731.

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[53] http://www.historyofparliamentonline.org/volume/1715-1754/constituencies/tregony, accessed 20 April 2012.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Edward Baumer, *The Early Days of the Sun Fire Office* (London: Causton, 1910), p. 51.

[56] Crossle, *CC Transactions*, p. 109.

[57] Hoope's principal correspondents were James bolt in Bristol; Jonathan Patton and Robert Fielding in Manchester; and Jonathan Gurney and Robert Hales in London. Cf., W.H. Crawford, *The Impact of the Domestic Linen Industry in Ulster* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2005), pp 35-6. Also, Richard L. Greaves, *Dublin's Merchant Quaker: Anthony Sharp and the Community of Friends, 1643-1707* (Stanford: Stanford UP 1998), pp 107, 128.

[58] *Dublin Weekly Journal*, 21 August 1725.

[59] *Dublin Weekly Journal*, 13 November 1725

William Spaight, a barrister, had an estate at Six-mile Bridge, Co. Clare, where he subsequently sat as a magistrate. In 1723, he may have been attending the Inns of Court in London in order to qualify for the Irish bar, a requirement for Irish barristers. The Irish comprised a relatively large part of the judicial community with certain chambers known for their strong Irish relationships.[60] Even Catholics had a presence. Although prohibited from practicing as solicitors or barristers, they specialised in conveyance and property where a legal qualification was not a formal requirement.

Peter Webb, tenth on the list, is a relatively common name. It is possible but unlikely that he was a linen draper whose premises were at the Wheat Sheaf in Henrietta Street, Covent Garden.[61] The occupation and location would connect him with Ireland and with others in the lodge. However, it is more probable that Webb was the Irish jeweller and banker of that name, who was at the time at the apex of his profession. He had many Irish customers.[62] Crossle noted that Webb had lent money to one of **John Gascoyne**'s business associates, James McCulloh, and that the debt was subsequently recovered through the intermediation of Andrew Crotty of Lismore, Co. Waterford. McCulloh, a gentleman of the King's Chamber, was employed in the procurement of goods for the Crown but also traded on his own account.

Benjamin Lambert, another merchant or high-end tradesman, was probably a Huguenot.[63] There were at least seven Lamberts among London's freemasons. Edward Lambert, a member of the Crown at Acton; George, a member of the Fountain in the Strand; John Lambert, the Ship tavern on Fish Hill; Philip, of the Crown at Acton and the Fountain in the Strand; Thomas, the Three Cranes in Poultry, later the Ship behind the Royal Exchange; and William, the Swan Tavern, Fish Street Hill. Another (or the same) Edward Lambert, was recorded in Grand Lodge's *Minutes* as a confectioner in Pall Mall. The last named was deputy Grand Steward to John Heidegger in 1725 and a Grand Steward in his own right in 1727. Tangentially, Crossle noted that members of the Lambert family living in Cregclare, Co. Galway had leased land from **Joseph Gascoyne**.

Henry Cunningham was from Mount Charles, Co. Donegal. A friend of **Albert Nesbitt** and **Nathaniel Gould**, he was probably connected to Greg, Cunningham & Company, a trading house with offices in New York and Belfast. Interestingly, one of the most important Irish American firms trading in Philadelphia in the mid- and late 1700s was Conyngham & Nesbitt. Its senior partner was Redmond Conyngham, who had originally migrated from Co. Donegal. There is also a connection to Cloud Stewart: Captain Andrew Stewart's second son, Hugh, married Margaret Morris of Mountjoy Castle. Their eldest son, also Hugh, married the daughter and heiress of William Cunningham of Castle Conyngham in Donegal.[64] A James Cunningham, described as a merchant and possibly related, was listed in Kent's *London Directory* for 1740.

Richard Warburton was probably the Irish MP of that name (1674-1747), then chairman of the Accounts Committee in the Irish Commons. MP for Portarlington from 1715-27 and Ballykanill from 1727-47, Warburton took an active role in the Irish parliament where he was involved with bills concerning the militia and trade. If not the MP, Warburton may have been another member of the same family despatched to London to look after their commercial and

[60] Cf., John Bergin, 'The Irish Catholic interest at the London inns of court, 1674–1800', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland/Iris an dá chultúr*, 24, (2009), 36–61.
[61] *Daily Post*, 23 January 1724.
[62] I am grateful to Toby Barnard for this observation.
[63] The name derives from 'de Lambert'; both were relatively common Huguenot names.
[64] *Debrett's Baronetage of England*, (London, 1815), vol. 2, p. 1121.

financial interests.[65] The Warburtons had lived at Garryhinch in Queens County since the early seventeenth century and had had representatives in the Irish parliament almost continuously since that time. Crossle stated that Warburton was 'well-known about town – a keen business man in vested land interests'.

Jonas Morris (*d.*1734), had been sent to London to monitor and manage his family's political and mercantile interests. On his return, he was elected to the Commons where he sat as the second member for Cork from 1730 until his death.[66] The Morris family were Quaker traders and merchants who had settled in Cork at least a century earlier.[67] A Jonas Morris had been mayor of the city in 1659; his mayoral seal had the mark of a ship between two towers. A descendant, Theodore Morris, became mayor in 1699; and another, Jonas Morris, was High Sheriff for the county in 1769.[68] Their political achievements across two centuries point to the family's financial success and influence; and the marriage of their daughters into prominent Irish political families indicates that their wealth had given them access to and membership of the local gentry, a view validated by James Morris becoming SGW of Munster's socially exclusive grand lodge in 1731. Jonas Morris' relationship with **Albert Nesbitt** is commented on above in connection with the provision of naval supplies at Cork and Kinsale. The political lobbying of the Quakers in London at the turn of the seventeenth century has been studied by John Bergin, who places them in the 'vanguard of political lobbying'.[69] He noted, tellingly, that their lobbying techniques were copied by their Irish counterparts and that both groups retained permanent lobbyists in London.[70]

It is likely that **William Hoar**, alternatively written as 'Hore' and 'Hoare', was the MP for Taghmon in the Irish parliament. The Hoare family were prominent merchants and bankers, based predominantly in Cork and with a large scale interest in shipping, victualling and brewing. They were unrelated to the English banking family of the same name. Over time, the Hoares acquired substantial landholdings in Cos. Cork, Kerry and Limerick, and built a series of alliances within Ireland and England through marriage and trading relationships. The family had robust Quaker connections. Joseph Hoare (*d.*1729) married into the Rogers family, another prominent Cork Quaker merchant family, and his son, Samuel Hoare (1716-96) married the daughter of another London Quaker merchant with solid Irish connections.[71] It is unclear whether William was a direct descendant of Edward Hoare (*d.*1690), the principal founder of the Irish dynasty in the seventeenth century. However, Edward had six brothers and at least three sons and a direct or indirect connection is a reasonable assumption. As an alternative identification, Crossle proposed that William Hoar may have been from Harperstown in Co. Wexford, who held a variety of lucrative government sinecures in Ireland.[72] Bergin has suggested that it is unlikely that the two families - Cork and Wexford - were connected.[73]

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[65] *Daily Courant*, 7 December 1725.

[66] *Read's Weekly Journal Or British Gazetteer*, 28 November 1730.

[67] John Windele, *Historical and Descriptive Notices of the City of Cork* (Cork: Luke H. Bolster, 1839), p. 100.

[68] John Fitzgerald, *The Cork Remembrancer*, (Cork: J. Sullivan, 1783), pp 146, 186: *Protestant Mayors & Sheriffs of Cork*. There is also anecdotal evidence that he was mayor of Cork in 1651 during the Cromwellian wars.

[69] John Bergin, 'The Quaker Lobby and Its Influence on Irish Legislation, 1692-1705', *Eighteenth-Century Ireland/Iris an dá chultúr*, 19 (2004), 9-36.

[70] With respect to other political lobbyists, cf. also, Kenneth Morgan, 'Bristol West India Merchants in the Eighteenth Century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 6th series, 3 (1993), 185-208, esp. 202.

[71] John Bergin, Edward Hoare (*d.*1690), *DIB* (Cambridge: CUP & RIA), http://dib.cambridge.org, accessed 2 August 2012.

[72] Crossle, *CC Transactions*, p. 112.

[73] John Bergin, Queens University Belfast, private communication.

William Richardson (*c.*1690-1755), from Somerset in Coleraine, Derry, was MP for Augher, which he represented in the Irish Commons from 1727-55, a position connected directly to his employment as agent for The Honourable The Irish Society. The organisation had been created by royal charter at the beginning of the seventeenth century as a means of obliging the City of London livery companies to co-finance Londonderry's plantations and to expedite English colonisation. It designed and financed the initial construction of the cities of Londonderry and Coleraine.[74] As agent, Richardson represented and was appointed by the society's governing board, an institution whose directors were nominated by the livery companies.

John Pringle may either have been the parliamentarian of that name (*c.*1674-1754), MP for Selkirkshire from 1708 until 1729, or more probably and as Crossle suggests, Mr John Pringle of Caledon, Co. Tyrone, the father of Major General Henry Pringle, later colonel of the 51st Foot. If the MP, Pringle was a Whig loyalist who from 1715, voted with the administration in all recorded divisions at which he was present. His Selkirkshire constituency was in the pocket of its hereditary sheriff, John Murray, Pringle's brother-in-law. Pringle was created Lord Haining in 1729 and appointed a justice on the bench in the Court of Session, the supreme civil court in Scotland. If the latter, Pringle (*d.* 1741) would have been descended from Scottish immigrants. He lived at Lyme Park, Caledon, an estate close to the border with Armagh, where he was a local justice of the peace and land agent for John Hamilton and then his daughter, Margaret, who inherited the Caledon estate in 1713. As such, Pringle would have been present in London in his capacity as agent to the estate.

Robert Waller was perhaps the person of that name commissioned as a cornet in 1723 and promoted to adjutant in the 1st Regiment of Foot in 1725, a prestigious position in a premier regiment that could only have been purchased at a significant cost.[75] Although the regiment was normally on the English Establishment, in 1713 it had been detached to Ireland on garrison duty. A Robert Waller was in 1736 made sheriff for Roscommon.[76] Crossle suggests that Waller may have been the eldest son of Robert Waller of Allenstown, Co. Meath.[77]

The other member of the lodge holding military rank was **Captain Lionel Beecher**, who later served as 1st lieutenant in Colonel John Wynyard's Regiment of Marines, which was raised in November 1739. Crossle noted that the family lived at Sherhin in Co. Cork.

Captain Patrick Trahee, also written as 'Trehee', was not an army or naval officer but a merchant seaman and the son of James Trehee (*d.*1709), who had captained the merchant ship 'Crocodile'.[78] Like his father, Patrick Trehee worked the Caribbean and Atlantic trade. A press report in 1709 recorded the following from Deal in Kent:

> March 10. Yesterday morning the Guildford, Captain Patrick Trehee, of 327 Tuns [sic] and 22 Guns, homeward bound from Jamaica, but last from Lisbon, was unfortunately cast away on the flats between the Downs and the River, but all the men saved. Her cargo, which consisted chiefly of sugar, indigo etc., was valued at £25,000.[79]

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[74] Cf., James Stevens Curl, *The Honourable The Irish Society and the Plantation of Ulster, 1608-2000: The City of London and the Colonisation of County Londonderry in the Province of Ulster in Ireland. A History and Critique* (Chichester: Phillimore & Co., 2000).

[75] *British Journal*, 18 December 1725.

[76] *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 20 January 1736.

[77] Crossle, *CC Transactions*, p. 112.

[78] 'Captain, late Commander of the Ship Crocodile but bound for the Canaries': Will Proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 6 June 1709.

[79] *Post Man and the Historical Account*, 10 – 12 March 1709.

The ship was recovered and Trehee continued to captain her on the Jamaica route. Press reports featuring Trehee occur throughout the early decades of the eighteenth century and a classified advertisement from 1722 provides evidence of the profits from the trade.[80]

> Lost, on Thursday … between London Bridge and Aldermanbury, a black pocket book in which was a Bank Note No. 385 for £120 payable to Capt. Patrick Trehee dated May 31st 1722 with several other Bills and Notes of no use to any other Owner, payment being stopped at the Bank and other places. Whoever brings it to the Portugal Coffee House near the Royal Exchange shall have Five Guineas reward and no questions asked.[81]

Trehee was still sailing in 1730, with the press noting his excursions to and from Rotterdam.[82] He was at this time a director of Royal Exchange Assurance alongside other members of the lodge. A press notice shows him as such in 1729, although his first appointment to the board would have been earlier.[83] Trehee remained a director of the Royal Exchange for many years.[84] His Will was proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on 24 October 1737, where he was described briefly as a merchant, resident in London.

'**Tiss. Putland'** is a misspelling of or abbreviation for Sisson Putland, the son of Thomas Putland, whose nephew was John Putland, JGW of Irish Grand Lodge in 1737, SGW in 1738, and DGM 1747-50 and 1763-4. Thomas Putland and his eldest son, Sisson's brother, also named Thomas, had been successful London merchants who had earlier emigrated to Ireland where they settled in Dublin.[85] Tiss lived in Spring Gardens, close to Charing Cross, and acted as the family's London agent with oversight of their business affairs. The *Gentleman's Magazine* described him succinctly at the time of his death as 'very rich'.[86] His obituary in the *London Evening Post* was slightly more informative:

> Yesterday Morning died, very much lamented, after a long illness, in Spring Gardens, Charing Cross, Sisson Putland, Esq. We hear he has left the bulk of his estate, which is very considerable, to his brother George Putland, Esq.,[87] and a very handsome legacy with his coach and horses to Miss Lindar, and to his man, a hundred pounds.[88]

A second obituary in the *London Evening Post* a few days later placed the value of Miss Lindar's bequest at £2,000, together with 'all the furniture of his house'.[89]

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[80] Cf., for example, *British Mercury*, 28 October 1713.
[81] *Daily Courant*, 8 June 1722.
[82] *Daily Journal*, 30 July 1730; *Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer* , 1 August 1730.
[83] *London Evening Post*, 26 -28 June 1729.
[84] *London Evening Post*, 29 June 1732 – 1 July 1732.
[85] Thomas Putland, Sisson's elder brother, stayed in Ireland. The membership records of the *Incorporated Society in Dublin for Society for Promoting English Protestant Schools in Ireland* show him as a member as late as 1737: *An abstract of the proceedings of the Incorporated Society in Dublin, for Promoting English Protestant Schools in Ireland: from the opening of His Majesty's Royal Charter, on the 6th day of February, 1733 to the 25th day of March, 1737* (Dublin, 1737), p. 35.
[86] *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 8, March 1738, p.165.
[87] In 1723, a George Putland was the Master of the Star and Garter lodge in Covent Garden.
[88] *London Evening Post*, 21 – 23 March 1738.
[89] Ibid, 25 – 28 March 1738.

It is not known whether Thomas Putland, Sisson's father, died in Dublin or London. However, a Will for a Thomas Putland was proved at Canterbury in July 1723 and referred to a merchant who had resided at Chelsea. Marriage announcements for Thomas Putland's daughters in 1728 and 1733, also referred respectively to 'a late eminent Merchant of this City' and to 'the late Thomas Putland … of Paradise Row, Chelsea, Esq.[90]

'Leon. Hatfield' may have been the Rev. Leonard Hatfield who in 1751 was given the livings of Stradbally and Moyana in Queens County by the Anglo-Irish Cosby family of Stradbally Hall.[91] However, it is more probable that he was the better-known appellant who appeared before the House of Lords in 1725. Hatfield *versus* Hatfield was an attempt by Leonard Hatfield to overturn a decree made by the Court of Exchequer in Ireland relating to his father's estate. A judgment in the Irish Courts had been issued the prior year in favour of his mother (or stepmother), Jane Hatfield, described as 'widow and relict of Leonard Hatfield, gentleman, deceased'. Leonard Hatfield's appeal was described in a counter-petition to the House of Lords as 'scandalous, impertinent and greatly reflecting on the petitioner, charging her with crimes not contained in the pleadings and wholly improper and indecent to be mentioned or suggested.'[92] Leonard Hatfield's claim failed; his appeal was dismissed and the decree confirmed.[93] A notorious rather than celebrated litigant, Crossle commented that Hatfield was 'well-known in the Dublin law courts'. The family came from Killinure in Co. Westmeath.

Alongside **Nathaniel Gould** and **Albert Nesbitt**, probably the wealthiest member of the lodge was **Springett Penn** (*d.*1731), a Quaker and the principal heir and grandson of William Penn, who founded the Pennsylvania colony. Penn had inherited substantial land holdings in Pennsylvania and in England, principally at Worninghurst, Sussex. However, he also had extensive land holdings in Ireland where he lived on the family's large Shanagarry estate. Shanagarry had originally been granted to his great-grandfather, Admiral Sir William Penn, by Charles II, in exchange for the market town of Macroom and its castle, which Admiral Penn had in turn been granted by Cromwell. In 1723, Springett Penn was almost certainly in London in connection with his estates and the legal obligations he retained in connection with Pennsylvania.[94] Despite being a Quaker, together with his mother, Hannah, Penn had inherited the right to govern the colony under the auspices of the Crown and as such his and his mother's formal consent was required periodically in connection with the colony's administration. For example, in 1725, the *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies*, record:

> 1 March. Declaration by Mrs. Penn that the royal approbation of Patrick Gordon to be Deputy Governor of Pennsylvania and the Three Lower Counties upon Delaware River, shall not be construed to diminish the right claimed by the Crown to the said Three Lower Counties. Signed, Hannah Penn, in the presence of S. Clement and Will. Penn.[95]
>
> 1 March. Similar Declaration. Signed, Springett Penn. Endorsed as preceding
>
> 11 March. St James's. Order of King in Council. Approving of appointment of Major

[90] *Daily Journal*, 12 July 1728 and *The London Magazine or Gentleman's Monthly Intelligencer*, 1733, vol 2., p. 425.
[91] *General Advertiser*, 30 March 1751.
[92] *Journal of the House of Lords*, 1722-1726, vol. 22, 21-31 March 1725.
[93] Ibid, 1-10 April 1725.
[94] Cf., for example, *British Journal*, 23 February 1723.
[95] Cecil Headlam (ed.), *Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies* (London: IHR, 1936), vol. 35, *America and West Indies*, 1 & 11 March 1726, pp 29-43.

> Patrick Gordon as Deputy Governor of Pennsylvania, provided he qualify himself as the law directs and give security as proposed, and that Springett and Hannah Penn make the declaration proposed.
>
> June 1726. *Order in Council approving draught of instructions for Major Gordon:*
> Order in Council of the 18th of April, 1726, approving the draught of instructions relating to the Acts of Trade for Springett Penn, Esquire, and Hannah Penn, widow, to be by them given to Major Gordon, Deputy Governor of Pennsylvania.[96]

Springett Penn was twenty-one in 1723 when a member of the Ship, four years below the stated minimum age to be accepted as a freemason. However, exceptions were often made for those of sufficient wealth and social standing and he was in good company. The Duke of Wharton was 24 when installed as English Grand Master; the Duke of Richmond, 23; and the Earl of Darnley, 22. Penn was appointed or elected DGM of Munster in 1726 and 1727, under the Grand Mastership of the Hon James O'Brien, GM of Munster from 1726 to 1728. O'Brien was the brother of the 4th Earl of Inchiquin, himself GM of England in 1727.

The associational overlap between Penn's commercial and social/Masonic networks can be seen not only in his membership of the Ship behind the Royal Exchange but also in his leasing of land on the Shanagarry estate to many recognisable Munster freemasons. Lepper and Crossle in their *History* note that among others, Thomas Wallis, Munster's Grand Warden, leased eight townships from Penn; Edward Webber of Cork held nine; and John Longfield of Castlemary, who succeeded Penn as DGM, leased one. **Nathaniel Gould**'s extensive mortgage holdings in Co. Cork, with which Walter Gould was linked, speak similarly to a blurring of business, social, family and Masonic connections.[97] Support for the argument is also suggested by Penn and Walter Gould's business relationships with Richard Longfield, Munster's DGM in 1728, and John Gamble, Munster's JGW in 1730, from whom Penn borrowed on the security of Gamble's mortgages on Shanagarry.[98]

Paul Minchell may have been a relation of and London agent for the Chester merchants and mercers of that name. The head of family who died in 1741, was described as 'the most eminent Mercer in the whole city of Chester'.[99] Crossle suggests that the name may have been misspelled and referred to Paul Minchin of Ballynakill in Co. Tipperrary.

Of the remaining members of the lodge, '**William Bently**' is presently unidentified; '**Mr Row Hill**' was probably Rowley Hill, described by Crossle as Junior Warden for a Dublin lodge in 1731 whose relations were from Ballkelly in Co. Derry. The family had been granted lands in Armagh, Antrim, Derry and Tyrone in the 1640s when Samuel Hill had been appointed Treasurer in Ireland under Cromwell.[100] Rowley Hill is however probably better known masonically as one of William Ponsonby's wardens at the lodge at the Yellow Lion tavern on 6 March 1731. **Abraham Sharigley** was, in Crossle's words, a 'well-known man about town in Dublin.'

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[96] K.H. Ledward (ed.), *Journals of the Board of Trade and Plantations* (London: IHR, 1928), vol. 5, January 1723-December 1728, pp 270-277.
[97] Lepper and Crossle, *History*, p. 142.
[98] Ibid, pp 143-4
[99] *London Evening Post*, 13 – 15 August 1741.
[100] Cf. Robert Bashford, *History of Union Lodge of St Patrick, No. 367, Downpatrick*, sourced at www.irishfreemasonry.com/index.php?p=1_40_History-of-Lodge-367-Downpatrick: accessed 10 October 2011.