‘Left Holding the Baby’

Remembering and Forgetting the Magdalen Laundry

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Contents

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Introduction

> *We survive, still, in the culture of estrangement, for how much longer no one knows. Yet to change that culture intelligently, we must understand it, trace its roots, know its history - not because estrangement is the lineal descendent of one particular historical event or time, but because the past is still alive in the present.*[1]

This thesis sets out to explore the 'culture of estrangement' that surrounds the story of Ireland's Magdalen Laundries. The immediate environment of the art college sparked my initial interest in this subject and provides much of the material for this thesis. The building that now houses Limerick School of Art and Design (LSAD) was, until 1994, home to the Good Shepherd Convent and Magdalen Laundry that operated in Limerick for almost a century and a half. The immense history of the building, alongside the knowledge that nationally the history of the Magdalen institutions is shrouded by a lack of acknowledgement, prompted this exploration. This thesis sets out to explore a number of questions. How is the Magdalen history remembered and forgotten? What are the reasons behind the lack of acknowledgement that surround this particular history? As a custodian of the building, where does the art college fit in the picture of remembering and forgetting?

Magdalen institutions began in the late 1700s but became most prevalent in the mid-nineteenth century, when secular asylums all over Ireland were taken over by the Catholic Church and converted into Magdalen Asylums.[2] Magdalen laundries were workhouses in which the state incarcerated Irish women who were perceived to be a threat to the moral fibre of society; workhouses where inmates performed hard labour, received no official sentences, had no mandated release dates, and were forced to give up their individual

[1] Starhawk. *Dreaming the Dark: Magic, Sex and Politics*, first published by Boston: Beacon Press, 1982. This edition London: Unwin Paperback, 1990, p. 185.

[2] By this time Magdalen asylums were part of the larger complex of custodial institutions (orphanages, reformatories, workhouses and the like) which moral reformers in modernising western societies regulated criminality, poverty, disease and sexuality. Brian Titley 'Heil Mary: Magdalen asylums and moral regulation in Ireland', *History of Education Review*, July 06, p. 2.

identities and assume new names for the length of their incarceration. Inmates were named Magdalens to conjure up the traditional image of the sinner, Mary Magdalene; their task of washing soiled clothing and linen symbolized a spiritual rebirth.

Historically made up of two distinct classes of women- the 'fallen' (prostitutes) and the 'preventative' (young women in moral danger)- Irish asylums in the twentieth century incarcerated a more diverse community of female inmates, including 'hopeless cases,' 'mental defectives,' infanticide cases, those on remand from the courts, transfers from industrial and reformatory schools, and 'voluntary' committals.[3] The Magdalen institutions in the twentieth century provided the state with an apparatus to deal with problem women and children, which Smith calls "the nation's architecture of containment." Throughout the twentieth century it is estimated that about 30,000 Irish girls and women were locked up in these institutions. The laundries continued to function in Ireland with the support of the Catholic Church, the government, and society until the last laundry closed its doors in 1996. [4]

Remembering, as a political action, is the subject of my first chapter. I begin by looking at some general issues in relation to remembering and forgetting of collective trauma. Using the Holocaust as my main point of reference, I examine the reasons why it is important to remember, and the purpose and function of collective forgetting. This is followed by an exploration of psychological theories in relation to trauma and abuse. This section focuses on feminist writings since they bring the issue into the realm of action. I conclude this chapter with an examination of ethics and responsibilities in relation to remembrance of trauma, and discuss what an effective response to witnessing of trauma might be.

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[3] James Smith, *Ireland's Magdalen Laundries and the Nations Architecture of Containment*, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame Press, 2007, p. xv.

[4] In October1996 a controversial chapter in Irish history ended with the closure of the last of the Irish Magdalen Laundries at the Convent of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity at Sean McDermott Street, Dublin. Gary Culliton, 'Last Days of a Laundry', *Irish Times*, 25/9/1996.

Chapter Two examines the pattern of remembering and forgetting of the Magdalen history. Part one explores local level remembering and forgetting. Through examination of the building, oral testimony and what little documentation is available, I explore the ways by which the history is remembered and forgotten. The second part of this chapter looks at the pattern at national level. In conclusion I examine some of the direct implications of the collective forgetting of this history.

In Chapter Three I examine the Magdalen history in the broader context of sexual politics in order to come to some understanding of this particular history, and the lack of acknowledgment that surrounds it. This examination places the story of the Magdalen asylums in the context of a centuries old history of control of women's sexuality that continues into the present: a history and practice that for the most part remains hidden and unacknowledged. I examine hegemonic practice of past and present that sets out to control women's sexuality and hide actual crimes against women.[5] I argue that while the physical structures of the Magdalen laundries that were used to maintain the hegemonic order no longer exist, the contempt of women's bodies and the goal of controlling women's sexuality and hiding crimes against women has not disappeared.

In the conclusion I revisit the role of LSAD and make some observations in relation to its practice of remembering.

[5] The concept of hegemony was developed by Gramsci. It attempts to explain how a ruling class exercises power and maintains social control. Rather than using force to produce consent, the ruling class attempts to engineer consent by legitimating a certain ideology. Ideology becomes hegemonic when it is widely accepted as describing 'the way things are' inducing people to consent to the institutions and practices dominant in their society and its way of life'. For more on this see, for example, Steve Jones, *Antonio Gramsci*. Routledge Critical Thinkers, New York and London: Routledge, 2006.

CHAPTER 1

Rights in Remembering: building the case for just and responsive remembering in relation to trauma

In this chapter I explore issues raised in relation to remembrance and trauma. I am situating my subject matter of the Magdalene laundries in this frame in order to make a case for the need for responsive and just remembrance of this disturbing aspect of our history. Current interest in trauma dates back to the early 1990s, when a number of groundbreaking works appeared: notably Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub's edited volume *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*; Judith Herman's *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence – From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror* and Cathy Caruth's edited volume *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*.[6] The subjects of remembrance and trauma are the source of extensive and often overlapping investigation, ranging from psychoanalytical to historical, individual to collective. My aim in this chapter is to make a case for ethical and responsible remembering of historical trauma. I will start by looking at some general issues in relation to remembering and forgetting of collective trauma – the Holocaust being my main point of reference. This is followed by an exploration of psychological theories in relation to trauma and abuse. In particular I will focus on feminist writings, which are included because they provide useful considerations in relation to broader issues of remembrance and trauma. They also bring the issue into the realm of

[6] Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub, *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*, New York and London: Routledge, 1992. Judith Herman. *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror New York*, New York: Basic Books, 1992. Cathy Caruth, *Trauma: Explorations in Memory*, Balitmore and London: JHU Press, 1995.

action. Finally I turn to the issue of ethics and responsibilities in relation to remembrance of trauma.

1.1 Remembrance

Remembrance as a vital human activity shapes our links to the past, and the ways we remember define us in the present. As individuals and societies, we need the past to construct and to anchor our identities and to nurture a vision of the future.[7] Much of the writings about the importance of collective remembrance are informed by the Holocaust. Kearney, for example, argues that the first-hand narratives of Lawrence Langer and the literary witness of writers like Primo Levi, Elie Wiesel or, at a fictional remove, Thomas Keneally, serve to show how essential narration is for the ethical remembrance of historical trauma. For Elie Wiesel, the reason he tells and retells the story is 'to give the victims "the voice that was denied them" by history'. [8] For Primo Levi, the need to recount his memoirs was a duty to have others participate in the events which might otherwise be forgotten, and by being forgotten, repeat themselves. Paul Ricoeur specifies memory's duty: "to do justice, through memories, to an other than the self'.[9] For their varied, but connected, reasons these writers emphasise the duty to remember.

Remembrance and memory, however, are by no means straightforward.[10] As Young points out, memory can be 'slippery and unreliable', always affected by forgetting

[7] James E. Young (ed.), *The Art of Memory: Holocaust Memorials in History*, Munich and New York, Prestel-Verlag and the Jewish Museum New York, 1994, p. 9.
[8] Richard Kearney, *On Stories*, London, Routledge, 2002, p. 48.
[9] Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting.* Translated by Kathleen Blarney and David Pellauer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004, p. 89.
[10] For a more comprehensive account of some of the debates in relation to memory see for instance Paul Antze, and Michael Lambek (eds.) *Tense Past: Cultural Essays in Trauma and Memory*. New York and London: Routledge, 1996. Lambek and Antze say that memory is something we all know intimately, but that when we begin to talk about memory, ambiguities and complexities rapidly emerge - what it is, how it works, where it lies. A central idea in their book is to imagine memory as practice, not as the pre-given object of our gaze, but as the act of gazing and the objects it generates. Memories, they say, are produced out of experience and, in turn, reshape it. The essays in their book explore how 'the very idea of memory' comes into play in society and culture and about the uses of 'memory' in collective and individual practice.

and denial, repression and trauma, and, more often than not, 'serving the need to rationalise and to maintain power'.[11] The instances of negationism, Kearney asserts, be that in respect of the Holocaust or other historical traumas, are reminders of the stakes involved.

1.2 Forgetting

With this in mind, I turn here to explore the notion of collective forgetting and amnesia. The main point that I draw on here is that collective forgetting, rather than being passive or involuntary, is often a controlled and exacting practice with far reaching consequences. Primo Levi wrote that the Third Reich waged an obsessive war against memory, practicing 'an Orwellian falsification of memory, falsification of reality, negation of reality.'[12] What is important to note is that such strategies of denial and repression did not begin or end with the downfall of the Nazi regime.[13] Lowenthal points out that collective oblivion is mainly deliberate, purposeful and regulated. 'The art is a high and delicate enterprise, demanding astute judgment about what to keep and what to let go, to salvage or to shred or shelve, to memorialize or to anathematize.'[14]

Post-modern debate about amnesia also locks in with the memory of the Holocaust. Theodor Adorno's thesis is, in essence, that failure to notice what is, or what was, when such knowledge is still possible, amounts to an act of forgetting, to a 'destruction of

[11] Young (ed.), *The Art of Memory*, p.9.
[12] Quoted in Young (ed.), *The Art of Memory*, p.10.
[13] David Lowental gives examples of such attempts to 'expunge memory wholesale'. Against the infection of idolatry, he writes 'Reformation Protestants sought to make "utterly extinct and destroy all shrines", in the 1547 Tudor injunction, "so that there remain no memory of the same." Pequot Indians vanquished by 17th-century English settlers were required to forget the very name of Pequot. Old Warsaw was eradicated by Nazi iconoclasts, so that Poles would forget their glorious past. The library at Sarajevo and the bridge at Mostar were destroyed precisely in order to force those who treasured them to forget their heritage.' David Lowenthal in Adrian Forty and Susanne Kuchler (eds.) *The Art of Forgetting*, Oxford, Oxford International Publishers Ltd., 1999, p. xiii.
[14] *The Art of Forgetting* sets out to explore 'the myriad artful modes of expelling things and thoughts that distress us or have become redundant or obsolete'. David Lowenthal points out in his preface that '[e]very culture, each epoch, crafts and accredits particular conventions for selecting what and how to forget: by ritual destruction of emblems of generational exchange [...] by funerary monuments that highlight material decay [...] by the protracted submergence into invisibility of anti-fascist memorials as in several German cities.' Forty and Kuchler (eds.), *The Art of Forgetting*, p. xi.

memory'.[15] Jean-Francois Lyotard equates the post-war German's amnesia and repression of the Holocaust with the failure of Western civilization, in general, to recollect past events, to reflect on its constitutive inability to accept difference, otherness and 'to draw the consequences from the insidious relationship between enlightenment modernity and Auschwitz.' In this view, Nazism is a singular, but not unique, case in which 'the narcissistic fantasies of omnipotence and superiority that haunt Western modernity have come to the surface.'[16] For Lyotard, if there is no memory, if we do not read the traces of the past, there can be no recognition of difference, no tolerance for the rich complexities and instabilities of personal and cultural, political and national identities. While post-modernism raises important issues in relation to history and narratives, it is also criticised on the basis of a withdrawal from real struggle and action for change.[17] Recent feminist research on trauma, in contrast, engages directly with issues of action and responsibility. I will examine some issues raised in this research in the next section.

1.3 Psychology of Trauma

Here I explore the subject of the psychology of traumatic memory. In doing so my aim is not to displace historical trauma with 'individual drama' but rather to see what can be extrapolated from this study in order to inform collective issues regarding trauma and remembrance. I will draw on feminist research into psychology, particularly that which relates to child sexual abuse and violence against women. This research looks at issues of

[15] Adorno is concerned with the events of the Nazism era in Germany, concerned with understanding how they happened and how we might adequately come to terms with them. He argues that contemporary society does not possess the intellectual resources which would allow for a full consciousness of what happened in this period, that is, it lacks the capacity to acknowledge the fact of suffering. The absence of this consciousness is, for Adorno, a forgetting, a destruction of memory. For more on this see, for example, Brian O'Connor, 'Adorno on the Destruction of Memory' in Radstone, Susannah and Bill Schwartz (eds). *Mapping Memory*. New York: Fordham University Press, 2008.

[16] Young, *The Art of Memory,* p. 10.

[17] See for example, Rosemarie Tong, *Feminist Thought: A Comprehensive Introduction*, London: Routledge, 1993, pp. 223-233. She outlines and comments on the main criticisms of feminist postmodernism. 'These critics view postmodern feminists as contemporary Epicureans who withdraw from real revolutionary struggle- marches, campaigns, boycotts, protests- into a garden of intellectual delights.' p. 231.

silence, speaking out and the struggle to be heard. The stories told by victims and survivors, and by their witnesses, chroniclers, and commentators – historians, therapists and a host of other experts – give central place to trauma. Lambek and Antze point to the 'interpenetration' of individual and collective discourses: both how history borrows from psychotherapy and vice versa in their respective construals of their subjects, and how memory of the individual draws upon collective idioms and mechanisms.[18] They point out, however, that the rise of popular therapeutic discourse has gone hand in hand with widespread political disengagement, citing Marilyn Ivy to illustrate the point. She describes 'a displacement from the possibilities of politics and community in late twentieth-century America into the domain of a privatised imaginary.[19] The overall result has been a shift in moral focus from collective obligation to narratives of individual suffering. Feminist writing about the psychology of trauma, on the other hand, is in direct contrast with this disengagement from the political and as Walker points out, is useful in thinking through more generalised problems of history and memory.[20]

In lecturing from her book *Trauma Cinema*, the subtitle of which is *Documenting Incest and the Holocaust*, Walker noted 'that audiences tend to breathe a sigh of relief when we finish with incest and move on to the more palatable topic of…the Holocaust.' [21] But, she adds, if we are to think seriously about the socio-political dimension of individual psychological disturbance then the so-called 'memory-wars' over childhood sexual abuse are instructive if unsavoury. In the context of the theoretically informed feminist psychology of trauma, Walker contends that discussions of Holocaust testimony by

[18] Lambek and Antze, *Tense Past*, p. xiii.
[19] Lambek and Antze, *Tense Past*, p. xiii. Allan Young writing about post-traumatic stress disorder among Vietnam War veterans, describes a comparable situation, one in which collective guilt is evaded through the 'medicalization' of individual experience.For more on this see Allan Young, 'Bodily Memory and Traumatic Memory, in Lambek and Antze, *Tense Past*, ps. 89-102.
[20] Janet Walker, 'Testimony in the umbra of trauma: film and video portraits of survival' *Studies in Documentary Film*, No. 2, 2007, p. 94.
[21] Walker, 'Testimony in the umbra of trauma, p. 94.

Shoshana Felman and Dori Laub may be appreciated anew.[22] Laub argues that the horror of the Nazi labour and death camps 'was beyond the limits of human ability (and willingness) to grasp, to transmit, or to imagine'.[23] She points to the necessity of articulating the traumatic experience to a listener or witness, 'so as to reassert the veracity of the past and to build anew its linkage to, and assimilation into, present day life.' [24] Rose argues that 'recovering from trauma is not just an individual act but a collective process', in which the struggle of survivors towards 'naming and claiming the experience of abuse and survival as their own story' requires a reciprocal willingness on the part of the others to listen.[25] To speak out about the trauma is to break through the silence that surrounds it. This silence is socially as well as psychologically determined, by defence mechanisms and survival strategies deployed by survivors, witnesses, and abusers themselves to minimise or deny the pain of abuse and the violence that caused it. Thus, argues Rose, 'Speaking out is a political as well as a therapeutic act, and as such, is a claim to power.'[26]

While Rose is cognisant of the risks in speaking out she also points to the dangers in remaining 'mute'. 'Silence' she says 'stifles the soul […] and accepts an unjust and abusive system of power that renders the victim powerless. It makes abuse possible without holding the abusers accountable.'[27] In the process of breaking silence, survivors are not only

[22] Felman and Laub describe a testimonial account as a performance intent on carrying forth memories by conveying a person's engagement between consciousness and history (Felman & Laub, 1992). Quoted in Roger I. Simon and Claudia Eppert, 'Remembering Obligation: Pedagogy and the Witnessing of Testimony of Historical Trauma', *Canadian Journal of Education*, Vol. 22, Spring 1997, pp. 175-91.
[23] [T]he imperative to tell the story of the Holocaust is inhibited by the impossibility of telling, and therefore, silence about the truth commonly prevails…[S]urvivors who do not tell their story become victims of distorted memory…The events become more and more distorted in their silent retention and pervasively invade and contaminate the survivor's daily life. The longer the story remains untold, the more distorted it becomes in the survivor's conception of it, so much so that the survivor doubts the reality of the actual events' Dori Laub 1995:68, 64 quoted in *Trauma and Life Stories: International Perspectives*, London, UK: Routledge, 1999, p. 2.
[24] Quoted in Kim L. Rogers, *Trauma and Life Stories*, p. 3.
[25] Susan Rose, '*Naming and Claiming: The integration of traumatic experience and the reconstruction of self in survivors' stories of sexual abuse*', p.174.
[26] Rose, '*Naming and Claiming'*, pp. 163- 4.
[27] Rose, '*Naming and Claiming'*, p.165.

finding their own voices; they are also collectively creating new narratives that challenge individual and collective denial of abuse and the reproduction of violence.

Alongside the reluctance of the afflicted to speak, there is also reluctance of society to hear and/or believe what is said. A backlash against speaking out occurs, because it exposes the atrocities in our midst and challenges both those who abuse power and those who stand by as muted witnesses.[28] Judith Herman puts it more sharply. In relation to witnessing it is easier to side with abusers than to serve as effective witnesses to the abused. 'All the perpetrator asks is that the bystander do nothing. He appeals to the universal desire to see, hear, and speak no evil. The victim, on the contrary, asks the bystander to share the burden of pain. The victim demands action, engagement and remembering.'[29] The role of witness, then, according to these writers, is integral to remembrance and trauma.

1.4 Bearing Witness to Trauma – Ethics and Responsibilities

This section addresses issues of ethics and responsibilities in relation to witnessing of trauma. As a response to testimonies of historical trauma, Roger points out that the process of witnessing requires space within the symbolic order of a culture, a 'listening space' that is not granted automatically, but very often has to be won through struggle. Telling a story of trauma, she says, 'frequently depends upon a politics of memory to force the issue into the public domain.'[30] Likewise, Eppert and Simon point out that witnessing is neither natural nor inevitable. Rather, they say, it is a practice of commemorative ethics that requires a particular 'kavannah - a particular embodied cognisance within which one becomes aware of, self-present to, and responsive toward something beyond oneself.'[31]

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[28] Rose, '*Naming and Claiming'*, p.174.
[29] Judith Herman, *Trauma and Recovery*, New York, 1992, pp.7-8.
[30] Rogers, *Trauma and Life Stories*, pp. 9-10.
[31] Eppert and Simon, 'Remembering Obligation, (shadow texts and the paradox of betrayal). Accessed through Wilson Web. http://0-vnweb.com. mislibsrv.lit.ie. Please note that this article is not page numbered

For Eppert and Simon witnessing is first and foremost an ethical concept. An ethical practice of witnessing includes the obligation 'to bear witness - to re-testify, to somehow convey what one has heard and thinks important to remember.'[32] Bearing witness to historical trauma, demands (but does not necessarily secure) acknowledgement, remembrance, and some indication that the provision of the testimony has been of consequence. As witnesses, they say that we must bear the psychic burden of a traumatic history, and acknowledge that memories of violence and injustice press down on our sense of humanity and moral equilibrium. In addition, they argue that we must carry and thus transport and translate stories of past injustices beyond their moment of telling by taking these stories to another time and space where they become available to be heard or seen. Through words, images, or actions, we must indicate to others not only *why* what one has seen or heard is worthy of remembrance, but also *how* such remembrance may inform contemporary perceptions and actions.[33]

1.5 Conclusion

Pozorski says that the 'time of trauma' is what comes after. 'In this paradoxical moment simultaneously outside of time and eternally, disruptively, present within it, what matters most […] is how we listen to survivors of traumatic events.' Such survivors speak from within an alternative experience of time, and what we do with their words 'reveals, if not understanding, then at the very least, a belated witness to their knowledge of trauma's time, the time which always comes after.'[34] Trauma theory and the work of the writers I have discussed in this chapter emphasise the need to address the 'unspeakable' moments in our history and culture. Perhaps most significantly Pozorski suggests is an ethical dimension to

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online - I have included the section from which the reference is taken in brackets.

[32] Eppert and Simon, 'Remembering Obligation' (Toward a pedagogy of remembrance: witnessing through re-telling).

[33] Eppert and Simon 'Remembering Obligation' (The performative relation between testimony and witnessing.)

[34] Aimee L. Pozorski, *Trauma's Time*, p. 76.

trauma - a dimension that begs for a response that attempts to recognise suffering. The works of Herman, Rose, Eppert and Simon, and Felman and Laub all draw attention to the need for responsible witnessing. Caruth puts it simply when she suggests that an adequate witness to a traumatic event does not turn away.[35]

In my next chapter I will explore how the history of the Magdalen institutions in Ireland is remembered and forgotten. I pay particular attention to the Magdalen Laundry in Limerick, and the place of remembering LSAD holds as a custodian of the building that housed the Magdalen asylum.

[35] Quoted in Pozorski, *Trauma's Time*, p. 76.

CHAPTER 2

Remembering and Forgetting the Magdalen Laundry

This chapter looks at the pattern of remembering and forgetting of the Magdalen history at both a local and national level. In the almost complete absence of archival evidence, I draw on two main sources to establish the pattern of remembering and forgetting at local level: the building and grounds which sited the Magdalen asylum and; oral history. In part two I look at the pattern at national level and I examine the implications of collective forgetting for the survivors of the system.

There is a notable absence of official historiography in relation to the Magdalen Laundries. Religious orders, who ran the asylums, deny access to their archival records.[36] Few women have come forward to testify about their experiences in Magdalen institutions.[37] The generation of witnesses is passing and with them their knowledge and stories. The physical remains of the past are also being destroyed. The buildings are being demolished or reconstructed to make way for new developments.[38]

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[36] Religious congregations refuse access to their archival records: 'penitent' registers and convent annals-of women entering asylums after 1900. James Smith, *Ireland's Magdalen Laundries and the Nation's Architecture of Containment*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008, p. xvi.

[37] The struggle of survivors towards naming and claiming their experiences of abuse is discussed in chapter one. In relation to the Magdalen laundries, with a few notable exceptions, relatively few women have come forward to testify about their experiences. Claire McGettrick, former spokesperson for the Justice for Magdalene group spoke of the difficulty in getting survivors to talk. She points to the fact that they are part of an older generation that still feel a lot of shame and guilt. Likewise families who may have put members of their own families into Magdalen institutions will not come forward (McGettrick, telephone conversation by author, 20/10/2008). Smith points out that the stigma traditionally associated with these institutions, a stigma rooted in the perception of the Magdalen asylums as a corrective to prostitution, still operates in Irish society today. This misapprehension feeds off secrecy, silence, and shame. James Smith, *Irelands Magdalen Laundries*, pp. xvii-i. Stephen Humphries, director of the 1998 documentary '*Sex in a Cold Climate*' also noted the difficulty in obtaining women's testimonies. Although many potential witnesses had been located by the filmmakers in Ireland, all of them were still too fearful to speak in public, and the film was eventually based on four Irish women who had since come to live in England. Kim Rogers, *Trauma and Life Stories: International Perspectives,* London, UK: Routledge, 1999, pp. 9-10.

[38] As is the case in Limerick, former Magdalen buildings in Waterford and Cork have been purchased and refurbished as universities and colleges. Others have been completely demolished as is the case in Galway city.

In addition to the lack of official documentation at local level, the disparity between oral narrative and written accounts of the history is striking as the following quotes demonstrate. This written account of the Good Shepherd asylum in Limerick tells us that:

> *[…] this institution presents a scene of unceasing industry and labour, carried on under the watchful eye and tender care of those who are themselves models of piety and purity; thereby imparting a healthful tone to minds broken down by misfortune and misery, and to hearts tainted by crime, but refreshed, and in happy instance, restored, by the tears of penitence and contrition. The reader, […] must agree with me, that this is a truly godlike institution; and that the work marked out by this community, not from year's end to year's end, but from the first flush of youthful womanhood, to the last hour of expiring age, is one which, to say the least, merits the respect and reverence of even the most heedless in the busy world outside those walls.*[39]

Oral history confronts us with another reality in this instance through the story of Babe:

> *I got to know her in Croom hospital [in 1978] She was just known as Babe. She had no surname. She was, I'd say, in her late 70s, early 80s […] And when she got better [the nuns] didn't want her. They never came to collect her. So she was sent to Camillis's - It's the old age home, for want of a better word, out the Ennis Rd [Limerick]. She worked in the laundry all her life. She [was born here and] lived all her life here […] She'd never been outside this building until she was sent to [the hospital]. She never had any visitors. She had one night dress. That was it.*[40]

This chapter gives weight to oral history as a valuable source of documentation. Through the combination of oral history and an examination of the building this next section sets out to reveal the pattern of remembering and forgetting that exists in relation to the Magdalen history at local level.

2.1 Retracing the Past – A story of remembering and forgetting of the Magdalen Laundry [41]

[39] Quoted from *The Industrial Movement in Ireland*, 1852, p. 249. The 'institution' referred to is the Magdalen laundry run by the Good Shepherd Congregation in Clare St., Limerick.
[40] Extract of Interview by author with Anne Culhane, Librarian, LSAD. 'here' and 'this building' refers to the LSAD premises on Clare St., which used to be home to the Good Shepherd Magdalen Asylum.
[41] This section is accompanied by photographic documentation in Appendix 2. Throughout the text I refer to particular figures in the document. The overall purpose of the photographic documentation is to provide a visual representation of what the building hides and reveals in relation to its history.

At the corner of Pennywell Road and Old Clare Street there is a sign on the wall that reads: 'Farrancroghy: The place of public executions in the 16th and 17th centuries.' [appendix 2: figures 2.1 and 2.2.] The Good Shepherd Convent and Magdalen Laundry was later built on this site.[42] In fact, the wall on which the sign is erected forms part of the outer boundary of the building. I discovered the sign while researching the history. John, who has looked after the gardens on the grounds since 1970, told me about it.[43] It is significant that the building which now houses the very recently renovated art college and which acknowledges the site as a place of executions in the 16th and 17th century, does not have a single marker to indicate that it served as a Magdalen Laundry for almost a century and a half. There are no official markers to indicate to the public that a Magdalen laundry existed on this site. A commercial laundry still operates on site, but it is no longer in the hands of the Good Shepherd nuns and no longer operated by unpaid labour of Magdalen penitents.[44] [appendix 2: figures 2.3 – 2.7]

The outer structure of the main convent building has changed little over the years. A new glass walled entrance has been added between it and the church. [appendix 2: figures 2.8-2.13 and 2.16] It constituted the final phase of the recent renovations. [45] The challenge was 'to come up with an entrance that would be contemporary but compatible with what

[42] The Good Shepherd Sisters arrived in Limerick in 1848 and set up house in a small building on Clare St. In the course of a few years a number of other adjoining sites were acquired and their operation expanded to include the Orphanage, The Industrial School (1873), a Reformatory for Girls (1859), the Laundry (1886). The convent was completed in 1900. The church was built in 1931. Rev. W. Fitzmaurice, 'Historical Memoirs of Good Shepherd Convent', in *In the Shadows of the Spire: A Profile of St. John's Parish*, Printed by Limerick Leader, 1991, pp. 29-36.

[43] Michael John Griffen is employed by the Good Shepherd Sisters as a gardener since 1970. He has continued to look after the gardens on the grounds of the school since the college takeover.

[44] The 1911 Census Returns for the Good Shepherd Convent and Magdalen asylum give some indication of the scale of the operation of the laundry. 95 penitents are listed in the Returns ranging in age from 16 years to 76 years. Of these 72 of the penitents are listed under the occupation of 'Laundress'. Source: Limerick City Library. See Appendix 4 for full Census Returns Figures.

[45] The Good Shepherd Convent on Clare St. was purchased by Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT) in October 1994. The convent and 7.5 acres of land 10 minutes from the city centre, was purchased by LIT for £750,000. Two major refurbishments have taken place since the purchase. The latter of these a 9.6 million refurbishment scheme. Interview by author with Richard Ruth, Head of LSAD, 23/9/2008 and 'Revamp of Limerick Art College', Interview with Richard Ruth, Head of LSAD, by Pamela Duncan, Boards.ie. www.boards.ie/vbulletin. Accessed 30/11/2008.

already existed.'[46] The old underground entrances and exits to the church, the ones that were used by the penitents and children from the orphanage to keep them sectioned off from each other have been filled in. 'There was no reason to retain them.'[47] [appendix 2: figures 2.14 and figures 2.17-2.23]

In front of the new entrance a ramp and driveway stretch all the way to the new gates and large sign that reveals the name of the college. In the convent and laundry days two nuns' graveyards occupied this space. [appendix 2: figure 2.29] The bodies were exhumed and reburied at the time of the sale. Later in 2005, Ian Castles, a degree year student at LSAD, erected an installation in the deconsecrated cemetery of the convent 'in which only nuns were allowed to be buried'.[48] His website describes his intention to create 'a permanent memorial to the "Magdalene Sisters" who were incarcerated there. It too got buried under the tarmac in the process of the renovations.

The penitents who died while under the care of the Good Shepherd nuns were not buried in the convent grounds. They were buried in a mass grave in Mount Saint Laurence Cemetery.[49] The biggest plot in the cemetery revealed no individual names of the women buried there. It simply read: 'Here lies the remains of the Residents of the Good Shepherd Convent'. Their names and identities, taken from them when they entered the asylums, were only returned to them in death following a campaign by local councillor John Gilligan in 2002-4. He wanted the women who were buried to be memorialized and named. It was, he said, 'imperative that what was denied to them in life, should at least be recognised in death'. Despite considerable resistance, the Good Shepherd sisters eventually agreed to,

[46] Interview by author with Richard Ruth, 23/9/2008.
[47] Interview, Richard Ruth, 23/9/08.
[48] http://www.iancastles.com/installation.htm. Accessed: 13/12/2008.
[49] Some of the penitents are also buried in Mount St. Oliver's Cemetery, conversation with Paul O'Shaughnessy, Caretaker, LSAD, 16/12/2008.

and paid for, the erection of a memorial and eleven slabs naming 253 penitents that were buried in the plot from 1850 to 1980.[50]

Without access to the Good Shepherd records there is no way of knowing if the 253 names account for all the women who died while in the care of the nuns. 'We are not quite sure if the records are correct but I do believe […] that a genuine effort was made by the Good Shepherd Convent to produce all the names. I don't think that is all of them. There is no way we can check that.'[51]

Since (Limerick Institute of Technology) LIT purchased the building in 1993 the physical space has been adapted and reformed to accommodate the art college.[52][appendix 2 and 3] With every structural change that takes place in the building, the history of the Magdalen institution is put further out of reach. The one part of the building that remains untouched by all the renovations is the attic space located towards the front and church side of the building. This was part of the penitents sleeping quarters. However the spiral staircase and lift that provided access to this attic space have been removed. [appendix 2: figures 2.44 – 2.51]

2.2 Who is remembering?

[50] Interview by author with Councillor John Gilligan, 2/12/2008.
[51] Interview, John Gilligan 2/12/2008. The lack of access to accurate information was highlighted in 1993, when church property held by the Sisters of Charity in Dublin, which once served as a convent laundry, was to be sold back to the Republic for public use. It was discovered at that time that some 133 graves existed, unmarked, in a cemetery on the public grounds. The graves belonged to the penitents. An initial exhumation order was given for 133 bodies, yet at the time of exhumation, another 22 bodies were discovered. No additional exhumation order was obtained or given, and the 155 bodies were cremated and moved. In 2003, Irish Times journalist Joe Humphrey revealed there were no death certificates extant for many of these women (and their children, some of whom were also found buried on the High Park grounds). Joe Humphreys, 'Magdalen plot had remains of 155 women', *Irish Times*, 21//8/2003.
[52] Interview with Richard Ruth, 23/9/2008.

At local level there exists a dearth of information in libraries and archives about the laundry.[53] Other than the 1901 and 1911 Census figures, the little information that was available from the City Library was, more often than not, written in praise of the Good Shepherd Sisters.[54] The local archives office does not hold any information relating to the subject of the Magdalen Laundry and didn't know of anywhere I could locate material.[55] The City Museum has displays of Limerick Lace and a small collection of photographs of the exterior of the convent building.[56] It did not have any information about the laundry except a number of laundry receipts. The Good Shepherd Sisters declined to be interviewed or to provide information of any kind for this project.

In attempting to reconstruct how the building functioned as a Magdalen asylum I encountered a complete absence of archival material. I could not locate drawings or plans for the building that pre-dated the1970s. These were not available from the city planning office or their archival base. Neither could I obtain them through LIT. It was not possible to even establish whether such drawings exist. If they do exist, the most likely source is with the Good Shepherd Sisters.

At national level, the practice of forgetting is evident in the actions of both the religious congregations who ran these institutions, and the state. I have already referred to the religious orders refusal to provide access to archival records. The state washes its hands of any responsibility with regards the Magdalen laundries by describing Magdalen

[53] This pattern revealed itself in the research gathering process for this aspect of my study. I drew on a number of sources to piece together local information on the history of the Magdalen Laundry. These included interviews, secondary sources of documentation, books, documentaries, films, newspaper archives, web searches, architectural drawings and photographs. I visited local libraries, contacted the local archives office, the museum, the planning office, the Good Shepherd Convent, Magdalen support and action groups, and authors who have written about the subject. In addition I sought access to the current laundry that remains on the site of the Magdalen laundry and the former orphanage in Old Clare Street, which now houses the Roxtown Childcare Centre, run by the HSE, to photograph the buildings.

[54] Two of the main sources of information included an article in *Our Catholic Life* 'Sisters of the Good Shepherd', Easter 1956 and an account entitled 'Historical Memoirs of Good Shepherd Convent' in *In the Shadow of the Spire: A Profile of St. John's Parish* written by Rev. W. Fitzmaurice, 1991.

[55] Confirmed by phone call from Archives Office, 27/11/2008.

[56] Limerick Lace was made in the Good Shepherd institution. While most of the women incarcerated in the Magdalen asylum worked in the laundry some also were occupied in the making of Limerick Lace. In the 1911 Census figures 7 of the penitents were described as 'Seamstresses'.

institutions as 'private charitable organisations outside the governments control or responsibility'. This is despite clear evidence of state 'culpability, complicity, and collusion' in these institutions and their abusive practices.[57] RTE, the national broadcasting agency, has refused to show '*Sex in A Cold Climate',* one of the few documentaries made about the Magdalen laundries in Ireland. The documentary was first shown in 1998 as part of the "Witness" series— a religious strand on Channel 4 in Britain. Watched by almost 3,000,000 people, the film caused an immediate uproar and made the main news on RTE the following day.[58] And historians have been criticised for their reluctance to address this aspect of our history.[59]

Yet, despite the very active blocking of history from these official sources, the story of the Magdalen laundries has been kept alive. Since the 1990s, in particular, dramas, documentaries, survivor testimonies, film, public monuments and memorials have played an important role in rescuing the stories of the laundries from a national amnesia.[60] At local level, the campaign organised by John Gilligan to have the names of the women who died

[57] Smith clearly documents the role of the state in the running of the Magdalen laundries. The state always relied on the availability of the Magdalen laundries to conceal problem women within the nation's architecture of containment. It continually facilitated the transfer of diverse populations of women into the nuns' care. It sought ways to underwrite the religious congregations that operated the laundries – indirectly by making possible a labour force and providing lucrative contracts and, after 1960, directly by way of capitation grants for women on remand from the courts. James Smith, *Ireland's Magdalen Laundries*, p.185.

[58] A helpline set up by Channel 4 after the programme was overwhelmed with calls from hundreds of other Magdalene's and victims of sexual abuse by the Catholic Church. It was the biggest response Channel 4 had ever had to a programme. Almost 450 women called from Ireland and England. This response became the main news item on the Nine o' Clock News in Ireland the next day.

[59] Finnegan says that it is significant that the most telling treatments of the closely-linked Industrial Schools and Magdalen Asylums have been those undertaken by non-historians. 'Historians have shown themselves reluctant to be involved in such controversial matters. It is thanks to the work of others that these unsavoury aspects of the past are at last receiving the sympathetic attention they deserve.' Frances Finnegan, *Do Penance or Perish, A study of Magdalen Asylums in Ireland*. Piltown, Co. Kilkenny: Cosgrave Press, 2001, p. x.

[60] These include Patricia Burke Brogan's plays – *Eclipsed* (1992) and *Stained Glass at Samhain* (2002); documentaries – *Washing Away the Stain* (1993), *Sex in a Cold Climate* (1998), *Les Blanchisseuses de Magdalen* (1998), a 1999 segment of *60 Minutes,* film – Peter Mullan's 2002 fictional film, *The Magdalene Sisters*; public memorials –Magdalen Memorial Bench, the Glasnevin Cemetery Magdalen plot, Gerard Mannix Flynn's extallation *"Call Me by My Name": Requiem for Remains Unknown, 1889-1987* and most recently Wilkins', 2008 a monument erected in Galway opposite the site of the original laundry.

while in the Magdalen asylums put on the gravestones stands out as a mark of remembrance and acknowledgement.[61] The story is also kept alive by way of oral narrative.

In the absence of archival material, the reconstruction of the building was made possible because of local first hand knowledge. Both Paul O'Shaughnessy and Michael John Griffen had considerable knowledge of the layout of the former laundry.[62] Paul took me on a tour of the building describing what previously existed. From this it was possible to make at least a partial reconstruction of the Magdalen asylum and to get some understanding and experience of the building and the spaces within it. [63] This, alongside the personal stories of survivors that are passed on by Anne bring the history alive.

2.3 Why remember the Magdalen story?

In chapter one, I examined theories and issues in relation to remembering and forgetting of historical trauma. I explored the role of witness and the idea of ethical, effective and responsible remembering. Remembering in this sense is not for nostalgic purposes, but is action-based and responsive. It reflects the idea that *what we do* with the stories we are told is important– how we pass them on and how we act on them. Ignoring the disturbing history of the Magdalen laundry, standing by as 'muted witnesses', I argue, enables the continuation of abuse in the present. It supports the stance of government and religious

[61] Other notable recent events were the Mannix Flynn exhibition '*Trespass and Forgiveness'*, (January-March 2008) in Limerick Printmakers in 2008 and the related talk by James Smith □arginali as part of the exhibition in April 2008. In the college itself, the history is acknowledged through the work of students for example Ian Castles (graduate 2005) and Richard Williams (current 3rd year painting student).

[62] Paul O'Shaughnessy is from Limerick and is one of the caretakers employed at LSAD. He has extensive knowledge of the layout of the building from its Magdalen days.

[63] For example the convent and sleeping quarters of the nuns, novitiates and penitents now forms the studio spaces and workshops for the graphics, painting, fashion and some of the print department. Part of the print workshop used to be the gym. At Christmas time, the nuns put on a party for the orphans in this hall. The sculpture area was part of the laundry. It was a much bigger operation than the current operation. It catered for all of Limerick city and surrounding areas. The canteen for the penitents still operates as a canteen but for the staff and students in the college. The nuns' dining room now forms part of the library space. The church, built in 1930, is now the gallery space. The balcony on the second floor of the church, the room I now attend for my thesis tutorials, was where the nuns who were ill came to attend mass. They were brought there from the infirmary. The doors that lead into the infirmary now open onto a brick wall.

institutions in refusing to accept responsibility for the abuses that happened under their care.

The failure to acknowledge this history has very real and current implications for the many survivors who are still alive and for families trying to locate relatives who have been in Magdalen institutions. The consequences of the state's denial of responsibility for Magdalen survivors is that it ensures that they will not receive any official state recognition of their time spent in these abusive institutions. It is particularly significant in this regard that Redress Boards and reparation schemes set up by the state for survivors of abuse in state-licensed residential institutions do not recognise the Magdalen laundries, and that neither the state nor the religious orders have ever issued a public apology to the women incarcerated in these institutions, thus denying them validation of their experiences and an opportunity to heal. [64]

2.4 Conclusion

Smith argues that Ireland's Magdalen institutions exist in the public mind primarily at the level of *story* (cultural representation and survivor testimony) rather than *history* (archival history and documentation). My research supports this claim. This chapter was constructed from the memories, impressions and stories I encountered while trying to piece together the place this history holds in the present. Documented information is for the most part absent or, in the case of religious archives, denied.

[64] The state's rationale for disqualifying Magdalen survivors from the reparations' scheme is simple. The victims were adults, not children. The institutions were private, not public. The government disclaims any function in licensing or inspecting these homes. In addition the state, according to Smith, has long ignored the blatant disregard for the Magdalen women's civil and constitutional rights: false imprisonment; the absence of due process; exploitative and dangerous work practices; the denial of educational and human developmental resources; and emotional, physical and, in some cases, sexual abuse. James Smith, *Irelands Magdalen Laundries and the Nation's Architecture of Containment*, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame Press, 2007, p. 4 and p. 185.

The college as a custodian of the building plays a role in this story of remembrance and forgetting. Buildings and sites carry physical evidence and memories of previous occupants; As such, they can create and facilitate direct links to the past. Moreover, further documentation through oral history can assist to enrich our understanding and experience of a building, the spaces within it and its inhabitants. The historical traces and the physical remnants of the Magdalen laundry in Limerick are slipping away. At official level the college sees no role, or responsibility for itself in preserving or acknowledging this history.[65] While this is the case at official level, there is no doubt that the history as a former Magdalen laundry is of interest to many in the college. The history is alive and exists in the college at the level of story and oral history, and the building still exists with all its traces of the past. The story lingers despite the continued demolition of the physical remains. In the absence of archival records documenting the first-hand knowledge of people like Anne, Paul and John becomes all the more vital. They are providing a last link to a history that is slipping away before our eyes.

In Chapter Three I examine the Magdalen story in the context of the history of the control of women's sexuality in an attempt to come to some understanding of this history and the lack of acknowledgement that surrounds it.

[65] Interview, Richard Ruth, 23/9/2008.

CHAPTER 3

Hegemony and the Control of Female Sexuality

> *Well the way I heard it was […] the visitor had to apply for permission to come in and visit […] They would have to apply to the Mother Superior. The Mother Superior would then have to get permission from the Bishop […]When [the nuns] knew the visitor was coming, they would make […] all the other unmarried mothers stand at the balcony and hold up their baby so that the visitor could see their shame, their sin, the physical embodiment of their sin. And that's where the expression came from, because they were the ones without visitors, they were the ones "left holding the baby".*[66]

The Magdalen story reveals a hegemonic practice that set out to control women's sexuality and hide actual crimes against women. In this chapter I examine this practice and I argue, that a hegemonic order exists today that is as dangerous to women now as it has been in the past but it manifests in less outwardly visible forms of control and concealment than that of the of Magdalen asylums. The Magdalen history marks neither the beginning nor the end of a practice of controlling (often with extreme violence) women's sexuality. The history of the Magdalen Laundries is part of a centuries' old history of control of women's sexuality *and* an accompanying lack of acknowledgement of those histories by the powers that be. Failing to acknowledge these histories, I argue, allows for the continued control of women's sexuality and concealment of crimes against women in the present.

3.1 Hegemony

> *I do remember the importance then that was placed on a son or a daughter joining the priests or the nuns. They became elevated immediately in the communities that they lived. [M]y mother […] tells the story whereby she knew this man down the road who was commiting incest with his three daughters, and brutally doing so, but because that was a thing you didn't speak about, when you met that man you saluted him or passed the time of day with him. But then when you had another neighbour whose son had left the priesthood, they were told they*

[66] Interview, Anne Culhane, 18/12/2008.

> *had to cross the street and keep their eyes downcast rather than have to look at them.* [67]

The concept of 'hegemony' explains how dominant groups or individuals can maintain their power - the capacity of dominant classes to persuade subordinate ones to accept, adopt and internalise their values and norms; it is helpful in coming to some understanding of how the Magdalen laundries managed to operate unchallenged for so long in Ireland.

The church-state partnership that developed in Ireland from the 1920s provides the historical context for the increasingly repressive sexual moral climate. In describing hegemonic practice, Smith identifies – the Carrigan Committee (1930-1), its ensuing report (1931), and the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1935 as being critical in establishing an official state attitude toward 'sexual immorality'.[68] Female sexuality was considered particularly problematic and in need of strict surveillance and control. This view was consistent with the age-old double standard- the belief that sexual activity that may be acceptable for men is unacceptable for women. Women who strayed from the narrow path of approved behaviour risked incarceration, many for life, in Magdalen asylums. Incarceration constrained them from further sexual transgressions and 'protected' society from their allegedly corrupting influence. This hegemonic order concealed sexual crime, especially rape, infanticide, and abuse, while simultaneously sexualizing the women and children who fell victim to society's moral proscriptions.[69] The asylums functioned as a powerful mechanism of social control of all women. Did the closing of the last Magdalen asylum in 1996 consign this particular history to the past or are the traces still in evidence today? In order to answer this question, this section examines issues in relation to current

[67] Interview, Anne Culhane, 18/12/2008.
[68] In arriving at a hegemonic discourse that responded to perceived sexual immorality, the Carrigan Report and the Criminal Law Amendment Act 'sanitized state policy with respect to institutional provision. They disembodied sexual practice by obscuring social realities, especially illegitimacy, in discursive abstractions […] This political response reveals how the discourse of sexual immorality □arginalized the real-life sexual practice that resulted in single motherhood and illegitimacy while it simultaneously elided the pervasive reality of rape, incest, and paedophilia.' Smith, *Ireland's Magdalen Laundries*, p. 4.
[69] Smith, *Ireland's Magdalen Laundries*, p.4.

state practice and interventions in respect of female sexuality, in an effort to identify underlying hegemonic practice.

Jabri states that the lived experiences of past generations come to form the memory traces of the present, constitutive of life in the present. 'The enactment of naming the present in any particular way […] is a reflection of a distinct and particular articulation of the present, emergent from a particular and distinct reading of history, a particular subjectivity.'[70] It is essential, she asserts, to analyse how power operates in the present, for it is in the relations of power that ultimately reveal the congealment of hegemonic institutionalised practices that determine the legitimate, the acceptable, and the remits of politics.[71]

A feminist analysis reveals that the current hegemonic order still attempts to control women's sexuality, hides actual crimes against women and protects the male perpetrators responsible for these crimes. This order no longer requires institutions like the Magdalen asylums to regulate and control women. The order relies more on denial, silence, inertia, misnaming and misinformation. By examining current policy and practice concerning women's reproductive health and in addressing violence against women, I argue that while the outward structures used to maintain the hegemonic order such as the laundries have changed, the contempt of women's bodies and the goal of controlling women's sexuality and hiding crimes against women still continues.

3.2 Womb politics

An analysis of policy decisions and debates relating to abortion, to cervical vaccinations for young girls, or a myriad of other issues relating to women's reproductive health, provides

[70] Vivienne Jabri, *Feminist ethics and hegemonic global politics*, London: Lynne Reinner Publishers, 2003, p.1.
[71] Jabri, *Feminist ethics and hegemonic global politics*, p. 2.

evidence that the sexual morality of women and the need to control women's bodies continue to inform decisions made in the present.[72] A more in-depth look at any one of these issues will reveal an underlying hegemonic practice that seeks to restrict women's freedom and choices when it comes to their reproductive health. I draw on one example here to illustrate the point.

The very disturbing story of the actions of consultant gynecologist Dr Michael Neary entered the public domain in 1998.[73] Over a 25-year period it emerged that he had carried out over 100 unnecessary caesarean hysterectomies on women under his care. In terms of hegemonic order this story reveals practices of collusion, silence and cover-ups.[74] It reveals the continued power and influence of the Catholic Church in practice relating to women's sexuality.[75] Furthermore, in terms of the state response, it shows an unwillingness to name the actions of Dr Neary as 'a crime', thereby failing to hold the perpetrator responsible.

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[72] See for example the following articles. Ariel Silvera and Sinead Ahern 'We're all in this together', *the fword, contemporary UK feminism*, 10, 2008. This article sketches the history of abortion in Ireland and the UK. Also, recent articles in the Irish and *Sunday Independent* relate issues and debates about cervical screening for Irish women and the abandonment of plans to introduce a cervical cancer vaccination for Irish girls. See for example Medb Ruane 'Where wealthy wombs mean healthy wombs' *Irish Independent*, 9/8/2008. Relating to the delays in introducing a national cervical cancer-screening programme, (the human cost of the delay is some 73 dead women annually, "most of whom didn't have to die") she seeks an explanation for what she describes as 'the systematic incompetence around reproductive women's health' and points out that the cost of treating full-blown cervical cancer is substantially higher than the cost of administering a vaccination and screening scheme.' Jody Corcoran, "'Sexual politics' in vaccine move. Worry over 'promiscuity' stigma.", *Sunday Independent* 16 /11/2008 reports on the perceived influence of far right religious groups on the government decision not to proceed with its cervical vaccination programme.

[73] In 1999 Dr. Neary was suspended from practice pending the results of an investigation into his practice of performing high numbers of peripartum hysterectomies on women under his care. He resigned later that year. In 2003 Dr. Neary was struck off the Medical Register. Judge Maureen Harding Clark S.C., *The Lourdes Hospital Inquiry: An Inquiry into peripartum hysterectomy at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Drogheda*. Dublin: The Stationary Office, Government Publications, January 2006.

[74] The Introduction and Summary of the report conducted by Judge Maureen Harding-Clark reveals the extent of collusion and silence that surrounded his practice. Despite all the evidence relating to the abnormalities in Dr. Neary's practice, she states that few complained or questioned–not the patients or their families, not the obstetricians, not the junior doctors, not the anesthetists, not the surgical nurses, not the midwives, not the pathologists and technicians who received the wombs, not the Matrons Attempts were made to disrupt the investigation. Files were tampered with and some were removed. An initial investigation by three of Dr. Neary's peers into his practice found no grounds to suspend Dr. Neary or to place any restrictions on his practice (public or private). In fact, they added that the mothers of the NEHB were fortunate in having the service of such an experienced and caring obstetrician.' The consultants were later struck off the Medical register when details of their report became public. They successfully challenged this decision and were reinstated in 2008.

[75]Harding refers to the consequences of a Catholic ethos in a maternity hospital in respect of the limitations with regard to the care available to patients, notably in relation to sterilizations. See Introduction and Overview of Report, pp. 21-24.

This story, I argue, reveals a blatant misogynistic practice that no official report or inquiry will name as such, despite all the evidence.[76] In 2008 it is still unknown if there was even a criminal investigation into his practice and the checks and balances that were recommended for hospitals to protect against a recurrence of similar events still have not been implemented.[77] Refusing to name, in this instance, conceals the crime, protects the perpetrator and distorts the reality of what happened. This refusal to either name as a crime or implement changes to ensure that this will not happen again sends a very strong message to all women in relation to the value placed on their bodies.

The Magdalen history, as stated earlier, reveals a hegemonic practice that not only set out to control women's sexuality but also concealed actual crimes against women. An examination of how issues of violence against women are dealt with in the present reveals an underlying hegemonic practice that relies on inaction and discourse to marginalise the real life experiences of women, hide crimes against women and protect perpetrators. The following section explores practice in relation to domestic violence and rape.

Refusal to name, acknowledge or make visible and a failure to hold perpetrators responsible for their actions underwrite the institutional responses to domestic violence and female homicide. Be it the media, the courts, or government action the response to domestic violence in Ireland is to keep it hidden and disguised. From the beginning of 1996

[76] Journalist Mary Raftery speaking on RTE's *Prime Time* (14/2/2008), following the publication of a report by gynecologist and obstetrician Roger Clements (2008) into the operations of 62 additional patients of Dr. Neary where it was found that he had performed dozens more unnecessary *planned* hysterectomies, said 'the significance of this report is that it catapults the motives for what he did into an entirely different league.' The previous report (Harding's), 'generally came down on the side of a phobia - that he was afraid of women dying on the operating table in front of him. […]This is in a different league because what he has done is he has volunteered to cut women open. So anyone who has a phobia about people bleeding to death is not actually going to go and cut them open, to put it at its bluntest. Roger Clements author of the report interviewed on the *Prime Time* special said 'I had never come across anything even remotely comparable with Dr. Neary's performance. To me it does not sound like medical negligence at all. It is not a doctor making mistakes- it's a doctor who has a need to do these operations on women.'

[77] Quoted by both Mary Raftery and Roger Clements in RTEs *Prime Time* 14/2/2008.

146 women have been murdered in the Republic of Ireland.[78] In half of all the resolved cases, the woman was killed by her partner or ex-partner. Media reporting consistently fails to recognise or name domestic violence in relation to these cases. The nature of the crimes is concealed in the language used. The cases are reported as 'tragic' or perpetrators are described as 'sick' or 'evil'. Increasingly gender-neutral language is used to describe male perpetrators.[79] In murder trials, evidence of domestic violence, or previous threats to kill the victim, is deemed inadmissible because it is seen as prejudicial.[80] There are no government-led campaigns to highlight or address the issue. This is in contrast with the very visible and well-funded road safety campaign to reduce deaths on Irish roads or the government response to gangland crime. As long as it is kept behind closed doors or couched in language that keeps from naming it for what it is, domestic violence is enabled to continue by the dominant groups and power holders.

Inaction and distortion of the crime is also evident in relation to rape. There is a 95% attrition rate in relation to rape cases in Ireland. 5% of rapes end in a conviction.[81] Rape reporting in the media distorts the reality of the crime. One of the most pervasive myths is that a 'real' perpetrator is a stranger who attacks women in public places, late at night. The

[78] This figure was published as part of the '16 Days of Action Against Violence Against Women' 24/11/2008 -10/12/2008. Since then at least four more women have been killed in the Republic of Ireland. 92 of the 146 (63%) of these women were killed in their own homes. In all of the resolved cases, 99% of perpetrators were men.

[79] This trend of media reporting is not unique to Ireland. For more on this, see for example, Mia Consalvo, 'Hegemony, domestic violence, and Cops: a critique of concordance', *Journal of Popular Film and Television*, vol. 26, no. 2, Summer 1998, pp. 62-70 and Jennifer Drew 'Does "gender neutral" language serve to cover up male violence?', *the fword, Contemporary UK feminism*, Issue 12, 2007, p.1.

[80] See, for instance, the Meg Walsh trial of 2008. Her husband was acquitted of her murder. Evidence of his threats to kill her were not allowed in the court. Meg Walsh wrote how John O'Brien had punched her, dragged her by the hair, and threatened to kill her just two weeks before she was murdered. The letter was concealed from the jury in her trial because it was deemed prejudicial by Mr Justice Barry White. Jerome Reilly, 'Meg: her letter might have convicted him', *Sunday Independent*, 18/5/2008. This is despite all the research into domestic violence that shows domestic violence is not a once-off incident, but a pattern of abusive behaviour that often includes threats to, and actual killing of partners (and sometimes children).

[81] The progressive reduction between crimes committed and those which end in conviction is known as the process of attrition. Exploring the Justice Gap in Rape Cases: RCNI Attrition Research Project, Rape Crisis Network Ireland, April 2005. www.rcni.ie/attritionpaper_000.htm. Accessed 29/12/2008.

reality is that in the vast majority of rape cases the perpetrator is known to the victim.[82] One of the starkest statistics in relation to rape concerns the issue of marital rape. Marital rape only became a crime in 1990. Since its introduction into law, almost two decades ago, there has been only one successful conviction for the crime of marital rape.[83] According to statistics 22% of sexual violence perpetrated on adult women is by a partner or ex-partner.[84]

3.3 Conclusion - The more things change the more they stay the same

The Ireland of today is presented as very different from its church-ridden days of post-independence. The Celtic Tiger took hold and presented an image of a much more liberal and forward thinking nation. The Magdalen days were in the past and bore no reality to the experience of life in the present. However, as Smith points out, contemporary Irish society, 'newly enthralled with commemorating historical events and ensuring accountability for past injustices, remains curiously desensitized' to its Magdalen history.[85] This failure to respond and provide justice and recognition to the women incarcerated within them, contrasts with responses to other institutional scandals that have emerged in recent times, notably the industrial schools and clerical paedophilia.[86] A closer look at practice in the present reveals that though much has changed, attitudes and practice relating to women's

[82] While this type of perpetrator does exist, the reality is that the perpetrator is known to the victim eight times out of ten. The perpetrator is a man in 96.2% of the time regardless, of whether the victim is child or adult, male or female. 2007 stats the perpetrator was a male partner or ex-partner (10.3%).Rape Crisis Network National Statistics 2007 Summary Report 19/11/2008. www.rcni.ie/public.htm Accessed 29/12/2008.
[83] Deborah Condon, 'Ireland ignoring marital rape issue', *Irishhealth.com,* 18/11/2005.
[84] According to Rape Crisis Network of Ireland statistics, at least 22% of sexual violence perpetrated on adult women is by a partner or ex-partner. Quoted in Condon, '*Ireland ignoring marital rape issue'*
[85] Smith, *Irelands Magdalen Laundries*, p. 177.
[86] The Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse provides a forum for survivors of childhood abuse not only to give testimony and therefore witness the past but also, when such evidence meets certain legal criteria, to pursue legal proceedings against perpetrators of physical and sexual abuse. The Residential Institutions Redress Board, again initiated by government statute, provides reparations to the survivors of abuse in all state-licensed residential institutions. However, the Redress Board does not recognize Ireland's Magdalen institutions. Smith, *Irelands Magdalen Laundries*, p. 184.

sexuality is still highly problematic. Today women are punished by inaction, misnaming, and by a phenomenal failure to hold perpetrators responsible for crimes against women.

Chapter One stated that the reason we have a duty in remembering historical trauma, is that the past would not be forgotten and thereby repeat itself. The Magdalen history reveals a story about the rigid and oppressive control of women's sexuality. The oppressive and often violent history of the control of women's sexuality is neither exclusive to Ireland nor exceptional. Women's sexuality has been perceived as a 'problem' by men for centuries.[87] What unites this history of oppression from past to present is the denial, the lack of acknowledgment and the failure by the dominant orders to address this oppression and violence directed at women because of their sexuality. The consequences of this lack of acknowledgement and inaction are often detrimental to women's lives. To contest this order requires an acknowledgement and a willingness to address past injustices. It requires an analysis of the conditions of the present and the hegemonic practices generative of oppression. It requires action on the part of those who witness abuse to challenge individual and collective denial of abuse and the reproduction of violence.

[87] Jack Holland in the introduction to his book '*Misogyny'* provides an overview. He states that the hatred of women, has thrived on many different levels, 'from the loftiest philosophical plane in the works of the Greek thinkers, who helped frame how Western society views the world, to the back streets of nineteenth-century London and the highways of modern Los Angeles, where serial killers have left in their wake a trail of the tortured and mutilated corpses of women. From the Christian ascetics of the third century AD, to the Taliban rulers of Afghanistan in the late 1990s, it has directed its rage at women and tried to suppress their sexuality. At least once, during the witch-hunts of the late Middle Ages, it has launched what amounted to sexual pogrom, burning hundreds of thousands – some historians say millions- of women at the stake throughout Europe. […] The history of misogyny is indeed the story of a hatred unique as it is enduring, uniting Aristotle with Jack the Ripper, King Lear with James Bond.' Jack Holland*, A Brief History of Misogyny: The Worlds Oldest Prejudice*, p. 4.

Conclusion

This thesis set out to explore how the history of Ireland's Magdalen laundry is remembered and forgotten. It sought to explore why remembering is important and the consequences of forgetting.

I found that The Magdalen history exists at the level of story and cultural representation. Since the 1990s the story has been brought to public attention through plays, films, documentaries, visual art projects and memorials. At local level the history lives on in oral form – stories and testimonies are retold and passed on. The emergence of the stories in the public domain has resulted in some responses and attempts to redress injustices done to victims. Having the names of the women who died while in the Magdalen institution in Limerick added to what was an unmarked grave and organizing a commemorative event to acknowledge the lives and deaths of these women is one such example.

I found that these responses and actions stood out in what is an overwhelming picture of denial and forgetting. This is evidenced by the states abdication of responsibility for Magdalen asylums and refusal to provide redress for victims; by the religious orders refusal to allow access to their archival records; in the dearth of historical research and written documentation on the subject. It is evidenced in the deliberate and/or careless destruction of the buildings and physical remains of the asylums.

There is a substantial body of research on the subject of witnessing. Eppert and Simon suggest that bearing witness to historical trauma, demands (but does not necessarily secure) acknowledgement, remembrance, and some indication that the provision of the

testimony has been of consequence. Ethical witnessing, they argue, demands engagement and action and that we share the burden of remembering.

My findings are clear. There is no doubt that remembering and being witness to the Magdalen history asks that we bear a burden. It requires that we own a history that was prepared to incarcerate thousands of women to lives of punishment, atonement and hard labour in order to protect society from perceived 'sexual immorality'; that forcibly separated mothers from their children; that took women's identities from them in life and buried them in unmarked graves on their deaths. It is a history that functioned to hide actual crimes against women; rape, child sexual abuse and incest and allowed perpetrators to walk free. It requires that we own a history, enabled through collusion and silence that implicated society as a whole - not just church and state. And crucially it requires that we own a history that cannot simply be assigned to the past.

The Magdalen story is very much of the present. Hundreds of survivors of the system are still alive.[88] Some women still remain under the care of the nuns. They were too institutionalized to leave following the closure of the laundries.[89] Thousands more are dead. Their stories remain unrecorded.

Refusing or failing to acknowledge this history, I argue, has consequences that are as cruel in 2009 as the initial incarceration of these women. Victims are denied justice and redress for the abuses carried out on them. The children of these women, who are trying to find a parent, are refused access to records held by the religious congregations. Neither church nor state has ever issued a public apology to the victims of the Magdalen laundries. And society through inaction colludes in this. Critically, refusing to address the history

[88] Frances Finnegan, *Do Penance or Perish: A Study of Magdalen Asylums in Ireland*. Piltown, Co. Kilkenny: Congrave Press. Rpt. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004 p. 242.
[89] An estimated 14-5 still live under the care of the Good Shepherds in Limerick at the time of writing this. Source: Michael John Griffen.

enables the continuance of the pervasive hegemonic practice that controls women's sexuality and continues to hide actual crimes against women.

In the course of writing this thesis other issues emerged. Of particular importance is the oral history that exists in relation to the Magdalen story. This provides invaluable information and insight into this history. I am grateful that I had an opportunity to record something of an already crumbling history. Other questions arose in this research that fell outside the limits of this particular study. For instance, at the level of politics and power - who benefits from forgetting (other than the obvious financial benefits for church and state)? Whose interest is served in enabling the continuance of this hegemonic order (other than perpetrators who get away with crimes against women)? What role do women play (in this case the nuns) in perpetuating these abuses? At a psychological and psychic level what is the burden of forgetting and how do stories get transmitted to us without our knowing.[90]

The role of LIT/LSAD was of particular relevance to this thesis and, to conclude, I offer the following points. The function of the building has changed since the takeover by LSAD and the building has been adapted to facilitate its work as an art institution. What happened in the building in its days as a Magdalen asylum did not happen under the watch of the college. The responsibility to redress lies with church and state. It can be argued that the college, by transforming the space into a place of creative expression and freedom for art students, provides 'an antidote' to the abuses that happened in the past.[91] In addition, to celebrate the recent refurbishment, the college has plans to build a remembrance garden and will plant forget-me-nots; an oak tree to symbolise education and a beech tree to symbolise a bridge between the old and the new.[92]

[90] Bracha Ettinger for example has developed an interesting theory in relation to how trauma is passed on through generations. Bracha Ettinger *The Matrixial Borderspace*. Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2006.
[91] Interview, Anne Culhane, 18/12/2008.
[92] Interview, Anne Culhane, 18/12/2008.

Richard Ruth points out that 'there is a residue of memories [in the building] and it can't be ignored.' His personal wish is to see someone, like historians or people with accurate information, to contribute to the remembering. Yet he is clear, that since its inception as an art college, at official level the college have felt no resonsibility to remember the history.[93] There is no ethical remembering, no bearing witness and no acknowlegement in LSAD of the history of the building. The original structure has been rennovated without any record of its original purpose. The permanent memorial dedicated to the Magdalen women was destroyed in the rennovations. Access to the attic, the one remaining part of the building that remains in tact from its days as a Magdalen laundry, has been removed. There is no official source of information on the Magdalen history and no official documents relating to this history on site.

LIT has taken ownership of a building with an immense history. The history is part of the building. Failing to take account of the history, it can be argued, has led to its thoughtless destruction. If LIT as the owners of the building have no responsibility in acknowledgeding or preserving the history of the building then who else can do it?

Mouffe argues that from the point of view of theory of hegemony, artistic practices play a role in the continuation and maintenance of a given symbolic order or its challenging.[94] The current stance of the college serves to maintain the order. But LIT/LSAD is in a unique position where it can challenge and make a difference. The college can explore ways of acknowledging this history that are meaningful and responsive. Acknowledgement demands engagement and action. The current commemoration plans are a positive step but, I argue, do not constitute a just and responsible remembering of this history. The college can instigate or undertake any number of actions: documenting what

[93] Interview by author with Richard Ruth, Head of LSAD, 23/9/2008.
[94] Chantal Mouffe, Which Public Space for Critical Artistic Practices?, *Cork Caucus: on art, possibility and democracy*, A National Sculpture Factory Project, 2005, p. 160.

history is available, recording the stories, organise art exhibitions, engage with the debates around the subject, inform students of the history, add voice to campaigns for justice, welcome back survivors or their families - Actions that say this history is important to us and important to remember.

If the college takes action such as these it steps outside the pattern of forgetting– it gives a message to survivors and society in general that the history is important to remember. And it allows for the transformation of the story – it holds the memory sacred and gives dignity to the history and to the survivors.

Appendix 1

Transcript of Interview by Evelyn Glynn with Anne Culhane, Librarian in LSAD, 18/12/2008

E.G.: What is your interest in the laundry? What do you know about it?

A.C.: My own interest would be from working here and I feel there is a lot of history in this building and if we don't catch it soon we will lose it. Even this refurbishment which was fantastic, its absolutely brilliant, but at the same time there were so many changes made that more of the history of the building is gone and unless we catch it now its going to be gone forever. My point is that they have a very bad reputation a lot of them, a lot of these laundries and orphanages, and these homes for unmarried mothers and some of it is deserved. But I also think that theres a lot to be said. Some of the backgrounds that those people, children and mothers, came from – to come from those backgrounds to this was actually to move into a better life. This is a place where they would be fed, where they would be clothed, where they would have heat, and a lot of them would not have had that. All you have to do is to read *Angela's Ashes* to see some of the deprivation and poverty that they put up with. So for a lot of them to come in here was actually a step up. It's too easy to be negative and critical about the nuns and, yes, they did a lot that was not right or good but it has to be taken in the context of the times that were there. Ultimately they did a lot of good as well because they would have trained all the girls who would have left. They would have been 15 or 16, trained as laundry maids or seamstresses. In fact they were going out into the world with a skill which otherwise they might not have gotten. Also they all had the minimum education here. When they left they could all read and write. Would they have had that education? Would they even have survived outside without that? I don't know. As I say just working here, I feel the character of the building, I just wish we wouldn't forget it or the people that were here.

E.G.: Do you think the school is doing enough to acknowledge the history?

A.C.: The best thing that could ever have happened this place was the school of art. This is just how I feel. There was a lot of hardship here. There was a lot of sadness, a lot of lonliness. There was a lot of tragedy. So for a building to have that amount of it, the best thing to do was to bring in these young students, art students. By their very nature they are

creative and positive. And I just feel if you are talking about energies it's just such a positive force of energy to come in to this building. I think its perfect. Its like an antidote.Thats how I feel about it. The other side is- no they are not at all doing enough to acknowledge it. I know there are plans to build a remembrance garden but that is more to celebrate the refurbishment. There is talk of planting rosemary and forget-me-nots which is lovely. It's fantastic. And an oak tree to symbolise education and a beech tree which symbolises a bridge between the old and the new. And I think that is fantastic.I hope they come to pass. I hope that will actually happen but I do think that a lot more could be done. I'm not sure what but the worst thing to do is to hide it because it did happen.

E.G.: What is the level of interest among students?

A.C.: There have been a few that have asked about the history of the building but not that many have come to us in the library. But then I met a group one day. It was a group of seven girls and there were two boys in it and every one of them was interested -wondering what life must be like here, wondering what age the girls were. Wondering what the original church was like. Would they ever consider doing it up to its original state. They were all asking questions. So I actually think that the level of interest among students is extremely high. And there is also Richard [Williams] whom you just met. A few years ago Ian Castles, built a memorial, a rose garden, to the babies that had died here.

Also there is a lecturer here, Sarah Flaherty and she did some beautiful sculptural fabrics about the laundry, the history of this building. They were on exhibition in the MacBride gallery in Killarney. I saw them by chance. I knew she was a lecturer here but I had no idea they were in the exhibition. and I went in to see it and there they were and it was beautiful. It was all these linens and lace. Each were to symbolise one of the women. I thought it was absolutely outstanding. It was really beautiful. And the fact that she was a member of staff here but I had never spoken to her about the building.

E.G.: You told me a story about the phrase 'left holding the baby' Can you tell me that story?

A.C.: Well the way I heard it was , well it was actually the visitor that had to apply for permission to come in and visit. First of all they would have to apply to the Mother Superior. The Mother Superior would then have to get permission from the Bishop. That

was actually less of a big thing than it sounds because we're in the parish of St. Johns and that's the bishops parish and he actually had rooms here. So it was really only a matter of form. But when a visitor would come they would have to come between the hours of 3 and 5 on a Sunday afternoon. The building was actually slightly different in that the drive was actually longer coming in from the road, more winding. When they knew the visitor was coming they would make all the other unmarried mothers stand at the balcony and hold up their baby so that the visitor could see their shame, their sin, the physical embodiment of their sin. And that's where the expression came from, because they were the ones without visitors, they were the ones left holding the baby. And that's where the saying comes from.

E.G.:Any other stories?

A.C.: There were also penitents here, that would be young girls, and their crimes might have been very simple,like stealing bread in order to survive but they would be incarcerated over where the Roxtown Health Centre is now. To get to the church there was a tunnel so they were never seen by the public. Nor could the public see them from the roadway. They were the penitents and then you had the unmarried mothers and then you had the nuns. Now if you go into the church. The church was divided into these sections .The nuns that were sick or disabled went up to a special area. But I thought it was particularly cruel. As I say not all the children were adopted, and they would be brought up here, just like Babe, then they would proceed to work into the laundry or the lacemaking if they were good enough or in somecases to making rosary beads. But they never met their mothers, they would be separated and inside of the church you would have the children separated from their mothers. Can you imagine the pain of that, the mothers, knowing that their child was so close and yet not being able to see them or feel them, to touch them or to talk to them. That was very very cruel because to have met them, there was no badness going to come out of that. There was no harm if they did meet. There was a woman I was speaking to and she was raised here and her mother was here and it wasn't until she was leaving that she was told that her mother was one of the workers here and she subsequently found out that the mother worked in the kitchen and had been one of those feeding her but had never been allowed to say 'I am your mother'.

And of course the other story is, and the one that fascinates me completely, is the story where you are going back to rural Ireland where you'd have farming families. You'd have one son who would inherit the farm. More often than not then if there was a second son he would go on to the priesthood. There were roles more or less laid out for them. But

the son that inherited the farm, if he didn't marry when he was younger, he usually stayed on in the home house with his father and mother and effectively was a batchelor until they died. He would have very little say in the running of the place. So picture then he could be in his 50s, no parents and all of a sudden he had nothing. Some of them would come in here and they would literally apply for a wife. The women of marriagable age, the unmarried mothers, would be made to line up and he could go up and down and take his pick- select his wife. Now it was a complete win-win situation for him for a number of reasons. First of all, she had proved by having a child already that she was of good breeding stock. Number two, he was seen to be a saint of a man, by his community, by the priest and by everyone in general by taking a fallen woman and making an honest woman out of her - taking her into his home. So effectively what he was getting was a slave. A slave to do everything – a domestic slave, a woman to help out on the farm, to cook, to clean and in the bedroom as well. And very often, as you can imagine, the age gap could have been 30 or 40 years. Peculiarly some of those marriages worked out really really well. Some didn't. Some were horrific absolutely horrific. They were never left to forget where they came from for one minute of their long days. But some of them worked out really well and actually I've heard of some cases where some of the farmers did not want, there was an expression for this, the *foal at the heel.* They did not want to take the child out with them – that is officially adopt the child or have the child live with them- the foal at the heel. But some did. Some actually took the mother and the child and that worked out pretty well.

And there was Babe. I used to work in Croom hospital and she came out as a patient and she was never visited. She had no surname. She was I'd say in her late 70s early 80s when she came out to Croom [hospital] and she was just known as Babe and when she got better they [the nuns] didn't want her, they never came to collect her so she was sent to Camilises- It's the old age home, for want of a better word, out the Ennis Rd. She worked in the laundry all her life. She was born there and lived all her life there. She was never adopted.

E.G. : So she would have been brought up in the orphanage next door?

A.C.: Yes and from there she worked in the laundry all her life until she was sent out and became a patient in Croom [hospital]. She'd never been outside this building until she was sent to Croom. I got to know her in Croom hospital. I felt sorry for her. She never had any visitors. She had one night dress. That was it. She was lovely, just a sweet woman.

E.G.: When was that?
Ann: 1978

E.G.: How did you come by these stories?

A.C.: My mother, is now 82, and she plays cards. And over the years she has just become very friendly with a lot of the women who play cards. And the conversation struck up one night at the table where two of them had been selected wives from here. The case of 'the foal at the heel' - my sister met that woman and she is living in Newcastlewest and they would have told both my mother and my sister other stories about other women because they did keep up contact with each other because they were like a little band of 'you know what I've been through' and 'how are you getting on' and how am I getting on'.

E.G. : So the stories exist at oral level?

A.C. That's true. You wouldn't find that out. You can't find that out. Because I remember being absolutely shocked. But my mother wasn't one bit shocked because she had known of such things for years and years but she had actually never met one of the women.

E.G. : Did people know what was going on then?

A.C. They did but because it was run by nuns you couldn't say a word. I think they thought the nuns were fantastic – that they were saving the 'fallen women' as it were. Because its only recently that the stigma attached to being unmarried and being pregnant has lifted – thank god. But they were seen to be fantastic – the nuns that is to be saving the fallen. I do remember the importance then that was placed on a son or a daughter joining the priests or the nuns. They became elevated immediately in the communities that they lived. And my mother often tells the story by where she knew this man down the road who was commiting incest with his three daughters, and brutally doing so, but because that was a thing you didn't speak about when you met that man you saluted him or passed the time of day with him. But then when you had another neighbour whose son had left the priesthood, they were told they had to cross the street and keep their eyes downcast rather than have to look at them. So what a warped society it was really.

E.G.: So that puts the Magdalen laundries in the context of that time. What do you think it says about now, the fact that the history is not given much weight?

A.C. : It's not fashionable. It's not sexy enough now. But then its like the Industrial Schools. People did not want to talk about them because everyone knew someone who'd been there or worked there. So a lot of people don't actually want to talk about it. But then again we are living in a country that if you knew someone who went to fight in WW1 then you didn't want to talk about them because you went to fight for the British. So history has cycles of fashion as well. But it is a pity because if you don't catch some of these things then they are lost.

Interview by Evelyn Glynn with John Gilligan- 2/12/2008

From 2002 to 2004 John Gilligan (then a local councilor and currently Mayor of Limerick) campaigned to have the women who died while in the care of the Magdalen laundry in Limerick commemorated. The campaign resulted in the 253 names of the Magdalen women who had died while still under the care of the Good Shepherd nuns being placed on gravestones in what was until then an unmarked grave in St. Laurence's cemetery, Limerick. An official ceremony was organised to commemorate the women in 2004.

E.G.: Tell me why you got involved in this project?

J.G.: I suppose it all went back to the graveyard. It's a very old graveyard in Limerick city, Mount St. Laurence's, and my parents are buried there. Some of my other family are buried there as well. But you usually take the usual trip in through the side gate; turn left and our graves would be down at the railway end of the graveyard. I'd often wander down the central lane, but I'd rarely take a trip around the outside. But I do know I did it on a number of occasions. There was this day I had been up visiting a grave. It was a lovely day so I went down. I like to look at tombstones, the dates and things like that, because its part of the social history of Limerick. And I took the left hand path. I know I'd passed it before, but I don't think it impacted on me, but the biggest grave in the entire cemetery and there wasn't a single name on it. It said 'here lie the residents of the Good Shepherd Convent'. It struck me as being rather odd why on earth it should have been remembered like that. I stopped and I contemplated it. All graveyards are full of the good, the bad and the highly indifferent. Everything from mass murderers even when they are executed they get their name on a headstone. It's a normal human thing to commemorate people who have passed through life. Everybody gets their name on a headstone, including all of the religious orders. They have two very big graves up there as well and they were commemorated and I wondered why these people should be any different. It began to bother me – of why they were being treated differently. So I took a look at the whole question of the Magdalen laundries, got what information I could. I remember actually being in the Good Shepherd convent when I was very young. My aunt taught elocution there, Eileen Linehan. I do remember at the orphanage that was attached there, she'd bring us along to Christmas parties. I do remember vaguely the people who worked in the laundry, the Magdalen laundry there. I recognised that these were probably the residents of the Good Shepherd

convent. Why should these people be different to everybody else? Nobody would give me a rational explanation as to why they were any different and therefore I decided that it would be nice if they were commemorated, if their names were commemorated. They had done nothing wrong that I could see in life, and even if they had, their names should still have been on some kind of marker. So I approached the convent. Some of the discussions I've had with them in the convent, I did give them my word that the actual discussion itself would remain private and I will always stand over my word but the general drift of it is I particularly met two nuns. One was very very supportive and understanding of what I was looking at. The other one was less so, was not less so, was totally antagonistic towards the entire thing – told me it was none of my business- that these people didn't complain. She said there were people there when these people were buried and they didn't complain. 'Why' I said 'were they ever asked?' At that stage she got kind of nasty and we had a sharp divergence of views. It went on for quite some time, writing to and having a number of meetings with the nuns of the Good Shepherds convent. There were some articles printed in the paper. I issued a statement. I said that I was very upset. I couldn't understand this. That led to more antagonism within the discussions because there was one newspaper, an English newspaper that said that some of these people were being put in because they were people of ill repute/prostitutes, which simply wasn't true. In fact I do know the history of some of the people. They were transferred/put in there because the great and the good in society were sexually abusing them and fucking decided that the handiest way to get rid of them was to stick them in a convent. Which is what happened and that would include members of the clergy. So they were being victimized again and I said I wasn't going to wear that. So I said I would continue with it and do it. In fact not only was I not going to pull back from the publicity, although I totally disagreed with what one newspaper had said about them, I said that I would intensify it and that I'd get there names one way or another, even if I had to go to court. And if they didn't do it, I'd do it myself. At this stage I was really angry by the way that these women had been treated. It was modern day fucking slavery. I know one woman who joined me in the campaign and she was literally kidnapped in Dublin. Her mother had died and she went to Dublin and she was working in some house or something like that and the Legion of Mary decided that morally she could be compromised in the house. So they met her, literally kidnapped her and fucked her into an orphanage where she stayed 5 or 6 years. She didn't know what she did wrong. In fact she did nothing wrong. But you had these people who made decisions like that. That woman was literally kidnapped of the streets and thrown into an orphanage. And some of them had

absolutely horrific stories to tell. They had little or no sunshine in their lives. They had nothing. Even when some of them had babies they weren't asked were the babies to be adopted. They were taken off them. Some of them were sold - to Americans particularly. It was a monstrous crime against humanity. And I recognised then that is why some people did not want the whole thing of the Magdalen laundry brought up. But I wasn't going to let it rest. So I ploughed away. I eventually wrote to the Bishop of Limerick. And I must say he was supportive. He did write back and say that it would happen. I think I wrote to him and [the nuns] wrote back to me. I think he told them that it was going to happen one way or another so you'd better be sure it's done properly. But I'm delighted to say that eventually when they did the job they didn't do it half-heartedly. It is a very touching display. It's sad to see the names of all these people who we had, I believe, welcomed back into our community. These were names of people who didn't exist, who had been airbrushed out by a totally hypocritical society. The day of the official opening some people were actually going along looking for names, these were names that would have come from the past, relatives of theirs that may have been there. There were some of the more progressive members of the order, the nuns, there. They were not in uniform. They told me they were there. There was a wonderful ceremony and it was a question of society recognising that what it had done in the past, which was absolutely horrible, and welcoming these women back into society. It was very very sad. There were people abused from all levels of society.

E.G.: What do you think is the legacy of the Magdalen laundries?

J.G.: Lots of [these institutions] started out with the very best of intentions and in fact at the time would have been very progressive. I'm sure when they set up the Magdalen laundries there were people who had nothing and it was a way of getting work in the exact same way that asylums were set up. They would take people who were incapacitated and give them asylum. Down through the years they became corrupted. They seem to have lost the idealism of the founding patrons of the places. And in the case of the Magdalen laundries, they were simply an alternative to women's prisons. It was also a method, of not just mass exploitation, but it cleansed society or got rid of some of the women in the society, who society would much preferred didn't tell their story and didn't exist. There were documented cases where people who had been sexually abused by the great and the good in society, women who had literally been taken, thrown in there, and spent a life sentence for

something that they had absolutely no control over and certainly weren't guilty of. And the guilty walked free and they were locked up. That's absolutely horrible that that should happen. I'm also very conscious of the fact that anything that I did in no way compensates for the dreadful life and dreadful existence which these people had but I do believe that in some small way society recognised that they had a story. Their story wasn't particularly a pretty one but nonetheless they were part and parcel of our society and it was about being lost from society for these people. We are not quite sure if the records are correct but I do believe that a genuine effort was made by the Good Shepherd Convent to produce all the names. I don't think that that is all of them. But there is no way we can check that. But even releasing the names [the nuns] would be telling me that their families wouldn't want the names released. I said their families are probably buried with a headstone themselves, particularly the older ones. I said I don't accept that. There were all kinds of excuses why it shouldn't be done. The only real reason is that they were part of our society and must be recognised as such.

E.G.: What do you remember of it growing up? Would you have been aware of what was going on?

J.G.: I would have been aware they were there, more than anybody else. Like I said my aunt, Eileen Linehan, taught there. She was the elocution and music teacher and she taught down there and I do remember going there with my sisters at Christmas to a number of parties and we'd have met the orphans. There was an orphanage there. You were aware of older people working in …I think I saw it working once …it left an impression. There was lots of steam and water and all kind of things lying about but you didn't recognise why they were there. They were taken for walks and things around the city. They walked on Sunday afternoons. The Magdalen women all walked like children behind the nuns. A couple of nuns in front and a couple of nuns behind. They were dressed up in veils. Suddenly from becoming whores they became virgins. There were these processions and they'd dress them up in veils and walk the streets like fucking freak shows. People would have been aware of these people but they wouldn't be allowed to stop and speak to you or anything like that …like crocodile walks…That's exactly how they were treated.

E.G.: What do you think about their exclusion from redress boards and compensation?

J.G.: I believe that society owes them an apology to begin with. Many of these people were taken away, were institutionalised, denigrated, fucking tortured, if you will. And of course society owes any of these people who are still alive. They have to get a safe protective environment to try and live the rest of their lives as best they possibly can. This must not be done as a favour. This is an obligation on society and we must recognise it as that. It's not that we are giving them anything. It is that we have taken so much from them. Many of these now would be old and infirmed. They must be looked after properly and must as much as possible be integrated back into society or as much of it as they can handle.

E.G.: Anything you'd like to add?

J.G.: I must say I came from a total brick wall attitude of 'how dare you'. We did have it up and down now and [the nun] got highly offended. I suppose we both lost it in one or two occasions but she was absolutely determined it wasn't going to happen and I was equally determined that it was. It's never been officially said, the bishop himself has never said it to me, but when I started pushing at the bishop, I do believe that he facilitated it.

E.G.: How long did it take?

J.G.: 18 months maybe 2 years. The other one I've been looking at it and meaning to do something about it is in Kilmurray graveyard. There is another mass grave with no names on it. It's from the people from the blind asylum. I've been trying to get names for that. I've asked one or two places but it hasn't happened. That's been bothering me - who exactly these people were and why are they not remembered. I'm sure somewhere along the line someone will be able to do something with that. I'll have to do something about it.

Transcript of Interview by Evelyn Glynn with Richard Ruth, Head of Limerick School of Art and Design (LSAD), 23/9/2008.

E.G. Can you tell me the story of how the art college came to be on the premises of a Magdalen Laundry?

R.R. I was on a career break from 1988 to 1993. At that stage the college or the School of Art and Design was under Co-Act as distinct from LIT, so it was Limerick College of Art Commerce and Technology. It's now LIT, but originally Co-ACT, and we were always looking for property from the 1980s onwards. We moved in 1975 from Mungrave St. to Georges Quay in 1975-76 and at that point we only had 140 students so the accomodation was adequate. Then we expanded and we were in five different locations around the city. So the quest was on for one location. Privately I suppose we never thought we would get it because Art and Design as an activity within the educational sector wasn't seen as critically important for the country. They had identified science and IT and maybe building as the primary concerns and that's where the money would be put into. In 1993/94 the Director of CoAct , or LIT, Pat McDonagh, got a phonecall from the first secretary in the Department of Education and Science in Marlborough St. in Dublin. She told us that this place was coming on the market and we should have a look at it and that the nuns were keen to sell it on to an educational establishment. The transaction was done very very quickly and we got the premises for £750,000. So we got the convent and 7.5 acres of land 10 minutes from the city centre for £750,000 in 1993.

So in 1993-94 we acquired the premises. In '94 because we had different locations in the city and some of them were really bad like the Red Tech. The Municipal Tech Institute in O'Connell Avenue was the home for year 1 and that was really a labyrinth of victorian decay and so we couldn't wait to get people out of there. Because even families were going in there and saying there is no way my kid is going to study art and design in a dump like that. And I've heard that many times. So they came up here and they were the first inhabitants of the school to relocate to the new campus in 1994. And then I think 97-98 we started moving courses over like we moved painting, printmaking, from Georges Quay and fashion and sculpture were left behind. Ceramics came up into Mary Crest, which is the building here . Everyone came up and in except for fashion and sculpture /combined media. And they came up this year so 2008. Literally, I mean its scary but what ah nearly 14 years later we have everyone on one campus for the first time since 1975 I think .

E.G. How did you deal with the fact that it was a Magdalene Laundry or did that matter?

R.R. It didn't matter. It didn't matter to us at all because we were so used to going in to premises that could have been anything – business premises, ex-schools - St. Annes was a secondry school. We never had any tangible or conscious link with the previous occupation. We were just delighted to have a space of our own and to get on with what we do best. But over the years students, like post-grad students, have done installations on the convent and its previous existance and I know in the early days, it must have been in the late 90s an MA student did an installation that was actually used on the premises for relating the horrific story of the past She was a Northern Ireland student. Other students have done interesting manifestations of the previous history around the grounds and on glass windows listing the names [of penitents who died here].

E.G. So you didn't anticipate any difficulties because of the history?

R.R. No, should we? It's just wonderful to have a premises like this, to have a church like that. This place was built in 1852. The church seemingly was added in 1930 so there is a kind of archaelogical or architectural conflict, or chronological conflict between those buildings but other than that. As it happens 1852 is when we were founded, the School of Art and Design.

E.G. The two were built in the same year?

R.R. It's just a coincidence. We were in Cecil St. and they were here.

E.G. In terms of the restructuring, was there limitations in what you could do with the building or was that a consideration for example in terms of architecture?

R.R. It wasn't a named building so in theory we could have knocked. I suppose the temptation, well in a way if we knocked it where would we go? So I suppose the sensible thing was to hold on to what we had, refurbish it and then in the final phase to come up with this entrance that would be contemporary but compatible with what already existed. I know at times when they were doing the refurbishment they thought it would have been

better the to knock because it was quite expensive to deal with the nooks and cranies of the existing building.

E.G. I read somewhere there was an auction in 1994 ?

R.R. The auction was in the print studio. That used to be the gym of the convent. I went to that auction.

E.G. Was that organised by the school?

R.R. No the nuns. This was their final fling. They were selling off bookcases, furniture, all the stuff that you would find in a convent – traditional items.

E.G. Is there any copy of the original plans of the building?

R.R. I've never come across them. Never seen them. The nuns may be the source of that. I remember when I came in here first on a tour. The nuns – there were only about 5 or 6 nuns left -they used to do Limerick Lace. That was a big activity here. They had a board inside the front door which was a wooden panel with holes in it and they had golf pegs in it next to the names of the people who were on that particular day. Originally it had a long list of people. Now they were just a small group .

E.G. The list was the Magdalene women?

R.R. No it was the nuns who were managing the system. The list of the children - I've never seen anything. I wonder the person who did the thing on the glass where he got the information from.

E.G. Was there a graveyard on sight?

R.R. Actually just in front of the new building, the new refurbishment section, that was a graveyard, a nuns graveyard specifically. And that was deconsecrated and moved in 93 or 94.

E.G. What do you think in terms of the history. Is it important to remember or acknowledge it?

R.R. It has to be. I mean you can't ignore it and say nothing happened between 1852 and 1994. It's a huge mark on the local history. I mean the kids, guys on the staff here, caretakers who lived around here were saying it was common for parents in this region to say 'if you don't behave yourself we will send you in here'. Now I'd say kids would love to be sent in here. It's a horrible history and even within the church where the kids were sectioned off – they were in one part, the nuns were in another and the general public in another and there were underground exits and entrances.

E.G. What has happened to those underground entrances?

R.R. They have been filled.

E.G. Was there a particular reason for that?

R.R. There was no reason to retain them.

E.G. Specifically does the college have any role in acknowledging the history? Whose job is that? Is it part of the colleges remit?

R.R. I never thought about it. I've never made the connection that we had a responsibility to do that. I think its not our responsibility but I'd love if someone else took it on like local historians or people who had accurate information about the times and the events and so on and that they could contribute to that. I suppose you could look at the TV programmes that were on at the time. There was a lot of coverage on Good Sheperd convents and I think historians were involved and they did come up with a kind of profile that exists today. So it has been resurrected but not by us.

E.G. Do you think it lives on?

R.R. It has to live on. All you have to do is visit the top of this building and you find sleeping quarters and they are so atmospheric. You know they are scary, haunting. There is a residue there of memories and it can't be ignored. It's something that happened and its part of the 19th and 20th century and it's nearly tangible when you go up and experience that space.

E.G. Is it still possible to get access?

R.R. It should be if you ask the caretakers. I've forgotten how to get there now. There used to be a spiral staircase and that's gone. Somewhere on the new floors or the refurbished floors there is another access point.

Appendix 2

Note: Unless indicated otherwise all photographs are taken by the author

The Building as Viewed from Pennywell Rd.

Figure 2.1: Corner of Pennywell Rd. and Old Clare St. In the background the distinctive chimney which formed part of the laundry and the church dome are visible.

Figure 2.2: Plaque on the wall acknowledging the site as a place of execution.

Figure 2.3: The commercial laundry entrance from Pennywell Road, 2009.

Figure 2.4

The Laundry

The commercial laundry that operates from the site of the Magdalen Laundry. Many of the original fixtures and fittings of the building remain the same, particularly on the upper level. Examples photographed here are the spiral staircase and shelving. Even some of the pictures on the wall remain.

Figure 2.5: Picture of sacred heart on wall.

Figure 2.6 : Spiral staircase

Figure 2.7 : Shelving on first floor.

Convent of the Good Shepherd, Front View of Main Building

Figure 2.8: 1901: Source: Limerick City Museum

Figure 2.9: Circa 1900-10. Source: Limerick City Museum.

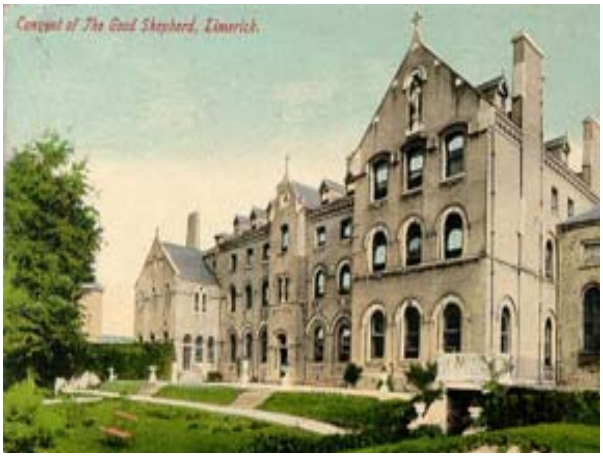


Figure 2.10: 1909: Source: Limerick City Museum

Front view of main building in 2009
showing details of changes and remaining traces of the past

Figure 2.11: LSAD, 2008.

Figure 2.12: Statues removed.

Figure 2.13: Sacred hearts over door remain.

Church and Tunnel Entrances

Figure 2.14:Tunnel entrance to the church is visible to the right.Source: Michael John Griffen.

Figure 2.15: Before the glass walled entrance was built. http://tethys.croydon.ac.uk/magdalenecircle.nsf

Figure 2.16: Glass walled entrance built in 2008.

The Orphanage

This building situated next door to LSAD was until 1974 an orphanage. Children born to the Magdalen women who were not adopted were brought up by the Good Shepherd sisters here. Contact between mothers and children was strictly forbidden. The building was adjoined to the church by way of underground tunnel.

Figure 2.17:
Former Orphanage

Figure 2.18:
Last traces of the tunnel entrance that led from the orphanage to the church:

Figure 2.19:
Entrance to church from orphanage side.

The Orphanage - Interior Space

Photos from the former orphanage on Old Clare St. The orphanage moved to new premises in 1974. These photos taken in December 2008 are of the unused part of the building. It is completely gutted inside except for the statue below. The rest of the building is renovated and is the location for the Health Service Executive (HSE) Roxtown Childcare Centre.

Figure 2.20 Door leading onto Clare St. exit.

Figure 2.21:Windows are boarded up.

Figure 2.22: Original stairs

Figure 2.23: The second floor space is empty except for this statue.

The Grounds

The garden space to the front and rear of the Mary Crest building, (now the location for the ceramics department) have made way for student and staff carparking.

Figure 2.24: The vegetable garden. In the Background the conservatory that joined The main convent to Mary Crest is visible. Source: Magdalene Laundry Survivors: http:/tehtys:croydon.ac.uk/magdalenecircle.nsf

Figure 2.25: Student car park 2008.

Figure 2.26: Garden to front of Mary Crest building Source:http://travel.webshots.com/photo/ 1485990253056393138bMlcvu

Figure 2.27: Staff car park 2008.

The Grounds

Figure 2.28: Front garden with fountain taken some time in 1970s.
Photograph courtesy of Michael John Griffen.

Figure 2.29: The nuns graveyards and later the ‘permanent memorial’ erected by Ian Castles were in this area. The space has now made way for the new access entrance constructed in 2008.

Corridor Spaces

Figure 2.30: This corridor retains the arches from the original building. The office at the end now houses the students union offices.Previously this corridor extended to the end of the building and continued through to the conservatory that joined the main building to Mary Crest.

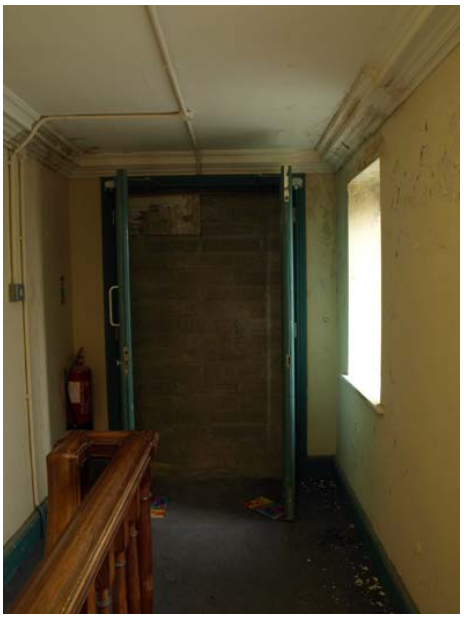


Figure 2.31: Double doors that opens onto a brick wall. This is located on the second floor of the church space. The doorway used to lead into the infirmary. Sick and disabled nuns were escorted from here to the second floor balcony that looked onto the church alter. See also figure 2.38.

Church Space

Figure 2.32:Photograph of church alter taken some time in the 1970s. Source: Michael John Griffen

Figure 2.33: The marble altars located to the left and right in the image above are still in place but are now hidden behind the white boarding.

Figure :

Figure 2.34: The white boarding from behind.

The Church Gallery

Figure 2.35: Photograph of church courtesy of Michael John Griffen taken sometime in the 1970s.

Figure 2.36:Many of the original features of the church have been removed. Many more are hidden behind the white boarding. And some features are still visible.

Figure 2.37 : Church Gallery 2009.

Figure 2.38: The small double window below the statue used to be the room where the nuns who were elderly, ill or infirmed attended mass and later where I attended tutorials for this thesis!

The Church Gallery 2009

Figure 2.39
Church gallery 2009

Figure 2.40:
Above the white boarding original church features are still visible

Figure 2.41:

Old Meets New

Figure 2.42: The confessional box that leads off from the church

Figure 2.43: And into the new glass walled entrance space

The Attic

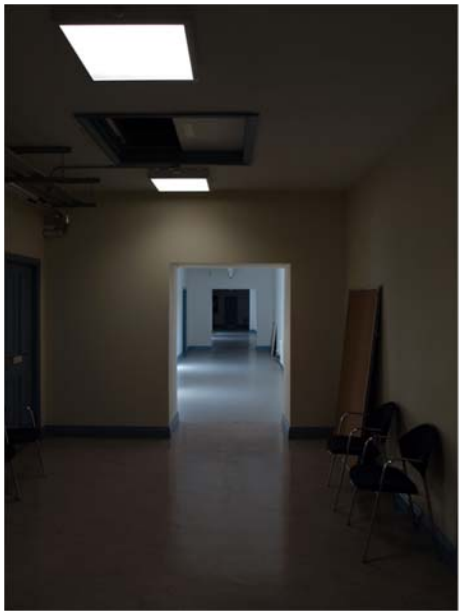


Figure 2.44: The trap doors seen here on the ceiling are now the only access point to the attic.

Figure 2.45: Attic corridor with rooms leading off on either side.

Figure 2.46: One of the rooms leading off corridor. All the rooms have been cleared of cleared of furniture.

Figure 2.47: Attic entrance as viewed from the attic. The space can now only be accessed by ladder.

Attic Windows - Hidden history

Figure 2.48: Attic Window

Figure 2.49: Stained Glass window located at front of main building.

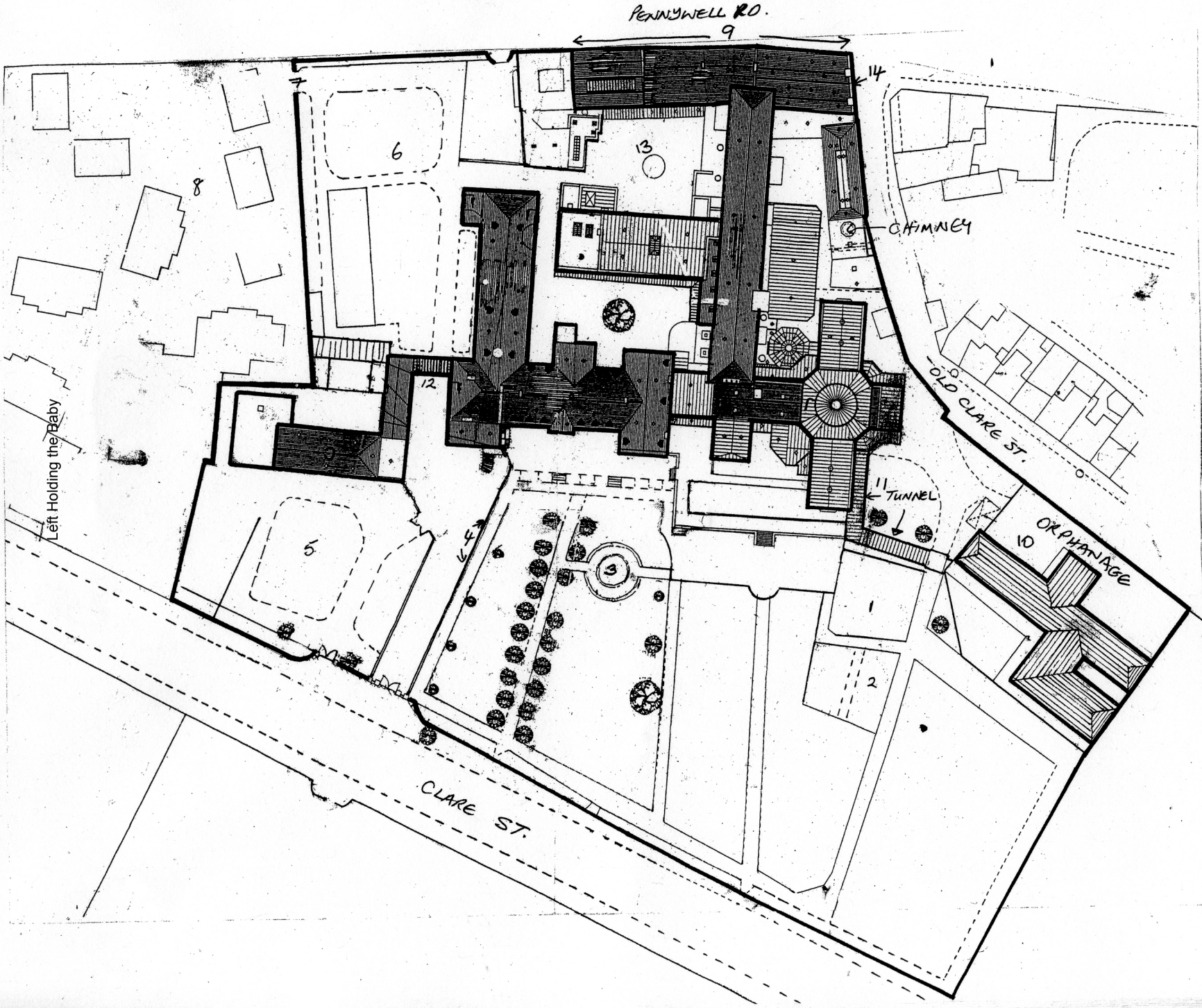
Figure 2.50: View looking on to church dome.

Figure 2.51: View looking onto the gardens. The two rows of trees are a feature of the convent gardens but the statue that was placed in the wall has been removed.

Appendix 3

Architectural Drawings and Reconstructions of the Magdalen Laundry

The partial reconstructions are based on information received from Paul O'Shaughnessy and Michael John Griffen.

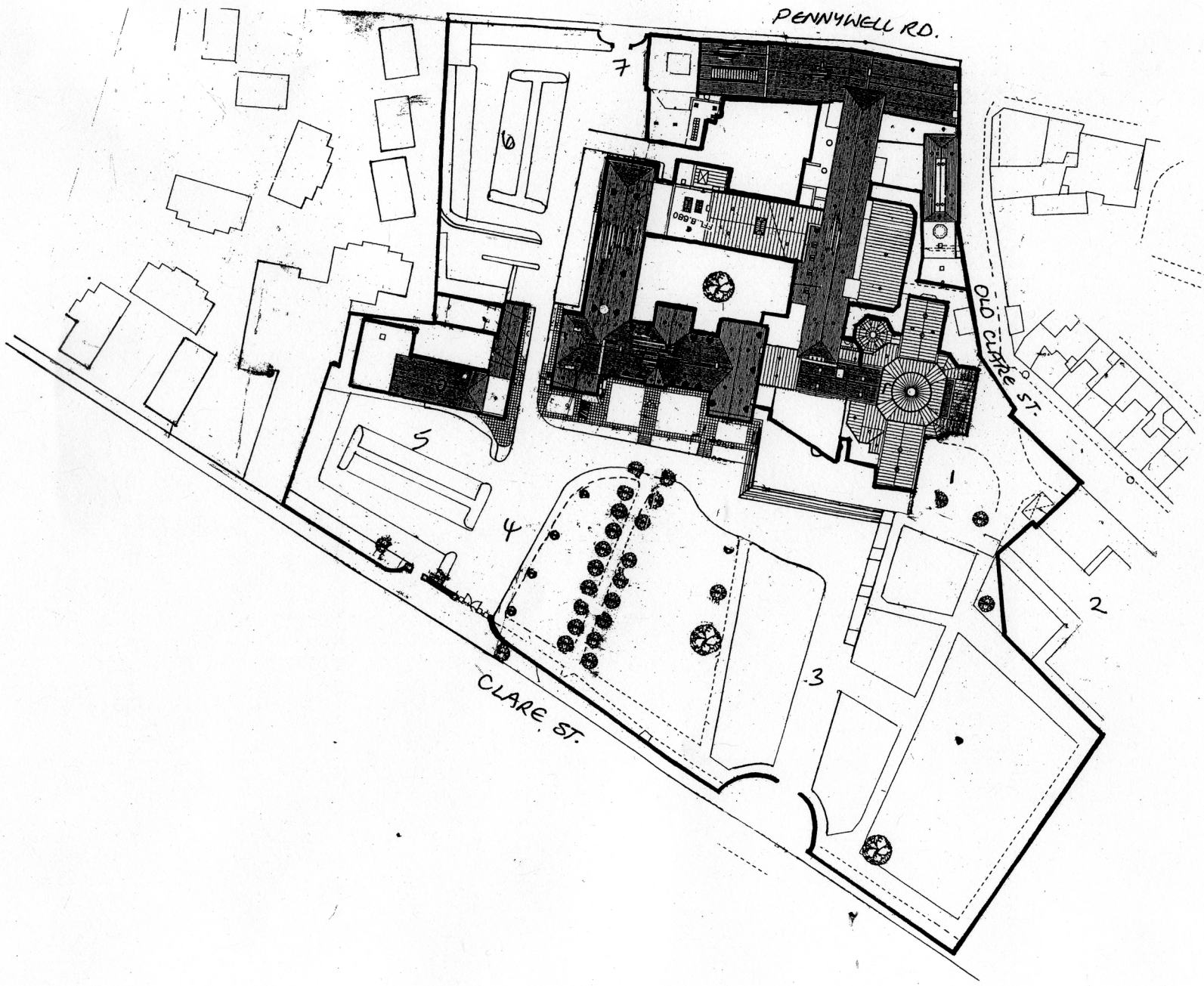


1 NUNS GRAVEYARD
2 NUNS GRAVEYARD
3 FOUNTAIN
4 WALL
5 GARDEN
6 VEGETABLE GARDE
7 OLD ENTRANCE FROM FARMYARD
8 FARMYARD
9 LAUNDRY
10 ORPHANAGE
11 TUNNEL FROM ORPHANAGE
12 CORRIDOR CONNECTING MA CONVENT TO MARY CREST
13: POND IN COURTYARD
14: OLD DOUBLE DO ENTRANCE TO LAUNDRY

Left Holding the Baby

Evelyn Glynn

CURRENT SITE PLAN



1 : TUNNEL TO ORPHANAGE REMOVED

2 ROXTOWN CHILDCARE CENTRE

3 NEW ENTRANCE

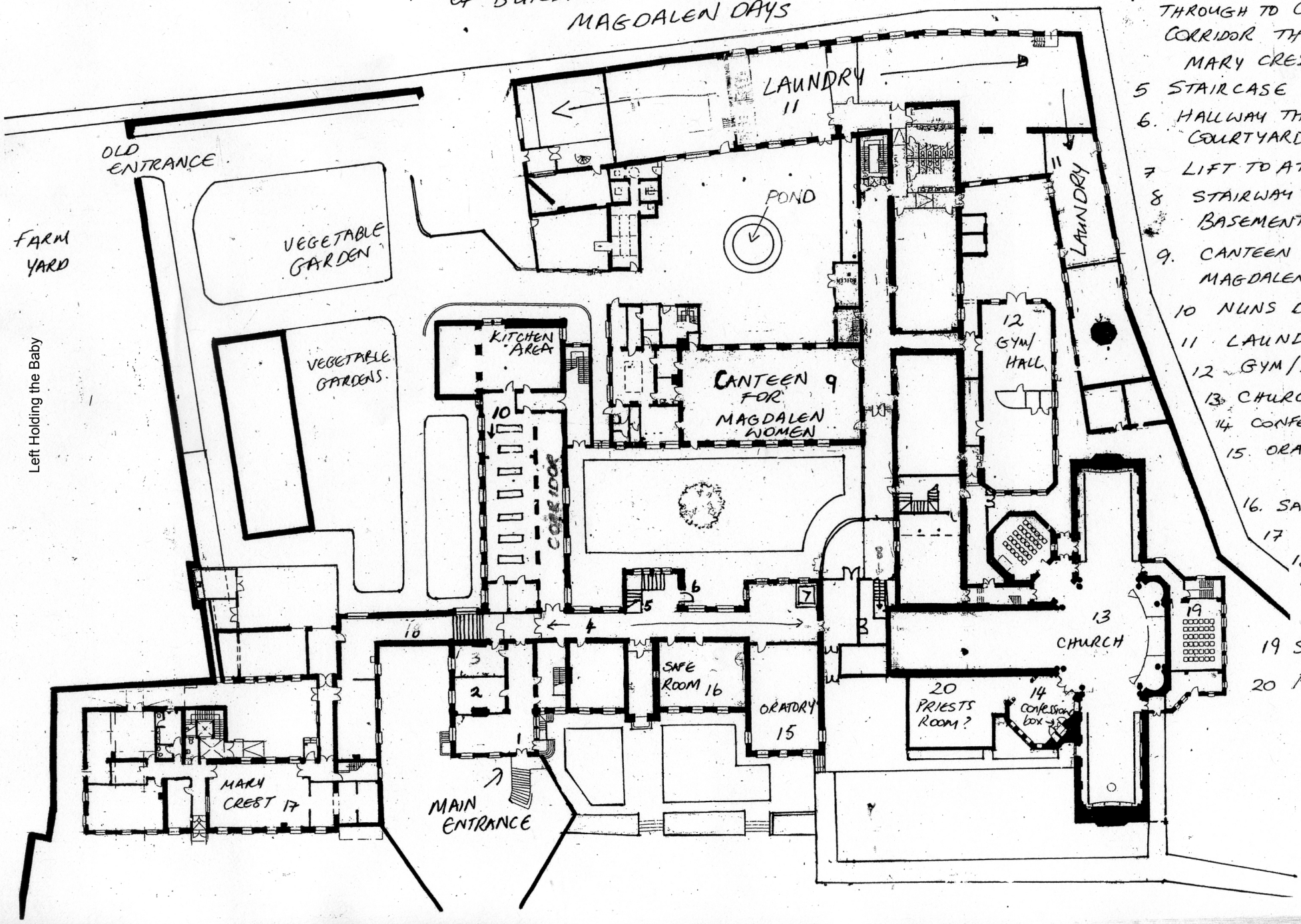
4 ENTRANCE FROM CLARE ST. - WALL REMOVED -

5. STAFF CAR PARK

6 STUDENT CAR PARK

7 ENTRANCE FROM PENNYWELL RD.

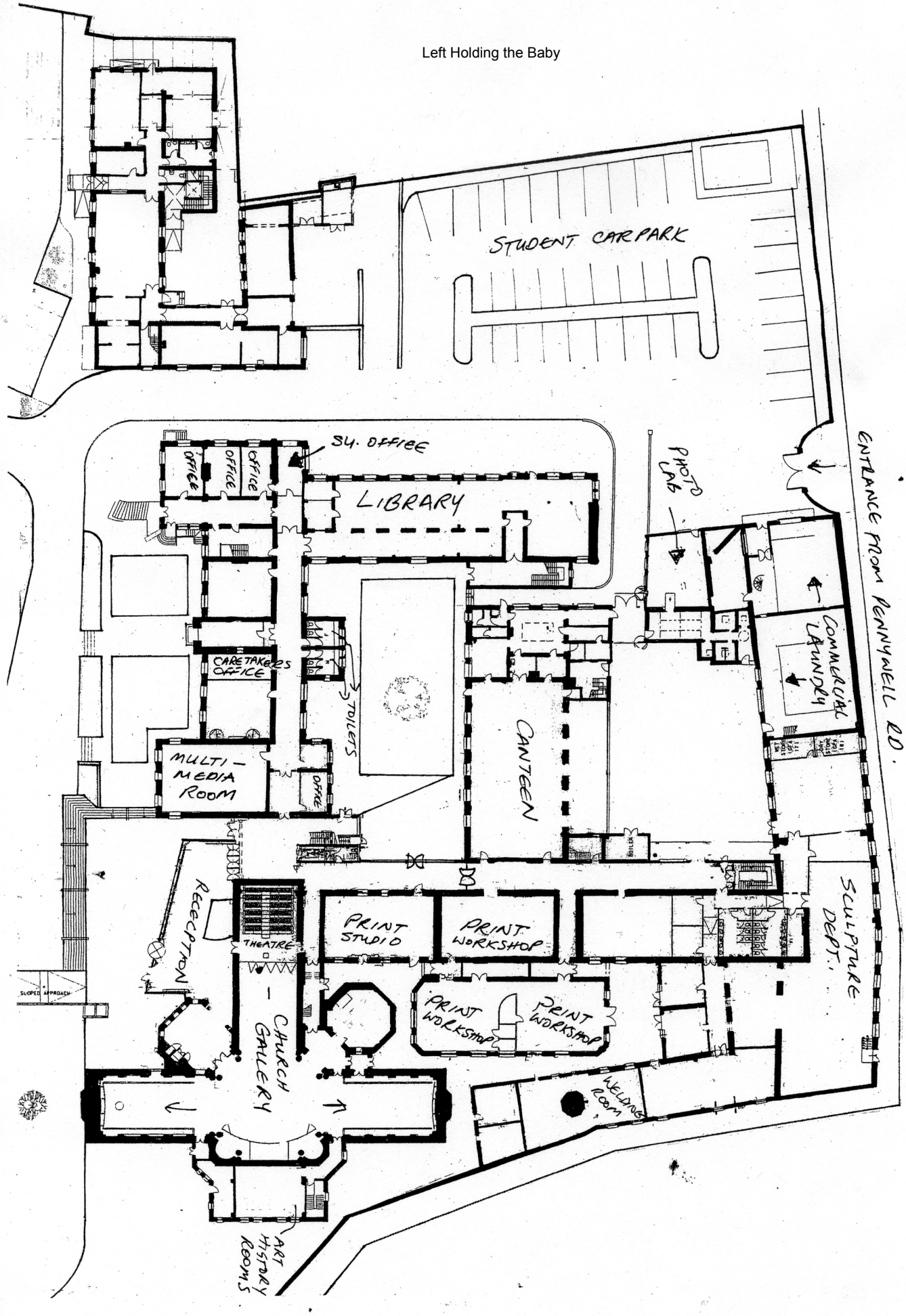
PARTIAL RECONSTRUCTION OF BUILDING LAYOUT IN MAGDALEN DAYS



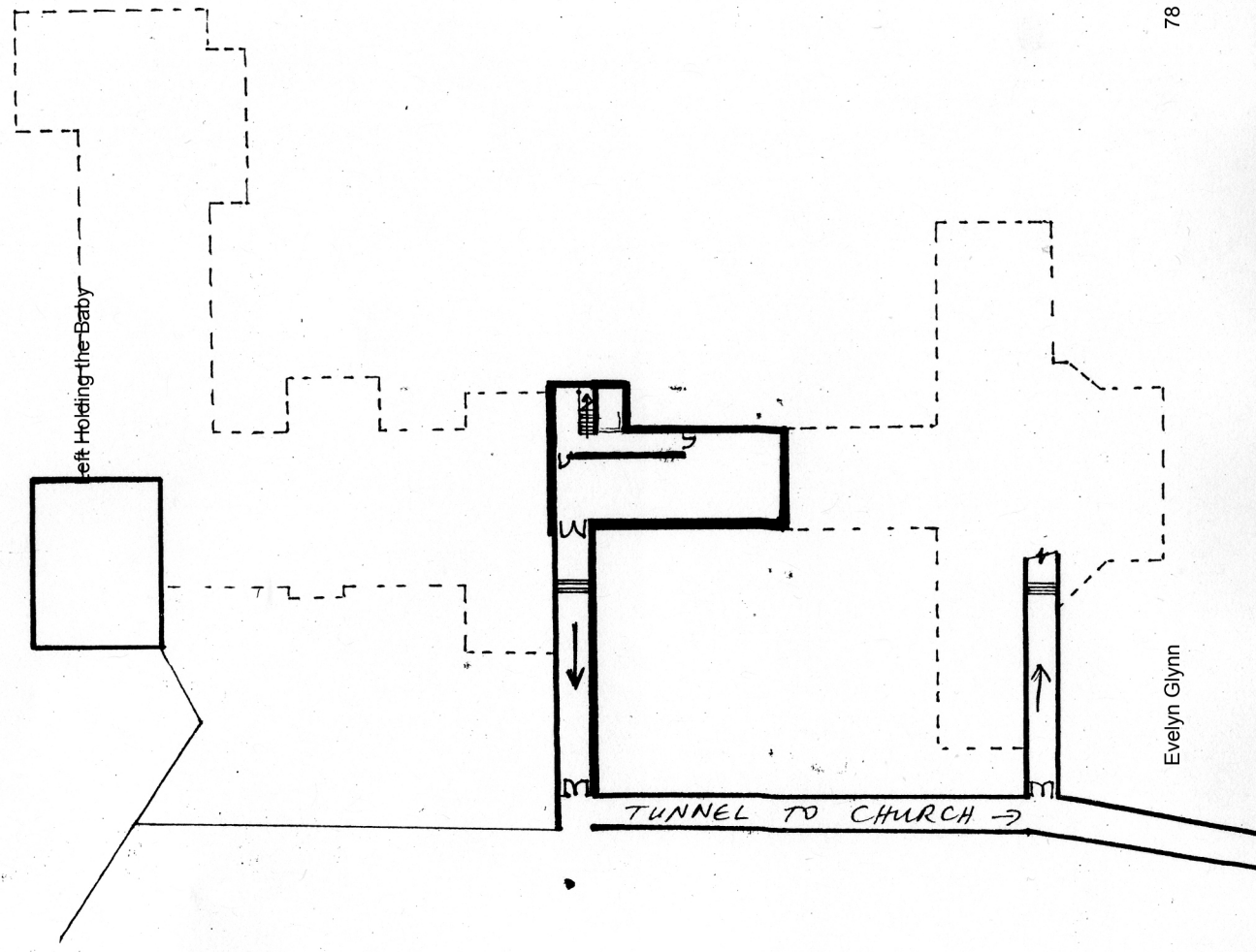
3 MOTHER SUPERIORS OFFICE
4 LONG CORRIDOR RAN THROUGH TO CONSERVATOR CORRIDOR THAT LED TO MARY CREST
5 STAIRCASE
6. HALLWAY THAT LED TO COURTYARD
7 LIFT TO ATTIC
8 STAIRWAY THAT LED TO BASEMENT TUNNEL
9. CANTEEN FOR THE MAGDALEN WOMEN
10 NUNS DINING HALL
11 LAUNDRY
12 GYM/HALL
13 CHURCH
14 CONFESSIONAL AREA
15 ORATORY (IN LATER YEARS)
16. SAFE ROOM ?
17 MARY CREST
18 CORRIDOR TO MARY CREST
19 SACRISTY
20 PRIESTS ROOM?

Left Holding the Baby

Evelyn Glynn


STUDENT CARPARK
SU. OFFICE
OFFICE
OFFICE
OFFICE
LIBRARY
PHOTO LAB
ENTRANCE FROM PENNYWELL RD.
COMMERCIAL LAUNDRY
CARETAKER'S OFFICE
TOILETS
CANTEEN
MULTI-MEDIA ROOM
OFFICE
BOILER
RECEPTION
THEATRE
PRINT STUDIO
PRINT WORKSHOP
SCULPTURE DEPT.
SLOPED APPROACH
CHURCH GALLERY
PRINT WORKSHOP
PRINT WORKSHOP
WELDING ROOM
ART HISTORY ROOMS

BASEMENT AND TUNNELS



Appendix 4

Good Shepherd Census Returns Figures 1911:

Source: Limerick City Library

Good Shepherd Convent, Magdalen Asylum, Census 1911 Returns: Source: Limerick City Library

Surname	Forename	House Number	Street	Position in household	Religion	Education	Age	Occupation	Martital Status	Children Born Alive	Children Still Living	Where Born
Gillespie	Kate	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	25	Seamstress	Single			Galway Co. (Ballinasloe)
McNamara	Anne	51	Clare St.		RC	Cannot read	29	Laundress	Single			Clare Co.
Doolan	Anne	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	50	Laundress	Single			Dublin City
Farrell	Rosanna	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	20	Laundress	Single			Westmeath Co. (Athlone)
O'Connor	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	55	Laundress	Single			Kerry Co.
McAuliffe	Maggie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	25	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Cournane	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Cannot read	32	Laundress	Single			Kerry Co. (Tralee)
O'Mara	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	25	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co. (Nenagh)
(illegible)	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	30	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co. (Nenagh)
Browne	Emily	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	37	Laundress	Single			Dublin City
Hearty	Maggie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	29	Laundress	Single			Cork Co. (Fermoy)
Kennedy	Cissie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	18	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co. (Nenagh)
Conway	Sarah	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	18	Laundress	Single			Clare Co. (Killaloe)
Murphy	(illegible)	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	56	Laundress	Widow			Dublin City
Tierney	Catherine	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	35	Laundress	Widow			Clare Co.

Surname	Forename	House Number	Street	Position in household	Religion	Education	Age	Occupation	Martital Status	Children Born Alive	Children Still Living	Where Born
O'Neill	Johanna	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	50	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Boyd	Agnes	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	19	Laundress	Single			Belfast
Fennell	Kate	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	28	Laundress	Single			Clare Co.
Cahill (?)	Kate	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	21	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Callaghan	Bride	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	18	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co.
Ellis	Norah	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	51	Laundress	Single			Scotland
Laffan	Norah	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	45	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Moore	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	22	Laundress	Single			Carlow Co.
Martyn	Kate	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	17	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co.
Reddan	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	50	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Gallagher	Norah	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	50	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Meaney	Ellie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	19	Laundress	Single			Wexford Co. (New Ross)
Roche	Lizzie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	29	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Murphy	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	18	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Loughran (?)	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	16	Laundress	Single			Kerry Co.
Richey	Fannie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	65	Domestic servant	Single			Waterford
Harrington	Julia	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	28	Laundress	Single			Cork Co.
Webbe	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	22	Laundress	Single			Limerick City

Surname	Forename	House Number	Street	Position in household	Religion	Education	Age	Occupation	Martital Status	Children Born Alive	Children Still Living	Where Born
Slaymaher (?)	Ellie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	42	Laundress	Single			Dublin City
Mulhall	Maggie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	18	Laundress	Single			Carlow Co.
Moloney	Ellie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	22	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co.
Molloy	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	70	Laundress	Single			Dublin City
Sheehan	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	45	Cook	Single			Limerick City
Sheehy	Catherine	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	56	Cook	Single			Limerick City
O'Connor	Molly	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	40	Cook	Single			Kerry Co.
Lowe	Isabel	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	42	Laundress	Single			Dublin City
Quinlan	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	73	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co.
Ryan	Margaret	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	45	Laundress	Single			Dublin
Brohan	Annie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	20	Cook	Single			Clare Co.
O'Dwyer	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	24	Cook	Single			Tipperary Co.
O'Moore	Norah	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	65	Seamstress	Single			Tipperary Co. (Cashel)
Fitzgerald	Fannie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	48	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co.
Madigan	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	49	General servant	Single			Limerick City
Noonan	Kate	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	50	Seamstress	Single			Tipperary Co.
Gleeson	Grace	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	31	Domestic servant	Single			Tipperary Co.
Geraghty	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	44	Laundress	Single			England

Surname	Forename	House Number	Street	Position in household	Religion	Education	Age	Occupation	Martital Status	Children Born Alive	Children Still Living	Where Born
Dunne	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	48	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
O'Connor	Kate	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	48	Domestic servant	Single			Cork Co.
Keogh	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	41	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Murray	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	50	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
McMahon	Annie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	45	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
McNamara	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	28	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Sisk	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	21	Laundress	Single			Cork Co.
Cotter	Sarah	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	50	Domestic servant	Single			Tipperary Co.
Noff…?	Delia	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	45	Laundress	Single			Germany
Reddan	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	43	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co. (Clonmel)
O'Shaughnessy	Josephine	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	20	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
McDonagh	Winnie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	47	Laundress	Single			Sligo
Ratigan	Bridget	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	20	Laundress	Single			Westmeath Co. (Athlone)
Flanagan	Maggie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	17	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co.
O'Neill	Louisa	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	31	Laundress	Single			Clare Co. (Ennis)
Dempsey	Maggie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	22	Laundress	Single			Galway
Rowe (?)	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	63	Domestic servant	Widow			Limerick City
Rice	Katie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	22	Laundress	Widow			Limerick City
Gallagher	Lillie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	18	Laundress	Widow			Kings Co. (Birr)

Surname	Forename	House Number	Street	Position in household	Religion	Education	Age	Occupation	Martital Status	Children Born Alive	Children Still Living	Where Born
Edwards	Delia	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	33	Laundress	Widow			Clare Co. (Ennis)
(illegible)	Teresa	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	25	Laundress	Widow			Sligo
O'Keeffe (?)	Ellie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	70	Seamstress	Widow			Limerick City
Barrett	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	35	Laundress	Widow			Limerick City
Harrington	Katie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	43	-	Widow			Cork Co.
Carroll	Jane	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	73	Seamstress	Single			Limerick City
(illegible)	Kate	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	18	Laundress	Single			Dublin City
Coll	Catherine	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	76	Domestic servant	Single			Galway
McDonnell	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	34	Laundress	Widow			Limerick City
O'Connor	Molly	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	73	Invalid	Single			Limerick City
Barrett	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	59	Seamstress	Single			England
Madigan	Annie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	53	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Barton	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	38	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
(illegible)	(illegible)	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	42	Laundress	Widow			Limerick City
Lenihan	Catherine	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	29	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Watson	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	45	Domestic servant	Single			Cork City
Purcell	Ellen	51	Clare St.		RC	Cannot read (Blind)	50	Invalid	Single			Cork City
Kildea	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	75	Laundress	Single			Limerick City
Sloan	Rose	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	36	Laundress	Single			Clare Co. (Ennis)
Moylan	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	45	Laundress	Single			Down Co. (Newry)
Reddan	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	35	Laundress	Single			Cork City
Hanagan	Annie	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	33	Seamstress	Single			Tipperary Co.
Bourke	Mary	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	41	Laundress	Single			Clare Co.
McDermott	Bridget	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	24	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co.
Griffin	Norah	51	Clare St.		RC	Read & write	28	Laundress	Single			Tipperary Co.

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Note: unless indicated otherwise all photographs were taken by the author.