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## ***'do not forget your bit wife'*: love, marriage and the negotiation of patriarchy in Irish Presbyterian marriages, c. 1780-1850.**

### **Introduction**

The relationships between husbands and wives, and between members of the family in general, are the subject of debate among historians. The publication of Lawrence Stone's ground-breaking monograph, *The family, sex and marriage in England, 1500-1800* (1977) launched a series of historiographical debates which continue to shape the direction of research conducted on marriage and the family to the present day. According to Stone, the rise of what he termed 'affective individualism' during the course of the early modern period led to a gradual shift in the emotional quality of family relationships, with bonds between husbands and wives, and parents and children, becoming strengthened by greater emotional attachment.<sup>1</sup> This development also had important consequences for marriage. As couples began to place emotional satisfaction above mercenary and dynastic interests, relationships between husbands and wives became more equal, leading to the emergence of the 'companionate' ideal, which became a distinguishing of feature of marriage by 1800.<sup>2</sup>

Drawing on a varied range of sources, from legal evidence in marriage settlements, to correspondence, diaries and conduct literature, subsequent generations of historians have sought to evaluate the degree to which spousal relations were indeed equal and companionate. Although agreeing for the most part that relations between husbands and wives grew more affective over the course of the early modern period, historians have differed in their opinions as to the degree, social location and timing of this change.<sup>3</sup> Taking the Irish case as an example, S.J. Connolly has observed that the companionate marriage ideal was well-established in Ireland by the late eighteenth-century –the time it is said to have only begun to emerge among the upper levels of English society.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, A.P.W. Malcomson has noted that if motivations for marriage among the Irish aristocracy had

undergone any significant transformation during the eighteenth-century, such change would have been reflected in the financial provisions of marriage settlements, increased the incidence of exogamic marriage and led to more frequent runaway matches. In his study, however, Malcomson found no solid evidence to support this view, leading him to conclude that if a change did occur, it was only one of degree.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the important contributions which such research has made to our understanding of marriage and family life, a number of scholars have pointed out the problems of adhering to this narrative of companionability. For example, in respect to North America, Anya Jabour has argued that the companionate ideal did not eliminate the differences between men and women, noting that in some marriages romantic love and patriarchy were simultaneously celebrated concepts.<sup>6</sup> Scholars working on English and European marriage have also reached similar conclusions. Linda Pollock and Allyson Poska have drawn attention to the fluidity of masculine and feminine identities in the past, highlighting the errors of a framework which presents women's place in society (and marriage) on either side of an 'agency-subordination' divide, which itself was subject to change.<sup>7</sup> Instead of measuring the emotional quality of marital relationships by the degree of 'companionability' they exhibited, historians have refocused their efforts on uncovering the ways in which couples interacted with patriarchy on a daily basis, an approach which reveals the more nuanced aspects of married life.<sup>8</sup> It should be remembered that patriarchy was not a rigid concept of marriage which was swept away by the advent of romantic love and the emergence of the companionate ideal. Rather, it was a malleable force which was open to negotiation and refinement.

These new approaches to the history of English and North American marriage have yet to be fully implemented in Irish scholarly research. To date, our knowledge of marriage in Ireland is fairly limited, and much of what we do know can be fitted into two broadly defined

categories. On the one hand, historians have been more concerned with examining the demographic conditions of marriage (its social and religious patterns, age at first marriage, and rates of remarriage) and the material negotiations which accompanied marriage decisions, than actual marital relationships themselves. The role which the Famine played in altering marriage patterns and behaviours has received more attention than the rise of ‘affective individualism’.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, much of what has been written on the family and marriage is skewed in favour of the better-off, and wealthier sections of society. Whereas much attention has been paid to the marriages of the wealthy, Anglican elite, and (to a lesser degree) those who belonged to the Irish Catholic gentry, very little has been written on those middling order, Presbyterian families who accounted for the majority of Ulster’s population.<sup>10</sup> Outside of a few notable exceptions, the historical record is frustratingly mute on the family relationships of this section of Irish society.<sup>11</sup>

Using the case-study of the Campbell-Allens, an Ulster Presbyterian couple, alongside a number of other Presbyterian families, this article aims to contribute to this developing area of research by exploring how patriarchy was negotiated within marriage, c. 1780-1850. Indeed, by focussing on Ulster Presbyterian families, this article aims to open up new avenues of research. This article is organised into two distinct sections. The first section is focused solely on the Campbell-Allens, and explores how the couple negotiated three elements of the patriarchal marriage: love, obedience and the control of household resources. Drawing on material collected from a number of other Ulster Presbyterian families, the second section will then consider how typical the Campbell-Allens are as a case-study of love, marriage and patriarchy.

### **The Campbell-Allens as a case-study: background**

Before discussing the operations of patriarchy in marriage, it is helpful to give a brief introduction to the couple on which this essay is largely based: the Campbell-Allens. William John Campbell-Allen was born on 22 October 1810, the only son of Thomas Allen and Jane Campbell, a relatively wealthy merchant family. William received his education at the Belfast Academical Institution, which was paid for by his maternal uncle, John Campbell, who had made his fortune in the American cotton industry. After the death of his father in 1822, William and his mother relied on the financial assistance of his uncle, who sent them an annual remittance for their rent, general upkeep, and schooling costs.<sup>12</sup> William entered into the legal profession, and for much of our period was a practising barrister, splitting his time between his lodgings in Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin, and his home in Donegal Street, Belfast. He later became involved in the Ulster Railway, and was appointed as its director in 1839, before moving on to the Ulster Bank, where he served as its senior director from 1868 until his death in 1884.<sup>13</sup>

Isabella Marshall was born on 3 March 1815, the sixth child of Andrew Marshall, a medical doctor, and his wife, Isabella Drummond. Like her husband, Isabella received a good education, and was privately tutored by her governess, Frances Knowles, the sister of the playwright Sheridan Knowles. Isabella's education is reflected in her letters and she took great enjoyment in translating texts from Latin, as well as discussing literary works such as Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Isabella later took an active interest in philanthropic affairs, and was involved in the Belfast Ladies' Association for the Relief of Irish Destitution, during the Famine years.<sup>14</sup>

The Campbell-Allens were married in August 1838, and were together for almost thirty years when Isabella died after an illness in March 1868. Their surviving correspondence spans the entirety of their marriage and was written during episodes of separation. For the first few years of their marriage in particular, William and Isabella lived

largely apart. Generally, William spent periods of up to one month in Dublin, where he was studying and practising law. During his absence, Isabella was expected to remain in the home they shared with William's mother in Donegal Street, Belfast. This living arrangement appears to have been prompted by William's frequent trips and was designed to ensure his mother was cared for in his absence. Indeed, in a letter dated May 1839, Isabella remarked regretfully that she had never been consulted on the choice of their home and that it was William's mother who had chosen the house in Donegal Street.<sup>15</sup> Frequent bouts of ill-health and attacks of rheumatism, however, meant that Isabella stayed more often with her parents a few streets away in Wellington Place, or went to the country in Larne, county Antrim, for fresh air, returning only when William was due to arrive back in Belfast. That Isabella was expected to keep company with Jane Campbell in Donegal Street is evident from the disagreements which occurred between the two women over the issue. During one such argument, Jane complained that she had 'got a daughter-in-law ... [who] was no daughter'<sup>16</sup> – insinuating that Isabella was failing in her duty as a wife. Isabella, however, maintained that she had received permission from William to take leave of the house, and wrote to her husband to this effect.<sup>17</sup> Indeed, in other letters to William on the issue, Isabella took pains to explain the reasons for her absences from the house in Donegal Street, often citing her poor health and need for medical treatment.<sup>18</sup>

Despite the problems which their separation later caused, neither Isabella nor William appear to have ever considered a permanent move to Dublin.<sup>19</sup> William believed that there were more opportunities for him to forge a career in Dublin than in Belfast. Once established, his plan was to capitalise on his contacts in these two cities, and act on behalf of clients in both Belfast and Dublin. In a letter to Isabella, for example, he noted how he had mentioned to a colleague that he 'thought it strange that a large mercantile place like Belfast should afford business to a lawyer who resided there constantly & would not come to Dublin as is

the case in Cork'.<sup>20</sup> Isabella also seems to have preferred living close to her parents and family, and despite having relatives in Dublin, was not willing to leave these sources of emotional and familial support. The couple's separation, however painful, was deemed to be begrudgingly necessary. Indeed, it was not until mid-1841, after three years of making little progress in Dublin, that William decided to give up the law profession and move back to Belfast, entering into business instead. Even then, however, the couple continued to live largely apart. William's new business interests and involvement in the Ulster Railway required him to be in London for long periods of time, and the couple continued to conduct their marriage through correspondence.<sup>21</sup>

It is Isabella's reaction to these periods of separation, and the subsequent impact it had on their marriage, which makes the Campbell-Allens worthy of such a close study. Isabella found it difficult to cope with William's frequent absences, and accused him of devoting more time to his books and profession, or as she termed them his 'mistress' and 'favourite', than his wife.<sup>22</sup> In response to what she perceived as 'neglect', Isabella created an identity for herself as a 'bit-wife'. During the earlier period of their marriage in particular, as Isabella adjusted her idea of married life to their living arrangement, she used this term fairly regularly, with small variations such as 'absent wife' in letters to William. This moniker was used to directly communicate her unhappiness and loneliness during William's absences from home. By subscribing herself in this way, Isabella drew attention to the fact that she was a wife in name only. While separated, neither she nor William were able to share in each other's daily activities or fulfil their corresponding duties to one and another; they were in a sense 'bit-married'.

As the couple settled into married life and became more accustomed to their separate living arrangements, the use of this term 'bit wife' slowly petered out of their correspondence. That is not to say, however, that their separation was unconditionally

accepted. While even Isabella acknowledged that the tone of her letters had certainly cooled by the later stages of their marriage and had ‘lost a vast amount of [their] youthful feeling’, she was still quick to criticise her husband for his lack of affectionate remembrance and accused him of deliberately delaying his return home.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, in a letter dated 6 February 1854, after almost sixteen years of marriage, Isabella angrily subscribed herself as William’s ‘attached daughter’, adding, ‘What I have written need I rectify it and say wife instead!!!’<sup>24</sup> Isabella still expected William to write to her in an explicitly affectionate manner, irrespective of how many years had passed by them.

While such exchanges can tell us about the tensions which existed in marriage, they also reveal the complexities of the relationships between women and men. In many ways correspondence enables us to gain a truer picture of married life than does a reliance on prescriptive and didactic texts. Letters enable us to hear the personal voices of women and men, recording their intimate thoughts and feelings, as well as the issues which they felt were important enough to commit to paper.<sup>25</sup> Moreover, scholars such as Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb have noted that because letters are ‘composed texts’, they filter lived experience through the rhetorical forms that shape them, giving the reader an insight into the operation of larger social discourses (like patriarchy) which ordered the world in which their writer lived.<sup>26</sup>

A study of this type also reveals how letters were used to affect the balance of power in marriage. Scholars have noted that female letter-writers often drew upon gendered constructions of the self in a deliberate attempt to elicit particular responses in their readers. By acknowledging the existence of patriarchal conventions (such as wifely obedience), female letter writers were able to find space to manoeuvre within the discourses available to them.<sup>27</sup> Considered in this context, Isabella’s self-fashioned identities as a ‘bit-wife’ or ‘affectionate daughter’ may have enabled her to voice her criticism of her husband’s absence,



while also simultaneously using it to leverage her position in marriage. Rather than being flippant remarks, these exchanges are highly significant, and their examination offers a unique insight into the complex ways in which couples both understood and negotiated patriarchy within marriage.

### **(I) The Campbell-Allens: negotiating love, obedience and economic resources**

#### **Love**

For couples who spent long periods of time apart, correspondence played an important role in bridging the physical and emotional distance which such separation engendered. Letters were not only used as a means of communicating family and household news, they were also an important vehicle through which men and women could exchange sentiments of love and affection. Moreover, because letter-writing is a collaborative process, the way in which such expressions were articulated and received affords us an insight into how love and loving behaviour were subject to negotiation in marriage.

The exchange of letters was an important vehicle through which sentiments of love were communicated in the Campbell-Allen marriage. The couple frequently referred to the act of writing letters as ‘little chats’ in their missives to one and another, with Isabella writing to William in November 1839 that upon his return she would be glad to find her ‘tongue instead of [her] pen conversing with [him]’.<sup>28</sup> For Isabella more so than for William, however, these morning chats gave her the opportunity to discuss the negative impact that their separation had on both her health and mind-set. She wrote frequently that his stays in Dublin caused her to be affected by what she called the ‘blues’; a condition which she blamed directly on his absences from home:

I have been today trying to drive of[f] an attack from the blues ... I strive to prevent myself thinking of the many days that must elapse before we meet

again but spite of my efforts it will intrude that only one out of the 30 has gone by and then the little blue imps seeing me in an undefended condition come to seize me but I will try and battle them.<sup>29</sup>

Generally, William responded to his wife's outbursts of the 'blues' with a 'lecture' on how she could prevent them, advising that her 'low spirits' could be averted if she kept her mind 'employed'. According to William, Isabella's bouts of depression and the 'imaginary ailments' she suffered were a direct cause of her idleness.<sup>30</sup>

One employment which Isabella did undertake to stave off the attacks of the 'blues' was the penning and receiving of letters. In order to remedy the effects of his Dublin trips, Isabella expected William to write to her frequently. She later admitted to him in a letter dated 6 November 1839 that she, 'fear[ed] that instead of growing reconciled to these Dublin trips [she would] become more & more wearied of them but what help is there'.<sup>31</sup> The 'help' in this case was the exchange of letters; they were visible pieces of evidence of their commitment to one and another.

In a recent study of love letters and writing practices in nineteenth-century France, Martyn Lyons has argued that letters are cultural artefacts, which obey coded forms of communication through what he has termed the 'epistolary pact'.<sup>32</sup> Essentially, this is an agreement made between two correspondents covering, among other things, the frequency, length and content of their written exchanges. The Campbell-Allens corresponded via their own mutually agreed and reciprocally constructed pact, which covered the desired frequency, length and content of their missives. In keeping to the rules of their agreement, both partners could be assured of the stability and companionability of their marriage. The failure of one party to write according to these rules was equated with neglect and met with recrimination by the other.

The frequency with which the Campbell-Allens wrote to one and another was arguably the most negotiated aspect of their epistolary pact. In general, the couple wrote their letters over a series of two to three days, and sent each letter after they received one in return. In some cases they also wrote to each other specific instructions detailing when they expected a reply. For example, Isabella relayed instructions to William in November 1839 that she expected him to write her a letter sooner than their usual day, as she had to send hers earlier than planned:

I ... nevertheless send to despatch this one, to day and make you pay postage & why? Because I wish to receive one from you before the usual day Thursday, for ... I will be at the wedding till late in the day and consequently would be on the fidgets to receive your letter. If dearest W lets me have one before then and be sure [you] will make no delay.<sup>33</sup>

Alterations to the accepted frequency pattern of their letters were acceptable so long as their regularity were not impeded.

The failure of either party to maintain their agreed frequency, however, was not acceptable and became a source of complaint. In a letter to William in June 1839, for example, Isabella reminded William to fulfil his duty and correspond frequently with her, warning him that although she left it to him to choose the time of returning an answer, he would incur her 'severe displeasure' if it was long delayed.<sup>34</sup> Indeed, after missing the last post deadline for Belfast and sending a letter late sometime in 1840, William included in his missive a pleading apology for her understanding. Knowing well that his breach of their agreed frequency would be met with displeasure, William made sure to stress that the delay was not caused by his deliberate neglect:

I am perfectly prepared my dearest Isabella to encounter the torrent of displeasure with which I shall be visited for my apparent neglect. But I cry you mercy: the neglect was only apparent as I am sure you will yourself feel satisfied when you see the enclosed which was sealed in due time last evening to go down to Belfast but no parcel was sent, and therefore it did not go.<sup>35</sup>

Although both partners expected each other to comply with the terms of their agreed frequency, Isabella's construction of herself as 'bit-married' allowed her room for manoeuvre in this area. Writing to his wife in November 1839, William accused Isabella of failing to keep up her side of their agreement, drawing attention to the fact that while he maintained a steady correspondence and, 'never let a day pass without writing' to her, he perceived in her letters, 'a gap of one and sometimes two days'.<sup>36</sup> Such an action violated their agreed frequency and was therefore deserving of reproach.

In reply, Isabella defended the gaps in her writing by noting that she found it difficult to 'command a solitary hour' in which to pen a letter, but thanked William for his 'constant recollection of [his] absent wife'. Isabella played further on this construction by relating news of an upcoming wedding to which 'all the relatives .... with the exception of strangers' were invited, and asked rhetorically, 'There is no chance of your being down? Oh no'.<sup>37</sup> In doing so, Isabella reminded William that his absences were incongruous with the normal pattern of married life and, were in fact, detrimental to their happiness. His absences were deserving of reproach, not the regularity of her letters.

In addition to negotiating the frequency of their letters, Isabella and William also expected their correspondence to conform to certain length and content specifications. For instance, the way in which each partner addressed the other enabled them to gauge their respective moods. Generally, William subscribed himself in his letters as Isabella's 'most affectionate husband'<sup>38</sup> and playfully referred to himself as her 'old husband' or 'old man'.<sup>39</sup> While Isabella used similar phrases to communicate her affection, such as 'devoted wife' and 'loving wife', she also employed other adjectives to convey her feelings. Such phrases included: 'bit wife', 'silly wife', 'loving, foolish & vexed',<sup>40</sup> 'lonely wife'<sup>41</sup> and 'bit lonely thing'<sup>42</sup> For Isabella, more so than William however, the wording of these phrases acted as an indicator of their marital happiness. For example, after receiving a letter from William in

November 1841 wherein he signed his name using only his initials 'WJCA', Isabella complained about his change in address.<sup>43</sup> Indeed, from William's reply, we learn that Isabella had feared his 'mode of signature' indicated 'a change in feeling', prompting him to promise to stick to his usual way of ending letters.<sup>44</sup>

In general, the Campbell-Allens asked one and another to send accounts of their everyday activities and news, while at other times specified detailed letters on family business and household finances. The fact that they expected letters from each other so frequently, however, became a problem as at times they had nothing of special interest to communicate. For example, in a letter dated November 1843, we learn that William had claimed his letters were worthless and that their short length could hardly be of any value to its reader.<sup>45</sup> Isabella, however, maintained that it was the receipt of the letter itself which made her happy, not its specific contents.<sup>46</sup> The letter itself was a symbol of her husband's remembrance of his absent wife.

Isabella, too, lamented to William that her mundane life at home did not yield any stories of interest, but her status as a 'bit-wife' afforded her more flexibility in this area. For example, in a letter to William in June 1839, Isabella apologised for her short letter, but also defended its meagre length for this reason:

I fear between this and Saturday my life here would afford quite too few events of interest to sup[p]ly material for a letter ... Much as I like writing to you and you reading neither of us can feel much pleasure in sending or receiving an empty sheet which unless I go out in search for adventure break my arm or get into some perilous ... situation ... must be pretty nearly so. From you whoever who live in the great metropolis ... write ... at your earliest convenience.<sup>47</sup>

Isabella contrasted her dull life in Belfast with William's allegedly more lively experience in Dublin in an effort to justify her scant account. Indeed, this type of hyperbolic language was often used by Isabella to liven up her letters and inject humour into her mundane existence.

For example, in another letter dated November 1839, she noted how she had ‘slaughter[ed] beasts as large as the Pyramids of Egypt’ while watering her plants.<sup>48</sup> Whereas William’s residence in a bustling city made it possible to write a long and lively letter, her relatively quiet situation did not. Isabella’s status as a ‘bit-wife’ therefore afforded her more room for manoeuvre.

### **Obedience**

The second element of the patriarchal marriage ideal which was open to negotiation and refinement was that of obedience. Conduct and advice literature contemporaneous to our period outlined the specific duties which husbands and wives were to fulfil in order for a marriage to be happy and successful. Wives’ responsibilities were circumscribed to the arena of the household, such as the education and discipline of children and the management of household affairs. In all these facets of responsibility, however, a wife was expected to be under the direction of her husband. It was through obedience to him that a wife demonstrated her love. Husbands, on the other hand, were tasked with the role of household head and provider. A husband demonstrated his love in marriage by fulfilling his primary duties of instructing, protecting and providing for his family.<sup>49</sup> The central elements of authority and obedience then, underpinned the patriarchal marriage ideal which formed part of the social discourse on marriage which operated during our period.

Although in theory husbands were to command and wives were to obey, the extent to which this reflected lived experience varied considerably. Factors such as personal character, age and wealth dictated the degree of wifely submission which women paid to their husbands in marriage. The Campbell-Allen marriage was no different. Rather than obedience being a fixed principle in their marriage, with one partner owing complete submission to the other, it was a fluid concept, which was subject to negotiation and refinement as circumstances

dictated. Key to understanding the nuances of this principle is an appreciation of Isabella's self-fashioned identity as a 'bit-wife'.

In letters to her husband, Isabella poked fun at the constraints which marriage was meant to impose upon her as a married woman, drawing attention to the fact that her status as a 'bit-wife' freed her from its control. The clearest examples of this can be found in those letters which refer to the conventions which governed attendance at social gatherings. Isabella attached a great degree of importance to the companionability of marriage and often remarked on William's absences from social events such as weddings, christenings and religious services. For example, in a letter dated May 1839, Isabella told of her disappointment that she partook of the Eucharist (for the first time since their marriage) without the company of her husband and hoped that they would 'both be spared to unite together in receiving it in spring'.<sup>50</sup>

In her letters to William, Isabella made constant reference to the fact that their separate attendance at gatherings only served to reaffirm their status as 'bit-married'. Indeed, after receiving a letter from William in which he relayed details of his attendance at parties and social events, Isabella jokingly chastised him for acting like an unattached man, telling him that she, 'would not wish [him] to be so gay & sprightly that people would be at a loss to know whether you were married or single.'<sup>51</sup> The following day, Isabella again took up her pen, and communicated to her husband a mocking recollection of why she, herself, had not attended any parties in his absence:

... the Montgomerys of Bessbridge who were visiting the young Ladies ... said they could not venture to ask me in the absence of my Husband and I said of course not how important!<sup>52</sup>

A few days later, Isabella again wrote to William news that there was to be a party in her father's house, but questioned the propriety of her attending without him: 'I suppose I may venture to go there though my husband be not at home- what think you?'<sup>53</sup>

The teasing tone of Isabella's comments is clear. By drawing attention to what she viewed as the inequality in their marriage, contrasting William's ability to attend functions and her inability to do the same, Isabella both reaffirmed her status as a 'bit-wife' and demonstrated her indifference to the constraints which marriage was supposed to impose on her as a 'wife.' She was not asking William's permission, she instead mocked the convention that expected her to seek it.

A similar example of this type of teasing can be traced to letters exchanged between the couple over an auction, which was to be held in November 1841. Along with her letter, Isabella sent William a copy of the daily newspaper and directed him to the page where an auction was advertised. She then asked him to send her 'permission to go to it and buy at least £100 worth to decorate the house', adding that there were articles on offer that would suit their drawing room, as well as an 'Indian china dinner service' which would make a 'grand display' when they entertained friends.<sup>54</sup> William neglected to answer Isabella in his next letter, prompting her to again ask for his consent before she, 'committed any very great extravagance'.<sup>55</sup> William eventually replied a few days later that there were 'better use[s]' for their money than purchasing 'fine things'.<sup>56</sup> William's refusal, however, did not bring an end to the matter. In her next letter, Isabella sent an indignant reply that she had never been serious about attending the auction in the first place and huffed that William 'ought [to] know [her] well enough to be aware that [she] had little taste for such things'.<sup>57</sup> In his defence, William maintained that he 'did not for one moment conceive that [she] was in earnest about the auction' and that he only gave an answer because she mentioned the matter twice.<sup>58</sup>



Whether or not Isabella was genuinely seeking her husband's permission is debatable. The fact that she had mentioned particular items on sale in first letter, as well as how her mother had attended and that some 'very excellent paintings' were on display in a later letter would suggest that she was.<sup>59</sup> What is more important, however, is that faced with William's refusal, she chose to mock the social convention which expected her to obtain consent in the first place. By feigning indifference, Isabella attempted to recover her own position of power and downplay the influence which William had over their household expenditure.

Isabella not only used William's absences as a means of portraying herself as free from his influence, she also used these episodes to poke fun at the prescribed roles which the patriarchal ideal carved out for men in marriage. Like those female letter writers described in James Daybell's collection of essays, Isabella also turned the principle of obedience on its head by insinuating that William's absences were in direct contradiction to the role he was supposed to play in their marriage.<sup>60</sup> For example, in a letter dated 5 June 1839, Isabella deliberately portrayed herself and her female companions as 'damsels in distress', in need of male protection:

We have just seen our only male protector [i.e. her brother-in-law] depart for Ballyclare. ... I think what a *forlorn* household we are three *helpless women* two of them *deserted* by their *natural guardians called husbands*. Three innocent children left by their mother and two servant maids, four chickens, mice and clocks all without a master what can be done we must strive to make ourselves contented in our desolate condition.<sup>61</sup>

Although Isabella's assault was framed with humour, its message was clear: William was neglecting his duty towards her through his continued absence. He too was a 'bit husband.'

### **Household resources**

The final principle of the patriarchal marriage which was subject to refinement was the control of economic resources. Ideally, husbands were to act as the provider of the family,

while wives were to manage the household income, under the direction of their spouse. In the Campbell-Allen marriage, this principle, like that of love and obedience, was open to negotiation. One of the main reasons for this was because Isabella had access to economic resources independent of that of her husband. Under the terms of their marriage agreement, she was to have access to a trust of £500 per annum, which was ‘for her own sole and separate use’ and ‘independent of her husband’.<sup>62</sup> Isabella was able to use this independent wealth as a bargaining tool in marriage and employed it as a tactic on occasions when she felt her independence threatened.

One such example can be found in the letters which passed between the couple in the aftermath of a dispute between William’s mother, Jane Campbell, and Isabella. The two women seem to have had an uneasy relationship, caused in part by Jane’s jealousy. In the heat of one argument, Jane had even threatened Isabella that, ‘no woman should ever tear [William] from her’.<sup>63</sup> More often, however, it was Isabella’s frequent absences from their home in Donegal Street which triggered arguments, such as that which occurred in May 1839.<sup>64</sup> According to Isabella, after quitting their home earlier than planned, Jane Campbell unleashed a violent verbal assault upon her, accusing her of ‘extravagance’, wasting the family’s wealth and swore if they, ‘had ever a child she would see it pitched over the bridge before it should be like’ her.<sup>65</sup> Most importantly, his mother also threatened to cut William’s access to the family wealth if they did not pay her more company:

She then began saying that if you did not remain at home to take care of her, and look after her, she would take a house for herself and her property with her, and see how you would do. ... Her property was three times as great as your’s, and she would hire a woman to go out and in with her, and attend her and leave us to go to our high [h]ouse and see what esteem you paid her what you owed her.<sup>66</sup>

In response to this attack, Isabella decided that she would use her own independent wealth in future and did not need to rely on her husband. In this same letter, she told William

that she intended speaking to her brother about her 'own' money, and had decided to make, 'its defray [her] own personal expenses'.<sup>67</sup> She went on to estimate the costs of her upkeep, noting that in her father's house twenty pounds had served her for clothes, and the remainder would supply extras for herself in the household such as food.<sup>68</sup> She ended her direction, telling William that, 'no difference on her account need be made'.<sup>69</sup> William's reply does not survive, but within Isabella's next letter we learn that he took offence to her insinuation that he could not provide:

How could you imagine I made any objections on you when I spoke of money, as far as you would have it in your power I know well you would give me all I desired but your mother had just told me you had no more in your control than I have would repay your expenses and I felt I would not wish to be dependent.<sup>70</sup>

Although reassuring William that she was aware of his 'desire' to provide for her financially, Isabella also drew attention to the fact that he could not fulfil his wish, and that her own independent wealth would be enough for her sole support. In doing so, Isabella again drew upon her identity as a 'bit-wife', enabling her to criticise William while simultaneously asserting her independence. William's reliance on his mother's wealth to provide for the household, on the other hand, was incongruous with the role carved out for him by the ideal patriarchal marriage.

Indeed, Isabella's access to independent resources also enabled her to negotiate with William on how best to manage their finances. In January 1840 their household income suffered a blow after a bank in America, with which William held considerable shares, encountered financial trouble. William corresponded with Isabella on this issue, and although he assured her that the drop in their income would only be temporary, he resolved that they needed to live much more prudently, noting that her account of housekeeping was rather meagre.<sup>71</sup> In reply, Isabella agreed that they should live in a more economical manner, but scolded him for questioning her management skills, telling him to 'quiet his fears on that

score'.<sup>72</sup> In an effort to both demonstrate her financial shrewdness and allay her husband's worries, Isabella then came up with a novel, yet humorous, money-saving idea for envelopes. She proposed that they should carefully break the seal of their envelopes so that they could be recycled, saving them postage each time of a 'hundred part of a farthing.'<sup>73</sup> William approved of her scheme, adding as a postscript in his next letter, 'I could not but admire your notable project for economy: it was really was worthy of your long head'.<sup>74</sup>

The issue of how best to manage their servants was also a regular topic of conversation in the Campbell-Allen correspondence. William took an active interest in how Isabella managed the servants and household affairs, and the pair jointly discussed the hiring and dismissing of servants under their charge.<sup>75</sup> As mistress of the household, Isabella was ideally allotted responsibility for the running of the household and management of the servants. In reality, however, the shared living arrangement between William, his mother, and Isabella engendered an uncomfortable mix of familial and power relationships. Isabella's position as household manager was rivalled by the influence which Jane Campbell held as William's mother and as a wealthy widow. For example, in June 1839 Jane Campbell complained to Isabella about the behaviour of one of their servant girls, adding that she had warned the young woman that 'unless she conducted herself better she would not keep her another quarter'.<sup>76</sup> In an effort to placate her mother-in-law, and demonstrate her management skills, Isabella offered to 'see her off at once' if she continued to cause annoyance.<sup>77</sup> Jane, however, was not pleased and made a 'sharp' retort to Isabella about the practicalities of her decision.

This uneasy relationship eventually came to the fore at the end of November 1839, when Isabella wrote to William to inform him that his mother and their servants were involved in a tit-for-tat game of one-upmanship, which was damaging her happiness at home. It appears that Jane Campbell, under suspicion that some of the female servants were

misbehaving, entered the servant's quarters, and after rummaging around their beds, found a bottle of opened whiskey. The servant maids, upon returning to find their rooms upturned and the bottle of whiskey moved from its original place, came to Isabella to plead their case that it had been a medicinal present from a member of their family. Isabella maintained to William that the two servants were honest and reliable, and believing their story asked to hear no more about it.<sup>78</sup> Another servant in the house named John, however, also came under the suspicion of Jane, who took it upon herself to rise in the middle of the night and check downstairs that he too was not misbehaving. Being aware of this, John allegedly placed a cap over a brush pole next to the fire, making it have the appearance of a man in an effort to frighten her during her midnight search.<sup>79</sup>

Isabella maintained to William that she did not want to convey these occurrences to him, calling them, 'petty little affairs' but did so as she was unsure how best to manage the situation.<sup>80</sup> It is also likely that she would not have related this affair to William were it not for the fact that his mother was directly involved. Isabella guessed that Jane Campbell would complain to William about the conduct of the servants, throwing into question her ability to manage them properly. She therefore wrote to William in order to give him the fuller picture of the argument, and remove all accusations of mismanagement.<sup>81</sup> What is important, however, is that rather than ask William how to settle the affair with the servants, she instead asked his advice on how to deal with his mother, adding that while there was fault on both sides, his mother was mostly to blame for her suspicious manner.<sup>82</sup> Isabella was confident in her ability to manage the servants, but took no responsibility for managing Jane Campbell.

It is also important to note that Isabella rested part of the blame of the disharmony at home on William's absenting himself from the household. Their status as 'bit-married' was as much to blame for the situation as his mother:

Certainly in that department [i.e. domestic concerns] I miss you much for the servants do presume on your absence not to act disrespectfully towards me but towards your mother, who follows a system of secret espionage which to all servants is particularly offensive and leads them to retaliate in ways by no means agreeable.<sup>83</sup>

It appears that on William's return home he had angry words with his mother over the incident, causing her to retire to her rooms and refuse to come out for the remainder of his visit. After he returned to Dublin early in 1840, Isabella wrote to William and scolded him for not controlling his anger before the servants, noting that they would 'become more disrespectful and the causes of disquietude made worse' by his example.<sup>84</sup> William eventually apologised for his behaviour and words, and asked Isabella to convey to his mother his, 'unfeigned regret' over their argument.<sup>85</sup> It is also notable that William's interference in the affair neither enhanced Isabella's position in the household nor markedly improved her relationship with her mother-in-law. Rather than directly challenging Isabella's household authority, Jane Campbell became obstinate, and refused to participate in household or leisure activities for a time, prompting William to anxiously ask after her health and well-being.<sup>86</sup>

## **(II) Middle-class Irish Presbyterian marriages**

As the example of the Campbell-Allens has shown, patriarchy was not a fixed principle in marriage but was subject to a constant process of negotiation and refinement. A combination of a number of factors (including wealth, individual personality, and their separate living arrangement) helped to shape how each partner communicated with the other. The question which remains, however, is how representative these conclusions are of marriage in general. Did many marriages function in this way, or were the Campbell-Allens unusual in how they communicated with one and another?

Other examples which demonstrate the fluidity of marital relationships have survived for the Ulster Presbyterian sources under consideration. For example, the correspondence of the Reverend Alexander Crawford, a Presbyterian missionary and minister of 1<sup>st</sup> Randalstown congregation, county Antrim and his wife Anna Gardner, also reveals how love and loving behaviour were subject to a process of negotiation in marriage. As in the case of the Campbell-Allens, Alexander's commitments as a minister meant that he and his wife lived apart for long periods of time. During the course of their thirty-three year marriage, the couple travelled extensively, from Scotland to India, England, and finally Ireland, as Alexander carved out his ministerial career. Each stage of this journey was also accompanied by a period of separation, ranging from one to six months. In order to reconcile themselves to these periods of separation, the Crawfords wrote to one and another frequently, and expressions of love and loving behaviour formed an important part of their letters. Their correspondence therefore affords an interesting comparison into how couples understood and negotiated love within marriage.

Like the Campbell-Allens, Anna and Alexander Crawford corresponded in a lively and chatty manner, using pet-names and other adjectives to convey their sentiments and feelings. Generally, Anna subscribed herself as Alexander's 'affectionate wife' and referred to him with terms such as 'beloved', 'dear', or with his pet-name 'Sandy'.<sup>87</sup> In addition to using these types of emotional adjectives, Alexander called Anna his 'Ruth in heathen' – a reference to her supportive role as a minister's wife.<sup>88</sup> The Crawfords also drew kisses in their letters to demonstrate their affection, using the letter 'O' to symbolise their mouths, and teased one and another as to the 'compound interest' they owed in kisses.<sup>89</sup> The inclusion of these terms in their letters, however, appears to have held more significance for Anna than they did for Alexander, with their absence equated with unloving behaviour and neglect. For example, after receiving a letter from Alexander sometime in June 1832, wherein he failed to

add his name to the end of the letter, Anna accused him of forgetting about her and questioned the sincerity of his love.<sup>90</sup> In an attempt to placate his wife Alexander deliberately cut short his next letter so that he could ‘keep room for that most important thing my sign[ature]’ and reassured Anna that at ‘no time’ had he ever forgotten her, and that his ‘hearts desire and prayer’ were always for her ‘in all these difficulties and trials of distance and separation’.<sup>91</sup>

The separate living arrangements of both the Crawfords and the Campbell-Allens placed an increased importance on how sentiments of love and loving behaviour were expressed and received. The failure of one party to communicate in the accepted manner was met with recrimination by the other, and threw into question the stability of their marriage. As in the case of the Campbell-Allens, the understanding of such sentiments were fluid and flexible, and were subject to negotiation and refinement during the course of marriage.

The control of economic resources was also an area which was subject to negotiation in the Crawford marriage. In comparison to the Campbell-Allens, the fortunes of the Crawfords were much more modest. Alexander’s family were of relatively humble stock and his father made a living as a mason. Likewise, while Anna’s father was a successful merchant, she did not have access to a trust fund or sources of independent wealth. The Crawfords were instead largely dependent on the income which Alexander made from his ministerial career, which itself was irregular and poorly paid. Indeed, it was not until 1837, after almost fourteen years of marriage, that Alexander held a permanent ministerial post.<sup>92</sup> Unsurprisingly, then, their household finances were a recurrent topic of conversation in the Crawford letters, particularly during those times when Alexander was between-jobs.

For example, in the summer of 1832, Alexander relocated to Huntingdonshire, England, to take up a position as a domestic chaplain to Lady Olivia Sparrow of Brampton Park, leaving Anna and their children in Edinburgh. In return for his chaplaincy services,



Alexander was to receive a salary of £70 per annum, as well as a house for himself and his family, which was to be ready for their arrival by the end of October.<sup>93</sup> Anna, however, was not pleased with either the salary offered or the season proposed for her travel to England. In a letter to Alexander on the subject, she complained that winter was ‘the very worst season’ for her and the children to set sail for England and that August ‘would be the very best’ or at ‘the very latest the 1<sup>st</sup> Sept[ember]’.<sup>94</sup> Anna also revealed to Alexander that she was two months pregnant, and reminded him that there ‘would be a great difference in between maintaining one person and a family of six besides a servant’.<sup>95</sup> Perhaps sensing that she had overstepped the authority of her husband, Anna then ended her letter by apologising for her comments on ‘pecuniary things’, telling Alexander that she would ‘leave it wholly to [him] to do as [he] liked in that matter’.<sup>96</sup>

Anna’s apology, however, did not put an end to the matter. The following day, she again took up her pen and continued her discussion of financial matters. However, instead of reiterating her own sentiments on the subject, Anna drew on the advice of her brother William (who was also a regular correspondent and friend of Alexander) to validate her point:

W[illiam] ... does not see how the family could be maintained upon £70. A labouring man might do with it as he can go with another kind of coat than you can and his family in another style than yours would need to be. He thinks with economy and a free house we might do with £120.... The season she proposes he thinks quite absurd, at the very latest he says it should be Sept[ember]. W[illiam’s] views I find to be almost the same with every one who has expressed an opinion on the subject. But my beloved what is your own opinion? ... That only can regulate my movements.<sup>97</sup>

By using the opinions of other respected male (and patriarchal) figures to reiterate her point, Anna was able to voice her criticism of Alexander’s financial management, while at the same time retaining her position as an obedient wife. While it is unclear from the Crawford papers whether Alexander did manage to secure an increase in his salary, Anna and the children

were living in Brampton Park by the beginning of September 1832. As in the case of the Campbell-Allens, Anna Crawford also found space to manoeuvre within the discourses which were available to her as a woman and a wife.

While some marriages, like the Campbell-Allens and Crawfords, operated within the bounds of the patriarchal ideal, others stood in stark contrast to the model generated in contemporary conduct literature. The marriage of the Reverend John Tennent, minister of Roseyards Presbyterian church, county Antrim, and his wife, Ann Patton, is one such example. Contrary to the roles which the patriarchal ideal carved out for men and women in marriage, the Reverend Tennent seems to have taken on a submissive role, with his wife Ann acting as the more dominant partner in marriage. Through sheer force of personality, Ann ensured that she, and not her husband, had the final say over family matters. Indeed, Ann's influence can be seen most clearly in two areas of household responsibility: family relationships and the control of economic resources.

In 1796, for example, Ann fell out with her eldest son William, then aged thirty-six years, after he chose to employ his nephew instead of his brother James in his business<sup>98</sup>. Her anger was further compounded by the fact that William had promised to help the son of his sister Isabella, whom his mother had disowned after she eloped with her husband John Shaw in 1777.<sup>99</sup> Indeed, in a letter to his son John, the Reverend Tennent revealed that Ann was so furious that when she received William's letter she 'tore it to pieces ... for anger tha[t] w[illia]m had so much care a[bou]t his Sisters son & so little a[bou]t his own Bro[the]r Ja[me]s'.<sup>100</sup>

Ann apparently did not forgive what she perceived as William's disloyalty in helping his nephew instead of his brother and deliberately prevented his sister Margaret from going to his home to help with housekeeping. When William wrote later that month to inquire why his

sister had not arrived as arranged, the Reverend Tennent wrote the following at the insistence of his wife:

[Your mother] wishes to intimate the reason why Peggy did not go to your House because you said long ago to her she was of no use to you & very probably she w[oul]d not trouble you to be of no use to you. And Betty Shaw perhaps may better please you than your own Sister or Some of John Shaws Crew. But while you have them about you neither your Mother nor Sister w[i]t[h] her Shall trouble you this from your Mothers mouth.<sup>101</sup>

In her anger, Ann resolved to cut off all contact with William until he rescinded his decision to employ his nephew, and it appears that her threats worked. Five days after sending this letter, the Reverend Tennent wrote again to William, relaying Ann's delight that he had complied with her request.<sup>102</sup>

What is important to note, however, is that the Reverend Tennent took pains to ensure that William was aware that his mother's sentiments were neither a reflection of his own, nor those of his sister Peggy's, drawing attention to the fact that they were his 'Mother's written by me'.<sup>103</sup> Indeed, the Reverend Tennent even wrote a private letter to William on the whole affair, in which he expressed his approval of William's decision to help out his nephew:

... no doubt before you receive this you will have got a very indelicate one from me. *But behoved to write it. tho' not very agreeable to me* no doubt w[he]n it was finished she desered me to write what I pleased but it was a question what w[oul]d *please her*. ... what ever rash passion might prevail on her to think or say I firmly believe according to your best judgm[en]t you did for all your Bro[the]rs & Sisters what appeared to be best. And particularly I take it as peice of great kindness to y[ou]r Sister & Children your offer of assistance at pres[en]t & also what they need.<sup>104</sup>

Moreover, the Reverend Tennent also confessed that although he was unable to 'write at proper liberty at home' on the subject, he wanted William to know that he thought his offer of help to Isabella's son was the right thing to do.<sup>105</sup> While it was not unusual for the Reverend Tennent to write letters on behalf of his wife (Ann's literacy skills appear to have been rather poor), the fact that he chose to communicate his own sentiments privately, speaks volumes

about the balance of power in their relationship.<sup>106</sup> Rather than directly challenge Ann's authority, Tennent preferred to communicate his sentiments on the matter in secret to his son.

Similar to her dominance in family matters, Ann also appears to have held a tight grip on the couple's household purse, deciding when and on what to spend their money. In contrast, the Reverend Tennent did not seem to have any control over the management of their finances, and when he did try to make a decision independently, he did so in secret. For example, in February 1796, the Reverend Tennent wrote to his son, John, the intentions of his son-in-law, John Shaw, to set up a grocery business in Dervock, county Antrim. It appears that Shaw had enquired if John Tennent Junior would send him goods to the value of £12 to be paid the following May so that he could set up his business.<sup>107</sup> The Reverend Tennent was supportive of the proposal and offered to secure the money on Shaw's behalf.<sup>108</sup> Despite this support, however, the Reverend Tennent was adamant that Ann should not find out about the scheme, and instructed his son to direct his reply to Shaw for fear his 'Mother w[oul]d see it and her hasty temper cant bear every thing tho' realy right'.<sup>109</sup>

Of these three marriages, that of the Tennents stands in sharpest contrast to the ideal form popularised in contemporary conduct literature. Rather than demonstrating how the terms of the patriarchal marriage could be negotiated and refined, the Tennent marriage reveals how patriarchy could be turned on its head. Through sheer force of personality, Ann Tennent dominated her marriage both in terms of managing her family and household expenses. Importantly, however, Ann's dominance did not mean that the Tennent marriage was an unhappy one, or that it was devoid of affection. When Ann died in August 1805, after forty-seven years of marriage, the Reverend Tennent was evidently heartbroken. In a letter to his son Robert, for example, he told how 'holy providence' had taken from him 'the Light of mine eyes' and that now he was, 'left alone of worldly company'.<sup>110</sup> Similarly, in a letter to

his eldest son William, he remarked that his mind was ‘raging like a wild Bull in a net’ after the death of Ann.<sup>111</sup>

## **Conclusion**

As the example of the Campbell-Allens and the other couples in this article have shown, patriarchy was not a fixed principle in marriage. Rather, it was subject to a constant process of negotiation and refinement during the course of marriage. Moreover, the degree to which patriarchy was enforced, if it was implemented at all, was largely dependent on the individual circumstances of married couple themselves. Factors such as wealth, personality, living arrangements and perhaps even age, all played a role in shaping marital relationships. It is also worth noting that while the couples studied were all drawn from the same religious community, there is no evidence to suggest that their attitudes to marriage were a product of their Presbyterianism faith.<sup>112</sup> Rather, these marriages hold much in common with the experience of wider Irish middle-class families.<sup>113</sup> The duties of love and obedience were not peculiar to Presbyterian marriages.

Although the Campbell-Allens cannot be said to be representative of all married couples at this time, their example nonetheless sheds lights on some of the wider aspects of the patriarchal ideal which many of their peers would have recognised: love, obedience and the control of household resources. Indeed, while Isabella’s use of the term ‘bit-wife’ appears to have been unique to the Campbell-Allen marriage, it nevertheless epitomises the elasticity of the roles which women and men played in marriage more broadly. In order to gain a better understanding of relations between women and men, it is therefore important to move away from the use of static narratives and to take into consideration the elasticity of the conventions of the patriarchal marriage ideal.

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Lawrence Stone (1977) *The family, sex and marriage in England* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson), p. 123. This argument is related to the wider historiography on the rise of the nuclear family. See also, Edward Shorter (1976) *The making of the modern family* (London: Fontana); Ralph Houlbrooke (1984) *The English family, 1450-1700* (London: Longman); Will Coster (2001) *Family and kinship in England, 1450-1800* (Harlow: Longman).

<sup>2</sup> Stone, *Family, sex and marriage*, p. 325; Martha Howell, The properties of marriage in late medieval Europe: commercial wealth and the creation of modern marriage in Isabel Davis, Miriam Muller and Sarah Rees Jones (Eds) (2003) *Love, marriage and family ties in the later middle ages* (Belgium: Brepols), p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> For examples of these debates see, Alan Macfarlane (1979) Review: The family, sex and marriage in England, 1500-1800 by Lawrence Stone, *History and Theory*, 1, pp 103-26; Christopher Hill (1978) Sex, marriage and the family in England, *The Economic History Review*, 31, 450-63; Ingrid H. Tague (2001) Love, honour and obedience: fashionable women and the discourse of marriage in the early eighteenth-century, *The Journal of British Studies*, 40, pp 76-106; Tamara K. Haveren (1991) The history of the family and the complexity of social change, *The American Historical Review*, 96, pp 95-24. For alternative interpretations see, Alan Macfarlane (1986) *Marriage and love in England: modes of reproduction, 1300-1840* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell); Amanda Vickery (1998) *The gentleman's daughter: women's lives in Georgian England* (London: Yale University Press); A.P.W. Malcomson (2006) *The pursuit of the heiress: aristocratic marriage in Ireland, 1740-1840* (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation), ch. 5; Randolph Trumbach (1978) *The rise of the egalitarian family: aristocratic kinship and domestic relations in eighteenth-century England* (New York: Academic Press).

<sup>4</sup> S.J. Connolly (1991) Family, love and marriage: some evidence from the early eighteenth-century, in Margaret MacCurtain and Mary O'Dowd (Eds) *Women in early modern Ireland* (Dublin: Wolfhound), pp 278, 288.

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<sup>5</sup> Malcomson, *Pursuit of the heiress*, pp 112-15.

<sup>6</sup> Anya Jabour (1998) 'The language of love': the letters of Elizabeth and William Wirt, 1802-1834, in Laura McCall and Donald Yacovne (Eds) *A shared experience: men, women and the history of gender* (New York: New York University Press), p. 120.

<sup>7</sup> Allyson M. Poska (2013) Unpending patriarchy: rethinking marriage and family in early modern Europe, in Allyson M. Poska, Jane Couchman and Katherine A. McIver (Eds) *The Ashgate research companion to women and gender in early modern Europe* (Farnham: Ashgate), p. 200; Linda Pollock (1989) 'Teach her to live under obedience': the making of women in the upper ranks of early modern England, *Continuity and Change*, 4, p. 233.

<sup>8</sup> See, Katie Barclay (2008) Negotiating patriarchy: the marriage of Anna Potts and Archibald Grant of Monymusk, *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 28, pp 83-101; Ibid (2011) Intimacy and the life-cycle in the marital relationships of the Scottish elite during the long eighteenth-century, *Women's History Review*, 20, pp 175-88.

<sup>9</sup> See among others, Kevin O'Neill (1984) *Family and farm in pre-Famine Killashandra* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press); Alan Fernihough, Corma O'Grada and Brendan Walsh (2015) Intermarriage in a divided society: Ireland a century ago, *Explorations in Economic History*, 56, pp 1-14; K.H. Connell (1962) Peasant marriage in Ireland: its structure and development since the Famine, *Economic History Review*, 14, pp 502-23; Idem (1957) Peasant marriage in Ireland after the Great Famine, *Past & Present*, 12, pp 76-91; Idem (1996) Catholicism and marriage in the century after the Famine' in idem (Ed.) *Irish peasant society: four historical essays* (Blackrock: Irish Academic Press), pp 113-61; Michael Drake (1963) Marriage and population growth in Ireland, 1750-1845, *Economic History Review*, 16, pp 301-13; Brendan Walsh (1970) Marriage rates and population pressure: Ireland, 1871 and 1911, *Economic History Review*, 24, pp 148-62; Joseph Lee (1968) Marriage and population in pre-Famine Ireland, *Economic History Review*, 21, pp 283-95; L.A. Clarkson (1981) Marriage and fertility in nineteenth-century Ireland, in R.B. Outhwaite (Ed.), *Marriage and society: studies in the social history of marriage* (London: Europa), pp 237-55

<sup>10</sup> Malcomson, *Pursuit of the heiress*; Deborah Wilson (2009) *Women, marriage and property in wealthy landed families in Ireland, 1750-1850* (Manchester: Manchester University Press); Maeve O'Riordan (2015) Elite courtship: the case of Mabel Smyly and Dermot O'Brien, 1901-1902, in Jennifer Redmond, Sonja Tiernan, Sandra McAvoy and Mary MacAuliffe (Eds), *Sexual politics in Ireland* (Kildare: Irish Academic Press), pp 36-52; Rachel Wilson (2015) *Elite women in ascendancy Ireland, 1690-1745: Imitation and innovation* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press); Erin Bishop (1999) *The world of Mary O'Connell, 1778-1836* (Dublin: Lilliput Press); O'Neill, *Family and farm*; S.J. Connolly (1982) *The priests and the people in pre-Famine Ireland* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan); Mary O'Dowd (2005) *A history of women in Ireland, 1500-1800* (Harlow: Pearson Education Limited); Maria Luddy (2011) *Matters of deceit: breach of promise to marry cases in nineteenth-and twentieth-century Limerick* (Dublin: Four Courts).

<sup>11</sup> Notable exceptions of works which include some discussion of Presbyterian family life include: J.M. Barkley (1963) *A short history of the Presbyterian church in Ireland* (Belfast: Presbyterian Church in Ireland); J.M. Barkley (1993) Marriage and the Presbyterian tradition, *Ulster Folklife*, 34, pp 29-40; J.M. Barkley (1963) *The eldership in Irish Presbyterianism* (Belfast: Barkley); A.R. Holmes (2006) *The shaping of Ulster Presbyterian belief and practice, 1770-1840* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Jonathan Wright (2012) *The 'natural leaders' and their world: politics, culture and society in Belfast, c. 1801-1832* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press); Robert Whan (2013) *The Presbyterians of Ulster, 1680-1730* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press). See also the author's own unpublished research, Leanne

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Calvert (2015) *Love, life and the family in the Ulster Presbyterian community, 1780-1844* (Ph.D. thesis, Queen's University, Belfast).

<sup>12</sup> See, Campbell and Allen emigrant letters, 1819-27 (P.R.O.N.I., T3597/1-11); Pedigree of the related families of Campbell (P.R.O.N.I., T3597/12).

<sup>13</sup> See, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland, 'Introduction to the Campbell Allen papers' ([http://www.proni.gov.uk/introduction\\_campbell\\_allen\\_d1558.pdf](http://www.proni.gov.uk/introduction_campbell_allen_d1558.pdf)).

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 29 May 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/1/4).

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> See for example, Ibid, 2 June 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/1/5).

<sup>19</sup> For one such argument, see, Letters between William John Campbell and Isabella Campbell Allen (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/18-19; 28-32).

<sup>20</sup> William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Allen, 2 May 1841 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/10/34).

<sup>21</sup> See, Letters between William John Campbell Allen and Isabella Campbell Allen (D1558/1/3/14; D1558/1/3/15; D1558/1/3/16 and D1558/1/3/17).

<sup>22</sup> See for example, Ibid (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/18-19; 28-32).

<sup>23</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 2 Feb. 1854 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/436).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 6 Feb. 1854 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/441). For William's replies, see, William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Campbell Allen, 5 Feb. 1854; 7 Feb. 1854 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/440; 442).

<sup>25</sup> Rosemary O'Day (2001) Tudor and Stuart women: their lives through their letters' in James Daybell (Ed.), *Early modern women's letter-writing, 1450-1700* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan), pp 128-29; Jabour, The language of love, pp 119-40.

<sup>26</sup> Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb (2005) Form and persuasion in women's letters, 1400-1700, in Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb (Eds), *Women's letters across Europe, 1400-1700: form and persuasion* (Aldershot: Ashgate), p. 5; Rebecca Earle (1999) Introduction: letters, writers and the historian, in Rebecca Earle (Ed.), *Epistolary selves: letters and letter-writers, 1600-1945* (Aldershot: Ashgate), pp 2-3; Martyn Lyons, Love letters and writing practices: on écritures intimes in the nineteenth century, *Journal of Family History*, 24, p. 232; Ylva Hasselberg, Letters, social networks and the embedded economy in Sweden: some remarks on the Swedish bourgeoisie, 1800-1850, in Rebecca Earle (Ed.), *Epistolary selves*, p. 103.

<sup>27</sup> Lisa Wilson (1998) A marriage "well-ordered": love, power and partnership in colonial New England, in Laura McCall and Donald Yacovne (Eds) *A shared experience: men, women and the history of gender* (New York: New York University Press), pp 85-88; Couchman and Crabb, Form and persuasion in women's letters, 1400-1700, in Jane Couchman and Ann Crabb (Eds), *Women's letters across Europe*, pp 11-12; James Daybell (2001) Introduction, in James Daybell (Ed.), *Early modern women's letter writing, 1450-1700* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan), p. 9; Rosemary O'Day, Tudor and Stuart women, p. 129.

<sup>28</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 26 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/9). For other examples see: Ibid, n.d.; 2 Nov. 1839; 9 Nov. 1839; 18 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/14; 1; 3; 4) and William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Campbell Allen, 19 Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/3/18).

<sup>29</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 12 Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/3/3). See also, Ibid, 6 Nov. 1839; 19 Nov. 1839; 23 Nov. 1839; n.d.; 16 Jan. 1840; Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/3/2/2; 7; 8; 13) and (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/3/3/3; 11; 17; 19) and



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William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Campbell Allen, 21 Jan. 1840; 13 Jan. 1840; 16 Jan. 1840; 18 Jan. 1840; 21 Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/3/3/6; 12; 16; 22).

<sup>30</sup> William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Campbell Allen, 18 Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/3/16).

<sup>31</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 6 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/2).

<sup>32</sup> Martyn Lyons (1999) Love letters and writing practices: on écritures intimes in the nineteenth century, *Journal of Family History*, 24, pp 232-33.

<sup>33</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 23 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/8).

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 Jun. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/1/7).

<sup>35</sup> William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Campbell Allen, 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/11).

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/5).

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 14 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/5)

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, c. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/11).

<sup>40</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 19 Nov. 1841 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/31).

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Nov. 1841 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/8).

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/1).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 Nov. 1841 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/6).

<sup>44</sup> William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Campbell Allen, 5 Nov. 1841 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/9).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/8).

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 5 Jun. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/1/6).

<sup>48</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 2 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/1).

<sup>49</sup> Anthony Fletcher (1994), Men's dilemma: the future of patriarchy in England, 1560-1660, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4, pp 61-81; Anthony Fletcher (1994) The Protestant idea of marriage in early modern England, in Anthony Fletcher and Patrick Roberts (Eds), *Religion, culture and society in early modern Britain: essays in honour of Patrick Collinson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp 161-81; Barbara Hanawalt (1986), *The ties that bound: peasant families in medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford Paperbacks), ch. 6; K.M. Davies (1981) Continuity and change in literary advice on marriage, in R.B. Outhwaite (Ed.), *Marriage and society: studies in the social history of marriage* (London: Europa), pp 58-80.

<sup>50</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 16 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/6).

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 18 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/4).

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 19 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/7).

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, 4 November 1841 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/6).

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 7 November 1841 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/10).

<sup>56</sup> William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Campbell Allen, 7 Nov. 1841 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/12).

<sup>57</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 10 Nov. 1841 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/17).

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- <sup>58</sup> William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Campbell Allen, 11 Nov. 1841 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/19).
- <sup>59</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 15 Nov. 1841 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/11/23).
- <sup>60</sup> See: James Daybell (2001) *Early modern women's letter writing, 1450-1700* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan).
- <sup>61</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 5 Jun. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/1/6). *Emphasis is author's own.*
- <sup>62</sup> Marriage agreement of Isabella Marshall and William John Campbell Allen, 13 Aug. 1838 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/4/2).
- <sup>63</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 29 May 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/1/4).
- <sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 27 May 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/1/3).
- <sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 29 May 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/1/4).
- <sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 2 Jun. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/1/5).
- <sup>71</sup> William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Campbell Allen, 18 Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/3/16).
- <sup>72</sup> Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/3/17).
- <sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 12 Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/3/3).
- <sup>74</sup> William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Campbell Allen, 12 Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/3/3).
- <sup>75</sup> See, Isabella Campbell Allen to William John Campbell Allen, 5 Jun. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/1/6).
- <sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 23 Nov. 1839 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/2/8).
- <sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>81</sup> *Ibid.* Isabella made this point explicitly: 'I have told you so much that on your return you may not be surprised to hear complaints from your mother and be disappointed to find that all did not move so harmoniously as you could wish.'
- <sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/3/1).
- <sup>85</sup> William John Campbell Allen to Isabella Campbell Allen, 11 Jan. 1840; 12 Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/3/2; 4).
- <sup>86</sup> In a letter to Isabella, for example, William expressed his happiness that his mother had attended a family dinner: 'do you mean that my mother accompanied you? If so I am glad that she has abandoned her intention of going nowhere during my absence'. See: William John Campbell-Allen, 21 Jan. 1840 (P.R.O.N.I., D1558/1/3/3/22).
- <sup>87</sup> See, for example, Anna Crawford to Reverend Alexander Crawford, 9 Jan. 1829 (P.R.O.N.I., D2003/A/2/9/1); *Ibid.*, 4 Jun. 1832; 24-25 Jul. 1832 (P.R.O.N.I., D2003/A/2/11/1; D2003/A/2/11/8)
- <sup>88</sup> See, for example, Reverend Alexander Crawford to Anna Crawford, 18 Mar. 1828 (P.R.O.N.I., D2003/A/2/8/2).

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<sup>89</sup> See, for example, Anna Crawford to Reverend Alexander Crawford, 24-25 Jul. 1832; 30 Jul. 1832 (P.R.O.N.I., D2003/A/2/11/8;11).

<sup>90</sup> Reverend Alexander Crawford to Anna Crawford, 3 Jul. 1832 (P.R.O.N.I., D2003/A/2/11/5).

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Records of the Crawford family, volume one (P.R.O.N.I., D2003/B/4/4/1), pp 122-27; Robert Allen (1955) *Three centuries of Christian witness, being the history of First Randalstown Presbyterian church* (Belfast: Belfast News-Letter), p. 62. For details of Alexander's income in his post as minister of 1<sup>st</sup> Randalstown Presbyterian congregation, see, See, John Brown to Reverend Alexander Crawford, 20 Dec. 1827 (P.R.O.N.I., D2003/A/2/16/7); Reverend Alexander Crawford to Anna Crawford, 13 Dec. 1836 (P.R.O.N.I., D2003/A/2/15/24).

<sup>93</sup> Reverend Alexander Crawford to Anna Crawford, 30 Jul. 1832 (P.R.O.N.I., D2003/A/2/11/11).

<sup>94</sup> Anna Crawford to Reverend Alexander Crawford, 24-25 Jul. 1832 (P.R.O.N.I., D2003/A/2/11/8).

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Reverend John Tennent to John Tennent (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/D/1/5/8-9; 11; 13; 16-19; 21; 24-25; 29-30).

<sup>99</sup> Reverend John Tennent to William Tennent, 2 Feb. 1796 (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/B/1/317/5).

<sup>100</sup> Reverend John Tennent to John Tennent, 25 Jan. 1796 (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/D/1/5/44).

<sup>101</sup> Reverend John Tennent to William Tennent, 1 Feb. 1796 (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/B/1/317/4).

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 6 Feb. 1796 (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/B/1/317/6).

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 2 Feb. 1796 (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/B/1/317/5).

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> There is only one surviving letter in the Tennent archive written in Ann's hand. It is also a rather poor scrawl. See, Ann Tennent to Robert Tennent, c. 1801 (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/C/1/203).

<sup>107</sup> Reverend John Tennent to John Tennent, 21 Feb. 1796 (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/D/1/38).

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid, 21 Feb. 1796 (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/D/1/5/38). See also, Ibid, 6 Apr. 1796; 29 Aug. 1795; 14 Nov. 1795 (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/D/1/5/39; 42-43).

<sup>110</sup> Reverend John Tennent to Robert Tennent, 2 Aug. 1805 (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/C/1/211/50).

<sup>111</sup> Reverend John Tennent to William Tennent, 27 Jan. 1807 (P.R.O.N.I., D1748/B/1/317/63).

<sup>112</sup> The similarities and differences between Presbyterian families and other religious traditions in Ireland is an understudied area. See the author's own research on this theme: Calvert, *Love, life and the family*.

<sup>113</sup> See for example, Bishop, *World of Mary O'Connell*