

RÍONA NIC CONGÁIL “Looking on for Centuries  
from the Sideline”:  
Gaelic Feminism  
and the Rise of Camogie<sup>1</sup>

IN THE FIRST DECADE of the twentieth century women’s rights movements expanded throughout the West, and civil associations grew in number. These two developments converged in new women’s sporting, cultural, health, educational, and political organizations. While some organizations worked toward achieving gender equality, women’s sport—from the first soccer matches in Britain to the biking craze in Canada—was opening up new spatial and societal freedoms for women.<sup>2</sup> In Ireland the first generation of women to attend university graduated at the end of the nineteenth century, and the right to vote and stand as candidates in local-government elections was extended to women with property in 1898.<sup>3</sup> Such gender-specific progress accompanied wider cultural stimulation: the Gaelic revivalist movement and the Anglo-Irish literary revival were both gaining in momentum by the turn of the twentieth century.

In this period of political and cultural activity a small group of educated feminist nationalists established the sport of camogie. This sport was a women’s alternative to the popular Gaelic game of hurling, and its founders promoted it as a means of enhancing their fellow-countrywomen’s lives. Camogie was initially a middle-class

1. My thanks to Sinéad O’Connor and the staff of the Camogie Association, Croke Park, Dublin, for allowing me access to the Camogie Archive and thus facilitating this research.

2. See Helen Lenskyj, “Physical Activity for Canadian Women, 1890–1930: Media Views,” in *From “Fair Sex” to Feminism: Sport and the Socialization of Women in the Industrial and Post-Industrial Eras*, ed. J. A. Mangan and Roberta J. Park (London: Routledge, 2004), 209; and Jean Williams, *A Game for Rough Girls? A History of Women’s Football in Britain* (London: Routledge, 2003), 26.

3. Maria Luddy, “Women and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Ireland,” in *The Irish Women’s History Reader*, ed. Alan Hayes and Diane Urquhart (London: Routledge, 2001), 34–35.

and urban-based sport played by well-educated young Irish women. However, during the first few decades of the century it also took root among rural and less affluent sections of society as well as among Irish emigrants in cities such as London and New York. Through an overview of the construction and evolution of camogie, including an analysis of how contemporary assumptions influenced perceptions of the sport, this essay offers a new lens for the study of early twentieth-century cultural nationalism. It also explores how the founders and early directors of the Camogie Association voiced inconsistent and often contradictory feminist ideologies—difficulties suggesting parallels with other early feminist movements in the West.

### WOMEN AND SPORT IN LATE NINETEENTH-CENTURY IRELAND

Small numbers of upper-class Protestant Irish women and girls played tennis, croquet, and hockey in the late nineteenth century, most often within a school system that was shaped by English educational traditions; however, organized sport assumed an inconsequential role in the lives of most Irish women.<sup>4</sup> Drawing on her own experience as a student at Methodist College, Belfast, leading cultural nationalist Alice Milligan described the limited role of women's sport in the 1880s:

When I was myself a school-girl, I became a mutineer and reformer, the organiser of a great petition that the girls of our school should have the privilege of playing games in a playground in the open air. When denied this privilege, we brought balls, fencing sticks, tennis rackets, and created tumult in our lecture-halls. For this I suffered imprisonment or detention and punishment. Finally, getting no satisfaction from our school authorities, I was one of a daring group, which being denied the use of the school grounds for recreation, appealed for and got the use of a tennis-court in a public Belfast park, in which no games had been formerly played by ladies. We were given the use of a house formerly occupied by a pair of Australian emus in the Ormeau park, and stored our implements here.<sup>5</sup>

4. Upper-class women were known to participate in hunting in the nineteenth century. See Josephine Martin Callwell, *Old Irish Life* (Edinburgh and London: W. Blackwood, 1912), 359.

5. *Sinn Féin*, 1 Feb. 1908, 2. Women began to play in tennis competitions at Wimbledon in 1884. See Jennifer A. Hargreaves, "Victorian Familism and the For-

From such modest beginnings other amateur Irish women's sporting organizations developed throughout the 1890s. Most notable was the Irish Ladies' Hockey Union (1894),<sup>6</sup> an upper-class Protestant organization influenced by late-Victorian traditions, whose members had long-established social networks from which to build their sporting aspirations.<sup>7</sup> Accounting for the vast majority of Irishwomen, middle-class or poor Catholic women had fewer educational opportunities and less leisure time than their Protestant counterparts; participation in athletic activities accordingly had less relevance to their lives. Nevertheless, a small group of middle-class Catholic women, feminists and cultural nationalists, established a quintessentially Gaelic sport for Irish women who had the luxury of leisure time. The ethos of this new sport, camogie, reflected its founders' desire to provide alternatives to female domesticity and to envision a classless activity that would foster skills, leadership, and administrative roles for women; it would facilitate new female communities, and persuade women to work toward a common goal. Within the future-oriented discourses symptomatic of the early century, camogie was envisioned as a means of enhancing the health of the next generation and discouraging Ireland's most talented young women from emigration to England and North America.

In gender-segregated late-Victorian Ireland men's sporting organizations catering to cricket, rugby, and soccer emerged more than two decades earlier than those for women; according to Gerry P. T. Finn, these male organizations were largely fueled by Irish boys returning home from elite English schools.<sup>8</sup> Witnessing the growth and success of such organized English sports, and an accompanying decline of indigenous games including "wrestling, handy-grips, top-pegging, leap-frog, rounders, [and] tip-in-the-hat," cultural nationalists sought to regulate, cultivate, and promote Gaelic sports,

native Years of Female Sport," in *From "Fair Sex" to Feminism*, ed. Mangan and Park, 141.

6. Irish Ladies' Hockey Union, *The First Hundred Years, 1894–1994: A Centenary History* (Dublin: Irish Ladies' Hockey Union, 1996), 8.

7. See Oonagh Walsh, "Protestant Female Philanthropy in Dublin in the Early Twentieth Century," *History Ireland* 5, no. 2 (1997): 27–31.

8. Gerry P. T. Finn, "Trinity Mysteries: University, Elite Schooling, and Sport in Ireland," *International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, no. 13 (2010): 2260–67.

particularly the team sports of hurling and Gaelic football.<sup>9</sup> In spite of the Gaelic Athletic Association's efforts to emphasize the differences between Gaelic and English sports—a typically oppositional cultural-nationalist approach that became more strident during the first half of the twentieth century—the GAA essentially adopted the blueprint of English sporting organizations. Indeed, the vocabulary of Victorian morality and the ideals of the “muscular and corporeal superiority of manhood” became embedded in the GAA's vision of Gaelic sports.<sup>10</sup> Such language differed from accounts of unregulated hurling matches earlier in the nineteenth century, which were often accompanied by a vocabulary of debauchery and violence.<sup>11</sup> Like the GAA, the Camogie Association adopted the structure of English sporting organizations that preached a high moral rectitude; simultaneously, the organization maintained a strong anti-English ideology.

#### SPORTS SCHOLARSHIP AND IRISH WOMEN

Although historians have explored various aspects of the GAA—its relationship with Irish culture, language, politics, and transnational contexts—the growth of such scholarship, not unexpectedly, includes little analysis of female sport.<sup>12</sup> Irish women's history, a relatively recent and still underdeveloped field of study, took root only as early work investigating the theory and history of women's sport emerged in other European countries and in North America.<sup>13</sup> Ac-

9. *Fáinne an Lae*, 30 Apr. 1898, 4–5.

10. *United Irishman*, 3 June 1905, 6.

11. See, for example, Hely Dutton, *Statistical Survey of the County of Clare, with Observations on the Means of Improvement; Drawn up for the Consideration and by Direction of the Dublin Society* (Dublin: Graisberry and Campbell, 1808), 301.

12. See, for example, recently published books on the history of the GAA, including *The Gaelic Athletic Association, 1884–2009*, ed. Mike Cronin, William Murphy, and Paul Rouse (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 2009); *The GAA: A People's History*, ed. Mike Cronin, Mark Duncan, and Paul Rouse (Cork: Collins Press, 2009); and John O'Flynn and Ainsley Baldwin, *The History of the Gaelic Athletic Association in Canada* (Victoria: Trafford Publishing, 2008).

13. The first edition of *From “Fair Sex” to Feminism: Sport and the Socialization of Women in the Industrial and Post-Industrial Eras* was published in 1987 when relatively few historians were publishing work on Irish women's history. See also Roberta J. Park, “Prologue: Reaffirming Mary Wollstonecraft! Extending the Dialogue on Women, Sport, and Physical Activities,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, no. 7 (2010): 1105–10.

companying this dearth of academic discourse surrounding women's sport in Ireland is what Katie Liston terms "the contradictory representations of women in sport" inherent within the Irish media and indeed further afield.<sup>14</sup> Liston claims that in twenty-first-century Ireland "sport remains a relatively unchallenged area in which an Irish male can develop his identity in opposition to a rigid and narrow perception of what an ideal Irishwoman should be."<sup>15</sup> Liston is among the few scholars to have studied women's sport in Ireland, and the representation of camogie in contemporary publications reflects this: with the exception of her work, and that of Sarah Brady and Margaret Ó hÓgartaigh,<sup>16</sup> articles and books on the subject lack both critical analysis and an objective distance from the sport.<sup>17</sup> This study thus aims to provide a primary account and cultural examination of the early years of camogie as part of an effort to contextualize and expand scholarship about the history of women's sport in Ireland.

#### THE GENESIS OF "CAMOGUIDHEACTH"

The founders of camogie made no claims that theirs was an ancient women's sport, nor did they show any awareness that women had been known to play hurling over the previous centuries. Indeed, only in 1898 did newspapers begin to report about the formation of

14. Katie Liston, "Power at Play: Sport, Gender, and Commercialisation," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 90, no. 359 (2001): 257–58.

15. Katie Liston, "The Gendered Field of Irish Sport," in *Ireland Unbound: A Turn of the Century Chronicle*, ed. Michel Peillon and Mary P. Corcoran (Dublin: Institute of Public Administration, 2002), 245.

16. Sara Brady, "Home and Away: The Gaelic Games, Gender, and Migration," *New Hibernia Review* 11, no. 3 (Autumn 2007): 28–43; and Margaret Ó hÓgartaigh, "Shedding Their 'Reserve': Camogie and the Origin of Women's Sport in Ireland," *High Ball* (2003): 29–31. Rpt. in *Quiet Revolutionaries: Irish Women in Education, Medicine, and Sport, 1861–1964* (Dublin: History Press Ireland, 2011), 169–71.

17. See, for example, Mary Moran, *Munster's Camogie Story, 1904–2004* (Cork: self-published, 2004); and Martin Bourke and Seámus J. King, *A History of Camogie in County Tipperary* (Tipperary: County Tipperary Board GAA, 2003). Mary Moran's *A Game of Our Own: Camogie's Story, 1904–2010* (Dublin: Camogie Association, 2011) chronicles the history of camogie and is thus the first attempt to impose an overarching narrative on the evolution of the sport. Indeed, its accessibility and high production values make this history of camogie accessible to diverse audiences.

women's hurling teams.<sup>18</sup> Centenary celebrations of the 1798 United Irish rebellion encouraged a growing support of cultural nationalism, and for the GAA, a "renewal of interest in native games."<sup>19</sup> Anecdotal evidence assimilated into oral folklore suggests that prior to the nineteenth century women had become involved in hurling matches, particularly during crucial moments of the game. One such story, recounted in *Evenings in the Duffrey* (1869), describes how "the Wicklow women, once seeing their men losing the game, crowded to the goal and stopped the ball from getting through."<sup>20</sup> Oral accounts, provided by Blasket-islander Tomás Ó Criomhthain among others, also suggest that girls and women participated in informal hurling matches in rural areas. And in *Scéal na hIomána ó Thosach Ama go 1884*, Liam P. Ó Caithnia intimates that through the centuries Irish females participated in hurling matches far more frequently than written evidence suggests.<sup>21</sup>

In August 1904, some six years after the establishment of the earliest women's hurling teams, the rules of camogie, then called "camoguidheacht," first appeared in *Banba*, a journal produced by the Dublin-based Keating branch of the Gaelic League.<sup>22</sup> Camogie came to public attention when it was showcased at the annual Oireachtas (Gaelic League festival) earlier that year: it differed from men's hurling in its use of a lighter ball and a smaller playing field.<sup>23</sup> Máire Ní Chinnéide and Cáit Ní Dhonnchadha, prominent Irish-language enthusiasts and cultural nationalists, are credited with creating the sport, with the assistance of Ní Dhonnchadha's scholarly brother Tadhg Ó Donnchadha, who drew up its rules.<sup>24</sup> Thus, although

18. Ó hÓgartaigh, "Shedding Their 'Reserve,'" in *Quiet Revolutionaries*, 169.

19. De Búrca, *GAA*, 60.

20. Patrick Kennedy, *Evenings in the Duffrey* (Dublin: McGlashan and Gill, 1869), 196–97.

21. Liam P. Ó Caithnia, *Scéal na hIomána ó Thosach Ama go 1884* (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar, 1980), 370–71.

22. "Riaghlacha Camóguidheachta," *Banba* (August 1904), 330.

23. See Seán O'Duffy's Papers, Camogie Archive, Croke Park, Dublin (hereafter cited as CACP); and Ó hÓgartaigh, "Shedding Their 'Reserve,'" in *Quiet Revolutionaries*, 169–71.

24. *Beathaisnéis a hAon, 1882–1982*, ed. Diarmuid Breathnach and Máire Ní Mhurchú (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar, 1986), 64–65; and *Beathaisnéis a Dó, 1882–1982*, ed. Diarmuid Breathnach and Máire Ní Mhurchú (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar, 1990), 79–80.

camogie was founded by women and independently run (if closely linked to the GAA), from the outset a small but powerful male presence existed within its administrative ranks.

Emanating from the Gaelic League and dependent upon the structures and networks provided by that organization during its initial expansion, camogie is best contextualized in Gaelic League history. Of all the cultural nationalist organizations for adults that emerged during the *fin de siècle*, the Gaelic League was unique in accepting female and male members on an equal footing. Established in 1893 with headquarters in Dublin, its mission was to preserve and extend the use of the Irish language as well as to further the study and publication of Irish-language literature, both old and new.<sup>25</sup> Simultaneously, it sought to realign Ireland with its pre-colonial Gaelic culture through a process of de-anglicization and re-Gaelicization. Seizing upon a growing enthusiasm for cultural nationalism, the Gaelic League signed up tens of thousands of new members to its branches in Ireland and abroad.<sup>26</sup> It was through this branch network that camogie would be expanded over time. In its early days the Camogie Association necessarily assimilated Gaelic League ideology. Irish was actively promoted as the language of the camogie pitch, and members used Irish-language versions of their names; players used Irish-made sports equipment and strips; and the game was endorsed as a means to curb emigration among the youth. The pioneers of the Camogie Association, several of whom were leading members of the Gaelic League, emphasized a future-directed ethos of cooperation to achieve a long-term goal—in the case of the sports organization, improving the lives of future generations of Irish women.

Established some twenty years before the Camogie Association, the GAA shared common interests with the Gaelic League and reportedly worked “harmoniously and concurrently” with it.<sup>27</sup> Indeed, it preempted the League’s de-anglicizing agenda by recreating Gaelic

25. Connradh na Gaedhilge, *The Gaelic League* (Dublin, 1896).

26. Breandán Mac Aodha, “Was This a Social Revolution?” in *The Gaelic League Idea*, ed. Seán Ó Tuama (Cork: Mercier Press, 1972), 21; Timothy G. McMahon, *Grand Opportunity: The Gaelic Revival and Irish Society, 1893–1910* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2008), 85–154.

27. *United Irishman*, 16 Sept. 1899, 6.



games, emphasizing their noble precolonial roots, and dissociating them from anglicized versions of similar sports. However, the GAA failed to embrace women, and without the active support of the well-developed GAA network, the Camogie Association relied instead on networks fostered by the Gaelic League. By 1905 a Dublin camogie league had been established, consisting of nine teams, with several more joining up the following year. Clubs were also set up in other counties, although the rules of the sport were not always followed: teams played up to 18-a-side on occasion rather than the 12-a-side stipulated in the official rules, leading to “overcrowding” on the pitch.<sup>28</sup> The sport’s development had come to an abrupt end by 1907, reportedly owing to lack of organization; however, the fact that the initial set of rules for the sport was published only in the Irish language, without an English-language version, suggests that those involved could have done far more to publicize camogie and make it widely appealing.<sup>29</sup> *The Gaelic League Annual and County Directory for 1910–11* notes that “[n]o executive or league has been organized in Dublin since 1906, although some teams still practice and play friendly matches.”<sup>30</sup> The sport’s failure to increase its range in Dublin was replicated in other parts of the country where clubs had previously been established.<sup>31</sup>

### CAMOGIE: EARLY REACTIONS

Cultural nationalists praised camogie during its initial and most fragile phase. But although nationalist newspapers endorsed and promoted this new Gaelic sport for women, as with negative responses to women’s sport elsewhere, not all sections of Irish society were equally supportive. Seán O’Duffy, who was to become involved with camogie at a later stage, observed that in the Edwardian era the “idea of girls

28. *Limerick Leader*, 6 May 1907, 3.

29. “Riaghlacha Camóguidheachta,” *Banba* (Aug. 1904), 330. When leading members of the Gaelic League wanted to make a public statement or to publicize an event, they generally did so by writing articles in the English language in bilingual newspapers and journals such as *An Claidheamh Soluis* and *Banba*.

30. Connradh na Gaedhíle, *The Gaelic League Annual and County Directory for 1910–11* (Dublin, 1911), 102.

31. *An Claidheamh Soluis*, 8 Oct. 1910, 4.



playing field-games in public was in many quarters considered little short of sinful.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, he notes that

Bhí an chlaonadh an tráth úd in aghaidh aon chluiche a bheith á imirt ag mná agus ba mhinic go raibh ar na cailíní na camógaí a cheilt faoina gcótaí nó i bpáipéar donn agus iad ag taisteal chun na páirceanna.

The tendency at that time was for women not to play any games, and the girls often had to hide their camogie sticks under their coats or in brown paper as they traveled to the playing-fields.<sup>33</sup>

Although newspaper reports reveal that camogie players were subjected to occasional jeering by male spectators, early antipathy toward the sport was initiated by certain members of the clergy, who viewed the game as detrimental to morality and female purity.<sup>34</sup> In 1905, Canon Mark Anthony Fricker of Rathmines in Dublin, a wealthy suburb in which a camogie team had recently been established, denounced this new sport at a meeting of the women's sodality in Rathmines Church. The nationalist *United Irishman* reported that:

On a certain Sunday evening recently he [Canon Fricker] had been shocked and horrified to meet six or eight young girls on the bridge, carrying sticks, which looked like hurling-clubs under their arms. He was greatly shamed and pained, and hoped he would never see such an awful sight again crossing that bridge, and he certainly would not like to think that any of his parishioners would do such a thing.<sup>35</sup>

The above passage leaves unclear whether Canon Fricker objected to camogie on the grounds of nationalism, religion, or class—or simply because it might provide a “bridge” between prescribed gender roles and new opportunities, educational and cultural, that were becoming increasingly available to Irish women at the turn of the twentieth century. Canon Fricker, however, supported the Gaelic League, and the *United Irishman* suggests that this English-born clergyman's

32. See Seán O'Duffy's Papers, CACP.

33. Ibid.

34. *Galway Observer*, 19 May 1906, 2.

35. *United Irishman*, 19 Aug. 1905, 1.

objection was, rather, gender- and class-based.<sup>36</sup> The article's author inquired:

How is it he does not mind seeing the crowds of Rathmines young ladies who spend their afternoons and evenings playing tennis, croquet, hockey . . . in Kenilworth and Mountpleasant-squares and other such fashionable resorts? . . . How is it we never hear a voice from his pulpit condemning the ladies who hunt and shoot by day and dance and gamble by night?<sup>37</sup>

Although camogie was a game for middle-class Catholic women who were often pursuing further education and had plenty of leisure time, this passage implies real differences between gendered sporting activities for middle-class Catholics and Protestants. Indeed, friction between camogie enthusiasts and the clergy of both faiths continued to arise during the decades to come.

#### MODUS OPERANDI OF THE CAMOGIE ASSOCIATION

When the sport of camogie was relaunched in April 1911, the association itself was better organized.<sup>38</sup> A year earlier, cofounder Cáit Ní Dhonnchadha published a series of articles in the Gaelic League's newspaper *An Claidheamh Soluis*, developing her ideas about reestablishing the sport for women.<sup>39</sup> Advancing its merits, she wrote that camogie would strengthen the Irish language and that as a team sport it would help women avoid loneliness. If female educators, members of religious orders, and university students became involved in the sport, she concluded, its influence would spread through Ireland's schools.<sup>40</sup> Ní Dhonnchadha remained committed to the new Camogie Association, inviting women from educational, women's rights,

36. See The Gaelic League, *Imtheachta an Oireachtais: Full Report of the Proceedings at The Oireachtas; or Irish Literary Festival, Held in the Round Room, Rotunda, Dublin, on May 17th, 1897* (Dublin: B. Doyle, Gaelic Printer, Franklin Printing Works, 1897), 11.

37. *United Irishman*, 19 Aug. 1905, 1.

38. "Camoguidheacht" was the initial title of this sport. The term "camogie" became more frequently used shortly after the sport was reestablished in 1911.

39. *An Claidheamh Soluis*, 8 Oct. 1910, 4; 5 Nov. 1910, 4; 24 Dec. 1910, 9.

40. *Ibid.*, 8 Oct. 1910, 4.

cultural-nationalist, and social-reform organizations to participate in its activities. Collectively, these organizations—including the Gaelic League, Inghinidhe na hÉireann, Sinn Féin,<sup>41</sup> and the recently formed United Irishwomen—represented a wide sphere of influence.<sup>42</sup> The last of these sought to promote rural regeneration and self-sufficiency among Irish women.<sup>43</sup>

The new Camogie Association chose Lady Fingall, a founder and soon-to-be president of the United Irishwomen, as its president, with novelist Mary E. L. Butler as vice-president. The choice of Lady Fingall to head the association's committee members represented an effort to portray a game with middle-class origins as a highly respectable sport for elite women. Although Lady Fingall was Catholic, her associations with the Dublin Castle circle and the United Irishwomen, a predominantly upper-class Protestant organization, meant that some nationalist members of the Camogie Association were initially wary of her involvement in and commitment to camogie.<sup>44</sup> She demonstrated her largesse and commitment by donating a playing pitch to a camogie club that she established next to her home in County Meath.<sup>45</sup> Lady Fingall's association with camogie enhanced its reception as an exclusively middle- to upper-class sport. When asked by a representative of the Camogie Association to establish a camogie club, the Reverend Mother at Booterstown Convent, Dublin, refused on the basis that "the girls at her school, being of the very poor class, would hardly prove the right material out of which to form a club."<sup>46</sup>

The Gaelic League emphasized building its rural base, assuming that its project of re-Gaelicizing Ireland would emanate from remote western parts of Ireland where English influence had not substantial-

41. This specific organization entitled Sinn Féin [We Ourselves] was unaffiliated with the later political party of the same name. See Richard P. Davis, *Arthur Griffith and Non-Violent Sinn Féin* (Dublin: Anvil Books, 1974), 17–36.

42. Inghinidhe na hÉireann [Daughters of Ireland] was a women's organization aimed at promoting aspects of cultural nationalism among children in particular; see Inghinidhe na h-Éireann, *First Annual Report, Session 1900–1901* (Dublin: O'Brien & Ards, 1901), 1–7.

43. *The United Irishwomen: An Appeal* (Dublin: Hely's, 1913), 1–4.

44. 1911 *Yearbook of the Camogie Association*, CACP; Elizabeth Fingall, *Seventy Years Young: Memories of Elizabeth, Countess of Fingall* (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1991), 52.

45. 1911 *Yearbook of the Camogie Association*, CACP.

46. 1912 *Yearbook of the Camogie Association*, CACP.

ly altered an older culture;<sup>47</sup> however, the Camogie Association initially took the opposite approach, deciding that the new sport should be promoted through nuclei within the cities, beginning with Dublin, before attempting to increase coverage over rural Ireland.<sup>48</sup> The Dublin Camogie League began anew in the summer of 1912, and the sport subsequently spread in the surrounding province of Leinster.<sup>49</sup> This approach facilitated easy administration of the association and focused all resources on one area.

The new organization quickly acted upon Cáit Ní Dhonnchadha's ideas about how best to promote camogie. With hockey already the sport of choice in Protestant girls' schools, the Camogie Association established links with middle-class Catholic secondary and national institutions, particularly with religious orders such as those operating Ursuline, Dominican, and Loreto convent schools. The sport was also adopted and showcased in Scoil Íte (St. Ita's School), a short-lived Gaelic girls' school founded in 1911 by P. H. Pearse, who had previously established the boys' school Scoil Éanna (St. Enda's School) in Dublin.<sup>50</sup>

The Camogie Association deliberately promoted the game at university level, thereby mirroring strategies of nineteenth-century pioneers working for women's and men's physical activity and sport in other Western countries.<sup>51</sup> It was assumed that university-educated women, the schoolteachers of the future, would proceed to establish camogie clubs in girls' secondary schools throughout Ireland.<sup>52</sup> The association recruited Agnes O'Farrelly, a women's rights activist, lecturer in the Irish language at University College Dublin, and leading member of the Gaelic League, to promote the sport at the post-secondary level—a charge that she successfully fulfilled when she es-

47. See Agnes O'Farrelly, *Smaointe ar Árainn/Thoughts on Aran*, ed. Riona Nic Congáil (Gaillimh: Arlen House, 2010), 73–84.

48. *An Claidheamh Soluis*, 30 Sept. 1911, 10.

49. *1912 Yearbook of the Camogie Association*, CACP; *Meath Chronicle*, 18 Sept. 1915, 1.

50. Elaine Sisson, *Pearse's Patriots* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2004), 20; *Irish Times*, 3 Aug. 1911, 4.

51. See Finn, "Trinity Mysteries," 2255–87; and Kathleen E. McCrone, "Play Up! Play Up! And Play the Game! Sport at the Late Victorian Girls' Public Schools," in *From "Fair Sex" to Feminism*, ed. Mangan and Park, 103.

52. *An Claidheamh Soluis*, 23 Mar. 1912, 1.

tablished a camogie club at her institution in 1911. In the same year Dr. George Sigerson presented the first “Sigerson Cup” as the prize for the inter-university hurling competition; following this example, in 1915 O’Farrelly persuaded her close friend Lord Ashbourne to donate the “Ashbourne Cup” as the prize for the inter-university camogie competition, a prize still awarded annually.<sup>53</sup> As a result of the early successes of camogie at the university level and its spread to secondary schools through university graduates, O’Farrelly urged the association to introduce camogie at women’s teacher-training colleges in order to ensure that the game would also flourish in Irish primary schools.

### Gaelic Feminism and Camogie

Contradictions and ideological differences within the feminist movement during the first half of the twentieth century often revealed themselves in the controversies surrounding camogie. Agnes O’Farrelly viewed the sport as a manifestation of the “new woman,” and having gained freedoms that her mother could never have envisaged, refused any longer to play a secondary role in society. O’Farrelly wrote that camogie had “evolved out of our own needs and our own people—the needs of womanhood—the needs of those women who had looked on for centuries from the side-line at the men of their race perfecting their physique and their stamina in games of skill and strength.”<sup>54</sup>

A feminist imperative appeared in camogie from its inception: its founders declared that women, no less than men, were entitled to participate in sports to further their physical potential. But unlike other women’s sports, where participants were expected to demonstrate character in expressions of temperance and “friendly rivalry,” camogie players were noted for their competitiveness and aggression—traits associated with male sports.<sup>55</sup> Manifestations of compet-

53. *The Gaelic Athletic Association in Dublin, 1884–2000*, ed. William Nolan (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2005), 95.

54. *1928–38 Yearbooks of the Camogie Association, CACP*.

55. *Irish Times*, 11 Feb. 1944, 3; Sheila Fletcher, “The Making and Breaking of a Female Tradition: Women’s Physical Education in England, 1880–1980,” in *From “Fair Sex” to Feminism*, ed. Mangan and Park, 145; and Ray Crawford, “Moral and Manly: Girls and Games in the Prestigious Church Secondary Schools of Melbourne, 1901–1914,” *ibid.*, 191.

itiveness and individualism rather than teamwork repeatedly arose within camogie matches. O'Farrelly recalled such moments, particularly during the sport's infancy: "Each player wielded her Camóg at her own sweet will, without any reference to her colleagues, just to show how far she could put the ball . . . ; the proud wielder of the Camóg felt she had gone one better than her brothers on the hurling field."<sup>56</sup> But not all members of the association applauded such individualistic behavior: honorary secretary Áine Ní Riain believed that the "over-competitive" edge in camogie matches "should not be encouraged because the game would be spoiled if such an element were permitted."<sup>57</sup>

The names of early camogie clubs suggest different versions of feminism operating within the sport: three London-based organizations called themselves the "Gráinne Mhaol" Club, the "Ethna Carbery" Club, and the "Caithlin Ní Houlihan" Club.<sup>58</sup> Legendary Gráinne Mhaol, the sixteenth-century Irish pirate queen who transgressed colonially imposed gender roles and challenged authority, represented female Gaelic prowess and militancy. Appearing as a source of inspiration to players, the club's name offered an alternative to male heroic values and symbols at the forefront of the GAA.<sup>59</sup> Ethna Carbery, on the other hand, was a pioneering cultural nationalist, a so-called "new woman" of the fin de siècle. A coeditor of the journal *Shan Van Vocht* who died in her prime in 1902, she was a contemporary Gaelic heroine, and as such, her achievements may have appeared more tangible and relevant to young camogie players than those of the legendary Gráinne Mhaol. Finally, "Caithlin Ní Houlihan", whose name gained prominence through W. B. Yeats and Lady Augusta Gregory's 1902 play of that title, symbolized a different kind of "new woman," a vision of Ireland rising from the fetters of the past.<sup>60</sup>

56. Úna Ní Fhaircheallaigh, "Corp Láidir agus Croí Glan," *An Ráitheachán* (1936). A copy of this article is available in the CACP.

57. *Irish Independent*, 1 Oct. 1939, 15.

58. 1912–19 *Yearbooks of the Dublin Camóg League*, CACP.

59. See Patrick F. McDevitt, "Muscular Catholicism: Nationalism, Masculinity, and Gaelic Team Sports, 1884–1916," *Gender & History* 9, no. 2 (1997), 262–84.

60. R. F. Foster, *W. B. Yeats: A Life, II: The Arch-Poet, 1915–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 490.

However, alongside these feminist titles, other Irish-based clubs, most notably the “Cú Chulainn Cailíní,” were named to signify male heroism. A Celtic warrior of courage, physical strength, and loyalty, Cú Chulainn epitomized an early twentieth-century Irish masculinity invoked by cultural and militant nationalists, most notably P. H. Pearse, as representing the personal ideals that they sought to emulate.<sup>61</sup> If such club names implied a continued sense of female subordination, so too did the frequent description of camogie as “Ladies’ Hurling” in Irish newspaper articles, which revealed both an innate gender bias within Irish society and the difficulties of the Camogie Association in branding the sport.<sup>62</sup> Moreover, leading feminists within the Camogie Association referred to camogie as a “pastime” and “game,” rather than employing the more powerful term of “sport,” which would have identified it as a serious and competitive form of physical exertion rather than a means to whittle away idle hours.

#### NATIONALISM AND CAMOGIE

The difficulties and frictions between Irish feminist and nationalist agendas can best be understood through the evolution of Cumann na mBan, founded in April 1914 when Britain appeared ready to endorse Irish Home Rule.<sup>63</sup> This organization, with which many members of the Camogie Association became affiliated, served as an auxiliary to the men’s nationalist organization, the Irish Volunteers—in large part because the Volunteers refused to sanction female membership of their own organization.<sup>64</sup> Cumann na mBan sought “to advance the cause of Irish liberty,” “to organize Irish women to further this objective,” “to assist in arming and equipping a body of Irishmen for defense of the country,” and “to form a fund for these purposes termed ‘The Defence of Ireland Fund.’”<sup>65</sup> Irish suffragists and militant female nationalists took issue with the latter two objectives of

61. Sisson, *Pearse’s Patriots*, 19; Joseph Valente, *The Myth of Manliness in Irish National Culture, 1880–1922* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 140–86.

62. See, for example, *Leitrim Observer*, 15 Sept. 1917, 5; *Anglo-Celt*, 19 Jan. 1918, 20.

63. Ríona Nic Congáil, *Úna Ní Fhaircheallaigh agus an Fhís Útóipeach Ghaelach* (Gaillimh: Arlen House, 2010), 245–55.

64. *Ibid.*, 245.

65. *Irish Independent*, 3 Apr. 1914, 5.



Cumann na mBan: both groups envisaged women's political activism in the public sphere, albeit in different ways, as the means to achieving societal reform. Other women were caught between their feminist and cultural-nationalist persuasions; several among them concluded that the struggle for women's rights needed to be temporarily relinquished in favor of national freedom.<sup>66</sup>

The Camogie Association, like the Gaelic League, was officially "strictly non-political and non-sectarian"; nonetheless, substantial numbers of its members and young players became involved in Cumann na mBan.<sup>67</sup> Although the aims of the two women's organizations differed greatly, the drills included in Cumann na mBan's training to promote discipline and teamwork overlapped with the approach to physical activity for women supported by the Camogie Association. The outbreak of the Great War, coupled with subsequent upheaval within Ireland, hampered the progress and spread of camogie, as many players chose to offer more of their time and energies to the political cause.<sup>68</sup> The proximity of camogie players to more militant nationalism became clear in July 1918, when several camogie matches throughout Ireland were disrupted as part of the British government's prohibition on public gatherings. This prohibition was in reaction to the growing solidarity between Irish nationalists, who had been faced with the threat of mass conscription into the British army during the previous months, as well as in recognition of increased public support for militant nationalism in Ireland.<sup>69</sup> The GAA, Irish Volunteers, Cumann na mBan, and Gaelic League were all affected by the ban. In the case of camogie teams that defied it, matches occasionally became violent, with police batons being raised.<sup>70</sup>

Camogie was initially promoted outside of the school system by arranging exhibition matches at Gaelic League festivals throughout

66. Cal McCarthy, *Cumann na mBan and the Irish Revolution, 1914–1923* (Cork: Collins Press, 2007), 15–21.

67. This political involvement was even more pronounced in the GAA, which was used as a recruiting ground for the Irish Republican Brotherhood and later the Irish Volunteers. See Cronin, *Sport and Nationalism in Ireland*, 86–87.

68. This was mirrored in the priorities of GAA members. See De Búrca, *GAA*, 110–11.

69. *Irish Independent*, 4 July 1918, 3.

70. *Freeman's Journal*, 8, 9, 10 July 1918, 3.

the country.<sup>71</sup> The early 1920s, a period of disenchantment in post-civil war Ireland, saw the reestablishment of the Tailteann games; these ancient Irish funeral games honoring Queen Tailte were somewhat similar in structure to the Olympics and represented a form of nationalist popular culture that reportedly added “a dash of colour and gaiety after the gloom” and sparked “the national imagination.”<sup>72</sup> The Camogie Association envisaged an intercounty and international competition as part of the 1924 Tailteann games.<sup>73</sup> Following a dispute between the association and the game organizers, however, only one exhibition match was held, independently of the Camogie Association and attended by only one hundred spectators<sup>74</sup>—in contrast to the tens of thousands who attended the motorcycle and air-racing events in the Phoenix Park.<sup>75</sup> Having witnessed the popularity of these other sporting events, the Camogie Association supported the 1928 and 1932 Tailteann games, a decision that reportedly gave camogie “a new value as a factor in Irish life.”<sup>76</sup> A rapid proliferation of clubs indicates the successful showcasing of the sport at such large-scale events: by 1934 there were 318 clubs in Ireland (with 80 teams in Dublin alone), 7 clubs in London, and several in the United States, with approximately ten thousand girls playing the sport worldwide.<sup>77</sup> The popular social life surrounding camogie, most notably the well-attended Irish dances or céilithe organized by individual clubs, provided opportunities for camogie and GAA players to mix.<sup>78</sup>

71. *Ibid.*, 24 June 1914, 4; *Meath Chronicle*, 21 June 1919, 6.

72. *Irish Statesman*, 19 July 1924, 382–83.

73. *Irish Times*, 4 Jan. 1924, 3.

74. Áine Ní Riain, honorary secretary of the Camogie Association, stated that “the association has not taken part in the Tailteann games, and the match was played obviously not in the best interests of the pastime.” See *Freeman’s Journal*, 9 Aug. 1924, 8; *Irish Independent*, 4 Aug. 1924, 5.

75. Mike Cronin, “Projecting the Nation through Sport and Culture: Ireland, Aonach Tailteann, and the Irish Free State, 1924–32,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 38, no. 3 (2003): 406.

76. *1928–38 Yearbooks of the Camogie Association*, CACP.

77. *Irish Press*, 26 Feb. 1934, 3; *Irish Independent*, 25 Feb. 1935, 13; and *1928–38 Yearbooks of the Camogie Association*, CACP. There were also clubs in existence in Liverpool and Manchester around this time. See *Irish Press*, 22 Feb. 1937, 10; *Irish Independent*, 22 Feb. 1937, 15.

78. See, for example, *Sunday Independent*, 16 Feb. 1930, 2; *Anglo-Celt*, 1 Sept. 1934, 5.

## CAMOGIE, WOMEN'S HEALTH, AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The health benefits of playing camogie were promoted as vigorously as was the social life surrounding the sport. Having lived through a century of famine, mass emigration, and high mortality rates from diseases like tuberculosis, nationalists were concerned with threats of physical decline, moral degeneration, and indeed national disintegration.<sup>79</sup> The Irish self-help movement emerging during this period—with the participation of the Gaelic League and GAA—promoted self-reliance, partially so as to resist famine and the mass emigration of young people.<sup>80</sup> The founders and pioneers of the Camogie Association envisaged their sport as helping to overcome these threats on a national level. Mary Butler, as former vice-president of the association, claimed that camogie would resurrect “the old classic ideal of a healthy mind in a healthy body,” her language suggesting a precolonial precedent for such a desired balance.<sup>81</sup> Agnes O’Farrelly went a step further by claiming that “camogie players would be better women and better mothers of their race because of this game,” and that they would thus build up the physical strength of the nation, an outlook she evidenced by citing the views of a leading gynecologist.<sup>82</sup> O’Farrelly emphasized a medical view that endorsed sport—and camogie in particular—for women; however, her statement also reduced the primary role of women as mothers to the subordinate domestic sphere. Seán O’Duffy, fondly known as “Mr. Camogie,” and at times the only male involved in the Camogie Association, also emphasized the importance of women’s domestic roles. When the mother of a player informed him that “since my daughter began playing camogie, she neglects to milk the cows,” O’Duffy responded by recommending that camogie players fulfill their domestic duties.<sup>83</sup>

The wider Irish feminist movement did occasionally influence the

79. Brian Ó Conchubhair, *Fin de Siècle na Gaeilge: Darwin, an Athbheochan agus Smaointeoireacht na hEorpa* (Indreabhán: An Clóchomhar, 2009), 6; Greta Jones and Elizabeth Malcolm, *Medicine, Disease, and the State in Ireland, 1650–1940* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1999), 158–76.

80. See P. J. Mathews, *Revival: The Abbey Theatre, Sinn Féin, the Gaelic League, and the Co-operative Movement* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2003), 7.

81. *An Camán: The Organ of Irish-Ireland*, 9 Dec. 1933, 5.

82. *Sunday Independent*, 3 July 1938, 11.

83. 1928–38 *Yearbooks of the Camogie Association*, CACP.

direction of the Camogie Association—particularly from the mid-1920s to the mid-1930s when the Cumann na nGaedheal and Fianna Fáil governments legislated to curtail women’s rights in public life. Such legislative activity culminated in the 1935 Conditions of Employment Act, which enabled the restriction of the employment of women in industry, and two years later in the 1937 Constitution, which one women’s rights organization condemned as “sinister and retrogressive” and as leaving “the door open for reactionary legislation against women in every department.”<sup>84</sup> In reaction to these continuous attacks on women’s rights—and despite the involvement of male coaches and referees in the sport since its establishment—the 1935 All-Ireland Camogie Convention voted that men would “henceforth be ineligible as delegates to the congress.”<sup>85</sup> However, men were permitted to continue as delegates at the provincial level, and the aforementioned Seán O’Duffy was exempt from this ban because of his dedication to the sport over the years.<sup>86</sup> In 1936 male referees were banned from involvement in camogie, and by 1937 some women professed that male “meddlesome interference in the business of the meetings as well as on the field of play [was] detrimental to the game.”<sup>87</sup> Not all feminists, however, agreed with radical male-banning measures, and some female delegates to the Camogie Convention even claimed that girls’ interest in camogie had lessened since males were excluded from the association.<sup>88</sup>

As a gesture toward a wider social unity, Agnes O’Farrelly, a figure regularly at the forefront of women’s rights campaigning in the 1930s, argued that women’s organizations should be open to men (even if the converse was often not the case). Nonetheless, she acknowledged the decision of the Camogie Association to exclude men as “absolutely necessary if the organization were to retain its independence

84. *Irish Times*, 11 May 1937, 13; Caitríona Beaumont, “Gender, Citizenship, and the State in Ireland, 1922–1990,” in *Ireland in Proximity: History, Gender, and Space*, ed. Scott Brewster, Virginia Crossman, Fiona Becket, and David Alderson (London: Routledge, 1999), 98.

85. *Irish Press*, 25 Feb. 1935, 11.

86. *Ibid.*

87. *Ibid.*, 17 Feb. 1937, 12; *Irish Independent*, 22 Feb. 1937, 15.

88. *Irish Press*, 2 Mar. 1936, 8. In spite of this ban there continued to be sightings of men dressing up as women and participating in camogie matches. See *Irish Independent*, 25 Oct. 1934, 6.

and if the women were to retain their self-respect.”<sup>89</sup> This ban within the sport turned out to be much shorter-lived than were the implications for women of the 1937 Constitution; within a few years men again became involved in refereeing and in the administrative ranks of the Camogie Association.

### THE ANTIFOREIGNISM CAMPAIGN

Both the state clampdown on women’s rights and the expulsion of men from the Camogie Association represented a growing intolerance and fundamentalism within Irish society, evidenced by governmental policy and by attitudes in the Catholic church in the 1920s and 1930s. Although the Gaelic League had discouraged “foreignism” since its inception, its leading members had never previously been in a position to direct antiforeignism policy on a national level.<sup>90</sup> According to Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin, the 1929 Censorship of Publications Act had “the long-term effect of ostracizing a generation of creative writers in Ireland, many of whom chose exile rather than succumb to a climate of unbending censorship.”<sup>91</sup> In the 1930s an anticinema and an antijazz campaign were initiated as part of the larger stance against the influence of foreign culture, leading to the 1935 Dance Halls Act.<sup>92</sup> This antiforeign obsession became evident in both GAA and Camogie Association policies; some members of the Camogie Association sought to prohibit camogie clubs and members from further involvement in the sport when they were found to engage in “foreign dance.”<sup>93</sup> The most notorious example of such extreme antiforeignism occurred in 1938, when Douglas Hyde, patron of the GAA and founder of the Gaelic League, was expelled from the GAA for having attended an international soccer match in his role as president of Ireland.<sup>94</sup>

89. Ní Fhaircheallaigh, “Corp Láidir agus Croi Glan,” *An Ráitheachán* (1936).

90. *Irish Peasant*, 5 May 1906, 8.

91. Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin, “Dancing on the Hobs of Hell: Rural Communities in Clare and the Dance Halls Act of 1935,” *New Hibernia Review* 9, no. 4 (2005): 9.

92. *Ibid.*, 9–18.

93. *Irish Press*, 24 Feb. 1940, 12.

94. Michael Mays, “‘Ireland of the Hearts’: The Ends of Cultural Nationalism and the Limits of Nationalist Culture,” *Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 22, no. 1

The influence of antforeignism campaigns on camogie became most evident through its relationship with women's hockey, the preferred team sport in many Protestant girls' schools such as Alexandra College, Dublin, whose club members had established the Irish Ladies' Hockey Union in 1894.<sup>95</sup> During the early years of camogie, hockey was not viewed as a threat, partly because it too was believed to be a Gaelic sport, albeit corrupted by anglicization. However, as the following passage published in the *Southern Star* suggests, hostility toward foreignism was rife even in the late 1920s:

The foreign equivalent of camoguidheacht is hockey. Hockey is very insipid beside camoguidheacht, but why is it more popular in our girls' colleges? . . . It is very hard to believe that our cailíní are so silly as to prefer an inferior game because the bat used is more finished than a camóg. If this is the reason—or one of the reasons—it is a difficulty soon got over. Some of our enterprising sports outfitters should put a nicely rounded, highly polished camóg on the market and see its effect.<sup>96</sup>

The 1934 Camogie Congress, despite opposition from Camogie Association president Mollie Gill, passed a motion that banned camogie players from participating in foreign games.<sup>97</sup> This action impinged on girls who played camogie as well as its rival sport, hockey; Seán O'Duffy expressed the view that it was "a crime that girls who should be playing the national game were playing hockey."<sup>98</sup> Again, Agnes O'Farrelly represented a more balanced attitude toward such antforeignism, believing that the exclusionist policy would only "be putting a barrier between the two associations, camogie and hockey," to the material detriment of camogie.<sup>99</sup> This was indeed the case: it

(1996): 5–6; Janet Egleson Dunleavy and Gareth W. Dunleavy, *Douglas Hyde: A Maker of Modern Ireland* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 402.

95. Irish Ladies' Hockey Union, *First Hundred Years, 1894–1994*, 8.

96. *Southern Star*, 8 Sept. 1928, 6.

97. *Irish Press*, 26 Feb. 1934, 3; *Connacht Tribune*, 3 Mar. 1934, 10; and 1928–38 *Yearbooks of the Camogie Association*, CACP; for information on Mollie Gill, see Sinéad McCoole, "Mollie Gill, 1891–1977: A Woman of Ireland," *History Ireland* 13, no. 2 (2005): 10–11.

98. *Irish Press*, 17 Apr. 1939, 9; 1938–54 *Yearbooks of the Camogie Association*, CACP.

99. *Sunday Independent*, 25 Feb. 1934, 9.

soon became apparent that Irish girls were choosing to play hockey rather than camogie.<sup>100</sup> The excessiveness of the new ban became clear when three camogie players in County Mayo were forbidden to participate in the game for six months after attending a hockey-club dance; the *Irish Independent* reported that they were “indignant” and that they “would continue to attend the dances.”<sup>101</sup> In the following year the Camogie Association responded to the threat posed by “foreign” hockey by imposing a six-month suspension on camogie players found to be playing the foreign game.<sup>102</sup>

This approach inevitably damaged camogie, and under pressure from the Dublin County Board the Camogie Association removed the ban on foreign games in 1939. However, the Ulster Camogie Council reacted against this move and maintained its hockey ban, refusing to play matches against counties that had lifted it. Within months, in its “determination to be Irish at all costs,” the Ulster Council, along with other detractors, had established its own rival “National Camoguidheacht Association.”<sup>103</sup> It took more than two years, and the input of GAA officials as mediators, to achieve amalgamation and the formation of a new All-Ireland Camogie Association.<sup>104</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Owing to the cultural-nationalist ideology so central to camogie’s origins and to a series of subsequent isolationist policies, the Camogie Association failed to foster relations with other women’s sporting associations in Ireland—thus curtailing its potential influence both as a sporting and as a feminist force. Although camogie faced adversity during its first four decades, it nevertheless represented a pioneering force in the women’s movement and in cultural nationalism. In comparison with the early development of camogie, the Ladies’ Gaelic Football Association was founded only in 1974, although teams had

100. *Irish Press*, 17 Apr. 1939, 9; 1938–54 *Yearbooks of the Camogie Association*, CACP.

101. *Irish Independent*, 31 Oct. 1934, 12.

102. *Ibid.*, 25 Feb. 1935, 13.

103. *Ibid.*, 18 Apr. 1939, 12; 5 Sept. 1939, 8; *Irish Press*, 28 Aug. 1939, 2.

104. *Irish Press*, 8 Dec. 1941, 5; 1938–54 *Yearbooks of the Camogie Association*, CACP.



been in existence for some years previously.<sup>105</sup> The Camogie Association, with its mixed feminist messages and clear-cut, if sometimes extreme, cultural-nationalist ideology, made sizeable advances in implementing a vision of a Gaelic sport for women, one offering women a sense of identity and purpose beyond the domestic sphere, while also providing them with community and health benefits. Camogie was a prime example of social capital, and in Agnes O'Farrelly's words it was "built as all great movements are built, on enthusiasm and voluntary work."<sup>106</sup> Establishing the sport was an act of feminist and cultural-nationalist defiance, but as camogie became more popular among young Irishwomen, and its members more embroiled in cultural-nationalist controversies, its potential as a feminist force faded away. As Mary Moran has noted, its development in Ireland was stunted in the early 1940s as World War II intensified.<sup>107</sup> The emigration of young Irishwomen in the postwar period nonetheless led to a new transnational phase in the evolution of camogie. By the late 1940s and early 1950s, with interest plateauing at home, these women reinvigorated the sport within growing Irish communities in cities across the United Kingdom and the United States.<sup>108</sup>

105. *Irish Independent*, 26 Mar. 1974, 10; Liston, "Gendered Field of Irish Sport," 245.

106. Ní Fhaircheallaigh, "Corp Láidir agus Croi Glan," *An Ráitheachán* (1936).

107. Moran, *Game of Our Own*, 79. For an overview of Irishwomen and emigration during the period in question, see Pauric Travers, "Emigration and Gender: The Case of Ireland, 1922–60," in *Chattel, Servant, or Citizen: Women's Status in Church, State, and Society*, ed. Mary O'Dowd and Sabine Wichert (Belfast: Queen's University of Belfast, 1995), 187–99.

108. *Sunday Independent*, 4 Dec. 1949, 8; 7 Jan. 1951, 8; *Connacht Tribune*, 20 May 1950, 5.