The popularity of Ireland as a travel destination increased gradually from 1760 onwards, and this naturally led to a concomitant increase in the number of travel books on this *terra incognita* (Hooper 1-3). Towards the end of the eighteenth century, visual images of Irish landscapes and cityscapes started to appear in pictorial guidebooks, and from 1820 ondrwards the number of drawings included in travel books increased dramatically. In the 1820s, various topographical travel books presented images of the scenic beauty of Ireland. In this context, Thomas Crofton Croker’s *Researches in the South of Ireland*, which was based on his travels around this area in 1812 and 1822 and published in 1824, is noted as a new type of publication in which the author describes his own travel experiences. The visual images included in this book also present some unique properties that made it attractive to the British readership. In fact, Croker’s travel book incorporates various elements that were later found in travel books on Ireland published in the 1830s and the early 1840s.

**1. Visual Images of Ireland and Travel Books**

A landmark three-volume travel book providing a comprehensive description of pre-famine Ireland was published between 1841 and 1843: *Ireland: Its Scenery, Character, &c.* This was a travel narrative rather than a travel guide and was compiled by Samuel Carter and his wife Anna Maria Hall on the basis of the experiences they had had during five tours of Ireland from 1825 onwards. The publication included almost 1,400
Tetsuko Nakamura

illustrations ranging from landscapes and cityscapes to sketches of the Irish people and their lives. No such visually entertaining travel book had ever been published before.

Since the late eighteenth century, visual images of Ireland had started circulating via various publications. John Malton’s drawings of Dublin scenery were compiled in a 1799 publication designed practically as a visual guide, *A Picturesque & Descriptive View of the City of Dublin*. Malton states that he drew all of the views in 1791, revising them until 1797 so that they “might be as perfect a semblance as possible of the original, at the time of the completion of the work” (i). This publication indicates that the main contemporary interest in Ireland lay in its architectural grandeur set in scenic beauty. The twenty-five images in the book, which was produced before the 1798 rebellion and the succeeding Union, all feature magnificent buildings in Dublin, although one of Stephen’s Green and another of a distant view of Dublin only show the buildings from a distance. Each drawing includes people walking or sitting around, establishing a familiar, everyday atmosphere.

Another publication to be noted is Jonathan Fisher’s 1795 pictorial guidebook, *Scenery of Ireland Illustrated in a Series of Prints of Select Views*, which consists of sixty picturesque country scenes from various parts of Ireland. It presents not only beautiful landscapes seen from afar but also some full views of waterfalls and rocks, and in addition various abbeys, castles, and great houses. Fisher had already published *Picturesque Tour of Killarney, Describing, in Twenty Views* in 1789, which featured Killarney, a popular tourist area since the mid eighteenth century. Focusing on the same types of sights and objects as those later featured in the 1795 publication, the twenty drawings in this visual guide show off the scenic beauty of the heart of Munster. These two books contrast clearly with Malton’s cityscape productions, although most of Fisher’s scenes, like Malton’s, include local people or tourists as part of the scenery.

Although both artists are well known for their visual representations of pleasant cityscapes and landscapes, they also produced some of indigenous workers. Malton produced a series of three prints, entitled *Irish Peasantry* (ca. 1790): “The Market,”
Visual Representations of Irishness with Special Reference to Croker’s *Researches in the South of Ireland* (1824)

which features a peasant couple with a car and a peasant with a horse on the way to or from the market, “The Turf Kish,” which shows a peasant woman unloading a turf kish from a car with a man measuring the turf, and “The Turf Footers,” which depicts several peasants stacking turf and transporting a kish of turf on a car. Fisher also includes in his *Picturesque Tour of Killarney* a drawing showing an indigenous Irishman chopping wood together with his family beside a cabin-like abode in a deserted landscape (15th view). The harshness of the workers’ lives can be discerned from these images, and the contrast between the Irishnesses derived from scenes of scenic beauty and those of the lives of Irish Catholics is regarded as a key to understanding the basic framework of Irish images toward the end of the eighteenth century.

Drawings of Irish landscapes inevitably reflected the sharp dichotomy between the ruling and ruled in the country. People seeking beautiful scenery started traveling to Killarney in increasing numbers in the late 1740s, and while they appreciated the beauty and sublimity of the area in aesthetic terms, they were also affected by the fear associated with the local agrarian protests (Gibbons 38-41). The tension between the big house and the rural poor fundamentally affected the depictions of Irish landscapes, which largely excluded the farmers who cultivated the land to support the domains. The Irish Catholics, associated as they were with violence and disturbance, were simply not in harmony with the landscapes they belonged to. The indigenous Irish in the landscape images are herdsmen and other laborers, whose lives are not, unlike those of farmers, essentially rooted in the domain (Dunne 47-48). This symbolically represents the unstable and uncertain status of the Irish in terms of politics, society and economy. Thus, Irish landscape images provide contexts that differ from those found in English landscape images, which include figures of farmers contributing to the domain as members of the community.

Travelers from the main island of Britain to Ireland were inevitably caught up in the political tension. Although they were outsiders, they had the social status and power of those in control. At the same time, they also had to depend in many ways on the local
people, including the Anglo-Irish landowners and Irish Catholics, and even the beggar peasants. Tourists simply could not travel without local support in such matters as transportation, lodging and sustenance. As Thomas Crofton Croker remarks in his 1824 travel book *Researches in the South of Ireland*, “travellers, any more than beggars, cannot always be chusers” (36). British travelers quickly attracted the local people’s attention, which meant they received hospitality on the one hand, but also became targets of exploitation. Their travel accounts inevitably reflect both the positive and negative aspects of the country, making them informative and attractive to British readers. Drawings of beautiful scenery and of the cultural activities and customs of the local people certainly make the travel books more attractive. In this context, the Halls’ *Ireland* can be regarded as the definitive travel book on Ireland; it benefited from previously published travel books, and had a great impact on British readers for the rest of the nineteenth century.

2. Croker’s *Researches in the South of Ireland*

The process leading to the production of the Halls’ publication started in 1820, when Thomas Cromwell’s *Excursions through Ireland* was published. This three-volume publication includes George Petrie’s sketches, and it was followed by similar publications like G.N. Wright’s series of guides, which started appearing in 1821, and J.N. Brewer’s *Beauties of Ireland*, which was published in 1825-26.

Compared with these topographical travel books, Croker’s *Researches*, which was published in the same period, is unique in providing a framework of personal travel narratives about Ireland. This publication includes nineteen one-page drawings of landscapes, many featuring ruins and castles, and many other smaller illustrations. Croker was born to a Protestant family in Cork, developed an interest in antiquities and the Irish language, and moved to London in 1818 at the age of 20 to work for the Admiralty. His *Researches* is his first book; it is based on his travels around the South in 1812 before he moved to London, and in 1822, when he traveled with two artists, Alfred Nicholson and his sister Marianne, who later became Croker’s wife. These two provided the drawings
for the book. Croker’s narrative is filled with historical and antiquarian information about the region, but it also includes many more personal descriptions about how they traveled around, what they encountered, and how they felt when communicating with Irish Catholics.

*Researches* begins with a statement on the importance of studying history to understand the present state of Ireland. Croker expresses his zeal to inform the British about the reality of their Sister Island and its national character, a character for which the Irish peasantry is mainly responsible. His purpose is thus clear: he wishes to focus on the history and antiquities of the south of Ireland, an area characterised by the manners and superstitions of the peasantry. He draws clear distinctions between the peasantries of England and Ireland:

The rough and honest independence of the English cottager speaks the freedom he has so long enjoyed, and when really injured his appeal to the laws for redress and protection marks their impartial and just administration: the witty servility of the Irish peasantry, mingled with occasional bursts of desperation and revenge – the devoted yet visionary patriotism – the romantic sense of honour, and improvident yet unalterable attachments, are evidences of a conquest without system, an irregular government, and the remains of feudal clanship, the barbarous and arbitrary organization of a warlike people. (2)

Croker’s critical views of the political and social systems of Ireland are here revealed, along with a somewhat imperial attitude towards the Irish peasantry, who were clearly difficult to control from the rulers’ point of view. However, Croker had already developed in his teens considerable interest in antiquities and folklore, collecting tales and legends, and in nurturing a close attachment to the indigenous people and their lives. While presenting views of Ireland that were agreeable to the ruling classes, Croker also drew attention to the Irish peasantry and tried to promote a better understanding of these
plebeians. His desire to act as a bridge between England and Ireland is clearly recognized, but this needs to be viewed in association with the series of agrarian rebellions known as the Rockite movement, which occurred in Munster between 1821 and 1824. Information on the present state of the peasantry in the south was certainly appreciated in the British context. This was also a time when British attention was focused on the possibility of Catholic emancipation (the Act of Emancipation passed in 1829), so the situation of the Irish peasantry was certainly a topical issue.

The threat of the Irish peasantry suggested at the beginning of *Researches* is conveyed in various ways in the drawings included in the work. One typical example is the view of Mallow by Marianne, which features Mallow Castle with St Anne’s Church on the left and wretched plebeian cabins in front (Fig. 1, 140f.). The contrast between the castle on the sunny hill and the miserable abodes shadowed by bushy trees symbolizes the dichotomy between the ruling and ruled. The social conditions characteristic of Ireland
are thus visually presented in this publication.

Another intriguing drawing is a view in Chapter Seven of the medieval castle in Castle Town Roche, now widely known as Blackwater Castle (Fig. 2, 134f.). This drawing by Alfred is certainly pleasing to English eyes as an example of the picturesque. However, it also conveys a more complicated message through its interaction with Croker’s text in Chapter Fifteen, which refers to a painting by Cork-born Nathaniel Grogan, Breaking Up of an Irish Fair (ca. 1780). This painting shows a scene viewed from the very same angle as Alfred’s drawing, but it produces a rather different atmosphere. Grogan focuses on some local Irish playing music and dancing in the shade of the crag at the back of the castle. Many plebeians are standing or sitting, enjoying the entertaining atmosphere, and others are taking care of their cattle; miserable abodes are also seen to the left. The general darkness in front is in stark contrast to the mountain ridges glowing in the evening light in the distance, and also to part of the castle standing out in the middle
against the dark blue sky. This arrangement clearly hints at a sense of energy revolving around the indigenous Irish and suggests the division between the ruling and ruled, and the potential for resistance and disturbances.

Croker’s reference to this painting appears in a section of the book dealing with his party’s visit to the source of the River Lee, the lake of Gougane Barra. This was a popular pilgrimage site in those days, where Irish pilgrims said a special set of prayers, hoping to derive benefits from the holy well. Inevitably, the lakeside became a tourist attraction offering pilgrims a fair-like atmosphere. This site in the heart of Munster attracted many Irish Catholics and reminded Croker of the fair featured in Grogan’s painting:

I [Croker] recollect having seen, in Cork, a painting by Grogan, (a native artist,) of the breaking up of an Irish fair, in which he has happily expressed the ceaseless motion of the musician’s fingers on such occasions by the introduction of a man holding a jug of porter to the piper’s lips, which he drinks without interruption to the dance. (281)

Superficially, this passage appears as a somewhat abrupt addition to the text intended to emphasize the character of the Irish people with their love of music, dancing and drinking in the context of the very Irish tradition of vising holy wells. However, the reference to Breaking Up of an Irish Fair reveals Croker’s awareness of the Irish situation and his recognition that the tension between the ruling and ruled made harmony impossible to maintain. The more harmonious drawing of the same site that appears earlier in the book is a further demonstration of Croker’s controlled representation of his visuo-narrative message. The surface representation agreeable to British readers is balanced by the skillfully presented interactions between the texts and visual images provided by local painters. The need Croker obviously felt to maintain a delicate balance between the two cultures is thus shown by his oscillating support of the British and Irish viewpoints.

Croker’s antiquarian and archaeological interest also supports the development of the narrative in this book. This feature of the publication should be viewed in the
context of the renewed interest in antiquarianism in Ireland that started in the 1820s, when the Royal Irish Academy resumed its antiquarian activities (O’Halloran 616-17). In fact, Croker’s own sketches of archaeological artifacts are scattered throughout the book, and the Irishness thus portrayed was the key to attracting British readers’ attention. Marianne’s one-page drawing of a druidical altar also has an impact. This shows one long oblong stone supported by two smaller stones and surrounded by magnificent ash trees; the stones were and still are situated in the demesne of Castle Mary in the village of Cloyne in East Cork (254 f.). Croker’s frequent references to round towers also add to the antiquarian atmosphere of the book, which is further emphasized by Marianne’s frontispiece featuring the village of Cloyne and its round tower (Fig. 3).

This image creates the impression that the village was once religiously prosperous but is now somewhat deserted, and arouses in the reader a nostalgic yearning for the past. The whole atmosphere is appropriate for a book intended to satisfy the archaeological interest of Britons, who viewed this area as remote and isolated. This effect is largely achieved by the depiction of the tower with its broken top and the ivy-like plants around it, all situated along a spacious but empty street. The tower with its missing top certainly looks like a ruin, but in fact it had only been damaged by a lightning strike “on the night of the 10th January, 1749” (243). Croker’s mischievous explanation of the facts disappoints
the reader’s expectations, which have been built up by the visual representation in the frontispiece. In addition, Croker describes the true situation in which Marianne sketched the tower: she was “surrounded by more than a hundred of the inhabitants, who flocked to the spot with a curiosity so great as scarcely to be credited, and, to use her own words, ‘closed on me with such overwhelming pressure, that I could scarcely draw either that or my breath’” (243). The tower still stands in Church Street near the center of the village and Cloyne Cathedral, and it is easy to imagine that Marianne attracted considerable attention from the local people as she sat sketching in the main street. She must have been acutely aware that tourists from England were an anomaly in the local community. While the visual images function as an effective vehicle for creating the wild and antiquarian atmosphere that is attractive to the British eye, the narrative occasionally reveals the reality of Croker’s party as objective reporters observing the indigenous Irish and their lives from the outside. The distance between the travelers and the local people, namely between the viewer and the viewed, is often humorously described, and the reader can humorously appreciate the discrepancies between the visual images and the accompanying narrative.

3. Images of Traveling in Ireland

In *Researches*, Croker’s awareness of himself as a traveler is quite clear, as symbolically shown by the sketch of a car, initialed H.K., in the second chapter where the travel narrative starts (Fig. 4, 32). This car, (the same type as those seen in Malton’s *Irish Peasantry*) is known as a chaise-maire, “an Irish cart with solid wooden wheels and a platform above the axle,” which is essentially used for carrying goods but is also good for six people to travel in on a mat or some straw (Williams 8). According to my research, this is the first illustration of people traveling on a car to appear in a travel book after the one included in John Bush’s *Hibernia Curiosa* (1769), a collection of letters from a Dublin gentleman to his friend in Dover (25). This eighteenth-century publication includes few visual images, making the illustration of the car all the more
significant. However, the image of the car and a rider on a horse is not at all realistic but rather schematic, making it contrast starkly with the graphic drawing in *Researches*, which effectively conveys the atmosphere of travelling in Ireland. The three travelers on the car are unlikely to be Croker, Alfred and Marianne, even though Croker was ten years younger than Alfred; perhaps they are a husband and wife with their son. There are no other drawings of people in the book. Before this publication, all of the visual images included in books of this kind had been landscapes and seascapes, or architectural and antiquarian representations. Small figures of people had long appeared in scenic drawings as an additional element; however, this sketch focuses only on the three travelers and the driver. According to the narrative, they had a problem with their first driver and had to find another driver and car; they then ended up in this car without springs. Even though they sat on straw, as expected on a chaise-marine, it took them three days to recover from the bruises they got (31-32). By quoting his conversation with the comical driver, Croker gives us a glimpse of the practicalities of traveling around Ireland.
An illustration of a car similar to the one in Croker’s *Researches* is attached to a four-page commentary on *Researches* in William Hone’s *Every-Day Book* (Fig. 5; II, cols. 239-40). This amply illustrated two-volume publication (1826-27) consists of curious and amusing accounts of sports, pastime, manners and various other subjects; Hone produced several similar publications, occasionally in combined form, in the 1820s and 1830s. In his commentary on *Researches*, which includes a long quote from Croker’s description of traveling by chaise-marine, Hone comments as follows:

In one of these machines [chaise-marines] Mr. Croker, with a lady and gentleman who accompanied him on his tour, took their seats. The car and horse were precisely of that description and condition in the engraving. Mr. W. H. Brooke painted a picture of this gentleman’s party, from whence he has obligingly made the drawing for the present purpose; the only alteration is in the travellers, for whom he has substituted a family on their removal from one cabin to another. (II, cols. 239-40).
Brooke’s illustration is a parody of the one in *Researches*: the family in the original has been replaced by a noisy Irish peasant family with a drunken husband and many little children in a satirical presentation of the Irish peasantry and the way they typically traveled. Hone adds, “The Irish ‘jaunting-car,’ the ‘jingle,’ the ‘noddy,’ and a variety of other carriages, which ply for hire in Dublin, are wholly distinct and superior vehicles” (col. 241). His suggestion is that the plebian form of transportation Croker’s party used identified them with the Irish peasantry; thus, the Irishness conveyed by *Researches* is not a favorable one. From the British point of view, Croker was a Cork-born Irish writer while, as evidenced by his reception in Cloyne, he was an England visitor from the Irish point of view. Croker’s in-between position is thus confirmed.

Between the publication of *Researches* and the end of the 1830s, very few drawings of travelers or local people were featured in travel books about Ireland. Only John Barrow’s *Tour round Ireland* (1836) and Leitch Ritchie’s *Ireland Picturesque and Romantic* (1837-38) included full-page drawings of travelers or indigenous Irish; all of these were drawn by
Cork-born Daniel Maclise, except for one anonymous image in Barrow’s book. His *Tour* is unique in using an image of people traveling on a jaunting car as the frontispiece, and an anonymous illustration of a chaise-marine inside; it also features one image of a family and two of groups of Irish peasants (Nakamura 43-48, 51-52). The frontispiece, entitled “An Outside Jaunting Car in a Storm,” shows a British man riding in a jaunting car in the rain with an indifferent driver and being chased by a group of beggar children (Fig. 6), while the chaise-marine image presents a traveler enjoying a talk with the driver. Interestingly, just after *Tour* was published, a review in *The Dublin Penny Journal* (1836) features the same frontispiece at the top of the first page (Review 369), and also presents two drawings of traveling parties in the middle (Fig. 7, 371). These two parties appear to be enjoying a pleasant time, suggesting that travel in jaunting cars was smooth and efficient; the speed of the car on the right is clearly shown. The journal adopts an Irish point of view in providing more agreeable images of travel in the country and humorously rebutting the negative impression of Irish tours created by Maclise’s frontispiece.

The attention paid to these images of traveling on a jaunting car was certainly associated with the flourishing car transportation business Charles Bianconi started in 1815. The local Clonmel area service expanded dramatically to the extent that he secured mail delivery contracts with the British and Irish post offices in 1832. References to Bianconi’s service are common in contemporary travel books and are generally favorable. *The Dublin Penny Journal*’s insertion of favorable images of jaunting cars should
be taken as a mark of Irish confidence in the reliability of the transportation system established by Bianconi. He had used jaunting cars with one horse before 1832, when he started using four-wheeled carriages with more than two horses; later he introduced longer four-wheeled carriages called “Fin McCools,” which accommodated up to twenty passengers (Hayes; Ryan 4-7; Williams 11-12).

Another image of a jaunting car carrying a British traveler surrounded by Irish beggars (as in Barrow’s frontispiece) eventually appears again in the Halls’ Ireland. This image was produced by C.H. Weigall and appears in the first chapter on Cork in the first volume, where it is the first image to feature people (Fig. 8, I, 7). It is an impressive image with its crowd of local Irish people, and it aptly demonstrates the significance of the jaunting car image in Irish travels and also of visual representations of people in travel books. The Halls’ three-volume publication contains many images of people, both in groups and on their own, but previously published travel books rarely included drawings of this type. In this context, the five one-page drawings Maclise had provided for Ritchie’s two-volume publication probably had a great impact on the Halls; each of the five features a young Irish woman in a different setting. The Halls’ Ireland actually included many of
the very same landscape drawings used in Ritchie’s *Ireland*, which certainly suggests how much the Halls appreciated and benefited from Ritchie’s work. They must have been encouraged by Maclise’s female figures to incorporate many images of people in their publication. The drawings Maclise produced for Barrow’s and Ritchie’s publications played an important role in directing attention to visual images of Irish people, although he contributed only two images of people to the Halls’ *Ireland*.

### 4. Conclusion

In the late eighteenth century, pictorial guidebooks of Ireland featured landscapes and cityscapes that were pleasing to the eyes of British readers. In the wake of the general sluggishness that followed the Union, the 1820s saw a dramatic increase in the publication of topographical and travel books including drawings of beautiful landscapes and archeological sites. Among these, Croker’s *Researches* was a unique publication in that it incorporated a personal travel narrative. His careful arrangements of texts and drawings show him to be a traveler and outsider. However, Hone satirically labels him an Irish writer close to the Irish peasantry and caricatures the drawing of travel by chaise-marine that appears in *Researches*. The commonly held visual image of traveling in Ireland was thus strongly associated with the chaise marine, and later, in the 1830s, with the jaunting car. *Researches* includes the first drawing of people in any travel book, a genre that had long been dominated by landscape drawings. Still in the 1830s, very few drawings of people were included in travel books, but the Halls’ three-volume travel narrative, which was published in the early 1840s, incorporated drawings of a wide variety of people. This powerful travel narrative with its numerous visual images of Ireland can be seen as the outcome of the various trends in travel-book writing since the late eighteenth century.

This article expands on some of the arguments presented in a paper entitled “Pluralism in Representations of Irishness in Travel Books in the Pre-Famine Era,” which I delivered
on October 11, 2014 at the symposium on “Images of Irish Cultures” during the 31st International Conference of the Japan Branch of the International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures (IASIL Japan). I wish to express my gratitude to those who attended the symposium for their insightful suggestions. I would also like to thank T.D. Minton for his helpful comments on my English in this article. This research is supported by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number 23520330.

References


Fisher, Jonathan. *Picturesque Tour of Killarney, Describing, in Twenty Views*. Dublin:
Tetsuko Nakamura

Published by L. White for the Author, 1789.

---. Scenery of Ireland Illustrated in a Series of Prints of Select Views: Castles and Abbies. London: Published by J. Debrett for the Author, Dublin, 1795.


