

Most Filthy Queanes': Analysing Female Brewers in Early Modern Dublin, c. 1500–1700

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ABSTRACT: Barnabe Rich was an English army Captain who served in the wars in the Low Countries and later in the colonization of Ulster. Born around 1540, in the later years of his life he moved to Dublin where he focused several of his writings on the conditions of that city and Ireland as whole. In 1610 he wrote perhaps his most notorious work, the *New Description of Ireland*, where he gave quite a scathing account of Dublin alewives, declaring:

I will speake onelie of the riffe-raffe, the most filthy queanes, that are knowne to bee in the Countrey, (I meane those Huswiues that doe use selling of drinke in Dublin, or elsewhere) commonly called Tavrner-keepers, but indeed filthy and beastly alehousekeepers: I will not meddle with their honesties [...] they are in the manner of their life and living to bee detested and abhorred.¹

This paper will compare Rich's three works to other contemporary Irish sources including the *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin the Dublin City Pipe Water Accounts of 1680 and 1681* and the *Dublin City Cess Book of 1647–1649*, to ascertain if there was any truth to his statements. Furthermore, it will compare these accounts to Judith Bennett's case study of England to determine whether Dublin female brewers were being pushed out like their counterparts there. Finally, it will collate this data to reach meaningful conclusions about the lived reality of brewsters in Dublin at the intersections of gender, brewing, and power.

In England, what was once a cottage industry of women brewing small batches of ale to satisfy their own households or to sell to their neighbours, especially in rural areas, became increasingly professionalized and industrialized according to scholars like Judith Bennett, Theresa Vaughan and Michelle M. Sauer.² As a result, women were pushed out of brewing. Bennett found this reflected in the legal texts, for example a 1540 ordinance from Chester that banned women ages 14 to 40 from selling ale.³ This was repeated in later doctrines and according to Bennett, was 'firmly' enforced.⁴ Importantly, perhaps as a result of this increased competition between men and women, female brewers came to be vilified not only in these legal ordinances but also in art and literature.

From John Skelton's *Turning of Elynour Rummyng*, to William Langland's Beton the Brewster in *Piers Plowman* to John Lydgate's *Ballad on an Ale-seller*, alewives were represented as selling befouled and adulterated ales in

illegal measures and generally lying and seducing their way through the literary world of late medieval and early modern English society.⁵ Not only were they depicted as purveyors of the mortal sins of gluttony and lust, they were also believed to be wholly incapable of brewing. They were, as a group, cheaters, liars, and completely untrustworthy – selling beer in illegal measures and doctoring their ale with various nefarious ingredients; alewives could even be associated with witchcraft in these stories. It is within this context that Rich must be read. The attitudes in Ireland might very well have been quite different, as this paper will investigate. According to Bennett, 'the cultural media of late medieval and early modern England suggested that all the problems associated with brewing- cheating, foul products, disorderly houses, and a host of other uncontrollable disruptions- were caused not by the trade itself but by the presence of women in the trade'.⁶ In addition to those literary depictions this paper has previously discussed, the cheating alewife is also presented in other forms. A striking example can be found in St. Laurence's Church in Ludlow where a misericord displays a naked alewife being dragged to hell. Cheating alewives in hell are also depicted in Doom paintings of Holy Trinity Coventry and a carving in Norwich Cathedral boasts a nude alewife perched in a wheelbarrow pushed by a demon. This negative portrayal of alewives was commonplace in the English context.

In Ireland, William Palmer contended that 'English observers often blamed the wives of Irish rebels for inciting their husbands to rebellion, for attempting to raise troops in Scotland and on the continent, for engaging in diplomatic activities, and for being generally antithetical in attitude toward a civil government'.⁷ Therefore, Palmer argued, when the English became more aggressive in Ireland, and developed their increasingly violent policies, they included women and 'felt justified in including them'.⁸ Palmer argued that the English fused their racial prejudices with their misogyny and concluded that women were the reason that Ireland was so hard to rule.⁹ He cited examples of Sir Gerald's McShane's account of the dangerous Lady Ellis, blamed for instigating the O'Conor rebellion, and Dame Janet Eustace as 'chief stirrer' of rebellion, among many others.¹⁰ English observers also labelled Irish women as promiscuous and therefore disorderly. Palmer cited multiple examples of these arguments, including Tilady Dowling, Edmund Tremayne, Queen Elizabeth and Henry VIII.¹¹ He contended that 'the inability to resist the temptations of alcohol, suggested, much like promiscuity, the inability to control one's desires'.¹² A detailed consideration of

alcohol consumption, gender, and power is beyond the scope of this paper, however, this topic will be addressed in significant depth in a forthcoming monograph.

The conception of blaming women for male violence was a centuries old tool of misogyny used throughout the corpus of medieval and early modern text in Europe. Importantly, it was also used by Irish authors. For example, Gormlaith, once wife of Brian Boru, was blamed in the majority of literary texts for the Battle of Clontarf. In the early modern period, Geoffery Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Eirinn* as well as the *Cath Cluna Tarbh*, both used Gormlaith as the cause for this battle, echoing sentiments from medieval works like the *Cogdab Gael re Gaillaibh* and *Njal's Saga*.¹³ Even when not blamed on Gormlaith, the Battle of Clontarf is still blamed on a female figure in Meredith Hammer's 1633 *Chronicle of Ireland*, whereby it is the 'wife of Merchant', who caused the violence.¹⁴ Scholars like Flavin echoed these sentiments with regards to English writers in Ireland, specifically Rich, contending, 'neither the political nor gender significance of such comments should be overemphasized, since they clearly reflect popular male discourse, both in England and Europe, during this period'.¹⁵

Thus, there are two significant strands of literary tropes at play when considering Rich; the first is the tendency of English authors to vilify alewives and the second is of English observers in Ireland to place the blame for male violence at the feet of women and to label Irish women more generally as lewd and promiscuous. It is imperative to understand Rich within this literary intersection when analysing and contextualizing the charges he lays at alewives in Ireland. Particularly when considering if these reflect any sort of lived reality.

In Rich's *New Description of Ireland*, the first in a series of works about the Irish people this paper will consider, he dedicated a decent portion to a discussion about Dublin alewives. It is critical to first briefly address Rich's strong Protestant bias against Irish Catholics and indeed, Irish customs, dress and mannerisms that is keenly apparent in his writings and may have been reflected in his discussions of alewives. Rich was blatantly hostile and stated that he 'wished that the Irish would submit themselves to the obedience of our English Laws'.¹⁶ While Rich did take pains to declare that he never hated Catholics themselves, merely their religion, this sentiment did not do much to mitigate his bias. For example, he declared that, 'the Pope himselfe with al his *Cardinals* to be hereticks, the brood of *Antichrist*, and the ministers of *Hell* and damnation'.¹⁷ Further down in his diatribe he declared, that harlots, publicans, and blasphemers were more likely to 'obteyne grace' than 'those holy hypocrites' because they affirm their faith and do not feel remorse.¹⁸ Therefore, it is clearly apparent that Rich held substantial biases against Catholics and perhaps Irish people more generally.

As was seen in the introductory quote, Rich held alewives in contempt and he spent some substantial

portion of his treatise on these women. Specifically, in Dublin, he contended that the selling of ale was,

[...] a Quotidian commodity, that hath vent in every house in the Towne, in every day in a weeke, at every house in the day and in every minute of the house: these is no merchandise so veniable, it is the very marrow of the commonwealth of Dublin: the whole profit of the Towne stands upon Ale-houses, and the selling of Ale [...].¹⁹

Indeed, Rich is making it clear that the entire town of Dublin's economy is based on the selling of ale. It is also important to note that Rich is talking about ale, and not beer; beer which would have been more commonly brewed in England. So he is very much declaring that it is specifically ale that is ubiquitous in Dublin at this time, and that this ale is what is supporting the economy. Rich also argued that even though this was so important, and indeed so common in Dublin, that 'the Cittizens a little to dignifie the title, as they use to call every Pedler a Merchant, so they call every Ale-house a tavern'. Implying here that Irish people, most particularly Dubliners, did not have some sort of hierarchy within the brewing trade, perhaps no way of controlling who and what was brewing and to what effect. There were not clear designations on sorts of establishments and this was a source of difficulties, he argued. Rich also contended that

this free Mart of ale-selling in Dublyne, is prohibited to none, but that it is lawfull for every Woman (be the better or be the worst) either to brewe or else to sell Ale. The better sort, as the Aldermens Wives, and the rest that are of better abilitie, are those that do brew, and looke how many householder there are in Dublyne, so many Ale-Brewers there be in the Towne, for every Householder's Wife is a Brewer.²⁰

So not only are there so many alehouses throughout the city of Dublin, and not only is the backbone of the city's economy based on the ale trade, but the majority of these brewers are female. Indeed, 'every Householders Wife is a Brewer'.

Beer is also mentioned in Rich's text, so he is very clearly making a distinction between the two beverages. While there are so very many ale brewers, 'almost as many in number as there dwelling houses', the number of beer brewers is apparently quite small in comparison, some three or four in total.²¹ In Early Modern Ireland, while beer was making in-roads, in particular with newly arrived English colonists and military, ale was still exceedingly popular.²² According to Fewer, home-brewed ale remained the popular drink of Kilkenny, throughout the second half of the sixteenth century and early seventeenth, and this was mirrored in Waterford.²³ This also appears to be the case in Dublin. However, if Rich is to be believed, the amount of brewers making beer in Ireland in 1610 was still quite small in comparison to ale; and these brewers were also still women.

This large number of breweries and the idea that every woman was a brewer, might be confirmed by a few primary source documents. However, in contrast to his assertions that there was no one was controlling who was brewing, a 1555 account in the *Dublin Assembly Rolls* seems to attempt to do just that. It stated that the Alderman of every ward and one constable are to take order of 'howe many shall keep ale houses in this cittye and subbarbs' and that these men shall appoint those who sell in common taverns and none shall be allowed to sell but those who have been appointed as such or they will be fined and expelled from the city.²⁴ Furthermore, in 1565, according to Gilbert, the increase in Dublin taverns spurred the Mayor of Dublin, Nicholas Fitz-Simons, to issue a proclamation, that no woman shall sell wine, ale, or beer within the confines of the city, unless they 'keep a sign at their door'.²⁵ These measures may not have been successful, however, and that is why Rich made his arguments. For example, according to Gilbert, 'in the reign of Charles II there were 1180 ale-houses and ninety-one public brew-houses' in Dublin with its estimated 4,000 population, so if this number is accurate the market was certainly flooded.²⁶

The amount of breweries might also be supported in the *Dublin Assembly Records* with regards to a payment called the Tolboll. On April 21st, 1201, King John of England decreed that the ale brewers of Dublin were to pay to the Abbey of St. Thomas the Martyr 'the toll of ale and mead which he has by the custom from the taverns in Dublin'.²⁷ This Tolboll was a gallon and a half of the 'best ale and mead and as much of the second'.²⁸ In 1524 this proclamation was contested; Thomas the Abbot put a bill of complaint against the Mayor and bailiffs of Dublin before the King's Commissioners of Ireland. According to the Abbot, the Mayor of Dublin and the bailiffs were hindering the collection of this Tolboll. However, the arguments made against the levying of this Tolboll were,

[...] that by the all simylytude att the tyme of the sayd Abbots graunt conseryng the Tolboll ther was certayn breweres that brewyd for the hold cittie which brewyd thirty or forty bussellis att a brew after the co[stom] of London and other wheres, by reyson wherfor the shold pay Tolboll, and now none within this cittie of Dublin brew nott past two bussellis, four other eight att the furdest att a brew, which ys spent for more in parte in ther housis and soo nott in the case that owght to pay Tolboll.²⁹

The commissioners deemed this a fair request and changed the decree so that only those who brewed 'to a sum of 16 bussellis' at a brew to be sold' would pay the custom of Toboll.³⁰ It is possible to infer that in previous generations there were a few breweries responsible for making all the ale in Dublin, whereas in 1524, there are many more breweries producing much less product and so the custom of Tolboll was becoming an undue burden. That this was deemed acceptable by the commissioners supports the claim of many breweries. This is perhaps the

opposite of what was occurring in England, where Bennett contended that with the rise of the status and occupation of brewing after the Black Death brewing became concentrated in fewer, male hands.³¹

The *Dublin Directory 1647–1706*, a Dublin City Council Project, is an invaluable online compilation of early modern sources found at the Dublin City Library & Archive and the Royal Irish Academy. Of particular interest for this paper were two sources, *the Dublin City Pipe Water Accounts of 1680 and 1681* and the *Dublin City Cess Book of 1647–1649*. While these are not complete records, it is possible to utilize them as a possible gauge for the broader brewing conditions in Dublin.

The *Dublin City Cess Book of 1647–1649* contains the payments levied by the Dublin City Assembly on the people of Dublin and its liberties for the weekly cess, that was a loan to Cromwellian Governour of Dublin, Colonel Michael Jones, in the amount of some 463 pounds to supply his occupying army.³² Importantly for the purposes of this article, it also contained weekly payments to the Dublin City Assembly for 'impost for grinding of malt and retailing of ale for the period 3 March 1647- 5 August 1648'.³³ *The Dublin City Pipe Water Accounts of 1680 and 1681* were detailed listings of those who had acquired water for use in brewing- literally 'water for ale brewing' or just simply 'brewing'. This seems to indicate a continuing popularity in ale sales in the capital.

A search for the term 'brewing' returned 31 entries from the *Dublin City Water Pipe Accounts 1680 and 1681*. Of these 31 entries eight were repeat entries: Richard Kelly, Edward Jukes, John Hawkshaw, John Kelly, Lewis Desmineries, Luke Lowther, Widow Malone (or Mallone) and Widow Weldon each had entries in both 1680 and 1681. The remaining entries represented distinct individuals, making for a grand total of 23 different people in what remains of these accounts. Of these six were women, all of whom were widows: Widow Malone, Widow Weldon, Widow Surdeville, Widow Toole, Widow Devine, and 'Alexander Norton's Widow' are all listed as paying for 'water for ale brewing' of £1 10s, with the exception of Widow Malone who in 1681 paid £1 15s. So that makes for 26% female, 74% male, which is not in keeping with Rich's arguments of women brewing and selling. However, as is the case in England and elsewhere, women were often subsumed under their husband's or father's name, even if he had naught to do with the brewing and it is quite likely that the same thing occurred here. For example, Luke Lowther and Lewis Desmineries are both listed as Alderman; and it was Alderman who Rich specifically mentioned as having wives who brewed. Unfortunately, while this account can't be used to determine how many women were brewing, it perhaps can give clues as to how many single women were remaining in brewing. Interestingly, all of the widows listed, were written as brewing ale.³⁴

Furthermore, of these 31 total entries, 16 specified ale and the remaining 15 did not, which could mean beer or

ale. A search for the term 'beer' in these records comes up empty. A further search for 'ale' returns 99 entries, of which 15 were from those Pipe accounts and the remaining 84 coming from the *Cess*. These *Cess* accounts are all listed for, 'weekly payment of impost for grinding of malt and retailing of ale to 5 August 1648'. Of these 14 were women, five widows and the remaining nine likely single-women. This accounts for 17% of the total of the *Cess*. However, just like the Pipe Rolls, this represents a minimum number, as again, women were likely subsumed under their husbands or kin.³⁵

Another point of interest is of the women listed, some 20 in total of both accounts, 11 were widows and nine were listed on their own, perhaps single women. However, it is important to note that some of the women in this listing also had impressively large impost fees, for example: Widow Hanlon and Widow Fitzwilliams were listed as 6 pounds each, which might represent a large or well frequented alehouse or brewery. This is in comparison to say Ellen Miller who paid 12s 6d or Elizabeth Ussher who paid £2 2s.³⁶

Judith Bennett argued in England, 'when women brewed, it was a humble employment, offering little prestige and little profit [...] compared to the sorts of work available to men, it was a poor option indeed'.³⁷ She also noted a shift in married couples who brewed, as women, and particularly single women, came to be pushed out, 'at some point married brewsters became helpful wives of brewers'.³⁸ Bennett contended that women stopped being brewers themselves and merely aided their husbands as brewing became a profitable and desirable occupation for men.³⁹

This is in contrast to Dublin where many more single women were brewing for profit than in places in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. For example, in Stockton in the late 13th century single-women and widows accounted for some 20% of the market, this decreased to 13% in the early fourteenth century, 11% in decades after the Black Death and a mere 6% in the early fifteenth century. Bennett contended that, 'by the second half of the fifteenth-century, commercial brewing by single-women and widows had virtually disappeared'.⁴⁰ An additional example is Norwich where they went from 16% in 1288 to 7% in 1399.⁴¹ This varied across areas, with places like York still having one out of ten brewers whose status was that of an unmarried woman in the 1560's.⁴² This however does not compare to the amount of women still brewing in Ireland a further century down the line. It is clear that Dublin, and indeed Ireland more generally, had a vastly different brewing industry than many areas in England and that Rich's assertion of so many women brewers is likely to have been accurate.

For the remainder of this paper Rich's misogynistic diatribes towards female brewers will be analysed to ascertain if these ideas were commonplace in Ireland, or even accepted. As with his fellow countrymen, Rich associated women and brewing with cheating, drunkenness, uncleanness, and above all, with what they

believed to be the ills of prostitution. The consideration of drunkenness and uncleanness is beyond the scope of this current paper which will instead focus on cheating and his accusations of prostitution.⁴³

Rich stated that, 'it is as rare a thing, to finde a house in Dubline without a Taverne, as to find a Taverne without a Strumpet'.⁴⁴ Rich continues with this sentiment throughout his discussion of alewives in Dublin stating, '[...] then they have a number of young idle housewives, that are both verie loathsome, filthie and abhominable, both in life and manners, and there they call *Taverne-keepers*, the most of them knowne harlots'.⁴⁵

The *Calendar of the Ancient Records of Dublin* perhaps echoes Rich's assessments of his perceived problems of prostitution in an entry dated to 1574. This declared that the city was 'exceedingly infected with the horrible vice of whoredom' and therefore they passed a strict ordinance against any women who 'shall defile her body with filthy fornication'.⁴⁶ Rich has a very clear misogynistic bent against any kind of prostitution.

The possible link between beer, ale and prostitution was acutely addressed in a by-law in Waterford in 1603 which banned women and girls from selling ale, beer, wine and 'aquavite' and this was specifically created because of concerns surrounding women and their apparent link to undesirable and nefarious behaviour,

This lawe was made for the insuing consideracions; ffirst for avoyding whordome, Secondlie to avoyde the consealment of goods stollen, Thyrdlie for drying away of unprofitable dwellers, and lastlie for strengthning of the Citie ffor then that all the retaylers within the Citie must be hereafter men servants and no women servants.⁴⁷

The Dublin Corporation also moved against prostitution within its confines, but it did not take the same perhaps drastic steps of banning all women from selling or brewing ale or beer. Instead, in 1565 it issued the following, '[...] ale by dussens to un-married women to be sold, and all of them that kepethe any hores in their houses, contrarie to the laws in that case provided, and to punishe those unmarried women that shalbe found with child', by banishment and expulsion from the city.⁴⁸ 1584 saw a similar measure targeting single-women who sold ale, using 'idle and evyll disposed women'.⁴⁹ Furthermore, in 1616 it issued orders to its Aldermen to report back the single women in their areas selling ale because again, there was a suspected link, between single women selling ale and prostitution.⁵⁰

Rich also alludes, much as Skelton did in his *Tunning of Eleanour Rummyng*, to unsavoury business practices and cheating customers. He stated that

[...] these doe take in both Ale and Beere by the Barrel from those that do brue, and they sell it forth againe by the potte, after twoe pence for a Wine quart. And this (as I take it) is an principall case for

the toleration of many enormities; for the gaine that is gotten by it must needs be great, when they buy mault in *Dublyn*, at haulfe the price that it is sold for at London, and they sell their drinke in Dublyn, at double the rate that they doe in London: and this commoditie the Aldermens wives and the rest of the Women-brewers do find to sweet, that the maister Mayor and his bretheren are willing-er to winke at, and to tolerate with those multitude of Ale-houses, that themselves do even known to be the very Nurseries of Drunkenness, of all manner of Idlennesse, of whordome, and many other vile abominations.⁵¹

Cheating alewives were a common anxiety in medieval Europe. Bennett found many examples of this sort of behaviour as indicated in the English records. So much so that it is likely that it was common, though perhaps inadvertent; for example, not having access to the proper cup sizes as per regulation, so using whatever containers happened to be around. However, there were also blatant examples of this sort of cheating: a brewster called Alice in 1364 unabashedly cheated her customers by selling them ridiculously false amounts of ale: she added 1½ inches of pitch to the bottom of an unsealed quart measure thus making them so 'severely false that even her six quarts didn't add up to a gallon'.⁵²

There were also certainly anxieties surrounding cheating in Ireland as well that date back to the Middle Ages. An *Ordinance of the Common Council of the City of Dublin* dating from the early 14th century gave a penalty of 20s for any woman brewer caught making ale with straw.⁵³ A 1450 Act Parliament in Ireland by Henry VI prohibited the sale of wine, ale, or other liquors, unless in the king's measure.⁵⁴ This was followed by an ordinance in 1455 that stated that all women selling ale in Dublin must do so again after the 'king's measure'.⁵⁵ 1470, 1480, 1483, and 1556–57 all saw similar regulations.⁵⁶

It is important to note that it is not only alewives who bore the brunt of the accusations of cheating and lying both by the English sources and Rich himself. James Davis explored the late medieval and early modern distrust of victuallars, brewers, bakers, and millers, as a whole.⁵⁷ However, unlike bakers and other victuallars, Rich's attacks against female brewers, like those of Skelton and Langleland, do use specific gendered insults and misogyny, which differs greatly from his assessment of men.

But, unlike his English counterparts, Rich's writing was received so poorly that he was compelled to write an apology. This provides a fascinating insight into the concepts of gender, beer, ale and power in Early Modern Ireland, because, while this apology text was written by Rich, it addresses the accusations that allegedly were made to him by the people of Dublin. Indeed, he must have angered some powerful men because he addressed this work directly to the Lord Deputy of Ireland, among other knights and barons. In this 1612 work *he stated*,

haue bin diuers times it cited by my friends, amongst the rest by some Aldermen of *Dublin*, to write an *Apology* (as they tear med it) wherby to satisfie some cittizens & others, that were much offended with my booke intituled. *A New description of Ireland* [...]⁵⁸

Most importantly for the purposes of this paper, however, is his attempt at an apology and explanation for his statements surrounding alehouses and alewives, to which he devoted a significant portion. However, instead of apologizing outright, he tried to support his earlier arguments by citing examples of others who also railed against them, notably, 'most reuerent and worthie magistrat, the Lord chiefe *Barrone* of his maiesties Exchequer in *Ireland*' and 'a learned doctor likewise, that openly exclaimed at the abomination that was vsed in those multitude of *Alehouses*'.⁵⁹

Rich is trying to save face by citing other people who agree with him, but he is forced to backpedal in some other areas of his arguments. Perhaps his most grievous offense was insulting Aldermen's wives. He also reiterates his position that some Aldermen's wives did brew ale for resale, and he wonders why this was such a bad thing to say, given that it is true, declaring, that brewing 'be longes to good huswifery, that euery wise womanne is to vnder take'.⁶⁰ A distinction he made no effort to make previously, but one he is almost forced to make now. He tried to make a distinction between these honest women and those who do so under pretense and keep filthy houses that are 'shamefull to be spoken of' and this is what offends him.

He declared that he was aggravated and harassed because of these statements about Aldermen's wives, in particular, by a 'femall creature' as he referred to the woman.⁶¹ *He blames the whole incident on this woman who hath forgotten to blush*, who,

[...] was that amongst the wholl assembly, beeganne to picke quarrelles both at me and my booke, belyng and slaundering both it and me, with such false and vntrue reportes, that a number of those that had neuer seene the booke it selfe, beleueed all to bee true that shee reported. And being thus caryed from hand to hand I was brought into a generall obloquie throughout the whol ci tie of *Dublyne*, but especially amongst the citizens wiues, a mongst the which there bee a number of graue, wise, and sober women [...]⁶²

Rich blamed the backlash of his book on a woman and the rest of Dublin simply didn't read the book and were taken in by her 'lies'. This, as was examined previously, is a good example of the trope of feminization of violence or discord.

As for the women of Dublin, here Rich seems to do an about-face from his previous book, though he declares that was not the case at all and that he was merely calling out the liars from before. Indeed he declared,

I protest it confidently, and I speake it from my heart, I neuer heard women les infamed or misse-reported, in any citty or towne wheresoeuer I haue trauallyd: so that if *Thucidides* rule be true, that those wo men are to be accounted most honest, that are least spoken of, I say the citizens wyues of *Dublyne*, may march in equall ranke with those women that are least steyned or misreputed.⁶³

Dublin women on the whole were honourable and true and it is only the liars and cheats that he has an issue with. Another distinction he had not made previously. He continued to reiterate that there was nothing wrong with women who brew ale, so long as they were honest. He also stated that he viewed alehouses and victualing houses to be a necessary part of life.⁶⁴ Again making the distinction,

these typling houses by honest housholders, and not by these knowne strumpets, that vnder the colour of selling ale, doe liue in that loathsomnesse of life, too shamefull to bee spoken of.⁶⁵

Following this, Rich goes on to defend his accusations against bakers, wherein he reiterated his original stance, stating that bakers were the only thing worse in the city of Dublin than the 'filthie alehouses'.⁶⁶ So, as with his previous work he also attacked these bakers.

In his final work on the Irish, Rich returns to discussing ale and alewives, though not to the extent he previously had. Here, he spent a decent portion discussing prostitution, though, he confessed, he did not know any dishonest women, but that, '...the trade is become to be so vniuersall, that they cannot thriue the one by the other'.⁶⁷ This reflected the anxiety surrounding prostitution. However, what is interesting, is that previously, Rich lamented the costs of ale and declared that alewives were swindling customers, but now he stated, that this 'plenty of harlots' enabled a man to have 'his pot of Ale, his pipe of Tobacco, and his pocky whore, and all for his three pence'.⁶⁸

In conclusion, many of the statements made by Rich with regard to the amount and ubiquitous nature of alehouses and female brewers seems to be verified by the other primary source accounts. It is clear that women were brewing in Dublin, in much larger amounts, for a much longer time period than what was happening in London and England generally. It seemed Ireland had a female dominated market or a larger market share of female brewers and sellers than what Judith Bennett's study found in England. Indeed, it is clear that women were brewing for commercial purposes well into the 17th century whereas in places in England they had all but been completely pushed out by this time.

Furthermore, Rich's statements, which reflected an English mentality about alewives, were directly challenged, so much so that he was forced to write an apology. Though he did not back down completely, and did try to frame it as though he had meant only those liars and cheats, he made

no such distinction in his initial writings, so it is likely that this was because his wholly negative ideas about alewives were not as welcome in Dublin as they were in his native England.

Finally, it is evident that the intersections of brewing, gender, and power were remarkably different in Ireland, particularly in Dublin, than they were in England. Even though Dublin was under English control in the Early Modern period, it clearly retained its own ideologies and economic system with regards to brewing. As to why this might be the case is the topic of this author's on-going research. In any event, it is certainly clear that female brewers in Ireland perhaps faced a very different legal and social environment than those in England.

About the author

Christina Wade completed her PhD entitled 'Gendered Symbolism as a Medium to Negotiate Power as Evidenced in the Furnished Viking Burials of Ireland' at Trinity College Dublin in 2017. She has launched Braciatrix.com, a project devoted to an academic, but accessible to the general public, study of beer and brewing history with an aim to create a series of monographs. Her central research interests are gender, particularly how it relates to power, burial practices, the history and archaeology of beer and brewing, and more generally, Viking and medieval history.

Notes

1. Barnabe Rich, *A Description of Ireland* (London: Thomas Adams, 1610), p. 11.
 2. Theresa A. Vaughan, 'The Alewife: Changing images and bad brews', *AVISTA Forum Journal* 21 (2012), pp. 34-41; Judith Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World 1300-1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996); Michelle M. Sauer, *Gender in Medieval Culture*, (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015).
 3. Bennett, *Ale*, pp. 142-143.
 4. *Ibid.* from her examination of Chester City Record Office, First Assembly Book, AB/1 Folio 70.
 5. It is also important to note that these were written in different centuries and thus represent various contexts and shifts in views of alewives. The message, though, remains similar. See John Skelton, 'The Tunning of *Elynour Rummyng*', in Marie Loughlin, Sandra Bell, and Patricia Brace (eds.) *The Broadview Anthology of Sixteenth-Century Poetry and Prose* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2012), pp. 1-8; William Langland, Piers Plowman, Elizabeth Robertson and Stephen Shepard (eds) (New York: Norton, 2006) John Lydgate, 'Ballad on an Ale-Seller', Henry Noble MacCracken (ed.) *The minor poems of John Lydgate edited from all available mss. With an attempt to establish the Lydgate Canon* (London: Oxford University Press, 1920-1934).
 6. Bennett, *Ale*, p. 151.
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7. William Palmer, 'Gender, Violence, and Rebellion in Tudor Early Stuart Ireland', *The Sixteenth Century Journal*. 23 (1992), pp. 699-712, 699.
8. Palmer, *Gender*, p. 699.
9. Palmer.
10. Palmer, p. 700 cf.
11. Palmer, p. 707-708.
12. Palmer, p. 709.
13. See Christina Wade, *Contextualizing Gormlaith: Conceptions and Portrayals of an Early Medieval Irish Queen* (M.Phil, Trinity College Dublin, 2012).
14. Wade, *Contextualizing*, p. 57.
15. Susan Flavin, *Consumption and Culture in Sixteenth Century Ireland*, (Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2014), p. 228.
16. Rich, *New Description*, p. 32.
17. Barnabe Rich, *A True and Kinde Excuse written in defence of that booke, intituled A new Description of Ireland*, (London: Thomas Adams, 1612), p. 14.
18. Rich, *Excuse*, p. 16.
19. Rich, *New Description*, p. 70.
20. Rich.
21. Rich, p.71.
22. The consideration of ale, beer and women outside of Dublin is beyond the scope of this paper, but it is clear that women were also brewing beer in Ireland as evidenced in the 1641 depositions among other sources, particularly within the plantations. There is also a critical element here relating to ethnicity and these beverages: notably concepts of 'Irishness' linked to ale with beer being linked to the English. These topics will be considered in more depth in this author's forthcoming monograph.
23. Greg Fewer, 'The Brewster in Medieval and Early Modern Kilkenny and Waterford', *Ossory Laois and Leinster* 6 (2015), pp. 55-102, 34.
24. J.T. Gilbert, *Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin, in the possession of the municipal corporation of that city*. Vol. 1 (Dublin: J. Dollard, 1889), p. 446
25. J.T. Gilbert, *A History of the City Of Dublin* Vol. 1, Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1978), p. 150.
26. Gilbert, *History*, p. 153.
27. Gilbert, *Calendar*, Vol. 1, p. 166.
28. Gilbert, p. 179.
29. Gilbert, p. 181.
30. Gilbert, p. 182.
31. Bennett, *Ale*, p. 47.
32. 'Sources for the Dublin Directory 1647-1706', in *Dublin Directory 1647-1706*
33. <http://databases.dublincity.ie/1647/sources.php> [Accessed 27 Jan 2018].
34. 'Sources'.
35. 'Full Text Search' in *Dublin Directory 1647-1706* http://databases.dublincity.ie/1647/freesearch_out.php [Accessed 27 Jan 2018].
36. 'Full Text Search'.
37. 'Full Text Search'.
38. Bennett, *Ale*, p. 147.
39. Bennett.
40. Bennett.
41. Bennett, p. 51.
42. Bennett, p. 183-184.
43. Bennett, p. 51.
44. This will be discussed in some depth in this author's forthcoming monograph. See also: Amanda Flather, *Gender and Space in Early Modern England*. (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2007); Barbara Hanawalt, *Of Good and Ill Repute: Gender and Social Control in Medieval England*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998); Kevin Kearns, *Dublin Pub Life and Lore: An Oral History*. (ebook) (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2014).
45. Rich, *New Description*, p. 70.
46. *Ibid.*, p. 71.
47. J. T. Gilbert, *The Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin in possession of the municipal corporation of that city*, Vol. 2 (Dublin: J. Dollard, 1891), pp. 89-90.
48. N.J. Byrne, *The Great Parchment Book of Waterford: Liber Antiquissimus Civitatis Waterfordiae*. (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 2007) p. 211.
49. Gilbert, *Calendar*, Vol.2, pp. 38-39.
50. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
51. J. T. Gilbert, *The Calendar of Ancient Records of Dublin in possession of the municipal corporation of that city*, Vol 3 (Dublin: J. Dollard, 1891), p. 72.
52. Rich, *New Description*, p. 71.
53. Bennett, *Ale*, p. 137.
54. Gilbert, *Calendar*, Vol. 1, p. 220.
55. Gilbert, p. 288.
56. Gilbert.
57. Gilbert, pp. 342, 360, 364, 460.
58. James Davis, *Medieval Market Morality: Life, Law and Ethics in the English Marketplace 1200-1500* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
59. Rich, *Excuse*, p. 1.
60. Rich, p. 12.
61. Rich.
62. Rich.
63. Rich, p. 6.
64. Rich, p. 13.
65. Rich.
66. Rich.
67. Rich.
68. Barnabe Rich, *Irish Hubbub or the English Hue and Crie* briefly pursuing the base conditions, and most notorious offences of the vile, vaine, and wicked age, no lesse smarting then tickling: a merriment whereby to make the wise to laugh, and fooles to be angry, (London; J. Marriot, 1617), pp. 16-17.
69. Rich, *Hubbub*, p. 17.