

Name: Fionnán O'Connor

Title of Research Project: Still With Us: Formative Imperatives in the
Historical Trajectory of Irish Whiskey Mash Bills 1661-1980

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Brief overview of the Thesis topic: This thesis is an examination of the *mash bills*, or granular recipes, underlying historical Irish whiskeys from the 1661 formation of the Excise to the 1980 Irish Whiskey Act. Using a combination of direct industrial and contextual archival research, the project has unearthed an array of distinct spirits from Irish distilling's core historical periods and examined key agricultural, legislative, and practical imperatives underpinning the drink's material evolution. Finally, through a combination of industrial outreach and close collaboration with the Boann distillery, the research has culminated in the distillation of 10 historical mash bills, examined by a blind panel of 25 blenders and distillers from across the contemporary industry. The thesis also outlines a proposal for an historically inclusive working definition of Irish pot still whiskey and this definition has recently been adopted and submitted to the Department of Agriculture by the leading trade representative entities as part of a revised E.U. Geographic Indication defining the legal meaning of the category.