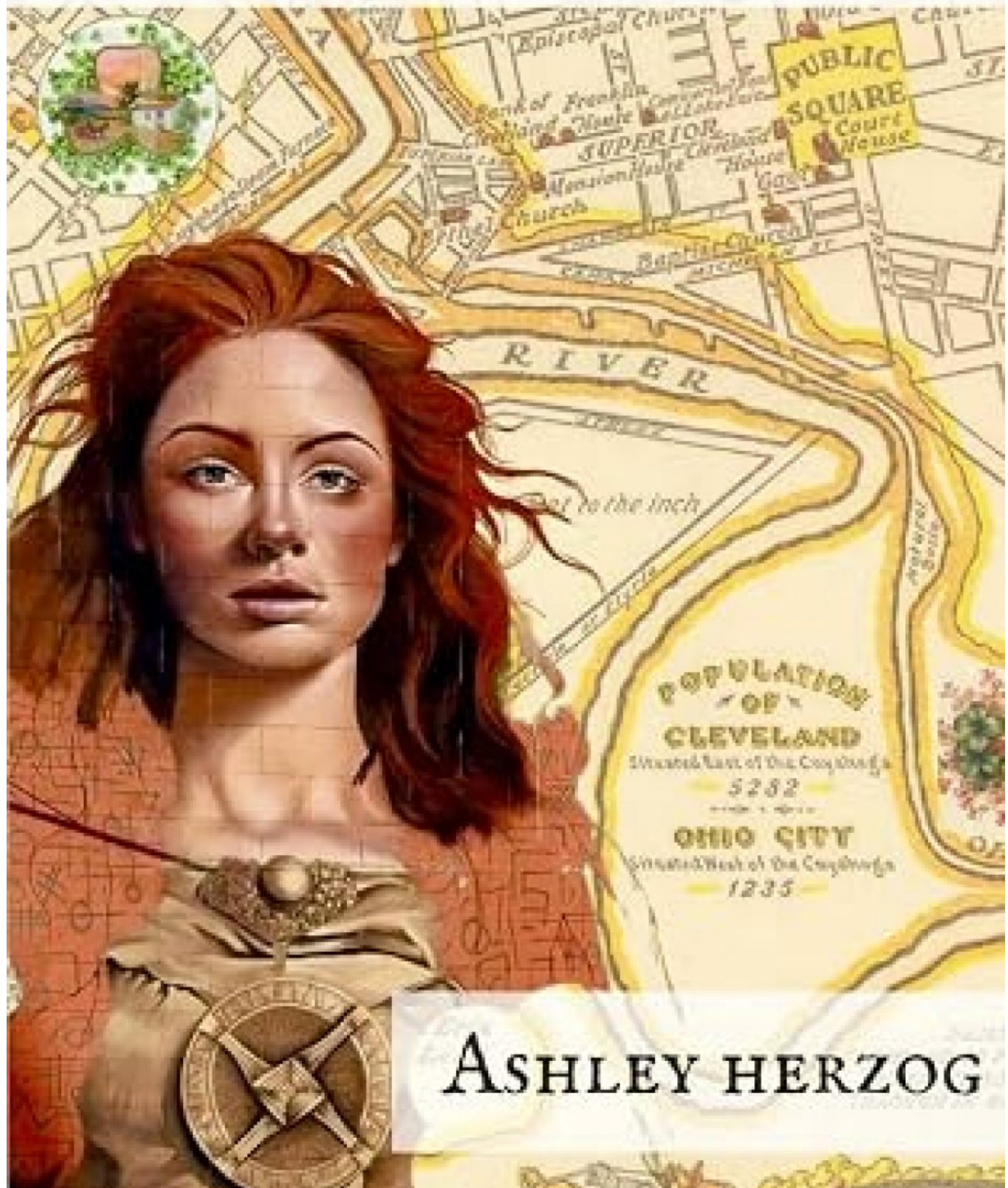


Ashley Herzog's *Burning River*: A Story of the Cleveland Irish Brings a Family's Civil War-Era History to Life

BURNING RIVER



Tomah, Wisconsin Aug 19, 2026 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Award-winning journalist and Cleveland native **Ashley Herzog** return to her roots with *Burning River: A Story of the Cleveland Irish*, a gripping historical novel that explores love, loyalty, family, and divided identities within Cleveland's Irish immigrant community during the American Civil War.

Set in **1863 Cleveland**, the novel follows **Bridget McGlynn**, an Irish immigrant who travels to America with her brother, Dominick, and young niece, expecting a new beginning in the Great Lakes region. Her plans are shattered when Dominick is drafted into the Union Army, leaving Bridget to make her way to Cleveland alone.

Her journey takes an unexpected and dangerous turn when she boards the *Green Monster*, a traveling showboat secretly being used by Confederate sympathizers to smuggle explosives. When the vessel mysteriously erupts in flames off Cedar Point, Bridget finds herself caught in a deadly conspiracy.

The only person who may know the truth is **William Chambers**, a wounded young Irish-American Marine from a rival family. Despite generations of tension between the Chambers and McGlynn families, Bridget and Will form an unexpected connection as they confront powerful enemies and the dangerous political divisions surrounding them.

As evidence from the *Green Monster* begins washing ashore, Bridget must decide whether revealing the truth will bring justice or put her own life at risk. Meanwhile, a U.S. Marshal secretly sympathetic to the Confederacy seeks to have Will charged with murder, while aspiring politician **Mark Hanna** pursues Bridget for himself.

A Story Rooted in Family History

For Herzog, *Burning River* is more than historical fiction; it is deeply connected to her own family history.

Born and raised in **Avon Lake, Ohio**, and now living in **Rocky River**, Herzog developed a passion for storytelling at an early age, writing and illustrating her own "chapter books" as early as second grade. She later pursued journalism at the **E.W. Scripps School of Journalism at Ohio University**, where she became a columnist for the university newspaper. Her work eventually gained national attention, including appearances on Fox News and publication in numerous media outlets, including Cleveland's *Plain Dealer*.

Despite her success in journalism, Herzog never abandoned her dream of becoming a novelist.

That dream took shape in 2015 when she began studying the extensive genealogy research of her great-uncle, **Grover Masterson**, a professional-level genealogist who traveled to Ireland to document the family's history. His research uncovered baptismal records, land holdings, court documents, and photographs of the cottage in County Mayo where Herzog's ancestors were born.

The research also revealed a remarkable Cleveland connection: Herzog's great-great-grandmother, **Mary Chambers**, owned a saloon in Cleveland that remains in operation today as **Carney's in The Flats**.

That discovery inspired Herzog's first novel about her ancestors, published in 2019. Her newest work turns the focus to the Irish community in Cleveland during the Civil War.

History, Conflict, and the Irish-American Experience

During the Civil War, Cleveland's Irish community faced complicated questions of identity, politics, war, and slavery. While some Irish immigrants opposed the war and became involved in violent draft resistance, others served honorably in Union forces.

Herzog's research led her to discover that her own third great-grandfather, **William Chambers**, served as a Union soldier and was seriously wounded during a raid involving a blockade runner, a vessel used to smuggle supplies to Confederate forces.

Her research also uncovered the presence of **Copperheads**, Confederate sympathizers active in Ohio during the war. Chambers was accused of war crimes after several Copperheads were killed during a raid on a Great Lakes smuggling operation.

These historical discoveries became the foundation for *Burning River*, blending documented family history with a compelling fictional narrative of romance, danger, and redemption.

At its heart, the novel asks what it means to belong to a family, a community, a country, and a new homeland.

An Invitation to Readers

Through *Burning River*, Herzog hopes readers will connect with the struggles and triumphs of her Irish immigrant ancestors and experience the history of Cleveland through the eyes of those who lived through one of America's most divided eras.

"I hope they enjoy my family's stories as much as I enjoyed writing them," Herzog shares.

Burning River: A Story of the Cleveland Irish is now available for readers interested in historical fiction, Irish-American heritage, Cleveland history, and stories inspired by real family history.

About Ashley Herzog

Ashley Herzog is an award-winning journalist and Cleveland native whose novels are inspired by the true stories of her Irish immigrant ancestors. Her work combines historical research, family history, and compelling storytelling to bring overlooked chapters of Cleveland and Irish-American history to life.

Book: *Burning River: A Story of the Cleveland Irish*

Author: Ashley Herzog

Available at: [Amazon](#)

Previous Promotional Activities: Quinn's Irish Radio; Cleveland Irish Cultural Festival

Ashley Herzog on the Spotlight Network

Readers and audiences can learn more about Ashley Herzog, her writing journey, and the inspiration behind *Burning River: A Story of the Cleveland Irish* in her featured interview on the **Spotlight**

Network with Logan Crawford.

Watch the Author Interview:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=__3poGKZjjY

The interview offers an opportunity for readers to hear directly from Herzog about her connection to Cleveland, her family's Irish immigrant history, and the real-life discoveries that inspired her historical fiction.



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