

Legacy in Stone

Ballygally & Ballycarry



The Larne area was transformed in the 17th century with the arrival of settlers, mainly from Scotland. Some, such as the Shaws and Edmonstones, initially formed part of Sir Hugh Montgomery's settlement in County Down before moving to County Antrim. Others arrived at Oldfleet Harbour, Larne and established themselves in the region.

Ballygally Castle

Members of the Shaw family from Greenock in Scotland came to Ireland in 1606. They were related by marriage to Sir Hugh Montgomery who encouraged their move to Ulster. Initially based in County Down, James Shaw and his wife Isabella later moved to Ballygally in County Antrim where in 1625 they built an impressive castle on lands leased from the Earl of Antrim. The well-built castle was one of the main refuges during the 1641 Rebellion.

BELOW
Ballygally Castle
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum Service



Ballycarry

In 1607 William Edmonstone, 7th Laird of Duntreath, and his brother James settled on land on the Ards peninsula granted by Sir Hugh Montgomery. Two years later William received land at Templecorran and lived at Redhall, just north of Ballycarry. In 2011 an artillery fort, believed to be from this era, was excavated adjacent to Templecorran Church.

The first Presbyterian minister in Ireland was the Reverend Edward Brice who was based at Templecorran Church from 1613 until his death in 1636. Brice previously had served on the Edmonstone estate at Duntreath in Stirlingshire, Scotland. Templecorran Church was located on a much earlier ecclesiastical site.



Richard Dobbs, 1683 Survey

'The inhabitants (except 2 or 3 belonging to the Custom House, and one family of one Mr. M'Kay, who are of the Church of England) are all Scotch and Presbiterians.'



ABOVE
Settlers at Templecorran unusually incorporated market steps in the west gable when rebuilding the church soon after their arrival.
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum Service

FAR LEFT
Inscription above the original entrance door with the initials for James Shaw (JS) and Isabella Brisbane (IB) and a shield depicting the coat of arms for the Shaw and Brisbane families.
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum

LEFT
Aerial photograph showing the shoreline location of Ballygally Castle.
Courtesy of Public Records Office Northern Ireland

BELOW
Petty's Down Survey Barony map of 1654, showing the castles along the coast road from Cushendun to Belfast.
Courtesy of Public Records Office Northern Ireland



Legacy in Stone

Kilwaughter & Olderfleet



Kilwaughter Castle

In 1622 Patrick Agnew of Kilwaughter married Janet Shaw, sister of James Shaw of Ballygally and they began construction of their home, a fortified tower house. The Agnews from Galloway had Gaelic connections in Ulster through the O'Ginnis, an Irish bardic family. The Agnews held leases from the Earl of Antrim and were tax collectors for King James I. They were on the opposing side to their landlord during the 1641 Rebellion.

BELOW
Kilwaughter Castle in about 1900, having been redesigned in 1807 by John Nash. The square three-storey section to the left of the large round tower was the original 17th-century fortified house.
Courtesy of Larne Museum



Olderfleet Castle

Olderfleet Castle is now a ruined four-storey tower at the entrance to Larne Harbour. Evidence from maps suggests that it is actually Curran Castle and may have been built by Sir Arthur Chichester.

The castle was a defended warehouse, navigational landmark and watchtower at Lough Larne through which many Scottish settlers arrived in Ulster. A description from 1683 notes that ships regularly called to Larne on the route between Derry or Coleraine and ports to the south. Linen and horses were the main exports, while coal and settlers were carried in ships from Scotland.

BELOW
Olderfleet/Curran Castle in 1900
Courtesy of National Museums Northern Ireland

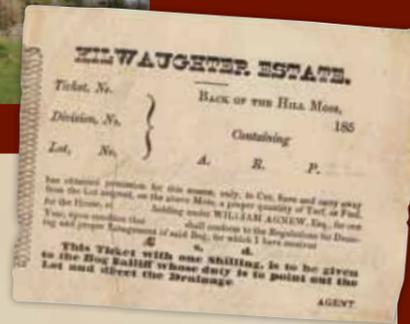


ABOVE
Olderfleet or Curran Castle today
Courtesy of National Museums Northern Ireland

LEFT
Kilwaughter Castle was seized from its Italian owner during World War Two and used to house American troops. The roof was removed in 1951 and the building is now a ruin.
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museums Service

BELOW
Ticket permitting a tenant to cut turf on the Kilwaughter Estate granted by William Agnew Esquire
Courtesy of Larne Museum

BOTTOM
Watercolour of Olderfleet Castle by artist J. White
Courtesy of Larne Museum



The Clanagherty Estate



In a thirty year period from 1610 – 1640s the lands around modern Ballymena changed hands many times, reflecting the fluid nature of land acquisition amongst English and Scottish opportunists and adventurers.

In the sixteenth century the 'tough' (estate) of Clanagherty, including Ballymena, was granted to Sir Thomas Smith who attempted a settlement which failed. Under the reign of James I the estate was granted to Rory O'g McQuillan, recorded as occupying a fort at Galgorm in 1610. In 1619, he sold Clanagherty to Sir Faithful Fortescue, whilst retaining a portion of his former estate.

In the 1620s Fortescue sold the property, dividing it between two Scots, William Edmonstone of Redhall, Ballycarry and William Adair of Kinlitt in Wigtownshire. Edmonstone acquired the portion that became known as the Galgorm Estate, and Adair obtained the lands that became a large portion of the Ballymena Estate.

BELOW
Fortescue, a nephew of Sir Arthur Chichester, transferred ownership of half the Clanagherty estate to Robert Adair (son of William)
Courtesy of Public Records Office Northern Ireland



Galgorm

Edmonstone sold Galgorm to a fellow Scot, Dr Alexander Colville, rector of Skerry from 1634. Colville built Galgorm Castle within Fortescue's bawn. He was not popular amongst his Presbyterian tenants for whom he had little time. Such difficult relations may account for accusations of Devil worship that were made against him, perhaps an attempt to discredit him with church authorities. Colville's eldest son Robert inherited Galgorm and bought the Montgomery estates at Newtownards and Comber.

BELOW
Portrait of Alexander Colville which hangs in Galgorm Castle
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum with permission of the Rt. Hon. Christopher Brooke



Ballymena

William Adair sold his lands at Portpatrick in Wigtownshire, Scotland and moved with his family and tenants to Ballymena. His son married Edmonstone's daughter, enlarging their landholdings. In 1626, Charles I confirmed their ownership and granted the right to hold markets and fairs in Ballymena. In 1638, Adair consolidated the family's position by further grants of land, creating the estate which they held until the mid 20th Century.

BELOW
1747 map of Adair's Ballymena estate, drawn on animal hide
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum



FAIR LEFT
Dunesky Castle near Portpatrick in Wigtownshire held by the Adairs of Kinlitt when resident in Scotland
Courtesy of Dr William Routson

LEFT
Galgorm Castle, built by Colville in the 1630s, is one of the finest examples of Jacobean architecture in Ireland
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum

BELOW
Map of the Barony of Toome featuring a pictorial representation of Ballymena (Ballinene Town) from a Volume of eighteenth-century coloured copies of Petty's Down Survey Barony maps (1654)
Courtesy of Public Records Office Northern Ireland



The O'Haras

Pragmatism and Survival



Many of the existing inhabitants of Mid-Antrim were displaced by the newcomers of the 17th-century. Others, such as the O'Haras of Crebilly, managed to hold onto their lands.

This branch of the O'Hara family, had their origins in Sligo. By the time of the 17th-century Plantation, they had amassed extensive lands at Loughgiel, Dunaghy and Ballymena. In 1607, James I granted Cahal O'Hara the lands which his family had occupied for centuries. In 1612, he received a warrant to hold a market at Crebilly, overlooking Ballymena. His daughters married into the principal Irish families of County Antrim, notably the O'Neills. His grandson Teig survived the turbulent 1650s by paying the Cromwellian government for protection.

BELOW
Armorial bearings of the O'Hara family which was integrated into the balcony design of Crebilly Castle.
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum



Teig's grandson, Henry, married a wealthy heiress and the family's fortunes continued to rise in the 18th Century. However, in the 19th century, the estate was in the hands of Henry Hamilton O'Hara who squandered the family fortune. On the death of his sister, in 1895, the property passed out of the family.

BELOW
Henry Hamilton O'Hara's memorial, Ballymarlow churchyard near Crebilly Estate.
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum



ABOVE
Photographic portrait of Mrs Mary Wardlaw, the last of the O'Hara family line.
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum with the permission of the Rt. Hon. Christopher Skelton

LEFT
Scrapbook created by Mrs Mary Wardlaw reflecting her rich cultural life and social circle.
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum



BELOW
Crebilly Castle, seat of the O'Hara's.
Designed by Charles Lanyon.
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum

