



1718: Society in Transition

Ireland at the turn of the Century



The replacement of James II by William of Orange as the king of England, Ireland and Scotland in 1688 was seen as a Glorious Revolution by many Protestants. For Roman Catholics and dissenting Protestants, it led to a loss of power, rights, and many lives.

King James II and William of Orange

In the second half of the 1680s, the English Parliament became ever more concerned with the actions of James Stuart, a king who ruled increasingly without their consent. His earlier conversion to Catholicism and, now, his policy of religious toleration and the promotion of Catholics to senior positions, aroused suspicion among the predominantly Anglican English. The birth of his son James Francis Edward Stuart in 1688 - a Catholic heir - prompted Parliament to act.

James' eldest daughter, Mary, was a Protestant married to her cousin William, Prince of Orange, Stadtholder of the Netherlands and the leading Protestant ruler in Europe.

Parliament invited William and Mary to replace James II as joint monarchs of England, Ireland and Scotland. James II fled to France, the most powerful Catholic state in Europe, gaining support from King Louis XIV. Parliament passed an English Bill of Rights which barred Roman Catholics from the royal succession, limited royal power, and established the rights of Parliament.



Above: High Death On Execution of Rights. The Bill of Rights (1689) confirmed William and Mary as joint monarchs of England, Ireland and Scotland. It also limited royal power and established the rights of Parliament.



Below: The Duke of Cornwall. James II's eldest daughter, Mary II, was a Protestant married to her cousin William, Prince of Orange, Stadtholder of the Netherlands and the leading Protestant ruler in Europe.

The War of the Two Kings (1688-1691)

In France, James II was offered military assistance by King Louis XIV before crossing to Ireland where he was widely supported. James intended to use Ireland as a springboard to reconquer England and Scotland. However, following the unsuccessful Siege of Derry (1688-1689), James' forces were narrowly defeated at the Boyne (1690), decisively beaten at Aughrim (1691) and ultimately surrendered in Limerick (1691).

During the war, Coleraine was briefly besieged by forces loyal to James II before lack of ammunition and provisions caused the defenders to withdraw. The bridge at Coleraine was destroyed, as were three bridges in Newtown Limavady. Newtown Limavady itself was burned.

Below: Portrait of James II. In 1688, King James II fled to France, the most powerful Catholic state in Europe, gaining support from King Louis XIV. Parliament passed an English Bill of Rights which barred Roman Catholics from the royal succession, limited royal power, and established the rights of Parliament.

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Mary II's Protestant supporters thought in Londonderry including George Canning of Garvaghy with his local regiment, the young James McEneaney and his family from Magilligan, and Helen MacDonagh of Bernaduff with her young children.

Like many Presbyterians, Lieutenant Matthew Clark of Milnes and Thomas Bell, William Caldwell, John Bear and Abraham Blair from Ballymoney, signed up to fight on behalf of William. However, all were disillusioned by the restrictive laws imposed after the war and later joined the migration to America.



Below: Reproduction of the Bill of Rights by George Mackenzie (1689). It confirmed William and Mary as joint monarchs of England, Ireland and Scotland. It also limited royal power and established the rights of Parliament.



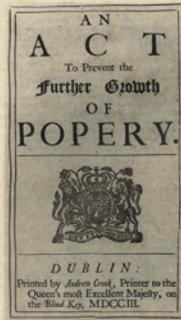
Below: The Duke of Cornwall. James II's eldest daughter, Mary II, was a Protestant married to her cousin William, Prince of Orange, Stadtholder of the Netherlands and the leading Protestant ruler in Europe.

The Penal Laws and Protestant Ascendancy

Although the 1689 Bill of Rights excluded James II and his son from the thrones of England, Ireland and Scotland, the Stuarts continued to claim the title of King. Their claim was supported by Catholic France and, from 1691-1766, by the Pope. Papal support for the Stuart dynasty was a threat to the Protestant monarchy in Catholic areas, in theory, obliged to support the Stuarts. The Irish Catholic majority were therefore viewed with suspicion by the Anglican dominated Parliaments in both London and Dublin.

In the 1690s, bad weather and poor harvest in Scotland resulted in famine and led to massive emigration to Ulster. The enlarged Scottish Presbyterian population in the north of Ireland was also seen as a threat to the Anglican establishment.

In response, the Dublin Parliament enacted a series of Penal laws after 1695 which restricted most rights, and all power, to members of the established Church of Ireland, while penalising non-Anglicans.



Below: Cover of the 1703 Act to Prevent the Further Growth of Popery. It restricted most rights, and all power, to members of the established Church of Ireland, while penalising non-Anglicans.

Jacobites - In support of James II and the Stuarts.

Following the Williamite Wars, many Irish soldiers left for continental Europe where they formed Irish Brigades in the armies of France and Spain. An estimated 650,000 Irishmen served in the French army between 1691 and 1745. Several attempts were made by Jacobites to restore the Stuarts, most notably by landing troops in Scotland in 1719 and 1745.

Randal MacDonnell, 6th Earl of Antrim was imprisoned on a suspected Jacobite in 1715. The physician, William Philipps, son of Sir Thomas Philipps from Newtown Limavady, wrote several plays including Helena (1722) which showed Jacobite loyalties. In 1745, the band leader Denis O'Hempsey, from Garvaghy, played for the Jacobite prince, Bonnie Prince Charlie. He was imprisoned that he kept a Jacobite hat badge at his father's house, ready for the return of the Stuart king.

However, enforcement of the Penal Laws made it impossible for Catholics to raise in support of the Stuarts. Without foreign aid, there could be no large scale Jacobite rebellion in Ireland.



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1718: Bann Valley Emigration

Bann Valley Emigration

In early 1718, due to a succession of poor harvests, cattle disease, higher rents and the Penal Laws, emigrations led by Presbyterian ministers were being planned.

A petition dated 26th March 1718 was sent to the Governor of Massachusetts seeking encouragement to emigrate. It signed the petition including their minister, it was carried by Reverend William Boyd from Massachusetts. He received the encouragement required from the colonial government in Boston, who thought Ulster settlers could be placed on the outer reaches of their colony.

In the summer of 1718, James McGregor (born Magilligan circa 1677), minister in Aghadowey, along with a large part of his congregation, left for the new England colonies heading for 'William of Cabano's', according to Reverend 'A. Mulin'. It is estimated that at least 100 families departed from Coleraine and Londonderry.

Arriving in Boston, where supplies for the locals were already short, and for other reasons, the new settlers were moved on. McGregor and his congregation had to sell up, some went on to Fairfield later named Londonderry others settled in the Massachusetts, Connecticut and coastal areas of Maine.

At the beginning of September 1718 MacCallum arrived in Boston and went onto Merrymount Bay, Maine. On board were 20 families with Reverend James Woodside of Durburgh, the first organised migration of Scots and Irish-born Presbyterians to the north of America.

'to avoid oppression and cruel bondage, to shun persecution and designed ruin, to withdraw from the communion of idolaters and to have an opportunity of worship in God according to the dictates of conscience and the rules of His inspired Word.'

From: James McGregor on the state of the Dominion. Extract permission of Londonderry C.I. Reel, 1813



New settlers faced challenges not least from the Native Americans. Reverend Woodside's garrison in Banwick provided refuge during an attack in 1722. John Dimmore from Ballyvaughan, Ballymorney, was captured and released by Native Americans. Other challenges included the poor land they were granted, civil and religious difficulties, opposition from other settlers and being far away from families and friends.

Families were emigrating to north America before 1718 and continued long after. The significance of 1718 is that this was the first organised migration of Scots and Irish-born Presbyterians to the north of America.

Map: The place of Ulster emigrants and the 1718 migration to New England.



Map: 1717 map of Sir Marcus Beresford's proposed County Londonderry. By Anthony Dawson. An online map of the proposed County Londonderry.

'3 rooms, about 12 or 14 foot each, and to that house a Stable, Cowhouse and Sometimes a Barn but the Barn is commonly at some distance so that one of the houses measured on the outside is between 70 and 80 feet long ... they are built with stones and Mudd and but few of them are pointed with mortar, they are very low, the windows small and ordinary, many of them have no windows, the Covering is a thatch of Straw or Course Rushey Grass.'

John Swaniger for the Bannemore Deeds, 1725.

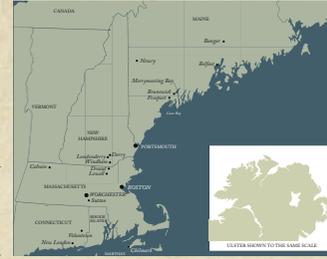
Aghadowey After 1718

When Reverend John Elder was ordained in Aghadowey 7th May 1723, there were only three elders compared to twenty in McGregor's time. Within a year this appears to have increased to fourteen. Reverend Elder was drawn into the debate between subscribers to the Westminster Confession of Faith, (the standards of Presbyterian Church) and non-subscribers (their ministers should not be required to declare their belief in any form of doctrine drawn up by men). Members of the congregation started to leave in 1726 as Elder appeared to be favourable towards the non-subscribers issuing in 1726, a pamphlet calling for moderation in the debate.



Reverend Elder would remain in Aghadowey until his death in 1779. In 1728 on evidence of the good circumstances, he rented the townland of Rushey 46 acres at a yearly rent of £18 3s. He also rented 66 acres of land at £17 a year. His daughter Chas. (1735-1788), whilst maintaining the household for her father, clearly had access to education and a household of books. A manuscript of her poems also reveals her social connections with prominent families in the area at the time.

Map: 1717 map of Sir Marcus Beresford's proposed County Londonderry. Based on County Londonderry by John Dawson 1725. From: Anthony Dawson's online map.



Map: Letter to Governor General. Dublin from Reverend of the County of Londonderry. 26 March 1718. Original in Boston.

Extract

To Mrs A.C.H., an account of the Authors manner of spending her time.

*When far from you, dear Anna, placed,
Think not my life I idly waste;
But when I tell you how it pass'd,
You'll say it is an odd contrast,
And that I strangely spend my time
Between the mean and the sublime.
I oft forsake both Pope and Swift
The house to sweep, and Pats to lift;
With Princely Queens my leave I give,
To call the folks from making hay;
Or Young upon the morning Star
To help the boy down with a Car
Quit Tragic Queens in all their clutter,
And help to burn, or dress the Butter
Off from my hand the Pen I whisk out,
And in its place take up the Dishlout;
For spite all sublime wishes,
I needs must sometimes wash the dishes.*

Courtesy of The poems of Anne Elder edited by Andrew Carpenter. Irish Manuscripts Commission 2017.



1718: Bann Valley Emigration

People

1 Rev. Joseph Osbourne

Minister of the old Newtown-Limavady church (1742-1800) lived at Drumadreen.

2 Rev. James Hillhouse

From Freshall, Limavady, in 1722 he became Pastor in New London, Connecticut.

William Connolly (c.1729)

Bought the Limavady estate in 1687 and took over George Philips' house of New Hall at the top of the Main Street, although it is unlikely he lived there and just visited. He was Speaker of the Irish House of Commons.

John Ross

Opened an inn in Newtown-Limavady in 1766 — fitted in the proper manner for gentlemen who travel the road with the best wine, liquors and good stabling, pasture hay and oats for horse.

Mr Bacon

Introduced the scheme to reclaim wetlands, bogs and forests in the Limavady area.

John Alexander

Lincoln Merchant, 1760.

Alexander Ogilby

Elementary teacher and linen draper who died in 1772.

George Taylor

Ironworker and distiller.

James Forbes and Hector Smith

Schoolmaster and Parish Clerk of Drumacross parish, 1726.

William Smith

An ironworker, was Priest in 1687 to 1693, 1696 to 1701 and 1703 to 1714.

Robert McCausland

Agent of William Connolly, Connolly bequeathed Church lands of Drumacross, Treenagh, Finklog and Ballagh to McCausland in his will which formed the Diogenes estate.

3 Rev. James Woodsie

Ordained Minister at Dunboe in 1700. Emigrated with his congregation to Merrymeeting Bay, Maine, September 1718.



4 Mary Murphy

Mary Murphy, also known as the 'Portrush Giantess', was nearly seven foot high. Mary married a French sea captain whose ship was wrecked in Portrush, Co. Derry. It is thought that Mary's husband exhibited her at side shows and then abandoned her. She was last seen at a show in Paris, on her own.

Margaret Martin

Noted in 1729 on the list of the poor of the Parish of Ballyvaughan.

5 James Tate

School master of the Irish Society school in Coleraine (1700-1723). He was pulled into public affairs and the disagreements in the Corporation, which caused the school to suffer.

Richard Lynam

Appointed a Burgess in the Coleraine Corporation in 1682. He became Chamberlain due to his knowledge of France. Lynam was rent collector for the Irish Society, the benefactors and collected tithes for the factor. He was appointed Mayor of the town in 1707. He renewed the town gates, iron chains and bars as well as the palisades.

William Galt

In 1768 Galt had a salt house in Coleraine and was associated with Robert Stewart who had Salt Pans in Portrush.

William Mitchell

From Belfast, set up as a bookseller and bookbinder in Coleraine in 1762. William died in 1771 and is buried in St Patrick's Church graveyard. Two of his sons emigrated to America around 1766 and set up a bookbinding business in Philadelphia and then in New York.

Robert and Elizabeth Shipboy

Robert and Elizabeth ran a business on Church Street, Coleraine in the 1770s, selling fabric, gloves, woman's shoes, hats, bonnets and more. Elizabeth was a dressmaker — they also sold groceries.

John Lawler

A Dancing Master, advertised that he would attend his dance schools in Ardara, Donmore and Coleraine in 1767.

William Wyllie

Emigrated to the West Indies in 1760.

Curtis Davis

Died in 1734, aged 100. He is buried in St Patrick's graveyard.

Rev. Samuel Dorrance

Was associated with the Presbytery of Coleraine. He became minister of the Community of Volantown, Connecticut in 1723.

Notes: None of these people found during excavations in Coleraine.

Source: www.colerainehistory.com



6 William Gregg

William, from Macosquin, became the principal surveyor and laid out property lots in the new settlement of Londonderry.

7 Rev. James McGreegey (c.1677-1729)

McGreegey sought shelter behind the walls of Derry during the Siege in 1688.

He was ordained Presbyterian Minister of Aghadowey in 1701.

As a fluent Irish speaker, he was commissioned by the Synod of 1710 to preach in Irish.

McGreegey decided to take his family and members of his congregation to America as he could see no future in Ireland.

Rev. John Elder (1693-1779)

Prominent New Light Presbyterian, ordained Minister of Aghadowey in 1723.

He set up a farm to supplement the donations from his congregation.

Olivia Elder (1735-1780)

Daughter of Rev. John Elder and a poet. Olivia's poems cover a range of subjects and include sentimental love stories. They are honest, dynamic and give an insightful representation of her life in Aghadowey in the eighteenth century.

John Orr

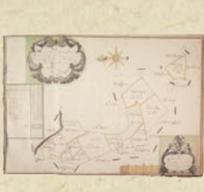
Established the first mechanised bleach green at Ballyvaughan, Aghadowey in 1734.

Betty Craig

Entry from the Aghadowey Session book, 1702, recorded that Betty confessed she was guilty of charming and spells. She was rebuked thoroughly and dismissed.

John Molloyne

Lincoln Merchant from Aghadowey, stayed late drinking in Coleraine one evening. On his way home he was thought that his horse went to the barn for a drink and that he fell off and drowned.



8 Denis O'Hernsey (1695-1807)

Barth George, buried McGilligan

Blind bard and Jacobite. Travelled extensively through Ireland and Scotland, playing for both Protestant and Catholic patrons including Cavalier Carling at Coleraine (c.1713) and Bonnie Prince Charlie (1746).

Rev. George Canning

The son of Sarahford Canning of Garagh, George was banished from his father's house for marrying a penniless beauty Mary Ann Costello, from Co. Mayo.

Canning died in 1771. Mary Ann went on to become an actress. Their son, George Canning would go on to be Prime Minister in 1827.

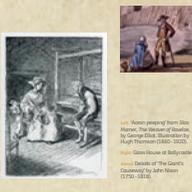
John Ross

Merchant, Ballymoney.

9 Rev. Matthew Clark

Visitor of the Siege of Londonderry, resigned as Minister of Kileeshole and became Minister of Londonderry (Wardfield) in 1729 after death of Rev. McGreegey. He married McGreegey's widow and died in 1738.

At the Siege, in 1688, he received a wound on his temple from a bullet which never thoroughly healed and over which he wore a black patch.



10 John and James McKean

Merchants from Ballymoney who sought refuge in Londonderry during the Siege. The McKean's helped finance the 1718 migration although John died shortly before leaving. James became a leading figure in Newfield, John's daughter, Anne, left Ballymoney as a young girl and also travelled to New England.

Thomas Ball, William Caldwell, John Ross and Abraham Blair

From the townland of Ballyvaughan in the parish of Ballymoney, Veterans of the Williamite War, they emigrated to Boston in 1718 and made their way to Newfield.

Rev. Robert Macbride (1686?-1759)

In September 1718 he was ordained as minister of Ballymoney, where he stayed for the rest of his life. He was remembered as a conscientious and competent pastor.

David Macbride (1726-1778)

Macbride, a doctor from Ballymoney, played a significant role in the progression of modern medicine and, in particular, a cure for scurvy.

John Ross

Merchant, Ballymoney.



11 John 'Hot Harry' Macconaghan (1722-1761)

Inheriting the Benwarden estate while still in his teens, John Macconaghan accumulated massive gambling debts. In 1740, he attempted to abduct the wealthy fifteen year old heiress Mary Ann Knox with the intention of escaping and securing his inheritance. Unfortunately, Mary Ann was shot and killed in the attempt and Macconaghan was found guilty of murder. The hangman's rope broke during his execution and he had to be hanged a second time.

12 William Martin

On 2nd July 1763 William Martin was the first minister to be ordained in Ireland by the Reform Presbytery (or Covenanters) Church at Vow graveyard. In 1772, William emigrated taking 1,000 people to Rocky Creek, Vow in Chester County, South Carolina, America.



13 Viscount McCarty (1737-1800)

Of Lissonure Castle, Ambassador to China 1792-1794.

14 Col. Hugh Boyd (1690-1745)

Established Ballycastle as a vibrant industrial centre.



James Whyte

Wife of Cooper, 1750.

Robert Wilson

Was a Shoemaker, 1750.

Hugh McCoy

Was a Shoemaker, 1750.

Patrick O'Hagan

Was a Merchant — importer of crown glass, 1750.

Robert Tibby

Wife of Cooperman, 1750.

Charles McNeil

Was a Farmer, 1750.

Robert McCarroll

Was a Surgeon, 1750.

William Christy

Was an Ironworker, 1750.

John McCurdy

Baller, 1759.

McClane

A Farmer from Ballyvaughan.

16 Ocean-Born Mary

Dr Mary Wilson was born at sea, on board a ship. Her parents, James and Elizabeth Wilson were travelling to America. It is said that a pirate attacked their ship but took pity when he heard the news from baby's cries. He agreed to spare the entire ship if the baby was called after his mother Mary. He gave the child a piece of green brocade for her wedding dress.

1718: People

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