

SOME OF THE NAMES FROM 1718

Settled in Londonderry, New Hampshire

**Robert Gilmore** and his wife, Mary Ann Kennedy, from Coleraine, with their children William, Robert, John and James.

**Abraham Blair**, from Aghadowey, a veteran of the Siege of Derry, and his children David, Hannah, Sarah, Lydia, Jenet and Mary.

**James McKeen**, from Ballymoney, and his family. Janet McKeen, the widow of John McKeen, his brother, with her children John, Robert, Samuel and Mary.

**James Gregg** with his wife, Janet Cargill, and children William, John, Samuel, Thomas and Elizabeth.

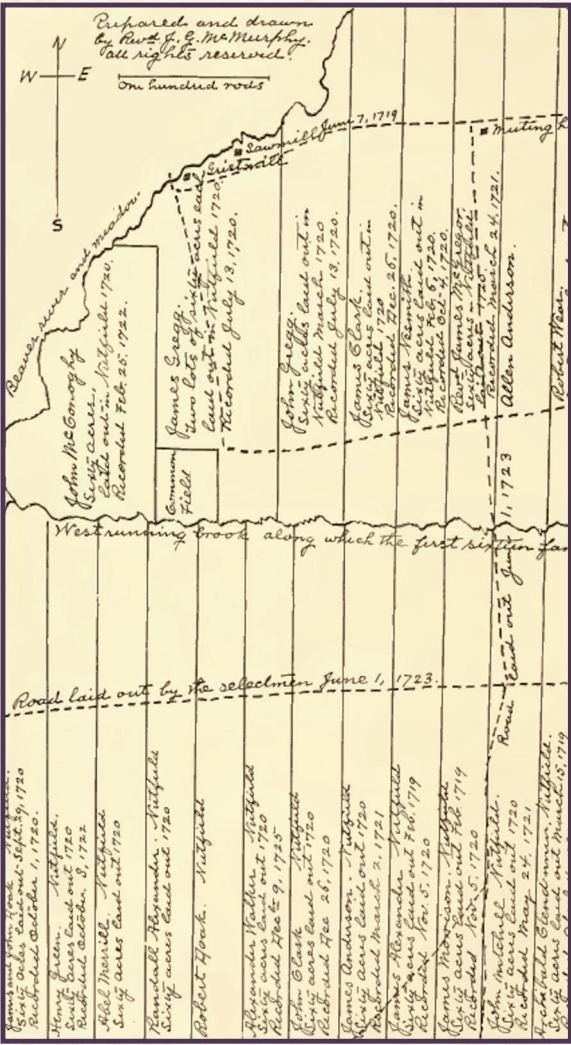
**John Dinsmore** from Ballywattick, near Ballymoney, a mason by trade.

**John Morrison** from Aghadowey, who was reputedly 108 years old when he died in 1736, with his wife, Janet Steele, and children James, John, Halburt, Martha, Samuel, Mary, Joseph and Hannah.

Settled in Massachusetts

**Matthew Watson** and his wife, Mary Orr, from Coleraine, settled in Leicester, with their children Matthew, Samuel, Patrick, Robert, Elizabeth, Margarette, John and Oliver. Oliver was born on the voyage to America.

**Robert Blair** and his wife Isabella Rankin, in Worcester, with their children Matthew, David, John, Sarah, Dolly, William, James, Robert, Elizabeth and Joseph. Robert was the nephew of Abraham Blair. Robert's older brother, William, and his wife, Mary Gray, also travelled to America. William Gray, Mary Blair's brother.

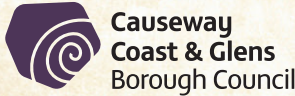


- Map of Nutfield 1723  
Courtesy of Sam Henry Collection, Coleraine Museum
- Front image courtesy of American Antiquarian Society

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1718  
Heritage  
Trail  
a journey from the  
Bann Valley



The journey across the Atlantic Ocean, undertaken of His Inspired Word."

aghadowey, delivered a sermon in which he declared they were leaving Ulster "to avoid oppression and cruel bondage, to shun persecution and designed ruin ... and to have an opportunity of worshipping God according to the dictates of conscience and the rules of His Inspired Word."

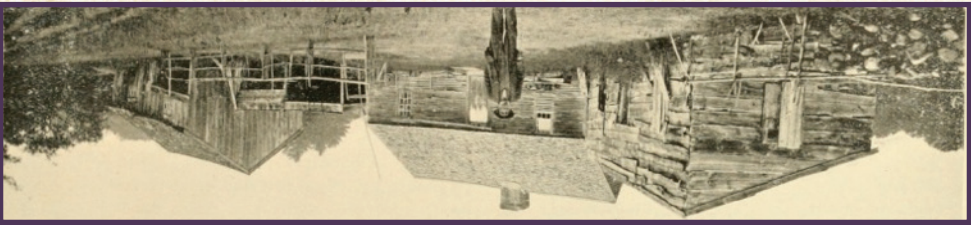
resolved to do so.

other members of the Bann presbytery had already of his fellow signatories decided not to emigrate, until the spring of 1719. Whilst Rev Boyd and some unknown, since Boyd remained in the 'New World' communicated to Boyd's co-religionists in Ulster is provided him with "assurances." Whether these were of Massachusetts seeking a grant of land. Shute March 26, 1718) addressed to Governor Shute many more." Boyd took with him a petition (dated this country [New England] in order to ye coming of as their agent to "enquire after ye circumstances of commissioned Reverend William Boyd, of Macosquin, in the spring of 1718, Presbyterians of the Bann Valley were not legally recognised.

from their pulpits and marriages performed by them from holding public office, ministers were debarred Sacramental Test Act of 1704 excluded Presbyterians religious intolerance also featured highly. The bad harvests had pushed food prices up. However, and higher rents were being demanded, a series of Ulster. Many leases were coming up for renewal combined to make life hard in early 18th century many and varied. A number of economic factors The reasons for seeking a new life in America were Scotland.

and, in later years, to escape religious persecution in of Ulster, attracted by the opportunity of cheap land the previous 100 years, at the time of the Plantation Many of them had moved to Ulster from Scotland in Donegal and parts of Tyrone. came from the Foyle Valley area including County Garvagh, Killea, and Ballymoney. The second group Aghadowey, Macosquin, Dunboe, Ballywillan, were from the Bann Valley, which included Coleraine, two districts in County Londonderry. The first group The families who left Ulster in 1718 came mainly from

▲ A typical New Hampshire homestead. From Willey's Book of Nutfield. Courtesy of American Library Association.



▲ First Sermon in Nutfield, April 1719  
Image from Willey's Book of Nutfield



No shipping lists exist for the early period, but it is thought that the following vessels arrived in Boston in the summer of 1718. The William and Mary, the Robert and the William from Coleraine, the McCallum from Londonderry, The Robert and the William from Coleraine arrived in Boston on the 4th August 1718, carrying the main contingent from the Bann Valley, while the Rev James Woodside and about 40 families of his congregation from Dunboe, arrived on the McCallum.

The new arrivals were not always made welcome. In addition to theological differences with existing settlers they also placed a strain on resources –

▲ Old Derry' Courtesy of Derry Presbyterian Church, Hershey, Pennsylvania (USA). All rights reserved.



Over the next 50 years an estimated 200,000 – 250,000 of their fellow countrymen followed them to the New World.

Londonderry was just one of the towns the settlers from Ulster founded, their influence was to be seen throughout their new homeland. Many moved on and settled throughout Massachusetts, Maine, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and the Carolinas. In addition to the potato and flax they brought with them their religion, work ethic, love of freedom, language and culture.

The original sixteen families were soon joined by many of their fellow countrymen and by September 1719 there were seventy families. While living under threat of attack from Native Indians the settlers had to build basic homes and clear the land for cultivation. It was soon decided "that a meeting-house shall be built in this town as speedily as may be" and within two years of their arrival it was in use. In June 1722 the little settlement was incorporated as the town of Londonderry.

One party, including James McKeen, travelled to Casco Bay on board the Robert, where they spent a cold and hungry winter. In the spring they sailed south to the Merrimack River and on to the town of Haverhill. From there they viewed an unsettled site called Nutfield, where they were joined by the Rev James McGregor, who had spent the winter in Dracut. He agreed to become their first minister, and the little settlement of Nutfield grew rapidly.

to nearby townships, such as Worcester, Andover, and Dracut. One party, including James McKeen, travelled to Casco Bay on board the Robert, where they spent a cold and hungry winter. In the spring they sailed south to the Merrimack River and on to the town of Haverhill. From there they viewed an unsettled site called Nutfield, where they were joined by the Rev James McGregor, who had spent the winter in Dracut. He agreed to become their first minister, and the little settlement of Nutfield grew rapidly.





▲ From A New Map of Ireland by John Senex 1720.  
© Houses of the Oireachtas, Dublin Castle Archival Material Collection

**Coleraine** – N 55° 07.984 W 06° 40.566  
**Dunboe** – N 55° 09.622 W 06° 48.624  
**Magilligan** – N 55° 01.482 W 06° 57.882  
**Macosquin** – N 55° 04.994 W 06° 40.732  
**Somerset** – N 55° 06.839 W 06° 39.903  
**Aghadowey** – N 55° 01.801 W 06° 38.974  
**Garvagh** – N 54° 58.719 W 06° 41.299

**Boveedy** – N 54° 56.755 W 06° 36.511  
**Kilrea** – N 54° 56.993 W 06° 33.241  
**Ballymoney** – N 55° 04.152 W 06° 30.681  
**Billy** – N 55° 10.898 W 06° 29.798  
**Dunluce** – N 55° 12.453 W 06° 34.674  
**Ballywillan** – N 55° 11.284 W 06° 38.035.

At Kilrea and Ballymoney use nearby public car parking.  
Additional information to support your journey is available at [www.niarchive.org](http://www.niarchive.org)  
Please exercise caution and be aware of traffic conditions at all times.

### 1 - Coleraine

Coleraine was the departure point of several of the five ships carrying emigrants from the Bann Valley in 1718. Rev James McGregor preached a sermon, possibly on the bank of the River Bann, before they embarked. Rev Robert Higginbotham, the minister of Coleraine Presbyterian Church, was one of the nine ministers who signed the petition to Governor Shute, although he did not go to America.



▲ THE OLD BRIDGE AT COLERAINE, ERECTED 1716  
Courtesy of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council

### 2 - Articlave / Dunboe

Nearly 40 families, accompanied by their minister, Rev James Woodside, left Dunboe seeking a new life. They walked to Londonderry where they boarded the *McCallum* and set sail for Boston, arriving in the summer of 1718. In January 1720 Cotton Mather wrote “poor Mr Woodside, after many and greivous callamities in this uneasy country, is this week taking ship for London.” Rev Woodside’s son William remained in Brunswick.

### 3 - Magilligan

James McGregor was born about 1677 in Magilligan, overlooking Lough Foyle and Donegal. During the Williamite wars the McGregors, like many other families, sought refuge in Londonderry. The young James McGregor is said to have fired the cannon from the top of St Columb’s Cathedral signalling the breaking of the boom by the *Mountjoy*.

### 4 - Macosquin

Rev William Boyd, the minister of Macosquin, was entrusted by the Presbyterians of the Bann Valley to take the petition to Governor Shute of New England. It is thought William Boyd may have been the son of Rev Thomas Boyd who was the minister of Aghadowey before James McGregor. Mr Boyd returned to Ireland in 1719 and was appointed minister of Monreagh Presbyterian Church, Co. Donegal, in 1725. He died in 1772 and is interred in Taughboyne Parish Church.

### 5 - Somerset

Andrew and Jane McFadden are thought to have travelled with Rev James Woodside’s group on the *McCallum*. They settled at Merry-Meeting Bay and Andrew thought the area “was like a place called *Summersett on the Ban Water in Ireland*” and he gave it the name of Summersett. The couple also called their daughter Summersett after their home in the Bann Valley.

### 6 - Aghadowey

Rev James McGregor, minister of Aghadowey, along with many members of his congregation, left the Bann Valley in 1718, arriving in Boston in early August. Some of his party founded the settlement of Nutfield, and Mr McGregor was their minister until his death in 1729.

### 7 - Garvagh

Rev James Woodside is recorded in some sources as the minister of Garvagh. This may have been prior to his service in Dunboe or he may have served both congregations.

### 8 - Boveedy / 9 - Kilrea

Rev Matthew Clarke, a veteran of the Siege of Derry, was the minister of Boveedy. He travelled to America arriving a few weeks after the death of his friend James McGregor. Rev Clarke, age 76, became the next minister of Nutfield, later marrying Mr McGregor’s widow. He served as minister of Nutfield until his death in 1735.

### 10 - Ballymoney

James and John McKeen were wealthy merchants in Ballymoney and are believed to have financed the ships to take the Bann Valley emigrants in 1718. James McKeen was the brother-in-law of Rev James McGregor. John McKeen died just a few weeks before they were due to leave but his widow and children went to America.

### 11 - Billy / Bushmills

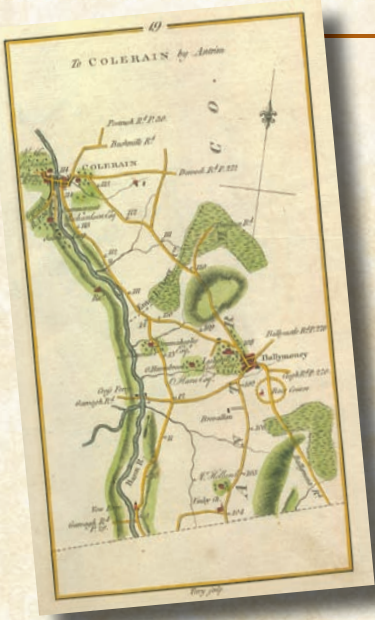
There was a Presbyterian congregation at Billy as early as 1646 when Rev Jeremiah O’Quin was ordained there. Sometime after Mr O’Quin’s death in 1657 the Presbyterians left Billy and moved their meeting-house to Dunluce.

### 12 - Priestland / Dunluce

Rev John Porter of Dunluce was one of the ministers who signed the petition to Governor Shute. The Patterson family left Priestland, Dunluce and settled in Nutfield, later Londonderry, New Hampshire.

### 13 - Ballywillan

Rev James Thompson, one of the nine ministers who signed the petition to Governor Shute, was ordained to Ballywillan in 1718. Robert Houston, another of the ministers who signed the petition, is believed to have been the son of Rev William Houston of Ballywillan.



▲ 1778 MAP – TO COLERAINE BY ANTRIM  
Courtesy of Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council