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‘The Project of Plantation’

17th Century changes in North East Ulster

People & Places



A project supported by the PEACE III Programme managed for the Special EU Programmes Body by the North East PEACE III Partnership.



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Cultural Fusions “The Project of Plantation”

Cultural Fusions “The Project of Plantation” has been delivered by Causeway Museum Service and Mid-Antrim Museums Service across the local councils of Coleraine, Ballymena, Ballymoney, Larne, Limavady and Moyle. It is supported by the PEACE III Programme through funding from the Special EU Programmes Body administered by the North East PEACE III Partnership.

The project supports the Decade of Anniversaries initiative and the 400th anniversaries of the granting of Royal Town Charters to Coleraine and Limavady, as part of the peace building process within our communities.

The project encourages a re-interpretation of the 17th century period based on new evidence and thinking . It aims to enable dialogue and discussion around the commemoration of key historical events to support peace and reconciliation building though a range of resources including:

An extensive tour exploring the histories revealed by our heritage landscapes providing information to allow site visits to be selected to suit learning needs

A major object based exhibition touring to venues across the North East PEACE III cluster area and beyond

New learning resources for community groups and to support the Northern Ireland curriculum.

Community engagement has been a pivotal process in the development of this exhibition, anchoring it in the community and ensuring strong relevancy for local communities. Community groups have taken part in co-curation workshops, exploring their local stories and developing content for the exhibition and archive.

A free downloadable version of this publication is available, as part of an extensive range of learning resources developed by Cultural Fusions, at www.niarchive.org/CulturalFusions.

Curriculum links

Key Stage 3 & 4, Learning for Life and Work & Environment and Society

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Thomas Raven maps, County Londonderry, 1622
Courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library

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Petty’s Down Survey Barony Maps, Toome, 1656-1658
Courtesy of Public Records Office Northern Ireland

“The Project of Plantation”

The events of the early 17th century brought significant changes to the North East of Ulster. Following nine years of war, a concerted effort was made to bring Protestant settlers from England, Wales and Lowland Scotland to occupy the lands of nine counties of Ulster.

A range of different schemes were operating simultaneously. The modern Counties of Londonderry and Antrim were both largely outside the scheme commonly outlined in text books. This book explores the people and places involved in this story in our area.

The events of “The Project of Plantation”, as it was known at the time, have given rise to conflicting perceptions which have contributed to current community tensions. Perceptions such as:

“The Irish natives were dispossessed and driven off the land by the English.”

“Our history only started in 1613.”

“The Plantation had nothing to do with my area.”

“Brave settlers left Scotland to set up life and bring civilisation to a hostile area.”

This project seeks to engage with evidence that still exists in the local landscape, revealed by current archaeological research and excavation, to encourage a re-interpretation of that time.

This booklet provides information about people and places. It provides the opportunity to focus on individuals and discuss their experiences and motivations. It seeks to promote investigation of significant locations in the landscape through images and information and encourages visits to accessible sites. Maps from the period can be used as tool in exploring the surviving archaeology.

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An English Agenda

England had long sought control of the British Isles. Wales had been subdued in the 12th and 13th century. Repeated attempts were made to bring Scotland under English rule. Since 1177, when Prince John was appointed Lord of Ireland, the English Crown made claim to Ireland. Throughout the succeeding centuries periodic attempts were made to assert that alleged Authority. Henry VIII changed his inherited title from Lord of Ireland to King of Ireland. His daughter Elizabeth, followed him in trying to control the Irish.



Queen Elizabeth I
Artist unknown
Public domain

Elizabeth I

Daughter of King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, Elizabeth was brought up away from court after the execution of her mother. Elizabeth came to the throne after the five year reign of her half sister Mary. Mary had led a brutal campaign to re-establish Catholicism in England. Elizabeth saw a return to Protestantism, but, declaring that she did not want to “make windows into men’s souls”, she was tolerant of religious practices maintained in private.

Elizabeth’s reign saw a major expansion of world trade and attempts at colonisation around the world. Conflict with Spain including the defeat of the Spanish Armada in 1588. The potential use of Ireland by the Spanish as a springboard for an attack on England was one of the factors in Elizabeth’s interest in the island.

She pursued a policy of ‘surrender and re-grant’, which meant that Irish clan chieftains were offered the chance to retain their land in exchange for accepting the Queen as their Monarch. The policy was widely regarded with distain, Chieftains enlisting and reneging when it suited them. The policy was supported by repeated military campaigns culminating in the Nine Years War which ended with the surrender of Hugh O’Neill a few days after her death. The cost of war had depleted the English treasury and major assets had been mortgaged. She supported early, unsuccessful attempts at plantation by Thomas Smith and the Earl of Essex.

Born 7th September 1533

Died 16th March 1603

Never married

“...the Earl of Tyrone’s rebellion, which cost England from 1st April 1600 to 29th March 1602 the sum of £283,673 19s 4½ d.”

Hibernica, Walter Harris, 1770

Plantation?

In the 12th century Anglo Normans from England and Wales invaded Ireland and established an aristocracy, including the Earldom of Ulster. They ruled over Irish natives by military force. Over time they adopted Irish language and customs and, it was said, became “more Irish than the Irish”. ‘Plantation’ was a different concept, the idea was not to control the natives, but to replace them with new settlers. Attempts in the 16th century failed because local opposition was too strong.

Thomas Smith

In 1571 Elizabeth gave a royal grant of lands in Clandeboyne and the Ards peninsula to Thomas Smith her principal Secretary of State. His son, also Thomas was commissioned with settling the land with English gentlemen. The land was, however, under the control of Sir Brian McPhelim O'Neill, of the Clandeboyne branch of the O'Neill clan. Sir Brian had obtained his knighthood and a royal grant of his land under the 'surrender and re-grant' scheme three years earlier. Now this very land had been given to Smith. O'Neill's campaign to destroy the infant plantation was successful.



Sir Thomas Smith
Artist unknown
Public domain

Robert Devereux, 2nd Earl of Essex

Remembered for his relationship with Elizabeth I, Robert Devereux was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1599. In 1573, his father had granted land on which to establish a plantation in North East Ulster. Robert's continuing failure as a military leader ensured that his attempt to implement the project was swamped by local opposition, not least from the MacDonnell clan. Devereux was subsequently beheaded for treason.

Born Herefordshire, 10th November 1565
Died 25th Tower of London, February 1601



Robert Devereux
2nd Earl of Essex
Artist unknown
Public domain

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Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone
Artist unknown
Public domain

A Loyal Ulsterman?

The policy of 'surrender and re-grant' was intended to convince Irish chieftains to support the English Crown. Hugh O'Neill of the powerful Tyrone O'Neills was given an English education. Returning to Ulster as the Queen's O'Neill he seemed the best hope for enlisting local support for the Crown.

Hugh O'Neill

The O'Neill clan of Tyrone were the most powerful clan in the North of Ireland. Leadership of the clan was not subject to direct line of descent, rather a leader was selected from the elite family. In 1562 this led to conflict when Hugh's father, Conn, was selected and the decision was disputed by his uncle, Shane. Conn along with Hugh's brother Brian was murdered. Hugh was taken away to safety in Dublin, where he was given an English upbringing and education and raised as a loyal subject of Elizabeth.

He returned to Ulster in 1567 as an officer in the English army, with an English title and the nickname the 'Queen's O'Neill'. After he was inaugurated, with English support, as 'The O'Neill', clan chief it became clear that his loyalties lay with his ancestry rather than his English upbringing. He was soon in open conflict with the Crown.

Initially, he managed to unite the northern clans and won a major victory against the English Army at the Battle of the Yellow Ford. The war dragged on and long sought help eventually came from Spain. In 1601, the Spanish force arrived not in the north, but in Kinsale, County Cork O'Neill was forced to march the length of Ireland in an unsuccessful attempt to rescue the Spanish. The ensuing battle was a major military defeat. Following Kinsale the English commander Edward Blount (Lord Mountjoy), supported by Arthur Chichester, led a brutal campaign of 'slash and burn'; killing people and cattle, burning homes and destroying crops.

In April 1603 Hugh O'Neill surrendered to a portrait of Queen Elizabeth at Mellifont Abbey, ending the Nine Years War. He was unaware that she had died a few days before. Mountjoy accepted the surrender and, in a deal that many thought over-generous, O'Neill was granted all his lands back.

In the ensuing years O'Neill found his position under assault from neighbours, particularly the O'Cahans, and from English adventurers. On the 14th September 1607 he boarded ship at Rathmullan, Donegal and set sail for Europe in the 'Flight of the Earls'. His intent was to reach Spain and negotiate support for a new campaign, however a peace treaty between England and Spain had been negotiated and the Spanish were no longer interested.

Hugh and his companions were welcomed in Rome where they spent their remaining days - never to return to Ireland. Military defeat and the departure of the most respected leaders in the north saw their lands in the hands of the Crown and left the way open for the 'Project of Plantation'.

Born Tyrone, c. 1550

Died Rome, 20th July 1616

A United Kingdom?

King James accession to the English throne united the Crowns of Scotland and England for the first time, a result which centuries of warfare had failed to achieve. Drawing Ireland into an effective United Kingdom was the next step. The success of the Nine Years War and the departure of key figures in the 'Flight of the Earls' left the North of Ireland militarily defeated and leaderless gave him the opportunity to launch a 'Project of Plantation' in Ulster. The Plantation of Virginia in 1607, establishing Jamestown, was underway. The Hamilton Montgomery Plantation of County Down was showing signs of success. The time for Plantation had come.



King James I
by Daniel Mijtens 1621
Public domain

James I & VI

James, son of Mary Queen of Scots, was from the House of Stuart who ruled Scotland from 1371. He was established as King James VI of Scotland in 1567 when only a year old. His mother's claim to the English throne, by descent from her grandmother who was Henry VII's sister, had been blocked. When Elizabeth I died childless James was judged next in line. On the 24th March 1603 he was crowned James I of England and Ireland.

His years in Scotland included a personal interest in the persecution of witchcraft. He wrote a book, 'Daemonologie', on the subject. As a believer in the 'Divine Right of Kings', he was happy to accept his role as head of the Anglican Church and remained opposed to Presbyterianism, which could not accept this position.

Finding the English coffers severely depleted he was keen to find an alternative solution to extended military campaigns in Ireland. James embraced "The Project of Plantation". He took a personal interest throughout the establishment of the project and his influence was crucial in persuading the London Guilds to participate in the plantation of County Coleraine.

Both sides of first Irish coinage of King James I, from James Simon's *An Essay towards an historical account of Irish coins and the currency of foreign monies in Ireland*, Dublin 1749

Born Edinburgh Castle, 19th June 1566
Died Hertfordshire, 27th March 1625
Married Anne of Denmark 1589

"the wisest fool in Christendom"
Sir Anthony Weldon, 1650



James was responsible for the King James version of the Bible which is still in use today.
Coleraine 'Revival bible', 1859
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum



'The Project of Plantation'
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“O’Cahan’s Countrie”?

In the six of the Ulster counties: Tyrone, Armagh, Fermanagh, Donegal, Cavan and Monaghan, parcels of land up to a maximum of 3,000 acres were offered to individuals. These individuals, known as Undertakers, had to prove that they had enough wealth to invest in their plot. An exceptional policy was applied to County Coleraine, formerly O’Cahan’s Country. This area was offered to London Livery Companies or Guilds.

The O’Cahans

Since Medieval times the area between the Rivers Bann and Foyle was known as O’Cahan’s Countrie, under the control of the O’Cahan clan.

Like the O’Neills, the O’Cahan’s trace their lineage back to the legendary Niall of the Nine Hostages. The two clans have been closely linked. Legend has it that the O’Cahan territory granted by the O’Neill was defined by how far O’Cahan’s brown horse could run in a day. ‘O’Cahan’s Countrie’ comprised most of what is now County Londonderry. They had castles at Dungiven, Limavady, Enagh and Coleraine. The O’Neills continued to regard the O’Cahans as a subservient clan, although an important one. They presided over the inauguration of the O’Neill Chieftain.

In the late 16th century the area long known as ‘O’Cahan’s Countrie’ was renamed County Coleraine, by the English authorities, although the O’Cahan’s were still firmly in control. In 1610 it was renamed, along with the town of Derry, Londonderry in honour of the Guilds.



Early 17th century map
 Courtesy of Coleraine Museum

Donnell Balloch O'Cahan

In the period before the Plantation, Donnell Balloch O'Cahan led the clan in the Nine Years War, alongside Hugh O'Neill. After defeat at the Battle of Kinsale, O'Cahan's Country was caught in the 'slash and burn' campaign, between troops based in Derry and Coleraine. In 1602 Donnell was forced to submit. The terms of his submission guaranteed him a large portion of his land back. Significantly, this land was by 'Right of the Crown' and cancelled any claim by the O'Neills. However in the following year when Hugh O'Neill surrendered, O'Neill was granted back most of his former territory, including the land promised to the O'Cahans. O'Neill was not long in asserting his authority. The aggrieved O'Cahan challenged by legal means. The Irish Privy Council supported his case in 1607, but nothing was done. An accusation of treason was brought against Donnell O'Cahan and he was arrested by Sir Thomas Philips in February 1608 and imprisoned in Dublin Castle. From there he was sent to the Tower of London. He was imprisoned for over twenty years, dying in the Tower. Not one single charge was brought against him.

O'Cahan's Country was divided up between the London Companies and became County Londonderry. Sir Thomas Phillips moved into Donnell's Castle at Limavady. Sir Edward Dodington developed the clan stronghold at Dungiven.



Detail from John Speed's Map of Ireland, 1605-1610
 Courtesy of Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich Library and Archive

Detail from Thomas Ravens map of Mercers Company Lands, 1622
 Courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library

Deserving O'Cahans

Throughout Ulster portions of land were given to the so called "deserving Irish", who had been helpful to the Crown.

While the O'Cahan chief remained in the Tower of London, his brother, Captain Manus O'Cahan, was given a small grant of land in the county. His kinsman, Manus McCowey O'Cahan, was granted a portion in what is now Garvagh. Donnell's wife was given a portion in Faughanvale.

"they were men of merit, having done good service to the State, could not be removed without inconvenience..."

Second conference about the Plantation of Ulster 1609





Detail of Thomas Raven's Map of Sir Thomas Phillips' buildings
 Courtesy of Coleraine Museum



Limavady Estate Map, 1699
 Courtesy of Limavady Museum

The Formidable Accuser

Sir Thomas Phillips, retired English Army Officer, was a major figure in the 'Project of Plantation'. From 1607 he was busily developing Coleraine and was deeply involved in the planning of the Londonderry Plantation. However, when he was forced to give up his holdings in Coleraine he was described as becoming "obnoxious to the Irish Society" and became their fiercest critic.

Sir Thomas Phillips

Sir Thomas Phillips acquired the Abbey Lands in Coleraine in 1607 and commenced a programme of development. He constructed a house for himself and started building houses to encourage others to settle in the town. He also leased Portballintrae and Portrush from The MacDonnells. The rent for Portrush was one hogshead of claret per annum.

He acquired the rights to fell timber over ten square miles of Glenconkeyne Forest, initially from Hugh O'Neill. He was granted the customs of the Bann, Portballintrae and Portrush and the right to hold a weekly market and annual fair in Coleraine. In 1608 he received a licence to distil whiskey in "County Coleraine and the Route". This licence is claimed by Bushmills Distillery.

Phillips took a leading role in planning the plantation of County Coleraine. He was the guide for the agents sent by the London Companies to survey the area. In 1609 he produced a document, *'Project for the Londoners Plantation'*. When the decision was taken to build the new town of Coleraine on the East bank of the Bann, he was forced to give up the developments he had commenced.

As compensation he was allotted land in the Roe Valley. In 1608 he was personally involved in the arrest of Donnell O'Cahan, clan chieftain. He subsequently moved into Donnell's castle. He developed this site and also 'Newtown-Limavadie', where the modern town of Limavady now stands. He negotiated permission to employ Catholics, a right which was officially denied to the London Guilds.

Having lost his land in Coleraine he became a major critic of the London Companies and spent years reporting their failings to the King. His campaign included the commissioning of Thomas Raven to map the entire county.

Born - unknown

Died - August 1636, Hammersmith

"Sir Thomas Phillips afterwards made himself very obnoxious to the Irish Society, by intermeddling in their concerns with regard to the Plantation..."

A Concise view of the Irish Society, 1832

“as the city of London shall see fit”

The London Livery Companies or Guilds were pressured by the King into investing in County Coleraine. The County was divided into twelve. Fifty Five Guilds were involved, however twelve Companies took on the main responsibility for each of twelve ‘proportions’. These were allocated by lottery. Other land was set aside for Coleraine and Derry, Sir Thomas Phillips, deserving Irish and the Church.

The Guilds

The London Livery Companies were descended from the Medieval Guilds which were created to defend the positions of workers in a wide range of trades. By the 17th century they held considerable wealth and were looking for investment opportunities. The Crown had at various times looked to the Guilds for financial support. James I put considerable pressure on them to become involved in the Ulster scheme. The twelve lead Livery Companies were the Mercers, Grocers, Drapers, Fishmongers, Goldsmiths, Skinners, Merchant Taylors, Haberdashers, Salters, Ironmongers, Vintners and Clothworkers. Many of them still exist as charitable institutions today.

The city of London being willing to undertake such a part as may befit them in the project of the plantation of Ulster, and to be a means to reduce that savage and rebellious people to civility, peace, religion, and obedience;

Letter from His Majesty’s Privy Council. 1609

“His Majesty offers to grant to these places charters of incorporation; the whole territory betwixt them, however which is above 20 miles in length , bounded by the sea on the north, by the Ban on the east, and the river Derry or Lough Foyle on the west, to be planted with such undertakers as the city of London shall see fit.”

Letter from His Majesty’s Privy Council. 1609



The Irish Society Crest
Courtesy of The Honourable The Irish Society

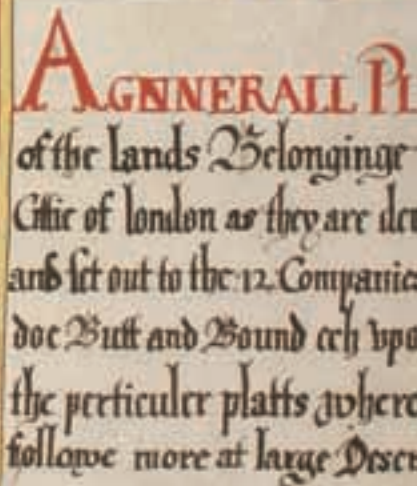
The Honourable The Irish Society

Since the Guild members themselves had little desire to become directly involved, a management committee or company was set up to oversee the scheme. It became known as The Honourable The Irish Society. The Company was granted its own charter in 1613. The Society continues to exist as a charitable organisation and still holds the fishing rights to the Bann and Foyle river systems. They are based today at Cutts House Coleraine.



St Patrick's Chalice presented by The Honourable The Irish Society, 1613
Courtesy of St Patrick's Church Coleraine

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Thomas Ravens County Londonderry Map, 1622
Courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library

What did the Londoners get?

The Londoners were looking for a return on their investment. Fish and timber had a ready market in England and in Europe, these were assets which could be immediately exploited. Otherwise income depended on establishing settlers and collecting rents.

Land

The twelve proportions given to the London Companies amounted to 260,000 acres with an additional 12,000 acres set aside for the Liberties of Coleraine and Derry. 137,000 acres went to Individuals and to the church, under the Bishopric of Derry.

The companies were required to bring in settlers to populate the land and pay rent to the Companies to recover their investment. It is likely that they had underestimated the size of the proportions, since Irish miles were larger than English miles. The low numbers of settlers meant that the companies agents allowed Irish tenants to stay at rents considerably higher than that paid by their English neighbours, although this was against the rules. Much of this income never reached the Companies.

Timber

The great forests of Glenconkeyne and Killetra on the shores of the Bann represented a hiding place for wolves and outlaws. It had been described as the “ultimate refuge of the Ulster rebel” by English Commander, Henry Bagenal. They forests were a resource which, given the extensive local building programme and a ready export market, could quickly be turned into cash.

Sir Thomas Phillips had obtained permission to fell an area five miles long by two miles wide, representing an estimated 160,000 oak, ash and elm trees, but was forced to abandon the enterprise when the London Companies took over. No thought was given to management or replanting and within forty years the forests were gone.

Fish

The salmon and eel fishing on the River Bann was a major attraction as it represented ready cash. Catches of 120 tons per year from both Foyle and Bann were promised. These figures are not far from catches in the 20th century. A single shipment of 36 tons, salted and barrelled, was sent on the ship ‘Grace of God’ to Spain in October 1613, showing the quality of the fishing in the Bann and the extent of the export market.

Fishing rights to the River Bann had long been contested between the McQuillan, O’Cahan, O’Neill and MacDonnell clans. At the time of Plantation King James promised the rights to the London Companies, but it was unclear who owned them.

James Hamilton (of the County Down Plantation), claimed to have obtained ownership of the fishing rights from John Wakeham, who had never set foot in Ireland, but held the rights by way of “King’s letters”. Hamilton sold to Arthur Chichester and the rights were subsequently transferred to The Honourable The Irish Society. All this ignored Randal MacDonnell’s royal grant of $\frac{1}{4}$ of the fishing in the River Bann, 1603 and claims made by the Bishop of Derry.



Salmon from the River Bann
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum.

Logs on the water in
Massachusetts. Similar to scenes
on the Bann.
Courtesy of Boston Public Library



What did it cost?

Each Company agreed to investing in the creation of new settlements. Settlers were to be brought from England to construct and populate the landscape. The Companies were committed to creating a new town on each proportion. The essential requirements were a Bawn, (a defended courtyard with walls and corner towers), an Agent's house, often incorporated into the Bawn, settlers' houses and a church. The English style building style known as Cage Work was used in many of the settlements, as well as Coleraine. A timber frame was filled in with wattle and daub or brick. The speed at which this was achieved varied from place to place. The original commitment for each proportion was a sum of £3,333.6s.8d. However in reality the Companies were to spend considerably more for little return.

Macosquin

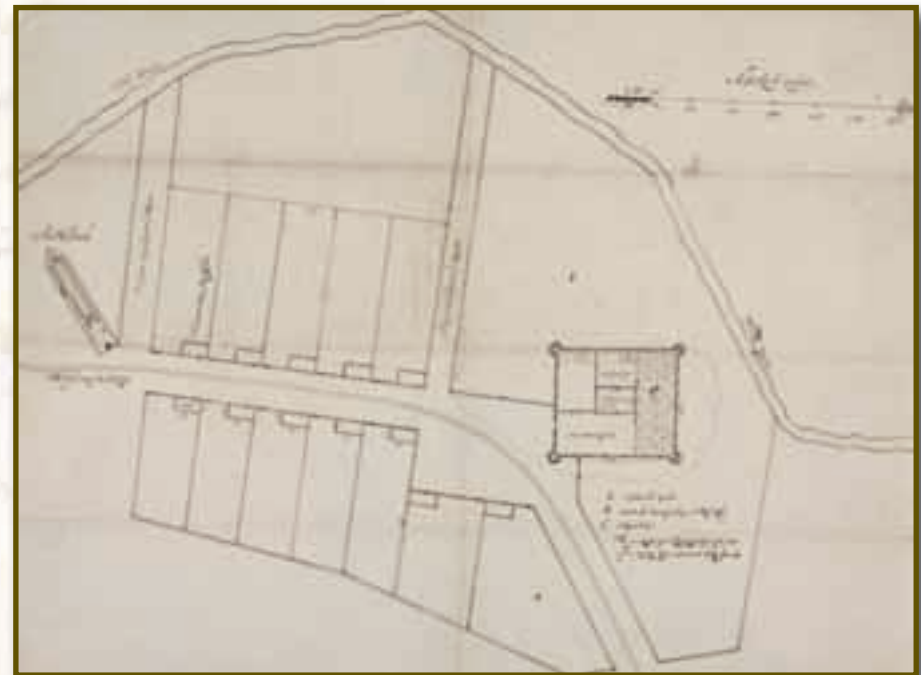
The Merchant Taylors established their main settlement at Macosquin. The lay out of the village still follows the lines of the 1615 plan. A Georgian house stands on the site of the Agents House and Bawn.

"Here, near unto the castle, are built seven good houses of Stone and Lime, well slated and inhabited with English, standing all together in a well chosen Place."

Pynnar's description of Macosquin, 1618



Cigarette card illustrating the crest of the Merchant Taylors Company
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum



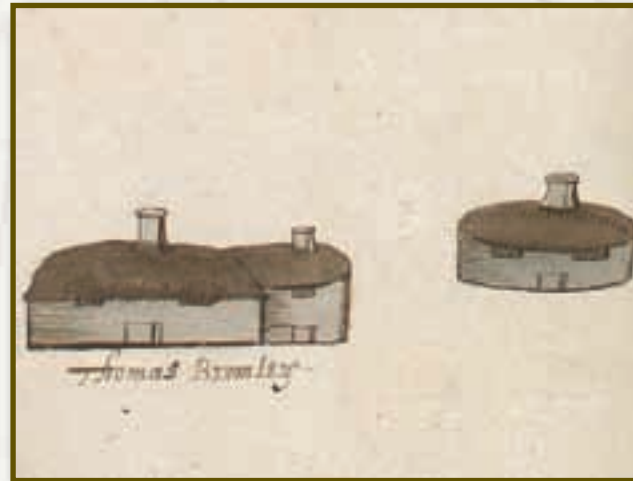
Plan of Macosquin, 1615
Courtesy of Merchant Taylors' archives, Guildhall Library

Movanagher

Although the proportions were supposedly drawn by lottery, it was the powerful Mercers Company who obtained the area with the best timber. Their settlement, at Movanagher, was overseen by agent Valentine Hartop. Raven's map clearly shows the water powered sawmill built to prepare timber for floating down the Bann to Coleraine. It also includes several Irish style houses suggesting the presence of natives. After attack in 1641, the settlement was not re-built since the timber which was the chief reason for its location, was gone. The Mercers re-built at Kilrea.



Thomas Raven's map of the Mercers Company buildings, 1622
Courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library



Irish houses from Thomas Raven's map of the Mercers Company buildings, 1622
Courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library



Cigarette cards illustrating the crests of the Ironmongers and Mercers Companies
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum

Aghadowey

The Ironmongers Company developed the land around Aghadowey. Their main house became known as 'Lizard Manor' after the Salamanders depicted on their crest.

"There are also eight dwelling houses of Cage Work, some are slated and some shingled; but they stand so far asunder that that they can have but little succour one of another"

Pynnar's description of Aghadowey, 1618



Thomas Raven's map of the Ironmongers Company lands, 1622
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum



The men on the ground

The Londoners had no great wish to travel to Ulster to manage their investments. In addition to the services of The Honourable The Irish Society, Agents were appointed for each of the 12 proportions.

Sir Edward Doddington

In 1603 Captain Edward Doddington, a former English soldier, began to establish himself by building on the site of the O'Cahan castle. The castle which in turn had been constructed on the site of the Augustinian Priory at Dungiven.

At the time of the Plantation this land came into hands of the Skinners Company. A compromise with Doddington saw him remain on the property he had established, while taking on the role of Agent for the Company.

Edward Doddington was responsible for over-seeing the construction of Derry's walls, travelling from Dungiven to the Derry via the Skinner's second bawn at Brackfield.



Cigarette cards illustrating the crest of the Skinners Company
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum



Replica of a tile found at Doddington House, Dungiven
Courtesy of Limavady Museum Collection



Thomas Raven's map of the Skinners Company lands, 1622
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum

Anne Beresford/Doddington/Cooke

Anne Beresford, eldest daughter of Tristram Beresford, married Sir Edward Doddington of Dungiven. After Doddington's death she remained at the castle on the former Dungiven Priory site. She married Sir Francis Cooke.

Anne continued development in Dungiven, establishing mills on the river Roe. She survived the 1641 rebellion, when the castle was temporarily back in the hands of the O'Cahans.

At her death her will indicates that in addition to the property in Dungiven she had holdings in other parts of Ulster and owned a town house in the Market Square in Coleraine.

Died 1673 , buried in Coleraine

Married Sir Edward Doddington & Sir Francis Cooke

Sir Edward Doddington's House from
Thomas Raven map 1622
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum



Sir Robert McLellan

The McLellan family have a long history in Scotland, centred on their castle at Kirkcudbright in South West Scotland. While the majority of settlers in Londonderry were English, Sir Robert McLellan was involved from an early stage.

He leased from the Haberdashers Company and established a castle at Ballycastle on Lough Foyle, where he appears to have lived with his family. The Haberdashers land subsequently came under the control of the Beresford family.

He also leased 3,200 acres on the west bank from the Clothworkers Company, based at Clothworkers Hall, however by 1618 little progress had been made with building.

"... neither no Plantation with any Brittish Tenants, but only one Freeholder, which is the Parson of the Parish. For all this land is inhabited with Irish."

Pynnar's Survey 1618



Thomas Raven map of Haberdashers Company Lands, 1622
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum

The fittest place to plant

In addition to the twelve Guild or Company 'proportions', there was a commitment to build two fortified settlements to serve as economic centres and military garrisons. The key positions of Derry and Coleraine, at the mouths of the two main rivers, were identified at the start of the Project in 1609 and were granted their charters in 1613. The Honourable The Irish Society was responsible for the development and maintenance of the two towns.

Carew plan of 1611
Crown copyright, courtesy of PRONI



"The late ruined city of Derry... and another place near the castle of Coleraine... seem to be the fittest places for the City of London to plant."

Motives and reasons to induce the City of London to undertake plantation in the north of Ireland 1609

Coleraine Town

It was quickly identified by the Londoners that the West side of The Bann was too steep to build a new fortified town. They demanded land on the East bank, however this was not within the gift of the King. After prolonged negotiations, Sir Thomas Phillips gave up his claim to the town and Sir Randal MacDonnell gave up 2,000 acres. This provided space for the walled town and agricultural land, known as the Liberties of Coleraine, to support the population.

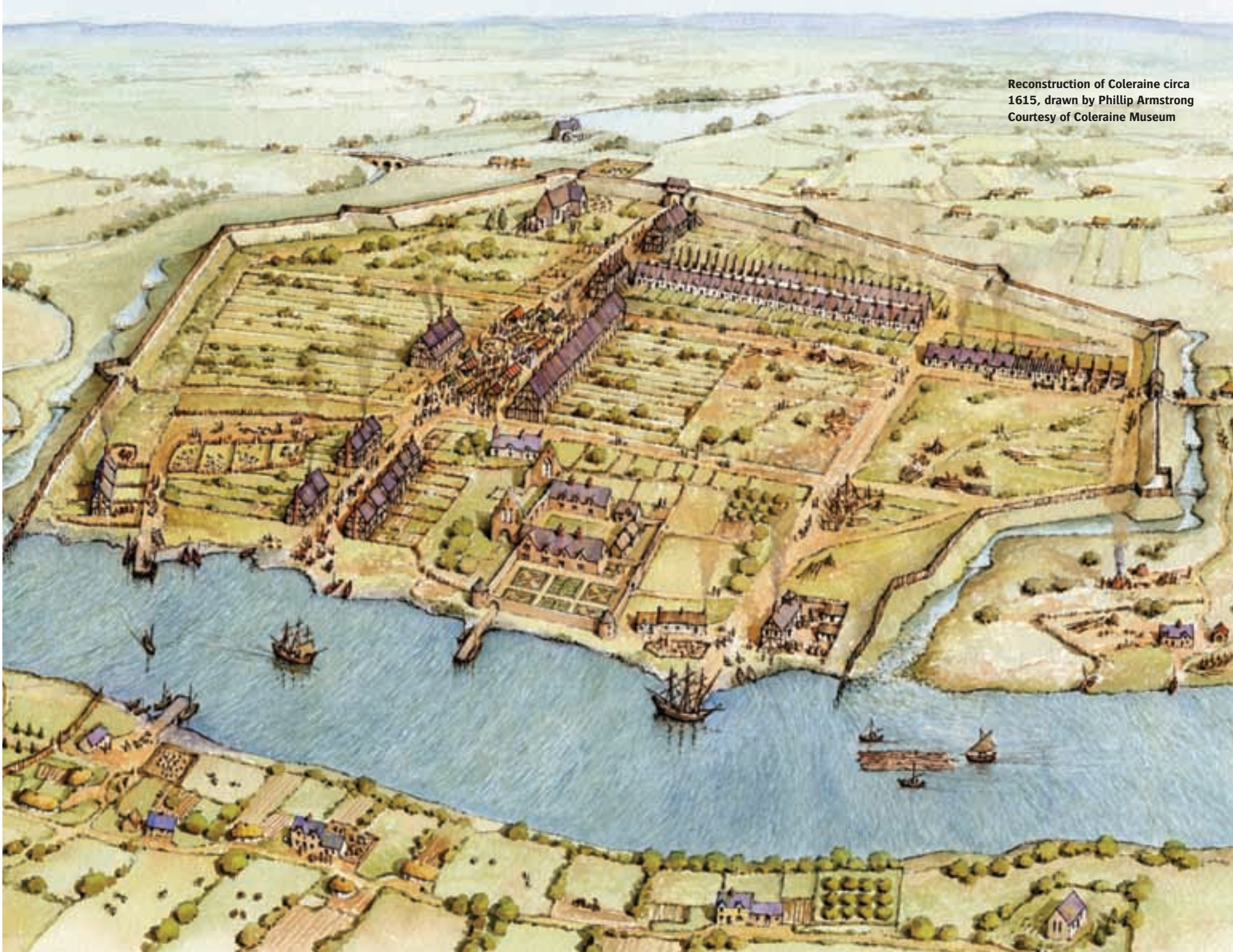
Standing in Coleraine town centre there appears to be nothing left of the 17th century town. The ramparts which once enclosed Coleraine are long gone, but the street layout is precisely that laid down in the plan of 1611. In Limavady the street patterns of the 17th century still provide character to the town.

Coleraine was planned as a commercial centre and also as a military stronghold to protect the young Plantation. A garrison was stationed there and the town was designed with a strategic defensive wall - a moat and earthen rampart, topped with a wooden palisade. The structure soon fell into disrepair and within a few years was wholly ineffective. The walled status of the town permitted some measure of control over its own occupants. The nightly ringing of the curfew bell, in Bell House Lane, signalled that all except residents and bona fide guests should leave.

The Book of Coleraine (1816) recording the town centre architecture, shows the original buildings still surviving at that time. Much of that 17th century build was swept away by 19th and 20th century developments, but elements of it are still there to be discovered. The main streets are narrower now, since the wooden walkways, a useful way of avoiding the 'pollution' on the streets, have been absorbed into the buildings.

Petty's Down Survey Map of the Liberties of Coleraine. 1656-1658
Courtesy of the Public Records Office, Northern Ireland





Reconstruction of Coleraine circa
1615, drawn by Phillip Armstrong
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum

1928 Chain of Office for the Mayor of Coleraine
Courtesy of Coleraine Borough Council



Coleraine

Since the Guilds were based in London the initial settlers would have been recruited there. At this time many people were travelling to London to make their fortune. Overcrowding was a problem. Settlers recruited might have come from anywhere in England. Scots would have been moving into the area throughout the 17th century. Coleraine was granted its Charter on 28th June 1613 by King James I. It set up a corporate body made up of a Mayor, 12 Aldermen and 24 Burgesses. The civic structures set up at that time are the basis of systems of governance which hold to this day.

John Rowley

John Rowley was appointed alongside Tristram Beresford as an agent in Coleraine. John is stated to "have come to Ulster as the agent of the Londoners for the building of the city of and the town of Coleraine", suggesting that Beresford may have been more involved with the surrounding country areas. He took up residence at Castleroe, a site previously occupied by the O'Neills.

He became embroiled in controversy when he was accused of taking advantage of his position; felling and selling timber and collecting rents from lands legally under the control of the Bishop of Derry. In November 1613, commissioners appointed by the City of London recommended his immediate dismissal.

"among the grievances complained of, it is alleged that Rowley has a grant of all timber woods and underwoods belonging to the bishopric and... has cut down 3,000 trees, and has transported into Spain many thousand pipe staves..."

Sir Arthur Chichester in a report to London, 1612



Fererra Sword presented to Coleraine in 1616 by Mathias Springham
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum



17th century houses amongst later buildings on New Row, Coleraine from the Book of Coleraine, 1816
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum

Tristram Beresford

In Coleraine's charter of 1613, Beresford is named as Portreeve (Port Warden). Thomas Phillips, John Rowley and Thomas Raven are among the twelve Burgesses listed. Beresford was subsequently appointed as the first Mayor of Coleraine.

He married John Rowley's daughter. His son, also Tristram, became Baronet of Coleraine. His descendants acquired the title of Earls of Tyrone and subsequently Baron of Waterford. The Beresford family is remembered in the Coleraine street names; Beresford Place, Beresford Road and Waterford Place. The Marquis of Waterford is the families current representative.

Coleraine People

In 1662 the Irish Parliament decided to introduce a tax on hearths (the hearth money rolls). In 1663 a list of people in Ireland with hearths was compiled. From this list we can find out who was living in Coleraine. Here are some of the family names, indicating English, Scots and Irish present in the town.

Adams, Aldridge, Baker, Bellas, Beresford, Brown, Campbell, Carr, Connor, Cox, Davidson, Eaton, Elder, Fisher, Fulton, Gault, Glover, Godfrey, Harper, Hughes, Kelly, McCullough, McGuinness, McKee, McLaughlin, McPherson, McQuilly, Miller, Mitchell, Osborne, Patterson, Pollock, Reid, Rowan, Smith, Steele, Taylor, Thomas, Thompson, Turner, Vesey, Walker, Watson, Wilson, Young.



Pynnar's map of Coleraine, 1618
Crown Copyright, Courtesy of PRONI



St Patrick's Church before 1855
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum

Workers

Since it was clearly stated that Irish workers could not be employed in any capacity, it was essential that all the trades required to make a success of the venture needed to be brought in amongst the new settlers.

The development of a viable economy was crucial to the project of the Plantation. The new settlers needed to be gainfully employed. Given the commitment by the London Companies to build houses, churches and bawns, builders at all skill levels would have been in high demand.

"A master carpenter or mason shall have, per day, with meal and drink, 6d. Without meal and drink, 12d."

**Note of Rates for the Wages of Artificers, Labourers, and Household Servants.
Carew MSS, 1603 - 1624**

Servants were hired by the year and were bound to their master for the period, they required permission to travel to another Barony.

"A good servant maid by the year, 10s. A cowboy for every cow, for the half year, 1 ½ d. A cowboy for two heifers."

**Note of Rates for the Wages of Artificers, Labourers, and Household Servants.
Carew MSS, 1603 - 1624**

Coleraine workers

John Craig, a carpenter, was granted freeman status in 1673. He paid forty shillings and gave a silver spoon worth 13s and 4d. George McLaughlin owned an inn in Coleraine. In 1676 Marmaduke Hegarty was "bound and enrolled as an apprentice to Patrick Hegarty, Butcher, for 7 years." Joshua Crewe was the official Baker of Coleraine. His wheat was destroyed one year and he sold loaves 3 ounces short of what he said they weighed. Edward Glover was the Keeper of the Town Clock.

Thomas Cavanagh had a business as a Wigmaker in Coleraine. Israel Breathwright, a shoemaker in Coleraine in 1691, was made Seal Master of the hand leather for the Town and Liberties. Hercules Heyland lived at Castleroe Castle. when Rebellion broke out in 1641, Hercules fled but a loyal housekeeper, named Kane, extended such kindness to the rebel troops that they didn't destroy the Castle.



17th century, wooden butter keg
Courtesy Ballymoney Museum



Late 17th century shoe remnant from excavations of
Plantation houses in Coleraine
Courtesy of Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Gateway to the World

The rivers and the sea were the gateway to the world for 17th century Ulster. The harbours at Larne, Carrickfergus and Coleraine port were key to the trading route between America and Britain.

Imports

Some of those living here were well connected and well travelled, they wanted the latest fashions and luxury goods available in London and elsewhere.

"Coloured silk lace, black Spanish silk, silk and silver butts, Flanders serge, crimson calico, cambric, striped canvas, silver buttons, French wine, Scotch aquavite, tobacco, sugar, prunes, currents, almonds, nutmeg, cloves, cinnamon, honey, white candy, drinking glasses, brass kettles, iron pots, hats, fine hats, stockings, playing cards..."

Imports into Coleraine 1613, The Port Books of Coleraine 1613



Merchants weights
Courtesy of the National Museum of Ireland

Exports

Aside from the prime assets of salmon, eels and timber, exports from Coleraine Harbour clearly show the agricultural base of the local economy. The inclusion of tanned goods and cloth indicates the start of industry rather than just exporting raw materials.

"Horses, hides, salt hides, tanned hides, sheepskins, lamb skins, goat skins, white leather, coney skins, butter, tallow, candles, calf skins, beef, bacon, neat's tongues, hog's grease, wheat, rye, oats, oatmeal, malt, yarn, Irish linen yarn, Scotch cloth..."

Exports from Coleraine, 1613, The Port Books of Coleraine 1613



Late 17th century chamber pot and Venetian glass from excavations of Plantation houses in Coleraine
Courtesy of Northern Ireland Environment Agency



'The Project of Plantation'

17th Century changes in North East Ulster

Were did the Irish go?

In response to a direct question the King's Privy Council made it clear that Irish were to have no place on the lands of the Plantation. Presbyterians would also be ruled out as they could not take the oath

"undertenants, servants labourers and cottagers of the Irish..., ...they shall not be meer Irish, nor any that will not take the oath of supremacy."

Reply to propositions delivered unto the Lords of his Majesty's Privy Council

Meer Irish

Instructions to the undertakers in 1608 allowed that "Natives" could reside on the Native Irish freeholds, Churchlands and the lands of some Servitors. Servitors were mostly former English or Scottish soldiers who had been granted lands.

"on the portions of such Servitors as are not able to inhabit their lands with English or Scottish Tenants, especially of such as best know how to rule and order the Irish."

As above

It was a widespread experience throughout the Plantations of Ulster that insufficient British settlers were enlisted and the previous residents remained. Thomas Raven's picture maps of 1622 were commissioned by Sir Thomas Phillips to show what a poor job the Companies were doing. Information included on the maps gave precise numbers for freeholders, 'British men' and natives. These clearly demonstrate that settlers were far outnumbered by native Irish throughout most of the county.

Movanagher, Mercers

Freeholders	3
British men	52
Natives	145

Fishmongers, Ballykelly

Freeholders	0
British men	23
Natives	245

Skinners, Dungiven

Freeholders	6
British men	12
Natives	348

Macosquin, Merchant

Taylors	
Freeholders	2
British men	36
Natives	124

Haberdashers, Ballycastle

Freeholders	5
British men	123
Natives	125

"... neither no Plantation with any British Tenants, but only one freeholder, which is the Parson of the Parish. For all this land is inhabited with Irish."

**Assessment of Clothworkers-Hall, 1618/19
Nicholas Pynnar's Survey**

Details from John Speed's Map of Ireland
Courtesy of Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich Library
and Archive

“...besieged on both sides”

1641 Rebellion

In the 1641 rising, the fortified town of Coleraine was besieged - estimates suggest that up to 2,000 inhabitants died, mostly of disease. Randal Og MacDonnell, on his return from Dublin, contributed to the relief of the siege.

The dead were buried in two pits. Local tradition has it that when a bulldozer crashed through the road in Brook Street in the 1930s a large number of bones were found beneath. The location is not far from the main gate of the town making this a likely location for one of the pits.

Many of the other Londonderry settlements were attacked. Some, such as Movinagher, were abandoned and never rebuilt.

“...those of Coleraine are strictly besieged on both sides, and by reason of their greate Diseases and Dearth of Fire and Corne doe daylie die apace;”

Sir James MacDonnell in a letter, 1642



Road works reveal the possible site of plague pit, Brook Street, Coleraine
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum

Replica of mid-17th century helmet
Courtesy of Ballycastle Museum Collection



‘The Project of Plantation’
17th Century changes in North East Ulster



'The Project of Plantation'

Explore the Landscape

1 Coleraine Town Centre

Street plan of Coleraine's town centre still conforms to the plan of 1611.

ACCESS: Public space, Coleraine 400 Heritage Trail - C847 344

2 Macosquin

Village lay out still reflects the 1615 plan of the Merchant Taylors Company

ACCESS: Public space. Bawn site private. Viewable from road - C822 287

3 Cutts House

Headquarters of The Honourable The Irish Society.

ACCESS: Private land. Viewable from road - C855 301

4 Bendooragh

17th century building near the site of a major battle in the 1641 rebellion

ACCESS: Private land. Viewable from road - C923 229

5 Movanager

Mercers Company bawn survives as walls and flanker, now part of farm buildings.

ACCESS: Private land. No access. Viewable from road - C919 159

6 Roe Valley Country Park

Signed as 'O'Cahan's Castle', the site was later Sir Thomas Phillip's residence.

ACCESS: NIEA site, facilities and signage - C676 2044

7 Walworth Bawn

Bawn walls and towers built for the Fishmongers Company survive.

ACCESS: Private land. No access. Viewable from road - C623 226

8 Dungiven Priory

Remains of medieval priory, O'Cahan stronghold and 17th century developments.

ACCESS: NIEA site, some interpretation. Open to the public - C691 082

9 Dunluce Castle

15th, 16th and 17th century developments on same site visible.

ACCESS: NIEA site, facilities & interpretation. Charges apply - C905 412

10 Dunseverick Castle

Dunseverick is an ancient site, destroyed in 1641.

ACCESS: National Trust Property. Free access. Some interpretation - C987 446

11 Bonamargy Friary

Franciscan Friary, traditional burial place of the MacDonnell clan.

ACCESS: NIEA site, free access - D126 408

12 Goodland

Outlines of a large number of temporary dwellings are visible.

ACCESS: Private land. Access on foot possible from Ulster Way. - D194 413

13 Glenarm Castle

MacDonnells' main residence since the 18th century.

ACCESS: Open to the public. Charges apply. - D306 152

14 Ballygalley Castle

Remarkable survival of an early 17th-century castle in Ireland within later structure.

ACCESS: Commercial Hotel. Customers welcome - D371 078

15 Olderfleet/Curran Castle

Olderfleet or Curran Castle was one of three guarding Larne's harbour.

ACCESS: NIEA site. Open to the public. No charge - D412 016

16 Kilwaughter Castle

1807 ruin designed by John Nash incorporating 17th century structure.

ACCESS: Private land. No access. Viewable from lane - D355 015

17 Carrickfergus Castle

A very well preserved castle dating back to Norman times.

ACCESS: NIEA site. Charges apply - J413 872

18 Ballymoney Old Church, Church Street, Ballymoney.

Graveyard includes a head stone dating to 1610.

ACCESS: Open to the public - C948 258

19 Clough Castle

Anglo-Norman site renovated circa 1600 by MacDonnells.

ACCESS: Private land. No access. Viewable from road - D095 147

20 Galgorm House

Well preserved bawn wall and flanker towers.

ACCESS: Private building. Viewable from road way - D094 013

Lower Clandeboye

The parts of County Antrim which were not under MacDonnell control were formally part of the territory of the Clandeboye O'Neills. They remained outside any official plantation scheme. Much of it was in the hands of Sir Arthur Chichester, based at Carrickfergus. Chichester was prepared to lease land to English, Scots and Irish.



Portrait of Sir Arthur Chichester
Courtesy of Belfast Harbour
Commissioners

Sir Arthur Chichester

Sir Arthur Chichester, a ruthless soldier in the Nine Years War, used his position as Lord Deputy of Ireland to maximise his own wealth. His holdings included the entire peninsula of Inishowen and Carrickfergus with surrounding lands, where he built his mansion, Joymount. Having long been opposed to the total removal of the Irish Chieftains, he was prepared to lease to Irish tenants. He maintained a life long animosity towards the MacDonnells, who had been responsible for the death of his brother.

Arthur Chichester was appointed Governor of Carrickfergus in 1598 following the death of his brother John. John Chichester was killed in battle by the MacDonnells who reputedly played football with his head. As a soldier Arthur Chichester enthusiastically supported Mountjoy's scorched earth policy in the Nine Years War. After the surrender of Hugh O'Neill he replaced Mountjoy as Lord Deputy and went on to play a major role in the planning and implementation of the Project of Plantation.

He acquired land holdings including the Inishowen Peninsula and considerable territory in East Antrim. He built a mansion at Carrickfergus and was closely involved with the development of Belfast. Having long been opposed to the total removal of the Irish Chieftains, he was prepared to lease to Irish tenants.

Born May 1563

Died 19th February 1625

Married Lettice Perrot, daughter of John Perrot, former Lord Deputy of Ireland, whose exploits included the taking of Dunluce Castle.

"...I would rather labour with my hands in the plantation of Ulster, than dance or play in that of Virginia."

Sir Arthur Chichester, 1610

Carrickfergus

Named after Fergus MacErc of Dunseverick, a castle was established by John de Coursey in 1177. In the 16th century it was one of the few footholds which the English Crown managed to maintain in the North of Ireland. It was over run and all the inhabitants slaughtered by Sorley Boy MacDonnell in revenge for The Earl of Essex's attack on Rathlin. In the 17th century it was occupied by Sir Arthur Chichester and remained one of the key ports on the North coast.



Map of Carrickfergus in 1685 by Thomas Philips
Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland

The Larne Area

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 Olderfleet Harbour, Larne and established themselves in the region

Ballycarry

In 1607 William Edmonstone, 7th Laird of Dunreath and his brother James settled on land on the Ards Peninsula. Two years later he received land at Templecorran and lived at Redhall, just north of Ballycarry.

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 served on the Edmonstone estate in Scotland.

Olderfleet or Curran Castle

Olderfleet Castle stands at the entrance to Larne Harbour. Evidence from maps suggest 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.



Larne harbour late 19th Century. Courtesy of Larne Museum



Known locally as Olderfleet Castle, this may actually be Coraine or Curran Castle
Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Museums Northern Ireland

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 16th 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 VI the estate was granted to Rory Og McQuillan by Sir Arthur Chichester. MacQuillan is 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 Kinlilt 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.

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.



Portrait of Alexander Colville
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim
Museum with premission of the
Rt. Hon. Christopher Brooke



A wood engraving of Galgorm Castle, that appeared in
The Dublin Penny Journal on the 28th June 1834.
Courtesy of Northern Ireland Environment Agency



Surviving flanker tower and bawn wall at Galgorm Castle

Rory Og MacQuillan

Rory Og MacQuillan was part of the MacQuillan clan who had lost Dunluce Castle and the territory of the Route to the MacDonnell clan. He was leased land by Arthur Chichester in some sort of compensation for the lands his family had lost. After selling a portion of his land to Sir Faithful Fortesque, he maintained friendly relations with his new English neighbour.

"... in consequence of the loss of his inheritance, disposed of by his Majesty To sir Randoplhe MacDonnell."

Reason stated by Sir Arthur Chichester regarding his grant of land to MacQuillan

Ballymena

William Adair sold his lands at Portpatrick in Wigtonshire, 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 20th Century.



Detail from Petty's Down Survey Barony Map of Toome, 1656-1658, showing Ballymena
Courtesy of Public Records Office, Northern Ireland

The O'Haras

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.

A branch of the O'Hara family had moved from Sligo to Antrim and, by the time of the 17th Century Plantation, 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.

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.



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



Crebilly Castle, seat of the O'Haras
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum



Scrapbook by Mrs Mary Wardlaw
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum with the permission the Rt. Hon. Christopher Brooke

MacDonnells - the Great Survivors

The Route and Glynnnes

The area between the rivers Bush and Bann is known as the Route. Tradition has it that the name derives from the ancient road to Tara, seat of the High Kings. One of five Royal Roads, it passed through this area, fording the Bann at the Cross, near Bendooragh, Ballymoney, terminating at Dunseverick Castle. The Route is an area of good farmland with bogs supplying good stores of peat. From Medieval times the territory was held by the MacQuillan clan.

The Glens of Antrim, known as the Glynnnes, is a mountainous area comprised of nine steep sided valleys. Until the construction of the Antrim Coast Road in the 1830s, access to the Glens was difficult and most goods were carried by boat. The close proximity of Scotland made cross channel trade easy. From the mid 13th-century the area was under the control of the Bisset family who were probably of Norman ancestry. The steep terrain of the area limited agricultural opportunities and would not have been favoured by Lowland Scots incomers.

Highlanders, Lowlanders and Borderers

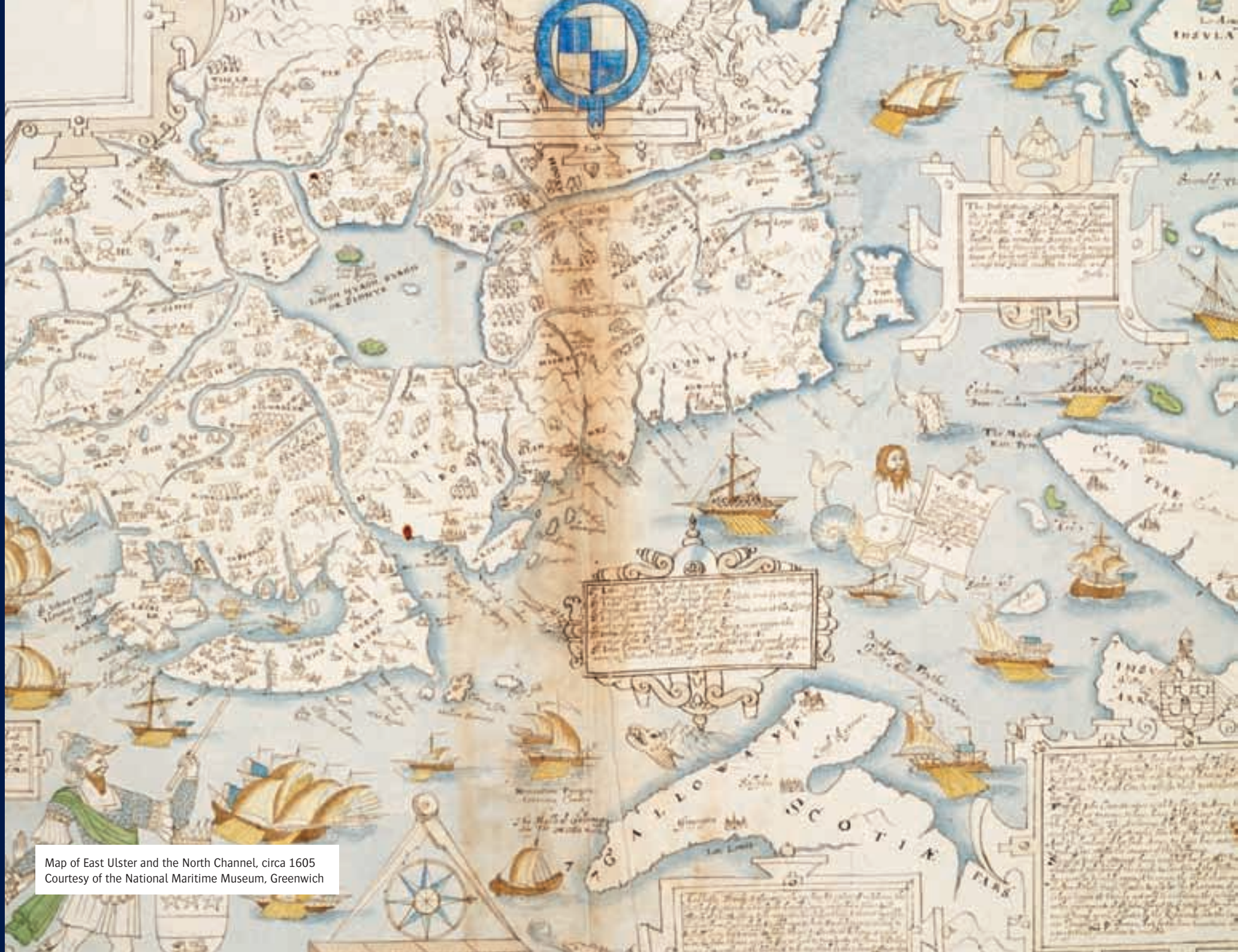
Scotland was by no means an area with a single cultural identity in the 17th century. People in the Highlands and Western Isles lived under a clan system and spoke Gaelic. They had more in common with Ireland than with Edinburgh, indeed they were frequently referred to as "Irish" by Lowlanders, because of their language. They would not have regarded themselves as Scottish nor hold loyalty to the Scottish Crown. There was frequent conflict between the Kings of Scotland and the Highlanders. Highlanders were, by and large, Catholic at this time.

The Central Lowlands of Scotland had largely embraced Protestantism, however conflict between the established church and the rising force of Presbyterianism continued throughout the 17th century. In the documents outlining the rules of Plantation, it is specifically mentioned that only Lowland Scots were desired as settlers.

The Border Lands between Scotland had long been dominated by powerful families who practised 'rieving' (cattle stealing) as a lifestyle. Conflict between the families and with both the English and Scottish authorities was frequent. The Borderers were an acute embarrassment to James I of England, creating a wild lawless area dangerous to travellers at the centre of his, supposedly, United Kingdom. James renamed the area 'the Middle Shires' and launched a muscular campaign against the Border families. Many Borderers lost their land and found their way to Ulster. They were not part of the official Plantation, but they were absorbed into the new society. Border names such as Armstrong, Elliot, Kerr and Bell are common in Northern Ireland.



John Speed's Map of Scotland, circa 1610
Courtesy of the National Library of Scotland



Map of East Ulster and the North Channel, circa 1605
Courtesy of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich

Scottish Invaders?

In the mid 16th century, members of the powerful MacDonald clan, from Islay, ousted the MacQuillan clan from Dunluce Castle and their extensive territories in County Antrim. These MacDonnells (as their name became) survived conflicts with Irish clans and English forces. They managed to succeed in a changing world.

MacDonnells

The MacDonnells or MacDonalds trace their ancestry to the early Celtic Kings in Ireland. The line leads through the Kings of Dalriada in North Antrim to the Western isles of Scotland.

For generations before settling in North Antrim the MacDonnells maintained close contacts with the North of Ireland and were married into the key Irish families of the O'Cahans, the O'Neills, the O'Donnells, the Savages and the Bissets. John Mor MacDonnell married Margaret Bisset, daughter of the Lords of the Glynnnes of Antrim, giving the MacDonnells a claim by marriage to the Glens, although they lived in Scotland. Around 1412 Alexander Carragh was the first MacDonnell to settle permanently in Antrim. He had eight sons including James and Sorley Boy. James took up leadership of the family until he died, allegedly from poisoning and Sorley Boy took over.

Sorley Boy MacDonnell

The youngest of eight brothers, Sorley was named after his famous ancestor and founder of the Lordship of the Isles. The nickname buidh, anglicised to Boy, means yellow, indicating that Sorley was blond.

Following his brothers James and Colla he took on the leadership of the clan and consolidated their hold on the Route and the Glens. During his long career he was at various times at war with the McQuillans, the O'Neills and the English. He was held prisoner by the English for a year until he was exchanged for Commander Bagenal, captured at a failed English attack on Rathlin. Shane O'Neill held him prisoner for two years until the O'Neills needed MacDonnell help. At the feast, supposedly to celebrate the new alliance, Shane was murdered. In his later years Sorley surrendered to a portrait of Queen Elizabeth and was re-granted all his land. He died in 1590 at the age of eighty five.

Born 1505, Dunluce or Dunaneanie

Died 1590, Dunaneanie

Married Mary O'Neill from Tyrone



The Funeral of Sorley Boy MacDonnell at Bonamargy Friary, by J. W. Carey, 1859-1937
Courtesy of Ballycastle Museum

‘The Project of Plantation’

17th Century changes in North East Ulster

Castles of Stone

Dunluce Castle

The origins of construction on the basalt stack of Dunluce are unclear. The presence of a 'souterrain' suggests there was settlement here at the time of the Vikings.

The MacQuillan clan occupied the site in the mid 14th century and created the external walls and round towers in a typically Irish style. The MacDonnells rebuilt sections, such as the Gatehouse, with a distinctly Scottish look. Randal Arranach replaced the original main house with a very English manor house.

The Castle withstood the first attack of the 1641 rebellion, when the town of Dunluce was damaged, but Randal Og lost the castle to General Munro after inviting him to dine with him. The castle sustained considerable damage during the ensuing years, when it was occupied by English troops.

17th century pottery fragment from Dunluce
Courtesy of Centre for Maritime Archaeology, University of Ulster and NIEA



17th century belt buckle from Dunluce
Courtesy of Centre for Maritime Archaeology, University of Ulster and NIEA



Watercolour of Dunluce Castle by A Nicholl 1804-1866
Courtesy of Coleraine Museum

Glenarm

Glenarm was the site of the Castle of the Bisset Family from around the middle of the thirteenth century, passing into the hands of the MacDonnells through marriage between John Mor MacDonnell and Agnes Bisset. The castle was rebuilt in the 1630s for Alexander MacDonnell, Randal Arranach's younger brother, but damaged in the 1641 rebellion.

After 1750 Glenarm became the seat of the Earl of Antrim and remains so to this day.



Gatehouse of Glenarm Castle
Courtesy Northern Ireland Environment Agency

MacDonnell Castles

In addition to Dunluce and Glenarm the MacDonnells maintained castles at Red Bay, a frequent landing spot for people travelling from Scotland, Bun Donnel Gorm (east of Ballycastle) and Dunaneanie to the west.

Kinbann or Kinbane was built by Sorley's older brother and came into the possession of the McAlister family, a branch of the MacDonnells. The remains of a castle, just off the Diamond in Ballycastle were visible in the 19th century.

Clough Castle occupied a prominent site near Ballymena. This was a defended site from the 13th century, refurbished by the MacDonnells around 1600. The site of a MacDonnell castle in Ballymoney is unknown.



Sketch of Ballycastle Diamond, 1854 showing ruins of the castle
Courtesy of Ballycastle High School

Clough Castle
Courtesy of Mid-Antrim Museum



“...valiant gentleman...”

Dunluce Castle

Randal Arranach MacDonnell switched from being an ally of Hugh O'Neill to being a loyal English subject convincingly enough to be granted 333,000 acres by King James. At a time when all other clans lost their territories to the Project of Plantation, Randal launched his own plantation scheme and retained his land.

17th century coins from Dunluce excavation
Courtesy of Centre for Maritime Archaeology,
University of Ulster and NIEA



Sir Randal Arranach MacDonnell

Son of Sorley Boy, Randal was fostered out to a family on the Scottish Isle of Arran, a common practice at the time, hence the nickname 'Arranach'.

He fought alongside Hugh O'Neill at the Battle of Kinsale, but then, realising how the war was going, he declared himself a loyal English citizen. He convinced King James that he was making efforts to “civilize the rude parts in which he lived” and was rewarded in 1603 with the grant of 333,907 acres of land in County Antrim. The territory stretched from the Bann to Larne and as far inland as Ballymena.

Under his own personal scheme, he started importing and settling Scottish Protestant Lowlanders in 1607, three years before the official schemes got underway. He constructed the town of Dunluce for his settlers, establishing a Protestant church and constructed a new manor House in the English Style within the grounds of Dunluce.

Randal continued to lease property to native Irish and to fellow Catholic Highlanders. The Scots were settled in the Route while the Glynnnes remained largely in Irish and Highland hands.

In 1620 he was created the 1st Earl of Antrim by King James I.

“Sir Randal MacDonnell, during the troubles of that Kingdom, hath as a valiant gentleman, performed to the Crown”

King James 1618

17th century gaming piece from Dunluce excavation
Courtesy of Centre for Maritime Archaeology,
University of Ulster and NIEA



“...canced person...”

Randal survived repeated attacks from the likes of Sir Arthur Chichester and Sir Thomas Phillips who were jealous of the extent of his territory.

From 1607 Randal Arranach began construction of a new town on land surrounding Dunluce Castle. The venture was on a bold scale with stone built houses and cobbled streets, it rivaled the town of Coleraine. Intended as a centre for trade the town was occupied by Scots traders.

In 1641 the town was badly damaged, however the real reason for its decline was its failure as a trading post due to the lack of a working harbour. An annual fair was held on the site for many years after it was abandoned.

The foundations of the town represent a fascinating opportunity for archaeologists.

Randal remained a Catholic and this was used to discredit him. Sir Arthur Chichester reported that he was maintaining Catholic Priests on his property. Randal admitted guilt and King James, while agreeing this was a grievous crime, nonetheless pardoned MacDonnell. His close relationship with the King, who repeatedly supported him, did nothing to make him popular with Phillips and Chichester.

“...there is not a more canced or malicious person than Sir Randal MacDonnell, who from a beggar is made great and yet rests unthankful.”

Sir Arthur Chichester, 1606



Reconstruction of Dunluce town by Philip Armstrong
Courtesy of Northern Ireland Environment Agency



17th century harp tuning key from Dunluce excavation
Courtesy of Centre for Maritime Archaeology,
University of Ulster and NIEA

‘The Project of Plantation’
17th Century changes in North East Ulster

Scottish Tenants

Randal leased substantial estates to Scottish tenants, remains of their constructions are still visible today.

Presbyterians

The instructions given to the Undertakers of the Plantation made it clear that they could neither let land nor employ “mere Irish or those who will not take the Oath of Supremacy”. The Oath of Supremacy stated that the monarch was ‘supreme governor... in all spiritual or ecclesiastical things’, which was wholly unacceptable to the Presbyterian Faith. The instruction was largely overlooked by the people on the ground in Ulster and Presbyterians played a major role in the Project of Plantation.

The Scots settled by Randal MacDonnell were mostly Presbyterian and were the start of the process which led to the founding of the Presbytery of the Route which exists to this day. In 1641 General Munro’s army arrived from Scotland to protect the settlers. They brought Presbyterian Chaplains with them, several of whom stayed behind. In this period many Church of Ireland parishes were occupied by Presbyterian Ministers, as there were not enough Anglican ministers available.

Ballintoy

The Stewart family arrived in North Antrim before the Ulster Plantation. An Archibald Stewart lost his lands on the Isle of Bute after he was involved in a failed rebellion against Mary Queen of Scot’s Regent. His sons arrived in Antrim around 1560. It is thought they stayed at Dunseverick and Ballinastraid before moving to Ballintoy. Tradition has it that the Stewarts murdered the chief Mulderg (the family became the Reids) to obtain the land and castle at Ballintoy.

In 1625 Randal Arranach issued a lease to a later Archibald Stewart, the lease stated he could not “sell the premises to any persons other than that of the Scottish Nation”. In 1630 MacDonnell appointed Archibald Stewart as his agent, after the death of John MacNaghten. The Stewart family sold their property in Ballintoy in 1759.



1st Ballymoney Presbyterian Church
Courtesy of Ballymoney Museum



Aerial photograph of the site of Ballintoy Castle
Courtesy of the Northern Ireland Environment Agency

Kilwaughter Castle

Patrick Agnew, under lease from the MacDonnells, constructed a Scottish Style castle at Kilwaughter, near Larne. This dwelling was later absorbed into a spectacular new castle designed by John Nash (designer of Buckingham Palace) in 1807.

The estate stayed in the Agnew family until passing by marriage an Italian, Count Balzani. During the second World War it was seized as 'enemy property' and occupied by American troops. The removal of its roof in 1951 led to its inevitable sad decay.



Kilwaughter Castle
 Courtesy of Larne Museum

Ballygally Castle

Under a lease from the MacDonnells, James Shaw of Greenock built at Ballygally Castle in the Scottish baronial style. The Shaw family stayed until the end of the 18th century.

The building is remarkably well preserved and is part of a hotel. The surrounding Bawn wall and flanker towers are, unfortunately not original.

"...hard upon the Shore, stands the house of Ballygelly, belonging to Captain Shaw."

A Brief description of the County of Antrim by Richard Dobbs, 1683



Ballygally Castle
 Courtesy of the Trustees of the National Museums Northern Ireland

Irish tenants and Catholic Highlanders

Randal continued to lease lands to his native Irish tenants and also to his kinsmen and other Catholic Highlanders.

Dunseverick Castle

Dunseverick is a truly ancient site supposedly occupied by Souphraic (Dun or Fort of Soubhraic) one of the commanders of the first successful Celtic invasion of Ireland. Dunseverick is mentioned in the Ulster Cycle, composed in the 1st century BC and is associated with Conal Cearnach, Cuchullin's foster brother. As the capital of Dalriada, the castle was the seat of the MacErcs who spearheaded the Dalriadan take over of Western Scotland.

In the 17th century Dunseverick was occupied by Gilduff O'Cahan of the O'Cahan Clan na Buaise (Clan of the Bush), a separate, though related, branch of the O'Cahans west of the Bann. Randal Arranach allowed the O'Cahans to remain during his plantation. Gilduff's activities in the 1641 rebellion led to the destruction of the castle by General Munro's army.



Print of drawing of Dunseverick Castle by WH Bartlett
Courtesy of Ballycastle Museum



Detail from map of East Ulster and the North Channel, circa 1605, showing Scots warning fire
Courtesy of the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich

Goodland

Goodland was leased in the 1620s by MacDonnell to two Magee brothers from the island of Islay, little else is recorded. The archaeological evidence indicates that there are over a hundred temporary houses similar to Booleys or Shielings. Elsewhere these buildings were used for summer shelter by those watching grazing animals. Here the concentration of buildings represents a potential population comparable to Coleraine at that time. Who these people were and how they supported themselves on this headland is unknown.

MacDonnell kin

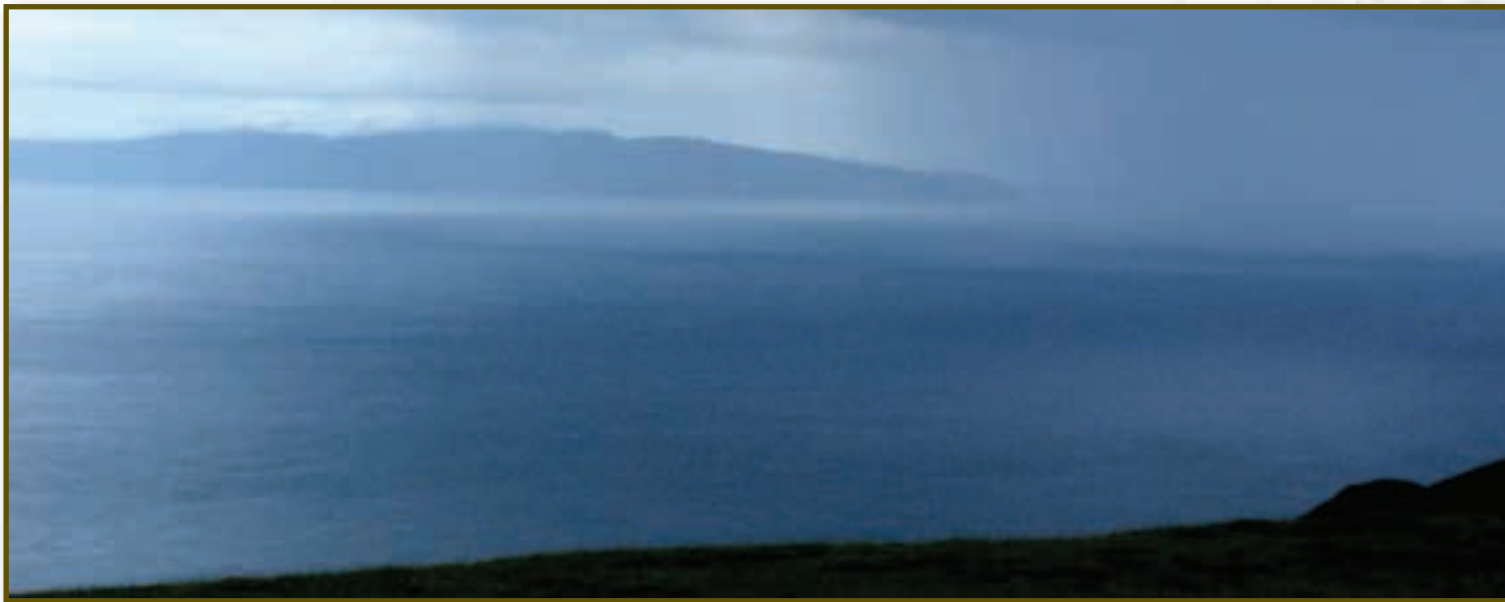
In addition to the MacDonnells of Dunluce, other members of the clan took up residence in County Antrim, the small number of Christian names in use can lead to easy confusion.

James MacDonnell of the Cross, near Ballymoney (not to be confused with James brother of Sorley Boy or James, eldest son of Sorley Boy), came to prominence during the 1641 rebellion. He wrote letters inviting all Scots to head for Portrush where they would be shipped back to Scotland.

Alexander or Alister MacColla MacDonnell, (not to be confused with Alexander MacDonnell, younger brother to Randal Arranach), was from the Colonsay Branch of the MacDonald clan. He had recently come from Scotland where he had met and befriended, Archibald Stewart. He enlisted in the local British regiment, under Stewart's command. Along with two companies consisting mostly of fellow Highlanders, he turned to support the rebellion. Attacks were made on Ballintoy Castle and on the town of Dunluce. Clough Castle was surrendered to Alexander. He defeated his former regiment in Battles at Portnaw and near Bendooragh.

"Alexander MacColla MacDonald... charged them in the boggy ground... without any great opposition took the Rout, which was the ruin of most of them, leaving their colours with the enemy."

English Officer with John Clotworthy's brigade



View of the Island of Islay from Goodland
Courtesy of Causeway Museum Service

The Next Survivor

Sir Randal Og MacDonnell



Portrait of
Randal Og MacDonnell
Artist unknown
Public domain

Son of Randal Arranach, Og simply means 'junior'. He became the 2nd Earl of Antrim. Randal Og spent time in London at the court of Charles I where he managed to gather considerable gambling debts. He married Catherine Manners, a wealthy woman and brought her back to Dunluce. In 1641 he was away when the rebellion broke out. On his return he sent cattle into Coleraine to feed the besieged inhabitants.

When General Munro arrived Randal invited him into the castle as a gesture to indicate that, in spite of the actions of some of his relatives, he had no part in the Rebellion. Munro however arrested him and imprisoned him in Carrickfergus Castle, from where he escaped - twice.

Randal spent the next years involved in the wider context of the English Civil War, working for the Royalist side. On the restoration of Charles II, he was accused of having dubious loyalties and subject to a tribunal. By a slim margin the vote went with him and his lands were restored.

On his return Dunluce Castle was in poor repair. He moved to a new house at nearby Ballymagarry and the castle was abandoned.

Born 1609

Died 3rd February 1683

Lady Catherine Manners/Villiers/MacDonnell



Portrait of
Catherine MacDonnell nee
Manners by Peter Paul
Rubens, circa 1625
Public domain

Catherine Manners, daughter of the Duke of Rutland was from a wealthy English family. She married the powerful George Villiers, 2nd Duke of Buckingham. She was painted by some of the leading portrait painters of the time. After Buckingham was murdered she married Randal Og and came to Dunluce. Tradition asserts that, after her fine life in London, she hated the place, but took solace in her Catholic faith.

After 1641, she shipped much of her belongings to storage in Chester, intending to return to England. However things had changed and Cromwell had her possessions seized and auctioned. A detailed list of the items exists giving us a picture of how Dunluce was decorated in her time. She never managed to settle back in England, but spent time in Flanders and in Waterford.

Born 1603, Probably Leicestershire

Died 3rd November 1649, Waterford

Married Randal MacDonnell, April 1635

"a woman of very great wit and spirit"

The Earl of Clarendon