

1610 ~ 2010  
**DONEGAL**  
**Plantation**  
*400 years*

*County Donegal  
& the  
Plantation of Ulster*



## Introduction

Ulster's rich tapestry of cultural diversity largely has its origins in the early seventeenth-century Plantation of Ulster with its influx of mainly Protestant English and Scottish settlers. Thus, the Plantation has proved, in the words of the historical geographer Philip Robinson, to be 'one of the most politically significant mass migrations to have taken place in western Europe since medieval times'.

There had been earlier plantations in King's and Queen's Counties (Leix and Offaly) in 1556 and in Munster in 1586 and there were plantations in Leitrim, Longford and Wexford contemporaneous with the Plantation of Ulster. The Ulster Plantation was also contemporaneous with the Plantation of Virginia, the Jamestown settlement being established in 1607. Hence, the Lord Deputy Sir Arthur Chichester's celebrated promotional spiel: 'I had rather labour with my hands in the Plantation of Ulster than dance in that of Virginia'.

The Ulster Plantation proved to be the most significant and successful plantation in Irish history.

### *Rahan Castle, Killaghtee*

Rahan Castle dates from the mid-fifteenth century. In 1610 the castle and its lands were originally granted to William Stewart, who failed to live up to his obligations, as did his immediate successor, George Murray of Broughton. By 1618 the property passed to John Murray, a favourite of James VI & I. He was raised to the peerage as 1st Earl of Annandale in 1625. In 1640 upon his death, his son James became the 2nd Earl who acquired further lands in south-west Donegal. James Murray died childless and his cousin, Robert Creighton, took over the estate and changed his own name to Murray.



## The Context

In the 1970s Dervla Murphy, the Irish cyclist and travel writer, aptly entitled her book about her travels in Ulster *A Place Apart* (London, 1978). Ulster has long been 'a place apart'. In 1949 the historian Hugh Shearman wrote: 'Ulster always has been one of the salty, stinging, unexpected elements in the life and flavour of this planet'. Shearman further explained that it was a place which has given 'sleepless nights' to 'statesmen and generals, kings and dictators' who have cursed 'the place and its ingenious and irrepressible inhabitants'.

The idea of Ulster as 'a place apart' long pre-dated the Plantation of Ulster. Gaelic institutions survived in Ulster long after they had disappeared from the rest of the island. Ulster was the source of repeated attacks on the English settlement in Ireland until the province was finally subdued by the defeat of the great O'Neill rebellion at end of the Nine Years' War in 1603.

However, even with the subjugation of the last bastion of Gaelic power, Ireland remained a strategic problem, a point which had been dramatically underscored by the arrival of a Spanish army at Kinsale in September 1601.

The Spanish had arrived in Ireland to effect a junction with O'Neill, O'Donnell and Maguire, whose power bases were Tyrone, Donegal and Fermanagh respectively. Fortunately, from the English Crown's perspective, the Spanish landed in the wrong end of Ireland, far removed from the northern power base of O'Neill and his Ulster allies. At the Battle of Kinsale on 24 December 1601, O'Neill and O'Donnell were routed with heavy losses, by Mountjoy. As the Venetian ambassador to London shrewdly observed, a few years later, 'Ireland is such that it would be better for the King if it did not exist and the sea alone rolled there'.



### *Boyton House, Convooy*

Boyton House, parts of which date from the seventeenth century, was originally the home of the Montgomery family of Convooy. Alexander Montgomery, the Prebendary of Doe, came to Ulster at the request of George Montgomery, his kinsman who was Bishop of Raphoe between 1605 and 1609. Richard Montgomery, the American Patriot general who was killed at Quebec in 1775, was a member of this family. The gate lodge pictured here dates from the 17th Century.

The advisers of James VI (of Scots) & I (of England) differed as to the best way of dealing with this problem. Sir Arthur Chichester, Lord Deputy of Ireland from 1605 to 1615, favoured a slow and gradual policy of 'Anglicization'. Sir John Davies, who was successively Solicitor-General (1603-6) and Attorney-General of Ireland (1606-19), preferred a much more radical and drastic policy of dismembering the existing Gaelic order root and branch. Gaelic intellectuals correctly recognised that men like Davies sought the creation of a 'Sacsá nua darb anim Éire' ('a new England called Ireland'). This was to be achieved by replacing the Gaelic order with an English model of civilisation through the plantation of Ulster 'with good English and Scottish corn' (or 'colonies of civil people of England and Scotland'). Thereby, the country would 'ever after be happily settled'. With the 'Flight of the Earls' in September 1607, the latter strategy became possible and seemed a most attractive solution to an otherwise intractable problem.

To encourage Scots to settle in Ulster represented a remarkable volte-face for the Government in London. Normally policy had been directed at keeping the Scots out of Ulster because – in the words of S. J. Connolly in *Contested Island: Ireland 1460-1630* (Oxford, 2007) – Gaelic Ulster and Gaelic Scotland represented 'a single ungovernable

hinterland'. However, because of Ulster's close proximity to Scotland, this policy usually met with little success. Admittedly, Government planned to settle Lowland Scots rather than Gaelic-speaking Scots in Ulster.



### *St Catherine's Church ruins, Killybegs*

St Catherine's Church dates from the fifteenth century. In December 1615 Roger Jones of Sligo was granted lands in the vicinity of Killybegs and responsibility for founding a borough. He was required to provide a church for the new Planter community and converted the church for Protestant worship in 1615. In 1622 the church was described as being 'newly re-edified'. Work on a new Church of Ireland Church – St John's – began in 1825 and was completed in 1828. The old church, the ruins of which are in poor condition, was then abandoned.

Predictably, St Catherine's graveyard is the final resting place of Montgomerys and Hamiltons, families prominent in the Plantation here in Donegal and elsewhere.



## *The Plan*

### *Two Plantations*

There were two plantations of Ulster: an unofficial, and almost exclusively Scots, plantation in counties Antrim and Down (and, to some extent, Monaghan) and an official plantation in the remaining six Ulster counties. Hugh Montgomery, laird of Braidstane in Ayrshire, and James Hamilton, an adventurer and a university lecturer at Trinity College, Dublin, spearheaded the unofficial plantation in North Down and the Ards peninsula.

### *The Unofficial Plantation in Counties Antrim and Down*

Hugh Montgomery, who was remarkably well informed about events in Ulster, knew that Con O'Neill of Clondeboye was imprisoned in Carrickfergus Castle on suspicion of treason. Montgomery undertook

### *Rathneeny (First Donegal) Presbyterian Church*

Presbyterianism has deep roots in County Donegal. There has been a Presbyterian meeting house on this site since the late seventeenth century, although the current church was built in 1801. In 1674 Revd William Henry was appointed to this congregation. Revd Thomas Craighead, a Scot and the congregation's second minister, emigrated to America in 1715. His son, the Revd Alexander Craighead was an influential patriot preacher, and is widely regarded as the spiritual father of the Mecklenburg Declaration of 1775, which anticipated the American Declaration of Independence of 1776.



### *The Walls of Londonderry*

The walls of Londonderry, the last walled town to be built in western Europe, were built by the Honourable the Irish Society between 1613 and 1618. The Walls are approximately 1.5 km in circumference and vary in width between 12 and 35 feet and are the most complete in Ireland.

Londonderry claims Europe's largest collection of cannon whose origins are known precisely. The cannon are displayed around the Walls.



to secure a pardon for Con from James VI & I in return for a share of his lands. Somehow or other, James Hamilton muscled in on the action. Thus in 1605 James made a triple division of the Clondeboye estate: one-third to Con O'Neill, and one-third each to Montgomery and Hamilton. However, Con was no match for his new neighbours and within a few years they had got their hands on Con's portion too.

Montgomery and Hamilton may not have been overly scrupulous in their treatment of Con O'Neill but they were able and energetic settlers: 'the prosperity of north Down, as well as its strongly Scottish character, had its origins in their labours'.

### *The Official Plantation*

The official plantation in counties Armagh, Cavan, Coleraine, Donegal, Fermanagh and Tyrone was facilitated by the so-called 'Flight of the Earls'. The departure of Hugh O'Neill and Hugh O'Donnell, the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell respectively, and some 90 of their followers, who sailed from Lough Swilly for the Continent on 3 or 4 September 1607, created a power vacuum and allowed the Crown to charge the Earls with high treason in their absence and to declare their lands

### *Clonleigh Parish Church, Lifford*

The Church was erected under the terms of the will of Sir Richard Hansard, the foundations being laid in 1622. The most interesting feature in the Church is a monument to Sir Richard, consisting of two sculpted figures kneeling on either side of a prayer stool. The figures represent Sir Richard and his wife, Anne. Both are dressed in contemporary costume. Sir Richard is wearing his military armour, while his wife is wearing a long dress and veil. The inscription provides a great deal of information about Sir Richard. He was born in Lincolnshire, England, and educated at Cambridge before becoming a soldier. He served in Ireland during the Nine Years' War and was governor of Lifford during Sir Cahir O'Doherty's rebellion. As a reward for his services, he was granted Lifford and the surrounding lands by James VI & I and given permission to found a corporate town at Lifford. The monument names Sir Richard's executors and details how they carried out the instructions in Hansard's will to build a church, school and schoolhouse and to set aside money from his lands to pay for a schoolmaster and other officials in the town. Sir Richard Hansard died on 5 October, 1619.



forfeit. Privately, the government was mystified by Tyrone's conduct.

Furthermore, in County Donegal Sir Cahir O'Doherty's revolt in April 1608, when he seized Culmore and Derry, and his death at Kilmacrenan at the beginning of July 1608, ultimately had the effect of augmenting the amount of land available for plantation in the county.

As early as 17 September 1607 Chichester submitted to the English Privy Council proposals for the disposal of the fugitives' lands. In March 1608 Chichester prepared 'notes of remembrance', which he further revised in October 1608, for a plantation in Ulster. In July 1608 a Commission was established to survey the six Ulster counties

which were to constitute the official plantation. In January 1609 a detailed plan for a plantation of the six Ulster counties, including the conditions to be observed by the planters, was completed.

The Scottish settlers came from Lanarkshire, Ayrshire, the Borders and the Lothians. James VI & I thought that his fellow countrymen would be excellent material for the plantation because they 'are a middle temper, between the English tender breeding and the Irish rude breeding and are a great deal more likely to adventure to plant Ulster than the English'.

However, because Scotland was incredibly poor compared to England and could not provide all the craftsmen, masons, carpenters and blacksmiths necessary to build new towns, new villages and fortifications, the Scottish settlers would need to be supplemented with English settlers. These came largely from Lancashire, Cheshire, East Anglia and Devon. In County Donegal some of the 'English' settlers were actually Welsh.

By January 1610 the English Privy Council succeeded in 'persuading'

### *The Diamond, Raphoe*

The Diamond in Raphoe, as in Donegal Town, is triangular rather than diamond-shaped. Very few, if any, Diamonds in Ulster are diamond-shaped.

The architectural historian Alistair Rowan has observed: 'The small scale of the place, the meagre church, despite its high tower, and the hills and hedgerows all round have little in common with most European episcopal capitals'. Nevertheless, Raphoe has some nice Georgian architecture and a charm all of its own.



the immensely wealthy City of London to assume responsibility for the plantation of the city of Derry, the county of Coleraine and the barony of Loughsholin in Tyrone. This territory was subsequently renamed County Londonderry. Londonderry's walls, built by the London companies and completed in 1618, mark it out as the last fortified city to be built in western Europe.

Land was divided into 'proportions' of 2,000, 1,500, and 1,000 acres, with three categories of grantee.

English and Scottish chief planters (undertakers) had the heaviest responsibilities as regards fortification and settlement. Those who were granted 1,000 acres were required to build a walled enclosure called a 'bawn'. The word 'Bawn' is derived from two Gaelic words; 'Ba', Irish for cow (or cattle), and 'Dhun', meaning 'fort',



### *Brooke's Castle, Donegal*

Donegal Castle is located in the centre of Donegal Town and sited on a bend in the River Eske. The castle consists of a fifteenth-century rectangular keep with a later Jacobean style wing. The castle was the stronghold of the O'Donnells, Lords of Tír Connaill, one of the most powerful Gaelic clans. The castle was regarded as one of the finest Gaelic castles on the island. In a letter to William Cecil, the Lord Treasurer, in 1566, Sir Henry Sidney, the Lord Deputy of Ireland, described the structure as 'the largest and strongest fortress in all Ireland'.

In 1611, after the Flight of the Earls, the castle and its lands were granted to an English Captain, Basil Brooke, who was knighted in 1616. The keep had been severely damaged by the departing O'Donnells to prevent the castle being used against the Gaelic clans but was quickly restored by its new owners.

### *Castle Balfour, Co. Fermanagh*

Castle Balfour is situated just off the Main Street of Lisnaskea, County Fermanagh. It was built in 1618 by Sir James Balfour. It was refortified in 1652 but dismantled in 1689. The corbelling is characteristic of seventeenth-century Scottish architecture, as are the steps. The castle was inhabited right up to the early nineteenth century.



translating roughly into 'cow-fort' or 'cattle-fort'. So the anglicized form of 'badhun' was 'bawn'. Those who received 1,500 acres were required to build a stone house within the bawn, and those with 2,000 acres a castle. The bawn was intended to offer protection to the undertaker, his tenants and their animals in event of attack by the native Irish. Undertakers were to ensure that the homes of their British tenants were built close to the bawn.

Civil and military servants of the crown in Ireland (servitors) were allowed to have Irish tenants, but could have lower rents if they settled the required number of 24 adult English and Lowland Scots per 1,000 acres. Successful applicants for grants came from lists drawn up in London and Edinburgh.

Local recipients ('deserving Irish') were to pay higher rents and to abandon Gaelic methods of tillage, harvesting, and threshing.

Twenty-eight baronies or 'precincts' were established, eight for English undertakers, eight for Scottish ones, and twelve for servitors and 'deserving Irish' jointly.

Land was also set aside for the financial support of the Church of Ireland, Trinity College, Dublin, (which received 95,000 acres in

# 1610-2010 DONEGAL Plantation 400 years

Counties Armagh, Donegal and Fermanagh), and the 'Royal' schools which were eventually established at Armagh, Cavan, Dungannon, Portora, and Raphoe.

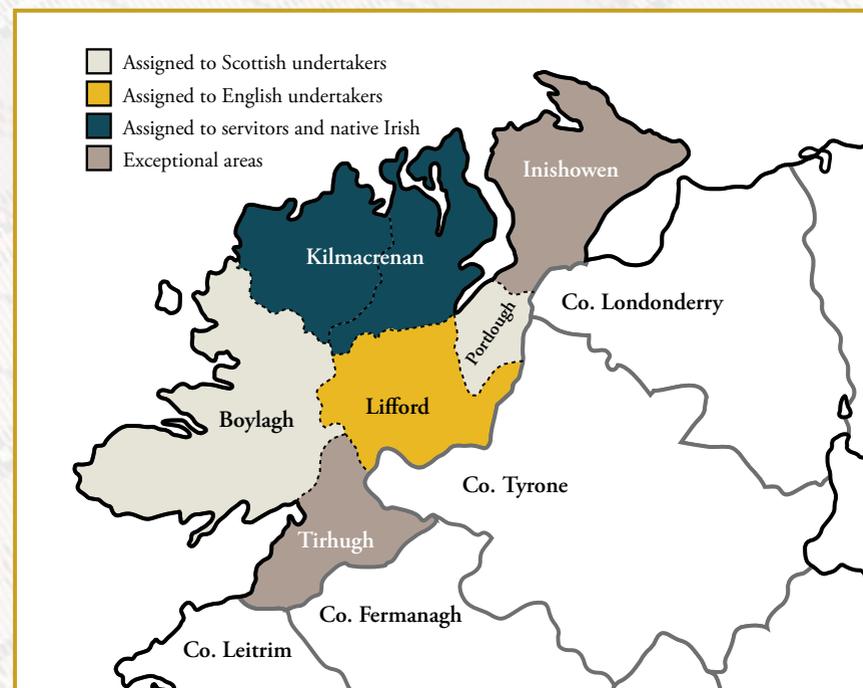
There were five exceptional baronies in all, two of which, Inishowen and Tirhugh, were in County Donegal.

## *The Plantation scheme in County Donegal*

Donegal was divided into seven 'precincts' and the lands were apportioned as follows:

Precinct	Recipient
Boylagh	assigned to Scottish undertakers.
Doe	assigned to servitors and native Irish.
Fanad	assigned to servitors and native Irish.
Inishowen	designated an exceptional area. Except for Church land, this precinct was granted to Sir Arthur Chichester, the Lord Deputy, in February 1610.
Lifford	assigned to English undertakers.
Portlough	assigned to Scottish undertakers.
Tirhugh	designated an exceptional area. 25% (4,000 acres) of Tirhugh was assigned to Trinity College, Dublin. The remaining 75% was divided between the Church of Ireland, servitors and native Irish, the Royal School in the County (200 acres) and Ballyshannon fort.

*Note: Doe and Fanad together are known as Kilmacrenan.*



## *Scottish undertakers in the Barony of Boylagh & Banagh*

Eight Scottish undertakers were awarded land in the Barony of Boylagh & Banagh. All the undertakers awarded land in this precinct disengaged early. These lands initially came under the control of one man, Sir Robert Gordon of Lochinvar, Kirkcudbrightshire. Eventually the land passed into the control of the Murray family of Broughton, Wigtownshire, the family's Scottish seat being at Cally, near Gatehouse of Fleet. The huge Murray of Broughton estate – including land round Donegal town, Ardara and Killybegs and large proportions of the parishes of Killaghtee, Killymard, Killybegs, Kilcar and Inishkeel – was impressive in size but less obviously in terms of quality. The estate's uplands were not very fertile but there was good land along the coast. The estate also possessed valuable herring and salmon fisheries. The estate's remoteness seriously curtailed its economic potential.

Undertaker	Origin	Name of Proportion	Estimated Area
Sir R. McClelland	Kirkcudbrightshire	Rosses	2,000 acres
G. Murray	Wigtonshire	Boylagh-Eightra	1,500 acres
W. Stewart	Kirkcudbrightshire	Dunconnolly	1,500 acres
Sir P. McKee	Ayrshire	Cargie	1,000 acres
J. Cullough	Wigtonshire	Mullaghveagh	1,000 acres
A. Dunbar	Wigtonshire	Kilkerhan	1,000 acres
P. Vans	Wigtonshire	Boylagh-Owtra	1,000 acres
A. Cunningham	Wigtonshire	Moynargan	1,000 acres

### *Tully Castle, Co. Fermanagh*

Tully Castle is situated on Blaney Bay on the southern shore of Lower Lough Erne, not very far from Monea Castle. The Blaney area takes its name from Sir Edward Blaney who was among the English advance party sent to Fermanagh to organise the Plantation. Tully Castle was a fortified house with a rectangular bawn and was built for Sir John Hume, a Scottish planter, in 1619. The bawn had four rectangular corner towers. The castle was captured by Rory Maguire in the 1641 Rebellion, burned and abandoned.



### *Scottish Undertakers in the Barony of Portlough*

Nine Scottish undertakers, four of whom were Stewarts and four of whom were Cunninghams from Ayrshire, were awarded land in the Barony of Portlough. Ludovic Stewart, Duke of Lennox, was a relation of James VI & I, a Privy Councillor and Lord High Steward of the King's household in London. Unlike their counterparts in Boyleagh & Banagh, these undertakers maintained a strong level of continuity in ownership.

Undertaker	Origin	Name of Proportion	Estimated Area
Duke of Lennox	Stirlingshire	Magervlin, Lettergull & Cashel	3,000 acres
Sir W. Stewart	Lanarkshire	Corkagh	1,000 acres
A. McAulay	Dunbartonshire	Ballyneagh	1,000 acres
J. Cunningham	Ayrshire	Dunboy	1,000 acres
W. Stewart	Ayrshire	Cooleelaghy	1,000 acres
Sir J. Cunningham	Ayrshire	Dacastross & Portlough	2,000 acres
C. Cunningham		Coolemacritreen	1,000 acres
J. Cunningham	Ayrshire	Ballyaghan	1,000 acres
J. Stewart		Lismolmaoghan	1,000 acres

### *English Undertakers in the Barony of Lifford*

Nine English undertakers were awarded land in the Barony of Lifford. Unlike English undertakers elsewhere, many of these men had significant Irish experience as civil and military servants of the crown.

<b>Undertaker</b>	<b>Origin</b>	<b>Name of Proportion</b>	<b>Estimated Area</b>
H. Clare	Norfolk	Stranorlar	1,500 acres
W. Wilson	Suffolk	Aghagalla & Convoy	2,000 acres
E. Russell	London	Acharin	1,500 acres
Sir W. Barnes		Monaster	1,500 acres
R. Mansfield	(Servitor)	Killygordon	1,000 acres
Sir T. Cornwall	Shropshire	Corlackey	2,000 acres
Sir R. Remington	(Servitor)	Tawnaforis	2,000 acres
Sir M. Barkeley	Somerset	Dromore & Lurga	2,000 acres
Sir T. Coach	(Servitor)	Lismongan	1,500 acres

### *Servitors in Doe & Fanad (also known as Kilmacrenan) Barony*

Fourteen awards (one jointly) were made to servitors in Doe & Fanad (also known as Kilmacrenan) Barony. Sir Ralph Bingley and John Vaughan had been part of Sir Henry Docwra's expedition to Lough Foyle. Captain Henry Harte had been at Culmore. Captain William Stewart had been sent to Ulster with 200 foot soldiers to suppress O'Doherty's rising.

<b>Servitor</b>	<b>Name of Proportion</b>	<b>Estimated Area</b>
W. Stewart	Clonlary	1,000 acres
P. Crawford	Ballyrehan	1,000 acres
J. Vaughan	Carnagilly	1,000 acres
J. Kingsmill	Kingstown	1,000 acres
B. Brooke	Edencarn	1,000 acres
Sir R. Hansard	Ramelton	1,000 acres
T. Perkins & G. Hilton	Facker	1,000 acres
Sir T. Chichester	Radonnell	500 acres
H. Hart	Ballynass	1,000 acres
Sir R. Bingley	Rosguill, Castledoe & Carrowreagh	1,100 acres
E. Ellis	Loughnemuck	400 acres
T. Brown	Crancasse	528 acres
H. Vaughan	Moyres	1,000 acres
C. Grimsditche	Legabrack	240 acres

### *Deserving Irish*

In all, fifty Irish grantees were awarded land, of whom one was a woman, Grainne ny Donnell. Four of them were given more than 1,000 acres: Donald McSweeney, Sir Mulmory McSweeney, Donnell McSweeney and Turlough O'Boyle. Each was awarded 2,000 acres in Doe & Fanad.

### *Corporate towns & associated grants of town & fort land in County Donegal*

Ultimately, there were to be five Boroughs in County Donegal. Ballyshannon, Donegal Town and Lifford were granted their charters in 1613. Killybegs was granted its charter in 1616 while St Johnston was granted its charter some time before 1619, possibly in 1618. Basil Brooke, Roger Jones and Sir Richard Hansard were the proprietors of Donegal, Killybegs and Lifford respectively. Donegal, Killybegs and Lifford were awarded 300, 224 and 500 acres respectively to support their progress and development. Sir Henry Folliott, who had responsibility for the fort at Ballyshannon, occupied a comparable position in that town. The fort at Ballyshannon was allocated 1,000 acres, a fact which underscores its perceived military importance. Doagh, Rathmullan and Raphoe were also considered for borough status but never achieved that status.

### *The Bishop's Palace, Raphoe*

Raphoe Castle, or the Bishop's Palace, was built in 1636 by John Leslie, Bishop of Raphoe. In 1633 Leslie, the Bishop of the Isles, was translated to Raphoe where he succeeded Bishop Knox. Shortly after its completion, the palace was besieged by Cromwellian forces. The palace was captured but Leslie was spared and allowed to remain until 1660 when he moved to Clogher. He was paid an annuity during the British Republic by Cromwell on condition that he remain peaceably in the palace, the Church of Ireland having been suppressed at that time. The Palace was extensively restored in the 1820s but destroyed by fire in 1838.



## *The Progress of the Plantation*

The English response to the challenge of the Plantation fell significantly short of Government expectation. Revd Andrew Stewart, the minister of Donaghadee, County Down, from 1645 to 1671, opined that the English would not migrate 'except to good land, such as they had known at home, or to good cities where they might trade, both of which in those days were scarce enough here'. However, the Scots readily took up the slack and spilled over into areas designated for English settlement. Thus, Scots influence in the Plantation was much greater than was ever intended.

For example, the City and County of Londonderry, East Donegal, West Tyrone and the Clogher Valley which were earmarked for English settlement are extremely Scottish in character.

Early seventeenth-century Londonderry was predominantly English rather than Scottish, with few Presbyterians and mostly English surnames. However, attempts by the London companies to 'levy' or 'press' artificers from London to be planted in Londonderry and Coleraine were not conspicuously successful. So much so, that by the

1630s, the Scots were dominant in the city. According to the customs report in 1637 the English were 'weak and few in number ... the Scots being many in number, and twenty to one for the English'.

Although the barony of Clogher was allocated to English undertakers, south Tyrone became more Scottish than English in settlement. In 1871 Presbyterians accounted for over 50% of the Protestant population of the Clogher valley and they invariably occupied the best farms.

Three factors in particular account for the strongly Scottish

## Raphoe Cathedral

Saints Colmcille and Eunan had founded churches at Raphoe in the fifth and sixth centuries. The oldest

part of the present building is the south east corner, which dates back to the twelfth century. The rest of the Cathedral is a mixture of successive rebuilding and alterations dating from the seventeenth century to the late nineteenth century. The first bishop of Raphoe, George Montgomery, began the rebuilding of the Cathedral around 1605. He had been chaplain to King James VI & I and was appointed not only Bishop of Raphoe but also of Clogher and Derry.



character of the Plantation. First, the fact that Ulster is separated from Scotland by the narrow North Channel which is at one point only 13 miles wide, meant that the Scots could easily transport men and livestock to Ulster. Geographical proximity also meant that the plantation could be constantly reinforced with new Scottish settlers. Secondly, as James fully appreciated, impoverished but adventurous Scots could not resist the prospect of good land on agreeable terms. Thirdly, the Scots came from a more a primitive society than the English and could more readily adapt to conditions not radically different from those with which they were familiar in Scotland.

What of the native Irish? The Gaelic bards lamented the Flight of the Earls because they had enjoyed their patronage:

*Woe to the heart that meditated, woe to the mind that conceived, woe to the council that decided on, the project of setting out on this voyage, without*

*knowing whether they should ever return to their native principalities or patrimonies to the end of the world.*

Contrary to popular perception, in *The Catholics of Ulster: A History* (London, 2001), Marianne Elliott has observed:

*The 'churls' [the under-tenants who actually worked the land] may well have fared a good deal better under the new dispensation than under the Gaelic land system. But the elite did not and it is their voice we hear.*

However, some Gaelic families – the principal rivals of the Earls who had fled – did well out of the Plantation settlement which was implemented with considerable co-operation from the Ulster Irish. Furthermore, there is remarkably little contemporary evidence of resentment towards the settlers. Pynnar's survey of 1619 found significant deficiencies in the building of fortifications, an indication that the settlers did not feel themselves to be under threat. However, it could be simply a case of people seeking to evade their responsibilities. The 1641 rebellion has traditionally been regarded as a revolt against the Plantation. However, the main conspirators were debt-ridden heirs of families who were originally beneficiaries rather than victims of the Plantation.

James VI & I took a very close interest in the Plantation. This is evidenced by the great many commissions and surveys which were established prior to the establishment of the plantation and subsequently to monitor its progress. He was also immensely pleased with the Plantation project which he regarded as one of his policy 'masterpieces'. In 1612 James told Sir Arthur Chichester that he esteemed 'the settling of religion, the introduction [of] civility, order and government amongst a barbarous and unsubdued people to be acts of piety and glory, and worthy always of a Christian prince to endeavour'.

In the short term, however, the Plantation did not have the impact

hoped for by James VI & I and his policy advisers. Settlers did not arrive in their expected numbers and the poor social backgrounds of some of the landlords meant that they had difficulty raising the money needed to improve their estates. The responsibilities were considerable and required substantial capital to meet.

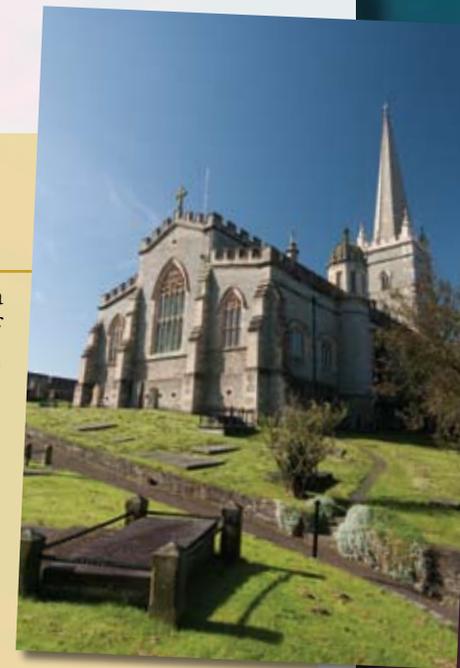
Apart from the Finn and Foyle river valleys much of County Donegal was mountainous and infertile. The wilderness and inaccessibility of the greater part of Donegal appalled many of the planters, some of whom, after one terrified glance at their holdings, returned home. All the undertakers awarded land in Boylagh & Banagh, as has already been noted, disengaged early. Others undertakers made no attempt to bring over English or Scottish tenants.

Surveys into the plantation held in 1611 (Sir George Carew), 1614 (Sir Josias Bodley), 1619 (Nicholas Pynnar) and 1622 (Sir Thomas Phillips and Richard Hasdor) demonstrate the extent to which settlers were neither fulfilling their building obligations, nor removing the native Irish from their lands as required.

On 23 August 1610 a proclamation was issued permitting the native Irish to remain on land assigned to British undertakers until the following May. The removal date was subsequently deferred until 1 May 1612. Thereafter, to all intents and purposes, the date became permanently postponable. So, for example, on 1 October 1618 the native Irish were ordered to leave the lands of British undertakers by 1 May 1619 or pay fines. The result of all this was that the native population was never fully 'removed'. Instead, they remained intermingled with the new population to a much greater extent than was ever envisaged. Although the articles of plantation required settlers to live in towns or villages, many plantation estates contained neither. Many of the undertakers arrived to find more land than they had bargained for. Even when villages were built, many other British tenants lived elsewhere on the

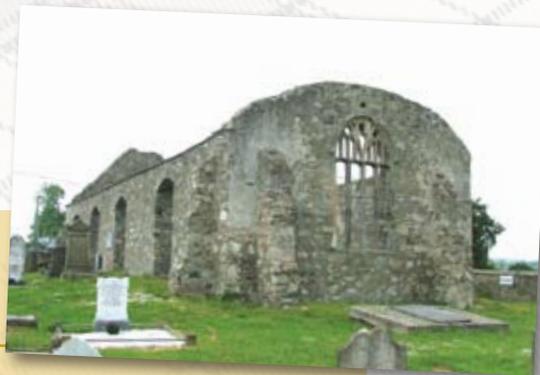
### *St Columb's Cathedral, Londonderry*

Dedicated to St Columb, the church is both a parish church and the cathedral of the Church of Ireland diocese of Derry. It was built by William Parrott, under the general supervision of Sir John Vaughan, and completed in 1633. James Stevens Curl, an architectural historian, has described the Cathedral as 'among the finest Gothic Survival buildings in the British Isles' and a superb specimen of perpendicular Gothic architecture. It is the most important seventeenth century building on this island and was the first Cathedral to be built in Europe since the Reformation.



estate, with some villages consisting of less than twelve houses. Most of the plantation settlers did not live in nucleated settlements of any kind, but were scattered among the townlands they leased and farmed, a situation permitted by the undertakers. It also took many years for some of the undertakers to provide churches for the new Protestant population. Likewise, many of the schools which were supposed to be provided for the planters' children had not been built by 1622 as required.

On estate after estate Pynnar recorded (in 1619) that there was nothing built and not a British tenant. It was only in the areas adjoining Counties Londonderry, Tyrone and Fermanagh that the Plantation in Donegal had any real impact. For example, Sir George Marbury had built at Letterkenny a market town of 40 houses, all inhabited by British. Peter Benson, near Lifford, had erected a good house, a water-mill, and had settled 24 families with 68 armed men who had taken



*Tullyaughnish Old Church,  
 Ramelton*

Sir William Stewart, originally from Wigtownshire in Scotland, was granted 1,000 acres in this area. A dynamic and efficient planter, he built the first town and lived briefly in the O'Donnell castle. He wasted no time in building Fort Stewart on the shores of Lough Swilly and the first Reformation church, which was almost completed at the time of Pynnar's survey and still stands. He was also granted an estate near Strabane where he built the town of Newtownstewart and a castle. Tullyaughnish's most interesting feature is the well preserved perpendicular window of four lights with rather jumbled mullions above. Stewart and his brother Sir Robert were responsible for with the formation of the formidable 'Lagganeers' (or Laggan army) which defeated Sir Phelim O' Neill at the battle of Glenmaquin, on 16 June 1642.

the oath 'and not one Irish family on the lands'. There were a few other estates of this type, but none of them were in the more remote districts of the county.

A survey of the six counties of the official plantation in 1622 suggests a minimum of 3,700 British families – an adult population of 13,000. The unofficial plantation of Antrim and Down was more densely populated with British families than the official plantation, with Antrim and Down having a British population of perhaps 7,500 in the early 1620s.

In Portlough by 1630 there were some 540 adult male British settlers, approximately 180 of whom were on the estates of the Duke of Lennox and another 250 on the various Cunningham estates. These figures come close to double the minimum requirement of 288 to which the undertakers had agreed when they had obtained their estates. East

Donegal was one of the most effectively settled regions of the entire Plantation.

By 1633 it has been estimated that there were between 40,000 and 50,000 British settlers in Ulster, of whom 13,000 were adult males capable of bearing arms.

*British adult male population of County Donegal*

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of British Adult Males</b>
1611	86
1613	302
1618	1,422
1619	1,423
1622	1,034
1630	1,093

Modest though these numbers may appear to us today, because early seventeenth-century Ulster was sparsely populated, they had a huge demographic impact. Militarily too, they had a significant impact. In the early 1640s Sir William and Sir Robert Stewart were able to organize Donegal settlers into the Laggan Army, one of the most formidable forces operating in Ireland during that turbulent decade. Originally formed to protect the settlers of County Donegal during the 1641 rebellion, the Lagganeers' field of operations ultimately extended beyond Donegal to Counties Fermanagh, Londonderry, Monaghan and Tyrone. In the early eighteenth century, before the exodus of between 250,000 and 300,000 Presbyterians to the New World, six of the nine counties of Ulster, including County Donegal, had Protestant majorities. 57% of the population of the County was Protestant.

### *Protestant Population of Ulster by County, c. 1732*

County	Percentage of Population
Antrim	81 %
Armagh	65%
Cavan	24%
Donegal	57%
Down	73%
Fermanagh	58%
Londonderry	76%
Monaghan	36%
Tyrone	48%

The 1911 Census illustrates the uneven impact of the plantation in County Donegal. Between 1885 and 1922 the County was represented in the House of Commons by four MPs representing four single-member constituencies: East, North, South and West Donegal.

### *Census of Population and Religion of the four Donegal Parliamentary Constituencies, 1911*

Name of constituency	Population	Roman Catholic	Non-Catholic	% Non-Catholic
East Donegal	39,643	24,658	14,985	37.8%
North Donegal	41,065	33,511	7,554	18.4%
South Donegal	41,490	32,687	8,803	21.2%
West Donegal	46,339	42,165	4,174	9.0%

## *Impact and Legacy*

The Ulster Plantation proved to be the most significant and successful plantation in Irish history. In *The Plantation of Ulster* (Belfast, 2000), Philip Robinson has succinctly described its wide-ranging impact:

*The Plantation brought innovation: a radical transformation of the lowland landscape had begun, even if influenced by pre-plantation precedent. Spread of a market-based rural economy resulted in a quite spectacular growth in urbanisation. Permanent dwellings of a more sophisticated construction became commonplace, and around the towns new field patterns emerged. The spread of hedged enclosure heralded innovations in agricultural methods, tools, livestock and systems of land tenure. In less tangible form, the settlers also brought with them a new language, new surnames, new religion and, of course, a change in politico-historical allegiance.*

### *Urbanisation*

The native Irish were not urban dwellers and, as a result, early seventeenth-century Ulster had very few urban centres. However, towns and the creation of 'an urban network' were central to the Plantation project. Towns were to be centres of trade and commerce. Thus, Undertakers and servitors wanted them for profit and security. Towns were also to be centres for administration and locations for churches and schools. Government wanted them for administrative coherence and to serve a market economy. Five boroughs were created in County Donegal. Ballyshannon, Donegal Town and Lifford were granted charters (and the right to representation in the Irish Parliament) in 1613. Killybegs was granted its charter in 1616 and St Johnston received its charter some time before 1619. Although it was considered, curiously, Raphoe, the ecclesiastical capital of the county, was never accorded borough status. One possible explanation for this is Raphoe's close proximity to St Johnston but this argument did not prevent Clogher and Augher

### *Rathmullan Friary*

The Carmelite Friary was originally granted to Sir James Fullerton, who assigned the buildings to Sir Ralph Bingley for use as a barracks. In 1617 the

Friary was occupied by Andrew Knox, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Raphoe, who converted it into a fortified house, with the chancel as his private chapel. Later in the seventeenth century it was used as the parish church. It was only abandoned in 1814 with the building of St Columb, Killygarvan.

Courtesy DocsPics/Phil Brown at [www.docbrown.info/docspics](http://www.docbrown.info/docspics)



both becoming boroughs in County Tyrone. Nevertheless, Raphoe's townscape – with its 'Diamond' (like Londonderry and Donegal) at the centre – reveals its debt to the Plantation. It was proposed that Doagh and Rathmullan should also become boroughs but this never happened. Many towns in the County – including Letterkenny, Ramelton, Moville and Malin – have their origins in the Plantation. So too do many of the villages: Convoy, Castlefin, Killygordon, Stranorlar and Carrigans. Mannorcunningham and Newtowncunningham, take their name from John Cunningham, a Scottish planter from Killbirnie in Ayrshire.

### *New buildings*

Scattered throughout this publication are photographs of buildings and sites relating to the Plantation, mostly but not exclusively in County Donegal. These castles, bawns, manor houses and churches remain an important visual legacy of the Plantation. In many respects it is a great pity that more of the domestic architecture has not survived. What has survived tends to be vestiges and fragments rather than complete

structures because there is a strong local tradition of 'tumbling' (demolishing) and replacing old buildings rather than repairing them.

### *New modes of agriculture*

The native Irish were not great exponents of tillage and the Nine Years' War provided no incentive to arable farming. Instead, they lived by *creaghting* or seasonal migration with their cattle. The native Irish were, in effect, ranchers who accompanied herds of cattle from one pasture to another, with never any more than a temporary shelter of sods for their own habitation. The English regarded the absence of hedgerows and fences and 'ploughing by tail' (the attaching of horses to ploughs by the hairs of their tails) as primitive and barbarous respectively. The planters introduced new crops, improved agricultural methods and better quality livestock. The spread of

### *Enniskillen Castle, Co. Fermanagh*

The first castle on this site was built by Hugh Maguire (who died in 1428) in the fifteenth century. In 1607 it was remodelled and refurbished by Captain William Cole, the servitor who laid the foundations of modern Enniskillen and ancestor of the Earls of Enniskillen. The riverside tower at the south, known as the Watergate, was supposedly built by Chonnacht Og Maguire who owned the castle between 1566 and 1589. However, significantly the Watergate does not feature in depictions of Dowdall's siege, although something approximating to the Watergate is depicted in John Speed's view of Enniskillen Castle in his *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain* (1610). In the 18th century the castle was remodelled as the Castle Barracks which now houses the Regimental Museum of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers.



hedged enclosure was one of their most obvious visual legacies.

However, there were clearly limits to the extent of agricultural progress in the County. In 1665 the agent of one Donegal landlord complained that he and his fellow Protestants ‘have estates and are easily found’ whereas the Roman Catholic tenantry, ‘snail-like, carry their houses on their heads and will easily so abscond themselves as never more to be seen by us’. This observation suggests that old habits – specifically *creaghting* – died hard.

In 1739 in a letter to Archbishop Wake of Canterbury, Bishop Nicolson of Derry –

### *Monea Castle, Co. Fermanagh*

Monea Castle is the most complete and best-preserved Plantation castle in Ulster. It was begun in 1616 by the Rector of Devenish, Revd Malcolm Hamilton. Shortly afterwards, in 1619, it was described by Pynnar as ‘a strong castle of lime and stone being 54 feet by 20 feet. The bawn, comprising ‘a wall 9 feet in height and 300 feet in circuit’ was added shortly before Hamilton became Archbishop of Cashel in 1623. Like so many Ulster Plantation castles, the design of Monea reflects the Scottish origin of its builder. Three storeys high with tall attics, it has a rectangular plan with a pair of massive semi-cylindrical towers on the short west end.



Inishowen was in the diocese of Derry rather than Raphoe – observed that the typical farmer in County Donegal ‘generally contents himself with no more land than is necessary to feed his family, which he diligently tills, and depends on the industry of his wife and daughters to pay by their spinning the rent, and lay up riches’. This suggests little more than subsistence farming rather capitalist enterprise.

### *New languages*

The Planters brought with them two new languages to County Donegal with contrasting fortunes: English and Scots. At the beginning of the seventeenth century English was still the language of a remote, modest-sized kingdom on the periphery of north-west Europe but in the course of the next three centuries the language of Tyndale, Cranmer and Shakespeare would become, in the words of the Tyrone poet W. F. Marshall, ‘the most useful language in the world’, a global language and a *lingua franca* in which billions would communicate. In the nineteenth century English would prove a great boon to Irish emigrants throughout the English-speaking world and especially the United States.

Admittedly, as W. R. Rogers acknowledged in *The Ulstermen and Their Country* (London, 1952), Ulster people, and this observation has special force in Donegal, speak ‘an English which is salted and flavoured by the poetical idiom of the Celt’. It is a form of English which retains ‘rich or rare words or phrases which belonged to the England of four hundred years ago’. Rogers observed: ‘Ulster people also have the gift of imagination, instantly seeing “likeness” in the most different things, and putting it into startlingly apt metaphor’.

Scots at the beginning of the seventeenth century was still the official or Court language of Scotland. However, given the Protestant Reformer John Knox’s marked distaste for of Scots as ‘the language of Popery’ (because the highest register of writing in Scots was religious and

thereby 'Catholic' and unreformed in content) and his preference for the Geneva Bible of 1560 (a translation in the English of London and south-east England) and the Union of the Crowns in March 1603, Scots lost prestige and status quite rapidly. Nevertheless, Scots continued to have a lively existence as a spoken, if not as a written, language in both Scotland and Ulster. As Ulster-Scots, the language is still widely spoken in the Laggan area of east Donegal, one of the language's remaining rural heartlands in modern Ulster. Until recently many native speakers would have referred to their way of speaking as 'Scots' or 'Braid Scots' rather than Ulster-Scots. In the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century young people from west Donegal would come to east Donegal to gather potatoes in the autumn. They colloquially referred to this experience as 'lifting the Scotch' because they were working in what was recognized to be a strongly Ulster-Scots-speaking area and they would return home with the rudiments of a new language and new vocabulary.

There is also a modest Ulster-Scots literary tradition based in east Donegal. The section entitled 'Scotch Poems' in the *Ulster Miscellany* (Belfast, 1753) appears to be written by, or about, the Presbyterian communities of east Donegal. Sarah Leech (1809 - c.1830), the daughter of a linen weaver, was born near Raphoe and is one of the few published women writers in the Ulster-Scots tradition. Beyond the biographical account contained in her only published collection, *Poems on Various Subjects* (Dublin, 1828), very little more is known about her. Her staunch unionism and Protestantism are evidenced by poems such as 'The Brunswick Clubs' and 'Progress of the Reformation'. 'On the Killing of a Mouse in Harvest' compares very favourably with Burns' 'To a Mouse'. Sarah's 'weaver poetry' is genuinely impressive and unfortunately undervalued.

### *Parke's Castle, Co. Leitrim*

Parke's Castle is a Plantation Castle idyllically situated on the shores of Lough Gill, County Leitrim. In 1610 Roger Parke completed his fortified manor house on the site of an earlier fifteenth-century O'Rourke castle. He retained the walls of the original bawn - a spacious pentagonal defensive area - and demolished the O'Rourke tower house in the centre. The stones of O'Rourke's tower were used to build the three-storey manor on the eastern side, eventually adorned with mullioned windows and diamond-shaped chimneys.



### *New surnames*

To ancient and traditional Irish surnames in County Donegal, such as O'Doherty, O'Donnell and MacSweeney, the Plantation added new English and Scottish surnames. We have already encountered the surnames of the English and Scottish undertakers and servitors. Between 1692 and 1800 County Donegal, as distinct from the County's five borough constituencies, was represented in the Irish Parliament by MPs with the following surnames: Brooke, Clements, Conyngham, Gore, Hamilton, Knox, McCausland, Montgomery and Stewart. These were the surnames of the County's new political, social and economic elite. Other documents, such as muster and rental rolls, provide us with the surnames of less privileged families lower down the pecking order: Graham, Maxwell, Wilson, Morrow, Boyd, Scott, Ingram, Duncan, Johnston, Adair, Smyth, Lowry, Buchanan etc.



### *Portora Castle, Co. Fermanagh*

Portora Castle is strategically positioned by the narrow exit of the River Erne where it flows into Lower Lough Erne.

The castle was built for Sir William Cole who purchased the land in 1612. In 1619 Nicholas Pynnar described the castle as 'a bawn of lime and stone'. Sir Michael Cole and his family moved to Portora Castle in 1710 when their previous residence, Enniskillen Castle, was destroyed by fire. They remained there until about 1716, when Sir Michael's son, John Cole (1680-1726), started building Florence Court. The castle is now in ruins partly because a group of pupils from the nearby Royal School, experimenting with gunpowder, blew up part of it in 1859. They also tried digging under the building which added to its dereliction. It was the site of the first of a series of demonstrations, addressed by Sir Edward Carson, which were held prior to the signing of the Ulster Covenant in September 1912.

### *New religion*

The Reformation and the Church of Ireland, the official state church in Ireland since 1536, were not conspicuously successful. Some Irish chieftains had renounced Rome and embraced the Reformation but not many. By the early seventeenth century the Church of Ireland was represented by little more than a handful of bishops and clergy who rarely spoke the Gaelic language of their flocks. In Ulster no Protestant bishop was in possession of a see, so the Plantation did involve the introduction of Protestantism into Ulster.

It is normally assumed that the Planters brought with them to County Donegal two very distinct forms of Protestantism: Anglicanism and Presbyterianism. This is a rather unsatisfactory way of viewing matters because in the early seventeenth century there was remarkably little by

way of clear cut distinction between the two.

In Scotland church government was not exclusively Presbyterian at this stage. Episcopacy and Presbyterianism existed side by side, prompting the description of Scotland's then ecclesiastical arrangements as 'congregationalism with a dash of episcopacy'. It is only with the Glorious Revolution of 1688/9 and the ecclesiastical settlement of 1690, when bishops were abolished, prelacy condemned as 'a great and insupportable grievance', Presbyterianism achieved the pre-eminent position in Scotland which many people have fondly imagined it has always enjoyed.

Doctrinally, however, the Scottish Church was Calvinist in outlook but so too was the Church of Ireland.

The position of the early seventeenth century Church of Ireland was an anomalous one. It was an Episcopal church but it was able to accommodate within its ranks many Scottish Presbyterian ministers. This gave rise to few theological problems because – unlike the Church of England – the Church of Ireland was doctrinally Calvinist rather than Arminian, Arminius being a Dutch theologian who had repudiated Calvin's doctrine of predestination. The early seventeenth-century Church of Ireland was Episcopal in terms of Church government but Calvinist in doctrine. The Church of Ireland's 104 Articles of Religion, adopted in 1615, was a Calvinist document. For the greater part of the first half of the seventeenth century the Church of Ireland was presided over by a Calvinist Archbishop of Armagh: James Ussher. When Ussher died in 1656, at Oliver Cromwell's insistence, he was given a state funeral and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

The Diocese of Raphoe was served by a succession of Scottish-born bishops in the first half of the century: George Montgomery (1605-9), Andrew Knox (1611-33) and John Leslie (1633-61). In 1625 *five* out of twenty-three Church of Ireland bishops were Scots. Their Scottish

# 1610-2010 DONEGAL Plantation 400 years

experience was within a Church which had been governed by both Presbyterian and Episcopal structures. They were instinctively sensitive to the scruples of Scottish Presbyterian ministers, even to the extent of omitting from the ordination service passages which offended the sensibilities of such ordinands. Scottish-born bishops were happy to have such men within the Church because there was a shortage of good ministers. Sixty-four Scottish ministers took up residence in Ulster during the reign of James VI & I. The Scottish-born bishops also appreciated that many of these Scottish Presbyterian ministers were men of outstanding ability.

So early seventeenth-century Presbyterians were not subjected to discrimination or persecution by Anglicans but were readily accommodated within the Church of Ireland. Indeed, this is the principal reason why a formal and distinct Presbyterian ecclesiastical structure in Ireland dates from the 1640s rather than earlier.

## *New politico-historical allegiance*

As was the intention, the plantation introduced a strong and vigorous element into County Donegal's population which was firmly attached to the British connection. This is not to suggest that these people did not develop a strong love and deep affection for Ireland. Quite the contrary, but these people were patriots who did not subscribe to the narrow tenets of Irish nationalism. For these newcomers and their descendants a sense of Britishness and of Irishness were not mutually exclusive identities but complementary ones.

However, not all the descendants of the Donegal Planters shared this perspective. Richard Montgomery of Convoy (1738-75), a former British soldier who became brigadier-general in the Continental Army in the rebellious American colonies, and Revd James Porter of Ballindrait (1753-98), the radical Presbyterian minister of Greyabbey, County Down, spring to mind as interesting examples of this phenomenon.

## *Manorhamilton Castle, Co. Leitrim*

The Castle, in Manorhamilton, County Leitrim, was erected in 1634 by Sir Frederick Hamilton who was granted land in north Leitrim, which had been confiscated from the O'Rourkes, the ruling clan of Breifne. Hamilton was confronted by frequent native rebellions before the Castle was burned down by the Earls of Clanrickard (Burkes) in 1652. Manorhamilton Castle Heritage Centre hosts a permanent exhibition here and provides guided tours of the Castle ruins and grounds.



Although he insisted that he had taken no part in the 1798 rebellion, Porter was hanged at the rear of his own Meeting House at Greyabbey for his alleged United Irish sympathies. Montgomery led the American invasion of Canada but was killed during an attack on Montreal. Isaac Butt (1813 -1879), the founder of the Home Rule movement, was born in Glenfin, County Donegal. Butt, unlike Montgomery and Porter, was not anti-British but sought to reconcile differing traditions by securing devolution for Ireland within a British framework.

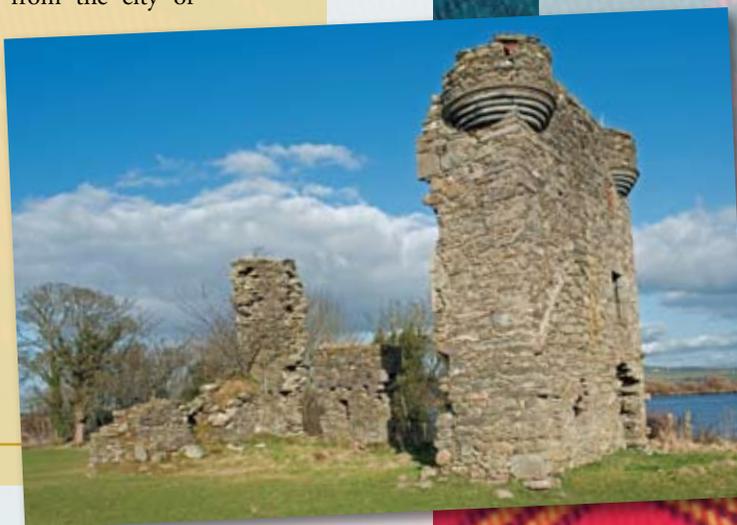
Unionism, however, remained the dominant ideology among most of the descendants of Donegal planters well into the twentieth century. Almost 18,000 men and women signed the Ulster Covenant and the parallel Women's Declaration in County Donegal on 28 September 1912. In the General Election of 1918 Major R. L. Moore, the Unionist candidate in East Donegal, polled 38.5% of the valid vote.

In November 1934 a petition was sent to the Northern Ireland Cabinet requesting that east Donegal and the Laggan district be transferred to Northern Ireland. Less than a month later a similar petition, signed by 7,368 'loyal subjects of the King' residing in east Donegal, was forwarded to J. H. Thomas, Secretary of State for the Dominions, in London.

In the election to the fourth Dáil in August 1923 Major James Sproule Myles (of Ballyshannon), topped the poll in the Donegal constituency, a feat which he replicated in five successive elections until 1943. The Major served in the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, won the Military Cross at the Battle of the Somme and was a former Unionist. Between 1943 and 1961 W. A. W. (Willie) Sheldon (from Raphoe) cornered this vote. Sheldon may have been originally elected as a *Clann na Talmhan* (Farmers' Party) TD but he soon reverted to being a TD very much in the mould of the Major.

### *Mongavlin Castle, St Johnston*

The remains of the keep of Mongavlin Castle are located on the banks of the River Foyle, about seven miles upstream from the city of Londonderry and a mile south of the town of St Johnston. In 1610 the manor of Mongavlin was granted to the 2nd Duke of Lennox. Both the Duke of Lennox and his brother, who inherited the property from him, died under suspicious circumstances, reputedly of poisoning, but no-one was ever charged with any wrongdoing. The manor then passed by marriage to James Hamilton, the 2nd Earl of Abercorn who had a seat at Baronscourt, just outside Newtownstewart in County Tyrone. Baronscourt remained the Hamilton family seat in Ulster, and Mongavlin fell into disrepair.



The Ulster tartan was discovered by William Dixon on a farm near Dungiven, Co. Londonderry in 1956. Several garments were uncovered in a ditch, including a cloak, a jacket and a pair of trows. Analysis carried out on the finds by the Ulster Museum concluded that the tartan cloth was woven sometime between 1590 and 1650, probably in Co. Donegal where the striking red dye originated. The Ulster tartan has many shared characteristics with the Lennox tartan. The 2nd Duke of Lennox was granted lands in nearby Portlough in 1610.

Throughout this publication two versions of the Ulster tartan are depicted. The Red Ulster tartan is a modern interpretation of what the original may have looked like. The muted version is closer to the appearance of the actual tartan unearthed in 1956.

### *Suggested further reading*

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Produced by



# Ulster-Scots Community Network

[www.ulster-scots.com](http://www.ulster-scots.com)

68-72 Great Victoria Street Belfast BT2 7BB

T: 028 9043 6710 F: 028 9033 0715

E: [info@ulster-scots.com](mailto:info@ulster-scots.com)

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