

The mere Irish and the colonisation of Ulster : c.1570-1641

PhD thesis 2015

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Summary

This work is an examination of the native Irish experience of conquest and colonisation in Ulster. While some Irish-language sources are drawn-upon, the fact that these have already been used to explore Gaelic *mentalités* by specialists like Marc Caball and Brendan Ó Buachalla, mean that English primary documents such as the state papers and 1641 depositions are heavily relied-upon. The oft-cited limitations of these primarily literary materials as a historical source have led to an assumption that the native Irish (especially non-elite) perspective in this era is largely irrecoverable. It is one of the primary aims of this thesis to challenge this assumption, by showing how English sources can be read against their own rhetorical intentions in order to recover something of this perspective. A case-study (chapter six) of the native landowners in Dungannon and Tyranny under the colonial order illustrates the extent of detail that can be mined from the patent rolls and various surveys carried out in the 1650s by the Commonwealth government, supplemented by discursive sources such as the war-diary of Friar Ó Mealláin. In this, my purpose has been not only to suggest the kind of detailed survey of native Irish society which is possible from such sources, but also to chart the links between specific families' place in Gaelic Ulster and the colonial order which replaced it.

One of my central theses is that the pre-1641 Ulster colony is most usefully seen in the context of European expansion throughout the Atlantic in the early modern period. This is argued, not on account of striking similarities between the Gaelic Irish and Native Americans, or because Ulster was a blueprint for later colonial ventures, but because, when we examine the nature of the changes that occurred in this period, we see clearly that what took place followed a pattern in many respects similar to that of colonies outside Europe. Rather than being comparable, for example, to the efforts of early modern governments to exert control over defiant social or religious groups, or disobedient areas of its core territory, Ulster was different in that most of the native population were regarded as primitive in a way unusual in relations between Europe peoples. While initial plans involved the transplantation of large numbers of the Irish, such a wholesale removal did not, however, materialise for pragmatic reasons.

Nor did colonial Ulster see any significant attempt to transform the Irish culturally,

notwithstanding the rhetoric of a ‘civilising mission’ as expounded by people like John Davies. I argue that the plantation in practice sought to engage the greater part of the native population as a ready-made underclass, in other words, merely to replace the native elite with a colonial one without really admitting the Irish, for the most part, to the possibilities offered by the new market economy. These natives, furthermore, came under increasing pressure to move from the best lands from new—mainly Scottish—waves of colonists in the 1620s and 30s. This, along with other factors such as harvest failure and the political anxieties of the Catholic Irish gentry, influenced the timing of the 1641 rising, but I argue in the concluding part of my thesis that we must look to the resentment caused by the plantation itself for an explanation of why the rising took place. I contend that these processes are best examined through the eyes of the native population who experienced these changes. In contrast, English and Scottish colonists (who have been the subject of most studies of plantation society) were largely concerned with imposing their own cultural and economic values on Ulster, although, as will be seen, not necessarily on its native population.

I wish to challenge the existing historiography of colonial Ulster in several other respects, and to show that certain notions, such as the idea of an ‘empty land’ or the impermanent, warlike nature of indigenous society, are in fact a hangover from the prejudices of colonists. I argue that the conditions for colonisation had more immediate origins, and had been created in the war-torn decades immediately prior to the plantation. This work will also examine Gaelic society and the changes which it underwent from a class perspective, which is neglected in the existing historiography. The profound transformation in the class structure brought about by colonisation will be stressed, and in particular the fate of the largely-ignored ‘freeholders’ of Gaelic society, who suffered the greatest diminution of status in the plantation, as the confiscation of huge areas necessitated redefining this class from something approximating landowners, to mere tenants of the attainted earls. It will be argued that this process, by which the freeholders were subsumed into an economic role indistinguishable from the landless, was a crucial dynamic in colonial Ulster, and was the source of much of the grievance attested to by the 1641 depositions.

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Abbreviations

| | |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <i>BL</i> | <i>British library</i> |
| <i>CCM</i> | <i>Calendar of the Carew manuscripts</i> |
| <i>CPRI</i> | <i>Calendar of the patent rolls, Ireland</i> |
| <i>CSPI</i> | <i>Calendar of State Papers, Ireland</i> |
| <i>CSPF</i> | <i>Calendar of State Papers, Foreign</i> |
| <i>HL</i> | <i>Huntington library, San Marino, California</i> |
| <i>LMA</i> | <i>London Metropolitan Archives</i> |
| <i>NAI</i> | <i>National Archives of Ireland, Dublin</i> |
| <i>SP</i> | <i>The National Archives, London, State Papers</i> |
| <i>TCD</i> | <i>Trinity College, Dublin</i> |

Dates

All dates have adhered to the convention of dating according to the Old Style (Julian) calendar, for the date and month, and the New Style (Gregorian) calendar for the year.

Transcriptions

Spellings have not been modernised except in the following cases:

v replaces u

u replaces v

i replaces j

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1 Introduction

Bheith fa neart an té is treise
is é ceart na críchese.

The law of this territory is that it shall be subjugate to him who
is strongest.

Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn.¹

The year 1570 marks the opening of the period under consideration in this thesis, but is qualified by the addition of a ‘circa’ because it would be unhelpful to pin the beginning of colonisation in Ulster to a specific date. In the late middle ages, government policy towards the province had been marked by a hands-off approach, trusting in alliances made with local Gaelic rulers to exert some measure of control over the province, or at least minimise it as a threat to the Anglo-Irish colony at Carrickfergus, or indeed further south to the Pale.² From an English perspective, as Katharine Simms has noted of the late fourteenth century, it made little difference whether this local ally was an Ó Néill or a Mortimer.³ This strategy of ruling by proxy, however, became increasingly unacceptable to Tudor rulers as

1 Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn; Eleanor Knott (ed), *The bardic poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn*, 2 vols, (London: Irish Texts Society, 1922-26), vol.1, p.120, vol.2, p.80.

2 Carrickfergus: Charraig Fhearghais, ‘the rock of Fearghas’, Fearghas Mór Mac Eirc being a legendary king of Dál Riata.

3 Katharine Simms, *Gaelic lordships in Ulster in the later Middle Ages*, (Ph.D. Thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1976), p.724.

the sixteenth century progressed. A policy of replacing much of the indigenous population with colonists gradually came to the fore in the corridors of power in the decades indicated here. Existing histories of the plantation, however, often convey the impression that the project undertaken in 1609 was an innovation without precedent. It will be one of the main arguments of this work that the plantation—while certainly innovative in its scale and ambition—represented the culmination of a process which had begun several decades earlier, and that the military onslaught of the Nine Years War, followed by the judicial onslaught on Ó Néill and Ó Dónaill power in the years before their flight, was as much a part of creating the groundwork for the plantation as surveys, inquisitions and other formal preparations.

This does not mean that colonisation was universally held as the long-term objective of English government for Ulster throughout this period. On the contrary, the last decades of Elizabeth's reign were marked by the absence of any consistent policy. These years instead saw the testing of various strategies, each of which failed in turn to bring about the desired-for transformation in the north of Ireland. Financial exigency loomed large in all calculations. Acknowledging that the observation is made with the benefit of hindsight, it remains the fact that throughout the latter half of the sixteenth century, a Gaelic society in Ulster, which had hitherto existed largely independent of the English government's influence, was progressively weakened to the point where it ceased to function as a self-sustaining entity. This, consciously or unconsciously, created the conditions in which the plantation project could be put into execution. 1570 has been chosen as an approximate start-date for this process because, with respect to the changeover to a strategy of planting colonies as a means of controlling Ulster, several important milestones are clustered in proximity to this year.

Seán Ó Néill's death in 1567 not only represented the end of a significant threat to potential English hegemony over the province, but his posthumous attainder two years later saw the re-assertion of crown rights to large areas of Ulster, claims which the English monarchs had inherited from the earls of Ulster in the fifteenth century.⁴ Ultimately, such claims would be used to justify the confiscation of the departed earls' territories in the aftermath

4 Ciaran Brady has noted that defeating Seán had become 'an obsession at court to which all other Irish affairs [were] subordinated for almost a decade'. *The Chief Governors: the rise and fall of reform government in Tudor Ireland, 1536-1588*, (Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.125.

of the 1607 flight. The decade beginning in 1570 is also important because it saw the first significant attempts in the early modern period to plant colonists in the province, with Thomas Smith's project in the Ards peninsula and the earl of Essex's more ambitious undertaking shortly thereafter.⁵ This decade could be said to mark the *beginning* of an end to seeking to rule by proxy, although subsequent agreements with both Toirealach Luineach and Aodh Ó Néill would suggest that this strategy had not yet run its course. A policy of colonisation came into greater vogue with the lord deputyship of Henry Sidney, whose first term of office ended in 1571.⁶

These decades, so important to understanding the background against which plantation took place, will be explored in chapter three. It will be noted in that chapter, and indeed throughout this work, that Ulster is discussed in a colonial framework, bracketed together with other colonial ventures in Virginia and New England, carried out by England in the first half of the seventeenth-century. Because this colonial context has been much-discussed (and disputed), and will be of such importance for much of what follows here, chapter two will be devoted to explaining why it is the best way of making sense of the Ulster colony. Just as these processes will be discussed in a wider chronological framework than merely the official plantation project of 1609, the geographic scope is similarly broad. Antrim, Down and Monaghan, therefore, fall within the parameters of this work as much as other parts of Ulster.⁷ Indeed, by 1641, the 'unofficial' plantation of east Ulster was probably more successful than the 'official' one. It has been estimated that in 1630, Antrim and Down contained more Scottish colonists than all of the escheated counties combined.⁸ The private plantations in east Ulster led by James Hamilton and Hugh Montgomery were, furthermore, extensions of a state colonisation policy, given that the grants of land to these

5 Ards: An Aird, 'the heights'.

6 Sidney, who had spent three years in Spain as Mary's emissary, likely influenced the plans for an *encomienda*-like system envisaged in projects such as Smith's. Steven Ellis, *Ireland in the age of the Tudors, 1447-1603: English expansion and the end of Gaelic rule*, (London: Longman, 1998), pp.292, 302.

7 Antrim: Aontroim, 'lone ridge', Down: An Dún, 'the fort', Monaghan: Muineachán, 'place abounding in thickets'.

8 Michael Perceval-Maxwell has based this claim on the 1630 muster roll, *The Scottish migration to Ulster in the reign of James I*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), p.251. Monaghan, although also increasingly penetrated by colonists arriving outside the scope of the official scheme, retained a more vigorous native presence. The leading sept in the area, the Mic Mahúna, were described by an observer in 1622 as 'the strongest sept that I know in Ulster', no doubt due to this relatively undisturbed state. 'Mr Taylor of Ardmagh his propositions for planting my Lo: of Essex land', 1622, NLI 8014, vol.10.

men contained conditions that they introduce colonists. The colonisation of Ulster will, therefore, be considered here as having embraced the entire province, and to have begun more tentatively than a definite start-date of 1609 would suggest. If the specific project launched in that year is being discussed, the term ‘plantation project’ will signify this.⁹

Nor should this work be seen as a history of plantation society in its entirety, but will be concerned specifically with the native experience of that society. Such an examination is apt, given the relative neglect of the Irish perspective in the existing literature. The Scottish experience in these decades has been examined in detail in Perceval-Maxwell’s work, while the work of Robert Hunter in particular represents a treasure-trove of information on the English undertakers and their tenants.¹⁰ The words of Nathan Wachtel—in his masterful attempt to recover the conquest of Peru through native eyes—could equally apply to Ulster:

‘There is obviously no purpose to be served by describing the Conquest from the viewpoint of the conquerors (western historiography, as we know, has amply dealt with that aspect of the affair) . . . it is just that we must remind ourselves that we have concentrated on the “underside” of a situation’.¹¹

The narratives of native and colonist in Ulster are often conceived-of as competing, but to focus on one does not necessarily serve to denigrate the other. From the colonists’ point of view, the early decades of colonisation might indeed be interpreted as a story of creation, construction, and beginnings in a kind of ‘new world’. Equally valid, however, (and less often acknowledged) is the story from the native Irish perspective, which, as this work will argue, was often a story of destruction, coercion and endings. Perspective is the key here, and a healthy dose of relativism that comes from the constant reminder that this is merely one way of looking at colonial Ulster society.

In most of the existing literature concerning the plantation, the natives (when not

9 Furthermore, in keeping with early-modern practice, the words ‘plantation’ and ‘colony’ will be used interchangeably. For further discussion of the terminology, see pp.67-8 below.

10 Perceval-Maxwell, *The Scottish migration to Ulster*. For the numerous works of Hunter consulted here, see bibliography.

11 Nathan Wachtel; Ben and Siân Reynolds (trans.), *The vision of the vanquished: the Spanish conquest of Peru through Indian eyes, 1530-1570*, (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1977), p.207.

invisible) are a peripheral and tangential presence, discussed primarily in terms of the threat they posed to the survival of the colony. This evinces an unconscious tendency to—in the terminology of native American historiography—‘face west’ and see the colonisation from the perspective of the invader, rather than facing eastwards, towards the coloniser, from the perspective of the indigenous peoples being invaded.¹² While the Revisionist project in Irish historiography has shone a much-needed spotlight on some of the assumptions of traditional Nationalist histories, it has been less zealous in its examination of the subtle—and sometimes not-so-subtle—anglocentric assumptions that characterise other accounts. These assumptions, all the more pernicious for being unacknowledged, have a long pedigree in Irish historiography. In the late eighteenth century, for example, this period was confidently described as one in which ‘Ireland, from being a land of ire became a land of concord’.¹³ Towards the middle of the nineteenth century, another historian asserted that those parts of Ireland where Gaelic culture predominated ‘remained in a state of wilderness’.¹⁴ The narrative is invariably one in which the entire island, fitfully and gradually, comes to enjoy the benefits of English ‘civility’, a process not without its teething troubles and occasional excesses certainly, but an ultimately beneficial and benevolent one. This, however, is no more viable a narrative than the much-criticised teleological story of an Irish nation, marching towards its manifest destiny, which was popular with Nationalist historians.

Such a bias may be forgiven in historians writing before the twentieth century. As Roy Foster has remarked, it is fallacious to expect ‘a detached historical sense exercised on behalf of Irish history at a time when it was not applied to English history, or any other’.¹⁵ Such sentiments might be viewed solely as the foibles of an earlier age, before ‘scientific’ or ‘value-free’ history, except for the fact that they have clearly been carried over into modern

12 The conceit originates in the work of Dee Brown: ‘Americans who have always looked westward when reading about this period should read this book facing eastward’. *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*, (Vintage: London, 1991), p.xvi. It is also used in the title of Richard Drinnon, *Facing west: the metaphysics of Indian-hating and empire-building*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997).

13 George Chalmers, ‘The Life of Sir John Davies’, introduction to John Davies, *Historical Tracts*, (London: John Stockdale, 1786), p.vx.

14 The writer in question cites a few lines of Walter Scott’s poetry as evidence that the seventeenth-century Irish built nothing lasting. Herbert F. Hore, introduction to ‘Marshal Bagenal’s Description of Ulster, Anno 1586’, in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, First Series, vol.2, (Belfast: Ulster Archaeological Society, 1854), p.138.

15 Roy Foster, ‘History and the Irish Question’, in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, vol.33 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1983), p.171.

histories, if in a more subtle form. The west-facing orientation of the historian often continues unchallenged. The opening sentence of T.W.Moody's seminal *Londonderry Plantation*, for example, reads: 'Throughout the reign of Elizabeth, Ulster had been a thorn in the side of the English government'.¹⁶ This apparently-commonplace assertion, from a historian who extolled the virtues of 'value-free history', is instructive in its elision of much that is problematic and value-laden. The passing assertion that it was Ulster which presented difficulties for the English government (and not the other way around) is highly subjective. Surely, the opposite might be claimed with (at the very least) equal truth. If the sentence 'the English government had been a thorn in the side of Ulster' strikes us as somehow more contentious and Nationalist, we might profitably ask ourselves why an assertion which is perceived as assertively nationalistic in one case is regarded as mundane and unproblematic in another.¹⁷

The reason, therefore, why the trope of the native Irish being a thorn in the side of the English appears somehow more natural to us is surely to be found less in the content of the claim being made, than in the way the 'Irish problem' has been constructed in the English language—a language which itself cannot claim objective detachment from the historical processes involved. Through repetition and normalisation, certain stock phrases habituate us to accept as self-evident, truisms which on closer examination reveal themselves to tell only half the story. In this case, it is Ireland which represents a 'problem' or poses a 'question' for an English/British solution. This is a problem/question presented by the intractability of the troublesome Irish, rather than an English/British problem/question consequent upon the difficulties presented by English/British rule in Ireland. The phrase 'Irish Question' can be employed in the title of an article by Roy Foster, for example, without the need to defend its use or carry out the kind of critique of received wisdom claimed as the hallmark of a 'value-free' history.¹⁸ In a similar vein to Moody's opening line, the first pages of Foster's *Modern Ireland* describe English colonies in Ireland as

16 T.W. Moody, *The Londonderry Plantation, 1609-41*, (Belfast: William Mullan and Son, 1939), p.23.

17 Frantz Fanon noted that when native intellectuals who sought to rehabilitate colonised civilizations came under fire for the 'exaggerated passion' with which they undertook this enterprise, it was by intellectuals whose 'own psyche and their own selves are conveniently sheltered behind a [. . .] culture which has given full proof of its existence and which is uncontested'. Frantz Fanon; Constance Farrington (trans.), *The wretched of the earth*, (New York: Grove Press, 1963), p.209.

18 Foster, 'History and the Irish Question', pp.169-92.

‘superimposed upon an ancient identity, alien and bizarre’.¹⁹ The reader is clearly invited to join the author in this westwards-facing aspect; the fact that the English colonists’ culture was no doubt equally alien and bizarre to the Gaelic Irish is, for some reason, passed over in silence.

Such omissions are symptomatic of a blind-spot which continues to characterise much history written about the meeting of *Gael* and *Gall*. This is also evident in descriptions of Gaelic social institutions, which often display a tendency to define them by those features of the English system which they happened to lack. Descriptions of Gaelic landholding practices by Debora Shuger and Perceval-Maxwell are a case in point; aspects such as subdivision, partible inheritance, and short tenures at the whim of the Gaelic rulers, are all given prominence.²⁰ As stressed by English observers at the time, who had an interest in denigrating such institutions, the emphasis is on dissolution and fragmentation. It would, however, be equally true to emphasise the fact that the land unit among the Gaelic Irish was corporately owned by the extended kin group and that the splitting up and redistribution of land was not permanent. This struck English observers as odd merely because it differed from their practice. All European colonial powers constructed a legitimising narrative to justify their conquest of native peoples and seizure of their lands. Just as the Spanish displayed a remarkable solicitude to determine whether or not the conquered peoples in America were ‘natural slaves’ who could receive the gospel, so too were the English anxious to construct a narrative of their intrusion into native lands which stressed their bringing of Christianity and modern technology. William Alexander wrote in 1624 that the colonists aim was to:

‘ . . . preach the Gospel where it was never heard, and not to subdue but to civilize the Savages, for their ruine could give to us neither glory nor benefit, since in place of fame it would breed infamie, and would defraud us of many able bodies, that hereafter (besides the Christian dutie in saving their soules) by

19 Roy Foster, *Modern Ireland 1600-1972*, (London: The Penguin Press, 1988), p.3.

20 Debora Shuger, ‘Irishmen, Aristocrats, and Other White Barbarians’, in *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol.50, no.2, (University of Chicago Press, 1997), p.507. Perceval-Maxwell, *The Scottish migration to Ulster*, p.16. It is telling that Perceval-Maxwell uses the term ‘gavelkind’ (a term applied by the English from a somewhat similar practice in medieval Kent with which they were familiar) to describe partible inheritance in Gaelic Ireland.

themselves or by their Posteritie may serve to many good uses, when by our meanes they shall learne lawfull Trades, and industries'.²¹

Claims that the plantation project in Ulster had as its aim the spreading of the Reformed faith, as well as acquainting the natives with more advanced agricultural techniques and manufacturing trades, were (and continue to be) made. This thesis will carefully examine these claims. Such an interrogation must form part of any modern assessment of the place of the indigenous populace in the early-modern colony.

Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Shuger's article, for example, is a prime example of uncritical acceptance of what Francis Jennings has dubbed the 'cant of conquest'.²² It is claimed that the Tudor-Stuart conquerors betrayed 'little animus against what we now refer to as native culture' and that the anglicisation of the Gaelic Irish had 'a great deal less to do with cultural aesthetics (refined table manners, cleanliness, *politesse*) than with social justice'.²³ This is—putting it mildly—dubious, as is the juxtaposition of a supposedly-impartial English common law with Gaelic law, perverted by the interference of native rulers, whose brehon judges were mere 'pawns of their clan chiefs'.²⁴ While the latter depiction could be said to contain a great deal of truth, the former is highly suspect. This is to cast a coldly-critical eye on Gaelic institutions while accepting at face value the claims for the intrinsic superiority of English culture made by commentators like Edmund

21 William Alexander, *An encouragement to colonies*, (London, 1624), pp.37-8. Interestingly, John Temple levied the accusation of fabricating disingenuous justifications at the Irish who claimed to be acting in the defence of the Catholic religion in 1641. As a general principle, there is much truth in Temple's observation: 'And it is well observed by Polybius, that there are commonly to be found, in all such great undertakings, *causae suasoriae*, and *causae justificiae*. The first, such as are the true natural causes, and really first in the intention; the other, such as are most commonly obruded on the world by way of cover and justification. Now, as the nature of water is most clearly seen in the first fountain, where it remains pure and unmixed, without any dross, or soil, that it afterwards contracts, as it passeth along in the streams derived from it: so, certainly, the quality of all human actions is best understood, and most clearly discerned, when we look upon them as they appear in their first original, before the inconveniencies and fatal miscarriages which afterwards come to be discovered, awake the first projectors, and teach them new artifices wherewith to disguise and colour-over their abortive, or otherwise unfortunate, counsels'. John Temple, *The Irish rebellion: or, an history of the attempts of the Irish Papists to extirpate the protestants in the kingdom of Ireland*, (London: White, Cochrane and co., 1812), p.8.

22 Francis Jennings, *The invasion of America: Indians, colonialism, and the cant of conquest*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976).

23 Shuger, 'Irishmen, Aristocrats', p.513.

24 Shuger, 'Irishmen, Aristocrats', pp.510-1.

Spenser and John Davies, who clearly cannot be regarded as impartial observers. A healthy skepticism is conspicuously absent in accepting such writers' claims to be motivated by benevolence in seeking to extend English 'civility' throughout the island. Shuger writes of 'Spenser's compassion for the miseries of "the poore distressed people of the Irish"' and asserts that he took 'both the sufferings and well-being of the common people seriously'.²⁵

While a greater critical vigilance for the 'cant of conquest' can go a great deal of the way to correcting the imbalance in such accounts, it must also be recognised that such blind-spots are to some extent hard-wired into the language in which most Irish historians work, because it is not the same language through which Gaelic society and its institutions were originally articulated. As will be argued below, this is by no means an insurmountable obstacle, but it must be at least acknowledged and confronted rather than simply ignored. The best examples of this, like the quotation from Moody above, often come from passing comments which indicate the depth of this mentality by their unobtrusiveness. Hiram Morgan, for example, describes as 'crises' the mechanism whereby succession was determined in Gaelic Ireland, but this is to adopt the succession to power in large European monarchies (like primogeniture in England) as the standard of what was normal and routine, whereas amongst the Gaelic Irish, the norm was for the strongest candidate to succeed.²⁶ For succession to be decided in this manner would indeed constitute a 'crisis' if it took place in sixteenth-century England or France; in a Gaelic context, however, such an event in no way constituted a 'crisis' or deviation from the norm.²⁷ Even an author as explicitly sympathetic to the sub-altern predicament as D.B. Quinn will use the word 'marauding' to describe the *Gàidhlig* Scots who entered Antrim in the sixteenth century, whereas those incursions sanctioned by the government are accorded more genteel

25 Shuger, 'Irishmen, Aristocrats', pp.515, 519.

26 It was often not necessary to actually prove this strength in combat. Hiram Morgan, *Tyrone's Rebellion: the outbreak of the Nine Years War in Tudor Ireland*, (London: Royal Historical Society, 1993), p.14.

27 The use of the word 'rebellion' in the title of Morgan's work also offers an example of the kind of language which re-enforces assumptions which really should be flagged as questionable. Declan Downey has contended that the word should be avoided, pointing out that sophisticated arguments existed at the time that the Tudor and Stuart monarchs had broken faith with their Catholic subjects in Ireland and could be abjured. Declan Downey, 'The Sovereign of our liking: lineage, legitimacy and liege-men. The Irish Catholic nobilities and the Spanish Habsburg Monarchy circa 1529 to 1651', *Tudor and Stuart Ireland Conference 2011*, <https://soundcloud.com/history-hub/dr-declan-downey-ucd-irish-catholic-nobilities-and-spanish-habsburg-monarchy-circa-1529-to-1651>, accessed 27 March 2015. Given that uncritical use of the term 'rebel' or 'rebellion' elides such debates altogether, these terms will be conspicuously avoided in this work in favour of the less partisan 'insurgent' and 'rising', which also acts as an almost-direct translation of *éirí amach*, which is referred to in the Irish language.

adjectives such as ‘settlement’ and ‘colony’.²⁸ Given the excessive violence perpetrated on the indigenous population by the earl of Essex’s efforts to colonise the same area in the 1570s, it is difficult to see in what sense these invaders were any less ‘marauding’.

Such language serves to maintain a false dichotomy between civilised/uncivilised which has really only been recognised as fundamentally subjective in the second half of the twentieth century.²⁹ Such a distinction, Jennings writes, ‘is a moral sanction rather than any given combination of social traits susceptible to objective definition’, and ‘a weapon of attack rather than a standard of measurement’.³⁰ While it may be demonstrated that one culture enjoyed superiority over another in specific, measurable aspects (the military inferiority of the Gaelic order can clearly be inferred from its defeat in the Nine Years War, not to mention the numerous adoptions of English military practices and technology that order made in its attempt to survive), such examples merely judge the worth of a society and its specific practices by a benchmark of survival or extinction. To generalise from this, however, the collective superiority of one culture over another is to enter the realm of value-judgments. Nonetheless, historians continue to do this, inheriting from early-modern thought what Patricia Palmer calls a ‘colonial discourse of difference’ by which:

‘. . . the colonist, no longer content to acknowledge the autonomy of the other’s discourse, extends the bounds of his discursive space and presumes to include—and evaluate—the other and his cultural attributes according to the values of the metropolitan culture. [. . .] The discourse of difference [. . .] operates by simultaneously devaluing the other and—in an impulse that joins cause with nationalism—validating the self [. . .] builds up a pattern of paired contrasts, pitting the perfections of the self and his civilisation (taken, in a manner guaranteed to

28 David Beers Quinn, *The Elizabethans and the Irish*, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press for the Folger Shakespeare Library, 1966), p.107.

29 At an International History Congress in the 1950s, the definition of a ‘western civilisation’ proffered was ridiculed by a Marxist historian as ‘vague and arbitrary’. Such a civilisation, he opined, might as well be defined as the world ‘within which witches were systematically persecuted and burned’. Cited in Bernard Bailyn, *Atlantic History: Concepts and Contours*, (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2005), p.28.

30 Jennings, *The invasion of America*, p.8.

fix the results, as the standard) against the—thereby inevitable—imperfections of the other’.³¹

The convenience of this form of discourse is clear for those who sought (and seek) to legitimise and justify the conquest and dispossession of ‘lesser’ peoples. For historians, however, it is a hindrance to the construction of a holistic picture of colonist-native interaction. Anthropologists and ethnographers have led the way in the adoption of a cultural relativism with which to approach these colonial encounters in a more objective manner. The adoption of such an interpretive framework among historians has been pioneered by those American scholars attempting to correct the imbalance in colonial history and introduce into their accounts the viewpoint of native Americans. These historians have championed an ‘ethnohistory’ which privileges, alongside written sources, archaeological remains, oral history, language, personal and place-names. Among these, the aforementioned Dee Brown and Francis Jennings—as well as James Axtell, Neal Salisbury and Frederick Fausz—have been instrumental in defining and defending this approach. Fausz has pinpointed the 1950s and 1960s as witnessing a shift towards ‘an interest in and sensitivity to the “Indian side” of early cultural frontiers’, related to broader societal changes outside of academia, as pioneering Ph.D students in this regard followed this path ‘in spite of their graduate school mentors’, according to Fausz.³² To do for the native Irish of colonial Ulster, what these historians have done for the natives of New England and Virginia, has been one of the guiding principles of this thesis.

The most oft-cited reason for the lack of attention given to the native Irish perspective in colonial Ulster has been the paucity of sources left by this segment of the population. It would of course be inaccurate to describe Gaelic Ireland, which possessed one of the oldest vernacular manuscript traditions in Europe, as pre-literate in the same way as the Algonquian peoples of north America were before contact with Europeans. Few of the written sources in Irish which have survived, however, give us a detailed insight into the day-to-day realities of social and political life in the Gaelic areas. As Marc Caball has noted

31 Patricia Palmer, *Language and conquest in early modern Ireland: English Renaissance literature and Elizabethan imperial expansion*, (Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp.22-3.

32 J. Frederick Fausz, ‘The Invasion of Virginia: Indians, Colonialism, and the Conquest of Cant: A Review Essay on Anglo-Indian Relations in the Chesapeake’, in *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, vol.95, no.2, (Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1987), p.136.

‘the English record of the plantation is effectively documentary and bureaucratic’ while ‘the Gaelic equivalent is purely literary’.³³ This, added to the fact that these English documentary sources are far more abundant, means that their usefulness for a certain kind of history far outweighs that of the Gaelic literary output. Part of the problem has been the extent to which bardic poetry in particular was reflective of political and social developments. It has been argued by several scholars—chiefly Bernadette Cunningham, Tom Dunne and Michelle O’Riordan—that the bardic poets, constrained by the encomiastic nature of their art and a correspondingly parochial worldview, proved unresponsive to the catastrophic changes taking place around them, which barely registered in their literary output.³⁴ Both Brendán Ó Buachalla and Marc Caball, however, have conclusively shown that such a claim is difficult to sustain. Caball has argued in his monograph on the subject that the period witnessed ‘ideological innovation in the work of the bardic poets’ and that, far from being overwhelmed, ‘the tradition was transformed’.³⁵ Abundant examples, in fact, register the response of poets to the upheavals of this period. In perhaps his most damning criticism, Ó Buachalla argued that O’Riordan deliberately chose those passages of work and individual poems that illustrate her thesis, deliberately ignoring that material which contradicts it.³⁶

We do not, in fact, need to come down firmly on one side or the other of this debate. Numerous examples of literature from the plantation period clearly reflect the massive dislocations which conquest and colonisation represented for the native people. There is,

33 Marc Caball, ‘Responses to transformation: Gaelic poets and the plantation of Ulster’, in Éamonn Ó Ciardha and Micheál Ó Siochrú (eds.), *The plantation of Ulster: ideology and practice*, (Manchester University Press, 2012), p.192.

34 Bernadette Cunningham, ‘Native culture and political change in Ireland, 1580-1640’, in Ciaran Brady and Raymond Gillespie (eds.), *Natives and newcomers: essays on the making of Irish colonial society, 1534-1641*, (Blackrock, Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1986), pp.148-70. Tom Dunne, ‘The Gaelic response to conquest and colonisation: the evidence of the poetry’, in *Studia Hibernica*, no.20, (Dublin: St. Patrick’s College, Drumcondra, 1980), pp.7-30. Michelle O’Riordan has perhaps gone furthest in positing the static nature of Gaelic poetry throughout this period, arguing that: ‘changes in the poetry corresponding directly to political and social changes initiated by the centralised government, do not occur [. . .] the fundamental concepts of power [. . .] remained fundamentally unaltered in the Gaelic Irish aristocratic mentality, to the end of the seventeenth century’. *The Gaelic mind and the collapse of the Gaelic world*, (Cork University Press, 1990), pp.5-6.

35 Marc Caball, *Poets and politics : continuity and reaction in Irish poetry, 1558-1625*, (Cork University Press, 1998), p.6.

36 Brendán Ó Buachalla, ‘Review Article: Poetry and Politics in Early Modern Ireland’, in *Eighteenth-Century Ireland / Iris an dá chultúr*, vol.7, (Dublin: Eighteenth-Century Ireland Society, 1992), pp.152, 158-9.

for example, no ambiguity in the sentiments expressed by the poet Lochlann Mac Taidhg Óig Ó Dálaigh, writing about the exile of a native ruling class and their replacement by newcomers:

Atá againn ‘na n-ionadh
dírim uaibhreach eisiodhan
d’fhuil Ghall, do ghasraidh Mhonaídh,
Saxoin ann is Albonaigh.

We have in their stead an arrogant impure crowd, of foreigners’
blood, of the race of Monadh—there are Saxons there, and
Scotch.³⁷

As Ó Buachalla has shown, giving as his example the east Ulster poet Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh, the Gaelic *literati* were at this time explicitly disavowing the kind of myopic, local focus highlighted by O’Riordan and Cunningham.³⁸ Far from simply lamenting the loss of patronage, Ó Gnímh’s *Beannacht ar anmain Éireann* [The Death of Ireland] enunciates a variety of leaders from all over the island who have been brought to ruin by the events of recent years. Patrons and patronage are not mentioned in the poem and Ó Gnímh foresees dire consequences for the entire country’s cultural and religious life from the removal of the native elite.³⁹ It is necessary to stress that this was an intermediate stage in the development of a consciousness that might be described as a shift from the parochial mode towards the national, and the formulation of a cultural response to the existential threat

37 Lochlann mac Taidhg Óig Uí Dhálaigh, translated in William Gillies, ‘A poem on the downfall of the Gaoidhil’, in *Éigse*, vol.13, (Dublin: National University of Ireland, 1970), p.205.

38 Ó Buachalla, ‘Poetry and Politics in Early Modern Ireland’, p.157. Cunningham, ‘Native culture’, in Brady and Gillespie (eds.), *Natives and newcomers*, p.161. In a paper jointly written with Raymond Gillespie, Cunningham has argued that Ó Gnímh’s work ‘suggests acceptance of the new *status quo* and there is no attempt to incite the Gaoidhil to revolt against the new order [. . .] imply an acceptance of the changed conditions of the new century’. Bernadette Cunningham and Raymond Gillespie, ‘The east Ulster bardic family of Ó Gnímh’, in *Éigse*, vol.20, (Dublin: National University of Ireland, 1984), p.108. While his work can certainly be described as evincing resignation, it is problematic to automatically interpret this as denoting a lack of hostility, or even approval, of the plantation. While this might seem like a hair-splitting nuance, the grey area represented by this continuum of resignation-acceptance-approval will be demonstrated at several points in this work to be vital in assessing native attitudes to the colony planted in their midst.

39 Fear Flatha Ó Gnímh, ‘Beannacht ar anmain Éireann’ [The Death of Ireland], in Osborn Bergin (ed. and trans.), *Irish bardic poetry: texts and translations*, (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1970), pp.115, 264.

which the New English represented to it. This development was taking place throughout the period from the 1570s to 1640s. It is not necessary for a nationalist ideology to come to full-fruit in order to discern an unmistakable reaction to the Tudor/Stuart conquest.

Even that poetry which registers the momentous changes occurring in Ulster at this time has its limits as a source for the modern historian. This reflects the distinction between documentary and literary sources made by Caball above. While poems like those of Ó Dálaigh and Ó Gnímh clearly register change—and despair at this change—they often attest to little else. Any documentary detail they might possess tends to be obscured by a style that continues to be hidebound by traditional tropes. An example of this is the practice of not naming any other living individuals except the subject of the encomium'.⁴⁰ A side-effect of this convention is that a large area of potential information that the poet might allude to, at least incidentally, is ruled out of the discussion. The poem *Bean do lamhaigheadh Leith Cuinn*, by Gothraidh Mac Briain Mac an Bhaird offers an example of the way in which the tropes of traditional bardic poetry could obscure contemporaneous events from view.⁴¹ This elegy for Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill, who died in the Tower of London in 1626 (see below pp.253-8), clearly acknowledges and laments the changes which have taken place, but at the same time we can glean little detail about those events in the poem's sixty stanzas. Most of the discussion surrounding the events of Niall Garbh's life takes place in the context of traditional Gaelic mythology or that of the Trojan war. Niall himself does not appear until stanza fifteen, and even then it is really only in stanzas eighteen to thirty-three that events contemporaneous with Niall's life are touched on.

Such poems are clearly of value in the evidence they provide of Gaelic *mentalités*.

40 Knott noted that this probably originated from a desire by the poets to 'preserve amicable relations between themselves and any chief upon whom, in the vicissitudes of things, they might one day come to depend'. Knott (ed), *The bardic poems of Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn*, vol.1, p.xlvi.

41 Gothraidh Mac Briain Mac an Bhaird, 'Bean do lamhaigheadh Leith Cuinn' [Leath Cuinn is a woman that has been wounded], in Paul Walsh (ed. and trans.), *Gleanings from Irish manuscripts*, (Dublin: At the sign of the Three Candles, 1933), pp.27-52. Mac an Bhaird is not identified as the author in Walsh's edition, but is indicated as such in Katharine Simms' online database of bardic poetry. This identification has been supported by Micheál Hoyne, 'A bardic poem to Diarmaid Ó Conchubhair Donn (d.1600)', in *Ériu*, vol.61, (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 2011), p.60. The dating of this poem is unclear. It can only be said with certainty that it lies sometime between Niall Garbh's death in 1626 and the date inscribed on the manuscript copy of the poem: 1658. Walsh (p.28) suggests that it was 'probably penned abroad after the dispersion of the learned men about the Cromwellian period'. If, however, Mac an Bhaird was the author, it seems unlikely that the career of a poet active (see Hoyne p.59-60) at the time of the Nine Years War would have extended to such a late date. It likely dates, therefore, to before 1641 at least.

Extensive references to figures from the corpus of Gaelic myth and pseudo-history, as well as the explication of prominent families in terms of the traditional branches of descent from figures like Niall Naoighiallach, point to the continuing currency and circulation of such knowledge well into the seventeenth century.⁴² They are also of interest for the decisive evidence they present of a perception, persisting decades after the plantation, that Gaelic leaders had been deprived of lands which were theirs by ancestral right. Despite its value as an indicator of emotional responses, however, such a poem offers little in the way of concrete detail about the native experience of colonial society, which it is the purpose of this thesis to examine. The plantation is effectively dehistoricised and the claims that Niall Garbh was universally-loved must likewise be treated with scepticism as a mere poetic convention. It is somewhat bizarrely claimed in stanza eighteen that he was a source of strength to both the Uí Néill of Tyrone and the Uí Dhónaill in their struggles with the English.⁴³ As chapter six will show, Niall's defection to the Henry Docwra's forces on Lough Foyle in 1600 was in fact one of the pivotal moments in the defeat of the Irish in the Nine Years War.⁴⁴ His relentless quest to unseat the ruling Uí Dhónaill in Tyrconnell must have won him a considerable number of enemies.⁴⁵ Life for the Irish in Ulster during the 1630s must have been bleak indeed, if Niall Garbh was being looked back upon with fondness. The employment of tropes associated with the traditional encomium in Mac an Bhaird's poem, however, means that it offers little real indication of Gaelic perceptions of Niall Garbh.⁴⁶

Bean do lamhaigheadh Leith Cuinn is, of course, more traditional in nature than much of the Gaelic poetry emerging in the middle of the seventeenth-century. The latter, often written by non-professionals, looser in its forms and broader in its range of subject-matter,

42 It remains, of course, open to question to what extent this reflects the knowledge and interest of a small clique of learned individuals or that of Gaelic society in its entirety.

43 Mac an Bhaird, 'Bean do lamhaigheadh Leith Cuinn' in Walsh (ed.), *Gleanings*, pp.36, 45. Tyrone: Tír Eoghain, 'Eoghan's country', i.e. that of Eoghan, a son of Niall Naoighiallach, eponymous ancestor of the Cineál Eoghain.

44 Lough Foyle: Loch Feabhail, which may mean 'lough of the lip', (Irish: béal), or refer to Feabhal, son of Lodan, a figure from the mythical Tuatha Dé Danann.

45 Tyrconnell: Tír Chonaill, 'Conall's country, i.e. that of Conall Gulban, another son of Niall Naoighiallach, eponymous descendant of the Cineál Chonaill.

46 Paul Walsh's assertion that 'he was the most hated man in the north of Ireland when he broke away from the anti-Elizabethan' party, as well as his portrayal by subsequent nationalist historians as the 'very personification of a traitor', merely reflects the reaction some historians felt was appropriate among the Irish to his actions, not one which we have contemporaneous evidence for. Walsh (ed.), *Gleanings*, p.28.

was clearly a consequence of the loss of patronage resulting from the attenuation of a native elite. While much of this clearly represents a more promising field for the modern historian, the fact that it was either written by exiles, or at least heavily-influenced by intellectual developments among the exiles, renders it somewhat less germane to the subject of this thesis, which will focus on those Irish left behind in Ulster after 1607, rather than the better-documented ranks of those who fled to the continent. A number of contemporaneous works in Irish will nevertheless be referred to in this work, particularly, the *Beatha Aodh Ruadh Ó Dónaill* of Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh, the anonymous *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis* (a satire on Gaelic social climbers), the *Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin* (a diary chronicling the war of the 1640s by a Franciscan priest) and the *Annals of the Four masters*. Just as bardic poetry must be understood on its own terms, and certain conventions not be taken as literal fact, so must a work like the *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis* be read in terms of its own satiric function. Once this is understood, a large amount of information, incidental to this function, can nevertheless be gleaned from its contents.

A far larger amount of such material is available in English, material which also had its own rhetoric function. The 1641 depositions are perhaps the best example of a source whose utility has been argued over. Often dismissed in the past as inherently biased in favour of the Protestant side, it is becoming clear (especially with the greater accessibility their digitisation has facilitated) that, just like Gaelic sources, they offer a wealth of information which is often incidental to their intended function.⁴⁷ This function, to record the losses of Protestant colonists and the crimes of their attackers for the purposes of propaganda and judicial prosecutions as well as compensation claims, means that they (and many of the other English-language sources cited throughout this work, such as the English state papers) must be read against themselves, and the inherent bias they often convey against anything associated with the ‘mere’ Irish, in order to salvage something of the native point of view. One example of this bias is the unquestioned maintenance of the civilised/uncivilised dichotomy outlined above. Once this is recognised, however, the

⁴⁷ The most influential proponent of the view that the depositions were essentially useless as a source was W.E.H. Lecky in *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century*, vol.1, (London: Longmans, Green, 1893), pp.71-3. Lecky’s view was greatly informed by the work of Ferdinando Warner, a Church of Ireland cleric working in the eighteenth-century. Aidan Clarke has recently shown, however, that Warner’s scholarship was deeply flawed. Aidan Clarke, ‘The 1641 massacres’, in Micheál Ó Siochrú and Jane Ohlmeyer (eds.), *Ireland: 1641 Contexts and Reactions*, (Manchester University Press, 2013), pp.46-8.

observations of English commentators provide a valuable source of information about Gaelic Ireland at this time, even if much of it was misinterpreted or misrepresented. The colonial discourse is readily apparent in Fynes Moryson's writings, for example, where he summed up the differences between the culture of English and native Irish as a collection of 'absurd things practised by them, only because they would be contrary to us'.⁴⁸ He is nevertheless a valuable source of information on these 'absurd' practices, if his inevitable value-judgments are left aside.

The following chapters will thus contain many citations from writers as intractably hostile to the Irish as Moryson, John Davies, Edmund Spenser and Barnaby Rich, while recognising the problematic nature of these primary sources. This need not be a source of great discouragement for a historian hoping to examine the story of these early years of colonisation from the indigenous people's perspective. As noted above, American historians have succeeded in gleaning from exclusively-European sources a history from the point of view of the entirely pre-literate Algonquian peoples on the eastern seaboard of north America. A review of the existing literature, however, reveals that such a project has not been taken up by Irish historians to any great extent. Indeed, it is surprising how little work specifically devoted to the Ulster colony exists, given the dramatic discontinuity which the plantation project represented, and the fact that conflict rooted in Ulster's seventeenth-century colonisation has persisted into modern times.⁴⁹ Indeed, in 1972, Robert Hunter welcomed the re-issue of George Hill's 1877 *Historical Account of the Plantation* 'in the absence of a recent alternative'.⁵⁰ Hill's work is one of the few from the nineteenth century that has stood the test of time and still rewards consulting, if for no other reason than for the research carried out by him in terms of names and locations of grantees, surveys carried out by the government, and the correspondence of key planners like Chichester and Davies. In fact, much of the work consists of a compilation of important primary sources rather than analysis. When Hill does attempt some

48 Fynes Moryson, 'The Itinerary', in Caesar Litton Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history and topography mainly of the seventeenth century*, (Longmans Green: London, 1904), p.263.

49 David Edwards has noted that, up to the late eighties, the subject was 'poorly served by most of the available secondary literature'. Foreword to Robert Hunter, *The Ulster plantation in the counties of Armagh and Cavan, 1608-41*, (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2012), p.xi.

50 Robert Hunter, 'Reviewed Work: An Historical Account of the Plantation in Ulster at the Commencement of the Seventeenth Century, 1608-1620', in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.18, no.70, (Dublin University Press, 1972), p.260.

interpretation, Hunter has noted that the:

‘. . . balance struck is not an unfair one—the author was sympathetic to the predicament of the native population, and while somewhat harsh towards the original planters he avoided ludicrous claims, all too common in works by their descendants, to moral and economic superiority on their behalf’.⁵¹

Many of the Unionist works which Hunter alludes to here, as well as Nationalist histories written at the same time, have not aged as well, deeply imprinted as they are with the politics of their time. In the latter category belongs a work like Thomas MacNevin’s *The confiscation of Ulster* (1846) which is imbued with the emotive language of a period when famine was raging in the country.⁵² MacNevin’s work, written under the auspices of the Young Ireland movement, while not factually inaccurate on most essential points, does not adequately account for an incongruity between intentions and practice in the plantation. He argues, for example, that the complete exclusion of the Irish from the escheated counties was aimed at from the start and (paralleling Protestant claims that the 1641 rising was a premeditated plot to massacre all the colonists) that the plantation was the result of long-term planning by the English government.⁵³ Timothy Healy’s *The Great Fraud of Ulster* (1917) also belongs to another highly-polarised period in Irish political history, and promised a story ‘simplified, in the hope that acquaintance with it may quicken and heighten the spirit of resistance to the statecraft of Partition’.⁵⁴ The tone is correspondingly polemic throughout.

51 Hunter, ‘Review of An Historical Account of the Plantation’, pp.261-2.

52 Thomas MacNevin, *The confiscation of Ulster, in the reign of James the First: commonly called the Ulster Plantation*, (Dublin: J. Duffy, 1846). MacNevin was associated with the Young Ireland movement and already suffering from a psychiatric disorder at the time of Thomas Davis’ death, which deeply effected him. He ended his days in an asylum in 1848. Charles Gavan Duffy, *Young Ireland: a fragment of Irish history, 1840-45*, (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1896), pp.212-4.

53 In this narrative, the implication of Aodh Ó Néill in a conspiracy and his subsequent flight, were all part of a conspiracy which had as its ultimate aim the confiscation and colonisation of the province. More recent histories on the other hand tend to see government policy dictated by expedience and contingency, the English taking advantage of circumstances to broaden an initially more modest plantation proposal, as the flight, and then Ó Dochartaigh’s rising, opened up the possibility of a more ambitious plan. MacNevin, *The confiscation of Ulster*, p.88.

54 Healy would become the Irish Free State’s first Governor-General. Tim Healy, *The great fraud of Ulster*, (Dublin: M. H. Gill, 1917), p.xiii.

Unionist historians of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century were naturally more specifically concerned with Ulster, and therefore more prolific in the manufacture of histories about the plantation serviceable to the needs of politics in their own time. A significant number of books were written which reflect growing anxieties within the Unionist community about the prospect of Home Rule. Indeed, the frequent re-issue of John Temple's *Irish Rebellion* (first: 1646, then: 1679, 1698, 1713, 1716, 1724, 1746, 1766 and 1812) attest to its enduring utility for those who wished to remind a Protestant readership of the need for constant vigilance against the Catholic enemy; the frontispiece of the 1812 edition justified its existence as being 'for the Perusal of all Protestants, as the most Effectual Warning-Piece to keep them upon their Guard against the Encroachments of Popery'. The events of 1641 were the subject of the two-volume *Ireland in the seventeenth century* (1884) by Mary Hickson, essentially a collection of excerpts from the more incriminating depositions, selected to establish once and for all Irish guilt in 1641 and quash claims that the events had been exaggerated, or even fabricated, to justify later harsh measures against the Irish. A certain lassitude among the English, wrote J.A.Froude in his preface to Hickson's work, was responsible for the countenancing of such claims. Froude ascribed this to a:

'. . . consciousness on the part of the English that they have much to repent of in regard to Ireland, which has made them careless of defending themselves against particular charges'.⁵⁵

This narrative of English leniency, leading to a fatal indecisiveness in their dealings with the perfidious Irish, was a theme in Froude's work. The failure to enforce a Cromwellian-style settlement in the aftermath of the Nine Years War—he argued in his study of *The English in Ireland* (1872-4)—had been a mistake, because: 'the Irish did not understand forbearance [and] interpreted lenity into fear, and respected only an authority which they dared not trifle with'.⁵⁶ The plantation was thus 'delayed in mistaken tenderness', but when put into operation some years later, Froude had no doubt that it was 'the only remedy for

55 J.A.Froude, 'Preface', in Mary Hickson, *Ireland in the seventeenth century*, vol.1, (London: Longmans, Green, 1884), p.vii.

56 J.A.Froude, *The English in Ireland in the Eighteenth Century*, vol.1, (New York: Charles Scribner's sons Year, 1888), p.65.

the chronic disorder'.⁵⁷ He represented the project of plantation as far more clement than in reality. His claim, for example, that, out of two million acres confiscated, 1.5 million were given back to the Irish, is demonstrably untrue.⁵⁸ He also asserted that those natives not belonging to the category of 'chiefs' and 'kerns [. . .] were spared, and lived in peace, scattered among the colonists'. He continued:

'If the meaning of government be the protection of the honest and laborious, and the punishment of knaves, not the smallest gainers from the Ulster settlement were the worthy among the Irish themselves, who were saved at last from the intolerable oppression under which they and their fathers from immemorial time had groaned'.⁵⁹

Froude's is one of the most explicit and categorical examples of a narrative found frequently—both in early-modern sources and (in a more qualified version) among subsequent historians—in which the plantation represented the salvation of the native underclass from their oppressive ruling elite. The remnant of this elite were judged as solely responsible for the souring of relations that led to the rising in 1641. 'Ireland would have benefited little from such owners of her soil had they remained in occupation', Froude speculated.

'Too vain of their birth to work, and enabled by the custom of the country to live on the plunder of the poor, they were finding at last the law too strong for them. The peasants whom they robbed were also Irish subjects, whose protection is made England's crime'.⁶⁰

The declaration that the Irish had become, by virtue of the plantation, 'equal in the eye of

57 Froude, *The English in Ireland*, vol.1, p.68.

58 In fact, the Irish were left in possession of between 20-25% of the escheated lands. Froude, *The English in Ireland*, vol.1, p.69.

59 Froude, *The English in Ireland*, vol.1, p.70.

60 In this, Froude was answering the accusations of historians like John Prendergast, whom he termed, 'the most accomplished exponent of the historical wrongs of Ireland'. Froude, *The English in Ireland*, vol.1, p.72-3.

the law' with the colonists had been made several pages earlier.⁶¹ These are the kind of highly-dubious assertions which, while rarely stated so baldly today, continue to inform academic opinion about the native experience of plantation society. In the following pages we will encounter several examples of the claim being made by modern historians that colonisation represented an improvement in the native lot compared to life under Gaelic rulers. As noted above, the Revisionist project has been markedly less concerned with a critical assessment of such central tenets of a Unionist history, than it has been with the tenets of a Nationalist one. This thesis will attempt to make a contribution towards rectifying this omission, in the spirit of a deeper, more thoroughgoing historical revision. Foster's admonition about expecting detachment from Irish historical writing in an age when it was scarce in *any* historical writing, does not apply in Froude's case, because his age did produce work of far greater impartiality and scholarly rigour, much of it summoned into being as a refutation of his writings. These refutations were made not only by Nationalist historians (whose revisions often introduced distortions of their own), but, of greater interest for our purposes, by W.E.H. Lecky.⁶²

In many respects, Lecky's account of the period stands up well to this day. Despite his political affiliations (he was an opponent of Home Rule and later became a Unionist MP in the 1890s), he did not flinch from reaching conclusions which cast English/British rule over Ireland in a bad light when the evidence suggested them. The sources led him to declare that the latter stages of the Nine Years War represented 'a war of extermination' and that the killing of Irish 'was looked upon as literally the slaughter of wild beasts'.⁶³ He regarded contemporaneous justifications for the confiscation of native land (race, the spreading of 'civility' and religion) with a healthy skepticism, and identified the material motive as uppermost.⁶⁴ He examined critically the notion that colonisation introduced the administration of impartial justice. 'Had such a spirit animated the Government of Ireland' he mused, 'all might yet have been well'. He then proceeded to demonstrate that such a spirit did not animate it, and concluded that court proceedings, especially those determining title to lands coveted by the New English, were an 'infamous mockery of

61 Froude, *The English in Ireland*, vol.1, p.70.

62 For the scholarly dispute between Froude and Lecky see Anne Wyatt, 'Froude, Lecky and "The Humblest Irishman"', in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.19, no.75, (Dublin University Press, 1975), pp.261-285.

63 Lecky, *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century*, vol.1, p.6.

64 Lecky, *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century*, vol.1, pp.15-6.

justice'.⁶⁵ Froude's estimate of 20,000 killed in the 1641 rising was revised downwards to a more realistic 4,000, a figure widely accepted among historians until Aidan Clarke's recent suggestion that it underestimates the number of victims.⁶⁶

Along with the work of his protégé, Richard Bagwell, Lecky's work on the plantation was probably the most accomplished written before the advent of Revisionism in the 1930s. This is not to say that his account is free of bias or untouched by the politics of his own time.⁶⁷ The poorer class of Irish responsible for the popular rising in 1641, for example, were described by him as 'men in a very low stage of civilisation'.⁶⁸ While the tone is a world away from the hostility of Froude, subjective statements such as this remind us that Lecky was a man of his time. Believing the Irish to be ultimately incapable of self-government, his work was limited by the intellectual straight-jacket which a paternalistic view of the Irish as a people in need of guidance (albeit kindly and judicious) imposed on it.⁶⁹

Richard Bagwell's monumental works on Ireland under the Tudors and Stuarts maintain Lecky's standards of relative impartiality and scholarship.⁷⁰ This is partly the case because Bagwell tends to shy away from analysis and comment in a work that is largely a reconstruction of events from primary sources, although an undeniably scrupulous and skilfully-fashioned one. Value-judgments with regards to the natives are, therefore, few and far between. In fact, in common with many subsequent historians, Bagwell chose not

65 Lecky, *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century*, vol.1, pp.26-7.

66 Froude, *The English in Ireland*, vol.1, p.112. Lecky, *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century*, vol.1, p.79. Clarke, 'The 1641 massacres', in Ó Siochrú and Ohlmeyer (eds.), *Ireland: 1641*, pp.45-8.

67 Some of the most deep-rooted misconceptions about colonial Ulster were perpetuated (and lent legitimacy) by him. The notion that the 20-25% allocated to the 'deserving' Irish constituted a 'considerable proportion', for example, continues to be recited without qualification. As will be illustrated by numerous examples below, however, the notion that the Irish themselves considered the plantation dispensation generous is deeply problematic. See pp.200-1, 245-6. He also attempted to rationalise a dichotomy between the emotional, feckless Catholic and the rational, industrious Protestant, which became an article of faith in the work of historians like Ingram and Hamilton (see below). Catholicism, Lecky wrote, was 'a lower type of religion than Protestantism [. . .] exceedingly unfavourable to independence of intellect and to independence of character [. . .] not favourable to industrial activity'. Lecky, *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century*, vol.1, p.22, 402-3.

68 Lecky, *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century*, vol.1, p.60.

69 Wyatt, 'Froude, Lecky and "The Humblest Irishman"', pp.284-5.

70 Richard Bagwell, *Ireland under the Tudors*, 3 vols., (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1885-90) and Richard Bagwell, *Ireland under the Stuarts and during the interregnum*, 3 vols., (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1909-16).

to dwell on the subject at any great length. Although Irish ‘nomads’ wandered throughout a ‘wilderness’ on the eve of colonisation in Bagwell’s account, there was correspondingly little to say of them.⁷¹ In a similar vein is Ramsay Colles’ four-volume *History of Ulster* (1919-20), dedicated to (among others) Lecky, which, while it does not have a great deal to say about the natives either, does at least refrain from presenting the story of plantation as one of unalloyed progress and opportunity. It is unusual to find in a work by a historian not obviously Nationalist in leaning, an admission such as ‘the natives were placed in a position bordering on starvation’. Colles wrote of:

‘. . . the great injustice upon which the plantation of Ulster was founded. The land was taken from the people [. . .] in the remembrance of this wrong, cherished for more than thirty years, the children of those who, by a legal quibble, had been thrust out of their own patrimony seized the first opportunity to regain their old estate’.⁷²

The claim that 1641 was occasioned by the confiscations of the plantation later came to be robustly challenged by Revisionist historians; this debate will be one of the central questions of this thesis, and will receive detailed treatment at the end of chapter six.

If Bagwell can be said to follow in the footsteps of Lecky, a number of other Unionist historians—working in the years when the prospect/threat of Home Rule loomed ever-larger on the horizon—can be seen as heirs to the tradition of Froude in their explicit hostility to the native Irish of Ulster. The work of T.D.Ingram, for example, is suffused with contempt for both the Irish and Catholicism. When writing of the period just prior to the plantation he asked rhetorically: ‘when we speak of a country as being barbarous, what do we mean?’ before giving a detailed answer to his own question and concluding: ‘all these symptoms are observable in Ireland up to the beginning of the seventeenth century. Nowhere in the world was the amending hand more required’.⁷³ Ireland, Ingram suggested,

71 Bagwell, *Ireland under the Stuarts*, vol.1, pp.64-5.

72 Ramsay Colles, *The history of Ulster from the earliest times to the present day*, 4 vols., (London, Gresham Pub. Co. 1919), vol.2, pp.180-1.

73 T.D.Ingram, *A critical examination of Irish history being a replacement of the false by the true, from the Elizabethan conquest to the legislative union of 1800*, (London: Longmans, Green, 1900), pp.46-7.

was practically unique in refusing to recognise the inherent cultural superiority of its conquerors and described the period between the Elizabethan conquest and 1641 as the ‘turning point of their national life’ when they ‘chose the downward path towards discord and confusion.’⁷⁴ It is in the light of attacks such as Ingram’s that the zeal of Nationalist writers to assert the sophistication and legitimacy of Gaelic culture must be understood. Even Lecky felt compelled to rehabilitate medieval Ireland as, ‘in one of the darkest periods of the dark ages, a refuge of learning and of piety’.⁷⁵ No doubt such vindications of Gaelic Ireland could err on the side of romanticism at times. Just as Revisionism would be a reaction to the elevation of a Nationalist view of Irish history to canonical status, so must a great deal of the notions it sought to revise be seen as a reaction to the view—widespread in English-language histories—of the Gaelic Irish as primitive people, not merely differing in culture from the newcomers, but lacking a culture altogether.

Of the other major works produced specifically about the plantation in this period, two were produced by self-declared unionist historians, Ernest Hamilton and Cyril Falls. Hamilton, Conservative MP for South Tyrone, asked some searching questions of ‘the general ethics of colonisation’ in the opening pages of his *Soul of Ulster* (1917): is it to be regarded as an ‘act of piracy’ or ‘a necessary part of the gradual reclamation of the world?’ Hamilton admits that the ‘disappearance of the native element’ in many instances across the world, would indicate that, ‘the land and not the souls of the natives was the first aim of the colonists’, and that the reality of empire-building was ‘not a pretty picture’. An exception, however, is made for Ulster:

‘. . . it can safely be said that no colonisation scheme has ever been more abundantly justified, both by antecedent conditions and by results, than has that of Ulster by James I of England. The antecedent conditions were, in fact, very bad, and even apologetic ingenuity could hardly argue that the fault lay at the door of the English’.⁷⁶

74 Ingram, *A critical examination*, p.50.

75 Lecky, *A history of Ireland in the eighteenth century*, vol.1, p.2.

76 Ernest Hamilton, *The soul of Ulster*, (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1917), pp.3-6. Hamilton wrote two other monographs on the subject: *Elizabethan Ulster* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1919) and *The Irish rebellion of 1641* (London: J. Murray, 1920).

Having been largely untouched by English rule in the preceding centuries, Hamilton argues that Ulster's desolate condition on the eve of colonisation was entirely the responsibility of its 'savage population' of Irish. This, as will be seen in chapter three, ignores to an astonishing extent the devastation wrought upon the province from the 1570s, to which a great deal of its sparsity of population and lack of economic infrastructure can be ascribed in the early 1600s. Hamilton's picture of Gaelic Ireland, however, is essentially the same as that of Fynes Moryson and Barnaby Rich; as history, it fails to rise above the bias of such hostile early-modern observers.⁷⁷ Bearing in mind that Hamilton was writing almost three decades after Lecky clearly complicates a picture of unbroken progress towards a more scientific, 'value-free' history. The latter's claims to define the intrinsic characters of the two communities in Ulster are, in Hamilton, elevated to a pseudo-science; the 'Roman Catholic natives, an emotional and a credulous people' are depicted in implacable hostility to the 'British colonists', a 'strong race, brave and true, and with a clean conscience', who 'will cling with the last gasp of their bodies' to 'the position which they have built up for themselves in the country'.⁷⁸

The trope of Ulster itself as a *creation* of the seventeenth-century colonists and their descendants is implicit in the title of Cyril Falls' *The Birth of Ulster* (1936). Falls, a military historian specialising in the First World War (in which he fought), came from a staunch Unionist background, and his interest in the subject was piqued by an admiration for his colonial ancestors. 'I was brought up to admire the Ulster colonists', he declared, admitting that 'that fact may also have sometimes warped my judgement'.⁷⁹ Falls' *Elizabeth's Irish wars* (1950) and *Mountjoy: Elizabethan general* (1955) are markedly more neutral in tone and do not look out of place alongside the kind of work being produced in consequence of the gauntlet thrown down by the launch of the Revisionist project at the end of the 1930s.

Revisionist work on the plantation can be said to have been inaugurated with two seminal works by T.W.Moody: his monograph on the *Londonderry Plantation* (1939) and, perhaps even more significantly, an article entitled 'The Treatment of the Native Population under

⁷⁷ Hamilton, *The soul of Ulster*, pp.9-10.

⁷⁸ Hamilton, *The soul of Ulster*, pp.180-3.

⁷⁹ Falls' father had been the Unionist party MP for Fermanagh and Tyrone from 1924-9. Cyril Falls, *The Birth of Ulster*, (London: Methuen, 1936), p.xii.

the Scheme for the Plantation’, which appeared in the first issue of *Irish Historical Studies* the year before. The latter represented a major contribution to our understanding of relations between native and colonist, establishing a picture of colonial Ulster in which ‘the natives for the most part remained on their former lands, but degraded from the status of proprietors to that of tenants-at-will’. This insight by Moody will inform one of the central characterisations of that society in this thesis. His very next sentence, however, also indicates the point at which this work will dissent from Moody’s interpretation of events:

‘The process by which they were driven out of the more fertile land and their places taken by British colonists was a gradual one, and was the product of economic forces rather than of any deliberate act on the part of the state’.⁸⁰

It is difficult to see how the aforementioned economic forces were not a *result* of deliberate acts carried out by the state, and this attempt to sever the link between the initial scheme of plantation and later economic processes will be examined critically below. It is clear that the movement of Irish onto inferior lands was indeed a result of what Aidan Clarke has described as a ‘slow sorting-out process’, as opposed to the efficient identification of superior land and its monopolisation by colonists at the outset.⁸¹ Clarke’s description of these processes in the aforementioned article is one of the most lucid explanations of the way the ostensible aims of the plantation project (such as the expulsion of Irish from whole swathes of the province, and the anglicisation of those that remained) were subverted by the activities of colonists on the ground, and how these activities laid the groundwork for a colonial society which—while segregated—was not segregated in the sense intended by the plantation, with discrete blocks of native and English/Scottish settlement:

‘. . . a privileged and propertied minority, separated from the rest of the population by social class and economic circumstances, as well as by religion, so that their ascendancy, though it had a religious character, was most significantly

80 T.W. Moody, ‘The Treatment of the Native Population under the Scheme for the Plantation in Ulster’, in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.1, no.1, (Dublin University Press, 1938), p.63.

81 Aidan Clarke, ‘The Plantations of Ulster’, in Liam De Paor (ed.), *Milestones in Irish history*, (Cork: Mercier Press, in collaboration with Radio Telefís Éireann, 1986), p.67.

expressed in their ownership of the means of production'.⁸²

Indeed, Clarke's writings on the Ulster colony consist of a series of articles and chapters in edited collections that form a body of work as informative and insightful as any available monograph.⁸³

The oeuvre of Robert Hunter is similarly diffused throughout a large number of articles and chapters rather than any major monograph. This was, at least, the case until the posthumous publication in 2012 of his ground-breaking thesis of 1969 on the plantation in Armagh and Cavan,⁸⁴ completed under the supervision of Moody and mysteriously denied doctoral status.⁸⁵ Hunter's work represents the strengths of Revisionist history in the depth of his research and accumulation of detail on the mechanics of colonisation. It is a mine of information gleaned from often-unpromising sources. Little space is devoted to the kind of rhetorical flourishes earlier generations of historians were prone to. If there is a fault to be found, it is that his reluctance to make generalisations based on this mass of data can lead to a blurring of the bigger picture. In part, this is because Hunter's work consists essentially of a sequence of local studies. While the idea of viewing the colonisation of Ulster as a number of local plantations, differing in character, is certainly an angle which rewards investigation, caution must be taken with such an atomising approach, no less than when making generalisations. We must be wary of stressing the peculiar and exceptional to the point where the plantation, as a top-down, state-sponsored project involving the replacement of natives with colonists, is lost sight of. While the above-

82 Clarke, 'The Plantations', in De Paor (ed.), *Milestones*, p.70.

83 Aidan Clarke, 'Pacification, plantation and the Catholic question, 1603-23', 'Selling royal favours, 1624-32', 'The government of Wentworth, 1632-40', 'The breakdown of authority, 1640-41', in F.J.Byrne, F.X.Martin, T.W.Moody (eds.), *A New History of Ireland vol. 3: Early modern Ireland, 1534-1691*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp.187-288. Aidan Clarke, 'Ireland and the General Crisis', in *Past & Present*, No. 48, (Oxford: Past and Present Society, 1970), pp.79-99. Aidan Clarke, 'Colonial identity in early seventeenth-century Ireland', in Donnchadh Ó Corráin and T.W.Moody (eds.), *Nationality and the pursuit of national independence: Historical Studies: papers read before the Irish Conference of Historians*, vol.11, (Belfast: Appletree Press, 1978), pp.55-71. Aidan Clarke, 'The genesis of the Ulster rising of 1641', in Peter Roebuck (ed.), *Plantation to partition: essays in Ulster history in honour of J.L. McCracken*, (Belfast: Blackstaff Press, 1981), pp.29-45. Aidan Clarke, 'The 1641 rebellion and anti-popery in Ireland', in Brian Mac Cuarta (ed.), *Ulster 1641: Aspects of the Rising*, (Queen's University, Institute of Irish Studies, 1993), pp.139-186.

84 Armagh: Ard Mhacha, 'Macha's height', Macha being a goddess of Irish mythology; Cavan: An Cabhán, 'the hollow'.

85 Robert Hunter, *The Ulster plantation in the counties of Armagh and Cavan, 1608-41*, (M.Litt Thesis, Trinity College Dublin, 1969 and Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2012).

mentioned informal economic processes should rightly be acknowledged, the emphasis on local variation can easily lead to the impression of organic and discrete local settlements, which would be profoundly misleading.

This impression is implicit in the dichotomy offered by Harold O'Sullivan, who argued that two 'contrasting and divergent historiographies' existed in Ireland. On the one hand:

'... the great master-narrative of Irish history, which, regardless of local variations and accommodations, has given overwhelming prominence to the principal themes of conflict, conquest and confiscation, [and on the other] the work of the local historian, engaged in the more modest pursuits of antiquarian and genealogical research [...] often suppressing its own genuine discoveries under the weight of the dominant tradition'.⁸⁶

While O'Sullivan's call for the latter approach to be emphasised, and its discoveries to be allowed to modify the 'dominant tradition' makes perfect sense on one level, there are a number of problems with this approach. Firstly, the extent to which the 'grand master-narrative' outlined above actually constitutes the mainstream historiography will be discussed below (see pp.341-2). Secondly, just as sloppy generalisations and a too-broad treatment can be applied to any historical time period or locality to misleading effect, so too can discrete events and regions be emphasised to the point where they appear misleadingly singular and disconnected from wider developments. While appearing to take greater account of complexity, therefore, this particularist approach can have the effect of preventing the historian reaching any conclusions from the evidence. What can be observed, however, is that all these localities had many features in common which can be referred to as 'colonisation' and treated as a unit; this does not preclude regional variation. Seamus Deane has noted this preference for the local and particular as symptomatic of a:

86 Harold O'Sullivan, 'Dynamics of regional development: processes of assimilation and division in the marchland of south-east Ulster in late medieval and early modern Ireland', in Ciaran Brady and Jane Ohlmeyer (eds.), *British interventions in early modern Ireland*, (Cambridge University Press, 2005), p.49.

‘. . . hostility to the idea that there might be a system, whether it is called capitalism, imperialism or colonialism, [which] is itself a symptom of Revisionism’s desire to deny the validity or the possibility of any totalising concept, and to replace this with a series of monographic, empiricist studies that disintegrate the established history of “Ireland” into a set of specific and discrete problems or issues that have at best only a weak continuity to link them’.⁸⁷

Decades of Revisionism have primarily had the effect of complicating the picture we have of colonial Ulster. This is not, in itself, either a positive or negative development. *Natives and Newcomers*, an important 1986 collection subtitled *Essays on the making of Irish colonial society, 1534-1641*, has noted this desire to replace the ‘simple and dismal account of inevitable military confrontation followed by subjugation and expropriation [. . .] by a greater awareness of the subtlety and complexity of events between 1534 and 1641’. It cites as an example of this more nuanced understanding, an appreciation of the ‘various and complex relationships between natives and newcomers’.⁸⁸ A more complex picture, however, is not necessarily a more accurate one. The variety of relationships between native and colonist offers a salutary example of this. It is certainly proper to acknowledge that several interest groups existed, which the blanket designation of ‘native Irish’ does not do justice to. Natives were not invariably antagonistic to the colony; some fared better than others in the new dispensation; others served in its administration, as sheriffs and bailiffs for example. While this work will take account of such multiple strategies and interests at work, it must also be recognised that a responsibility rests with the historian to determine whether this variety of experiences was significant enough to render all characterisations of that society as simplifications. To emphasise variety and complexity is in itself no more value-free an act than to emphasise one single aspect of a society.

Although less closely-associated with Revisionism than Moody and Dudley-Edwards, the contribution of D.B.Quinn to a study of the period must be recognised in a work such as this, which takes as its framework the context of Atlantic colonisation which he advocated

87 Seamus Deane, ‘Wherever Green is Read’, in Ciaran Brady (ed.), *Interpreting Irish History: The Debate on Historical Revisionism 1938-1994*, (Irish Academic Press 1994), p.238.

88 Brady and Gillespie, ‘Introduction’, in Brady and Gillespie (eds.), *Natives and newcomers*, p.11.

in numerous works, notably 'Ireland and sixteenth-century European expansion' (1958) and *Ireland and America: their early associations, 1500-1640* (1991). A debt must also be acknowledged to Quinn's *The Elizabethans and the Irish* (1966) which, as an attempt to rectify the kind of anglocentric bias described above, was a work ahead of its time. This work exemplifies an application to Irish history of the kind of anthropological approach taken by American historians' in constructing a native-centred history, and it might be wished that its lead had been followed by Irish historians more frequently than it has. Quinn's imaginative use of sources such as artwork and literature, and the emphasis he placed on the lived experience of historical actors likewise make his work a unique and valuable contribution.

The influence of Quinn upon the work of Nicholas Canny has been evident, with Canny describing his own *Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland* (1976) as 'an outgrowth' of Quinn's scholarship, and developing Quinn's thesis of early modern Ireland as an outpost of English Atlantic expansion in numerous works, most notably: 'The ideology of English colonization: from Ireland to America' (1973), *Kingdom and Colony: Ireland in the Atlantic World 1560-1800* (1987), and a festschrift for Quinn (edited with K.R.Andrews and P.E.H.Hair) entitled *The Westward Enterprise: English Activities in Ireland, the Atlantic and America, 1480-1650* (1978).⁸⁹ Both the aims of, and methods employed in, colonisation in Ireland at this time are assessed in Canny's *Making Ireland British* (2001), which foregrounds personal enrichment as the primary motive behind the plantations, as opposed to the kind of ideological impulses stressed by its promoters. This work is also important for its model of a 'popular peasant uprising which followed upon, or ran parallel to, an attempted *coup d'état* by a group of disgruntled Catholic landowners.'⁹⁰ This model, and the divergent class interests within Gaelic Ireland which it implies, will inform the analysis of that society which follows.

Canny has also made an important contribution to the debate about religious reformation as a part of the colonising impulse in Ireland. Much of the discussion on this subject in chapter four will be influenced by the fertile exchange of views which took place between

89 Nicholas Canny, *The Elizabethan conquest of Ireland, A Pattern Established*, (Hassocks: Harvester Press, 1976), p.ix.

90 Nicholas Canny, *Making Ireland British, 1580-1650*, (Oxford University Press, 2001), p.502.

Canny, Brendan Bradshaw and Karl Bottigheimer.⁹¹ Alan Ford's *The Protestant reformation in Ireland, 1590-1641* (1987) and Brian Mac Cuarta's *Catholic revival in the north of Ireland, 1603-41* (2007) have also been key to understanding this aspect of plantation society. Chapter five's discussion of the economic changes which accompanied colonisation will be informed by another debate in which Canny engaged, with Raymond Gillespie, over the economic and demographic changes to Ulster in these decades.⁹² Particular attention will be paid to the question of how extensive was the economic transformation of the province in the three decades between the plantation and 1641 rising. Gillespie posits a more significant level of change than Canny, who has argued that 'the leaders of the settler community failed to transform the economy of the country'.⁹³ Raymond Gillespie's voluminous contribution to seventeenth-century Irish history, especially economic history, is attested by the numerous works listed in the bibliography below. Gillespie's work has been particularly useful in fleshing out the informal economic workings of the colony which he, in common with Clarke, has stressed as a far more decisive engine of change than the state's colonising projects.⁹⁴

A clear disassociation of these two phenomena has already been flagged as problematic above. Gillespie's claim, for example, that 'within Gaelic Ireland the traditional dress of mantle and glib were a thing of the past by choice rather than by coercion' might be subject to the same objection leveled at the Moody distinction between economic forces and deliberate acts of the state.⁹⁵ To claim the movement of natives onto poorer-quality land, or their abandonment of Gaelic cultural norms such as dress and language, was consensual, merely because it was the result of impersonal economic forces, is problematic. Just like

91 Brendan Bradshaw, 'Sword, Word and Strategy in the Reformation in Ireland', in *The Historical Journal*, vol.21, no.3, (Cambridge University Press, 1978), pp.475-502. Nicholas Canny, 'Why the Reformation failed in Ireland: Une question mal posée', in *Journal of ecclesiastical history*, vol.30, no.4, (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1979) pp.423-50. Karl Bottigheimer, 'The failure of the Reformation in Ireland: une question bien posée', in *Journal of ecclesiastical history*, vol.36, no.2, (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1985), pp.196-207.

92 Nicholas Canny, 'Migration and Opportunity: Britain, Ireland and the New World', in *Irish Economic and Social History*, vol.12, (Belfast: Economic & Social History Society of Ireland, 1985), pp.7-32. Raymond Gillespie, 'Migration and Opportunity: a comment', in *Irish Economic and Social History*, vol.13, pp.90-5, and Canny, 'A reply', pp.96-100.

93 Nicholas Canny, *Kingdom and colony: Ireland in the Atlantic world, 1560-1800*, (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), p.50.

94 This is the argued by Gillespie in: 'The Problems of Plantations: material culture and social change in early modern Ireland', in James Lyttleton and Colin Rynne (eds.), *Plantation Ireland: settlement and material culture, c.1550-c.1700*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2009), pp.43-60.

95 Gillespie, 'The Problems of Plantations', p.56.

the Irish language, the mantle and glib were subject to prohibitory legislation under English law; the fact that such legislation was rarely enforced is less important than the fact that Gaelic speech and clothing came, as a result of colonisation, to be a badge of otherness and hence an obstacle to economic and cultural engagement with the colonists; this in turn was practically the only route to economic self-improvement open to natives.⁹⁶ Contemporaries like John Davies had no problem in acknowledging the very effective coerciveness of expedience in his description of the effect which the introduction of English common law would have on the newly-conquered areas. He described how the Irish, ‘because they find a great inconvenience in moving their suits by an interpreter, they do for the most part send their children to schools, especially to learn the English language’.⁹⁷ This kind of coercion would, Davies realised, be a far more effective means of bringing about conformity than penal legislation ever could. To describe this as ‘choice’ is, therefore, true only in the most perfunctory sense of the word.

This differing definition of coercion will underlie one of the main points of disagreement with Gillespie’s analysis in this thesis. It is in some ways ironic to find this emphasis on negative liberty—a cornerstone of liberal thought—in Gillespie’s work, for few historians working in the field would appear to ascribe more fully to the (traditionally Marxian) idea that changes in the economic base were the source of historical change in this period. This work will loosely adopt such a materialist model of process, as well as the model of culture (superstructure) as largely a product and consequence of changes in the economy (material base). This conceptual model was outlined by Marx in his *Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*:

‘In the social production of their existence, men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will, namely relations of production appropriate to a given stage in the development of their material forces of production. The totality of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite

⁹⁶ For further discussion of the way colonisation effected Gaelic dress, see pp.158-175.

⁹⁷ John Davies, ‘A discovery of the true causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued’, reproduced in *Historical tracts*, p.215.

forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the general process of social, political and intellectual life. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness'.⁹⁸

It should, however, be noted that Marx himself was not dogmatic on this point, later commenting that such a causal relationship between base and superstructure was merely true of his own times, 'in which material interests preponderate, but not for the middle ages, in which Catholicism, nor for Athens and Rome, where politics, reigned supreme'.⁹⁹ While a useful model, the extent to which it applies to early seventeenth-century Ireland is, therefore, open to question, especially to a society such as Gaelic Ulster, where traditional modes of thought and living appear to have significantly offset the workings of a rational choice theory model in which autonomous individuals maximise their benefits and minimise their costs.

Gillespie has at times taken a view of the natives' interaction with the Ulster colony which, in its eagerness to see the Irish respond rationally to economic incentives, takes insufficient account of conservatism and adherence to a former way of life. He has recently suggested, for example, that 'those who argued that promoting economic growth would give the native Irish a stake in the new order and reduce the possibility of rebellion may have been closer to the truth than they realised'.¹⁰⁰ The fact that a violent uprising *did* occur against the colonists, however, would appear to bear out the opposite conclusion. Gillespie, however, has repeatedly argued that the plantation dispensation was not a primary cause of the 1641 rising. This question will also be examined in the final chapters below. The possibility, in any case, that the native Irish weighed factors other than purely economic self-interest in determining their relationship with the colony should alert us to

98 Karl Marx; S.W. Ryazanskaya (trans.), *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, first published 1859, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm>, accessed 13 April 2015.

99 Karl Marx; Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling (trans.), Frederick Engels (ed.), *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*, vol.1, first published 1867, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/ch01.htm#34>, accessed 13 April 2015.

100 Raymond Gillespie, 'Success and failure in the Ulster Plantation', in Ó Ciardha and Ó Siochrú (eds.), *The plantation of Ulster*, p.115.

the danger of adopting a materialist interpretive framework to reductive lengths. This danger will be borne in mind throughout this work, while asserting that such a framework remains the most fundamentally sound one in which to explain change.

Of the other works published in recent decades on the subject, mention must also be made of Philip Robinson's *Plantation of Ulster: British settlement in an Irish landscape, 1600-1670* (1984), which stresses geography and environmental factors over economics and government intentions. In Robinson's own words, the book is 'not a history of the Ulster plantation, but a geographer's view of change and continuity in the Ulster landscape as it was affected by [. . .] broad movements of population'.¹⁰¹ Robinson's attempt to discuss aspects of the plantation less liable to be tainted by politics or ideology is perhaps an understandable decision, given the tremendous tensions in Northern Ireland at the time he was writing. The resulting work contains many valuable insights into colonial Ulster society, based on creative analysis of data such as townland-density and surname-frequency. A shying-away from potentially-controversial topics is palpable throughout. As Robinson's description of the colonisation of large areas of the province at the expense of its native inhabitants as 'broad movements of population' would suggest, the picture which emerges is one resembling a migration, without any of the coercion and violence which accompanies the conquest of a country in preparation for its settlement by colonists. An emphasis upon the co-operation of native and newcomer is also a distinguishing feature of Audrey Horning's work on plantation society. Her 2013 monograph, *Ireland in the Virginian sea: colonialism in the British Atlantic*, will be critiqued in chapter seven, in the discussion there of the extent of this co-operation. This aspect has also been stressed by Jonathan Bardon, whose 2011 *The Plantation of Ulster* serves as a useful survey of the subject, but which, along with Horning's work, appears to subordinate an accurate impression of native-colonist relations to the requirements of a history serviceable to inter-sectarian harmony in Northern Ireland today.¹⁰²

A major contribution to the debate over relations between native and colonist was made by

101 Philip Robinson, *The plantation of Ulster: British settlement in an Irish landscape, 1600-1670*, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1984), p.xvii.

102 Jonathan Bardon, *The Plantation of Ulster: the British colonisation of the north of Ireland in the seventeenth century*, (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2011) and Audrey Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea: colonialism in the British Atlantic*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013).

William Smyth in *Map-making, landscapes and memory*, which offered a much-needed corrective to the picture, increasingly-common in recent histories, of a native population reconciled to colonial society. Smyth wrote instead of, ‘two peoples, generally out of touch and out of sympathy with one another’. The surprise with which the 1641 rising was met by the colonists is seen by Smyth as reflective of the fact that the colonial elite had ‘little understanding of or insight into the feelings and experiences of the subjugated majority’, as opposed to any real social reconciliation that had taken place.¹⁰³ Likewise, the stress laid in Smyth’s work on the processes by which the imposition of English economic, agricultural and linguistic norms worked the ruin of Gaelic civilisation has been deeply influential on this work. Smyth is likewise one of the few Irish historians to adopt a studied cultural relativism, and eschew the kind of value-laden terminology associated with the ‘cant of conquest’ as discussed above. His approach has informed the approach to terminology in this work to a great extent.

It has already been noted how language and the terminology can commit the fallacy of begging the question, in assuming in their premises an assertion that has yet to be established. In an effort to capture something of the native Irish perspective on the events of these decades, this thesis will advocate terminology which involves a certain degree of defamiliarisation from seemingly-familiar concepts and social structures. This is done in the belief that the recovery of a subaltern perspective involves, by necessity, a rigorous questioning of frequently-used terms that perpetuate an anglocentric view of the colony without drawing attention to the fact that they are doing so. The notion of the Irish as ‘rebels’ is just one example. Perhaps the most arresting way in which this thesis will deploy this strategy will be in the use of Gaelic designations for social forms, which the English language has merely approximated. This is necessary in order to understand Gaelic society on its own terms, instead of—as the commentators on whom we largely rely for sources did—understanding it in terms which a seventeenth-century English observer was familiar with.

For the plantation, perhaps the most egregious example of this was the confusion caused by the planners’ attempts to make the Irish land unit, the *baile bó* (anglicised ‘balliboe’ and

103 William J. Smyth, *Map-making, landscapes and memory : a geography of colonial and early modern Ireland, c. 1530-1750*, (Cork University Press in association with Field Day, 2006), p.16.

meaning ‘cow land’), serve as the uniform sixty-acre townland of their understanding.¹⁰⁴ Sixteen of these townlands were supposed, in turn, to constitute a *baile biataigh* (anglicised ‘ballybetagh’ and translatable as ‘town of the food-provider’). The *baile bó* was not, however, a measurement of size but a unit of roughly equal agricultural potential: the amount, for example, of land necessary to support a specific number of people or cattle. There has also been a suggestion that the term derives from the rent of one cow that was levied on each of these units.¹⁰⁵ The *baile biataigh* in turn, was not uniformly subdivided into sixteen *bailte bó*, but could consist of more or less than this. In imposing their own notions of standardised measurement on the Gaelic way of conceptualising land, outsiders misled themselves into believing that these units contained a uniform 60 and 960 acres respectively when they were in fact far from constant. This was more than a semantic error, as it led to huge discrepancies between the amount of land allocated to plantation grantees on paper and in reality.

The attempt to interpret foreign cultures by applying the terms of one’s own led to misunderstandings in America as well, where, for example, English preconceptions of hunting as a leisurely pastime led one observer in New England to believe that the native men enslaved their women: ‘the Men for the most part live idly’, wrote Francis Higginson ‘[and] doe nothing but hunt and fish: their wives set their Corne and doe all their other worke’.¹⁰⁶ This was to ignore the fact that hunting was, to Algonquian peoples, a means of survival rather than sport, and provided a vital component of their diet in conjunction with the maize, beans, squash and pumpkins, mostly tended to by the women. Such corresponding errors on either side of the Atlantic would suggest, therefore, that Andrew Murphy is incorrect in claiming that those English arrivals who tended to ‘rehearse the alien in terms of the familiar’ in America did not do so in Ireland.¹⁰⁷ On the contrary, the struggle to explain Gaelic society in terms of what was familiar from England characterised much of the early misunderstandings. Usually, what was familiar was in fact familiar *from an earlier period*, reflecting the assumption that native society in both Ireland and

104 Robinson, *The plantation of Ulster*, p.14.

105 Thomas McErlean, ‘The Irish Townland System of Landscape Organisation’, in Terence Reeves-Smyth and Fred Hamond (eds.), *Landscape Archaeology in Ireland*, (Oxford: B.A.R., 1983), p.328.

106 Francis Higginson, *New England’s plantation, or, A short and true description of the commodities and discommodities of that countrey*, (London, 1630), sig. C4r.

107 Andrew Murphy, *But the Irish sea betwixt us: Ireland, colonialism, and Renaissance literature*, (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), pp.20-1.

America approximated an earlier stage in England's history. English writers imagined their country's expansion throughout the Atlantic as akin to the expansion of ancient Rome, civilising 'backward' peoples in much the same way as the ancient Britons had been civilised by the Romans. As Thomas Hariot reminded his readers, 'the Inhabitants of the great Brietannie have bin in times past as sauvaige as those of Virginia'.¹⁰⁸ Nor was this unconscious assumption confined to the early modern period; historians up to the twentieth century have continued to write as if history follows a regular procession of stages through which all cultures pass, some being more advanced on this trajectory than others, leading Eoin MacNeill to warn against such a simplification.¹⁰⁹

Numerous other Gaelic terms will, therefore, be used in this work in order to avoid the pitfalls of presenting the society confronted with plantation as merely a mirror of medieval England. The Gaelic rulers will, for example, be referred to by the term *tiarna* (plural *tiarnaí*), a word usually translated as 'lord'. It is necessary to distinguish their role from that of a lord in feudal societies, because their rule (*tiarnas*) was characterised by some peculiarly Gaelic features, which will be discussed in the course of this work.¹¹⁰ The traditionally-defined kin-groups which *tiarnaí* ruled over will be here designated by the Irish word *sliocht* (plural *sleachta*) in order to preserve as much as possible of the

108 Thomas Hariot, *A briefe and true report of the new found land of Virginia*, (Frankfurt, 1590), sig. E1r.

Another example is Robert Johnson's following justification for the harsh treatment of the natives in Virginia: '...how much good we shall performe to those that be good, and how little iniury to any, wil easily appeare, by comparing our present happinesse with our former ancient miseries, wherein wee had continued brutish, poore and naked Britanes to this day, if Julius Caesar with his Romane Legions (or some other) had not laid the ground to make us tame and civill'. Robert Johnson, *Nova Britannia offering most excellent frutes by planting in Virginia: exciting all such as be well affected to further the same*, (London, 1609), sig. c2r.

109 'We cannot rightly simplify the history of any race or any region into a regular procession from lower to higher stages'. Eoin MacNeill, 'Ireland and Wales in the history of jurisprudence', in *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, vol.16, no.62, (Dublin: Educational Company of Ireland, 1927), pp.253-4.

110 There is much variation in historical works on the preferred term for these Gaelic sovereigns. Those who seek to use a Gaelic term sometimes prefer *taoiseach* (chieftain), although this suggests a bond of subordination to another ruler which is not necessarily implied here. *Rí* (king) is also sometimes used, although this would seem anachronistic in an early modern context as Gaelic rulers had long ceased to use the word to refer to themselves. *Tiarna* will be the preferred term because it appears to have been still in use in the period under discussion. The *Annals of the Four Masters* use it liberally, while the followers of Conn Mac Néill Ó Néill in Clondeboye referred to him as 'Great Teirne' as late as 1603. William Montgomery and Rev. George Hill (eds.), *The Montgomery manuscripts: (1603-1706)*, (Belfast: Archer and sons, 1869), p.21. The reason why no single generic term is completely satisfactory is that Gaelic rulers' surnames in themselves served as their title, 'the Ó Néill', 'the Ó Dónaill', etc. being the equivalent of titles like marquis, earl, viscount or baron. Katharine Simms, *From kings to warlords: the changing political structure of Gaelic Ireland in the later Middle Ages*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 1987), pp.11, 33.

particularity of the Gaelic way of conceptualising their society.¹¹¹ This involved the perceived branching-out of generations from ancient forebears such as Niall Naoighiallach (Niall of the Nine Hostages), a model which also encompassed those branches, with their roots further back in time, known as the *cineálacha* (singular *cineál*). This model will be further discussed in chapter five (pp.182-5). The *sliocht* can be read as synonymous with the term ‘sept’, with which it will here be used interchangeably.¹¹² The territory ruled over by individual *tiarnaí*, usually referred to in English-language works as a lordship (a term which, once again, carries feudal connotations), will be designated here by the word *oireacht* (plural *oireachtaí*), one which Katharine Simms has noted is found ‘in place-names formed during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries’.¹¹³ This will be used in preference to other Irish terms such as *tuatha* which, according to Kenneth Nicholls, became obsolete soon after the Norman invasion.¹¹⁴

It will be noted in all of the above cases that the modern Irish spelling of these terms has been used in preference to the Classical Irish forms. This has been decided-upon both for ease of reference and consistency. It will also be noted that, in the spirit of examining the native experience in its own terms as much as possible, the Irish-language form of names

111 For an elaboration of these Gaelic cultural institutions see below pp.181-95.

112 Note, however, that the term ‘clan’ has been rejected by historians like Eoin MacNeill and Gerard Hayes-McCoy as implying the existence of a ‘clan system’ in Ireland, in which the land was divided up into territories inhabited exclusively by members of a specific extended family, which ‘clans’ were in permanent conflict with other ‘clans’ around them. As rightly pointed out by these authors, such a state of affairs never existed in Gaelic Ireland, where some of the most bitter and irreconcilable antagonisms were between different sub-branches of the same *sliocht* and individual areas were always inhabited by a mixture of different *sleachta*, some of which occupied a position of hereditary subordination to another. Eoin MacNeill, *Celtic Ireland*, (Dublin: Academy Press in association with the Medieval Academy of Ireland, 1981), p.8. G.A. Hayes-McCoy, ‘Gaelic society in Ireland in the late sixteenth century’, in G.A. Hayes-McCoy (ed.), *Historical Studies: papers read before the Irish Conference of Historians*, vol.4, (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1963), p.49. Kenneth Nicholls, on the other hand, has described this as a ‘curious dislike’ and pointed out that the word is perfectly serviceable as simply meaning ‘a unilineal (in the Irish case, patrilineal) descent group forming a definite corporate entity with political and legal functions) and does not necessarily imply the existence of the kind of clan-system outlined above. Nicholls furthermore recommendeds the word as itself being Irish (*clann*, children or offspring), although, as Katharine Simms has pointed out, differences between the anthropological use of the word ‘clan’ and the Irish *clann* mean that any author wishing to use both will constantly have to make distinction between clan with one ‘n’ and with two, only perpetuating confusion. On balance it has been felt best to avert confusion by avoiding the term altogether. Kenneth Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland in the Middle Ages*, (Dublin: Lilliput Press, 1972), pp.8-9. Katharine Simms, ‘Review of *Cattle Lords and Clansmen: The Social Structure of Early Ireland* by Nerys Patterson’, in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.31, no.121, (Irish Historical Studies Ltd., 1998), p.126.

113 Simms, *From kings to warlords*, p.69.

114 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, p.25.

has been used to refer to Irish figures throughout. Given that few individuals outside the learned orders could actually write their own names, this is no more or less anachronistic than using any other form, either English or Classical Irish. Modern-Irish forms have the advantage of allowing for consistency in the use of names, given that an authoritative source exists recording their modern standardised spelling, namely: Muiris Ó Droighneáin, *An sloinnteoir Gaeilge agus an t-ainmneoir* (1982). Every effort has been made to provide grammatically-correct forms of these names (e.g. Ó Dónaill indicating an individual and Uí Dhónaill the collective form of the *sliocht*); it should, however, be noted that the term Uí Néill, while most often used to refer to the collective descendants of Niall Naoghiallach (encompassing most of the leading *sleachta* in Ulster) will here be used in the more limited sense of those who bore the name Ó Néill and were descendants of Niall Glúndubh (d.919), members of a *sliocht* who dominated the north from the thirteenth century onwards.

As the table in appendix 3 (p.360) will show, Gaelic names were often anglicised in a bewildering array of forms, as English-speakers struggled to produce in writing some kind of phonetic approximation to the unfamiliar sounds of a foreign language. Such names were often offensive to the sensibilities of English-speakers who, like Fynes Moryson, regarded them as ‘rather seeming the names of Devowring Giants then Christian Subiects’.¹¹⁵ Edmund Spenser advocated the prohibition of Gaelic names and their replacement by surnames built upon an English pattern, either derived from a person’s:

‘ . . . trade and facultye or of some quality of his bodie or minde, or of the place wheare he dwelte, so as everie one should be distinguished from thother, or from the most parte, wherby they shall not onelye not depende uppon the heade of their septe as now they doe but allso shall in shorte time learne quite to forgett his Irishe nacion. And hearewithall would I allsoe wishe all the Oes and the mackes which the heades of the septes have taken to their names to be utterlye forbidden and extinguished’.¹¹⁶

115 Fynes Moryson; Charles Hughes (ed.), *Shakespeare’s Europe: unpublished chapters of Fynes Moryson’s Itinerary, being a survey of the condition of Europe at the end of the 16th century*, (London: Sherratt & Hughes, 1903), p.195.

116 Edmund Spenser; Rudolf Gottfried (ed.) ‘A View of the Present State of Ireland’ in *Works: vol.10, Spenser’s prose works*, (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins Press, 1949), p.215.

While the state never took recourse to such measures, the alteration of Gaelic personal- and placenames which took place in the course of their transcription was often so dramatic that it involved a transformation so complete as to amount to re-naming. As English-speakers sought to establish written forms which they might feel more at home with, Lughaidh might become ‘Lewis’ or Eochaidh become ‘Coggy’. In some cases, the Irish themselves participated in this process as they sought to acquire some of the cultural capital associated with the names of prominent families from the settler population. The Uí Ghnínmh of Antrim, for example, often anglicised their name as Agnew in order to identify themselves with a Scottish family who had settled in that part of the county. Mac Giolla Seanáin, by way of ‘Gunshenan’, sometimes became Nugent, the most powerful magnates in Westmeath, whose Norman ancestors descended from the town of Nogent-le-Rotrou, near Chartres in France. This transformation-by-transcription could go so far on occasion as to completely bury the original signifier, confusing later observers as to the provenance of Gaelic names. Audrey Horning has written of a ‘rebel with the improbable name of Fairy’ attacking a bawn in the 1640s.¹¹⁷ There would, however, appear to be nothing improbable about the name ‘Fairy’, being most likely an English transcription of the name Fearach (often transcribed as ‘Farry’). The similarity to the English word ‘fairy’ is merely a superficial resemblance, although probably not a coincidental one, given the tendency, when transcribing names, to pick an existing English word if one existed which was even vaguely similar.¹¹⁸

This process is even more obvious in the case of placenames. While, in most cases, colonisation did not involve the wholesale renaming of the landscape, transcriptions once again involved the mutation of words into alternate, anglicised forms which, combined with the eventual loss of the native language, would result in the thorough appropriation by the colonising power of the signifiers with which the Gaelic Irish described their world.

117 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.228.

118 A similar misunderstanding appears to have led to the naming of Virginia in the 1580s. The first English visitors are said to have asked a native their name for the area and received the reply *Wingandocoa*. This was deemed similar enough to ‘Virginia’ to merit adoption in a modified form, to honour queen Elizabeth I. Only later was it realised that the native had been misunderstood and that *wingandocoa* actually meant ‘you wear good clothes’. Walter Raleigh realised the mistake, alert to the dangers of such mistranslation, given that the Spanish had also mistakenly believed ‘Peru’, ‘Yucatan’ and ‘Paria’ to be native placenames. Frederic Webb Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico*, part 2, (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1910), p.957.

This had the effect of alienating the Irish from the semantic landscape around them, a fate subsequently reflected upon by Tyrone poet John Montague:

The whole landscape a manuscript
We had lost the skill to read,
A part of our past disinherited;
But fumbled, like a blind man,
Along the fingertips of instinct.¹¹⁹

The tableau of placenames that overlies the landscape represents a rich vein of knowledge which was pragmatic and descriptive, as well as mythical and poetic. The transformation of names like Tír Leathfhóid (land of the uneven sod), Uachtar Achaidh (southern field) or Baile an Tréin (townland of the brave warrior) into Tirlahode, Woteraghy and Ballintrain respectively, represented the first step on their way to their becoming largely-meaningless sounds to the people who lived among them. Patricia Palmer has written that to live in a landscape of such ‘strange and obdurate names’ was to live ‘in a landscape where names guarded their secrets closely’, where names ‘drew a veil over our world, locating us in a landscape of sound effects rather than sense’.¹²⁰

Much of the Irish population, in this sense, would gradually come to be severed from the realm of knowledge represented by placenames to an extent unparalleled elsewhere in Europe. While language-loss is the main reason for this, this alienation was also linked to the fact that, while the land may have been named by the native Irish, this nomenclature was codified and recorded by outsiders who conceived of this recording as taking place visually, in the form of maps, inscribed in a foreign language. The Irish, on the other hand, conceptualised the landscape discursively, the names of places studied in the branch of traditional learning known as *dinnseanchas* or placename-lore. Through this study the Irish recorded practical descriptions of the topography of an area; the names of neighbouring Droim an Ghamhna (the ridge of the calf, ‘Drumgavenny’) and Baile an Easa (town of the waterfall, ‘Ballyness’) in County Londonderry practically embedded with

119 John Montague, *Selected Poems*, (Toronto: Exile Editions, Ltd., 1982), p.108.

120 Patricia Palmer, ‘Cross-talk and mermaid-speak’, in *Britain & Ireland: lives entwined*, (Dublin: British Council Ireland, 2005), p.48.

directions from one *baile bó* to the next.¹²¹ The lore contained in Irish placenames also recorded a rich overlay of mythic and historical context in which the natives moved. This remained a current and relevant realm of knowledge on the eve of colonisation, as evinced in the work of Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh.¹²² Such practices, by which the naming of the land was made to serve as a kind of chronicle, were not dissimilar to those carried out by the natives of New England, of whom Edward Winslow observed in 1624:

‘Instead of records and chronicles, they take this course. Where any remarkable act is done, in memorie of it, either in the place, or by some path-way near adjoining, they make a round hold in the ground about a foote deepe, and as much over; which when others passing by behold, they inquire the cause and occasion of the same, which being once knowne, they are carefull to acquaint all men, as occasion serveth, therewith. And least such holes should be filled or growne up by any accident, as men passe by, they will oft renew the same. By which meanes many things of great Antiquitie are fresh in memory’.¹²³

While Algonquian placenames recorded this kind of knowledge, William Cronon has also noted how, just like Gaelic ones, they encompassed a practical and descriptive function, generally reflecting native knowledge of what plants could be gathered, shellfish collected, mammals hunted, and fish caught in specific areas. Pokanoket in Massachusetts meant ‘at or near the cleared lands’, Wabaquasset, in Rhode Island was ‘where flags or rushes for making mats could be found’ and Aqoiuoneset, also in the Narragansett Bay area, was the ‘small island where we get pitch’. On the other hand, those names which the colonists imposed on the landscape, Cronon remarks, were ‘most frequently [. . .] arbitrary place-

121 This work will use the term ‘Derry’ to refer to the town/city, where a settlement of this name has existed since the middle ages. The county created in 1613 will, however, be referred to as ‘Londonderry’, given that this political entity has never existed under any other name. The name Derry comes from the Irish *Doire*, meaning ‘oak-grove’.

122 In his description, for example, of the passage from ‘Sith Aodha, across the river, up the bank of Assaroe, at a point that was no usual passage for people up to that, save when champions or strong men would cross it in the drought of summer to prove their strength and courage. That was right, for the name of the place where they entered the river was The Champions’ Path’. Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh; Paul Walsh (ed. and trans.), *The life of Aodh Ruadh O Domhnaill*, (Dublin: Irish Texts Society, 1948), p.157.

123 Edward Winslow, *Good newes from New-England*, (London, 1624), p.61.

names which either recalled localities in their homeland or gave a place the name of its owner'.¹²⁴ Such was the case in Ulster too, as names like Castlecaulfeild, Cookstown and Salterstown suggest. This attempt to supplant names asserting Gaelic possession (Baile Uí Dhonnaile or 'Ballydonnelly', the territory of the Uí Dhonnaile in Tyrone was acquired by Toby Caulfeild for example, and renamed Castlecaulfeild) was clearly a self-consciously appropriative one. This is suggested by a statute from the 1660s which sought to legislate out of existence 'barbarous and uncouth names, by which most of the towns and places in this Kingdom of Ireland are called'. It was alleged that such names 'hath occasioned much damage to diverse of his good subjects, and are very troublesome in the use thereof, and much retards the reformation of that Kingdom'. Henceforth, letters patent were to provide 'new and proper names more suitable to the English tongue'.¹²⁵

A certain resistance to this process is suggested by the fact that such efforts did not always take. Successive failed attempts to rename Lough Neagh in honour of both Henry Sidney and Arthur Chichester, for example, are recorded in maps of the period.¹²⁶ The resentment of natives at the effacement of their placenames can be discerned in the observation of a deponent in 1643 that he 'heard from divers, bitter words cast out [. . .] that all the names given to Lands or places should be abolished, & the ancient names restored'. The deponent's interlocutor declared the intention of the Irish to restore the name of Achadh an Iúir (field of yew trees) to the settlement in Cavan dubbed 'Virginia' by the colonists.¹²⁷ If Irish names were thought to retard the reformation of the kingdom, Irish boundaries

124 William Cronon, *Changes in the land: Indians, colonists, and the ecology of New England*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1984), pp.65-6.

125 *The statutes at large, passed in the parliaments held in Ireland* (21 vols), vol.3, (Dublin: George Grierson, 1786), p.137. This act of re-naming has often accompanied conquest and colonisation. Patrick Wolfe has noted contemporary examples in the continuing resistance of white Australians to the restoration of aboriginal placenames. In Israel, post-1948, Wolfe notes, renaming has been 'central to the cadastral effacement/replacement of the Palestinian Arab presence', as evinced by the obsessive erasure of Arab placenames by Israelis. Patrick Wolfe, 'Settler colonialism and the elimination of the native', in *Journal of Genocide Research*, vol.8, no.4, (Basingstoke, Hampshire: Carfax Publishing, 2006), pp.388-9.

126 Richard Bartlett's 'Generalle Description of Ulster', 1603, SP MPF 1-35, and the 1609 Bodley Survey map: 'Part of the barony of Donganon', SP MPF-1-45-1 respectively. Lough Neagh: Loch nEathach, 'Lake of Eachaidh', a figure from Irish mythology.

127 Deposition of George Creighton, 15 April 1643, TCD MS 833, f.232v. It is interesting to reflect that such acts of renaming, as the practice of an assertive and dominant culture, can be witnessed in reverse in the middle ages, when earlier waves of colonists had been assimilated to some extent by the Gaelic Irish. Under such circumstances, the name Mandeville, an Anglo-Norman marcher family in Ulster, could be transformed into Mac Martain. Simms, *Gaelic lordships*, p.199.

were even more problematic to the colonists, accustomed to a landscape parceled-out in neatly demarcated territories indicating exclusive possession. Irish boundaries, on the other hand, were recorded verbally by reference to local landmarks like hillocks and streams. Finding this far too opaque, colonists constantly sought to define these borders more concretely. In the beginning, they were obliged to consult with the natives as to the identity of the *bailte bó* on which their townlands were based. Initial surveys, however, took little cognizance of actual boundaries, merely recording the approximate location of *bailte bó* without making any serious attempt to represent their shape or size.¹²⁸ It is not surprising, therefore, that confusion remained about the boundaries between lots, and colonial landlords and tenants continued to require recourse to native knowledge. Over time, however, this knowledge was assimilated and in 1637 a proclamation was issued calling for a commission of perambulation to replace the conceptual markers of the Gaelic Irish with physical tokens of enclosure such as ditches and hedges.¹²⁹ In the interests of recovering, to some extent, the sense of a Gaelic semantic landscape in this work, the English form of place-names will be supplemented with their original Irish, followed by a translation of their meaning in the footnotes.

A number of other terms used here merit comment. The first is the phrase ‘mere Irish’, which appears in the title of this thesis. This has in part been used because it was one of the most common ways in which the Gaelic Irish were referred to at the time. It also encapsulates something of the disdain which both the Old and New English in Ireland had for their Gaelic counterparts. It must be acknowledged, however, that the word ‘mere’ at this point in history was still used to mean ‘pure’ or ‘unmixed’ (cf. Latin *merus*), as well as its more value-laden homonym meaning ‘nothing more than’ with which it is associated today.¹³⁰ It is unclear to what extent its significance had shifted from the former to the latter by the seventeenth century. The fact that ‘mere’ is almost always found coupled with

128 On the maps of the 1609 Bodley survey, for example, the efforts of the map-maker to fit the requisite number of townlands into a given shape are apparent from the smooth, irregular curves of their borders, which J.H.Andrews observed, suggests ‘an artist who seeks a more or less realistic effect without committing himself to the kind of shape that can easily be proved incorrect’. J.H.Andrews, ‘The Maps of the Escheated Counties of Ulster, 1609-10’, in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Section C: Archaeology, Celtic Studies, History, Linguistics, Literature, vol.74, (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co., 1974), p.151.

129 Hunter, *The Ulster plantation*, M.Litt Thesis, pp.429-30.

130 Leerssen, *Mere Irish and fíor-ghael*, p.39.

the word 'Irish' would suggest these negative connotations were already present.¹³¹ Cases of 'mere English', however, do exist in sources from the period, indicating its continued (if limited) use in the Latin-derived sense as well.¹³² This, and other problematic phrases such as 'deserving Irish' will be enclosed by apostrophes throughout.¹³³

The term Old English must also be clarified as designating the descendants of the medieval Anglo-Norman colonists, given that its use has also been contested. Ciaran Brady has opted instead for the term 'Anglo-Irish', arguing that 'Old English' did not come into use until the late 1590s, whereas the 'Anglo-Irish' corresponds more closely to terms more commonly used at the time, such as 'Anglo-Hiberni', 'English-Irish' and 'English of Irish birth'.¹³⁴ While Brady is correct in pointing out a certain anachronism in use of the term, as Nicholas Canny has observed, the term 'Anglo-Irish' has 'won almost universal acceptance among historians and literary scholars to describe the Protestant descendants of the Elizabethan and Cromwellian conquerors of Ireland', that is to say, the descendants of those known in this period as the 'New English'.¹³⁵ To use the same term to describe this later Protestant Ascendancy class and the descendants of the twelfth century invaders is to invite further confusion; therefore 'Old English' is preferred here.¹³⁶

131 In one of the 1641 depositions, the 'meere' in the phrase 'meere Irishman' is crossed out, as the Irishman in question is subsequently revealed by the deponent to have helped him and his family. This suggests that the word was a negative adjective which the clerk, as an afterthought, decided not to apply. Deposition of John Hickman, 6 February 1643, TCD MS 833, f.156r.

132 E.S., 'A survey of the present estate of Ireland Anno 1615', HL Ellesmere MS 1746, f.11v. On the previous page (f.11r), however, the writer has discussed the dangers of English colonists *becoming* 'meere Irish', suggesting that the phrase meant not only 'pure Irish, unmixed with English' but a state which the English could become by too-close proximity with those 'mere Irish'. See also Rowland White; Nicholas Canny (ed.), 'Discors Touching Ireland, c.1569', in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.20, no.80, (Irish Historical Studies Ltd., 1977), p.463.

133 For discussion of the term 'deserving Irish', see below pp.245-6.

134 Ciaran Brady, 'Spenser's Irish Crisis: Humanism and Experience in the 1590s', in *Past & Present*, no.111, (Oxford University Press, 1986), p.24, n.21.

135 Nicholas Canny, 'Spenser's Irish Crisis: Humanism and Experience in the 1590s', in *Past & Present*, no.120, (Oxford University Press, 1988), p.203, n.9.

136 To distinguish between the Old English and the 'mere Irish' may also require some justification, given the uncertainty which exists as to how different were the two groups in reality. Kenneth Nicholls has argued that, to an outsider in the sixteenth century, the differences between the two 'would have appeared imperceptible'. Kenneth Nicholls, 'Gaelic society and economy', in Art Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, volume 2: Medieval Ireland 1169-1534*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), p.422. While the differences in terms of dress, language, customs etc. may indeed have had more to do with an urban/rural divide than an Old English/Old Irish one, the distinction appears to have been a very real and important one to both communities. Old English writers like Richard Stanihurst wished his readers across the water to believe that the manners and customs of the Old English 'differ little or nothing from the ancient customes and dispositions of their progenitors, the English and Welsh men' and was indignant when, on

It is to avoid anachronism that the term 'British' will be studiously avoided in this work. This is not merely because a British polity did not exist until the union of England and Scotland in 1707, but also because it would be inaccurate to posit the existence of a British identity in the period under consideration here. While it is true that many references to 'British' colonists appear in sources from the very outset of plantation in Ulster, this usage was an aspirational one at this early stage. It could be argued that the colonisation of Ulster was a pivotal moment in the genesis of a modern British identity. As David Armitage has noted, the plantation was 'the first cooperative British enterprise of James' newly proclaimed Kingdom of Great Britain'.¹³⁷ It was, however, merely a genesis, and it would take at least several generations of interbreeding and separation from Britain for the distinct identities of the English and Scottish colonists to merge into something which can confidently be referred to as 'British'. In the decades prior to 1641, the two appear to have kept their distance as distinct national groups.¹³⁸ The fact that the planners of the 1641 rising had hoped to leave the Scots unmolested suggests that they were easily distinguishable from the English and lived separately from them. Hiram Morgan has argued that this remained the case until as late as the middle of the nineteenth century.¹³⁹

visiting England, his hosts expressed surprise at his ability to speak the language, having assumed he would only be able to speak Irish. Richard Stanihurst, 'The Description of Ireland', in Raphael Holinshed, *Holinshed's Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, vol.6: Ireland, (London: J. Johnson et al., 1808), pp.7, 67. This feeling of separateness would appear to have been mutual. In 1643, a deponent recorded a 'Conference with divers of the Pale gentlemen concerning this bitterness of the Irish against the English'. These Old English gentry reportedly had been told by the 'northern Irish' that 'they hoped they had now requited them for helping the English in former times against the Irish whoe (sayd they) broke our harts heretofore Now we hope we have broken your harts: yow brought Plantacions into our Landes Now we hope yow shall have the plantacons in the Counties of Meath & Dublin'. Deposition of George Creighton, 15 April 1643, TCD MS 833, f.232v. While perhaps not objectively great, the Old English accentuated those characteristics which distinguished them from the 'mere' Irish because it was these which formed the bedrock of their identity as a loyal bulwark against the latter. This was a position which would become more and more unsustainable as the seventeenth century progressed.

137 'The Ulster planters were to be the first of a new race of Britons, whose legal identities as Scots or English would be supplemented and, for their children, replaced by their attachment to a new ethnic Britishness'. David Armitage, *The ideological origins of the British Empire*, (Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.57.

138 William Bedell's son remarked that the Scot and the Englishman 'for the most part desire to have as little to do the one with the other as may be'. William Bedell (d.1670), 'Life and Death of William Bedell, by his son', in E.S. Shuckburgh (ed.), *Two biographies of William Bedell, bishop of Kilmore: with a selection of his letters and an unpublished treatise*, (Cambridge University Press, 1902), p.49.

139 Hiram Morgan, 'An introduction to the study of political ideas in early modern Ireland', keynote address to 'Ireland 1598: contexts, representations and revolts' organised jointly by the Departments of History and English at UCC, May 1998. <http://www.ucc.ie/celt/Ideology.pdf>, accessed 18 April 2015.

The structure of this thesis is a thematic one. The next chapter will clarify the nature of colonisation in Ulster and argue that it may most usefully be seen as a node in the seventeenth-century English expansion throughout the north Atlantic. Chapter three will focus on events which created the conditions for a lasting colony to be established in Ulster, while chapters four and five will examine the day-to-day reality of colonial society for the native Irish, in its cultural (superstructure) and material (base) aspects. These chapters will explore, first, the changes to native culture largely consequent upon the dictates of economic necessity. The chapter on economic changes will examine these transformations through the experience of those who had comprised the non-elite classes of Gaelic society, both the landless and the tribute-paying landholder classes. The rump of the former elite who did not flee in 1607 or find themselves implicated in Ó Dochartaigh's rising, would be granted lands in the plantation project. Chapter six will examine, in a case study of the plantation precincts of Dungannon and Tiranny, the fate of this class of 'deserving Irish' in the years leading up to 1641.¹⁴⁰ Chapter seven will sum up the main questions of this work and assess what conclusions can be reached from the evidence presented here, and how firmly the evidence suggests we can adhere to those conclusions.

140 Dungannon: Dún Geanainn, 'the fort of Geanann', according to the Ulster cycle, the son of an important Ulster druid, Cathbad, who dwelt in the palace of Eamain Macha with Conchúr Mac Nessa. Tiranny: Tuath Threana, 'the tribe of Treana', a people that settled on the western boundaries of modern County Armagh.

2 Ulster as a colony in the Atlantic world

‘Goe not thither, for though there be plenty of all thinges, thou shalt starve there, Loyterers and lewd persons in this our new worlde, they will not be indured’.¹

These admonitory words were written in 1610 by Thomas Blenerhasset, in a pamphlet aimed at attracting men of substance and ability to the Ulster plantation project. Seeking to dissuade those of more slender means from taking part, who might be under the illusion that life in the escheated counties represented an opportunity for easy gain at little cost in money and labour, Blenerhasset’s use of the term ‘new worlde’ appears, to modern readers, incongruous in an Irish context. Certainly the phrase enjoyed common currency at the time—as the Virginia company was establishing what would become England’s first self-sustaining colony in America, and tentative attempts were being made to found settlements further north in the area that would become known as New England—but Ulster was surely too close to home for English colonial adventurers to speak of it as a New World unless it was with tongue firmly in cheek. A relative latecomer to European expansion in the Atlantic, England was beginning, in the first decade of the seventeenth century, to take a renewed interest in the New World as it is more commonly understood, after a lull of several decades since the failed attempts to establish colonies in Virginia in the 1580s. It was also beginning to take a renewed interest in colonisation efforts in Ulster, after the unmitigated failure of several projects in the east of the province in the 1570s (see

1 Thomas Blenerhasset, *A direction for the plantation in Ulster*, (London, 1610), sig. C4v.

chapter three).

It had taken a major military investment, resulting in catastrophic social upheavals, and the removal of the resistant element of the native ruling class (both by war and diplomatic guile), to lay the groundwork for the plantation project of 1609 and the opportunities publicised by Blenerhasset. While few historians deny that the society which finally did emerge from these efforts in Ulster could be characterised as ‘colonial’, it has been claimed by some that it is inappropriate to bracket these outposts of English expansion with the New Worlds being encountered in the Americas at the same time, and that such parallels—initiated by historians like D.B. Quinn and subsequently advocated most prominently by Nicholas Canny—are misleading.² Objections to viewing early modern Ireland in the context of extra-European imperialism have centred around the assertion that Ireland was subjected to a type of rule which differed in important respects from that practiced in places like Virginia, New England and the Caribbean. Various comparisons are proposed in their stead: the dispossession of Protestants in Bohemia after defeat at the Battle of the White Mountain has been compared to that of Irish Catholics in the 1650s;³ the consolidation of the state’s authority over peripheral areas on the island of Britain is cited, not only over ethnically-distinct peoples in Scotland or Wales, but over the English border areas which had previously enjoyed a great deal of autonomy;⁴ some contemporaries such as John Davies found parallels with the Irish situation far closer to home than America, comparing the transplantation of the natives in Ireland to the expulsion of the Moriscos from Spain to North Africa.⁵

2 The most articulate and sustained objections to viewing early modern Ireland in this Atlantic context—and those from which most of the arguments addressed here will be taken—have come from Steven Ellis, ‘Writing Irish History: Revisionism, Colonialism, and the British Isles’, in *The Irish Review*, No. 19, (Cork University Press, 1996) and Hiram Morgan, ‘Mid-Atlantic Blues’, in *The Irish Review*, 11, (Cork University Press, 1991); two works by Andrew Murphy, ‘Ireland and ante/anti-colonial theory’, in *Irish Studies Review*, vol. 7, No. 2, (Avon: Irish Studies Review, 1999) and a monograph, *But the Irish sea betwixt us: Ireland, colonialism, and Renaissance literature*, are both valuable contributions to the debate, although they are strictly speaking works of literary criticism and largely derivative of both Ellis and Morgan’s works.

3 Morgan, ‘Mid-Atlantic Blues’, p.57.

4 Raymond Gillespie, ‘Explorers, Exploiters and Entrepreneurs: Early Modern Ireland and its context, 1500-1700’, in (eds.) B.J.Graham and L.J.Proudfoot, *An Historical Geography of Ireland*, (London: Academic Press, 1993), p.152. Counter to the view of Ireland as an external colony, Steven Ellis has stressed the ‘location of early modern Ireland within an expanding British periphery’. ‘Writing Irish History’, p.14.

5 John Davies, ‘A letter from Sir John Davies to Robert Earl of Salisbury concerning the state of Ireland, 1610’, in *Historical Tracts*, p.289.

It is important to state from the outset that none of these comparisons are necessarily incompatible with an Atlantic approach. A view of Ireland as *purely* colonial in this sense is one rarely—if ever—encountered in the literature on the subject, and is not one that will be made here.⁶ Raymond Gillespie’s oft-cited formula of early modern Ireland as ‘a mid-Atlantic polity having some features of both the Old World and the New’ offers a useful reminder that this is not an either-or question of choosing between two distinct contexts in which to analyse the phenomenon.⁷ The mid-Atlantic, however, offers a disconcertingly broad latitude for speculation, and there is a danger inherent in over-emphasising the uniqueness of Ireland’s position to the point where it is denuded of all historic context. This uniqueness is usually presented in terms of being uniquely ambiguous or complex; Andrew Murphy has gone so far as to claim that, ‘of all of the countries that have experienced colonialism, Ireland’s history is the most complex’.⁸

Any discrete historical event, however, can be shown to be uniquely complex if dissected at sufficient length, and such a characterisation often tells us more about the prolixity of that discussion than the inherent complexity of the phenomenon being discussed. Its entanglement in the wider controversy over Revisionism has continually resuscitated this debate over whether Ireland was a kingdom, colony, or a hybrid of both. If sought-for with sufficient diligence, divergences can of course be found between any two given colonies, which in many other ways exhibit similarities. Virginia and New England, for example, have traditionally been viewed as differing profoundly, in that Virginia was a more nakedly-commercial venture from the outset compared to the motives driving the Separatists and Puritans in New England.⁹ In this sense, both these colonies possessed unique features as well as similarities.

Ireland, likewise, had features that were unique to an English colony, such as the fact that

6 Indeed D.B. Quinn rejected a ‘simple and direct contrast between Ireland and the greatest of the sixteenth century colonies, the Spanish empire in America’. D.B. Quinn, ‘Ireland and sixteenth century European expansion’, in *Historical studies*, No. 1, (London: Bowes and Bowes, 1958), p.23.

7 Gillespie, ‘Explorers, Exploiters and Entrepreneurs’, p.152.

8 Murphy, ‘Ireland and ante/anti-colonial theory,’ p.160.

9 E.E.Rich, ‘The European Nations and the Atlantic’, in (ed.) J.P. Cooper, *The new Cambridge modern history, Volume 4, The decline of Spain and the Thirty Years War, 1609-48/59*, (Cambridge University Press, 1971), p.681.

it had the constitutional status of a kingdom. To claim that its position was *uniquely* ambiguous, however, is as fallacious as to claim that it was identical with another colony. Such exact parallels will always be found lacking when any one colony is examined closely enough. This does not mean, however, that comparisons are by their very nature redundant; the nature of the Ulster colony can be better appreciated by recognising both the differences as well as the similarities with other colonies. Perhaps the best method of clarifying where in the mid-Atlantic the island should be placed conceptually is to address those specific objections that have been made to treating it as a colony in the Atlantic world. This chapter will therefore examine these objections in turn.

Whereas most of the published debate has centered on all of Ireland, the following discussion will be concerned with Ulster alone. Justifying this separate treatment of Ulster necessarily involves confronting the first major objection to viewing Ireland as an Atlantic colony, which is that Ireland's proximity to Britain, and the long-standing familiarity between the peoples of the two islands, renders such a comparison unsound. This is because, while this particular point may reasonably be made for other parts of Ireland, it does not hold for Ulster. The gradual and faltering nature of the encroachment of English rule over Ireland meant that the island was subjected to several different kinds of colonialism at the same time. It is thus indiscriminate to discuss all of Ireland without making due distinction between several different patterns of colonial development, geographically-speaking. William Smyth, following on the lead of D.W.Meinig, has identified three such zones of differing settlement.¹⁰

Firstly, the west of Ireland, in contrast with other parts of the island, was not intensively settled by English or Scots and retained much of its Gaelic character for longer than other regions. Part of the reason that Ulster was made subject to such an exacting project of plantation is that its Gaelic rulers had proved themselves unwilling to accept cultural and political assimilation on the terms of the English government. The FitzGeralds of Desmond fell prey to a similar fate, but in general the Gaelic rulers of west Munster and Connacht were amenable to political assimilation in a way that Ulster was not. The earls of Thomond and Clanricard, for example, were prepared to live under a President in Munster and Connacht, whereas the prospect of the creation of such an office for Ulster prompted Ó

¹⁰ Smyth, *Map-making*, p.435.

Néill to write to James I, beseeching him ‘not to graunt any such government’.¹¹

A second zone of colonisation, which may loosely be termed The Pale, encompassed most of Leinster and east Munster, and had existed as an English colony in some shape or form since the invasion of the twelfth century. Here, the Anglo-Norman colonists had put down deep roots and significant acculturation had taken place between them and the native Irish. The Reformation drove a further wedge between this Old English community and New English settlers, deepening the affinity between them and their ‘mere Irish’ neighbours. Regarding these neighbours, Ciaran Brady’s observation—made of the Irish in contrast to Americans¹²—may be said to hold true for this particular zone: ‘the English and Irish did not meet across a frontier but mingled closely together in a manner which overcame or diluted such cultural differences as existed between them’.¹³ It will be argued throughout this work, however, that the same could not be claimed of relations between the ‘mere Irish’ and the colonists in Ulster.

Ulster, like other areas such as the mountain fastnesses of Wicklow, formed a third zone, largely impervious to direct English administration until the aftermath of the Nine Years War.¹⁴ It was not so much the difficulty of gaining access with troops, as maintaining authority in a territory that offered none of the infrastructure to support it. Lord Deputy Sidney’s observation when withdrawing troops from Rathlin Island in 1575, that the island was ‘veri easy to be wonne at any tyme but very chardgious and hard to be held’, could have been said of the entire province of Ulster.¹⁵ Until the second half of the sixteenth century

11 Aodh Ó Néill to King James I, 17 June 1606, SP 63-218 no.71, f.221r. The names for the earlier Gaelic division of Munster: Desmond, Thomond, Ormond derive from the prefix of, respectively, south, north and east: Dheasumhan, Tuamhain and Urumhan. An early medieval kingdom of Iarmuman (west Munster) also existed.

12 Writing in an early modern context, the term ‘American’ will here be used to denote those peoples often referred to as native American, Indian or Amerindian. As there were no ‘Americans’ in this period in the sense it is meant today, i.e. the descendants of Europeans, African, etc. no confusion will arise.

13 Ciaran Brady, ‘The Road to the View: On the Decline of Reform Thought in Tudor Ireland’, in Patricia Coughlan (ed.), *Spenser and Ireland: an interdisciplinary perspective*, (Cork University Press, 1989), p.35.

14 Wicklow: Cill Mhantáin, the modern Irish name of the county, bears no relation to the name Wicklow, which most likely derives from the Old Norse for ‘meadow of the Viking.’

15 Henry Sidney to Queen Elizabeth, 1575, cited in George Hill, *An historical account of the Macdonnells of Antrim*, (Belfast: Archer, 1873), p.156. Humphrey Gilbert expressed similar sentiments about the whole of Ireland: ‘more chardgeable in keepinge thereof then proffitable unto England’. Humphrey Gilbert, ‘The discourse of Ireland, 1572’, in David Beers Quinn (ed.), *Voyages and colonising enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, (London: Hakluyt Society, 1940), p.124. Rathlin: Reachlainn, the

the English were thus content to control the province by reaching accommodation with the strongest local warlord at any given time, usually one of the Uí Néill. They were far less concerned with transforming Ulster than simply managing the *status quo*. This strategy was eloquently expressed by the earl of Ormond in 1594, who wrote of making Aodh Ó Néill ‘an instrument to helpe to suppress and appease the northrin stirres that othersie may be chardgable to her ma[jes]tie’.¹⁶ John Davies acknowledged that, from the time of the first conquest by Henry II up to the reign of Elizabeth, Irish rulers beyond The Pale had been merely tribute-paying sovereigns and not subjects.¹⁷ When this territory had finally been opened up to colonisation the same writer remarked that Ulster was ‘heretofore as unknown to the English here as the most inland part of Virginia as yet unknown to our English colony there’.¹⁸ Audrey Horning has described Davies comparison as ‘somewhat hyperbolic’, but ‘slight exaggeration’ would be a more fitting characterisation of the attorney-general’s choice of words.¹⁹ When Davies was writing, Ulster was about to become a colony, but a newer kind of colony differing from, and bordering on, an older one, The Pale. Unlike the medieval (but like the American) colonies, Irish native and New English newcomer *did* meet across a frontier in Ulster.

The cultural nature of this frontier will be discussed in more detail in chapter four. Geographically-speaking, it is easy to forget, in an age when a trip from London to any part of Ulster can be made in under three hours, that a journey to the interior of the province from the metropolis could take the better part of a month in the early seventeenth century, and that, even after colonisation had begun in earnest, much of that interior remained largely impenetrable to outsiders without a guide.²⁰ This lack of knowledge is evident from

origins of which are obscure but may possibly mean ‘rugged island.’

16 Ormond to Burghley, 19 August 1594, SP 63-175 no.65, ff.266r-266v.

17 Davies, ‘A discovery’, in *Historical Tracts*, p.83.

18 Sir John Davys to the Earl of Salisbury, 24 August 1609, in Geraint Dyfnallt Owen (ed.), *Calendar of the manuscripts of the most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury*, vol.21: 1609-1612, (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1970), p.121.

19 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.51.

20 Jonathan Bardon has calculated this was how long it took the Ironmongers’ company agent George Canning, to reach his destination in 1614 in *The Plantation of Ulster*, p.236. T.W. Moody also estimated that ‘the journey from London to Londonderry appears to have taken about a month’, in *The Londonderry Plantation*, p.352. Thomas Phillips, one of the most intrepid servitors, who knew Ulster as well as any settler, needed to employ a guide when traveling through the heavily-forested areas of Loughlinsholin, see Moody, *Londonderry Plantation*, p.345. As late as 1635 the route between Newry and Dromore was ‘a most difficult way for a stranger to find out’ according to William Brereton, ‘Sir William Brereton’s travels in Ireland, 1635’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.372.

a glance at sixteenth-century maps of the province.²¹ In a 1520s map from Robert Cotton's collection in the British Library (fig.1), the existence of the province, squeezed into a tiny northwestern corner of the island, is almost ignored. By the 1560s, when John Goghe's map was made (fig.2), the expanding frontiers of knowledge are apparent, as are its limitations. While the more anglicised parts of the island were depicted with reasonable accuracy, Lough Erne was still being represented as a single lake and Donegal, instead of being represented as smaller, is now swollen out of all proportion; that territory's resistance to survey is further symbolised by the figures of three warriors.²² This resistance would be dramatically demonstrated in reality, when the cartographer Richard Bartlett was beheaded in 1603 by locals only too aware of the association between the arrival of surveyors, and the armies and settlers which would follow.²³ In the light of this, the admission of another map-maker, Francis Jobson, that he had of necessity left the counties of Donegal and Fermanagh 'un[per]fected' as he was reluctant to venture into those areas in the 1590s, is understandable, as is his contention that he was 'every hower in daunger to loose my head'.²⁴

It is crucial to appreciate the isolation and relative foreignness of Ulster in order to understand the impact of colonisation on its native inhabitants. There are indications that Ulster's physical proximity to Britain also misled some colonists into believing that it would resemble home far more than it actually did. Thomas Smith seriously underestimated the difficulties presented by the culture of the indigenous population when planning his colony in the early 1570s. The Ards peninsula proved to be an alien and hostile environment for Smith's colonists, not least his son, who was shot dead by an Irishman in his employ.²⁵ Many of the problems which befell this scheme stemmed from the mistaken belief that the followers of native rulers would spontaneously come over to the colonists' side once they saw the benefits (self-evident to Smith) of English civility. The

21 Smyth, *Map-making*, pp.21-53.

22 Lough Erne: Loch Éirne, 'Lake of the Érainn', possibly an ancient population group or a goddess from which the Érainn took their name.

23 John Davies to Salisbury, 28 August 1609, in C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (eds.), *CSPI James I, 1608-1610*, (London: Longman & Co., 1874), p.280.

24 Francis Jobson, 'Ulster's unitie', SP 63-202-4 no.83, f.263v.

25 Hiram Morgan, 'The Colonial Venture of Sir Thomas Smith in Ulster, 1571-1575', in *The Historical Journal*, vol.28, no.2, (Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp.261-78; David Beers Quinn, 'Sir Thomas Smith (1513-1577) and the Beginnings of English Colonial Theory', in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, vol.89, no.4, (Philadelphia: The Society, 1945), pp.543-60.

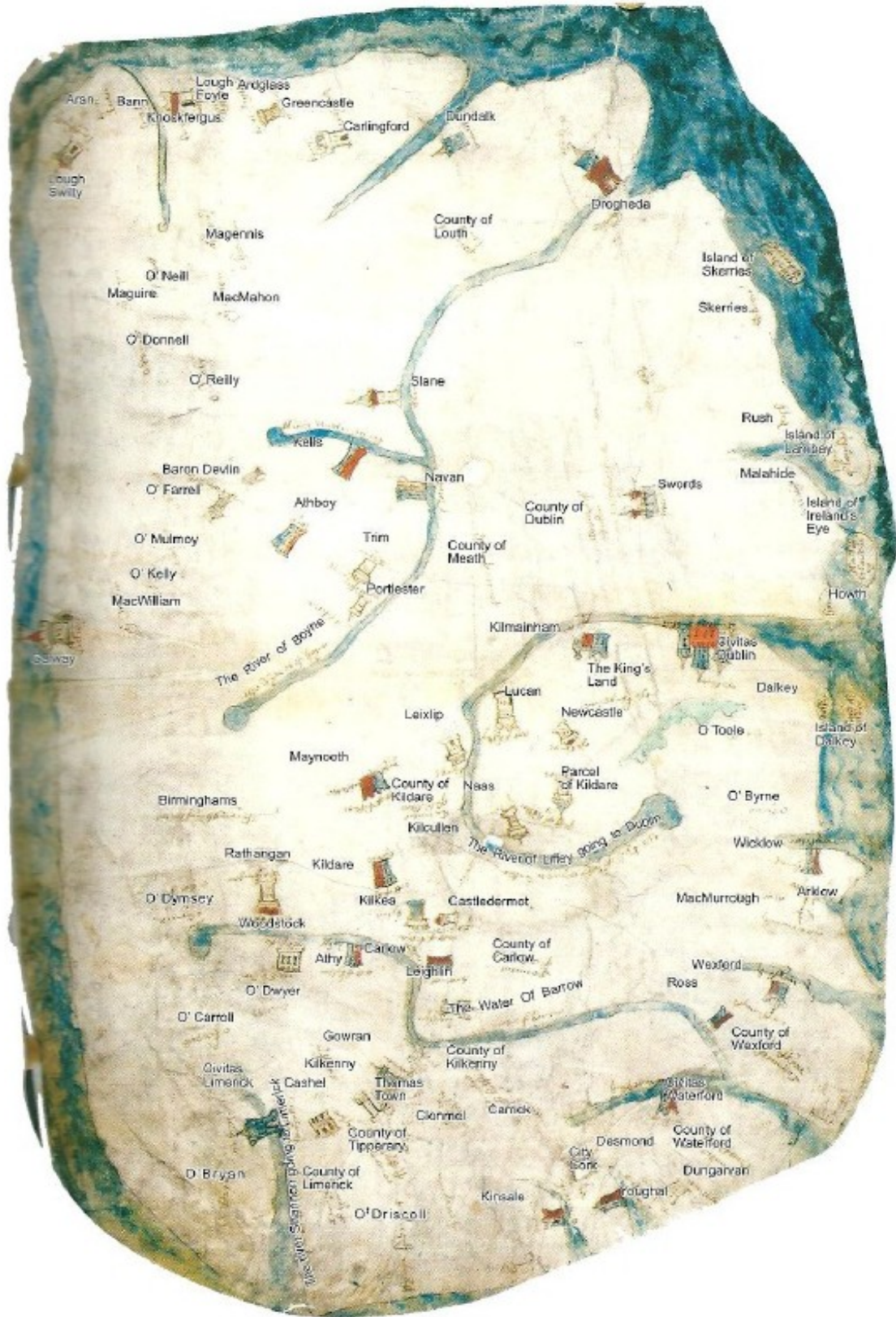


Figure 1: 'Cotton' map of Ireland, 1520s.



Figure 2: Detail of 'Hibernia: Insula non procul ab Anglia vulgare Hirlandia vocata.' John Goghe, 1567.

language which Smith used to describe the native Irish betrays a belief that parasitic Irish 'lords' oppressed their 'churls' with the 'exactions' of their 'Kerne or Galliglas', and merely needed to be replaced by modern English landlords in order to unleash the economic potential of the 'very simple and toyleseme' natural follower, who wished only 'that he may not bée eaten out with ceasse, Coyne, nor liverie'.²⁶

Smith, who had never been to Ireland, trusted too much to such analogies. Although there were certainly similarities in the relationship between lord and churl on the one hand, and *tiarna* and his followers on the other, there were crucial differences between Gaelic society and the feudal structures of medieval England. The failure to appreciate these differences meant that the colonists were unprepared for the hostile reaction they faced from local rulers like Brian Mac Feidhlim Ó Néill of Clandeboyne, whose followers, instead of flocking to the colonists as their saviours, were mobilised to ravage Ards and Carrickfergus. The Gaelic social hierarchy was more nuanced than such observers were prepared to allow. The complexity inherent in the word *biatach*—which can be defined as one who rendered food dues to his *tiarna*—serves to illustrate this. While this included the *daor-bhiatach*, whose status might be said to approximate that of a serf, the word also encompassed a wider range of intermediary social ranks, up to the *brughaidh*, or hospitaller, who enjoyed a high status.²⁷

A variety of functionaries, whose offices were often hereditary, such as the *ollamh*, as well as the *ceithearnach* and *gallóglach* to which Smith referred, were likewise attached to the retinue of a *tiarna*. Thus, the fabric of Gaelic social hierarchy was multi-layered and characterised by interconnected relations of reciprocity; followers would provide tribute in the form of food or services in return for protection and, in the case of non-food-producing elements of society, military services were provided in return for upkeep in the form of *buannacht*, levied on the *biatach*. Smith, however, appears to have laboured under the illusion that the Gaelic followers were bound to their rulers in a type of vassalage, inheritable from father to son under feudal law. No such estate of inheritance existed, either in land or serfs, in Gaelic society, and the relationship between a *tiarna* and the various subordinate classes beneath him was contractual and terminable. Implicit in this is

26 Thomas Smith, *A Letter sent by I. B. Gentleman unto his very frende Maystet R. C. Esquire*, (London, 1572), sig. D3r-D3v.

27 Simms, *From kings to warlords*, p.171.

the freedom of these subordinates to leave a *tiarna* who was not fulfilling his end of the social contract.²⁸ This freedom would no doubt have been severely curtailed by the reality of economic dependence, although the same could be said of the wage labourer in the capitalist economy that would supplant the Gaelic one.²⁹ Smith was, therefore, misled by his own attempt to impose English categories upon a Gaelic cultural landscape.

While some sought the familiar in the unfamiliar society confronting them in Ulster, it was perhaps the experiences of the Ards colonists that men like Blenerhasset and Davies had in mind when they stressed to their fellow countrymen the newness of this New World. Some historians claim that these comparisons were nothing more than propaganda to disparage the Irish, and are not to be taken as a serious reflection of how they were viewed by English observers, who were in fact aware that the Irish cultivated oats to supplement their dairy produce.³⁰ As has been seen, however, the Algonquian peoples encountered in southern New England also practised a mixed economy which involved tillage. This did not prevent Europeans (and subsequently Euro-Americans) from denying to them, down to the twentieth century, the status of farmer.³¹

The issue was not that Americans were not using the land, but rather that they were not using it in the way Europeans did; that is to say, with the aim of producing a surplus and thus exploiting its commercial potential to the full. A key concept in the early modern period was 'improvement'. In time, this word would be superseded by 'development', but the same meaning is conveyed.³² John Winthrop met the objection that the Puritans had 'noe warrant to enter upon that Land w[hi]ch hath been soe longe possessed by others', with the answer that the Indians 'inclose noe Land, neither have any settled habytation, nor

28 Hayes-McCoy, 'Gaelic society in Ireland', p.55. Quinn, *Elizabethans*, p.38.

29 For further discussion of this freedom see below, pp.191-2.

30 Morgan, 'Mid-Atlantic Blues', pp.53-4.

31 In the 1930s A.L. Kroeber described the Algonquians of New England as '[. . .] agricultural hunters, not [. . .] farmers. There were no economic classes, no peasantry to exploit nor rulers to profit from a peasantry. Every man, or his wife, grew food for his household. [. . .] Ninety-nine or more percent of what might have been developed remained virgin, and was tolerated, or appreciated, as hunting ground, as waste intervening to the nearest enemy, or merely as something natural and inevitable, in 'Native American Population', in *American Anthropologist*, New Series, vol.36, no.1, (Washington D.C., American Anthropological Association, 1934), p.12. Note the contradictory claims (within a single sentence) that, on the one hand, the native Americans did not farm, and on the other, that they grew food for their households.

32 Smyth, *Map-making*, p.382.

any tame Cattle to improve the Land by', thus depriving them of any legal rights to the territory.³³ John Temple made frequent reference to the 'improvements' made by the colonists in Ulster and the jealousy of the Irish which had spurred them to attack.³⁴ Failure to improve the land, John Locke wrote, was the reason why the Americans, 'whom nature having furnished as liberally as any other people, with the materials of plenty', lived in such poverty that 'a king of a large and fruitful territory there, feeds, lodges, and is clad worse than a day-labourer in England'. It is no coincidence that Locke was one of the most influential theorists of the right to take land not being used in recognisably European, commercial ways.³⁵

Colonists were often unable, or unwilling, to perceive the ways in which these peoples mixed their labour with the natural resources of their environment. The peoples of New England, for example, had developed over the centuries a sophisticated polyculture, which involved planting their crops symbiotically, using the stalk of the maize as a natural frame on which they grew beans. This combination, along with squash and tobacco, maximised soil-nutrients and moisture and gave the appearance, to Europeans, of a densely tangled and unweeded garden—nothing like the rows of uniform crops they had come to associate with the word farming.³⁶ Few cared to look more closely into the matter; indeed, such practices seemed to violate the injunction of Leviticus 19:19: 'thou shalt not sow thy field with mingled seed'. Roger Williams, one of the few colonists in New England who attempted to understand the natives' way of life on its own terms, recognised that the Algonquians' burning of the undergrowth at regular intervals, both to clear the ground for planting and to facilitate hunting, constituted an improvement, and gave them as much right to their land as the king of England had to his royal forests.³⁷ In a very real sense, the

33 John Winthrop, 'Reasons to be considered for justifieinge the undertakeres of the intended Plantation in New England, and for encouraginge such whose hartes God shall move to ioyne with them in it', in Robert C. Winthrop (ed.), *Life and letters of John Winthrop, governor of the Massachusetts-Bay Company at their emigration to New England, 1630*, (Boston: Little, Brown, 1869), pp.311-2.

34 Temple, *The Irish rebellion*, pp.21, 23, 74, 105.

35 John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, (London: Whitmore and Fenn, 1821), p.222. On p.209 he wrote: 'Whatsoever then he removes out of the state that nature hath provided, and left it in, he hath mixed his labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property'. See also Chapter 5: Rediscovering America: the Two treatises and aboriginal rights, in James Tully, *An Approach to Political Philosophy: Locke in Contexts*, (Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp.137-76.

36 Cronon, *Changes in the land*, pp.43-4.

37 'Master John Cotton's answer to Master Roger Williams', in Roger Williams, *The complete writings of Roger Williams*, vol.2, (New York: Russell & Russell, 1963), p.48. This argument is known only from Cotton's refutation, as Williams destroyed his tract on the subject of Indian land rights.

Indians were cultivating the game, because selective burning of the forests lured the deer into areas in which they had cleared, creating an ideal grazing environment.³⁸ Thus, land which looked as if it was going to waste was not. The semi-pastoral way of life of many Irish in Ulster proved equally problematic to English observers and the mis-perception has likewise endured to modern times. The geographer Emyr Estyn-Evans in 1973 wrote that: ‘the hills and bogs, providing as they did abundant grazing and fuel, were the preferred environment for the traditional pattern of rural life’.³⁹ While this would have been true if the Irish had remained all the year round in the bogs or upland grazing areas, this was not the case. The cultivation of oats and wheat took place in more fertile lowland areas which, Estyn-Evans implies, were surplus to the requirements of the Irish.

That such cultivation took place is evident from Lord Deputy Sidney’s report on an military expedition against Seán Ó Néill in the vicinity of Clogher in September 1566. Passing through ‘divers strange partes, and greate wooddes’, the soldiers came upon a ‘countrie so well inhabited, as wee think no yrishe Countrie in this Realm lik it’ and ‘remayned in that campe one whole day purposelie to destroye the corne, wherof wee founde no small aboundance, burninge that daie above 24 myles compas’.⁴⁰ The practice of moving to summer pasture between sowing and harvest, as well as the periodic redivision and redistribution of land, gave the appearance of impermanence and waste to those coming from cultures where agriculture was marked by an uncritical commitment to increased productivity and largely limited to sedentary monoculture. Land was utilised in a far less intensive way, both in Ireland and north America, and supported a sparser population than was the norm in most European countries. In many ways, however, such mixed economies were more efficient and ecologically sustainable than the commercial agriculture introduced by colonists, because the latter stimulated the kind of unsustainable population growth often cited as the very reason why overseas colonies were necessary in the first place. ‘We are a great people, and the lande is too narrow for us’, declared a pamphlet

38 Cronon, *Changes in the land*, p.51.

39 E. Estyn Evans, *The personality of Ireland: habitat, heritage and history*, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p.78.

40 Lord Deputy Sidney, Gerald Fitzgerald earl of Kildare, Sir Nicholas Bagenal and Francis Agard to Queen Elizabeth, 12 November 1566, SP 63-19 no.43, f.86v. There is also evidence that the cultivation of wheat and barley had been more common in the early middle ages. Katharine Simms, ‘Guesting and Feasting in Gaelic Ireland’, in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol.108, (Dublin: Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 1978), p.79.

promoting the Virginia settlement in 1609.⁴¹ The morally-corrupting influence of overpopulation was among the anxieties that prompted the Separatists' dissatisfaction with their adopted place of refuge in Holland; it was difficult to be godly when there was 'such pressing and oppressing in towne and countrie, about Farmes, trades, traffique, &c. so as a man can hardly any where set up a trade but he shall pull downe two of his neighbours'.⁴²

There was a sincerity and a certain logic to the comparisons made by English colonists in America between the natives they encountered there and in Ireland.⁴³ The Irish being compared were those—frequently prefixed by the adjective 'wild'—from beyond the Pale and not the Old English or those 'mere Irish' who had been in contact with that culture long enough to have adopted its trade and agricultural methods. The English of England may have viewed their Old English counterparts as a breed apart—an anonymous author wrote that 'the descente of the Inglish (to their great greefe) are here [in England] called and counted Irishe, though there (of the mere Irish) reputed and called Inglish'; they would never, however, have categorised them as so alien as to compare them to Americans.⁴⁴ A sharp distinction was made between them and the 'wild' Irish, as witnessed by a phrasebook for travelers printed in 1555, which remarked that the 'people of the englishe pale be metely well manered, using the english tunge but naturally, they be testy, specially yf they be vexed', whereas those beyond The Pale were said to be 'slouthful, not regarding to sow and tille theyr landes, nor caring for riches [. . .] untaught and rude, the which rudenes with theyr meloncoli complexion causeth them to be angry and testy without a cause'.⁴⁵ The difference was that the behaviour of the Old English Irishman, testy if vexed, was at least explicable; the 'wild' Irishman on the other hand was liable to become testy for his own inscrutable reasons. Such inscrutability goes some of the way to explaining the identification of far-flung exotic peoples, who had yet to be encompassed within the realm of the familiar and predictable.

41 Robert Gray, *A good speed to Virginia*, (London, 1609), f.B2v.

42 Robert Cushman, 'Reasons and considerations touching the lawfullness of removing out of England into parts of America', in William Bradford, George Morton, Edward Winslow, Robert Cushman, *A relation or journall of the beginning and proceedings of the English plantation settled at Plimoth in New England*, (London, 1622), p.70.

43 Several examples of these comparisons are listed in Quinn, *Elizabethans*, pp.23-6.

44 Anonymous, 1598, 'That planting of collonies, and that to bee begonne onely by the Dutch, will geve best entrance to the reformation of Ulster', SP 63-202-4 no.75, f.235v.

45 Andrew Boorde, *The fyrst boke of the introduction of knowledge The whych dothe teache a man to speake parte of all maner of languages, and to knowe the usage and fashion of al maner of countreys*, (London, 1562), sig.C3r-C3v.

It could also be averred that within the category of ‘mere Irish’ in Ulster there existed a social class sufficiently conversant with, and familiar to, the metropolitan society to avoid comparison with Americans.⁴⁶ The issue of class differences within pre-colonial Gaelic society has not been adequately taken account of by historians, who have sometimes treated Gaelic society as an undifferentiated mass.⁴⁷ The Brian Mac Feidhlim Ó Néill who confronted Thomas Smith’s colonists was precisely the kind of English-backed ruler which a resource-poor government had long relied on to act as its proxy in Ulster. A year prior to finding his lands had been granted to the prospective Ards colony, he had written to the queen of the ‘malicious myndes of your graces disloyall subjects’ in the area, and the ‘incursions of the Irish Scotts’, offering to carry out ‘the reducinge of these p[ar]tes to due subiection in a shorte tyme’ in return for confirmation of his family’s ancestral lands.⁴⁸

The most famous example (or infamous, from the point of view of Elizabethan officialdom) of this strategy was Aodh Ó Néill, who spent his youth under the supervision of English patrons and was purposely cultivated as an agent for the extension of the state’s authority in Ulster. The success of this policy seemed apparent in the comments of the earl of Essex, who embarked upon his own colonisation scheme in east Ulster shortly after Thomas Smith, and was assisted by Aodh Ó Néill in his campaign against the aforesaid Brian Mac Feidhlim. He described Aodh as ‘very forward in service, and [. . .] the only man of Ulster that is, in my opinion, meet to be trusted and used’.⁴⁹ Even when Ó Néill came to disappoint these expectations, he was perceived in the light of a treacherous subject—not unlike the Percy earls of Northumberland—and unlike his ‘wild’ followers.

It has been suggested that the existence of a class within the Gaelic world which the English attempted to cultivate as an cultural bridgehead for anglicisation has no parallels

46 As Hiram Morgan has pointed out, the Gaelic nobility participated in the ‘meat and drink’ of English politics, ‘warfare, marriage alliances, faction fighting, litigation and prosecution, the bribery of officials, the selection of JPs and sheriffs, the billeting of troops, the holding of parliament and the constant manoeuvring at Court. There is nothing colonial about any of these activities. They are all recognisably European’. ‘Mid-Atlantic Blues’, p.52.

47 This will be discussed in more detail in chapter five.

48 Brian Mac Feidhlim Ó Néill to Queen Elizabeth, 6 July 1571, SP 63-33 no 3, f.5r.

49 Essex to Burghley, 20 October 1573, in Walter Bouchier Devereux (ed.), *Lives and Letters of the Devereux Earls of Essex in the reigns of Elizabeth, James I and Charles I, 1540–1642*, 2 vols, (London: John Murray, 1853), vol.1, p.42.

in the New World. No American leader, Raymond Gillespie writes, was treated as favourably in defeat as Aodh Ó Néill was at Mellifont.⁵⁰ Conversely, Hiram Morgan has suggested that no American was ‘deemed so threatening to England’s national interest’ to merit the kind of public execution accorded to Brian Ó Ruairc in 1591 or Conchúr Mag Uidhir and Aodh Mac Mathúna in the 1640s.⁵¹ To address the former point, both Ulster and the American colonies were characterised by a series of *pro tempore* alliances between colonists and indigenous leaders whom they were not yet ready to confront. It will be argued below (pp.322-7) that such alliances with the Gaelic Irish—for example, those fashioned under the ‘surrender and re-grant’ schemes, or promises made to Gaelic rulers who would come over to the government’s side in the Nine Years War—may be viewed in the light of similarly expedient arrangements made with American *werowances*, *sachems* and *ogemas* in the infancy of England’s colonisation of North America.

Just as Gaelic rulers were offered earldoms and baronages, attempts were likewise made to draw American rulers away from their traditional political and legal systems of legitimation and into ‘the ambit of English law’.⁵² The Powhatan *werowance* Wahunsenacawh replied, when requested by the Jamestown colonists to come and receive gifts and a crown sent by King James, that he would not come to receive them but that they should come to him. His awareness of the protocol and symbolism in such ceremonies is clear, and would suggest that the reasons for his reluctance to ‘kneele to receive his crowne’ were also due to an unwillingness to accept subordination to James as overlord.⁵³ The Pequots, Narragansett and Wampanoag peoples of New England were allied with, and in turn discarded, when such alliances had outlived their usefulness; no conception of the Americans as savage stood in the way of making accommodations with them in the interests of the colony.

After the massacre of a third of Virginia’s settler population in 1622, the English response

50 Gillespie, ‘Explorers, Exploiters and Entrepreneurs’, p.152. The Irish name of Mellifont, An Mhainistir Mhór, refers to the great abbey situated there.

51 Morgan, ‘Mid-Atlantic Blues’, p.52.

52 This was Seán Ó Faoláin’s description of the strategy in an Irish context. Seán Ó Faoláin, *The great O’Neill: a biography of Hugh O’Neill, Earl of Tyrone, 1550-1616*, (Cork: Mercier Press, 1970), p.13.

53 John Smith, ‘Proceedings of the English Colonie’, in Thad W. Tate, Philip L. Barbour (eds.), *Complete Works of Captain John Smith, 1580-1631*, 3 vols, (University of North Carolina Press, 1986), vol.1, pp.236-7.

was initially unrestrained; indeed the Company's pamphleteer Edward Waterhouse suggested that they should emulate the genocide committed by the Spanish on Hispaniola.⁵⁴ By 1625, however, the colonists had realised that the annihilation of the natives was impossible and that moreover, they had come to depend on the Americans' corn harvest in order to devote themselves to growing tobacco as a lucrative export crop.⁵⁵ In consequence, a peace was negotiated with the *werowance* Opechancanough, who had planned the complete extermination of the colonists. This peace lasted until 1644 when the elderly leader once again led an attack on the colonists. By this stage, the English were far stronger, both numerically and militarily, and once the Powhatans had been defeated and their *werowance* captured, there was no need to placate them anymore. Opechancanough was placed on exhibition in Jamestown and then shot by one of his guards in revenge for 'the Calamities the Colony had suffer'd by this Prince's Means'.⁵⁶

William Berkeley, however, the governor responsible for capturing Opechancanough, had intended keeping him alive in order to send him to England to be presented as a captive to the king.⁵⁷ This would seem to confute Hiram Morgan's suggestion that Americans were never deemed dangerous enough to merit this kind of treatment. The Narragansett sachem Miantonomo was likewise accorded a legal process of sorts when captured by allies of the English in 1643. A meeting of the Commissioners of the United Colonies was convened, which advised that the Mohegan leader Uncas 'take away the life of Myantenomo [. . .] according to justice and prudence'. In order to make sure that the deed was carried out (they themselves were anxious to make it appear that Uncas alone was responsible for the killing) they sent along 'some discreet and faythfull persons' to 'see the execution for our more full satisfaccion'.⁵⁸ Such actions are reminiscent of the kind of quasi-legal machinations which were practised in Tudor and Stuart Ireland, which for long periods of time was under marshal law, and where legal process was often subordinated to political ends.⁵⁹

54 Edward Waterhouse, *A declaration of the state of the colony and affaires in Virginia*, (London, 1622), p.30.

55 Frederick Fausz, 'Openchancanough: Indian Resistance Leader', in Roger L. Nichols (ed.), *The American Indian: Past and Present*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1992), p.30.

56 Robert Beverley, *The history and present state of Virginia, in four parts*, (London: printed for R. Parker, 1705), pp.52-3.

57 Beverley, *The history and present state of Virginia*, p.52.

58 Jennings, *The invasion of America*, pp.266-8.

59 See for example, Peadar Mac Duinnshleibhe, 'The Legal Murder of Aodh Rua McMahon, 1590', in

Even accepting that a more intensive effort was made in Ireland than America, either to incorporate or eliminate indigenous enemies of the state, the reasons for this have more to do with pragmatism than differing perceptions of the natives on opposite sides of the Atlantic. In America, where a western frontier existed until its ‘closure’ in the 1890s, Europeans always had vast ‘empty’ territories to their west, onto which the retreating Indians could be displaced. Only when this ceased to be the case did the government address the ‘Indian problem’ as anything other than a security threat. The frontier in Ireland, however, closed in the early decades of the seventeenth century. In this case, an effort needed to be made to legally incorporate the indigenous population which was nowhere near as pressing a necessity in America at that time.⁶⁰ The proximity of Ireland, and the possibility of it being used as a staging post by England’s European enemies, also meant that the threat posed by sovereign Gaelic rulers was always going to be a matter of more serious concern. Notwithstanding plans to have Opechancanough transported across the Atlantic, the distances involved made such a procedure generally impractical. The key, therefore, to understanding military and diplomatic strategies in both Ulster and America is expediency rather than any ideological impulse. A group of native rulers in Ulster were flattered with land and titles when they were powerful enough to represent a threat to stability; once this danger had passed, however, the state no longer felt compelled to court them. Aodh Ó Néill discovered this in the years after Mellifont, when he found to his indignation that he could no longer command respect from the king’s officials and was subjected to ‘verie hard and dishonorable speche’ at the council table.⁶¹

Perceptions of the Gaelic population as savage were rooted less in any specific English

Clogher Record, vol.1, no.3, (Clogher Historical Society, 1955), pp.39-52 and Liam Price, ‘The Case of Phelim MacFeagh O’Byrne and the Lands of Ranelagh’, in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Seventh Series, vol.13, no.2, (Dublin: Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 1943), pp.50-59.

60 Although there existed no conterminous frontier beyond which to push the Irish, it should of course be remembered that, in the case of those deemed inassimilable, the option existed of transportation into foreign military service or indentured servitude/slavery in the Caribbean, which many took, either voluntarily or involuntarily; see E. Bourke, ‘Irish levies for the Army of Sweden (1609-1610)’, in *The Irish monthly*, vol.46, (Dublin: McGlashan & Gill, 1918), pp.396-404 and John W. Blake, ‘Transportation from Ireland to America, 1653-60’, *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.3, no.11, (Dublin University Press, 1943), pp.267-81.

61 Aodh Ó Néill, ‘Articles exhibited by the earle of Tirone to the king’s most exelent ma[jes]tie, declaringe certaine causes of discontent offered him, by which he toke occasione to dep[ar]t his country’, 1607, SP 63-222 no.201, f.319r.

antipathy towards the Irish, than a perception, general in metropolitan Europe, of what constituted civilised society. This was informed by Renaissance conceptions which transcended religion and nationality. English Catholics such as William Good, visiting Ireland in the 1560s, clearly did not regard them as co-religionists, claiming that the Irish were in the habit of propitiating the new moon and contracted spiritual relationships with wolves.⁶² The narrative of Francisco de Cuellar, a survivor of the Armada, makes frequent references to the ‘savage’ natives and expressly mentions details of unchristian-like mores such as not burying corpses.⁶³ Michel de Montaigne wrote of the Irish as being at the same stage of development as the ancient Gauls, expressing the belief that they wore hardly any clothes.⁶⁴ There was nothing puzzling to early modern Europeans in finding such ‘wild men’ on the periphery of their own continent. As late as 1693, the Swedish authorities in Lapland were burning Saami shamans at the stake amidst a vigorous Christianisation campaign, at the same time as missionaries from the same country were, in Delaware, publishing the Lutheran catechism in the language of the native Lenape.⁶⁵

The difficulty which some historians have had in accepting a colonial reading of Irish history stems largely from a *modern* perception of colonisation as something that happened outside Europe. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europeans experienced no such difficulty. The primary model from which they took their conception of colonisation was the Roman one, indeed the word colony has its root in the latin *colonus*, meaning a settlement of Roman citizens in a hostile, conquered territory. Self-consciously following Roman models, Thomas Smith referred to himself and his deputies as ‘coloniae ductores, the distributors of land to english men in a forein contrey’.⁶⁶ The historical misconception is compounded by a modern use of the words ‘plantation’ and ‘colony’, which differs from

62 William Good, ‘The Maners of the Irishry, both of old of later times’, in William Camden, *Britain, or A chorographical description of the most flourishing kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland*, (London, 1637), part 2, pp.145-6.

63 Francisco de Cuellar; Robert Crawford (trans.), ‘An introduction and complete translation of Captain Cuellar’s narrative of the Spanish Armada’, in Hugh Allingham, *Captain Cuellar’s adventures in Connacht & Ulster, A.D. 1588*, (London: Elliot Stock, 1897), pp.41-51 and *passim*.

64 Michel de Montaigne; M.A.Screech (trans.), ‘Apology for Raymond Sebond’, in *The Complete Essays*, (London: Penguin Press, 2003), p.510.

65 Håkan Rydving, *The end of drum-time: religious change among the Lule Saami, 1670’s-1740’s*, (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1993), p.55. Johan Campanius Holm, *Lutheri Catechismus: ofwersatt på American-Virginiske språket*, (Stockholm: Burchardi tryckeri af J.J. Genath, 1696).

66 Thomas Smith to Lord Deputy William FitzWilliam, 31 July 1574, cited in Quinn, ‘Sir Thomas Smith and the Beginnings of English Colonial Theory’, p.547.

the way these terms were understood at the time. While the word ‘colony’ is frequently flagged as problematic in relation to Ireland, ‘plantation’ enjoys more or less universal acceptance. Implicit in this is a feeling that the former term is to be reserved for settlement in America or other far-flung locations, while the latter is more appropriate for Ireland. It would appear, however, that the two words were used interchangeably in the early-modern period. Their synonymy is suggested by the fact that the verb related to *colonus* is *colere* meaning, to cultivate, or plant. As Raymond Gillespie has noted, the word ‘plantation’ was not used in print until 1586, when Walter Raleigh was praised for making ‘a plantation of the people of your own English nation in Virginia’.⁶⁷ William Bradford’s famous account of the Plymouth colony’s early years was entitled *Of Plymouth Plantation*. Proposals made concerning Ulster at the start of the seventeenth century, on the other hand, referred as often to the establishment of colonies as they did to plantations.⁶⁸

This anachronistic distinction has had the unfortunate effect of perpetuating and strengthening a perception of difference between these outposts of empire which did not exist at the time. From an English perspective, once the two areas had been opened up to settlement and investment, they were both nodes in the network of English empire, spoken of in the same breath. ‘Our plantations go on, the one doubtfully, the other desperately’, wrote one Samuel Calvert in 1612, comparing the situations in Ulster and Virginia respectively.⁶⁹ The interconnectedness is apparent in the way Arthur Chichester spoke of the colonial ventures in America detracting resources from Ulster.⁷⁰ Francis Bacon’s dismissal of plans for a Virginia colony as ‘an enterprise [. . .] differing as much from this [Ulster] as *Amadis de Gaul* differs from Caesar’s *Commentaries*’, could at first sight be construed as indicating that Bacon placed the two projects in entirely different categories;

67 Gillespie, ‘The Problems of Plantations’, pp.44-5; John Hooker, ‘To the Right Worthie and honorable gentleman Sir Walter Raleigh knight’, in Raphael Holinshed, *The Second volume of Chronicles*, (London, 1586), f.A3v.

68 For example: Anonymous, 1598, ‘That planting of collonies, and that to bee begonne onely by the Dutch, will geve best entrance to the reformation of Ulster’, SP 63-202-4 no.75, ff.232r-236v. Anonymous, ‘Certyn notes and observations touching the deducing and planting of colonies, addressed to the earl of Northampton, Lord Privy Seal’, no date, [BL Cotton Titus BX, ff.402-409], printed in Lyttleton and Rynne (eds.), *Plantation Ireland*, p.34.

69 Samuel Calvert to William Trumbull, 3 August 1612, in A.B. Hinds (ed.), *Report on the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Downshire*, 4 vols, (London: HMSO, 1938), vol.3, p.344.

70 Arthur Chichester to Salisbury, 2 October 1605, SP 63-217, f.165v; Nicholas Canny, however, has suggested that Chichester’s fears may have been unfounded, and that migration to Ireland complemented rather than competed with American colonies. ‘Migration and Opportunity’, pp. 30-1.

however, the fact that the two are bracketed together in the first place is significant and, read in context, he would seem to be expressing the conviction that the plans for Virginia were unrealistic compared to the sound financial proposition that Ulster represented. A more sober comparison is made earlier in the letter, when Bacon, reflecting on the motives that normally drive colonists (pleasure, profit and honour), reflects on the absence of a pleasure motive in Ulster where there are ‘no warm winters, nor orange-trees, nor strange beasts, or birds, or other points of curiosity or pleasure, as there are in Indies and the like’ to attract potential adventurers, who would have to make do with profit and honour.⁷¹

Objections to viewing Ireland as a colony were really only taken up later, by those such as William Molyneux, who argued that Ireland was a ‘Compleat Kingdom within it self’ and in no way comparable to that of Rome with one of its colonies.⁷² When looking at this constitutional argument for regarding Ireland as a kingdom rather than a colony, the focus must, of necessity, shift away from Ulster, as the debate concerns the entire island as a legal entity. Rather than being a defence of the dignity and sovereignty of Ireland, such arguments were usually made in assertion of the rights of the Protestant ascendancy which had benefited from that conquest. Anxious to reap the rewards of England’s growing maritime dominance in the Atlantic and participate fully in trade with the empire as a part of the hub rather than a colonial outpost, the constitutional status of Ireland as a kingdom offered a means by which they could distinguish it from other territories conquered and settled by the English.

Such arguments were necessary because the tendency persisted—notwithstanding the country’s status on paper—to treat Ireland as a colony. The 1698 act to restrict the exportation of wool from Ireland to England provides the context for Molyneux’s tract. Legislation already existed banning the export of live cattle to England, and the Navigation Acts which came to restrict trade between Ireland and the rest of the empire would suggest that, far from being an equal kingdom, the country was being governed with the economic interests of England—and later Great Britain—in mind. This was nothing new. As D.B.

71 Francis Bacon, ‘Certain considerations touching the plantation in Ireland, presented to his majesty, 1606’, in James Spedding (ed.), *The Letters and the Life of Francis Bacon*, 7 vols, (London: Longmans, Green, Reader and Dyer, 1868), vol.4, pp.121, 123.

72 William Molyneux, *The case of Ireland’s being bound by acts of Parliament in England stated*, (Dublin: 1698), pp.148-9.

Quinn has noted, the aim of colonial projects mooted at the beginning of the seventeenth century was ‘to encourage the exploitation of Ireland in the economic interest of England’.⁷³ The only difference later on was the existence of a class—eloquent, enfranchised and Protestant—to articulate objections to this. Such objections would in time lead to a ‘patriot’⁷⁴ movement in Ireland and in America to revolution and independence.

The argument that Ireland differed from the American colonies by virtue of its constitutional status is belied by the political realities of the time. The Irish Parliament was, as T.W.Moody has put it, ‘the instrument of the English colony in Ireland’; Lord lieutenants and deputies were invariably English; above all, however, the country was economically ‘condemned to an instrumental role by the metropolis’ which, Michael Hechter argues, is the ‘pattern of development characterising the colonial situation’. This often takes the form of the ‘development of underdevelopment’ in the interests of the colonising power and is normally associated with extra-European, Third World countries.⁷⁵ The de-industrialisation of India under British rule, as elucidated by Jawaharlal Nehru amongst others, is a classic example of this process.⁷⁶ If, as Steven Ellis has suggested, the ruling elite in Ireland ‘promoted the development of the local economy’, the fact that they were unable to do so effectively, on account of the Irish parliament’s impotence, is testament to Ireland’s colonial status. It is interesting in this respect to examine the other grounds on which Ellis has based his assertion that ‘a typically European society [as opposed to a colony] was successfully established in Ireland’.⁷⁷

73 David Beers Quinn, ‘A Discourse of Ireland’ (Circa 1599): A Sidelight on English Colonial Policy’, in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy. Section C*, vol.47, (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co, 1942), p.152.

74 Uncertainty as to what to call this eighteenth-century movement—the term ‘colonial nationalist’ would have undermined the basis of their argument—is discussed in Scott Brewster, *Ireland in Proximity: History, Gender, Space*, (London: Routledge, 1999), pp.30-1; the term ‘Protestant Ascendancy’ itself is not without its drawbacks either, see discussion of terminology regarding this social group in: S.J. Connolly, *Religion, law and power: The Making of Protestant Ireland, 1660-1760*, (Oxford University Press, 1995), pp.103-4.

75 T.W. Moody, ‘The Irish Parliament under Elizabeth and James I: A General Survey’, in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Section C, vol.45, (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co, 1940), p.43. Jenny Wormald, ‘The Creation of Britain: Multiple Kingdoms or Core and Colonies?’ in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Sixth Series, vol.2, (London: Royal Historical Society, 1992), p.185. Michael Hechter, *Internal colonialism: the Celtic fringe in British national development, 1536-1966*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1975), p.30.

76 Jawaharlal Nehru, *The Discovery Of India*, (Delhi: Penguin Books India, 2004), pp.323-8.

77 Ellis, ‘Writing Irish History’, p.9.

Two of these points may be taken together: that Ireland's 'governing elite was generally resident there' and that the country 'enjoyed a very wide degree of self-government'. While it is true that those who sat in the Irish parliament generally did reside in the country, both these statements pose difficulties for the reasons given above, namely that the restrictions imposed by Poyning's Law essentially gave London a veto on legislation from Dublin. This makes the use of the term 'self-government' problematic here, as well as the contention that this elite 'governed' in the full sense of the word. Another problem is that the country whose interests this elite represented, insofar as they did govern, was confined to the small minority entitled to participate in the political life of the country. Molyneux's claim that there remained a 'meer handful of the Antient *Irish* at this day; I may say, not one in a thousand' was simply untrue.⁷⁸ Between 82% of the population in 1659 and 70% in 1732 were disenfranchised Catholics, excluded from any role in public life; this is not to mention the considerable numbers of Protestant Dissenters who were likewise subject to such impediments.⁷⁹ Such legislation also confutes Ellis' contention that the ruling elite 'identified with the country', assuming that 'the country' one is referring to consists of the entire population rather than just the ruling caste. It will be thus seen that the society created in Ireland was far from typically European; it was in fact rather unusual in Europe for an ethnic/religious minority to rule over the majority in this way.

Ancillary to the constitutional argument against Ireland's colonial status is the claim that the Irish were incorporated as full subjects of the crown, whereas this was rarely—if ever—envisaged for Americans.⁸⁰ Just as the legal status of Ireland as a kingdom presents merely a formal difference between the way that territory was administered compared to Virginia or New England, the same is true regarding the legal positions of the Irish and Americans. It has been noted by Michael Neill, however, that the semantic sleight of hand by which the the 1541 act reclassified 'the king's Irish enemies' as 'the king's Irish subjects', is 'reminiscent of the papal apportionment of New World natives to Spain and Portugal half a century before'.⁸¹ By this act, the Irish became technically free at law; little or no attempt

78 Molyneux, *The case of Ireland's being bound by acts of Parliament in England stated*, p.20.

79 These figures are extrapolated from Youssef Courbage, 'The Demographic Factor in Ireland's Movement Towards Partition (1607-1921)', in *Population: An English Selection*, vol.9, (Paris: Institut national d'études démographiques, 1997), p.190.

80 Morgan, 'Mid-Atlantic Blues', pp.52-3; Murphy, 'Ireland and ante/anti-colonial theory,' p.155.

81 Michael Neill, 'Broken English and broken Irish: Nation, language, and the optic of power in Shakespeare's histories', in *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol.45, no.1, (Baltimore, Maryland: The John

was made by the English to legally integrate north America's native population with that of the colonists in the same way.⁸² Just as the legal designation of 'kingdom' masks a reality that is more complex than appearances would suggest, so does the term 'full subject'. This requires some clarification about what exactly was meant in practice.

It may be inferred from the status of free subject that the Irish became entitled to avail of the common law like any other subject in the three kingdoms. Once more confining our focus to Ulster, it was declared—even before the flight of the earls—that the people of the province were 'all his highnesse naturall subiects, so will his Maiestie have an equall respect towards them all'.⁸³ The benefits of being the king's Irish subjects were proclaimed as a primary justification for the plantation project by John Davies, who argued that the failure to admit the Irish to such benefits in the past had been responsible for most of the colony's troubles. Some of the practical consequences of this failure, Davies reflected, meant that the 'mere Irish' were 'not only disabled to bring any actions, but they were so far out of the protection of the law, as it was often adjudged no felony to kill a mere Irishman in the time of peace'. Davies was among the first justices of assize to sit in Tyrone and Donegal after the Nine Years War, and describes the respective reactions of the Gaelic rulers and their followers:

'Though it was somewhat distasteful to the Irish lords, [it] was sweet and most welcome to the common people, who, albeit they were rude and barbarous, yet did quickly apprehend the difference between the tyranny and oppression under which they lived before, and the just government and protection which we promised unto them for the time to come'.⁸⁴

It is certain that Aodh Ó Néill resented the intrusion of another legal authority in the region, the dictates of which could impinge on privileges he had enjoyed by customary right. In order to discover what the status of free subject meant in practice, and therefore

Hopkins University Press, 1994, p.5.

82 This would continue to be the case after American independence; the 'Indians' were not granted full citizenship until 1924 in the United States and 1947 in Canada.

83 'Proclamation of March 1605', SP 63-217 no.17, f.43.

84 Davies, 'A discovery', in *Historical Tracts*, pp.82-8, 210.

to what extent it represents a significant factor differentiating the colonised populations in Ireland and America, it is necessary to examine more closely the picture which Davies paints of the natives' position under the common law.

As Ó Néill was to recount in a list of grievances submitted to the king after his flight, the reality of the common law in Ulster in these years was very different from that suggested by the promise to 'governe them all by one indifferent Law, without respect of persons'.⁸⁵ The following picture which emerges after the introduction of sheriffs and assizes is one of a society in which the earl could no longer protect his people from the depredations of government officials who were, in theory, supposed to be upholding the law. It was alleged, for example, that lord deputy Chichester had incited Ó Néill's inveterate enemies, the sons of Seán Ó Néill (d.1567), to commit robberies and murders among his tenants, sheltering them in Chichester's own lands in Clondeboye—only prosecuting them when they killed one of his own tenants by mistake—then proceeding to use the law to prosecute those tenants who had been robbed of food by the Mic Seáin, for 'having relieved the said rebels with meat'.⁸⁶ Such arbitrary use of the law to terrorise the population continued throughout the colonial period, and will be illustrated in more detail below (pp.224-7).

The potential political benefits of being accounted full subjects were likewise tempered by the reality. If the natives' availing of these alleged benefits proved inconvenient to the authorities, this could be bypassed by the selective application or disregard of the law. While those 'mere Irish' who fulfilled the property qualification were allowed, for example, to participate in elections, in practice they could be thwarted by other means; Toirealach Mac Éinrí Ó Néill in Armagh was simply prevented by a sentry from taking part in the elections to the 1613 parliament.⁸⁷ Out of 64 MPs, Ulster returned only one Catholic. The manipulation by which the government ensured a Protestant majority (largely by the creation of boroughs in newly-colonised Ulster) was regarded—even in an era when

85 'Proclamation of March 1605', SP 63-217 no.17, f.43.

86 Aodh Ó Néill, 'Articles exhibited by the earle of Tirone to the king's most exelent ma[jes]tie, declaringe certaine causes of discontent offered him, by which he toke occasione to dep[ar]t his country', 1607, SP 63-222 no.201, f.318r.

87 John McCavitt, 'Rebels, Planters and Conspirators: Armagh 1594-1640', in A.J. Hughes and William Nolan (eds.) *Armagh history and society: interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county*, (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2001), p.256.

representative democracy by modern standards was an alien concept—as unacceptable.⁸⁸ Having seen Davies elected as speaker of the house against their wishes, the now-minority Catholic members of the Commons withdrew from the chamber in disgust and refused to return on the first day of parliament, protesting that ‘those within the House are no house’.⁸⁹

On the ground in Ulster, therefore, the status of full subject would have meant far less than the rhetoric would suggest; rather than a new dispensation in which an impartial body of law had replaced the arbitrary rule of Gaelic *tiarnaí*, the society which emerged in colonial Ulster was characterised by an arbitrary form of rule by the state’s representatives. The common law proved little more than a veneer, thinly-disguising the rule of force over a conquered people, and from which the colonists themselves were largely immune. The rolls of gaol delivery between 1613 and 1618 for example, show that more than 90% of those tried for crimes in this period by the justices of assize bore Irish names.⁹⁰ In light of these facts, the claim by Fynes Moryson that ‘the English alwayes governed Ireland, not as a conquered people by the sword and the Conquerers lawe, but as a Province united uppon mariage or like peaceable transactions’ may be seen strictly as self-serving rhetoric designed to ascribe noble motives to the conquest.⁹¹

The scenario outlined above could, on the other hand, be presented as the teething troubles inherent in the establishment of authority in a new territory. It has been claimed that, despite corruption and inefficiency, the legal system in time came to enjoy a significant level of confidence among the native population.⁹² The practice of gauging acceptance of the new order in Ulster by the use which the Irish made of the institutions of

88 ‘A Letter directed to His Majesty, from six Catholic Lords of the Pale, 25 November 1612’, in *Desiderata curiosa Hibernica: or a select collection of state papers*, 2 vols, (Dublin: printed by David Hay, 1772), vol.1, pp.158-62.

89 ‘A true declaration of the Protestants of what passed the day before the beginning of the Parliament’, in J.S. Brewer and William Bullen (eds.), *Calendar of the Carew manuscripts, preserved in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth*, vol.5, 1600-1623, (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, & Dyer, 1873), p.274.

90 Figures compiled from an analysis of: James F. Ferguson (ed.), ‘Ulster Roll of Gaol Delivery, 1613-1618’, in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, First Series, vol.1, (Belfast: Ulster Archaeological Society, 1853), pp.260-70.

91 Moryson, ‘Itinerary’, in Hughes (ed.), *Shakespeare’s Europe*, p.223.

92 Jane Ohlmeyer, ‘A Laboratory for Empire?: Early Modern Ireland and English Imperialism’, in Kevin Kenny (ed.), *Ireland and the British Empire*, (Oxford University Press, 2004), p.36.

English law, has led Raymond Gillespie to claim that such acceptance became ‘quite widespread’.⁹³ There is a danger in such a method, however, because the Irish no longer had recourse to any alternative means of legal redress other than English law. A legal system enjoys cogency only to the extent that resources exist to implement it. With the attenuation of a native ruling class capable of enforcing its precepts, Gaelic law had become obsolete; in the absence of any alternative, the fact that the Irish sought redress by the only means that existed tells us very little about acceptance of the new order or otherwise. As Anthony Carty has pointed out, ‘a complete destruction of the cultural-political structures of a society must not be allowed, of itself, to constitute evidence of an acquiescence in their destruction’.⁹⁴ It is of course perfectly possible that some administrators were sincere in the belief that the extension of common law would enfranchise the Irish and give them a stake in the new *status quo*, while others saw a convenient instrument for the extension of the state’s power and the exploitation of Ireland’s resources.

Even accepting for the purposes of argument that the reform/anglicisation of early modern Ireland was a means of addressing England’s economic and social problems—and was thus, by Hechter’s criteria, colonial in nature—the very existence of such a strategy of reform has been taken to differentiate it from the American colonies. The argument is that, even if the Irish were not yet within The Pale, metaphorically speaking, those shaping policy were working actively to bring them in; this process of anglicisation, however, was never something envisaged for the Americans.⁹⁵ To claim that the Americans were never seen by the English colonists (or their Euro-American ancestors) as anything more than a security threat to be displaced ever-westwards, elides a period in the first century of colonial America’s history, when significant efforts at cultural reformation of the Americans were in fact made by some among the settlers.

There was ever a tension—analogous to that between advocates of reform and colonisation in Ireland—between those who sought to instill these values, usually laying heavy emphasis

93 Raymond Gillespie, *Colonial Ulster: the settlement of East Ulster 1600-1641*, (Cork: Cork University Press for the Irish Committee of Historical Sciences, 1985), p.111.

94 Anthony Carty, *Was Ireland conquered?: international law and the Irish Question*, (London: Pluto Press, 1996), p.41.

95 Morgan, ‘Mid-Atlantic Blues’, pp.52-3.

on the Christianisation element of such reformation, and those who saw them as inimical to the health of the colony. In Virginia, for example, the 1614-1622 period between the first and second Anglo-Powhatan wars was marked by a change in emphasis, from the earlier aggressive stance to one of attempting to conciliate the Americans and win them over to Christianity. These efforts were embodied by the figure of George Thorpe, whose attempts to win converts through persuasion attracted criticism from his fellow colonists for what were perceived as his indulgence towards the natives.⁹⁶ Thorpe's death in the massacre of 1622 was seen as evidence of the irredeemably savage nature of the people he had believed reformable.⁹⁷

1622 marks the end of a period when the anglicisation of the Indian in Virginia was deemed possible. It is remarkable, given the later taboo surrounding intermarriage with the natives,⁹⁸ that the marriage between John Rolfe and Pocahontas was not only socially permissible in 1614, but seen as a cause for celebration and publicised in England in the hope of repairing the colony's damaged reputation. In New England, Thorpe had his counterpart in figures such as John Eliot and Roger Williams. Their efforts at proselytisation were likewise greeted with a mixed reaction from the colonial population at large, and were conditioned by the stipulation that such efforts lead to as little intercultural contact as possible. Separate villages were set up to keep the 'praying Indians' away from both their 'savage' kin and the colonists, and were the object of intense hostility—especially after Metacom's War in the 1670s—from those who foresaw no role for the Americans in the colony's future.⁹⁹

It is misleading to view the question in binary terms, either in Ireland or America, as a conflict between those who sought to reform and ultimately incorporate the natives as equals on the one hand, and those who sought to expel or exterminate them on the other. Colonies rarely have a settled policy towards the natives, uniformly subscribed to by all its

96 Wesley Frank Craven, 'Indian Policy in Early Virginia', in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, vol. 1, no. 1, (Williamsburg, Virginia: Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1944), p.72-3.

97 Waterhouse, *A declaration*, pp.15-6.

98 James Axtell, *The European and the Indian: Essays in the Ethnohistory of Colonial North America*, (Oxford University Press, 1981), pp.155-6.

99 Neal Salisbury, 'Red Puritans: The "Praying Indians" of Massachusetts Bay and John Eliot', in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, vol. 31, no. 1 (Williamsburg, Virginia: Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1974), pp.41, 53-4.

members. In Ulster, neither wholesale removal/extermination on the one hand, nor the elevation of the natives to equal status on the other, emerged as a practical policy. A third alternative will be outlined in chapter seven which became the distinguishing policy of the Ulster colony towards its natives in practice. Ultimately, expulsion did not prevail as the settled policy in Ulster, if for no other reason than that it was not feasible. This is not to say that expulsion was not attempted; the plantation project, after all, did aim at the ethnic cleansing of natives from the lands of English and Scottish undertakers in Ulster;¹⁰⁰ the 1650s again saw a wave of confiscation and transplantation which removed practically all Catholic landowners in that province. In America, expulsion largely prevailed over incorporation and anglicisation of the natives until the late nineteenth century. It is crucial to remember, however, that in the seventeenth century these ultimate outcomes were by no means inevitable. Ulster began, at this time, the process of transformation from being the part of Ireland least- to most-integrated into the British polity. Such an outcome has made that region appear, with hindsight, conceptually close to Britain, and the transformative impact of colonisation a phenomenon in need of little explanation.

The comprehensive anglicisation of Ireland has been cited by Steven Ellis as evidence of its position being 'fundamentally different from that of an extra-European colony'. As an example, African colonies are cited, which were colonised for a much shorter length of time, and where the native culture maintained its integrity to a far greater extent than in Ireland.¹⁰¹ Such a comparison, however, already assumes a dichotomy between Ireland and colonies outside Europe that does not stand up to scrutiny in this particular case. Jared Diamond has shown that settlement in the tropical zone, in which diseases like malaria were endemic, was a bridge too far for Europeans and, equally importantly, their domesticated animals. Most African colonies were thus home to far fewer settlers than colonies like Ireland and America.¹⁰² If the north American colonies had been taken as evidence instead, it would be seen that in those cases where indigenous people were swallowed up by the expanding European colony, they generally underwent a process of acculturation at least as thoroughgoing as the Gaelic Irish. In terms of the distinction between colonies of settlement and colonies of exploitation, therefore, it is Ireland and

100 The extent of this territory can be seen in figure 27, p.355.

101 Ellis, 'Writing Irish History', pp.9-10.

102 Jared Diamond, *Guns, germs and steel: the fates of human societies*, (London: Jonathan Cape, 1997), p.214.

north America which belong together in the former category, and those in the tropics that belong in the latter. On the other hand, the scarcity of native epidemic diseases in America, coupled with the natives lack of immunity to European microbes, constitutes the single biggest factor differentiating colonisation in America, not only from Ireland, but from all Old World colonies, in that the newcomers started out with an enormous genetic advantage over the natives. In seventeenth-century Ireland on the other hand, it was the newcomers who were more likely to succumb to unfamiliar bacteria such as the Irish ‘flux’ which decimated English armies in the 1640s and 50s and, as noted above, the presence of tropical diseases constituted an even greater barrier to colonial settlement in areas like sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁰³

Understandably, given the more recent history of the province, the Ulster plantation has often been studied in terms of its ultimate consequences. If it is to be understood in the context of its own time, however, comparisons and contrasts with other similar projects in the early modern period are necessary. The context of English expansion throughout the Atlantic world is particularly useful because—our subject being the *native* experience of colonisation—that story will, to a great extent, be one of adaption to dramatically transformative pressures and changes imposed from outside. The nature of this change in Ulster, from the natives’ point of view, bore more similarity with radical changes in the native way of life in America than it did with those undergone by peoples in, for example, peripheral areas of England, where national development took place along the lines of an evolutionary ‘diffusion’ of the dominant cultural and political values resulting from long-term interaction between core and periphery.¹⁰⁴ A history of the Ulster colony concerned primarily with a segment of the settler population on the other hand—such as Perceval-Maxwell’s work on the Scottish colonists—may well find the Atlantic context rather less useful, given the prominence of cross-channel contacts in that story. After all, in the colony’s first years, settlers could travel back across the North Channel for religious service of a Sunday.¹⁰⁵ Such a trip was hardly possible for those settling in America.

Issues of identity, whether they be ethnic, cultural, religious or otherwise, played a role in

103 Micheál Ó Siochrú, *God’s executioner: Oliver Cromwell and the conquest of Ireland*, (London: Faber, 2008), pp.10, 32.

104 For Michael Hechter’s opposition of this ‘diffusion model’ with ‘internal colonialism’ see below p.142.

105 Clarke, ‘The Plantations’, in De Paor (ed.), *Milestones*, p.68.

Ulster which was not the case in those territories where the metropolitan culture diffused over a longer timespan. The 'wild' Irish were constructed in the late sixteenth century as the counterpart to the 'wild' American, perhaps because they shared with the American a certain exoticness in common, with one crucial difference: the English had long possessed an image of the 'mere Irish' which could be used as a 'standard of savage or outlandish reference', not only in reference to 'savages' across the Atlantic, but closer to home. Archbishop Parker, for example, attempted in 1560 to expedite the appointment of resident clergy in the north of England, lest the people there 'should be too much Irish and savage'.¹⁰⁶

When American colonisation began, this image could easily be transferred across the ocean to the new peoples being encountered there; hence Roger Williams' warning to John Winthrop in 1637 that the Pequots who had surrendered not be enslaved for fear they should 'turn wild Irish'.¹⁰⁷ The Irish experience persisted as a convenient point of reference in America into the old age of those, like Samuel Gorton in New England, whose childhood had spanned the period when Ulster was being conquered. Gorton used the Nine Years War as a salutary warning of the dangers of stirring up native resentment. He clearly had no doubt about the parallels between that struggle and the one facing the colonists in 1675 against a native alliance led by the Wampanoag sachem, Metacom or, as he was known to the English, King Philip:

'I remember the time of the warres in Ireland (when I was young, in Queene Elizabeths days of famous memory), where much English blood was spilt by a people like unto these [. . .] And after these Irish were subdued by force, what treacherous and bloody massacres have they attempted is well knowne'.¹⁰⁸

By the time Gorton was writing, such comparisons were becoming rarer. As S.J. Connolly has noted, when the wars in Ireland had receded sufficiently in the memory, 'the wild

106 Quinn, *Elizabethans*, p.26.

107 Roger Williams to John Winthrop, June 1637, in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, vol.6, 4th series, (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1863), p.195.

108 Samuel Gorton to John Winthrop Jr, 11 September 1675, in *The Winthrop Papers*, Vol.7, 4th series, (Boston: The Massachusetts Historical Society, 1865), pp.629-30.

Irishman rampaging at the frontiers of English settlement gave way in English folklore to the comic provincial'.¹⁰⁹ Swings of public feeling in response to military fortunes are crucial in understanding English attitudes to the Irish. After the Nine Years War hostility towards the Irish was gradually replaced by a condescending paternalism, evident, for example, in Ben Jonson's representation of the defeated Irish in the *Masque* (1613) no longer as dangerous rebels, but as clownish figures, squabbling with one another in competition for the king's favour.¹¹⁰ A sharp swing back towards a view of the Irish as treacherous and bloodthirsty can be seen in the aftermath of the 1641 rising, the writings of John Temple being only the best-known of an antipathy widespread at the time.¹¹¹ Although it took far longer, perceptions of the native American ultimately underwent a similar process of romanticisation and stereotyping, once resistance had been quelled and the 'Indian' was no longer seen as an obstacle to the 'winning of the west'.¹¹² In Ulster between the 1560s and 1600s, a series of military incursions paved the way for plantation proper. The conquerers'

109 Connolly, *Religion, law and power*, p.113.

110 Ben Jonson, 'The Irish Masque at Court', in *The works of Ben Jonson*, (London: Routledge, Warne and Routledge, 1859), pp.583-4. Victor Durkacz has noted a similar process taking place in eighteenth and nineteenth century England vis-à-vis the romanticisation of Highland Gaelic culture: 'The myth of their warlike fidelity was glorified into a cult by the Celtic society, and the kilt was its symbol. The essence of highland culture, as expressed through the Gaelic language, was passed by. This was the final victory of English over Gaelic culture. The Gaels having been 'reformed' from Catholicism and 'improved' from barbarity and backwardness, Tory romantics re-Celticised them into a polite, politically sterile caricature of themselves'. Victor Durkacz, *The decline of the Celtic languages: a study of linguistic and cultural conflict in Scotland, Wales and Ireland from the Reformation to the twentieth century*, (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1983), p.196.

111 Alison Games has traced the spread and durability of this anti-Irish feeling throughout the British Atlantic world. A full twenty years after the rising, for example, laws were being passed in Bermuda to disarm the Irish and forbid them gathering in groups of more than two, the English 'not being willing to have them destroyed by these bloody people who did use most horrible cruelties to our English Protestants in Ireland'. *The web of empire: English cosmopolitans in an age of expansion, 1560-1660*, (Oxford University Press, 2008), pp.263-4. This pattern can be seen to replay itself up to the nineteenth century. Michael de Nie has noted that an upsurge in violence by the Fenian Brotherhood during the 1860s and 70s saw 'the transformation of the stereotypical Irishman, Paddy, into the 'Celtic Caliban'. "A Medley Mob of Irish-American Plotters and Irish Dupes": The British Press and Transatlantic Fenianism', in *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 40, no. 2 (University of Chicago Press, 2001), p.215.

112 Attempts, sincere in some quarters, to effect the conversion of the natives in Virginia to Christianity, ended after the 1622 massacre. John Parker, 'Religion and the Virginia Colony, 1609-10', in Andrews, Canny and Hair (eds.), *The Westward Enterprise*, pp.245-70. Aspirations to incorporate the Americans into colonial society were abandoned in favour of expulsion from the Virginia peninsula, across which a palisade was constructed, in order to enclose a pale. By 1631, the colonial legislature was passing laws forbidding colonists from even talking to the natives: 'No person or persons shall dare to speake or parlie with any Indians either in the woods or in any plantation, yf he can possibly avoyd it by any meanes'. William Waller Hening (ed.), *The statutes at large: Being a collection of all the laws of Virginia, from the first session of the Legislature, in the year 1619*, vol.1, (Richmond, Virginia: Printed by and for Samuel Pleasants, Junior, printer to the Commonwealth, 1809), p.167.

perceptions of the indigenous culture would be determined by the kind of underlying material realities that were at play in Virginia and New England, and vice versa. Gaelic society in this period was in a profound state of flux, as the Irish adopted various strategies in response to these pressures from without. These strategies, and the stresses to which Ulster was subject in the decades immediately before the plantation project, will be the subject of the next chapter.

3 Broken by a war, capable of good government¹

Fuaras bruidhne Banbha Cuinn,
buidhne a h-adhnha 's ní fhaghuim.

I have found the mansions of Conn's Ireland,
But I cannot find the companies of her halls.²

The decades prior to the Ulster plantation have attracted considerable attention from historians of early modern Ireland. There is no shortage of work on the Nine Years War, the flight of the earls, or any of the other episodes that played an instrumental role in preparing the ground for colonisation. There is often, however, a slight disjuncture between these events and the plantation itself. The devastation of Gaelic Ulster, particularly during the latter stages of the Nine Years War, has been neglected as a factor when taking account of native reaction to the plantation. The period reaching back to the 1570s saw a series of attempts to integrate the province into a centralising English (soon-to-be Anglo-Scottish) state. A variety of strategies were tried and found to be wanting, from attempts at private colonisation in east Ulster in the 1570s, to the effort at controlling the province through (it was hoped) a tractable local ally, or from the creation of native freeholders in Monaghan, to a commitment to military conquest. These efforts, however, are not often presented as integral to laying the groundwork upon which the plantation took place. Histories often end with defeat at Kinsale or the flight of the earls, or they often begin with the arrival of colonists in the reign of King James I.³ Rarely do they demonstrate

1 'A barbarous country must first be broken by a war before it will be capable of good government'.
Davies, 'A discovery', reproduced in *Historical tracts*, p.4.

2 Uí Dhálaigh, 'A poem on the downfall', p.204.

3 Kinsale: Cionn tSáile, 'headland of the sea.'

unequivocally the causal link between the two.

Moreover, the introduction of English and Scottish colonists is sometimes presented as taking place against a pacific blank slate, rather than upon a society recovering from several decades of war and famine. Perceval-Maxwell for example, writes of the Scottish colonists developing ‘the wilderness of Ulster’, a territory that was ‘ripe for settlement’. Among the consequences of this settlement was ‘the order it established’.⁴ The absence of order *before* the arrival of the colonists is clearly implied by such a sentence, and the suggestion is of a land not so much depopulated as empty. The distinction between these two terms will be explored in this chapter. The English in America were similarly apt to see the land as having been miraculously cleared of inhabitants. The Puritans in New England believed that God had ‘made roome for his people to plant’, by means of virulent epidemics that decimated the native population while sparing the unwittingly immune English.⁵ Such beliefs were not confined to the Puritans; their inveterate enemy Thomas Morton (often represented as sympathetic to the natives), finding in the Massachusetts landscape a ‘new found Golgatha’, opined that the land had been ‘made so much the more fitt for the English Nation to inhabit in, and erect in it Temples to the glory of God’.⁶ A similar wish to present Ulster as having been auspiciously cleared of natives lay behind the attempt—when showing representatives of the London companies around the lands earmarked for that colonisation project in 1609—to steer the guests away from any contact with the indigenous population; ‘matters of distaste, [such] as fear of the Irish’, Chichester was instructed, were to ‘be not so much as named’.⁷

4 Perceval-Maxwell, *The Scottish migration to Ulster*, pp.18, 29, 311.

5 Edward Johnson; J. Franklin Jameson (ed.), *Wonder-working providence*, (New York: C. Scribner’s sons, 1910), p.41; it was not only those natives who stood in their way whom the Puritan’s regarded as liable to the vengeance of providence. William Bradford wrote of a ‘proud and very profane yonge man’ among the crew of the Mayflower, who tormented the brethren; ‘but it plased God before they came halfe seas over, to smite this yong man with a greeveous disease, of which he dyed in a desperate maner’. William Bradford, William T. Davis (ed.), *Bradford’s History of Plymouth Plantation, 1606-1646*, (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1908), p.122.

6 Thomas Morton, *The New English Canaan*, (Boston: Prince Society, 1883), p.134.

7 Lords of the Council to Sir Arthur Chichester, 3 August 1609, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, pp.266-7. As John McCavitt has pointed out, this design was thwarted at the end of a successful visit when, on their way home, the Londonders’ ship chanced to stop at Carlingford Lough at the same time as a boat full of native soldiers, destined for deportation to Sweden, took the captain prisoner and attempted to jump ship. See: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/plantation/transcripts/ag02_t12.shtml, accessed 28 October 2013.

One of the purposes of this chapter will be to show that Ulster was not the blank slate which some early-modern commentators, and subsequent historians, have hoped or suggested it was. The fact remains, however, that no widespread or co-ordinated resistance to the plantation was offered, in these decades, from the native inhabitants. This work will seek to determine the attitude of the native population towards the Ulster colony, and to what extent that society was one characterised by conflict or co-operation. Some English observers did not see a lack of outward resistance as necessarily indicating acceptance of the new order. Toby Caulfeild observed in 1610 that the Irish reacted with dismay when Toirealach Mac Éinrí Ó Néill of the Fews arrived back from England with news of the proposed plantation, and were already resigned to being moved off their lands and forced to live as woodkerne; there was, he added, ‘not a more discontented people in Christendome’.⁸ His comments suggested not only the hostility of the Irish towards the plantation, but also their acute demoralisation and lack of means to resist it. Others such as Thomas Wentworth seemed blithely oblivious to any such discontent; only two years before the rising of 1641, he expressed with confidence that there was ‘neither couradge nor hope left for opposition’ from the Irish.⁹

Instead of seeking an answer in the favourable/unfavourable disposition of the Irish towards the colony, however, the remainder of this chapter offers a more useful avenue of inquiry into the lack of substantial resistance, suggesting that it may be more profitably sought in the sense of powerlessness previously attested to by Caulfeild. Evidence indicates that the actions of the vast majority were in fact determined by the dictates of necessity rather than choice, and that an expedient accommodation may be more fully explained by looking at the condition of native society in Ulster at the outset of the period. When the latter is taken into consideration, it is indeed difficult to imagine what form such resistance could have taken. Looking at the factors that rendered Ulster, in the aftermath of the flight, incapable of putting up any meaningful resistance, will thus determine the shape of this chapter. These factors encompass the series of abortive attempts to integrate Ulster through private colonisation schemes, and the devastation caused by the Nine Years War, as well as the perception of Ulster as a ‘land of war’, and subsequently as an ‘empty land’, ripe for settlement.

8 Sir Toby Caulfeild to the lord deputy, 27 June 1610, SP 63-229 no.108i, f.61v.

9 Wentworth to Christopher Wandesford, 1639. Bodleian library, Oxford, Carte MS 1, f.126r.

Pre-colonisation strategies

The idea of planting colonies amongst the Irish in Ulster was not new. The presence of Old English names such as Jordan, Savage and White in Down bore witness to settlement associated with the medieval earldom which had, in its heyday, extended its influence across the province.¹⁰ The earl of Ulster had, at times, received tribute from all of the most powerful septs of Ulster and behaved in many respects as an integrated part of the warlord-dominated landscape of that province, little different to any other regional Gaelic *tiarna*. In an indenture of 1390, for example, the Uí Néill of Tyrone recognised the earls as having rights to the ‘lordships, rents, exactions and answerings of all the Irishmen of Ulster and Uriel;’ this included such Gaelic institutions as the *buannacht*, a ruler’s right to billet mercenaries or servants on his subjects, which the Ó Néill promised not to ‘intermeddle with’.¹¹ By this period, Katharine Simms has remarked, it made little difference to the English government whether the overlord in Ulster was Gaelic or English, as long as he refrained from attacking the Anglo-Irish colony.¹² In the sense of translating the earl’s sphere of influence into an actual colony of English settlers, however, the earldom never expanded beyond east Ulster. By the sixteenth century, the descendants of these settlers had been Gaelicised to the extent that Thomas Smith in the 1570s claimed they ‘save the name remayneth nothing English’.¹³

This part of the province alone—east of the Bann—originally defined the boundaries of ‘Ulster’, a term derived from the ancient kingdom of *Uladh*.¹⁴ The earls’ claim to wield authority over the entire province meant that by the fourteenth century, it had lost this more restricted meaning and began to be applied to the entire north by the Irish themselves, with the leaders of the Uí Néill adopting the title of *rí Ulaidh* to express their ambitions for province-wide overlordship.¹⁵ While they never achieved such a stable

10 The attainder of Seán Ó Néill in 1569 cited as evidence of the medieval conquest of Ulster by John De Courcy the presence of ‘Savages, Yordans, Fitz Simons, Chamberlains, Bensons, Russels, Audeleyes, Whytes, and many others’ in the province at that time. *Statutes Ireland*, vol.1, p.331.

11 Simms, *Gaelic lordships*, pp.346-7.

12 Simms, *Gaelic lordships*, p.724.

13 Smith, *A Letter sent by I. B.* sig. B3v.

14 The Bann river: An Bhanna, deriving from *bandia*, a compound word (*bean+dia*) meaning ‘goddess.’

15 Simms, *Gaelic lordships*, p.677.

position of dominance in the north, Gaelic rulers did enjoy a resurgence throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and the earldom fell into abeyance. That an overlordship such as that claimed by the earls continued to exercise the minds of the Uí Néill is clear from the desire of both Conn Bacach and his grandson Aodh Ó Néill to be given the title of earl of Ulster instead of the more limited earldom of Tyrone. The granting of such titles was in keeping with the crown's policy of controlling Ulster at arm's length, through alliances with local rulers.

A change of policy took place in the 1570s, with the crown promoting private colonies in Antrim and Down. The backdrop against which this shift took place was one in which the Tudor state, from around the middle of the sixteenth century, engaged more actively with Ireland. The conversion of the lordship into a kingdom in 1541 was symptomatic of the changes which fed into this more interventionist approach. The Reformation brought about circumstances under which Irish Catholics would be viewed as potential traitors or, at best, what King James would one day describe as 'half-subjects'; while a movement towards 'civilising' the native Irish arising from the growing influence of humanist ideas amongst the intelligentsia played a similar role (see pp.114-5). The possibility of Ireland being used as a staging-post for foreign invasion also meant that the consolidation of control over the island was perceived as an urgent necessity.¹⁶ Perhaps most fundamental of all was a centralising impulse, associated with the rise of national monarchy throughout Europe, which was making its belated arrival in Ireland. The early modern state sought to consolidate control over its territory, laying increasingly insistent claims to a monopoly on violence. Contemporaneous struggles of the English crown against powerful magnates in the North of England, such as the Percys and Dacres, can be seen in this context.¹⁷ Powerful, semi-independent warlords of this kind were no longer acceptable in this new era, and this trend can be seen to play a role in the Tudor move away from entrusting the

16 Lord deputy Sussex wrote in 1560 that he had often wished the country 'to be sunk in the sea', but that the danger presented by the possibility of the French gaining a foothold there (and linking up with the Scots) necessitated its subjection to English rule, despite the trouble and expense that entailed. 'The opinion of th' Earl of Sussex touching reformation of Ireland', 11 September 1560, William Bullen, John S. Brewer (eds), *Calendar of the Carew Manuscripts Preserved in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth*, vol.1, 1515-1574, (London: Longmans, Green, Reader & Dyer, 1867), p.302.

17 Steven Ellis has argued that these struggles parallel the crown's dealings with powerful Anglo-Irish rulers such as the Earls of Kildare; see Steven Ellis, 'Nationalist Historiography and the English and Gaelic Worlds in the Late Middle Ages', in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.25, no.97, (Dublin University Press, 1986), pp.13-14.

viceroyalty in Ireland to local magnates like the earls of Kildare.¹⁸ Aspirations for a more direct form of rule can be discerned in the fact that after 1534, chief governors of Ireland were exclusively English.

As Nicholas Canny has noted, the overthrow of the Earls of Kildare removed a protective bulwark to the west, which enabled the Irish of the midlands to attack the Pale directly.¹⁹ The plantations in Offaly and Laois in the 1550s were an attempt to construct another kind of bulwark against such attacks. They are also a good example of how, once set in train, the process of extending English rule over the island generated its own momentum. The shift in policy from delegating rule to local elites to direct colonisation took place only gradually; efforts to rein in Gaelic rulers provoked a response which, in turn, generated a counter-response from the government, feeding into a self-sustaining spiral of violence which hastened greater military investment by the English. The idea of planting colonies was concomitant with the expanding early modern state. Officials like lord deputy Sidney were familiar with Spanish colonisation strategies in America and Humphrey Gilbert, who also became involved in Ireland at this time, had already been active in promoting English projects across the Atlantic.²⁰

In Ulster, given the largely notional nature of government rule, such a hands-on approach was not possible in the mid-sixteenth century. An alternative strategy appeared far more appropriate to conditions there. This strategy, dubbed 'surrender and regrant' by historians, was promoted by the Old English of the Pale with the support of lord deputy Anthony St.Leger in the 1540s. Government policy for dealing with the native Irish would vacillate between this, on the one hand, and direct intervention/colonisation on the other, for the remainder of the century. Surrender and regrant involved Gaelic rulers relinquishing their territories and receiving them back as fiefdoms held from the crown. Gaelic landholding arrangements were to be replaced by English ones, lands were to be passed on by primogeniture and Gaelic practices such as redistribution of land amongst the kin group and the institution of the *tánaiste*, would, it was hoped, be abolished. These

18 Kildare: Cill Dara, 'church of the oak.'

19 Canny, *The Elizabethan conquest of Ireland*, p.31.

20 Quinn, *Elizabethans*, pp.106-7. J. Michael Hill has noted the irony in the fact that it was under the Catholic Mary and Philip that Spanish strategies of colonisation in America began to influence policy in Ireland, in *Fire and sword: Sorley Boy MacDonnell and the rise of Clan Ian Mor, 1538-1590*, (London: Athlone Press, 1993), p.41.

reforms envisaged a transformation of Gaelic society from the top down; the sons of Gaelic nobles would be sent away to receive an English education; the Irish, it was felt, would come to see the superiority of English civility over Gaelic barbarity.

While less costly than military intervention, surrender and regrant aspired to more than simply leaving the Irish to their own devices. In reality, however, it rarely brought about the profound changes which had been hoped for. In Ulster, it was particularly unsuccessful. Conn Bacach Ó Néill, created earl of Tyrone in 1542, did not enjoy the kind of ascendancy looked for in a proxy, and the campaigns of his son, Seán Ó Néill, who had been frustrated in his ambition to succeed his father, highlighted the limits of government control over Ulster. Indeed, Seán Ó Néill's final defeat did not even come at the hands of the English but, having been routed in battle by the Uí Dhónaill of Tyrconnell, he fled to the Scots in Antrim, who killed him in revenge for their defeat at Glentaisie two years earlier.²¹ The proximity of Scotland to Ulster, and the Mic Dhónaill presence in Antrim growing in strength throughout these decades, was a source of tremendous concern to the government. Besides reducing the Ulster Irish to 'civility' and transforming the province into an obedient, revenue-generating part of the realm, the aim of driving a wedge of English settlement into this cross-channel *Gaeltacht/Gàidhealtachd* provides another crucial element in explaining why, in the 1570s, the government turned from the policies outlined above, to one of attempting direct colonisation in east Ulster.²²

The 'Enterprise of Ulster'

Although Queen Elizabeth had written of Ulster to the lord deputy Sidney in the 1560s concerning her intention to 'have that contrey peepled with obedyent subiects', the 1570s did not see a complete revolution in government policy towards all of Ulster.²³ Support for private colonisation projects was confined to areas close to either the east coast or the Pale. Elsewhere, the government's strategy remained one of supporting a local ruler such as Toirealach Luineach and (with even greater hopes of success) Aodh Ó Néill, to uphold their

21 Glentaisie: Gleann Taise, 'the glen of Taise', a princess of the Tuatha De Danann. It is also possible that the name derives from the Irish *taise*, meaning both 'ghost', 'ruins' and 'dampness, moistness'.

22 For further discussion of this dimension, see pp.332-6.

23 Elizabeth to Sidney, 11 June 1567. SP 63-21 no.10, f.23v.

interests.²⁴ The ‘Enterprise of Ulster’ would be an abject failure in that it established no permanent colonies. As a forerunner to the seventeenth-century plantation, however, it merits examination, not only for the lessons learned by the government from its failure, but also because native reaction to these incursions can indicate to what extent, if any, the Irish were conscious of such changes in strategy.

A new approach to Ulster can be seen in the decision, after Seán Ó Néill’s death, to establish a permanent colony of soldiers in the vicinity of Carrickfergus. Thomas Smith spoke of these soldiers as part of a wall to be constructed for the defence of the Pale, which would include his colony in the Ards and Clondeboye.²⁵ Smith’s project is the best-known of these schemes; he received his patent at the same time as Thomas Chatterton was granted permission to settle the southern parts of Armagh, and Nicholas Malby the country of the Mic Artáin in Kinelarty, County Down.²⁶ These grants were clearly part of a wider plan to insulate the Pale from creeping Gaelicisation, primarily from the Ulster Irish, in the same way that the colonisation of Laois and Offaly had been. The presence of Nicholas Bagenal at Newry was a part of the same strategy, designed to control one of the main points of access to the province at the Moyry Pass.²⁷

Chatterton and Malby’s schemes amounted to little, both men discovering their means to be wholly inadequate to the task at hand. Few details survive of their failure, or of the reaction of the native population in the areas they were to colonise. A document from the time of James’ plantation records the reversion of Chatterton’s patent to the crown, mentioning that Chatterton himself had been killed by the locals shortly after he received his grant.²⁸ The cavalier attitude with which he approached the project can be gauged from

24 Although, as Hiram Morgan has pointed out, the inclusion in Smith’s grant of a vague reference to ‘Tyrone and the adjacent places’ indicates that the way was left open to colonies in central Ulster if he was successful in Clondeboye and the Ards. Morgan, ‘The Colonial Venture of Sir Thomas Smith’, pp.263-4.

25 William Cecil, ‘Memoriall for Irelande’, 22 December 1567. SP 63-22 no.49, ff.143r-146r. Thomas Smith to his son Thomas Smith, 18 May 1572. SP 70-146 no.13, f.80r.

26 For a summary of the Chatterton, Malby and Smith projects (‘identical in . . . scope and ultimate failure’) see Robert Dunlop, ‘Sixteenth century schemes for the plantation of Ulster’, in *Scottish Historical Review*, vol. 22, no. 87, (Glasgow: Jackson, Wylie, & Co., 1925), pp.117-24. Kinelarty: Cineál Fháirtaigh, named for a population group which inhabited the territory, the descendants of Fathartach.

27 Newry: An tIúr, ‘the yew tree’. Moyry Pass: Bealach an Mhaighre, Mhaighre probably derives from the words for ‘plain’ *má* and ‘fort’ *ráth*, i.e. ‘plain of forts’.

28 ‘An Abstract [of] his majesty’s several titles’, 1610, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.553.

the lord deputy's complaint that Chatterton and his brothers had journeyed (against Fitzwilliam's express prohibition) into Ó hAnluain's country, 'as if he had bin taking of a farm in Mide', and were spreading rumours of their intentions without having the means or the men to quell the disturbances they had caused.²⁹ Nicholas Malby, a soldier stationed at Carrickfergus who had been among those willing to colonise Laois in the 1550s, seems to have expended his energies in assisting the designs of Thomas Smith and his son. While he was confident in October 1572 that they would 'by degrees work another English Pale in the north', two years later, it was being written that his grant would have to be revoked.³⁰ The ultimate failure of the Ards colony appears to have convinced Malby that his own was not worth even attempting, and he was only too willing to surrender his patent to Mac Artáin's country in return for lands in Roscommon and Longford.³¹

These private colonisation schemes had the virtue, from the government's point of view, of being cheap. Whereas surrender and regrant arrangements had promised the anglicisation of Ulster through transforming the Gaelic ruling class, it was now proposed to replace that elite altogether with English colonists who, instead of requiring a vast outlay of men and weapons, would fend for themselves in defence of lands which they had been granted. This imperialism on-the-cheap sought to marshall the self-interest of colonial landowners instead of taxing the government's resources. The cheapness of such schemes perhaps blinded administrators to their weaknesses. Chief amongst the overlooked difficulties was the presence of a hostile native population, or indeed, the presence of a population altogether. Sir Thomas Smith's belief that the Irish 'churl' would see the colonists as saviours from the tyranny of their rulers has already been alluded to; elsewhere in the same promotional pamphlet he depicted a land almost devoid of people altogether.³²

It is no surprise then, that many colonists who had never seen the land, arrived with unrealistically high expectations regarding the ease with which it would be occupied. The

29 Lord deputy Fitzwilliam to Burghley, 26 October 1572. SP 63-38 no 24, f.58r.

30 Nicholas Malby to Burghley, 28 October 1572. SP 63-38 no.25, f.61r. 'The meanes how my Lord of Essex maye rayse to his ma[jes]tie in Ulster a yearly revenue of [£]5000', November 1574. SP 63-48 no.64, f.197r.

31 Bernadette Cunningham, 'Malby, Sir Nicholas (c.1530–1584)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (Oxford University Press, 2004), online edn, Jan 2008, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17856>, accessed 13 Nov 2013. Roscommon: Ros Comáin, 'Saint Coman's wood.'

32 Smith, *A Letter sent by I. B.* sig. B1r.

resistance which confronted these initial efforts moderated such expectations. When the earl of Essex arrived in the area in 1573, it was with a force of 1,200 soldiers, suggesting that the need for a more robust approach had been recognised. The fact that his force was half funded by the crown (Essex having borrowed £10,000 from the Queen to enable him to pay his own share) also suggests a dawning realisation that the task was too great for private means alone. It is nonetheless clear that adventurers continued to believe in the prospect of unoccupied land for the taking. As the project began to unravel, Essex complained in his letters that his associates were returning to ‘the delicacies of England’ when they realised that such land would have to be fought for.³³ It was such adventurers, and men like Chatterton, that Thomas Blenerhasset would later try to disabuse when it came to the plantation of 1609.³⁴ One lesson learned from the abortive colonies of the 1570s was that quality was more important than quantity; it was better to attract a more realistic and committed class than a large number of adventurers seeking quick and easy profit.

Perhaps the most lasting lesson learned from these schemes was that privatised colonisation of this sort was a chimera, based on this illusion of land either uninhabited or inhabited only by tractable peasants. This had been clear beforehand to realists such as Sidney. He had proposed an unattractively-expensive plan in the late 1560s, to build a series of fortifications at key strategic points in Ulster, adding that if the government was not prepared to invest in these, it would be better to abandon the province.³⁵ The failure of the Essex expedition merely confirmed Sidney’s opinion that, while colonisation was the right strategy to pursue, the resources required for its proper execution meant that only the state could realistically undertake such a project. It was, he wrote, ‘no subject’s enterprise’.³⁶ Essex himself came to a similar conclusion, based not merely on the paucity of material resources available to the private individual, but also on the realisation that such an enterprise did not have the prestige associated with a state undertaking, resistance to which could be labeled as treason and punished accordingly. This distinction, he observed, was ‘a thinge that the Irrishe have a speciall eye unto’.³⁷

33 Dunlop, ‘Sixteenth century schemes’, pp.124, 126, 203.

34 See above, p.48.

35 Lord deputy Henry Sidney to William Cecil, 12 November 1568. SP 63-26 no.18, ff.71r-75r.

36 Dunlop, ‘Sixteenth century schemes’, p.211.

37 Essex to the Privy Council, 15 April 1574. SP 63-45 no.66, f.170v.

A more immediate consequence of this realisation was that the state fell back on its alternative policy of surrender and regrant, attempting to exert control over the north through the latest in a long line of hopefully-pliable local allies, Aodh Ó Néill. The spectacular failure of these hopes for Ó Néill would entail a lengthy discussion of the genesis and course of the Nine Years War, which is beyond the scope of this work. It may suffice to say that in the aftermath of that war, and even more so after the flight of the earls, a consensus had been reached that, as John Davies observed in 1612, ‘when private men attempt the conquest of countries at their own charge, commonly their enterprises do perish without success’.³⁸ It is somewhat ironic then, that at the time Davies was writing, this consensus was being proved wrong in the very area where these private colonisation schemes had earlier foundered. The ‘private’ plantation of Antrim and Down, by means of large grants of land to individuals such as James Hamilton, Hugh Montgomery and Ránall Mac Dónaill, would prove to be more successful in the long term (if judged by population density of colonists in relation to natives) than the official one. While the Mac Dónaill presence in north Antrim had been established by a lengthy struggle against both crown and natives throughout the sixteenth century, Hamilton and Montgomery developed their plantations in Clondeboye from 1606 with little resistance from the Irish. The fact that they succeeded where Smith and Essex had failed would suggest that a profound change had taken place in the intervening years, rendering the native Irish no longer able or willing to resist the influx of colonists.

An empty land, a land of war

Two developments took place in the decades after the 1570s which left east Ulster a far more pacific environment for colonisation than Smith and Essex had found it; these were the breakup of the once-powerful Gaelic *oireacht* of Clondeboye, and a significant depopulation of the area during the Nine Years War. It would be more accurate to say that these developments accelerated in this period, as the first was already underway when the adventurers of the 1570s arrived, and the campaign of Essex made a major contribution to the second. As much as the depopulation and dislocation caused by the physical assault on Gaelic Ulster, it was the gradual breaking down of that society’s cultural and legal

³⁸ Davies, ‘A discovery’, reproduced in *Historical tracts*, p.129.

coherence that would prove its ultimate undoing. The fate of Clandeboye is a prime example of this process. The Clandeboye Uí Néill were not so much eliminated as a threat to colonisation, so much as rendered powerless by internecine conflict and division within the *oireacht*, a conflict promoted by government policy. This, combined with a series of untimely deaths, the added threat of the Scots in Antrim on the one hand and the Uí Néill of Tyrone on the other, meant that by the early seventeenth century, while individual members of the sept might receive grants of land from the crown, Clandeboye was extinct as a political entity.³⁹

The destruction of Clandeboye as a Gaelic sovereignty paved the way for the intensive settlement which took place in the area from 1606. Just as the rest of Ulster would be denuded of its ruling elite after the flight of the earls, such a process was essentially complete in east Ulster by 1603. Even if some of the personnel who would have formed that ruling elite under other circumstances remained, they were reduced to the status of, at best, major landowners. As will be seen later in this work, the economic forces at work in colonial Ulster tended, with time, to squeeze out these Gaelic landlords at the expense of colonists. In east Ulster, the primary beneficiaries of this process were Mac Dónaill, Hamilton, and Montgomery. The granting of lands to the latter two figures (Mac Dónaill's grant merely recognised his *de facto* situation) has generally been accounted as opening the way for the extensive (mainly Scottish) colonisation that followed. Such grants, however, only provided a means by which colonists gained a foothold, and thus provide only a proximate explanation for the success of these projects in the 1600s compared to earlier efforts.

The circumscription of a native elite that might co-ordinate resistance certainly played a role. On a fundamental level, the greater proximity of east Ulster to the island of Britain cannot be discounted; certainly the medieval settlement of English had been largely

39 The zenith of Clandeboye's existence saw leadership pass, almost unbroken, from father to son for almost the entire fifteenth century. The beginning of its demise can be dated from period after the death of Niall Mór Ó Néill (d.1512), with the deaths, in quick succession, of several of Niall's sons (Aodh Meirgeach d.1524, Brian Ballach d.1529, Feilimí Bacach d.1533, Niall Óg d.1537), leaving the position of *tiarna* open to many rivals, none of whom enjoyed a clear superiority over his rivals. The instability consequent upon this was ultimately fatal for the integrity of the territory and efforts to resist the English. For a detailed account of this decline see: Thomas Murphy, *Clandeboye: an outline of its rise and decline c. 1350 to 1606*, (MA dissertation, University of Limerick, 2011).

confined to this area. Proximity had likewise enabled the Scots from the Western Isles and Highlands to travel back and forth across the North Channel for centuries, and had no doubt played a major role in helping the Mic Dhónaill in Antrim defy faraway authorities in Dublin, Edinburgh and London. The importance of sea links were recognised in the division of Clandeboyne; it was specified that ‘the sea coasts might be possessed by Scottish men’ for trading and defense purposes.⁴⁰ It may be countered that east Ulster was no closer to Scotland geographically in 1605 than it had been 30 years earlier. The kingdom across the water, however, and the kingdom which had attempted to implement these earlier colonisation schemes, were now ruled by the same king. Migration from lowland Scotland would now have not only the blessing, but the active encouragement, of the state.⁴¹ James VI and I was moreover, a king who had already attempted to plant lowland Scots in outlying areas of the Western Isles, whose Gaelic inhabitants he perceived as ‘all uterlie barbares, without any sorte or shew of civilitie’.⁴²

Such factors alone do not explain why the early seventeenth-century colonisation of east Ulster thrived to a greater extent than further west.⁴³ Perhaps the greatest contributing factor to this phenomenon was the depopulation of the area in the preceding decades. The image of Ulster as an ‘empty land’ will be examined below; while that image will be seen to be problematic, there are good reasons for believing that the settlers brought over by Hamilton and Montgomery found a land in which the native population had been severely depleted, most recently by the scorched-earth campaigns of Chichester, but also by the earlier depredations of Essex.⁴⁴ The letters patent dividing up the lands of Conn Ó Néill of Clandeboyne described it as ‘depopulated and wasted’.⁴⁵ The entire county of Antrim was

40 Montgomery and Hill (eds.), *Montgomery manuscripts*, p.32.

41 ‘Hitherto, the idea of using Scots to supplement any English that might be persuaded to come had suffered from one serious objection. A Scottish settlement in Ireland could prove a Trojan horse in the event of an Anglo-Scottish conflict, but with the union of the crowns this objection disappeared’. Perceval-Maxwell, *The Scottish migration to Ulster*, p.18.

42 James VI, *Basilikon doron Devided into three bookes*, (Edinburgh, 1599), p.42.

43 This is evinced by the fact that the native Irish in this area were no longer numerous enough to rise effectively in 1641. Roger Markham remarked that Antrim was safer than other counties because ‘there wer small store of Irish’. Deposition of Roger Markham, TCD MS 839 f.17r. The greater proportion of respondents professing a British identity in the eastern part of Ulster, according to the 2011 census would also appear to bear out the long-term consequences of this:
<http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/interactive/2012/dec/12/northern-ireland-census-national-identities-mapped?uni=Data:in%20body%20link>, accessed 15 December 2013.

44 As a factor in clearing the way for the east Ulster colonies, this has been curiously neglected by historians, with the exception of Murphy, *Clandeboyne: an outline of its rise and decline*, pp.53-4.

45 Letters Patent of 3rd James I, to James Hamilton esq., 5 November 1605, in James Hamilton; T.K. Lowry

described in similar terms in the 1604 grant to Ránall Mac Dónaill.⁴⁶ It is not hard to find reasons why this was so in the writings of contemporaneous commentators.

Even before the arrival of Smith and Essex, this process was underway. Rowland White wrote in 1571 that, since a garrison had been placed in Carrickfergus:

‘. . . there was ‘not any wey within tenne myle about [. . .] syx plowe lands manured withe tillage any kynde of grayne, but all that province waste where was five or sixe hundred plowes before’.⁴⁷

This implies, incidentally, a fairly dense population before the garrison began to despoil the area. A huge loss of life can be inferred from the period of Essex’s campaign in the area. The massacre of Scots on Rathlin Island in July 1575 is only the most famous episode of this expedition. In the same month, the earl boasted to the Queen that he had returned from Clondeboy ‘having lefte all the countrey desolate, and without people’, two months, incidentally, after receiving notice from Elizabeth that she was withdrawing support for his colonisation project.⁴⁸

It is highly unlikely, Thomas Murphy notes, that the population had recovered by the time of the devastation wrought by Arthur Chichester’s forces in the area during the Nine Years war.⁴⁹ There is abundant evidence of the massacre of civilians and the deliberate inducement of famine in Chichester’s own words. At times he came close to suggesting the extermination of the entire native population. Arriving in the Route during Ránall Mac Dónaill’s absence in support of Ó Néill at Kinsale, Chichester wrote:

(ed.), *The Hamilton manuscripts: containing some account of the settlement of the territories of the upper Clondeboye, Great Ardes, and Dufferin, in the county of Down*, (Belfast: Archer & Sons, 1867), Appendix 1, p.i.

46 Grant of lands to Randall McDonnell, knt, in John Caillard Erck (ed.), *A repertory of the inrolments on the patent rolls of chancery, in Ireland; commencing with the reign of King James I*, Volume 1, (Dublin: McGlashan, 1846), p.137.

47 Rowland White; Nicholas Canny (ed.), ‘The Disorders of the Irisshery, 1571’, in *Studia Hibernica*, no.19, (Dublin: St. Patrick’s College, Drumcondra, 1979), p.158.

48 Walter Devereux to Queen Elizabeth, 22 July 1575. SP 63-52 no.67, f.176v. Queen Elizabeth to Walter Devereux, earl of Essex, 22 May 1575. SP 63-51 no.39, ff.106r-107r.

49 Murphy, *Clondeboye: an outline of its rise and decline*, p.50.

‘I sparde nether house, corne, nor creature [. . .] I have often sayde and writen yt is famine that must consume them, our swordes, and other indevours worke not that speedie effect w[hi]ch is expected’.⁵⁰

In the light of such comments, it is difficult to read his warning (written the same year) that ‘the queene wyll never reape what is expected untyll the nation be wholly destroyed or so subiected as to take a neewe impression of lawes’ in any other way as suggesting the deliberate depopulation of Ulster.⁵¹ It is not surprising, after his exertions in this endeavour, that Chichester later resented the acquisition by Hamilton and Montgomery of grants to lands that he had sought to obtain for himself and his associates.⁵² In addition to the depredations of outsiders in the area, the internecine wars of the Irish themselves also contributed to the demographic collapse in east Ulster. ‘By meanes of their domestique dissention’, Henry Bagenal wrote of north Clandeboye in 1586, ‘the countrey is for the most parte waste and depopulate’.⁵³

The settlers brought over by Hamilton and Montgomery found large areas as sparsely populated as the adventurers of the 1570s had mistakenly believed them to be. The fact that the ‘unofficial’ settlement of east Ulster was predicated on the violence and destruction of this pre-plantation period is testament to the importance of these decades prior to colonisation in understanding the genesis and growth of the Ulster colony. This violence has at times been elided, in claims, for example, by the Ulster-Scots Agency that the Hamilton and Montgomery settlement was ‘not plantation, not conquest, not invasion [but] *settlement*’.⁵⁴ A distinction is thus implied between an empty land, passively awaiting settlement, and one that has been actively depopulated. That armies, under the direction of the crown, were largely responsible for this depopulation, further renders the distinction

50 Chichester to Robert Cecil, 22 November 1601. SP 63-209-2 no.196, f.203r.

51 Chichester to Cecil, 8 October 1601. SP 63-209-2 no.133, f.29v. Of his military operations in Tyrone, Chichester wrote: ‘wee kyll man, woeman, chylde, horse, beast, and whatsoever wee fende’, Chichester to Robert Cecil, 15 May 1601. SP 63-208-2 no.68, f.192r.

52 Chichester wrote with concern of the size of the grants to Hamilton in June 1605, Chichester to Salisbury, 19 June 1605. SP 63-217 no.44, f.112v.

53 Bagenal; Hore (ed.), ‘Marshal Bagenal’s Description of Ulster, Anno 1586’, p.154.

54 Italics in original:

<http://web.archive.org/web/20131023004204/http://www.hamiltonmontgomery1606.com/home.asp>, accessed 1 November 2013.

between ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ plantation largely meaningless. The perception of an empty land—which became a kind of self-fulfilling prophesy in Antrim and Down—was not confined to the area east of the Bann. A view of Scottish and English colonists generally arriving in an uncultivated wilderness, devoid of significant native settlement, has exercised an enduring hold on the Ulster-Scots imagination. Ian Paisley claimed in 1981 that:

‘Our ancestors cut a civilisation out of the bogs and meadows of this country while Mr Haughey’s ancestors were wearing pig-skins and living in caves’.⁵⁵

There is no doubt that the ravages of the Nine Years War had led to a sharp decrease in the population of other parts of Ulster by the time the plantation project was initiated. A population of somewhere in the region of 240,000 would appear likely for the six escheated counties before this collapse.⁵⁶ There are many references in the sources to severe depopulation in the latter years of the war, due largely to the same kind of scorched-earth campaigns Chichester had waged in east Ulster. The latter would later reminisce that the war had ‘destroyed the greatest parte of the people’.⁵⁷ This was a result not only of casualties in battle, but also (probably to a greater extent) the famine caused by widespread destruction of crops and cattle, and the subsequent epidemics to which malnourished populations are vulnerable. Under normal circumstances, Ireland appears to have been a relatively healthy environment, free of epidemics, but a recent ‘great plague’ is referred to in 1609, which seems to have started at the close of the Nine Years War.⁵⁸

Little aside from anecdotal evidence exists on which to base estimates of the scale of this demographic collapse. Solicitor-general Robert Jacob wrote in 1609 for example, that

55 Quoted in Ed Moloney and Andrew Polak, *Paisley*, (Swords: Poolbeg, 1986), pp.382-3.

56 The basis on which this (very rough) estimate has been arrived at is examined in Appendix 2 (pp.357-9).

57 Arthur Chichester, ‘A note of som of the most materiall services w[hi]ch I have performed since I came into the government of your ma[jes]ties realme of Irelande in Februarie 1604’, May 1614. SP 63-232 no.6, f.153r.

58 Gillespie, *Colonial Ulster*, p.54, although, as has been seen above (p.77), English soldiers suffered from native diseases such as the ‘Irish flux’. Robert Jacob (solicitor-general) to Salisbury, 15 April 1609. SP 63-226 no.69, f.190r; see also p.li of C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (eds.), *CSPI James I, 1606-1608*, (London: Longman & Co., 1874).

20,000 was the number of ‘men of the sworde’ alone in the whole of Ulster.⁵⁹ Extrapolated, this might indicate a population somewhere in the region of 120,000 for province on the eve of colonisation.⁶⁰ This suggests that the population had been reduced by about half. While this might seem excessive, compared, for example, with the 20% mortality rate estimated for the 1649-53 period of Cromwellian campaign in Ireland, such an estimate does not seem unrealistic in the light of an observation by John Davies, who, in 1604, remarked that so few people remained on Aodh Ó Néill’s lands that only a twentieth part could be cultivated.⁶¹ Taking into account that part of this fall in population may be accounted for by migration to other parts of Ireland, rather than mortality (many of Ó Néill’s followers were said to have fled to the Pale) this estimate should probably be reduced. It is likely, however, that Ulster lost at least two-fifths of its population in this period.

Some writers regard the sparseness of Ulster’s population on the eve of plantation as being the result of factors other than the recent war, famine and plague. The low-intensity nature of Gaelic agriculture, as well as accusations that the Irish did not till the land and led a nomadic lifestyle have already been examined in chapter two (p.60). While such factors no doubt contributed to Gaelic areas having a lower-density population—even in times of peace—than areas such as southern England or the Netherlands for example, the image of Ulster as being largely empty on account of the inability of the indigenous population to maintain a viable society are unsupported by the available evidence. It was reported on the eve of the war, for example, that ‘O’Neill’s country was never so inhabited in no man’s time’.⁶² It would be truer to say that Ulster had been emptied, therefore, rather than that it was empty. As for contemporaneous descriptions of Gaelic society as innately rootless and mobile, it will suffice to say here that the most oft-cited observers of this society at the turn of the seventeenth century—men such as John Davies or Fynes Moryson—had only

59 Robert Jacob (solicitor-general) to Salisbury, 15 April 1609. SP 63-226 no.69, f.190r.

60 Based on the assumption that this represented half the male population, multiplying by two for women, and assuming an average family-size of at least four children (probably a conservative estimate).

61 Micheál Ó Siochrú, ‘Atrocity, codes of conduct and the Irish in the British Civil wars 1641–1653’, in *Past and Present*, no. 195, (Oxford: The Past and Present Society, 2007), p.80. John Davies to Cecil, 19 April 1604, in C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (eds.), *CSPI James I 1603-1606*, (London: Longman & Co., 1872), p.160.

62 Report submitted to Sir Nicholas Bagenal, 1579, in James Hogan and N. McNeill O’Farrell (eds.), *The Walsingham letter-book or Register of Ireland, May, 1578 to December, 1579*, (Dublin: Stationery Office for the Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1959), p.225.

witnessed that society on a heightened war-footing. It is, therefore, not surprising that the impression they took away was one of a people incapable of anything except a hapless nomadic existence. We need not necessarily dismiss (as Hiram Morgan has) as ‘deliberate lies’ the denigrating observations of such commentators.⁶³ On the contrary, it seems likely that they sincerely believed the claims they were making, based on what they had seen of a society in the final stages of a long and devastating period of conflict.

It is to this period of conflict that we must ascribe the dramatic loss of population outlined above; not finding the land as empty as they had hoped, the government made a decisive contribution to emptying it. Estimates of over 40% mortality appear more plausible when taking place over a longer period than merely the last few years of the Nine Years War. A widespread dislocation and militarisation occurred in Ulster from around the middle of the sixteenth century, which has been described by Kenneth Nicholls as ‘a general increase in violence everywhere, leading to a decline in material conditions and economic life’.⁶⁴ It is relevant here to look more closely at the roots of this breakdown, not merely because it contributed to depopulation, but also because it contributed to a growing perception amongst English (and subsequently Scottish) observers, of Ulster as a source of instability for the entire island—as a ‘land of war’, underpopulated as a result of the inherently warlike characteristics of its people. The Irish were represented by writers such as Ben Jonson, as having been held back by ‘unnatural broils’, which had mired them in servitude, barbarism and poverty.⁶⁵ Fynes Moryson painted a picture for his readers of Gaelic Ireland as a society ‘by nature very factious’, addicted to warring against one another and trapped in a mentality of ‘defend me and spend me’ which had left them in thrall to their rulers. Aspiring to be swordsmen, and ‘despising all arts and trades to maintain them’, they had failed to develop the settled agriculture based on tillage which was seen as a hallmark of civilisation. This devotion to the narrow military interests of the local *tiarna* had, moreover, left them incapable of seeing beyond personal ties of loyalty and kinship and distinguishing between a just or unjust cause.⁶⁶

English warfare, on the other hand, was represented as something constructive, corrective,

63 Morgan, ‘Mid-Atlantic Blues’, pp.53-4.

64 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, p.5.

65 Jonson, ‘The Irish Masque at Court’, p.594.

66 Moryson, ‘The Itinerary’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, pp.283, 311-2.

and conducive to the building of civilisation on the ruins of this barbarism. John Davies likened the destruction of Gaelic Ulster to the tearing down of a house to prevent the spread of fire, and on two occasions in his *Discovery of the true causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued*, he referred to the necessity of breaking and destroying the people to make way for good government.⁶⁷ Confronted by the ‘ruffull spectacles of soe manie wretched Carcasses starvinge, goodlie Countreies wasted, [and] so huge a desolacion and Confusion’, Edmund Spenser’s metaphor of choice was that of treating a sick body, so that the soul may be fit to receive ‘sprituall comferte’.⁶⁸ Arthur Chichester also advocated the creation of ‘year zero’ conditions (see p.95), which would enable the ‘civility’ of the coloniser to take root. The internal contradictions involved in this distinction between ‘civilised’ and ‘uncivilised’ violence was deeply embedded in English culture. Many accounts of the warfare of the period, for example, decry the barbarity of the Irish in beheading their enemies, while triumphantly tallying the count of Irish heads taken by English soldiers.⁶⁹

Nor has such rhetoric been confined to the Tudor and Stuart period. In the nineteenth century, Froude wrote of the Irish that:

‘Waste, bloodshed and misery held no terrors for a population who for centuries, of their own free choice, had lived in chronic war, and deliberately preferred it to a state of peace’.⁷⁰

The trope of Ireland beyond the Pale as a ‘land of war’ (and concomitantly, of ‘English’ Ireland inside it, as a ‘land of concord’) had been established in the thirteenth century with the coming of the Anglo-Normans. From the point of view of those living on the borders of the Pale, the Gaelic regions from which they were regularly raided must certainly have appeared to be a ‘land of war’. On the other hand, given Lydon’s observation that the medieval invasion had led to a situation in which ‘war was becoming endemic in the lordship’, it may well have appeared to the Gaels that it was the Pale itself which deserved

67 Davies, ‘A discovery’, reproduced in *Historical tracts*, pp.4, 79-80.

68 Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) ‘A View of the Present State of Ireland’, pp.139, 159.

69 Patricia Palmer, “‘An headlesse Ladie’ and “‘a horses loade of heades’”: Writing the Beheading’, in *Renaissance Quarterly*, vol. 60, no. 1, (New York: Renaissance Society of America, 2007), p.31.

70 Froude, *The English in Ireland*, vol.1, p.66.

such an epithet.⁷¹ Such terms are, however, subjective—replete with suggestions that the violence of one community was somehow more legitimate than that of the other—and are of limited value for the historian. It is interesting, however, to reflect upon the significance which they held for early-modern commentators. Patricia Palmer has remarked upon the way both Fynes Moryson and Henry Sidney inadvertently contradicted their own easy contrast between civilised English tillers of the soil and uncivilised nomadic barbarians, when reporting the destruction of orderly-fenced and tilled land by the English forces.⁷² Under such circumstances, it is easy to see how the English might have appeared to the inhabitants of Ulster as destructive barbarians. Indeed, Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh described them as such in his encomium for Aodh Ó Dónaill in the 1600s.⁷³

The Irish were commonly described in these centuries as ‘outside the king’s peace’, a phrase that bespeaks an aspiration on the part of the coloniser to over-arching power, not merely victory over its enemy, but a monopoly over the legitimate use of violence. Whereas enemies who conceive of each other as equals might allow the vagaries of battle to decide who had the *right* to victory, the English in Ireland held those in opposition to them not merely to be *their* enemies, but the enemies of peace itself. Numerous examples from the close of this period attest to the fact that Irish prisoners taken in war were not regarded as entitled to the same treatment as English ones.⁷⁴ France, beyond the English enclaves of

71 James Lydon, ‘A Land of war’, in Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland*, volume 2, p.240.

72 Palmer, *Language and conquest*, pp.74-5.

73 ‘Ainffine allmhardha’ (savage foreigners). Ó Cléirigh; Walsh (ed.), *The life of Aodh Ruadh O Domhnaill*, p.37.

74 The most explicit statement of this was made by Parliament during the wars of the 1640s, when the English parliament objected to the execution of English prisoners in retaliation for the execution of Irish ones; for the Irish to ‘be made equall in Exchange with the English Nation, and Protestants’, it was declared ‘the Lords and Commons of the Parliament of England, cannot with Religion, Honour, or Justice, in any sort consent unto it’. Robert Devereux, earl of Essex, *A letter from the Earl of Essex to His Highnesse Prince Rupert concerning the putting to death of souldiers come out of Ireland taken prisoners: with His Highnesse answer thereunto*, (Bristol, 1645), p.3. See also Ó Siochrú, ‘Atrocity, codes of conduct’, pp.55-86. That the Irish were aware they were being denied the status of ‘civilised enemy’ accorded to other European peoples is clear from the comments of Ó Mealláin in the Cinn Lae: ‘They observed no guarantee of quarter, or promise of protection that they ever made to the Irish, but rather dishonoured them in breach of the law of nations, being wont to kill women, unbaptised infants, old men and those of every infirmity’. Tarlach Ó Mealláin; Charles Dillon (ed.), ‘Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin’, in Charles Dillon and Henry A. Jefferies (eds.), *Tyrone: history & society*, (Dublin: Geography Publications, 2000), p.368. The standards of conduct in war applying between ‘civil’ peoples did not apply to the American enemy either. The council in Virginia, in the unforgiving mood which followed the 1622 massacre, wrote back to London that, against the indigenous population, ‘neither fayre Warr nor good quarter is ever to be held, nor is there other hope of theire subversione’. Council in Virginia, a letter to the Virginia Company of London, 30 January 1624, in Susan Myra Kingsbury (ed.), *The records of the*

Gascony or Calais might be enemy territory, for example, but was never conceived of as a 'land of war'. In Ireland, however, the only peace held to be legitimate was that of the English. As Andrew Hadfield has suggested, Spenser's conception of this peace was an exclusively English one, which excluded the native Irish, in the sense that those Irish who sought to live in peace—but on their own terms—were held to be in a state of war for their refusal to accept this overbearing definition of peace.⁷⁵

The descendants of the Anglo-Norman invaders, however, were gradually forced by pragmatic considerations to engage with Gaelic society on its own terms. The division of Ireland into lands of peace and war cannot have had the same purchase with Gaelicised magnates such as the earls of Desmond who—judging by phenomena such as intermarriage with Gaelic ruling families, fostering of each others' children, the assimilation of features of brehon law into feudal law—appear to have accepted to some extent, even when at war with the Gaelic Irish, the necessity of co-existence. The aspiration to monolithic power, and an exclusivist definition of peace, revives in the sixteenth century, with the Tudor regime's increasing determination to exercise direct rule over Gaelic areas previously outside its control. The military campaigns associated with this new push towards island-wide hegemony appear to be the most likely cause of the breakdown and militarisation of Gaelic society postulated by Nicholls. This 'greater instability and violence' was, according to Katherine Simms, 'a result of the pressures imposed by the reconquest itself'.⁷⁶

The image of Ulster as a particularly dislocated and warlike society, which was used to justify its conquest and eventual colonisation, thus became increasingly realised, with the Gaelic order supporting a greater and greater degree of mobilisation in order to defend itself. A self-fulfilling prophesy, the reaction of Gaelic Ulster to outside aggression was used to justify the intensification of this aggression. A similar phenomenon has been noted

Virginia Company of London, vol.4, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1935), p.451. In New England, 'some of the rude and ignorante sorte' expressed their discontent that English colonists should be punished with death for killing a native, clearly indicating that such a crime was not felt to be as grave as the murder of one of their own. Bradford; Davis (ed.), *Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation*, p.346.

75 Andrew Hadfield, 'Briton and Scythian: Tudor Representations of Irish Origins', in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.28, no.112, (Dublin University Press, 1993), p.403.

76 Simms, *From kings to warlords*, p.9.

by Anthony Pagden in the context of the Spanish *encomienda* regime in America, where the trauma of conquest was:

‘...directly responsible for many of the features of Indian life which the Europeans found most reprehensible; suicide, infanticide, induced abortions, and what the Spaniards generally referred to as the Indians “lack of charity”, their willingness to abandon the sick or the old, even to mock the sufferings of the dying’.⁷⁷

The observance of such behaviour rarely induced the coloniser to recognise this pattern of brutalisation; more often than not it merely justified greater severity in order to purge the natives of what was believed to be their innate savagery. On occasion, the very behaviour patterns that had been engendered by colonisation were used to support the conclusion that the native was beyond hope of reform. A writer in 1615, for example, put the wickedness of the Irish down to the fact that they moved around too much and did not form stable communities:

‘Neighbourhood and society is the begetter of lawe, and freindship, and this often removeinge makes them knowe so little charity that the proffitt of xiid will make them cutt one anothers throaths’.⁷⁸

It does not appear to have occurred to the writer that such dislocation was largely a result of the heightened military activity of the English in Ulster in the preceding half century.

To say that Ulster became increasingly militarised in the last decades of the sixteenth-century is not to deny that it had been a warrior society beforehand. As previously alluded to, raids in pursuit of plunder, especially cattle, were a perennial feature of life on the borders of the Pale, and must have contributed to an image, in the English mind, of the Irish as both warlike and devoid of respect for property rights. Gaelic society could indeed

⁷⁷ Anthony Pagden, *The fall of natural man: the American Indian and the origins of comparative ethnology*, (Cambridge University Press, 1982), p.35.

⁷⁸ E.S., ‘A survey of the present estate of Ireland Anno 1615’, HL Ellesmere MS 1746, f.20v.

be said to have been geared towards the institution of the *táin*, or cattle-raid, but this is not to say that it was on a permanent war-footing. Lacking any conception of cultural relativism, early-modern observers were unable to view such activities in their native context. Fynes Moryson, for example, saw the *táin* as nothing more than theft, the result of an innate idleness and disinclination to live by honest means.⁷⁹ Taken in context, however, the acquisition of cattle by raiding was celebrated as the main means whereby the *tiarnaí* augmented their power and prestige. As Eoin MacNeill argued, the *táin* was also a conventionally-accepted, almost ritualistic, way for a young warrior to provoke battle with a neighbouring *tuath* in order to prove his mettle.⁸⁰ Likewise, within Scottish Gaeldom, the institution of the *creach*, or predatory raid, was seen as a kind of ‘graduation ceremony from the clan schools in which the sons of the gentry were instructed in athleticism and military expertise’ and, as Macinnes has pointed out, ‘had not been looked on as robbery’ in the *Gàidhealtachd*.⁸¹

Given these almost-constant raids upon one another’s territory, the picture of a Gaelic Ireland mired in never-ending internecine conflict contains a certain degree of truth. The nature of this conflict, however, was misunderstood, and masked a stability below the surface which outsiders rarely acknowledged. A high rate of attrition, taking and giving of hostages, alliance through marriage, gossip and fosterage, accompanied not only conflict between neighbouring *sleachta* but succession disputes within the *dearbhfhine*. Such consequences, however, were largely confined to the warrior elite. While this state of affairs certainly had consequences for those that had to support this non-food-producing martial class (the periodic stealing of large number of cattle upon which they depended for their livelihood would undoubtedly have resulted in much hardship), there is no evidence for the kind of mass-killing of non-combatants and destruction of crops which would characterise warfare with the Tudor and Stuart state. The instability of Gaelic society was, therefore, ‘mainly at the top’.⁸² While the ruling elite chopped and changed, this incessant

79 Moryson, ‘The Itinerary’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.312.

80 MacNeill, *Celtic Ireland*, p.8. The cattle raid enjoyed, remarks Simms, ‘the same honourable status accorded to duelling in the eighteenth century’. Simms, *From kings to warlords*, p.4.

81 Allan I. Macinnes, *Clanship, commerce and the House of Stuart, 1603-1788*, (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1996), p.33.

82 Patrick J. Duffy, David Edwards and Elizabeth FitzPatrick, ‘Introduction: Recovering Gaelic Ireland, c.1250-1650’, in Patrick J. Duffy, David Edwards and Elizabeth FitzPatrick (eds.), *Gaelic Ireland, c.1250-c.1650: land, lordship and settlement*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), p.43.

but low-level type of warfare left society outside this elite (an elite which, after all, only constituted a small minority of the population) relatively untouched, and life must have been carried on in more or less the same fashion no matter which particular *tiarna* was owed tribute.

The ritualistic element of the *táin* is mirrored not only among the Scottish Gaels, but also in the warfare practiced by those native Americans the English encountered in the seventeenth century. The killing of women and children in war was rare—perhaps unknown—to the Powhatans of Virginia before they clashed with the English, and they were said to be ‘appalled by the atrocities done in James I’s name’.⁸³ The Narragansett allies of the English, who were present at the massacre of Pequots in 1637, balked at the burning of non-combatants in their homes and the killing of those attempting to flee, declaring such tactics to be ‘too furious, and slaies too many men’.⁸⁴ Moreover, while the Gaelic rulers were seen as oppressive tyrants through the lens of English cultural values, viewed in their native *milieu*, a strong ruler provided the same kind of stability and guarantee of redress trumpeted by writers like Davies as the preserve of the common law. As Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh wrote when the young Aodh Rua Ó Dónaill rose to a position of dominance in Tyrconnell:

‘...he proceeded to govern his principality as was right, preventing theft and evil deeds, banishing rogues and robbers, executing every one who was plundering and robbing, so that it was not necessary for each one to take care of his herds of cattle but only to bed them down on straw and litter, and the country was without guard or protector, without plundering one by the other, and two enemies slept in the one bed, for fear did not allow them to remember their wrongs against each other’.⁸⁵

Even making allowances for the eulogistic purpose of Ó Cléirigh’s work, the kind of power

83 J. Frederick Fausz, ‘An “Abundance of Blood Shed on Both Sides”: England’s First Indian War, 1609-1614’, in *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, vol. 98, no. 1, (Richmond: Virginia Historical Society, 1990), p.53.

84 As reported by the ringleader of the massacre, John Underhill in his *Newes from America; or, A new and experimentall discoverie of New England*, (London, 1638), p.43.

85 Ó Cléirigh; Walsh (ed.), *The life of Aodh Ruadh O Domhnaill*, p.57.

wielded here is far from the arbitrary, purely self-interested tyranny portrayed in English sources.⁸⁶ A kind of social compact operated, whereby the yoke of obedience to a local warlord is accepted in return for protection from the uncertainties of Hobbes' war of all against all. While the vast majority of this society's members cannot be said to have played any role in the choosing of such a ruler (which could be said of all early modern societies), a certain degree of consent (on the part of the ruling elite at least) was involved in the sense that a prospective *tiarna* had to retain the support of a sufficient number of his peers to enable to him to fight off any challenges to his authority. While it would be wrong to underestimate the burden of tribute imposed by Gaelic rulers on their subjects, such tribute was nevertheless regulated by custom and law. Far from being free to arbitrarily exact whatever impositions he felt like, a *tiarna* was constrained by this necessity of retaining the support of his followers.⁸⁷ It is therefore difficult to see in what way the rule of a Gaelic *tiarna* was any more arbitrary or absolutist than that of the average European monarch.

Defining the concept in culturally-relative terms, a stability prevailed in Gaelic Ulster in the late middle ages which encompassed all the practices—pastoralism, transhumance, gavelkind, cattle-raiding—alleged by English observers to render the Irish 'unfitt tenants' for their own land.⁸⁸ As a consequence of this stability, Ulster society in the period prior to the militarisation of the mid-sixteenth century was probably more densely populated, less mobile, and placed a greater emphasis on tillage than would later be the case. Wheat was being cultivated throughout the late middle ages in Tyrone; this cultivation declined, however, as the aforementioned crisis intensified. As Kenneth Nicholls has pointed out, 'in times of trouble not only were cattle much less vulnerable than crops—they could be driven off into the woods or a neighbouring area, while crops and granaries had to be left at the mercy of an invader'.⁸⁹ A more mobile pastoral economy simply made more sense under

86 Acknowledgment of such a stability in Gaelic society, while rare in English sources, is not unknown. An observer in 1515 commented that 'many an Iryshe greate capytaine kepeyth and p[re]serveyth all the kinges subjets of ther rome and contreys in pease w[ith]oute any hurte of ther enymyes so that ther landes be tylyd and occupied with the ploughe aswell as ever they were'. 'State of Ireland and plan for its reformation', SP 60-1 no.9, f.23r.

87 Quinn, *Elizabethans*, p.51. Hayes-McCoy, 'Gaelic society in Ireland', p.48.

88 'And the Irish, besides their fickleness and disloyalty, are at this time soe poore, and withall soe rude and unskillfull in hudbandry, as they are very unfitt tenants for this makes them being altogether unable to build castles or good houses, or to stock and improve that wast land as that ought'. Anonymous, 'Certyn notes and observations', in Lyttleton and Rynne (eds.), *Plantation Ireland*, p.34.

89 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp.131-2.

such circumstances. Katharine Simms has painted a picture of agriculturalists being harassed, expelled and replaced by pastoralists from as early as the fifteenth century, a process that accelerated as a consequence of the Tudor reconquest.⁹⁰ This was accompanied by a gradual change in the meaning of the word *caoraidheacht* (anglicised: ‘creaght’), from describing a landowner and his cattle temporarily displaced by war, to refer to the widespread organisation of society into units of potentially-mobile droves, both for the purposes of transhumance and war.

Such developments masked this earlier, more sedentary pattern of life, and were cited from the 1570s by a new breed of colonial adventurer to argue that the Irish did not use the land in any meaningful way, and that therefore it would simply ‘lie waste like a wilderness’ if left in their possession.⁹¹ The Old English had, over the centuries, adapted themselves (to a greater or lesser degree depending on the exigences of the situation) to the nuances of Gaelic culture—including the kind of limited warfare outlined above. While defining themselves as the crown’s loyal subjects (in contrast to its ‘Irish enemies’) and arguing for reform, they had nevertheless acknowledged in Gaelic Ireland an enemy with which it was capable of reaching accommodation, exchanging hostages and making strategic alliances with, sometimes involving intermarriage and the interlinking of families’ long-term fortunes. J. Michael Hill has described the Old English governing class as a ‘buffer’ which was removed with the arrival of this new class of ‘self-financed colonial enterpriser’.⁹² These interlopers had no understanding of such nuances, and their knowledge of Ireland beyond the Pale was often limited to hearsay, or writings such as Andrew Boorde guidebook for visitors to Ireland, which described the land of the Gaels as ‘wylde, wast and vast, ful of marryces and mountains and lytle corne’. Such a description was not totally inaccurate but, allied to the description of this land’s inhabitants as ‘slouthful, not regarding to sow and tille theyr landes, nor caring for riches’, it tended to fuel the delusions and ambitions of these ‘New English’, who saw in the native population an obstacle to furthering their interests in a country where land was reputed to be had for the taking and

90 Katharine Simms, ‘Nomadry in medieval Ireland: the origins of the creaght or caoraigheacht’, in *Peritia, Journal of the Medieval Academy of Ireland*, vol.5, (Cork: Medieval Academy of Ireland, 1986), pp.383-4.

91 John Davies, letter to Salisbury concerning the state of Ireland, 1610, reproduced in *Historical tracts*, p.288.

92 Hill, *Fire and sword*, p.139.

fortunes easily made.⁹³

Gaelic Ireland was perceived by writers like Spenser (and presented to readers who had never been there) as a land where ‘wolves and thieves abound’.⁹⁴ Indeed, a large enough population of wolves existed for it to be necessary to bring cattle into protective enclosures at night, and Gaelic rulers were obliged to organise periodic hostings of their followers to cull the wolf population.⁹⁵ Periods of war and the resulting attrition of the human population—such as witnessed in this period—can only have led to a corresponding revival in the numbers of wolves and other wild animals. There is more, however, to the frequent allusion to Irish wolves in early-modern English literature than the actual presence of the animal. With the growing conviction that colonisation was the only way to neutralise the threat presented by the independence of Gaelic Ireland, the native population were seen, along with wolves, foxes and other vermin, as infesting the landscape. Speaking of the necessity of bringing the cattle in at night, Blenerhasset bracketed together the threat from the ‘cruell wood-kerne, the devowring Woolfe, and other suspicious Irish’. At times in his promotional pamphlet, the hunting of woodkerne and wolves is combined so that it is difficult to see if any distinction was being made between the two. The colonists, he proposed, should regularly set out on a ‘universall great hunt’ to clear the recalcitrant Irish from their traditional places of refuge; halfway through his description of such a hunt, however, what has begun as a quasi-military operation segues into something approaching a sport, and it becomes unclear whether the prey he is speaking of is human or non-human:

‘They shall discover all the Caves, holes, & lurking places of that country, even for an hundred miles compasse & no doubt it will be a pleasant hunt, and much preye will fall to the followers; for what dooth escape some, will fall to the hands of others, and bring such a terror, that the woolfe himselfe will not dare to continue his haunt, where such so suddaine incursions shall be used, although it be but once in a moneth: the charge none, the

93 Boorde, *The fyrst booke of the introduction of knowledge*, sig.C3v.

94 Edmund Spenser; Thomas P. Roche, Jr and C. Patrick O’Donnell, Jr. (eds.), *The Faerie Queene*, (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978), Canto VI, p.1039.

95 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, p.7. Simms, *From kings to warlords*, p.116.

pleasure much, the profit more’.

As if to clinch his argument, Blenerhasset finally presents the necessity of hunting down such undesirable elements as a positive attraction for prospective investors in the plantation of Ulster: ‘Art thou a Gentleman that takest pleasure in hunt?’ he entices, ‘the Fox, the Woolfe, and the Wood-kerne doe expect thy comming’.⁹⁶

This strand of western thought had a long pedigree; Aristotle bracketed together the hunting of wild animals and the enslavement in war of ‘such of mankind as though designed by nature for subjection, refuse to submit to it’.⁹⁷ In the same way that the prevalence of wolves represented the breakdown of civilised society, those Irish unwilling to conform to the new order were seen as inimical to *all* order. Josias Bodley, while waxing lyrical about such order, claimed that ‘all love it, except the Irish men-at-arms, who are a most vile race of men, if it be at all allowable to call them men who live upon grass, and are foxes in their disposition and wolves in their actions’.⁹⁸ An image of the Irish native as a

96 Blenerhasset, *A direction*, sig. A3v-A4r, B2r-B2v, C4v. Such an identification of the Irish enemy and wild animals was not an idiosyncrasy of Blenerhasset’s; Barnaby Rich wrote that ‘the Rebel of Ireland must have no leisure to take his breath; he must be hunted like the Fox that is new rouzed from his den, he must be chased from Covert to Covert’, *A new description of Ireland wherein is described the disposition of the Irish whereunto they are inclined*, (London: Thomas Adams, 1610), p.105. Perhaps most outlandish was the belief, related by Edmund Spenser, that there existed amongst the Irish a disease called ‘Licanthopia’ which, like their supposed Scythian forebears, enabled them to transform themselves into wolves. It is unclear to what degree Spenser credited such claims; less equivocally, however, he had his mouthpiece, Irenius, assert that ‘some of the Irishe doe use to mak the wolfe their gossip’. Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) ‘A View of the Present State of Ireland’, p.109. Fynes Moryson likewise recounted the widespread belief in lycathrony amongst the Irish, and specifically the belief that people in Ossory were changed into wolves. ‘The Itinerary’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, pp.216, 222. The special place of wolves in Irish belief and folklore is attested to by their appearance in numerous folktales, as well as the fact that the Irish word for wolf is *mac tíre*, or ‘son of the countryside’.

97 Aristotle; H. Rackham (trans.), *Politics*, (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1932), p.37.

98 ‘An account of a journey of Captain Josias Bodley into Lecale, in Ulster, in the year 1602-3’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.329. This process of animalisation was a standard conceptual pattern in relation to peoples who occupied lands coveted by the encroaching colony. In America, it can be observed in Robert Cushman’s claim that the natives of New England ‘doe but run ouer the grasse, as doe also the Foxes and wilde beasts’. Cushman, ‘Reasons and considerations’, p.68. Matthew Kruer has illustrated the transformation, in the Puritan mind, of the Pequots from being a ‘stately, warlike people [. . .] just and equal in their dealings, not treacherous either to their countrymen or English, requiters of courtesies, affable towards the English’, to, within just a few years, being variously described as ‘roaring Lyons’, ‘sullen Dogs’, ‘a Kennell of devouring Wolves’, ‘a Nest of Serpents’, and ‘Bears bereaved of their Whelps’, when their interests and those of the English came into conflict. Matthew Kruer, *Red Albion: Genocide And English Colonialism, 1622-1646*, (M.A. thesis, University of Oregon, 2009), pp.138-40. By the language of animalisation then, peoples such as the Pequots and the Irish were rendered sub-human and thus transferred outside the realm of those it was considered dishonourable to

problem akin to the presence of wild animals persisted even after their defeat and the colonisation of Ulster. Hugh Clotworthy in 1627 described those dispossessed Irish who had fled to the woods and bogs, where they supported themselves by raiding the settled community, as ‘infesting’ the province.⁹⁹ The oft-cited rationale of seizing land that would otherwise go to waste masked a deep-rooted sense of cultural superiority and antipathy towards a people who, even if they did attempt to live a sedentary farming lifestyle, seemed not to count as inhabiting the land in any case. William Brereton wrote of ‘being lost amongst the Irish towns’ on a journey from Dromore to Newry in 1635; having described at length the cabins and the farms of these people, he goes on in the next sentence to describe the same area as ‘a wild country, not inhabited’.¹⁰⁰

While Gaelic Ulster had, for centuries, articulated itself on an aristocratic level through the low-intensity conflict associated with cattle-raiding, the kind of military developments provoked by the Tudor conquest were of a different order. The most commonly-cited innovation of this period was the arming of the Irish labouring class. According to Sidney, Seán Ó Néill ‘armyth and weaponnyth all the peasantes of hys cuntre the fyrst that ever so dyd of an Iryshman’.¹⁰¹ Another factor contributing to the growing destructiveness of conflict in the sixteenth century was the introduction of firearms, which had become common by the middle of the century.¹⁰² Humphrey Gilbert commented in 1572 that the Irish were:

‘. . . nowe more apt thereunto by dayly encrease in use of warlicke exercises knowledge and use of municion which nove is farre other than it was when the people were more savadge and barbarouse’.¹⁰³

Fynes Moryson also commented on the folly of introducing the more advanced military

kill in cold blood.

99 Hugh Clotworthy to Falkland, 16 February 1627, S.P. 63-244 no.611b, f.157v.

100 Sir William Brereton’s travels in Ireland, 1635, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.372.

Dromore: Droim Mór, an extremely common placename in Ireland, meaning ‘large ridge.’

101 Lord deputy Sidney to the earl of Leicester, 1 March 1566, S.P. 63-16 no.35, f.87r.

102 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, p.99.

103 Humphrey Gilbert, ‘The discourse of Ireland, 1572’, printed in Quinn (ed.), *Voyages and colonising enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, p.125.

technology of the English into Gaelic Ireland and training the Irish in the ‘free use of arms, which should be kept only in the hands of faithful subjects’.¹⁰⁴

Whereas before, Gaelic rulers’ military requirements had been supplied largely by hostings of their followers, under this growing military pressure they increasingly turned to hired troops from the Highlands and Western Isles of Scotland. The migration of mercenaries across the North Channel was of course nothing new; *gallóglai* had been fighting in the service of Irish rulers since the thirteenth century; many of these—septs such as the Mic Shuibhne of Donegal and the Mic Dhónaill in Tyrone and Armagh (see pp.280-1)—had received land in return for their services and had become absorbed into Ulster society. The sixteenth century, however, saw the seasonal migration of troops known as ‘redshanks’, who usually returned home after their period of service in the summer months was over. A central figure in this development was Agnes Campbell, a daughter of the earl of Argyll who was first married to Séamus, head of the Mic Dhónaill in Antrim, until his death in 1565; her subsequent marriage to Toirealach Luineach in 1569 allowed the Ó Néill to import thousands of redshanks to supplement his native troops. As a part of the same marriage compact, her daughter with Mac Dónaill, Fionnualá, known as Iníon Dubh (the dark daughter), was matched with the young Aodh Rua Ó Dónaill, thus strengthening the network of military alliances across the North Channel and bringing the traditionally-hostile Uí Néill and Uí Dhónaill closer together, in a foreshadowing of the formal alliance of the Nine Years War.

By the 1590s, about 6,000 of these troops were available for use by Aodh Ó Néill and his allies.¹⁰⁵ The servicing of this lucrative market in mercenaries contributed to the growing militarisation of the Western Isles in its turn, as able-bodied men were rounded up for service in Ireland. In addition, when this outlet was suddenly cut off with the defeat of the

104 An extension, in the Gaelic mind, of that component of society to whom the exercise of arms was proper was clearly taking place. It is questionable how far such innovations reached; that the Irish forces still exhibited some conservative features even at the close of the Nine Years War can be conjectured from Moryson’s observation that he had seen ‘the chief of a sept ride, with a gentleman of his own name (and so learned as he spoke Latin) running barefooted by his stirrup’, indicating that to ride a horse remained a privilege denied to all but the highest-ranking aristocrats. Moryson, ‘The Itinerary’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.283, 290-1.

105 Jane Ohlmeyer, “‘Civilizing of those Rude Partes’: Colonization within Britain and Ireland 1580s-1640s”, in Nicholas Canny (ed.), *The Oxford history of the British Empire, Vol.1, The origins of Empire: British overseas enterprise to the close of the seventeenth century*, (Oxford University Press, 1998), p.128.

Irish, the return to Scotland of these mercenaries led to further destabilisation in that area.¹⁰⁶ The mere presence in a region of large numbers of men trained in arms can have, on its own, the effect of prolonging a conflict.¹⁰⁷ In Ulster, the influx of soldiers from Scotland also impacted on the consensual aspects of Gaelic rule alluded to above, in that a *tiarna* who had previously needed to take into account the interests and wishes of an extended ruling elite in order to retain their support, could use these mercenaries as an alternative power-base and thus free himself to some extent from dependence on his traditional followers. Added to the fact that far heavier tributes were imposed on the subservient orders of Gaelic society in wartime, there is evidence that Gaelic rulers became more autocratic in the late sixteenth century. It is this development, argues Simms, that formed the basis of an evolution of Gaelic lordship away from the kings of the middle ages towards the warlords of the later period, when ‘elections to kingship became a formality, as succession was decided by primogeniture or main force’.¹⁰⁸ The consequences of this can be seen, for example, in some of the privileges which Aodh Ó Néill claimed even after his defeat; the right to the forcible return of his former tenants who had fled Tyrone for the Pale, for example. Such a proprietary relationship to their subjects does not seem to have been a traditional feature of Gaelic society, as will be seen in chapter five.¹⁰⁹

106 Where once this non-productive class had only needed to be supported by the local population outside the warring season, there was now no external outlet for its potentially-destructive energies. The result was that feuds between clans such as the Mic Dhónaill of Dunnyveg and the Mac Gill-Eains, and the Mac Leòids of Dunvegan and the Mic Dhónaill of Sleat, came to a head and led to the devastation of large parts of Kintyre, Skye, Uist and Harris. Martin MacGregor, ‘Civilising Gaelic Scotland: the Scottish Isles and the Stewart empire’, in Ó Ciardha and Ó Siochrú (eds.), *The plantation of Ulster*, pp.39-40.

107 This was seen in an earlier period when, for example, the support of the Mic Shuibhne in Tyrconnell for various warring factions of the Uí Dhónaill prolonged those factional struggles far beyond the lifespan they would have had if these outside military resources had not been available. Simms, *Gaelic lordships*, pp.553-4. It would appear that the existence in Ireland after the Nine Years War, of a powerful class of military servitors (with the lord deputy Chichester at their head) forestalled the development of a peaceful society. This at least was the conclusion of John Harrington, who in 1605 observed of such a peaceful society as was professed to be the object of plantation: ‘This owr Captens and men of warre thear perhaps do not wysh [. . .] some of them tooke speciall care how to nowrysh the seeds of new quarrells, lest yf all wear quyet theyr craft wold bee owt of request.’ John Harrington; W. Dunn Macray (ed.), *A short view of the state of Ireland written in 1605*, (Oxford, London: James Parker, 1879), p.6. Some administrators who did not belong to this military class—men like Francis Blundell and Robert Jacobs—suspected these ‘Marshal men’ of exaggerating the threat posed by the Irish in order to advance their own agenda. Francis Blundell to Sir Ralph Winwood, 26 April 1615. SP 63-233 no.16, ff.49r-49v. Robert Jacob to R. Winwood, 28 April 1615. S.P. 63-233 no.18, f.54r.

108 Simms, *From kings to warlords*, p.19; see also Canny, *The Elizabethan conquest of Ireland*, pp.24-5.

109 Curiously, although a writer like John Davies claimed that Ó Néill exercised a mastery over these followers tantamount to slavery, the same author reported at the same time Ó Néill’s statement that, if these tenants had given him six months notice of their departure, he would not have felt entitled to

The autocracy of such rulers was in turn cited by writers like Davies as a primary justification for the colonising of Ulster, despite the fact that it had been largely generated by the pressures caused by the very same colonisation project. This fact appears to have been lost on English observers, however, who imagined that Gaelic Ireland suffered from an innate instability which only the introduction of colonists might rectify. This ‘civilising mission’ was one of the primary justifications of the plantation project. To accept these professed intentions at face value, however, is clearly inadequate. Subsequent actions are at least, if not more, important, when determining what kind of cultural and economic changes the colonisation of Ulster represented. It will be seen that a disparity exists between intention and practice, which has not always been sufficiently taken into account when examining what kind of colony Ulster actually was. To take one example, the clearing of Irish from large areas of the province was a professed intention of the project; as king James stated in 1613, the ‘fundamental reason of the plantation’ was the ‘avoyding of ye Irish’.¹¹⁰ Colonists realised, however, that this massive population transfer was neither feasible nor desirable. Instead of exclusive zones of native and colonial settlement, therefore, a society emerged which was characterised by cohabitation and acculturation. The nature of this acculturation requires some attention. Existing histories of plantation society have tended to take either a traditional nationalist/unionist position that little acculturation took place between native and newcomer, or, more recently, attempt to emphasise those examples of cultural intermingling that emerge from the primary evidence.¹¹¹ In fact, neither of these positions is satisfactory. The fact that Ulster today is overwhelmingly English-speaking, for example, attests to a significant anglicisation of the indigenous population. The idea that colonial Ulster was characterised by cultural intermingling (i.e. two cultures meeting and acting upon one another to a more or less equal extent) is, however, deeply problematic. The next chapter will explore the acculturation of the native Irish, the question of the plantation as a culturally-transformative project, and the disparity between intentions and practice.

demand their return. John Davies to Cecil, 19 April 1604. SP 63-216 no.15, f.45r.

110 Notes on certain documents regarding the Ulster Plantation, SP 63-247, no.1102, f.75.

111 Raymond Gillespie has put forward the most articulate argument for a colony characterised by cultural interchange between native and newcomer. See, for example: ‘Success and failure’, p.111.

4 Cultural superstructure

‘...and since that you are heere strangers, and come into our Countrey, you should rather conforme your selves to the Customes of our Countrey, then impose yours upon us’.¹

Such was the response of a Wicomesse native of Maryland in 1635, to the demand of an English governor that the Americans hand over those responsible for killing three English colonists. Having offered to ‘make satisfaction’ for the injury according to their own laws (compensation of 100 arms-length of beads for each person killed), the insistence of the governor that this satisfaction should be interpreted in English terms (‘those men, who have done this out-rage, should be delivered unto me, to do with them as I shall thinke fit’) reflects the unthinking assumption on the part of the invader that their own cultural practices should take precedence over those of the indigenous inhabitants. This, it is clear from the assertion cited above, was far from self-evident to the Americans. This rejection of the applicability of the natives’ laws in their own land is mirrored in Ireland by the abhorrence of John Davies for the brehon law of the Irish, by which murder was punished

¹ Thomas Cecil, *A relation of Maryland together with a map of the countrey*, (London: William Peasley, 1635), pp.35-6.

by a fine, known as an *éiric*, rather than the death penalty of English custom. The idea that the colonists should conform themselves to the customs of the country they were settling in was utterly alien to a figure like Davies, for whom one of the main objectives of the plantation was the cultural transformation of the Irish, so that ‘the next generation will in tongue and heart, and every way else, become English’. What lay behind this impulse, in Davies’ case, was a belief that previous attempts to subdue Ireland had failed because only the colonists had been admitted to the protection of English law, while the native inhabitants had been defined as outside that law, essentially aliens in their own land. Davies believed that the natives would, once admitted to this law, see the self-evident benefits of English civility and abandon their own practices.²

Others, such as Edmund Spenser, however, argued that it was ‘vaine to speake of plantinge of lawes and plottinge pollicies till they be altogeaether subdued’, and that a period of martial law would facilitate the harsh measures necessary to bring the Irish up to the level of civilisation at which they would be ready for admittance to the status of full subjects. ‘Sithens we Cannot now applie lawes fitt to the people’, he wrote, ‘we will applie the people and fitt them to the lawes’.³ While the exact sequence of events by which the Irish were to be ‘civilised’ was debated, a consensus was nonetheless emerging towards the close of the sixteenth century that the anglicisation of the Irish would have to form part of future colonial projects in order for them to succeed. It had not always been thus. Earlier settlers in Ireland had shown a far greater willingness to adopt aspects of Gaelic society. The extent of assimilation had varied according to how far the settler in question was from the Pale. While clichés about the Anglo-Normans becoming ‘more Irish than the Irish themselves’ overstate the case, there is no doubt that colonists from the latter part of the sixteenth century onwards were significantly less inclined to be assimilated into Gaelic Ireland.

It may justifiably be asked what had changed that made co-existence with this alien culture increasingly unthinkable. A centralising impulse of the emerging national monarchy has already been alluded to above; this was the political dimension of broader ideological currents, informed by humanist notions of ‘primitive’ peoples, which had begun to percolate down to the level of administrators and policy-makers. Renaissance humanism,

2 Davies, ‘A discovery’, reproduced in *Historical tracts*, pp.134, 215, 83.

3 Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) ‘A View of the Present State of Ireland’, pp.55, 199.

while often understood as a revival of classical scholarship, was also a reaction to the intellectual convulsions caused by discoveries such as those of Columbus and Copernicus, which upset the medieval conception of the universe and the Eurocentric view of the world that had hitherto been dominant. Humanism can, therefore, also be seen as representing the efforts of intellectuals to discern a new kind of stability and order grounded in change and diversity itself. The Spanish encounter with native American peoples initiated an attempt to classify cultures in a systematic manner, a conceptual pattern which was then carried back to Europe in considering 'primitive' peoples closer to home, such as the Irish.⁴

While regarding such peoples as degenerate, humanists also inherited from classical scholars a doctrine of the Golden Age, which led some to view the same natives as living in a state of primeval innocence before the corruptions of civil life had taken place.⁵ Such contradictory beliefs would profoundly influence conceptions of indigenous peoples in the centuries of European imperialism which followed. This dichotomy encouraged the tendency to either demonise or romanticise the said natives according to a European conceptual pattern, rather than view them in their own historical and geographical context. There inevitably followed from such systems of classification the construction of a hierarchical relationship between human societies, and a narrative in which cultures developed through a series of recognisable stages on their way to attaining the heights of European refinement.⁶

Notwithstanding the role humanism played in the methods initially determined-upon to reform the Irish, it is difficult to see these ideological currents as the prime factor in the colonising process. Even in the case of a consummate humanist scholar such as Thomas Smith, it seems more likely that the investment opportunity was what initiated the desire to found a colony in the Ards, rather than any lofty ideals it was claimed to embody. While Smith's colonial theorising based on classical precedents appears to have been sincere,

4 For the influence of Renaissance Humanism on Irish colonisation see: Bradshaw, 'Sword, Word and Strategy', pp.475-502, and Nicholas Canny, 'The Ideology of English Colonization From Ireland to America', in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, vol.30, no.4, (Williamsburg, Virginia: Omohundro Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1973), pp.575-98.

5 J. H. Elliott, *The old world and the new 1492-1650*, (Cambridge University Press, 1992), p.42.

6 Nicholas Canny has noted in this period the development of 'a concept of historical process' which 'slowly eroded the old idea of a static world'. 'Ideology of English Colonization', p.592.

such theories played a corroborative rather than instigating role.⁷ They served to strengthen the argument by justifying the invasion of foreign lands on the basis of bringing civilisation and reformed religion. Additionally, the idea that the natives would eagerly embrace the opportunity to acquire English culture no doubt assuaged investors' fears of violent resistance from that quarter. Circumstantial reasons are, therefore, far more compelling than ideological ones. Rather than seeing the emergence of a disdain for Gaelic culture as purely novel (the medieval English had, after all, also regarded the Gaelic Irish as primitive to some extent⁸), it would be more accurate to say that this period saw a new immediacy to relations between *New* English arrivals and the Gaelic Irish.

Nicholas Canny has stressed the fact that this period saw Englishmen come into direct contact with the Irish in their native *millieu* for the first time since the Anglo-Norman conquest.⁹ Throughout most of the late middle ages, the English visitor's experience of the Irish was generally of those who lived in the Pale or other anglicised trading towns. While this exposed them not only to the Old English but also to the 'mere Irish' of these areas, these populations had been anglicised to some extent by their contact with the outside world. For the Irish in these areas, the cultural divide between them and the 'wild Irish' of Ulster was not so insurmountable that they could not migrate to live amongst them when the extortions of the English soldiery on the Pale became intolerable in the 1560s. It is significant, however, that an English writer described as 'contrary to their nature and bringing up', this migration to live among 'the savage and rude sorte of Irish men', suggesting that sufficient cultural differences divided the two groups to be apparent to an outsider.¹⁰ While a newcomer may have been able to see something recognisably 'civilised' (i.e. English) in those Irish inhabiting the marches of the Pale, those living beyond, practising transhumance and living under the suzerainty of Gaelic warlords, must have

7 Hiram Morgan argues persuasively for the influence of Thomas More's classic humanist text *Utopia* (1516) on Thomas Smith's plans for the Ards colony. Morgan, 'The Colonial Venture of Sir Thomas Smith', pp.269-70.

8 John Gillingham has dated to the twelfth century 'one of the most fundamental ideological shifts in the history of the British Isles', when not just the Irish, but the Welsh and Scots as well, began to be consistently deprecated as culturally-inferior by English writers. It was at this point, Gillingham notes, that 'a common cultural world in which the Irish could still be teachers' came to an end. John Gillingham, *The English in the twelfth century: imperialism, national identity, and political values*, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000), p.145.

9 Canny, 'Ideology of English Colonization', p.583; Canny, *The Elizabethan conquest of Ireland*, p.123.

10 'A boke comp[re]hendinge divers articles spe[ci]fyng the miserable estate of the Englishe pale of Ireland', March 1562, SP 63-5 no.51, f.137r.

appeared quite alien, backward and primitive.

This sudden confrontation with the otherness of Gaelic culture, therefore, contributed to a developing ideology of cultural superiority. This both fed into, and was fed by, a new ethos driving English expansion. These trends involved both a growing aversion on the part of colonists to acculturation, and the intensification in turn of an impulse to anglicise the native population. It must be stressed, however, that the urgency of this reformation was not felt overnight; it would be truer to view it as a resolution—gradually intensifying in response to the resistance of the natives—from the 1530s, that Ireland would never be made tractable until it ceased to be Irish.¹¹ The period also witnessed a significant evolution in the methods felt to be most appropriate in carrying out this transformation. To view this merely as a humanist-inspired project to reform the Irish through exposure to English culture would be a gross simplification. Instead, we may discern several distinct strategies which co-existed during the whole period of the Tudor conquest. While one or other of these may have gained prominence during certain periods, at no stage did any single one completely eclipse the others. These strategies may usefully be considered under the threefold division of Reform, Reduce and Replace.

Reform, Reduce and Replace

‘Reform’ implied the anglicisation of the Irish by making available to them the

11 The gradualness of this intensification can be gauged by the fact that wholesale anglicisation had still not become the *sine qua non* of policy in the 1560s, when Henry Sidney could argue for the government’s upholding of the Gaelic order in the interests of maintaining the peace in an area, like Ulster, outside the effective range of military control. For example, by supporting Toirealach Luineach Ó Néill’s authority over the whole of Tyrone. ‘A note of the cheefest matters conteyned in the l[ord] deputies l[ett]ers, w[hi]ch are to be considered and answered’, 5 July 1567, SP 63-21 no.48, ff.107r-108r. While anglicisation was the long-term goal, a distinctly gradualist approach persisted. In the reign of Sussex as lord deputy (1556-65), for example, the establishment of English law was to take place by means of ‘interim constitutions’, which made provision for the retention of Gaelic law (and the participation of brehons, who were allowed to collect fees) in less serious cases, while the people became familiar with English law, introduced at first only for the most serious offenses. Brady, *The Chief Governors*, p.74. Elizabeth Fowler has shown how Gaelic law was at times recognised for practical purposes in order to secure a bridgehead for English law in Ireland. The Irish custom of partible inheritance (known to the English as ‘gavelkind’), for example, was frequently and successfully used in the common law courts there. Fowler has concluded that ‘English legal strategies for bringing the Irish to accept their government were complicated mixtures of accommodation and force, both of which produced a ferment of political thought’. ‘The Failure of Moral Philosophy in the Work of Edmund Spenser’, in *Representations*, no.51, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), p.54.

accoutrements of English civility: modes of dress, speech, manners, the common law and the reformed church. Implicit in this was the assumption that, given the choice, the Irish would clearly opt for the superior culture. This in turn reflected a humanist belief in the perfectibility of humans. As Brendan Bradshaw has remarked of the Reformation in Ireland, an optimistic view of a human nature capable of responding rationally to the choice between civility and incivility informed initial efforts to reform the Irish through persuasion rather than coercion.¹² The Irish simply needed to be given the opportunity to behave civilly in order to become so. The Old English writer Rowland White, for example, argued that the natives ‘be men reasonable [. . .] where hitherto lackinge the lawe they colde not lawfullie lyve’.¹³ Over time, however, as the natives refused to play the part allotted to them in this narrative, the optimistic view came into conflict with a darker vision of human nature, which stressed the predominance of the will over the intellect, and reflected a Calvinist belief in ‘the natural irrationality and viciousness of man’.¹⁴ A hardening of attitudes took place in the second half of the sixteenth century, which gave new vigour to perceptions of the Irish as barbarian. Whereas administrators had once argued that reforms and laws would be sufficient to change the Irish, voices such as Spenser’s—condemning them as responsive only to the sword—became increasingly prominent towards the end of the century.

12 Bradshaw, ‘Sword, Word and Strategy’, pp.490-1. The adoption of English customs and social structures was felt to be axiomatic. An example of the reasoning here is offered by English common law. Its guarantees to life and property, argued such advocates, would empower the Irish to abandon their clearly deleterious lifestyle. It was envisaged that primogeniture, for example, would be readily adopted by them if the inheritance of an eldest son could be protected by the authority of the state from his brothers, or other rivals within the sept. The confidence thus bred that property would pass to their heirs, would in turn encourage the Irish to make improvements to the land such as the planting of crops and the building of English-style houses. Davies, ‘A discovery’, reproduced in *Historical tracts*, pp.2, 4, 97.

13 White; Canny (ed.), ‘Discors Touching Ireland’, pp.448-9. It is doubtful that Old English advocates of reform were greatly interested in the thoroughgoing reform of Gaelic culture. Brendan Bradshaw has noted that the object of their attack ‘was not Gaelic culture or society, but Gaelic dynasticism, a political system that was incompatible with the form of centralised government to which the Pale reformers were totally committed. [. . .] the priorities of the reformers reveal comparative indifference to the purely cultural forms of Gaelicisation. They addressed themselves to those features of the Gaelic socio-political system, such as buyings, coyne and livery, and the galloglass, which were directly inimical to the stable and centrally governed community they were striving to achieve. The reform of matters of language, dress and similar social customs was put on the long finger. The attitude of these practical politicians towards Gaelic culture was tolerant - indeed, one suspects, in many cases sympathetic’. *The Irish constitutional revolution of the sixteenth century*, (Cambridge University Press, 1979), p.42.

14 Bradshaw, ‘Sword, Word and Strategy’, p.498. David Armitage has also written of the ‘lost faith in the effectiveness of such humanist ethical edification during the darkening years of Elizabeth’s last decade’ in *The ideological origins of the British Empire*, (Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.55.

While the term ‘reform’ has been (and continues to be) used to encompass violent means of bringing about that reform, for the purposes of this discussion, the word here implies peaceful methods of cultural transmission. Violent methods are included within the scope of the ‘reduction’ of the native population. This strategy resulted from the failure of the Irish to respond in the hoped-for manner to the civility on offer.¹⁵ This became the orthodox view among English administrators by the early seventeenth century, and John Davies’ assertion that a ‘barbarous country must first be broken by a war, before it will be capable of good government’ can be taken as broadly representative of such a view.¹⁶ While the reformation of the Irish remained the goal, such an end was felt to be unattainable without first dismantling the infrastructure which sustained Gaelic culture. It reflects the continued hope that it was not the Irish themselves who were fundamentally unresponsive to reform, but rather their leaders and retainers who were obstructing these efforts. As upholders and transmitters of the most problematic aspects of Gaelic culture, this elite had to be removed (or at least divested of their power), in order for reforming efforts to bear fruit.¹⁷ In this manner, the state would first have to wipe the slate clean before the

15 The term ‘reduce’, frequently used by contemporaries in reference to native peoples, requires clarification. As James Axtell notes in a North American context, it appears peculiar on first glance that people with an image of their own culture as superior would so often speak of ‘reducing’ the native, when we would expect them to describe their endeavours as an attempt to raise ‘inferior’ peoples up to their level. Axtell, *The European and the Indian*, pp.45-6. In both America and Ireland, however, many contemporaries wrote as if the culture they were confronting was not merely inferior, but constituted an absence of culture altogether. The language of disorder, chaos and wildness dominates descriptions of the indigenous way of life in both localities, particularly with respect to the seasonal movements of population which they failed—at times willfully failed—to understand, and mistook for aimless wandering. This unsettled pattern of life was just one of the many features which were seen as symptomatic of an ungovernable pride which it was believed inhered within these cultures. Even the long hair of the Indians, and the ‘glib’ sported by the native Irish, were symbols of this pride. The epithet of ‘proud’ given to Seán Ó Néill was indicative of the more unequivocally-negative meaning of the word in the early modern period, when it was associated with the most serious of the seven deadly sins. It was from this state of pride that it was felt the natives must be reduced before they could be made receptive to anglicisation. Chichester described the followers of Mag Uidhir in Fermanagh being ‘reduced to the state of freeholders’ under the English landholding system, and in the same letter of receiving warrant ‘to reduce that cuntrie to the state of Monaghan’, and reducing the people to conformity. Lord Deputy and council to the Lords, 12 September 1606, SP 63-219 no.104, ff.70r-71r. The anonymous author of the ‘Discourse concerning the settlement of the natives in Ulster’ in 1628 also wrote of the need ‘to reduce them into obedience’. Printed in Mary Hickson, *Ireland in the seventeenth century*, vol.2, (London: Longmans, Green, 1884), p.329.

16 Davies, ‘A discovery’, reproduced in *Historical tracts*, p.4.

17 Brendan Bradshaw outlines a key difference between the ‘reform’ and ‘reduce’ strategies, in that the former envisaged a situation in which ‘the existing lords were to retain the status and function of leadership in the localities, and local government was to be operated through their agency’, whereas ‘reduce’ represents the ‘later programmes of reform which brought new English officials into the localities to usurp the place of the local leader [and] were sharply resented’. *Irish constitutional*

inculcation of English cultural values could begin. What Ciaran Brady has termed a ‘cultural trauma’, paraphrasing Spenser’s proposals, would first have to take place, and this is what Chichester meant when he wrote that ‘the queene wyll never reape what is expected untyll the nation be [. . .] so subiected as to take a neewe impression of lawes’.¹⁸

A strategy of ‘reducing’ the Irish did not so much supplant the reform agenda as introduce an additional stage which would have to take place before reform was possible. The mechanics of anglicisation were worked out in a more concrete fashion than had previously been the case. This is because it involved the introduction of English (and later lowland Scottish) colonists, who would take the place of the native elite as agents of reformation, ‘by whose life, care, and good husbandrie’, Chichester wrote, ‘it is to be hoped the neighboures wilbe alured to allowe and imitate that course, which bringes profit to themselves, their posteritie and the commonwealth’.¹⁹ Clearing the way for the introduction of such colonists, however, necessitated the violent destruction of Gaeldom.

revolution, p.230. Bradshaw has elsewhere summarised the programme more colourfully: ‘the community was to be brought to docility rather in the way a pack of wild animals might be tamed. The malicious were to be exterminated and the rest brought to heel by stern discipline’. Bradshaw, ‘Sword, Word and Strategy’, p.490. This dichotomy between the tractable lower orders, led astray by a delinquent native elite is apparent in Samuel Purchas’ injunction (referring to the natives of Virginia) ‘that servile natures be servilely used; that future dangers be prevented by the extirpation of the more dangerous’. *Hakluytus posthumus, or, Purchas his Pilgrimes, contayning a history of the world in sea voyages and lande travells by Englishmen and others*, vol.19, (Glasgow: J. Maclehose and Sons, 1907), p.246.

18 Brady, ‘Spenser’s Irish Crisis’, p.30. Chichester to Cecil, 8 October 1601. SP 63-209-2 no.133, f.29v.

19 Arthur Chichester, ‘Certaine noates of Rememberance touching the plantation and setelment of the escheted lands in Ulster’, September 1608, SP 63-225 no.225, f.108. It is interesting to contrast Chichester’s proposal that colonists will transform the native Irish by their good example, with the following warning he wrote only months later: ‘Heere it is worthie of great consideration how the English language and customes maie be alwayes p[re]served pure and neat unto posterities, w[i]thout w[hi]ch I account it noe good plantation nor anie great honnor and securitie to us to deduce people thither. The way to p[er]forme that, is to separate the Irishe by themselves, as I said afore, to forbear marrynge and fosteringe w[i]th them, and to excede them in multitudes, if it be possible’. Arthur Chichester, ‘Certaine Considerations touchinge the king’s escheated lands in Ulster’, 27 January 1609, SP 63-228 no.15, f.36r. These apparently-contradictory instructions to place the colonists and natives side-by-side, and at the same time to segregate them, reveal a tension between plans for acculturation-by-example, and the anxiety that the opposite would happen—that ‘the veary Englishe of birthe’, as Edmund Campion put it, ‘conversant with the brutishe sorte of that people [would] become degenerate in short space’ and be ‘quite altered into worst ranke of Irish rooges’. Such fears were well-founded in historical experience; the assimilation of earlier generations of English in Ireland was held up as a salutary warning by innumerable writers, who warned of the ‘the infectious manners of the country’, as if Irishness was literally a disease. ‘It is holden for a Maxime in Ireland’, wrote Barnaby Rich, that ten English wil sooner become Irish, then one Irish will be found to turne English’. Edmund Campion, *Two histories of Ireland, the one written by Edmund Campion, the other by Meredith Hanmer Dr of Divinity*, (Dublin, 1633), p.14. ‘The efficiente and accidentall impediements of the civilitie of Irelande’, 1579, SP 63-70 no.82, f.204r. Rich, *A new description*, p.34.

English efforts to present their culture as more civil and stable were seriously undermined by the fact that this destruction involved recourse to distinctly uncivil methods. This irony was not lost on English contemporaries; Spenser's *View* can be read as an attempt (arguably unsuccessful) to resolve this contradiction.²⁰ David Edwards has noted that martial law continued to be employed extensively in provincial areas in what was, officially at least, peacetime.²¹ In the reign of Charles, Irish Catholics had sought among the 'Graces' assurance that provost marshals would only execute people in time of war.²²

The extent to which the period between 1603 and 1641 represented a peaceful interlude has been overstated. In an Ulster context, it is vital to remember that this daily reality of arbitrary punishment would have been an innovation to the inhabitants there. For those on the receiving end, it must have bore a striking resemblance to no law at all, and can hardly have recommended the English legal order as a more stable and impartial replacement for the Gaelic one. It is, therefore, not surprising that the Irish failed to respond to this strategy of reduction, just as they had failed to respond to reformation. This resistance led to the belief in some quarters that the Irish were utterly incapable of reformation, and for some to advocate, especially in the final years of the Nine Years War, a strategy of simply replacing them with colonists from outside.

While few argued for the wholesale extermination of the Gaelic population (although some came close), the tendency to believe that Ireland would only be pacified by the replacement of a large part of its population played a major role in the period when the Ulster colony was being planned. As early as 1566 lord deputy Sidney wrote to Cecil that the government could choose 'ether to bring the people to the just rule of Inglysh law or to banysh them and unpeople the soyle by Inducement of colonyes', adding that the latter was 'optable and

20 Ciaran Brady has argued that this contradiction is left unresolved by Spenser in *The View*: 'The road to The View', p.43.

21 David Edwards, 'Out of the blue?: Provincial unrest in Ireland before 1641', in Ó Siochrú and Ohlmeyer (eds.), *Ireland, 1641: contexts and reactions*, pp.97-8.

22 'Certain humble requests in the behalf of the subjects of Ireland', 24 May 1628, SP 63-246 no.62, f.157v. It was these assurances lord deputy Falkland complained of when, shortly afterwards, he warned: 'By the sayed Articles we are directed not to attempt the suppression of them any way but by the course of the common lawe, untill they be growen unto a heade, and yett it is not determined what numbers they must amounte unto before they be accompted a heade fitt for the Marshal comissioners to be authorised'. Falkland to Lord Conway, 3 July 1628, SP 63-247 No.2, f.3r. Falkland was reassured, however, that the king would never 'tye the hands of his deputie from usinge his power to suppress disorders in the government'. Lord Conway to Falkland, 18 July 1628, SP 63-247 no.21, f.42v.

fesyble'.²³ A 'Discourse of Ireland' written in 1599 argued that Ireland would never be made safe until 'all the race of them' was moved to England to serve as menials, to be replaced by English and Flemish ('a People of more propinquity to our Nature') colonists.²⁴ Some of the rhetoric produced in such periods of intense conflict can be assigned to the category of 'bad-tempered and tough-minded talk' which, Ciaran Brady cautions, could 'hardly be said to form the elements of an ideology'.²⁵ The aforementioned plans to deport much of the Irish population, however, appear sufficiently thought-out and argued to give the impression that they were informed by a belief that all other options had failed, rather than the simple motive of revenge alone. It is significant that a belief in the incapacity of the Irish for civility was current, if not predominant, at the time when the plantation project was being executed. In contrast to rhetoric presenting the plantation as an attempt to culturally transform Ulster, the relatively perfunctory efforts made at anglicising the Irish are also consistent with widespread disillusionment at this possibility. Perhaps in no other field is this more apparent than that of religion.

Religion/superstition

Even when the Irish had shared the same religion as their conquerors, the subjugation of the island had occasionally been framed in religious terms. In the aftermath of the Anglo-Norman conquest, Gerald of Wales had sought to justify the assumption of lordship by Henry II as a means of 'reforming the Irish people, who were then very ignorant of the rudiments of the faith, by ecclesiastical rules and discipline, according to the usages of the English church'.²⁶ Such reforming impulses had no impact on an area as remote from the

23 Lord Deputy Sidney to William Cecil, 17 April 1566, SP 63-17 no.14, f.38r.

24 Such radical plans reflect a loss of faith in the proximity of English colonists to transform the Irish: 'True it is that the malice is so inveterate within Irish heartes, as hardly they can endure their subjection unto the English nation or to mixe or suffer us to participate with them in any interest of their Soile unless we [become] meere Irish with them in Language Apparell and Manners'. The author did, however, hold out some hope that 'the removing of the Irish maye happily alter their disposition when they Shall be planted in another Soyle. For doubtles in England wee find the Irish servant very faithfull and Loving, and generally the people kinde the rather when there malice can not profit them anye waye'. Anonymous; Quinn (ed.), 'A Discourse of Ireland (Circa 1599)', p.164.

25 For example, a writer in 1601 remarked that 'by many it is wished that this kingdome of Ireland had ben longe againe, turned into a sea poole, than it should have soe charged her ma[jes]tie, but it had been much better all the woods therin had been cutt downe and burned'. Discourse of Ireland, 1601, SP 63-209-2 no.273, f.431r. Brady, 'Spenser's Irish Crisis', p.23.

26 Gerald of Wales; Thomas Wright (ed.), *The historical works of Giraldus Cambrensis*, (London: George Bell and Sons, 1894), p.260. James Muldoon has described the Irish church at this time as 'both within and without Christian Europe' and the Irish as 'nominally Christians', in *Canon law, the expansion of*

centre of power as Ulster, and in practice, the church beyond the Pale was left throughout the late middle ages to develop along its own lines. Clerical marriage was widespread, and the hereditary character of the priesthood in Ireland marked the Gaelic church off from the mainstream of European Catholicism. As Kenneth Nicholls has noted, such practices did have their parallel in other Celtic areas of Scotland and Wales, but they were markedly less tolerated in the archdiocese of Armagh—which straddled both the Pale and Ulster—by primates not of a Gaelic background.²⁷ Because of this, the church was effectively split up into two units, *inter anglicos* and *inter hibernicos*, and the fact that primates seldom visited the north—leaving it to be administered by Gaelic officials—is testament to the differing character of the Catholic church in Ulster.²⁸

In attempting to define this character more clearly, some qualification must be offered to the tendency among certain English writers to view the Irish as essentially pagan in the wake of the Reformation.²⁹ While this was partly based on the deviations in Gaelic practice from mainstream European Catholicism and the many obvious survivals from pre-Christian religion, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the use of the term ‘pagan’ as illustrative of these survivals, and its use as a term of abuse indicative of a belief that *all* Catholics were unworthy to be deemed Christians. The poet Robert Herrick, for example, described the Catholic faith itself as a ‘mixt religion, part pagan, part papistical’ and the title-page of John Bale’s book on his experiences in Ireland (see figure 3, p.129) depicted ‘The English Christian’ (accompanied by a lamb) and ‘The Irishe Papist’ (with a wolf) as if the two were mutually-exclusive categories.³⁰ This more exclusive definition of what it was to be Christian suggests that we should be cautious in accepting descriptions of the Catholic Irish as pagan at face value. With this in mind, the observations of Catholic outsiders are more likely to offer an ethnographically-accurate picture of the practice of religion in Gaelic Ireland at this time, given that they had no propaganda interest in

Europe, and world order, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), p.311.

27 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp.106-13.

28 Hunter, *The Ulster plantation*, M.Litt Thesis, p.543.

29 Anthony Trollope (‘The Irishe men, except [in] the walled townes, are not christyans’) and Edmund Spenser (‘they are all Papistes by their profession but in the same so blindelye and brutishly enformed, for the moste parte as that ye would rather thinke them *Atheists* or infidles’) are just two of the many writers to refute the Christianity of the Irish. Trollope to Walsingham, 12 September 1581, SP 63-85 no.39, f.97v. Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) ‘A View of the Present State of Ireland’, p.136.

30 Robert Herrick; F.W. Moorman (ed.), *The Poetical Works of Robert Herrick*, (Oxford University Press, 1921), p.91; John Bale, *The vocacyon of Johan Bale to the bishiprick of Ossorie in Irelande his persecucions in ye same, & finall delyueraunce*, (Rome, 1553), sig.A1r.

denigrating all Catholics as pagan.

Such writers, even without the ideological motivation to denigrate the Irish as pagans, testify to a religious syncretism in Gaelic Ireland that had probably been widespread across Europe in the middle ages. Wherever Christianity took root, it was invariably grafted onto pre-existing pagan beliefs; such a fusion still characterises Catholicism in large parts of Latin America to this day. A French visitor in the 1640s, while acknowledging the native Irish were ‘very good Catholics’, added that they were ‘not very polished’ and knew little of their religion.³¹ In the mid-sixteenth century the English Catholic William Good was appalled by ‘most filthy life of their Priests, who of Churches make profane houses, and keepe harlots, who follow them whithersoever they goe’, lambasting them for the prodigious number of children they sired with these women, their drunken debauchery, and participation in armed disputes.³² This latter phenomenon is symptomatic of the extent to which the Catholic clergy in Gaelic areas were implicated in the distinctly-worldly concerns of secular society. Through intermarriage with ruling families, hereditary land-proprietaryship, and their participation in political legitimation and war, priests in Gaelic Ireland were far from conforming to the ideal of a detached, impartial class of arbiters; on the contrary, they and their children were often able to avail of the social advantages of the position of priest to maintain hospitality (a key lever of power in Gaelic society) and raise forces of fighting men to develop their power-base and that of their allies.³³ A Counter-Reformation zeal for the rectification of this situation animated much of the efforts of Catholic clergy, trained on the continent, who operated in seventeenth-century Ulster.³⁴

31 François Le Gouz de la Boullaye; Thomas Crofton Croker (trans.), *The tour of the French traveller M. de La Boullaye Le Gouz in Ireland, A. D. 1644*, (London: T. and W. Boone, 1837), pp.38-9.

32 Good, ‘Maners of the Irishry’, pp.144-5.

33 ‘These Priests sonnes that follow not their studies, prove for the most part notorious theeves. For they that carry the name of Mac-Decan, Mac-Pherson, Mac-Opac, that is, the Deanes or Deacons son, the Parsons son, and the Bishops sonne, are the strongest theeves that be, and the more able by their Parents liberality to raise a power of unruly rebels; and the rather, because following their fathers steps, they maintaine hospitality. Good, ‘Maners of the Irishry’, p.145. Thomas Gainford described ‘the bastards of priests’ as ‘notorious villainse’, adding that ‘the daughters either begg or become strumpets’. *The glory of England, or A true description of many excellent prerogatives and remarkeable blessings, whereby she triumpheth over all the nations of the world*, (London, 1618), p.150.

34 The success of these Catholic clergy, in reconciling feuding factions for example, was even praised by Protestant observers. John Bossy, ‘The Counter-Reformation and the People of Catholic Ireland, 1596-1641’, in T. D. Williams (ed.), *Historical Studies: Papers Read before the Irish Conference of Historians*, vol.8, (Dublin: Gill and MacMillan, 1971), pp.158-9.

Beyond the behaviour of the priesthood, Good noted a compendium of pagan practices, from the incompatibility of horse-ownership with eating an odd number of eggs, to the widespread attempts of ‘wise women’ to cure diseases by combining non-Christian magic charms and Christian prayers. He concluded:

‘I cannot tell whether the wilder sort of the Irishry yeeld divine honour unto the Moone; for when they see her first after the change, commonly they bow the knee, and say over the Lords prayer, and so soone as they have made an end, they speake unto the Moone with a loud voice in this manner: Leave us as whole and sound as thou hast found us’.³⁵

The inordinate veneration/fear of the bardic poets can also be seen as a relic of pre-Christian beliefs in the magic efficacy of their ‘versified curses’, whose reputed ability to wield ‘magical harm’ Nicholls has described as an ‘extraordinary survival from an earlier and pre-Christian phase of Celtic life’ when their function had been more explicitly sacral.³⁶ Other beliefs, such as the ‘enchanted Gyrdles’ reported by Barnaby Rich (which were reputed to protect the wearer from both swords and gunshot) are reminiscent of the Powhatans’ belief in the immunity of their leader, Nemattanew, to harm from bullets.³⁷ It can even be inferred from an anecdote in Campion’s *Two Histories* that the Irish had been self-consciously tapping into a pagan past, associated with strength in battle, while the

35 Good, ‘Maners of the Irishry’, pp.145-6. Lest this anecdote appear a mere rhetorical device on the part of Good to disparage the Irish, such moon-worship was alluded to by another visitor to Ireland in the same period. William Lithgow, *The totall discourse, of the rare adventures, and painefull peregrinations of long nineteene yeares travailes*, (London, 1640), p.433.

36 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp.93-4. Edmund Campion observed in the sixteenth century: ‘they esteeme their poetes, who wright Irishe learnedly, and penne therein sonettes heroicall, for the which they are bountefully rewarded; yf not, they sende owt lybells in dispraise, whereof the gentlemen, specially the meere Irishe, stande in greate awe’. Campion, *Two histories of Ireland*, p.14. An echo of this belief in the magical properties of poetic language can be felt in the idiom of folklore in Ireland down to the twentieth century. Seamus Ennis recorded for Alan Lomax in 1951 a story-song from Connemara, in which one character warns the other: ‘You had far better be dead when your father arrives, because he’ll make a poem that will take the flesh from your bones..’. ‘Go Deimhin, a Mháire, má d’Imigh an Coileán Uait’, <http://c0383352.cdn.cloudfiles.rackspacecloud.com/audio/T3282R06.mp3>, accessed 26 July 2014.

37 Rich, *A new description*, p.41. John Harrington, in the notes to his translation of *Orlando Furioso*, remarked ‘some say it is a great practise in Ireland to charme girdles and the like, persuading men that while they weare them, they cannot be hurt with any weapon’. Ludovico Ariosto; John Harrington (trans.); Robert McNulty (ed.), *Ludovico Ariosto’s ‘Orlando furioso’*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p.140. Thomas Gainford also wrote that the Irish ‘use incantations and spells, wearing girdles of womens haire, and locks of their lovers’, in *Glory of England*, p.150.

Christian legacy was associated with the weakness consequent upon restraint:

‘In some corners of the land they used a damnable superstition, leaving the right armes of their Infants males unchristened (as they tearmed it) to the intent it might give a more ungracious and deadly blow’.³⁸

The prayers appealing to God for abundant booty undertaken before setting out on a raid, and their attributing of success to his favour, are further testament to the belief in an immediate and interventionist God among the Irish, compared to the more abstracted and unapproachable deity that had come to dominate the English Protestant mind.³⁹

This emphasis on the responsiveness of the natural world (through supernatural agency) to their actions and entreaties increasingly distinguished the religious temperament of the Irish from that of New English arrivals. Many of the latter were strongly influenced by a Calvinist view of a universe in which God stood largely aloof from creation, ‘that no mere ceremony could have any material efficacy, and that divine grace could not be conjured or coerced by any human formula’.⁴⁰ Allied to this was the belief that worldly attainments—while not a *means* of achieving salvation—were ‘indispensable as a sign of election’, an intellectual development on which Max Weber based his thesis associating the rise of capitalism with ascetic Protestantism. As Weber observed, an ethos of ‘God helps those who help themselves’ came to supplant earlier modes of thought in which God was believed to dole out rewards and punishment according to ceremonies of propitiation or moral action.⁴¹ It is not difficult to see how a mentality of associating advancement with the grace of God on the part of the Irish, and activity in the world on the part of the Protestants, might lead to a tendency towards fatalism on the part of the former, and a contrasting enterprise and dynamism on the colonists’ side. We should, however, be wary of imputing too much significance to such broad cultural undercurrents. For one thing, the recourse to magic had by no means receded to a distant memory among the English

38 Campion, *Two histories of Ireland*, p.15.

39 Good, ‘Maners of the Irishry’, p.144.

40 Keith Thomas, *Religion and the decline of magic: studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England*, (London: Penguin, 1971), p.55.

41 Max Weber; Talcott Parsons (trans.), *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*, (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1930), p.115.

themselves. A Puritan like John Penry in 1587 regarded areas far from the metropolitan south-east, such as Wales and Northumberland, as particularly devoid of anything resembling true faith, describing the people there as ‘either such as never think of any religion, true or false, plainly near-atheists, or stark blinded with superstition’.⁴² A belief in the power of the poor’s curse, still potent enough to make the gentry afraid of prohibiting begging, was hardly any less superstitious than the fear of the poets in Ireland.⁴³ Karen Kupperman has remarked that the rank and file colonists in Virginia did not ‘have a much more sophisticated understanding of the operation of the universe than their Indian counterparts’ and that:

‘They feared not only the military attacks of the Indians or the withdrawal of technological support, but also that the Indians might use magic against them. It is very easy to overdraw the modernity of the English. They and the Indians believed in a world peopled with supernatural forces which could affect their lives’.⁴⁴

Belief in magic may have had as much to do with class than ethnicity. The writer of the *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis*, a satire written by a member of the Gaelic elite aimed at those deemed to be social upstarts, clearly regarded the peasantry as so mired in superstition as to be lacking any true understanding of their nominal religion, declaring that they would not have been capable of receiving the faith if Christ himself had been their teacher.⁴⁵

We must also critically assess what is meant by ‘superstition’, as distinguished from the officially-sanctioned religious faith practiced by elites. It is difficult to see how the conviction expressed by lord deputy Falkland—that God was aiding the government in the

42 J.E.C. Hill, ‘Puritans and the Dark Corners of the Land’, in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Fifth Series, vol. 13, (London: Royal Historical Society, 1963), p.81.

43 John Walter, *Crowds and popular politics in early modern England*, (Manchester University Press, 2006), p.203.

44 Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *Settling with the Indians: the meetings of English and Indian cultures in America, 1580-1640*, (London: Dent, 1980), p.viii.

45 Anonymous; N.J.A. Williams (trans.), *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis*, (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1981), p.66.

capture of fugitive priests—did not itself constitute the same kind of superstition existing at the highest level of society.⁴⁶ Keith Thomas has posited a distinction between religion and magic as one defined by the ‘coercive’ nature of the latter and the ‘intercessionary’ nature of the former, but a vast range of religious beliefs and practices do not fit neatly into either category, falling instead somewhere in the grey area between the two.⁴⁷ The following formal distinction which he notes in a later chapter may be closer to the truth:

‘The legitimacy of any magical ritual depended upon the official view taken of it by the Church. So long as theologians permitted the use of, say, holy water or consecrated bells in order to dispel storms, there was nothing ‘superstitious’ about such activity’.⁴⁸

Often the characterisation of a belief as ‘superstitious’ and ‘primitive’, therefore, appears to have had more to do with a definition of the people who believed in it as primitive than the content of the belief itself. A reluctance of the Irish to name children after their parents was imputed by Good to a superstitious belief that it would hasten the death of the eponymous precursor.⁴⁹ Besides his hypothesising on the subject, however, there appears no objective sense in which the custom can be demonstrated as any more superstitious than the *preference* for naming children after their parents.

Another prime example is funerary customs among the Irish. These seem to have struck many newcomers to the island as especially strange and indicative of both ungovernable emotions and a lack of true faith.⁵⁰ The Irish, as Wiley Maley has noted, were ‘wheeled out

46 Falkland to Lord Viscount Killultagh, 29 April 1627, SP 63-244 no.650, f.228r. John Davies likewise entertained the idea that God had waited until the reign of a Queen to permit the final subjection of Ireland to English rule ‘that it might rather appear to be his own immediate work’, timing the event to also co-incide with the coming of England and Scotland under one crown, ‘to the end that a secure peace might settle the conquest’. Davies, ‘A discovery’, in *Historical Tracts*, p.60.

47 Thomas, *Religion and the decline of magic*, p.73.

48 Thomas, *Religion and the decline of magic*, p.247.

49 Good, ‘Maners of the Irishry’, p.143.

50 There are numerous vivid descriptions of the Irish manner of mourning the dead. Those of Edmund Campion and Richard Stanyhurst are almost identical to the letter and clearly the product of their joint studies. Campion, *Two histories of Ireland*, pp.13-4; Stanyhurst, ‘The Description of Ireland’, p.67. Both Edmund Spenser and Barnaby Rich acknowledge the influence of Stanyhurst in their descriptions but they also contain some original material. Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) ‘A View of the Present State of Ireland’, p.105; Rich, *A new description*, pp.12-3. The description of William Good in Camden’s *Britain* appears to be based on first-hand experience, from which the accounts of both Fynes Moryson and John Speed appear to have been lifted almost *verbatim*. Good, ‘Maners of the Irishry’, p.147; Moryson, ‘The

repeatedly as illustrations of extreme emotions’, and the ‘despairefull outcries and ymoderate waylinges’ at Gaelic funerals were said by Spenser to ‘savor greatlye of the Scythyan Barbarisime’.⁵¹ This ‘excessive mourning’⁵² was said, furthermore, to signify a lack of real belief in salvation. John Bale noted in Waterford:

‘There wawled they over the dead, with prodigyouse howlynges and patterynges, as though their sowles had not bene quyeted in Christe and redemed by hys passion’.⁵³



The English Christia / The Irishe Papist.

Figure 3: Title page of John Bale, *The vocacyon of Johan Bale to the bishiprick of Ossorie in Irelande his persecucions in ye same, & finall delyueraunce*, (Rome, 1553), sig.A1r.

Itinerary’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.319-20; John Speed, *The theatre of the empire of Great Britaine*, (London, 1612) p.138.

51 Willy Maley, ‘Angling for Ulster: Ireland and plantation in Jacobean literature’, in Ó Ciardha and Ó Siochrú (eds.), *The plantation of Ulster*, p.228; Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) ‘A View of the Present State of Ireland’, p.105.

52 Speed, *The theatre of the empire of Great Britaine*, p.138.

53 Bale, *The vocacyon*, sig.C1v, f.17v.

The subject of the soul's fate in the afterlife was, to such outsiders, conspicuously absent in discussions at the deathbed. This may be deduced by other accounts, such as Good's, to have its origins in a strong reluctance among the Irish to acknowledge the approach of death, lest such an acknowledgement cause the patient to give up the fight for her/his life:

'Such as visite and sit by one that lieth sicke in bed, never speake word of God, nor of the salvation of his soul, ne yet of making his will, but all to put him in hope of his recovering: If any one call for the sacrament, him they count past hope and recovery. [. . .] When one lieth ready to die, before he is quite gone, certaine women, hired of purpose to lament, standing in the meeting of crosse high-ways, and holding their hands all abroad, call unto him with certain out-cries fitted for the nonce, and goe about to stay his soule, as it laboureth to get forth of the bodie, by reckoning up the commodities that he enjoyeth of wordly goods, of wives, of beauty, fame, kinsfolke, friends, and horses; and demanding of him why he will depart? and whither? and to whom? yea they expostulate with his soule, objecting that she is unthankfull'.⁵⁴

Once again it appears that it was the Irishness of such funeral customs, and the difference they represented from English practice, that defined them as barbaric and pagan. It is in any case difficult to see how they can be viewed as intrinsically any more superstitious.⁵⁵

The 'howling and barbarous outcries' were also seen by writers like Stanyhurst and Campion as indicative of a lack of sincerity in the Gaelic Irish. Both writers ascribed to the exaggerated emotions displayed at their funerals, the origin of the proverb 'to weep Irish', which signified (as elaborated by Barnaby Rich) 'to weepe at pleasure, without cause, or grieffe'.⁵⁶ The hired mourning-women or *bean chaointe* attested to by Good's account were

54 Good, 'Maners of the Irishry', p.147.

55 James Axtell has noted how fines and whippings were meted out by the Puritans in north America for the natives' 'mourning with a great noyse by howling'. Axtell, *The European and the Indian*, pp.64-5.

56 Stanyhurst, 'The Description of Ireland', p.67; Campion, *Two histories of Ireland*, pp.13-4. Rich, *A new description*, p.13.

the most disreputable feature of Irish funerals in this respect. This *caoineadh* ('keen' or lament) was similar to the *corrach* practiced in the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd*, where it was condemned by Calvinist evangelists who in many other respects were remarkably tolerant of *Gàidhlig* customs.⁵⁷ Although Barnaby Rich claimed that there was 'neither Jesuite, Seminary, nor Popish priest [. . .] that wil once rebuke or find fault at the matter', the *caoineadh* was in fact denounced by the Counter-Reformation church in Ireland, according to John Lynch in the 1660s, who declared it to be 'offensive to the living and of no use to the dead'.⁵⁸ It would appear, however, that such denunciations had little effect. The fact that the custom was mentioned by William Brereton in the 1630s as taking place in the heart of Dublin suggests it was probably widespread in the less-anglicised countryside.⁵⁹ The *bean chaointe* continued to be a prominent feature of Irish funerals throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and thus appears to have enjoyed the semi-toleration of the Catholic church, only disappearing in the wake of the Great Famine and the more active discouragement taken up by that institution in that period.⁶⁰

Rather than being seen as the detached observations of proto-anthropologists, the commentaries of many outsiders on Irish religious practices must be seen as those of individuals whose own set of values and practices were *believed* to constitute the orthodox and authoritative form of the faith, from which local variations were seen as a deviation. In this, they were not unlike the medieval traveler Ibn Batuta, who viewed with dismay the practice of Islam in faraway corners of the Muslim world such as Mali.⁶¹ What may have struck English observers of the 'mere Irish' was not that they were fundamentally more superstitious, but the co-existence with Christianity with beliefs which were not in accord with the elite-sanctioned form of the faith. These remnants of pre-Christian religion were reminiscent of those observed among the poorer classes in England. One Lady Ann Fanshawe, a visitor in 1650, believing she had seen a *bean sí*, came to the conclusion that

57 Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) 'A View of the Present State of Ireland', p.105. Jane Dawson, 'Calvinism and the Gaidhealtachd in Scotland', in Alastair Duke, Gillian Lewis and Andrew Pettegree (eds.), *Calvinism in Europe, 1540-1620*, (Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp.251-52.

58 Rich, *A new description*, p.13. John Lynch; Matthew Kelly (ed. and trans.), *Cambrensis eversus*, vol.2, (Dublin: The Celtic Society, 1850), p.211.

59 Sir William Brereton's travels in Ireland, 1635, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.383.

60 A newspaper from 1792 described it as 'the counterfeit and barbarous clamour of howling savages that would disgrace the funeral of a Hottentot'. Kevin Whelan, 'The Cultural Effects of the Famine', in Joe Cleary and Claire Connolly (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Irish Culture*, (Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp.141-2.

61 Karen Ordahl Kupperman, *The Atlantic in world history*, (Oxford University Press, 2012), p.47.

the greater superstition of the Irish made it a more attractive environment for the devil to stage such apparitions.⁶² The fact that she shared this belief in the *bean sí*, however, suggests that she herself did not subscribe to a world-view that was markedly more rationalistic.⁶³

Ironically, this perception of the Gaelic Irish as barely-Christian led to a belief in the highest circles that they would be easier to win over for the Reformed church than the supposedly more staunchly-Catholic Old English part of the population.⁶⁴ The fact that the Reformation subsequently failed to make much headway with these reputedly-irreligious natives raises the question of whether or not they were as dissolute in their Catholicism as was assumed. There is also the difficulty, alluded to above, of knowing whether or not descriptions of the Irish as pagan were intended as dispassionate observations or merely pejorative remarks on their perceived barbarity. An antagonism seems apparent from the very beginning between those, such as Davies and King James—whose beliefs about the reformability of the ‘mere Irish’ were based less on actual first-hand experience than generalised speculations about ‘primitive’ people—and those charged with executing the Reformation among the Irish, who were more familiar with conditions on the ground.

Bishop George Montgomery, for example, who was exhorted by Davies to be a ‘new St. Patrick’ among the Irish, wrote in 1607 that his efforts to win over native clergy to Protestantism were being hampered by resistance coordinated by Ruairí Ó Dónaill.⁶⁵ Ó Dónaill’s departure later that year may have temporarily made the bishop’s job easier but, despite some initial success in persuading Catholic priests to become Protestant ministers, this proved to be a false dawn. The evidence would suggest that many of these conversions were mere outward shows of conformity by priests anxious to safeguard their livelihood and their families. There are several reasons for supposing this. Firstly, many of these

62 Thomas, *Religion and the decline of magic*, p.570.

63 Further evidence of this can be seen in the fact that English merchants, mindful of the absence of snakes in Ireland, would bring Irish soil back home with them ‘to caste in their gardens to kepe out and to kyll venimos wormes’. Boorde, *The fyrst boke of the introduction of knowledge*, sig.C4r.

64 Instructions to the lord deputy in 1606 asserted that the people would be ‘more easily won’ where they were ‘least civil’. Lords of the Council to Arthur Chichester, 24 January 1606, in *CSPI James I 1603-1606*, p.390. In the same year, John Davies expressed the belief that ‘the multitude’ in Ulster were ‘apt to receave anie faith, yf the Byshop of Derrie [. . .] would come and bee a newe Saint Patricke amongst them’. ‘Observations of S[i]r Jo[h]n Davys attorney of Ireland, after a journey made by him in Mounster’, 4 May 1606, SP 63-218 no.53, ff.156v-157r.

65 Bodleian Library, Oxford, Carte MS 61, f.344.

figures later returned to Catholicism under more favourable conditions. The years in which the plantation project got underway saw the enforcement of a 1605 royal proclamation ordering the banishment of priests from Ireland and a fine of 12d for those failing to attend Protestant service. This fell largely into abeyance as the years passed and the demands of social stability prevailed over those of religious conformity.⁶⁶ This, coupled with the arrival of increasing numbers of Tridentine clergy from the continent as enforcement of these edicts eased, brought many outwardly-conforming clergy back into the Catholic camp. The expediency of these ‘conversions’ is also suggested by the fact that the wives and children of these priests refused to attend Protestant services (women and children not being subject to recusancy laws), and that many priests returned to the Catholic church on their deathbeds.⁶⁷

Even while outwardly conforming to the religion of the coloniser, these clergymen often continued to serve the interests of the Catholic church in a clandestine fashion. One Brian Mac Seáin Ó Mealláin, while a warden in the Protestant church on the Haberdashers proportion in Londonderry, was accused of harbouring a Catholic abbot, Giolla Cholaim Mac Taidhg, in his house and to have had sixteen masses said by him.⁶⁸ The fact that some were attacked simply for associating with figures who had converted to Protestantism is testament to the hostility towards the Reformed religion amongst the natives. George Canning, the Ironmongers’ agent, reported that the Irish on the company’s lands in Londonderry were too afraid of the consequences among their own people, to conform to

66 This official proscription of Catholicism was very unevenly applied. There were periodic reinforcements during fits of royal displeasure with the Catholic community, such as the period following the opening of the 1613 parliament, when James increased the freedom of Dublin authorities to impose coercion; by 1629 on the other hand, following years of *de facto* toleration in the interests of appeasing Spanish opinion and extracting subsidies from the Catholic community in Ireland, Francis Annesley could write: ‘The lawes concerning religion have ben of late wholly neglected. Popish schoolmaisters, preists, Fryers, Jesuits and semiaries reside dilligently amongst the people and exercise their functions publicly and bouldly without disturbance’. ‘The present state and condicion of the Realme of Ireland worthy of speedy and serious consideracion’, SP 63-248 no.45, f.139r. The politique approach which prevailed is exemplified by the answer of Wentworth when asked to enforce a law against friars meeting: ‘This be a thing fitt both for examination and punishment, yet cannot I hold this in my judgment a seasonable time to rubb upon that sore, you know my ground not to attempt att all, till we be provided to drive it thorow’. Bodleian Library, Oxford, Carte MS 1, f.121r.

67 Brian Mac Cuarta, *Catholic revival in the north of Ireland, 1603-41*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2007), pp.51-2.

68 Examination of Knogher McGilpatrick O’Mullan, of the age of 60 years or thereabouts, taken before Sir Thomas Phillips, 10 May 1615, in C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (eds.), *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, (London: Longman & Co., 1880), pp.54-5.

the colonists' religion. An Irishman tending cattle on the Mercers proportion in 1615 was reported to have been killed, 'for no other cause than that his M[aste]r being an Irishman had conformed himself and came to the Church'.⁶⁹ The religious aspect of the violence in 1641 is evident in attacks on those such as Dónall Ó Laoire, an Irishman from outside Belturbet who had married an English woman and become Protestant; having had his goods and rents taken away from him, he was promised by the insurgents that they would be restored to him if he returned to the Catholic faith.⁷⁰ Such examples would suggest that resistance to conversion (and adherence to Catholicism) was more deeply-rooted in Gaelic Ulster than merely a campaign orchestrated by elite figures like Ó Dónaill, or imposed from outside by clergy from the continent.

It remains the case, however, that most sophisticated analyses of the Reformation in Gaelic Ulster have centered around the failures of the Church of Ireland rather than success on the part of the Catholics in resisting it.⁷¹ The idea that the Reformation failed implies that, given the right combination of strategy, sufficient funding, and dedicated personnel, the natives of Ulster were not so rigidly attached to Catholicism as to be entirely beyond hope of conversion. Indeed, as has been seen, some believed the 'least civil' Irish would prove most receptive. Where historians have differed is in dating the moment when this hope decisively ended. While Brendan Bradshaw has argued that the window of opportunity closed as early as the reign of Queen Mary, and Karl Bottigheimer has written that the Reformation was lost by the 1620s, Nicholas Canny has refuted the idea of its failure in the early modern period altogether, and asserted that the issue remained undecided up until the nineteenth century.⁷²

There is no question, however, that an observer towards the end of the period under discussion here would have conceded such a failure among the Gaelic Irish in Ulster. In

69 Canny, *Making Ireland British*, p.434.

70 Deposition of John Hickman, 6 February 1643, TCD MS 833, f.156r. Belturbet: Béal Tairbirt, 'mouth of the isthmus.'

71 Bradshaw, 'Sword, Word and Strategy', pp.475-502; Canny, 'Why the Reformation failed in Ireland', pp.423-50; Bottigheimer, 'The failure of the Reformation in Ireland', pp.196-207. The exception to this is the monograph by Brian Mac Cuarta, *Catholic revival in the north of Ireland, 1603-41*.

72 Bradshaw, 'Sword, Word and Strategy', p.479. Bottigheimer, 'The failure of the Reformation in Ireland', p.200. Hunter likewise concluded that the Reformation had failed amongst the Irish in Ulster by 1641, by which date 'it was clear that protestantism was only to be the religion of the colony'. Hunter, *The Ulster plantation*, M.Litt Thesis, p.497. Canny, 'Why the Reformation failed in Ireland', p.450.

1630, Bishop William Bedell painted a bleak picture of the state of the Reformation in the dioceses that had been committed to his care:

‘The People, saving a few British Planters here and there, [are] obstinate Recusants. A Popish clergy more numerous by far than we, and in full exercise of all Jurisdiction Ecclesiastical, by their Vicar-General and Officials; who are so confident as they Excommunicate those that come to our Courts; even in matrimonial causes. [. . .] The Primate himself lives in my Parish, within two miles of my house: the Bishop in another part of my Diocess further off. Every Parish hath its Priest, and some two or three a piece; and so their Mass-houses also; in some places Mass is said in the Churches’.⁷³

Bedell concluded by observing that recognition of James as king by the Irish was ‘but at the Pope’s discretion’. His letter captures the ascendancy of the Catholic clergy despite decades of official proscription. Even from an early stage of the plantation, the optimism of men like Davies and the king was not shared by all. Chichester confided to James at the astonishingly early date of 1610 that the religious dimension of the plantation had failed. According to him, the Irish were too firmly-attached to the Catholic faith and would need to be subjected to the kind of campaign of reduction outlined above, in order to be ‘clarified from the dross and poison of the Church of Rome’, as a prerequisite to any successful Reformation. Such a process would clearly take a considerable period of time, given Chichester’s reference to ‘almightie providence havinge reserved it to be the worke of some other to whom God grannt better succeasse’, implying that neither he nor the king would see this preparatory groundwork completed during their terms of office.⁷⁴

73 William Bedell to Archbishop William Laud, 1 April 1630, in Gilbert Burnet, *The life of William Bedell, D.D. Bishop of Kilmore in Ireland*, (Dublin, 1736), pp.34-6. In a letter later the same year, Bedell quantified this preponderance of the Catholic clergy, writing that there were 66 priests active in Kilmore and Ardagh, whereas there were only 32 Protestant ministers (3 of whose wives did not go to church). Bedell to Laud, 18 September 1630, *ibid.* p.46.

74 Chichester to the King, 31 October 1610, SP 63/229, f.172r. A tension analogous to that between the advocates of reform and reduce previously discussed is evident within the Church of Ireland concerning the best approach to the conversion of the Irish. While some promoters saw the inculcation of Protestantism as the surest method of creating a peaceful and stable environment for the colony to prosper in, others envisaged the establishment of such an environment as creating the necessary conditions for the work of conversion to begin. As will be seen, the latter position came to prevail

The lord deputy was, however, unduly pessimistic. The examples cited above of Catholic priests being compelled to conform (if only superficially) in these early years would suggest that the Reformation might have been enforced successfully on the natives of Ulster. Nicholas Canny has shown how mere conformity might evolve into conviction over time, if initial coercion gave way to intensive evangelisation, as happened in parts of Germany, Bohemia, and France following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes.⁷⁵ Neither was the fact that Reformation was being imposed 'from above' a bar to success in Ireland. After all, such had been the case in England itself. As G.R. Elton noted, whereas the continental Reformation had its origin in popular alienation from the Catholic church, falling into the hands of secular government only in its second stage, in England, the reverse was the case; government took the initiative, and it was the political changes imposed from above which led to the subsequent religious transformation.⁷⁶ Prior to this transformation (which can really only be said to take place in the reign of Elizabeth), mere conformity had characterised the nominally-Protestant population in parts of England remote from the centre of power.⁷⁷ To reflect that the success of the Reformation was far from inevitable in England and Scotland should alert us to the fact that its failure was far from inevitable in Ireland.⁷⁸

amongst Protestant leaders in Ireland, who saw the civil authorities as having failed to create these conditions through lack of zeal in enforcing outward conformity. As will also be seen, it was far more attractive for those who sought either an excuse for the slight gains made by the Reformation, or a pretext for choosing not to attempt the unrewarding and unglamorous work of evangelising the Irish at all, preferring instead the far more congenial work of ministering to the newly-arrived colonists.

75 Canny, 'Why the Reformation failed in Ireland', p.446.

76 G.R. Elton, *England under the Tudors*, (London: Routledge, 1991), p.110. While the momentum for Reformation came from below (most decisively from the nobility), such was the danger of a religious reaction from forces surrounding Mary Stuart that the Scottish Reformation could never feel wholly secure until the 1570s. T.M. Parker, 'Protestantism and confessional strife', in R.B. Wernham (ed.), *The new Cambridge modern history, vol.3: The Counter-Reformation and price revolution, 1559-1610*, (Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp.112, 116.

77 Steven Ellis has noted that 'popular acceptance of Protestantism and the enforcement of parliamentary religious legislation went forward at markedly different rates in the various parts of England'. Steven G. Ellis, 'England in the Tudor State', in *The Historical Journal*, vol. 26, no. 1, (Cambridge University Press, 1983), p.202.

78 There were in fact aspects of Gaelic religious practice which would appear to have been more amenable to Protestantism than reformed Catholicism. Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin has offered as an example the previously-mentioned practice of 'clerical marriage-concubinage and the resulting ecclesiastical dynasties [which] were actually far easier to accommodate within the developing Protestant tradition, rather than within a reformed Catholicism which placed increasing emphasis on clerical celibacy'. *The Church of Ireland and the native Irish population in plantation Ulster*, (Dublin: Institute for British-Irish Studies, University College Dublin, 2010), p.2.

In Gaelic Ireland, however, the second stage which followed this government-inspired Reformation elsewhere never took place, and it is the factors which distinguished it from places where the ‘Reformation-from-above’ struck deeper roots among the people which must be examined. The key difference was the colonial relationship in Ireland, as outlined in chapter two, which established an antagonistic relationship between the interests of reformers and those they wished to see reformed.⁷⁹ The difficulties Chichester reported facing evangelising ministers were a far cry from the somewhat idealised image which Blenerhasset presented in the same year, suggesting that Ulster would soon ‘in civility and sincere Religion, equal even faire England herselfe’:

‘Art thou a Minister of Gods word? Make speed, the harvest is great but the laborers be fewe: thou shalt there see the poore ignorant untaught people worship stones and sticks: thou by carrying millions to heaven, maiest be made an Archangell, and have whiles thou doost live for worldly respects, what not’.⁸⁰

The appeal to self-interest in this image of abundant souls waiting to be reclaimed from heathenism suggests another factor which undermined evangelical efforts in Ulster from the outset.⁸¹ The belief thus fostered—that the mission would involve preaching to scarcely-Christian barbarians with little or no attachment to Catholicism—was, as has been seen, a misconception, and the kind of ministers attracted by such promises were not likely to persevere once they realised the enormity of the task facing them. This was especially true when growing numbers of colonists offered them an alternative kind of pastoral work that was both easier and more lucrative.⁸² Blenerhasset’s hint at the attractive remuneration to

79 For a caveat see below p.144.

80 Blenerhasset, *A direction*, sig.D1r.

81 This combination of sacred and profane motivations was not unique to Ulster. Promoters of colonisation unashamedly cited the spiritual and material fruits of missionary endeavour in one breath. Daniel Price gave a sermon in 1609 to bolster support for the Virginia plantation, promising that those who took upon themselves the task of Christianising the Americans would ‘receive an unspeakable blessing, for they that turne manie to righteousnesse, shall shine as the starres for ever and ever: you will make [. . .] a Savadge country to become a sanctified Country; you will obtaine their best commodities’. Daniel Price, *Sauls prohibition staide. Or The apprehension, and examination of Saule*, (London, 1609), sig.F3r.

82 There were of course exceptions who were sincerely committed to missionary work, the most famous of whom was William Bedell, the Bishop of Kilmore (1629-42) and Ardagh (1629-33) who complained frequently of the corruption and neglect of the Protestant mission in Ulster.

be had for ministering in Ulster foreshadows the kind of interests which would come to prevail over missionary work with such clergy, and hints at a more likely reason for the hostility of the native Irish towards the Church of Ireland than either Chichester's explanation of insufficient state coercion, or the resistance of the Irish, provides.⁸³

This explanation places more emphasis on the neglect of the Church of Ireland itself in carrying out the evangelical mission that had been used as a central justification for colonisation. In both Ireland and America, the conversion of native peoples played a central role in this justification, offering a thin veneer of ethereal motives for (scarcely) concealed material ones. John Smith—a central figure in the early years of the colony—criticised the Virginia Company for 'making Religion their colour, when all their aime was nothing but present profit'.⁸⁴ William Bedell referred to the personnel of his own church as 'the chiefest impediments of the work that we pretend to set forward'. One of the primary impediments, Bedell observed, was the 'hatred of subdued people to their conquerers' amongst the Irish, which his peers, far from allaying, had increased by their 'extortions' upon the native population.⁸⁵ The risk that Protestantism would be reviled by the Irish due to its association with conquest and defeat had been perceived by Edmund Spenser. He

83 Indeed, such coercive measures as were taken—even if less robust than Chichester would have wished—seem more likely to have hardened the hearts of the Irish against the Protestant religion than made them receptive. The observation that measures like the execution of the bishop of Down and Connor, Conchúr Ó Dubhánaigh, were making Catholic martyrs rather than serving to advance the Reformation, comes from Chichester himself, writing three years after his advocacy of coercion in Ulster. Chichester to Salisbury, 6 February 1612, SP 63-232 no.8, f.16r.

84 John Smith, *Advertisements for the unexperienced planters of New-England, or any where*, (London, 1631), p.4. This is not to dismiss all claims to religious motivation as insincere. The presence of George Thorpe (comparable in many ways to Bedell and equally as anomalous) in Virginia marked a short period in which missionary work seems to have been undertaken in earnest by at least some ministers there. Alden T. Vaughan, 'Expulsion of the Salvages: English Policy and the Virginia Massacre of 1622', in *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, vol. 35, no. 1, (Williamsburg, Virginia: Institute of Early American History and Culture, 1978), pp.68-73. The careers of Bedell and American contemporaries have been compared in: Vivian Salmon, 'Missionary linguistics in seventeenth-century Ireland and a North American analogy' in *Historiographia Linguistica*, vol.12, (Amsterdam: Benjamins, 1985), pp.321-49. John Parker has also contended that the years 1609-10 constituted a 'brief, enthusiastic hour in English and American history, when religion spoke more loudly for empire than either the state or the merchant community', in 'Religion and the Virginia Colony, 1609-10', in Andrews, Canny and Hair (eds.), *The Westward Enterprise*, p.270. The massacre of colonists (Thorpe among them) brought this brief conciliatory period to an end, a development welcomed by some who, anxious to 'obtaine their best commodities', were only too willing to conclude that 'the sinnes of these wicked Infidels, have made them unworthy of [. . .] the eternall good' of salvation. Waterhouse, *A declaration*, p.14.

85 William Bedell to Samuel Ward, 2 February 1634, Charles McNeill (ed.), *The Tanner letters: original documents and notices of Irish affairs in the sixteenth & seventeenth centuries, extracted from the collection in the Bodleian Library, Oxford*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1943), p.104.

recommended that (after the conquest and coercion which was necessary to render the population docile and receptive):

‘ . . . some discrete ministers of their owne Cuntrymen be firste sente amongeste them which by their milde perswacions and instruccions as also by their sober liffe and Conversacion maie drawe them firste to understande and afterwarde to imbrace the doctrine of their salvacion’.⁸⁶

For all the harshness in Spenser’s attitude towards the native Irish, he was clearly sincere in his wish to see them converted. The efforts of bishop Montgomery indicate that some effort was made in the years after 1603 to follow Spenser’s advice and recruit native Irish clergy to the Church of Ireland. As has been seen, however, many of these had merely conformed outwardly in order to maintain their livings. What Spenser did not foresee was that newly-arrived ministers accompanying the colonists from England and Scotland would prefer to preach to their already-reformed compatriots than to a people speaking an alien language who, in any case, exhibited all the signs of being already-damned.⁸⁷ Furthermore, those clergymen who did take up posts among the natives often compounded the animosity felt towards the church by treating the position as a sinecure, carrying out little or no pastoral work, a vacuum which the Counter-Reformation clergy were quick to

86 Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) ‘A View of the Present State of Ireland’, p.221.

87 Just as Edward Waterhouse (above n.84) was eager to conclude that the Powhatans of Virginia were reprobate (in the Calvinist sense of the word, meaning not belonging to the ‘elect’), Marc Caball has noted a corresponding willingness in Ulster to hold the ‘Catholic population to be so innately depraved as to be beyond redemption’ which, he speculates, ‘may have encouraged a lukewarm attitude to attempts made to win the Irish to the Anglican church’. Marc Caball, ‘Providence and Exile in Early Seventeenth-Century Ireland’, in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.29, no.114, (Irish Historical Studies Ltd., 1994), p.187. Canny has referred to this more unequivocally as a ‘ready-made excuse for desisting from the evangelisation effort whenever their overtures did not produce immediate results’. Nicholas Canny, ‘Protestants, Planters and Apartheid in Early Modern Ireland’, in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol. 25, no. 98, (Irish Historical Studies Ltd., 1986), p.107. This grasping at the notion of the Irish as reprobate as a ruse to avoid the work of conversion can be added to the excuse alluded to above (n.74), that government enforcement of conformity must precede such efforts. While according to the doctrine of predestination it was impossible to know for sure who was among the elect, it was believed that those chosen were marked by signs of God’s grace. The conspicuous absence of such marks among the Irish appears to have convinced many ministers in Ireland, like Stephen Jerome, that ‘the generalitie are corrupt and become abominable’. Stephen Jerome, *Irelands Jubilee, or joyes Io-paeen, for Prince Charles his welcome home*, (Dublin, 1624), pp.89-90.

fill.⁸⁸

The evidence for such neglect is widespread. Some inhabitants of Tyrone, for example, complained that they were being routinely fined for failing to attend churches ‘when as for the moste p[ar]te there is no church to come unto, and if there be, there is commonlie none but an English or Scottish minister whome the common people understand not’.⁸⁹ Chichester expressed concern in 1615 that, ‘intending their own profit most among the Irish’, such ministers had begun to farm out the collection of their tithes to woodkerne ‘and such like extortionate people’, in other words, the very class he had been attempting to eradicate.⁹⁰ Ministers in Monaghan were widely reported to have refused baptism to the children of native Irish unless they received exorbitant fees for doing so, suggesting that monetary gain was a far greater priority than spreading the Reformed faith.⁹¹ So derelict were the ministers in their duties that one writer claimed they (often ‘Mechanick men’ and ‘rude bred Souldiers, whose education was at the Musket mouth’) spent their time drinking and carousing with the very Catholic priests they were meant to be contending with for the souls of their parishioners.⁹² Bedell perceived the disrepute into which such practices were

88 Bedell’s son wrote that ‘they generally accounted those livings, where all or most of the people were papists, to be *sine cura* saving only to take care to sell tithes’. Such abuses were, moreover, not confined to clergy on the ground, but were perpetrated at the highest level. The younger Bedell wrote of ‘the frequent prostitution of that solemn and dreadful sentence of excommunication, which with them (as it were) was become nothing else but an engine to open men’s purses; with this the chancellor, yea and even the very apparitors, were used to force in their fees and exactions, especially from the Irish, the poorest of all not excepted. The chancellor, tho’ but one man and a meer lay-man, when he saw his time, would decree men excommunicated, and presently the ministers were commanded to denounce them as such in their churches, twenty in a parish at once. [. . .] thus denounced, tho’ papists (as commonly they were) whose religion excommunicates them from our worship and assemblies, the next business was by a writt *de excommunicato capiendo* to apprehend them and clap them up in the goale; where sometimes they were famished, or, to avoid taking, forc’d to fly to woods and mountains, to turn kerns and live by robbery’. Bedell (d.1670), ‘Life and Death of William Bedell’, pp.36-7, p.40.

89 ‘Some agreevances that the poore subiects in the countie of Tyrone undergoe’, TCD MS 808, f.47r.

90 Chichester to the Lords of the Council, 22 March 1615 in *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.23. These tithes, levied on milk, were an innovation, and not something the Church of Ireland could maintain was simply being transferred from Catholic to Protestant use. Mac Cuarta, *Catholic revival*, pp.57-8.

91 ‘Grievances of the tenants and Inhabitants belonginge to the right honourable the Earle of Essex in Farney’, 1622, NLI 8014, vol.10. All the major religious rites were an occasion for extortion by such officials. One Conchúr Mac Éinrí carried his sick father into Meath so ‘that hee might die there for feare of the ministers ex[t]or[ti]ons’.

92 Lithgow, *The totall discourse*, p.439. It could be argued that the poverty of predominantly-Irish parishes attracted the dregs of the clergy. Many of these areas were so poor that they did not provide a living satisfactory to ministers, who therefore held several, leading to the pluralism which Bedell bemoaned. Steven Ellis has emphasised the poor financial resources of the Church of Ireland, ravaged by lay impropriation, as a reason for the failure of the Reformation, although this would seem open to debate, given the generous allocation of both ecclesiastical and glebe lands (to be taken from the secular

bringing the established church, drawing an unflattering comparison to the austerity of the early church:

‘And that religion that makes men that professe it, and shewes them to be despisers of the world and so farre from encroaching upon others in matter of base gaine as rather to part with their owne. [. . .] This bred the admiration of the Primitive Christians, contrary causes must needs bring forth contrary effects. Wherefore let us preach never so painefully, and live never so piously ourselves, so long as the officers in our Courtes do prey upon the people, they [the Irish] account us no better then publicanes’.⁹³

Given the prominence accorded to conversion in the rhetoric of plantation, it seems surprising that those on the ground proved so uninterested in the project. There are many explanations for this: greed, the poor quality of personnel, lack of resources, the challenge of the Counter-Reformation, simple inertia. None of these are entirely convincing. Notwithstanding the challenges, the impression cannot be avoided that, if the will had been present, a way would have been found. This points to a more fundamental reason for the neglect of the mission, which is that disinterest in the reformation of the Irish was hardwired into the structure of colonial Ulster. Protestantism, as a cultural marker, was a primary means by which the colonists could signal their identity as a privileged class—civil, placid, sedentary and loyal—in contrast to the uncivil, warlike, transient and disloyal native population. While the crown may have wanted to employ them as a means of making the Irish equally civil, sedentary and loyal, the settlers had a different agenda. To extend the exclusivity conferred by Reformation to the native population would have been self-defeating, in that it would have threatened the maintenance of this privileged position.

This applies as much to church personnel as it does to the lay population. While compelled

proportions) in the plantation project. Steven G. Ellis, ‘Economic Problems of the Church: Why the Reformation Failed in Ireland’, in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, vol. 41, no.2, (Edinburgh: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1990), pp.239-65.

93 William Bedell to the Bishop of London (Laud), 10 August 1630, in E.S. Shuckburgh (ed.), *Two biographies of William Bedell, bishop of Kilmore: with a selection of his letters and an unpublished treatise*, (Cambridge University Press, 1902), p.311.

to pay lip-service to the idea of converting the Irish, English and Scottish ministers had no interest in creating a wave of native Protestant clergy who would provide competition for posts.⁹⁴ Other classes of settler proved likewise indisposed to assist in augmenting the proportion of the population with whom they would have to compete for privileges reserved to Protestants. Michael Hechter has analysed this phenomenon, contrasting two different models of core-periphery acculturation. In the first, which he terms ‘social structural convergence’, the social structures and cultural practices of a core will diffuse to the periphery once it has established domination. In time ‘differences become muted [. . .] the core and peripheral regions will tend to become culturally homogeneous because the economic, cultural, and political foundations for separate ethnic identification disappear’. This is in contrast to what Hechter refers to as the ‘internal colonial model’, which better describes seventeenth-century Ulster. Notwithstanding the rhetoric of promoting cultural transformation, the core, having dominated the peripheral area, seeks to exploit it materially. The pursuit of this objective entails—contrary to cultural convergence—the creation of a colonial elite and its subordinate counterpart; an unequal distribution of resources and power between the two is institutionalised and high-status roles reserved for the ruling class:

‘This stratification system, which may be termed a cultural division of labor, contributes to the development of distinctive ethnic identification in the two groups. Actors come to categorize themselves and others according to the range of roles each may be expected to play. They are aided in this categorization by the presence of visible signs, or cultural markers, which are seen to characterize both groups. At this stage, acculturation does not occur because it is not in the interests of institutions within the core’.⁹⁵

Hechter has noted a situation comparable with the failure of the reformation in Ulster in

94 Likewise, the revenue from recusancy fines and other exactions proved so lucrative that they can only have acted as a powerful deterrent to undermine their source by converting the Irish. This deterrent can be observed at the highest level of government in that the government made profitable the violation of plantation conditions by fining the natives who failed to remove from undertakers’ land, which explains the almost-complete lack of any effort on the state’s part to put these conditions into execution.

95 Hechter, *Internal colonialism*, pp.7-9.

Wales, where Nonconformist sects benefited from the Anglican church's lack of interest in preaching to the Welsh-speaking population.

'Since the Welsh gentry had ultimately chosen to abandon their Welsh culture, thereby heightening their social status both in Wales and in England, they were not anxious to devalue this privilege by democratizing access to English culture among the Welsh masses. The value of English culture and most particularly of English speaking in Wales, was a direct function of its exclusivity. [. . .] it was through the maintenance, even the proliferation, of cultural distance that the Welsh squire preserved his domestic privilege. Every interaction with common Welshmen on a basis of equality threatened the squire's own precarious ethnic identity'.⁹⁶

Counter-currents to this trend must, however, be acknowledged. The eagerness of colonists to keep native Irish on their lands has been noted; one of the ways in which investors could evade plantation conditions forbidding them from doing so was to count Irish who had become Protestants as 'British'. The Ironmongers' agent in Londonderry inquired about the legality of doing this in 1615, wondering whether the Oath of Supremacy was required in addition.⁹⁷ There would thus appear to have been an interest in ensuring at least outward conformity. On the other hand, the strict enforcement of the Reformation might, as Alan Ford as noted, drive potential tenants away, thus defeating the purpose of converting them if the hope was to retain them as tenants by doing so.⁹⁸ Such were the antagonistic impulses which governed the attitude of newcomer towards native (and vice-versa) in colonial Ulster. On balance, the benefits of keeping the native Irish in a position of legally-disadvantageous Catholicism appear to have outweighed the potential benefits of converting them. No fact is more indicative of this than that, given the higher rents paid by their Irish tenants, undertakers often paid the fines levied on the native Irish for remaining

⁹⁶ Hechter, *Internal colonialism*, pp.182-4.

⁹⁷ Canning to Ironmongers' Company, 1615, LMA, Guildhall Library MS 17278-1, f.69r.

⁹⁸ Alan Ford, *The Protestant reformation in Ireland, 1590-1641*, (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter Lang, 1987), p.178.

on their lands.⁹⁹

Theological sanction for this cultural divide could be found in Leviticus, where the Israelites were commanded not to take indentured servants from among their compatriots, but ‘of the heathen that are round about you’.¹⁰⁰ The idea of demarcating your own community off from an exploitable ‘other’ was facilitated by the notion of an impervious dividing line between the ‘elect’ and the ‘reprobate’ in Calvinist thought, which would appear to render pointless any attempts at missionary work. There was of course nothing inevitable about the failure of the Reformation in Gaelic Ulster. We need look no further than the Highlands and Isles of Scotland to find an example of the Reformation successfully extended to a people speaking a language and practicing a lifestyle similar to that of the Ulster Irish. The key factor present in the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd*, which distinguished it from Ireland, was the willingness to preach to the people in their own language. Unlike in Ireland, the native elite and its learned orders were recruited into the service of the new religion. The Protestant message was mediated through the native idiom and adapted to take account of beliefs that would have normally been regarded as ‘pagan’ or ‘idolatrous’. There is evidence that Gaelic Calvinist ministers made a distinction, for example, between black magic and other more benign beliefs such as ‘second sight’ and fairies.¹⁰¹

Frowned upon by the Scottish Kirk, this Gaelic Calvinism would come to be eroded by Lowland cultural values as the seventeenth century progressed; it nevertheless gives some indication of what might have been achieved if evangelisation had been carried out in Ulster, as envisaged by isolated figures like Bedell. In the Scottish *Gàidhealtachd*, therefore, the Reformation did not appear as a front in a campaign of colonial domination. In Ulster, however, the Reformation was burdened with the baggage of anglicisation, which left it inextricably linked to the processes of conquest and dispossession. This is nowhere more evident than in the failure of Church of Ireland clergy to preach in Irish, a failure which is itself indicative of the linguistic state of affairs in colonial Ulster before 1641.

99 Moody, ‘The Treatment of the Native Population’, p.62.

100 Leviticus 25:44-46.

101 Dawson, ‘Calvinism and the Gaidhealtachd in Scotland’, pp.231-53.

Language

The question of why the Church of Ireland did not make a sustained effort to evangelise the Irish in their own language has, to a great extent, already been answered. The same disinterest in carrying out the Reformation by most church personnel explains a reluctance to take on the considerable task of either training ministers in Irish or recruiting Irish-speaking priests to the Protestant cause. This is not to say that some efforts were not made in this respect. One of the purposes of the foundation of Trinity College Dublin had been, ostensibly, to:

‘. . . serve as a college for learning, whereby knowledge and civility might be increased by the instruction of our people there, whereof many have usually heretofore used to travel into France, Italy and Spain, to get learning in such foreign universities, where they have been infected with popery and other ill qualities, and so become evil subjects’.¹⁰²

The fact that Irish Catholics flocked to continental universities in even greater numbers in the seventeenth century is testament to the failure of the university to fulfill this ambitious program. It is nevertheless true that William Daniel’s translation of the New Testament into Irish, as well as the initiatives taken by Bedell to encourage the teaching of the language when he became provost of Trinity in 1627, indicate that *some* attempts were made.

Between Daniel’s departure at the beginning of the seventeenth century, and Bedell’s arrival, however, the training of Irish-speaking students was neglected. The reforms attempted by Bedell were partly in response to a situation where scholarships intended for Irish-speakers were being given to anyone born in Ireland.¹⁰³ The slackening momentum of this project can be gauged by the falling proportion of native Irish students, roughly a fifth

102 The Queen to the Lord Deputy, the Lord Chancellor, and the Council of Ireland, touching the University of Dublin, Westminster, 29 December 1592, in James Morrin (ed.), *Calendar of the patent and close rolls of Chancery in Ireland, of the reigns of Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary, and Elizabeth*, vol.2, (Dublin: HMSO, 1863), p.227.

103 Alan Ford, *The Protestant reformation in Ireland, 1590-1641*, (Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Peter Lang, 1987), p.105.

in 1619, compared to just five (of 103) in 1640.¹⁰⁴ Andrew Knox, appointed bishop of Raphoe in 1610, was another of those who took seriously the mission of Reformation in Ulster, although his preferred strategy placed a greater emphasis on coercion than Bedell's.¹⁰⁵ Upon his appointment, he pressed for the adoption of an ambitious series of articles intended to eliminate Catholicism from the kingdom, which Perceval-Maxwell has described as reflecting 'a rather utopian view of the ease with which Protestantism might be made supreme'.¹⁰⁶ Knox did not entirely neglect the persuasive aspect of his mission, however, bringing three Gàidhlig-speaking clergy with him to his new diocese, although this only seems to have underlined his underestimation of the challenge he faced. These clergy, living 'under the deadly hatred of the Irish', had to take shelter with the Bishop and be protected by a specially-appointed militia, suggesting that merely preaching in their native language may not have been sufficient to win over the native population.¹⁰⁷ Furthermore, whether these Irish-speaking clergy were actually used for evangelising Irish-speaking inhabitants is open to question. The 1622 visitation book includes, among its recommendations for churches and personnel to be moved from areas of native habitation to those where colonists were more densely concentrated, the advice that a converted native priest (surely perfect material for carrying out the work of conversion) should be moved to an area 'better inhabited by British people'.¹⁰⁸

This is further evidence of a gulf between the theory and practice of colonisation in Ulster. Given that influential figures such as Knox were aware of the utility of preaching in Irish, it bears asking why so little of it took place. This willingness to adapt aspects of the indigenous culture as an aid to conversion was overpowered by the strong association in the English mind between the Reformation and other aspects of cultural anglicisation such

104 Alan Ford, 'Who went to Trinity? The early students of Dublin University', in Helga Robinson-Hammerstein (ed.), in *European universities in the age of Reformation and Counter Reformation*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), p.66.

105 Raphoe: Ráth Bhoth, 'ring-fort hut'.

106 Perceval-Maxwell, *The Scottish migration to Ulster*, p.258.

107 'His ma[jes]ties direction in favor of the Bishopp of Raphoe', 1612, SP 63-232 no.30, f.69r. These three Gàidhlig-speaking Scottish ministers appear to have still been present in 1622, however. The Visitation book of archbishop Usher includes in its survey of clergy in Raphoe, one Robert Aikyn, living in the parish of Clondahorky ('m[as]ter of artes who understandeth the Irish language a sufficient and carefull preacher), Dowgall Cambell (at Conwal, 'who understandeth the Irish language and able to teach therein, given to hospitallity') and John Rose (at Tullyfern, 'a reading minister in English and Irish'). 'Archbishop Ussher's visitation book', TCD MS 550, pp.214, 215, 217.

108 'Archbishop Ussher's visitation book', TCD MS 550, p.223

as language. Although figures such as Bedell sought to disentangle the two, they proved to be inextricably linked. It was a link made explicit in the 1537 ‘Act for the English Order, Habite, and Language’, which stipulated that appointees to positions within the church be given ‘to such person or persons as can speake English’.¹⁰⁹ While this legislation may have been unenforceable in the period when it was enacted, it articulated the belief among English authorities that civil modes of thought could not take place in a language that was felt to be barbarous. Such was the strength of this belief that, in cases where a minister could not speak English, Latin was prescribed as the alternative by the 1560 Act of Uniformity.¹¹⁰ Given the importance of preaching in the vernacular to Protestants, this prescription pointedly suggests that anything but Irish was seen as preferable.

As the idea took root, throughout the sixteenth century, that the decay of earlier English colonies was linked to colonists assimilation into Gaelic society, the need to maintain cultural distance from the Irish became a more pressing concern. Learning Irish appeared to contemporaries a prime example of colonists falling into the trap. A writer in 1520 warned that the ‘vulgar Irish tongue induceth the habit, the habit induceth the conditions and inordinate laws, and so tongue, habit, laws and conditions maketh mere Irish’.¹¹¹ The sequence here is noteworthy: it is the Irish language which introduces the corruption; all the other stages of degeneracy follow as a consequence. A century later, the Anglican bishop Godfrey Goodman warned of ‘base and barbarous languages’ which could disfigure both the mind and body (‘a man must wrong his owne visage, and disfigure himselfe to speake them’). Such languages, claimed Goodman, were:

‘. . . without gravitie or wisdome in their first imposition, consisting only of many bare, and simple tearmes, not reduced to any certaine fountaines, or heads, which best resembleth nature. Many of them hindring mans thoughts, and wanting a sufficient plentie of words, cannot significantly expresse the quicknes of invention or livelily expresse an action: some giving way to fallacies and sophistrie, through Tautologies, ambiguous

109 *Statutes Ireland*, vol.1, pp.123-7.

110 *Statutes Ireland*, vol.1, , p.290.

111 Anonymous, ‘Ireland’, in J. S. Brewer (ed.), *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII*, Volume 4, part 2, 1526-1528, (London: Longman, Roberts & Green, 1872), no.2405, p.1076.

words, darke sentences. . .'.¹¹²

Edmund Spenser suggested that there was something inherently treasonous about the Irish language, arguing that English children should not be nursed by Irish women, because, learning their first language from them, 'the speache beinge Irishe the harte muste nedes be Irishe'.¹¹³ While stressing the importance of introducing the Reformation to the natives through Irish, therefore, he cannot have intended that outsiders should actively learn it for this purpose.

This fear of contamination by the Irish language points to a linguistic nationalism which characterised English expansion through the Atlantic, overriding evangelical concerns. Patricia Palmer has noted that 'religion and language occupied mirror-image positions within England and Spain's colonial ventures', contrasting England's prioritisation of linguistic integrity with Spain's religiously-sanctioned imperialism, where 'the Counter-Reformation imperative to evangelise overruled'.¹¹⁴ Numerous legislative acts such as those cited, as well as the outlines of plantation projects and treatises written at the time, attest to the fact that imposition of the English language was a central pillar of colonial ideology.¹¹⁵ The purpose of such legislation had as much to do with preventing the spread

112 Godfrey Goodman, *The fall of man, or the corruption of nature, by the light of our reason*, (London, 1616), p.293.

113 Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) 'A View of the Present State of Ireland', p.119. There would seem to be an internal contradiction in this belief that the most effective means of reforming the Irish would undermine those very efforts. Arthur Chichester's thinking on this matter was similar. He advocated the training of [already] Irish-speaking ministers at Trinity College on the grounds that 'being of the country birth and having the language, [they] may prove profitable members hereafter, either in the church or commonwealth'. Cited in Alan Ford, 'Who went to Trinity? The early students of Dublin University', in Helga Robinson-Hammerstein (ed.), in *European universities in the age of Reformation and Counter Reformation*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), p.63. This was no doubt partly to forestall the learning of Irish by English ministers, as he stressed the dangers elsewhere (see n.19 p.120) of contamination by Irish culture.

114 Palmer, *Language and conquest*, p.125. This contrast is broadly applicable to Protestant and Catholic imperialism in America. James Axtell has compared the unyielding methods of those Puritans who made some attempt to evangelise the natives—segregating them in boarding schools and applying strict discipline to the teaching of English, Latin and Greek—with the more culturally relativistic French Jesuits in Canada, who gave up the idea of Frenchifying the Indians in the middle of the seventeenth century, instead seeking to integrate themselves into native society for the purposes of Christianising it through the medium of its own language and customs. Axtell, *The European and the Indian*, pp.69-70.

115 Palmer has noted the odd tendency of many historians to divorce the decline of the Irish language from the process of English conquest and colonisation. R.W. Bailey contended that it would be a 'mistake' to attribute the advance of English in Ireland to any 'consistent imperial impulse', while Victor Durkasz ascribed 'the westward march of English into ever more peripheral areas' to the 'economic vigour and cultural buoyancy of the English-speaking peoples'. The notion that one language prevails over others on

of Irish among English colonists, as it was to compel the Irish to learn English. In the seventeenth century, as the English state commanded an unprecedented dominance over parts of Ireland hitherto outside its control, those factors which had once compelled colonists to learn Irish receded in importance, and colonial society became less tolerant of those who crossed the cultural divide.

It could take a light-hearted form, such as the mockery William Bedell received from a fellow-bishop when it was observed he had taken to wearing Irish *brogues*.¹¹⁶ Such disapproval could be framed more severely, as seen in the accusations directed at Bedell of violating the statutes against adopting Irish customs.¹¹⁷ The fact that Bedell is so often offered as an example of the adoption of Gaelic cultural traits by colonists should alert us to the fact that it was not a widespread phenomenon in seventeenth-century Ulster. In terms of language, while there were certainly examples of colonists learning at least some Irish, and even more of Irish learning English, it is far from clear that acculturation was taking place in any widespread sense.¹¹⁸ Certainly, the fact that heavily-colonised areas became overwhelmingly English-speaking demonstrates that, in the long term at least, linguistic assimilation of the Irish to colonial society, rather than acculturation, was the rule. A change had clearly occurred by the seventeenth century that made New English colonists less likely to adopt Gaelic practices than Old English ones. Nicholas Canny has noted a distinction between the anxieties of directors and planners of colonisation such as Chichester, and the assurance of those who ‘actually engaged upon these enterprises in Ireland and Virginia’ that their ‘superior culture would inevitably prevail over an inferior one’.¹¹⁹

account of some inherent linguistic superiority is entirely ahistorical however. Certainly ‘economic vigour’ played a part, but to argue from this that the decline of the language was not due to colonisation is superficial. It was the plantation project, after all, which set into motion these economic conditions. Arguments attributing some ‘cultural buoyancy’ to English, or any of the other European languages that spread throughout the world in the wake of expanding empires, serve to dehistoricise the eclipse of indigenous languages and ignore the violence and coercion which created the conditions for their decline. Palmer, *Language and conquest* pp.14, 122.

116 Bedell (d.1670), ‘Life and Death of William Bedell’, p.29.

117 Bedell (d.1670), ‘Life and Death of William Bedell’, p.41.

118 The term ‘acculturation’ is here intended as shorthand for *mutual* acculturation, whereby both cultures influence one another to a greater or lesser extent. Assimilation will be used to describe the process whereby the dominant culture replaces the subordinate.

119 Nicholas Canny, ‘Dominant minorities: English settlers in Ireland and Virginia, 1550-1650’, in A.C. Hepburn (ed.), *Minorities in history: papers read before the thirteenth Irish Conference of Historians*, vol.12, (London: Edward Arnold, 1978), pp.54-5.

Perhaps the most profound long-term factor which determined that new waves of colonists would maintain their cultural distinctiveness was simple numbers. There was a brutal logic to Fynes Moryson's observation that 'the mere Irish of old overtopped the English-Irish in number, and nothing is more natural—yea, necessary—than for the less number to accommodate itself to the greater'.¹²⁰ By the same logic, the demographic catastrophe which engulfed Ulster in the early seventeenth century, compounded by the unprecedented numbers of colonists arriving from across the water, ensured that newcomers would not be 'overtopped' in this manner and that English, lowland Scots—and subsequently British—culture would endure in Ulster.¹²¹ In contrast to those earlier colonists, doomed to be swamped by the culture of the surrounding savages, a writer like Richard Eburne argued that it 'be the people that makes the land English, not the land the people'.¹²² Indicative of this confidence, and the determination to resist any Gaelicising influences, was Vincent Gookin, a settler in Munster who wrote to Wentworth in 1633: 'I have done and ever will stand at distance w[ith] the Irish, and will not soe much as suffer my children to learne their language'.¹²³

This shift is evident from as early as the mid-sixteenth century. Christopher Nugent, baron of Delvin, wrote that 'feawe or none of englyshe natione borne & bredd in England ever had that gifte' of being able to speak Irish.¹²⁴ Recent histories have tended to emphasise examples of accommodation between the cultures of native and newcomer. Raymond Gillespie suggests that colonists' knowledge of Irish was proof of cross-cultural bilingualism, while Nicholas Canny writes of the 'emerging bilingual competence by many

120 Moryson, 'The Itinerary', in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.310.

121 This was far from evident by 1641 however, Irish still outnumbering colonists in many areas. The really decisive waves of immigration from Britain took place later in the seventeenth century.

122 'And if you will needs live in England, imagine all that to bee England where English men, where English people, you with them, and they with you, doe dwell'. Richard Eburne, *A plaine path-way to plantations that is, a discourse in generall, concerning the plantation of our English people in other countries*, (London, 1624), sig.B2v-B3r.

123 Gookin continued: 'I knowe they hate mee, and I make them knowe I knowe it, And that I neither care nor feare their hatred'. Vincent Gookin to Wentworth, middle of 1633, SP 63-270 no.44, f.75r. Such scrupulous maintenance of cultural purity can also be read as a sign of insecurity on the part of colonists about their identity and anxiety not to lose their Englishness. Groups of isolated colonists in America were also said to suffer from such insecurity. Settlers in South Carolina, for example, were described by one contemporary as fond of British manners and customs 'even to excess'. Cited in Robert M. Weir, 'The Carolinas', in Canny (ed.), *The Oxford history of the British Empire. Vol. 1*, p.396.

124 Christopher Nugent, baron of Delvin, probably 1560s, in Irish Primer, f.3v. Benjamin Iveagh Library, Farmleigh, Dublin. Delvin: Dealbhna, from the name of a population group in the early middle ages.

people in both communities'. Evidence offered of this bilingualism often rests on apparently unproblematic communication between the Irish and colonists reported in sources like the 1641 depositions.¹²⁵ The fact, however, that two groups of people were reported to have been able to communicate does not necessarily imply significant levels of bilingualism. Palmer has noted how the presence of interpreters was often elided in early modern English sources. 'Repeatedly', she writes, 'English correspondents presented speeches delivered in Irish as though they had been made, uncomplicatedly, in English'. For example, speeches in English were ascribed to the Irish-speaking Aodh Rua Ó Dónaill by the bishop of Meath, which he could not possibly have spoken. 'Even when the interpreter is solidly inside the frame', Palmer notes, 'he is not necessarily listed in the credits'.¹²⁶

The reasons why the presence of translators went unremarked is most likely because, being omnipresent, it was assumed their participation would be taken for granted by the reader.¹²⁷ This is suggested by the very examples which have been offered of colonists learning Irish, which imply that such bilingualism was the exception. Elizabeth Price, who gave a deposition in 1643, has been cited by Nicholas Canny as one such example, but the fact that it is explicitly pointed out that she overheard Irish people speaking 'in Irish words' suggests that her ability deviated from the norm of understanding through a translator.¹²⁸ It furthermore seems apparent that the insurgents felt free to speak Irish in her presence in the expectation that they would not be understood. This was certainly the case with one Brian Mac Giolla Chainnigh, who threatened to kill the deponent John Glencorse and added that he had killed twenty others, 'not knowing that this examinatur understood the language'.¹²⁹ The name Glencorse would suggest that the man in question had originally come from Galloway, which was still a *Gàidhlig*-speaking area at the time. It was,

125 Gillespie, 'Success and failure', p.111; Canny, *Making Ireland British*, pp.452-3.

126 Patricia Palmer, 'Interpreters and the Politics of Translation and Traduction in Sixteenth-Century Ireland', in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol. 33, no. 131 (Irish Historical Studies Ltd., 2003), pp.260-1.

127 Palmer asserts, however, that the reasons went beyond simple narrative convention and was due to an 'absence of linguistic self-reflexiveness which characterises sixteenth-century English narratives of discovery and colonisation', noting that 'compared with their Spanish contemporaries, English colonists seem notably inattentive to native languages'. 'Their consistent erasure of Irish', she adds, 'was one way of downplaying the salience of Irish dissent'. Patricia Palmer, 'Interpreters and the Politics of Translation and Traduction in Sixteenth-Century Ireland', in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol. 33, no. 131 (Irish Historical Studies Ltd., 2003), p.261.

128 Deposition of Elizabeth Price, 26 June 1643, TCD MS 836, f.104v.

129 Deposition of John Glencorse, 3 May 1653, TCD MS 837, f.131v.

therefore, more likely Glencorse's ability to speak *Gàidhlig* that enabled him to understand Mac Giolla Chainnigh than any *Gaeilge* he had picked up since arriving in Ulster.

Unequivocal examples of colonists being able to speak Irish are in fact rare in the depositions for Ulster.¹³⁰ The fact that a deponent was able to report what Irish insurgents had said need not mean that they themselves understood the language. For someone to report Irish speech, only one member of a group needed to be bilingual to translate for the others. This indicates that, at the very least, a number of individuals moved in to fulfill a niche market for interpreters that had sprung up. This is not surprising in a society where, practically overnight, a significant minority of colonists had established themselves, wielding disproportionate power and influence, but unable to communicate directly with the bulk of the native population. That individuals sought to meet this demand is equally unsurprising; it would indeed be remarkable if *no-one* had facilitated communication between the two communities, given that it was a means of making themselves useful and employable. In light of this, it seems likely that such individuals were often those in a position of economic subordination and dependence on others.

Certainly in areas such as Cavan, where they were heavily outnumbered, or the number of native freeholders meant Irish tenants were less dependent on them, it would have been imperative for colonists to learn the native language. Even in these cases, however, it is just as likely that they employed an Irish interpreter. One example of such arrangements is the household of Anthony Mahue at Limavady, who was visited by an Irishwoman, Onóra Ní Ghiollagáin, on behalf of her husband Séamus Mac Briain, in 1615.¹³¹ That Mahue had formed relationships with the Irish in the area is suggested by the fact that Ní Ghiollagáin was described as his 'gossip', as well as the warning he received from her and her husband about the conspiracy being hatched by Ruairí Ó Catháin, Alsandar Mac Dónaill and their associates. Notwithstanding this, Mahue knew no Irish, and relied on the services of a maid who acted as interpreter. This suggests that even those who formed close relations with the Irish did not necessarily learn their language; it also shows how economically-

130 Two other examples have been found. Jane Cooke escaped from her captors 'becawse she spoke Irish and sayd she was an Irish woman', and one Michael Harrison, who lived close to the estates of Féilim Rua Ó Néill, also said he could understand Irish. Deposition of Katherin Cooke, 24 February 1644, TCD MS 836, f.92r; Examination of Michael Harrison, 11 February 1653, TCD MS 836, f.127r.

131 Limavady: Léim an Mhadaidh, 'leap of the dog'.

dependent figures such as the maid could augment their importance to an employer by assuming the role of intermediary.¹³²

Given the generally subordinate position of the natives economically, it is more likely that the Irish were compelled to learn English than vice-versa. This only became more likely with the passage of time, as the colony became more firmly-established and the number of colonists as a proportion of the population increased. By 1641, for example, there was said to be ‘small store of Irish’ in County Antrim.¹³³ Planners like John Davies foresaw that the everyday necessity of adapting to English norms imposed on the province would be a far more effective way of making the Irish adopt English language and customs than the enforcement of cultural diktats like the ‘Act for the English Order, Habite, and Language’. The inconvenience of relying on an interpreter in transactions with the colonists would, he predicted, make the Irish send their children to learn English, so that within a generation they would be assimilated into the colonial population.¹³⁴ The level of English-language acquisition by the Irish in early colonial Ulster suggests that Davies was too optimistic in believing that it would completely replace Irish within such a short time. Certainly at the outset of the period, prospects were not good. No doubt embittered by the Nine Years War, there was said to be an abhorrence of the Irish in Ulster towards the English language in 1598.¹³⁵ Shortly afterwards, Moryson reported that ‘few or none could or would speak English’ there, and that even Spanish was more common.¹³⁶ If we compare this situation with the post-plantation period, it is clear that knowledge of English increased, but not as dramatically as Davies had hoped.

The fact that Onóra Ní Ghiollagáin needed an interpreter in order to talk to Anthony Mahue in 1615 is just as telling as the fact that Mahue needed one to talk to her. As depleted as the Irish population of Antrim had become, it proved necessary to carry out court proceedings there at least partly through Irish in 1627.¹³⁷ Frustration at the slow pace

132 Examination of Anthony Mahue, taken before sir Thomas Phillips, 24 April 1615, in *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.48.

133 Deposition of Roger Markham, 15 February 1642, TCD MS 839 f.17r.

134 Davies, ‘A discovery’, reproduced in *Historical tracts*, p.215.

135 Anonymous, ‘A discourse to show that planting of colonies, and that to be begun only by the Dutch, will give best entrance to the reformation of Ulster’, 1598, SP 63-202 part 4 no.75, f.234v.

136 Moryson, ‘The Itinerary’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.262.

137 Colin Breen, ‘Randal MacDonnell and early seventeenth-century settlement in northeast Ulster, 1603-30’, in Ó Ciardha and Ó Siochrú (eds.), *The plantation of Ulster*, p.154.

of acculturation can be gauged in Moryson's claim that the continued use of their own language by the Irish was one of those 'absurd things practised by them only because they would be contrary to us'.¹³⁸ The writer of a survey of Ireland in 1615 claimed that the Irish learnt English 'to no other ends, but to complaine withall in England, and to be justices of peace in Ireland'.¹³⁹ While this jaundiced view towards the native Irish is evident throughout his survey, the author nevertheless hit upon a salient point regarding the acquisition of English amongst them. Rather than being regarded by the Irish as a self-evidently superior and civil form of communication, to be learnt for its own inherent worth, the English language was adopted where necessary for interaction with the colonists. Prominent native landowners like Féilim Rua Ó Néill (educated in London), who had a great deal of contact with English institutions no doubt acquired fluent English. It is far from clear that the majority of the Irish population, however, learnt more than the smattering necessary to transact business with colonists. In those areas where colonial settlement was sparse—places like north Donegal and upland areas of Tyrone—the Irish would have had little contact with English-speakers and thus little incentive to learn the language.

The writer of a 1615 survey described a situation similar to that in Wales outlined above (p.143), alleging that the Gaelic elite did its best to prevent the poorer class of Irish from learning English, perhaps wishing to prevent the negation of an economic advantage they possessed over them.¹⁴⁰ This would certainly fit with the picture presented in the *Pairlement Chloinne Tomás* of a weakened Gaelic elite attempting to preserve as much as possible of the hierarchical society it had once lorded over. While lampooning the efforts of lower-class Irish to master English, it offers a reminder that it is less helpful, in such situations, to imagine the population divided into those who could and those who could not speak a language, than to recognise that there was probably a great many people in between, who had picked up a few basic words and phrases, or the kind of barely-intelligible pidgin [indicated by italics] used by the character of Tomás in the following exchange with an English tobacco-seller:

‘They were not long then until they saw a young Englishman

138 Moryson, 'Itinerary', in Hughes (ed.), *Shakespeare's Europe*, p.214.

139 E.S., 'A survey of the present estate of Ireland Anno 1615', HL Ellesmere MS 1746, f.21r.

140 E.S., 'A survey of the present estate of Ireland Anno 1615', HL Ellesmere MS 1746, f.14r.

coming towards them. “Who is yonder Englishman coming this way?” asked one of them. “I know him”, said another, “it’s Roibín an Tobaca, and the tobacco he brings with him is usually of good quality”. “We’ll buy some of it”, said Bernard Ó Bruic, “and who of us will speak English to him?” “I myself,” said Tomás. The young Englishman arrived and greeted them politely and said: “God bless you, Thomas, and all your company”. Tomás answered him in no uncivilised fashion and said: “*Pleshy for you, pleshy, goodman Robin*”. “By my mother’s soul”, said Bernard Ó Bruic, “you have swallowed the best of English”. Everybody gathered round him marvelling at Tomás’s English. “Ask him the price of the tobacco”, said Bernard. Tomás spoke and said: “*What the bigg greate órdlach for the what so penny for is the la yourselfe for me?*” Roibín said: “I know, Thomas, you aske how many enches is worth the penny”, and he raised his two fingers as a sign, and said: “Two penny an ench”. “By my godfather’s hand, it’s a good bargain”, said Tomás. “What is it?” asked Dour Diarmuid. “Two pence an inch”, said Tomás. “Act on our behalf”, they all said. “I will”, replied Tomás, and he said: “*Is ta for meselfe the mony for fart you all my brothers here*” Roibín said: “I thanke you, honest Thomas, you shall command all my tobaco”. “*Begog, I thanke you,*” said Tomás’.¹⁴¹

It is interesting to bear in mind that the foregoing was written for the entertainment of Irish-speakers whose English was good enough (the italic sections are as they appear in the original) to laugh at the ludicrous efforts of Tomás to speak the language. To such figures, proficiency in English was clearly a source of pride and status. It would be misleading to portray the Irish attitude towards the English language, however, as simply one of wishing to acquire this key to economic and social advancement without taking into account other, conflicting factors. While governed by such pragmatic concerns, a hostility towards the language was clearly repressed in the years when the province was under the firm control

141 *Pairlement Chloinne Tomás*, pp.40, 97.

of colonists and the state; it flared up again when the Irish assumed control over large areas of Ulster in 1641.

Just as pressure to conform to the Protestant religion became associated with the conquest and dispossession which attended it, so too was English perceived in some quarters as an instrument of oppression. In 1641, a group of insurgents in Antrim, led by some of the Uí Chatháin, issued a proclamation forbidding the speaking of English; George Creighton in Cavan spoke of the Irish wishing to frame laws to the same effect; attempts were even made to prevent their prisoners from speaking English.¹⁴² Kathleen Noonan has speculated that the Irish burnt bibles not because they were Protestant, but because they were in English.¹⁴³ This would make it, at least partly, an act of ethnic/linguistic animosity rather than a purely religious one and would accord with Barnaby Rich's observation that the Irish did not regard as binding an oath sworn on an English book.¹⁴⁴ There is no contradiction in the fact that the Irish of colonial Ulster at once resented the imposition of the English language upon the province, and at the same time sought to acquire it in order to advance their own economic interests. In these conflicted feelings about the relative value of their own culture we can discern the beginnings of the kind of 'double consciousness' articulated by W.E.B. Du Bois, whereby the colonised subject internalises a negative image of themselves inherited from the coloniser.¹⁴⁵ Irish attitudes to other symbols of English 'civility' such as dress, hairstyles, consumption and behaviour-patterns, were no less marked by these conflicting impulses of attraction and repulsion.

142 Examination of Fergus Fullerton, 1 March 1653, TCD MS 838, f.56r; Deposition of George Creighton, 15 April 1643, TCD MS 833, f.232v; Deposition of John Mountgomery, 26 January 1642, TCD MS 834, f.132r.

143 Kathleen Noonan, 'Martyrs in Flames: Sir John Temple and the conception of the Irish in English martyrologies', in *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies*, vol.36, no.2, (Boone, North Carolina: Appalachian State University, 2004), p.241.

144 Exasperated as ever with the Irish, Rich added that 'the simpler sort of them, do hold their Oathes to be so much the more, or so much the lesse, according to the bignesse of the book: for if they sweare upon a little Booke, they think they take but a little Oath'. Rich, *A new description*, p.29.

145 This process by which a colonised people is taught to perceive themselves through the eyes of the coloniser is one of the classic psychological consequences of long-term colonisation. There are few examples of this 'colonial mentality' more clear-cut than the anglicisation of Ireland where, in the nineteenth century, the English language was adopted by a people who had come to associate their own language with backwarness and lack of opportunity. It is also sobering to reflect that, in the state schools run by the British government, it was not until 1898 that official sanction was given to teach Irish history to schoolchildren in Ireland. Michael Coleman, 'Representations of American Indians and the Irish in Educational Reports, 1850s-1920s', in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.33, no.129, (Dublin University Press, 2002), p.45. For further discussion of a colonial mentality in Ireland, see p.350 below.

Consumption and material goods

These conflicting impulses are most readily seen in the attitude of the Irish towards colonists' clothing and other material goods. The insurgents in 1641 were reported to express such a hatred towards:

‘. . . the English and their very fashions in clothes that they resolved after the irish hadd gotten the victory all the women in Ireland should as formerly goe only in smockes, mantles and broages as well Ladies as others & the English fashions to be quite abolished’.¹⁴⁶

When the reports of attacks on the Protestant religion and the English language are taken into consideration, it is clear that widespread animosity towards the culture of the colonists—both material and non-material—was real. This must be reconciled, however, with the evidence, just as compelling, that many Irish were anxious to acquire those same possessions, so redolent of the colonists' power. In consideration of this, it must first be recognised that material objects can often (unlike religions and languages) be demonstrated to be superior or inferior to one another, in that some fulfill their purpose better than others. The picture regarding the native adoption of such cultural artifacts is complicated by this fact. While it cannot be argued that the Irish adopted the English language or the reformed religion for any demonstrable inherent superiority they possessed, it is perfectly possible that the superior material qualities of a coat or a kettle, for example, might outweigh any reticence towards adopting the culture of the colonists.¹⁴⁷ At the same time, material goods are clearly not ideologically-neutral, adopted or rejected for their utility alone. Clothing provides the most obvious example of this twofold nature;

146 Deposition of Elizabeth Peirce, 10 October 1643, TCD MS 837, f.11v.

147 That has not stopped some from claiming that some inherent linguistic superiority facilitated the spread of English around the world. Patricia Palmer has written: ‘Anyone familiar with the story of language in Elizabethan Ireland can only feel impatience, if not despair, at the latter-day triumphalism of works like Melvyn Bragg’s best-selling *The Adventure of English*. It retells an old tale about the unique fitness of “Shakespeare’s English” to become a world language, a story which ignores the bitter fact that it is military might, not linguistic merit, that makes “a tongue of account”’. Palmer, ‘Cross-talk and mermaid-speak’, p.54.

while clothes were undoubtedly objects of utility, they also held enormous symbolic significance in early modern Ireland as a marker of class and ethnic identity. It is, therefore, worthwhile examining the subject of dress in colonial Ulster.

At its most prosaic level, the clothing of colonists seized in 1641 was seen as an object of material value by the insurgents. It is easy to forget that the acquisition of the clothes themselves may have been the main object of such attacks, rather than any ritual humiliation of the victims.¹⁴⁸ The clothes on their back were often among the most valuable movable goods a person possessed at this time; that their assailants should target these goods is no surprise, given that colonists were generally wealthier than native Irish and no doubt owned better-quality clothes.¹⁴⁹ It is clear, however, that in some cases more was involved. Precisely *because* they were associated with a dominant class, the material culture of the colonists must have assumed a privileged status in the eyes of some Irish at the same time as it aroused the strongly negative feelings attested to above. This would be entirely consistent with the behaviour of other colonised peoples. The eagerness of Americans to trade with colonists is well-documented, not only on account of the utility of many manufactured goods, but also for other, less tangible, benefits believed to accrue from such commodities.¹⁵⁰ The Algonquian peoples of New England, for example, observing the immunity of the newcomers to the diseases which were decimating them, sought to acquire by the possession of English goods such as glass beads and textiles, a quality beyond mere function or aesthetic value which they termed *manitou*, translated by

148 Nicholas Canny has written that colonists ‘were stripped naked, seemingly to symbolise that they were being forced to depart in the same penniless state in which they had arrived’. *Kingdom and colony*, p.62. Elsewhere, he has noted that ‘the value of clothing, relative to total income, would have been much higher’ in this period than today. Canny, *Making Ireland British*, p.542. The importance of such items can be gauged by the complaint of a tenant in Monaghan in 1622 that one of the minister’s servants had taken (in lieu of a fine of sixpence) a *cadó* (a kind of wrap or blanket) worth 6d 8p and had kept it for two years. ‘The grevances of the inhabitants of Donnamanie in Farny’, 1622, NLI 8014, vol.10. This not-inconsiderable value of the item in question, as well as the obvious grievance its loss represented to the individual in question, gives some suggestion of the importance of such items in a pre-industrial age, before clothing was mass produced and assumed the relatively cheap and disposable character it has today.

149 Mentions of stripping by deponents most often appear to characterise the act as theft above all else; among many examples are: Deposition of Honorah Beamond, 7 June 1643, TCD MS 834, f.170r; Examination of Turlough Groome O Quin, 2 June 1653, TCD MS 839, f.92v; Deposition of Francis Leiland, 19 July 1643, TCD MS 836, f.98v.

150 Thomas Morton, for example, described the ‘covetous desire they have to commerce with our nation’, in *The New English Canaan*, p.127.

Neal Salisbury as the ‘power and brilliance’ behind the creation of these objects.¹⁵¹

The ascribing of intangible qualities like status and power to goods such as clothing can be seen in this quasi-religious context. That such qualities were associated with the possessions of colonists seems evident, for example, in the behaviour of a woman from Moira, County Down, who, after her husband Aodh Ó Laoire had taken possession of William Burley’s house:

‘. . . went up into this deponentes wiffe chamber & seasing on the deponentes wiffes apparrell attired and dressed herself in the best of that apparrell and that done came downe into the parlor, called for strong beare & made her servants fetch it and drinck a Confusion to the English doggs and being sett att the upper end of the table in a chaire asked the people whether that chaire apparrell and place did not become her aswell as Mrs Burley’.¹⁵²

The adoption of English attire by the poorer class of Irish is a recurrent theme in the *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis*, where a dispute takes place about whether the ‘lower orders’ should wear fine clothes or not. One Giolla Dubh Ua Glaimhin is made to speak for the old order, arguing for a return to old customs, and that ‘life was at its best [. . .] when farmers had trews, mantles and caps, and their shins in leggings’.¹⁵³

Such laments are testament to the kind of changes taking place in the dress of the Irish under pressure of colonisation. Similar to the Irish language, distinctive items of Gaelic dress and hairstyles had long been regarded by the administration as deviations from the English norm and subject to prohibitory legislation. Up until the sixteenth century, these

151 Neal Salisbury, ‘Religious Encounters in a Colonial Context: New England and New France in the Seventeenth Century’, in *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. 16, no. 4, (Hurst, Texas: Southwestern American Indian Society, 1992), p.502.

152 Deposition of William Burley, 10 August 1644, TCD MS 837, ff.29r-29v. After this, Mrs Uí Laoire and those present in Burley’s house proceeded to get drunk, wasting a great deal of beer in the mistaken belief that it had gone bad. Burley returned with some soldiers shortly afterwards and killed them all, in retaliation for which Aodh Ó Laoire burned the nearby town of Magheralin.

153 *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis*, p.109.

regulations were largely defensive in nature, intended to ensure the maintenance of a distinction in appearance between the Gaelic Irish and the inhabitants of the Pale. The 1447 'Act that he, that will be taken for an Englishman, shall not use a Beard upon his upper Lip alone' is typical in this regard.¹⁵⁴ It can be seen how vital such a distinction could be when it is borne in mind that the beheading of robbers was permitted if their company did not contain at least one member 'in English apparel'.¹⁵⁵ It was not until the reign of Henry VIII, when 'the king's Irish enemies' were transformed (on paper at least) into subjects, that legislation regulating appearance came to apply to the Irish beyond the Pale as well. There followed a series of laws in the sixteenth century forbidding various aspects of Gaelic apparel. The 'Act for the English Order, Habite, and Language' focused specifically on the *glib*, a long fringe of hair hanging down over the eyes, the *croiméal* or moustache (as suggested by the 1447 act, a moustache without beard was perceived as specifically Irish), the use of voluminous shirts dyed with saffron and urine and, perhaps most irksome of all to authorities, the *fallaing*, usually referred to in English sources as the mantle.¹⁵⁶

The *fallaing* in particular, far from being regarded as a mere item of clothing, appears to have been seen as an instrument of subversion by contemporaries. Spenser described it as a 'fitt howsse for an outlawe a mete bedd for a Rebell and an Apte cloake for a thefe'. His reasons for wishing the abolition of the *glib* were similar in that it made the Irish more difficult to identify by agents of the (English) law.¹⁵⁷ It appears that these artifacts of Irish culture, just like beliefs and language, were regarded as barbaric precisely *because* they were Irish rather than for any barbaric features intrinsic to them. Indeed, in his protracted denunciation of the multiple uses to which the *fallaing* could be put, Spenser inadvertently attests to its remarkable practicality. It was this very practicality which recommended the prohibition of the *fallaing* and the *glib* to the English, who distrusted them for the same reasons they distrusted a pastoral lifestyle; facilitating mobility and concealment, they made the Irish more unpredictable and difficult to monitor. Such utility was also reprehensible in that it made life easier, a quality by no means regarded as laudable in an age when, especially among Puritans, it was believed that an easy life was morally

154 *Statutes Ireland*, vol.1, p.7.

155 *Statutes Ireland*, vol.1, p.28.

156 *Statutes Ireland*, vol.1, p.121.

157 Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) 'A View of the Present State of Ireland', pp.100, 102.

corrosive.¹⁵⁸ William Herbert, defending the stricter enforcement of clothing laws in 1589, argued that ‘a forme of attire and lieffe that requireth no such care, but is had without any industrie at all maketh the mynde lacie idle and abiect’.¹⁵⁹

It has been suggested by Ciaran Brady that Spenser’s comments on Irish dress and hairstyles were ‘not altogether serious’, but the length at which he discussed this issue indicates otherwise.¹⁶⁰ The idea that a form of clothing which facilitated an easy and less productive life could lead to decadence suggests a belief that what a person wore could mould their personality. This idea was made explicit by Spenser, who claimed that an individual’s behaviour was:

‘. . . often times governed by their garmentes ffor the persone that is gowned is by his gowne putt in minde of gravetye and allsoe Restrained from lightenes by the verye unaptnes of his wede. Therefore it is written by Aristotle that when Cirus had ouercome the Lidians that weare a warlike nacion and devised to bringe them to a more peaceable liffe he Chaunged their Apparrell and musicke And in steade of their shorte warlike Coate cloathed them in longe garmentes like weomen and in steade of their warlike musicke appointed to them certaine Lascivious layes and loose gigs by which in shorte space their mindes weare so mollified and abated that they forgate their former firesnes and became moste tender and effeminate wheareby it appeareth that there is not a litle in the garment to the fashioning of the minde and Condicions’.¹⁶¹

Herbert likewise argued that the Irish:

158 Mindful of the biblical curse that humans should eat their bread by the sweat of their brow, colonial promoter William Alexander wrote that ‘all Adam’s posteritie were appointed to worke for their food, and none must dreame of an absolute ease’. *An encouragement to colonies*, (London: Printed by William Stansby, 1624), p.27.

159 ‘A note of sutch reasons as mooved mea toe putt the statute in execution agaynst Irish habites’, William Herbert to Burghley, 25 May 1589, SP 63-144 no.57-2, f.186r.

160 Brady, ‘Spenser’s Irish Crisis’, p.28.

161 Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) ‘A View of the Present State of Ireland’, p.121.

‘. . . by the contynuall gesture and wearinge of rude and barbarous attire receiveth an impression of rudenes and barbarisme: and by wearinge civill handsom and cleanlie apparell receiveth a persuacion and adoptacion unto handsomnes cleanelyness and civilitie’.¹⁶²

Clothing was clearly a far from trivial matter to such writers. When such beliefs are considered, it is easier to understand the repeated efforts to regulate dress habits through legislation.

Such law had existed for centuries in England, generally referred to by historians as ‘sumptuary’ laws, although Claire Sponsler argues persuasively that this is a misnomer, in that such legislation was not primarily intended to limit expenditure, as the term ‘sumptuary’ would suggest, but to ensure that people dressed according to their ordained station in life.¹⁶³ It is instructional to compare such laws in Ireland, where they were intended to make different ethnic groups appear more similar, to English laws intended to accentuate the distinction between social classes. Laws regulating dress were repealed in England in 1604, signifying the abandonment by the legislature of any attempt to preserve the appearance of a medieval social hierarchy. It is testament to their differing function in Ireland, and the colonial nature of Irish society, that they continued to be employed there for decades. A 1624 proclamation by the government in Dublin ordered:

‘No person wearing Irish mantles or trowses to keep muskets. Any nobleman or gentleman of English dress may seize them. No man to wear after 1 August next any mantles, trowses, or long skeines [. . .] No one wearing Irish dress to be admitted to the Council, any Court, or any Magistrate. Sheriffs to break long skeines, and to take off and cut to pieces any mantles or trowses

162 ‘A note of sutch reasons as mooved mea toe putt the statute in execution agaynst Irish habites’, William Herbert to Burghley, 25 May 1589, SP 63-144 no.57-2, f.186r.

163 Claire Sponsler, ‘Narrating the Social Order: Medieval Clothing Laws’, in *Clio*, vol.21:3, (Fort Wayne, Indiana: Purdue University, 1992), pp.267-83.

worn in public. They may be worn in the house'.¹⁶⁴

In contrast to their function in England, such laws in Ireland were designed to promote the appearance of homogeneity. The expression of any Gaelic identity in appearance was something to be confined to the home. Herbert observed that 'the common people and multitude beinge more ledd by the eie then by any other sence', the existence of different modes of dress among the Irish and English 'breedeth and confirmeth in them a strangenes and alienacion of mynde from us, our lawes and government'.¹⁶⁵ A similar sentiment was expressed in the 1537 act, when it was claimed that such diversity:

' . . . by the eye deceiveth the multitude, and perswadeth unto them, that they should be as it were of sundry sorts, or rather of sundry countries, where indeed they be wholly together one bodie, whereof his highness is the onely head under God'.¹⁶⁶

It was to make this largely aspirational unity a reality that distinctive Irish clothing was forbidden in public.

Laws regarding dress were as unenforceable in practice as those which sought to regulate the language people spoke. Those changes which did occur in the dress of the Irish were less to do with legal dictates than the more insidious processes of economic and psychological domination associated with colonialism. The Irish *triús*, not mentioned in the 1537 Act, but forbidden by proclamation in 1624, were said to be disappearing in the decades before 1641. In fact, contemporaries attributed this decline as much to the influence of Counter-Reformation clergy as to any pressure from the state.¹⁶⁷ It may be

164 'A proclamation concerning Warlike Munitioun and wearing Mantles, Trousers and Skeins', no.252, 1 April 1624, in Robert Steele (ed.), *Tudor and Stuart proclamations 1485-1714, ii: Scotland and Ireland*, (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1910), p.27.

165 'A note of sutch reasons as mooved meae to putt the statute in execution agaynst Irish habites', William Herbert to Burghley, 25 May 1589, SP 63-144 no.57-2, f.186r.

166 *Statutes Ireland*, vol.1, p.120.

167 John Lynch, who used the term *braccæ* for this garment, claimed that it had already been abandoned by the elite before 1600, but that the 'humbler orders' continued to use it until the 1640s, when 'they were prevailed upon, partly by the exhortations of the clergy or of their own accord, to lay them aside'. Lynch; *Cambrensis eversus*, vol.2, p.211. James Ware also noted this decline, *The works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland*, vol.2, (Dublin, 1745), p.177. It is interesting to note, incidentally, that this is the third example in this chapter (feuding n.34 p.124, the *caoineadh*, p.131) of the Catholic church playing

presumed from this that the garment was considered indecent by outsiders; the description by Luke Gernon suggests as much:

‘The trowse is a long stocke of frise, close to his thighes, and drawne on almost to his waste, but very scant, and the pryde of it is, to weare it so in suspence, that the beholder may still suspecte it to be falling from his arse’.¹⁶⁸

The replacement of *triús* with English-style breeches was clearly far from advanced in Ulster, however, given that phrases such as ‘stinking English Churles with great Breeches’ are recorded in the depositions as being used by Ulster insurgents in order to disparage those living in the Pale, suggesting that the wearing of breeches continued to be a contested practice and a marker of alien and low-born identity.¹⁶⁹ The *fallaing* appears to have remained common among the Irish for a considerably longer period; James Ware remarked in the 1650s that ‘the meaner Sort of People’ still wore it ‘though of a different Kind from the antient one, and without a fringed or shagged Border’.¹⁷⁰ Thomas Dinely observed twenty years later that it was still common among the ‘vulgar Irish’,¹⁷¹ although its use was clearly in decline, given that an account of Westmeath in 1682 remarked ‘nor is there now any more appearance of the Irish cap, mantle, or trowses, at least in these countries’.¹⁷²

The reference to Old English wearing breeches and the observation that the *fallaing* had disappeared in Westmeath highlights the distinction in dress between groups of people in Ireland who may have shared other cultural traits, such as language and religion, in

an active role in the suppression of Gaelic customs: examples of what Nicholas Canny has noted as the church ‘complementing the civil, if not the religious, objectives of the government’. Canny, *Making Ireland British*, p.406.

168 Frieze was a kind of rough woolen cloth. Luke Gernon, ‘Discourse of Ireland, 1620’, in Falkiner, *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.356.

169 Deposition of Richard Parsons (TCD MS 833) f.279v; the phrase ‘Churles with the greate breeches’ also appears in the deposition of Ambrose Bedell, 26 October 1642, TCD MS 833 f.105v.

170 Ware, *The works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland*, vol.2, p.177.

171 Thomas Dinely; Evelyn Philip Shirley, and John P. Prendergast (eds.), ‘Extracts from the Journal of Thomas Dineley, Esquire, Giving Some Account of His Visit to Ireland in the Reign of Charles II, *The Journal of the Kilkenny and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society*, New Series, vol.1, no.1, (Dublin: Kilkenny and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society, 1856), p.186.

172 Henry Piers, ‘A Chorographical description of the County of Westmeath, written A.D. 1682’, in Charles Vallancey (ed.), *Collectanea de rebus Hibernicis*, vol.1, (Dublin, 1786), p.108.

common. The Palesman Rowland White described the clothes of the Gaelic Irish as ‘saulvage garments’, although he clearly did not ascribe the same importance to them as Spenser or Herbert, given his comment that ‘thapparrell can nether helpe nor hinder greatly’.¹⁷³ With the colonisation of the north, the distinction in dress between different classes *within* Gaelic society no doubt grew sharper. As will be seen, the ‘deserving’ element of the Gaelic elite that had been integrated into the plantation project were anglicised more rapidly than the non-elite majority in these decades. The image of Féilim Ó Néill presented in a hostile pamphlet from the 1640s, indistinguishable from an English gentleman (see figure 5, p.167), was probably more accurate than the traditional image of a Gaelic chieftain.

The dress of the Gaelic elite had long been characterised by the adoption of high-status features from outside Ireland, social status being signified by the greater number of colours a person wore and the use of silk and fine woolen fringe.¹⁷⁴ The colour red appears in particular to have been associated with the aristocracy. The author of the *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis* lamented that ‘Clan Thomas began to dye their clothes blue and red’ in this period, and asserted that ‘it is a crime that the son of a churl or labourer should be similar to a nobleman’s son or the son of a high-born father’.¹⁷⁵ This concern with the ‘confusion of degrees’ can be seen in any society in periods when rapid social change puts wealth into the hands of a hitherto poorer class, giving them the means to imitate the habits of a (relatively declining) richer one. A late push to enforce a dress-code according to social class took place in Elizabethan England, as the sons of wealthy capitalist farmers flooded into London and indulged in an orgy of conspicuous consumption felt to be inappropriate to their class.¹⁷⁶ No less than their English counterparts, the Gaelic elite had traditionally sought to impose such a code; the brehon laws, for example, contained detailed stipulations regarding dress for the children of aristocrats in fosterage.¹⁷⁷ By 1620, English dress had clearly become associated with privilege and status among the Gaelic

173 Rowland White, ‘Acts and orders for the government of Ireland and reformation thereof’, SP 63-32 no.32, f.95v.

174 Joseph C. Walker, *An historical essay on the dress of the ancient and modern Irish*, (Dublin, 1788), p.16.

175 *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis*, pp.83, 109.

176 Wilfrid Hooper, ‘The Tudor Sumptuary Laws’, in *The English Historical Review*, vol.30, no.119, (Oxford University Press, 1915), p.445.

177 P.W. Joyce, *A social history of ancient Ireland*, vol.2, (Dublin: M.H. Gill & Son Ltd., 1920), pp.221-2.



The wilde Irish man



The wilde Irish woman



Figure 4. Top: Gaelic triús (anglicised 'trews' or 'trouse') as illustrated in Joseph C. Walker, *An historical essay on the dress of the ancient and modern Irish*, (Dublin, 1788), plate X. Bottom left: *The fallaing or mantle*, as worn by a 'wilde Irish man' and woman, from John Speed, *The theatre of the empire of Great Britain Date*, (London, 1676). Bottom right: English-style doublet and breeches as worn by Charles I, 1629.



Figure 5. Representation of Féilim Ó Néill of Kinard in the late 1640s in English elite attire. Reproduced in John T. Gilbert (ed.), *A contemporary history of affairs in Ireland from 1641 to 1652*, vol.2, (Dublin : Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society, 1880), p.208.

elite. Luke Gernon reported in that year that this class were ‘apparelled at all poynts like the English onely they retayne theyr mantle which is a garment not indecent’.¹⁷⁸

Gernon’s observation that the *fallaing* of the elite was ‘not indecent’ is a reminder that not all outsiders depicted Gaelic dress as repellent and of low quality; there was no doubt tremendous variation depending on the financial means of the wearer. James Ware observed that the *fallaing* could be made, ‘according to the Rank or Quality of the Wearer’:

‘. . . of the finest Cloath, bordered with a silken or fine woollen Fringe, and of Scarlet and other various Colours. Many Rowes of this Shagg or Fringe were sowed on the upper Part of the Mantle, partly for Ornament, and partly to defend the Neck the better from the Cold’.¹⁷⁹

Writers like Gernon were open to the possibility that Irish clothes might indeed serve just as well as English ones. This distinguished them from someone like Spenser who, despite his detailed description of the *fallaing’s* usefulness, was unable to overcome his repulsion at things Irish and acknowledge its suitability to Irish conditions. Attitudes among the colonists in America were similarly characterised by this duality: blanket condemnation of all things native by some, and men like Thomas Morton on the other hand, who accepted the possibility that native material culture might be better adapted to the environment.¹⁸⁰ Nor were all English observers eager that the Irish should adopt English clothes; Barnaby Rich, so hostile to other aspects of Gaelic culture, wrote that he would ‘not wish the Irish so much harme, to injoyne them to follow our English fashion in apparrell’.¹⁸¹

178 Gernon, ‘Discourse of Ireland, 1620’, in Falkiner, *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.356.

179 Ware, *The works of Sir James Ware concerning Ireland*, vol.2, p.175.

180 Morton wrote that the Americans when wearing their own clothes ‘doe seeme to me to be hansomer, then when they are in English apparrell’, observing that ‘they looke like Irish in their trouses’. *New English Canaan*, pp.143-4.

181 Rich’s reasons were evidently more to do with his distaste for the frequently-changing fashions of the English than any admiration for Irish dress. ‘There is almost never a passage from Chester to Dublyne’, he wrote ‘but one Foole or other commeth over with a new fashion, either for men or Women, or for both. And although the Irish are proud enough of minde, yet they are not lightly proude in their apparrell; and yet the example of our English pride, hath doone a great deale of harme amongst that people’. Rich, *A new description*, p.34. Richard Lawrence would devote a chapter of his *Interest of Ireland* to showing how Irish people attempting to live up to English fashions was ruining the Irish economy. *The interest of Ireland in its trade and wealth stated*, (Dublin, 1682), pp.18-36.

The variation in dress habits between the different classes of Gaelic society accounts in part for the differing assessments of the progress of English customs and dress among the Irish. While one writer in 1579 could observe that these were ‘very little planted’ and ‘utterly dispised’, even ‘in civill places’,¹⁸² another commented in the same period that:

‘. . . the Irishrye without exception doth seem to be weary of their old trade, and in testimony thereof the better sort of them have changed their habit and put on English garments, outwardly showing that which I pray God may prove inwardly’.¹⁸³

The fact that the Nine Years War broke out within a decade of the latter being written by Luke Dillon would suggest the hopes expressed therein were illusory. There are several possible reasons why such varied reports could co-exist. Dillon may have been presenting the state of affairs in a deliberately optimistic light for his own diplomatic reasons. There is also the fact that the Irish appear to have deliberately misled authorities, adopting English dress in their interactions with the state and when visiting the Pale, but resuming Gaelic habit in the course of everyday life. The most commonly-cited example of this is Gerald FitzGerald, the earl of Desmond, donning the proscribed Irish attire when returning to his lands after his imprisonment among the English.¹⁸⁴ This temporary adoption of English clothes for show continued well into the seventeenth century; the writer of a tract for King James in 1615 asserted that:

‘The Irish go to the Assizes in English clothes and there the judg commends them, and saith he is gladd to see them conformable to the English fashion [. . .] but before night they are in there trowses againe, for they keepe there English clothes but onlye for suche tymes’.¹⁸⁵

182 ‘The efficiente and accidentall impediements of the civilitie of Irelande’, 1579, SP 63-70 no.82, f.204v.

183 Luke Dillon to Lord Burghley, Dublin, 17 June 1585, PRONI, Ellis papers, D683-1, f.2r.

184 G. A. Hayes-Mccoy, ‘The Completion of The Tudor Conquest and the Advance of the Counter-Reformation, 1571-1603’, in Byrne, Martin, Moody (eds.), *A New History of Ireland vol. 3*, p.99.

185 E.S., ‘A survey of the present estate of Ireland Anno 1615’, HL Ellesmere MS 1746, ff.18v-19r.

Gernon also described how the Irish contravened laws banning Irish clothes at public assemblies, removing the fringe around the top of their *fallaing* so that it resembled an English cape, ‘and after the assembly past, to resume it agayne’.¹⁸⁶

The *glib* was less easy to remove and resume at will. The great pride which the Irish took in their ‘long crisped bushes of heare’ was commented upon by several observers,¹⁸⁷ blonde hair being particularly cherished, from which the common epithet of *buí* or ‘yellow’ derived.¹⁸⁸ D.B. Quinn surmised from the evidence of illustrations that the Irish were already trimming their hair in order to make some concession to English edicts in the late sixteenth century.¹⁸⁹ This trimming of the hair so as to resemble English fashions probably continued over the early part of the seventeenth century, to the point where the law regulating facial hair was repealed in 1635.¹⁹⁰ The argument forwarded by Spenser, that the *glib* made the Irish more difficult to identify by officers of the law, was no doubt part of the reason for the peculiar obsession with eliminating long hair. This gained a new dimension with the rise of Puritan sects and, James Axtell has claimed, took on political significance during the English civil war, when the long hair and powdered wigs of the Cavaliers came to be associated with excessive pride. Taking their zeal for short hair across the Atlantic, New England Puritans like John Eliot railed against ‘the wearing of long haire after the manner of Ruffians’, ‘wild Irish’, and ‘barbarous Indians’.¹⁹¹

A more mundane reason for the drive to eliminate the *glib* can be inferred from John Hooker’s observation that the hair of the Irish grew so thick and matted, and was often coiled on top of the head, so that it served ‘in steed of a hat, and kéepeth the head verie warme, & also will beare off a great blow or stroke’.¹⁹² Given that the wearing of hats was almost universal in early modern England, the freedom of the Irish from this necessity

186 Gernon, ‘Discourse of Ireland, 1620’, in Falkiner, *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.356.

187 Stanihurst, ‘The Description of Ireland’, p.67. Good, ‘Maners of the Irishry’, p.148.

188 Moryson, ‘The Itinerary’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.321. Gernon also described Irish women as ‘very comely creatures’ having ‘tresses of bright yellow hayre, which they chayne up in curious knotts, and devises’. Gernon, ‘Discourse of Ireland, 1620’, in Falkiner, *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.356.

189 Quinn, *Elizabethans*, p.92.

190 *Statutes Ireland*, vol.2, pp.153-4.

191 Axtell, *The European and the Indian*, p.59.

192 The observations were made by Hooker in his annotations to Gerald of Wales’s ‘The Conquest of Ireland’, in *Holinshed’s Chronicles*, vol.6: Ireland, p.228.

must have struck outsiders as strange and disturbing. Rowland White's main objection to the *glib* appears to have been that it prevented the development of a hat-making industry in the country:

‘. . . the deformytie and kinde of araymente is not so dispraysable, as the use is ympedymente to good exercyse and labor for by wearinge of the glybbed heare thoccupacion of cappers [hatmakers] is greatlie hyndered of which crafte many cyvill men might be maynteyned weare the same forbidden’.¹⁹³

The concern of White that the ‘mere Irish’ should be spending more money on hats touches on another key objective in the campaign to complete the conquest and colonisation of Ireland and thus make it a revenue-generating part of the realm, instead of one that merely drained revenue. This was to transform the culture of the Gaels from one based on gift-giving, customary tribute and hospitality, to one habituated to the sale and consumption of material goods and services. That this represented not merely an economic but a cultural changeover was clear to men like William Herbert who bemoaned the failure of the Irish to relate to clothing in this way. It was, he wrote:

‘. . . conducive to the Common societie, commerse and Interchange of thinges that some porcion of evrie mans substance be bestowed yearely in apparell and things thereunto belonginge. [. . .] the charge that is bestowed upon apparell (so it be not excessive) is of greater use and profitt then that which is bestowed in meate drinke, plaie or other like superfluous charge’.¹⁹⁴

193 Rowland White, ‘Acts and orders for the government of Ireland and reformation thereof’, SP 63-32 no.32, f.96r.

194 William Herbert to Burghley, 25 May 1589, ‘A note of sutch reasons as mooved mea toe putt the statute in execution agaynst Irish habites’, SP 63-144 no.57-2, f.186r. The profitability of the clothing industry in this period should not be underestimated. An individual with the fitting name of Mr. Taylor seems to have been primarily interested in supervising a plantation of the earl of Essex lands in Farney, Monaghan, in order to procure a monopoly of the clothing trade in the area, ‘w[hi]ch may helpe to support the poorer and advantage all sorts’. ‘Mr Taylor of Ardmagh his propositions for planting my Lo: of Essex land’, 1622, NLI 8014, vol.10.

This lack of interest among the natives in the pursuit of wealth and material possessions for their own sake struck many English observers in both Ireland and America as curious and problematic. Andrew Boorde remarked that the ‘wilde Irysh’ ‘care not for ryches’ on several occasions in his guidebook.¹⁹⁵ John Locke would attribute the Americans’ poverty to the fact that they ‘contented themselves with what unassisted nature offered to their necessities’. Making a distinction between that ‘part of things really useful to the life of man’ and ‘things that fancy or agreement hath put the value on, more than real use’, Locke argued the failure of some peoples to cultivate a demand for this latter category of goods meant that they failed to improve the land in order to accumulate such goods. According to Locke’s theory, such improvement of property, and the labour that went into making it more valuable, constituted a person’s title to ownership of that property (God had given the world ‘to the use of the industrious and rational’) and, lest some might fail to see how this appropriation of natural resources into private hands benefited society as a whole, Locke asserted that ‘he who appropriates land to himself by his labour, does not lessen, but increase the common stock of mankind’ by making it more valuable.¹⁹⁶

Thomas Morton, not for the first time, showed himself capable of transcending the limitations of his own cultural mindset when he observed that the Americans were merely poor from the perspective of a European, preoccupied ‘with superfluous commodities’. ‘They may’, wrote Morton, ‘be rather accompted to live richly, wanting nothing that is needefull; and to be commended for leading a contented life’.¹⁹⁷ Whatever exchange of goods that did take place in Algonquian society was largely aimed at the maintenance and building of kinship and power networks instead of the accumulation of wealth for investment. The Gaelic economy was likewise geared towards providing a surplus for the elite who, instead of exchanging this surplus and investing or spending the income in a market, had traditionally used it to extend hospitality and largesse to their allies and retainers, thus consolidating their power and reproducing the social order. This spending was perceived by outsiders, trapped within a limited conception of what function an economy was *supposed* to serve, as a squandering of their wealth.¹⁹⁸

195 Boorde, *The fyrst boke of the introduction of knowledge*, sig.C3r-C3v.

196 Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, pp.214, 218, 225-6.

197 Morton, *New English Canaan*, p.176-8. This does not mean that Morton aspired to the Americans’ austerity; a primary purpose of his work was to advertise the many commodities (not coveted by the natives) which America offered to potential investors in his colonial scheme.

198 Rowland White, for example, described the institution of *cóisir* whereby a Gaelic ruler periodically

Gaelic rulers were, however, not entirely unfamiliar with a commercial economy; that Ó Dónaill was known abroad as the ‘king of fish’ for the trade he conducted with foreign wine merchants is testament to some degree of participation in international trading networks, probably limited to commodities that couldn’t be obtained at home.¹⁹⁹ Raymond Gillespie has demonstrated the growing importance to the Gaelic elite of consumer goods by analysing the changing subject matter of bardic poetry throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Whereas prowess in battle, leadership qualities, and the quantity of cattle a ruler possessed had once been markers of status, the subject of housing and furnishings become increasingly prominent in the poetry of this period. The declining importance of the poets themselves is also evidence that the status conferred by their praise was becoming less important than that conferred by conspicuous wealth.²⁰⁰

It may be asked why the transformation of the Gaelic Irish into consumers was viewed as a necessity at all. This was by no means universally perceived. Indeed, there is little evidence to suggest that the incorporation of the native Irish into the colonial economy was viewed as an urgent necessity by most settlers on the ground. Beyond the employment of some native Irish as servants, cowherds and manual laborers, there was as little active effort to engage them in the economic activities of the colony as there was to engage them in the religious ones. The, Irish, many felt, could ‘go to hell their own way’, as long as they did not represent a security threat to the plantation.²⁰¹ A society, however, whose economy was centred around ‘fighting and feasting’, where resources were distributed through tribute, hospitality and cattle-raiding, could—from the invaders point of view—only retard the development of a commercial economy by contributing to an instability, defined as anything which hindered the anglicisation of Ulster. Just as the guarantee of inheritance by primogeniture would give eldest sons an interest in developing their lands and properties economically, this line of thought argued that the Gaelic population had to be given an interest in the market economy being imposed upon them, by fostering the desire for consumer goods. This would not only ensure a more sedentary pattern of life, but

exacted hospitality from his followers as ‘wasting and devowryne’ the country. Rowland White, ‘Acts and orders for the government of Ireland and reformation thereof’, SP 63-32 no.32, f.92v.

199 ‘Notes of Ulster, Connaught, Munster and Leinster’, 1560, in *CCM*, vol.1, p.308.

200 Gillespie, ‘The problems of plantations’, p.55-6.

201 The phrase is Bradshaw’s: ‘Sword, Word and Strategy’, p.502.

participation in a market economy would also place the Irish in a position of dependency upon the (English) institutions which administered that economy instead of the (Gaelic) ones that dictated the old way of life.

Humphrey Gilbert perceived this in the 1570s when he wrote that the Irish trade with Spain would have to be stopped:

‘. . . and let them have it by traffique of Englishmen, which shall not onely procure love of them unto the English nacion but also bringe them into that necessitie for ther victuelling and lving by english men as they shalbe dryven to kepe obedience unto the prince of England and amytie with the English nacion’.²⁰²

While contemporaries like Gilbert perceived that such economic changes worked to undermine the native way of life, *why* they worked was less well-understood and written about at the time. Historians have been better able to give concrete instances of how the sudden exposure to foreign trade networks could destabilise and even destroy a society. Neal Salisbury has shown, for example, how the arrival of Europeans, and the insatiable demand for beaver skins, led the Mi'kmaq people (indigenous to the modern-day maritime provinces of Canada) to devote themselves almost exclusively to hunting in order to trade with the newcomers. While they had practiced a largely self-sufficient mixture of farming and hunting prior to contact, within a few generations, due to this specialisation, they lost the skills necessary to grow their own food and manufacture their own tools and utensils, coming to depend entirely upon trade with the French for these necessities.²⁰³ Once the beaver had been hunted to near-extinction, moreover, they found themselves in a very precarious position of near-total dependency on Europeans for survival. It was not merely this reliance on the colonists for subsistence that worked the ruin of the Americans. As a Euro-american observer looking back at the start of the eighteenth century wrote, the Europeans had ‘introduc'd Drunkenness and Luxury amongst them, which have multiply'd

202 Humphrey Gilbert, ‘Discourse of Ireland, 1572’, in Quinn (ed.), *Voyages and colonising enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, p.126.

203 Neal Salisbury, *Manitou and providence: Indians, Europeans, and the making of New England, 1500-1643*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp.56-7.

their Wants, and put them upon desiring a thousand things they never dreamt of before'.²⁰⁴ It might be expected that the experience of colonisation would effect the Irish of Ulster in an entirely different way, being primarily a pastoral people. The plantation project, however, initiated economic changes which, while differing in the details, offer parallels in broad outline, in that they appeared to offer some natives an opportunity to improve their standard of living at the outset, but came to place them in a position of greater dependency upon neighbouring colonists and the state over time. It would, however, be misleading to write of 'the Irish' as one unit in this economic context, because the plantation affected the different classes of Gaelic Ulster in different ways. To examine the processes which followed the plantation, however, is to move from the cultural to the economic aspects of colonisation in Ulster.

204 Robert Beverley, *The history and present state of Virginia, in four parts*, (London, 1705), pp.63-4.

5 Economic base

‘Wee have beene your Slaves all this tyme now you shalbe ours’.¹

These words, attributed in 1641 to one Aodh Ó hAnrachtaigh, a ‘late servant to Henry Manning Esquire’ in Fermanagh, are of interest for what they reveal about the attitudes of non-elite Irish towards the Ulster colony, an area notoriously difficult to illuminate due to the paucity of source material written from their perspective. Firstly, it is clear that Ó hAnrachtaigh, and no doubt many other natives, did not view the social position he had occupied before the rising as an advantageous one. There is little sign of the kind of economic opportunity which it is sometimes claimed was offered the Irish by the plantation settlement. Both John McCavitt and Nicholas Canny have pointed out that a low population density and the high demand for tenants offered the Irish the possibility of negotiating favourable conditions at the outset of the period.² While there is some truth in this, it will be argued in this chapter that the economic effects of plantation on the indigenous population were far more mixed, and that the reality of living in colonial society was often very different from the lofty rhetoric surrounding the project at its inception would suggest. The resentment of Ó hAnrachtaigh towards his colonial masters is reflective of this reality.

1 Deposition of John Cox, 5 January 1642, TCD MS 835, f.95r.

2 John McCavitt, ‘The Political Background to the Ulster Plantation’, in Mac Cuarta (ed.), *Ulster 1641: Aspects of the Rising*, p.22. Canny, *Kingdom and colony*, p.44.

The remarks attributed to Ó hAnrachaigh are also a reminder that, far from regarding their engagement with the colonial economy as an opportunity to improve their economic position, many Irish saw themselves as having suffered a diminution of status. This in turn attests to the complexity of the Gaelic social hierarchy. There has been an unfortunate tendency in the historiography to conflate all ‘native Irish’ with the small elite class from which the ‘deserving Irish’ were drawn. It would be equally mistaken to regard all non-elite Irish as belonging to the labouring class of food-producers that supported this elite. As this chapter will set out to demonstrate, insufficient account has been taken of the fact that Gaelic Ulster was a society riven by class distinctions, and that these classes reacted differently to colonisation. A landless peasant, under the Gaelic system, might eke out no more than a bare subsistence and thus welcome the possibility for advancement which the plantation appeared to offer; similarly, the rump of the elite had been deemed ‘deserving’ of land grants in the plantation. Other categories of native, however, who had either held land under the Gaelic dispensation or belonged to the military or learned orders, lost out. These latter groups, whose fate has been curiously neglected, were left with little recourse in colonial society but to sell their labour, and may well have viewed a fate such as domestic service in the household of a colonist as demeaning.³

To take the aforementioned Ó hAnrachaigh as a case in point, while it is unclear what status his family occupied immediately prior to the plantation, it is known that the sept had once ruled a territory known as Uí Méith Macha, today approximating the barony of Monaghan, and were referred to as ‘kings’ there by the fourteenth-century poet Seán Ó Dubhagáin.⁴ By the end of the sixteenth century, they had ceased to be even landholders in

3 Beyond the decline in status from landholder or trusted retainer of a *tiarna*, there must also be factored in the undoubted social disdain of the Gaelic Irish for the *Gall* of any description. Richard Stanyhurst observed that ‘the Irishman standeth so much upon his gentilitie that he termeth anie one of the English sept, and planted in Ireland, Bobdeagh Galteagh, that is, English churl: but if he be an Englishman born, then he nameth him, Bobdeagh Saxonnegh, that is, a Saxon churl: so that both are churls and he the only gentleman’, in ‘The Description of Ireland’, in *Holinshed’s Chronicles*, vol.6: Ireland, p.67. Numerous depositions would suggest that three decades of colonisation did little to alter this perception; one Friar Ó Maoláin articulated the widely-held belief that the lands of the dispossessed Irish had been given to ‘men that were litle worth in former times’, Deposition of Roger Holland, 4 March 1642, TCD MS 834, f.120r. Armed children were reported by Nicholas Simpson to have taunted the colonists during the rising with cries of ‘bodagh sasanaghe’ (Saxon churl). Deposition of Nicholas Simpson, 6 April 1643, TCD MS 834, f.184v.

4 Seán Ó Dubhagáin; John O’Donovan (ed.), *The topographical poems of John O’Dubhagáin and Giolla na Naomh O’Huidhrin*, (Dublin: Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society, 1862), pp.30-1.

the county. Such a displacement, probably at the hands of the dominant Mic Mhathúna sept, is at least suggested by the absence of the name from the 1591 and 1606 allocations of land to the Monaghan Irish by the government.⁵ This ‘expansion of the ruling or dominant stocks at the expense of the remainder’ was a constant feature in Gaelic society, as the procreation of these ruling families pushing downwards in the social scale displaced those who had previously held land as their subjects.⁶ While the Uí hAnrachtaigh may have lost their lands long before the plantation itself, the memory of such elite status did not pass quickly into oblivion in a society as acutely conscious of pedigree and lineage as the Gaelic one.⁷ The sept were still of sufficient status in the seventeenth century to send their children to the continent to study for the priesthood.⁸

While it may be too much to read into the specific offhand remark of Aodh Ó hAnrachtaigh, a perception of the colonists as low-born, upstarts or *bodaigh* was widespread among the Irish. The confiscation of vast amounts of land for the plantation project must have involved the dispossession of large numbers of a middling class—neither elite nor servile—who viewed themselves as the social betters of those newcomers who now occupied their former lands and on whom they often relied for employment. Members of this class have most often been referred to by the term ‘freeholders;’ for reasons explained below (p.187), they will be signified here by the more general term ‘landholders’. It was no doubt to such individuals that the Franciscan friar Toirealach Mac Rodáin preached in the woods of Loughinsholin in 1613, telling them that God had ‘punished them by suffering their land to be given to strangers and hereticques’, but that they should ‘bee of good comfort for it should not be long before they were restored to their former prosperities’.⁹

5 1591 division of Monaghan in James Hardiman (ed.), *Inquisitionum in officio rotulorum cancellariae Hiberniae asservatarum, repertorium*, vol.2 Ulster, (Dublin: Printed by Grierson and Keene, 1829), pp.xxi-xxxi; 1606 ‘Division of the county Monaghan’, in *CSPI James I, 1606-1608*, pp.164-87.

6 As examples of the rapidity of this displacement, Nicholls has shown how the Mag Uidhirs, whose reign as rulers in Fermanagh began in 1282, had by 1607 come to possess at least three-quarters of the entire county. Such expansion is not surprising when we consider that Pilib Mag Uidhir alone, who died in 1395, had at least two sons each by eight different mothers, and at least fifty grandsons. Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp.11-2.

7 A poem like the elegy written for Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill in 1626 is suffused with knowledge of ancient ancestry and historico-mythical origins that were still widely understood among the Gaelic Irish at the time it was written. Mac an Bhaird, ‘Bean do lamhaigheadh Leith Cuinn’ in Walsh (ed.), *Gleanings*, pp.27-52. Fynes Moryson complained that ‘the poorest of any great sept or name repute themselves gentlemen’. ‘The Itinerary’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.283.

8 Their most illustrious representative from this period being Pádraig Ó hAnrachtaigh, who had studied in Bordeaux and was appointed vicar-apostolic to Down and Connor in 1614.

9 ‘Examination of Teag Modder McGlone, taken before me Sir Toby Caulfeild’, 21 October 1613, SP 63-

Such resentments as expressed by Ó hAnrachtaigh are a salutary warning of the dangers of a too-rigid adherence to the kind of materialist interpretation of historical change outlined in chapter one (pp.32-3). Cultural factors, such as an attachment to traditional political practices, might offset purely-economic ones. Even in a situation where engagement with the colonists might be economically-advantageous, other determinants sometimes came into play. While no doubt in material need of the employment, for example, nobody could be found in the locality of Lough Derg to assist 'at any price' in the demolition of Saint Patrick's Purgatory, ordered by the Church of Ireland bishop James Spottiswood in 1632.¹⁰ The behaviour, therefore, of John Davies' 'inferior inhabitants' clearly cannot always be understood in purely material terms, and the attorney-general was wrong when he wrote that 'they love every maister alike, so hee bee praesent to protect & defend them'.¹¹ In fact, the persistence of a mindset which continued to uphold the Gaelic social hierarchy is evident even decades after the elite ceased to rule the province. If individuals like Ó hAnrachtaigh were unwilling to be 'slaves' to the colonists, some Irish in colonial Ulster appear to have continued to regard as legitimate the social dominance of septs to which they had been traditionally subservient.

The widespread hopes for the return of Ó Néill after 1607 with reinforcements are well known; less appreciated is the extent to which networks of kinship and deference were still alive in 1641. The ease with which figures like Féilim Ó Néill, Conchúr Mag Uidhir and Pilib Ó Raghallaigh were able to raise fighting men in that year is part testament to the prestige attached to their names and the bonds of obligation that continued to be felt towards them by their followers. The actions of the Mic Uaid, who invaded the town of Glaslough in northern Monaghan at the outset of the rising, are indicative of this.¹² Having first entered the town under the pretence of searching for thirty lost sheep belonging to Toirealach Óg Ó Néill (a younger brother of Féilim who had been fostered by the Mic Uaid) they ransacked the settlement. The townsfolk, while accepting their incapacity to defend themselves, 'refused to yelde to those mcwades untill some gentleman of qualitey in the

232 no.21, 22, f.137r. Loughinsholin: Loch Inse Uí Fhloinn, 'lake-isle of the Uí Fhloinn', a prominent sept of the area in earlier times.

10 Mac Cuarta, *Catholic revival*, p.98. Loch Derg: Loch Dearg, 'red lake.'

11 John Davies to Salisbury, 24 September 1610, SP 63-229 no.125a, f.129v.

12 Glaslough: Glasloch, 'green lake'.

Cuntrye Came to us'. Only with the arrival of Toirealach Óg shortly afterwards were the they prepared to surrender.

This attests to the continuing socially-cohesive power of fosterage among the Irish, and an enduring self-identification among the Mic Uaid as followers of the Uí Néill. The fact that the colonists at Glaslough regarded Toirealach Óg as a 'gentleman of qualitye', but not those Mic Uaid who attacked the town, also suggests that even the English and Scottish were aware of and acknowledged such hierarchies.¹³ Other evidence from the 1641 depositions shows that a pre-colonial mindset had not faded even three decades after the plantation. The refusal of an Ó Cinnéide to deliver up a Mac Dónaill's house to an Ó Néill, for example, suggests that, just as the plantation did not sweep away bonds of amity between allied septs overnight, nor did it erase age-old rivalries and vendettas.¹⁴ Nor did the influx of outsiders necessarily widen the mental horizons of the Irish to a significant degree, or expose them to radically different foci for their identification. In Cavan, for example, the hopes of the people that local leader Pilib Ó Raghallaigh would be king are reminiscent of a strikingly parochial mode of thought, receptive to the bardic convention of proclaiming the fitness of relatively insignificant local rulers for the high-kingship of Ireland.¹⁵

The actions of the Irish in colonial Ulster must be understood in the context of such cultural determinants, as well as material ones. The ironic response of an unnamed insurgent in the deposition of George Creighton speaks volumes about the propensity of humans to respond unpredictably to the incentives by which rationalist arrangements attempt to systematise their behaviour:

'Then this deponent said I will give yow all the poore clothes we have out of this window & what els wee have to give yow content: Give mee (said one of the Rogues) my deare Cozen Turlogh McCabe, whoe the other day was killd at Croaghan'.¹⁶

13 Deposition of Nicholas Simpson, 6 April 1643, TCD MS 838, ff.182r-184r. Another deponent Jane Cuthbertson also recognised the Uí Chléirigh as 'Ould fosteres to the said Captane Hugh Rellie'. TCD MS 833, 3 February 1644, f.243r.

14 Deposition of Margaret Dunbarr, 8 May 1653, TCD MS 838, f.237r.

15 Deposition of William Watte, 12 November 1642, TCD MS 833, f.200r.

16 Deposition of George Creighton, 15 April 1643, TCD MS 833, f.233r. Coaghan, 'little hollow.'

Nonetheless, if the above caveat is borne in mind, an analysis of the native experience in colonial Ulster in terms of changes in the material base is vital to get a sense of the transformation in the lives of the Irish. This can best be gauged by looking at the class-structure of Gaelic society before the execution of the plantations, both official and unofficial, by assessing the changes that colonisation wrought on this structure, and by examining the fate of each of these classes in turn. It should of course be noted that this is not to posit some static, 'pure' state in which Gaelic society had existed from time immemorial. As argued in chapter three, the sixteenth century witnessed a disruption of that society as a result of military pressure from outside, resulting in a heightened militarism and autocracy on the part of the elite, and an increased mobility among the general population. The period of the Nine Years War which immediately preceded colonisation only added to this sense of dislocation. As suggested by the intense interest in ancestry and awareness of traditional kinship bonds, however, there was an element of continuity and conservatism in Gaelic society which transcended this instability.¹⁷ The sense of a 'normal' state of affairs to which a desired return had been made impossible by the plantation is attested to in numerous sources.¹⁸ While taking account of the fact that Gaelic society (like any other) did not operate in every time and place in precise accordance with the following model, a reasonably-accurate snapshot of how it functioned on the eve of its demise can be outlined.

The class structure of Gaelic society

The first thing to be noted about the hierarchy of Gaelic society is that it was intrinsically linked to the rights and obligations associated with the ownership and rental of cattle, and that landholding, and the conceptualisation of land, differed from a common law

17 The composition of works such as the Annals of the Four Masters, Ó Cléirigh's and MacFhirbhisigh's book of genealogies in the seventeenth century would suggest that this interest only became more intense in this period.

18 Caball, 'Providence and Exile', pp.174-88. As suggested by the belief that the colonists were social *parvenus*, the plantation was seen as an inversion of the 'natural' order of things, especially in the eyes of elite Irish. It was no doubt a return to this order (not only the expulsion of the colonists but also the return to subservience of the non-elite Irish) that Féilim Rua Ó Néill referred to when he is said to have quipped in 1641: 'The horse had bene a longe tyme on the topp of the Ryder, but nowe God bee thanked the Ryder was gotten on the topp of the horse agayne'. Deposition of Nicholas Simpson, 6 April 1643, TCD MS 838, ff.184v.

jurisdiction in several important ways. Instead of being associated with a strict hierarchy of divisions and sub-divisions as applied to territories with neatly-defined boundaries, sovereignty as exercised by the *tiarnaí* should be understood as largely exercised over specific *sliocht* and their rights to use cattle.¹⁹ Such boundaries could contract, expand, or simply move, especially in times of dislocation; therefore the fluid nature of landholding in Gaelic society must be appreciated. Having said this, it should not be overstated; the area which constituted an *oireacht* might fluctuate over the centuries, but remained stable enough for the northern half of what is today known as County Londonderry, for example, to be referred to as Oireacht Uí Chatháin.

Just as the territory of a *tiarna* expanded or contracted according to his fortunes in battle and diplomacy, so could the extent of his *tiarnas* (chieftainship or lordship) in relation to other *tiarnaí*. Ó Catháin is usually given as the prime example of an *uirrí* or sub-king for his subservient relationship to the Uí Néill, but as Nicholls has noted of Ó Catháin specifically, relationships as well as territories fluctuated and the control exercised by the Uí Néill over Ó Catháin was relatively weak compared to that exercised over a less powerful *tiarna* like Ó Garmaile.²⁰ In general, the reciprocal relationship between a *tiarna* and his *uirrí* took the form of tribute and military service, in return for which he received protection from outside threats. In the latter part of the sixteenth century two overlords—Ó Néill and Ó Dónaill—existed in Ulster, to whom the various *uirríthe* were attached. It is clear, however, that such a system was breaking down, as the growing disorder left some *tiarnaí* unable to maintain alliances with their erstwhile *uirríthe*, whom the government often tried to detach from their allegiance as a means of weakening Gaelic resistance. The ambiguity in Dónall Ó Catháin's relationship with his overlord, for example, was exploited by those who wished to undermine the authority of Aodh Ó Néill in the immediate post-Mellifont years.

Such was the importance of lineage and hierarchical relationships between different *sleachta* that the Irish primarily identified themselves with perceived common ancestry rather than particular geographical locations.²¹ These perceived origins were articulated in

19 MacNeill observed that in the Gaelic social system, 'the idea of the ownership of land is nowhere prominent'. MacNeill, *Celtic Ireland*, p.111.

20 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, p.26.

21 Much of that which was understood as history by contemporaries was no doubt legend. As Dáibhí Ó

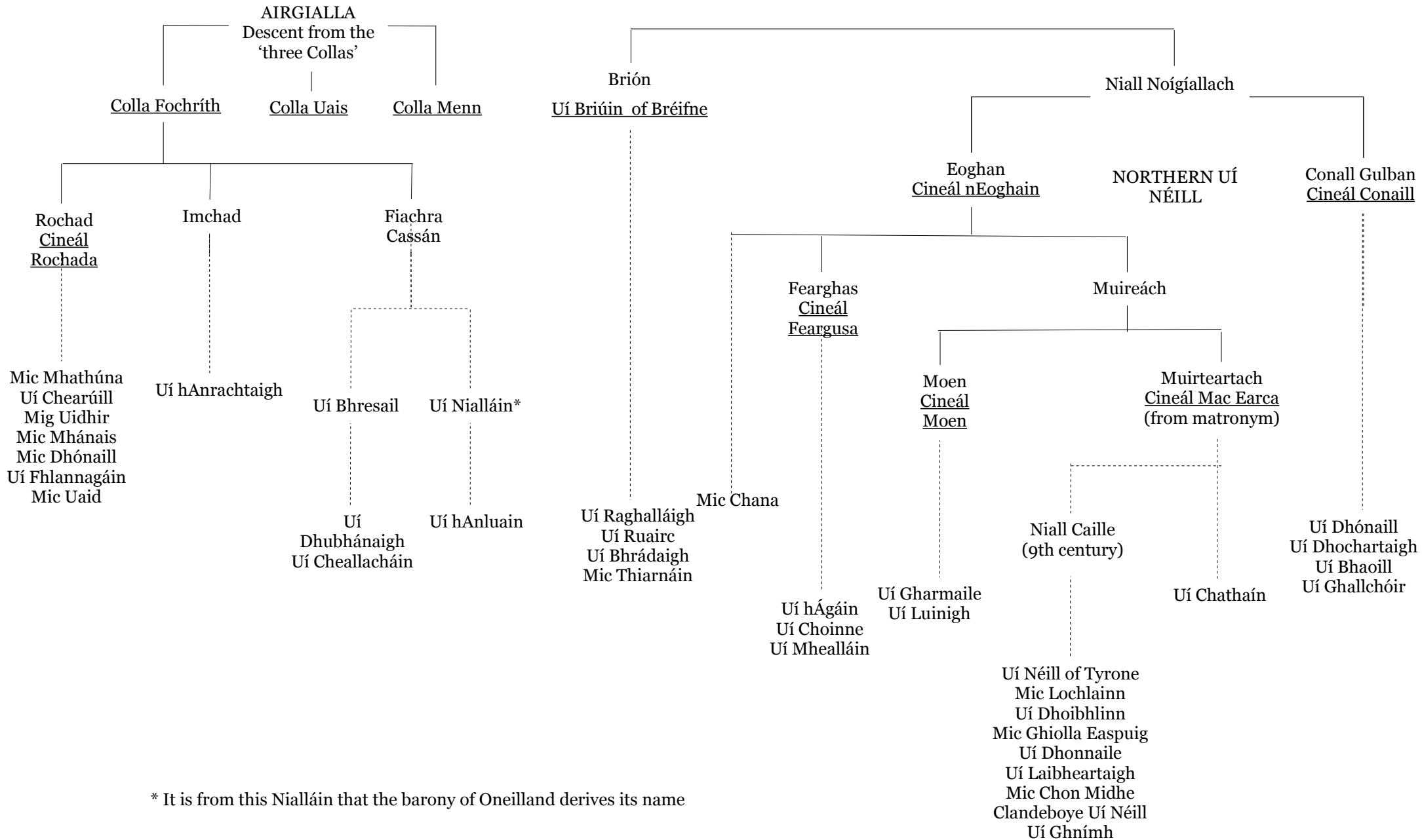
terms of the *cineál*, meaning branch or race, and which connote a more long-term view of ancestry in the distant, semi-mythical past than the terms *sliocht* or *fine*. Many of the prominent *sleachta* of Ulster in the sixteenth century traced their origins to Niall Noígíallach (Niall of the Nine Hostages), and were thus known as the Uí Néill. These in turn were split into two main lineages, the Cineál Eoghain and Cineál Conaill, said to be descended from two sons of Niall, Eoghan and Conall Gulban. Within these two groups there existed numerous subdivisions, some of which (those representing the chief *sleachta* at the end of the Gaelic order) are summarised in figure 6 (p.184) below. Several other powerful groups in Ulster did not belong to the Uí Néill however; the leading *sleachta* of Bréifne in the south of the province—the Uí Raghalláigh, Uí Ruairc and Uí Bhrádaigh—believed themselves to be descended from a brother of Niall Noígíallach named Bríón, hence their collective name of Uí Bhriúin. The Mic Mhathúna of Monaghan and the Mig Uidhir of Fermanagh were thought to have their ultimate origins in the founders of the ancient kingdom of Airgialla (‘those who give hostages’, often anglicised as ‘Oriel’), which had once extending across central Ulster, but which by the ninth century (and the expansion of the Cineál Eoghain) was largely restricted to the south-east corner of the province. These Airgiallan kin-groups survived as clients of the Cineál Eoghain, providing them with military service, by which means their histories became inextricably linked.

The legitimising role played by an ancestor’s military exploits can be seen in the lengthy recitation by Eoghan Mac hAodha Mac Néill Mór Ó Néill of his father’s and forefathers’ record of service to the English in 1600.²² The prestige attached to the names of long-dead ancestors can be seen in the habit of leaders of the Uí Raghallaigh, for example, to take the name Maolmórdha, after a twelfth-century ruler, for whom the *sliocht* was known as the Muintir Maolmórdha. Nor were these noble lineages confined to the elite stratum of Gaelic society. Such was the propagation of dominant families and their displacement of weaker

Cróinín has remarked of the Uí Néill genealogy: ‘There is more than a suspicion that what survives in the way of genealogical and pseudo-historical tradition about them has been doctored, if not concocted’. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, ‘Ireland, 400-800’, in Dáibhí Ó Cróinín (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, volume 1: Prehistoric and early Ireland*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), p.201. Whether or not such ancestries were based on historical fact or not is less important, in understanding modes of self-identification among the Irish, than the fact that they were believed to be true.

22 Seeking the crown’s favour, this Ó Néill of the Fewes in Armagh, stressed not only the services rendered by his father and grandfather in fighting against both Seán Ó Néill and Conn Baccach, but also made pointed references to Toirealach Luineach Ó Néill’s aspiration to be made ‘The Ó Néill’ (which he reminded the reader was ‘the title of a traitor’) in order to sully the reputation of Toirealach son Art, with whom Eoghan competed for favours. SP 63-207-4, no.22, f.57r.

Figure 6. Reputed origins of Ulster *sleachta*



ones that the entire population must have been, by the seventeenth century, able to trace their ancestry back to some noble ancestor in the distant (or perhaps not even very distant) past. This is borne out by Spenser's complaint that:

‘. . . all the Irishe almoste boste them selves to be gentlemen
[. . .] if he cane derive himselfe from the heade of anie septe as
most of them can, they are experte by their Bardes’.²³

Notwithstanding the possibility of tracing their lineage back to a venerable aristocracy, in reality the vast majority of the population lived in a condition of greater or lesser subservience to a small minority, here referred to as the elite. For the purposes of this discussion, the definition of elite will be confined to those within the *dearbhfine* of four generations (an individual, sons, grandsons and great-grandsons) descent, deemed eligible to succeed a *tiarna*, and their retainers, both military and learned. The activities of this level of society are neatly summarised in Jane Ohlmeyer's description of Gaelic society as a 'fighting and feasting' culture.²⁴ This is accurate insofar as these two activities provided the mechanism by which surplus produce was redistributed. Rather than being sold for a price determined on a market, this surplus was offered up as tribute to local rulers and then redistributed by them to their allies and retainers in return for loyalty and services. These retainers fell into several categories which can broadly be categorised as the military and learned castes. The means by which each was supported differed somewhat.

The fighting men of a *tiarna* were supported by a levy imposed on the people known as *coinmheadh*, anglicised as 'coigny' or 'coyne' and translated as 'guesting'. This involved billeting the ruler's soldiers upon the population. As the Gaelic *tiarnaí* of Ulster came to rely less on personal military service from their followers and more on mercenaries (often hired from across the North Channel), a form of this levy known as *buannacht*, or the billeting of mercenary soldiers (*buanna*), grew more common. Such obligations to provide the ruler with payment and lodging for his soldiers were sometimes commuted to a

23 Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) 'A View of the Present State of Ireland', p.203. Barnaby Rich likewise remarked that 'the meanest Shackerell that hath scarce a mantle to wrap himselfe in hath as proud a mind as Oneal himselfe, when he sits upon a green banke under a bush in his greatest maiesty', in *A new description*, p.9.

24 Ohlmeyer, 'Civilizing of those rude partes', p.127.

payment in money or produce. The same is true of the *cóisir* (anglicised ‘cosher’ or ‘cohery’) or *cuid oíche* (‘cuddy’, lit.night’s portion), feasts which his followers were obliged to host for a *tiarna* several times a year, but which were also often commuted to payments as the sixteenth century progressed.²⁵ Besides the military caste and mercenaries, the *tiarnaí* also supported a range of other retainers, the learned professions, ranging from poets (who enjoyed the highest status) to jurists and doctors. These orders (the head of which was called an *ollamh*) were maintained by being given lands, usually free of the kind of obligatory payments outlined above, and were monopolised by families whose hereditary role it was to fill these posts.

While some of these hereditary orders had their own lands on which they subsisted, the elite and many of their military retainers specialised in war, and were thus far too busy fighting and feasting to produce the means to support themselves. As has been seen, the soldiers were provided-for by billeting them on the lands of the followers of a ruler. To provide for the (presumably not inconsiderable) upkeep of the *tiarna* and collateral branches of his family who constituted the elite, a tribute was levied on the produce of those who held land in the numerous smaller territories into which an *oireacht* was divided. This subdivision was the territory in which the hospitalier or *biatach* collected the tribute due to the *tiarna*, who ruled over these *bailte biatach* (sing. *baile biataigh*, anglicised ballybetagh), the number of which depended on the power and prestige of the *tiarna* in question.²⁶ Kenneth Nicholls has noted a feature peculiar to Ulster in the later middle ages, whereby only the mensal lands associated with the office of *tiarna* provided for the upkeep of the ruler. These lands, called the *lucht tighe* (people of the household) were held by a specific *sliocht* whose hereditary responsibility was to farm them and sustain the elite group within the *oireacht*. The lands outside this *lucht tighe*, therefore, provided military service and hospitality to the *tiarna*, but not necessarily a regular portion of the surplus.²⁷ When viewed in this light, they must have lived relatively independent of the *tiarna*, although the amount of tribute demanded no doubt fluctuated.

25 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp.37-8.

26 Geoffrey Keating described Ulster as consisting of 36 ‘triochas’ (a older term which he appears to use synonymously with *oireacht*), each consisting of, on average, 30 *bailte biatach*. It would be misleading to claim from this that the *oireacht* consisted of a uniform number of 28 *bailte biatach*, but it gives a rough idea of their extent. Geoffrey Keating, David Comyn, (ed. and trans.), *The history of Ireland*, vol.1, (London: Irish Texts Society, 1902), p.119.

27 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, p.40.

Under normal circumstances, it might be stable and sustainable, but in wartime, a *baile biataigh* was ‘probably compelled to contribute all it could bear’.²⁸ As the sixteenth century progressed, moreover, wartime was becoming the norm rather than the exception, and the burden no doubt increased correspondingly.

The individual *baile biataigh* was the unit of land collectively held by a *sliocht* which, although not members of the elite ruling class in the sense that they could aspire to sovereignty over the *oireacht*, nonetheless lived in relative autonomy and possessed the land as a corporate body in something akin to the freehold of English common law. It is for this reason that this class have generally been referred to as ‘freeholders’ by most historians. The more general term ‘landholders’ is here preferred, however, for the same reason that the verb ‘holding’ will be preferred to ‘owning’ to describe their relationship with the land; this is to avoid the tendency to use English approximations to describe Gaelic institutions which is apparent from the very earliest observations by outsiders, and masks some fundamental differences between how land was held under the Gaelic and the English legal systems. The most obvious of these differences was the institution of partible inheritance. Instead of a portion of land being passed from father to son under the system of primogeniture, which was the norm in most of feudal Europe, in Gaelic society, the entire *baile biataigh* was divided up into smaller holdings which, when the holder died, resulted in a redistribution made between those eligible to hold land, once again, the adult males in the *dearbhfine* of four generations.²⁹ The means by which this redistribution took place differed according to time and place. In some areas, the youngest of those eligible to take part divided up the land into portions and they were chosen in order of seniority, from the head-man, or *ceann-fine*, downwards; in other areas, the *ceann-fine* himself was responsible for dividing the lands, which no doubt resulted in him getting the most generous share.³⁰

An example of how these kind of divisions looked in reality can be obtained from the 1591 land settlement imposed on the native Irish of Monaghan. This attempted to freeze the

28 Hayes-McCoy, ‘Gaelic society in Ireland’, p.48.

29 Women, whose children would belong to their father’s rather than mother’s *sliocht*, could not inherit, although Nicholls has noted that they sometimes held land in pledge for a dowry, passed on to the male heirs when the woman in question was married. Nicholls, ‘Gaelic society and economy’, in Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, volume 2*, p.433.

30 Nicholls, ‘Gaelic society and economy’, in Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, volume 2*, p.432.

landholding situation and make those in corporate possession of the land by the Gaelic system, freeholders with estates of inheritance as individuals under common law. The division among the Irish of one *baile biataigh*, recorded as ‘Balledromhurke’ (Baile Droim Thoirc or ‘hill of the wild boar’), is shown on the following page.

What is immediately striking about this division is the prevalence of Mic Mhathúna, a feature which is reflected throughout the county. Patrick Duffy has noted that, by 1591, this *sliocht* occupied thirty of the approximately forty-eight *bailte biatach* in the county which were now to be held in freehold.³¹ While this no doubt reflects the phenomenon, alluded to above, of ruling elites constantly exerting downward social pressure on the weaker landholders and displacing them, it may also be a result of the government’s eagerness to transform the ruling Mic Mhathúna from warlords into English-style landlords. In order to accommodate collateral branches of the ruling *sleachta*, land previously occupied by the landholder class must have been confiscated and given to members of the elite, primarily Mic Mhathúna, who had previously not held land but occupied themselves with ‘fighting and feasting’.³² Such a dispossession of the landholders foreshadows the fate of this class in the plantation itself, as they were deemed by John Davies to have ‘no estate of inheritance’, and were dispossessed not just to accommodate colonists from England and Scotland, but also members of the Gaelic elite.³³

These constant re-divisions of the *baile biataigh* might result, over many generations, in the land being fragmented into unsustainably-small portions. The extent to which this occurred, however, is very much linked to the rate of population growth. That this could present a problem can be seen, for example, in Ireland during the eighteenth and

31 Patrick Duffy, ‘The territorial organisation of Gaelic landownership and its transformation in County Monaghan, 1591-1640’, in *Irish Geography*, vol. 14, (Dublin: Geographical Society of Ireland, 1981), p.8.

32 It would be wrong to posit a unified Mac Mathúna *oireacht* split up into freeholds in the 1590s. Sixteenth-century Monaghan saw the Mic Mhathúna divided into three competing groups: one in the modern-day barony of Dartree, another in the area encompassed by the baronies of Cremorne and Farney, and a group in what is now Monaghan barony, the leader of which held the title of ‘Mac Mathúna’ for most of the century, but whose supremacy was disputed by the other two groups. The leading Mic Mhathúna were *uirríthe* to Ó Néill until the defeat of Conn Bacach at Ballyhoe in 1539, after which they vacillated between the English government and their traditional allegiance to Ó Néill. Philip Moore, ‘The Mac Mahons of Monaghan (1500-1593)’, in *Clogher Record*, vol.1, no.3 (Clogher Historical Society, 1955), pp.22-4.

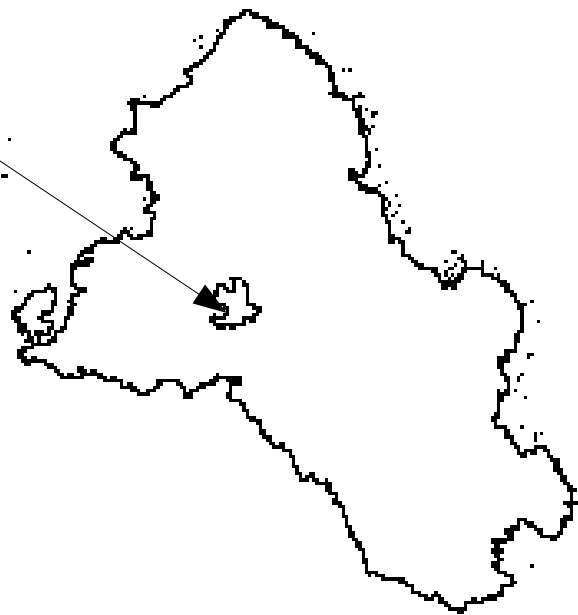
33 John Davies to Salisbury, 24 September 1610, SP 63-229, no.125a, f.128v.

Figure 7. Baile Droim Thoirc, 1591



1. Tuathal Buí Mac Ardail Mac Mathúna (4 tates)
2. Brian Mac Réamann Mac Mathúna (4 tates)
3. Colla Mac Tuathail Mac Mathúna (2 tates)
4. Ruairí Mac Rosach Mac Mathúna (2 tates)
5. Seán Dubh Mac Mathúna (2 tates)
6. Brian Mac Éamainn Mac Mathúna (2 tates)

Source: P. J. Duffy, 'The Territorial organisation of Gaelic landownership and its transformation in County Monaghan, 1591-1640' in *Irish Geography*, vol. 14, (Dublin: Geographical Society of Ireland, 1981), pp.5, 11.



Note: 'Tate' was the term used in Monaghan and Fermanagh for what was elsewhere referred to as a *baile bó* or, in Cavan, a 'poll'.

nineteenth centuries, where rapid population growth and partible inheritance of land led to smaller and small holdings in the west of Ireland. This would not necessarily be a major problem, however, in a society where the birth rate did not much exceed the rate necessary for replacement. If a population increase from 0.75 million in 1500 to one million a century later is accurate, and the fecundity of the Irish attested to by contemporaries is true, it can only be concluded that the mortality-rate in Gaelic society was quite high.³⁴ Given this, it logically follows that, with the numbers of males dying and coming into their inheritance in near-equilibrium, the subdivision into infinitesimally-small holdings would be avoided. One historian has furthermore speculated that the territory of the *baile biataigh* itself may not have been physically divided up, but only the produce thereof.³⁵ The possibility that the territory was farmed in common is supported by the fact, pointed out by Audrey Horning, that within each *baile biataigh* there existed ‘the full range of land types necessary to support cattle-raising and grain (most often oat) cultivation’.³⁶

When we consider that the landholder class often consisted of collateral branches of the ruling family outside the *dearbhfhine* of the ruler, the social gulf between the two may have lacked distinction.³⁷ This separation into hard and fast categories must be seen as a somewhat arbitrary, if useful, convenience. The extent of subordination between landholders and elite was no doubt partly decided by military might, the ability of a *sliocht* like the Mic Mhathúna to enforce their rule constituting much of the grounds of their legitimacy. Neither should the importance of precedent and tradition, as has been seen, be underestimated. Again it must be stressed that these class distinctions were already being upset by the dislocations of the sixteenth century before formal colonisation began. One of the most important features which had distinguished the landholding class from the laborers who farmed their land is that they were allowed to bear arms and owed military service to their *tiarna* in times of war. This convention was upset when Seán Ó Néill armed the landless class for the first time.³⁸ Aside from this, perhaps the most obvious

34 Thomas Blenerhasset claimed of the Irish that they ‘encrease ten to one more then the English, nay I might well say twenty’ in *A direction*, sig.B3v. For discussion of population estimates, see appendix 2.

35 William F.T. Butler, *Confiscation in Irish history*, (Dublin: Talbot Press, 1918), p.81.

36 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.34.

37 Hayes McCoy has noted that some *bailte biatach* were exempt from tribute when ruled by collateral branches of the ruling *sliocht*. It is tempting to see the practice, peculiar to Ulster, of only demanding tribute from the *lucht tighe* areas as being linked to this exemption. Hayes-McCoy, ‘Gaelic society in Ireland’, p.48.

38 Lord deputy Sidney to the earl of Leicester, 1 March 1566, S.P. 63-16 no.35, f.87r.

distinguishing feature between these two classes is the fact that this productive element in Gaelic society did not have any kind of estate in land, corporately or as individuals. They were, therefore, obliged to sell their labour to those who owned the means of production—the land and cattle—in order to obtain a proportion of the agricultural goods that they produced.

The members of this productive class are often referred to in English sources as ‘churls’, and written-of as if their condition was akin to serfdom. This generalisation can be attributed to the unthinking tendency of contemporaries to see in Gaelic Ireland a mirror-image of England’s feudal past. Fynes Moryson claimed that this productive class were ‘reputed proper to those lands on which they dwell’, and that Gaelic *tiarnaí* vied with each other, not so much to conquer lands as the people who were tied to them.³⁹ John Davies decried Aodh Ó Néill’s attempts, in the aftermath of the war, to secure the return of people who had fled to the Pale from his territories, claiming that Ó Néill aspired to be ‘maister both of their bodyes & goodes’.⁴⁰ It would appear, however, that this is an example of the kind of innovation that accompanied the growing autocracy of Gaelic *tiarnaí* in the specific war-torn period during which Moryson and Davies were writing. Kenneth Nicholls observes that the contrary had been the norm during the sixteenth century, and that the landless Irish had in fact been free to wander ‘from place to place and master to master, apparently driven not by want, but by restlessness and the inducements held out to them’.⁴¹ This freedom was largely due to the underpopulation of the country and the resultant chronic shortage of labour.

It may indeed have been partly due to the problems associated with such a shortage that Gaelic lords began to claim their subjects were not free but bound to the soil. The extent of freedom and mobility of the productive class in Gaelic society, therefore, fluctuated with shifts in their strength relative to the other classes. In this, it was no different to the bargaining power enjoyed by the wage-labourer in a capitalist economy. The balance of power would have been determined by circumstances; in the power-vacuum created by

39 Moryson, ‘Itinerary’, in Hughes (ed.), *Shakespeare’s Europe*, p.194.

40 John Davies to Cecil, 19 April 1604, in SP 63-216, no.15, f.45r.

41 Nicholls, ‘Gaelic society and economy’, in Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, volume 2*, p.409. Patrick Duffy likewise notes a ‘tendency for tenants and labourers to abandon oppressive and war-torn lordships’ in Patrick J. Duffy, ‘Social and spatial order in the MacMahon lordship of Airghialla’, in Duffy, Edwards and FitzPatrick (eds.), *Gaelic Ireland*, p.122.

Aodh Ó Néill's flight in 1607 for instance, Toby Caulfeild suggested that it was the 'custom of the country' that 'tenants may remove from one lord to another every half year, as usually they do'.⁴² Generalising from specific (and unusual) circumstances, Caulfeild was probably overestimating the frequency of such removals and overstating the mobility of the landless class as much as other writers had understated it.

A qualification must also be made to the impression that the landholding class owned one of the vital means of producing the surplus, the cattle, by which they compelled the landless class to work for them. The cows were in fact often owned by the *tiarnaí* themselves, who leased them to their followers in return for a share of the resultant produce.⁴³ This practice, known to contemporaries as 'commyns' was a kind of pastoral sharecropping, and a crucial lever of power in Gaelic society. Its implications must be understood in order to belie the image of a basically-feudal hierarchy of sedentary classes, each occupying lands by the grace of the class above it. Rather than the extent of his territorial reach, it was the amount of cattle a *tiarna* possessed that constituted his power, the tribute and service he received being primarily for the lease of his cattle rather than the right to occupy lands. In a country as sparsely-populated as Ulster, land was plentiful and therefore relatively valueless without the people and cattle necessary to make it economically productive. The practice would furthermore appear to have been closely linked to the custom of fosterage; a 1610 investigation into customary dues suggests that followers would often nurse and foster the children of the ruling elite in return for the lease of cattle.⁴⁴

The struggle for mastery over herds of cattle thus held a prominent place in traditional Gaelic society, wars between neighbouring *tiarnaí* often taking the form of cattle-raids and counter-raids, contested not only for material resources but for power and prestige.⁴⁵ The

42 Toby Caulfeild, 'The collection of Tyrone's rents from his flight in 1607 till 1 November 1610, when the lands were given out to undertakers', 18 December 1610, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.533.

43 At the time of the earls' flight, the rent paid for each cow was estimated to be 12d, paid not only in dairy produce, but oats, pigs mutton and sometimes partly in money. Caulfeild, 'The collection of Tyrone's rents', in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.533.

44 'Instructions for the commissioners appointed to deal in matters of comyns', 28 August 1610, in *CCM*, vol.5, pp.58-9.

45 That the Irish continued into the 1640s to view military success in terms of successful cattle raids is evident in the *Cín Lae* of Toirealach Ó Mealláin and the deponent who spoke of the Irish celebrating the victories of Féilim Rua Ó Néill in songs about vast numbers of cattle being slaughtered. Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), 'Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin', pp.345-6. Examination of Michael Harrison, 11 February 1653,

grazing of a *tiarna's* cattle on the land of his followers must be seen as a means, not only of monopolising control over an important source of sustenance, but of dominating and controlling the population. The exercise of this control in practice can be seen in the twice-yearly count carried out by officials in the employ of a Gaelic *tiarna*; the struggle to assert their former prerogatives in the years after 1603 can be gauged by Caulfeild's observation that many were able to evade a reckoning of their cattle either by hiding them, bribing those tasked with the count, or fleeing outside the weakening jurisdiction of the *tiarna*.⁴⁶ This breakdown of authority (so often represented as the *establishment* of authority in Anglocentric historians' accounts of Ulster at this time) can also be seen in the retention by former followers of Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill and Dónall Ó Catháin of the cattle they had been leased when the men were imprisoned in 1608.⁴⁷ Those areas from which rulers had either fled or been imprisoned must have witnessed something of an overthrow of the social order, in that a proportion of the cattle belonging to the former elite wound up in the hands of those who had hitherto been compelled to rent them.

Commyns was a more subtle manifestation of the way in which grazing cattle on the land of others was used as a means of domination and control by the elite in Gaelic society. This can also be seen in the existence of mobile herds, the *caoraidheacht* (anglicised 'creaght'), which Katharine Simms sees as having its origins in a kind of 'aggressive pastoralism' developed in the north of Ireland in the late middle ages, whereby livestock were deliberately used 'as an instrument of destruction'.⁴⁸ Such was the growing disorder of sixteenth-century Ulster that to live in a *caoraidheacht* was becoming a permanent condition for certain sections of the population. The extent of this permanence, and the proportion of the population who moved about in this fashion, continues to be debated, however, as does the nature of the *caoraidheacht* itself. What is certain is that those who concluded from the existence of the *caoraidheachta* that the Gaelic Irish were nomadic, were simply wrong. Firstly, as has been seen by Horning's observation that each *baile biataigh* encompassed a range of land-types suitable for both pasture and tillage, there is no doubt that tillage, especially the growing of oats, was practiced in Gaelic areas.⁴⁹

TCD MS 836, f.132r.

46 Caulfeild, 'The collection of Tyrone's rents', in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.533.

47 'Lords of the council to Chichester' (and enclosures following), in C.W. Russell and John P. Prendergast (eds.), *CSPI James I, 1611–1614*, (London: Longman & Co., 1877), pp.390-2.

48 Simms, 'Nomadry in medieval Ireland', pp.383, 390.

49 Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, pp.131-2. Lord deputy Sidney's description of destroying 24

Secondly, a distinction (rarely noted by contemporaries) must be made between the seasonal migration of herds from winter to summer pasture and back again, and groups of people and their cattle who had either been displaced by war or provided a mobile food-source for armies. The former practice, known to anthropologists as transhumance and to the Irish as *buailteachas* (from the Irish *buaille* or place of summer pasture, anglicised ‘booleying’), was an age-old practice in a predominantly pastoral society where there was abundant upland available to allow much of the population to inhabit different locales at different times of the year, and represented an optimal use of marginal land. The existence of many pairs of townlands today, differentiated only by the suffix -etra or -otra (from the Irish for *uachtar*, upper, and *íochtar*, lower), would suggest that such *bailte bó* were perceived to be associated pasture-lands, corresponding summer and winter quarters of the same kin-group.⁵⁰ Large numbers of permanently-itinerant people with herds, on the other hand, are less well-attested. Certainly, *caoraidheachta* fleeing from, or accompanying, armies were common in times of war (it would once again become so in the 1640s); whether or not they could be described as a permanent feature of Ulster society is a moot point.

Given the considerable displacement of people from their lands that must have taken place during the plantation, groups of wandering people must have been as common—if not more common—in colonial society. Indeed, it has been shown that transhumance continued to be practiced in parts of Donegal until the nineteenth century; it was only when population pressure led to permanent settlement of the summer pastures that their use as *buailte* came to an end.⁵¹ Although the *caoraidheacht* and *buailteachas* made economic and strategic sense, it was alleged by early-modern commentators that Gaelic areas remained predominantly pastoral because they were backward.⁵² The pastoralism of

square miles of crops near Clogher in 1566 confirms the ‘no small abundance’ of cultivation in Ulster. Henry Sidney, Gerald Fitzgerald, earl of Kildare, Sir Nicholas Bagenal and Francis Agard to Queen Elizabeth, 12 November 1566, SP 63-19 no.43, f.86v.

50 Robinson, *The plantation of Ulster*, p.34.

51 Jean M. Graham, ‘Southwest Donegal in the seventeenth century’, in *Irish Geography*, vol.6:2, (Dublin: The Geographical Society of Ireland, 1970), p.141.

52 John Davies was most explicit in his depiction of a pastoral lifestyle as a consequence of barbarism, and wrote of James as a ‘skilful husbandman’ who would save Ulster from its own population, and would ‘suffer so good and fruitful a country to lie waste like a wilderness’. Davies, letter to Salisbury concerning the state of Ireland, 1610, reproduced in *Historical tracts*, pp.287-90. This conception of a pastoral economy as primitive and uncongenial to ‘civil’ society appears to have been more deeply

such areas was, however, determined geographically rather than culturally. Given the soil type, much land was simply more suitable for pastoral than arable farming.⁵³ Even today, almost 90 percent of the farmed area of Ireland is devoted to pasture, hay or silage.⁵⁴ It also made sense to cultivate a mobile food-source in times of growing instability and war.

A model of four classes (see overleaf) may be usefully employed in illustrating the structure of Gaelic society in its pre-colonial state. Such schemata need to be understood as a blueprint from which reality deviated, both in terms of local variation and under circumstances which prevented the stable functioning of the Gaelic order. It serves to illustrate that such an order and stability did exist, however, and that the image of an unstructured, nomadic people living in an uncultivated wilderness was entirely false, serving merely to justify the confiscation of the land. This image of rootlessness and chaos was of course strengthened by the very efforts of the Tudors to destabilise the Gaelic order. As William Smyth has pointed out, it was not just these military incursions which weakened a social order based on kin-groups and clientship, but also the introduction of common law forms of landholding, market forces and the relations determined and upheld by them, not to mention technical innovations from both England and the continent.⁵⁵ Many of these innovations were introduced by those, such as Aodh Ó Néill, who sought to

ingrained in the colonial psyche than merely a concern for economic productiveness. As noted above (pp.160-1), elite figures, contemplating colonies in both Ireland and America, felt an innate suspicion for any way of life that provided the means of sustenance with too much ease. The excess energy, it was felt, inevitably ended up being spent in raiding cattle, fighting one another or, worse still, fighting the government. This energy, Spenser believed, would be dissipated by a sedentary agricultural lifestyle. Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) 'A View of the Present State of Ireland', p.216. Rowland White likewise believed that the path 'towards civilitie' for the Irish lay in 'true laboring for their livings'. White; Canny (ed.), 'Discors Touching Ireland', p.455. The mobility inherent in the pastoral lifestyle, on the other hand, was believed to have made the Irish innately lazy and incapable of developing their own country economically. Fynes Moryson waxed lyrical about the potential resources of Ireland but lamented the 'natural sloth' of the Irish which left it mostly unexploited, claiming that the indigenous population 'hold it baseness to labour'. 'The Itinerary', in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, pp.222, 224. Barnaby Rich claimed that the island could support twice the population if only the Irish farmed it properly, and that there was 'not a greater plague-sore to Ireland, then the ydlennesse thereof'. *A new description*, sig.B3r, p.9.

53 Brendan Bradshaw has referenced the work of Nicholas Canny and R.A. Butlin in support of this argument, denouncing the tendency, even among modern historians, to uncritically accept this Tudor image of a society that was *unable* to evolve from this pastoral mode through some cultural backwardness. 'The Elizabethans and the Irish: A Muddled Model', (review of *The Twilight Lords* by Richard Berleth), in *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, vol. 70, no. 278/279, (Dublin: Talbot Press Ltd., 1981), pp.236-7.

54 Figures for 2012 in *Statistical yearbook of Ireland*, Central Statistics Office, (Dublin: The Stationery Office, 2013), p.173.

55 Smyth, *Map-making*, pp.82-3.

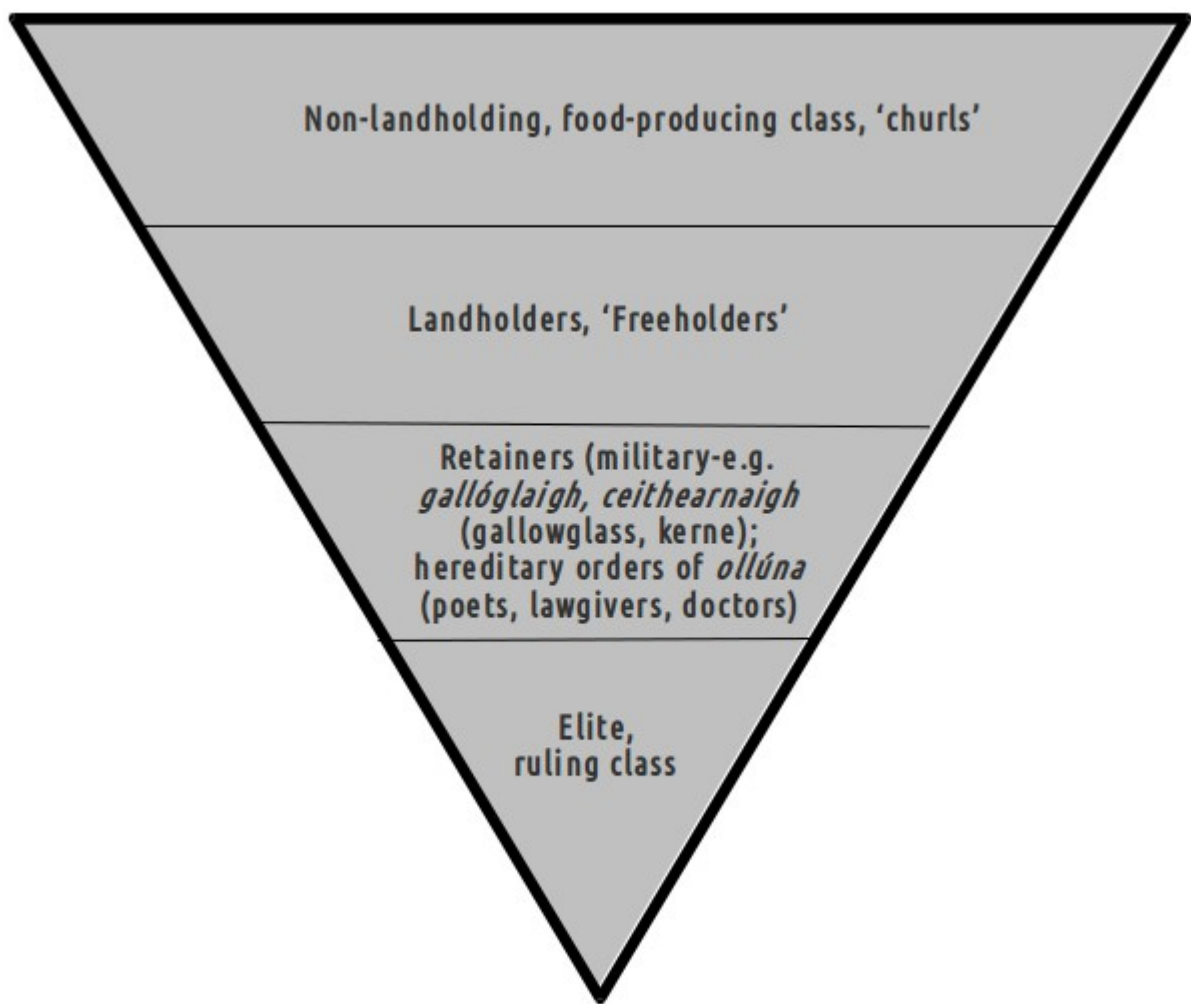


Figure 8. The class structure of Gaelic society.



Figure 9. Strabane and Dungannon, physical geography and main settlements.

engineer the survival of Gaelic Ulster on its own terms by modernising aspects of that society. This attempt failed, and when Ó Néill and his associates fled, the colonisers instead brought innovation on their own terms.

To speak of the effects of colonisation on ‘Gaelic society’ would be to invite oversimplification. Nonetheless, it would be wrong to view each class as experiencing its own discrete fate after the plantation. The paradigm of ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’ Irish imposed on Ulster by the plantation resulted in a dispensation from which the native Irish can be viewed as falling into one of two categories post-plantation, with the structure of four classes outlined above transformed into a two-class structure. These two classes consisted of, on the one hand, those deemed ‘deserving’ of incorporation into the plantation project, and on the other, those seen as ‘undeserving’ of land. This latter group included both those who had been landholders in the Gaelic system, and also those who had never ‘possessed’ land. While the fate of the Gaelic elite and its retainers will be discussed in the following chapter, the remainder of this chapter will be devoted to the fate of the landholding and landless classes of Gaelic society, and how they fared in colonial society.

The landholders

The government’s criteria for choosing which natives should receive grants of land had little to do with preserving any vestige of the landholding arrangements of Gaelic society, as it had in Monaghan, but instead aimed to give those who retained the capability to disrupt colonial society enough of a stake in it to make them hesitate from so doing. An insight into the kind of reasoning applied can be gained from a 1610 document in which Toby Caulfeild listed a number of natives (mostly rivals of the departed Aodh Ó Néill) worthy of favourable treatment in the aftermath of both the flight and Ó Dochartaigh’s rising. It was primarily due to these individuals, Caulfeild commented, that a general rising had not followed on from Ó Dochartaigh’s attempt and ‘the swordmen and ill-disposed persons there (who were abundant in those countries) were kept back from many outrages that they were ready and inclinable unto in those dangerous times’.⁵⁶ The capacity to restrain the military castes of Gaelic society was, therefore, a vital criterion in determining

56 Caulfeild, ‘The collection of Tyrone’s rents’, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.539.

the choice of grantees in the formal plantation.

This capacity was largely decided by their place in the Gaelic order, and means that the vast majority of grantees must have been either elite figures with the ability to command some military resources, or their retainers. Proof of loyalty and previous military service for the English played a part but, as will be seen below (below pp.246-64), this was no guarantee of favour. Nor was military might the only criteria for merit. One individual, Cú Chonnacht Ó Daimhín, was granted an abatement of rents ‘for his maintenance in the college at Dublin, the better to encourage others to conform themselves in civility and religion’.⁵⁷ The Uí Dhaimhín were a notable family of *airchinnigh*, or hereditary stewards of church lands, who most likely occupied the *baile biataigh* referred to as ‘Coole Muntedevin’ (containing four *bailte bó*) in the 1608 survey which ascertained the extent of the escheated lands.⁵⁸ The hope that a prominent religious figure such as Cú Chonnacht would convert, and lead other native Irish by his example, clearly demonstrates that the desire to accommodate prestigious cultural leaders of the community, as well as military figures, played a role. The fact that several bardic poets, such as Eochaidh Ó hEosa in Clanawley, Fermanagh and Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh in Kilmacrennan, Donegal, would receive grants in the plantation also bears this out.⁵⁹ Other members of the learned orders were driven off their lands, often into exile; the Irish schools on the continent, especially in the Spanish Netherlands, provided a haven for such exiles.

Those who constituted the class of landholders, as here defined, did not command the resources to instigate material or ideological resistance. In consequence of this, it was not necessary to buy them off with land grants. The fate of such landholders can best be illustrated by taking as a case study a specific area and contrasting the treatment of this latter group with those Irish in the area whom it was deemed politic to conciliate. The barony of Strabane in Tyrone offers an interesting sample area. Its location, downriver from Derry, one of the principal entry-ports to the province for colonists, meant that the

57 Caulfeild, ‘The collection of Tyrone’s rents’, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.540.

58 ‘A booke of the Kings lands founde upon the last generall survey within the province of Ulster anno le: 1608’, MS. Rawlinson A. 237, printed in *Analecta Hibernica*, vol.3, (Dublin: Irish Manuscripts Commission, 1931), p.157.

59 Clanawley: Clann Amhlaoibh, ‘the kin of Amhlaoibh’, a gaelicisation of the Norse Olaf, the Amhlaoibh in question being one of the early Mag Uidhir rulers of Fermanagh, who died in 1306. Kilmacrennan: Cill Mhic Réanáin, ‘the church of the Mhic Réanáin.’

density of colonial settlement was significant. As will become clear below, however, the area does appear to have retained a significant Irish population as well. Strabane, therefore, falls somewhere between the most densely-settled areas such as north Down, and areas like north Donegal which, although formally part of the plantation scheme, were scarcely touched by the presence of English or Scots. The most prominent Irish leader in this area on the eve of colonisation was undoubtedly Toirealach Mac Airt Ó Néill, the grandson of Toirealach Luineach.⁶⁰ His father, Art, had been persuaded by Henry Docwra to come over to the government's side at a crucial stage of the Nine Years War but died in October 1600. Toirealach's youth (Docwra commented that he 'had not attained to the full age of a man' at the time of his father's death) meant that his position as head of this *sliocht* of the Uí Néill was briefly challenged by his uncle, Cormac.⁶¹ The weakness of his position, however, may have saved him from the fate of others such as Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill and Dónall Ó Caháin, in that he was not regarded by the English as sufficiently threatening to merit removal. They, therefore, accepted him over his uncle, as the 'true & imediate heire', entitled to 'inherit all the fortune & hopes of his father'.⁶² What these hopes consisted of precisely would be unclear for a number of years after the victory of the English government.

1607-08 saw the rapid removal of rivals to Toirealach Mac Airt on all sides. To the west, Ruairí Ó Dónaill had fled to the continent and Niall Garbh was imprisoned; to the north Cathair Ó Dochartaigh was dead; Dónall Ó Catháin to his north-east was soon imprisoned and, most significantly, Aodh Ó Néill—whose rise had put an end to the dominance of the *Sliocht Airt Óig*—went into exile. Normally, such circumstances would have offered a Gaelic *tiarna* remarkable opportunities for an expansion of his power and territory. Toirealach was quickly disabused of any such hopes, however, as Chichester made clear that he was to confine his ambitions to three *bailte biatach* of land around modern-day

60 Strabane: An Srath Bán, 'the white valley-bottom.'

61 This branch of the Uí Néill will be here referred to as the 'Sliocht Airt Óig', descendants of Art Óg (d.1519), a brother of Conn Bacach Ó Néill, 1st earl of Tyrone. Confusion can easily arise between this group and the 'Sliocht Airt' of Omagh, who were descendants of an Art who died in the mid-fifteenth century and once dominated the Omagh area. Confusion is compounded by the fact that the *Sliocht Airt Óig* came to dominate the Omagh area in the sixteenth century and the *Sliocht Airt*, while remaining, became subordinate to the new ruling *sliocht*.

62 'The service he was able to doe was not greate', Docwra wrote, 'but some use wee had of him'. Henry Docwra; J. O'Donovan (ed.), 'A narration of the services done by the army ymployed to Lough-Foyle, under the leadinge of mee Sir Henry Docwra', in *Celtic Miscellany*, (Dublin: Celtic Society, 1849), p.247.

Newtownstewart, to be shared with his brother Niall. While the lord deputy thought this sufficient for the brothers, they were far from pleased with this curtailment. It can only be imagined how they felt the following year when the original plan for a more modest plantation grew more elaborate and they learned that the entire barony of Strabane was to be confiscated and allocated to Scottish undertakers.⁶³

Toirealach, his brothers Niall and Brian, and a number of other leading figures from the area, were to be relocated to the native/servitor precinct of Dungannon, designated as the area for ‘deserving’ Uí Néill and their followers.⁶⁴ While Toirealach (no.1, figures 15, p.266 and 16, p.267), according to his patent, received 3,330 acres to the west and south of Dungannon fort, his brothers—Niall (no.2, figure 15, p.266 and no.6, figure 16, p.267) and Brian Mac Airt (no.3 figure 15, p.266 and no.8 figure 16, p.267)—received smaller proportions close by.⁶⁵ Another grantee in Dungannon was Cormac Mac Con Midhe (no.8 figure 15, p.266), whose family had occupied lands near Ardstraw appertaining to the post of hereditary poet to the Sliocht Airt Óig.⁶⁶ Cormac was most likely the author of a poem addressed to Toirealach lamenting the death of his father, Art, and the downfall of the Uí Néill in general.⁶⁷ He was a prominent enough personage in 1601 to warrant a pardon, and

63 Arthur Chichester, ‘Certaine noates of Rememberance’, September 1608, SP 63-225 no.225, f.112r. The brothers aspired to possess the eleven *bailte biatach* held by their ancestor Niall Connalach in the area to the south-west of the Sperrin mountains, in the area often referred-to in English sources as Slew-sheese (or variant spellings thereof). Lords of the council to Arthur Chichester, 30 April 1610, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.438-9. While Chichester, in 1610, mentions three brothers of Toirealach to be granted land in the plantation—Niall, Brian and Conn—only the first two appear in the patent of 1614 granting these lands in Dungannon. Conn had most likely died during the intervening period. Grant from the King to Tirlagh O’Neale of Caslane, 9 December 1614, in *Calendar of the patent rolls of Ireland, James I*, (Dublin, H.M.S.O., 1800), p.272. Slew-sheese was an anglicisation of *sliabh síos*, ‘the mountain heading north’, so-called by the inhabitants of the region, to whom the Sperrins were simply referred to as *the mountain*. ‘Some Place-Names in Co. Tyrone’, in *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Seventh Series, vol. 4, no. 1, (Dublin: Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 1934), pp.143-4.

64 See map and discussion of grantees in Dungannon in the following chapter.

65 Toirealach received over 19,000 in reality. Estimates of actual sizes of grant have been made by adding together the acreage of modern-day townlands contained in the grant. Given that the boundaries of most townlands have remained static in the intervening centuries, this should give a reasonably accurate idea of the actual sizes of proportions, and the sometimes huge disparity between this figure and that officially cited on patents. The average size of townlands contained in a grant can additionally be used to gauge the quality of the land granted (see pp.287-8). Niall received 800 acres on paper, 4,800 in reality, Brian, 370/3,200. Grants to Neale O’Neale and Brian O’Neale, 9 December 1614, in *CPRI James I*, p.272.

66 According to the *Ceart Uí Néill*, the family were obliged to provide the Ó Néill with food if he spent the night in the vicinity. Éamon Ó Doibhlin (ed.), ‘Ceart Uí Néill: A Discussion and Translation of the Document’, in *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, vol.5, no.2, (Armagh Diocesan Historical Society, 1970), p.346. Ardstraw: Ard Sratha, ‘high valley-bottom’.

67 This poem is in TCD MS 1291 f.89v. Diarmuid Ó Doibhlin, ‘Tyrone’s Gaelic literary legacy’, in Dillon

the grant of a townland between the modern-day village of Pomeroy and Cookstown.⁶⁸

In the area where Cookstown would stand, a number of Irish grantees were densely concentrated. Among these, several others appear to have been moved from the Strabane area: three Uí Gharmaile, Séamus Mac Giolla Seanáin and Seinicín Ó Daimhín. The Uí Gharmaile were a *sliocht* of the Cineál Moen (see figure 6, p.184) who had held territories, like the Mic Con Midhe, around Ardstraw. Once a dominant *sliocht* on the western side of the Foyle, rising to greatest prominence in the twelfth century, Uí Gharmaile resistance to the hegemony of the Uí Dhónaill in Tír Conaill, as well as a ‘relentless hostility’ to the Mic Lochalainn, led them to gravitate towards the increasingly-powerful Uí Néill (the Mic Lochalainn’s rivals for power in Tyrone) in the later middle ages.⁶⁹ In the sixteenth century, however, their strength and territorial reach became more and more circumscribed by the Uí Néill themselves, to the point where a great deal of their lands came into the possession of the *Sliocht Airt Óig*.⁷⁰

The Uí Gharmaile awarded lands in the plantation were military retainers who had once, probably reluctantly, assisted Aodh Ó Néill in the Nine Years War, but later served the government when the earl lost the power to compel their aid.⁷¹ Two individuals named

and Jefferies (eds.), *Tyrone: history & society*, p.405; Description of poem by Mac Con Midhe in: T. K. Abbot (ed.), *Catalogue of the manuscripts in the Library of Trinity college, Dublin*, (Dublin: Hodges, Figgis, 1900), p.308.

68 Fiant no.6489, in *Seventeenth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland*, (Dublin: Alex. Thom, 1885), p.175. Grant to Cormock McNemee of ‘Bardacessiogh’ (Bardahessiagh), 27 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Cormac died in 1627, leaving the land to his son Brian Óg, although by 1641 it has passed into the hands of an Irishman, Cormac Mac Eoghain Ó hÁgáin (see below p.267, no.16, figure 16), from whom it was confiscated during the 1650s. Inquisition made at Dungannon, 28 September 1630. Tyrone, Charles I, no.13, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. Bardahessiagh is listed as ‘Badrahechagh’ in the Down Survey, ‘Badahessogh’ in the Civil Survey, and ‘Baldarahechagh’ in the Books of Survey and Distribution. Down Survey, ‘Part of Desertcreagh (Desertcreat) parish’, PRONI D594/4/51; ‘Forfeited lands in barony of Dunganon’, Robert Simington (ed.), *The Civil Survey A.D. 1654-1656. Vol.3, Counties of Donegal, Londonderry and Tyrone*, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1937), p.282; NAI, Books of Survey and Distribution (hereafter BSD), vol.7, f.172v.

69 Simms, *Gaelic lordships*, pp.443, 626, 654.

70 Ó Doibhlin (ed.), ‘Ceart Uí Néill’, p.346.

71 As George Hill rightly observed, Davies’ was mistaken in representing such co-operation with the English as a abrupt betrayal of their ‘fugitive master’ on the part of many of the Irish in the aftermath of the flight and Ó Dochartaigh’s rising. George Hill, *An historical account of the Plantation in Ulster at the commencement of the seventeenth century, 1608-1620*, (Belfast: McCaw, Stevenson & Orr, 1877), p.160. In fact, account must be taken of internecine power-struggles within Ulster. Within the Uí Néill themselves, the ruling branch headed by Aodh was vehemently opposed by the sons of Seán ‘an Diomás’ Ó Néill, for example. The *Sliocht Airt Óig* was likewise antagonistic. When Aodh Ó Néill had been strong, Art, successor to Toirealach Luineach and predecessor to the Toirealach discussed here, was left

Ruairí Ó Garmaile (no.46, figure 15, p.266), who may be the same, are found in possession of townlands in Dungannon. One of these was called Killygarvan and lay just south of Cookstown, the other is impossible to locate today.⁷² One of these Ruairís received a pardon in 1609 and in the same year sat on the jury which assisted the surveyors of the escheated lands in Tyrone.⁷³ Toirealach Óg Ó Garmaile (no.45, figure 15, p.266), who received land that today lies within the town itself, was one of those commended by Toby Caulfeild for his assistance in quelling Ó Dochartaigh's rising in 1608, and was listed among the 'servitors of Irish birth' in 1610.⁷⁴ Having served Docwra as a captain, he no doubt followed the lead of Art Ó Néill when he defected from Aodh Ó Néill's cause in 1600.⁷⁵ For this service he was awarded a pension as well as a townland, although by 1626 he was reported to be in dire financial straits due to the government's tardiness in paying

with little option but to join the war against the English; he appears, however, to have taken the first opportunity to defect to the enemy, reflecting his desire to replace Ó Néill as the preeminent Ó Néill (with English backing) within the Gaelic system. Docwra promised him the earldom of Tyrone if he helped remove Ó Néill. Docwra, 'A narration of the services done', p.240. The possibility that the eclipse of Ó Néill might presage the eclipse of the entire Gaelic order does not seem to have entered into Art's calculations, or those of figures like Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill and Dónall Ó Catháin. It is within the context of such rivalries within Gaelic society, that the apparently fickle co-operation with plantation commissioners and surveyors, of groups like the *Sliocht Airt Óig* who expected to benefit from this co-operation, should be understood.

- 72 The Ruairí living in Killygarvan can only be traced from the inquisition announcing his death in 1621 and the succession of his son Conn. 'Roger O'Gormley', Tyrone, Charles I, no.12, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. The townland in question appears to be the 'Killegarnan' granted to the Scottish undertaker George Crayford in the plantation precinct of Mountjoy (north Dungannon). It is unclear how Ó Garmaile came to possess it within a few years. It may be that Crayford never came into possession of the townland at all. Grant from the king to George Crayford, 29 August 1610, *CPRI James I*, p.163. The other Ruairí received a grant to a townland called 'Killegewill', but no modern townland in Dungannon (or over the nearby border in Loughinsholin) offers itself as an obvious match. Grant to Rorie O'Gormley of 'Killegewill', 27 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. These two Ruairís might be thought one and the same person ('Killegewill' might conceivably be seen as an alternative spelling of Killygarvey, given the sometimes wild disparity between anglicised versions of Irish placenames in these sources) but for the fact that separate inquisitions refer to the two as dying in different years and being succeeded by different heirs. The latter Ruairí (of 'Killegewill') was succeeded by his son Seán on his death in 1618. Inquisition taken at Dungannon, 2 October 1624, Tyrone, James I, no.7, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. As witnessed by several examples of the inquisitions reporting the death of the same individual in different years, however, this does not necessarily prove they are different people. Killygarvan: Cill Gharbháin, 'Garvan's wood'.
- 73 General pardon to Rowrie Duffe O'Gormley, 6 July 1609, *CPRI James I*, p.152. Appendix II, Tyrone, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.
- 74 Grant to Tirlogh oge O'Gormley of 'Killdoogin' (part of the townland today known as Killymoon Demesne), 18 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Caulfeild, 'The collection of Tyrone's rents', in *CSPI James I, 1608-1610*, p.540. 'Charge of his majesty's army and garrisons in pay for half a year from 1st April to 30th September 1610', 30 September 1610, in SP 63-229 no.128a, f.154r.
- 75 He received a pardon in 1606 for whatever role he played in fighting the government. General pardon to Tirlogh oge O'Gormley, 18 February 1606, *CPRI James I*, p.88.

this pension.⁷⁶ These difficulties no doubt contributed to him losing his land, which he sold to a Scottish colonist, James Stewart, in 1632.⁷⁷ The townland of Killygarvan, inherited by Conn Ó Garmaile on his father's death in 1621 was likewise lost to the family by the 1650s, being possessed by the heirs of one Archibald Sanderson, a Scottish colonist.⁷⁸ It had most likely already been lost before the outbreak of the rising, in which the Uí Gharmaile were listed among the chief followers of Féilim Rua Ó Néill in leading the insurgency in Tyrone.⁷⁹

Séamus Mac Giolla Seanáin (no.18, figure 15, p.266), also granted a townland in Cookstown, was another member of a sept that had dwelt around Strabane and followed the Sliocht Airt Óig.⁸⁰ A Niall Modartha Mac Giolla Seanáin was, in 1610, listed among those who held land under Toirealach Mac Airt in the area, recommended to Chichester for the grant of new lands in Dungannon, although he does not appear to have received any.⁸¹ Neither does the Irish servitor Toirealach Mac Giolla Seanáin who, like Toirealach Óg Ó Garmaile, followed Art Ó Néill into an alliance with Docwra in 1600.⁸² The absence of both Niall Modartha and Toirealach from lists of native grantees (as well as the fact that Séamus is not referred to elsewhere as performing favours for the English which might merit recompense) would suggest that they died before reaping the rewards for their service, and

76 Lord deputy and council to the English privy council, 27 February 1626, SP 63-242, no.244, f.126r.

77 'Killedugan', *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.257.

78 'Killigarvin' *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.261.

79 'Native Irish in arms in Ulster, 1641', in John T. Gilbert (ed.), *A contemporary history of affairs in Ireland from 1641 to 1652*, Vol. 1, pt. 1, (The Irish Archaeological and Celtic society. 1879), p.369.

80 Grant to 'James McGunchenan' of 'Coolekeigan' (Coolkeeghan), 27 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192.

81 The recommendation probably came from Toirealach Mac Airt himself, seeing as he was the carrier of this letter back to Chichester from the English council, having visited London to plead for the retention of his ancestral lands in the Strabane area. While Chichester was instrumental in deciding which Irish were eligible for land in the plantation, prominent figures like Toirealach also played a role in helping to identify those among their followers who were also to be accounted loyal. Lords of the council to Arthur Chichester, 30 April 1610, in *CSPI James I, 1608-1610*, p.439.

82 Docwra elaborated on the great service performed by this Toirealach, who was said to have 'killed with his owne handes to all our knowledges not soe fewe as 200 people of his owne nation' as well as unmasking twenty spies that were subsequently hanged. He then recounted how Toirealach and his troops turned against the English and killed all their soldiers at Newtownstewart, an inexplicable maneuverer considering he repented of his actions almost immediately and offered to 'redeeme his offence by a lyke murder upon the contrarue side'. Puzzled by this behaviour, Docwra claimed that Toirealach confessed to him that he had acted 'out of the mere disposition of a perfidious natrue delighted in the verye qualitie of evill, he was moved thereunto by a sodaine and meere instigation of the devill'. Henry Docwra to the privy council, 28 September 1601, SP 63-209, no.109 ff.277r-278r.

that Séamus was a relative of one or both who received this reward in their stead.⁸³

The Uí Dhaimhín have already been noted as native to the Strabane area. One of that name, Seinicín Ó Daimhín (no.9, figure 15, p.266), received the townland of Derrygortrevy in the Dungannon precinct.⁸⁴ Like Toirealach Óg Ó Garmaile, he was among those noted by Caulfeild as taking part in the suppression of Ó Dochartaigh's rising.⁸⁵ The land appears to have been held by Ó Daimhín until its forfeiture in the 1650s (no.26, figure 16, p.267).⁸⁶ The removal of these people east of the Sperrins, forced to leave ancestral lands, undoubtedly provoked regret and resentment.⁸⁷ At the same time, these grantees were no doubt aware, from the abundant cautionary examples around them, that their fate could have been worse. In Strabane, for example, most of the other landholders received no land at all in the plantation and (it appeared at the outset at least) were to be compelled to move from an area earmarked for exclusively Scottish colonisation. The fate of these dispossessed landholders is harder to elucidate than that of the plantation grantees because the few traces that native Irish *did* leave in English administrative records largely concern those who received land. There is no doubt, however, that large numbers of these dispossessed landholders considered themselves owners of their lands to at least as great an extent as the 'freeholders' of common law did. This is clear from the reaction of those Irish in the first area confronted with the reality of dispossession, Cavan, where the native landholders maintained 'that they had estates of inheritance', a claim rejected by Davies on the grounds that they did not practice primogeniture, but often divided estates up on the death of their holder. To this was added the assertion that they 'never esteemed lawful matrimony to the end they might have lawful heirs' and finally, 'that they never built any

83 Séamus may be one of the two Jameses named in the long list of Mic Ghiolla Sheanáin appended to the pardon given to the leading Uí Néill of *Sliocht Airt Óig* in 1601. Fiant no.6489, in *Seventeenth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland*, p.174. He was succeeded by his son Art Modartha on his death in 1623 but Art sold it soon afterwards to Francis Capron, an English settler. Tyrone, Charles I, no.28, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. 'Killchichan', *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.257.

84 Derrygortrevy (Doire an Ghoirt Riabhaigh, 'wood of the striped field') appears to have been granted to both Ó Daimhín and Toirealach Mac Airt Ó Néill. Grant to Jenkin O'Deven of 'Dirrigortenhugh', 27 February 1611; grant to Tirlagh O'Neale of 'Dirrigortenhugh otherwise Dirrigortlewy', 9 December 1614, *CPRI James I*, pp.192, 272. It is unclear how the (by no means rare) error was dealt with, and in whose favour. The 'Commission for decinding differences in the plantation', which was established to resolve such issues, does not mention it. TCD MS 806, ff.10v-29r.

85 Caulfeild, 'The collection of Tyrone's rents', in *CSPI James I, 1608-1610*, p.540.

86 'Diregortne', *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.282. Ó Daimhín is recorded there as forfeiting another townland called 'Shrew', but it has been impossible to identify this with any certainty.

87 Sperrin Mountains: Sliabh Speirín, a *speirín* being a 'little spur of rock'.

houses nor planted any orchards or gardens'.⁸⁸

Not possessing their lands in the English manner, therefore, amounted to not possessing them at all. This was, at least, the convenient conclusion reached by the attorney-general and those who constructed the legal framework for confiscation.⁸⁹ According to Davies, the Irish 'seemed not unsatisfied in reason' with this rationale 'though in passion they remained ill contented, being grieved to leave their possessions to strangers'.⁹⁰ There is no reason to believe that the Irish in other parts of Ulster regarded their possession of the land any differently to those in Cavan. There are several reasons why a legal challenge took place in that county that has not been recorded elsewhere. It was observed that the natives there, 'having many acquaintances and alliances with the gentlemen of the English Pale, called themselves freeholders' and employed a 'lawyer of the Pale' to argue their case. Being the first county in which the commissioners arrived to put the plantation into execution, Cavan was seen as the litmus test for legal challenges to the confiscation.⁹¹

88 John Davies to Salisbury, 24 September 1610, SP 63-229 no.125a, ff.128r-128v.

89 Davies use of such legal pretexts is a clear example of what Hans Pawlisch referred to as 'legal imperialism'. That expedience and pragmatism dictated actions, and not the consistent imposition of a body of law, is clear from the fact that only four years earlier, Davies himself had argued that the same class of natives 'were not tenants at will, as the lords pretended, but freeholders, and had as good and large estate in their tenancies as the lords had in their seignories'. This, of course, was written at a time when the government was seeking to buttress this class of 'freeholders' as a means of weakening Aodh Ó Néill, who was still suspected of pretensions to regional sovereignty. Davies to Salisbury, 12 November 1606, SP 63-219 no.132, f.174r. Accommodation was, given the strength of the government's position in 1610 Ulster, no longer necessary to such an extent that the native landholders needed to be encompassed. That it continued to be deemed politic during the implementation of the plantation, however, is shown by the decision to transgress English landholding norms in other cases. Under advice from Chichester, for example, the young Féilim Rua Ó Néill of Kinard did not inherit the entirety of his estates when his grandfather and father were killed fighting for the government against Ó Dochartaigh. Concerned at the trouble Féilim's uncles might make if denied a share in their father's lands, they were each given a share (in contravention of the principle of primogeniture), it being felt that 'it would tend to the quiet of those parts if the said lands were divided in some convenient manner amongst the issue male of the said Sir Henry'. The king to Chichester, 31 March 1612, in *CSPI James I, 1611-1614*, p.260. Which legal interpretation of the rights, in English law, of these Irish to possess their lands was actually correct is an unanswerable question, given that Ulster had hitherto been no more than nominally part of the realm ruled by the English kings, and that the rights of the Irish to hold their land were of course grounded in their own laws and customs. To ask whether or not the natives of Ulster had common law title to their land was as absurd as asking whether the natives of Virginia or New England had. It lent a panache of legal formality to the act of dispossession by brute force and in this sense can be compared to the Spanish *requerimiento*, which invited uncomprehending natives in America, on first contact, to acknowledge the sovereignty of the Pope and Spanish monarch over their lands, on pain of being accounted a legitimate target for killing and enslavement.

90 John Davies to Salisbury, 24 September 1610, SP 63-229 no.125a, f.129r.

91 Davies observed that 'the eyes of all the inhabitants of Ulster were turned upon this county of Cavan'. John Davies to Salisbury, 24 September 1610, SP 63-229 no.125a, f.129r.

When the challenge failed there, it was most likely adjudged to be a futile exercise by the Irish elsewhere.

For an area like Strabane, it remains to try and quantify the numbers of those dispossessed, i.e. not deemed deserving of compensatory lands elsewhere. The principal difficulty is the lack of detailed information on the landholding structure of the area prior to colonisation, which is the case for most of Ulster. The 1608 survey did enumerate forty *bailte biataigh* of temporal land in Strabane barony, providing some basis for calculations.⁹² To make an estimate of the density of landholders across these forty *bailte biataigh* under the Gaelic dispensation we must look elsewhere, namely to the only county for which such information was recorded in detail: Monaghan. The government captured something of a snapshot of the Gaelic landholding system in Monaghan, both in 1591 and 1606, when it sought to enshrine the arrangements there in common law, with estates to be inheritable intact and by primogeniture. The 1591 survey, for example, lists 74.5 *bailte biataigh* in the entire county (not including church lands), divided among a total of 310 freeholders, a figure which includes several individuals (all Mic Mhahúna except one Mac Cionaoith) who owned several *bailte biataigh* in demesne. This suggests that an average of slightly over four landholders shared each *baile biatach*, a figure which, if applied to Strabane, would suggest that the barony was ‘owned’ (in the Gaelic sense of the word) by around 160 landholders. Unless the pattern of landholding differed profoundly in Strabane from that seen in Monaghan (and there is no reason to suppose it did), there must, therefore, have been in excess of 100 small landholders dispossessed in the barony. The fate of these former landholders was, at best, to be reduced to the status of tenants of the incoming Scottish undertakers or, at worst, to flee to upland areas and forests not coveted by the newcomers and eke a living either by raising livestock on waste land or by robbing colonists and/or their more-fortunate fellow Irish.⁹³

When the information available about the tenantry of Strabane living under Scottish

92 ‘A booke of the Kings lands’, MS. Rawlinson A. 237, printed in *Analecta Hibernica*, vol.3, pp.156-8.

93 Numerous accounts testify to the existence of large numbers of these people living ‘upon their keeping’ on the outskirts of colonial society. By the 1620s, they were said to be growing more numerous and bold. Francis Annesley, for example, wrote in 1624 that there were ‘many others in sevrall counties upon their keeping as wee call itt here; yet becaus upon the suddayn they appeare more bold then they have done of a long tyme, I inferr that it is fitt to looke to them betymes’. Francis Annesley to Edward Conway, 27 March 1624, SP 63-238-1 no.31, f.108v.

landlords is examined, it becomes clear that, in common with many other areas reserved for undertakers, the Irish did not leave *en masse*, but remained, often with the encouragement of the colonists. There is no knowing which tenants of the new landed class had their origins in the former landholding class or which had been landless in Gaelic society. Given that the former landholders, however, would have been far more likely to command the resources necessary to make the transition to rent-paying tenantry, the majority of these tenants must have been former landholders, paying rent to newcomers (whom they often looked upon as low-born usurpers) for lands which only a few years earlier they had regarded as their patrimony. The new dispensation involved the re-division of the forty *bailte biataigh* of Strabane into eleven proportions (see map, figure 11, p.211), initially distributed to seven Scottish undertakers under the leadership of James Hamilton, the 1st Earl of Abercorn.⁹⁴

94 James Hamilton received two of these proportions, Strabane and Dunnalong, along the banks of the Foyle in the west of the barony. He was accompanied by two brothers, Claude, who received two proportions (Killenny and Eden) and George, who received one, Largie. Despite receiving the smallest share, this latter George came to wield the great influence over the character of colonisation in the area due to the early deaths of both James (d.1618) and Claude (d.1614) and the wardship of their heirs being entrusted to him. Being a Catholic, George Hamilton raised both wards as Catholics and Strabane thus saw the anomalous example of a Catholic colony forming part of a project which had, in part, been claimed as an attempt to plant the Reformation in Ulster. The Scots' colony in Strabane has been dealt with in some detail in both Roulston, 'The Ulster plantation in the manor of Dunnalong', pp.267-89 and Hunter (ed.), *Strabane barony during the Ulster plantation*.

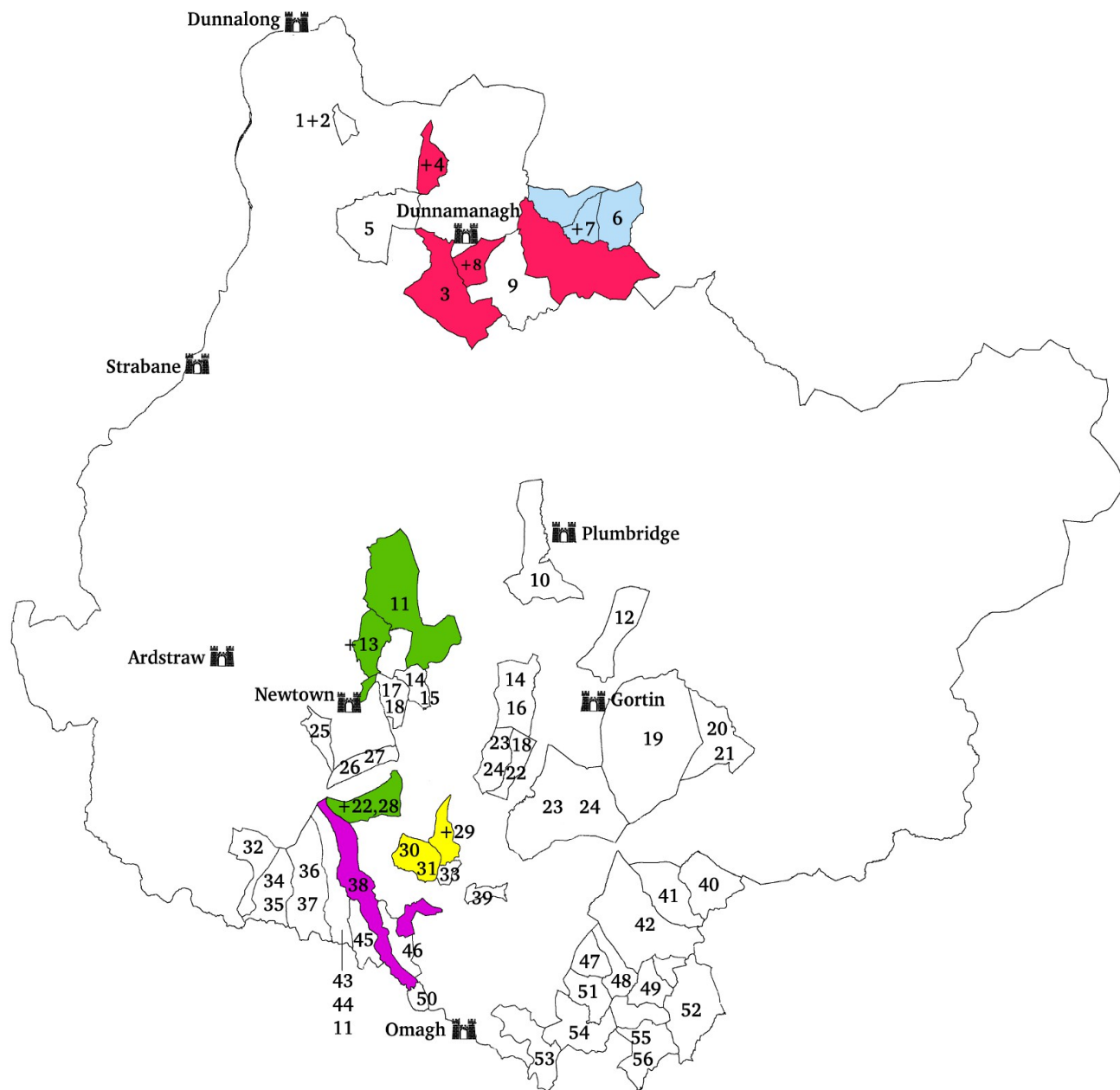


Figure 10. Strabane, Irish tenants, 1610-30s.

Key to Irish tenants in Strabane map, figure 10

These individuals have been collated from several sources: William Roulston, 'The Ulster plantation in the manor of Dunnalong, 1610-70', in Dillon and Jefferies (eds.), *Tyrone: history & society*, p.277; Rentals Killenny, estate of Claude Hamilton, 1612-14, printed in Robert J. Hunter (ed.), *Strabane barony during the Ulster plantation, 1607-1641*, (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 2011), pp.60-1; Inquisitions Tyrone, Charles I, nos.3, 4, 5 and 31 in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

| | | |
|----|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Cormac Ó Daimhín | Dullerton |
| 2 | Aodh Ó Daimhín | Dullerton |
| 3 | Pádraig Gruama Ó Daimhín | Castlemellan Drumman, Torkernaghan and Barran Tironnolly, Carnagribban, Claggan and Gortaclare Aughermoy and Killeny Leat and Loughash |
| 4 | Muiris Óg Mac Con Midhe | Castlemellan |
| 5 | Oone (Uaine or Úna?) 'O'Mory' | Killyclooney, Glencosh, Killycurry and Windy Hill |
| 6 | Aodh Donn Ó Daimhín (possibly same as #2) | Moneycanon, Ballyneaner, Liscloon (upper and lower) and Ballynacross |
| 7 | Seán Rua Ó Daimhín | Moneycanon |
| 8 | Féilimí Ó Daimhín | Aughermoy and Killeny |
| 9 | Brian 'Crou' Ó Daimhín | Rousky, Drain and Lisnaragh (Scotch and Irish) |
| 10 | Muiris Ó Tiarnáin | Letterbrat and Dergbrough |
| 11 | Toirealach Óg Ó Cuinn | Glenknock or Cloghogle, Croshballinree, Straletterdallan, Gallan Lower/upper, Sessagh of Gallan, Lisnacraight and Beltany |
| 12 | Brian Rua Mac Con Midhe | Trinamadan |
| 13 | Tomás Óg Ó Camhaoil | Glenknock or Cloghogle |
| 14 | Pádraig Óg Ó 'Criggan' | Strahulter and Dunbunrawer |
| 15 | Art Gruama Mac [?] | Strahulter |
| 16 | Cú Chonnacht Mac Tomáis | Dunbunrawer |
| 17 | Cormac Ó Cuileannáin | Moyle Glebe |
| 18 | Eoghan Ó Néill | Moyle Glebe and Lisnabarney |
| 19 | Eoghan Modartha Mac Con Midhe | Gortin and Lenamore |
| 20 | Art Óg Mac Ruairí | Fallagh upper/lower/middle |
| 21 | Giolla Dubh Mac Ruairí | Fallagh upper/lower/middle |
| 22 | Mánas Ó Cuileannáin | Lisnabarney and Beltany |
| 23 | Aodh Ó Cuinn | Tirmurty, Tircur, Cullion, Lislap east and Eskeradooey |
| 24 | Eoghan Ó 'Colly' | Tirmurty, Tircur, Cullion, Lislap east and Eskeradooey |
| 25 | Eachmharcach Mac Con Midhe | Rackelly |
| 26 | Séamus Mac Garmaile | Lislap east or west and Gortgranagh |
| 27 | Niall Mac Dualtaigh | Lislap east/west and Gortgranagh |

| | | |
|----|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 28 | Art Muíneach | Beltany |
| 29 | Niall Mac Giolla Seanáin | Tattynure |
| 30 | Liam Ó 'Skheagh' | Tattynure and Castletown |
| 31 | Tadhg Ó 'Skheagh' | Tattynure and Castletown |
| 32 | Toirealach Mac Aodha | Legland |
| 33 | Thomas Beane and Seán Mac 'Aula' | Tattynagole |
| 34 | Giolla Dubh Mac Éinrí | Tullymuck |
| 35 | Niall Ó 'Gornery' (probably Ó Garmaile) | Tullymuck |
| 36 | Donncha Ó Garmaile | Dunteige and Glasmullagh |
| 37 | Féilimí Ó Maolchraoibh | Dunteige and Glasmullagh |
| 38 | Brian Mac Éinrí Óg Ó Néill | Tattraconnaghty, Lisnagirr and Beragh |
| 39 | Ruairí Ó Néill | Carnony |
| 40 | Aodh Ó Cuinn | Aghalane |
| 41 | Donncha Mac Giolla Dubh Mac Giolla Seanáin | Killins |
| 42 | Pádraig Modhartha Mac Ceithearnaigh | Faccary and Ballynaquilly |
| 43 | Anraí Ó Néill | Lisnacraight |
| 44 | Muirteartach Ó Néill | Lisnacraight |
| 45 | Pádraig Óg Ó 'Murrogh' | Calkhill |
| 46 | Brian Ó Néill | Tully |
| 47 | Eoghan Ó 'Sladdan' | Crosh |
| 48 | Seán Ó 'Slodan' | Maine |
| 49 | Brian Óg Mac Giolla Seanáin | Racolpa |
| 50 | Dónall Ó Dúlainn | Bunnynubber |
| 51 | Giolla Dubh Ó Donnaile | Tirquin |
| 52 | Dónall Buí Ó Dónaill | Drumnakilly |
| 53 | Aodh Ó Cuinn | Cranny and Mullaghmore |
| 54 | Niall 'Slodan' | Ballynamullan |
| 55 | Toirealach Ó Donnaile | Cloghfin |
| 56 | Niall Carrach Mac Aodha | Cloghfin |

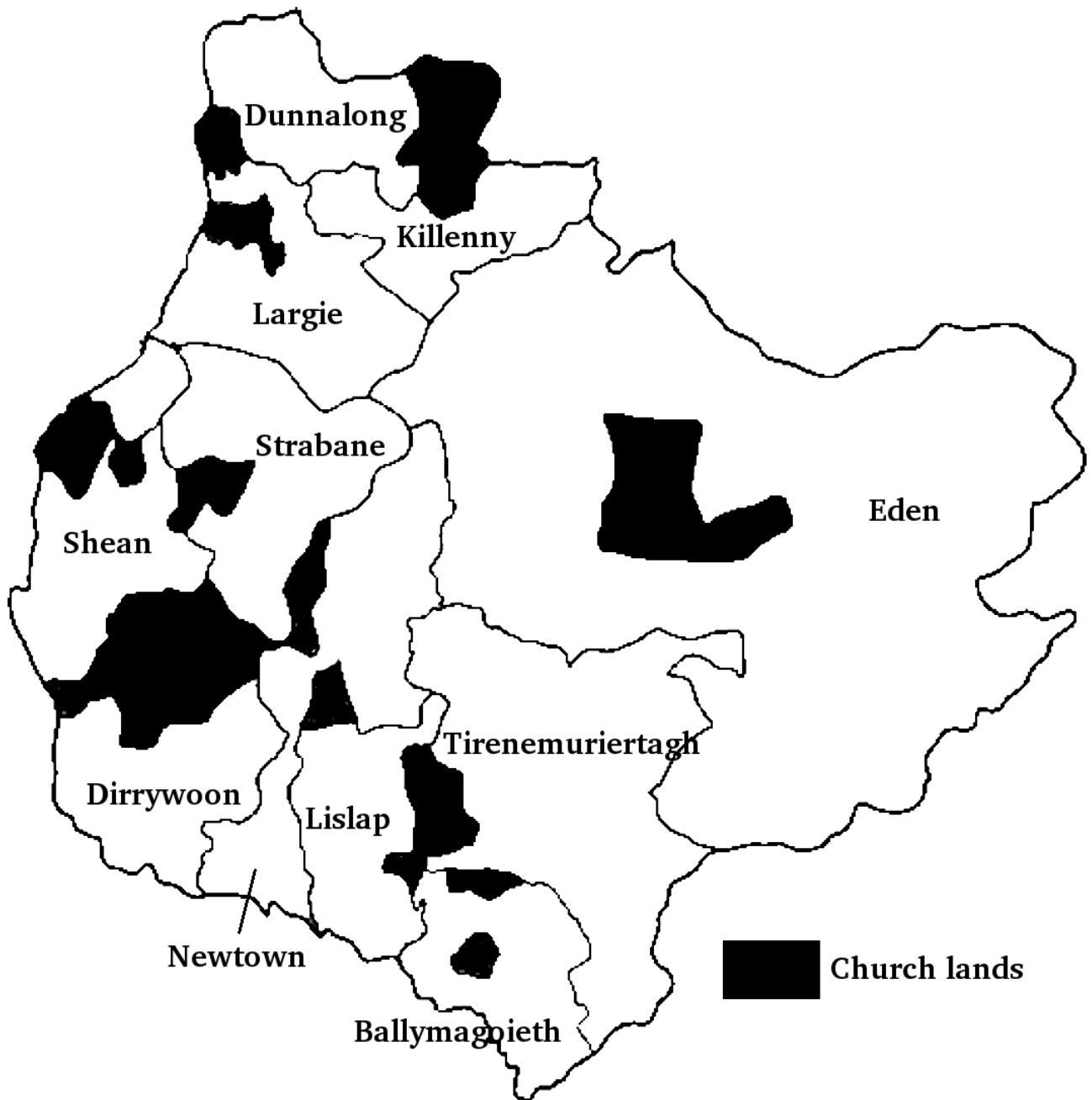


Figure 11. Plantation proportions in Strabane.

The map above, of Irish tenants on undertakers' lands in Strabane in the period from c.1610 to 1641, shows an apparent concentration of Irish in the south-central and northern parts of the barony. It should be noted, however, that this does not necessarily indicate that these areas were more densely inhabited by natives, because information about tenantry survives for only six of the eleven proportions. The native Irish therefore appear to be exclusively concentrated in these areas due to the incompleteness of the data. A better impression of the ratio of native to newcomer can be gained by the 1622 commission's survey of the area, which indicates, not surprisingly, that proportions closer to the Foyle and the port of Derry were more densely colonised, with the native Irish concentrated further east, in less accessible upland areas.

Figure 12: Findings of 1622 commissioners in Strabane⁹⁵

| <i>Proportion</i> | <i>Undertaker in 1622</i> | <i>'British' families</i> | <i>Irish families</i> |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Strabane, Dunalong and Shean | James Hamilton, 2nd earl of Abercorn | 94 | 120 |
| Largie (or Cloghogenhall) and Dirrywoon | George Hamilton | 38 | 88 |
| Ballymagoieth (or Ballenagneagh) | John Drummond | 32 | 40 |
| Newton and Lislapp | Robert Newcomen | 36 | 45 |
| Tirenemuriertagh (or Munterlony) | George Hamilton's half | 0 | 38 |
| | Robert Newcomen's half | 7 | 38 |
| Killenny and Eden (or Teadane) | George Hamilton | 0 | 120 |

It becomes clear from the list of tenants' names accompanying figure 10 that those families already noted as prominent in Strabane also formed the backbone of the tenant class after colonisation. It also appears that members of the same *sliocht* continued to be concentrated in specific areas, suggesting that many Irish remained where they had been before the arrival of colonists. The seven Uí Dhaimhín, for example, are almost all found renting in the proportion of Killenny; the three Uí Gharmaile listed are among those closest to their traditional territory near Ardstraw. That some of the *sliocht* chose to flee

⁹⁵ Information collated from Victor Treadwell, 'The Survey of Armagh and Tyrone, 1622', part 2, *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, Third Series, vol.27, (Belfast: Ulster Archaeological Society, 1964), pp.140-3.

the area in the wake of colonisation is clear from a 1627 note which reports them moving south to Munster in hopes of taking passage to the Low Countries.⁹⁶ The most prominent of these Uí Dhaimhín tenants was Pádraig Gruama Ó Daimhín, who rented almost 6000 acres of land in the area and, as William Roulston has noted, was of sufficient standing at the outset of the plantation to sit on a jury assembled at Strabane in 1611.⁹⁷ That Ó Daimhín possessed the resources to lease such significant quantities of land so soon after the establishment of the plantation would suggest that he was already a figure of some means beforehand and that he was one of the Gaelic landholders whom the government felt it unnecessary to reward in the plantation, as opposed to a landless labourer. That the Sliocht Uí Dhaimhín continued to be prominent in the area is shown by the fact that a captain of that name was put in charge of Strabane castle by the Catholic insurgents in 1642.⁹⁸

In many (but not all) areas of Ulster, the absence of any attempt to physically expel the Irish, as well as the fact that many colonial landlords were quite willing to accept them as tenants, meant that landholders such as Pádraig Gruama Ó Daimhín had the opportunity to remain in occupation of their lands in a different economic framework. That many attempted to accommodate themselves to the plantation in this way, rather than flee to the mountains and bogs, is entirely unsurprising and signals individuals making the best of the situation. That they chose to do this provides little foundation for broader assumptions about their attitude to the colonists. From a purely material perspective, it involved nothing more than the substitution of one group for another to whom tribute/rent was owed. While it is possible to make a comparison of the material burden on the individual of tribute to a Gaelic *tiarna* and rent to a colonial landowner, it must be qualified by a

96 'The second examination of Brian o Hogan taken by direction of the right honorable the Lord Deputye', 2 March 1627, SP 63-244 no.606, f.145v. The fleeing of natives from the exactions associated with the arrivals of colonists and their religious and legal apparatus is likewise recorded in areas settled outside the escheated counties. In 1622, for example, numerous individuals were observed to have fled Monaghan for the counties of Louth and Meath, to escape the exactions of ministers and arbitrary fines for using Irish manners of ploughing. 'Grievances of the tenants and Inhabitants belonging to the right honourable the Earle of Essex in Farney', 1622, NLI 8014, vol.10.

97 This is based on the acreage, by modern measurements, of the thirteen townlands Ó Daimhín rented, as attested to in the sources in map 10.:Aughtermoy, Barran, Carnagribban, Castlemellan, Claggan, Drumman, Dullerton, Gortaclare, Killeny, Leat, Loughash, Tirconnolly and Torkernaghan. William Roulston, 'The Ulster plantation in the manor of Dunnalong, 1610-70', in Dillon and Jefferies (eds.), *Tyrone: history & society*, p.277.

98 'Relation by Audley Mervyn', 4 June 1642, in Gilbert (ed.), *A contemporary history*, vol.1, pt.2, p.474.

recognition that tribute and rent differ in nature. The latter was governed (to a greater or lesser extent) by market forces whereas the former was subject to the dictates of custom and contingency. This difference would create difficulties for some native landowners in plantation society, whose income was restrained by the resistance of their tenants to an economic rent decided by market prices. The payment instead of something approximating the traditional *ceart* or ‘chiefry’ meant that Irish landlords often received less income from lands of the same value than English or Scottish colonists.⁹⁹ Such a phenomenon would strongly suggest that the burden of customary tribute was often significantly lighter than that imposed by an economic rent. This impression is further strengthened when we remember that in Ulster, those followers of a *tiarna* who lived outside their *lucht tigh* lands were not obliged to provide him with a portion of the agricultural surplus. In times of war, however, the burden could grow very heavy indeed.¹⁰⁰ A comparison of rent with the dues rendered to Gaelic *tiarnaí*, therefore, bears closer examination.

An impression of this can be gained from Toby Caulfeild’s assessment of the rents due to the departed Aodh Ó Néill in 1609 for the cattle he leased to the population.¹⁰¹ Based on this, Phillip Robinson has suggested a rent of 4s per year per cow, translating into an average of 9.5 cows per *baile bó*.¹⁰² This ‘commyns’ can in turn be translated into a rough estimate of £1 18s per townland before colonisation. This translation of commyns to money rent is, of course, nothing more than a crude equivalent, and leaves out other exactions more difficult to quantify in monetary terms. The same can be said, however, for the rents charged by colonial landlords, as the following table of examples (which includes some figures from the map of Strabane above, and then a representative selection of tenants from other areas of Ulster where the information has been recorded) shows:

99 Gillespie, *Colonial Ulster*, pp.141-2, 200.

100 Robert Hunter has argued, for example, that the conditions in Cathair Ó Dochartaigh’s patent for Inishowen in 1605 were less onerous than the ones which had been demanded by the Ó Dónaill. It must, however, be noted that the burden of this tribute cited by Hunter is that owed to Aodh Rua Ó Dónaill at the height of the Nine Years war, as compared to the burden of an economic rent owed to the crown in peacetime. Robert Hunter, ‘The end of O’Donnell power’, in William Nolan, Liam Ronayne, Mairead Dunlevy (eds.), *Donegal: history and society, interdisciplinary essays on the history of an Irish county*, (Dublin: Geography Publications, 1995), pp.231, 258, n.19.

101 Caulfeild, ‘The collection of Tyrone’s rents’, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, pp.532-6.

102 Phillip Robinson, ‘The Ulster Plantation and its impact on the settlement pattern of County Tyrone’, in Dillon and Jefferies (eds.), *Tyrone: history & society*, p.243.

Figure 13. Conditions of tenantry in early years of plantation (1612-24)

| <i>Tenant(s)</i> | <i>Townland(s) rented (modern names)</i> | <i>Rent total</i> | <i>Rent per townland (decimalised)</i> | <i>Other dues and notes</i> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Kilenny, estate of Claude Hamilton: Strabane, Tyrone (Source: Rentals for 1612-14, printed in Hunter (ed.), <i>Strabane barony during the Ulster plantation</i>. | | | | |
| Aodh Donn Ó Daimhín | Moneycanon, Ballyneaner, Lisclon (upper and lower) and Ballynacross | £10 | £2 | 16 days service |
| Oone (Uaine?) 'O'Mory' | Killyclooney, Glencosh, Killycurry and Windy Hill | £10 | £2.50 | 24 days service, 4 barrels of barley, 3 sheep, 3 pigs, 18 hens and capons |
| Pádraig Gruama Ó Daimhín | Drumman, Torkernaghan and Barran | £20 | £6.66 | 18 days service (with horse), 8 barrels of barley, 8 sheep, 8 pigs, 36 hens and capons, 1 barrel of butter, 1 cow and calf |
| Pádraig Gruama Ó Daimhín | Tirconnolly, Carnagribban, Claggan and Gortaclare | £9 | £2.25 | 16 days service, 4 barrels of barley, 4 sheep, 4 pigs, 1 cow and calf |
| Brian 'Crou' Ó Daimhín | Rousky, Drain and Lisnaragh (Scotch and Irish) | £9 | £2.25 | 32 days service, 6 barrels of barley, 10 sheep, 10 pigs, 24 hens and capons |
| Oneilland, Armagh (Source: 1624 survey of Irish living on colonists' lands in Armagh, SP 63-238-1, ff.140r-141r) | | | | |
| Colla Mac Ceallacháin, Eoghan Ó Garbháin, Ruairí Mac Ruairí, Muiris Óg Ó Coileáin, Aodh Ó Gormáin, Brian Ó Donnchaidh | Mullaletragh | £4 | £4 | Tenant of Francis Sacheverell on the proportion of Mullalelish; 'pay for the rent the halfe of the corne and fower poundes rent by the yeare for the grasse' |
| Tadhg Ó Cuinn and Pádraig Ó Cuinn | Ballyloughan ('a quarter of the towne of Ballilohan') | £4 | £16 | Tenant of Francis Sacheverell |
| Dónall 'McCawkely', Dónall Óg 'McCawkely', Dónall Ó Móráin, Tadhg Ó Corra, Toirealach Dubh Ó Corra | Toberhewny | £7 | £7 | Tenant of William Bruncker |
| 'Edde' Mac Cana, Aodh Carrach 'McEvagh', Niall 'McEvagh', Ruairí 'McEvagh' | Derryinver | £6 | £6 | Tenant of William Bruncker |

| | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Donnchadh h'Éigeartaigh, Pádraig Ó Tomhnair, Manás Ó Muirí, Tadhg Buí Ó Biorna | Ballymagerny | £14 | £14 | Sub-tenant—rented from Richard Cope who in turn leased from Lord Saye and Sele; rent was 'about fowerteen or fifteene poundes' |
| Leginn, estate of James Balfour: Knockninny, Fermanagh (Source: 1624 survey of Irish living on colonists' lands in Fermanagh, SP 63-238-1, ff.62r-64r) | | | | |
| Cathal Mac Giolla Phádraig Mag Uidhir | Aghakillymaud | £4 | £4 | |
| Éamann Mac Briain Mac Seáin Mag Uidhir, Dónall Mag Uidhir, Toirealach Ó Raghallaigh, Ruairí Mac Giolla Ruairí | Aghnacloy | £9 | £9 | |
| Seán 'O'Corney' | Carn | £8 | £8 | |
| Seán 'Kany' Ó Droma, 'Gilliterna O'Molanfey', Giolla Phádraig Modartha Mac 'Vanaghtie' | Clonfane | £8 | £8 | |
| Seán Rua Mac 'Vallone', Niall Mac 'Valone', Aodh Mac 'Valone' | Corradovar | £8 | £8 | |
| Seán Rua Mac 'Vallone', Niall Mac 'Valone' | Drumbrughas | £4 | £4 | |
| Réamann Mac Cába, Maoileachlainn Óg Mac Gorthraigh | Gortoral | £4 | £4 | |
| Eoghan Mag Uidhir, Giolla Phádraig 'Magiltas' Mac Mánas | Killygreagh | £4 | £4 | |
| Pilib Mac Tomás Mag Uidhir, Eoghan Mac Cormaic, Cormac Mac 'Gillilaghin' | Kilnakelly | £7 | £7 | |
| Aodh Mac Seáin Buí Mag Uidhir and Éamann Bhallach Ó Raghallaigh | Leginn | £6 | £6 | |
| Art Buí Ó Galáin, Aodh Ó Galáin | Mullyneeny | £1 10s | £1.50 | |
| Brian Óg Mac Éamainn Mag Uidhir, Art Buí Ó 'Muckigar', Éamann Modartha Mac Collúin | Tonyvarnog | £5 | £5 | |

As seen from this table, the average rent (in this sample, almost £6) of a townland in colonial Ulster was generally higher—sometimes significantly higher—than the estimated £1 18s owed on average to a tiarna for ‘commyns’. It must also be recognised that the first set of tenants from Strabane are recorded more than a decade before those in Oneilland and Knockninny, a period which saw a significant increase in rents.¹⁰³ This illustrates a phenomenon long commented upon by historians, namely the gradual worsening conditions for Irish tenants in the decades between 1610 and 1641. At the beginning of colonisation, as many proprietors had difficulty attracting English and Scottish colonists to Ulster, and needed to keep Irish on their lands to ensure a steady income, there was little or no increase in the burden of rent on the native population. As undertakers became more familiar with the environment and more colonists arrived, either to compete for lands with the Irish or to form an intermediary sub-letting class of tenantry that further inflated prices, the bargaining position of the Irish was progressively weakened. Forced to renegotiate ever-more onerous terms, some either became homeless or moved onto cheaper, marginal lands.¹⁰⁴

There is some evidence that this rise in the price of land affected natives more severely than colonists. For a start, although it has often been observed that many English or Scottish undertakers, as well as the London companies, showed a preference for natives tenants, this was only because the Irish, desperate to remain on their lands, were prepared to pay higher rents. This supplemental burden was essentially a premium, paid to overcome the disadvantage resulting from the fact that colonist landlords were in fact more likely to favour their fellow countrymen, all else being equal. It was explicitly suggested by Thomas Phillips that the London companies were aware of this attachment to lands that went beyond their use-value, and exploited it to triple or even quadruple the rents they charged. Such was the effect of these extortionate rates that by 1635, Phillips claimed that a:

‘. . . man that had 100 cowes have scarce six left and those that were wont to howld a towne or two of themselves are now growen so miserably pore that 6 or 7 can scarce paye the Rent of

103 Knockninny: Cnoc Ninnidh, ‘hill of Ninnidh’, a sixth-century saint.

104 This ‘second-phase sorting out process’ has been best described in Clarke, ‘The genesis of the Ulster rising of 1641’, p.37, and Clarke, ‘The Plantations’, in De Paor (ed.), *Milestones*, p.67.

one Towne'.¹⁰⁵

In the case of Knockninny, County Fermanagh, we can examine these rent-increases by looking at the situation in the same townlands listed above, seven years after the 1624 survey (see following page). While it may not appear spectacular, this average rise of 46% took place over only seven years. Furthermore, an average townland rent of £7 represents more than a tripling of the estimated equivalent due to a Gaelic ruler. Some Irish, unable to sustain this increasing burden, dropped out of the tenant class altogether and adopted an itinerant existence, grazing their cattle in *caoraidheachta*. These mobile herds and their attendants sometimes existed in the vicinity of the colonists, as can be seen in the 1622 commissioners' observation in Strabane that there were '7 or 8 Creats neare adioyning to the place where the castle and bawne is begunn' on the proportion of Shean.¹⁰⁶ The growing scarcity of land would explain the 1615 report that these herdsmen had taken to sneaking onto colonists' land at night and grazing their cows while the landowners were asleep.¹⁰⁷ Some drifted away from the more densely-colonised areas to eke out an existence on marginal lands, which had once been inhabited only in the summer months. That this was seen as only fitting by the authorities can be seen in the list of mountainous townlands 'most fitt and convenient [. . .] to be graunted and lett to the inhabitants and meere natives of this countrey', appended to an inquisition condemning the letting of lands adjudged too valuable for them to inhabit.¹⁰⁸ To see the Irish living in such areas no doubt re-enforced the colonists' belief, echoed centuries later by Estyn-Evans (above p.60), that this was their 'preferred environment'.

This state of affairs led some to adopt the lifestyle of the 'woodkerne', living by robbery and violence. Others took the more drastic step of seeking to flee the country altogether. It is unclear how numerous this itinerant component of the native population was in plantation Ulster. As Robert Hunter has observed, while they 'far exceeded the number of settlers', the nature of their existence was such that they remain 'as hidden as most of their

105 'The humble petecion of Sir Thomas Phillipps knight', June 1628, SP 63-271 no.25, f.50v. The calendar in question dates this document 'about May 1635', but Moody has concluded that it must be from June 1628'. Robert Pentland Mahaffy (ed.), *CSPI 1647-1660*, (London: H.M.S.O., 1903), p.208. Moody, *Londonderry Plantation*, p.240.

106 Treadwell, 'The Survey of Armagh and Tyrone, 1622, part two', pp.142.

107 E.S., 'A survey of the present estate of Ireland Anno 1615', HL Ellesmere MS 1746, ff.12v-13r.

108 Inquisition taken at Newtown, 9 January 1629, Tyrone, Charles I, no.5, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

| Figure 14. Conditions of tenantry in Leginn, estate of James Balfour, Knockninny, Fermanagh in 1631. (Source: Rent Roll, PRONI, D1939/15/2/1) | | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tenant(s) | Townland(s) rented (modern names) | Rent total | Rent per townland (decimalised) | % change in rent since 1623 | Other dues and notes |
| Féilim Dubh Mac Briain Mac Réamainn | Aghakillymaud | £12 | £12 | +200% | '4 fatt unshorne muttuns, 12 hennes, 8 days work'. |
| Cathal Mag Uidhir | Aghnacloy | £9 | £9 | 0% | '4 fatt unshorne muttuns, 12 hennes, 8 days work'. |
| Toirealach Mac 'Coloone' and Éamann Modartha Mac 'Coloone' | Carn | £5 10s | £5.50 | -31.25% | |
| Seán 'Camye' Ó Droma | Clonfane | £8 10s | £8.50 | +6.25% | |
| Aodh Mac 'Voloane' | Corradovar | £8 | £8 | 0% | '2 fatt hogges, 12 hennes, 8 able workmen, with horsses'. |
| Réamann Mac 'Valoane' | Drumbrughas | £5 10s | £5.50 | +37.5% | '2 fatt unshorne muttuns, 6 hennes, 4 days work'. |
| Toirealach Mac Mánas | Gortoral | £6 10s | £6.50 | +62.5% | |
| Seán 'Kenge?' and Pillib Mag Uidhir | Killygreagh | £5 | £5 | +25% | '2 fatt unshorne muttuns, 12 hennes, 4 days work, with an able house and man, the kings rent and country charges'. |
| Pilib Mac Tomás Mag Uidhir | Kilnakelly | £8 | £8 | +14.28% | '4 fatt unshorne muttuns, 12 hennes, 8 days work of an able man and house, the kings rent and country charges'. |
| Aodh Mac Seáin Búí Mag Uidhir | Leginn | £7 | £7 | +16.66% | '2 fatt unshorne muttuns, 12 hennes, 4 days work, with an able house and man, the kings rent and country charges'. |
| Art Búí Ó Galáin 'and others' | Mullyneeny | £5 | £5 | +233.33% | '1 fatt hogg, 12 hennes, 8 workmen'. |
| C? Modartha Mag Uidhir | Tonyvarnog | £4 10s | £4.5 | -10% | '10s 2 fatt unshorne muttuns, 12 hennes, 8 workmen'. |
| Average % change: | | | | +46.18% | |

sixteenth-century predecessors, for whom there is little clear impression of either their numbers or their social structure'.¹⁰⁹ While these may be as invisible in the historical record as their sixteenth-century predecessors, this does not mean that little had changed from their perspective. While the displacement of the landholding class in native society by colonists may, in one sense, be seen as a continuation of their displacement by the Gaelic ruling elite, this does not mean that the Irish saw it this way. It must once again be stressed that in the minds of the native population, the colonists lacked the legitimacy which the native elite had possessed, and treatment which might be regarded as the 'natural' operation of a social hierarchy at the hands of native rulers was seen as oppressive when experienced at the hands of outsiders.¹¹⁰

The landholding class has been described by Hiram Morgan as a 'disaffected group which constituted the Achilles heel' of Gaelic society.¹¹¹ This would appear to have been the government's hope as well, in an earlier period, when they attempted to turn the landholders against the elite by offering them secure title to their lands under the crown instead of Gaelic *tiarnaí*. Such were the vicissitudes of the Nine Years War, and the events which led to the Flight of the Earls, that the strategy was abandoned in favour of the wholesale introduction of colonists. As a consequence of this, the interests of the landholders were abandoned in favour of the remaining Gaelic elite. Notwithstanding what has been noted above of the legitimacy attached to native elite figures such as Toirealach Mac Airt Ó Néill, the landholders of Dungannon who were supplanted to make way for these 'deserving Irish', cannot have been any less pleased to be dispossessed than those in Strabane. In fact, the strategy of the English towards the native landholding class can be seen, in the Jacobean plantation, to have come full circle, back to a policy mooted in the reign Henry VIII, of getting the Irish ruling class to 'connive at the reduction of local landholders to the status of tenants [. . .] in return for the confirmation of their own titles'.¹¹²

109 Robert Hunter, 'Plantation in Donegal', in Nolan, Ronayne, Dunlevy (eds.), *Donegal: history and society*, pp.309-10.

110 See n.3 p.177 and n.18 p.181 for evidence that the colonists were widely regarded by the Irish as low-born *parvenus*, with no right to the land as traditionally-defined.

111 Morgan, *Tyrone's Rebellion*, pp.80-1.

112 Bradshaw, *Irish constitutional revolution*, p.204.

The landless Irish

As mentioned at the start of this chapter, several factors appeared to point towards a favourable economic outlook for the class which commanded the least amount of resources in Gaelic society, but produced most of its wealth. The rise in rents noted above, however, and the growing competition for land which characterised plantation society, suggests that this window of opportunity closed rather quickly as the colony put down deeper roots. This applied as much to those who had never possessed lands as to those who had. Whatever advantage arose from a situation whereby the landless Irish were able to assume ownership of the cattle of their former rulers who had either fled or been imprisoned, was soon curtailed by the arrival of colonists taking possession of their lands. This is because, just as land was useless from a pastoralists' point of view without the cattle to graze on it, so were cattle economically unproductive without land to graze them on. In the power-vacuum that obtained around 1608-09, it must indeed have appeared as if the subordinate classes of Gaelic society had finally been freed from their dependence on the traditional ruling elite. Whereas they had previously occupied the land but not the cattle to graze on it, for a brief period they possessed both cattle and land. Once the plantation was established, however, the native Irish in large areas of Ulster possessed the cattle, but not the land. The 1624 survey of natives living on colonists' lands in Armagh and Fermanagh contains numerous references to Irish servants and herdsmen whose wages consisted of grazing rights for their cows.¹¹³ While the commodities exchanged differed, the economic transaction in principle was the same in both Gaelic and colonial Ulster: labour being exchanged in return for the leasing of the means (cattle/land) of producing their sustenance. That the Irish were unwilling (or unable) to pay for these means, just as they had tried to avoid liability for their commyns, is clear from the above-mentioned reports of surreptitious night-time grazing on colonists' lands.¹¹⁴

There is a logic to the theory that the removal of the native elite would offer greater economic opportunities to the landless class of Irish, especially when it is considered that many of the colonial theorists and administrators who asserted this relied for their information on the Gaelic economic system primarily on commentators who portrayed the

113 SP 63-238-1, ff.57r-83r, 139r-144r.

114 E.S., 'A survey of the present estate of Ireland Anno 1615', HL Ellesmere MS 1746, ff.12v-13r.

social order as one of unalloyed tyranny. It was claimed that Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill asserted ownership of the very people in the lands traditionally ruled by the Uí Dhónaill, implying that the subjects of a *tiarna* were slaves.¹¹⁵ Fynes Moryson likewise claimed that the *tiarnaí* ‘challenged right of Inheritance in their Tenants persons, as if by old Covenants they were borne slaves to till their grounde’ and depicted them (not entirely inaccurately in the context of the Nine Years’ War) as imposing an arbitrary and unpredictable burden of tribute upon their people on ‘occasions of spending’ which were ‘sometymes true, sometymes fayned’.¹¹⁶

The distinction between ‘true’ and ‘fayned’ occasions is interesting for what it implies was (and continues to be) a perceived difference between the exactions levied by the Gaelic rulers in the form of commyns, tribute and hospitality, and those charged by the English government in the form of taxation and cess. While the latter were held to be acceptable because they were to be spent in the upkeep and defense of the public good, the former were seen as being imposed for the private entertainment of the *tiarna* and his cronies. The distinction is, however, less clear-cut, firstly because a concept of public liability for public works *did* exist in the laws governing the exaction of tribute in Gaelic Ireland and secondly, because it is clear that taxes in the typical early modern European state were often *not* spent on works of public utility but used to finance private interests such as the maintenance of the elite’s luxurious lifestyle.¹¹⁷ The supply of the viceroy’s household during the period of Sussex and Sidney’s rule placed an enormous burden on the country, leading one commentator to remark that such exactions ‘have done more harm to the country than ever the Irish did’.¹¹⁸ It would be more accurate to say, therefore, that the

115 It should be noted, however, that we rely for this information exclusively on Henry Docwra’s interpretation (no doubt through an actual interpreter) of Ó Dónaill’s pretensions, and the claim in question may have as much to do with Docwra’s preconceptions about the nature of Gaelic *tiarnas*, as any demands made by Ó Dónaill. Docwra, ‘A narration of the services done’, p.249.

116 Moryson, ‘Itinerary’, in Hughes (ed.), *Shakespeare’s Europe*, pp.196-7.

117 Simms, ‘Guesting and Feasting in Gaelic Ireland’, p.84. It is also worth noting, as D.B. Quinn has, ‘how precise and uncasual’ were the exactions of the Gaelic rulers; ‘unless the individual lord was successfully tyrannical or war drove him to emergency dealings with his tenants, many other Irish impositions were also much more closely defined by Irish law and practice than English writers, who saw in them solely arbitrary exactions realised’. *Elizabethans*, p.51.

118 Edward Walsh to Cecil, 23 August 1559, cited in Brady, *The Chief Governors*, p.89. Brady gives some indication of the magnitude of this burden: ‘In one year alone he [Sussex] cessed almost 35,000 pecks of grain, 700 beeves and 200 muttons for his own use. Sidney took over 740 pecks of grain and 3,000 animals in the first months of 1567 alone. Between September 1568 and March 1569 his butcher slaughtered over 10,000 animals for his household’s use. In the later 1570s Sidney made little attempt to curtail his demands: each year he took up over 2,200 pecks of grain and 7,500 beasts’. *Ibid.* p.226.

distinction contemporaries made between 'rent' and 'black rent' was merely a subjective one between revenue-flows which they found acceptable on the one hand and repugnant on the other; 'rent' enriched the government, 'black rent' did not. In reality, little more than the negative-sounding adjective 'black' distinguished them.

The notion that the landless Irish were slaves, whose economic potential would be unfettered by the removal of the Gaelic elite, rested both upon an exaggeration of their perceived lack of freedom (see above pp.190-1) and an illusory belief in the equality of opportunity in the market economy introduced to Ulster. Any economic opportunities this presented to the poorer Irish were largely nominal. Certainly, compared to a system in which tribute and services were established by custom, a market economy offered opportunities to those with capital and entrepreneurial know-how. Most of the Irish, however, lacked both these advantages. The economic decline of the 'deserving' grantees and their descendants will be examined in the next chapter. The fate of those who engaged in the colonial economy without starting capital or assets was largely preordained, given that participants in a market economy rarely start out as equals, and the leverage enjoyed by one contender over another at the outset usually plays a decisive role in determining success or failure. The plantation, which was, after all, established primarily to offer economic opportunities to the undertakers, presented other disadvantages to the native population. Many of the possible benefits opened up to the Irish by the existence of markets in which to sell their produce were offset by the difficulty of accessing such markets. Philip Robinson has noted that while 90% of British-owned farms were within a five-mile radius of a market, Irish farms, 'occupying marginal lands', were often outside their effective range.¹¹⁹

Nor did colonisation eliminate all of the features of the Gaelic economy which were felt to be so deleterious, such as the imposition of irregular and uncertain tribute as opposed to economic rent. It was noted in 1628 that undertakers were inclined to keep Irish tenants on their lands in preference to English and Scottish ones, because the Irish, being 'more servile', were prepared not only to pay higher rents, but to 'give more custom', the kind of custom levied by their former rulers the plantation planned to eradicate.¹²⁰ These former

119 Robinson, *The plantation of Ulster*, p.166.

120 'Discourse concerning the settlement of the natives in Ulster' 1628, printed in Hickson, *Ireland in the seventeenth century*, vol.2, p.327.

rulers, transformed in theory from warlords to landlords, continued to be denounced for oppressing their people within the colonial framework. In 1615, the typical Irish landlord was depicted as ‘seated in the midst of his tenants like to a spider in a webb’, using the priests’ power of excommunication, not to mention their information-gathering services through the confessional, to control and oppress his tenants at will. Instead of using access to cattle, and the levying of *cóisir*, *buannacht* and *coinnheadh* as a means of exerting this control, Irish landlords allegedly utilised the very legal instruments which had been meant to bypass their power. The above writer claimed that the manorial courts were exploited so that ‘the subject almost forgett that he hath a soveraigne, knowinge no law but of his landlords making’. The use of such courts to enforce the traditional demand for hospitality, for example, can be seen in the case of a tenant being fined 20 shillings ‘for not entertheyning a gentlewoman that was his landlords kinswoman’.¹²¹

The imposition of English common law on the province had of course been vaunted as the cornerstone of a new dispensation, in which all classes of native would enjoy equal status as subjects of the king. One of the ‘excellent good effects’ of its extension to Ireland would be (according to Davies) to teach the:

‘. . . common people [. . .] that they were free subjects to the kings of England, and not slaves and vassals to their pretended lords: that the cuttings, cosheries, sessings, and other extortions of their lords were unlawful, and that they should not any more submit themselves thereunto, since they were now under the protection of so just and might a prince as both would and could protect them from all wrongs and oppressions’.¹²²

The reality of this new status as ‘free subjects’ fell far short of Davies’ rhetoric. The new legal system in fact did little to guarantee non-elite Irish equal treatment before the law. Indeed, those charged with executing the law were often the most flagrant in breaking it. From the very beginning of the colonial period in Ulster the enforcement of English law was used as a pretext for exploiting the native population. It was reported that the fines

121 E.S., ‘A survey of the present estate of Ireland Anno 1615’, HL Ellesmere MS 1746, ff.16r-16v, 17v-18v.

122 Davies, ‘A discovery’, reproduced in *Historical tracts*, p.212.

levied for ploughing with the horse's tail in Tyrone, for example, went 'into pryvat mens purses and brings noe proffit to the kings coffers'.¹²³ Those exacting such fines from the Irish in Farney, County Monaghan, were said in 1622 to be deciding themselves how much to charge, demanding hospitality and accommodation, as well as any of the inhabitants' possessions that took their fancy.¹²⁴

The use of the law as an instrument for enriching those entrusted with its execution is nowhere better illustrated than in a scheme operating in Tyrone, where any who refused to bribe the bailiffs to escape prosecution were summoned to trial, with those who refused to attend being summarily fined.¹²⁵ The fines levied on the native Irish who remained on undertakers' lands were, by 1622, being referred to as a 'tax', the proceeds of which served to 'inriche the purses of a fewe pryvat men'.¹²⁶ By such means, it was pointed out, not only were the native Irish being exploited, but the crown was deprived of revenue. The stated intention of these fines, moreover, which was to induce the Irish to leave those lands earmarked for colonial habitation, was subverted, and the fines instead became an entrenched part of the revenue of a class who had little interest in seeing the articles of plantation complied with. In this way, the state undermined its own intentions when it farmed out such revenues.¹²⁷ By the 1620s, servitors whose pay was in arrears were being encouraged to take such arrears out of the goods forfeited by the Irish for infringements of colonial law.¹²⁸ While such expedients relieved (in the short-term) pressure on a crown struggling to manage its finances, they effectively stymied any efforts to transform Ulster society. Far from removing the Irish to their designated areas, or transforming them in the image of their English or Scottish neighbours, their precarious legal situation in colonial

123 'Some agreevances that the poore subiects in the countie of Tyrone undergoe', 1622, TCD MS 808, f.47r.

124 'Grievances of the tenants and Inhabitants belonginge to the right honourable the Earle of Essex in Farney', 1622, NLI 8014, vol.10. Farney: Fearnagh takes its name from the ancient kingdom of Fernmag, i.e. plain of alders.

125 It was alleged that the deputy clerk of the court kept a third part of the proceeds from this scheme. 'Some agreevances that the poore subiects in the countie of Tyrone undergoe', 1622, TCD MS 808, f.49r. A similar scheme, with an ecclesiastical flavour, was being operated in the parish of Donaghmoyne, Monaghan, where the archdeacon's officers took money in exchange for not presenting parishioners in the archdeacon's court. 'The grevances of the inhabitants of Donnamanie in Farny', 1622, NLI 8014, vol.10.

126 'Some agreevances that the poore subiects in the countie of Tyrone undergoe', 1622, TCD MS 808, f.49r.

127 In 1619, for example, one Edward Wray was granted for the following seven years the aforementioned fines for a yearly rent of £100. 6 April 1619, in *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.244.

128 Report of the Irish commissioners on the case of Henry Smith, 23 June 1626, SP 63-242 no.359, f.357r.

society was thus turned into a source of revenue, a state of affairs which few colonists had any interest in altering.

Another feature of this regime was the collective punishment of the native population for transgressions against colonists. Among the complaints made by Ó Néill before his flight was that Chichester sent soldiers to seize goods as compensation from the entire population, some of whom had themselves been robbed by the same ‘woodkerne’. Some of these soldiers, it was added, wounded a man, and when the wounded man and his kin went to Derry to complain to the governor, they were placed in the stocks as punishment for disarming the offending soldier. Soldiers ravaged the countryside, acting with impunity, demanding food and quarterage—ironically, exactly the kind of arbitrary exactions it had been promised the common law would replace. Sir Henry Folliot, it was claimed, stole 200 cows from Ó Néill’s tenants in 1604, causing the deaths of over 100 people from starvation.¹²⁹ Nor had things changed by 1622, when it was reported that:

‘. . . oftentimes [. . .] men are casually robbed by the highwaie or their cattell stollen by negligence, the poore inhabitants of the Irish natives that are honest poore husbandmen, are comelled by order of the judges of Assize or by the justice of the peace to paie for those robberies and thefts’.¹³⁰

It is extremely unlikely, therefore, that the Ulster Irish viewed the imposition of English law as the introduction of a qualitatively more impartial or egalitarian legal system. On the contrary, it would have appeared as a crude mechanism by which one interest group dominated another. This was analogous to the crown’s use of the Campbell clan to subjugate western Scotland during the same period, where appeal to the law essentially meant appealing to ‘Campbell justice’.¹³¹ Just as there was little point in appealing to the Campbells to rectify injustices committed by them or their retainers, there was little point

129 Articles exhibited by the earl of Tirone to the king’s most excelent ma[jes]tie declaring certaine causes of discontent offered him, by which he toke occasione to dep[ar]t his countrey, 1607, SP 63-222 no.201, f.318r.

130 ‘Some agreevances that the poore subiects in the countie of Tyrone undergoe’, 1622, TCD MS 808, f.50r.

131 MacGregor, ‘Civilising Gaelic Scotland’, in Ó Ciardha and Ó Siochrú (eds.), *The plantation of Ulster*, pp.44-5.

in appealing to the common law in Ulster to make amends for transgressions committed by its officers. That the Irish perceived the judicial process as little more than a kind of ritualised violence is suggested by instances during the 1641 rising of judicially-sanctioned violence being mimicked in the killing of colonists. Mock trials and executions may, John Walter contends, be seen as an attempt to ‘lay claim to a socially sanctioned violence’.¹³² It is also possible, however, that these parodies mocked the claims of the common law to being somehow different to the settling of disputes by brute force. They illustrated that, dressed up with a few legalistic formalities, the insurgents’ violence differed little from that perpetrated by the state. It is not surprising that the Irish viewed the operations of the common law with such derision. In a situation where its agents extorted ‘almoste what they list from the Irishe inhabitants’, those who resisted them were summarily accused of relieving woodkerne:

‘And under cullor of that accusation the provost marshall he seazes his goodes and imprisons the poore man. And so terrifies and threatens him betweenes him and his man, that be yt right or wronge, the poore wretche is to give them a p[ar]te of his goodes to lett him alone’.¹³³

It is interesting to note that in this particular case, native Irish figures were themselves complicit with the colonial authorities in the intimidation and plundering of their fellow Irish. The provost marshals were said to ‘keape 10 or 12 or more of such as have been the most notorious kearne and theeffes themselves formerlie in all the countrey’.¹³⁴ This complicates the picture of a subject population being oppressed by a regime consisting exclusively of colonist personnel.¹³⁵ Just as some ‘deserving Irish’ were awarded land in

132 John Walter, ‘Performative violence and the politics of violence’, Ó Siochrú and Ohlmeyer (eds.), *Ireland, 1641: contexts and reactions*, p.138.

133 ‘Some agreevances that the poore subiects in the countie of Tyrone undergoe’, 1622, TCD MS 808, f.49r. It was reported by the commissioners in the same year in Monaghan that those who dared complain of such treatment simply invited greater extortion as a consequence. One Pádraig Mac Crábháin was fined 7s for ploughing in the Irish manner in 1621 and, having complained of this at the general sessions, found the fine increased to 10s the following year. ‘Grievances of the tenants and Inhabitants belonginge to the right honourable the Earle of Essex in Farney’, 1622, NLI 8014, vol.10.

134 ‘Some agreevances that the poore subiects in the countie of Tyrone undergoe’, 1622, TCD MS 808, f.49r.

135 Nor was it just the native population which suffered from the extortions of such figures; it was complained in 1616 that the tenants on the Ironmongers’ proportion in Londonderry were ‘contynuallie

order to secure their co-operation, more modest material opportunities also existed for those native Irish prepared to work as enforcers under the aegis of a colonial ruling class instead of a native one.¹³⁶ It is unclear how different the victims would have perceived such exactions under the aegis of a Gaelic or colonial order. While Gaelic society had offered military figures some scope to demand food and lodging from the productive population, such demands were normally regulated by custom and the legitimating authority of the *tiarna*. The powerful persistence of conceptions of serving specific *sleachta* has already been alluded to. Even if both kinds of exaction were resented, it seems unlikely that the unpredictable and arbitrary exactions of colonial militias consisting of hired Irishmen would have been regarded with the same legitimacy as traditional ones.

It is clear that the Irish engaged with the colonists' law to a degree, both as executors and as litigants. It has been argued, however, in chapter two (pp.73-4) that the extent to which engagement implies acceptance, or even approval of the plantation, is limited. The same is true of native figures occupying positions in the colonial regime, whose motives were primarily opportunistic rather than political in nature. This is suggested, for example, by the fact that the 1641 depositions identify Gaelic Irish insurgents who had previously occupied a range of positions, from bailiffs and sheriffs, not to mention MPs like Féilim Rua Ó Néill.¹³⁷ Even before the breakdown of the colonial order in 1641, many Irish who occupied such offices were using their position to further interests directly contrary to the stated aims of the plantation. The collection of tithes claimed by Catholic clergy was facilitated by Irish sheriffs in County Down in the 1630s, for example, and funds were collected by the sheriff's bailiffs in Fermanagh to send a delegation to advance the Catholic cause in London in 1613.¹³⁸ In this way, the Irish sometimes adopted the common law—just as they sometimes adopted English military techniques—in order to further their own agendas.

oppressed' by the 'countie sherriff and their bailiffes' as well as soldiers. Canning to Ironmongers' Company, 15 March 1616, LMA, Guildhall Library MS 17278-1, ff.119r-119v.

136 Many of those cited as extorting money, hospitality and personal possessions from the tenants of Farney, County Monaghan, in 1622, bear Irish names, often working under the supervision of individuals with English surnames. In many cases, Mic Mhahúna are found taking part in the spoilation of their fellow Mic Mhahúna. NLI 8014, vol.10.

137 Donncha Mac Mánaís (Deposition of Thomas Manton, 22 May 1642, TCD MS 835, f.211r) and Toirealach Óg Mag Uidhir, bailiff to the sheriff Réamann 'mc Cosker', (Deposition of Sara Ranson, 22 August 1642, TCD MS 835, f.217r) can both be found in the Fermanagh depositions for example.

138 Mac Cuarta, *Catholic revival*, pp.86, 121.

Some of the more shrewd observers sensed a profound resentment and anxiety in the native population as a result of the uneven and arbitrary application of the law, and that an opportunity had been lost to win them over to the new order by applying the kind of blind, impartial justice heralded by Davies.¹³⁹ It bears quoting at length Francis Blundell, who reported on the state of the country in 1629:

‘Provost marshalls who doe comonly use and imploy soldiors in their journeys doe exacte meate drinke lodging horsemeat and monye. And albeit these abuses have ben often times complayned of by noblemen and others yet noe redres hath ben given in soe much as the poore people growe nowe afearede to complayne least the soldiors should use them the wors for their complayninge and doe therefore rather give over their farmes then subiecte themselves to such oppressions as they are not able to beare and pay their rents by which meanes greate dearth of corne hath ben in this Kingdome and is like to continue’.¹⁴⁰

The fact that the native Irish were abandoning their lands, and any attempt to adopt a sedentary lifestyle based on tillage, speaks to a profound lack of confidence, not only in the justice of the colonists, but in the very possibility of securing a sustainable place in colonial society in the future. Nicholas Pynnar pointed out as early as 1619 that the plantation had placed the Irish in such an insecure position that they enjoyed little incentive to sow crops

139 A continuing association between English law and the arbitrary exercise of power would damage the claims of the colonial regime to legal legitimacy in the minds of many Irish for centuries to come. These attitudes are reflected in the observations of de Tocqueville in the 1830s, that the poorer class of Irish were ‘treated as a conquered one by the landowners’, and that they had ‘not the slightest confidence in justice’, believing ‘themselves to be somehow outside the law’. This impression was confirmed when the French visitor was told by the Secretary of the Poor Law Commission that ‘in Ireland almost all justice is extra-legal’ and ‘the jury system is almost impracticable’. Alexis de Tocqueville, *Journeys to England and Ireland*, (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1958), pp.119, 132-3.

140 Francis Annesley, ‘The present state and condicion of the Realme of Ireland worthy of speedy and serious consideracon’, 21 March 1629, SP 63-248 no.45, f.139v. It is curious to note, incidentally, that the rather gloomy ending of Blundell’s report, ‘as things nowe stand the success may be feared’, (f.141r) is transformed to ‘all may yet be well’ in the calendar entry, in Robert Pentland Mahaffy (ed.), *CSPI Charles I, 1625-1632*, (London: H.M.S.O., 1900), p.442.

on land from which they might be expelled at any moment.¹⁴¹ The exactions of soldiers and ministers in south Monaghan was, in 1622, reportedly driving the native inhabitants to flee into the neighbouring counties of Louth and Meath.¹⁴² One of the most profound indications of a society's stability is its confidence in the future. In this sense, the plantation undoubtedly increased, rather than decreased, the element of instability and uncertainty in the lives of the native Irish.

The short-term interests of those who put the plantation into execution subverted the professed intentions of those who planned and theorised it. From provost marshals who abused their positions of power, to Church of Ireland clergy who disdained preaching to the natives, and undertakers who exploited the vulnerability of native tenants—such groups found it far more congenial to maintain the subordinate position of the native Irish underclass inherited from the Gaelic elite than to create new social structures, which offered significant opportunity for economic advancement through the adoption of English cultural and economic norms. The plantation project had claimed to provide such opportunities by permitting the Irish 'churls' to remain in selected areas (those in white, figure 27, p.355) where, it was hoped, they would be 'alured to allowe and imitate that course, which bringes profit to themselves, their posteritie and the commonwealth'.¹⁴³ Seeking to balance these lofty aspirations with more pragmatic security considerations, the black areas in the map were to be cleared and populated exclusively with colonists. The fact that such strict segregation did not materialise in reality reflects on the one hand the pragmatism and self-interest of colonists, and on the other a disparity in views of the native Irish between planners on the one hand and practitioners on the other.

Planners like Davies, Chichester and King James, viewed the Irish as having been liberated from the tyranny of their former rulers by the recent war and subsequent flight, needing only the salutary example of industrious colonists. The way the colonists related to the Irish, however, appears to have had far more in common with the view promulgated by Thomas Smith in the 1570s. It has been observed by Nicholas Canny that Smith, in his

141 Captain Nicholas Pynnar to the Lord Deputy and Council, 28 March 1619, in *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.387.

142 'Grievances of the tenants and Inhabitants belonging to the right honourable the Earle of Essex in Farney', 1622, NLI 8014, vol.10.

143 Arthur Chichester, 'Certaine noates of Remembrance', September 1608, SP 63-225 no.225, f.108r.

Ards colony:

‘. . . was totally abandoning the notion of the Old English that the native Irish were enslaved by their lords and were crying out for liberation. The Irish, in his view, were indeed living under tyranny but were not yet ready for liberation since they were at an earlier stage of cultural development—the stage at which the English had been when the Romans had arrived. They needed to be made bondsmen to enlightened lords who would instruct them in the ways of civil society’.¹⁴⁴

Although it might be expected that one of the most obvious lessons learned from the failure of Smith’s project was that the natives were not as docile as he had believed, a similar (convenient) attitude to the native population appears to have prevailed among the colonists in Ulster after 1609.¹⁴⁵ Only with the perceived treachery of the 1641 rising did this become one of suspicion and mistrust towards the Irish. Prior to 1641, the evidence would suggest that most colonists viewed the non-landowning Irish with condescension rather than outright hostility, a class of people fit to occupy a place in colonial society as manual labourers rather than to be expelled.¹⁴⁶ Karen Kupperman has argued that the first colonists in Virginia made no fundamental distinction between the inferiority of the lower classes back home and the natives they encountered in America.¹⁴⁷ While an ethnic

144 Canny, ‘Ideology of English Colonization’, p.589.

145 The sentiments expressed by the author of a tract in 1618, (‘There is no doubt but a great number of husbandmen, which the country calls the churls, will come and offer to live under them [the Ironmongers’ company] and farm the grounds both such as are of the country birth and others, both of the wild Irish and the English pale’) are almost identical (even the wording) with the belief expressed by Smith more than forty years earlier: ‘There is no doubt but ther will great numbers of the Husbandmen which they call Churles, came and offer to live under us, & to ferme our grounds: both such as are of the Cuntry birth, and others, bothe out of the wilde Irishe and the Englyshe pale’. *The Particular Discription of the Countrie and State of Ireland*, 1618, BL Additional MS 4780 f.60v. Smith, *A Letter sent by I. B.*, sig.D3v.

146 Administrators who viewed Ulster at a greater distance from those on the ground were often less sanguine, especially those, such as Chichester, with fresh memories of the Nine Years War. Others like Falkland and Blundell continued to warn, into the 1620s, of the potential dangers of planting colonies too sparsely amidst the Irish. Falkland wrote in 1627, for example, that ‘the Brittons of that province [Ulster] are manie but too confident, careless, il armed and not trained’. Falkland to Conway, SP 63-245, no.883, f.298v. It should also be noted that such figures sometimes exaggerated the putative danger represented by the Irish in order to secure political ends such as funding and military resources from the London regime.

147 Kupperman, *Settling with the Indians*, pp.2-5.

element, present in Ireland and America, was lacking in relations between gentry and lower classes in England, there is much to recommend this position. Racial antipathy and the move towards segregation of native and newcomer only became the rule after events such as 1641 in Ireland and 1622 in Virginia, confirming for many that the natives were unassimilable to colonial society.¹⁴⁸

The idea that the natives in Ulster and America might be made to fit the role of docile peasantry proved particularly attractive in an era when the increasing commercialisation of agriculture in England was disrupting the traditional social hierarchy. Kupperman has noted that England was undertaking colonisation on a significant scale for the first time during a period of serious social dislocation at home:

‘Many people of all walks of life looked back nostalgically, and with a good deal of romanticism, to a settled past where everyone had had a place in society and money meant less than place’.

‘Gentry or aristocratic colonial leaders’, Kupperman adds, ‘sometimes came to America looking for a chance to recreate such a society, organized semi-feudally around the lord of the manor’.¹⁴⁹ The rural squirearchy envisaged by the Ulster plantation project also had a distinctly feudal look to it. A society organised around manors held by the (even then outmoded) tenure of knight’s service appears to have been tailored to attract a gentry longing to escape the harsh economic realities of England and re-create some imagined feudal Arcadia, rather than a class of entrepreneurial capitalist farmers seeking to expand the early-modern economy into the north of Ireland. When Fynes Moryson wrote that the ‘manners and customs of the mere Irish give great liberty to all men’s lives, and absolute power to great men over the inferiors’ he was reflecting a belief that Irish conditions lent themselves to the kind of social hierarchy and deference that was felt to be disappearing in

148 In the 1650s, for example, Richard Lawrence advocated the separation of natives from incoming colonists. Even those Irish who had converted to Protestantism would require the testimony of two justices of the peace and two ministers of the Protestant church to prove their fitness to live among the colonists. Richard Lawrence, *The interest of England in the Irish transplantation, stated*, (London, 1655), p.16.

149 Kupperman, *Settling with the Indians*, p.9.

the metropolitan society.¹⁵⁰ Those who aspired to re-create such an imagined community were no doubt partly inspired by nostalgic images of simpler, more socially-static times past, as well as idealised visions of the ‘noble savage’.

The proximity of the Irish made it more difficult to fit them into this conceptual mould. As Raymond Gillespie has remarked, ‘Irishmen who arrived in England in the 1620s were more likely to be deported under the vagrancy acts than marveled at for their exoticism as was Pocahontas’.¹⁵¹ Traces of a ‘noble savage’ conceit can nevertheless be discerned in images of the lower-class Irish as naturally-deferential and obedient, such as Thomas Smith’s description of ‘the swéetnesse whiche the owners shall find in the Irish Churle, giving excessively’.¹⁵² Even a writer as implacably hostile to the ‘mere Irish’ as Edmund Spenser could wax lyrical about a pastoral Eden in book six of the *Faerie Queene*, while furiously denouncing such a lifestyle in the real world in his prose work. While this romantic image may have faded somewhat in the years since Smith wrote, it appears that many colonists subscribed to a view of the Irish as ‘natural followers’, and sought to simply assume the place of the Gaelic aristocracy in Ulster, instead of effecting the economic and cultural transformation of the colonised areas. That some were attracted by the mirage of cheap land and cheap (deferential, obedient) labour, is suggested by promoters’ attempts to disabuse such potential colonists. Thomas Blenerhasset’s attempt to deter ‘loyterers and lewd persons’, cited at the start of chapter two, is a case in point. William Alexander similarly urged caution to those who might read Edenic descriptions of the colonial environment too literally, warning ‘there is no land where man can live without labour’.¹⁵³

150 Moryson, ‘The Itinerary’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.310.

151 Gillespie, ‘The Problems of Plantations’, p.60.

152 Smith, *A Letter sent by I. B.*, sig.D4r. The tendency of some outsiders to idealise the Irish ‘churl’ and blame the Gaelic elite for all the animus directed towards the colony was satirised by the anonymous author of *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis*, who has a character brag that ‘the justices of the peace do not imagine that we, the race of churls, are not completely honest, and they suppose that it is the idle aristocracy, the minor gentry and the scroungers among the tail-ends of noble families, who do all that we do of cheating, assault on, and chicanery against whores, jades and low women, and that seems to us to be absolutely fair, as does every other skulduggery’. *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis*, p.86.

153 Alexander, *An encouragement*, p.27. That both America and Ulster were perceived as places of greater liberty and license is also clear from the oft-expressed anxiety that colonists would ‘go native’. These had less to do with the attractions of the indigenous culture than mistrust, on the part of ruling-class writers and officials, of their own ‘lower orders’. ‘Soe muche Can libertie and ill example doe’ Spenser had written, warning of the seductive effect of this perceived liberty. Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) ‘A View of the Present State of Ireland’, p.67. The relaxation of constraints which was felt to operate among primitive peoples has often been noted in the conduct of war; what is less often remarked-upon is the greater freedom the colonial environment was believed to offer to the ‘naughty sort of Englishmen’ in

The image of colonial society in County Down, as presented by William Montgomery in the late seventeenth century, would also suggest that colonists there, choosing to conceive of the area as a blank slate on which to build a new society, had looked to re-create some kind of idealised earlier society, less complicated and harsh than the one they had left behind:

‘Now every body minded their trades, and the plough, and the spade, building, and setting fruit trees, &c., in orchards and gardens, and by ditching in their grounds. The old women spun, and the young girls plyed their nimble fingers at knitting and every body was innocently busy. Now the Golden peacable age renewed, no strife, contention, querulous lawyers, or Scottish or Irish feuds, between clanns and families, and sirnames, disturbing the tranquillity of those times’.¹⁵⁴

Such an image might seem hopelessly romanticised, but east Ulster probably did suffer less from tensions between colonist and native, on account of the more extensive depopulation of that area at the time when colonisation commenced, compared to other regions. In this sense, the idyll which Montgomery depicted had been founded upon the genocidal military

peacetime as well. The phrase was used by a writer advising King James on the development of the colony in 1615, to describe those colonists who kept Irish tenants and impaired the culturally-transformative aspects of the plantation programme. E.S., ‘A survey of the present estate of Ireland, anno 1615’, HL Ellesmere MS 1746, f.11r. Such fears were not groundless; arrivals in the new world often took the first opportunity to flee the constraints of European society. William Bradford wrote of a boat shipwrecked off the coast of Cape Cod in 1626 from which, after only a few hours ashore, some of the seamen had run away to the Indians. Defection to the Powhatans in Virginia became such a problem for the Jamestown settlement in its early years that exemplary capital punishments such as as burning and breaking upon wheels were employed as a deterrent. Nor were these extremes measure resorted to only in short-term crises; continuing concern about the flight of colonists to native society is attested to by laws enacted in Connecticut in 1642, which prescribed (at least) three years imprisonment and corporal punishment for those ‘diverse persons [who] departe from amongst us, and take up their aboade with the Indians, in a prophane course of life’. Bradford; Davis (ed.), *Bradford’s History of Plymouth Plantation*, pp.220-1. Nicholas Canny, ‘The Permissive Frontier: The Problem of Social Control in English Settlements in Ireland and Virginia’, in *Andrews, Canny and Hair (eds.), The Westward Enterprise*, pp.30-1. Axtell, *The European and the Indian*, p.156. When the wretched physical conditions in early settlements such as Jamestown, and the hard physical labour involved in clearing forests for cultivation is taken into account, it is not surprising that many colonists from more disadvantaged backgrounds fled. Native society must have appeared to offer a higher standard of living, especially given the early reports of writers who depicted the Americans living lives of relative ease in a bountiful environment, whose corn grew more abundantly and required less labour to cultivate than in England. Hariot, *A briefe and true report*, pp.14-5.

154 Montgomery and Hill (eds.), *Montgomery manuscripts*, p.66.

strategy pursued by Essex and Chichester decades earlier, although by the time Montgomery was writing, enough time had passed to obscure the violence on which it was predicated.

To the Ulster Irish at the time of the plantation, however, this violence must have been quite fresh in the memory. This fact appears to have escaped many colonists, who viewed the Irish proletariat as naturally fitting the role of an underclass. This was because they were, it was believed, already habituated to abject servitude under Gaelic rulers. In the early seventeenth century, the belief was widespread in the highest official circles that the Irish (as Davies put it) ‘desire naturally to be followers, & cannot live w[ith]out a maister’, and needed only to be provided with a ruling elite to replace the Gaelic one, whom they would follow as ‘willingly, & rest as well contented under their wings, as young fessants doo under the wings of an House-hen though shee be not their naturall mother’.¹⁵⁵ Chichester, in his ‘Notes of Remembrance’, expressed similar sentiments:

‘Wee shall have noe greate cause to take care for the inferior natyves for they will all settele themselves, and their dependency, upon the Bishops, undertakers, or the Irish landlords that shalbe established by his Ma[jes]ties gracious favor, for most of them are by nature enclyned rather to be followeres and tennants to others then lords or freeholders of themselves’.¹⁵⁶

Such attitudes altered little in the decades before the 1641 rising. Wentworth, for example, writing in 1639, expressed his confidence that the tenants and freeholders of the Protestant earl of Ormond would adopt the reformed faith, ‘it being most certaine that no people under the sunne are more apte to be of the same religion which their great lords as the Irish be’.¹⁵⁷ Even those who rounded on the Irish as irredeemably treacherous in the aftermath of the 1641 rising could not help feeling, as Temple did, that ‘a blind, ignorant, superstitious people’ could not have taken the initiative in such a matter and that it must have been conceived of and set afoot elsewhere (i.e. Rome), the natural order being for ‘the

155 Davies to Salisbury, 24 September 1610, SP 63-229, no.125a, f.129v.

156 Arthur Chichester, ‘Certaine noates of Remembrance’, September 1608, SP 63-225 no.225, f.114r.

157 Thomas Wentworth to Christopher Wandesford, 1639, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Carte MS 1, f.127v.

great ones mischievously to plot and contrive, the inferior sort tumultuously to rise-up and execute whatsoever they should command'.¹⁵⁸ The Irish were even reported to *sound* like a subordinate, defeated people, according to a number of visitors, their 'querulous and whining' tone of voice being conjectured by a Welsh visitor in Dublin to 'proceeded from their often being subjugated by the English'.¹⁵⁹ Both Davies and Luke Gernon also commented on this 'whining tone', and remarked on it as being peculiar to the poorer Irish.¹⁶⁰

It follows from this belief in a naturally-subservient population that they were judged by the colonists as fit only for unskilled work or their traditional agricultural occupations. At best, those Irish seeking to avail of the new opportunities made available by colonisation could aspire to domestic service. Even this was deemed to place the natives in a position of too-great proximity by some, who sought to introduce a ban on colonists retaining any Irish in their household. The same instructions, however, regarded as acceptable the employment of Irish for outdoor labour such as ploughing, ditching and digging, as long as the individuals in question were conformable in religion.¹⁶¹ The issuing of such edicts ran directly counter to the avowed aspiration that the Irish would, by imitation, learn trades and manufacturing skills, and yet such segregation was also, as has been seen, just as much a part of the plan of plantation as integration. These two contradictory impulses co-existed and worked against each other throughout the period in question.¹⁶²

Employment of the Irish in a capacity other than unskilled labourers or domestic servants is not attested to in significant numbers. The evidence, indeed, would point to the contrary. After three decades of colonisation, only a limited number of native Irish acquired the kind

158 Temple, *The Irish rebellion*, p.63.

159 Letter 'to the R.H. the E.R.', 9 August 1630, James Howell, *Familiar letters: or, Epistolae Ho-Eliaanae*, (London: J. M. Dent, 1903), p.205.

160 'All the common people have a whining tone, or accent, in their speech, as if they did still smart or suffer some oppression.' Davies, 'A discovery', reproduced in *Historical tracts*, p.142. 'Theyr speach hath been accused to be a whyning language, but that is among the beggars'. Gernon, 'Discourse of Ireland, 1620', in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.356. Richard Stanyhurt confined such comments to his discussion of the Irish women speaking English in the Pale: 'Women have in their English toong an harsh & brode kind of pronuntiation, with uttering their words so peevishlie and faintlie, as though they were halfe sicke, and readie to call for a posset'. Stanihurst, 'The Description of Ireland', p.4.

161 'The cerificat touching the undertakers of Ulsters lands', 23 February, 1621, SP 63-236 no.4a, f.19r.

162 For example, in the contradictory sentiments expressed by Chichester above n. 19 p.120.

of skills it had been envisaged plantation society would offer. Audrey Horning has noted, for example, that only English and continental workers were employed on ironworks.¹⁶³ Numerous other examples emerge from the depositions of colonists kept prisoner because they possessed skills the insurgents themselves lacked; the fact that the Irish coveted not merely the property but also the skills of a gunsmith, weaver, miller, shoemaker and a blacksmith suggests that they had not engaged in these occupations themselves to the extent that there were many Irish capable of taking over the role from the colonists they had killed or expelled.¹⁶⁴ While colonists may have been happy to employ native Irish on their lands as herdsmen and servants—who often accepted as remuneration nothing more than the right to graze their cattle on the landlord’s property—skilled workers were almost always imported from England or Scotland. Even in cases where apprentices were to be trained in Ulster, regulations stipulated that underprivileged children be brought over from England for the purpose.¹⁶⁵

The notion that the native inhabitants might become a class of docile manual labourers serving the colonists reflects standard practice in seventeenth-century colonisation. In New England, as James Axtell has noted, ‘skilled trades for the Indians were seldom considered and, when they were, were quickly shunted aside for fear of providing unnecessary competition for colonial workers’. Even those ‘praying Indians’ who had been given the rudiments of an English education were limited to ‘marginal home industries,

163 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.333.

164 For example the gunsmith Thomas Smith from Belturbet; Deposition of Thomas Smith and Joane Killin, 8 February 1644, TCD MS 833, f.265r. It was additionally believed that George Wirrall knew how to make gunpowder, although Wirrall himself denied it, claiming only to have worked as a clerk for a ‘Saltpeter master in London’. Deposition of George Wirrall, 18 July 1642, TCD MS 835, f.231r. The husband of Audrey Carington was encouraged to return to his occupation as a weaver by the insurgents in Clankelly, Fermanagh. Deposition of Audrey Carington, 27 October 1645, TCD MS 833, f.282r. Thomas Dixon from Armagh claimed he had been spared by Féilim Ó Néill (and promised exemption from rent during the war) if he would keep his mill running. He also reported that Ó Néill attempted (in vain) to save an English surveyor named Thomas Cleever. Examination of Thomas Dixon, 26 February 1653, TCD MS 836, ff.194r-119v. Richard Miles from Lisburn was kept alive by the insurgents ‘in regard he was a Shoemaker & Serviceable for them’. Examination of Richard Miles, 3 March 1653, TCD MS 836 f.214r. Blacksmith Edmond Knowles from Lissan (near Cookstown) was kept prisoner and ‘forced by Neile oge ó Quin to worke in his trade’. Examination of Edmond Knowles, 25 March 1653, TCD MS 839 f.66r.

165 ‘And because the said townes shall not be peopled in tyme to come with Irishe it is resolved forthwith to send over 12 hospitall and other poore Children for prentices and servants there, and order taken that the inhabitants shall not take praentices of Irishe, to the end our nation may be much planted there’. ‘A precept received [. . .] from the governor and committees of the Irishe plantation’, 2 March 1617, LMA, Guildhall Library MS 17278-1, ff.118r-118v.

such as the manufacture of brooms, pails, and baskets, berrying, and hunting and fishing for hire'.¹⁶⁶ In Virginia, it had become clear to the Powhatan leadership by 1622 that the newcomers could not be assimilated into native culture, and that their vision for the country would include natives 'only if they sacrificed their identity, their culture, and their souls'.¹⁶⁷ In the aftermath of the 1622 massacre in Virginia, Samuel Purchas' policy for the Americans contended that:

'. . . servile natures be servily used; that future dangers be prevented by the extirpation of the more dangerous, and commodities also raised out of the servilenesse and serviceableness of the rest'.¹⁶⁸

Some limited education and assimilation of the natives was indeed attempted in all three of these Atlantic colonies—Ulster, New England and Virginia—but only to the extent that it might engender the desired transformation of them into a subject population akin to the peasantry back home, or rather, one that behaved as it was felt the peasantry back home ought to behave. Following such an education, largely designed to eliminate 'primitive' traits perceived as inimical to the interests of the colony, the natives tended, as Bernard Sheehan has observed in an American context, 'to become disintegrated Indians rather than Englishmen'.¹⁶⁹ In Ulster—as in America—the period between the establishment of the plantation and the 1641 rising witnessed the attempted destruction of the structures of native society, rather than the physical destruction of the individuals that made up that society. This does not mean that the ranks of undertakers, servitors and company agents were completely devoid of figures who took to heart the civilising rhetoric of the plantation planners. They were, however, few and far between; as noted in chapter four, the fact that William Bedell in Cavan is so often offered as an example of such individuals indicates how exceptional he was in colonial Ulster.¹⁷⁰

166 Axtell, *The European and the Indian*, p.65.

167 Kruer, *Red Albion*, p.65.

168 Samuel Purchas, *Purchas his pilgrimes*, part 2, book 9, chapter 20, (London, 1625), p.1819.

169 Bernard W. Sheehan, *Savagism and civility: Indians and Englishmen in colonial Virginia*, (Cambridge University Press, 1980), p.181.

170 A genuine hope that the native Irish might be admitted to plantation society as equals might be discerned in the eagerness of George Canning, the Ironmonger's agent, to bring an Irish convert over to London in order to show him off in 1616, although this might equally been seen as an attempt to demonstrate what progress had been made by the company in neutralising the natives as a security threat.

The attitude of colonists towards native participation in the economy was characterised by pragmatism. This means that native Irish were accommodated within colonial society to the extent that it served colonists' interests (a tendency which has been stressed in the recent historiography), but also discouraged in economic contexts which the colonists wished to reserve to themselves. The attitude towards the Irish can best be encapsulated in the wish expressed by Chichester in 1609 that the undertakers should be restrained from marrying the Irish, but instead encouraged to intermarry within their own community, 'to strengthen on another against the common enemy'.¹⁷¹ While many colonists were prepared to countenance the involvement and proximity of the Irish to a greater extent than the lord deputy, they did share a perception of the Irish as a common enemy and displayed, in their relations with them, a concern similar to that displayed in America, that the natives should not, by the acquisition of skills and trades from the colonists, become their competitors.

A general anxiety that Ireland, if made 'civil', might become a 'more noisome and dangerous neighbour to England', was described in 1583 as a 'common objection' among English administrators to developing the country.¹⁷² This was widely believed among the Irish, who felt that the English wished to keep the country permanently at war and unsettled, lest (it was stated in 1579) 'being cyvile her enemyes would be the stronger and so growe to her maesties greate detrymente'.¹⁷³ This strategy was based on the fear that the

Canning to Ironmongers' company London, LMA, Guildhall Library MS 17278-1, f.135r. The same could be said for the plans to send the children of the Gaelic elite over to England to receive their education there, although as Hiram Morgan has noted, this might more likely be seen as a 'a civilised method of keeping the sons of Ulster lords as hostages'. Lords of the council to Chichester, 3 May 1615, in *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.53; Morgan, *Tyrone's Rebellion*, p.47.

171 Arthur Chichester, 'Certaine consideracons touchinge the plantation of the kings escheated lands in Ulster', 27 January 1610, SP 63-228 no.15, f.35v.

172 'A discourse for the reformation of Ireland', 1583, in William Bullen, John S. Brewer (eds), *Calendar of the Carew Manuscripts Preserved in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth*, vol.2 (1575 - 1588), (London: Longmans, 1868), p.370.

173 'The efficiente and accidentall impediments of the civilitie of Irelande', 1579, SP 63-70, no.82, f.204v. Nor was this a mere fancy of the Irish; a Spanish observer in the same decade expressed the same belief that England sought to keep Ireland in a state of permanent underdevelopment and 'to keep the people in ignorance, lest they should learn the difference between liberty and slavery, and knowing well that the inhabitants are warlike and courageous, and capable of supporting every fatigue, they fear lest they should be instructed in the art of war. For the same reason they never allowed artists to settle there, lest the inhabitants, by learning how to avail themselves of the natural resources of the country, might become rich and powerful, and shake off the foreign yoke'. Anonymous, 'Manners and customs of the Irish', 1570s, in Patrick Francis Moran (ed.), *History of the catholic archbishops of Dublin since the reformation*, vol.1, (Dublin: James Duffy, 1864), p.96.

Irish might adapt forms of social organisation and technology from the English while rejecting the religious and political fundamentals of attachment and loyalty to the crown. If this were to happen, it would gift them the means to resist more effectively the very authority which sought to impose itself upon them. Referring to the court of wards, which had given an English education to numerous members of the Gaelic elite, but failed to make them Protestant, the earl of Orrery would remark that ‘an English education, & an Irish religion, is much more dangerous then if both were Irish’.¹⁷⁴ Such a danger had been illustrated most vividly in Aodh Ó Néill, who had used the knowledge of English military techniques gained during his upbringing in the Pale, against the government.¹⁷⁵ Those who had experienced the enhanced effectiveness of the Irish forces in the Nine Years War were thereafter acutely conscious of the dangers posed by the Irish emulating their enemy. Fynes Moryson observed that at the start of the war, it took three Irish soldiers to fire a musket, ‘one had it laid on his shoulders, another aimed it at the mark, and a third gave fire, and that not without fear and trembling’, but that within a few years they had become completely proficient in the use of such weapons. The English should take their cue from the ancient Spartans, he mused, who:

‘. . . made a law never to make long war with any of their neighbours, but after they had given them one or two foils for strengthening of their subjection, to give them peace, and lead their forces against some other, so keeping their men well trained, and their neighbours rude, in the feats of war’.¹⁷⁶

Colonists in America such as William Bradford likewise condemned those such as Thomas Morton who had traded European weapons with the natives and taught them how to use them.¹⁷⁷ Such trading led the colony to attempt a ban on selling firearms to the Americans.¹⁷⁸

174 The earl of Orrery to secretary Edward Nicholas, 7 September 1661, SP 63-307-2 no.200, f.71v.

175 Ó Néill’s soldiers were described in 1596 as ‘cannyballs’ who had learn to use muskets, pikes and other weaponry ‘which these traitors were not accustomed to have in this measure’. John Dowdall to Burghley, 9 March 1596, SP 63-187 no.19, f.32v.

176 Moryson, ‘The Itinerary’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.286.

177 Bradford; Davis (ed.), *Bradford’s History of Plymouth Plantation*, pp.238-9.

178 Charles Francis Adams Jr., ‘Morton of Merrymount’, in Morton, *New English Canaan*, pp.20-22.

Fears that the English were, at the very least, equivocal in their desire to develop Ireland economically proved well-founded. This is clear from the correspondence of those at the highest level of government. Thomas Wentworth, for example, wrote in 1639 that—the manufacturing of clothing being vital to the English economy—if the Irish were allowed to manufacture their own woollen clothes, they might undersell English products on the market. Such manufacturing, Wentworth concluded, must be retarded, not only for economic reasons but for:

‘. . . reason of state, [because] soe long as they did not indrape their owne wooles, they must of necessity fetch the clothings from us, and consequently in a sort depend upon us for their liveliehood, and thereby become soe dependant upon this crowne as they could not depart from us, without nakednesss to themselves and children’.¹⁷⁹

Later legislation (the Navigation Acts for example) would suggest that this concern not to develop Ireland into an economic competitor to the ‘mother country’ continued to dictate economic policy into the eighteenth century and beyond.

In conclusion, to represent the plantation as offering the landless Irish significant economic opportunity not only overestimates the extent to which they were integrated into the colonial economy, but also the extent to which the whole economy was transformed, in the decades before 1641, from a reciprocal/redistributive one based on personal kinship and alliances, to a market economy based on the exchange of consumer goods. Perhaps most misleadingly, it assumes the sincerity of those who claimed that the plantation was intended to effect this transformation. When the practice of colonisation in Ulster is closely examined it becomes clear that economic transformation was low on the list of priorities of most participants. From its very inception, the primary objective of the project was the acquisition of land, to be distributed to a class of colonists who would make the province

¹⁷⁹ Wentworth did, however, go on to propose the development of linen manufacture ‘in regarde the women are all naturally brede to spinning, and that the Irish earth is apt for bearing of Flaxe’, and which, decisively, would not put the Irish in competition with English commodities. On the contrary, Wentworth asserted that the cheapness of manufacturing in Ireland would allow the Irish to undersell French and Dutch linen, thus damaging England’s competitors economically. Thomas Wentworth to Christopher Wandesford, 1639, Bodleian Library, Oxford, Carte MS 1, f.128v-129r.

both governable and taxable. Many, indeed, saw the primary object of warring in Ireland not as a means of punishing traitors or civilising the country, but as a means of acquiring land for themselves and their descendants.¹⁸⁰

The economic relations between native and newcomer described in this chapter would suggest that little changed in the social dynamics between ruler and ruled in the transition from Gaelic to colonial society beyond terminology; *tiarnaí* were exchanged for landlords, landholders became tenants, *ceithearnaigh* became provost marshals. Aidan Clarke has pointed out that the economy of the province ‘was not dramatically transformed by the plantation’, and that there was no immediate changeover from pastoralism to arable farming.¹⁸¹ Instead, a society of commercial agriculturalists sought to impose itself upon the base of landless pastoralists which had sustained Gaelic society, making little effort to transform this base, either culturally or economically. The sort of relations which emerged bore a superficial resemblance to those imagined by Thomas Smith when he planned his Ards colony. Far from expelling the Irish to the limited areas outlined in figure 27 (p.355), many undertakers were eager to retain Irish tenants, bearing out Smith’s predication that ‘the sweetness which the owners shall find in the Irish churl, giving excessively, will hinder the country much in the peopling of it with the English Nation’, if by ‘sweetness’ he meant a source of cheap labour and high rents.¹⁸²

Ironically, some of those most inactive in fulfilling the plantation conditions were the very

180 A writer in 1601 stated this with unusual bluntness when he complained about the tactic of pardoning of native Irish, asking rhetorically: ‘what benefitt will the warres bringe unto her ma[jes]tie, when the rebell beinge p[ar]doned, shall enjoie their whole countryes or possessions, as yf they had never offended?’ Anonymous, ‘A Discourse of Ireland’, 1601, SP 63-209-2 no.273, f.434r-434v.

181 Clarke, ‘The Plantations’, in De Paor (ed.), *Milestones*, p.66. There has, however, been some disagreement about the extent of this transformation. Raymond Gillespie writes of ‘the replacement of a Gaelic lordship economy by an English-style market economy’ in this period, whereas Nicholas Canny has come to a similar conclusion as Clarke, namely that the notion of a ‘dramatic transformation in every aspect of life’ is a ‘myth’, arguing, in the context of agricultural practices, that the colonists attracted to Ulster brought little knowledge that was not already familiar to the native population. Gillespie, ‘Explorers, Exploiters and Entrepreneurs’, p.136. Canny, ‘Migration and Opportunity’, p.27 and ‘A reply’ (to Gillespie’s critique), p.98, n.3.

182 Smith, *A Letter sent by I. B.*, sig.D4r. What Smith underestimated, and what colonists continued to underestimate, was the resentment of the natives towards this new ruling elite which sought to replace the old one without, it must be added, the legitimacy afforded by longevity and tradition. This resentment became suddenly apparent in 1641, leading the Cavan clergyman George Creighton to conclude that the Irish had ‘covered soe great bitternes soe long a tyme in their harts’. Deposition of George Creighton, 15 April 1643, TCD MS 833, f.235r.

same figures who had been most explicit in promoting it as a ‘civilising mission’. Thomas Blenerhasset, for example, who wrote a much-cited tract promoting the project, emerges as one of the biggest retainers of Irish tenants in a 1623 survey of Fermanagh, nor was he especially assiduous in integrating them into an English-style market economy. Most of the Irish upon his lands, it was noted, paid ‘custome, work, hoggs, butter and meale unto the landlord over and above their rents’.¹⁸³ These Irish tenants, therefore, were burdened with the ‘exactions’ they had been accustomed to bear under the Gaelic system, in addition to which they were required to pay an economic rent. John Davies himself, who wrote so mellifluously about giving the Irish a stake in colonial society, was granted extensive lands in the precincts of Omagh and Clanawley, but did little to develop them.¹⁸⁴ The survey conducted by Josias Bodley in 1613 stated that on his Omagh lands, none of the building required by the plantation conditions had been undertaken, ‘neither is there any settlement of British families, nor any undertakers granted for colonising of these parts, the Irish inhabitants continuing yet on the same as in former times’.¹⁸⁵ Much of the rhetoric about saving the Irish underclass from their tyrannical masters, therefore, proved to be nothing more than a legitimising narrative, employed in America at the same time and destined to be employed in countless other colonial environments throughout the world for centuries to come.

183 Blenerhasset, *A direction*. SP 63-238-1, ff.72r-74r.

184 Omagh: An Ómaigh, ‘untilled plain’.

185 This precinct (on paper, said to contain 11,000 acres and divided between five undertakers, in reality about 225,000 acres in size) was granted in its entirety to Davies and the family of his wife, Eleanor, the daughter of Lord Audley, whose unhappy marriage with Davies and later notoriety as a prophetess was matched only by the notoriety of Davies’ fellow grantee in Omagh, Mervyn Touchet, Lord Audley’s eldest son, who was later executed for sodomy and helping a servant rape his wife. Bodley survey of 1613, in Francis Bickley (ed.), *Report on the manuscripts of the late Reginald Rawdon Hastings, Esq., of the Manor house, Ashby de la Zouche*, vol.4, (London: H.M.S.O., 1947), pp.180-1. His efforts in Fermanagh were equally desultory, limited to some renovations carried out on Lisgoole abbey near Eniskillen. Ibid. p.168. On the 500 acres of land Davies owned in Armagh known as Corrinshigo (now on the outskirts of Newry town), Nicholas Pynnar’s survey of 1619 noted ‘there is nothing at all built, nor so much as an English Tenant on the Land’. Pynnar’s survey, in Hill, *An historical account*, p.569. Many undertakers did not even bother to relocate to Ulster, leaving their proportions to be managed by agents in their stead; in 1622 it was observed that ‘the most p[ar]te of the whoale countrey is possessed by such greate men, aswell churchmen as noblemen and gentlemen, as are seldome or never resident, and doe yerely carry awai a greate mass of readie money, and neither keape house in the country nor attend the kings service, but leave all upon the shoulders of a fewe gentlemen’. ‘Some agreeevances that the poore subiects in the countie of Tyrone undergoe’, 1622, TCD MS 808, f.50r. This widespread absenteeism would suggest that many colonial landowners saw the plantation primarily as a money-making venture and were indifferent to its wider professed objectives.

6 The ‘Deserving Irish’

‘...never were subjects purchased with soe much expense and bludd, and keep with soe litle profit.’¹

In the previous chapter’s examination of the relocation from Strabane to Dungannon of Toirealach Mac Airt and his followers, some preliminary discussion has already taken place regarding that class categorised by historians as the ‘deserving’ Irish. Dungannon was earmarked by the plantation planners as the locale for resettlement of native Irish grantees from all over central Ulster. The white areas mapped on figure 27 (p.355) show that this was only one of a number of ‘precincts’ reserved for natives to share with servitors, all of which added up to roughly a quarter of the escheated territory.² Considerations of space dictate that a detailed analysis of the native grantees’ fate in each of these areas is impossible here; in this chapter, therefore, the focus will remain on Dungannon (with the addition of the small barony of Tiranny) as a case study, bearing in mind that, while this area can be seen as representative of the native/servitor districts in many ways, there is an element of local variation in the execution of the plantation project in different areas. Where appropriate, therefore, attention will be drawn to those respects in which the more general native experience of plantation deviated from the example of Dungannon and Tiranny.

1 Anonymous memorandum concerning Ireland, 26 July 1633, SP 63-254 no.49, f.91v.

2 The names and status of each plantation precinct are illustrated in figure 26 below, p.354.

Before this class is examined in detail, however, the term ‘deserving Irish’ requires further examination. Its frequent use in secondary sources to describe the class of native grantees seems to imply that it was used at the time of the plantation. This, however, does not appear to be the case. The phrase does not occur in primary sources from the seventeenth century, nor is it used with any regularity in histories written about the period until the twentieth century.³ What appears to have happened is that the adjective ‘deserving’, employed until the nineteenth century to describe both native and non-native grantees, came to be increasingly used with reference to the Irish grantees alone.⁴ This is not surprising, given that the granting of land to the native Irish was, under the circumstances, in greater need of explanation. Frequent usage in this context led to the formulation of the stock phrase ‘deserving Irish’, to the point that it has been presented as if taken from contemporaneous usage. The *New History of Ireland*, for example, presents it in inverted commas, suggesting it was a categorisation, like ‘mere Irish’ or ‘wild Irish’, used at the time.⁵ Such usage has further reinforced the idea that this was indeed the case, to the point that some recent secondary works explicitly claim that this is what the English called the Irish grantees.⁶

This in turn has led to the common assumption that they represented a favoured class of beneficiaries who ‘were not the dispossessed Irish’, and had been ‘allowed to benefit from the plantation’.⁷ While this may well be how Irish plantation grantees were seen by colonial

3 It appears once in Thomas Carte, *An history of the life of James Duke of Ormonde, from his birth in 1610, to his death in 1688*, vol.2, (London, 1736), p.385. The standalone adjective ‘deserving’ was sometimes used, both by contemporaries and historians, to describe the native grantees. Chichester, for example, described as ‘the honester sorte, and best deserving’ as among those it would be necessary to consider in awarding land. Chichester to the privy council, 14 October 1608, SP 63-225, no.224, f.105r. He uses the phrase ‘good and deserving men’ to describe undertakers and servitors, however, and the adjective clearly had no use specific to the Irish at the time. Chichester to the earl of Northampton, 5 February 1609, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.145.

4 George Hill’s nineteenth-century work on the plantation, for example, uses the adjective to describe both Irish and non-Irish grantees, *An historical account*, pp.153, 578.

5 Clarke, ‘Plantation and the Catholic question, 1603-23’, in Byrne, Martin, Moody (eds.), *A New History of Ireland vol. 3*, pp.201-2.

6 Jerrold Casway, for example, uses the phrase: ‘these deserving Irish, as they were termed’, in ‘The decline and fate of Dónal Ballagh O’Cahan’, in Micheál Ó Siochrú (ed.), *Kingdoms in crisis: Ireland in the 1640s: essays in honour of Dónal Cregan*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), p.62. John McCavitt has claimed on his ‘Flight of the Earls’ website that ‘the native inhabitants of the affected areas’ were ‘known as the ‘deserving’ Irish’. http://www.theflightoftheearls.net/plantation_of_ulster1.htm (accessed 10 December 2014).

7 This example is taken from Tim Harris, *Rebellion: Britain’s First Stuart Kings, 1567-1642*, (Oxford

planners, it does not do justice to the complexity of their situation or reflect how they themselves viewed their fate.⁸ The notion of a class of ‘deserving’ natives, treated favourably because they were allowed to retain lands (in most cases far less than the amount previously possessed) is a historians’ construct, unduly skewed to reflect the perspective of one side in the conflict of interests represented by the plantation. Indeed, the idea that the natives were unambiguously pleased with this dispensation itself elides this conflict of interests. In this sense, the term ‘deserving Irish’ is problematic and has been used throughout this work with inverted commas to draw attention to this. Another simplification which the term tends to re-enforce is that the English government regarded as deserving of favour those Irish who had been loyal to them in the preceding period of conflict with Aodh Ó Néill and his allies. In fact, loyalty was no guarantee of favour. The considerations which the government were attempting to balance against each other in their choice of native grantees proved to be more complicated than simply a case of rewarding loyal natives. We can, in fact, learn a great deal about what the government was hoping to achieve, by examining the fate of a number of *tiarnaí* who, in their service to the English, appeared to possess all the qualifications for ‘deserving’ status, but whom the government in fact took decisive measures to exclude from the plantation arrangements.

The ‘Undeserving Irish’

The purpose of the plantation was to transform Ulster from a culturally-alien and recalcitrant territory to a secure and loyal, revenue-generating part of the realm. The main means by which this was to be achieved, in the years after Ó Néill’s departure, was to be through the introduction of colonists. It has already been seen that—though no doubt sparsely populated in the aftermath of the Nine Years War and associated famine and disease—Ulster was by no means an empty land when colonists began to arrive.⁹ In its initial stages, therefore, there was official recognition that the native Irish—especially in

University Press, 2014) p.434.

8 This has already been seen by the example of the Sliocht Airt Óig and will be illustrated numerous times in this chapter.

9 There was, in fact, a considerable amount of local variation in this extent of this depopulation. County Down, where the native population had less time to recover before the arrival of significant numbers of colonists, perhaps came closest to fulfilling newcomers’ hopes for an entirely blank canvas on which to found a colonial society. The legal challenge to plantation in Cavan, as well as the relatively large amount of land granted to Irish in this county compared to other areas, would suggest the presence of a local population large enough to require accommodation in the plantation scheme.

areas where they remained more densely concentrated such as Cavan—would have to be accommodated to some extent if the colony was not to be overrun in its infancy. Just as in America, care was taken to appease the native population proportionate to its strength, while the colony remained small and vulnerable.¹⁰

It is central to any native history of the plantation to take account of this accommodation. Notwithstanding the sparsity of population demonstrated above, throughout the decades up to 1641, in the six escheated counties at least, natives continued to heavily outnumber colonists in most areas.¹¹ While the element of accommodation in the official project consisted of the granting of lands to natives, it can also be seen to take place through the retaining by colonists of Irish tenants on their lands, against official proscription. The state effectively endorsed this policy by deferring the expulsion of the natives from these areas time and time again. Indeed, when fines were introduced in 1618 for those natives who remained on undertakers lands, the undertakers themselves were prepared to pay, as the profits generated by the natives as tenants and labourers clearly outweighed the financial burden of the fine.¹² It is also clear, however, that this was not regarded by either the government, or those on the ground, as a permanent solution. The following statement from the London Companies, defending the retention of Irish on their lands, expresses the motivation behind this:

‘We desire them [the Irish] not in Perpetuity but for a small time of 2 or 3 years till we have performed the Great Works in the Town and City, or otherwise we shall not be able to feed our number of Workmen and Soldiers’.¹³

10 This can be seen in practice in New England, where Robert Cushman expressed concern on the arrival of new settlers from England who were not affiliated to the Plymouth brethren, for the image of their fledgling colony in the eyes of the natives, whose sufferance they were still reliant upon in many respects: ‘I fear these people will hardly deal so well with the savages as they should. I pray you therefore signifie to Squanto, that they are a distincte body from us, and we have nothing to doe with them, neither must be blamed for their falts, much less can warrente their fidelitie’. Squanto, or Tisquantum, was a Patuxet man who assisted the Plymouth colonists in the difficult first months after their arrival, showing them how to grow food in the area and acting as an intermediary with other native groups. Bradford; Davis (ed.), *Bradford’s History of Plymouth Plantation*, p.136.

11 Willie Smyth, ‘Towards a Cultural Geography of the 1641 Rising/Rebellion’, in Ó Siochrú and Ohlmeyer (eds.), *Ireland: 1641*, p.75.

12 5s per adult per year. Moody, ‘The Treatment of the Native Population’, p.62.

13 ‘The points in the lord deputy’s letter of the 29 April 1612 which concern the Londoners and to which they are to make answer, followed by the Londoners’ answers’, in Thomas Phillips; D.A. Chart (ed.),

This strategy, therefore, reflects a pragmatic attitude which recognised the prudence of utilising the natives until sufficient numbers of colonists had come over to make them dispensable. It is in this strategic context that Chichester's argument for a large allocation of land to the natives must be read. This concern not to provoke the Irish into resistance too early likewise moved him to advise Toby Caulfeild not to impose innovatory rents or taxes on the natives in the early years, so as to:

‘. . . make it appear unto them that his Majesty would be a better and more gracious landlord to them in all respectes then Tyrone was or could be’.¹⁴

The Irish, for their part, appear to have cherished the belief that the intruders would not stick it out for long, and (as Chichester had predicted) abandon the project at the first sign of difficulty.¹⁵ From their point of view, the arrival of colonists represented no less of a challenge requiring negotiation than it did for the English and Scottish, and their primary objective was to retain occupation, at least, of their lands. The most effective way to safeguard their interests was to make themselves useful—if possible, indispensable—to the newcomers.¹⁶ In return for their help, the colonists explicitly promised the Irish that they

Londonderry and the London companies, 1609-1629: being a survey and other documents submitted to King Charles I, (Belfast: H.M.S.O, 1928), p.37.

- 14 Caulfeild, ‘The collection of Tyrone’s rents’, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, pp.533-4. A tension can be discerned in this period, between figures like Chichester, who had more experience of the Irish in real-life (largely in combat with them), who realised they would not give up their way of life without a fight, and those whose plans for the colony were less informed by the reality of the situation on the ground than theoretical considerations. Chichester warned in 1610 that the failure to convince the Irish that they were better off under the rule of the English than Ó Néill and Ó Dónaill had led to hostility towards the plantation. That his recommendations had been ignored was largely the result of the coming to ascendancy of figures like John Davies and his chief justice James Ley, whose plans for the colony were far more ambitious and offered less scope for native participation. Such individuals might fit D.B. Quinn’s description of ‘armchair empire builder’ (used in relation to Thomas Smith), whose plans for Ulster were fuelled by visions of Roman imperial grandeur and took little account of the realities presented by native society in Ulster. Chichester to Salisbury, 27 September 1610, SP 63-229 no.126, ff.133r-133v. Quinn, ‘Sir Thomas Smith and the Beginnings of English Colonial Theory’, p.546.
- 15 Sir Oliver St. John to Salisbury, April 21 1610, SP 63-228 no.83, f.226r. Chichester believed that, many of the undertakers, lacking the necessary military background, would be scared away by the ‘least trouble or alteration of the tymes’. Chichester to Salisbury, 27 September 1610, SP 63-229 no.126, f.133r. Chichester to Salisbury, November 1610, SP 63-229 no.135, f.174r.
- 16 As suggested above, individuals like John Davies (following in the tradition of Thomas Smith’s mistaken belief that the natives would welcome the colonists with open arms) were inclined to believe in the myth of a native underclass yearning to be freed from the tyranny of their own rulers. Describing the arrival of

would intercede with the crown on their behalf to help them stay on their lands.¹⁷

While prior services rendered to the state were no doubt a primary consideration in choosing grantees, the ability of individuals to mobilise their followers if they became disaffected towards the colony was also weighed in the balance. In some cases, this dictated the granting of lands to Irish who might not otherwise have qualified;¹⁸ in other cases, the government can be seen, throughout this period, to make allowance for individuals from traditional leading families who might otherwise have proved a potential focus for resistance.¹⁹ Aside from the native aristocracy, a certain effort was also made to neutralise the influence of the Gaelic learned classes by co-option into the plantation scheme.²⁰ The attitude of authorities towards the *aos dána*, or learned classes, is perhaps best summed up in the words of Bishop George Montgomery in relation to one such individual, Eoghan Mac Camhaoil, who he described as ‘keen witted, artful and crooked’. While such figures were clearly mistrusted on one level, it was deemed politic to win them over and, if possible, make them dependent on the plantation rather than its enemies. As Montgomery put it, ‘I have persuaded him to be of our party by ample hope of preferment,

English law in Donegal, in the shape of chief baron Edmund Pelham, Davies claimed that Pelham was welcomed by a ‘multitude that had been subject to oppression and misery [who] did reverence him as he had been a good Angel sent from heaven, and prayd him uppon their knees to returne again to minister Justice unto them’. Davies to Cecil, 1 December 1603, SP 63-215 no.114, f.261r. As seen above (pp.225-30), there is little evidence of this gratitude existing outside Davies’ mind. The less starry-eyed Chichester, as ruthlessly blunt and clear-headed an observer as he was a commander, was ultimately proven correct in his assessment of the attitude of the Irish towards the newcomers; although they appeared to ‘strayne themselves to the uttermost to gratefie’ the colonists, they were biding their time, ‘content to become tenants to anie man rather then be removed from the place of their byrth and education, hopinge [. . .] att one tyme or other to finde an opportunitie to cutt their landlords throates’. Chichester to Salisbury, November 1610, SP 63-229 no.135, f.174v.

17 Chichester to Salisbury, November 1610, SP 63-229 no.135, f.174v.

18 For example, the uncles of Féilim Rua Ó Néill who, technically, were not entitled to inherit any part of Féilim’s lands if the principle of primogeniture had been followed. See above n.89 p.206.

19 This is evident from Falkland writing in 1625 of one Conn Mac Cafairr Ó Dónaill (a son of Cafarr who had died in Rome with his brother Ruairí, the exiled earl of Tyrconnell), whose education Chichester had provided for through an annual pension, the continuance of which (as well as his residence in England) the lord deputy argued for, ‘when I consider the greatnes of his blood, and how quickly hee may make himself eminent by a multitude of dependancies, if the tymes shall happen to bee stirring’. Falkland to Lord Conway, 24 December 1625, SP 63-241 no.174, f.364r.

20 Diarmaid Ó Doibhlin has shown how those executing the plantation harnessed ‘the Gaelic literati’s usefulness as a unique repository of historical and legal knowledge’, using this knowledge to help them survey the confiscated land and identify existing boundaries and placenames. Diarmaid Ó Doibhlin, ‘The plantation of Ulster: aspects of Gaelic letters’, in Ó Ciardha and Ó Siochrú (eds.), *The plantation of Ulster*, p.200-1.

for I prefer a fawning dog to a barking one'.²¹

This co-option of native elite figures was a standard tactical move in the early years of colony-building. As Wayne Lee has remarked:

‘. . . one powerful individual, suborned or at least made cooperative by gifts and/or bribes, is much easier to deal with than a fractious, unpredictable consortium of individuals’.²²

Lest this explanation appear to place too Machiavellian an interpretation on the government’s motives, several examples exist of natives who were cultivated as allies and then disposed of when they had outlived their usefulness. Three figures in particular—Cathair Ó Dochartaigh, Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill and Dónall Ó Catháin—performed significant services for the English in the hope of reward. After the flight of the earls, however, such figures suddenly found themselves standing in the way of more grandiose plans for Ulster than merely the domination of the province through sheriffs and provost-marshalls. Under the circumstances the authorities deemed it, on balance, expedient to dispose of such allies, often through extra-legal means. Chichester admitted as much, when he wrote in 1602 that it would be:

‘. . . profetable to temporize w[ith]h [Dónall Ó Catháin] untyll the greatest worke [the overthrow of Ó Néill] be done, after w[hic]h these pettie lordes wylbe dealt w[ith]all att pleasure’.²³

21 George Montgomery; A.F.O.D. Alexander (ed.), ‘Bishop Montgomery’s survey of the bishoprics of Derry, Raphoe and Clogher’, *Analecta Hibernica*, No. 12 (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1943), p.101.

22 Lee’s essay demonstrates how this strategy was employed both in Ireland and North America: ‘A key means of extending sovereignty (as perceived by the English) was to co-opt native leadership. [. . .] There were several routes of working through the existing leadership. One was economic motivation to a selected leader—find an individual who at least appeared to be cooperative, and who already enjoyed some status or position of leadership inside the native society and then support or enhance their authority as native leaders while also cementing their allegiance to England. Often the quickest route to such influence was to militarily support a local leader in his struggle against competitors. But direct military intervention demanded a greater exertion from England. More economical in the long run were material rewards’. Wayne E. Lee, ‘Using the Natives against the Natives: Indigenes as ‘Counterinsurgents’ in the British Atlantic, 1500–1800’, in *Defence Studies*, vol.10.1, (Southgate, London: Frank Cass & Co., 2010), pp.95-6.

23 Chichester to Cecil, 20 June 1602, SP 63-211-2 no. 58, f.152r.

While it took more than mere military defeat to overthrow Ó Néill, the fact that Ó Catháin was eventually ‘dealt withal’ following that overthrow, suggests that, in his case, the government never swerved from a premeditated strategy of expedient alliance and betrayal.²⁴

The case of Cathair Ó Dochartaigh is a less clear-cut example of this kind of undeviating strategy. Assisted by the English to the leadership of the Uí Dhochartaigh, the ruling sept of Inishowen, on the death of his father in 1601, Cathair seemed well-placed, at the end of the war, to benefit from his alliance with Henry Docwra and to break free of his family’s traditional dependence on the Uí Dhónaill.²⁵ There seems to have been a genuine rapport between the young Ó Dochartaigh and Docwra; it was due to the English commander’s recommendation for his ‘love and affection’ that he received a knighthood.²⁶ Following Docwra’s departure and replacement as governor of Derry by George Pawlett in 1606, however, his position deteriorated rapidly, Pawlett belonging to a class of servitors who saw no obligation on his part to honour agreements made with Irish allies. Indeed, in the subsequent period of tension between Ó Dochartaigh and the governor, the Irish *tiarna* sought to portray himself as a loyal servant of the crown stymied by local officials who, in his own words, ‘wold rather geit a litle to themselfe then to advance the kings searvis’.²⁷

It is clear that he was still, on the eve of his rising, striving to advance his interests by co-operation with the government. He acted as a foreman to the jury which indicted the departed earls, and lobbied to be appointed to the household of the prince of Wales at court. Like Brian Mac Feidhlim Ó Néill in Clandeboyne, Ó Dochartaigh wished to secure for himself favourable terms in a colonial Ulster by serving the English. Like Ó Néill, he took up arms only when he felt this avenue had been closed off to him by the provocations of the state’s officials.²⁸ It is debatable whether Ó Dochartaigh would have fared much better if he

24 In this sense, Audrey Horning’s characterisation of the government’s treatment of Ó Catháin as ‘inconsistent’ can be seen to be incorrect. *Ireland in the Virginian sea: colonialism in the British Atlantic*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), p.187.

25 Only 14 years-old at the time of his father’s death, leadership of the *slíocht* was initially conferred by the Ó Dónaill on Cathair’s uncle, Féilim Óg. Ó Dónaill’s choice, however, angered the Mac Daibhéid family who had fostered Cathair, and they championed his right to succeed his father. Once again showing the ability of English commanders to take advantage of quarrels amongst the Irish, Docwra backed this appointment, winning over to the English side the allegiance of many followers of the Uí Dhochartaigh.

26 Docwra, ‘A narration of the services done’, p.262.

27 Cathair Ó Dochartaigh to Arthur Chichester, 4 November 1607, SP 63-222, no.169, f.231r.

28 Pawlett’s provocations included attempting to seize Ó Dochartaigh’s house and turn his wife (a daughter

had held his nerve and restrained from attacking Derry in April 1608. While his rising achieved little beyond personal revenge on Pawlett, and led to Ó Dochartaigh's death in battle at Kilmacrennan in July, aged twenty-one, it is far from certain that he could have avoided the subsequent fate of Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill and Dónall Ó Catháin even if he had continued his policy of co-operation with the government. Like Ó Dónaill and Ó Catháin, he might well have found himself languishing for years in prison no matter what his conduct, especially when it is borne in mind that Inishowen was coveted by Chichester, for whose benefit the area was excluded from the plantation project. The fact, however, that the Privy Council decided to return Inch island to him as late as April 1608, suggests that perhaps the government had not irrevocably determined on a definite course of action at this juncture, and that Ó Dochartaigh could have established some kind of position for himself in plantation Ulster if he had remained quiescent.

It is not difficult to see why Ó Dochartaigh's rising did not attract widespread support among the rump of the Gaelic elite. In the aftermath of the flight, Gaelic Ulster was split in its disposition towards armed resistance to the encroaching English state. Chichester noted that:

‘. . . such as are well affected or welthie and att their ease, are fearfull of warr, and much perplexed how to prevent or evade the future danger of their persons, and the losse of their goodes; [?] the idle and laise men, whereof the number farr exceed the former, do hope for stirres and alteracon, and so speciallie desire it’.²⁹

While the latter group constituted the majority of the native population, the elite had little

of the viscount Gormanston) against him. The decisive insult, however, was when Pawlett physically struck him, leaving him with little choice but to defend his honour. According to the Four Masters, Ó Dochartaigh would ‘rather have suffered death than live to brook such insult and dishonour, or defer or delay to take revenge for it’. Cathair Ó Dochartaigh to Arthur Chichester, 4 November 1607, SP 63-222 no.169, f.231r. John O’Donovan (ed.), *Annala Rioghachta Eireann: Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four masters*, vol.6, (Dublin: Hodges and Smith, 1856), p.2361.

²⁹ Chichester to the Privy Council, 17 September 1607, SP 63-222 no.137, f.124r. Thomas Phillips commented, on travelling through Tyrone after the flight, that the people were ‘amazed and redie to forsacke theyr houses [. . .] ther is no trust in them’. Thomas Phillips to Salisbury, 22 September 1607, SP 63-222 no.140, f.135r.

to gain from taking up arms against a government which clearly had the upper hand militarily. On the contrary, the vacuum left behind by Aodh Ó Néill was no doubt perceived as opening up advantages to certain *sleachta*—collateral branches of the Uí Néill for example, whose hostility towards the ruling branch eclipsed any fear of domination by the English.³⁰ The only significant support for Ó Dochartaigh came from Eochaidh Óg Ó hAnnluain in Armagh. Given that the latter was married to Ó Dochartaigh's sister, this alliance was most likely a reflection of the obligations of kinship than any strategic consideration.

The doubtful chances of insurrection, therefore, can have held few attractions for either Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill or Dónall Ballach Ó Catháin. Ó Dónaill, whose career up to that point had been dominated by a sense of having been deprived of his rightful position of leadership in Tyrconnel, had good reasons for believing that his efforts in the service of the crown were finally about to bear fruit.³¹ He also had every reason to proceed with caution, given the fact that he had been disappointed before in his hopes for preferment. In the aftermath of the Nine Years War, after his rivals within the Uí Dhónaill had been defeated, Niall Garbh, instead of being rewarded for his assistance to Docwra, was regarded as a decidedly inconvenient presence in the area, given his expectation that he would be set up as a ruler of the entire region in the traditional Gaelic manner. Once again drawing on the tactic of raising up rivals to prevent any one Irish figure from growing too powerful, the lord deputy wrote in 1603 of settling Aodh Rua Ó Dónaill's brother, Ruairí, in a considerable part of Tyrconnell, perceiving 'howe notable an instrument he may be made to bridle the Insolencie of Sir Neale Garvagh (w[hi]ch is growen intollerable)'.³² The

30 In 1608 the high sheriff enumerated several of these groups among the 'naturals [. . .] who hate Tyrone and his sept': the sons of Seán 'an Díomais' Ó Néill in the barony of Clogher, the descendants of Toirealach Luineach, the Sliocht Airt of Omagh, the head of the Uí Néill of Kinard, Anraí Óg, and his son Toirealach, who were killed in combat against Ó Dochartaigh's forces, leaving the infant Féilim Rua Ó Néill to share with his mother and uncles the land granted as a reward for these sacrifices in the plantation scheme. John Teighe, 'A Brief of some Things which I observed in the several Baronies of the county of Tyrone during the time that I was High Sheriff of that county in Anno 1608', in *CCM*, vol.5, pp.30-1.

31 Niall Garbh was the grandson of An Calbhach Ó Dónaill, who had ruled Tyrconnell in the 1560s, and whose imprisonment by Seán Ó Néill had allowed Aodh Rua's branch of the family to seize power for themselves. Following Aodh Rua's escape from imprisonment and his consolidation of power in Tyrconnell, Niall was obliged to co-operate with his rival throughout the 1590s. It was only with the arrival of Henry Docwra's forces on Lough Foyle that it became feasible for the pretender to challenge the ruling Ó Dónaill, and in October 1600, he and his brothers joined forces with the English in return for recognition of his lordship over Tyrconnell.

32 Once again drawing on the tactic of raising up rivals to prevent any Irish figure from growing too

conclusion of peace saw Ruairí given the title of earl of Tyrconnell, and substantial lands that Niall regarded as his entitlement.

Displeased with this rehabilitation of his rival, Niall Garbh attempted to seize the initiative by presenting the authorities with a *fait accompli* in the shape of his inauguration as The Ó Dónaill. In this, he had clearly failed to recognise the changed circumstances under which the English would no longer tolerate any sovereignty in Ulster besides the crown's. Riding into Derry, he confronted Docwra with his new title and offered to let bygones be bygones, as if he spoke from a position of strength. Events moved quickly to disabuse Niall of this notion. News having arrived from Mountjoy that he had decided to make peace with Aodh Ó Néill and 'was fullie resolved to beare noe longer with Neale Garvie', Docwra arrested Niall Garbh forthwith.³³ Ó Dónaill escaped from captivity almost immediately, however, and it is the reaction of the lord deputy to Niall's escape that is perhaps more significant than any other detail of the story: Mountjoy wrote that 'this accident falls nott out ill for the kinges servis, for he would never be made honest'.³⁴ It is clear, therefore, that the authorities were looking for a pretext to remove Niall Garbh from the scene or at least clip his wings substantially. Recapture seems to have chastened him at this juncture, for he managed to secure his release and accepted a more modest portion of lands around Castlefinn, 'which he possessed when he lived under and in amity with Hugh Rufus O'Donell'.³⁵ Such a restoration of the pre-war situation was surely bitter recompense for his support of the English and all the sacrifices this had entailed.³⁶ There was, however, little he could do. The ease with which he had been captured and recaptured revealed the extent

powerful, the lord deputy wrote in 1603 of settling Aodh Rua's brother Ruairí in a considerable part of Tyrconnell, perceiving 'howe notable an instrument he may be made to bridle the Insolencie of Sir Neale Garvagh (w[hi]ch is growen intollerable). Lord deputy and councillors at Athlone to the English privy council, 9 January 1603, SP 63-212 no.114, f.277v.

33 In fact, Docwra paused to doubt the legality of his instructions from Mountjoy, noting in his later *Narration* that it was only those who had themselves acclaimed Ó Néill who were subject to arrest, and that 'for those that looke upon them to be heads of other families, the Punishment was onelie a Penaltie of 100 marks'. While he thus wrestled with his conscience, however, news arrived of Queen Elizabeth's death. Fearing lest Niall Garbh should take advantage of the ensuing uncertainty and, as he reasoned, 'what a Blemish would it be to all my actions, if the kinge, at his first Coming in, should finde all the kingdome quiet but onelie this litle parte under my Charge', pragmatism and self-interest overruled Docwra's scruples on this occasion. Docwra, 'A narration of the services done', p.268.

34 Mountjoy to Cecil, 25 April 1603, SP 63-215 no.38, f.85r.

35 *CPRI James I*, p.272. Castlefinn: Caisleán na Finne, 'white castle'.

36 Among these sacrifices was the loss of his wife, Nuala Ní Dónaill, sister of Ruairí, who had abandoned Niall Garbh when he went over to the English in 1603, subsequently fleeing to the continent with her brothers in 1607.

of English hegemony in Ulster at that stage and the paucity of Niall's resources to combat it.

His conduct in the years that followed would suggest that he had learned the lesson that the only means by which he could further his interests was in the service of the English.³⁷ Sometimes this assistance even extended to assisting Ruairí against local rivals;³⁸ more often, however, he attempted to portray himself as a loyal servant of the crown while damaging Ruairí's reputation.³⁹ Even when referring to his assistance, however, a lack of trust in Niall Garbh comes across in English sources, as when Chichester mentions a serious injury Niall had received in service for the state which, it was added hopefully, 'he wyll hardly recover of longe tyme, if he scape w[ith] his life'.⁴⁰ The next sentence of Chichester's holds the key to understanding why Niall Garbh would never be deemed deserving of a place in colonial Ulster. Referring to those minor native figures whom Niall Garbh had helped to subdue in 1607, Chichester wrote:

'If I can satisfie these younge men w[ith] a reasonable portion of lande, they maye be preserved to good purpose to swaye the greatnes of others in those parts'.⁴¹

Given the context, it is clearly implied that Niall Garbh was among those who, aspiring to greatness, would not be satisfied with a reasonable portion, and as such were a far bigger source of concern to the authorities, notwithstanding all their efforts to make themselves useful.

37 This does not mean that he had resigned himself to being dominated by Ruairí Ó Dónaill; on the contrary, within a year he was said to have augmented his power in the region by attracting to himself many of his rival's followers and cattle, so much so that the earl of Tyrconnell had retreated to the Pale, 'very meanly followed'. John Davies to Cecil, 19 April 1604, SP 63-216 no.15, f.45v.

38 He took part, for example, in a campaign against Cafarr Óg Ó Dónaill and Niall Mac Suibhne (who were dissatisfied with the allocation of lands to them by the earl of Tyrconnell) in 1607.

39 In 1606, he informed them of the earl of Tyrconnell's part in a conspiracy with Cú Chonnacht Mag Uidhir and Aodh Ó Néill. A note by Chichester in the margins of Niall's examination, however, reveals that the lord deputy placed little trust in the integrity of his evidence and that he was at least (if not more) suspected than the figures whom he tried to discredit. 'The examination of Sir Neale O'Donnell, taken the 7th of August 1606 at the campe near Devenish', SP 63-219 no.105-i, f.78v.

40 Chichester to the Salisbury, 28 March 1607, SP 63-221 no.34, f.88v.

41 Chichester to the Salisbury, 28 March 1607, SP 63-221 no.34, f.88v.

It is in the context of Ruairí Ó Dónaill's flight that Ó Dochartaigh's rising occurred, a period in which Niall Garbh had every reason to hope for reward and little reason to embroil himself in a hopeless attack on the English at Derry. In this sense, his involvement in the rising would appear inexplicable. Some, indeed, have suggested that Niall Garbh encouraged Ó Dochartaigh to take up arms in the hope of being rewarded for helping to quell it.⁴² While such scheming is conceivable, and certainly in character, it must be stressed that absolutely no concrete proof for such a stratagem exists.⁴³ The neatness of this explanation is, moreover, problematicised by the question of why he did not offer more immediate and enthusiastic support for the government's forces when they arrived in the area, if this had been his intention from the start. The most likely explanation for this is that Niall was, as ever, playing his own game—withholding assistance in the hope that the government would grow desperate enough to grant him the coveted lordship of Tyrconnell in return for it.⁴⁴ This was, it would transpire, a foolhardy and costly gamble.

A number of local adversaries were compelled by the English to testify to Niall Garbh's involvement in the rising. One of its central figures, Féilim Rua Mac Daibhéid, asserted that Ó Dochartaigh had been persuaded by Ó Dónaill to burn Derry and massacre its

42 Aidan Clarke for example has conjectured that Niall Garbh 'calculatedly encouraged' Ó Dochartaigh in 'Plantation and the catholic question, 1603-23', in Byrne, Martin, Moody (eds.), *A New History of Ireland vol. 3*, p.197. Jonathan Bardon likewise asserts that 'it is likely that Sir Cahir was encouraged to rebel by Niall Garbh O'Donnell. Affecting to be his friend, O'Donnell hoped that by cooperating with the Crown he could be granted Inishowen', *The Plantation of Ulster*, p.102.

43 The key missing evidence is that concerning Niall Garbh's motives. While we may surmise that he was deeply resentful at the way he had been denied the prize of lordship over Tyrconnell, on the other hand, he may have felt fortunate to avoid permanent imprisonment in 1603 and to have received at least a more limited share of the spoils. It is likewise with Niall's reputed claims to autocratic power, which come down to us exclusively through English sources, primarily Docwra. See Docwra, 'A narration of the services done', p.249. We must allow for the possibility that a figure like Docwra may have either exaggerating the extent of Niall's aspirations or simply misunderstood, as many English observers did, the nuances of Gaelic lordship. Added to this layer of misunderstanding is the likelihood that Niall and Docwra spoke through an interpreter. There is simply no record directly expressing Niall's attitude towards the state in the years prior to Ó Dochartaigh's rising. All that can be said must be deduced from circumstantial evidence.

44 The truth of Niall Garbh's involvement in this rising has been examined by several historians, who have formed widely differing opinions on the matter. Seán Ó Dónaill cast considerable doubt upon the confidence with which earlier historians asserted Niall Garbh's complicity, see 'Sir Niall Garbh O'Donnell and the Rebellion of Sir Cahir O'Doherty', in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.3, no.9, (Dublin University Press, 1942), pp.34-38. F. W. Harris on the other hand argued that 'the contention that Niall Garbh had no part in Sir Cahir O'Doherty's rebellion is not tenable', 'The rebellion of Sir Cahir O'Doherty and its legal aftermath', in *Irish Jurist*, vol.15, (Dublin: Jurist Publication Company, 1980), pp.298-325.

inhabitants.⁴⁵ Other witnesses, such as his mother-in-law Iníon Dubh (the mother of Aodh Rua and Ruairí Ó Dónaill), gave similarly damning testimony, although much of this must be open to suspicion as coming from individuals who had every reason to corroborate any trumped up charge that would assist the English in getting him out of their way.⁴⁶ What is less relevant here than the question of Niall Garbh's guilt is the government's determination to use the uncertainty surrounding his loyalty to have him removed from the scene. His (at most, indirect) support for Ó Dochartaigh would seem, under the circumstances of the time, insufficient as an explanation for the abortive trial and years of imprisonment which followed. His lack of zeal in prosecuting Ó Dochartaigh was deliberately construed as treasonous, but in this he was no more disloyal or loyal than many of those who would subsequently be regarded with favour by the government.

As has been seen above, minor figures like Cafarr Óg Ó Dónaill and Niall Mac Suibhne could take up arms against the state and almost immediately afterwards be pardoned and granted lands if such actions served the interests of extending English sovereignty. The government could have used evidence of the complicity of others in Ó Dochartaigh's rising to have them imprisoned, but chose not to. Dónall Ó Dochartaigh, brother of Cathair, attested to the involvement of Brian Crosach Ó Néill (see below pp.311-15) in the plot, as did Féilim Rua Mac Daibhéid.⁴⁷ Such evidence was flimsy indeed, and yet it would be on equally flimsy grounds that Dónall Ó Catháin was locked up indefinitely. Brian Crosach, on the other hand, came to be rewarded with lands in the plantation scheme. Toirealach Mac Éinrí Ó Néill of the Fewes was regarded with particular favour by the crown during this period, his lands being exempt from those granted to Aodh Ó Néill in the post-war settlement, and subsequently in the plantation scheme. At one stage, however, he is referred to in the state papers as 'blouddy an enemy as any man amongst them all', and the state had sufficient evidence of his past complicity with the earl of Tyrone, his half-brother,

45 Examination of Phelim Reagh [McDavitt], 3 August 1608, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.2.

46 Iníon Dubh's must be regarded as suspect for several reasons; she was the mother of his bitterest rivals in the Uí Dhónaill dynasty. Indeed, Niall Garbh killed one of her sons, Mánas. Of more immediate relevance in the context of Ó Dochartaigh's rising is the fact that Niall, at its breaking out, drove her from her castle at Mongavlin and occupied it. Examination of John Lynnshull, Sir Neale O'Donnell's secretary, 15 June 1608, in *CSPI James I, 1606-1608*, p.564.

47 The voluntary confession of Daniel, the brother of Sir Cahir O'Dogherty, June 1608, in *CSPI James I, 1606-1608*, p.583; Examination of Phelim Reaghe [McDavitt], 3 August 1608, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.3.

to justify his exclusion from favour if it had wished to do so.⁴⁸

The reason why Brian Crosach and Toirealach Mac Éinrí were deemed reconcilable to a colonial Ulster has much to do with their willingness to ‘draw bludd on their neighbors’⁴⁹ in order to prove their loyalty and burn their bridges with possible Irish allies.⁵⁰ This in itself, however, does not explain the difference between the government’s attitude to them and Niall Garbh. While the latter had showed fatal inactivity in coming to the government’s assistance in 1608, he had, as he argued himself, demonstrated his willingness to fight his fellow Irish on behalf of the government in the past.⁵¹ But this was not the sole benchmark by which an ally was judged worth retaining or not. There were in fact two kinds of native allies. This can be inferred from a remark made by Mountjoy in 1600 that they would make use of ‘rebeles of the most stirring sorte thatt would make good rodds to scourge these traytors and after to be throwen into the fyer themselves’.⁵² Niall Garbh belonged to this latter category, destined to be thrown into the fire after he had served his purpose, because there was a conviction that he would never be truly reconciled to life as a landowner in County Donegal, as opposed to a sovereign in Tyrconnell. It is this Mountjoy had meant when he expressed the belief that he ‘would never be made honest’. This conviction led him to express satisfaction at his revolt in 1603, which would allow the state to renege its promises to him.⁵³

The arrest and trial of Niall Garbh in the wake of the 1608 rising can be seen, therefore, as a continuation of the government’s strategy of removing former allies, this time by pseudo-legal means, who were of too-great stature to easily integrate into colonial society. John Davies was quite candid about the manipulation of the judicial process involved, and his

48 ‘Certayne notes that Owen Mack Hugh Mack Neale Moore ONeale desireth to be made knowen unto her most excellent ma[jes]tie’, 17 July 1600, SP 63-207-4 no.22, f.57v.

49 The phrase was that of George Carey in a letter to Cecil, 21 May 1601, SP 63-208-2 no.86, f.237r.

50 After he had abandoned Ó Néill’s cause, Toirealach Mac Éinrí was described by Mountjoy as assisting in the campaign of creating famine conditions amongst the Irish by ‘cuttinge downe their corn and [?] w[ith] his owne hands, and falls out w[ith] every boddy thatt will profess to do more for the Queen than hee’. Mountjoy to Cecil, 7 August 1601, SP 63-209-1 no.7, f.15r. Notwithstanding the evidence that Brian Crosach had flirted with the idea of joining Ó Dochartaigh, Toby Caulfeild reported in 1610 that he had been ‘retained in dutiful obedience’ by a timely abatement of rent. Caulfeild, ‘The collection of Tyrone’s rents’, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.539.

51 Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill to Salisbury, 30 May 1610, SP 63-229 no.101, f.49r.

52 Mountjoy to Cecil, 4 July 1600, in SP 63-207-4 no.5, f.23r.

53 Docwra recalled being told by Mountjoy to ‘sett downe in writing the uttermost of what I could charge him withall’. Docwra, ‘A narration of the services done’, p.274.

comment—after having failed to secure a guilty verdict against Ó Dónaill—that he ‘must bee kept in prison till the colonies of English and Scottish bee planted in Tirconnell’ strongly suggests that the prosecution had more to do with Niall Garbh being perceived as an obstacle to plantation rather than any collaboration that might actually have taken place with Ó Dochartaigh.⁵⁴ The difficulty of extracting a guilty verdict against Niall led the colonial government to abandon its prosecution of Dónall Ó Catháin until further instructions came from London. The grounds on which Ó Catháin had been accused of complicity with Ó Dochartaigh were even flimsier. That Davies and Chichester knew this is palpable in their letters.⁵⁵ The events that led up to his arrest and imprisonment have, with hindsight, a kind of inevitable monotony to them.

Dónall Ballach (the freckled) Ó Catháin had been Ó Néill’s most powerful *uirrí*, ruling an area referred to as Ciannaicta or Oireacht Uí Chatháin, encompassing the north of modern-day County Londonderry between the Bann and Foyle.⁵⁶ The relationship of Ó Catháin to Ó Néill was analogous to that between Ó Dochartaigh and Ó Dónaill except that, whereas Cathair Ó Dochartaigh had been freed from his subservient position by the detachment of Inishowen from what was traditionally understood as Tyrconnell, the position of Ó Catháin as a dependent of Ó Néill was confirmed by the peace agreement the earl of Tyrone made at Mellifont. This is despite promises made to Ó Catháin when he joined the English that he would be recognised as a landowner independent of Ó Néill once the war was over. The pattern will by now be familiar: promises were made by Docwra in order to win over the

54 The jury (whose composition Niall objected to) was starved over a weekend in order to coerce them into finding Ó Dónaill guilty. When they nevertheless refused, Davies suspended the trial in order to avoid a verdict of not guilty being returned, ‘pretending that I had more evidence to give for the King, but that I found the Jury so weak w[ith] long fasting that they were not able to attend that service’, and recommending that Niall either be removed to England and tried there, or simply locked up indefinitely without trial, as he subsequently was. Davies to Salisbury, 27 June 1609, SP 63-227 no.89, ff.11r-12v.

55 Chichester to Salisbury, 31 October 1609, S.P. 63-277 no.150, f.157r.

56 The name Ciannaicta derived from an early Irish population group who had lived in the area prior to the Cineál Eóghain, whom the Uí Chatháin were a branch of. The name is preserved in the barony of Keenaght. An English observer wrote around 1600 that ‘O’Chane is cheefest of O’Neils Uraughts and createth him O’Neile by casting a shooe over his heade upon a hill in the county of Tyrone [Tullyhogue], a place allwaies assigned for that purpose’. John Dymmok, ‘A Treatise of Ireland’, in *Tracts relating to Ireland: printed for the Irish archaeological society*, vol.2, (Dublin: Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society, 1843), p.25. Such was Ó Catháin’s military importance to Ó Néill that he privately admitted that Dónall Ballach Ó Catháin’s coming to terms with the English had broken the back of his own resistance, George Montgomery, Bishop of Derry to Salisbury, 1 July 1607, SP 63-222 no.97, ff.14r-14v.

Irish ruler, and Docwra was later compelled to break them at the insistence of Mountjoy.⁵⁷ After Mountjoy's departure, however, Chichester and Davies oversaw a gradual shift in practice—if not declared policy—by which the standing of Ó Néill was to be curtailed to the full extent allowable by the aforementioned agreements. Ó Néill was to argue that these measures contravened them.⁵⁸ As a neighbour of the earl, who had already shown his willingness to loosen the traditional bonds of allegiance to his overlord, Dónall Ó Catháin found himself perfectly placed to aid the government in this endeavour.

It was now claimed that Ó Néill had inherited in Ó Catháin's territory only 'a cheefry of certen cowes and rising out of men, and was not owner of the land in Demeane'.⁵⁹ Stoked by the authorities, the dispute between Ó Catháin and Ó Néill grew more intense, culminating in a heated argument at the council table in Dublin, where they had come for arbitration of their dispute in June 1607.⁶⁰ This arbitration was referred to London for resolution, where the prospect of being arrested was likely to have been one of the main factors that prompted Ó Néill's escape to the continent shortly afterwards.⁶¹ Just like Ó Dochartaigh and Ó Dónaill, Ó Catháin's prospects must have seemed bright at this juncture, now that his (apparently) chief rival in the north had fled. Unfortunately, he was mistaken about the identity of his chief rival. While Ó Néill was no doubt an overbearing

57 'Articles of agreem[en]t betweene Sir Henry Dockwra knight gov[er]nor of Loughfoile and O Cahan', 27 July 1602, SP 63-211-1 no.98, f.268r. On being asked to go back on his word to Ó Catháin, Docwra is said to have asked the lord deputy: 'how shall I looke this man in the face when I shall knowe myselfe guilty directlie to have falsified my word with him?' Mountjoy is said to have replied: 'Hee is but a drunken ffellowe [. . .] and soe base, that I doe not thinke but in the secreete of his hearte, it will better Content him to be soe then otherwise, besides hee is able neither to doe good nor hurte, & wee must have a Care to the Publique good, & give Contentment to my lord of Tyrone'. When Docwra broke the news of this about-turn to Ó Catháin shortly afterwards, he reportedly 'bad the Devill take all English Men & as many as put their trust in them'. Docwra, 'A narration of the services done', pp.274, p.277.

58 Aodh Ó Néill to the King, 26 May 1607, SP 63-221 no.56, f.139r.

59 'Chieffy' was a word used by English writers to signify the tribute and rents paid by Gaelic *uirrí* to their overlords. Davies to Salisbury, 1 July 1607, SP 63-222 no.95, f.7r. For discussion of the reversal of Davies' position after the flight, when it became politic to argue that Ó Néill's subordinates *had* been his tenants, see above n.89 p.206.

60 The conflict was made all the more acute by the difficulties Ó Catháin had in paying his rent to Ó Néill, who, in lieu of this, seized, 'in a violent manner [. . .] a great distresse of cattle' from him in October 1606, as Davies reported, 'the first notorious violent act that the earl hath donne since he was received to grace'. Davies to Salisbury, 12 November 1606, SP 63-219 no.132, ff.173r-173v. Ó Néill's growing frustration can be gauged by his snatching a paper from Ó Catháin's hands and tearing it up during the aforesaid council meeting. Docwra, 'A narration of the services done', p.284; Deputy and Council to the Privy Council, 26 June 1607, SP 63-221 no.88, ff.214r-215r.

61 Information relayed back to Spain by its ambassador in London would suggest that Ó Néill's fears were well-grounded. Micheline Kerney Walsh, *Destruction by Peace: Hugh O'Neill after Kinsale: Glanconcadhain 1602-Rome 1616*, (Armagh: Cumann Seanchais Ard Mhacha, 1986), p.130.

neighbour, the state threatened Ó Catháin's very existence as the major landowner in the area. Like Ó Dónaill, he does not appear to have perceived that the removal of his rival left him with comparatively little to recommend him to the government as a useful ally. Instead, he behaved as if his position was much stronger than it actually was, ignoring summonses by the government to answer questions about the flight, or to attend a commission for governing the north. He also found himself in dispute with bishop George Montgomery about the Church of Ireland claiming rents on his land and expelled the bishop's rent-collectors.⁶² While it might conceivably be argued that, like Ó Dochartaigh, Ó Catháin might have played his hand more cautiously at this point and made himself amenable to the government's plans for Ulster, it appears far more likely that they were already seeking a pretext to arrest him.

While plans for a colony by the London companies in the area had yet to crystallise, it is clear that more general plans for colonisation were already in existence before Ó Dochartaigh's rising.⁶³ To allow Ó Catháin to claim all the lands he had been granted in the agreement with Docwra in 1602 would prove an obstacle to the building of a colony in the area. It was acknowledged by officials that the only way to render it void was through his attainder.⁶⁴ It is vital to remember that Ó Catháin was arrested in February 1608, two months before the rising, yet the state still managed to contrive accusations of his involvement in it. The prominent part played by his brother, Seán Carrach (the scabby), was the chief means by which the state implicated Dónall Ballach. Once Seán was arrested and interrogated, he claimed that his brother, around Christmas 1607, had encouraged him to gather men and arms in preparation for Ó Néill's imminent return from exile and 'moved and procured' him into rebellion.⁶⁵ There are several possible explanations for Seán

62 Casway, 'The decline and fate of Dónal Ballagh O'Cahan', p.53.

63 Within weeks of the flight Chichester was advising that the king 'assume the countreys into his possession and protection; divide the landes amongst the inhabitantes, to everie man of note or good desert, so much as he can convenientlie stocke and manure by himself and his tenantes and followers, and so much more as by conjecture he shalbe able to stocke and manure for five years to com[e]; and bestow the rest upon servitors and men of worth here; and w[i]thal to bringe in colonies of civile people of England and Scotlande, at his ma[jes]t[y]'s pleasure, w[i]th condicion to build castels or stone houses upon their landes'. Chichester to the Privy Council, 17 September 1607, SP 63-222 no.137, f.125v.

64 Chichester wrote in 1608 that Ó Catháin had been promised 'the whole countrie (the castle of Annogh [Enagh] w[i]th a good quantitie of landes thereunto annexed, and the Bishop's and churche's rights excepted)'. Arthur Chichester, 'Certaine noates of Remembrance', September 1608, SP 63-225 no.225, f.111v.

65 This testimony seems suspect for several reasons. Firstly, there is the obvious fact that joining forces with Ó Néill was the last thing on Ó Catháin's mind; given their recent quarrel he had no incentive to

Carrach's accusations, none of which suggest that Dónall Ballach was actively in league with Ó Dochartaigh.⁶⁶ Even more instrumental in Ó Catháin's downfall was another brother, Mánas, who made even more extravagant accusations in November 1608, claiming that Dónall Ballach was secretly in league with Ó Néill and had intended to flee with the earls the year before, being prevented from doing so only by the absence of the ferryman to cross the Foyle on the appointed day.⁶⁷ For Ó Catháin to desire Ó Néill's return was, as has been seen, highly unlikely, but Mánas, unlike Seán Carrach, was rewarded for his testimony, receiving lands amounting to 2000 acres along the east bank of the River Faughan.⁶⁸ Clearly Mánas was felt to be modest enough in his landed ambitions to be allowed to live only a few kilometres from such a vital settlement as Derry. While Dónall would not be content with 'two partes of that country', Chichester wrote in 1608, Mánas should, the lord deputy argued, be rewarded for his loyalty.⁶⁹

welcome his return. Secondly, Dónall and his brother had been estranged for years; although Seán's 'voluntarie confession' recognises this inconsistency (claiming that Dónall had suddenly sent for him and 'desired him to bee frends'), this sudden reconciliation is left unexplained. 'The state of the cause touching Sir Donell Ochane', October 1609, SP 63-227 no.150a, f.163r.

- 66 They may be what Jerrold Casway has referred to as 'completely unfounded [. . .] nothing more than post-flight manoeuvres aimed at discrediting significant northern leaders'. Even if the first part of that assessment is not entirely true, the second part is undoubtedly so. It may be that Dónall's failure to discipline his brother's woodkerne activities was deliberately construed as abetting them. In January 1608, John Davies wrote testily to London of a 'base brother' of Dónall (most likely Seán) 'who doth play Robin Hood in his cuntry and is, as wee hear, countenanced by him'. It is also possible that Dónall *did* encourage his brother's activities, but that he did so for similar reasons that Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill is said to have encouraged Ó Dochartaigh; namely, in the hope of seeing him arrested and ridding himself of a rival. It may also be that these accusations were actually made as they are recorded in the sources, and that the already-condemned Seán was attempting to bring to the scaffold with him a brother for whom he nursed a bitter resentment. Casway, 'The decline and fate of Dónal Ballagh O'Cahan', p.53. Davies to Salisbury, 6 January 1608, SP 63-223 no.2, f.6v.
- 67 'The state of the cause touching Sir Donell Ochane', October 1609, SP 63-227 no.150a, f.164r.
- 68 The agreement made by Jo: Rowley and Tristram Berisford Agentes for the Cittie of London, with the Freeholders of Colrayne the 16th of Auguste 1611, 'Ulster Plantation Papers', in *Analecta Hibernica*, vol.8, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1938), pp.211-2.
- 69 Arthur Chichester, 'Certaine noates of Rememberance', September 1608, SP 63-225 no.225, ff.111v-112r. The 'loyalty' of Mánas extended to passing on to Chichester a letter written to him from Dónall in 1610 begging him to 'perform a brotherly part to gain yourself a loving brother' and come to England to sue for his release. Dónall further pleaded with his brother not to be tempted into betraying him by the promise of small amounts of land from the English. He argued that the parcels of land given to figures such as Toirealach Mac Airt Ó Néill and Brian Mac Cú Chonnacht Mag Uidhir were paltry compared to what Mánas had been offered by him. Dónall Ó Catháin to his brother Mánas, 1 June 1610, in *CSPI James I, 1608-1610*, pp.504-5. Mánas was however, by 1627, disaffected enough to be in contact with his two sons in Spanish service in the Netherlands about a planned invasion led by Seán Mac hAodha Ó Néill (Tyrone's heir), and was considered by the latter to be the 'onely principall man on whom he relyed to take the cittye and countye of Derrye'. The examinacion of Brian McDonnoghho Braddaugh O'Haggan alias O Hogan, taken before me on the 17 day of February 1626[27], S.P. 63-244 no.582, f.86r.

What is once again most evident is not the murky details of Dónall Ballach's alleged treason, but the determination of the government to interpret his actions as grounds on which to imprison him, and the willingness of local contenders to feed the state's appetite for incriminating evidence. The failure to convict Niall Garbh Ó Dónaill convinced John Davies that it would be best not to proceed with the case against Ó Catháin. Like Ó Dónaill, he was instead imprisoned indefinitely without trial, first in Dublin and then (after an escape attempt in February 1609) moved to the Tower of London, where he died in 1616. He was never charged with a crime. A letter accompanying Ó Catháin on his transfer to England by Chichester, who had written of the necessity of removing Dónall, summed him up as one who 'hath ever byne reputed a man trewe of his worde, valeant but unactive', and that the accusations were 'more probable' against Niall Garbh than himself. It was thus strongly hinted that the charges had been trumped up in order to effect his removal. Chichester's choice of the word 'unactive' is also interesting in this context, in that it implies that, even if he had not taken any active steps against the government, the definition of treachery had grown so broad as to encompass failure to actively help the government against its native enemies.⁷⁰ In such an atmosphere, almost everyone could be construed as guilty if they stood in the way of the plantation.

Thus were Ó Dochartaigh, Ó Dónaill and Ó Catháin deemed undeserving of a place in the new colonial dispensation. The perceived potential of these individuals to disrupt the government's plans for a colony in Ulster doomed them to exclusion from those plans. Those members of the Gaelic elite who remained, therefore, were judged by plantation planners to be of lesser stature in comparison, locally-influential enough for the granting of lands to induce them to act as leaders of a compliant native population in the new colonial order, but harmless enough to make them unlikely leaders of resistance. That the Irish understood this is evident from the elegy written in 1626 for Niall Garbh, which contended that the flower of the Gaelic ruling elite (the tall trees) had been eliminated in Ulster prior to the plantation, leaving behind only lesser figures (the smaller hazel trees).

70 Niall Garbh's son, Neachtain Ó Dónaill, who was sent into imprisonment in England along with his father and Ó Catháin was said by Chichester to have committed no crime ('he hath done no harme neither is he charged with anie') beyond being 'as proude spireted as his father'. Chichester to Salisbury, 31 October 1609, S.P. 63-227 no.150, f.157r. Chichester is cited by Jerrold Cassway as writing that Ó Catháin had 'never' been a man of his word, but the manuscript clearly reads 'ever'. Cassway, 'The decline and fate of Dónal Ballagh O'Cahan', p.55.

Leth Mogha déis na healbha
tarrthaidh tuisle a creidemhna,
leth Cuinn s as crainn do tesgadh
ni caill fa thtuinn tarrthasdar.

Leith Mogha sustained a stagger in its glory by the loss of the
princes; it was in Leith Cuinn the trees were cut down, nor was it
the hazels which fell to the ground.⁷¹

This less-threatening residue of the elite constituted figures like Mánas Ó Catháin, or individuals such as those cited by Dónall Ballach in his letter to his brother: Toirealach Mac Airt Ó Néill (grandson of Toirealach Luineach) and Brian Mag Uidhir, brother of the Cú Chonnacht who was instrumental in arranging Ó Néill's flight. Abandoning any traditional aspiration to sovereignty over their followers, they accepted a place as landowners in colonial Ulster. It will be noted, however, that in the long term, many of these figures—seeing their economic fortunes decline over the years and hemorrhaging lands to more successful colonist neighbours—ultimately shared a similar fate to the ‘undeserving’ natives, in that it became clear that plantation Ulster held no place for them in the long term. Seeing themselves as ultimately destined for the same fate as the latter, albeit by means of economic forces rather than formal government scheming, their desperation was channeled into the taking up of arms in 1641. In this sense, the following case studies will illustrate that a hard and fast distinction between ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’ Irish is, in this sense, problematic.

The ‘deserving Irish’ of Dungannon and Tyranny: a case study

The ‘deserving Irish’ moniker may also be questioned if it suggests that the native grantees were pleased with the proportions allotted them. Instead of being based on what

71 Mac an Bhaird, ‘Bean do lamhaigheadh Leith Cuinn’, in Walsh (ed.), *Gleanings*, pp.27-52. The division of the island into Leath Cuinn (Conn’s Half, the north) and Leath Moga (Mugh’s half, the south) was believed by the Irish to date from its partition among two legendary heroes, Conn Cétchathach (‘of the hundred battles’), from whom the Connachta and Uí Néill dynasties were believed to descend, and Eoghan Mór (also known as Mug Nuadat, from whom the Eóganachta, based around Cashel, claimed descent), who defeated Conn at the battle of battle of Maigh Nuadat in 123, and compelled him to cede the southern half of the island to him.

administrators believed the Irish should feel about it, however, an understanding of the native grantees' experience of colonisation in Ulster should be based on what the evidence suggests was the reality of living in colonial Ulster as a native Irish landowner. To further this understanding, this chapter will therefore move the focus from broader themes to a close examination of the experience of native grantees in Dungannon and Tyranny, who are illustrated in the maps on the following pages.

The first group of grantees examined here offer immediate evidence that the award of lands was not unequivocally welcomed by the Irish. These were the *sleachta* who had held hereditary military and administrative positions under The Ó Néill in the area: the Uí Choinne, Uí hÁgáin, Uí Dhonnaile, Uí Dhoibhilin and Mic Dhónaill. Several members of the first two septs refused to accept portions of land when the plantation commissioners arrived in Tyrone in 1610. Davies noted their preference:

‘. . . to bee tenants at will, to the servitors, or others who had competent quantities of land to receive them, then to bee freeholders to his m[ajes]tie; of such small parcels, for which they should bee compelled to serve in Juries and spend doble the yearly vawew thereof at Assizes and Sessions’.⁷²

Davies went on to ascribe this to a natural desire on the part of these groups to be followers rather than become part of the native landed gentry which the colony sought to establish. While there was no doubt a great deal of flippancy in the remark, the status which these *sleachta* had enjoyed in Gaelic Ulster may have played a role in their reluctance to accept the small parcels of land on offer. The Uí Choinne and Uí hÁgáin had been the chief lieutenants of the Ó Néill in Tyrone since the thirteenth century, when the Uí Néill prevailed over their chief rivals, the Mic Lochlainn.⁷³ Unlike the *uirrithe*, these groups were not independent rulers paying tribute to the Ó Néill, but inhabited his *lucht tighe* (people of the household) lands, monopolising a number of hereditary roles as administrators of Ó Néill's territory over the following centuries. An Ó Coinne, for example, fulfilled the role of

⁷² Davies to Salisbury, 24 September 1610, SP 63-229, no.125a, f.129v.

⁷³ The *Ceart Uí Néill* assigned to the Uí Choinne a two-thirds share, and to the Uí hÁgáin one third, of the profits assigned to the two septs, on account of the presence of two Uí Choinne and one Ó hÁgáin at the killing of Mac Lochlainn in battle. Ó Doibhlin (ed.), ‘Ceart Uí Néill’, pp.324, 345, 357.

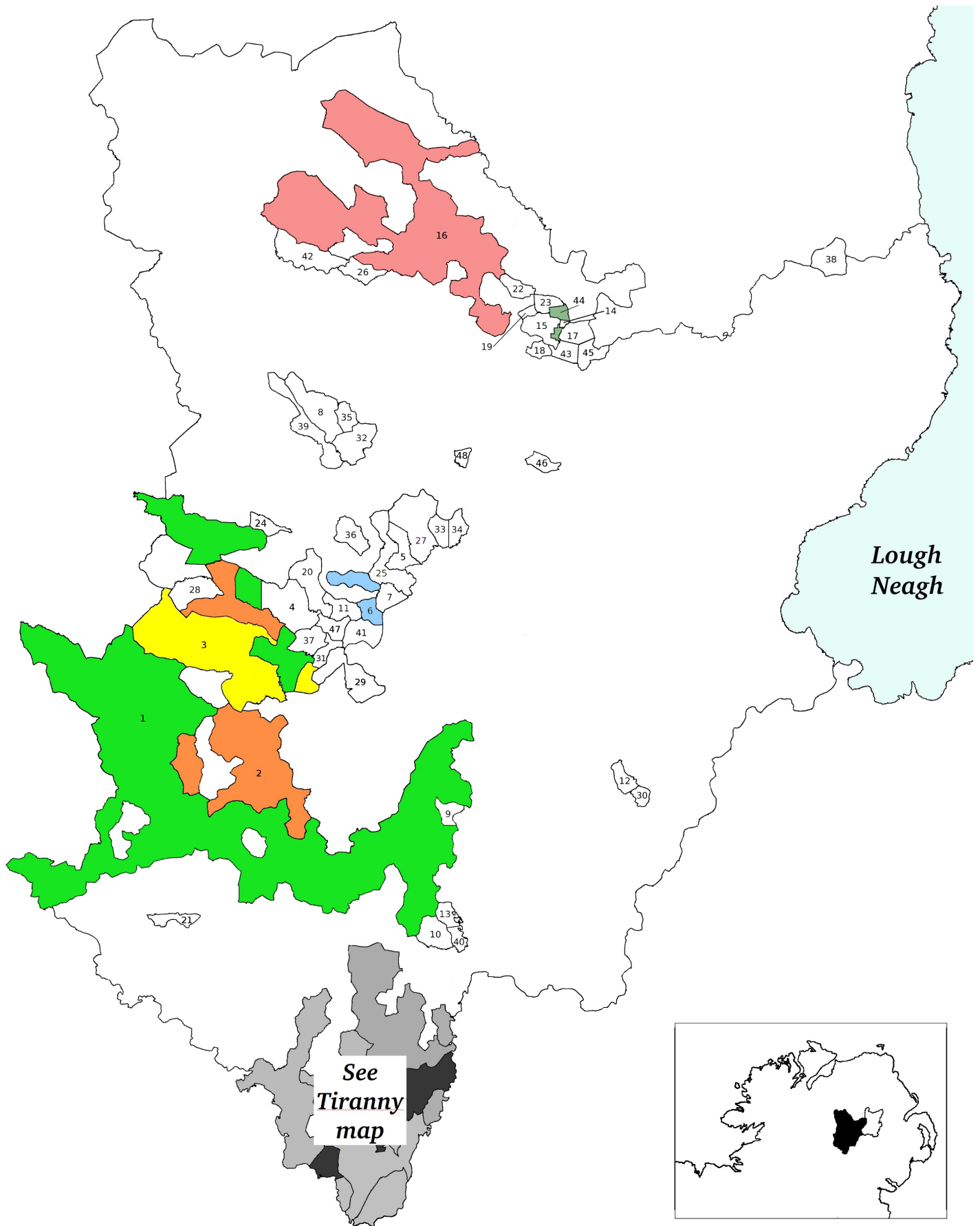


Figure 15. Dungannon: Irish plantation grantees

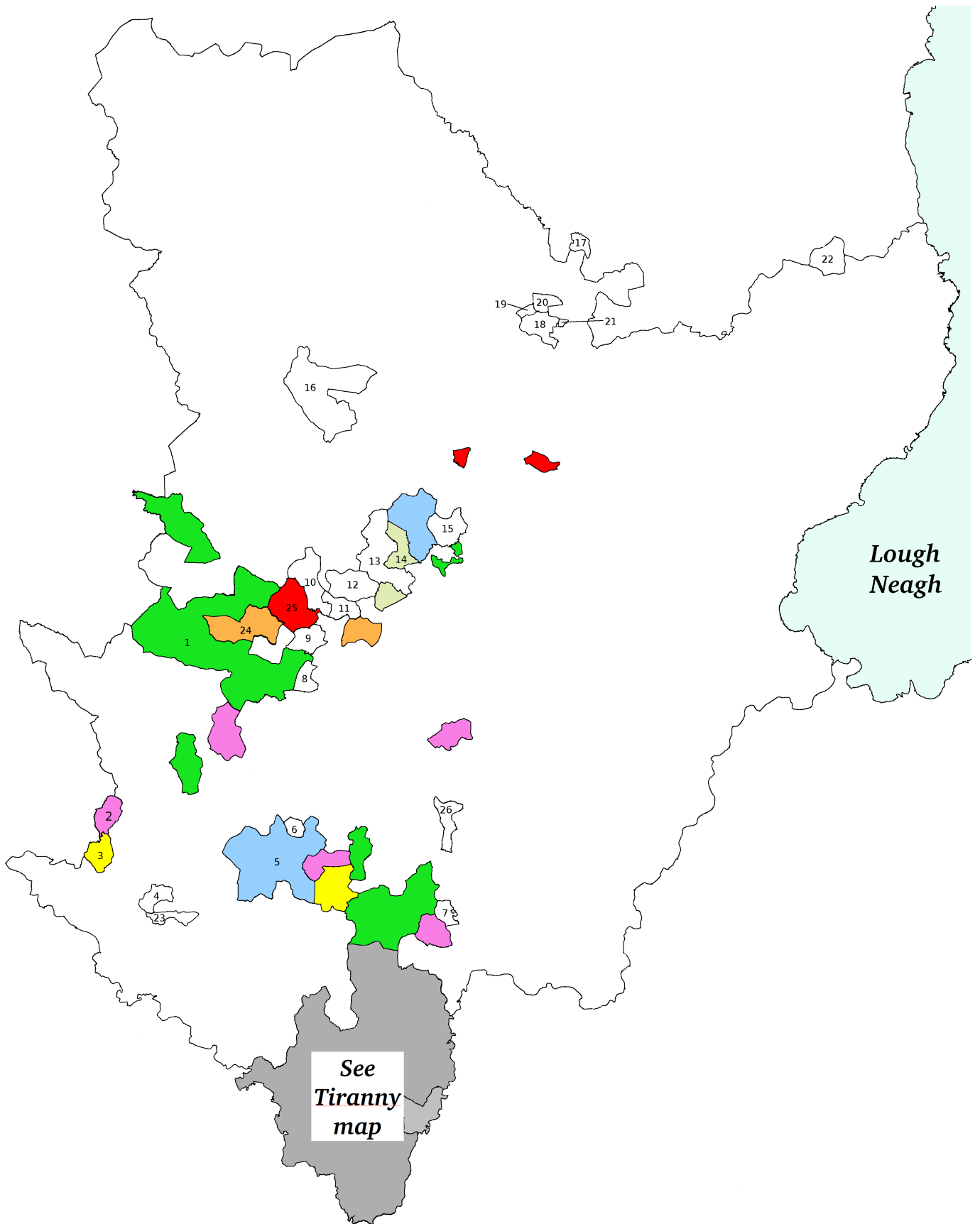


Figure 16. Dungannon: Irish landowners, 1641.

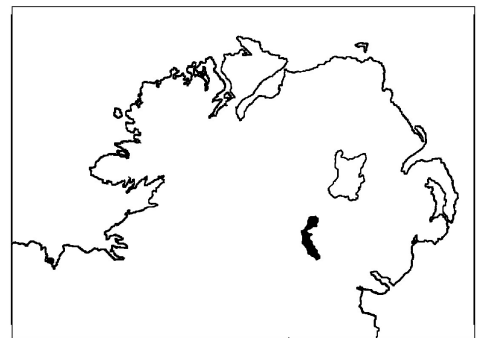
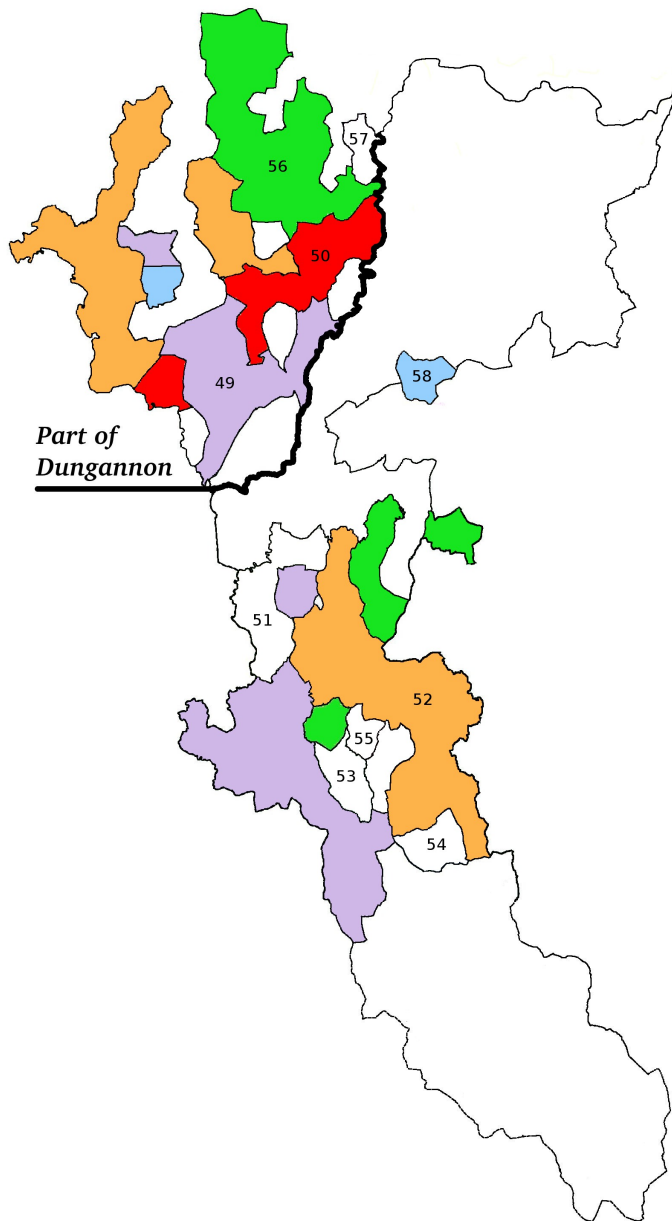


Figure 17. Tyranny: Irish plantation grantees.

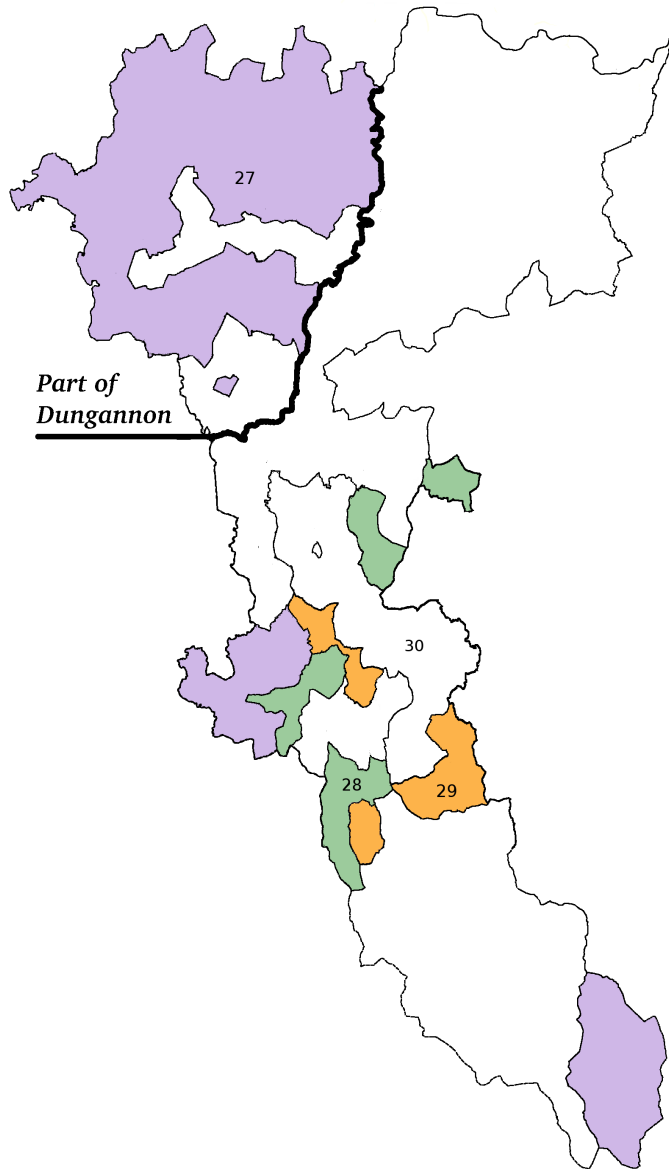


Figure 18. Tiranny: Irish landowners, 1641.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Dungannon barony, Tyrone Irish plantation grantees (figure 15) The area shown in the map actually represents the Scots undertaker precinct of 'Mountjoy' as well as the native/servitor precinct of Dungannon. So many Irish grantees received <i>bailte bó</i> in the former, however, that it is included within Dungannon here. | |
| 1 | Toirealach Mac Airt Ó Néill |
| 2 | Niall Mac Airt Ó Néill |
| 3 | Brian Mac Airt Ó Néill |
| 4 | Robert Hovendon |
| 5 | Dónall Mac Seáin na Mallacht Ó Néill |
| 6 | Conn Buí Ó Néill |
| 7 | Aodh Mac Dónaill Ó Néill |
| 8 | Cormac Mac Con Midhe |
| 9 | Seinicín Ó Daimhín |
| 10 | Anraí Óg Ó Néill |
| 11 | Brian and Niall Ruadh Ó Néill |
| 12 | Art Mac Ruairí Ó Néill |
| 13 | Art Mac Airt Ó Néill |
| 14 | Féilim Ó Mealláin |
| 15 | Seán Mac Dónaill Gruama Ó Donnaile |
| 16 | Brian Crosach Ó Néill |
| 17 | Seán Rua Ó Néill |
| 18 | Séamus Mac Giolla Seanáin |
| 19 | Anraí Mac Néill Mac Airt Ó Néill |
| 20 | Éamann Óg Ó hÁgáin |
| 21 | Feardorcha Ó hÁgáin |
| 22 | Féilim Buí Ó hÁgáin |
| 23 | Niall Ó Coinne |
| 24 | Tadhg Mac Éamainn Ó hÁgáin |
| 25 | Séamus Ó Siail |
| 26 | Aodh Gruama Ó Maolchalann |
| 27 | Eoghan Rua Ó Coinne |
| 28 | Bartholomew Owen |

| | |
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| 29 | Giolla Easpuig Mac Dónaill |
| 30 | Seán Mac Lochlainn Ó Donnaile |
| 31 | Eoghan Ó Corra |
| 32 | Brian Ó Doibhilin |
| 33 | Feardorcha Mac Cathaoir Ó Mealláin |
| 34 | Séamus Carrach Ó Donnaile |
| 35 | Eoghan Óg Mac Eoghain Mac Aibhistín Ó hÁgáin |
| 36 | Eoghan Ó hÁgáin |
| 37 | Seán Mac Aodha Mac an Deagánaigh Ó Donnaile |
| 38 | Féilim Gruama Mac Néill Carraigh Ó Néill |
| 39 | Lochlann Ó hÁgáin |
| 40 | Feardorcha Mac Brian Carraigh Ó Néill |
| 41 | Ránall Mac Dónaill |
| 42 | Aodh Mac Camhaoil |
| 43 | Aodh Mac Aodha Meirgeach Ó Néill |
| 44 | Máire Ní Néill |
| 45 | Toirealach Óg Ó Garmaile |
| 46 | Ruairí Ó Garmaile |
| 47 | Aodh Gruama Ó hÁgáin |
| 48 | Toirealach Óg Mac Briain Ó Néill |
| Tiranny barony, Armagh Irish plantation grantees (figure 17) The small barony of Tiranny was one of the areas officially exempt from the plantation project, much of which was granted to the family of Anraí Óg Ó Néill and his son Toirealach, who both died in 1608 fighting for the English against Ó Dochartaigh's forces. | |
| 49 | Féilim Rua Ó Néill (granted to his mother Caitrín from 1613-23 until his coming of age) |
| 50 | Caitriona Ní Néill |
| 51 | Toirealach Óg Ó Néill |
| 52 | Brian Mac Éinrí Ó Néill |
| 53 | Brian Mac Néill Rua Ó Néill |
| 54 | Niall Ó Néill |

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| 55 | Séarlas Ó Néill |
| 56 | Conn Buí Ó Néill |
| 57 | Aodh Ó Néill |
| 58 | Anraí Ó Néill |
| <p>This map has been produced by identifying the modern-day townlands with those granted to native plantation grantees, listed in the <i>CPRI Ireland, James I</i>. Reference has also been made to the lists in Hill, <i>An historical account of the Plantation in Ulster</i>, pp.316-22.</p> <p>None of the <i>bailte bó</i> granted to the following individuals in Dungannon could be identified: Muirteartach Ó Coinne ('Tanagh' and 'Dirrie') Conn Mac Toirealaigh Ó Néill ('Corboy') Féilim Óg Ó Maolchraoibhe ('Ballinemucky') Ruairí Ó Garmaile ('Killegewill')</p> <p>Grantees who possessed non-contiguous <i>bailte bó</i> have been assigned a colour.</p> | |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Dungannon barony Irish landowners, 1641 (figure 16) | |
| 1 | Toirealach Mac Airt Ó Néill |
| 2 | Niall Mac Coinne Mac Cathail Ó Coinne |
| 3 | Dónall Mac Eoghain Mac Cathail Ó Coinne |
| 4 | Muirteartach Ó Coinne |
| 5 | Toirealach Gruama Ó Coinne |
| 6 | Niall Mac Airt Ó Néill |
| 7 | Cormac Mac Airt Ó Néill |
| 8 | Brian Mac Airt Ó Néill |
| 9 | Seán Mac Aodha Mac an Deagánaigh Ó Donnaile |
| 10 | Eoghan Mac Éamainn Óig Ó hÁgáin |
| 11 | Caitriona Ní Néill |

| | |
|----|------------------------------------------------------|
| 12 | Connlaodh (Conn Buí?) Ó Néill |
| 13 | Toby Ó Siall |
| 14 | Dónall Ó Néill |
| 15 | Seán Buí Ó Donnaile |
| 16 | Cormac Mac Eoghain Ó hÁgáin |
| 17 | Aodh Mac Taidhg Mac Éamainn Óig Ó hÁgáin |
| 18 | Pádraig Ó Donnaile |
| 19 | Niall Mac Éinrí Ó Néill |
| 20 | Niall Óg Ó Coinne |
| 21 | Feardorcha and Tuathal Mac Feidhlim Ó Mealláin |
| 22 | Féilim Gruama Mac Néill Carraigh Mac Feilimí Ó Néill |
| 23 | Pádraig Gruama Ó Hágáin |
| 24 | Ránall Mac Dónaill |
| 25 | Henry Hovendon |
| 26 | Seinicín Ó Daimhín |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Tiranny barony Irish landowners, 1641 (figure 18) | |
| 27 | Féilim Rua Ó Néill |
| 28 | Robert Hovendon |
| 29 | Toirealach Mac Briain Ó Néill |
| 30 | Toirealach Óg Ó Néill |
| <p>The Irish landowners in the 1640s and 1650s have been taken from The Down Survey, PRONI D597/4, The Civil Survey, vol.3 and the Books of Survey and Distribution, vol.7, copy in the National Archives, Dublin.</p> | |

law-enforcement official and guardian of Ó Néill's supplies, both military and domestic. It is for this reason that their territory of Ballyquin, encompassing Roughan Lough near modern-day Stewartstown, contained a number of *crannóga* (defensible island-dwellings). The Uí hÁgáin, on the other hand, played an important role in the inauguration of The Ó Néill (having their territory of Ballyhagan close to the inauguration-place at Tullyhogue), as well as holding the office of chief administrator and collector of rent and food dues.⁷⁴

These groups exemplify the (at times, somewhat murky) distinction between the elite of Gaelic society and the landholding class discussed in the previous chapter. While *sleachta* like the Uí Choinne and Uí hÁgáin possessed lands which supported them, at the same time their military and administrative roles meant many of them were not (unlike the landholders) directly engaged with agriculture. The transformation from retainers in the administration of a native warlord, to landlords in a colony ruled by outsiders (with whom they had, until recently, been at war) may thus have appeared unappealing to them.⁷⁵ While this disinclination may have played a part, there is of course the simpler explanation of rational economic choice: having assessed the deal on offer, these Uí Choinne and Uí hÁgáin came to the conclusion that it was a bad one. Perceiving in the small portions of land offered them, a landowning status incommensurate with their cattle-owning one (and one which furthermore would not compensate them adequately for the expenses incurred by the obligation to serve on juries and attend assizes and sessions) they preferred the less onerous condition of tenantry. As will be seen in this chapter from the difficulties faced by

74 Morgan, *Tyrone's Rebellion*, p.89. Éamon Ó Doibhlin, 'O'Neill's "Own Country" and Its Families', in *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, vol.6, no.1, (Armagh Diocesan Historical Society, 1970), p.9. Tullyhogue: Tulaigh Óg, 'little hillock'.

75 The comments of several contemporaries on the 'natural sloth' of the Irish and their preference for battle and robbery above 'honest labours' were no doubt partly informed by prejudice; they may also, however, have been an observation based on the disdain of these former retainers of great *tiarnaí* for agricultural labour, and the much greater esteem in which military service was held by the Irish generally. There was of course nothing peculiarly Irish about this esteem for military over civilian occupations, which had held throughout medieval Europe and was only in the early modern period being challenged by the rise of a commercial farming and merchant class. The 'natural sloth' of the Irish was asserted by Fynes Moryson. 'The Itinerary', in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.22, 24. Camden wrote that the 'the sweetness of inbred idleness doth so hang upon their lazie limbes, that they had rather get their living from doore to doore, than by their honest labours keepe themselves from beggery'. Camden, *Britain*, part 2, p.98. Barnaby Rich asserted that it was 'holden for a servile kinde of basenesse amongst the Irish, for a gentleman or a gentlewoman, to be seen in any manner of faculty, idleness onely excepted'. Rich, *A new description*, p.36. George Hill speculated that the Uí Choinne and Uí hÁgáin, having been 'steady adherents of the earl of Tyrone [. . .] could not, so easily as some others, bring themselves to accept the new order of things'. *An historical account*, p.230.

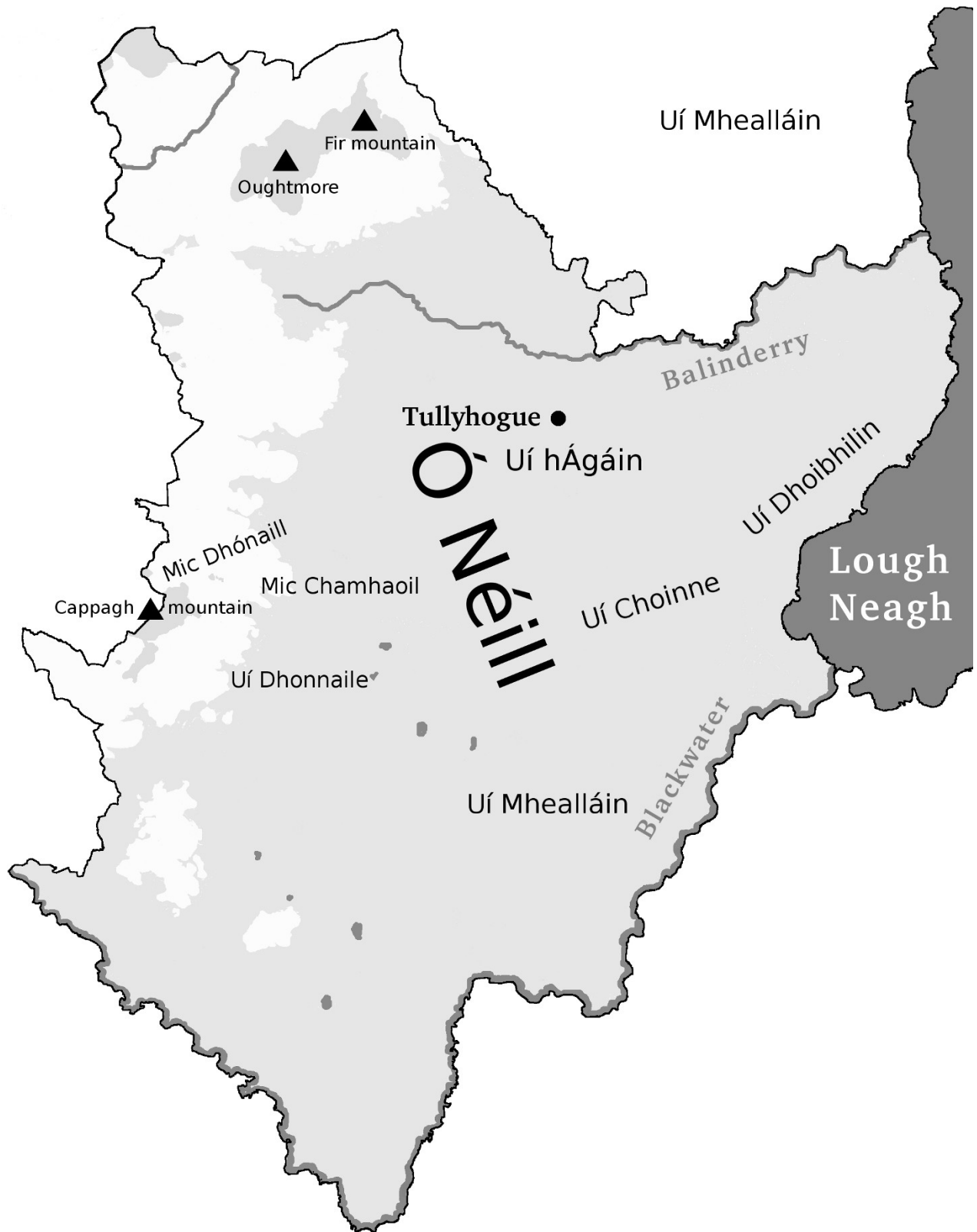


Figure 19. Principal sleachta of Dungannon

most Irish grantees, this choice would appear in retrospect to have been an astute one.

According to Davies' account, it was precisely because these individuals had 'good stocks of cattle' that they were allocated portions of land.⁷⁶ The fact that they found themselves in possession of a significant number of cows was due to the rights and privileges they enjoyed, as outlined in the *Ceart Uí Néill* above; it would also suggest that they were among those discussed in the previous chapter (see p.193) who had taken advantage of the chaotic situation following the flight of Ó Néill. Their role as trusted servants of the *tiarna* and custodian of his material resources probably enabled them, in his absence, to appropriate these resources for themselves. While an explanation foregrounding self-interest and economic factors appears the most compelling, the fact remains that it was members of these specific *sleachta*, closest lieutenants to Ó Néill in Gaelic society, who are mentioned as rejecting the offer of plantation lands in Davies' account.

A principled objection to co-operation with the plantation commissioners, related to their traditional alliance with the Uí Néill, cannot therefore be entirely dismissed. Like all groups in Gaelic society, colonisation provoked a variety of responses from these septs, and there was no doubt variations in the degree of loyalty which individual Uí Choinne and Uí hÁgáin felt towards the earl. While a refusal to accept the role of colonial landowner is not necessarily indicative of hostility to the plantation as such, others—such as Seán 'Na Puint' Ó hÁgáin, Ó Néill's rent-gatherer, and his 'attendinge servant' Muirteartach Ó Coinne—unambiguously sided with Ó Néill by choosing to flee with him in 1607.⁷⁷ On the other hand, four Uí Choinne and two Uí hÁgáin sat on the jury which carried out the 1609 inquisition into Ó Néill's escheated lands in Tyrone.⁷⁸ Four of these six received grants in the plantation: Eoghan Rua Ó Coinne (no.27, figure 15, p.266), Muirteartach Ó Coinne (unnumbered), Éamann Óg Ó hÁgáin (no.20) and Eoghan Óg Ó hÁgáin (no.35). It is the stories of such individuals that must provide the evidential basis of any assessment of the

76 Davies to Salisbury, 24 September 1610, SP 63-229, no.125a, f.129v.

77 'Na puint' meaning 'of the purses'. 'Shane ne Bonty, rent gatherer' in the list of those who accompanied Ó Néill to the continent. Also mentioned as 'John O'Punty O'Hagan' in the indictment against these individuals. *CSPI James I, 1606-1608*, p.436, 555. The description of Muirteartach Ó Coinne as Ó Néill's servant is in SP 63-218 no.18i, f.44v. Both Muirteartach and Seán appear to have later regretted their decision to join the flight; left behind in the low countries by Ó Néill when he travelled on to Rome, they sank into poverty and were reported in 1609 to be sounding out the possibility of a return to Ulster. Chichester to Francis Annesley, November 1609, SP 63-227 no.165a, f.198r.

78 Appendix: Tyrone inquisition, Dungannon 23 August 1609, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

experience of the ‘deserving Irish’ as a class.

Eoghan Rua Ó Coinne was the brother of the Muirteartach who accompanied Ó Néill into exile.⁷⁹ He received three *bailte bó* just north of the present-day village of Donaghmore.⁸⁰ Based on the fact that these were all in the possession of Toirealach Gruama Ó Coinne in 1641 (no.5, figure 16, p.267) it seems likely that Eoghan was the father of the aforementioned Toirealach, an adolescent at the outset of the plantation, who acquired a number of *bailte bó* about 14km south of his father’s grant in the intervening thirty years.⁸¹ Notwithstanding this improvement in his family’s landholding status (he was the third-largest native landowner in the barony in 1641), Toirealach was one of the most senior military figures in the rising and led the attack on Mountjoy castle in its first days.⁸² That the Muirteartach who sat with Eoghan Rua on the August 1609 inquisition at Dungannon was not his brother is clear from the fact that Chichester’s letter mentions the latter as being in Flanders at that time. It is most likely he who shortly afterwards received a grant of two *bailte bó* referred to as ‘Tanagh and Dirrie’ in the patent.⁸³

The plantation grantee Niall Ó Coinne (no.23, figure 15, p.266) died in 1621, passing his *baile bó* of Loy (today in the town centre of Cookstown) on to his 32-year-old son, Niall Óg

79 That is, presuming he is the same ‘Owen Roe O Quayne’ whom Muirteartach wrote to, seeking license to return. Chichester to Francis Annesley, November 1609, SP 63-227 no.165a, f.198r.

80 Grant to ‘Owen Roe O’Quin’ of ‘Drumadd or Drumard’ (Drummond), Monygowre (Mulnagore) and Cornelanan or Carulenan (Curlonan), 18 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Donaghmore: Domhnach Mór, ‘big church’.

81 The epithet ‘Gruama’ means melancholy. Éamon Ó Doibhlinn has no hesitation in identifying Eoghan Rua as Toirealach’s father. ‘Domhnach Mór: Part III: The Plantation Era’, in *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, vol.3, no.1, (Armagh Diocesan Historical Society, 1958), p.221. Toirealach’s age can be gauged from the fact that he was said to be aged ‘55 yeares or thereabouts’ at the time of his interrogation by the Cromwellian authorities in 1653. Examination of Turlough Groome O Quin, 2 June 1653, f.91r. Almost all of the *bailte bó* were acquired from Toirealach Mac Airt Ó Néill who, as a comparison of figures 15 and 16 shows, while still retaining some lands in 1641, had by then been considerably reduced in his holdings. Toirealach’s lands at the end of this period are attested to in both the Down Survey and Books of Survey and Distribution: Dromade (Drummond), Carlonan (Curlonan) and Munegore (Mulnagore) in Down Survey, ‘Part of the Parish of Donaghmore Afores[ai]d’, PRONI D594/4/54 (these three are confirmed in *BSD* vol.7, f.176v); Mullirodan (Mullyroddan), Kranasklagh (Cranslough), Edenteelane (Edentiloan), Castletowne (Castletown), Mullincashee (Mullaghness), Leynagh (Leany), Knockerriffe (Knocknarney) and Derenebory (Dernaborey), *BSD* vol.7, f.180v.

82 He is referred to as one of Féilim Rua Ó Néill’s chief captains in Ó Mealláin’s journal. Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), ‘Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin’, pp.336, 338, and in several depositions: Deposition of John Parrie, 31 May 1642, TCD MS 836 f.65r; Examination of William Howell 19 May 1653, TCD MS 839 f.85v; Examination of James Carrell, 19 May 1653, TCD MS 839 f.85v.

83 Grant to ‘Murtoogh O’Quin’ of ‘Tanagh’ and Dirrie’, 27 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192.

(no.20, figure 16, p.267).⁸⁴ The elder Niall, one-time ‘chief favourite’ of Aodh Ó Néill, was captured by the English while drunk in 1600. He had performed the traditional Ó Coinne offices in Ó Néill’s service, ‘havinge longe had commannd of some of his islands and been trusted with most of his prisoners’. After he had been interrogated (this was delayed as ‘drinke had made him both soe senceles and speachles’), Niall was rumoured to have ‘promised somethinge whereupon he is yet preserved’.⁸⁵ It was in such moments of negotiation that survival or extinction was decided.⁸⁶ Intriguingly, just before Ó Coinne returned to the Irish, Mountjoy spoke of bringing him north from his captivity ‘for some speciall occasions of the service’.⁸⁷ Nothing more, however, is heard of this Niall Ó Coinne until the name once again emerges in the patent rolls showing land granted to the Irish in the plantation. Niall Óg, the successor of this grantee, was, by the time of the 1641 rising, in his fifties with two sons named Eoghan and Naos, and described as a tenant of the colonist Thomas Staples in Lissan.⁸⁸ He took a leading part in the capture of nearby Moneymore, on the Londonderry lands of the Drapers’ Company, and the ironworks in Lissan.⁸⁹ The reason why Niall Óg’s activities at this time are recorded in several Commonwealth depositions is that he had been captured and held prisoner in Coleraine by 1653, and was executed shortly afterwards.⁹⁰ His 135 acres was confiscated and, along with the surrounding district, came into the possession of one Thomas Coote.⁹¹

84 Grant to ‘Neale O’Quin’ of ‘Ballinelongy’ (Loy), 27 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Inquisition made at Augher, 22 September 1625. Tyrone, Charles I, no.2, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. The Down Survey records its forfeiture from Niall Óg in the 1650s. Down Survey, ‘The forfeited part of Derryloran Parish’, PRONI, D597/4/45 and *BSD* vol.7, f.188v.

85 Griffin Markham to Robert Cecil, Newry, 8 November 1600, SP 63-207-6 no.19, f.55v.

86 He must have an individual of some importance (Mountjoy described him as ‘chiefe Favourite unto Tyrone’) because Ó Néill appears to have provided Mountjoy with pledges for his good behaviour in order to secure his return. Mountjoy and council to the privy council, Dublin, 26 November 1600, SP 63-207-6 no.29, f.75r. Mountjoy to George Carey, 8 August 1601, Camp near Mountnorris, Armagh, SP 63-209 no.9, f.18v.

87 Mountjoy to George Carey, 23 May 1601, Drogheda, SP 63-208-2 no.91, f.257r.

88 Examination of James Steile, 14 March 1653, TCD MS 838, f.76v. Lissan lies on the border between Dungannon and County Londonderry, just north of the *baile bó* Niall and Niall Óg owned.

89 On orders from Féilim Rua Ó Néill, he kept the workers at the ironworks alive in order to keep them productive in the insurgents’ cause. Examination of Margaret Armstrong, 18 March 1653, TCD MS 838, f.80v. Lissan: Liosán, ‘little fort’.

90 Examination of Lawrence O Cullen, 7 March 1653, TCD MS 838 f.66v. Niall Óg’s interrogation is recorded in: Examination of Neile oge O Quin, 17 March 1653, TCD MS 838 ff.38r-39v. ‘A list of those persons who were condemned by the High Court of Justice in the Province of Ulster for murder, and executed’, in *Mercurius Politicus*, no.162, (London, 1653), p.2591. Coleraine: Cúil Raithin, ‘corner of ferns’.

91 *BSD* vol.7, f.189r.

Of the Uí hÁgáin who, like the Uí Choinne, had occupied lands at the heart of Ó Néill's territory and served him right up until the collapse of the Gaelic order, eight received grants of land in Dungannon. One of these, Éamann Óg (no.20, figure 15, p.266), sat on the 1609 inquisition and received two *bailte bó* (Gortindarragh and Glenburrisk), just north of Castlecaulfeild, as reward for his cooperation.⁹² It is also likely that Tadhg Mac Éamainn Óig (no.24), who received a *baile bó* nearby, was his son, although the relationship is slightly confused by the existence of two inquisitions recording the death of Éamann Óg in

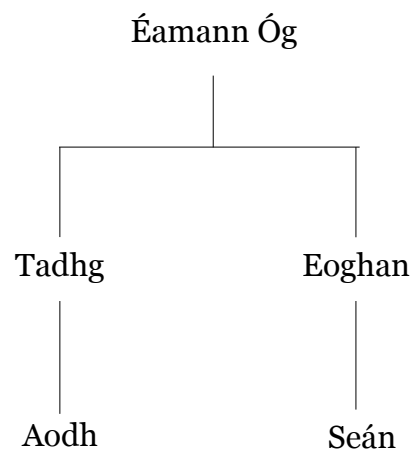


Figure 20. Descendants of Éamann Óg Ó hÁgáin

different years, one in 1616 and another in 1624. The latter seems to suggest that the *baile bó* mentioned in Tadhg's patent, Drummond (with the addition of nearby Aghafad), only passed to him on his father's death, while the former, in recording Éamann Óg's death eight years earlier, attests to the passing of those lands listed in his original patent to another son, Eoghan.⁹³

92 Grant to 'Edm. oge O'Haggan' of 'Goretindarragh' (Gortindarragh) and 'Clonborrowes' (Glenburrisk), 27 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Gortindarragh: Gort na Darach, 'field of the oak' and Glenburrisk: Gleann Burrais, 'glen of the caterpillars'.

93 Grant to 'Teige McEdmund oge O'Hagan' of 'Ballidromon' (Drummond?), 27 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Additional confusion is caused by the fact that Drummond appears to have been granted to Eoghan Rua Ó Coinne (no.27, figure 15, p.266) as well; for this reason, it is represented on the map as belonging to the latter, and Tadhg Mac Éamainn Óig is shown in the location of Aghafad. The fact that an Aodh Mac Taidhg Ó hÁgáin (no.17, figure 16, p.267), apparently Tadhg's son, is recorded as possessing the *baile bó* of 'Drumnan' in 1641 (a *baile bó* in the parish of Derryloran, north of Cookstown and actually outside the borders of Tyrone, in Loughinsholin), opens up the further possibility that the 'Ballidromon' in Tadhg's patent referred to this *baile bó*, although this seems less likely, given that there

This son (no.10, figure 16, p.267) was already forty years old in 1616 and had received a pardon in 1608, presumably for anti-government activities in the Nine Years War.⁹⁴ Still holding these *bailte bó* in 1641, his death at some point during the wars that followed can be assumed, given that the Down Survey records these lands as having been forfeited by his heirs.⁹⁵ No doubt due to Eoghan's advanced age, his son Seán was the family's most prominent participant in the 1641 rising. Described as a captain of Féilim Ó Néill from Tullyhogue, the *Cinn Lae* of Friar Ó Mealláin records his successful defense of a *crannóg* in Loughinsholin in April 1643.⁹⁶ Although mentioned several times in the depositions, it is often impossible to distinguish him from another prominent Seán Ó hÁgáin, son of Cormac (no.16 figure 16, p.267), and a grandson of the plantation grantee Eoghan Óg Mac Eoghain Mac Aibhistín Ó hÁgáin (no.35, figure 15, p.266).

This Eoghan, who sat with Éamann Óg Ó hÁgáin on the inquisition in 1609, was awarded two *bailte bó* a few kilometres north of the latter.⁹⁷ While compliant enough to be regarded as 'deserving', he aroused the authorities' mistrust by providing refuge to the fugitive Franciscan friar Toirealach Mac Rodáin in 1613.⁹⁸ On his death in 1622, these lands passed to the aforementioned Cormac, who led the seizure of Antrim town at the start of the 1641 rising, and was killed in a battle at Clones in June 1643.⁹⁹ Cormac and his father, although their lands were located about 7km south-west of Cookstown, appear to have lived in or

is no *baile bó* with a name bearing any similarity to 'Aghefaddein' nearby. Down Survey, 'The forfeited part of Derryloran parish', PRONI D597/4/45 and *BSD* vol.7, f.188v. Inquisition at Augher, 12 April 1631: 'Edm' Oge O'Hagan seis' fuit de balliboe ter' de Dromon, ac de balliboe de Aghefaddein in co' Tyrone. Sic inde seis' existen', obiit circa 7 an' elapsos. Teige Mc.Edm' O'Hagan, eius fil' & her', tunc fuit plen' etat', & maritat'. Tyrone, Charles I, no.26. Inquisition at Dungannon, 2 October 1624, Tyrone, James I, no.7, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

94 This pardon was issued in February of that year and therefore does not indicate his participation in Ó Dochartaigh's rising later that year. General pardon, 23 February 1608, *CPRI James I*, p.117.

95 'Glanboriske' (Glenburrisk) and 'Gortnedarragh' (Gortindarragh), Down Survey, 'part of the parish of Donaghmore'. PRONI, D597/4/54 and *BSD* vol.7, f.176v.

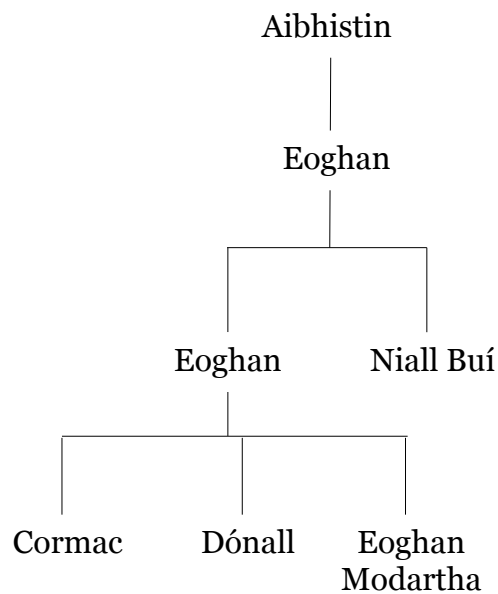
96 Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), 'Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin', pp.340, 348.

97 Grant to 'Owen oge O'Hagan McOwen McEvistan' of 'Mullinecore' (Mullenure) and 'Aghnecreagh' (Aghnagreagh), 27 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192.

98 'The examynation of Teag Modder McGlone taken before me Sir Toby Caulfeild, knight', 21 October 1613. SP 63-232, no.21,22, ff.136v-138r.

99 Inquisition at Augher, 22 September 1625, Tyrone, Charles I, no.2, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. 'Mullenure' (Mullynure), 'Bardrahechagh' (Bardahessiagh) and 'Aghnagreagh' (Keenaghan), Down Survey, 'Part of Desertcreagh (Desertcreat) parish', PRONI D594/4/51, *BSD* vol.7, ff.172v, 173v and 'Bardahessogh, Ahuecgrigh and Mullinure, three Townes', in *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.282. As noted above, Bardahessiagh had been granted to Cormac Mac Con Midhe (no.8, figure 15, p.266) in the plantation. Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), 'Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin', pp.336, 351.

near Moneymore in Londonderry; they are described as coming from this locality in sources from the 1620s and 1640s.¹⁰⁰ Cormac's son, Seán, attacked Moneymore in October 1641 with a company of foot-soldiers, initially recruited for the king's service, for which he had license to transport into Spanish service.¹⁰¹ These no doubt provided the bulk of the insurgents' forces in the area after the outbreak of the rising. Eoghan Ó hÁgáin (no.36, figure 15, p.266), who received the single *baile bó* of Dungororan in the plantation, was described in his pardon of 1602 as 'chief of his name'.¹⁰² Taking into account the evidence of patronyms, and the placing of Eoghan's grant immediately before Eoghan Óg's in the patents, it is likely that Eoghan was the father of the Eoghan Óg discussed above. If this was the case, the following family tree for the above individuals can be constructed:



*Figure 21. Descendants of Aibhistin Ó hÁgáin*¹⁰³

100 In the inquisition recording his death, Eoghan Óg is described as 'late of Moneymore', Inquisition at Augher, 22 September 1625, Tyrone, Charles I, no.2, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. A deposition from 1642 describes Cormac as coming from 'Tawlett in the countye of Londonderry', almost certainly the *baile bó* of Tamlaght, a *baile bó* just south of Moneymore on the Ballinderry river. Depositions of Anne Smyth, Susana Wright, Anne Walton, 15 September 1642, TCD MS 839, f.102r. Moneymore: Muine Mór, 'big thicket'.

101 Examination of Neile oge o Quin, 17 March 1653, TCD MS 838, ff.38r-38v. Seán's ultimate fate is unclear but he was probably killed in the wars of the 1640s and 50s or fled abroad.

102 Pardon, 20 November 1602, in James Morrin (ed.), *Calendar of the patent and close rolls of Chancery in Ireland, from the 18th to the 45th of Queen Elizabeth*, vol.2, (London: H.M.S.O., 1862), p.632. The patent to his plantation grant also describes him as leader of the Uí hÁgáin: Grant to 'Owen O'Hagan' of 'Doongororhan' (Dungororan), 18 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Dungororan: Dún Mhic Furahrain, 'fort of the son of Foraran'.

103 Eoghan Modartha is attested to in: Depositions of Anne Smyth, Susana Wright, Anne Walton, 15 September 1642, TCD MS 839, f.102r. Deposition of Robert Waringe, 12 August 1642, TCD MS 839,

After his death in 1618, Eoghan's land, however, passed to another son, Niall Buí, who was already in his forties at the time.¹⁰⁴ This Niall does not appear to be mentioned in the depositions and the land is no longer recorded as belonging to the family by the time of the Down Survey.¹⁰⁵

Another prominent *sliocht* of military retainers under Ó Néill were the Mic Dhónaill, descended from Scottish *gallóglaiigh*, first imported into Ulster in the thirteenth century and given lands in Tyrone in the fifteenth.¹⁰⁶ These Mic Dhónaill (not to be confused with the more recently-arrived Mic Dhónaill in Antrim) were rewarded for their service by the Ó Néill with lands which came to be called Baile Mic Dhónaill, today the *baile bó* of Knocknaclogha in Altmore forest, west of Dungannon town.¹⁰⁷ Ránall Garbh Mac Feardorcha Mac Dónaill (no.41, figure 15, p.266 and no.24 figure 16, p.267) and his brother, Giolla Easpaig (no.29, figure 15, p.266), subsequently received lands only a few kilometres to the east of these ancestral lands. These two brothers were among the leaders of Aodh Ó Néill's Mic Dhónaill soldiers in the latter stages of the Nine Years War, and fought with him at Kinsale, where their brother Ruairí was killed.¹⁰⁸ Unlike many 'deserving' Irish grantees, the Mic Dhónaill brothers' resistance to English colonisation appears to have continued beyond Ó Néill's flight and to have encompassed participation in Ó Dochartaigh's rising; this, at least, is what the government suspected.¹⁰⁹

The fact that they received a pardon the following year and lands in the plantation, as opposed to being rounded up for transportation to Sweden, suggests that the authorities' approach to each group of natives was decided on a case by case basis. The colonial government balanced the possible security risks posed by specialist martial groups like the Mic Dhónaill against the benefits of placating them with land grants, not forgetting the

f.109r would suggest that he had the epithet 'Modartha' (Surly, overcast) and that there was another brother called Dónall in the family.

104 Inquisition at Dungannon, 2 October 1624, Tyrone, James I, no.7, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

105 It is recorded as being in the possession of William Groves, an English colonist, *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.282.

106 Donald M. Schlegel, 'The MacDonnells of Tyrone and Armagh: A Genealogical Study', in *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, vol. 10, no. 1, (Armagh Diocesan Historical Society, 1981), pp.199-200.

107 O'Donovan (ed.), *Annala Rioghachta Eireann*, vol.5, p.1365. Knocknaclogha: Cnoc na gClocha, 'stony hill', and Altmore: An tAllt Mór, 'great height'.

108 Schlegel, 'The MacDonnells of Tyrone and Armagh', p.211.

109 'Demands to be made to Philemy Reagh [McDavitt]', 1 August 1608 and 'Examination of Phelim Reaghe [McDavitt]', 3 August 1608, in *CSPI James I, 1608-1610*, pp.1-3.

considerable trouble of apprehending and transporting them out of the country.¹¹⁰ Clearly there was a fine line dividing figures like Ránall and Giolla Easpaig Mac Dónaill in Tyrone from Eochaidh Óg Ó hAnluain in Armagh, who was deported for his part in aiding Ó Dochartaigh. There is no record of Giolla Easpaig's death, but an inquisition held at Dungannon at the end of the 1630s records the two *bailte bó* granted to him as being in the hands of William Caulfeild.¹¹¹ Ránall not only managed to retain the *baile bó* of Kilnaslee, but actually augmented his holdings during this period, by the acquisition of several *bailte bó* from the Sliocht Airt Óg.¹¹² Despite the fact that Ránall must have been relatively advanced in years, he led the initial attack on Dungannon in 1641 and was afterwards appointed governor of the castle by Féilim Rua Ó Néill.¹¹³ He was killed in a skirmish while tending to the army's *caoraidheacht* in Cavan in August 1643, one of the few military figures whose career spanned both the Nine Years War and the struggles of the 1640s.¹¹⁴

The Uí Dhonnaile had also been military retainers of the Uí Néill prior to the collapse of the Gaelic order. They were, however, reluctant allies of the earl of Tyrone, being adherents of his great rivals, the numerous progeny of Seán Ó Néill who died in 1567.¹¹⁵ It was an Ó Donnaile who carried out the murder of Ó Néill's father, 'Matthew' Feardorcha, on Seán Ó Néill's behalf in 1558. Their animosity towards Aodh Ó Néill (as well as the fact that he brought them to heel) is clear from the observations of English writers who, while describing them as subordinates to the earl, remarked they were held in that position 'onely by pledges and constrains'.¹¹⁶ In 1598, they were described as a 'great faction [. . .] which the Erle doth seeke by all the meanes he can to supresse in respect of the love which this nation beareth unto Shane Oneales sonnes'.¹¹⁷ While the Uí Dhonnaile

110 'General pardon', 28 February 1609, *CPRI James I*, p.132.

111 Inquisition at Dungannon, Tyrone, Charles I, no.50, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

112 Aghnaskea, and possibly Sessiadonaghy and Altmore. There is a discrepancy between the Down Survey and the Books of Survey and Distribution. The former claim that Toirealach Mac Airt Ó Néill remained in possession of these two *bailte bó*, whereas the latter state they had come into Ránall's possession. Down Survey, 'Part of the parish of Donaghmore', PRONI D597/4/54 and *BSD* vol.7, f.177v. In the map above, Sessiadonaghy has been assigned to Ránall and Altmore to Toirealach. Kilnaslee: Coill na Slí, 'wood of the road', Aghnaskea: Achadh na Sceach, 'field of thorns' and Sessiadonaghy, Seiseach Donnchaidh, 'Donncha's sixth'.

113 Deposition of George Burne, 12 January 1644, TCD MS 839, f.38r; Deposition of John Kerdiff, 28 February 1642, TCD MS 839, f.16r; Deposition of Anthony Stratford, supplement, 7 February 1643, TCD MS 839, f.24r.

114 Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), 'Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin', p.354.

115 One of Seán Ó Néill's epithets was 'Donnghaileach', signifying fosterage with that *sliocht*.

116 Lord deputy and council to Burghley, 2 May 1590, SP 63-152 no.4, f.26r.

117 'The factions through the north of Irelande', May 1598, SP 63-202-2 no.54, f.179r.

nominally assisted Ó Néill in phases of the Nine Years War, and Seán Mac Dónaill Gruama served as his marshall, they cannot be described as genuine allies. In 1601 this Seán Mac Dónaill Gruama went over to the English after Mountjoy's forces penetrated deep into Tyrone and burnt all the corn in his country of Ballydonnelly, where Castlecaulfeild today stands.¹¹⁸ It was he who provided the crown forces with a detailed list of the companies Ó Néill had at his disposal in Tyrone.¹¹⁹

It is no surprise that the Uí Dhonnaile came to be seen by the government as a group who might be accommodated within the plantation settlement, given their antagonistic relationship to Ó Néill and his interests. For his co-operation with the government, Seán Mac Dónaill Gruama Ó Donnaile (no.15, figure 15, p.266) was awarded a *baile bó* in the location of what is today Cookstown, about 15 kilometres from the ancestral lands of the Uí Dhonnaile, which were for the most part granted to Toby Caulfeild. When Seán died in the early 1620s, his land passed to his son Pádraig, who still held it in 1641 (no.18, figure 16, p.267).¹²⁰ Although a number of historians have concluded that this Pádraig played a prominent role in the rising in Tyrone, it would appear that he is often conflated with another individual, Pádraig Modartha Ó Donnaile, described in several sources as being from the vicinity of Castlecaulfeild, and a 'silicitor' to Toby Caulfeild (the 3rd baron) before the rising.¹²¹ The proximity of Castlecaulfeild to the *baile bó* of Crosscavanagh would suggest that, instead of being the son of the Seán Mac Dónaill Gruama above, he was kin to Seán Mac Aodha Mac an Deagánaigh Ó Donnaile (no.37, figure 15, p.266 and no.9 figure

118 Fynes Moryson, *An itinerary containing his ten yeeres travell through the twelve dominions of Germany, Bohmerland, Sweitzerland, Netherland, Denmarke, Poland, Italy, Turky, France, England, Scotland & Ireland*, vol.2, (Glasgow: MacLehose, 1907), p.414.

119 'The perfect names of such captens and commanders with their severall companies as are now under the command of the Traitor Tyrone within Tyrone', 9 August 1601, SP 63-209-1, no.10c, f.28v.

120 Two inquisitions record the death of Seán, either ten or eight years before the date they were made (in 1631). Inquisition at Augher, 12 April 1631, Tyrone, Charles I, no.23, and at Dungannon, 29 August 1631, Tyrone, Charles I, no.34, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. 'Gorteloran' and 'Gorteeloran' (Gortalowry) in Down Survey, 'Part of Derryloran parish', Down Survey, PRONI D597/4/45 and *BSD* vol.7, f.188v.

121 O'Donovan (ed.), *Annala Rioghachta Eireann*, vol.6, p.2429, and Michael McRory, 'Life and Times of Doctor Patrick O'Donnely, 1649-1716: The Bard of Armagh', in *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, vol.5, no.1, (Armagh Diocesan Historical Society, 1969), p.4. Pádraig Modartha himself gave the location as 'neere Castlecaulfeild', Examination of Patrick Modder o Donnely, 30 March 1653, TCD MS 838, f.42r. Nicholas Combe provides the exact location, Ballyward, a townland just to the south of this location, and owned by Caulfeild in 1641. Ó Donnaile was therefore his tenant as well as his employee prior to the rising. Examination of Nicholas Combe, 4 June 1653, TCD MS 839, f.78r; Deposition of George Burne, 12 January 1644, TCD MS 839 f.38r. 'Silicitor' in this context most likely signified an agent as opposed to a law-officer.

16, p.267), who received Crosscavanagh in the plantation.¹²² This Pádraig Modartha Ó Donnaile retook the family's lands in Ballydonnelly from Caulfeild and was involved (with Ránall Mac Dónaill) in the taking of Dungannon castle in October 1641.¹²³ He also led the attack on Drogheda in February of the following year, and was placed in charge of Dungannon castle after it was retaken by the Irish in August 1642.¹²⁴ His position in the service of an English colonist no doubt allowed him to gain access in October 1641 to such a vital stronghold as Dungannon, just as Féilim Rua Ó Néill's acquaintance with Caulfeild allowed him to gain access to Charlemont.¹²⁵ We should be wary of mistaking—as many colonists appear to have—the appearance of contentment (or at least acquiescence) for actual contentment, when the evidence attests to a widespread underlying resentment among the Irish.

Brian Ó Doibhilin (no.32, figure 15, p.266), who was granted the *bailte bó* of Moneygaragh and Knockavaddy, was the only individual of that name to receive land in the plantation.¹²⁶

122 Grant to 'Shane O'Donilly McHugh McAdegany' of 'Crosse', 18 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. This Seán's patent includes the patronym 'McAdegany', an anglicisation of Mac an Deagánaigh, meaning one of his forebears was a dean in the church, not an occupation we would expect to find in a *sliocht* traditionally associated with military functions. He was still in possession of Crosscavanagh on the eve of the rising, and may have still been alive at the time of the Down Survey, which refers to his possession of the land rather than his heirs'. 'Croskevanagh' (Crosscavanagh), *BSD* vol.7, f.175v; Down Survey, 'Part of the parish of Donaghmore', PRONI, D597/4/54 and *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.288. Crosscavanagh: Cros Caomhánach, 'Caomhánach's cross'.

123 The seizure of Dungannon was achieved more by subterfuge than force. Ó Donnaile came to the justice of the peace, captain Perkins, seeking a warrant to search for some sheep he pretended had been stolen from him. When Perkins admitted him and went to sign the warrant, one of Ó Donnaile's party went and opened the door to let in Ránall Mac Dónaill and eighteen of his men. Information of Captain John Perkins, 8 March 1644, TCD MS 839, f.40r.

124 Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), 'Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin', pp.336, 338, 346. Pádraig Modartha emerges from the depositions as having the reputation of a disciplined soldier and a restraining influence on some of the excesses perpetrated by the insurgents. John Elliot reported that one Pádraig Modartha Ó Luachráin fled from Ó Donnaile, fearing punishment for having killed one Hugh Allen. Examination of John Elliot, 3 May 1653, TCD MS 838, f.177r. Nicholas Combe said he had 'often heard the said Pat Modder O Donnelly with greatte regret bewayle the death of the said Mr Allen'. Examination of Nicholas Combe, 4 June 1653, TCD MS 839, f.78v. A conversation was also reported between Ó Donnaile, Toirealach Gruama Ó Coinne (no.5 figure 16, p.267) and Féilim Rua Ó Néill, in which Ó Coinne is said to have advocated the killing of enemy forces who had been granted protection, a tactic which Ó Donnaile reportedly said he would never consent to. Examination of Michael Harrison, 11 February 1653, TCD MS 836, f.135r. Drogheda: Droichead Átha, 'bridge of the ford'.

125 Charlemont took its name from Charles Blount, baron Mountjoy; the original Irish name of the townland on which it is situated was Achadh an Dá Chora, 'field of the two weirs'.

126 Grant to 'Brien O'Develin' of 'Monigar' and Knockfada', 18 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Moneygaragh: Muine Ghearrtha, 'trimmed thicket' and Knockavaddy, Cnoc an Mhadaidh, 'the hill of the dog'.

The Uí Dhoibhilin, along with the Mic Chamhaoil and Mic Mhurchaidh, belonged to what was known as the Uí Néill's *fircheithearn* or 'true kerne', whose responsibilities included the taking of hostages and guarding the camp of Ó Néill when on a hosting. They were entitled to a commission of two sheep for every cow accruing to their *tiarna* in the form of fines for robbery, bloodshed or the breaking of old customs.¹²⁷ As Éamon Ó Doibhlin has noted, in an earlier period, fighting in battles was limited to these *sleachta*, alongside the Uí Dhonnaile and *gallóglai*gh, in contrast to the Uí hÁgáin and Uí Choinne, who administered the internal affairs of Ó Néill's lands.¹²⁸ The restriction of military functions to this limited number of septs, however, was already a thing of the past by the time of the Nine Years War.

The Brian listed in the plantation settlement was most likely the 'chief of his name' pardoned towards the end of Elizabeth's reign.¹²⁹ The *bailte bó* he received were far inland from the sept's ancestral lands, which bordered on the western shores of Lough Neagh.¹³⁰ The fact that individuals such as Seán Mac Aodha Ó Donnaile and Ránall Mac Dónaill were allowed to remain in their own territories, whereas Ó Doibhilin and many others were relocated with little or no regard to their families' relationship with specific locales, is reflective of the strategic considerations dictating government policy. The wish, for example, to move Ó Doibhilin away from his traditional territory in order to detach him from his followers is suggested by a writer's (most likely John Davies) claim that it would be:

'. . . safest to make that portion [allocated to 'deserving' Irish] to consist of several parcels not lying together but scattered or distant from another for hereby that will come to pass, that if

127 Ó Doibhlin (ed.), 'Ceart Uí Néill', p.353.

128 Ó Doibhlin, 'O'Neill's "Own Country" and Its Families', p.13.

129 Pardon to 'Brian O Deublinge of Mountrie Deubline, chief of his name', 22 November 1602. Fiant no.6713, in *Eighteenth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records in Ireland*, (Dublin: Alex. Thom, 1886), p.107.

130 These lands are recorded under several names in the English surveys of the period: they appear as 'Munter Develin' (20 *bailte bó*) in the 1608 survey. 'A booke of the Kings lands', MS. Rawlinson A. 237, printed in *Analecta Hibernica*, vol.3, pp.152. In the more thorough survey carried out under Josias Bodley's supervision in the following year, they appear on the maps divided into two sections 'Revelinowtra' and 'Revelinyetra', (upper and lower). 'Part of the barony of Donganon', SP MPF-1-45-1. Brian sold the land he had been granted in 1615 to a 'Dame Margery Roe' according to the *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.264.

they should have [?] to stir they shall not have opportunity so easily to conspire or to combine with their tenants and followers, nor to assemble so suddenly to do mischief'.¹³¹

The same writer asserted that 'barbarous people have no strength or power to rebel when they are removed from that earth or land wherein they are bredd'.¹³² It may also have been the geographical location of his Gaelic territory which necessitated the relocation of Brian Ó Doibhlin. Coastal and riverine territories such as those of the Uí Dhoibhlin provided a tactical advantage in the event of war. This was made clear by Arthur Chichester in his recommendations of 1610, that 'none of the ilands in the rivere of Loughearne be lefte or past to anie of the Irish'.¹³³ Chichester went on to single out the area of 'Munterdevlin' as being of particular importance, and asked that it be granted to his fellow military servitor Francis Roe.¹³⁴ His strategy concerning the placement of Irish grantees was spelled out by him in another document of the same year. It would be necessary:

' . . . to appoint them [the Irish] some one parte of the plainest ground of theire owne countrie [. . .] where they may be invironed w[i]th seas, stronge houlds and powerfull men to overtope them'.¹³⁵

That the Uí Dhoibhlin lands were not awarded to Francis Roe but to Andrew Stewart,

131 Anonymous, 'Certyn notes and observations', in Lyttleton and Rynne (eds.), *Plantation Ireland*, p.41.

132 Anonymous, 'Certyn notes and observations', in Lyttleton and Rynne (eds.), *Plantation Ireland*, p.38.

133 Arthur Chichester, 'Remembrancies in the behalfe of p[er]sons of qualitie and desert to be recommended to the king's ma[jes]tie and the lords of the councill', January 1610, SP 63-228 no.16, f.39v.

134 Chichester, 'Remembrancies', SP 63-228 no.16, f.39r.

135 Note the word 'plainest' used here should be understood as meaning 'open, unobstructed, unsheltered, exposed'. Chichester, 'Certaine Considerations', SP 63-228 no.15, f.35v. This dispersal of native Irish *sleachta* among colonists was claimed, by a writer in the 1620s, to have succeeded in pacifying the country: 'And our King hath onely divided the most seditious families of the Irish by dispersing them in sundry parts within the Countrey, not to extinguish, but to dissipate their power, who now neither have, nor give cause of feare. The Romanes did build some Townes which they did plant with their owne people by all rigour to curbe the Natives next adjacent thereunto. And our King hath incorporated some of his best Brittaines with the Irish, planted in sundry places without power to oppresse, but onely to civilize them by their example. Thus Ireland which heretofore was scarcely discovered, and only irritated by others, proving to the English as the Lowe-Countries did to Spaine, a meanes whereby to walle their men, and their money, is now really conquered, becoming a strength to the State, and a glorie to his Majesties government, who hath in the setling thereof excelled all that was commended in any ancient Colonie'. Alexander, *An encouragement*, pp.4-5.

Lord Ochiltree, is testament to the fact that Chichester's recommendations were not always taken up, and that the interests of influential undertakers often overrode those of the military servitors.¹³⁶ For the same reasons, Irish grantees did not always receive the 'plainest ground' of the precincts they were allocated. Such areas were more likely to be highly-prized agricultural land, often earmarked for undertakers instead. Thus, while it was clearly unsatisfactory to remove all the Irish landowners into inaccessible mountainous or boggy areas, where they would be difficult to surveil and control, at the same time the distribution of land in the map of grantees in Dungannon above clearly shows a correlation in the barony between areas given to natives and the western uplands of the barony, as far away as possible from Lough Neagh. This impulse to allocate poorer-quality, less accessible areas to the Irish cannot, therefore, be completely discounted.

A similar pattern is seen in County Armagh, where the better-quality lands in the north of the county were reserved for English and Scottish undertakers, while the south of the county was distributed to natives and servitors, or left in the possession of Toirealach Mac Éinrí Ó Néill.¹³⁷ In general, the precincts earmarked for English or Scottish settlement correspond to economically more promising areas, not only in terms of quality of soil and altitude, but also proximity to rivers and harbours.¹³⁸ Any effort to assign the better-quality land to colonists, however, was made only in the crudest sense. Given that only a few years before the plantation took place the escheated counties of Ulster were practically *terra incognita* from London's point of view, it could hardly have been otherwise. While a number of surveys were commissioned to assess the extent and nature of the land confiscated, these contained nowhere near the level of detail necessary for a systematic

136 Chichester to Salisbury, 27 September 1610, SP 63-229 no.126, ff.133r-133v. Chichester to Salisbury, November 1610, SP 63-229 no.135, f.174r.

137 Chichester noted, for example, that Uí Néill lands in the southern half of the Fews were 'more woode and bogge than pasture or arrable ground'. Arthur Chichester, 'Certaine noates of Rememberance', September 1608, SP 63-225 no.225, f.112v. Perceval-Maxwell has also noted that the northern part of this barony, allocated to Scottish colonists, 'was the best portion of the precinct'. *The Scottish migration to Ulster*, p.120.

138 Interestingly, a hierarchy of ethnic groups within the class of colonists can also be detected in some writings. A proposal for plantation on the lands of the earl of Essex in Farney, County Monaghan in 1622 suggested that the 'the wast land on the north' of Essex's lands, 'to the w[hi]ch English wilt hardly be drawn it wear good to sett it to Scotch men'. Such poorer-quality land was not only felt to be more fitting for Scottish settlers, but their presence would have the added advantage of acting as a buffer between the English to the south and the native Irish: 'the Scotch shalbe as awall betwist them and the Ireish throw whose quarter the Ireish wilt not pass to cary any stealths'. 'Mr Taylor of Ardmagh his propositions for planting my Lo: of Essex land', 1622, NLI 8014, vol.10.

apportionment of land on the basis of its quality. Instead of being a marked feature of the plantation at its outset, the settlement of natives on poorer land was a phenomenon that became more pronounced over time, exacerbated by informal economic processes, rather than the plantation project *per se*. As Aidan Clarke has shown, after the establishment of the colony:

‘. . . a slow sorting-out process soon commenced. As the early settlers learned of better land, better terms or better markets in some other part of the province, they moved, and new settlers, coming speculatively rather than by arrangement, were guided by the same considerations. It was in this second phase that the prime settlement areas were identified, and the Irish forced on to the inferior lands’.¹³⁹

While these processes were clearly instrumental in driving the native population away from good-quality land, this would not have been possible without the formal plantation facilitating such developments.

Attempts have been made, most notably by Phillip Robinson, to examine in detail the settlement patterns of native and newcomer in this early colonial period. Using the nineteenth-century Griffith’s valuation to gauge the quality of lands, Robinson has argued that, by 1659-67, on lands of the highest-quality, Irish and colonist numbers were roughly equal. Given that the native population overwhelmingly outnumbered the colonists at this stage, this would suggest that the English and Scots were indeed proportionally over-represented on the best lands. Robinson has furthermore shown that ‘very few British occupied the poorest lands’.¹⁴⁰ What is at issue here is the *perceived* quality of land at the time, for which Griffith’s valuation (being far more accurate and rigorous than seventeenth-century assessments) is not an appropriate gauge. Robinson has hinted at a better way of comprehending seventeenth-century perceptions of a townland’s value in his observation that ‘larger townlands contain poorer quality land than the smaller’ ones.¹⁴¹

139 Clarke, ‘The Plantations’, in De Paor (ed.), *Milestones*, p.67. See also: Aidan Clarke, ‘The genesis of the Ulster rising of 1641’, p.37.

140 Robinson, *The plantation of Ulster*, p.100.

141 Robinson, ‘The Ulster Plantation and its impact on the settlement pattern of County Tyrone’, p.234.

Given that the *baile bó* reflected a Gaelic perception of its ability to yield a defined agricultural output, the size of these land divisions, which became the townlands, was thus inversely proportional to their quality. *Bailte bó* containing poorer land would need to be larger to fulfill their economic potential, while smaller *bailte bó* reflected land capable of supporting a greater density of people and livestock. While far from an exact science, there is a clear correlation between the size of townland and the quality of its lands. The impression that larger townlands tended to be granted to ‘deserving’ Irish (e.g. in the north and north-west parts of the barony granted to Toirealach Mac Airt and Brian Crosach Ó Néill) is confirmed by Robinson, who observed that the areas which came to be occupied by colonists ‘were precisely those which had previously been most densely peopled by the Irish, according to the density map of ballyboes’.¹⁴² Various and sometimes conflicting interests, therefore, were at play in the allocation of land. These impulses involved more than the simple imperative to drive the native Irish into the mountains and bogs. To claim this would be overly simplistic. To rule out this imperative, however, would be equally unsatisfactory.

Besides Brian Ó Doibhlinn, the only other ‘deserving’ individual from one of those *sleachta* designated as *fircheithearn* was Aodh Mac Camhaoil (no.42, figure 15, p.266), whose ancestors had, in the twelfth century, assisted the Uí Néill in their rise to power.¹⁴³ Despite this, however, by the sixteenth century, they had been displaced from their lands by the ruling Uí Néill. On the eve of colonisation in Ulster, the Mic Chamhaoil held lands immediately to the west and north-west of these *lucht tigh* lands (see figure 19, p.273), and had ceased to function primarily in a military capacity, being for the most part devoted to ecclesiastical affairs.¹⁴⁴ Notwithstanding this, Aodh Mac Camhaoil, who received the

142 Robinson, ‘The Ulster Plantation and its impact on the settlement pattern of County Tyrone’, p.245.

143 Ó Doibhlinn, ‘O Neill’s “Own Country” and Its Families’, pp.17-18. The name Mac Camhaoil has been anglicised in a bewildering variety of ways (McCawell, Campbell, McCaul) one of which is Caulfeild, no doubt an attempt to share in the reflected status of one of the most prominent colonist families in the area. A similar phenomenon can be observed in the anglicisation of the name Ó Gnimh in Clondeboye, to Agnew, prominent tenants of the earl of Antrim.

144 Éamon Ó Doibhlinn, ‘Domhnach Mór: Part II’, in *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, vol.2, no.2, (Armagh Diocesan Historical Society, 1957), p.420. Ó Doibhlinn, ‘O Neill’s “Own Country” and Its Families’, p.18. Perhaps the most noteworthy individual of this name in plantation society was Eoghan Mac Camhaoil, an *airchinneach* of Dunboe parish whom bishop George Montgomery sought to win over to the Protestant cause. ‘Bishop Montgomery’s survey’, *Analecta Hibernica*, No. 12, p.101. This is most likely the same individual who was awarded a *baile biatach* of lands in the midst of the Mercers’ proportion in

baile bó of Tulnacross (7km west of Cookstown) served as an officer in 1600 under Cormac Mac an Bharúin, Ó Néill's brother.¹⁴⁵ He was later commended by Caulfeild for his role in helping defend Dungannon during Ó Dochartaigh's rising, and this was no doubt instrumental in his inclusion among the native grantees.¹⁴⁶ Aodh's proximity to the lands granted to Brian Crosach, Cormac Mac an Bharúin's son—whose short-lived coexistence with colonial society ended with his execution in 1615 (see below pp.327-31)—suggests a continuing attachment to this family; his tenure as proprietor of Tulnacross had already ended by 1641, when William Parsons was in possession.¹⁴⁷

His neighbouring grantee, Aodh Gruama Ó Maolchalann (no.26, figure 15, p.266) was another of those who sprang from a primarily ecclesiastical rather than military *sliocht*, whose name indicated the sept's ancestral devotion to St. Calann. They (and the Uí Mhealláin) were hereditary keepers of the bells of St. Patrick, now in the National Museum of Ireland, which remained in the family until the nineteenth century.¹⁴⁸ At the time of the plantation, this sept was still primarily based in Loughinsholin, close to where Aodh Gruama received his *baile bó* of Corkill, although several branches existed in other parts of Ireland.¹⁴⁹ Maolchalann sold his land to William Caulfeild in 1620 and it was still in that family's hands in the 1650s.¹⁵⁰ The other Corkhill in Dungannon was granted in 1611 to Séamus Ó Siall, a Leinsterman described eleven years earlier as a 'pryncipall practiser for Tyrone in Mounster and Leynster'.¹⁵¹ The following year, an intelligence report asserted

Londonderry.

145 Grant to 'Hugh McCawill' of 'Tullinecrosse', 18 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Tulnacross: Tulach na Croise, 'hillock of the cross'. 'The perfect names of such captens and commanders with their severall companies as are now under the command of the Traitor Tyrone within Tyrone', 9 August 1601, SP 63-209-1, no.10c, f.28r.

146 Caulfeild, 'The collection of Tyrone's rents', in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.542.

147 *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.260.

148 'The bell of St. Patrick and its shrine, Armagh, Co. Armagh', National Museum of Ireland website, <http://www.museum.ie/en/exhibition/list/ten-major-pieces.aspx?article=3a7f87c7-ee55-459d-b7c8-577becc19e15>, accessed 16 January 2015.

149 An account written by the sheriff of the area in 1609 lists the Uí Maolchallan as one of the principal septs in that barony. John Teighe, 'A brief of some things which I observed in the several baronies of the county of Tyrone during the time that I was High Sheriff of that county in Anno 1608', in *CCM* vol.5, p.30. Grant to 'Hugh Groome O'Mulchallane' of 'Corchiell' (Corkill), 27 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. A large number of individuals with this name (usually anglicised as 'Mulholland') were demised land by Niall Óg Ó Néill in the parish of Killead, Co. Antrim, on the eastern shore of Lough Neagh, suggesting a high concentration there as well. Inquisition made at Carrickfergus, 30 March 1640. Antrim, Charles I, no.143, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. Corkill: Corr Choill, 'round hill of the forest'.

150 *CPRI James I*, p.536. *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.260.

151 It has been deduced that the Corkhill next to Tullyaran was the one granted to Ó Siall, because he

that he had commanded 200 men in Ó Néill's 'own guard'.¹⁵² At the time of the plantation, Ó Siail remained in Ulster and had won the trust of the government to the extent that he was put in charge of one of their forts on the Blackwater. He nevertheless continued to be regarded with suspicion by some; in a 1609 report to Salisbury, he was included among the 'dangerous persons' who were said to openly commend Ó Néill and his actions; the forts, this writer advised, would be better entrusted to 'honest men'.¹⁵³ Notwithstanding such warnings, Ó Siail established his credentials as a 'deserving' native and served on the government's inquisition into escheated lands in Dungannon, receiving his two *baile bó*, nestled between the other native grantees in Donaghmore parish.¹⁵⁴ It might, indeed, be argued that to classify Ó Siail among the 'natives' is problematic; certainly he was not native to the area in which he settled, and the locals may well have viewed him as a figure as alien as any of the colonists from England or Scotland.¹⁵⁵ More plausibly perhaps, he should be seen as a hybrid figure, comparable to the Hovendons, originally from Kent, who became associated with the Uí Néill through fosterage and were Gaelicised to the extent that they were included in the list of native grantees (see below p.307).¹⁵⁶

When Séamus Ó Siail died in 1618, these lands passed to his thirteen year-old son Toby, likely named after Caulfeild.¹⁵⁷ Toby (no.13, figure 16, p.267) appears to have fared reasonably well in the following decades, cultivating outside economic interests and marrying into the distinguished Pippard family of Drogheda. In 1637 he was described as a merchant in Dublin, and it is perhaps no coincidence that one of the few 'native' grantees

received this *baile bó* as well. The other Corkhill, granted to Ó Maolchallan, must therefore have been the one further north. Grant to 'James Sheale' (Séamus Ó Siail) of 'Tullygarrin otherwise Coolmckry' (Tullyaran) and 'Corhill' (Corkhill), 18 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. The term 'practiser' here meaning conspirator or schemer. 'Intelligence from the parson of Trym', 17 June 1600, SP 63-207-4 no.5ii, f.26r.

152 'The perfect names of such captens and commanders with their severall companies as are now under the command of the Traitor Tyrone within Tyrone', 9 August 1601, SP 63-209-1, no.10c, f.28r.

153 Henry Pepwell to Salisbury, 22 August 1609, SP 63-227 no.122, f.92v.

154 Appendix: Tyrone inquisition, Dungannon 23 August 1609, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

155 There were several *sleachta* in Gaelic Ireland who bore this name. The ancestors of this Séamus were probably of that branch who had occupied the hereditary position of physicians to the ruling sept in Offaly.

156 'Names of servitors and natives to whom Lands are now granted in the Precinct of Donganon', in *CCM*, vol.5, p.237.

157 Inquisition made at Dungannon, 2 October 1624. Tyrone, James I, no.7, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. The *baile bó* of Coolmaghry which was bequeathed to Toby was, at the time of the plantation, included in Tullyaran. Éamon Ó Doibhlinn, 'Domhnach Mór Part V: The Cromwellian Settlement and Its Aftermath', in *Seanchas Ardmhacha*, vol.4, no.1, (Armagh Diocesan Historical Society, 1961), p.184.

to prosper economically was one who had a foot in the cultural life of the Pale, and some familiarity with English economic and legal practices.¹⁵⁸ Most likely residing in Dublin, Toby Ó Siail was not present in Ulster at the beginning of the rising in 1641.¹⁵⁹ Although, as a Catholic landowner, his lands were confiscated in the 1650s, his absence from the province at the time of the rising probably helped his family (Toby died in 1658) recover the lands at the Restoration Court of Claims, the only ‘native’ landowner in Dungannon to succeed in doing so.¹⁶⁰

Another of those ‘dangerous persons’ entrusted with the Blackwater forts in 1609 was Bartholomew Owen (no.28, figure 15, p.266), who received the *baile bó* of Knocknaclogha, close to Altmore where the Uí Siail would come to reside.¹⁶¹ The origins of this individual are difficult to ascertain. Charles Meehan claims he was a Franciscan friar, but the few primary documents that refer to him would suggest he was a captain—Catholic, of Irish birth, possibly with family links in Cheshire—who fell in with Ó Néill at some point during

158 Éamon Ó Doibhlin has claimed that Toby Ó Siail augmented his holdings by the purchase of the adjacent *baile bó* of Skea in 1639, having discovered evidence of its purchase from John Perkins, the governor of Dungannon, the deed of sale having been unearthed at a solicitors office in Cookstown in 1961. Ó Doibhlin, ‘Domhnach Mór Part V’, p.186. All three of the primary sources for landowning used here, however, indicate that it was still in the possession of the Ó Néill family to whom it had been granted in the plantation. See Aodh Mac Dónaill Ó Néill (no.7, figure 15) below, p.320.

159 Opportunities for economic advancement beyond agriculture being no doubt scarce in Ulster, native landowners such as Ó Siail may have chosen not to reside on the lands which they had been granted. A comparable example may be found of Brian Mag Uidhir (a brother of that Cú Chonnacht Mag Uidhir who fled with Ó Néill), who was another of those who adapted particularly well to plantation society. In the 1622 survey he was reported to live ‘very civil after the English manner’. This relative success may have incurred the jealousy and resentment of his fellow natives, for the same survey reports that he had taken a house in the Pale, ‘to avoid the accustomed great reportes of his kinsmen and others of his howse’. ‘A Brief Returne of a view and survey taken in the moneth of August 1622 by Sir Francis Annesley, Knight Baronett and Sir James Perrott, Knight, of the present state and Conditions of ye Plantation in the Counties of Cavan and Fermanagh’, (BL Additional 4756), printed in P. Ó Gallachair (ed.), ‘A Fermanagh Survey’, in *Clogher Record*, vol. 2, no. 2, (Clogher Historical Society, 1958), p.306. His alienation from (or at least a lack of identification with their interests) the other native Irish in Ulster is suggested from his refusal to side with the Irish in 1641 and his giving assistance to William Cole, the leader of the colonists’ forces in the area. That these feelings of alienation were mutual is suggested by the fact that, by the 1650s, Brian was said to be ‘in a very necessitous condition, occasioned by the several plunderings made upon him by the rebels for his faithfulness to the English interest’. The Council of Ireland to the Protector, 16 June 1656, in Thomas Birch (ed.), *A collection of the state papers of John Thurloe*, vol.5, (London, 1742), p.121.

160 They are listed as forfeit in the *Civil Survey* vol.3, p.288. Ó Doibhlin, ‘Domhnach Mór Part V’, pp.187-90. The surname anglicised as Shields, the family remained prominent local landowners in the area, living at Altmore house (7km to the west of Ó Siail’s plantation lands) until the nineteenth century, where the American general and politician James Shields was born in 1810 before emigration.

161 Grant to ‘Bartholomew Owin’ of ‘Knockclogh’ (Knocknaclogha), 18 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192.

the wars.¹⁶² He was most likely a soldier of fortune, of English or Old English origin, and might be counted among the servitors granted land in Ulster (within a few years of the war's end he was awarded a pension by Chichester for his services to the government) but for the fact that he was explicitly listed in documents at the time as a 'native' grantee.¹⁶³ Despite serving the government, claims that he and Séamus Ó Siall continued to support Ó Néill's interests are substantiated by other accounts, such as that of Toby Caulfeild, who asserted that Owen had defended Ó Néill in conversation with him shortly before the flight.¹⁶⁴

Others claimed he had only missed the opportunity to travel into exile because he was absent in Dublin, on business for the earl, at the time of the flight, 'yet carried him selfe in so subtill a fashion as the horses and many other things lefte by the said Earle was comitted to his custodye'. It was furthermore maintained by Bouchier that Owen planned to join Ó Néill at the earliest opportunity.¹⁶⁵ Instead of seeing this as reason to exclude him from the plantation settlement, however, officials appear to have concluded that it necessitated buying him off. While it is unclear whether Bouchier himself proposed preventing Owen from traveling abroad by force or inducement, the fact that he was included in the plantation scheme suggests that Owen was an individual of sufficient stature to warrant cultivating. Despite his mistrust, Caulfeild certainly felt it worthwhile doing him 'manie curtesies' in order to win him over.¹⁶⁶ Unfortunately, none of the sources refer to Owen's lands subsequently, and it is impossible to determine whether he still held them or not in 1641. He appears to have been still alive in 1623, and in receipt of a pension.¹⁶⁷

162 Charles Meehan, *The fate and fortunes of Hugh O'Neill, earl of Tyrone, and Rory O'Donel, earl of Tyrconnel*, (Dublin: J. Duffy, 1886), pp.63, 134. 'Annuyties and pensions graunted in Irelande determinable upon the death of the parties', 1623. SP 63-237 no.79, f.197v. He was described as 'much accounted of, and privately trusted by the Earle of Tirone'. John Bouchier to Salisbury, 21 June 1609. SP 63-227 no.87, f.7r.

163 List of Pensioners, 9 March 1606. SP 63-218, no.28, f.79v. Two lists include Owen among the native grantees, one among the Carew papers at Lambeth palace and one at Trinity college Dublin, printed in the following collections: Names of servitors and natives to whom Lands are now granted in the Precinct of Donganon, in *CCM*, vol.5, p.237 and 'Ulster Plantation Papers', *Analecta Hibernica*, vol.8, p.214. By 1623, he was described as a servitor and still receiving a pension. 'Annuyties and pensions graunted in Irelande determinable upon the death of the parties', 1623. SP 63-237 no.79, f.197v.

164 Toby Caulfeild, 'A coppie of a letter for my lieutenant', 25 January 1606, SP 63-218 no.18i, f.45r.

165 John Bouchier to Salisbury, 21 June 1609. SP 63-227 no.87, f.7r.

166 Toby Caulfeild, 'A coppie of a letter for my lieutenant', 25 January 1606, SP 63-218 no.18i, f.44v.

167 'Annuyties and pensions graunted in Irelande determinable upon the death of the parties', 1623. SP 63-237 no.79, f.197v.

The Hovendons, as noted above, were descended from an English soldier, Giles Hovendon, who came to Ireland in the 1530s and whose son, Henry, was recorded as foster-brother to Aodh Ó Néill in 1583. Ó Néill spent much of his upbringing with this Henry (Hovendon's mother is described as having 'brought upp the barron, from a childe'), thus accounting for the strong bond between the families in subsequent years.¹⁶⁸ While Henry Hovendon was listed in 1583 as an 'Englishe gent', by the time of the plantation his son, Robert, was counted among the natives, a late example of the kind of assimilation of outsiders into Gaelic society that had been commonplace in the middle ages. While his father fled with Ó Néill in 1607 (he later claimed that he had been as surprised as anyone else at the hasty flight and sought a means to return to Ulster and recover his lands), Robert received Glenbeg, Galbally and a third of Lurgylea, alongside the other natives planted in Donaghmore parish (Pomeroy today).¹⁶⁹ His marriage to Caitríona Ní Néill, however, which took place prior to 1613, brought Robert into alignment with an alternative branch of the Uí Néill. Caitríona was a daughter of Toirealach Mac Éinrí of the Fewes, but more crucially for Robert's future, the widow of Toirealach Ó Néill from the Uí Néill of Kinard (Caledon today) in the far south of Dungannon, bordering on the small barony of Tiranny.¹⁷⁰ Toirealach had been killed, along with his father Anraí Óg, fighting on the government's behalf against Ó Dochartaigh. Before his death, he had fathered with Caitríona a child, Féilim Rua, who would become the famed leader in 1641. The lands Caitríona received in the plantation, along with those she received in trust for her son, made the family extensive landowners in the area, with far greater holdings than Robert. For this reason, it is not surprising that Robert had relocated to this area by the 1640s (no.28, figure 18, p.269) and a kinsman, Henry Hovendon, held those lands which Robert

168 Lords Justices to the Privy Council, 23 August 1623. SP 63-104 no.28, f.71v. An earlier connection between Giles Hovendon and Conn Bacach Ó Néill (d.1559) has been postulated by John J. Marshall in 'The Hovendens: Foster Brothers of Aodh O'Neill, Prince of Ulster (Earl of Tireoghan)', in *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, Second Series, vol.13, no.1, (Belfast: Ulster Archaeological Society, 1907), p.6.

169 Thomas Edmonds to Salisbury, Brussels, 4 November 1607, *CSPI James I, 1606-1608*, p.632. It does not appear that Henry ever did return to Ulster, as Caulfeild is recorded in 1609 as making allowance for the relief of the wife and children he left behind. Caulfeild, 'The collection of Tyrone's rents', in *CSPI James I, 1608-1610*, p.543. Grant to Robert Hovenden of Glanbeg, 'Galbolly' (Galbally) and 'the third part of 'Largalea' (Lurgylea), 27 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Glenbeg: Gleann Beag, 'small glen', Galbally: Gallbhuaile, 'stone cattle enclosure' and Lurgylea: Lurga Liath, 'grey shin (long slender hill)'.
 170 Grant to 'Catherine ny Neale, late wife of Terence or Tirlagh oge O'Neale, and now wife of Robert Hovenden', 14 December 1613, *CPRI James I*, p.262. Kinard: Cionn Aird, 'top of the height'. Caledon, a shortened form of Caledonia, was the name given to the place by the colonists.

was granted in the plantation (no.25, figure 16, p.267).¹⁷¹

That Robert established himself, alongside Féilim Rua Ó Néill, as a pillar of colonial society is clear from his inclusion in a list of commissioners to raise money for the army in 1627.¹⁷² He also began to accumulate enormous debts in the 1630s, borrowing (with his in-laws) in excess of £8000.¹⁷³ The question of just why Hovendon and the Uí Néill of Kinard found themselves borrowing so much will be addressed below (pp.295-300); it may suffice to say at this juncture that, while Hovendon belonged to the category of grantee who genuinely tried to engage with the commercial economy introduced by plantation, by 1641 he was in serious financial difficulty. In the event, Robert did not live to see the outbreak of the rising in Ulster, as he died in May 1641.¹⁷⁴

His son Alexander, step-brother to Féilim Rua Ó Néill, played a prominent part in the attack on Armagh town at the beginning of the rising and, according to John Wisdome, he and others broke a promise made to the besieged colonists in the church that they would

171 'Drumquose' (Drumgose), 'Glasdromin' (Glasdrummond), Crossdalla, 'Unsheage' (Unshog), 'Ballinemetagh' (Ballynameta) and 'Breaghbuy' (Breghey) in *BSD* vol.1, f.39v. This Henry was either a son or nephew of Robert. Henry his son most likely died in the 1630s; according to John J. Marshall, a grave in Tynan churchyard bears this name and the date beginning 163-, the last figure being indecipherable. Marshall, 'The Hovendens', p.80. On Robert's death in 1641, a two year-old nephew was recorded as inheriting his lands in Armagh. Inquisition at Armagh, 24 March 1661, Armagh, Charles II, no.9, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. 'Galwally' (Galbally) and Glenbeg in Down Survey, 'part of the parish of Donaghmore,' PRONI, D597/4/54. Henry also possessed 'Killgevilloe, als Killgevilke' (Killygarvan) and Tully at his death, Down Survey, 'Part of Clonfickle Parish,' PRONI D597/4/61.

172 'Commissioners for the counties of Ireland', 16 July 1627, SP 63-245 no.729, f.83r.

173 Statute staple, Dublin, no.1797, 1 December 1631, borrowed £400 (with Féilim Ó Néill) from Henry Smith of Armagh (paid); no.1818, 4 May 1632, borrowed £2000 (with the brothers Féilim and Toirealach Óg Ó Néill, as well as Art Ó Móra) from John Symons of Armagh (never repaid); no.1965, 24 July 1634, another loan of £400 from the same Symons (paid); no.2055, 17 June 1635, a loan of £1200 from William Caulfield (with Féilim Ó Néill; the fate of this debt is unclear); no.2062, 27 June 1635, a £2000 loan (with Féilim and Toirealach Óg Ó Néill) from Randal Aldersey (satisfaction of this debt was finally acknowledged in 1667); no.2185, 24 May 1637, £300 (with one Brian Ó Néill from Tullyglush, near Keady) borrowed from Phillip Conran (never repaid); no.2197, 7 July 1637, £2000 (with Féilim and Toirealach Óg Ó Néill) from Randal Aldersey (never repaid). In those cases where a debt is here recorded as 'never repaid', the statute staple books indicate it was still being pursued in chancery in the 1660s, it must be assumed, unsuccessfully. Jane Ohlmeyer and Éamonn Ó Ciardha (eds), *The Irish statute staple books, 1596-1687*, (Dublin Corporation, 1998), pp.56, 78, 82, 144, 149, 240, 261 and 270. That Hovendon was also borrowing from local colonists is evident from the depositions. A parson's wife from Loughgall, for example, named him among their debtors. Deposition of Ellenor Fullerton, 16 September 1642, TCD MS 836 f.50r.

174 Inquisition at Armagh, 24 March 1661, Armagh, Charles II, no.9, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster. Although, curiously, one deponent reported him to be 'overjoyed' by its outbreak. Deposition of Robert Maxwell, 22 August 1642, TCD MS 809, f.5r.

be allowed to carry away their possessions if they surrendered.¹⁷⁵ A very different picture of Alexander's conduct emerges from the deposition of Robert Maxwell, the rector of Tynan, who claimed that Hovendon was the only commander who kept promises to conduct English prisoners to safety, and that he saved Armagh town being burnt to the ground on two separate occasions. Even if Maxwell was mistaken in his belief that Hovendon disobeyed 'secret directions to have murdered them', and that the English 'would trust no other Convoy then himselfe', he was clearly held in some esteem by the local colonists.¹⁷⁶ Ó Mealláin records his death in a skirmish near Benburb in September 1644.¹⁷⁷

Discussion of the Hovendons brings us, finally, to those Uí Néill who remained behind and attempted to adapt to colonial society in this area. As evinced by his role in 1641, Féilim Rua Ó Néill (no.49, figure 17, p.268; no.27, figure 18, p.269) undoubtedly became the leader of the native element in colonial Ulster society. This was not predetermined, however, by the extent of lands granted to his family. Other 'deserving' natives in Ulster received far larger amounts of land in the plantation scheme; while Féilim got roughly 5000 acres (granted to his mother in trust until he came of age in 1623), Toirealach Mac Éinrí, his maternal grandfather, received the entire southern part of the Fews barony (approximately 30,000 acres); a cursory glance at figures 15 and 17 will show that the family of Toirealach Mac Airt received far more land than the Uí Néill of Kinard; elsewhere in the province, Conchúr Rua Mag Uidhir received the entire barony of Magherastephana (almost 60,000 acres).¹⁷⁸ By the 1640s, however, as a comparison of the two maps show, Féilim Rua had augmented his landholdings significantly. He had also obtained an education at Lincoln's Inn, London and fought with the English army in France in the 1620s, thus establishing himself as a 'socially and politically acceptable member of the propertied class'.¹⁷⁹

175 The attack on Armagh town is reported in: Deposition of John Wisdome, 8 February 1642, TCD MS 836, f.14r.

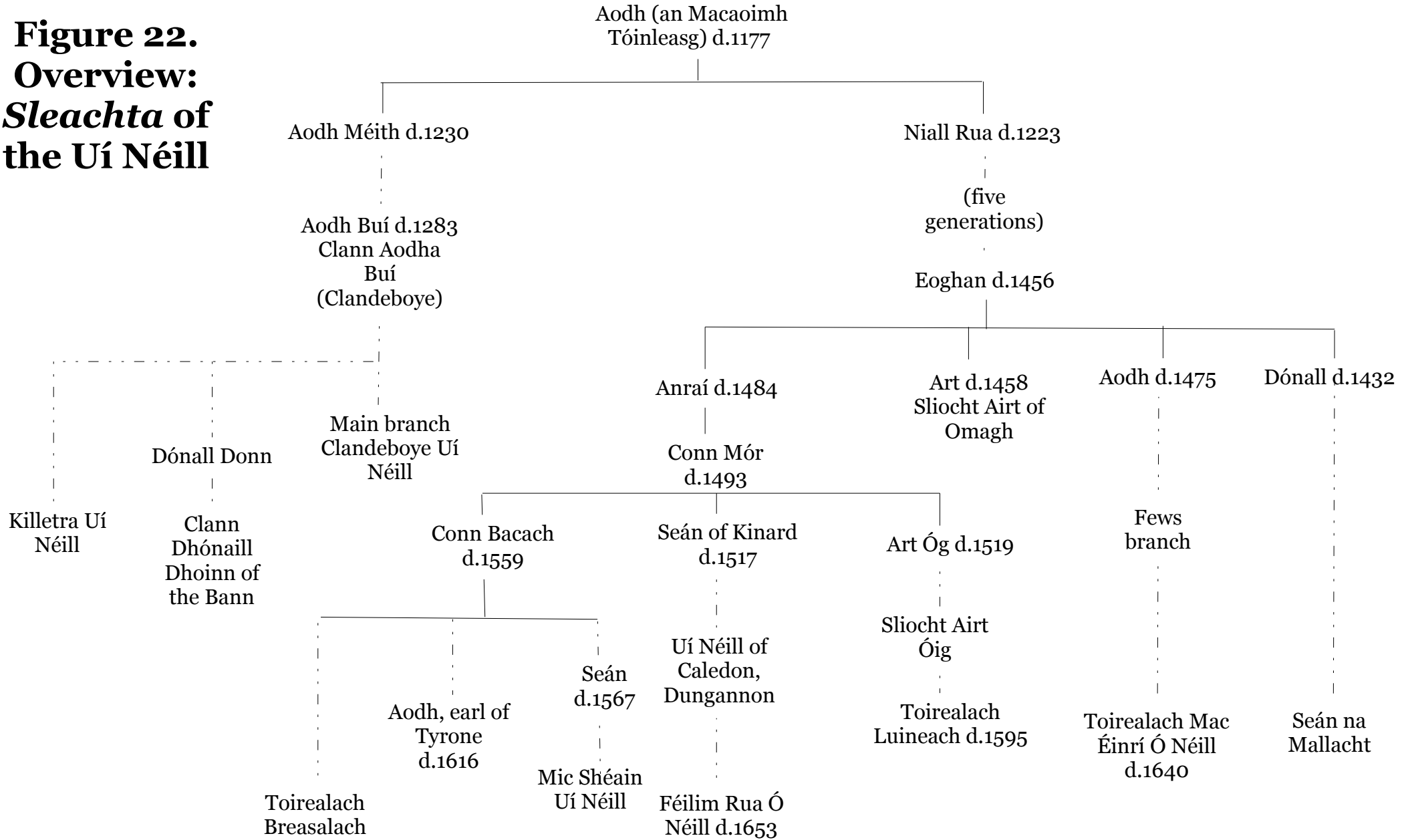
176 Deposition of Robert Maxwell, 22 August 1642, TCD MS 809, f.9v.

177 Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), 'Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin', p.360. Benburb: An Bhinn Bhorb, 'hill of defiance'.

178 Technically, the allocations to Toirealach Mac Éinrí Ó Néill and Conchúr Rua Mag Uidhir were not grants; the lands were instead deemed exempt from confiscation. Mag Uidhir was said to be unsatisfied with his share; Chichester wrote in 1610 that he had expected 'to have three Barronies upon some promise made unto him when the traitors Tyrone, Tyrconnell and others Irish lords were restored to their former grants, but a more prudent course being now in hande I see not that the kinge is bounde in honor or otherwise to make so barbarous and unworthy a man greater then his neighbours'. Chichester, 'Remembrancies', SP 63-228 no.16, f.39v.

179 Clarke, 'Ireland and the General Crisis', pp.88-9.

Figure 22.
Overview:
Sleachta
of
the Uí Néill



John Temple gives the impression that native landowners like Ó Néill had adapted to the commercial realities of the colony to the extent that they were prepared to expel their Irish tenants in order to take English ones, 'who were able to give them much greater rents, and more certainly pay the same'.¹⁸⁰ James Froude would later claim that 'Catholic landlords in the North preferred English tenants to their own people, when they felt in their purses the contrast between the improving stranger and the slovenly and unprofitable Celt'.¹⁸¹ The possibility that Irish landowners preferred colonists as tenants is far from implausible. Temple's claim, however, occurs in the midst of a long passage depicting implausibly idyllic relations between native and colonist, the literary function of which appears to be to heighten the treachery of the Irish in October 1641. Froude was intent on bolstering an image of the colonists as industrious pioneers, who had come 'over to earn a living by labour, in a land which had produced hitherto little but banditti'.¹⁸²

The notion that the contrast between industrious colonist and feckless native was so great that it outweighed cultural affinities between the Gaelic elite and tenantry appealed to his rhetorical aims, but is not backed up by supporting evidence. The depositions, for example, give little indication that Ó Néill had replaced much of his native with non-native tenants; indeed such a possibility would appear to contradict the oft-cited willingness of the Irish to pay higher rents, which explains the colonists' preference for native tenants in many cases. Even if Temple was exaggerating, however, it would not be surprising if the economic pressures which native landowners found themselves under in colonial Ulster put a strain on the traditional bonds tying a *tiarna* to his followers. Pádraig Lenihan's claim, however, that this process had advanced so far by 1641 that 'there was no natural community of interest between O'Neill and the lower classes of the native population', may overstate the extent of alienation between landed and landless Irish under colonisation, as well as the community of interest that had existed under the Gaelic order.¹⁸³

180 Temple, *The Irish rebellion*, pp.23-4.

181 Froude, *The English in Ireland*, vol.1, p.75.

182 Froude, *The English in Ireland*, vol.1, p.69.

183 Lenihan has cited Temple, and the Deposition of Robert Maxwell, TCD MS 839 f.43', in support of a claim that 'O'Neill had recently evicted his Irish tenants from a parish near Caledon (then called Kinard) and planted 48 British families'. While reservations have been noted about Temple's claim based on the context in which it was written, the 48 families cited by Lenihan do not appear in Maxwell's deposition (TCD MS MS 809 ff.5r-12v). They do, however, appear in the volume and folio cited, information supplied by a Captain John Perkins, who deposed that 'in the parish of Killaman neer adjoininge to Charelemount there were Cruelly murdered by Shane o Neyle Captain of the Castle of Charlemount under Sir Phelim o Neyle, to the Number of 48 families haveing beene protected by Sir Phelim three

Given the class divisions that existed in Gaelic society, the pursuit by Irish landowners of their own commercial interests in the plantation does not represent as profound a break from the past as might first appear. The ruling elite in Gaelic society was just as likely to sacrifice the needs of weaker elements in society when their own interests were at stake. ‘Ceremonial propaganda’, as Lenihan has aptly termed it, was indeed necessary to bolster the appearance of common interests, but this was as true under the Gaelic order as afterwards. Féilim Rua Ó Néill was, furthermore, equivocal in his conversion to the new order. He differed from an individual like Brian Mag Uidhir of Tempo, for example, in that he attempted to maintain a foot in both worlds. The activation of traditional networks of allegiance under his leadership in 1641 is testament to this, and he might best be seen as a figure akin to Aodh Ó Néill, seeking to adapt to English cultural, legal and political institutions as a means of preserving the vestigial power of the Gaelic elite. The fact that he subsequently found it difficult to control the violence of the native population is also illustrative of the weakening of the social control his class had once wielded.

Féilim Rua Ó Néill would thus seem to fit into the category of native landowner whom Nicholas Canny has described as ‘under local pressure to maintain an extended kinship group in idleness and to provide patronage to priests, poets, and literati, as their forebears had done’. Canny has also noted that those landowners who found themselves in this position tended to be the ones who fell most deeply into debt, due to the maintenance of such retainers, and the fact that their attempt to fulfill a traditional Gaelic role ‘prevented them from maximizing their rents as the settler landowners were doing’.¹⁸⁴ Some of the considerable debts accumulated by Ó Néill, as recorded in the statute staple books, have already been examined in relation to his step-father Robert Hovendon.¹⁸⁵ The total amount

quarters of a yeare & more’. This does not suggest that the families were necessarily Ó Néill’s tenants, merely that they had been protected by him for 9 months. Furthermore, if they were residents of the parish of Killyman (the text is unclear), it would suggest that they were definitely *not* his tenants, given that Ó Néill did not own any land in that area. In the light of this, and pending further evidence, the claim that Ó Néill replaced many native tenants with English or Scottish ones must be regarded as unproven. Pádraig Lenihan, *Confederate Catholics at war, 1641-49*, (Cork University Press, 2000), p.31. Information of Captain John Perkins, 8 March 1644, TCD MS 839, f.43r. Killyman: Cill na mBan, ‘church of the women’.

184 Canny, *Kingdom and colony*, pp.56-7.

185 The only bond which was not sold by Féilim in conjunction with Hovendon and listed above in footnote 173 was no.2819, 2 February 1639, borrowed £1000 from Edward Bolton (the fate of which bond is unclear). Ohlmeyer and Ó Ciardha (eds), *Irish statute staple*, pp.69, 270.

of debt accumulated by him (in some cases with his brother Toirealach Óg, Robert Hovendon and Art Ó Móra) recorded in the staple amounts to £9,300. This does not take account of money Ó Néill may have borrowed from other members of the landed gentry in Ulster, nor does it include the sums which he borrowed in London.¹⁸⁶ His total indebtedness on the eve of the rising was most likely well in excess of £10,000. That these debts were a factor in his decision to hatch a conspiracy in 1641 is open to question, as the kind of upheaval initially envisaged may not have been so extensive so as to offer the possibility of default on his debts. That this became a factor with Féilim Rua, however, seems likely; one deponent, Nicholas Simpson, certainly believed that the retaining of his estate was:

‘ . . . the onely Cause hee entred into this Rebellion, & not religion would often tymes aske mee, where were nowe our Statute staples, our execucions, & our potestations hee Cared not a farte for them all’.¹⁸⁷

The cost associated with the lifestyle of an English landlord, the purchase of a knighthood, and the settlement of the value of his wardship and marriage was also a significant drain on his finances.¹⁸⁸ Any success which Ó Néill achieved in passing himself off as a wealthy landed gentleman, therefore, must be tempered by an acknowledgement that it was based on unsustainable borrowing. It must also be questioned how representative this ‘success’ was. Few of the ‘deserving Irish’ improved their material conditions in the space of three decades examined here, or engaged in the colonial economy to the extent that Féilim Rua Ó Néill did. On the contrary, a loss of lands in this period was the fate of the vast majority of those listed in figures 15 and 17 (pp.266, 268) above, for whom it can be determined whether or not they increased (6) or decreased (30) their family’s landholding stake. Some, indeed, lost all the lands they had been granted and descended to a landless status. It is

186 Some of these are detailed in: Inquisition at Dungannon, 16 June 1661, Tyrone, Charles II, no.3, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

187 Deposition of Nicholas Simpson, 6 April 1643, TCD MS 834 f.184v. George Creighton described the plans of his captors to ‘burne & ruin it distroy all records & monuments of the English government’. Deposition of George Creighton, 15 April 1643, TCD MS 833, f.232v. Other deponents also described the deliberate destruction of accounts recording debts. Deposition of John and Isabell Gowrly, 8 November 1642, TCD MS 836, f.57r.

188 Jerrold Casway, ‘O’Neill, Sir Phelim Roe (1603–1653)’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.elib.tcd.ie/view/article/20784>, accessed 22 January 2015.

also important to note that in those few cases where native landowners did increase their holdings, it was inevitably at the expense of their fellow Irish.

The general failure of Irish landowners to thrive in the plantation economy has occasioned much comment. Certainly, factors associated with the old ways could act as a constraint on the Gaelic landlord's attempt to maximise the economic potential of his resources. The aforementioned attempt to maintain retainers also played a part, as well as the commitment to traditional kinship-networks, which prevented landlords from either charging an economic rent or expelling tenants from their lands. Perhaps most decisive is the fact that Irish landlords were suddenly competing in a market economy with English and Scottish settlers familiar with this economic system. Besides being a set of social relations guaranteed by the state's enforcement of property rights, a commercial economy also consists of cultural practices which, while native to the newcomers, were newfangled to the natives. Such habits of thought could not be internalised overnight, and anecdotal evidence would suggest that the shift to a commercial mindset was not always as smooth as those who posit the rational response of the Irish to economic incentives might believe. English observers were sometimes exasperated by the failure of the Irish to assume the role of rational economic actor. One writer in 1615 commented that:

‘ . . . they never value there owne labour, if a man ever owe of them iiiiid, he will goe ten miles to demmand it, if one of them should hire him to go so farre, he would not doe it for xiid, so maliciously improffitable are they not onlie to others, but even to them selves’¹⁸⁹

The refusal, noted above (p.179), of natives to take up potentially-lucrative employment, such as assisting in the demolition of Saint Patrick's Purgatory belongs likewise to this category of factors mitigating a purely economic response to incentives.

Some adapted better than others. Féilim Rua Ó Néill succeeded well enough to be regarded as credit-worthy, but he was clearly living on borrowed time. The gains in land he made were almost all made at the expense of other members of his family. If the English custom

189 E.S., ‘A survey of the present estate of Ireland Anno 1615’, HL Ellesmere MS 1746, f.15r-15v.

of primogeniture had been applied in the plantation, these lands would have been granted to him in the first place. Chichester, however, had argued for the sidelining of this element of the project for the sake of expedience, given the infancy of Féilim at the time of the plantation and the potential of his uncles to dispute the inheritance of *all* his grandfather's lands, arguing that:

‘ . . . it would tend to the quiet of those parts if the said lands were divided in some convenient manner among the issue male of the said Sir Henry’.¹⁹⁰

Robert Dunlop contends that it is doubtful if this arrangement was ever put into execution, which would explain how Féilim is found in possession of almost all his family's granted land three decades later.¹⁹¹

The land which Féilim Rua's mother, Cairtriona (no.50, figure 17, p.268) received in her own right was swallowed up by her son's holdings in the far south of Dungannon. By the 1650s, she held one *baile bó*, Kilmore (no.11, figure 16, p.267), previously shared by Brian and Niall Rua Ó Néill, lying very close to the property given to her husband, Robert Hovendon (no.4, figure 15, p.266).¹⁹² Robert Maxwell, who deposed concerning the leniency of her son Alexander, likewise claimed that Cairtriona showed a great deal of compassion to colonists made homeless by the rising, having fed and housed 24 of them in her own house for nine months, before the approach of an army made it impossible for her to stay there any longer.¹⁹³ She was still alive in 1661, attempting to reclaim from a Cromwellian adventurer, Maurice Thompson, some of the lands forfeited by her sons in the barony of Tiranny.¹⁹⁴ Cairtriona's younger son by her first husband, Toirealach Óg (no.51, figure 17, p.268), also increased his share of lands by 1641 (no.30, figure 18, p.269). He was a prominent figure in the native Irish community at the time of the 1641 rising and was described by the colonists themselves as a ‘gentleman of qualitey in the Cuntrye’, living

190 The king to Chichester, 31 March 1612, in *CSPI James I, 1611–1614*, p.260.

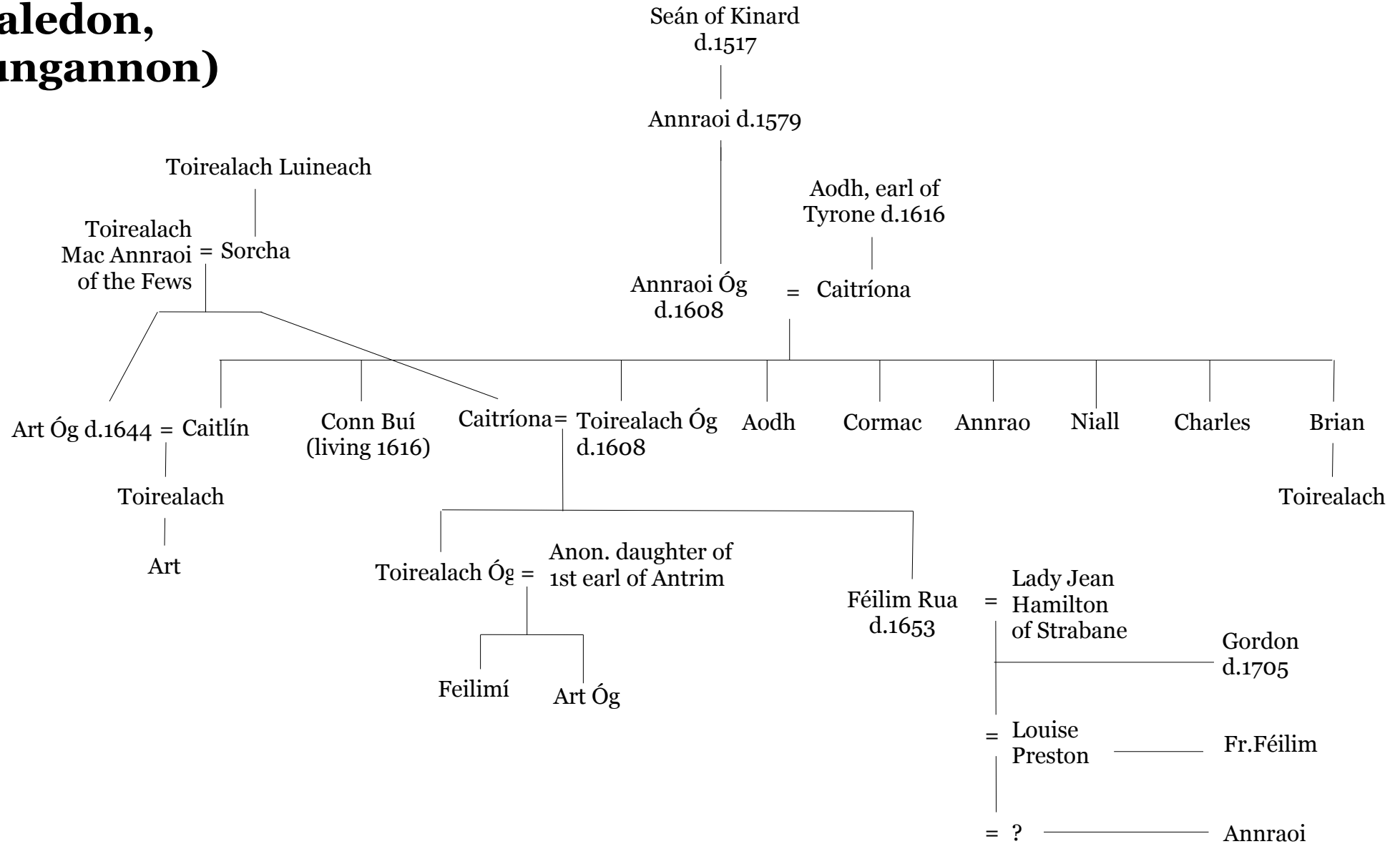
191 Robert Dunlop, ‘O’Neill, Sir Phelim Roe (1604?–1653), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.elib.tcd.ie/view/olddnb/20784>, accessed 24 January 2015.

192 The grant to Brian and Niall Rua is in *CPRI James I*, p.192. ‘Katherin Ny o Neale’ is listed as proprietor of ‘Killmoore’ in the Down Survey, PRONI MS D597/4/54. Kilmore: Cill Mhór, ‘big church’.

193 Deposition of Robert Maxwell, 22 August 1642, TCD MS 809, f.9r.

194 Inquisition at Armagh, 20 June 1661, Armagh, Charles II, no.2, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

Figure 23. Ó Néills of Kinard (Caledon, Dungannon)



at Ardgonnell castle, near Middletown, County Armagh.¹⁹⁵ He shared this residence with his stepfather Robert Hovendon and half-brother Alexander, Robert's son.¹⁹⁶

While living at Ardgonnell castle, Toirealach Óg's power-base was in the barony of Trough, north County Monaghan, where he had been fostered by the Mic Uaid.¹⁹⁷ He married a daughter of the first earl of Antrim, which is interesting in light of his mother's refusal to offer hospitality to one of the second earl's footmen, a slight 'which gave much occasion of discourse in that Country', and indicates perhaps a degree of discord within the family about political allegiances and strategies.¹⁹⁸ This is further suggested by the claims that Toirealach had not been in favour of the rising at all and had attempted to dissuade his brother from any involvement in it. After the initial attack at Glaslough, Monaghan, he reportedly traveled on to Armagh and:

'. . . by the way protested way much against those Courses of his brother Sir Philomye, & that hee beeing Shreife of that Countie, [he] woulde keepe the Brytische from all oppression & wronge & that hee woulde Carrye the kings monye hee had received to Dublyn & passe his accompts'.¹⁹⁹

When the conflict was underway, he allegedly attempted to make a deal to save some colonists and 'to deliver upp the Castle of Charlemont, And his Brother Phelemie alive or dead in itt' in the hope of receiving a pardon.²⁰⁰ Toirealach Óg's apparently-contradictory behaviour may be explained as an attempt to hedge his bets—compelled on the one hand to support the initiative of his brother, but hoping to secure a degree of leniency in the event of its failure. At the same time, he was pulled in the opposite direction by the advice of the

195 Deposition of Nicholas Simpson, 6 April 1643, TCD MS 834 f.182r.

196 Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), 'Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin', pp.393-4. Ardgonnell: Ard gConaill, 'Conall's hill'. Toirealach Óg's lands in 1641 are listed in the *BSD* vol.1, f.33v-34v: Carricklane, 'Coolekill' (Coolkill), 'Corofeaghan' (Corfehan), 'Creenorkin' (Creevekeeran), 'Dugirre' (Doogary), 'Killibridge' (Killtubbrid), 'Lislannill' (Lisslanly), 'Mullin' (Mullan), Portnelligan, 'Tulliglast' and 'Tulliglissoghoge' (Tullyglush Nevin and Kane).

197 Trough: An Triúcha, derived from *tríocha céad*, 'thirty hundreds', a unit of land-holding in medieval Ireland, usually translated in English as a 'cantred.'

198 Deposition of Nicholas Simpson, 6 April 1643, TCD MS 834 ff.182r-182v; Deposition of Robert Maxwell, 22 August 1642, TCD MS 809, ff.7v-8r.

199 Deposition of Nicholas Simpson, 6 April 1643, TCD MS 834 f.182v-183r.

200 Examination of Captain Thomas Chambers, undated, TCD MS 836, ff.38v-39r.

clergy, to whose dictates he was apparently susceptible. Richard Warrin claimed that he overruled a protection from Féilim Rua ‘by the instigation of patrick o Connolan prist’.²⁰¹ Similarly, while he showed a willingness to preserve the deponent Nicholas Simpson from danger, he then informed him he could no longer do so. When asked the reason for this ‘suddayne alteracion’ he responded ‘that hee was perswaded that itt was a mortall & unpardonable synne to protect heretiques’, this being ‘the ffryers & his mothers perswasion’.²⁰² Simpson’s mention of Cairíona Ní Néill’s harshness against the colonists (she and Toirealach Óg’s wife were described as ‘two most Cruell woemen to the Englishe’) belies the more sympathetic image left by Robert Maxwell cited above, and should alert us to the essential subjectivity of individual depositions.²⁰³ Notwithstanding his hopes, Toirealach Óg never received a pardon for his role in the rising. His fate is in fact unclear. Friar Ó Mealláin mentions him accompanying the forces of Eoghan Rua Ó Néill on the eve of the battle at Benburb in June 1646; he does not appear in any sources after this date and it may be that he was killed in this battle.²⁰⁴

Of the Uí Néill who were given land in Dungannon, the largest grantees, Toirealach Mac Airt and his brothers, have already been examined in the previous chapter. The extent of land lost by this family is readily apparent from the two maps above (pp.265, 267). This pattern is likewise seen with the other Uí Néill planted there. Back in Donaghmore parish, Dónall Mac Seáin na Mallacht Ó Néill (no.5, figure 15, p.266), was awarded one *baile bó*, close to his son, Aodh (no.7).²⁰⁵ This branch of the Uí Néill were descended from Eoghan, king of Tyrone (d.1456) through his son Dónall. Seán, the father of plantation grantee Dónall, had been given the byname na Mallacht (‘the cursed’), and the name seems to have passed down to his son and grandchildren. Dónall served Aodh Ó Néill in the Nine Years

201 Deposition of Richard Warrin, 7 January 1642, TCD MS 836, f.9r.

202 Deposition of Nicholas Simpson, 6 April 1643, TCD MS 834 f.185r.

203 Deposition of Nicholas Simpson, 6 April 1643, TCD MS 834 f.183v.

204 Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), ‘Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin’, p.369.

205 Grants to ‘Hugh McDonell O’Neale’ of ‘Skeagh’ (Skea) and ‘Donill McShane Mallatas’ of ‘Shraghcrom’, 27 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. No *baile bó* with a name resembling ‘Shraghcrom’ survives today. Ó Doibhlínn has observed, however, that ‘it is clearly marked on Plate 3, II of the Escheated Counties Maps. It is shown there between the town lands of Tullnagall and Corchill, and to-day is absorbed in Crossdernott’. Dónall’s grant has therefore been marked on the map here in the same place where Crossdernot lies today. Ó Doibhlínn, ‘Domhnach Mór: Part III’, p.220. The identification of Aodh Mac Dónaill Ó Néill was also made by Ó Doibhlínn. It is unclear if this was based on the evidence of the patronym alone; the fact that Aodh’s lands lie so close to Dónall’s does re-enforce the impression, making his identity as Dónall’s son more likely than not. Ó Doibhlínn, ‘Domhnach Mór Part V’, p.186.

War and submitted to the government in July 1602.²⁰⁶ Two of his sons—the aforementioned Aodh, and Niall—are also recorded as commanding troops under Brian Mac Airt, Aodh’s nephew, in August 1601.²⁰⁷ Niall does not appear to have received compensatory lands in the plantation, nor do the other sons of Dónall—Art, Féilim, Eoghan and Conn Buí. Féilim’s existence can only be deduced from a reference in the *Cinn Lae* of Ó Mealláin to a Franciscan friar named Niall Mac Feidhlim Mac Dónaill, likely a grandson of this Dónall.²⁰⁸

Eoghan and Conn Buí are likewise only attested to by two different inquisitions concerning the death of Dónall, both claiming his land passed to them and both giving different dates for his death, either 1616 or c.1629.²⁰⁹ By the 1640s, the proprietor of this land was Dónall Ó Néill (no.14, figure 16, p.267), most likely the son of plantation grantee Aodh, who had also inherited his father’s *baile bó* of Skea.²¹⁰ Perhaps the most interesting member of the family was Art, who is likely one of the three sons of Dónall Ó Néill singled out for a two-year remittance of rent by the government in 1610, ‘in regard of their fidelity in the time of O’Dogherty’.²¹¹ The fact that Art was not subsequently awarded lands in the plantation may account for his involvement in the conspiracy of 1615, for which he was hanged, draw and quartered.²¹² His son Conn continued the family’s tradition of leading resistance to colonisation; Ó Mealláin mentions him as commanding the ‘men of Keiregeir’ (today, the area around the village of Augher) at the capture of Liscallaghan (Fivemiletown) in October 1641.²¹³

206 ‘The names of the submittees’, 29 July 1602, Newry, SP 63-211-1 no.103a, f.281r.

207 ‘The perfect names of such captens and commanders with their severall companies as are now under the command of the Traitor Tyrone within Tyrone’, 9 August 1601, SP 63-209-1, no.10c, f.28r.

208 Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), ‘Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin’, p.352.

209 The first states that he died on the 9 April 1616 and was succeeded by Eoghan (then aged 20), the second records his death taking place c.1629 and claims he was succeeded by one Conn Buí. Inquisition at Augher, 22 September 1625, Tyrone, Charles I, no.2, and at Augher, 12 April 1631, Tyrone, Charles I, no.25, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

210 ‘Crossdernad’ (Crossdernot), Down Survey, ‘part of the parish of Donaghmore’. PRONI, D597/4/54. *BSD* vol.7, f.176v. *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.288. Crossdernot, Cros Dhiarmda, ‘Dermot’s cross’ and Skea: Sceach, ‘thorn bush’.

211 Caulfeild, ‘The collection of Tyrone’s rents’, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.540.

212 ‘The voluntary confession of Gorrie McManus O’Cahan (Gothraidh Mac Mánaís Ó Catháin)’, 21 June 1615, in *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.74.

213 It is only through this reference to Conn in the *Cinn Lae* that Art can be identified as a member of this family at all. Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), ‘Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin’, p.336. ‘Keiregeir’ is clearly visible on the Bodley map of Clogher from 1609. ‘The baronie of Clogher’, SP MPF-1-51. The reference to Art’s execution is in: Tadhg Ó Donnchadha (ed.), ‘Cín Lae Ó Mealláin’, in *Analecta Hibernica*, No. 3, p.6 n.3.

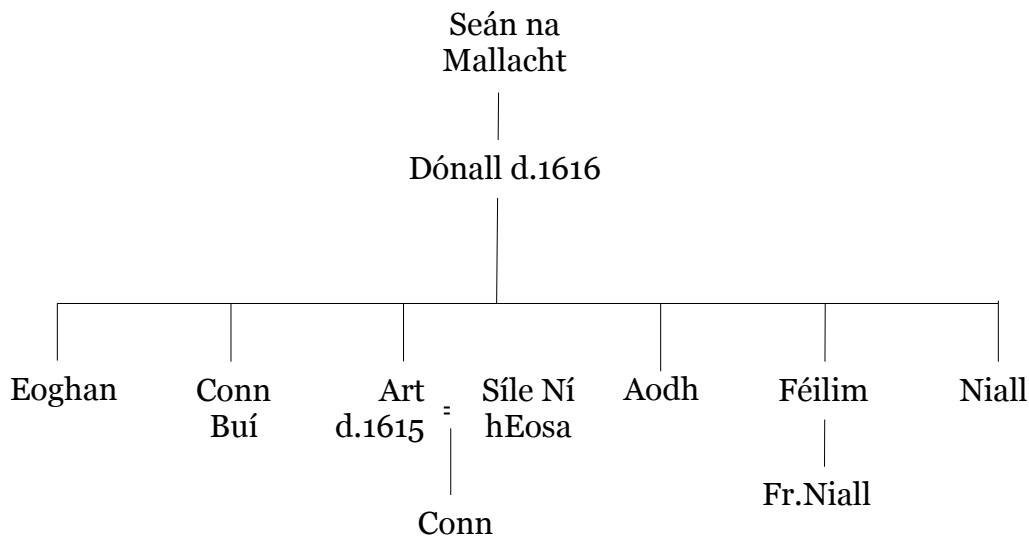


Figure 24. Descendants of Seán na Mallacht Ó Néill

Féilim Gruama Mac Néill Carraigh Ó Néill (no.38, figure 15, p.266) hailed from a branch of the Uí Néill based in Killetra, that portion of a vast wooded area between the Balinderry and Moyola rivers. The woods to the north were known as Glenconkeyne. This *sliocht* was more closely related to the Clandeboye Uí Néill than those west of the Bann. It had been powerful enough for Aodh Ó Néill to have its leader, Féilim Mac Toirealaigh Ó Néill (whom he saw as a threat to his hegemony in the province) killed in 1593.²¹⁴ It is difficult to determine the relationship between this Féilim and the Féilim Gruama awarded the *baile bó* of Lanaglug on the shores of the Ballinderry, within Dungannon but as close as possible to Killetra, where the Salters' company in Londonderry became his neighbours after the plantation.²¹⁵ Given that he was the only native landowner in the area of Ballinderry, it is impressive that Féilim Gruama managed to hold onto his land until the 1640s; the Civil Survey records its confiscation in the 1650s, although he had been killed at Glenmacquin in 1642 fighting the 'Laggan army'.²¹⁶

214 See figure 22 above.

215 Grant to 'Phelim Groome McNeale McPhelimy' of 'Broghvane otherwise Bravaghane' (Lanaglug), 18 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. He may have been a grandson of Féilim Mac Toirealaigh; his descent is recorded as 'son of Niall, son of Feilim Balbh' by Ó Mealláin, when recording his leading an attack on the Salters' castle in 1641. Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), 'Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin', p.336. Lanaglug: Lann na gClog, 'church of the bells', Ballinderry: Baile an Doire, 'town of the oak wood', Killetra: An Choill Íochtarach, 'lower forest'.

216 *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.283. Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), 'Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin', p.342. Glenmacquin: Gleann Mhic Coinn, 'Conn's glen'.

While Féilim Gruama may have received plantation lands reasonably close to his family's territory, the same cannot be said of Feardorcha Mac Brian Carraigh Ó Néill (no.40, figure 15, p.266), scion of another branch of the Uí Néill from the area between Tyrone and Clondeboye, namely the Sliocht Dhónaill Dhoinn, descendants of one Dónall Donn who lived in the fifteenth century. These Uí Néill had occupied lands straddling the river Bann, owing tribute to the Tyrone Uí Néill on the west side and the Clondeboye Uí Néill on the east. The name of this *sliocht* led English commentators to dub them them and their territory 'Clandonnell' and this sometimes led to the mistaken belief that they were related to the Mac Dónaill Scots who had settled in Antrim.²¹⁷ Brian Carrach Ó Néill, the father of

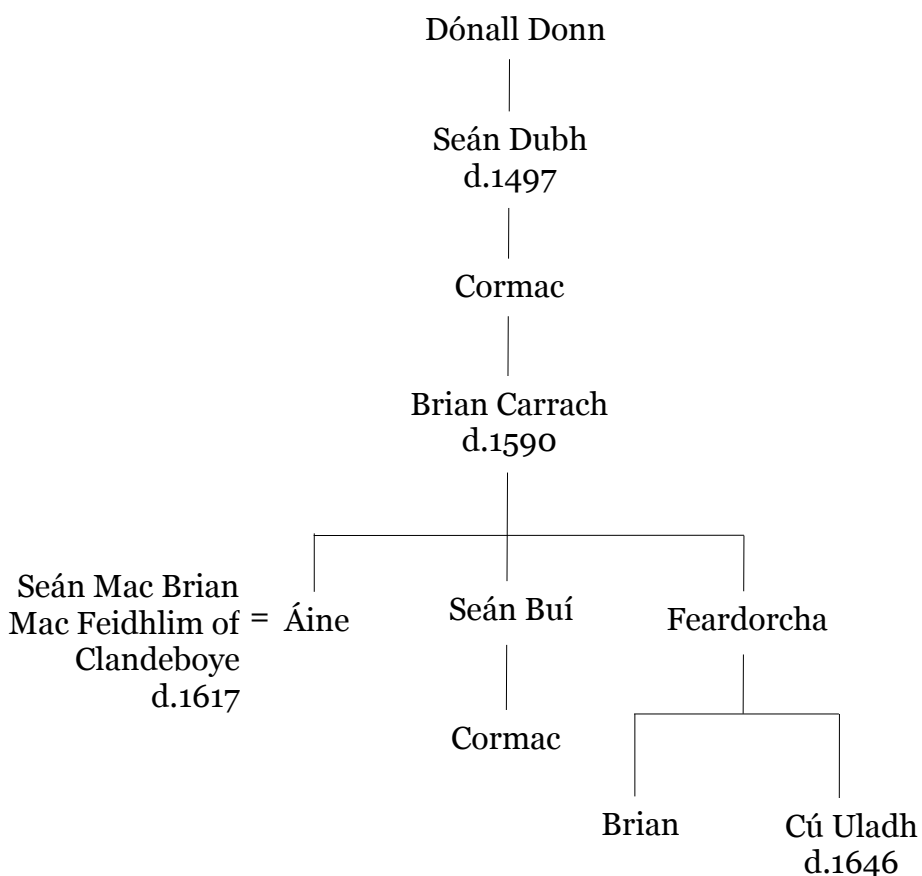


Figure 25. *Sliocht Dhónaill Dhoinne*

217 Henry Bagenal described them as a 'bastard kinds of Scotts' in his account of 'Brian Caraghe's country' in 1586, adding that, while not large in numbers, the sept was extremely difficult to attack given the inaccessibility of their territory, 'which in dede is the fastest grownde in Ireland'. William Camden referred to the area being left, after the failure of the earl of Essex's expedition, to 'Brian Carragh, of the Mac-Conells race'. Bagenal; Hore (ed.), 'Marshal Bagenal's Description of Ulster, Anno 1586', pp.154-5. Camden, *Britain*, part 2, pp.113.

the plantation grantee, was a formidable figure in the region, and contemporaneous maps of the area bear his name.²¹⁸ Brian transferred his allegiance from Toirealach Luineach to Aodh Ó Néill in 1586 and died in 1590, presumably in the service of the latter.²¹⁹ His place as leader of the *sliocht* was taken by a son, Seán Buí, who was listed by both Fynes Moryson and John Dymmok among the forces ranged against the government in 1599, although his ultimate fate is not apparent from the sources.²²⁰ Neither is it clear what specific services Feardorcha, Seán Buí's brother, performed for the government to merit land in the plantation. The *baile bó* of Terryglassog he received was situated far from the traditional lands of his *sliocht*.²²¹ Clearly Feardorcha did not prosper as a colonial landlord; by the 1640s, the area was owned by one Sutton Clark with Feardorcha's son, Brian, clearly belonging to the malcontents of Tyrone society, given his role as a 'captain of Tullahoge' in 1641.²²²

The final two individuals to be accounted for here are Máire and Brian Crosach Ó Néill, a daughter and son of Cormac Mac an Bharúin Ó Néill, brother of the departed earl of Tyrone. The actions of Cormac in the immediate aftermath of the flight are somewhat bizarre. Chichester informed the privy council that he was the first to come to Dublin with news of the earls' departure. The fact that Cormac's eldest son, Art Óg, went into exile with his uncle led the lord deputy to suspect that Cormac was 'not unacquainted with their purpose'.²²³ Whether his remaining behind was part of some strategy on the part of the Uí Néill, or whether he genuinely hoped to gain favour by informing the authorities of the flight, is unclear. Either way, it proved to be a tragic misstep; John Davies embellished these suspicions a few days later, refusing to take at face value Cormac's decision not to travel with his kinfolk:

218 In Francis Jobson's map of 1590, for example, the area is marked 'Brian Caragh'. 'A map of the Ulster counties', TCD MS 1209-15. Even after his death c.1590 it continued to be referred to by his name; in Bartlett's map of Ulster the name 'Brian Carrogh' is emblazoned across the area. Richard Bartlett 'A Generale Description of Ulster'. SP MPF 1-35.

219 Wallop to Burghley, 12 August 1586, SP 63-125 no.47, f.178r. William M. Hennessy (ed. and trans.), *The Annals of Loch Cé*, vol.2, (Dublin: Stationery Office, 1939), p.509.

220 Moryson, *An itinerary*, vol.2, p.232. 'Shane mac Bryan Carragh, and his cuntry joyning on the Bansyde' is also mentioned in Dymmok, 'A Treatise of Ireland', p.29.

221 Grant to 'Fardorogh McBrien Carragh O'Neale' of 'one of the 2 balliboes of Tierglassog' (Terryglassog), 18 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Terryglassog: Tír dhá ghlásóg, 'land of two rivulets'.

222 *Civil survey*, vol.3, p.271. Ó Mealláin; Dillon (ed.), 'Cinn Lae Uí Mhealláin', p.340.

223 Lord deputy and council to the privy council, Rathfarnham, 9 September 1607. SP 63-222, no.129 f.105r.

‘It was noted that Sir Cormack had his private end in this; for withall hee was an earnest suitor to have the custodian of his brothers cuntrey, which perhaps might bee to his brothers use by agreement betwixt them, and therefore for this and other causes of suspection, the constable of the castle of Dublin hath the custodiam of him’.²²⁴

Cormac had followed Ó Néill and the rest of his party as far as Dunnalong, only a few miles from the garrisons at Lifford and Derry, whom he failed to inform of the earl’s intentions, waiting instead for confirmation that they had departed before heading to Dublin.²²⁵ Under interrogation, Cormac himself claimed that relations with his brother had deteriorated since the end of the Nine Years War, after which Aodh had:

‘. . . suppressed and discountenanced him and his tenantes, which he accounteth to be such a slaverie as he desireth rather to remaine the kinges prisoner duringe his life, then be at libertie such as he had under his unnatural brother, who countenanced even his horsemen to do him contynuall wronge and indignities’.²²⁶

Cormac was imprisoned without trial for the remainder of his life, although the evidence would suggest that, just like Dónall Ó Catháin, the state had come to the conclusion that he represented no real threat.²²⁷ The grant of land to two of his children, however, suggests that the authorities recognised the expediency of giving the family some stake in the plantation. Chichester included ‘the childeren of Sir Cormock Mc Barron’ among those who would ‘kindle a neowe fyre in those p[ar]tes at one tyme or other, yf they be not well

224 John Davies to Salisbury, 12 September 1607, SP 63-222 no.133, f.114r.

225 Chichester to the privy council, 7 September 1607, SP 63-222 no.126, f.90r. Dunnalong: Dún na long, ‘fortress of the ships’, Lifford: Leifear, ‘half-water or grey-water’.

226 ‘An abstract of the voluntarie confession and offers of Sir Cormock O Neile, knight’, October-November 1607, SP 63-222 no.164a, f.216r.

227 The future lord deputy, Oliver St.John wrote of Cormac in December of that year: ‘besides the oppinion of his house, hath little in him to make him dangerous, but I wish he may be kept secure so long as there is any hope of his brothers retorne’. St.John to Salisbury, 11 December 1607. SP 63-222 no.192, ff.287v-288r.

looked unto or p[ro]vided for in some reasonable measure'.²²⁸ An allowance was thus made in 1610 for the relief of Cormac's wife (Maighréad Ní Dónaill, sister of Ruairí, the departed earl of Tyrconnell), a daughter Máire, and a son, Brian Crosach.²²⁹

Cormac's daughter, Máire Ní Néill (no.44, figure 15, p.266), was awarded Coolnahavil and Coolnafranky in the territory known as Arachtra before the plantation (now the area around Cookstown).²³⁰ Her brother Brian Crosach (no.16) became the second-largest native grantee in Dungannon after Toirealach Mac Airt, receiving almost 8,000 acres of largely poor-quality land around Oughtmore and Fir Mountains to the west of Máire's portion.²³¹ This area was far from their father's power-base in the barony of Clogher, about 40km to the south-west.²³² Máire married a Scottish colonist, William Stewart, who was most likely related to the family of Lord Ochiltree (later baron Castlestewart). They had a son, also called William, who inherited Máire's lands on her death in the early 1620s.²³³ Another son called Robert, however, sold Coolnafranky to James Stewart in 1632, who was also in possession of Coolnahavil by the 1640s.²³⁴ That Máire's husband William was a not-entirely reputable member of the Stewart family is suggested by allegations that he was involved in the conspiracy of the Irish against the colony in 1615. Brian Crosach claimed that William had sworn to assist the conspirators, and would bring with him the assistance of the 'best of the Scots'. While his interlocutor expressed doubts, the possibility cannot be

228 'Certaine noates of Remembrance', Arthur Chichester, September 1608. SP 63-225 no.225, f.112v.

229 Caulfeild, 'The collection of Tyrone's rents', in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.539. Maighréad was later given a pension of £100 per year in 1617. 'Pension to lady Margaret O'Neale', 17 March 1617, in *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.152.

230 Grant to 'Mary nyne Neale' of 'Tiranegane (Coolnahavil) and 'Cooleteffrangan' (Coolnafranky), 18 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.192. Coolnahavil: Cúl na habhla, 'back of the orchard', Coolnafranky: Cúl na francaigh, 'corner/slope of the French' possibly 'Freanga's corner', The origins of the name Arachtra are obscure, perhaps deriving from *oirtheas*, east. Cookstown is named after the colonist Allan Cook, who arrived in 1609 and obtained a patent for fairs and markets in 1628.

231 Grant to 'Bryan Crossagh O'Neale', of 'Clontedonan otherwise Clontedoan' (Cluntydoon), 'Tullycoole' (Tullycall), 'Tubberleawe otherwise Tubberlean' (Toberlane), 'Dromvarhim otherwise Dromvarhin' (Drumearn), 'Gortreagh', 'Ballinecreggy' (Craigs), 'Dromnaclogh' (Drumnaglogh), 'Gorenesoole' (Muntober), 'Coolerrecurrah' (Feegarran), 'Ballinegorhah' (Oritor), 'Drineleah' (Derrinleagh), 'Cornvaneghan' (Corvanaghan), 'Ballinenoghelly' (Ballynagilly), 'Rousky' (Gortnagross), 'Ballihawlaght' (Tamlaght), 'Ballidromard' (Drumard), and 'Ballinenane otherwise Ballinenowne' (Beltonanean), 15 February 1611, *CPRI James I*, p.187.

232 'Certaine noates of Remembrance', Arthur Chichester, September 1608. SP 63-225 no.225, f.112r. Clogher: Clochar, 'stony place'.

233 Inquisition made at Augher, 12 April 1631. Tyrone, Charles I, no.21, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

234 'Cullnefrangan', Civil survey, vol.3, p.257. 'Cullnehaviell', Down Survey, 'part of Derryloran parish', PRONI, D597/4/45 and 'Cullnehavell' *BSD* vol.7, f.188v.

dismissed out of hand, given that the two men were brothers-in-law, and that the plot involved the release of Williams' father-in-law and another brother-in-law, Anraí.²³⁵ To understand the context in which Brian Crosach Ó Néill—who had apparently enjoyed the beneficence of the plantation commissioners—became involved in such a desperate and ill-fated design as the conspiracy of 1615, it is worth attempting to piece together the course of his fortunes in the years leading up to this.

From the time of the flight and his father's imprisonment, the government's attitude towards Brian Crosach was ambiguous. Chichester and his colleagues had to weigh up the potential benefits of winning his allegiance to the new order against the dangers of leaving him at large. At the time of Ó Dochartaigh's rising in 1608, Toby Caulfeild, recognising Brian's capacity to 'to draw a great many of idle followers after him to commit villainy', bought the young man off with the rents (£40) of a *baile biataigh* for two years.²³⁶ Notwithstanding this, doubts were cast upon Brian's dependability in the aftermath of the rising, with several of those involved claiming that he had been sympathetic to Ó Dochartaigh and at least flirted with the idea of joining him.²³⁷ No doubt Brian Crosach, like many other native leaders at the time, was unwilling to commit himself to Ó Dochartaigh's cause until he could be assured it had a reasonable chance of success. This hesitation on the part of the Irish was a major contribution to its failure.

Notwithstanding these allegations, Brian Crosach's relatively large grant of lands in 1611 suggests that he was given the benefit of the doubt and, unlike his father (and others who fell under suspicion in the wake of Ó Dochartaigh's rising), was recognised as 'deserving' in 1611. At this point, Brian possibly saw the plantation as a welcome opportunity for social and economic advancement. Raymond Gillespie argues that 'despite the fears of the Dublin

235 Examination of Dermot oge McDonne taken before the Lord of Meath, Sir Toby Caufeild, Captain Doddington, and Francis Annesly, 3 April 1615, in *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.32-3. The intention of freeing 'Henry McCormacke McBarron' is mentioned in 'Additions upon a second Examination of the above-named Teage O'Lennan (Tadhg Ó Linneáin) taken by Sir Thomas Phillips, knight', 12 April 1615, in *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.43.

236 Caulfeild, 'The collection of Tyrone's rents', in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.539.

237 Ó Dochartaigh's brother, Dónall, alleged that Brian promised to join their party as soon as the lord deputy had returned to Dublin, and that he had promised to use powder, but no bullets, in their weapons when fighting the insurgents. Féilim Rua Mac Daibhéid likewise claimed Brian had made a pact with him, but implied that he had later been betrayed. The voluntary confession of Daniel, the brother of Sir Cahir O'Dogherty, June 1608, in *CSPI James I, 1606–1608*, p.583. Examination of Phelim Reaghe [McDavitt], 3 August 1608, in *CSPI James I, 1608–1610*, p.3.

government the plantation scheme did not provoke widespread hostility among the Ulster Irish'. In Brian's specific case, Gillespie claims that colonial society would have offered opportunities for social advancement which, as an illegitimate son of Cormac Mac an Bharúin, would have been denied him by the Gaelic order.²³⁸ As Kenneth Nicholls has shown, however, illegitimacy was not so heavily stigmatised in Gaelic society as in English.²³⁹ To be an illegitimate son was a greater obstacle to advancement in English society than it was amongst the Irish. It is difficult, therefore, to see how the imposition of English mores and values on the province would have offered somebody in Brian Crosach's position greater freedom for advancement.

No doubt Brian Crosach viewed this grant of lands in the foothills of Slieve Gallion as better than the alternatives on offer—following his uncle into exile or living 'on his keeping' in the forests and fastnesses of the Sperrins or Glenconkeyne-Killetra.²⁴⁰ It does not necessarily follow, however, that he viewed the plantation as a positive development or saw in it an opportunity to improve his lot. On the contrary, there are good reasons for doubting this was the case, or at least that such a frame of mind did not last very long beyond the date of his grant in 1611. Firstly, the London companies to his north argued in 1612 that the land awarded to Brian Crosach was actually not in Dungannon at all, but Loughinsholin (which had recently been transferred from Tyrone to the newly-created county of Londonderry), and that his patent should be canceled and the land handed over to them.²⁴¹ It is not surprising that Brian attempted to sell his land to the Londoners at this point, strongly implying that he did not view his future as a colonial landowner with any great confidence.²⁴² Although Gillespie has claimed that the Londoners' demand was not acceded to by the government, and that the whole question of Brian's lands being within the confines of Londonderry was proved on investigation to be false, none of the references

238 Raymond Gillespie, *Conspiracy: Ulster plots and plotters in 1615*, (Belfast: Ulster Society for Irish Historical Studies, 1987), pp.25, 31-2.

239 'Irish law did not distinguish in matters of succession between the legitimate and the illegitimate' heirs and, as indicated by his citing of Fynes Moryson to illustrate this, this was the case right down to the end of the Gaelic order in Ulster. Nicholls, *Gaelic and Gaelicized Ireland*, p.88.

240 Slieve Gallion: Sliabh gCallann, 'mountain of the heights, Glenconkeyne: Gleann Con Cadhain, 'glen of Cadhan's hound'.

241 'A remembrance of such impediments as the Londoners pretend to be the hinderance and lett of their proceeding in the Plantation of Ulster', 20 June 1612, in *CSPI James I, 1611-1614*, p.273.

242 'The points in the lord deputy's letter of the 29th of April 1612', in Phillips; Chart (ed.), *Londonderry and the London companies*, p.36.

cited conclusively prove that the issue was laid to rest there.²⁴³

The following year, 1613, the Bodley survey reported that Brian had done little or nothing to develop his lands.²⁴⁴ It may well be that the option of cutting his losses and fleeing the country *did* appear more attractive; that flight was on his mind is suggested by the fact that he and his fellow-conspirators in 1615 included in their plans the provision of a boat to transport them abroad.²⁴⁵ As has been argued elsewhere in this work, the plantation introduced an element of insecurity into the lives of many Irish in Ulster, which made them less—not more—likely to develop the trappings of sedentary life, such as tillage agriculture and permanent dwellings. Furthermore, there were more than purely economic interests at stake. Despite Brian’s grant of lands being better than nothing, a displeasure comparable with that already seen in Toirealach Mac Airt Ó Néill and Conchúr Rua Mag Uidhir—that he had had not received lands commensurate with his status—would be consistent with Brian Crosach’s subsequent actions.

That aristocratic pride played a part in his calculations is suggested by a complaint he made of his treatment at the summer assizes in 1614, where he claimed the New English judge Aungier, ‘was ready to revile me like a churl’.²⁴⁶ Gillespie traces Brian Crosach’s involvement in the plot largely to this slight, dismissing other factors such as dissatisfaction with the plantation, and suggesting that he may not have agreed to conspire with the others until after this.²⁴⁷ This incident, however, should not be over-emphasised. Brian’s own account of the confrontation suggests his resentment ran deeper than a mere insult. Firstly, the imprisonment of his father on no charge for the past seven years must have alienated him from any new order founded on such an injustice. Added to the disrespect he received at the hands of Justice Aungier, Brian Crosach furthermore claimed ‘the other black judge would lean his head upon one shoulder to see if he could espy any occasion to hang me’. Something more tangible than disrespect may have occurred at these

243 Gillespie, *Conspiracy*, p.32.

244 ‘Brian Crossagh Oneale hath only digged a small trench and raised it 4 feet high, towards the making of a weak bawn, and provided couples for an Irish house, his land being no otherwise estated than before’. Bodley survey of 1613, in *Hastings*, vol.4, p.179.

245 Examination of Dermot oge McDonne taken before the Lord of Meath, Sir Toby Caufeild, Captain Doddington, and Francis Annesly, 3 April 1615, in *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.32.

246 Examination of Dermot oge McDonne, *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.31.

247 Gillespie, *Conspiracy*, pp.16, 33.

assizes which drove Brian to declare the following year: 'I will not, by my good will, ever come among them any more'.²⁴⁸ It is curious that the patent recording the transfer of his lands after his attainder to Francis Edgworth, while issued in 1616, dates Edgworth's deed to these lands the 30 July 1614, *before* Brian Crosach entered into conspiracy.²⁴⁹ If he had already been dispossessed of his lands in 1614, the question of his motivation for involvement in 1615 suddenly becomes a lot more straightforward.

As for the conspiracy itself, the rather sordid course of events that led to its disclosure, and the arrest and execution of its leading figures (including Brian Crosach) has been recounted at length in Gillespie's monograph. Observers like Francis Blundell and Robert Jacob, the solicitor-general, argued that it had been blown out of proportion by the class of military servitors, led by Chichester, who had a vested interest in convincing the government that the colony was under threat. Blundell went so far as to suggest the plot had been invented by one Tadhg Ó Linneáin, who, 'being to be hanged as an idle person, offered (as the manner of this people is) to save his own life by confessing such things as might much concern His Majesties service' and 'accused divers active young men of the ancient septs of the Irish in that province of having combined together' in the conspiracy.²⁵⁰ Jacob wrote of it as 'a matter of no great importance, howsoever some men doe magnifye itt'.²⁵¹ Such conspiracies were all markedly local in focus, and attracted little support outside a small group of conspirators.²⁵²

Gillespie similarly claims that there was no widespread resentment towards the plantation beyond 'some initial dissatisfaction', which 'does not seem to have developed into a more

248 Examination of Dermot oge McDonne, 3 April 1615, *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.31.

249 Grant to Francis Edgworth 'assignee of Sir John Eyres, knight, one of the gentlemen of the privy chamber, by deed bearing date 30 Jul. 1614', of 'Clontedonan otherwise Clontedon' (Cluntydoon), 'Tullycollo' (Tullycall), 'Tubberleawe otherwise Tubberlean' (Toberlane), 'Drombarhim otherwise Drombarhin' (Drumearn), 'Gortreagh', 'Ballinecreggie' (Craigs), 'Dromnaclogh' (Drumnaglogh), 'Gortnesoole' (Muntober), 'Coolerecarrah' (Feegarran), 'Ballinegorhahe' (Oritor), 'Moytubber otherwise Moightobber' (Muntober), 'Drineleah' (Derrinleagh), 'Cornedanaghan' (Corvanaghan), 'Ballynenoghelly' (Ballynagilly), 'Rousky' (Gortnagross), 'Ballyhawlaght' (Tamlaght), 'Ballydromard' (Drumard), and 'Ballynenane otherwise Ballynenowne' (Beltonanean), 'all being late in the tenure of Bryan Crassagh O'Neale, attainted', 14 January 1616, *CPRI James I*, pp.354-5. Brian Crosach's attainder is recorded in: Inquisition made at Dungannon, 15 February 1616. Tyrone, James I, no.3, in *Inquisitionum*, vol.2 Ulster.

250 Francis Blundell to Sir Ralph Winwood, 26 April 1615, SP 63-233 no.16, f.49v.

251 Robert Jacob to R. Winwood, 28 April 1615. S.P. 63-233 no.18, f.54r.

252 This low-level violence against the plantation in the decades prior to 1641 has been explored in more detail in: Edwards, 'Out of the blue?: Provincial unrest in Ireland before 1641', pp.95-114.

coherent movement and had melted away by 1616'.²⁵³ Numerous examples have been offered in this work, however, of English administrators attesting to the discontent of the Irish at the plantation in these years. Brian's belief that the 'black judge' was seeking an opportunity to hang him, is illustrative of the view that the implementation of English law was often nothing more than the same process of conquest and dispossession—previously carried out by military means—now being executed by judicial ones. His speech to Diarmaid Óg Mac Doinne (see below p.327) reflects a profound disenchantment with colonial society and a belief that it would never genuinely accommodate the native Irish beyond the strategic extent necessary to suppress dissent.

In one respect, however, Gillespie is correct in that dissatisfaction did not develop into any coherent movement in these early years. This was as much to do, however, with the exhaustion of the population after a long period of war, and a lack of leadership rather than any significant level of contentment among the general population. Solicitor-general Jacob remarked in 1609 of the Irish in Ulster:

‘They want a great man to be president amongst them, whose countenance, power, and authority might governe them and keep them in awe; for nowe they are a multitude w[i]thout a head’.²⁵⁴

With the departure of the earls and their retinue, the only others who might have been in a position to lead native resistance to colonisation were those who had been given the hope of a stake in the plantation by grants of land. While a few of these, like Brian Crosach, came to the conclusion that this new dispensation was, in the long term, disadvantageous to the Irish, most had yet to come to this realisation by 1615. The handful who participated in the conspiracy of that year could hardly be described as a 'coherent movement', being neither competent nor numerous enough to seriously threaten the colonial administration. If, however, their conspiracy had not been discovered, who knows whether it might not have

253 Gillespie, *Conspiracy*, p.25.

254 Robert Jacob (solicitor-general) to Salisbury, 15 April 1609, SP 63-226 no.69, f.190r. That this had hardly changed by 1625 seems apparent from a writer's comment that the six escheated counties had been 'soe weaklie planted by the undertakers as without speedie and more effectuall proceedings, upon any stirre of the Irish, they willbe supplantted [. . . and] will give easie entrance of invasion, betwixt Tirone and Tirconnell who will cast all the other northern plantacions into great dangers. 'Abstract of divers papers concerning Ireland', 1625, SP 63-241 no.190, ff.399v-400v.

sparked off a widespread uprising of the population as happened in 1641. By that date, a sufficient proportion of the native landowning gentry had lost faith in the possibility of advancement, or even maintenance of their position, through co-operation with the plantation project, to form the ranks of a native leadership capable of taking over central Ulster with relative speed.

Belief in the opportunities represented by engagement with the colony may have been prolonged by the negotiation of the 'Graces', and in some quarters lasted into the 1630s. By 1641, however, judging by the level of participation in the rising among the native landowning class, it is clear that most of this group had belatedly come to similar conclusions as Brian Crosach Ó Néill twenty-six years earlier. Both Raymond Gillespie and Aidan Clarke have argued that short-term political factors, such as the growing intransigence of the Puritan element in the London parliament and the failure of Wentworth's government to honour the 'Graces', were more instrumental in the minds of those who planned the rising, than the overthrow of the plantation itself.²⁵⁵ While it is certainly true that such considerations determined the timing of the conspiracy that sparked the rising, they alone do not explain the fact that it occurred. While the Irish gentry may well have had less radical objectives than the overthrow of the plantation to start with, these objectives appear to have evolved with the changing tactical situation. The crippling debt in which a 'successful' native landowner like Féilim Rua Ó Néill found himself would certainly have given him a powerful incentive to overthrow the colonial order when that opportunity presented itself. It should also be borne in mind, however, that different insurgents no doubt harboured a variety of hopes for the rising.²⁵⁶

While some 'deserving' Irish may have wanted changes in colonial society, there was no

255 Gillespie, 'Success and failure', p.98. Clarke, 'Ireland and the General Crisis', p.89. To these immediate causes Raymond Gillespie has also added economic factors, such as the series of poor harvests in the years leading up to the rising. Raymond Gillespie, 'Harvest crises in early seventeenth-century Ireland', in *Irish Economic and Social History*, vol.11, (Belfast: Economic and Social History Society of Ireland, 1984), pp.5-18. Brendan Bradshaw, on the other hand, writing in 1994, found it 'dismaying to find Raymond Gillespie still hammering home Aidan Clarke's thesis that the Ulster Rising came as a bolt from the blue', and that the Irish had 'reconciled themselves to making the most of the crumbs that came their way'. Brendan Bradshaw, 'The invention of the Irish: Was the Ulster rising really a bolt from the blue?' in *The Times Literary Supplement*, 14 October 1994, (London: Times Publishing Co. Ltd, 1994) p.9.

256 Féilim Rua's brother, Toirealach Óg, would appear from accounts in the depositions cited above, to have been far less enthusiastic about the rising than his brother.

doubt a limit to the social revolution they were prepared to countenance. This is why it is once again important to take cognizance of the class divisions that existed in the ranks of the native Irish in plantation society and to recognise that two risings took place in 1641. One was planned by a small group of conspirators, relatively conservative in their aims, seeking to seize a few strategic forts and towns and negotiate from a position of strength. The other was a more spontaneous outburst of violence by an oppressed colonial underclass that sought the complete overthrow of the existing order. An awareness of divergent class interests within the ranks of the Irish suggests that the co-existence of both risings is in no way contradictory. The more limited rising of the conspirators, as portrayed by Clarke and Gillespie, makes sense if understood as relating to the Irish gentry alone. Confusion has arisen from the tendency to conflate this group (who constituted, after all, a small minority of the native population in Ulster) with the whole. In this way, the majority has to some extent been written out of the history of this period. It was in fact this landless majority which seized the initiative in October 1641 and determined the character of the rising, especially in Ulster.

To posit a rising that was *not* a consequence of deep-seated resentment towards the colonial order in Ulster is to reject a simpler and more straightforward explanation (for which abundant evidence exists) for a far more proximate and convoluted one. It also appears to imply a colonial society that was largely harmonious, being suddenly destabilised by political crisis and harvest failure.²⁵⁷ To speculate on the contentment or otherwise of the native population in plantation society, however, it is necessary to move beyond this case-study of the 'deserving' Irish, and to examine some of the broader questions surrounding the Ulster colony.

257 This appears to take upon trust the kind of idyllic picture painted by John Temple (after the outbreak of the rising) of that society before the eruption of violence. According to Temple, 'as for the ancient animosities and hatred, which the Irish had ever been observed to bear unto the English nation, they seemed now to be quite laid aside and buried in a firm conglutination of their affections and national obligations passed between them. The two Nations had now the lived together forty Years in peace, with great security and comfort; which had in a manner consolidated them into one body, knit and compacted together with all those bonds and ligatures of friendship, Alliance and Consanguinity, which seemed fitted to make up a constant and perpetual union betwixt them. Temple, *The Irish rebellion*, p.23.

7 Conclusion

‘Partial and fitful cruelty lays up only a long debt of deserved and ever-deepening hate’.¹

A major objection to seeing the rising as a consequence of the plantation has been the thirty year gap between the execution of the project and 1641. Raymond Gillespie for example, has found fault with T.W.Moody’s monograph on the Londonderry plantation for leaving this ‘gap of thirty years of peace before the rising’ unexplained.² If Ulster was as peaceful and harmonious in these decades as some historians have suggested, then three decades without any widespread resistance to colonisation by the Irish really require no further explanation. This work argues, however, that colonial Ulster was a society characterised by underlying tension and conflict. This is evinced not only by what happened in 1641, but by the writings of a number of perceptive observers throughout the whole period in question. In 1622, Francis Blundell notes that as things stood then, the Irish would ‘rather choose to die in rebellion than live under such a government where

1 James Anthony Froude was reflecting here upon the conduct of the Tudors in their Irish wars, referring with macabre irony to the tactical error of servitors like Humphrey Gilbert in not killing every single Irish man, woman and child, instead leaving behind survivors who might avenge his actions. *History of England from the fall of Wolsey to the defeat of the Spanish Armada*, (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1893), p.254.

2 Raymond Gillespie, ‘Review: T.W. Moody, *The Londonderry Plantation, 1609-41*, in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.29, no.113, (Dublin University Press, 1994), p.112.

their lands are taken from them upon bare pretences or obscure titles at the best'.³ Three years later, an anonymous commentator wrote that 'the dispossession of the lands they formerly held' was one of the main causes of the natives' discontent.⁴ Clearly, then, any putative benefits or opportunities offered to the native Irish by the plantation had not dulled the memory of wholesale dispossession which the process involved.

Neither does the evidence suggest that the violence done to native society three decades earlier was only '*half-remembered*' by 1641, as Audrey Horning has suggested (my italics).⁵ The depositions offer abundant evidence that, among the insurgents, a widespread perception persisted that they (or the generation before them) had been unfairly dispossessed of their lands by force and legal chicanery. Dorothy Moigne in Cavan, for example, reported her attackers telling her that she and her family had 'enjoyed wrongfully the said Landes too longe'; not content with repossessing these lands, these insurgents were also said to have claimed 'the areres of rent of the said landes duringe the undertakers possession'.⁶ Indeed, as much as the original act of dispossession, it was the economic realities of plantation society that stoked this smouldering resentment. Thomas Phillips, speaking from the kind of first-hand experience few English commentators possessed, followed his remarks on the impoverishment of the natives in 1635 (see above

3 Francis Blundell, 'On plantations', c.1622, BL Harleian MS 3292, ff.40-45.

4 'Abstract of divers papers concerning Ireland', 1625, SP 63-241 no.190, ff.399v-400v.

5 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.263.

6 Deposition of Dorothy Moigne, 5 March 1642, TCD MS 833, f.36r. John Brooks likewise reported that the insurgents had 'said that they had longe paid rents to the English but they wold make them pay it back againe'. Deposition of John Brooks, 5 January 1642, TCD MS 832, f.193r. One Edward Cooper was told that his goods were being stolen because 'all that he had was too little to gyve them satisfaction for the rent of the lands the time past'. Deposition of Edward Cooper, 24 May 1642, TCD MS 833, f.123r. The colonists in the parish of Lavey, County Cavan were told by a local priest: 'yow have kept our Lands Long enough & it is now tyme for us to looke for our Rents'. Deposition of William North, 30 June 1642, TCD MS 833, f.179r. One deponent was told by Eoghan Mac Conchúir Ó Raghallaigh that the confiscation of his goods was too little 'considering the losse of his rent since the plantation which was wrongfullie taken and detayned from him'. Deposition of Francis Greham, 2 November 1642, TCD MS 833, f.153r. The insurgents told John McKewne that 'it was tyme for them to looke for their owne lands that the English hadd kept from them thirtie three yeres'. Deposition of John McKewne, 12 November 1642, TCD MS 833, f.165v. John mcSkimmeine deposed that 'it was a Common speech amongst the Rebels that neither English nor Scottish shold enioy any part of this Kingdome of Ireland any longer for they had enioyed the same too Long already'. Deposition of John mcSkimmeine, TCD MS 833, 12 November 1642, f.187r. Once again, it must be stressed that this was not merely a feeling of being dispossessed in the abstract; the memory of specific acts of confiscation were still fresh in the mind in 1641, and the belief among many of the Irish that colonists had been inhabiting not merely their people's lands but their specific families' lands. Ros Mac Airt Mag Uidhir entered the lands of colonist William Baxter in Rathmoran, Fermanagh, 'challenging them to have belonged to his father before the said plantation'. Deposition of Wiliam Baxter, 22 September 1642, TCD MS 835, f.192r.

pp.217-8) by observing that the Irish were:

‘. . . now grown into a despirat case, and I verely believe that the one halfe of them are theves or relevers into such misserable case is that hopefull plantation now brought, which might have bene made the strongest and richest cuntry in all your majesties dominions’.⁷

Froude’s comment at the head of this chapter is particularly apt here. Rather than seeing widespread transplantation as the source of their ‘ever-deepening hate’, it was the very incompleteness of the native inhabitants’ dispossession—even more so than if they had been expelled entirely—which generated resentment and eventually, violent retaliation. Remaining in many cases on or near their ancestral lands, they continued living in proximity to outsiders who assumed ownership of these lands and often came to rely on these same colonists for employment, all the while conscious that they had been, within living memory, usurped.

As Raymond Gillespie suggests, therefore, the fact that the thirty years between plantation and rising saw no widespread or co-ordinated resistance to colonisation really *does* require some explanation. To this must first be attached the caveat that the alleged peacefulness of colonial Ulster was largely on the surface. A writer in 1625 correctly characterised the condition of the country as ‘externally in peace, internally subject to perturbation’.⁸ The day-to-day reality of life for the native inhabitants, especially the poorer ones, was one in which they were subject to arbitrary arrest, fines and violence by judicial and military figures. Nor should local and less co-ordinated conspiracies directed against individual colonists always be understood as mere criminality, wholly lacking an ideological dimension. The previous chapter has argued that the involvement of individuals like Brian Crosach in the 1615 conspiracy was a consequence of the plantation. Likewise, less well-known events, such as the ‘conspiracy intended by the Maguyures and Magaurans’ discovered in 1625 were said to involve ‘many if not most of the principall natives’ in the area, and differ only from sundry episodes during the 1641 rising in that the seizure of

7 ‘The humble petecion of Sir Thomas Phillipps knight’, SP 63-271 no.25, f.50v.

8 ‘Abstract of divers papers concerning Ireland’, 1625, SP 63-241 no.190, ff.399v-400v.

wealthier colonist neighbours' lands and goods lacked a wider context.⁹

The distinction between ideologically-motivated resistance and criminality is, therefore, often merely one of scale, or entirely subjective altogether. What may have appeared as entirely self-interested robbery to the English may have been understood in an ideological context by the natives.¹⁰ While Barnaby Rich might describe the *ceithearnach* as living 'by robbing and spoiling the poore Countreyman, that maketh him many times to buy bread to give unto them', evidence would suggest that the Irish themselves may not have seen this in so stark a light.¹¹ Those living by robbing colonists in Kinelarty, County Down, were said in 1627 to have grown to the 'height of pride and insolence [. . .] out of the connivency of the contrey people'.¹² It would be ironic if resentment towards the exactions of the military castes had indeed characterised Gaelic society, only for the far greater exactions of the plantation to push many Irish into identifying (if they did not actively join their ranks) with the *ceithearnach*, as long as they confined their attacks to the colonists.

Some of the everyday incidents of petty violence offered to the newcomer evince an attempt by the Irish to sabotage the efforts of the colonists to establish a firm foothold. By the mid 1620s, parts of the Londonderry plantation were no-go areas into which the colonists feared being lured by 'ambuscadours', suggesting a less-than-complete mastery over the landscape.¹³ On the Ironmongers' proportion in 1616, workers were 'fearfull to

9 Just as Tadhg Ó Linneáin was alleged to have conjured up, or at least exaggerated, the 1615 plot, so in Fermanagh, it was noted in 1625 that the testimony of the accuser, Féilim Mac Somhairle Mac Cába, might be tarnished by the fact that ancestors of the 'some of the prisoners ancestors hadd killed some of the accusers Friends and kindred in Rebellion'. 'The discov[er]y of a conspiracy intended by the Maguyures and Magaurans', 21 August 1625, SP 63-241 no.118a, ff.233r-233v. The year before, rumours of an 'insurrection of the Irishe to surpris the Englishe' with Spanish help were rife among the Irish in Cavan, to the great concern of the authorities. William Andrewe to Mr. Waterhouse, 17 April 1624, SP 63-238-1 no.38, f.129r. The failure of negotiations for a marriage between the future Charles I and Maria Anna, daughter of the king of Spain, have also been linked by Hunter to a heightening of tension and increased fear of insurrection in Ulster on the government's part in these years. Hunter, *The Ulster plantation*, M.Litt Thesis, pp.207-8.

10 The elevation in Irish folk culture of individuals seen by the English authorities as common criminals, to a status akin to freedom fighters, has been explored by Ray Cashman, 'The Heroic Outlaw in Irish Folklore and Popular Literature', in *Folklore*, vol.111, no.2, (London: Folklore Society, 2000), pp.191-215.

11 Rich, *A new description*, p.37.

12 H Kinaston to Falkland, 21 February 1627, SP 63-244 no.611c, f.159r. Kinelarty: Cinéal Fhathartaigh 'Fathartach's kindred'.

13 James Perrot, 'The townes in Ireland most to bee feared for surprisal or Insurrecons and the meanes to prevent itt', 1625, SP 63-241 no.149a, f.302r.

work in the woodes except they be 10 or 12 in a companie'.¹⁴ These workers were said to have been threatened by the Irish 'that if ever they came thither againe for work they would cutt off their heades'.¹⁵ These efforts at sabotage could take more subtle and clandestine forms than robbery; it was said of a colonist who had gone to the trouble of removing all the stones from a meadow, that when he 'came to mowe his grounds, he found more stones then he tooke out (for the Irish never went that way day or night but threwe in stones from under their mantles'.¹⁶

Given, therefore, that the outward peace of these decades in Ulster masked a multitude of 'intestine discontentments', the reasons why it took until 1641 for a substantial uprising to occur must be sought elsewhere than in the actual contentment of the Irish.¹⁷ These can be clearly found in the conditions of widespread devastation and depopulation illustrated in chapter three, allied to the removal of a native elite that might have co-ordinated that resistance. As seen in the previous chapter, the members of this native elite who remained behind were dissuaded from leading resistance by the granting of land in the plantation scheme. That these 'deserving' Irish eventually came to see the actual (as opposed to projected) plantation as detrimental to their interests indicates a delayed reaction among native leaders characteristic of colonial situations across the Atlantic. Time and time again in the American colonies, native rulers embraced the strategy of alliance with the colonial intruder, hoping to turn the power of these newcomers to their advantage against rivals in local power-struggles, only to be consumed by the onrush of settlement, germs and warfare.

Brian Mac Feidhlim Ó Néill of Clondeboye is an instructive example of this. In the period following the death of Seán Ó Néill, he appeared for a time to have ousted his rivals and come close to wielding control over all of Clondeboye. This was achieved with the assistance of the English, who made substantial cash payments to Brian and knighted

14 George Canning to Ironmongers' Company, 1616, LMA, Guildhall Library MS 17278-1, f.135v.

15 George Canning to Ironmongers' Company, 11 August 1616, LMA, Guildhall Library MS 17278-1, f.140v.

16 E.S., 'A survey of the present estate of Ireland Anno 1615', HL Ellesmere MS 1746, f.13r.

17 'Intestine discontentments' was a phrase used by lord deputy Falkland who, in 1624 described Ireland as 'att this tyme in that state of weaknesse and disorder, as if it had bene plotted and prepared to be betrayed over as a prey to any powerful enemye that had a will to attempt it, and the skill to make use of intestine discontentments'. Falkland to Conway, 24 April 1624, SP 63-238-1 no.45, f.147r.

him.¹⁸ In many respects, he acted as the crown's proxy in the area.¹⁹ This English support, however, came at a price which, while not immediately apparent, was very heavy indeed. The acceptance of money, a knighthood, and possession of Belfast castle, involved adopting the English landholding- and legal-system. Entering into such an alliance brought the advantages associated with the military and fiscal might of the crown, but at the cost of undermining the traditional basis of his rule. Having helped in some unspecified way to defeat Seán Ó Néill, Brian agreed to a package of conditions, most of which involved building bridges, as well as passes through the woods, protecting English shipping and travellers, and helping the English garrisons to procure timber in the area.²⁰ In return for short-term personal advantage, therefore, he entered into an agreement to construct the infrastructure in the area that would facilitate his removal. All this, perhaps, only became clear to him (if ever) when it was far too late.

Such arrangements undermined his rule not merely in a physical sense but also ideologically. By making himself dependent on the crown for the maintenance of his dominant position locally, the legitimacy of that position came increasingly to rest upon appeals to the Queen for secure title to his lands, rather than on the traditional appeal to his followers on the basis of genealogical precedence, poetic legitimation and prowess in battle. Brian, when he discovered in 1572 that Elizabeth had granted his lands to Thomas Smith, cited his family's possession of them for fourteen generations, suggesting that he was aware of the conflicting foundations upon which his power rested.²¹ Having hoped to maintain a foot in both the Gaelic and English worlds, he realised, when his appeals fell on deaf ears, that such a position was untenable, and that he would be forced to choose between them.

18 Timothy McCall, *The Gaelic background to the settlement of Down and Antrim*, (MA dissertation, Queen's University, Belfast, 1983), pp.24-5.

19 Brian himself sought to represent himself in this light, describing the territory of Clondeboye to the queen as: 'this your country, which I only guard for Your Majesty'. SP 63-35 no.44, f.162r, original in Latin. Translation in Brian MacFeidhlim Ó Néill to Queen Elizabeth, 27 March 1572, in Mary O'Dowd (ed.), *CSPI, Tudor Period, Rev. ed. Vol. 3: 1571-1575*, (Dublin: Irish Manuscript Commission and National Archives, 2000), p.225.

20 'Articles betwixt the right honorable Sir Henry Sidney knight of the most noble order, lord president of the march of Wales and lord deputy of Irelande, on the one p[ar]te, and Sir Brian Mc Phelim Bacco knight and Brian Caro on the other p[ar]te', 8 October 1568. SP 63-26 no.5, f.30r.

21 Brian MacFeidhlim Ó Néill to Queen Elizabeth, 27 March 1572. SP 63-35 no.44, f.162r, original in Latin. Translation in *CSPI, Tudor Period: 1571-1575*, p.225.

Similar to the way that Brian believed he could absorb the threat posed by the colonial venture of the earl of Essex, and even utilise his connections among the English to bolster his control over Clandeboye, successive Algonquian *sachems* in New England sought to harness the power of the newcomers and their powerful weapons, only to find themselves fall prey in turn to the colonists' expansion once they had outlived their usefulness. It is remarkable indeed how north America saw a continuous repetition of this pattern up to the eve of American independence. The Pequots, who had used an alliance with the Dutch to grow powerful, drew the enmity of the neighbouring Narragansetts, whose jealousy the English were only too happy to exploit in order to engineer the removal (and near-extermination of) the former, thus ensuring the advance of the English colony into the area which would become Connecticut.²² As they became increasingly isolated in the face of these threats, the Pequots had reached out to their Narragansett rivals in an appeal for unity against the common foe, arguing that:

‘. . . the English were stranegers and begane to overspred their countrie, and would deprive them therof in time, if they were suffered to grow and increse; and if the Narigansets did assist the English to subdue them, they did but make way for their owne overthrow, for if they were rooted out, the English would soone take occasion to subjugate them’.²³

The warning was to prove prescient. The Narragansetts soon came to be seen as an obstacle to English expansion. The latter did not have to look far for native allies, the Narragansetts already being embroiled in a conflict with the Mohegans. Just as the Pequots has sent out emissaries six years earlier, the Narragansett *sachem*, Miantonomoh, began to canvas his neighbours for native unity against the intruders. He was reported to have pleaded with the Montaukett of eastern Long Island in the following manner:

‘For so are we all Indians as the English are, and say brother to

22 For the location of the ethnic groups mentioned here, see figure 28, p.356 below. For an excellent summary of the successive attempts by different native groups to ally with the English, only to find themselves courting annihilation, see Kruer, *Red Albion*, pp.147-9. For a more detailed treatment, see Salisbury *Manitou and providence* and Jennings, *The invasion of America*.

23 Bradford; Davis (ed.), *Bradford's History of Plymouth Plantation*, p.338.

one another; so must we be one as they are, otherwise we shall be all gone shortly, for you know our fathers had plenty of deer and skins, our plains were full of deer, as also our woods, and of turkies, and our coves full of fish and fowl. But these English having gotten our land, they with scythes cut down the grass, and with axes felled the trees; their cows and horses eat the grass and their hogs spoil our clam banks, and we shall all be starved; therefore it is best for you to do as we, for we are all the Sachems from east to west, both Mouquakues and Mowhauks joining with us, and we are all resolved to fall upon them all, at one appointed day'.²⁴

Once again, while perceiving that the nature of the threat from the colonists differed from that presented by competing Algonquian groups, Miantonomoh's understanding and appeals came too late and fell on deaf ears.²⁵ This belatedness was a common theme in these encounters, as leaders only urged unity when *they* themselves were directly threatened. It bespeaks the persistence of a local, self-interested perspective which was always too late in comprehending its insufficiency. For their part, the English, once they had more firmly established their presence, felt themselves under no obligation to honour agreements they had made with the Americans in earlier, more vulnerable, periods.²⁶ The

24 This was Miantonomoh's speech as reported by Lion Gardiner in his *A history of the Pequot war*, (Cincinnati, Ohio: W. Dodge, 1860), p.26. While the speech itself was most likely Gardiner's articulation of what he thought Miantonomoh *might have* said, it is clear that the Narragansett *sachem* was indeed traveling among the Algonquian groups of the area to build an alliance against the intruders.

25 This pattern repeated itself as the Wampanoag, who had managed to maintain an uneasy co-existence with the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies under their sachem Massasoit, by helping them against their fellow-natives, came to grief after Massasoit's death, as the encroachment of English settlement finally provoked his son Metacomet (known to the English as King Philip) into forging a native alliance and launching an attack on the New England confederation, resulting in a three year war (1675-8) which, inevitably, led to the near-extinction of the Wampanoag. Thus it continued into the American revolutionary period, as the Mohawk, an Iroquois people who lived to the north-west of New England, steadfast allies of the English who fought for them in numerous wars against their fellow natives (including that against Metacomet and his allies) gradually became alienated from the colonists' encroachment on to their lands (between modern day Albany and Lake Ontario), to the extent that they took the side of the British crown in the American revolution. The colonists' victory and the emergence of the United States condemned the Mohawk and other Iroquois to either absorption by the Euro-Americans or exile in Canada.

26 The general sentiment was expressed by William Samuel Johnson, who wrote in 1743 that agreements with the Mohegan had no validity as they had been made 'with savages, whom they were to quiet and manage as well as they could, sometimes by flattery, but oftener by force. Who would not Treat if he saw

concern of the Plymouth colonists, alluded to above, (n.10 p.247) to maintain peaceful relations with the natives in the early years of their colony's existence must be seen in this light.²⁷ This may be contrasted with the hubris displayed by the same New Englanders in 1660 who were said to boast: 'we are now twenty to one to what we were then, and none dare meddle with us'.²⁸

It is not difficult to find parallels in Ulster to the notion that agreements with the natives were not binding in the same way as those made with 'civil' people. Lord deputy Mountjoy dismissed the scruples expressed by Henry Docwra when breaking promises made to Dónall Ballach Ó Catháin by declaring: 'Hee is but a drunken ffellowe'.²⁹ With regard to promises made to Conchúr Rua Mag Uidhir for title to three baronies in Fermanagh, Chichester wrote: 'I see not that the kinge is bounde in honor or otherwise to make so barbarous and unworthy a man greater then his neighboures'.³⁰ Nor is it difficult to find parallels to Miantonomo and Metacomet in Ulster. A few individuals, such as Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh, spotted the pattern by which the English forged alliances in order to weaken the ranks of the Irish, going back on their promises and turning on these erstwhile allies when they had succeeded in removing the greater threat.³¹ Such sentiments match those of Brian Crosach Ó Néill, when trying to convince one of his fellow natives who had been serving the English, Diarmaid Óg Mac Doinne, to come over to the conspirators side in 1615:

himself surrounded by the Company of Lyons, Wolves or Beasts whom the Indians but too nearly resembled'. Cited in Tully, *An Approach to Political Philosophy*, p.168.

27 Fynes Moryson likewise conceded that there was 'some colour of truth' to the excuse offered by earlier generations of English colonists in Ireland for their fraternisation with the Gael, especially during the Wars of the Roses, when the colonists were 'never supplied, but left so weak as they were forced to apply themselves to the mere Irish as the stronger'. Moryson, 'The Itinerary', in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.257.

28 Gardiner, *A history of the Pequot war*, p.23.

29 Docwra, 'A narration of the services done', pp.274, p.277.

30 Chichester, 'Remembrancies', SP 63-228 no.16, f.39v.

31 Ó Cléirigh claimed to paraphrase the words of Aodh Rua Ó Dónaill himself in the following passages: 'He said that the promises of the English were always vain and deceitful, and that it was by false promises they had stolen their patrimony from the Irish of the province of Leinster and of the province of Munster, and not that merely, but whomsoever else they deprived of their land in Ireland it was by fraud and a false peace they obtained it. It is thus they will act towards you when your implements of war and conflict are few and your battle ranks thin; and when one by one the Irish who have risen in alliance with you heretofore will be enticed away from you they will get whatever they ask, for abandoning you. The English will play false with you here, and they will attack you when they find you unprepared, unready, short of arms and armour, of soldiers and champions, if peace be made with them and no securities or hostages given by them for fulfilling to you what they have promised you'. Ó Cléirigh; Walsh (ed.), *The life of Aodh Ruadh O Domhnaill*, pp.129-131.

‘Dermot, thou hast been a servitor for the King, and hast brought many men to great trouble and some to their deaths. Let me see what thou has got by it? If thou shouldest serve for five years more and cut off many more, thou shouldest have nothing, but in the end be hanged for thy labour’.³²

But such perception was rare in the twilight years of Gaelic Ulster. Just as in America, most native Irish leaders seemed to perceive the English as just another group who might be accommodated within the nexus of regional rivalries. Therefore, in Ulster, many Irish *tiarnaí* behaved as if co-existence with the New English, who encroached on their borders from the 1570s onwards, might be bargained-for and secured through military alliance, intermarriage and fosterage, as it had been with the original Anglo-Norman invaders. There was, however, a world of difference between the cultural aloofness of the seventeenth-century colonists and the way the De Courcys and De Lacys had been sucked into the internal politics of Ulster, finding themselves allied with the Irish against the government on occasion. In such an age, the English really had been just one of several pieces in a regional power jigsaw.³³ It is easy to see why many Irish did not perceive that the New English represented a more fundamental threat than the Old. As Jane Ohlmeyer has pointed out:

‘. . . in the short term, a willingness to adopt the civilizing and colonising policies of the core often brought immediate political gain and strengthened the regional position of landed power-brokers. In the longer term, the insidious financial and economic

32 Examination of Dermot oge McDonne, 3 April 1615, in *CSPI James I, 1615–1625*, p.31.

33 Roy Foster has noted that even up to the era of surrender and regrant ‘the Irish lords entered in and out of treaties as easily with the royal government as with each other’. *Modern Ireland 1600-1972*, pp.8-9. This is because they did not see the English government as a fundamentally different sort of polity to other regional players; in this sense it was viewed as just another *oireacht*, larger and more powerful than their neighbours certainly but, crucially, more distant. Given this state of affairs, Hiram Morgan’s observation that the Dublin government was the ‘natural ally’ of the Uí Dónaill of Tyrconnell, makes perfect sense in the period before the Nine Years War, when both parties were antagonistic to the Uí Néill of Tyrone. Morgan, *Tyrone’s Rebellion*, p.113. By the same token, the Uí Néill of Tyrone were on occasion viewed by the English as useful allies in the north, especially as a means of restraining the Clandeboyne Uí Néill when they became too threatening towards the colonial outposts that survived on the east coast. Simms, *Gaelic lordships*, p.278.

pressures to which these imperial initiatives gave rise, exacerbated by the onset of civil war in 1641 and again after 1688, left the Catholic elite more vulnerable still to more forceful waves of imperialism'.³⁴

Such short-term advantage was surely uppermost in the mind of an individual like Eoghan Ó Néill of the Fews, when offering help to defeat the earl of Tyrone in 1600 'with the assistance of her ma[jesty]'s forces to be planted upon the border'.³⁵ It is the only way to explain his (with hindsight, inexplicable) belief that those troops would retreat from the border back to the Pale, once Tyrone was defeated.

The failure to realise the novelty of the threat presented by the expanding early modern state and its colonial vanguard attests to an asymmetry in the knowledge that colonising and colonised peoples had of each other. Jared Diamond has shown how this was one of the most profound factors determining the eclipse of native societies by invading ones in the 'New World'. Like the lack of immunity to European disease, this was a more significant factor in America than Ireland. It is testament to the Americans' poor knowledge of the Europeans, for example, that the Incas knew nothing of the Spanish conquest of Panama, which began in 1510, when Pizarro arrived on their shores in 1527.³⁶ This contrasts with the solicitude of the Spaniards in gathering information about native society.³⁷ The 'pilgrim fathers' in New England too, can be seen to exhibit a strong interest

34 Ohlmeyer, 'A Laboratory for Empire?', p.48.

35 'Certayne notes that Owen Mack Hugh, Mack Neale, Moore Oneale, desiereth to be made knowen', 17 July 1600, SP 63-207-4 no.22, f.57r.

36 Diamond, *Guns, germs and steel*, pp.78-80.

37 'Cortes affords us a splendid example of this, and he was conscious of the degree to which the art of adaptation and of improvisation governed his behavior. Schematically this behavior is organized into two phases. The first is that of interest in the other, at the cost of a certain empathy or temporary identification. Cortes slips into the other's skin, but in a metaphoric and no longer a literal fashion: the difference is considerable. Thereby he ensures himself an understanding of the other's language and a knowledge of the other's political organization (whence his interest in the Aztecs' internal dissension, and he even masters the emission of messages in an appropriate code: hence he manages to pass himself off as Quetzalcoatl returned to earth. But in so doing he has never abandoned his feeling of superiority; it is even his very capacity to understand the other that confirms him in that feeling. Then comes the second phase, during which he is not content to reassert his own identity (which he has never really abandoned), but proceeds to assimilate the Indians to his own world. In the same way, it will be recalled, the Franciscan monks adopted the Indians' ways (clothes, food) to convert them more effectively to the Christian religion. The Europeans exhibit remarkable qualities of flexibility and improvisation which permit them all the better to impose their own way of life'. Tzvetan Todorov; Richard Howard (trans.), *The conquest of America*, (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), p.248.

in assessing the internecine rivalries and tensions within native societies. One of the first things noted when encountering a new people was the identity of their enemies, this mapping out of local animosities and alliances being a key foundation for the successful execution of a divide-and-conquer strategy.³⁸ Such assessments were, if anything, even more frequently carried out in Ireland, such as the 1608 report of the high sheriff in Tyrone on the various rivalries within the ranks of the Uí Néill and their erstwhile followers, or the 1625 survey of those in Ulster who were to be ‘cherished’ and those who were to be ‘watched’.³⁹

The antithesis of this was the natives’ almost complete ignorance of the invaders’ culture and politics. His English hosts were reportedly amused by the behaviour of Uttamatmakkin, an uncle of Pocahontas who accompanied her on her visit to England in 1616, who had been directed to record all the people he saw in England by notches on a tally stick, a task he quickly realised the futility of.⁴⁰ The English and French took time out from a standoff at Port-Royal, Nova Scotia in 1613 to laugh at the natives’ failure to understand that they came from different countries.⁴¹ The abiding unworldliness of the Ulster Irish is evinced by Seán Ó Néill’s invitation to Henry Sidney to stand godfather to one of his children, as if figures like Sidney could still be drawn into the orbit of Gaelic alliances through such personal ties.⁴² Despite attempts to instill in the natives a sense of the impersonal connection between subject and sovereign, loyalty continued to be perceived by many Irish as a personal bond tying individual *tiarnaí* to English administrators rather than to the crown in the abstract.⁴³

38 In their first meetings with the Massachuset, for example, Bradford noted they ‘were much affraid of the Tarentins [Mi’kmaq]’. Bradford; Davis (ed.), *Bradford’s History of Plymouth Plantation*, p.120. In Virginia, it was explicitly understood that ‘the Spaniard made great use for his owne turne of the quarrels and enmities that were amongst the Indians, as throughly understanding and following that Maxime of the Politician, *Divide & impera*, Make divisions and take Kingdomes: For thus he got two of the greatest Kingdomes of the West Indies, Peru and Mexico, by the Princes divisions, and the peoples differences’. Waterhouse, *A declaration*, pp.24-5.

39 John Teighe, ‘A Brief of some Things which I observed in the several Baronies of the county of Tyrone during the time that I was High Sheriff of that county in Anno 1608’, in *CCM*, vol.5, pp.30-1. ‘Abstract of divers papers concerning Ireland’, 1625, SP 63-241 no.190, f.399r.

40 John Smith, *The Generall Historie of Virginia*, (London, 1624), pp.423-4.

41 Alexander, *An encouragement*, p.23.

42 Ciaran Brady, *Shane O’Neill*, (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1996), p.36. The fact that Ó Néill was, on some level at least, aware of the changing power-relations in Ulster is suggested by his employment of an Old English lawyer, William Fleming, to help him navigate the intricacies of English law. Simms, *From kings to warlords*, p.89.

43 Toirealach Mac Éinrí Ó Néill, for example, appears to have regarded his alliance with the government as

The period of the Nine Years War, and the modernising influence of Aodh Ó Néill, marked a decisive turning point in this imbalance of knowledge about one another. Radical changes in the military techniques used by the Irish have been noted above (p.240), as has the attempt by the people of Cavan to mount a legal challenge to the plantation in 1610 (p.206). Nonetheless, there remained in many cases a failure to fully apprehend the cataclysmic nature of the changes taking place, so much so that Chichester wrote of the Ulster Irish at the time of the plantation that they ‘understand no truth of the affaires of the world’.⁴⁴ This is only one of several respects in which the interaction of colonist and native in Ulster paralleled that on the other side of the Atlantic. Throughout this thesis, it has been shown that the evidence bears out the usefulness of this Atlantic context. Parallels between the native experience of colonisation in Ulster and America become more apparent as the sixteenth century progressed, and the colonial discourse of difference discussed in chapter one intensified. Whereas English arrivals in the middle ages had conceived of the Gaelic Irish as—if not exactly equals—a people who possessed a culture with which they might reach accommodation, by the end of the sixteenth century, a view had come to predominate of them as a people not merely different, but lacking culture altogether, ‘primitive’ in the same sense that the natives of New England or Virginia were perceived as ‘primitive’. It is on the basis of such evidence that a determination should be made on whether or not ‘colony’ is the best word to describe the establishment of English and Scots settlers in Ulster at this time.

The strategy settled on in practice for dealing with the Irish in colonial Ulster was one of

falling into abeyance on the death of lord deputy Burgh (with whom he had established a rapport) in 1597. Brian Ó Conchúr of Offaly’s return to hostilities against the government must likewise be seen in the light of lord deputy Grey’s replacement as lord deputy in 1540, peace agreements being seen as binding with the lord deputy himself rather than the government as an institution. Similarly, Ciaran Brady has noted how the attitude of magnates in Munster and Connacht towards the regional presidents appointed to those provinces was determined less by the nature of the office itself, but by the ‘character and allegiance of the man who was to discharge its responsibilities’. On these grounds, Desmond accepted a president who was amenable to him personally, whereas Ormond and Clanricard reacted with hostility to the *individuals* appointed in their spheres of influence. Tomás Ó Fiaich, ‘The O’Neills of the Fews’, in *Seanchas Ardmhacha: Journal of the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society*, vol.7, no.1, (Armagh Diocesan Historical Society, 1973), p.36. Robert Dunlop, ‘The Plantation of Leix and Offaly’, in *The English Historical Review*, vol. 6, no. 21, (Oxford University Press, 1891), p.62. Brady, *The Chief Governors*, p.176.

44 Chichester to the privy council, 23 September 1610, SP 63-229 no.125, f.126r. For examples of this markedly parochial mentality displayed by the followers of Pilib Ó Raghallaigh and Toirealach Óg Ó Néill, see above, pp.179-80.

‘reducing’ them from their purportedly wild and ungovernable state, rather than reforming them by peaceful means on the one hand, or completely replacing them with colonists on the other. While all the evidence points to the retention of the Irish in many areas where they were scheduled to be expelled, it does not necessarily follow that the co-habitation of native and newcomer in these areas led to an attempt at anglicising them, with the ultimate goal of admitting them to colonial society on an equal footing to the colonists. A misunderstanding of the natives’ fate in colonial Ulster has followed from the notion that we must choose between attributing a strategy of integration or expulsion to the colonists. One of the central theses of this work is that a third alternative characterised this society, namely, that while many natives remained within the plantation’s territory geographically, they were not, to any great extent, admitted into the commercial agricultural and manufacturing economy it was designed to create. On the contrary, the Ulster Irish (with the exception of a few elite figures) were regarded as a kind of ready-made *untermensch*, to be ‘civilised’ only to the extent that they could carry out the unskilled manual labour that colonists in a New World had come to escape. A corollary of this is that, while the physical elimination of the Irish population was not aimed at in the plantation project, their elimination as a people with a distinct culture and social system most definitely was.⁴⁵

45 As the sixteenth century progressed, many English commentators came to the conclusion that the existence of a separate Gaelic culture in Ireland was ultimately incompatible with loyalty to the crown and adherence to English law. This is why the necessity of anglicisation becomes more and more pronounced towards the turn of the century, and the urgency of a cultural wiping of the slate was stressed by writers like Spenser. A campaign against the poets, cultural sustainers of an alternative locus of legitimacy to rival the English crown was felt to be especially important. John Derricke asserted that ‘the Bard by his Rimes hath as great force emongst Woodkarne to perswade, as the elloquent oration of a learned Oratour emongst the civill people’. *The Image of Ireland, with a discoverie of woodkarne*, (London, 1581), sig.F2r-F2v. The poets could play a key role in the kind of elevation described above (p.321), of individuals seen as mere criminals by the colonial authorities. This is a phenomenon that continued long after the seventeenth century; witness the dismay among English administrators at the popularity of the eighteenth-century highwayman, John Freney, among the Catholic Irish. See Cashman, ‘The Heroic Outlaw’, pp.191-192. Colonial authorities continued to combat the challenge into modern times; the French in Algeria, noting that the traditional storytellers had adapted their traditional fables to reflect the anti-imperial struggle, began to arrest these storytellers systematically in the 1950s. Fanon *The wretched of the earth*, pp.240-1. Nor was this excision of native culture merely a New English objective. The Old English too perceived the existence of the Gaelic culture as an obstacle to the kind of reform which they wished to see. Rowland White expressed the hope that the ‘mere’ Irish might one day be ‘clearelie blynd and forgetfull what their auncetours olde disposicions had byn to the contrarye, as men utterlie ignorant therein, berefte the memorye and recorde thereof forever’. White; Canny (ed.), ‘Discors Touching Ireland’, p.460. The necessity of eliminating the sustainers of native culture was also perceived in America, with regard to religious personnel. Karen Kupperman has noted that many English writers ‘grasped the fact that Indian religion was in fact central to Indian culture and that its existence was the greatest obstacle to the Europeanization of the American natives’. One minister expressed the conviction that ‘till their Priests and Ancients have their throats cut, there is no hope to bring them to conversion’.

A failure to recognise this has led to a tendency, especially in recent studies of the Ulster colony, to portray a society characterised by far more integration between native and newcomer than was actually the case. As Canny has noted of Horning's recent monograph, once the model of colonisation is replaced by a 'reconciliation-friendly version of Ireland's past', it tends in practice to obscure the conflict and underlying social tensions so central to the story of these decades.⁴⁶ If these features of colonial Ulster are ignored, much of the violence perpetrated against the colonists in 1641 becomes simply inexplicable. An indication of what these alternative, 'reconciliation-friendly' versions might look like can be gleaned from Bottigheimer's description of the plantation as a 'natural migration', and the assertion that Scottish colonial settlement was merely the continuation of a centuries-old pattern of 'spilling back and forth across the North Channel since the Celts first inhabited the British Isles'. In a similar vein, Andrew Murphy has described this settlement as a 'traditional circulation'.⁴⁷ The attractiveness of this idea for Unionists has been correctly identified by Roy Foster as offering support for the argument that 'Ulster's different nature is immemorial and uncontrollable, and stems from something more basic than English governmental policy'.⁴⁸

T.W. Moody, however, has dismissed this 'effort to prove that the Scots who came to Ulster in plantation days were really Gaels returning home after centuries of sojourning abroad' as 'romantic shadow-hunting'.⁴⁹ Clarke and Perceval-Maxwell have concurred with this assessment, stressing that those Scots who came over in conjunction with the plantation 'were Lowland Protestants rather than Highland Catholics, welcome allies of the state, not unruly intruders, and they represented a wholly new departure in the tradition of Scottish

Kupperman, *Settling with the Indians*, p.78.

46 Nicholas Canny, 'Reconciled to colonialism?: Ireland in the Virginian Sea: Colonialism in the British Atlantic', in *The Irish Times*, Dublin, 24 May 2014, p.12.

47 Karl S. Bottigheimer, 'Kingdom and Colony: Ireland in the Westward Enterprise', in Andrews, Canny and Hair (eds.), *The Westward Enterprise*, p.57. Murphy, 'Ireland and ante/anti-colonial theory,' p.157.

48 Foster, *Modern Ireland*, p.78. As an example of the credence give to this line of thought, taken to extremes, an article published on the website of Ian Paisley purports to prove that Ulster was originally inhabited by a British people called the 'Utili', who were driven out by Irish colonisers in the third century. The writer of this article uses this thesis to assert that 'the Ulster Scots, not the Irish, were the original inhabitants of Ulster and as such are its rightful historical owners'. Arthur Noble, 'The Mentality Of Deceit: Unmasking Ancient Irish History', <http://www.ianpaisley.org/article.asp?ArtKey=mentality>, accessed 6 March 2015.

49 T. W. Moody, 'The Ulster Scots in Colonial and Revolutionary America', in *An Irish Quarterly Review*, vol.34, no.133, (Dublin: The Educational Company of Ireland, 1945), p.87.

relations with Ireland'.⁵⁰ Those Scots who came over in conjunction with both the unofficial and official plantations after the Nine Years War must be distinguished from the Mic Dhónaill settlement in Antrim during the sixteenth century. The latter may indeed be classed among the 'unruly intruders' (from the English government's point of view) and a continuation of this 'spilling back and forth across the North Channel'. These, Catholic, *Gàidhlig*-speaking settlers shared a language and religion with the indigenous people and the links binding these inhabitants of the Hebrides with the north of Ireland were probably far more tangible than those binding them to the rest of the Scottish kingdom of which, until the seventeenth century, it was a part in name only.⁵¹ The fact that Lowland Scots at the time referred to *Gàidhlig* as 'the Irish tongue' would suggest that they themselves did not see the likes of the Mic Dhónaill as fellow Scots, and that use of the term expressed the aspiration that they would one day become so.⁵²

50 Clarke, 'The Plantations', in De Paor (ed.), *Milestones*, pp.62-3. Perceval-Maxwell has also written: 'Those Scots who entered Ireland during Elizabeth's reign were, on the whole, of a different type from those who crossed during the following reign'. *The Scottish migration to Ulster*, p.10.

51 'The real significance of the lordship of the Isles as an entity apart from the Scotland which was centred on Edinburgh cannot be too strongly stressed'. G.A. Hayes-McCoy, *Scots mercenary forces in Ireland*, (Dublin, London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1937), p.8. As Steven Ellis has noted, this entity has been largely neglected by historians of the late middle ages. Ellis, 'Nationalist Historiography', p.1. The reasons appear to have a great deal to do with the fact that this cultural unity never succeeded in finding any expression in a political sense, and that Gaelic Ulster and Gaelic Scotland were ultimately absorbed into separate kingdoms. Conversely, the permanent establishment of English and Lowland Scots in Ulster has tended to privilege a view of the province as connected to the areas from which the colonists came, but in the period prior to the end of the Nine Years War this was far from the case.

52 Ohlmeyer, 'Civilizing of those Rude Parties', p.126. The inhabitants of the Lordship of the Isles were described in 1545 by an English source as 'the Scottyshe Irysshe. Ellis, 'Nationalist Historiography', p.7. Brian Mac Feidhlim Ó Néill of Clandeboye described the Mic Dhónaill of Antrim as 'Irish Skotts. Brian Mac Feidhlim Ó Néill to Queen Elizabeth, 6 July 1571, SP 63-33 no 3, f.5r. Alasdair Mac Colla Chiotaich Mac Domhnuill, from a branch of the the Clan Iain Mor which had remained in the Western Isles (from which the Antrim Mic Dhónaill originated), was described in 1641 as an 'Irish gentlemen' in the 1650s. Examination of Donnell Gorme McDonnell, 11 March 1653, TCD MS 838, f.30v. A 1639 account describes the tutor of Archibald Campbell, 9th Earl of Argyll, being competent in both 'Inglis and Erise', clearly meaning *Gàidhlig*. Macinnes, *Clanship, commerce and the House of Stuart*, p.13. This may in fact have been an innovation of the late middle ages; Jane Dawson has noted the following change in the nomenclature applied to the *Gàidhlig* language: 'Until the end of the fourteenth century the Latin terms 'Scotice, lingua Scotica' were regularly applied to the Gaelic language. By c.1450 that language was referred to as 'Hibernice', 'Erse' or 'Irish', though the speech of the Lowlands continued to be known as 'Inglis'. Significantly, by the end of the fifteenth century the term 'Scottis' was used to describe Lowland speech. The Lowlanders had appropriated the name of the whole kingdom for their own tongue. In addition, by labelling Gaelic 'Irish' they associated that language and culture with a foreign realm'. Jane Dawson, 'The Gàidhealtachd and the emergence of the Scottish Highlands', in Brendan Bradshaw and Peter Roberts (eds), *British Consciousness and Identity: The Making of Britain, 1533-1707*, (Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp.283-4.

One of the intentions of the plantation was to sever this cross-channel Gaeltacht/Gàidhealtachd, and prevent whatever cultural and linguistic unity existed across the channel from developing a political dimension.⁵³ Since the fifteenth century, a fear had existed that these ‘Scottyshe Irysshe’ might overrun the north of Ireland and replace the (largely nominal) English hold over the province with a Scottish hegemony. In 1474 the Irish parliament warned that Ulster was in danger of being absorbed into the kingdom of Scotland due to the influx of the Mic Dhónaill in Antrim.⁵⁴ Such a fear may indeed have been one of the factors that lay behind the attempts, gradually gathering in intensity throughout the sixteenth century, to bring the province under government control.⁵⁵ As noted in chapter three (n.16, p.85), the possibility of foreign powers using Ireland and Scotland as a staging-post for an invasion of England had long been a concern. With the union of the crowns of England and Scotland under James, the possibility of the Scottish kingdom linking up with foreign enemies had been forestalled; for the same reason, the colonisation of Ulster and the extension of the power of the king’s proxy, the earl of Argyll, over the Hebrides was seen as a welcome development in London.⁵⁶ Francis Bacon expressed relief in 1608 that:

‘Scotland, is cut off, by the Union, of both these Kingdoms; If that, it shall be now made constant, and permanent. That of

53 Aidan Clarke has described the ‘desire to drive a wedge into the midst of this Gaelic zone’ as a ‘a spur to the colonisation of Ulster’, in ‘The Plantations’, in De Paor (ed.), *Milestones*, p.62.

54 Simms, *Gaelic lordships*, p.273.

55 Behind such fears lay the attempt, in 1556, to legislate against the ‘bringynge in of Scotts, reteyninge of theym, and marieng with theym’. *Statutes Ireland*, vol.1, p.10. This legislation was repealed in 1612, no doubt because it represented a legal obstacle to the integration of Scottish colonists into the plantation. *Idem*, p.443. Fears of *Gàidhlig* incursions had not subsided by the 1580s, when Nicholas Malby wrote of the threat posed by Agnes Campbell (whose marriage to Toirealach Luineach brought to the latter the possibility of importing thousands of mercenary troops from Scotland): ‘this Scottish woman will make a new Scotland of Ulster’. Nicholas Malby to the earl of Leicester, 17 August 1580, in *CCM*, vol.2, p.297. It was to keep the Mic Dhónaill busy warring in the Isles that Henry Bagenal recommended the government give a pension to the chief of the Mic Ghiolla Eain clan (the Mic Dónaill’s enemies) in 1586. Bagenal; Hore (ed.), ‘Marshal Bagenal’s Description of Ulster, Anno 1586’, p.159.

56 A number of failed attempts in these years (1595-1602, 1605 and 1609) to colonise Lewis and Harris with adventurers from Fife attests to an aspiration on the part of the crown to affect a transformation in this area akin to that being attempted in Ulster. This aspiration was articulated in the Statutes of Iona of 1609, which attempted to bring the inhabitants of this area within the compass of Scottish law, and contained clauses requiring the *Gàidhlig* rulers to limit the number of their followers and military retainers, to undermine the culture of hospitality and tribute, and even to eliminate the use of the *Gàidhlig* language. Jane Ohlmeyer, ‘Driving a Wedge within Gaeldom: Ireland & Scotland in the Seventeenth Century’, in *History Ireland*, vol.7, no.3, (Dublin: History Ireland, 1999), pp.28-9.

Ireland, is likewise cut off, by the convenient situation, of the North of Scotland, toward the North of Ireland, where the Sore was: Which, we see, being suddainly dosed, hath continued closed, by means of this Salve; So as now, there are no Parts, of this State, exposed to Danger, to be a Temptation, to the Ambition of Forrainers'.⁵⁷

The planting of English colonists in Ulster with a view to keeping out the Scottish had been discussed by Elizabeth and lord deputy Sidney as far back as 1567.⁵⁸ Docwra was instructed in 1599, amidst the busy traffic between Ulster and Scotland, not to trade with the 'wrong' kind of Scots, and to prevent them from trading with Ó Néill and his allies. At the same time he was encouraged to trade with, and protect, the 'right' kind of Scots, and warned not to do anything which might threaten the good relations between Elizabeth and her future successor, James VI of Scotland.⁵⁹ When Scots were invited to participate in the colonising endeavour under James, it was explicitly made clear that only English-speaking, Protestant, 'inland' Scots—not Highlanders or islanders—need apply.⁶⁰ The evidence would suggest that this attempt to filter the flow of Scots across the North Channel was, broadly speaking, successful. Those who took part in the colonisation of Ulster after 1606 were generally English-speaking Protestants, but not exclusively so.⁶¹ As the reference to a deponent from Galloway above (p.151) demonstrates, there were some Scottish colonists

57 Francis Bacon, 'A Speech in Parliament touch the Naturalization of the Scottish Nation', in *Resuscitatio, or, Bringing into publick light severall pieces of the works, civil, historical, philosophical, & theological, hitherto sleeping, of the Right Honourable Francis Bacon*, (London, 1657), p.22.

58 Elizabeth to Sidney, 6 July 1567, SP 63-21 no.49, f.109r-109v.

59 Docwra, 'A narration of the services done', pp.291-2.

60 A 'bond for performance of conditions of plantation by British undertakers', in 1610 specifically says that those brought over by undertakers much have been either 'borne in England or the Inland p[ar]tes of Scotland'. The 'proiecte for the devisiion and plantac[i]on of the escheated laundes' likewise explicitly stipulated 'inland Scottish' colonists. Both these documents have been printed in 'Ulster Plantation Papers', *Analecta Hibernica*, vol.8, pp.197, 289. 'Inland Scottish inhabitants' is also the term used in the 'Orders and Conditions' of plantation. *A collection of such orders and conditions, as are to be observed be the undertakers, upon the distribution and plantation of the eschaeted lands of Ulster*, (Edinburgh, 1609), sig.A3r.

61 Their language may also be referred to as 'Scots', although 'English' has been used here to avoid possible confusion with *Gàidhlig*. Disagreement exists among linguists as to whether the variety of English spoken in Scotland is distinctive enough to qualify as a separate language. While certainly mutually-intelligible with English south of the border, at its broadest, the position of Scots bears comparison to Norwegian in relation to Swedish, Frisian/Dutch and Catalan/Spanish, all of which are universally accorded the status of languages.

who were at least familiar with the *Gàidhlig* language, if not native speakers.⁶² Surnames would suggest, however, that wave of colonists consisted largely of Lowland Scots from counties along the border with England and Argyll, rather than from the Highlands and Western Isles.⁶³

The fact that seventeenth-century colonisation took place under the auspices of a government actively pursuing an explicit policy of removing the indigenous population from large parts of Ulster, also gives the lie to the idea that this was merely a continuation of the *Gàidhlig* migration of past centuries. To speak of these later colonists as ‘migrants’, therefore, invites misunderstanding. While the term ‘migration’ might be argued to encompass colonisation, the word suggests a movement of population due to incognisant economic and demographic factors, which does not do justice to the violence and deliberative government planning that went into the plantation project. Even where direct government supervision was lacking, such as in the Hamilton and Montgomery projects in County Down, settlement of non-Irish on the lands was stipulated in grants to the individuals concerned, and the successful colonisation of the area could not have occurred without the military conquest and extensive ethnic cleansing which preceded it. Chapter three has explored the creation of these conditions and also noted a modern effort to re-brand this as ‘settlement’ as explicitly ‘not plantation, not conquest, not invasion’ (p.95).

62 Allan Macinnes has stated that ‘colonising by Scots in Ulster should not be regarded as the preserve of Lowlanders’. While it is true that not all Gaelic-speaking tenants in Ulster were exclusively Irish, the (implicit) claim that *Gàidhlig* Scots participated in the plantation project to a significant degree is more doubtful. *Clanship, commerce and the House of Stuart*, p.68.

63 Perceval-Maxwell, *The Scottish migration to Ulster*, p.289. This is not to ignore factors which complicate an image of *exclusively* Lowland/Protestant undertakers bringing in tenants of the same stamp. The north of Antrim, for example, continued to be held by a Catholic landowner, the earl of Antrim, who brought in large numbers of Protestant colonists from Scotland, as his patents compelled him to do. The Hamiltons in Strabane were likewise Catholics, and brought in co-religionists from Scotland as tenants. Nor should the possibility of a greater affinity between the Scottish colonists and the natives of Ulster be dismissed. The insurgents in 1641 initially declared their intention to leave Scottish colonists unmolested. The depositions attest to the reality of this discernment, at least for the first few weeks of the rising, as well as offering instances where Scots seem to have more closely identified with the Irish than their English fellow-colonists. On a cultural level, this should come as no surprise, given that (as noted in the introductory chapter, p.46) in this period, the notion of the two communities of colonists sharing a common ‘British’ identity is an anachronism. At least two depositions attest to Scotsmen joining the ranks of the insurgents in order to share in the spoils of the colonists’ robbery. Deposition of Christopher Parmenter, 28 July 1643, TCD MS 839, f.136r and Deposition of Mary Bennington, 7 January 1642, TCD MS 835, f.74r. Such individual examples, however, should not be overemphasised. The Scottish colonists in Ulster, after all, sent a supplication to the Scottish parliament in Edinburgh in November 1641, to ask for help against the insurgents. David Stevenson, *Scottish covenanters and Irish confederates*, (Belfast: Ulster Historical Foundation, 1981), p.50.

These more undesirable qualities are also played down in much of the recent scholarly discourse on plantation Ulster which—as alluded to throughout this work—tends to emphasise characteristics of that society which point towards harmony, cooperation and mutual acculturation rather than conflict and ‘apartheid’.⁶⁴ This bears examination, given that the society depicted in earlier chapters is clearly at odds with this image.

It is important to acknowledge the existence of other imperatives, informed by contemporary ideology and politics, which influence the historiography of a subject that has had profound consequences for those living in Ulster. Audrey Horning, for example, who has recently published a monograph promising the kind of comparative Atlantic study of colonisation advocated by this thesis, has openly stated that the recent Troubles in Northern Ireland have influenced the character of her research. Nicholas Canny noted in his review of this work that Horning appears to recoil from this colonial context for, amongst other reasons, the fact ‘that the term colony has become a partisan word favoured in the Nationalist community and resented by Unionists’.⁶⁵ In Horning’s own words, the fact that ‘significant members of the unionist community would not self-identify as colonists’ renders the word ‘colony’ ‘challenging’.⁶⁶ The same author has elsewhere noted that she has ‘found English students to be uncomfortable with discussing any aspect of colonialism, initially unable to disassociate themselves from feeling implicated in the process’.⁶⁷

Horning’s solution to this dilemma appears to be to lay emphasis on those aspects of colonial Ulster which made it appear more like the kind of ‘natural migration’ alluded to above. Thus, the imperative to produce a history fit for the purpose of healing sectarian divisions in Northern Ireland dictates what elements are to be emphasised, included, and omitted. Inevitably in such an enterprise, each wrong or injustice inflicted by one ‘side’ is

64 While the word ‘apartheid’ might appear anachronistic if understood as meaning the kind of government-supervised segregation that existed in South Africa (the early-modern state clearly did not have the means to carry out such a project), it is used here in the more general sense of the original Dutch word meaning ‘separateness’. In this, I follow the practise of both Brendan Bradshaw and Nicholas Canny. Bradshaw, ‘Sword, Word and Strategy’, p.502. Canny, ‘Protestants, Planters and Apartheid’, *passim*

65 Canny, ‘Reconciled to colonialism?’, p.12.

66 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.viii.

67 Audrey Horning, ‘Cultures of contact, cultures of conflict?: Identity Construction, Colonialist Discourse, and the Ethics of Archaeological Practice in Northern Ireland’, in *Stanford Journal of Archaeology*, vol.5, (Stanford University, California, 2007), p.115.

to be counterpoised, in the interests of ‘balance’, by one committed by the other. While this may indeed produce a more ‘balanced’ picture, it does not necessarily guarantee a true one. The production of history, after all, should be made subordinate to the evidence, not the other way around. To give one example, an archaeological dig at Limavady on the site of the medieval castle of the Uí Chatháin and Thomas Phillips’ plantation bawn, was seen as ‘an opportunity to recast O’Cahan’s and Phillips’ stories in terms of community understanding’ and ‘aimed to engage the local public in the discovery process’. While these are no doubt laudable aims, as is Horning’s intention of raising awareness of Phillip’s almost entirely-forgotten role in the town’s origins, other aspects of such a project are problematic.⁶⁸

A reading of this site which emphasises ‘the destruction of the Gaelic world personified by the downfall of the O’Cahan chief, Donal Ballagh O’Cahan, whose lands were seized and granted to Phillips in 1611’ would, according to Horning, be ‘superficial’.⁶⁹ The fact remains, however, that Ó Catháin’s lands *were* seized and granted to Phillips. It is likewise noted that ‘when Phillips is remembered [by locals] he is routinely cast as a villain who intentionally swindled O’Cahan out of his lands’. It is unclear whether the project to improve ‘community understanding’ merely involves correcting the (mistaken) idea that Phillips was personally involved in Ó Catháin’s dispossession, or whether this extends to revising the (correct) assessment that Ó Catháin was indeed ‘intentionally swindled’. If so, this essentially means replacing one misunderstanding with another. The fact that both Irish and English pottery deposits were found at the site ‘of late sixteenth- or early seventeenth-century date’, argues Horning, ‘speaks to the meeting of O’Cahan’s Gaelic world and Phillips’ plantation world’.⁷⁰ In fact they speak to no such thing. While it may indeed indicate that natives and newcomers both inhabited the site at the same time, even if this was the case, it is difficult to see how this implies a meeting of the Gaelic and colonial worlds in any acculturative sense. The absence of material remains from both the Gaelic and colonial eras would indeed be odd, given what has already been noted about the retention of Irish on colonists’ lands. If native Irish were present within Thomas Phillips’

68 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.210.

69 Audrey Horning, ‘Leim an Mhadaigh: Exploring unwanted histories of the Atlantic world’, in Peter Edward Pope and Shannon Lewis-Simpson (eds), *Exploring Atlantic Transitions: Archaeologies of Transience and Permanence in New Found Lands*, (Woodbridge, Suffolk: The Boydell Press, 2013), p.94.

70 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.210.

bawn, they were inhabiting Phillips' land, on Phillips' terms. Ó Catháin's hegemony had been decisively replaced.

Horning acknowledges that there is a risk in such an approach 'of avoiding discussions of violence, trauma, and strategies of resistance', and it would be wrong to claim that such themes are entirely ignored in her work.⁷¹ As a general rule, however, writing history with a view to eliciting a particular reaction in the present must inevitably suffer from the same shortcomings as those histories designed to promote divisions and animosity. Horning's work on the plantation, it would seem, has as its predetermined outcome the foregrounding of 'ambivalence and ambiguity attendant upon encounter and exchange', and the 'acceptance of complexity'.⁷² While 'ambivalence', 'ambiguity', and 'complexity' must indeed be acknowledged and 'accepted' where they characterise a historical moment, we must also recognise that *any* given account can be rendered ambivalent, ambiguous or complicated by the accumulation of detail and caveats. This, just like the deliberate weighting of each sides' atrocities to produce 'balance', does not necessarily offer a truer account.⁷³ Such an interpretive technique invariably serves to problematise all patterns, trends and explanations, which it is surely the historian's task to tease out. This in turn lends itself to those who might wish to obscure what Brendan Bradshaw has referred to as the 'catastrophic dimension of Irish history'.⁷⁴

When we consider the first decades of colonisation with respect to the indigenous population, one of the central theses of this work has been to show that it is correct to stress this catastrophic dimension as reflecting their experience. Nor, incidentally, is an image of colonial Ulster which recognises these facts any less 'reconciliation-friendly'. We would do well to heed Bradshaw's warning, written in the darkest days of the Troubles:

'The antidote to the neurosis engendered by folk-memory is not induced forgetfulness but rational reflection upon the past based on a scientific examination of it. The mistake about Irish

71 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.12.

72 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.12.

73 See the assessment of complexity and ambiguity as inherently preferable above, pp.28-9.

74 Brendan Bradshaw, 'Nationalism and Historical Scholarship in Modern Ireland', in *Irish Historical Studies*, vol.26, no.104 (Dublin University Press, 1989), p.350.

history is not that it is too much remembered but that it is remembered too little, for only by taking possession of our past by historical investigation can we prevent it from taking possession of us in the form of irrational myths, prejudices, and hatreds. By distinguishing fact from fancy historical investigation subjects the popular traditions that inevitably spring up around significant past events and personalities to the purificatory process of demythologization'.⁷⁵

Indeed, in order to better understand the fissures and conflicts of interest that have characterised contemporary Northern Ireland, it is surely more useful to recognise the strained and tense relations between native and newcomer in these early decades of colonisation than to pretend that this was not the case. Such a recognition would be more conducive to inter-communal understanding in the long term, if the aim is to understand the past rather than simply paper over its cracks.⁷⁶

Another impulse must be acknowledged, which may have played at least as great a part as contemporary politics in dictating a history that plays down conflict, but which is itself not disconnected with Ulster's troubled history; this is the desire to provide a corrective to earlier historical works whose image of the Ulster colony was designed to serve a more obviously Nationalist or Unionist agenda. As noted in the discussion of secondary literature in chapter one, all contemporary histories of the plantation are written in response—consciously or otherwise—to works in which axes were ground more loudly than we are accustomed to hearing today. As noted, the Revisionist project has in practice aimed its revisions almost exclusively on Nationalist historiography, while leaving the misconceptions attendant-upon other (often unacknowledged) ideological positions largely

75 Brendan Bradshaw, 'The Elizabethans and the Irish, review of *The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland* by Nicholas Canny', in *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review*, vol.66, no.261, (Dublin: Talbot Press Ltd., 1977), p.38.

76 The timing for such an enterprise may be particularly auspicious. As Ethan Shagan has noted, the easing of tensions in Northern Ireland that accompanied the Good Friday Agreement offers historians the opportunity to carry out a reappraisal of plantation Ulster and the violence of this era 'in a way that neither presumes nor sidesteps modern tensions but instead treats those tensions themselves as history'. This, Shagan suggests, offers the hope that 'Ireland's seventeenth century may finally be passing from memory to history'. Ethan Shagan, 'Early modern violence: from memory to history: a historiographical essay', in Ó Siochrú and Ohlmeyer (eds.), *Ireland, 1641: contexts and reactions*, pp.17, 32.

untouched. Some of this revision of Nationalist history regarding the period has been merited and valuable, such as T.W. Moody's 'Treatment of the Native Population', exploring the retention of the natives on lands from which they had been slated to be expelled.⁷⁷ Such examinations have left us with a more nuanced and sophisticated picture of colonial Ulster than is suggested by either a Nationalist fable about complete expulsion or extermination, or a Unionist one of a barren wilderness being settled by brave pioneers.

While the implications of Revisionism have been far more dramatic (and contentious) with respect to the famine or the revolutionary period of 1913-23, an early-modern equivalent can be discerned in, for example, the tendency to elide the devastation caused by the Tudor conquest of Ulster (and the role this played in creating the conditions for plantation), or the impulse to play down the intrinsic underlying tensions of colonial Ulster. While Moody's observations were characterised by scholarly rigour and circumspection, some of his successors, as observed throughout this work, have been less temperate. This has been done under the guise of correcting previously flawed, usually Nationalist, history. What often goes unremarked, however, is that the kind of crude Nationalist interpretation of the plantation, which once needed correcting, has largely disappeared from serious academic discussion. This thesis, therefore, has spent less time critiquing Nationalist 'myths' surrounding the plantation than examining the currently predominant image of it in the (surprisingly limited) scholarly work published on the subject in the last few decades. While this 'corrected', Revisionist view of colonial Ulster could be said to constitute a new orthodoxy, it is curiously unwilling to acknowledge this position, and clings steadfastly to an image of itself as a radical and iconoclastic alternative to the dominant Nationalist consensus.⁷⁸ This allows some historians to continue what is essentially the practice of addressing straw-man arguments, which few serious scholars actually hold.⁷⁹ Jonathan Bardon's recent monograph on the plantation, for example, makes the following

77 Moody, 'The Treatment of the Native Population', pp.59-63.

78 This has been noted by Kevin Whelan in 'The Revisionist Debate in Ireland', in *Boundary 2*, vol.31, no.1, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2004), p.192.

79 One of the leading proponents of the revisionist tendency, Roy Foster, has implicitly recognised this danger in his acknowledgement that critics of the kind of nationalist history exemplified by Pearse, which was adopted as state policy in an independent Ireland 'must be wary of falling into the same trap as those who, by condemning the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century historians [such as Spenser and Davies], imply that scientific objectivity was possible at this time; textbooks in English schools in the 1920s and 1930s were hardly models of fair-minded detachment'. Foster, 'History and the Irish Question', p.187.

observations:

‘The assumption that religious and cultural differences kept British colonists and Gaelic Irish, and their descendants, as rigidly separate ethnic groups does not stand up to close scrutiny. There was far more intermingling than is generally acknowledged; otherwise British surnames, such as Hume, Adams and Sands, would not be found amongst Catholic nationalist activists, nor would native Irish ones, such as O’Neill, McCusker and Maginnis, be found amongst Protestant Unionist politicians’.⁸⁰

That such an assumption continues to be widely held is, however, highly questionable, as is the existence of a class of historians positing such a level of segregation that could have prevented native and newcomer from interbreeding over the course of four hundred years. The fact that such interbreeding did indeed take place, it is further implied, attests to an ‘intermingling’ between the two communities that belies an antagonistic relationship, but this by no means follows. The existence of mulattos and mestizos in America, after all, does not attest to the racial integration of those societies or disprove the existence of widespread segregation. It is likewise with the observation by Douglas Carson cited in the frontispiece to Bardon’s book, that Elizabeth Windsor is the direct descendant of Aodh Ó Néill through his daughter Sorcha, and that the present British queen therefore ‘embodies’ the dynasty of Ó Néill. While this might initially strike the casual reader as ironic and suggestive of a profound distortion in our view of the plantation, this fact becomes distinctly less remarkable—in truth, distinctly meaningless—when we consider that the thirteen generations separating Aodh Ó Néill from Elizabeth Windsor have, at a very conservative estimate, spawned over 60,000 people. As a researcher into population growth, Steve Olson, has demonstrated: ‘virtually anyone with a European ancestor descends from English royalty’.⁸¹

We would, in fact, be hard pressed to find a historian of the last hundred years positing the

80 Bardon, *The Plantation of Ulster*, p.x.

81 Steve Olson, ‘The Royal We’, in *The Atlantic Monthly*, vol.289, issue 5, (Boston, Massachusetts: Atlantic Monthly Company, 2002), p.63.

kind of rigorously-supervised apartheid that could have kept natives and colonists apart to such an extent. It is thus highly disingenuous to describe this as in any way representing an orthodox position. At the same time, this revised image of colonial Ulster has gone so far as to be in need of revision itself. There is a palpable straining and stretching of the facts, in some quarters, to come up with an image of colonial Ulster society marked by mutual acculturation and consensus. The story of a colonist, Anthony Mahue, communicating with one Onóra Ní Ghiollagáin through the medium of a maidservant acting in the role of interpreter, has already been examined in chapter four (see pp.152-3). Audrey Horning has used Ní Ghiollagáin's visit as evidence that she 'hoped to speak to Mahue in Irish', suggesting in turn 'that some English learned the tongue'. It has already been seen, however, that Ní Ghiollagáin, being Mahue's 'gossip', must have been well-acquainted with him, and therefore entertained no such hope.⁸² Even more egregious is Horning's account of an incident on the Mercers' proportion in Londonderry in 1615, when three English were killed by a band of woodkerne at a makeshift inn run by one John Browne and his wife. Far from seeing this as evidence of hostility on the part of the Irish who attacked Browne's household, Horning speculates that:

'The murders do not seem to have been premeditated acts of resistance, as the attack occurred after John Browne, his wife, and three of their Irish neighbors spent several hours imbibing "beer, wine, and aqua vitae" together with the nine woodkerne in Browne's home. The drunken brawl that ensued might have been sparked by an inappropriate comment or perhaps by a demand for payment on the part of Mrs.Browne, [whose] Irish guests viewed the proffering of drink as a gesture of hospitality and would readily take umbrage at its reduction to an economic exchange. Whatever the impetus, such shared consumption of alcohol, be it in the Browne house or in Agent Russell's alehouses, provided the spaces for exchanges of cultural knowledge, which only become problematic when there is a misunderstanding. Certainly, the widespread practice of intercultural imbibing was a perennial cause for concern to

82 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.213.

individuals like Sir Thomas Phillips, who recommended in 1623 that no alehouses be allowed in remote places'.⁸³

The notion that such 'intercultural imbibing' was taking place between the English and their attackers is contradicted, however, by a close examination of the primary source on which this story is based. In this, the Ironmongers' agent clearly states:

'Browne with his wife and Williams and 3 Irishmen their neighbours were sitting by the Fier (the wife of the house had beare, wyne and Aquavite to sell) and as they were sitting together in came the rebels, some 9 of them and fell upon both the Englishemen and bound them, after they bound the three Irishmen that were with, and gagged them with great sticks in their mouthes, that they should not crye. There they tarried all that day drinking and making merry with such victualls as they found in the house.'⁸⁴

The nine woodkerne who attacked the house, therefore, *immediately* bound and gagged its occupants instead of drinking convivially with them for several hours. The killing of Browne, his fellow-Englishman John Williams, and one of their employees who returned to the house later in that day, took place after their assailants had been drinking for several hours, but the entire complexion of the story is altered by the fact that this *was* a simple case of natives attacking colonists, minus the preliminary 'intercultural imbibing' which Horning claims preceded the attack. This may be simply a mistaken reading of the sources, or a mistaken reading of Nicholas Canny's account in *Making Ireland British*, published some years earlier than Horning's book, in which it is simply stated that 'no disturbance occurred until the raiders had been drinking for several hours'.⁸⁵ It is difficult to avoid the

83 Horning, *Ireland in the Virginian sea*, p.235. Such is the importance Horning accords this anecdote that she refers to it once again in her summing-up, p.361, and at length in another essay, where she claims of this incident: 'Irish and English on the Mercers' proportion were content to drown their sorrows and share their joys together with ale and spirits'. 'The root of all vice and bestiality: exploring the cultural role of the alehouse in the Ulster Plantation', in Lyttleton and Rynne (eds.), *Plantation Ireland*, pp.123-4.

84 Canning to Ironmongers' Company, 15 January 1616, LMA, Guildhall Library MS 17278-1, ff.109v-110r.

85 Canny, *Making Ireland British*, p.435. The same story is also presented as an example of 'how settlers and natives lived alongside each other on cordial terms' in a BBC television programme from 2004, *You*

impression, however, that Horning's aforementioned eagerness to discern cordial relations between the Irish and the colonists may have distorted her interpretation of events.

The above example illustrates the pitfalls of trying too eagerly to see accommodation between native and colonist, which is potentially just as misleading as earlier generations' eagerness to perceive intractable divisions between the two communities. A stress upon mutual acculturation and peaceful coexistence tends to present the colonisation of Ulster as a migration across the North Channel by people who were willing to treat with the native population as equals. In this reinterpretation, the natives are portrayed as generally consenting to the plantation, from which they benefited by the economic opportunities on offer. This belief rests partly upon a fundamental misunderstanding of the society that existed in Ulster prior to plantation, assuming that this population was divided into a military elite of warlords and the mass of people who lived in abject subordination to this elite, and were happy to have been liberated from it. This ignores, however, the existence in Gaelic Ulster of a large class of landholders who lived in semi-independence from the ruling elite, and who were the major losers of the plantation scheme. To fully acknowledge the existence and importance of this class of landholders has been another of the central arguments of this work. The transformation from a class-structure of three divisions (elite, landholding and landless) to a twofold division of 'deserving' and 'undeserving' was the work of the plantation, and goes a great deal of the way to explaining the dual nature of the insurgency in 1641.

It is the events of October 1641 which attest more powerfully than anything else to the profound failure to integrate the indigenous population into the colony that was set on foot in the early 1610s. It has been argued here that, while short-term political and economic crises may have determined the timing of the rising, the pent-up alienation and resentment that characterised the native experience of colonisation made its outbreak inevitable. That contemporaries failed to see it coming, and that some like John Temple claimed it had emerged as a bolt from the blue, had more to do with accentuating the treacherousness of the Irish (who he argued had attacked the colonists without provocation or warning), or simple inattention. In fact, more perceptive elements in the administration were well

Thought You Knew, in which the presenter, Jim McDowell, claims that 'nothing happened until after several hours of drinking, when the woodkerne drew their swords and slew the two Englishmen'. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00c6fl1>, accessed 18 March 2015.

aware of the dangers posed by a native population merely quiescent but unreconciled to the colony. ‘Many hundreds of Brittain families’ were said to be fleeing the undertakers lands in 1624, ‘fearing the event of the menaces published concerning the Irish inhabitants’.⁸⁶ In the same year, lord deputy Falkland wrote of ‘fearfull rumours and panicke apprehensions of some sudden commotion, and generall massacre of the English’ and described the ‘Brittons of that province’ as ‘too confident, careless, il armed and not trained’.⁸⁷ In 1628, Thomas Phillipps wrote to the king that ‘those that were children at there [the colonists] fyrst cominge, are now growen to be men’ and were likely to ‘rise upon a sudden and cutt the throte of the pore dispersed Brittaines’.⁸⁸ Francis Blundell wrote despairingly in the early 1620s of colonists living in dispersed settlements and not maintaining their vigilance against attack from the natives, the consequences of this which had been seen in the Munster plantation’s destruction in the 1590s.⁸⁹

The fact that many were ignoring the conditions laid down by the government to prevent a repeat of Munster, however, would also suggest that there was a certain amount of unpreparedness borne of complacency.⁹⁰ The heightened tension between England and Spain following the failure of the ‘Spanish match’ in 1623 no doubt had something to do with the anxieties expressed above. These appear to have receded somewhat in the 1630s, especially as the negotiation of the ‘Graces’ appeared to offer hope that the Irish Catholics might secure some form of *de facto* toleration. Wentworth’s belief, at the start of the 1640s, that the possibility of Irish resistance had evaporated, has been noted above (p.83). James Ware also wrote in 1633 (in the preface to his sanitised first edition of Spenser’s *View*) of native and colonist: ‘now we may truly say *iam cuncti gens una sumus* [now we are one whole people]’.⁹¹ A perusal of the 1641 depositions for Ulster reinforces the impression that many colonists were genuinely surprised when their Irish neighbours turned on them.

86 ‘The humble pet[itio]n of James L[or]d Balfour Baron of Clenaully S[i]r Fr[ancis] Annesley Knt. and Baronet S[i]r Archibald Acheson Knt. Authorized in the behalf of the undertakers of Ulster in Ireland’, 14 July 1624, SP 63-238-2 no.44, f.80r.

87 Falkland to Conway, 24 April 1624, SP 63-238-1 no.45, 147r. Falkland to Conway, 1623 or 1624, SP 63-245 no.883, f.298v.

88 ‘The humble petecion of Sir Thomas Phillipps knight’, June 1628, SP 63-271 no.25, ff.50v-51r.

89 Perceval-Maxwell, *The Scottish migration to Ulster*, p.190.

90 Hunter has argued that the government itself became slovenly in its military preparedness. The projected twice-yearly muster of colonial tenantry did not take place until 1618 and ‘acute financial stringency’ led to the disposal of the inland forts in 1620, leaving the government without a permanent military presence in Armagh and Cavan. Hunter, *The Ulster plantation*, M.Litt Thesis, p.599.

91 James Ware, ‘preface to Spenser’s *View*’, in *Two histories of Ireland*, sig.Q3v.

Nicholas Simpson, who reported the attack on Glaslough by the Mic Uaid (see above pp.179-80), remarked that the colonists:

‘. . . were not able to resist them, ffor besides the suddaynenes, wee had no powder amongst us, the late proclamacion against havinge of powder beeing so stricte that none Could bee gotten but by lycence from the newrye’.⁹²

Not only had the colonists in Glaslough (where ‘the greatest parte were Irishe’) not provided themselves with gunpowder for such an eventuality, but their ability to procure such gunpowder was obstructed by official regulations.

The rising could fairly be said, therefore, to have taken at least some colonists by surprise. This surprise must be accounted for if the image of a society presented here, characterised by underlying conflict and tensions, is to be sustained. The key word here is *underlying*. Without the prospect of foreign assistance and the temporary appeasement of the native elite, there was no prospect of overt large-scale resistance to the plantation project for many years. The idea of a collective native response to colonisation, therefore, fell into abeyance, and the Irish response was atomised into an individual struggle for survival and adaptation to the new dispensation. In most cases, this involved accommodation and adaption to the newcomers’ culture and economic patterns. Such surface accommodation no doubt convinced many colonists that the Irish were content with their lot. They were, in any case, not predisposed to exert themselves in seeking out signs of discontent. Speaking a foreign language and markedly disinterested in the native culture, colonists proved unreceptive to signs of resentment among the natives. As the years passed without any major challenge to their settlement, complacency set in; this complacency was subsequently transformed into Irish treachery by writers like Temple.

The fundamental reason why the warnings of men like Blundell fell on deaf ears is suggested by a line of Temple’s: ‘For what cause, offence, or least seeming occasion of provocation, these woes have come upon us, our souls could never imagine’.⁹³ It was this

⁹² Deposition of Nicholas Simpson, 6 April 1643, TCD MS 838, f.182r.

⁹³ Temple, *The Irish rebellion*, p.105-6.

failure of the imagination which left the colonists incapable of empathising with, and putting themselves in the shoes of, the native in Ulster (or for that matter, in America), to imagine how they would react under similar circumstances. Having been progressively rendered more and more primitive in the English imagination throughout the previous century, the ‘mere Irish’ were, by this stage, sufficiently ‘othered’ as to be beyond identifying with. It was thus rendered easy to imagine that they did not resent a fate which the colonists themselves would find intolerable if the roles had been reversed. Just like Temple’s belief that foreign agents had instigated the 1641 plot, Barnaby Rich could not bring himself to believe that the discontent of the Irish lay behind the frequent disturbances to which the country was subject, but that it was ‘only the poison of the Popes doctrine that inciteth to seditions, to Rebellions, and that setteth subiects against their Princes’.⁹⁴ A memorandum on the state of Ireland in 1625 likewise emphasised this image of the Irish as mere dupes to malign foreign influence, claiming that ‘these discontenements of theirs have bin formented and entertayned by a correspondence with some Jesuites in Spaine’, and that the ‘cheife septs of the Irish declared Rebels to the king [. . .] have bin chefished and entertayned by the king of Spaine as instruments reserved for a mischeivous day’.⁹⁵ This image of the Gaelic Irish as a naturally-subordinate people dovetailed neatly with another rhetorical image that was frequently summoned to justify colonisation—that of the newcomers saving the mass of the people from the tyranny of their former ruling elite.

An image of the Irish as simple and easily-duped sat uneasily alongside another current perception of them as (in the words of Fynes Moryson) ‘subtle temporisers’.⁹⁶ The idea that the Irish were inherently hostile to the English and their interests, but had become expert at concealing it, was not new. It is suggested by lord deputy Fitzwilliam’s comment, when Brian Mac Feidhlim Ó Néill was finally provoked into action by Thomas Smith’s colonists in 1572, that Brian had ‘nowe discovered his Irishe nature full’.⁹⁷ According to Moryson, the

94 Rich, *A new description*, p.80.

95 Memorandum on the present state of Ireland, 11 November 1625, SP 63-241 no.147, f.294r.

96 Moryson, ‘The Itinerary’, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, pp.315-6.

97 Lord deputy Fitzwilliam to Burghley, 4 October 1572. SP 63-38 no.4, f.11r. Brian Mac Feidhlim’s correspondence with the crown and its servitors, of course, shows him to have been anything but a ‘rebel’ by choice, that he had, on the contrary, hoped to bolster his own power by acting as an agent of the crown’s interests in east Ulster, and only resorted to force against Smith and Essex as a desperate last resort. Although Brian’s actions were entirely rational and explicable under the circumstances, the fact that Fitzwilliam chose to interpret these as the recrudescence of some innate tendency to treachery is an

stereotypical Irishman's skill consisted in appearing to be a 'natural fool' but having the 'craft of humouring every man to attain his own ends'.⁹⁸ This belief holds the key to another factor which may have blinded the colonist to native resentment, that is, the fact that the Irish were concealing it. Nor do we need to posit some kind of innate duplicity in the Irish to entertain this possibility. It has been remarked in chapter four that, for the natives, successful adaptation to the colonial society often necessitated making themselves useful and amenable to the newcomers. The concealment of enmity no doubt became a survival mechanism under these circumstances, the colonial dispensation engendering a kind of learned deceitfulness in the Irish, traits which Luke Gernon (who described them as 'servile, crafty and inquisitive after newes') noted perceptively were 'the simptoms of a conquered nation'.⁹⁹

Gernon was not the only one to comment upon the cultural effect that conquest had on the conquered. It has already been seen how the Catholic clergy were compelled for the sake of expedience to feign conversion to Protestantism, while continuing to carry out their role as priests. In the aftermath of the outbreak of violence in 1641, George Creighton remarked that the Irish had 'covered soe great bitternes soe long a tyme in their harts'.¹⁰⁰ The anecdote above (p.322), about the Irish filling a colonist's land with stones, hints at a society in which the natives' everyday acts of petty resistance surreptitiously obstructed the

example of how the English, instead of viewing the native Irish as rational actors in their confrontations with them, were often befuddled by their own preconceived notions of the Irish as primitive and non-rational beings. The almost-perverse insistence on attributing resistance to factors other than an explicable disinclination to be conquered and dispossessed can once again be seen in a treatise on the Irish written around the time of the plantation. Here, the author considers the 'matter of religion' and 'oppression and iniustice' as possible causes of Irish 'rebellions', but dismisses these in favour of the following abstruse reflections: 'the maine and materiall cause that stirres theire rebellions, is a Nacionall quarrell and opinion where with the Irishe are carried to all enormities whatsoever even against all modestie, conscience and duety, as in comparison thereof they hold all persons and matter whatsoever altogether respectles and most contemptible'. Anonymous, 'Discourse on the mere Irish of Ireland', sometime between September 1607 and November 1608, Exeter College, Oxford, MS 154, f.55v.

98 Moryson, 'The Itinerary', in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, pp.315-6.

99 Gernon 'Discourse of Ireland, 1620', in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.356. De Toqueville made a similar reflection in the 1830s on the comments of the Secretary of the Poor Law Commission that 'there is no other country where it is more difficult to get the truth out of a man' when he wrote: 'This has always been the vice of the unfortunate and of slaves'. De Tocqueville, *Journeys to England and Ireland*, p.119.

100 Deposition of George Creighton, 15 April 1643, TCD MS 833, f.235r. Vincent Gookin wrote that the Irish were 'crafty and subtill, but very shallow . . . mutanous but cowardly . . . full of words but to little purpose. . . They will speake fayrest when they intend worst'. Vincent Gookin to Wentworth, middle of 1633, SP 63-270 no.44, f.71r.

intruders' efforts at every turn.¹⁰¹ Nor was this merely something noted by English observers. The Gaelic writer of the satirical *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis* imagined a parliament run by the 'lower orders' of Gaelic society, in which decrees were issued ordering each to procure 'a powerful bosom friend of an Englishman' and to 'laugh with your enemy and to slander him behind his back'.¹⁰² Such, suggested the poet, was the decline of personal integrity brought about by the need to appease the country's new rulers. Such habits, internalised over time, could—like the 'double consciousness' discussed in chapter four (p.156)—be counted among those traits associated with a 'colonial mentality' as described by Frantz Fanon.¹⁰³

There are, therefore, no shortage of explanations for the widespread failure to perceive indigenous resentment. These explanations are far more plausible than the possibility that this resentment did not exist in the first place. This is because the pre-1641 Ulster colony failed, outside of a small minority of elite figures, to integrate the native population to any significant extent. The picture that emerges from the sources is of a society in which natives interacted in legal and economic terms with the colony, while maintaining their own culture and religious sphere discrete and separate from the colonists. As long as material conditions were not too onerous or hope of improvement remained, there were significant numbers of Irish who preferred the chances offered by personal accommodation with the colony over the doubtful benefits of armed insurrection.¹⁰⁴ As new waves of colonists arrived, and the Irish found it increasingly difficult to compete for land and employment, such opportunities became more circumscribed. A series of harvest failures and (especially relevant for the 'deserving' Irish) increased pressures for political and religious conformity, increased the chances of the native population 'rising out'. The underlying reasons for this uprising, however, were the failure to give the Irish a significant stake in the colony's future. This, notwithstanding the rhetoric that accompanied its

101 The impression that the Irish could not be relied upon for the slightest bit of help is re-enforced by an account of William Brereton in 1635 who, finding himself lost on the way to Newry 'gave an Irishman to bring us into the way a goat, who led us like a villain directly out of the way and so left us'. Sir William Brereton's travels in Ireland, 1635, in Falkiner (ed.), *Illustrations of Irish history*, p.372.

102 *Pairlement Chloinne Tomáis*, p.114.

103 Frantz Fanon, *Black skin, white masks*, (London: Pluto Press, 1986).

104 Francis Annesley, lamenting in 1629 that so little had been done to evangelise among the Irish, argued that such an effort should be made, but 'as may not give tooe much dislike to the modest and well affected papists whereof there are multitudes in this kingdome'. Francis Annesley, 'The present state and condic[i]on of the Realme of Ireland worthy of speedy and Serious consideracon', 21 March 1629, SP 63-248 no.45, f.140r.

launch, was an integral feature of the colonisation of Ulster *in practice*.

Although Froude had been referring with macabre irony to the negligence of Humphrey Gilbert in leaving survivors who might avenge his victims, the actual (as opposed to planned) plantation in Ulster could, in a sense, be said to represent the kind of ‘partial and fitful cruelty’ which he censured—cruel, because it involved widespread dispossession and left most natives outside the charmed circle of those who might benefit from the changes it effected in Ulster; fitful and partial, because it did not extirpate completely the Irish from Ulster. Instead, a subjugated and resentful population remained which, while useful as a source of rents and cheap labour, represented a security threat, heavily outnumbering the colonists in most areas and easily able to overwhelm them when the opportunity arose.¹⁰⁵ In the sense that it failed to establish a stable and sustainable community of interest, therefore, this first effort to colonise the province was a failure. As Jane Ohlmeyer has noted, it was really only later in the seventeenth century, and especially after the completion of the Williamite conquest, that the colony ensured its survival and ‘the Protestant interest finally closed the frontier in Ireland’.¹⁰⁶ Spenser had warned that any future colonisation efforts would be futile if the Irish were left to their own devices, as they had been in the previous conquests of Ireland dating back to Henry II.¹⁰⁷ Yet another *Present State of Ireland*, written in 1673, argued that the same mistake had been made in the years before 1641, by leaving ‘the antient inhabitants’ to:

‘. . . shift for themselves, who being strong in body, and daily increasing in number, and seeing themselves deprived of their means and maintenance, which they and their Ancestors had formerly enjoyed, would undoubtedly be ready, when any occasion offered it self, to disturb our quiet’.¹⁰⁸

105 Local variations in this reality must of course be acknowledged. In some areas, the insurgents failed to overwhelm the settler population. In east Ulster, this seems to have been due to their small numbers relative to the English and Scots. In other areas, however, this failure was due to other factors. The element of surprise was lost in Donegal and the area around Derry, for example, as the colonists had sufficient warning of the outbreak of violence in Tyrone to prepare themselves. In Cavan, the progress of the rising was more measured than elsewhere due to the greater discipline of the insurgents under the command of Pilib Mac Aodha Ó Raghallaigh.

106 Ohlmeyer, ‘Civilizing of those rude partes’, p.145.

107 Spenser; Gottfried (ed.) ‘A View of the Present State of Ireland’, p.56.

108 Anonymous, *The Present state of Ireland together with some remarques upon the antient state thereof*, (London, 1673), pp.59-60.

The only native presence to be tolerated in the Ulster colony, therefore, was one which did not disturb the quiet of the colonists. That a society could be regarded as quiet in which the majority of its inhabitants had been 'deprived of their means and maintenance', is testament to the process of othering which, by the seventeenth century, had reached the point where the native Irish were seen less as individuals with whom the colonists might share similar hopes and ambitions, than a class of people content to assume their purported station in life, as the proverbial hewers of wood and drawers of water.¹⁰⁹

109 The phrase, having its origin in the Canaanite inhabitants of Gibeon, condemned to manual labour by the invading Israelites (Joshua 9:27), was frequently drawn on by Jonathan Swift in reference to the Irish Catholics of his time: 'When foes are o'ercome, we preserve them from slaughter, To be hewers of wood, and drawers of water'. 'A serious poem upon William Wood', in *The poetical works of Jonathan Swift*, vol.3, (London: W. Pickering, 1834), p.113. 'The common People without Leaders, without Discipline, or natural Courage, being little better than Hewers of Wood, and Drawers of Water, are out of all Capacity of doing any Mischief, if they were ever so well inclined'. Jonathan Swift, 'A letter concerning the sacramental test', 4 December 1708, in John Nichols and Thomas Sheridan (eds.), *The works of the Rev. Jonathan Swift*, vol.4, (New-York: William Durell and Co., 1812), p.36.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Maps

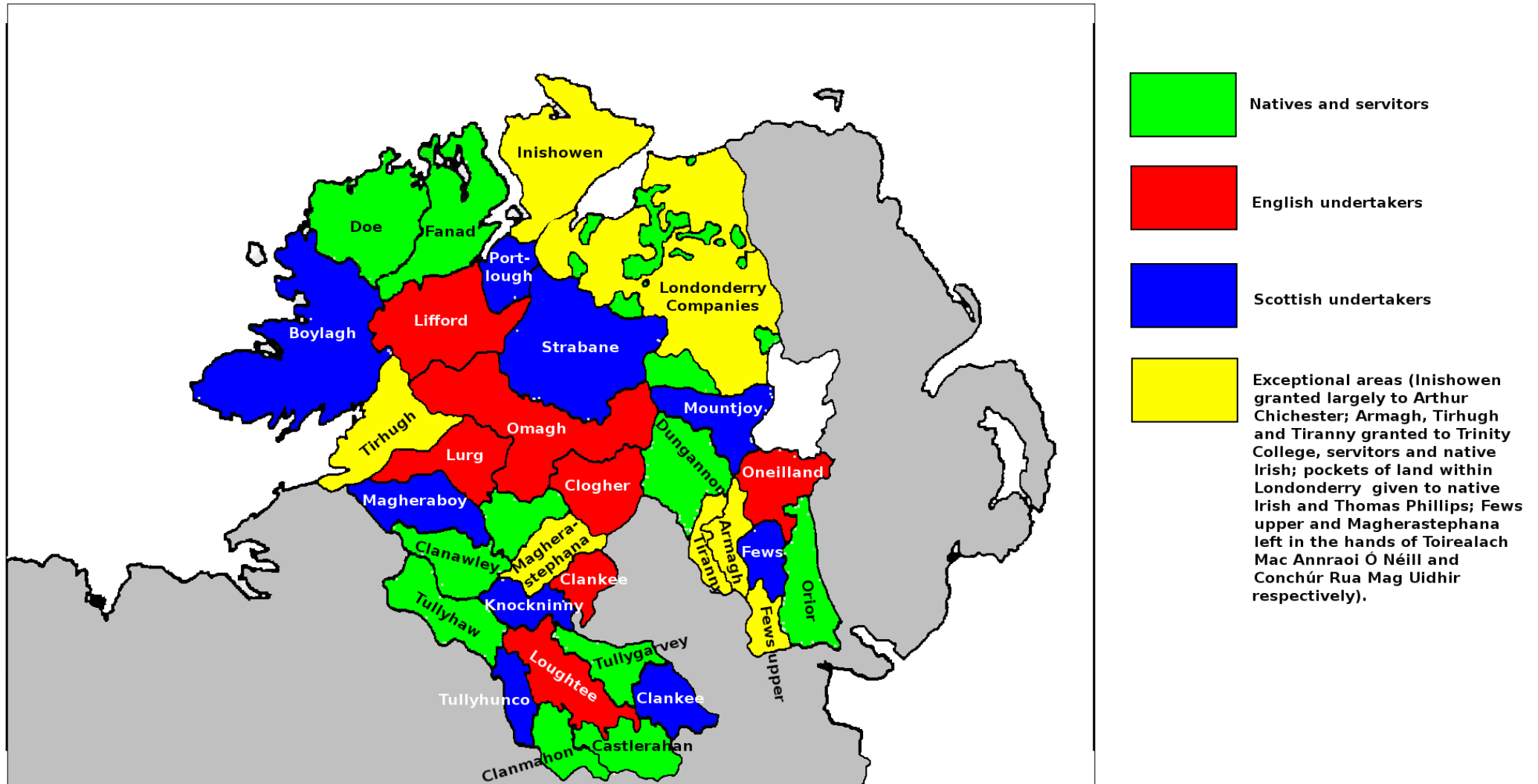


Figure 26. Ulster: plantation precincts

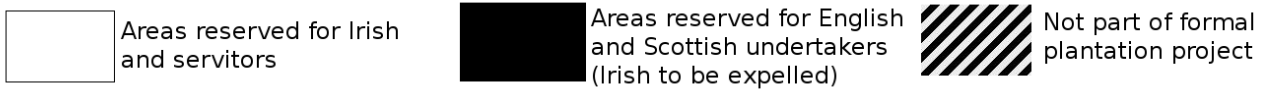
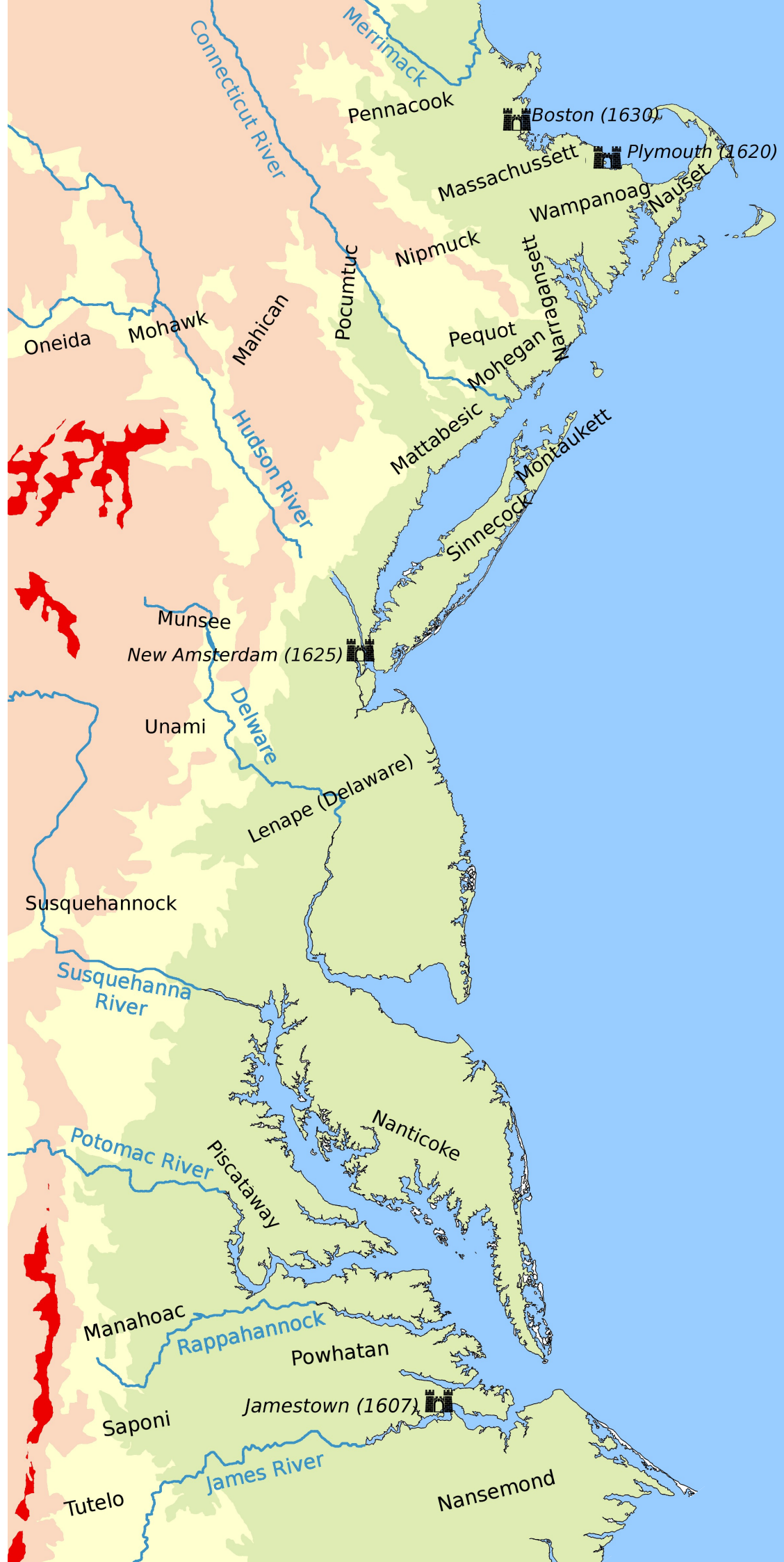


Figure 27. Ulster plantation project: areas of projected native and colonial settlement

Following page: *Figure 28. Eastern seaboard of North America in seventeenth century*



Appendix 2: Population estimates

Ireland

Given the fact that this part of Ulster had been beyond the effective control of the English in the sixteenth century, and the lack of administrative records produced by the organs of the Gaelic ruling order, the kind of early modern sources which can be used in lieu of a census elsewhere (such as records of births and deaths, fiscal returns, muster rolls etc.) are wholly absent. The caveat offered by Louis Cullen in his study of seventeenth-century population figures can only be given greater emphasis in relation to sixteenth-century estimates: 'there is little prospect of progressing beyond informed guesswork'.¹ The uncertainty surrounding even informed guesswork can be gauged by a review of the estimates for the population of Ireland as a whole between 1500 and 1603. At the high end, Cullen (based on a realistic rate of increase and a comparable co-efficient between Ireland and England's population in 1700) proposed the figures of 1 million in 1500 rising to 1.4 million in 1603.² The substantially lower figure of half a million can be deduced, however, from the estimates of contemporaries, such as the writer in 1581 who claimed that Ireland contained 'not haulfe a quarter of the numbere of those which England contynewally mayntayneth'.³ More recent estimates by Nicholas Canny and Pádraig Lenihan fall between these extremes, and suggest a population of one million at the start of the seventeenth century, having risen from 0.75 million in 1500.⁴

Ulster

It would be misleading to simply divide these figures by a quarter to arrive at an estimate for Ulster. Perceval-Maxwell arrived at a figure of between 25,000 and 40,000 for the province, based on the number of fighting men the Irish in Ulster could raise in 1600 (8,592) multiplied by four.⁵ This contemporary estimate⁶ of Ulster's military strength was

1 L.M. Cullen, 'Population Trends in Seventeenth Century Ireland', in *Economic and Social Review*, vol.6, (Dublin : Economic and Social Studies, 1975), p.150.

2 Cullen, 'Population Trends', p.163.

3 The population of England and Wales being taken to be approximately 4.1 million in 1600. Andrew Trollope to Walsingham, 12 September 1581, in Hans Claude Hamilton (ed), *CSPI Elizabeth I, 1574-1585*, (London : Longman & Co., 1867), p.318.

4 These estimates are summarised in Appendix 1 of S.J. Connolly, *Contested island : Ireland 1460-1630*, (Oxford University Press, 2007), pp.404-6.

5 'If it is assumed that the Irish could raise half the male population as a fighting force and that for every male adult there was a female, the English estimate may be multiplied by four to give some idea of the total population'. It would appear that Perceval-Maxwell makes no provision for the existence of children. Perceval-Maxwell, *The Scottish migration to Ulster in the reign of James I*, p.17.

6 'A perticuler of the rebells forces of horse and foote ordinarilye employed in the rebellion, 28 April

made, it should be noted, before the demographic collapse associated with Mountjoy's tenure as Lord Deputy. Cullen would appear to be correct in describing it as a 'very substantial underestimate'.⁷ As has been seen in chapter three, Robert Jacob estimated that there were 'at least 20,000 men of the sword' in Ulster in 1609.⁸

Geographical considerations also indicate that Perceval-Maxwell's figure is an underestimate. There are today, for example, 16,301 townlands in Ulster. Taking his maximum of 40,000, this would mean an average of 2.45 people living in each townland. This is inconceivable, given that the *baile bó* was by definition a subdivision of land capable of sustaining a given number of cows that were necessary to support, by extension, a given number of people/families. Although it is difficult to quantify just how many people the average *baile bó* would have supported, it must surely have been considerably more than two parents and half a child. William Herbert estimated (citing a 'well-known Irish couplet') that they sustained 500 cows with seven ploughlands. If it is remembered, however, that many *bailte bó* were occupied only seasonally, then the average population of each rises correspondingly.

The *baile bó* is the one administrative artifact left behind by Gaelic Ireland which can offer some grounds for speculation. If some idea can be obtained of how many families lived in an average *baile bó*, and how large those families were, we can begin to outline a range within in which the population of Ulster. Philip Robinson, in his study of Tyrone before and after the plantation, has suggested an average of two or three families to each *baile bó*, with an upper limit of five.⁹ Anecdotal evidence would suggest that Irish families were large. Thomas Blenerhasset asserted that the birth-rate among the Irish was ten or twenty times greater than the English.¹⁰ It has been estimated that the mean household size in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England was between four and five'.¹¹ Allowing for a certain degree of poetic license on Blenerhasset's part, a range of possible figures may be offered based on an average family size of between six and ten. Once again it must be remembered that many *bailte bó* were merely summer pasture, so this estimate has to be

1599', in *Tracts relating to Ireland*, volume 2, (Dublin : Irish Archaeological and Celtic Society, 1843), pp.29-30.

7 Cullen, 'Population Trends', p.149, n.1.

8 See above, p.100.

9 Robinson, 'The Ulster Plantation and its impact on the settlement pattern of Co. Tyrone', p.242.

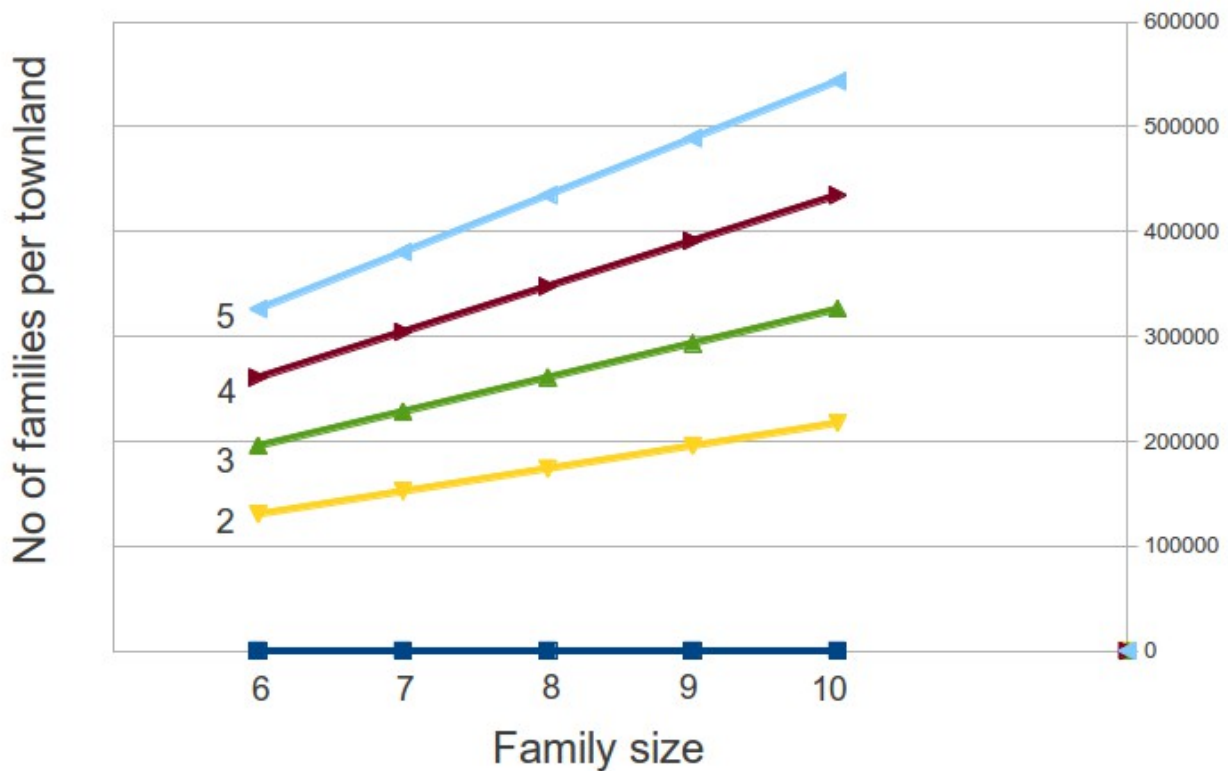
10 Blenerhasset, *A direction for the plantation in Ulster*, Sig.B3v.

11 Barry Coward, *The Stuart age : England, 1603-1714*, (Harlow: Longman, 2011), p.21.

reduced to account for the fact that many were not permanently occupied. The following chart represents this range, with the total of townlands reduced by a third (10,867) in order to take account of seasonal occupation:

| Family size | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 6 | 130,408 | 195,612 | 260,816 | 326,020 |
| 7 | 152,142 | 228,214 | 304,285 | 380,356 |
| 8 | 173,877 | 260,816 | 347,754 | 434,693 |
| 9 | 195,612 | 293,418 | 391,224 | 489,030 |
| 10 | 217,346 | 326,020 | 434,693 | 543,366 |

| Number of families supported by one <i>baile bó</i> | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | | | | |
| 7 | | | | |
| 8 | | | | |
| 9 | | | | |
| 10 | | | | |



The lowest estimate here: two families of six living on two thirds of the townlands in Ulster, would give a population of 130,408; the highest, five families of ten, gives a population of 543,366. The median figure here, 304,285 (an average of four families of seven), is roughly in line with a quarter of the population of one million given above for the whole island. To assert anything more precise than that the population of the province most likely fell within this range would be to give a false impression of certitude in the matter.

Appendix 3: Irish names and their anglicised forms

| Modern Irish forms Source: Muiris Ó Droighneáin, <i>An sloinnteoir Gaeilge agus an t-ainmneoir</i> , (Dublin: Coiscéim, 1982). | | Anglicised forms | Earlier Irish spellings (pre-1950s) Source: Patrick Woulfe, <i>Sloinnté Gaedheal is Gall/Irish names and surnames</i> , (Dublin: Gill, 1922). |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Given names | Genitive forms (Mac, Ó) | | |
| Aibhistin | Aibhistín | Evistan, Evisten | |
| Aibhne | Aibhne | Eveny, MacAveny, MacEvinney, Mac Avinue, MacAvenue | |
| Ailis | | Alice | |
| Art | Airt | Art, Arthur | |
| Alsandar | Alsandair | Alexander | Alastar, Mac Alastair |
| | an Bhaird | McAward, Ward, ‘son of the bard’ | |
| | an Bharúin | Baron | |
| | an Deagánaigh | McAdegany, ‘son of the dean’ | Mac An Deagáin |
| | an Déanaigh | Enany, Aneany, Aneeny, Eneany, Aneny, Neney, Bird | Mac An Eanaigh |
| | an Fhailí | McAnaly, McAnally, McEnally, McEnaly | Mac an Fhailghigh |
| | an tSaoi | Atee, Entee, Intee, Kenty, Kinty, Ginty | |
| Aodh | Aodha | Hugh, Hughes, McCoy, McKay | Mac hAodha |
| Aodhán | Aodháin | Aidan | |
| Ardal | Ardail | Ardal, Arnold | Árdghal, Mac Árdghail |
| | Artáin | Cartan | Mac Cartáin |
| | Baoill | Boyle | |
| | Biataigh | Betagh, Beatagh, Beatty | Ó Biadhtach |
| | Brádaigh | Brady | |
| | Braonáin | Brennan | |
| Brian | Briain | Brian, Bryan, Bernard, Barnaby, Barney | |
| Bríd | | Brigit, Briget, Brigid, Bridget, Bridgit, Bríd and Bride | Bríghid |
| | Cába | Cabe | |
| Cafarr | Cafairr | Caffar, Caffer, Caffarra, Cathbar | Cathbharr, Mac Cathbhairr |
| Cairbre | Cairbre | Carbery | |

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | Caiside | Cassidy | |
| Caitlín | | Cathleen, Kathleen | |
| Caitríona | | Catherine, Katherine | Caitrín |
| Calbhach | | Calvagh, Charles | |
| | Camhaoil | Cawell, Cevill, Cowell, Cowhill, Caul, Call, McHall, Caulfield, Keawell, Howell, Campbell, Callwell | Mac Cathmhaoil |
| | Cana | Cann, Gann | |
| Cathal | Cathail | Cahill, Cahell, Cahal | |
| | Catháin | Cahan, Kane | |
| Cathair | Cathaoir | Cahir | Cathaoir, Mac Cathaoir |
| | Ceallacháin | Callaghan, Calane, Calon | Ó Céileacháin |
| | Ceallaigh | Kelly | |
| Cearúil | Cearúill | Carroll, Charles | Cearbhall, Mac Cearbhaill |
| | Cionaoith | Kenna | Mac hÉanna |
| | Cléirigh | Cleary, Clery | |
| | Coileáin | Cullan, Cullane | |
| Conn | Coinne | Quin, Quinn, Coyne | Mac/Ó Cuinn |
| Colla | Colla | Cullo, Cooley | Cú Uladh, Mac Colla |
| | Con Midhe | MacNamee, McNamee | Mac Conmidhe |
| Conall | Conaill | Connell | |
| Conchúr | Conchúir | Conor, Connor, Knogher, Connogher | Conchobhar, Mac/Ó Conchobhair |
| | Conghaile | Connelly | |
| | Corcráin | Corcoran, Corkran, Corkeran | |
| Cormac | Cormaic | Cormac, Cormack, Charles | |
| | Corra | Corr | |
| | Crábháin | Craven | |
| Cú Chonnacht | | Constantine | |
| | Cuileannáin | Cullenan, Cullinane, Cullinan, Quillinan, Cullnane, Quilnan, Callanane, Callanan | |
| Cúmhaí | Cumhaí | Covey, Cowey, Cowy | Cúmhaighe |
| Daibhéid | Daibhéid | McDavitt, McDaid | |
| | Daimhín | Devine, Devin, Deven, Devins | Ó Doimhín |
| | Dhuibhín | Given, Gevan, Givan, Gevin | |
| Diarmaid | Diarmada | Dermot, Dermot, Darby, Jeremiah, Jarmy, Jerry, Jerome | |
| | Dochartaigh | Doherty, Docherty, Dogherty | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| | Doibhilin | Devlin, Develin | Ó Doibhilín |
| Dónall | Dónaill | Donall, Donnell, Donal, Donald, Daniel | Domhnall, Ó Domhnaill |
| | Donnaile | Donnelly | Ó Donnghaile |
| Donncha | Donncha | Donogh, Donough, Donaghy, Donoghue, Donat, Dennis, Denny, Duncan | Donnchadh, Mac/Ó Donnchadh |
| | Droma | Droma, Drum | |
| Dualtach | Dualtaigh | Dowltagh, Dualtagh, Duald, Dudley | Mac/Ó Dubhaltach |
| | Dubhánaigh | Devany | |
| | Dúghaill | Doyle | Ó Dubhghaile |
| | Dúlainn | Doolan | |
| | Dúnagáin | Donnagan, Donagane, Donaghan | Ó Donnagáin |
| Echmarcach, Eachmharcach | Eachmharcaigh | Averkagh | |
| Eachmhíle | Eachmhíle | Agholy, Aughelie, Cafely, Caughley, Caffaley, Caffely | Eachmhíleadh, Mac Eachmhíleadha, Eachmhílidh |
| Éamann | Éamainn | Edmund, Edmond | Éamonn, Mac Éamoinn |
| Eibhlín | | Evelin, Evelyn, Eileen, Aileen, Helen | |
| Éimhear | Éimhir | Ever, Heber | |
| Anraí | Éinrí | Henry | Annraoi, Mac Annraoi |
| Eochaidh | Eochaidh | Oghie, Oghy, O’Coggy. NB-Some English sources transcribe this as ‘Coggy’ which could also signify <i>Chogaidh</i> , ‘warlike.’ | |
| Eoghan | Eoghain | Owen | Eóghan, Mac Eóghain |
| Fearach | Farraigh | Farry, Verry, Fairy | Fearadhach, Mac Fearadhaigh |
| Feardorcha | Feardorcha | Frederick, Ferdinand, Ferdoragh | |
| Fearghal | Fearghail, Fearail | Farrell, Fergal | |
| Fearghas | Fearghais | Fergus | |
| Féilim | Feidhlim | Phelim, Feilim, Felix | Feidhlim, Mac Feidhlim |
| Feilimí | Feilimí | Phelimy, Phellimy | Feidhlimidh, Mac Feidhlimidh |
| Fionnualá | | Finola, Finula | Fionnghuala |
| | Flaitheartaigh | Flaherty | Ó Flaithbheartaigh |
| | Flannagáin | Flanagan | Ó Flannagáin |
| | Gallchóir | Galchor, Gallagher | Ó Gallchobhair |

| | | | |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Garbháin | Garvan, Garven | |
| | Garmaile | Gormley | Gormghail |
| | Giolla Cholaim | Elholm, Gillecolme | Giolla Cholm |
| Giolla Dhuibh | Giolla Dhuibh | Gilduff, Gilladuff | Giolladhuibh |
| Giolla Easpaig | Giolla Easpaig | Gillaspick, Gillespie, Gillaspy, Gillespy, Galesby, Glaspy, Glashby, Glusby, Aspig, Bishop | Giolla Easpuig |
| Giolla Ghlais | Giolla Ghlais | Gilglasse, Green | Giolla Glas, Giollaghlais |
| Giolla Íosa | Giolla Íosa | Gillisa, Gillesa, Gill, Gillisse | |
| | Giolla Phádraig | Gilpatrick, MacIlpatrick, MacIlfpatrick, MacElfpatrick, MacIlfrederick, MacElfedrick, Gilpatrick, Kilpatrick, Kirkpatrick, Fitzpatrick | Giolla Pádraig |
| | Giolla Riabhaigh | Kilrea, Killery, Gillreavy, Gilrea, Kilcree, Elreavy, Ilravy, Elreath, Elreath, Ilwraith, Ilea, Areavy, Arevy, Gallery, Callery, Kilgreay, Gray | |
| Giolla Ruaidh | Giolla Ruaidh | Gilrowe, Gilrewe, Gilrew, Gillroy, Gilroy, Elroy, Alroy, Ilroy, Kilroy, King, Gilrea | |
| | Giolla Seanáin | Gunchenan, Gunshenan, Gillshenan, Gilshenan, Gilshenon, Gelshinan, Gilsenna, Gunshinan, Gilson, Gillchenan, Gilchenan, Gilchenon, Gelchinan, Nugent, Leonard | |
| | Giollagáin | Gilligan, Gillegan | Giollagáin |
| Glaisne | Glaisne | Glasney, Glasny, Giles | |
| | Gnímh | Agnew (Ó Gnímh was often anglicised to Agnew, which was the name of a Scottish colonist family in their area, not an anglicised spelling). | |
| | Gormáin | Gormen, Gorman | |
| Gormlaith | | Gormlaith, Gormley, Barbara, Barbary | Gormfhlaith |
| Gothraidh | Gothraidh | Gorry, Gorie, Gorey, Godfrey | Mac Gothfraidh |
| | h'Éigeartaigh | Hegarty, Hagarty | |
| | hÁgáin | Hagan (this is the Ulster form of the surname Hogan). | |
| | hAnluain | Hanlon | Ó hAnnluain |
| | hAnrachaigh | Hanratty, Enright | |

| | | | |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | hÉara | Hara, Harra | Ó hEadhra |
| | hEosa | Hussey | Ó Eoghasa/hEoghasa |
| | hUiginn | Higgins, Higgin | Ó hUige |
| | Laoire | Leary | |
| | Linneáin | Lenan | Ó Lionnáin |
| Lochlann | Lochlainn | Loughlin, Lochlain, Lochlan, Laughlin, Laghlen | |
| | Luachráin | Lochrane, Lochran, Loghrane, Loghran | |
| Lughaidh | | Lewis, Lewy | |
| | Luinigh | Looney, Luny, Lunney, Lonney, Loney | |
| | Mag Aoidh | Magee | Mac Gaoithe |
| | Mag Aonasa | Magennis, MacGuinness | Mag Aonghuis |
| | Mag Shamhráin | Govern, McGawran, Magawran, Magauran | |
| | Mag Uidhir | Maguire | |
| Máire | | Mary | |
| Mánas | Mánais | Manus, Magnus, Manasses | Maghnus, Mac Maghnuis |
| Maoileachlainn | | Melaghlin, Melaughlin | |
| | Maolchallann | Mullholland, Mullhallane | |
| | Maolchraoibhe | Mulcreve, Mulcreevy, Mulgrievy, Mulgrave, Mulgrew, Mulcroan, Mulcroon | |
| Maolmórdha | Maolmórdha | Mulmorie, Mulmory, Mulmurry, Myles | |
| | Mathúna | Mahon, Matthew | Mathghamhain, Mac Mathghamhna |
| Meallán | Mealláin | Mellan, Meldan, Mullan | |
| | Móra | Moore | Ó Mórdha |
| Muirteartach | Muireartaigh | Murtagh, Murtaugh | Muircheartach, Mac Muircheartaigh |
| Murcha | Murchaidh | Murphy | Murchadh, Mac Murchadha |
| Naos | Naois | Neece, Neese, Niece, Nicholas | |
| Neachtain | Neachtain | Nechtan, Naughton | |
| Niall | Néill | Niall, Neale | |
| Onóra | | Honora | |
| Pádraig | Phádraig | Patrick | Mac Phádraic |
| Pilib | Philib | Philip | |
| Piaras | Piaraís | Pierce, Peirce, Pearson, Pierson, | |

| | | | |
|------------|-------------|------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| | | Peirson, Pearse | |
| Proinsias | | Francis | |
| | Raghallaigh | Reilly, Crilly, Crelly, Creilly | |
| Ránall | | Randall | Raghnall |
| Réamann | Réamainn | Raymond, Redmond, Mundy | Réamonn, Mac Réamoinn |
| Risteard | Risteaird | Richard | Riocárd, Mac Riocáird |
| | Rodáin | McCrodden, Croden, Crodyn, Rodden, Rodan | |
| Róis | | Rose | Rós |
| Ros | Rosach | Ross, Rossa | |
| | Ruairc | Rourke, Roarke | |
| Ruairí | Ruairí | Rory, Roger | Ruaidhrí, Mac Ruaidhrí |
| Sadhbh | | Sive, Sabia, Sophie, Sophy, Sarah, Sally, Seva | |
| Seán | Seáin | Shane, John | |
| Séamus | Séamuis | James | |
| Séarlas | | Charles | |
| Seinicín | | Jenkin (little John, from Seánín) | |
| | Siail | Shiel, Sheil | Ó Siadhail |
| | Sirideáin | Sheridan | Seireadáin |
| | Sléibhín | Slevin, Slavin, Slevan, Sleaven | |
| Somhairle | Somhairle | Sorley, Samuel, Charles | |
| | Suibhne | Sweeny, Sweeney | |
| Tadhg | Taidhg | Teige, Teague | |
| | Thréinir | Trenor, Traynor, Trener | Thréinfhir |
| Tiarnán | Tiarnáin | Tiernan | Tighearnán, Mac/Ó Thighearnáin |
| | Toimilín | Tomlyn, Tomlinson | |
| Toirealach | Toirealaigh | Turlough, Tirlagh, Terence, Terry | Toirdealbhach, Mac Toirdealbhaigh |
| Tomás | Tomáis | Thomas | |
| | Tomaltaigh | Tumulty, Tumultie, Tomalty | |
| | Tomhnair | Toner | |
| Tuathal | Tuathail | Toole, Toal, Tully | |
| | Uaid | McQuaid, McQuoad, McWade | |
| Uaine | | Owny, Owney, Hewney, Oney, Oyney, Anthony | |
| | Uilín | Mac Quillan, Cullen, Gwylín | Coilín |
| | | | |

The prefix *Maol* before a name literally means ‘bald’, but implied ‘follower of’, relating to the bald patch of a monk’s tonsure. The prefix *Giolla* likewise means ‘follower’ or ‘servant of’ a saint.

Epiteths

‘Generally, they give unto their children when they come to holy baptisme profane names, adding alwaies somewhat to the name, taken either from some event, or an old wife, or else some colour, as red, white, blacke: or else from a disease, scab, and peeldnesse, or from one vice or other, as theefe, proud, &c. and albeit they be of all men most impatient of reproach, yet these noble men of theirs, even they that have the letter [O] prefixed to their names, disdaine not those additions’. (Camden, *Britain*, part 2, p.143)

| <i>Modern Irish forms</i> | <i>Meaning</i> | <i>Anglicised forms</i> | <i>Earlier Irish forms</i> |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| an Chogaidh | Warlike | Coggy | |
| an Díomas | Proud | | |
| Bacach | Lame | | |
| Balbh | Dumb, inarticulate, stammerer | | |
| Ballach | Freckled, Marked | | Ballagh |
| Bán | White, pale | Bane, Bawn | |
| Breasalach | Associated with Clanbrassil, an area of northern County Armagh along the southern shore of Lough Neagh. Chlann Bhreasail was an Airgiallan group ruling the area before they were displaced by the Mic Chana. | | |
| Buí | Fair, blonde | Boy | Buidhe |
| Caoch | Blind | | |
| Carrach | Bald, scabbed | | Carragh |
| Connalach | Fostered with the O'Domhnails in Tyrconnell | | |
| Crosach | Pock-marked | | Crossagh |
| Dall | Blind | | |
| Dearg | Red, red-haired | | |
| Donnailleach | fostered with the O'Donnghailes | | Donnghaileach |
| Dubh | Dark | Duff | |

| | | | |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| Faghartha | Bad-tempered, fiery | | |
| Garbh | Rough | Garve, Garvey | |
| Geimhleach | fettered, imprisoned | | |
| Gorm | Blue, (of skin) Black | | |
| Gruama | Gloomy, Melancholy | Groome | |
| Luineach | From Lunney, the family with whom Toirdealbhach Luineach was fostered | | |
| Mallacht | The cursed | Mallatas | |
| Mantach | toothless, stammering | | |
| Maol | bald | Moyle | |
| Meirgeach | Rusty, copper-coloured, irritable, pockmarked | Mergagh | |
| Modartha | Surly, overcast | Modder, Mother, Moder | |
| Rua | Red, red-haired | Roe | Ruadh |
| Sáfach | Battle-axe | Sanaght, Samogh | Samhthach |

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