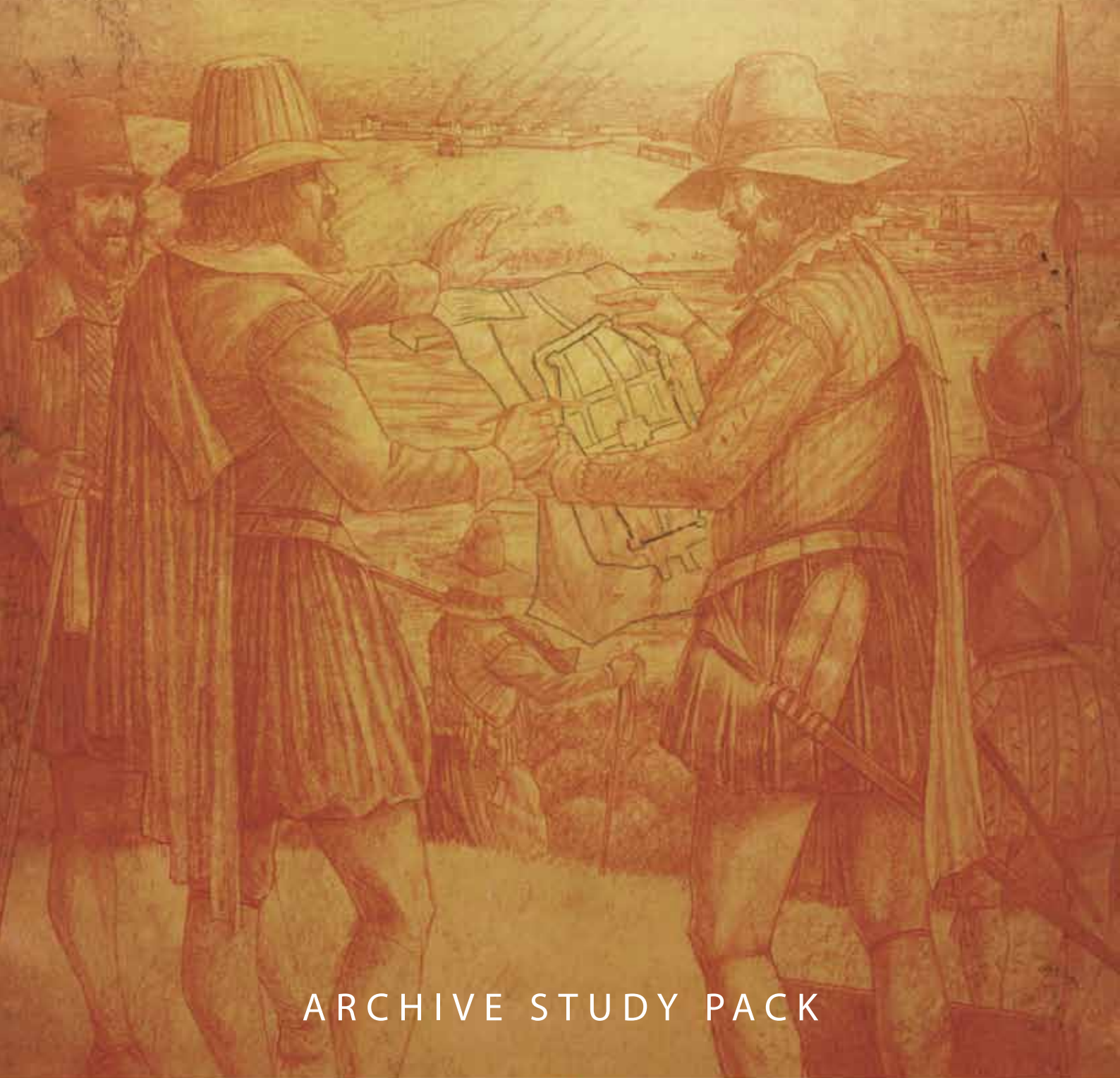


# Plantation of Ulster



ARCHIVE STUDY PACK

# How To Use This Study Pack

## What are Archives?

Archives are documents from the past that have been kept as a record. They are important in helping us to better understand the past. They include items such as diaries, letters, reports, photographs, maps, plans, paintings and audio/visual recordings. They are called primary sources as they were created at the time when the event happened and contain first hand information from people who lived through the actual events.

## How to use it

This study pack has digitised versions of items chosen from our collection, the London Metropolitan Archive, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland and other relevant archive collections. This includes letters, extracts from correspondence, leases, maps and drawings. We have chosen these carefully to allow you to see and use a variety of sources and perspectives.

These can be downloaded and used by schools, groups or informal learners in conjunction with the designed learning activities. This pack can be used either as a complete learning programme, looking at all four topic areas, or as stand-alone double lesson plan on an individual topic. Each unit has been designed to be as comprehensive and easy to use as possible and with suggested activities and follow up work.

In the study pack you will find a general introduction to the Plantation of Ulster, four specific learning areas, as outlined below, each with a topic sheet, a set of facsimiles and suggested activities which could be used in a 40-50 minute lesson:

- 1 Implementation
- 2 Individuals
- 3 What did it look like?
- 4 Environment and Society

## Advice on how to use archives

- Work out what type of document you are looking at – is it a letter, lease, report, map, drawing or photograph?
- Think about why the document was produced – was it written for a particular person or purpose?
- Find out what are the most important facts or information in the document.
- Think about the information in the document – how accurate is it, has the person who produced it tried to present a certain argument, is there any information missing?
- When looking at a collection of documents think about how these help to build a picture of the past.

## Curriculum Links

The study pack is directly linked to both the Northern Ireland Revised Curriculum and Republic of Ireland Primary and Secondary School Curricula. The activities given can be used as part of the History, Citizenship and English syllabus.

- Key Stage 2 - The World Around Us (Senior level Primary Syllabus)
- Key Stage 3 - Environment and Society (Post Primary Syllabus)
- Adult learners and community groups

## Cross Curricular Skills

The activities have been designed to deliver learning to different age groups and learning styles/abilities based on the following key skills:

- Communication
- Using Mathematics
- Using ICT
- Managing Information
- Working with Others
- Thinking, Problem Solving, Decision Making
- Self Management
- Being Creative

For more information or advice contact the Heritage & Museum Service

**Learning Staff:**      **Email:** [museum.education@derrycity.gov.uk](mailto:museum.education@derrycity.gov.uk) or

**Tel:**      028 7136 5151 ext 8253

# Ulster Before The Plantation

In the late 16th century Ireland was divided politically and culturally into English and Gaelic parts. The West and North were predominantly Irish with scattered nomadic settlements and a pastoral economy based on farming. Numerous English style towns and villages existed around Dublin, in an area known as the 'English Pale', however the Gaelic language and local customs were beginning to spread among them. It became hugely important for the Crown to protect its interests in Ireland and expand English law and customs.



Provincia Ultonia by J. Janssonium c. 1659 Derry City Council Archive Collections

## Society

Gaelic society was very hierarchical and the Lord was a very powerful individual. Military strength and ambition was very important as the lord had to be able to defend and earn his political position. Some chieftains ruled over a single barony; however the Great O'Neill ruled three of the nine counties of Ulster. If the lord was not able to prove himself to his people there were many lesser nobles and chiefs who would challenge his position. As a result many of the disputes and instability within Gaelic society came from within individual lordships, although there were also deep rivalries between some of the great Gaelic families in Ulster. The English even referred to Ireland as a 'land of war'.

## Law

Society was managed by a complex legal system known as the Brehon Laws, which dated from the early 7th century. Lords employed judges or Brehons to try cases

such as fines for disobedience and tax evasion and by the 16th century Brehons were also trying cases of murder and theft. Brehons held a very important place in Gaelic society, as did the bardic poets. Official court poets were highly honoured by the lord. Each had a tax free farm and a pension of twenty cows a year in return for one poem. It took between seven and ten years of training before a poet could produce an elaborate formal verse. This would then be memorised before being recited to the Lord's court.

Poets would often compose a poem praising their Chieftain to be read at one of the fairs or gatherings which occurred throughout the year. Important holidays such as May Day or Halloween often saw these gatherings taking place outside the lord's castle and part of his rents would be used to provide a feast and public entertainment.

## Trade and Economy

Ulster was the most rural part of Ireland prior to the Plantation. There were small pockets of trade at Derry and Donegal but most people survived by farming the land. Whole villages would leave their winter fields where they had planted their crops and travel with their animals to areas of rough summer grazing on the hills and mountains. They made butter, cheese and 'bonnyclabber', a strong-flavoured soured milk, similar to yogurt. Cattle produced meat, milk, leather, tallow or fat, fertiliser and calves. Sheep provided wool for clothing and pigs were raised for their meat. While the women and children remained with the animals, the men would travel back to their crops at harvest time.

## Early Plantation

The first Plantations in Ireland took place during the Tudor conquest of Ireland. The Munster Plantation was the first large scale plantation and occurred following the Desmond Rebellions when the Earl of Tyrone resisted English interference. The English crown confiscated these estates and they were granted to English Undertakers to settle and develop. Queen Elizabeth I and her Council wanted to gradually strengthen their rule by making English laws and local government widely available and by treating the Gaelic chieftains as good subjects. However, Elizabeth's military commanders in Ireland wanted to secure Ireland using military force.

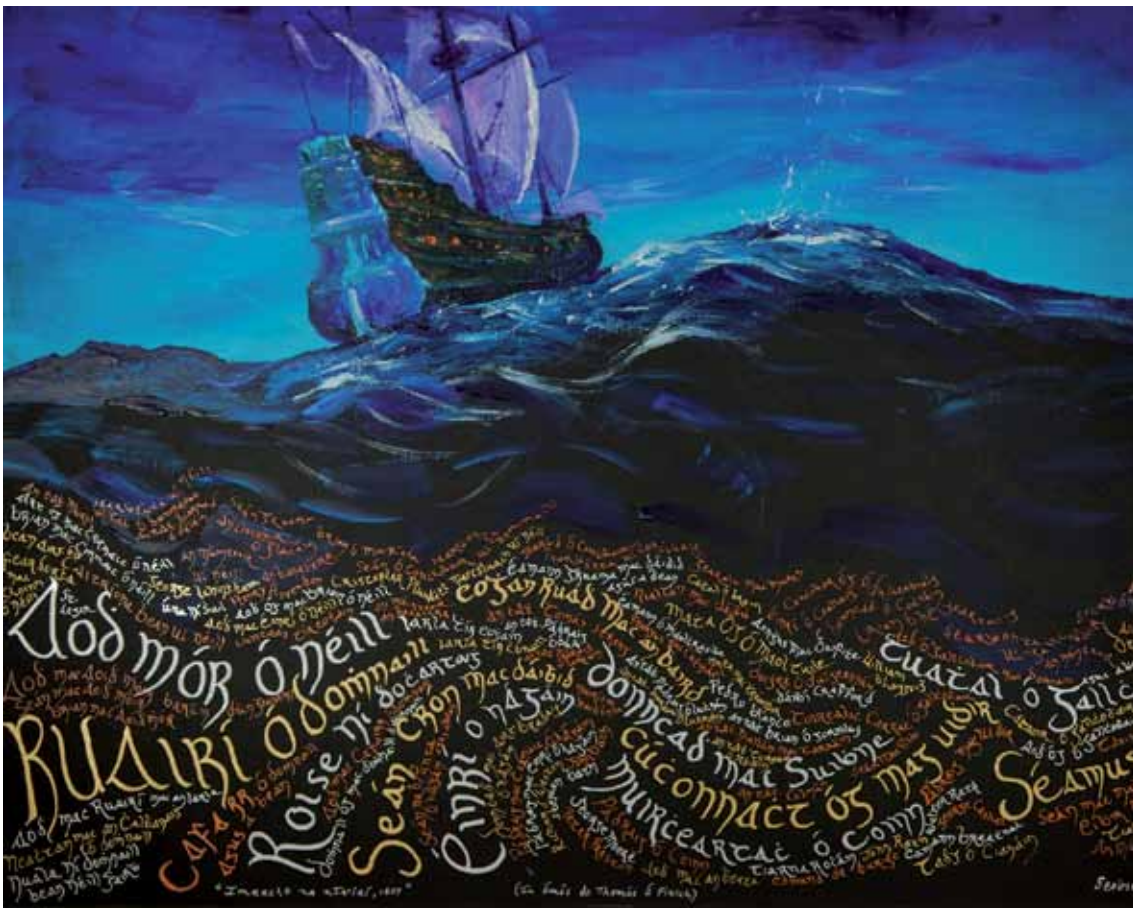
## Nine Years War

Attempts by the English Crown to extend its reach into Ulster and take control of the wild, densely forested land led to the Nine Years War (1594 – 1603). Under the leadership of the Earl of Tyrone, Hugh O'Neill and the Earl of Tyrconnell Hugh

O'Donnell, the Gaelic Irish in the north successfully routed Elizabeth I's armies at the battles of Clontibret and Yellow Ford. But they were finally defeated by the English at the Battle of Kinsale in 1601 and were reduced to fighting in small bands known as 'Woodkerne' while English commanders such as Docwra, Mountjoy and Chichester swept the countryside. O'Neill finally surrendered to Mountjoy, signing the Treaty of Mellifont in March 1603, unaware that Elizabeth had died three days earlier.

## Flight of the Earls

The treaty gave the Earls good terms as the newly crowned King James I of England was anxious to end the constant threat of rebellion and conflict in Ulster, which had cost the Crown two million pounds and nearly bankrupt England. However, the power and influence of the Gaelic lords had to be restrained. A countrywide amnesty was put in place and the Earls received a full pardon from the King. Their estates were returned to them, however they were greatly reduced and they had to abandon their Irish titles, disband their private armies and swear loyalty to the Crown. Even so, allegations, campaigns and conspiracies continued to plague the Earls. On 14 September 1607 the Earls and key members of their families set sail from the small town of Rathmullan, on the shores of Lough Swilly in County Donegal for the continent, marking the end of the Gaelic order in Ulster.



Flight of the Earls by Seoirse O'Dochartaigh

On 15 November 1607 King James issued a 'Proclamation touching the Earles of Tyrone and Tyrconnell' declaring their lands forfeit, and paving the way for the start of the Plantation. The original plans devised by Sir Arthur Chichester were modest when compared to the scale of Plantation that eventually took place. Less land was to be planted, and large grants were to be allocated to the Gaelic Irish. It was important to create a secure native Irish population alongside the new settlers. It was also important that some Irish remained to work the land and replant the crops that had been destroyed by the 'scorched earth' tactics used by English commanders during the war where farmlands, crops and food stores were destroyed to prevent them being used to support the rebel forces.

## The O'Doherty Rebellion

The list of potential native beneficiaries of the Plantation was essentially a directory of the rivals of the lords who had fled, but life in Ulster for the remaining Gaelic lords was dramatically different than what the Crown had promised. Gaelic noblemen such as Niall Garb O'Donnell, Donal O'Cahan and the Lord of Inishowen, Sir Cathair O'Doherty, had supported the Crown during the Nine Years War, in fact Sir Cathair O'Doherty was the foreman of the jury that pronounced the absent Earls traitors. They did retain land, but it was greatly reduced. O'Doherty lost his lands at Inch Island and then came under suspicion from Sir Arthur Chichester, who accused him of involvement with the fugitive Earls, but it was Sir Henry Docwra's decision to leave Derry and return to England which would be the catalyst for a rebellion that would have dramatic implications for the scale and scope of the Plantation.

Docwra had developed a good relationship with O'Doherty and he later wrote that without O'Doherty's support it was 'utterly impossible that we could have made that sure and steady progress in the wars'. Docwra's replacement as Governor of Derry was Sir George Paulet who was not well liked, even among the English commanders. Chichester advised that there had been 'many dissensions since his arrival' and that he was not fit to govern the city. Paulet fell out with the new Bishop, Dr George Montgomery over lands and accused O'Doherty of treason. A prolonged campaign of verbal and physical abuse resulted in O'Doherty leading a small group of less than 100 men to take the fort at Culmore. Just before dawn the following day, Tuesday 19th April 1608, O'Doherty and his men attacked Derry, killed George Paulet and burned the city to the ground. The rebellion spread across O'Doherty's lands and as far as Armagh but it was short lived and ended after eleven weeks when O'Doherty was ambushed and killed by English soldiers at Doon Rock near Kilmacrennan, County Donegal.

Sir Cathair's rebellion came as a shock to the King. He had been a leading member of the Irish aristocracy and had assimilated himself into the English system; he spoke English, wore English style clothes and had even attempted to join the Prince of Wales' household. It seemed that no Irish could be trusted. O'Doherty's lands were forfeited to the crown and granted to Sir Arthur Chichester. Donal O'Cahan was accused of aiding the rebellion and his lands were also confiscated. Naill Garbh O'Donnell had supported O'Doherty at first, but he did not join the rebellion and later declared his allegiance to the King; nevertheless, he was arrested and held in the Tower of London without trial until his death in 1626.

The threat of future rebellions against the Plantation had been removed and the demography of Ireland would be transformed forever by changes in the physical and economic nature of society. Most significantly it resulted in the creation of large communities with a distinctive British and Protestant identity.



Reputedly the sword of Sir Cathair O'Doherty,  
Derry City Council, Museum Collection