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Emigrations to Ulster

The following is quoted from *Irish and Scotch-Irish Ancestral Research* Volume I, Repositories and Records, by Margaret Dickson Falley, B.S., published by Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc. 1981.

Plantation Settlement Records

The Plantation and Settlement records of Ireland, c. 1540-1703, comprise a great corpus of Government documents containing personal records of members of the old and new landed families, extending from one to several generations. They concern the progressive confiscations and the successive series of new land grants, until the final distribution placed most of the acreage of Ireland in the possession of English Protestants.

. . .

In a figurative sense the term "Plantation" is applied to the establishment of new colonies of English, Welsh and Scots in Ireland, chiefly carried out by Elizabeth and James I. The preliminary ground work was, however, laid by Henry VIII, and the first steps were taken during the reigns of Edward VI and Mary.

The term "Settlement" used in the last half of the 17th century, in relation to the great changes in ownership and occupation of the land, is explained in *The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*, by John P. Prendergast, Dublin, 1875 (pp. xiii-xv): "The term 'Settlement,' of such great import in the history of Ireland in the seventeenth century, means nothing else than the settlement of the balance of land according to the will of the strongest; for force, not reason, is the source of the law. And by the term Cromwellian Settlement is to be understood the history of the dealings of the Commonwealth of England with the lands and habitations of the people of Ireland after their conquest of the country in the year 1652. As their object was rather to extinguish a nation than to suppress a religion, they seized the lands of the Irish, and transferred them (and with them all the power of the state) to an overwhelming flood of new English settlers, filled with the intensest national and religious hatred of the Irish. Two other settlements followed, which may be called the Restoration Settlement, and the Revolution Settlement. The one was a counter revolution, by which some of the Royalist English of Ireland and a few of the native Irish were restored to their estates under the Acts of Settlement and Explanation. The other (or Revolution Settlement) followed the victory of William III, at the Battle of the Boyne. By it the lands lately restored to the Royalist English and a few native Irish were again seized by the Parliament of England, and distributed among the conquering nation. At the Court for the Sale of Estates forfeited on account of the war of 1690, the lands could be purchased only by Englishmen . . . It will thus be seen that these three Settlements are only parts of one whole, and that the Cromwellian Settlement is the foundation of the present settlement of Ireland."

On the whole, the Plantation and Settlement of Ireland carried out the principal object of the Crown and the English Government (including that of the Commonwealth) over a period of one hundred and fifty years, to eventually subjugate Ireland by confiscation, and plant the realm with new land-lords, loyal to the State, who would supply revenue to the Government, maintain English law administered by representatives from England, and furnish protection by locally supported military forces. Thus the forfeitures of individual estates by "enemies of the State" are a part of the series of Plantation and Settlement records which set forth the changes in ownership and

tenure of Irish lands.

Presbyterian Records

The Presbyterians in Ireland were largely Ulster Scots. During two and a half centuries after the first plantation of Scottish Presbyterian colonies in Ulster, ca. 1606, they maintained a close connection with their homeland, while they remained a race apart from their Irish and English neighbors. They were hated by the Roman Catholics of Ulster, whose land they had usurped. They were despised by the English, whose Government and Established Church inflicted persecution upon them due to religious non-conformity.

The Ulster Scots kept their racial strain pure in matters of intermarriage. They sent their sons to Scotland to be educated for the ministry, etc. Many of them married there before they returned to Ulster. Thus they remained under the influence of Scottish religion, philosophy, and family ties to their early and some later generations.

While the Presbyterians who settled in Ulster were almost solidly Scottish, there were many English Puritans of Calvinistic doctrine who settled in Dublin and the South of Ireland. The English type of Presbyterianism lacked the more severe theology and discipline of the Scottish Church. Their congregations in Leinster and Munster were the outgrowth of the English Puritans and Independents of the Commonwealth period, left there without organization after the Restoration. These two sects united in 1696 and developed the Southern Association of the Presbyterian Church. This became the Presbytery of Munster and a part of the General Synod.

Historians of Church and local affairs, and the genealogists, have preserved a wealth of published and manuscript records regarding Presbyterian families and individuals. The sources are listed in Volume II, . . .

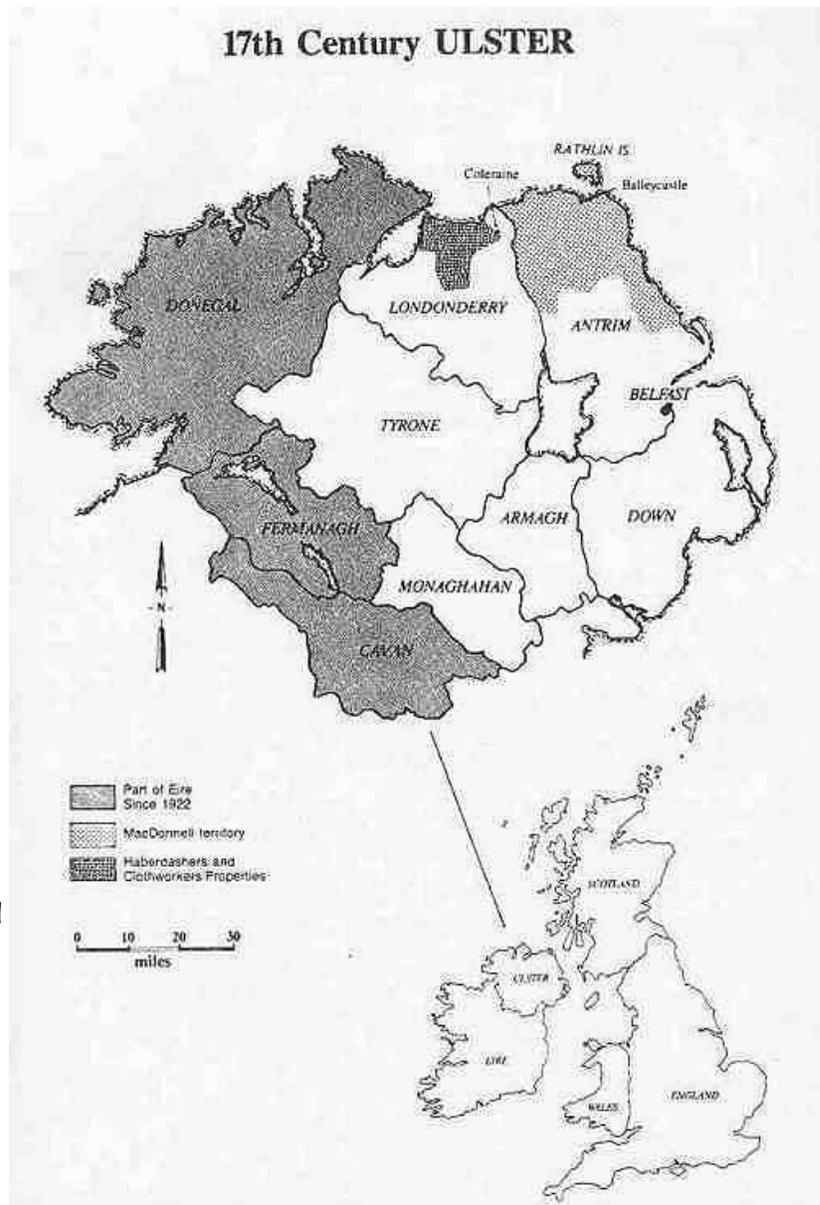
A few points which may puzzle genealogists will be clarified by a brief review of the history of the Presbyterians and their problems, due to the laws of the realm regarding dissenters from the Established Church of Ireland. This will show that less than half of the Presbyterian families were permanently settled in Ireland before 1650. The Penal Laws and other Acts of Parliament, depriving Presbyterians of religious and civil liberty, were during some periods more rigorously imposed in Scotland than in Ireland, thus resulting in a large emigration to Ulster. At other times the Ulster Presbyterians were more severely penalized, causing several ministers and many Church members to return to Scotland. At all times until well into the eighteenth century, the religious laws and practices resulted in the entries of many records of baptism, marriage and burial, in the Parish Registers of the Established Church.

The first wave of Presbyterian settlers came to Ulster as leasees of the numerous Scottish proprietors who were granted estates by James I, 1605-1625. By patent of 16 April 1605, the northeast quarter of County Down was granted to Hugh Montgomery and the northwest quarter was granted to James Hamilton. This represented two-thirds of the estates forfeited by Con O'Neill, who later was forced to sell his remaining lands to the benefit of Hamilton and Montgomery. The southern part of County Down remained in Roman Catholic hands. The new proprietors were required by the Crown to live on their estates, build houses, churches, and bring English or Scottish settlers as tenants, able to bear arms for the King, build houses and develop their land. Hamilton and Montgomery brought emigrants from the Scottish counties of Ayre, Renfrew, Wigtown, Dumfries and Kirkcudbright. They began coming in May 1606. By 1610,

Montgomery could muster 1,000 men for the King and in 1614, the two proprietors mustered 2,000 men, representing about 10,000 Scots settled in County Down.

Sir Arthur Chichester received a large portion in the southern part of County Antrim. In 1603, he was granted the "Castle of Belfaste" and surrounding property. He soon afterward acquired land along Carrickfergus Bay and to the north almost as far as Lough Larne. He at first settled an English colony around Belfast, but before long the Scottish settlers predominated throughout the lower half of County Antrim. The upper half had been in the hands of the Macdonnell clan since about 1580. Soon after 1607, the area was granted to Randall Macdonnell who, in 1620, became the Earl of Antrim. Scottish tenants also spread through his estates, being required to bear arms for the King and develop the land.

The flight of the Ulster Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnel with their Chiefs who were confederates, on 14 September 1607, gave James I the opportunity to confiscate their lands for past and present treason. The six counties of Armagh, Cavan, Donegal, Fermanagh, Londonderry, and Tyrone, were escheated to the Crown. This great confiscation, of some 3,800,000 acres, led to the carefully planned "Plantation of Ulster" between 1608 and 1620. Of this land, about 1,500,000 acres were only partly fertile and largely bog, forest, and mountain country. This was restored to the Irish Roman Catholic natives. Extensive grants were reserved for the bishops and their incumbents of the Established Church. Trinity College, Dublin, and other Royal Schools received about 20,000 acres. Land was also set aside for the corporate towns, forts, etc. The remaining half million acres of the most fertile land was reserved for colonization by English and Scottish settlers.



King James at first chose fifty-nine Scotsmen of high social standing and influence and nearly as many Englishmen, together with fifty-six military officers or "servitors" and eight-six natives, as undertakers who were to receive estates of 2,000 acres or less, in all counties but Londonderry which was reserved for the Corporation of the City of London. Eventually, by 1630, some undertakers acquired as much as 3,000 acres, and estates in County Londonderry came into

private hands.

...

A rich source of genealogical information regarding Presbyterian ministers and their families is the *Fasti* of the Irish Presbyterian Church, 1613-1840. The records were compiled by the late Rev. James McConnell, and revised by his son, the late Rev. Samuel G. McConnell. The work was published by the Presbyterian Historical Society, Belfast, 1951.

...

Through the influence of John Knox, the foundations of the Presbyterian Church were laid in Scotland and the first General Assembly was called in 1560. James VI of Scotland who succeeded to the English throne as James I, in 1603, was determined to strengthen the Established Church in Scotland. Melville, the leading Presbyterian of the time, was imprisoned in the Tower of London, and the General Assembly was forbidden to function. Presbyterian ministers and their adherents alike were severely persecuted by the bishops, to bring them under Church control.

At the same time, King James was anxious for a large settlement of English and Scots in Ireland. The latter came to Ulster for new land but also for religious liberty, attracted by the tolerant attitude maintained there by the bishops. The new Confession of Faith, sanctioned by Parliament for the Plantation Settlements, reconciled the differences between Anglicans and Presbyterians. It was Calvinistic in doctrine and allowed Presbyterian ministers to serve as clergy in the parish churches according to their own practices and beliefs. This encouraged the Scottish ministers to follow their countrymen to Ulster.

In the first period, between 1613 and 1642, the outstanding ministers in Ulster and the dates of their arrival were: . . . John M'Clelland, after 1629, . . .

The easy cooperation of the bishops in Ulster changed after 1625, and the ministers preached under increasing restrictions. This came about through the influence of William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, over Charles I. They were determined to tighten the control of the Established Church and this was reflected in Ireland. . . .

To make matters worse, Wentworth (Earl of Strafford) was appointed to the Irish Vice-royalty and arrived in Dublin in 1633. He and his government began a reign of terror for Roman Catholics and Presbyterians alike. He followed Laud's policy to the letter. The earlier "Articles of Religion" were set aside and the ministers were required to adopt a Confession of Faith embodying the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England. He further ordered the Act of Uniformity to be enforced against the ministers. This declared that every clergyman or minister celebrating any religious service other than that of the Established Church, every layman assisting at such a service and every person who opposed the liturgy of the Church, was liable on the third offense to confiscation of goods and imprisonment for life.

...

John M'Clelland, of Newtownards, was deposed but continued to preach, and was therefore excommunicated.

...

In 1636, Robert Blair, Robert Hamilton, John M'Clelland and John Livingstone organized a group of 140 Scottish settlers to emigrate to New England. They set sail in September, 1636, and when half way across, were driven back by storms. The ministers, to escape arrest, fled to Scotland, accompanied by many of their adherents. At this time Scotland had become a safe refuge.

The crowning blow to Ulster came in 1639 when the "Black Oath" was imposed. The clergy were

required to read it from their pulpits and the people were forced to swear on their knees, if over age sixteen, to obey the King's commands and to abjure and renounce the Covenant. The clergy were ordered to report on every Presbyterian in each parish. Some conformed. Landed proprietors such as the Hamiltons and the Montgomerys betrayed their faith and joined the persecutors. Great numbers, who could re-establish themselves in Scotland, returned there. As many as 500 at a time returned to Scotland for the Communion season.

This persecution and departure of many Scots from Ulster saved hundreds of lives during the Rebellion which broke out in 1641. The Roman Catholics, determined to exterminate the English, also hated the Presbyterians for settling on their forfeited land. They tortured and murdered thousands and drove others out of their homes to die of privation. Reprisals by the settlers, and a Scottish army sent to Ulster, were equally devastating.

The biographies of the ministers in the Fasti of the Irish Presbyterian Church, gave the time and place of death of the ministers who served during the first period, 1613-1642, and in some cases later, with some records of their issue:

...

Ministers who died while residents of Scotland:

...

John M'Clelland, at Kirkcudbright, 1638; in Ireland, summer of 1644; died in 1650. He married (1) Marion, daughter of Bartholomew Fleming, Edinburgh, who died s.p. 1640; (2) Miss Isobel M'Clelland.

Following the Rebellion, after 1652, the Presbyterians came from Scotland to Ulster in great numbers, owing to the unsettled conditions while Cromwell was attacking the Scottish Royalists. Some, who had fled Ulster during the early years of the Rebellion, returned after Scottish forces made their safety more assured. When peace was established, Cromwell at first held the Presbyterians suspect for having supported the Royalist cause. After a little time they were allowed to flourish and many of their ministers were permitted to preach under ecclesiastical control of the new State Church. By 1658, there were eighty congregations and seventy Presbyterian ministers organized into five Presbyteries and a General Synod.

The Presbyterians who were in Ulster in 1659, if settled in one of the counties of Antrim, Armagh, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry or Monaghan, are listed in *A Census of Ireland, circa 1659*, edited by Seamus Pender, Dublin, 1939. Records for the counties of Cavan and Tyrone are omitted, due to the fact that the original documents were not preserved. . . .

Following the restoration of Charles II, in 1660, he who had pledged his loyalty to the Presbyterian Church when Scotland crowned him king, soon after his father's execution in 1649, now betrayed his word. He and his Parliament returned the Established Church to power. Its lands and churches, taken by the Commonwealth Government, were restored to the extent they were owned in 1641, and the bishops with their clergy regained their positions. . . .

For more information read: *Irish and Scotch-Irish Ancestral Research* Volume I, Repositories and Records, by Margaret Dickson Falley, B.S., published by Genealogical Publishing Co, Inc. 1981.



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