

Londonderry 400

*Plantation of
the Walled City*

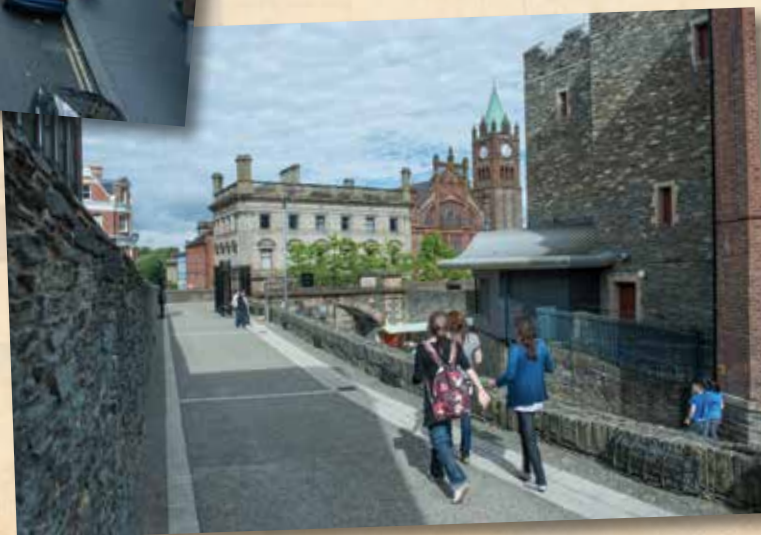


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Preface

In 2013 Londonderry celebrated the 400th anniversary of the Charter granted by James VI (of Scots) & I (of England). Between 1604 and 1689 Derry received five different Charters. The first was granted by James VI & I in 1604. The second, also granted by James VI & I, in 1613, is universally regarded as the most historically significant because of its provision 'that the said city or town of Derry, for ever hereafter be and shall be named and called the city of Londonderry' to mark forever the association between Derry and the City of London which had 'undertaken' the Plantation of both the City and the renamed County. The third Charter was granted by Oliver Cromwell in March 1656. The fourth Charter was granted by Charles II in April 1662 and simply reiterated the content of James VI & I's Charter of 1613 (including the name change) and confirmed its provisions. A fifth Charter was granted by James VII & II in August 1687 but this Charter, intended to remodel radically the composition of the Corporation, was overtaken by the 'Glorious Revolution'. To celebrate the anniversary of the grant of Londonderry's most historically significant Charter 400 years ago, Londonderry will be the UK City of Culture in 2013. This publication is intended as a contribution to those celebrations.



Introduction

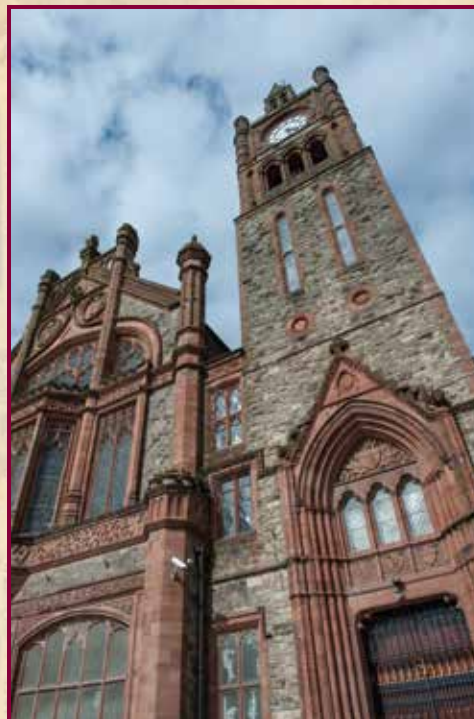
Many writers and visitors have been struck by the magnificence of Londonderry's geographical setting and by the place's historical significance.

George Berkeley, the Church of Ireland Bishop of Cloyne and one of the foremost philosophers of the eighteenth century (after whom the flagship campus of the University of California is named), was briefly Dean of Derry and in 1724 he described the seat of his deanery as 'the most compact, regular and well built town that I have seen in the King's Dominions'.



Londonderry's 'singular pituresqueness'

In the mid-nineteenth century John Hempton, a Londonderry businessman, enthusiastic local historian and President of the revived Mitchelburne Club, asserted that 'whether it be regarded in relation to its singular picturesqueness, or to its historical associations, Londonderry is perhaps superior to any other city in the British Empire'. With respect to Londonderry's 'historical associations', in *Highways and Byways in Donegal and Antrim* (1928) Stephen Gwynn, the former



The Guildhall

Nationalist MP for Galway, was prepared to admit that the 'town-proud' inhabitants of Derry had 'a right to be'. However, Gwynn contended that the city was 'devoid of any architectural beauties'. As one with a great many distinguished Church of Ireland clerics and academics in his lineage, how could Gwynn fail to be impressed with St Columb's Cathedral, even if he wasn't impressed by the Walls and the Guildhall? However, he did grudgingly concede that Derry's 'situation lends it a certain charm'.

In his *In Praise of Ulster* (1938) Richard Hayward, the writer, filmmaker and musician, generously acknowledged both the magnificence of Derry's geographical and historical setting when he observed:

The situation of the city of Derry is one of striking beauty, lying as it does at a lovely curve in the splendid River Foyle. And in the old city there is much to think about, much to dream about, and lessons which will be not be lost on those who have the parts to read and the grace to understand.

And echoing the famous stricture of the great Lord Macaulay, Hayward continued: *... it is fitting that we should revere these, our noble forbears, not in any spirit of religious fanaticism, but with high thoughts of the blows they struck for the liberties of future generations.*

Londonderry is historically significant because of its strategic location. However, even the seventeenth-century founders of the city could not even have begun to imagine its immense strategic significance during the Battle of the Atlantic in the Second World War. Nevertheless, their foresight was twice vindicated within their

lifetimes: first, in 1641 against the Irish insurgents and, secondly, in 1648 and 1649 when the Parliamentarians held out against the Royalists. Finally, before the end of the century the City was successfully defended in the Williamite cause against the Jacobites in the longest and most famous siege in modern British history, the 105-day-long siege of 1689. Thus, Londonderry is often referred to as 'the Maiden City' because its famous walls have never been breached.



Part of the Siege Window, St Columba's Cathedral

The Strategic Problem

Gaelic institutions survived in Ulster long after they had disappeared from the rest of the island. Ulster was the source of repeated attacks on the English settlement in Ireland until the province was finally subdued by the defeat of Hugh O'Neill's great rebellion at end of the Nine Years' War in 1603.

However, even with the subjugation of the last bastion of Gaelic power, Ireland remained a strategic problem, a point which had been dramatically underscored by the arrival of a Spanish army at Kinsale in September 1601. The Spanish had arrived in Ireland to rendezvous with O'Neill, O'Donnell and Maguire, whose power bases were Tyrone, Donegal and Fermanagh respectively. Fortunately, from the English Crown's perspective, the Spanish landed in the wrong end of Ireland, far removed from the northern power base of O'Neill and his Ulster allies. At the Battle of Kinsale on 24 December 1601 O'Neill and O'Donnell were routed, with heavy losses, by Mountjoy.

As the Venetian ambassador to London shrewdly observed, a few years later, 'Ireland is such that it would be better for the King if it did not exist and the sea alone rolled there'. Acute appreciation of the special strategic significance of Derry (in relation to both Lough Foyle and Lough Swilly) predated both the Flight of the Earls (of Tyrone and Tyrconnell) and the Plantation of Ulster. In 1604 'Derrie' was granted its original Royal Charter by James VI & I. The Charter, dated 11 July 1604, recognized both the site's strategic and commercial significance:

The town or borough of Derry is, by reason of natural seat and situation thereof, a place very convenient and fit to be made both a town of war and a town of merchandise and so might many ways prove serviceable to the Crown and profitable to the subject, if the same were not only walled, entrenched and inhabited but also incorporated and endowed with convenient liberties, privileges and immunities.

The document continued by praising the efforts of Sir Henry Docwra, a Yorkshire man, who had erected two forts in the vicinity, one on the riverside and the other on the high ground above it:

Sir Henry Docwra, Knt. in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and King James, having by his extraordinary valour, industry and charge, repossessed, repaired and re-peopled, that town being utterly ruined and laid waste by the late rebellion [a reference to the Nine Years' War] in those parts. And having begun and laid a good foundation there for the planting of a colony of civil and obedient people in that place, the King ... did pursuant to letters dated at Westminster, 22nd March 1603, give grant and confirm unto the



Sir Henry Docwra window in the Guildhall

inhabitants of the Derry and all the circuit and extent of land and water within compass of three miles to be measured from the circumference of the old church walls directly forth in a right line, every way round about, every miles containing 1,000 geometrical paces, and every pace five feet in length entire and perfect City and Council of itself to be called the City and County of Derry and shall be a Corporation and body politic ... Sir Henry to be Provost for life, as fully as the Lord Mayor of London.

In 1606 Docwra left the town in the charge of Sir George Paulet (or Paulette), a younger son of the Marquess of Winchester, who was arrogant and foolishly neglected the town's fortifications. Paulet, lacking political acumen, diplomatic skills and common sense, stupidly provoked Sir Cahir O'Doherty, otherwise a natural ally, into rebellion. Thus 'the town or borough of Derry' referred to in the Charter of 1604 was destroyed in April 1608 when O'Doherty seized Derry and Culmore during his short-lived revolt. Paulet paid for his folly with his life. O'Doherty's rebellion was brought to a close by his death at Kilmacrennan in July.

Sir Josias Bodley, a military engineer and brother of the founder of the famous library at Oxford, visited Derry in the aftermath of O'Doherty's rebellion and reported that the city had been 'wholly spoiled, ransacked and fired'. He noted that the town's fortifications had been 'much decayed and open to surprise', a perfectly fair assessment of why the town fell so easily after O'Doherty's two-day-long siege. Six months later Bodley recommended 'new gates and bridges to

be made, the ditch digged deeper and broader in most places, houses of *municon* [the Spanish word for ammunition, from which the word munitions is derived, thus magazines], victualles [food stores] and other purposes to be made'.

Together, the defeat of Sir Cahir O'Doherty's revolt and the Flight of the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell created the opportunity for a radical solution to the strategic problem: the plantation of Ulster 'with good English and Scottish corn' (or 'colonies of civil people of England and Scotland'). In this context, Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, James VI & I's principal minister, strongly advocated rebuilding Derry.

Turning to the City of London

With its coastline (and the threat, however remote, of another Spanish invasion in support of the restoration of Tyrone and Tyrconnell) and the survival of significant numbers of Gaelic swordsmen (or *kerne*) holding out in the dense forests and slopes of the Sperrins, the Plantation of the territory which corresponds to the modern County of Londonderry posed special problems. These were not susceptible to the same treatment as the other five Plantation counties (i.e. Armagh, Cavan, Donegal, Fermanagh and Tyrone) because they would require expenditure on a scale far beyond the means of ordinary undertakers and servitors. Thus the Plantation of the City and County of Londonderry was entrusted to a consortium of the London Companies by the King and the Privy Council.

The Crown took the view that no one or no corporate body could match the City of London in terms of wealth, and therefore the City was 'the ablest body to undergo so brave and great a work'. In the words of the historian J. S Curl: '... the City of London [was] ... to act as a sort of development corporation for a very large area that nobody else would touch'.

The Londoners subsequently alleged, with undeniably a fair amount of justice, that their participation had been forced upon them to get James VI & I out of a



Sir Thomas Raven's Map of County Londonderry for Sir Thomas Phillips (1622)

territorial difficulty of which other settlers fought shy. The Crown, on the other hand, contended, possibly tongue-in-cheek, that the grant was made for the City of London's present honour and future profit.

On 1 July 1609 the Lord Mayor of London issued a *precept* (the term for a command from the Lord Mayor) to the Masters and Wardens of the twelve principal London Companies. The *precept* instructed them to discuss the matter within their companies and to appoint a committee of four men from each to draw up terms. The *precept* was accompanied by the proclamation of the 'Orders and Conditions', which could be viewed as the Plantation's prospectus.

The prospectus candidly conceded that Derry was more or less a ruin but offered a glowing account of the wealth and possibilities of the territory between the Bann and the Foyle. This region was capable of sustaining a substantial population.

Furthermore, it would also provide the population of London with beef, pork, fish, rye, peas and beans. The prospectus claimed that hemp and flax grew better in the region than anywhere else and would provide the raw materials for making cables, cordage and canvas for London's fleets, as well as thread and linen cloth. The soil would be suitable for breeding English sheep. The region would provide an abundant supply of pelts from red deer, foxes, conies, martens and squirrels. Timber, stone, lime and slate were readily available for building. The earth was suitable for the manufacture of bricks and tiles. Deposits of copper and iron ore had been found. And the harbour at Derry was said to be excellent.

Although ostensibly the document offered the City of London a most attractive prospect, the Courts of Aldermen and Common Council, and the Companies were sufficiently cautious to send over 'four wise, grave, and discreet citizens to view the situation proposed for the new colony': John Broad, a goldsmith, Hugh Hamersley, a haberdasher, Robert Treswell, a painter-stainer, and John Rowley, a draper.

The London delegation was entertained and stayed in new English houses with as much comfort as could be mustered. Sir Thomas Phillips, the Governor of Coleraine, arranged their itinerary and ensured that they saw only what the Crown wished them to see. For example, he ensured that they did not see English surveyors carrying out their work under armed guard (several surveyors had been killed by the Irish 'who did not wish their lands to be discovered'), and that only attractive parts of the country were visited. They were not shown much of the wilder mountainous parts of the Sperrins, where the Irish *kerne* (or swordsmen) resided, and where the terrain was unfriendly. Accounts of casual butchery by *kerne* were to be fairly common place in the early years of the Plantation.

The 'wise, grave, and discreet citizens' saw Coleraine and the banks of the Bann, and Sir Arthur Chichester took them to see Derry, Lifford and the banks of the Foyle. Having seen the Foyle and the Bann teeming with fish (Barnaby Rich, the English soldier and prolific author on Irish subjects, thought the eel-fishery on the river Bann was the best in Europe) and having been impressed by the agricultural

potential of the county's fertile valleys, the delegation on their return presented a very favourable report to the Court of Common Council.

Phillips was so enthusiastic and confident of a positive report that he pre-empted their response by ordering the felling of 10,000 trees so that the timber would be seasoned by the following spring.

On 15 December 1609 the London merchants decided to form a company, a consortium of the City merchant companies, to manage their estates in the county. Herein are the origins of the Honourable the Irish Society.

In January 1610 the Commissioners for Irish Causes, representing the Crown's interests, met representatives of the City of London at the Recorder's chambers in the Temple. There the Londoners set out their demands in three successive conferences.

In some respects, the Londoners drove a hard bargain, indicating that they would only undertake the work if the territory granted to them was expanded. They asked for lands east of the Bann in County Antrim on which they would build a new town and establish its hinterland or Liberties (Coleraine and surrounding area); they asked for land on the west bank of the Foyle on which to build their new city and establish its Liberties (Derry and its environs); and they demanded the great forest in the Barony of Loughinsholin in County Tyrone in order to provide timber for constructing buildings.

Anxious that the City of London might become intransigent and refuse to proceed, the King acquiesced in their demands and a new County was created specially for



Coat of arms of The Honourable The Irish Society in St Columb's Cathedral

the City to colonise. That County was to be named the County of Londonderry and included the old County of Coleraine, to which parcels of Counties Antrim, Donegal, and Tyrone were joined.

As a result, 'Articles agreed upon 28 Jan 1610 between the Lords of Privy Council on the King's Majesty's behalf on the one part, and the Committees appointed by Act of the Common Council on behalf of the Lord Mayor and Commonalty of the City of London on the other part concerning a Plantation in part of the Provinces [sic] in Ulster', were drawn up and signed.

What the City of London signed up for

The 'Articles agreed upon 28 Jan 1610 ...' contained 27 clauses, not all of which were relevant to Derry, many relating to Coleraine and, of course, County Londonderry generally. Among the more interesting clauses, are these:

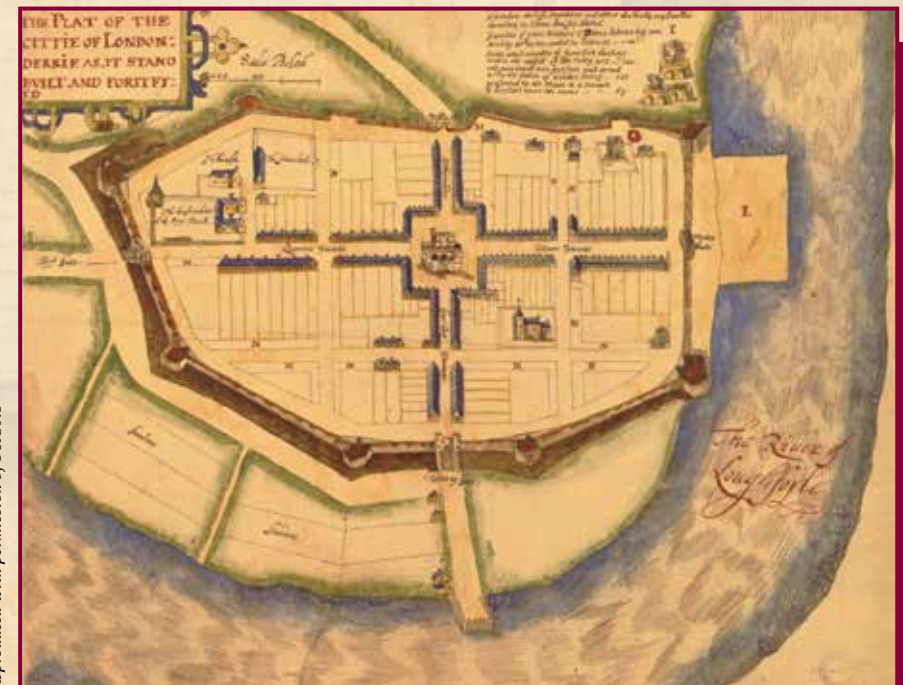
- [1] £20,000 would be levied (in retrospect an absurdly small amount), of which £15,000 would be spent on the Plantation, and £5,000 to buy out existing tenants.
- [2] 200 houses should be built at Derry, and space left for 300 more. 4,000 acres on the Donegal side of the Foyle, excluding bog and barren mountain were to be laid to the City of Derry.
- [3] The Bishop and Dean of Derry were to be granted convenient plots for their dwellings.
- [6] The entire County of Coleraine and the rest of the territory to be undertaken by the City of London should be cleared of all interests (effectively a coded reference to the native Irish) except the inheritances of the Bishop and Dean of Derry, and certain portions of land should be assigned to three or four Irish gentlemen (at the most) then dwelling and settled in the County of Coleraine. These Irish gentlemen were to become freeholders to the City of London, and were to pay a small rent.

- [9] The City of London should have patronage (i.e. the right to appoint ministers) of all the churches in Derry, Coleraine, and all the lands to be undertaken.
- [13] Customs of all goods imported or exported should be enjoyed by the City of London for 99 years within the City of Derry ... with a yearly payment of 6s. 8d. to the King...
- [16] The City of London was to hold the office of the Admiralty of the coasts of Tyrconnell (County Donegal) and Coleraine, and all profits accruing thereto, and was to have the right to all ships and cargoes lost at sea or wrecked on the coastline between Ballyshannon and Olderfleet.
- [21] The two towns (Derry and Coleraine) were to have Liberties extending for three miles in every direction.
- [22] Municipal privileges in Derry and Coleraine would be granted, modelled on those of London, the Cinque Ports, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, or Dublin, as applicable.
- [24] Sufficient forces were to be maintained at the King's expense for the safety of the Undertakers.
- [25] The King would give the Royal Assent to Acts of the British and Irish Parliaments to settle and secure the Plantation.
- [26] The City would have scope to make reasonable demands of the Crown over seven years if necessary.
- [27] The City would immediately commence work on the Plantation, and that 60 houses would be erected at Derry and 40 at Coleraine by 1 November 1610, with convenient fortifications, the rest of the houses to be built and perfected by 1 November 1611.

A planned city

The cities of Derry and Coleraine were the direct responsibility of the City of London rather than the twelve principal London Companies which were responsible for the Plantation elsewhere in the county.

The Londoners decided to concentrate on Coleraine first, having decided merely to build a wall around Derry and leave the construction of the city until later. The stated reason why work went ahead in Coleraine first was because of problems buying out the land rights of those who had settled in Docwra's Derry after 1600.



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'The Plat of the Cittie of Londonderrrie' by Sir Thomas Raven (c. 1622)

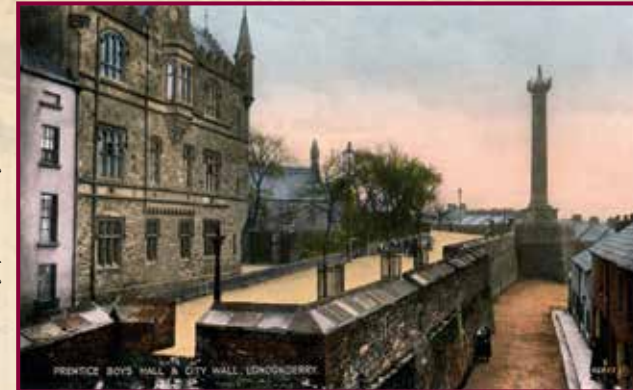
Narrow Ground that an army helicopter pilot flying over Londonderry during 'The Troubles' saw the city 'exactly as it appears on map of Pynnar's survey of 1618-19'.

Both Derry and Coleraine were planned cities. Derry is widely thought to have been modelled on Vitry-le-François, some 100 miles east of Paris, and in turn to have been replicated in Philadelphia. Derry may also have influenced the lay-out of Charleston in South Carolina and Frederica in Georgia. D. B. Quinn and Nicholas Canny, two of the leading historians of early modern Ireland, have even contended that Ulster was 'a laboratory' for English colonial policy in the Americas.

Derry was built on the northern face of a hill, sloping to the water's edge. The walls formed an irregular oblong, distorted, in A. T. Q. Stewart's apt description, like 'a battered shield' and were designed by Captain Edward Doddington. Within the walls the street-plan may have owed something to the contemporary Renaissance-inspired fascination with the grid-iron pattern. From a square in the centre (called 'The Diamond' as in other Plantation towns in Ulster) four streets led to the four gates cut in the walls. The almost 700 *Bastides*, the fortified new towns built in medieval Languedoc, Gascony and Aquitaine, by both the English and French during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, may have provided the inspiration. The vast majority of *Bastides* (from the Occitan word *bastida*, meaning a group of buildings) also had a grid-layout and, after all, they fulfilled a function very similar to Plantation towns in Ulster. *Bastides* may still be found in Lot-et-Garonne, the Dordogne, Gers, and Haute-Garonne. Sauveterre-de-Rouergue in Aveyron (25 miles southwest of Rodez) is a good example of a *Bastide*. Montpazier is the best preserved *Bastide* in the Dordogne and Montflanquin is a stunning example in Lot-et-Garonne.

Derry was the last walled city to be built in western Europe. Yet, curiously, the site or location of the City left much to be desired in two respects. First, the walls, while adequate as a defence against the native Irish, were wholly inadequate against a well-equipped and professional continental army, especially one with a proper siege train. The walls never really measured up to contemporary European

Picture courtesy of Mark Lusby



Early twentieth-century view of the Memorial Hall, the Walls and the Walker Monument

standards. At the end of the seventeenth century, to quote Lord Macaulay, they probably would have 'moved disciples of Vauban to laughter', Vauban being the great French military engineer of that era.

Secondly, as we have already noted, the whole town tilted towards the river. This meant that ships only had to sail up the Foyle to bombard the town at will. Furthermore, on land it could be shelled similarly from the adjacent high ground. Nevertheless, within the course of the seventeenth century the walls were sufficient to enable the city to withstand three sieges.

The initial progress of the Plantation

As both James VI & I and the City of London were extremely interested in the progress of the Plantation and commissioned inspections and reports, we at the beginning of the twenty-first century are able to monitor progress almost as closely as the King and the City Fathers in London were in the early seventeenth. The following summaries convey a flavour of various inspections and reports.

In 1611 George Carew, a distinguished English soldier and administrator, undertook a survey of the Plantation on behalf of the Government and found very little progress. The old Augustinian church had been repaired and slated. Two stone houses had been built and there was a store house, a saw pit, a smith's forge and two lime kilns. A wharf, 300 feet long, 14 feet wide, and 8 or 9 feet high, had been constructed. There were landing stages for the ferry on both sides of the

Foyle. A ship of between 70 and 80 tons was under construction.

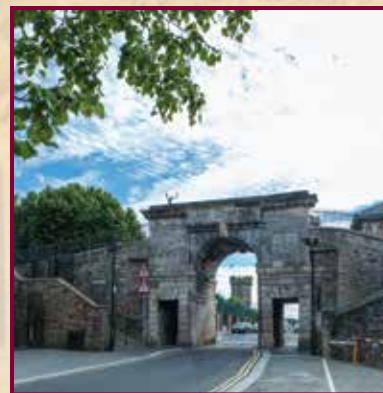
In 1613 Alderman George Smithes and Matthias Springham were selected and despatched by the Court of Common Council to conduct a survey on behalf of the City. They found that 32 houses had been built in Derry but, because of their modest size, that they accounted for only 15 habitations.

Sir Josias Bodley also visited Derry that year and again in September of the following year. Between his two visits apparently 130 houses, admittedly consisting of only one story and a single room, had been built. Bodley also reported that, of the two old forts erected by Docwra, one had been demolished and the other was beyond repair. Although there was stone to begin construction of the town's walls, as yet no masonry had been raised. The high street had been levelled and some other streets had been paved.

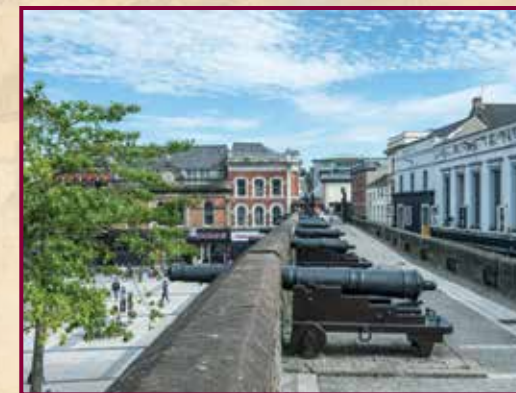
Alderman Peter Proby and Matthias Springham undertook a fresh survey of Derry in 1616 on behalf of the Court of Common Council. They found 215 houses in Derry built by the Londoners, and other houses which had been built privately both inside and outside the walls. Proby and Springham found that the walls were 'very commendable' and by this stage were 'wellnigh half done'. Springham decided the time was ripe to build a free school. A gift of the City of London and the precursor of Foyle College, the school was erected in 1617 inside the walls close to St Augustine's.

The Walls

The City's Walls were completed in 1618 at a cost of £10,757. The following year, Captain Nicholas Pynnar in his famous survey recorded that the Londoners had surrounded the City with a 'very strong wall, excellently made and neatly wrought of good lime and stone'. He also noted that its circumference was 284 2/3 perches, that the wall was 24 foot high – higher than Proby and Springham had suggested – and 6 foot thick.



Bishop's Gate



Cannon on the Walls overlooking Guildhall Square

There were four battlemented gates, two of which had drawbridges but no portcullises. These gates came to be known as Bishop's Gate, Shipquay Gate, the New Gate (subsequently known as Butcher's Gate) and the Ferry Gate (subsequently Ferryquay Gate). There were nine bulwarks 'very large and good' and two half bulwarks. Four of the bulwarks could accommodate four cannons. The others were 'not quite so large'. The rampart within the city was '12 foot thick of earth.' The total number of houses, according to Pynnar, was 92 in which 102 families lived. However, an obvious problem in defending the city was the disagreeable reality that there were insufficient men to man the walls.

Further progress

In 1622 Richard Hadsor and Thomas Phillips, whom we have previously encountered as the Governor of Coleraine who arranged the itinerary of the City of London's 'four wise, grave, and discreet citizens', reported on behalf of Government. They found streets well paved and they provide us with their names: Queen Street (later Bishop Street), Silver Street (later Shipquay Street), Gracious Street (later Ferryquay Street) and Shambles Street (later Butcher Street). Docwra's lower fort had been repaired and now served as a magazine. The town was garrisoned by a company under the command of Sir John Vaughan. There were 121 families living within the walls and 110 men capable of bearing arms.

Thomas Raven's beautifully drawn maps were by commissioned Thomas Phillips to accompany Hadsor and Phillips' survey. In the 1630s these maps constituted

part of the evidence which Phillips submitted to King Charles I in support of his charge against the London Companies that they were not fulfilling their legal obligations.

A report in 1627 stated that if every room and attic was regarded as a house, there were by those criteria 200 houses in Derry. If the number was to be arrived at by counting households there were 135 households in the town.

The Charter of 1613

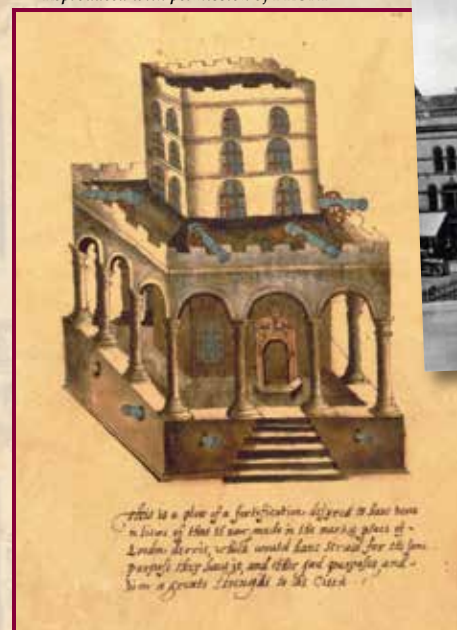
On 29 March 1613 a new Charter was issued incorporating Derry as the city of Londonderry (to emphasize its association with London), creating the new county of Londonderry (renamed for the same reason), incorporating the Irish Society of London, and granting to it the greater part of the temporal land in County Londonderry.

The City of Londonderry was to be constituted as a corporation with a Mayor, two Sheriffs, a Chamberlain, 12 Aldermen and 24 Chief Burgesses forming the Common Council. This body was empowered to make laws for the regulation of the City but all its enactments had to be approved by the Irish Society, which had the power of veto and amendment. Courts, similar to those of the City of London, were established. A common market (to be held four times a week) and an annual fair were granted. No other market was to be held within seven miles of the City.

The Town House

In 1622 the Irish Society erected a Town House, with a jail beneath, in the centre of the Diamond. This building was destroyed during the great Siege. Historians regard court records as an excellent source for capturing the flavor of life in the early modern era. According to the historian T. W. Moody in his pioneering work on the Londonderry Plantation, the quarter sessions at Derry dealt with a wide

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*The Town House as depicted
by Sir Thomas Raven*



range of offences: assault, theft of money and stock, salmon-poaching, ploughing by the tail, selling drink in unsealed measures, permitting drunkenness, selling wine and bread in a solitary place to outlaws, altering boundaries, refusal to assist constables in bringing prisoners to jail, rescuing prisoners, the acquittal of prisoners by jurors, relieving rebels, murder and treason.

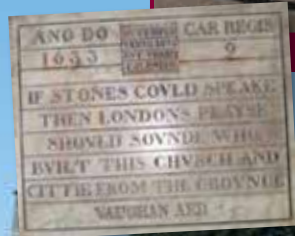
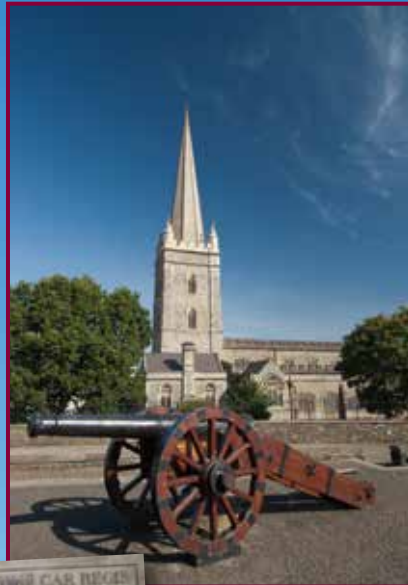
The Cathedral

In 1623 the Corporation sent a petition to the Irish Society which contended that the old church (St Augustine's) was unable to accommodate any more than half the town's population. The foundation stone of St Columb's Cathedral, which was built to serve both as the parish church of Derry and as the cathedral of the Church of Ireland diocese of Derry, was laid in 1628. The Cathedral, dedicated to Saint Columb (who founded a monastery in Derry in 546 and in 563 left Ireland to found Iona), was built by William Parrot, under the supervision of Sir John Vaughan. The cathedral was completed in 1633 and consecrated by John Bramhall, the new Bishop of Derry. J. S Curl, an architectural historian as well as the historian of both the Irish Society and the Plantation of Londonderry, has described the Cathedral as 'among the finest Gothic Survival buildings in the British Isles' and

a superb specimen of perpendicular Gothic architecture. It is the most important seventeenth-century building on this island and the first cathedral in Europe to be built since the Reformation.

In the porch remains the striking inscription:

*If stones could speake
then London's prayse
should sounde who
built this church and
cittie from the grounde.*



The Scottish dimension

There was a widely held view in early modern England that the country was overpopulated and that an underpopulated and underdeveloped Ulster would provide a suitable home for 'the superfluous multitudes of poor people which overspill the realm of England' and that this would be to 'the weal (i.e. advantage or benefit) of both kingdoms (i.e. England and Ireland)'.

Thomas Blennerhasset, a Norfolk undertaker granted land in Fermanagh, forcefully contended that his fellow countrymen who had suffered 'misfortune' ought to 'make speed, get thee to Ulster, serve God, be sober; if thou canst not govern, or be governed, thou shalt recover thy self, and thy happiness there will make thee rejoice at thy former fortunes'.

Blennerhasset recognized, quite correctly, that Ulster needed tradesmen, especially smiths, weavers, masons and carpenters and that they would prosper there. He even argued that even 'poor indigent fellows' should go to Ulster because they would not starve there.

Blennerhasset's observation would have had greater validity in the City of Londonderry than virtually anywhere else in Ulster (because of the scale and ambition of the Londonderry project) and yet the Irish Society experienced great difficulty in persuading Londoners to settle in Londonderry. So much so that in 1624 it was even suggested that if English people were not prepared to settle voluntarily in the city, they should be coerced into doing so by issuing warrants to press and transport them there. On the other hand, trade with Scotland was always likely to be accompanied by an influx of Scottish settlers and so it proved.

As elsewhere in the Plantation (for example, in west Tyrone and the Clogher Valley) where the English failed to rise to the challenge, the Scots responded to the opportunities afforded by the Plantation and readily took up the slack, spilling into areas originally designated for English settlement.

Even as early as 1616 and 1617 a significant proportion of those settling in

Londonderry were Scots. In 1630 Scots were still reckoned to account for just under a quarter of the city's British population (probably an understatement of the Scottish component of the population) but they monopolised mercantile activity in the city, a fact of the utmost importance. However, a mere seven years later the Surveyor General opined that the English in Derry were 'weak and few in number' and the Scots were 'many in number' and that 'twenty to one for the English'. The latter observation was almost certainly not based on hard statistics but was impressionistic. Nevertheless, because the Scots had 'the prime trade of the country' and were thriving and growing rich, it is not difficult to comprehend how the Surveyor General could arrive at such an assessment.

Trade

The port books for Londonderry from 1612 to 1615 are extant. Four vessels from Londonderry – the *Bride*, the *Elizabeth*, the *Greyhound* and the *Peter* – were regularly engaged in trade. The *Peter*, whose master was Wybrant Olphert, was engaged in trade with Norway. In the port's early days building materials (for the construction of the City) accounted for a significant proportion of Londonderry's imports but gradually building materials gave way to the importation of clothing, hardware, foodstuffs, spices, tobacco, salt and wine. Weapons were also imported. Linen, yarn, beef, hides, tallow and wool constituted the town's principal exports, supplemented by butter, pork, salmon and cattle. During the course of the century cattle became an increasingly important export.

The Court of Star Chamber

Although the progress of the Plantation was slow and unspectacular, urban growth in Londonderry was probably far healthier than that in contemporary Maryland or Virginia. Nevertheless, the Crown threatened repossession if the terms of the Plantation were not adhered to. In the 1630s the Crown commenced

proceedings in Star Chamber, the Privy Council sitting as a court, against the Irish Society on numerous grounds, including the allegation that the Society had made excessive profits. This allegation was manifestly unjust because by 1635 the individual companies had spent some £22,000 on the management of their 'proportions', against gross receipts of £37,500. This modest profit had to be set against the initial capital investment of £62,000 that had been required from the City, from which it received £6,000 in dividends. On 28 February 1635 the City of London and the Irish Society were found guilty. The verdict was a political one, as it was always going to be: the defendants were fined £70,000 (subsequently reduced to £12,000) and were deprived of their charter.

The case against the Irish Society was partially prompted by the strong personal animosity of Sir Thomas Phillips towards the Irish Society. Originally an enthusiast for the Plantation of Londonderry as we have seen, Phillips was a disgruntled and embittered individual because he had not fared as well from the Plantation as he thought he should have. Rightly or wrongly, he laid the blame for his misfortune at the door of the Irish Society.

The second, and no doubt infinitely more important, element in prompting the proceedings against the Society was the Crown's insatiable appetite for revenue during 'the personal rule of Charles I' (1629-1640). In order to avoid summoning Parliament in these years, Charles I sought to exploit every financial opportunity to maximize his revenue. The London Companies had been induced to undertake the Plantation of Londonderry by the lure of profit but Charles I chose to concentrate entirely on their obligations, seeking to impose crippling fines where those obligations were not honoured.

The Londoners had endeavoured to honour their obligations to the very best of their ability. Their failure to honour all their obligations was no greater than that of other grantees. The City of London blamed their harsh treatment on Thomas Wentworth, the Earl of Stafford and Charles I's Lord Deputy in Ireland. The City of London's enmity was an important contributory factor to Wentworth's impeachment and execution in 1641. Nor should it occasion any surprise that

when England became embroiled in civil war the City of London should be firmly on the side of Parliament rather than on that of Charles I.

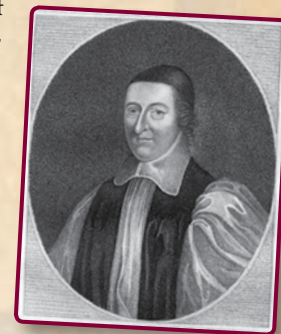
John Bramhall

On 26 May 1633 John Bramhall was consecrated as the fifth Protestant Bishop of Derry in the chapel of Dublin Castle, an event of great significance in ecclesiastical history and in the history of Ulster and of the diocese.

A Yorkshire man, he had been the Lord Deputy's chaplain and in the 1630s and again in the early 1660s as Archbishop of Armagh (after the restoration of Charles II) he was the dominant force in the Church of Ireland. His mission was to bring the Church of Ireland into closer conformity with the Church of England and to root out nonconformity.

The early seventeenth-century Church of Ireland was readily able to accommodate people who later in the century would be regarded as Presbyterians. This is why a formal and distinct Presbyterian ecclesiastical structure in Ireland dates from the 1640s rather than earlier. The Church of Ireland was an Episcopal church with a great many Scottish Presbyterian-inclined ministers within its ranks. This gave rise to few theological problems because – unlike the Church of England – the Church of Ireland was doctrinally Calvinist rather than Arminian, Arminius being a Dutch theologian who had repudiated Calvin's doctrine of predestination.

Church of Ireland bishops were episcopal Calvinists. (Calvin did not actually object to bishops: the Reformed Church in Hungary, like the Church of Ireland, was an episcopal church.) A significant number of bishops were Scots and others, like George Downham, Bramhall's immediate predecessor as Bishop of Derry, were English Puritans. George Montgomery, the first Protestant Bishop of Derry was a Scot. Bishop Montgomery played a key role in the settlement of Scots in his



new dioceses – he was simultaneously Bishop of Raphoe and Clogher as well – when he first arrived in Ulster. These bishops' Scottish experience was within a Church which had been governed by both Presbyterian and Episcopal structures. They were instinctively sensitive to the scruples of Scottish Presbyterian-inclined ministers, even to the extent of omitting from the ordination service passages which offended the sensibilities of such ordinands. Scottish-born bishops were happy to have such men within the Church because there was a shortage of good ministers. They also appreciated that many of these Scottish Presbyterian-inclined ministers were men of outstanding ability.

However, Charles I, who succeeded his father James VI & I in March 1625, was unwilling to tolerate such a state of affairs. Uncomfortable ruling with the three kingdoms of the British monarchy with their different customs, laws, and religions, Charles I wished to bring them into conformity; and William Laud, the leading English exponent of Arminianism, who became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1633, provided the model of ecclesiastical conformity which Charles desired: High Church and Arminian. Laud believed in the 'beauty of holiness' and introduced measures to decorate churches and to separate the communion table from the congregation, innovations anathema to English Puritans and Ulster-Scots Presbyterians alike. Wentworth observed to Laud that 'as for bowing at the name of Jesus, it will not down with them yet; they have no more joints in their knees for that than an elephant'.

Since Laud's jurisdiction did not extend beyond the Church of England and because James Ussher, the Archbishop of Armagh, was a staunch Calvinist, in January 1632 Charles I appointed Thomas Wentworth as Lord Deputy of Ireland and his chosen instrument to root out nonconformity in the Church of Ireland. Wentworth forced the Church of Ireland to discard its Calvinistic articles of 1615. In December 1634 he obliged the Church of Ireland to adopt the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England. Under Wentworth's patronage, and with the knowledge that he was following the express wishes of Charles I and Archbishop Laud, Bramhall began the process of usurping the authority of Archbishop Ussher

and assuming the day-to-day running of the Church of Ireland. To put it mildly, he began making life extremely uncomfortable for Presbyterian-inclined ministers and laity. Undeniably able and energetic, Bramhall drove such people out of the Church of Ireland and was thereby indirectly responsible for the creation in due course of a separate and distinct Presbyterian structure in Ireland. By extension, Bramhall may be said to bear some responsibility for the great exodus of Ulster Presbyterians to the New World during the course of the eighteenth century. Thus, the legacy of Bramhall's appointment to the see of Derry went far beyond the confines of his diocese and is still with us.

First Derry Presbyterian Church

Because of the period of co-existence with the Church of Ireland, it is difficult to date the precise origins of a distinct Presbyterian congregation in the City. While Presbyterians were present there from the time of the Plantation, the first congregation probably has its origins in the 1640s or 1650s. Across the river, a Presbyterian congregation was founded at Glendermott about 1654.

The current building of First Derry Presbyterian Church was opened in 1780, and is believed to be on the site of an earlier Presbyterian Church erected in 1690. Mary II, the wife of William III, although a devout Anglican, made a handsome donation to the construction of this church, built in the immediate aftermath of the Glorious Revolution 'in recognition of the sacrifices of Presbyterians in the defence of Derry'.

*First Derry Presbyterian Church*

The foundation stone of this earlier building can be found above the central door of the current church, inscribed with the Roman numerals MDCXC (i.e. 1690). The current building following an extensive programme of renovation, is once again being used as a place of worship.

In the 1670s Presbyterians had a large meeting house (possibly St. Augustine's) in close proximity to the Bishop's palace, much to the irritation of the Bishop. The meeting house attracted congregations of upwards of 2,000 people, more than could be dispersed without the risk of serious violence. A compromise was apparently achieved whereby the meetings were moved outside the city walls.

Presbyterians, from the 1660s, by virtue of being outside the Established Church (i.e. the Church of Ireland), did suffer disadvantages. It would be overstating things to say that they were 'persecuted'; but it would be fair to say that they were disadvantaged or 'discriminated against'. The Crown, not without good reason,

was suspicious of Presbyterians and viewed them as potentially subversive. After all, Scottish Presbyterians staged revolts of varying degrees of seriousness, in 1666, 1679 and 1685. In Scotland, some Scottish Presbyterians, the Covenanters, actually were the victims of severe, and even vicious, repression. And some Covenanters, for example, the celebrated Alexander Peden, regularly fled to the milder conditions in Ulster to escape real persecution.

*St Augustine's Church of Ireland*

The Siege of Derry

Members of the Church of Ireland and Presbyterians could still come together in times of shared adversity, a point underscored in a poem entitled 'The Londerias', written by Joseph Aicken, a soldier who served in Londonderry during the great siege.

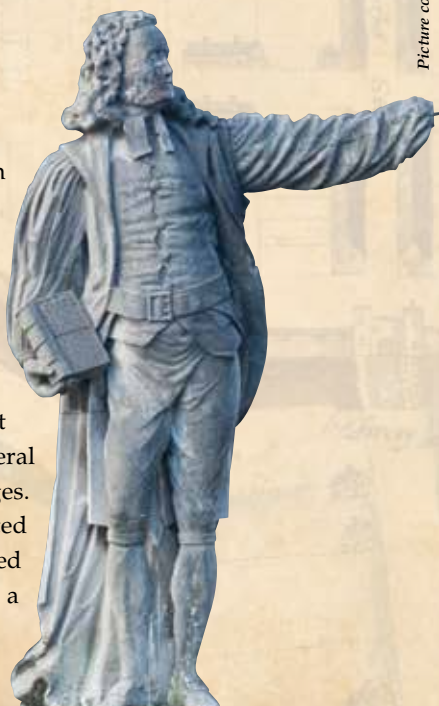
*The Church and Kirk do thither jointly go
In opposition to the common foe:
Although in time of peace they disagree,
Yet they sympathize in adversity.*

Or, as W. F. Marshall, Presbyterian minister and poet, put it in his poem entitled 'The Twain' in the twentieth century:

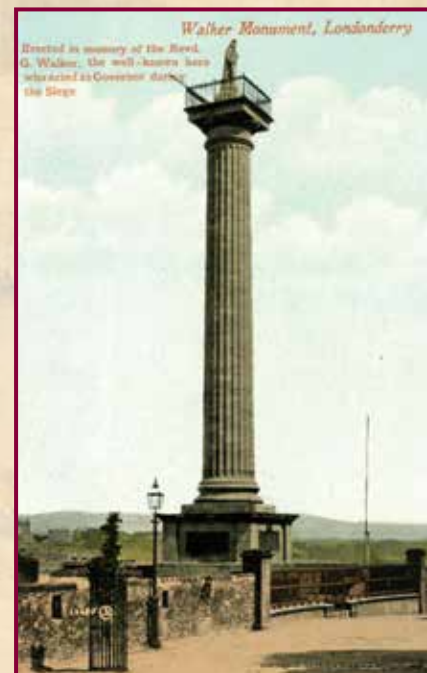
*They were Twain when they crossed the sea,
And often their folk had warred;
But side by side on the ramparts wide
They cheered as the gates were barred:
And they cheered as they passed their King
To the ford that daunted none,
For, field or wall, it was each for all
When the Lord had made them One.*

Afterwards things were not quite so harmonious. The depth of rivalry and hostility between Anglicans and Presbyterians was evidenced by hastily written rival accounts of the siege.

The Revd George Walker, the Church of Ireland Rector of Donaghmore, County Tyrone, and Governor of Londonderry from 19 April 1689 to the end of the siege, was first in the field with his publication entitled *A True Account of the Siege of Londonderry* (London, 1689). Walker's account was dedicated to King William III, rapidly went through several editions and was translated into a number of foreign languages. Walker's pamphlet aroused Presbyterian ire and generated fierce controversy. Walker rushed out a brief sequel, entitled *A Vindication of the Account of the Siege* (London, 1689), as a



Picture courtesy of Mark Lusby



The Walker Monument as it appeared prior to its destruction by the I.R.A. on 28 August 1973

pre-emptive strike before his critics could get into print.

John Mackenzie, the Presbyterian minister of Derryloran, County Tyrone, and, as such a near neighbour of Walker's in east Tyrone, took serious exception to Walker's pamphlet and produced his own *Narrative of the Siege of Londonderry* (London, 1690) to rectify the mistakes and supply the omissions of Walker's account. Mackenzie, the Presbyterian chaplain in the Revd George Walker's own regiment during the siege, accused Walker of taking too much credit for himself and members of his church and ignoring the Presbyterian contribution to the defence of Londonderry.

Mackenzie offered a radically different account and perspective to that put forward by Walker. Predictably, Mackenzie's hero is Adam Murray, the Presbyterian, and perhaps deservedly so. One could be forgiven for thinking that Walker and Mackenzie were eye-witnesses to two completely different episodes in history.

Mackenzie sought to emphasize the role of the Presbyterian clergy and gentry. Mackenzie claimed that Presbyterians outnumbered members of the Church of Ireland by as many as fifteen to one.

Walker praised the conduct of the eighteen Church of Ireland clergy who had taken part in the siege, five of whom died, and named them all in an appendix. However, Walker professed to be unable to obtain the names of any of the seven nonconformist clergy despite the fact that Mackenzie was a chaplain in Walker's own regiment.



The locks of the four city gates, as preserved in St Columb's Cathedral

Even when Walker did provide a list of the seven nonconformist clergy in his *Vindication*, he managed to do so in a manner calculated to antagonize the Presbyterian community by referring to Revd Mr Gilchrist of Kilrea as 'Mr W. Kil-Christ'.

Objectively, Mackenzie and his co-religionists had a genuine grievance with Walker's account but arguably Mackenzie spoils his case by overstating it. Mackenzie accused Walker of embezzlement, cowardice and treason. Mackenzie even went so far as to suggest that Walker was never governor of the city at all and that he was only a kind of quartermaster and a corrupt one at that. Mackenzie accused Walker of cowardice and drunkenness and that he was 'guilty of shedding no other blood to stain his coat but that of the grape'. The fact that Walker was killed at the Battle of the Boyne and, furthermore, that he fell where the fighting was fiercest casts considerable doubt on Mackenzie's contention that Walker had always taken care not to expose himself to physical danger during the great siege. Mackenzie also accused Walker of plotting to betray the place like another Lundy. There is no historical evidence for this.

Presbyterian hostility to Revd Dr George Walker, understandable in the eighteenth century in the wake of the 'Test Act' of 1704 (when in Londonderry 12 aldermen,

six of whom had been mayors, and 14 out of the 24 burgesses were removed from their municipal office as a result of the sacramental test) and the great exodus to the New World, persisted well into the nineteenth century. For example, Thomas Witherow, the Presbyterian historian who was Professor of Church History at Magee College, writing in 1876, juxtaposed George Story's contemporary account of Walker's corpse being stripped by the Ulster-Scots who followed William's camp with the observation: 'A just visitation, one would think on a man who had dealt such scanty justice to their kindred'. Even at the end of the twentieth century Presbyterian minister, historian and scholar J. M. Barkley, who grew up in the Maiden City in the 1920s, recalled in his autobiography: 'I walked the walls. I read Mackenzie's *Siege of Derry*, and saw Walker's account for what it was.'

Appendix A:

Presbyterianism in Londonderry

The fact that so many of the congregations detailed below were founded in the nineteenth-century is a reflection of the City's extraordinary growth during that remarkable century and is testimony to the existence of a vibrant and dynamic Presbyterian community within the City.

The unfortunate closure of so many of these congregations since the outbreak of 'The Troubles' is a by-product of the movement of over 90 per cent of the Protestant population from Londonderry's West Bank, one of the biggest movements of population in western Europe since the end of the Second World War.

The background to this process is thoughtfully explored in Jonathan Burgess' play entitled *The Exodus* which was first performed in the Waterside Theatre, Londonderry, on 13 April 2011.

Londonderry congregations:

First: founded c. 1661 - following ejection from the cathedral.

Strand: Associate Synod, founded c. 1780. Closed.

Carlisle Road: United Secession Synod, founded c. 1837. Now incorporates Strand and Buncrana.

Great James Street: also 'Scots Kirk', established 1834. Closed.

Claremont: began c. 1895, founded 1900/1901. Closed.

Ebrington: founded c. 1896.

Waterside: founded c. 1861. Joint charge with Fahan.

There is much more information about these congregations in *A History of the Congregations in the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, 1610-1982* (Belfast: Presbyterian Historical Society of Ireland, 1982).

The story of Londonderry's Presbyterian community is one which merits serious research.

Appendix B:

Early Scottish surnames of the City of Londonderry

Pre-1622 Family Names

[from sources including land purchase, inquisitions and denization]

* indicates a name featuring continuously in records until at least 1700

Anderson*	Appleton	Archer
Betson	Boyd*	Dickes/Dykes
English/Inglish*	Griffin	Howston/Houston*
Kees	Kneeland	Lennox*
Lyon*	Matthew	Palmer
Patterson*	Read	Redgate
Robinson*	Rodgers*	Russell
Sadler	Smith*	Thompson*
White*	Wray*	

Sample Names from the Muster Roll of 1622

[Male inhabitants capable of military service, aged between 16 and 60 years old]

Bailey	Gifford	Wallace
Byers	Hammond	Wells
Cooke	Leach	Wilson
Crawford	Morrison	Wooldridge
Cunningham	Stewart	Wray/Rae

Sample Names from 1628 Rent Roll of the City

[Suggesting that over 40% householder names were Scots]

Adamson	Burgess	Inch	Sampson
Barnes	Burnett	Large	Turbitt
Beney/ett	Chambers	McMath	Watson
Bell	Clements	Osborne	Wennys
Bright	Crookshank	Ritchie	Wright

Sample Names from the 1630s

[mainly derived from the Muster Roll]

Acken/Aiken/Atkins	Blackwood	Johnston	Orr	Semple
Akenhead	Browning	Knox	Pollock	Strawbridge
Alexander	Clyde	Lamont	Ramsey	Sturgeon
Allen	Douglas	Moore	Rankin	Warke
Begard/Bigger	Jamison	Nesbitt	Sandyes	Young

Sample Names from 1660s

[mainly from Hearth Taxes, Cathedral records]

S = subsidy rolls, showing wealthier families

Armstrong	Colhoun	Graham	Linton	Montgomery
Baird	Edwards	Hanna	Mairs	Murray
Beattie	Elder	Hepburn	Maxwell	Pinkerton
Cairnes	Ferguson	Irwin (S)	McAuley	Riddell (S)
Caldwell (S)	Gillespie	Jackson	McCrea	Stevenson
Campsie	Gregg (S)	Kyle	McGowan (S)	Turner

Sample from 1688-1700 - City, legal, Cathedral records

Arbuckle	Ewing	Laurie/Lowry	Neville	Scott
Austin	Finley	Lecky	Nixon	Sheals
Baliff	Fleming	Lane/Lean	Noble	Sinclair
Blackhall	Forrest	Leatham	Norman	Sproule
Booth	Fox	Little	Norrey	Smellie
Brown	Fullerton	Logan	Nutt/Nott	Taylor
Buchanan	Galloway	McAfee	Ogilby	Topin/Tippin
Burnside	Gordon	McCausland	Parke	Torrens
Campbell	Greer	McClenaghan	Patton	Tosh
Cochrane	Gregson	McClelland	Pearson	Trimble
Cooper	Hamilton	McCullough	Porter	Trott
Crofton	Harris/on	McKenzie	Proctor	Tweed
Culbertson	Hume	McKillop	Reney	Ussher
Cummings	Hutchison	McNicholl	Richardson	Valentine
Davies	Jordan	Mackey	Robb	Vance
Deane	Kane	Mitchell	Roleston	Walker
Deglees	Karr	Moffat	Ross	Warden
Delap	Kennedy	Moncrieff	Rowan	Weir
Dickson	Kilgore	Monteith	Sanderson	Witherow
Edmonds	Kinhead	Morrow	Sawyers	Wylie

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